Title: *The Witness*, January to December, 1995

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POLITICAL PRISONERS

The Witness

Volume 78 • Number 1 • January/February 1995

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Glamour

MANY THANKS FOR GOING WITH the nightmare re: Glamour and Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann's fabulous, original article "The witch, the actor and the Hebrew queen." (Good stuff on wicca.) Having finished reading, I was moved to paint my toenails a rich, bright Advent PURPLE (usually reserved for the grandchildren!) Blessings. (I am a Quaker.)

Barbara Potter
West Buxton, ME

GLAMOUR — WHAT A PLEASANT and unexpected topic for the November issue!

Lloyd Moyer
Montpelier, VT

AS AN ALTERNATE DEPUTY from the Diocese of Western New York, I observed the deliberations of the cognate Committees on Canons of the General Convention in Indianapolis from their organizational meeting August 22nd through the end of Convention.

Chancellor Johnson in her article (11/94) correctly gives herself credit for many of the substantive changes made in the Blue Book draft of the Title IV proposal. She is a significant voice for the victims in the disciplinary process of our Church. Without her contributions to the Title IV revisions accepted by the General Convention the document would be weaker.

She does, however, describe an atmosphere within the committees which does an injustice to the many women and men who served.

When she divides the committee up into those who were "protecting clergy... from ... bishops and victims" and a woman priest and herself, Chancellor Johnson gives herself too much credit.

A little humbleness and some credit to the other deputies is warranted.

These committees worked as diligently on their task as any committee has since the Prayer Book Committee of Minneapolis (which I also observed). They do not deserve to be described as participants in a battle. All 23 did a superb job, working together to make the Episcopal Church a safer place.

Michael E. Hartney
East Aurora, NY

Witness praise

THANK YOU FOR CONTINUING to be on the edge of breaking oppression! My hope still is that one day there will be a global community. Your magazine makes me realize others share my dream.

Sally Swart
Birmingham, MI

You do great work! Every issue of The Witness is eagerly awaited and thoroughly read at our house! Blessings!

Luella C. Bassett
Royal Oak, MI

Classifieds

Resource

Christians and Homosexuality: Dancing Toward the Light is an exploration of personal, biblical, and ethical issues. This new, expanded 5th edition is a collection of articles that have appeared in the pages of *The Other Side* Magazine. Included in this updated 64-page booklet are articles on what Scripture does and does not say about homosexuality, reading Scripture through gay eyes, gay and lesbian roles in the church, and more. Equally ideal for group discussions or personal reflection. Order yours today — Single copy $5, 10 or more $4 each, 50 or more $3 each, postpaid. Write: *The Other Side* Book Department, 300 W. Apsley Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144.

Volunteer Opportunities

Episcopal Urban Intern Program: Work in social service ministry, live in Christian community in Los Angeles, share in spiritual formation. For adults 21-30. Apply now for the 1995-1996 year. Contact: The Rev. Gary Commins, 260 N. Locust St., Inglewood, CA 90301. (310) 674-7744.

Volunteers are desperately needed to teach in all grade levels from K-11 in the five bilingual mission schools in the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras, Central America. Applicants need to be college graduates but do not have to be certified teachers or speak Spanish. School sessions run from September 1995 - June 1996. Contact C. Edgar Bryant, 506 So. East St., Apt. 305, Culpeper, VA 22701, 703-825-7393; or Beverley Allison, 703-832-5555.

Workshop

Women Proclaiming: Research, Issues and Resources, March 13-17, 1995 with E. Lee McGee at the College of Preachers, Washington National Cathedral. Current research reveals that in adolescence women often "lose their voices" as they become aware of the risks of speaking out about what they know to be reality. What can support, empower, and amplify the voice of women preachers as they face such obstacles? Come explore valuable resources which can increase the creativity and effectiveness of women's voice and, thus, of women's preaching. Call or fax the College for more information: phone/202-537-6381, fax 202-537-5650.

William Stringfellow

Readers with letters from or stories about William Stringfellow are invited to contact Bill Wylie-Kellermann, who is working onStringfellow's biography with Andrew McThenia.

Contact Wylie-Kellermann c/o The Witness, 1249 Washington Blvd., #3115, Detroit, MI 48226; phone (313) 962-2650; fax (313)-962-1012.

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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Cover: North American Political Prisoner *by Tim Blunk. Art by political prisoners is being exhibited to support Mumia Abu-Jamal, a prominent African-American radio journalist and Black Panther leader in Philadelphia sentenced to death after a policeman was killed in 1981. Jamal, who maintains his innocence, was convicted by a nearly all-white jury, on the basis of confusing and conflicting evidence. Near the top of the execution list, Jamal's death warrant could be signed at any time. You can help by: 1) asking the Governor of Pennsylvania (Main Capitol Building, Rm. 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120) not to sign Jamal's or any other death warrants; 2) sending a tax-deductible check made out to the Bill of Rights Foundation, marked "Jamal," to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, N.Y. 10023-5001; 3) bringing the art show to your city — contact Mary Taylor, (201) 435-3244.*
Back cover: Audre Lorde *by Annie Cemmett and Jean Weisinger, SCW. A color poster of this image can be ordered from the Syracuse Cultural Workers by sending $20 to SCW, Box 6367, Syracuse, N.Y. 13217-6367.*

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Icons of resistance

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Epiphany is an excellent season during which to consider political prisoners. It's a biblical season rife with government threats and murder. The couple who raise the Christ do so only by going underground and fleeing. The three kings, who look beyond traditional leadership for hope, also flee clandestinely lest their visit threaten the infant in whom all our hopes rest.

Christians in the U.S. may be naive about the brutality of governmental power, but the Bible is not. By definition, the power of the state is death. When it's state-sanctioned, execution stands behind the authority of law. When it's not, clandestine assaults and murders can secure its power.

This issue, which is shaped around a National Council of Churches (NCC) book titled *Can't Jail the Spirit: Political Prisoners in the U.S.*, may be difficult for some, but it's timing is good both in terms of the church calendar and the electoral one. The next two years promise an assault on the values and programs to which *The Witness* is committed.

Headlines announce that some advocate ending government aid to dependent children, creating orphanages for children whose parents are alive and ending funds for Congress' minority caucuses and for National Public Radio.

Meanwhile, the right is also emerging on the streets. Friends who monitor right-wing radio shows remark that not only is the open-mike rhetoric hostile to women and children who can't fit in the free, white and 21 category, it is also erratic and quick to condemn the government.

The agenda for the next two years appears barbaric, predicated on the assertion that people who need something from society are at fault, asking for what they have not earned — consequently deserving of punishment.

L. Whitehorn from a photo by Jennifer Beach

Mumia Abu-Jamal, to whom the cover is dedicated, is a radical radio journalist and former president of the Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists who is on death row in Huntingden, Penn. Interviewed by *The Village Voice*, Jamal observed, "The U.S. has embarked on a low-technology, low-skilled, high employment scheme that exploits the poor, the stupid and the slow via a boom in prison construction, America's sole growth industry. More and more Americans are guarding more and more American prisoners for more and more years."

I grow weary already anticipating the battles we will need to fight for seemingly obvious goals — like the feeding of our nation's children.

And I wonder where are those in the oppressed communities who could lead a movement with the courage of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and César Chavez?

Odds are they are in jail.

Not all the activists in *Can't Jail the Spirit* are appealing. Some seem self-serving and it's hard to feel comfortable with people who employ violence through bombings and robberies. "No matter what it takes" has a clear moral imperative, but there are few people I would trust to exercise it.

But in the stories of these political prisoners is a hard-edged indictment of the system in this country. These are people whose concern about injustice is so keen that they are willing to be confrontative and to risk major consequences.

It's no wonder they make us uneasy. It's also true that, while the revolutionary movements are sometimes bound in by their own rhetoric, they are *always* misrepresented in the media. When the City of Philadelphia decided to dump plastic explosives on the homes of members of MOVE, we learned that their philosophy led them to feed rats and that they were difficult neighbors. Their political beliefs, which were threatening enough to attract the hostility of the administration and police department, never made the news.

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editor's note

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

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Articles in this issue will outline the way that the prison population is growing exponentially, far outstripping the rate of imprisonment in other western industrialized countries. The articles will also examine the beliefs of some in the Justice Department and in groups like the Trilateral Commission who feel that democracy can't work when the economic pie is shrinking, and therefore recommend suppressing minority and special interest groups, isolating their messages and bullying their advocates.

Many political prisoners, defined in the book as those who have been detained "for beliefs, associations or acts advocating self-determination for oppressed people or nations," have experienced surveillance and harassment. Some have watched prosecution witnesses perjure themselves. Most are serving lengthy sentences — sentences that exceed the ones meted out to people who commit the same offenses without a political motivation.

In the 1970s and 1980s the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration sponsored studies that resulted in guidelines that advised police to know activists' names, faces, addresses and cars. Without distinguishing between those who were exercising their civil rights legally and those who were breaking the law, they outlined campaigns of harassment and advised the police to prevail upon the city councils to require permits for demonstrations and then to authorize them only in low-visibility areas; likewise they asked the press not to "enflame" protests by covering them.

Their efforts are effective in making legal protests innocuous and militant ones heavy with penalties.

Of course, the impulse to cry out against injustice doesn't disappear, it just runs deep. In some cases it turns into mindless violence. In others it courses into an underground movement that surfaces only now and then. And when it does, good church people are at a loss. Even when the activists are committed to nonviolence, many church people hesitate to express support because they have broken the law. But when violence is a tactic, far fewer people support them.

Michael Yasutake, one of our board members who is director of the Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project at the NCC, is critical of our hesitation, objecting that we need to stand in solidarity with one another.

"With regard to the moral issue of the use of 'violent' or 'non-violent' means in the struggle for justice, various views exist," Yasutake says. "The so-called radical movements that would resort to armed defense or resistance against forces of injustice are not any more violent than any nation that resorts to armed conflict for national security. International laws such as of the U. N. maintain that the oppressed may use any means necessary for liberation, including the use of arms.

"The prevalent view of the dominant society in the U.S. is that nonviolent methods are the only appropriate means of social change. ... [Even though] many in the dominant society, including religious institutions, are not pacifists themselves — fully relying on armed police power for protection or on the brute force of the armed services in the name of national security."

This issue does not hope to seriously address the question of nonviolence *vs.* violence. Yasutake's comments here clearly conflict with Walter Wink's editorial in the December, 1994 issue. The questions raised are critical and we will examine them in the July/August issue on the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. It must be enough for now to indicate that most of the staff is committed to active nonviolence as a way of life, not simply a tactic. We believe, as Gandhi did, that nonviolence is not passive and that injustice requires action.

In this issue, we raise the names of several political prisoners. We raise them as icons into the injustice and cruelty that are woven through our American way of life. We raise them as people willing to move past liberalism to activism with cost. They also give us a way of examining the growth in our prison system — which happens, no doubt, in response to the American desire for quick and easy answers to deep social problems.

We raise these prisoners as potential leaders of the movements we so desperately need, who have been removed from society by design, often so quickly and effectively that we never learn their names.

Stewart Wood will not face ecclesiastical trial

The Witness is glad to report that, by a vote of three to two, a committee of five bishops has determined that in ordaining a lesbian in a committed relationship to the priesthood last summer Michigan bishop Stewart Wood did not break church law.

In its report the committee said that church canons do not prohibit the ordination of non-celibate homosexual persons. While noting that a 1979 resolution of the church's General Convention states that "we believe it is not appropriate for this Church to ordain a practicing homosexual person," a majority of the committee concluded that the resolution's wording did not clearly indicate an intention that this resolution be mandatory.

The committee had been appointed by Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning to investigate charges brought against Wood by six priests and 29 lay persons in Michigan who oppose the ordination of homosexual persons. — *Julie Wortman*

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If they come in the night

by Marge Piercy

Long ago on a night of danger and vigil
a friend said, *Why are you happy?*
He explained (we lay together
on a hard cold floor) what prison
meant because he had done
time, and I talked of the death
of friends. *Why are you happy*
then, he asked, close to
angry.

I said, I like my life. If I
have to give it back, if they
take it from me, let me only
not feel I wasted any, let me
not feel I forgot to love anyone
I meant to love, that I forgot
to give what I held in my hands,
that I forgot to do some little
piece of the work that wanted
to come through.

Sun and moonshine, starshine,
the muted grey light off the waters
of the bay at night, the white
light of the fog stealing in,
the first spears of the morning
touching a face
I love. We all lose
everything. We lose
ourselves. We are lost.

Only what we manage to do
lasts, what love sculpts from us;
but what I count, my rubies, my
children, are those moments
wide open when I know clearly
who I am, who you are, what we
do, a marigold, an oakleaf, a meteor,
with all my senses hungry and filled
at once like a pitcher with light.

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"It can't happen here": political prisoners in the U.S.

by José Lopez

Since the social upheavals of the 1960s, the number of political prisoners in the U.S. has grown dramatically, with well over 100 behind bars today. The total number of prisoners has also spiraled upwards. These increases take place in a particular context — prisons are increasingly used as tools of counterinsurgency and population control by a U.S. government that faces serious economic, social, political, and military crises.

Who's in prison?

According to the Deptartment of Justice, the number of prisoners in this country reached one million as of June 1994. The bloating of the imprisonment rate will continue in the context of the new "crime" bill.

In 1925, when the U.S. began keeping statistics, the imprisonment rate was 79 per 100,000. The rate stayed more or less constant until 1972, when it started to rise dramatically. Today the rate is 373.

Who is being swallowed up by this ever-expanding prison system?

In 1994, the imprisonment rate for black people was almost eight times higher than for white people. A 1979 government survey revealed that about one out of every five black men would go to prison in his lifetime. The proportion is now closer to one out of every four.

In comparing international imprisonment rates, a recent study by the Sentencing Project found that while white people in the U.S. went to prison about twice as often as people living in Europe, black people went to prison at a rate that was five times higher than that for black people in South Africa under apartheid!

Theorists insisted that since insurgency was a stable feature of the political landscape, governments must implement permanent low-intensity repressive strategies to "nip revolutionary movements in the bud."

Meanwhile, outside the prison walls, people of color are trapped in deteriorating public housing projects, dropping out of schools at alarming rates, and losing their lives to drugs and violence. While the national unemployment rate is six percent, for blacks it is 20 percent. Seventy-five percent of black and poor youth are unemployed; 80 percent of black youth drop out of high school.

The number of women in prison has also increased enormously in the last ten years, at a faster rate than the number of men. These women are disproportionately black, Latina and Native American. Two thirds are under the age of 35 and 90 percent are single mothers. They are poor, with 85 percent reporting incomes of less than $2,000 in the year prior to their arrest. Most are in prison for economic crimes. Of the few imprisoned for violent crimes, the vast majority were convicted for defending themselves or their children from abuse.

War on crime

President Lyndon Johnson launched the "war on crime" in 1965. He said, "We must arrest and reverse the trend toward lawlessness because crime has become a malignant enemy in America's midst." Congress responded by adopting the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. The new law set in motion the involvement of the whole population in the fight against crime, from Neighborhood Watch to police telephone snitch lines.

The government poured vast sums into militarizing the police. In 1974, the amount spent was $15 billion. Today the amount spent on the criminal justice system is $65 billion. Additionally, the system adopted euphemisms to obscure the reality of the prison system and win the support of the general public. With a stroke of the pen the penal system became the "criminal justice system," prisoners became "inmates," and penitentiaries became "federal correctional institutions." But the ultimate aim was still to contain people of color: population control.

Since 1965 there has been a series of studies and documents which have augmented the ideas outlined in the original crime law. In 1967, faced with waves of urban rebellion, Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote a series of articles in which he proposed the creation of concentration camps to contain black people.

In 1968 the Kerner Commission, cre-

José Lopez is 1st secretary of the *Movimiento de Liberacíon Nacional Puertorriqueño* (MLN). This article is adapted from *Can't Jail the Spirit: Political Prisoners in the U.S.* which can be ordered from Ellen Youniss, 59 E. VanBuren, #1400, Chicago, Ill., 60605 for $14. Checks to *Can't Jail the Spirit/Freedom Now*. Artist **Edward Bisone** lives in Santa Ana, Calif.

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ated by President Johnson, concluded that the U.S. was moving into two separate societies, black and white, separate and unequal. The Kerner Commission projected that if demographic trends continued, that by the year 2080, a majority of people in the U.S. would be people of color.

Significantly, one of the Kerner Commission's members went on to develop the concept of "spatial deconcentration." This process involves driving the masses of poor people of color out of the inner cities to the outer cities, into more easily manageable pockets of population. We see this in the gentrification of every major city in the U. S., and the proliferation of black towns or unincorporated districts lacking basic social services, decent schools, sometimes even fire departments and paved roads.

President George Bush's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Jack Kemp, promised to turn these horribly depressed areas into tax-free "enterprise zones" to take advantage of plentiful cheap labor.

Counterinsurgency

The *Crisis of Democracy* was a major ruling-class policy statement on domestic affairs, written principally by Samuel Huntington and issued by the Trilateral Commission in 1973. The book described the U.S. political crisis of the 1960s and 1970s as being caused by the excessive demands of "ungovernable sectors" — black, Chicano and Native American movements, along with women and youth. "The demands on democratic government grow, while the capacity of democratic governments stagnates," Huntington said. "This, it would appear, is the central dilemma of the governability of democracy."

Huntington lamented that society had become too democratic: "There are potentially desirable limits to the indefinite extension of political democracy." The Trilateralist remedy was more authoritarianism to insure "a more balanced existence."

Condemned **Edward Bisone**
"We are all confined to solitary confinement for life."

In the 1970s, U.S. military and intelligence circles closely studied the work of Frank Kitson and Robin Eveleigh, two British colonels who articulated the need for permanent counterinsurgency. These theorists insisted that since insurgency was a stable feature of the political landscape, governments must implement permanent low-intensity repressive strategies to "nip revolutionary movements in the bud."

In this model, prisons serve as an important tactic to contain political leaders and organizers.

Recent studies support the understanding of prisons as tools for population control, for detaining the "undesirables." William Nagel, a well-known criminologist, analyzed many factors in various states to determine which factors were related to rapidly increasing imprisonment rates. He found no relationship between the crime rate (or violent crime rate) and the imprisonment rate and no relationship between the crime rate (or violent crime rate) and the proportion of black people in a state.

However, he discovered a very strong relationship between the imprisonment rate and the proportion of black people. In other words, people go to prison in increasing numbers because they are black, not because of a rise in crime.

Two British criminologists, Steven Box and Chris Hale, found similar results. They concluded that people are sent to prison during times of economic instability, not because of an increase in crime, but because they are perceived as a threat by those who hold power in society. Johnson's mid-1960s war on crime, it should be recalled, was launched at a time when the U.S. was facing stiff economic competition from its allies and was facing an upsurge of national liberation struggles from Angola to Vietnam. In addition, there was fierce internal opposition at home, from the liberation movements of oppressed nationalities to the Vietnam anti-war movement.

In the 1980s, prisons no longer pretended to rehabilitate — while the federal and state governments spent more money on more prisons, guard towers and barbed wire, they cut educational and vocational programs. They said that crime was caused by bad individuals, the undesirables, rather than focusing on the social, political and economic roots of crime.

Political prisoners

In the 1960s, as the Civil Rights and Black Power movements grew, the number of black political prisoners swelled and the prison struggle became a major part of the black liberation struggle. Political prisoners like George Jackson stated that prisons are an important tool in the government's effort to contain and destroy black people's freedom.

Although the government refuses to admit it, there are nearly 100 political

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prisoners and prisoners of war in U. S. prisons today. They come from the Puerto Rican, Black/New Afrikan and Native American liberation movements. They include progressive Christians, white anti-imperialists, draft resisters, and grand jury resisters. The movements that these people represent honor, love and respect them. Yet the government contends that they are criminals or terrorists and reserves for them, as well as for prisoners showing leadership and political direction, the harshest treatment.

The Bureau of Prisons intentionally builds walls of silence around its prisons in hope that the public will never learn about the people living within the prison walls.

Imprisoning women

A control-unit facility for women was built at the Lexington Federal Correctional Institute in Kentucky in October 1986. Control units are designed to totally control the lives of the prisoners in them.

The Lexington facility was a behavior modification unit in which the Bureau of Prisons used sensory deprivation, extreme isolation, and sexual degradation to control the prisoners.

The director of the Bureau said that the conditions in the unit were necessary to provide adequate security for the women. He said their radical politics made them a threat to the community and "escape prone."

Other prison officials told the women that their only avenue out of the unit was to renounce their political associations, to repudiate a lifetime of political principle.

After a national protest campaign, in October 1987 the Bureau announced that it would close the unit, stating that it was not big enough to house all the women political "terrorists" in the country. In June 1988, three of the prisoners sued the Bureau. A federal judge agreed that the Bureau had persecuted them for their political beliefs and ruled that they be transferred out of the unit immediately.

By August 1988, the Bureau had opened a new federal prison in Marianna, Fla. It contained a special women's unit which the Bureau said would "continue the mission" of the Lexington Control Unit. In the U.S., roughly 25 percent of political prisoners are women.

Immigrants

Immigrants are another group of "undesirables" the government is trying to contain. During brighter economic times, immigrants, mostly Mexican, were considered desirable because they were cheap labor for industrial production. Now, however, the government perceives them as undesirables taking jobs away from U.S. citizens.

In addition, the government fears that some immigrants, such as Palestinians, Central Americans, Haitians, and Irish Republicans, will spread the truth about the persecution in their homelands where liberation struggles are rising. And the government has tried to exclude immigrants from countries that are not allies of the U.S., such as Libya and Iran.

To control these immigrant populations, the government passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986 which stated that only immigrants who can prove that they have lived and worked in the U.S. may apply for residency and that it is illegal for employers to hire immigrants. As part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's REX '84 program, mechanisms were placed and exercised for detaining thousands of immigrants, as well as North American dissidents, if the government deems it necessary in the political emergency. A recent example illustrates all of this painfully well. When thousands of people rebelled in Los Angeles in May of 1992, following the racist verdict that let off the four cops who brutalized Rodney King, the L.A. police forces mobilized themselves and deported thousands of Mexicans and Salvadorans, many of them, it was later revealed, "in error."

And now we have Proposition 187 (see page 24).

Factories with fences

Of course, the government's "war against crime" has a price. Currently it costs more to imprison a person for one year than to send him or her to Harvard University. While this country faces an economic crisis and has slashed basic social services for Third World and poor people, it has poured billions of dollars into the "criminal justice system."

Ominously, new plans such as prison-for-profit options are being developed. Warren Burger, former U.S. Supreme Court justice, has publicly called for the conversion of prisons into profitable enterprises. Using the slogan "Factories with Fences," Burger argues for the dismantling of present rules governing prisoner-made goods, the privatization of prisons and the making of prisons into profit-generating enterprises.

In the coming years, we may see factories, textile plants, foundries, and even high-tech industries springing forth in and around prisons. Already, the prison system contracts out prison labor to the state, military, and private industries, at near-slave wages. (Federal prisoners' wages begin at 22 cents per hour.)

The Bureau of Prisons intentionally builds walls of silence around its prisons in hope that the public will never learn about the people living within the prison walls, nor the BOP's brutal policies. The wall of silence must be torn down. TW

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A retrospective view: from prison to AIDS work

by Marianne Arbogast

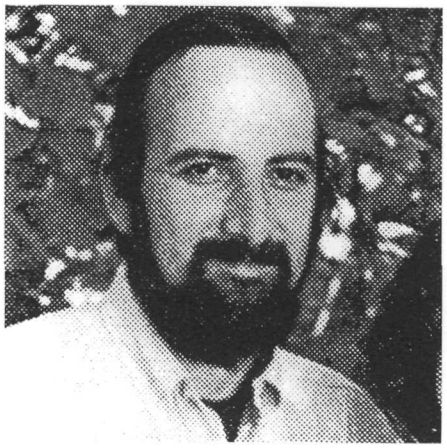
Alan Berkman is a physician who works with low-income AIDS patients in Manhattan, and a long-time political activist who served two prison sentences for his work with the Black liberation movement — once for refusing to collaborate with an investigation of the Black liberation movement and later for offenses including weapons' possession, bail jumping, and robbery.

While imprisoned at the maximum security Marion Federal Penitentiary, he learned that he had Hodgkin disease but was denied treatment.

During a recent telephone interview, Berkman observed that *The Witness* readership probably has serious concern about offering support to people who have used violence in their revolutionary activity.

"The one thing I know about myself and others is that we were motivated by a real deep sense of valuing everybody's lives, whether in El Salvador or Nicaragua or the U.S.

"In this country there is enormous acceptance of inhumanity. Even when the U.S. was waging the *Contra* war in Nicaragua and thousands and thousands of people were being killed, it was reduced to a policy issue between the Democrats and Republicans. Many of us felt a sense of outrage that people's lives could be destroyed that way. We felt it couldn't be allowed to become just a debate for the political elite in this country.



Alan Berkman

"For me a certain ideology played a role that tended to glorify revolutionary violence. I don't glorify any violence at this point. At a human level, violence can be corrupting, no matter who you are and what you want to do with it.

"But it's very dangerous to look at the decisions of the past with the eyes of the present and the ethics of the present. In the late 1960s there was almost a sense of civil war and strife. The FBI was trying to kill Black Panthers."

Berkman noted that while those in militant struggle may not have been totally right, pacifists have not demonstrated any dramatic success in ending injustice. "Nobody won — it's not as though the pacifist movement has taken over the U.S. and transformed it.

"When I was at Wounded Knee, some members of the Catholic left, whom I respect a lot, came to talk to the leaders, and said, 'We want to support you, we have the same commitment, but we don't believe in the use of force. We don't want to be in there with you and the guns.'

"The leaders said, 'We think the best thing you could do would be to set up an encampment in the no-man's land between us and the FBI. If the FBI killed one of you, there would be a major outcry; and if you kept them from shooting at us, that would be good.' But they decided the best thing they could do was to have a demonstration in an area removed from the center of conflict."

Sometimes, Berkman suggested, people insulate themselves from the gravity of the injustice and never feel the pain deeply enough to be able to understand why someone might want to rebel violently.

"One of the most dangerous things is that the government has eliminated knowledge of political people in prison, because to acknowledge political prisoners is to acknowledge that there continue to be real social struggles. There are wonderful people whose whole lives are being wasted in prison, and they really should be supported." TW

(Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of The Witness.)

Sponsoring a prisoner of conscience

Congregations and groups willing to sponsor a prisoner of conscience can consult with Michael Yasutake, director of the Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project of the National Council of Churches.

The commitment involves any of the following: convening a forum about prisoners of conscience once a year; corresponding with a prisoner; making a pastoral visit once a year; contributing financially to the Prisoner of Conscience Project.

Yasutake can be reached at 2120 Lincoln St., Evanston, IL 60201; phone and fax (708) 328-1543.

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Jailed conscience

by Camille Colatosti

The Prisoners of Conscience Project of the National Council of Churches identifies over 100 political and religious prisoners in the U.S. Despite this identification, the U.S. government denies the existence of political prisoners in America. Many officials express a view similar to that of John Clark, the warden of the federal super maximum prison for men at Marion, Ill., who says: "While it's true that some of the inmates held here subscribe strongly to certain ideologies, they are not here because they hold those ideological beliefs. They are here because they have engaged in criminal acts."

Yet, a look at the circumstances surrounding the conviction of political activists, the alleged criminal acts, the specious evidence and the involvement of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reveals a striking pattern. The arrests appear designed to halt, or at least interrupt, political movements.

Take, for example, the three prisoners described here. Each was a political and community activist leading a struggle that opposed dominant political and economic forces in the U.S. The FBI had targeted each for "neutralization." Each was convicted with suspicious evidence. And each received sentences far harsher than those received by criminals who committed similar acts, but who held no oppositional political views.

The stories should also be looked at in light of the overall philosophy and approach of the FBI's counterintelligence division. Throughout its history and especially during the 1960s, the FBI had as its primary goal an end to progressive social and political movements in the U.S. A counterintelligence-related memo, dated October 24, 1968, and sent from Bureau headquarters to all field officers, makes the point. It reads: "Successful prosecution is the best deterrent to such unlawful activities [as dissident political organizing]. Intensive investigations of key activists ... are logically expected to result in prosecutions under substantive violations within the Bureau's jurisdiction."

The Bureau was not beyond illegal tactics to attain, or fabricate, information that would lead to the arrest of political leaders. The biographies below paint a striking picture.

Each was a political and community activist leading a struggle that opposed dominant political and economic forces in the U.S. The FBI had targeted each for "neutralization."

Leonard Peltier

Leonard Peltier may be the best known political prisoner in the U.S. This 46-year-old Anishinabe/Lakota Indian was convicted in 1977 of the June 26, 1975, killing of two FBI agents during a firefight on Wounded Knee at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. A leader of the American Indian Movement (AIM), Peltier joined other activists who had occupied Wounded Knee, demanding a federal review of the treaty of 1868 guaranteeing the return of the Black Hills to the Lakota Sioux.

Pine Ridge had been a target of the FBI since 1972. Tension between the activists and federal agents continued to build until June 26, 1975, when FBI Special Agents Jack Coler and Ronald Williams entered the occupied property and a firefight ensued. The fight involved more than 200 federal troops, and left Coler, Williams and AIM member Joe Stuntz killed. Leonard Peltier, and two other activists — Bob Robideau and Dino Butler — were charged in the deaths of the agents. No one was charged for Stuntz' murder.

Peltier feared for his life and fled to Canada. Because of this, the government tried Peltier separately from Butler and Robideau. The latter were tried first, together, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and were found not guilty on the grounds that they had acted in self-defense.

Extradited from Canada, Peltier was tried in 1977 in Fargo, N.D. Judge Paul Benson refused to allow the jury to hear testimony of FBI misconduct. Peltier was found guilty on two counts of murder. His conviction has been upheld through two rounds of appeals, despite mounting evidence of his innocence.

A review of the FBI's own documents proves that incomplete and inaccurate ballistics evidence was deliberately presented at the trial in order to establish Peltier's guilt. In 1980, Amnesty International concluded that even the most elementary standards of justice require that Peltier receive a new trial.

Following Peltier's 1985 appeal, Eighth Circuit Court Judge Gerald W. Heaney, who wrote the opinion in *U.S. v. Peltier* (1986), reflects the court's grow-

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Camille Colatosti, author of *Stopping Sexual Harassment: A Handbook for Union and Workplace Activists*, is a freelance writer in Detroit. Puerto Rican artist **Elizam Escobar** self-identifies as a political prisoner of war. His work is widely exhibited.

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ing doubts of Peltier's guilt. As he writes: "There is a possibility that the jury would have acquitted Leonard Peltier had the records and data improperly withheld from the defense been available to him in order to better exploit and reinforce the inconsistencies casting strong doubts upon the government's case."

Despite this "possibility," Heaney denied Peltier's appeal, saying, "We are bound by the Bagley test, requiring that we be convinced, from a review of the entire records, that had the data and records withheld been made available, the jury probably would have reached a different result. We are not so convinced."

Prosecutor Lynn Crooks, in the 1985 appeal proceeding, admitted that "though the state had tried Leonard Peltier for first-degree murder, naming him from start to finish as 'the man who came down and killed those agents in cold blood,' it did not really know that this was true."

In early 1991, another AIM activist, Mr. X., came forward in an interview on the CBS television show 60 Minutes, admitting that he killed the men in self-defense. He wore a mask over his face and never stated his identity.

In a July 1991 interview in *In These Times*, Peltier expressed both relief and regret about Mr. X's confession. "I hope he's never identified. I don't want him to come forward completely, where he may end up going to prison. There is no guarantee I would be released even if he did. This is a good man who is very committed, still working hard for our people. If it had been left up to me, I wouldn't have even let him come out as far as he has now."

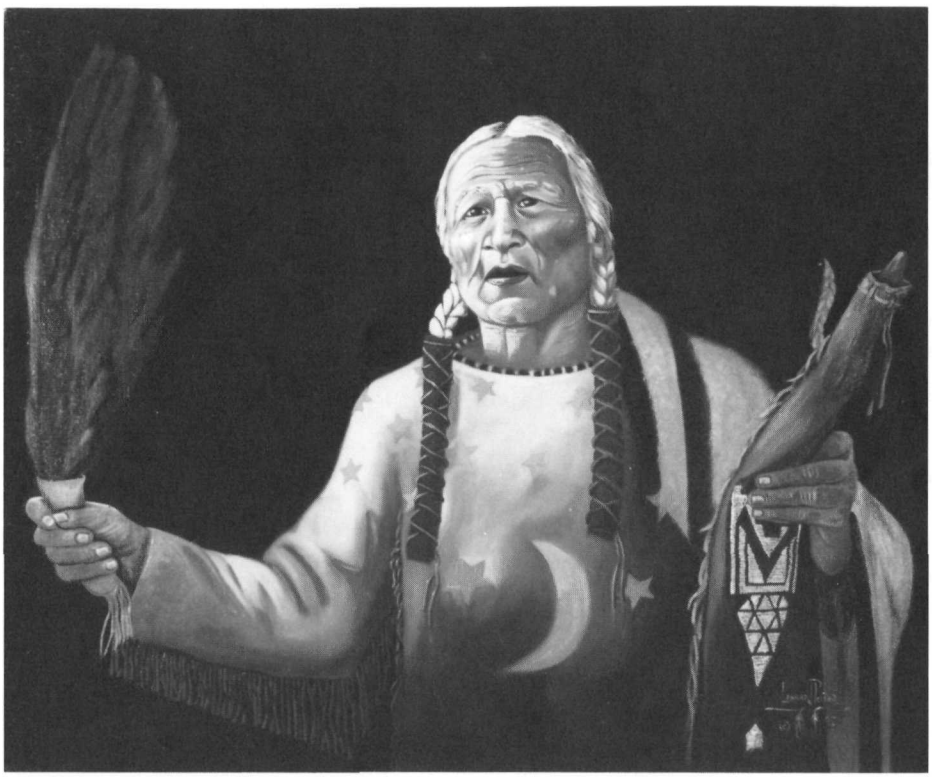
Moved by evidence from Mr. X and Eighth Circuit Court Judge Heaney, Hawaiian Senator Daniel Inoye asked President George Bush to commute Peltier's sentence. The president did not.

In November 1993, Ramsey Clark, Peltier's lead defense attorney, filed for executive clemency. As of press time, Clark has received no response from the administration.

In December 1993, Peltier was again denied a petition for parole. The board disregarded the evidence in his favor and instead recommended that Peltier receive 15 additional years due to the "nature of his crimes."

The FBI still refuses to release nearly 6,000 pages of documents on the Peltier case. Supporters believe that some of these documents would exonerate Peltier.

On the 20th anniversary of the Pine Ridge firefight, 17 years after Peltier was imprisoned for a crime he did not commit, 3,500 people gathered in Washington's Lafayette Park to demand that President Bill Clinton grant clemency. As David Staiger, of the Leonard Peltier Support Network, states, "It's urgent that he get out. It's hypocritical. A government that claims to be a democracy admits that it doesn't have proof and yet keeps Peltier in prison.This says a great deal about what's happened to Native Americans and Native American rights in this country. The injustice is so blatant."



Ghost dance leader Leonard Peltier

"This painting represents the memory of all our people massacred at Wounded Knee. I dedicate it to Louis Irwin, my spiritual leader and good friend."

geronimo ji Jaga (pratt)

Like Peltier, geronimo ji Jaga (pratt) was a leader of his community. Pratt headed the Black Panther Party Los Angeles chapter. An organization dedicated to increase the power of African Americans throughout the country, especially in the nation's cities, the Black Panthers supported a free breakfast program for children, com-

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Amnesty International's view

Amnesty International (AI), known for its worldwide human rights work, defines as a political prisoner "any prisoner whose case has a significant political element: whether the motivation of the prisoner's acts, the acts in themselves, or the motivation of the authorities." AI demands fair, prompt trials for all political prisoners, but does not take a stand on their political goals or methods, ask for special prison status (eg. exemption from wearing prison clothing), or necessarily advocate their release.

Within this broad category, AI recognizes a smaller group of prisoners which it designates as "prisoners of conscience." This group, for which AI demands immediate and unconditional release, comprises "people detained anywhere for their beliefs or because of their ethnic origin, sex, colour or language — who have not used or advocated violence." (Exceptions may be made for prisoners who have used violence in "clear and unambiguous instances of individual self-defense," or for prisoners who have used violence, but are not released after their sentences are completed.)

Recent AI literature acknowledges controversy concerning this restriction, and offers the following explanations:

1) The non-violence clause is necessary to attract broad-based support from people across the political spectrum;

2) Prisoners who have been involved in violence are not excluded from AI's advocacy. AI monitors trial procedures and sentencing of all political prisoners, works for the abolition of torture and the death penalty, and seeks an end to extrajudicial "disappearances" and executions;

3) As an organization, AI takes no position on whether violence is justifiable in political struggles. However, its 1992 handbook argues that AI would be applying a double standard if it insisted on non-violent treatment of prisoners yet maintained that prisoners who had made use of violence "should not be brought to justice";

4) If AI became identified in the minds of governments with particular opposition groups, its effectiveness — which rests on its impartial, outside status — would be undermined.

Although AI recognizes a number of political prisoners in the U. S., none are currently designated "prisoners of conscience." The most recent U.S. prisoner of conscience was a conscientious objector to the Gulf War; others have included a Central American sanctuary movement worker and the Wilmington 10 (civil rights workers and students convicted of arson and assault in 1972 on testimony extracted by threat).

Amnesty's 1994 report on its work in the U. S. focuses on death penalty cases, allegations of police and prison brutality, the forced return of Haitian refugees, and the government handling of the Waco incident. It includes reports on its continued monitoring of the cases of Leonard Peltier (see p. 12) and geronimo ji Jaga (pratt) (see p. 12).

For further information write Amnesty International USA, 322 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10001.

— *Marianne Arbogast*

munity education and health care.

More controversially, however, they also supported armed struggle and made a point of stocking and carrying weapons. This was one of several reasons why the FBI targeted the organization and made it a central part of its counterintelligence division (CID). In a September 8, 1968, *New York Times* interview, J. Edgar Hoover called the Black Panther Party "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country" and began issuing directives to destroy the party by whatever means necessary — including the use of spies.

William Sullivan, a former CID head, describes his agency's behavior: "We were engaged in COINTELPRO (counterintelligence program) tactics, to divide, conquer, weaken, in diverse ways, an organization." A target of COINTELPRO, the Black Panther Party was subject to a sustained and systematic FBI effort to divide leaders and factionalize the organization.

It was largely due to the effectiveness of the COINTELPRO campaign that, in 1972, ji Jaga was convicted of the 1968 murder of Donna Olsen, a white school teacher. The senseless murder followed a robbery on a Santa Monica tennis court. Ji Jaga's defense focused on the fact that, at the time of the killing, he was 400 miles from Santa Monica at a week-long Black Panther Party central committee meeting in Oakland, Calif.

Though the murder occurred in 1968, it wasn't until late 1970, that ji Jaga was arrested for the crime. He was sentenced, on July 28, 1972, to seven years to life in prison.

At the time of his arrest, ji Jaga was isolated from the majority of Party members and was, therefore, an easy target for the FBI. Due to factionalism, key party members refused to testify at the trial. A split in the party led to ji Jaga's expulsion — key party members stopped speaking

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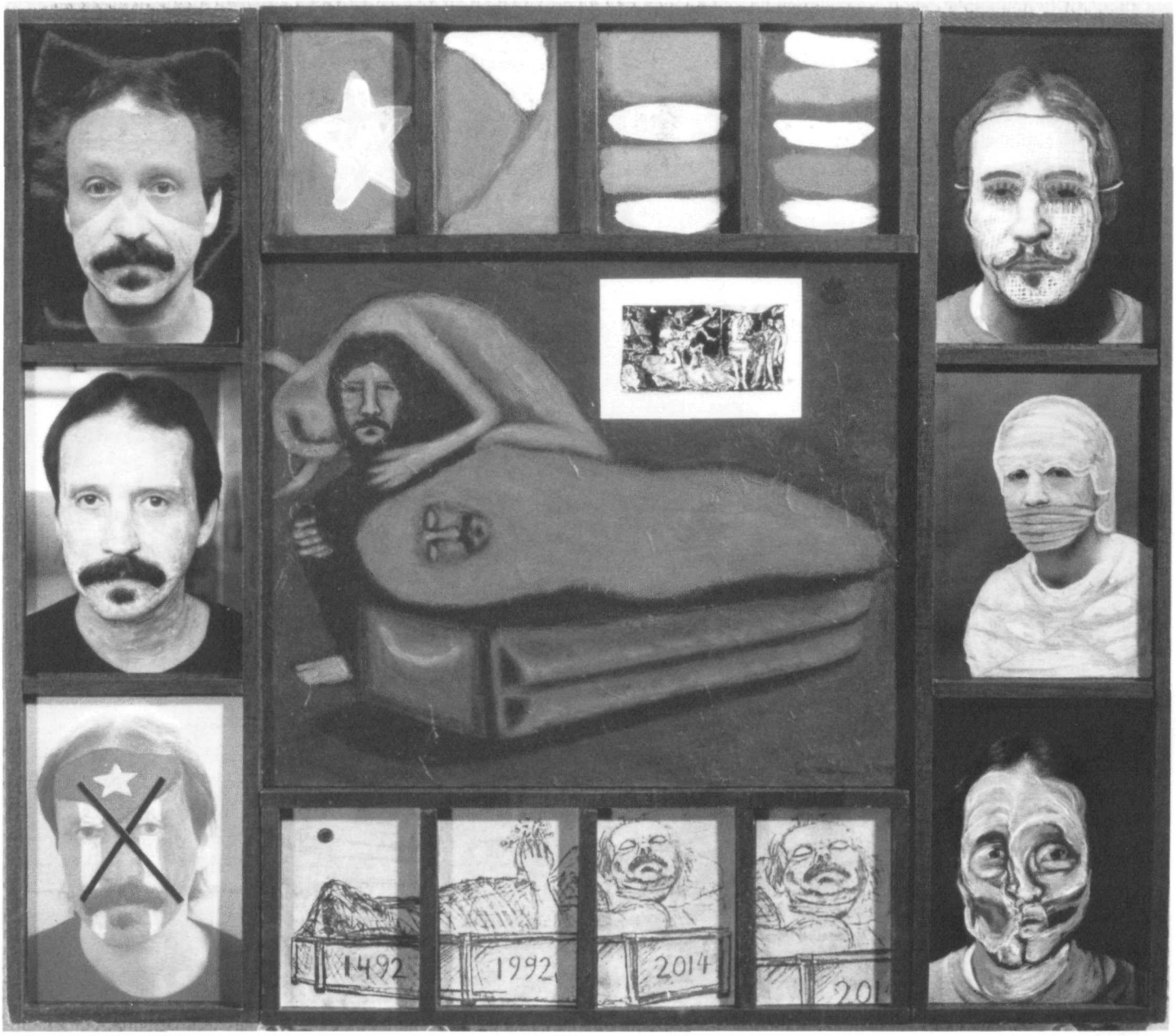

***Heuristica Uno*, 1992** Elizam Escobar

to him. The division in the BPP ranks occurred in 1970 when ji Jaga was jailed for two months before b eing acquitted of a stolen weapons charge. During those two months the FBI attempted to win ji Jaga over as a spy.

An FBI field report from the Los Angeles office, dated February 26, 1970, states: "In view of Pratt's adamant expression of hatred toward law enforcement personnel in general, no consideration is being given to re-interview Pratt for the purpose of development as a PRI [informant]. It is noted, however, that constant consideration is given to the possibility of utilization of counterintelligence measures with efforts being directed toward neutralizing Pratt as an effective BPP functionary."

Following the government's efforts to recruit ji Jaga, the Party required him to undergo a battery of loyalty tests. While he passed, he was still expelled on August 5, 1970.

Not until January 2, 1992, did five former leaders of the Black Panther Party break a 21-year silence to demand a new trial for ji Jaga.

"We were duped," said David Hilliard, the Party's former chief of staff. "Geronimo is innocent." Hilliard and other Party leaders — Kathleen Cleaver, Emory Douglas, John Seale and Harvey McClendon — all spoke up and confirmed that ji Jaga had been with them at the meeting in Oakland.

Ironically, the FBI surveillance data could clear up ji Jaga's whereabouts when Donna Olsen was murdered. But at the trial, the FBI lied, denying that the Party was being surveilled.

In 1973, anti-war protestors broke into an FBI office in Media, Penn., and found the proof ji Jaga needed. They discovered crucial COINTELPRO files verifying that the Black Panthers and especially ji Jaga, as the head of the Los Angeles chapter, were under constant surveillance. Indeed, upon taking the leadership role, ji Jaga was labeled a "key black extremist," by the FBI. The Bureau placed him on its National Security Index.

The FBI also made ji Jaga the subject of a personalized series of cartoons designed to make him a target of another black power organization in Los Angeles.

When confronted with this evidence, the FBI then admitted that they had been following ji Jaga but they now claimed to have lost the documents from the days surrounding the murder.

Likewise, Julius Carl Butler, a key witness for the prosecution in ji Jaga's conviction, stated under oath that he was not an informant. However, the Los Angles FBI Field Office Informant report verifies that he was.

While in jail, ji Jaga learned from police that his wife, Sandra, eight months pregnant, had been shot five times and killed. He was not allowed to see the body and the homicide was never investigated.

Analyzing the weak case against ji Jaga, Amnesty International concluded that a retrial was necessary.

During a 1988 parole hearing, Los Angeles Assistant District Attorney Diane Vianni went before the board to explain why ji Jaga should not be released. As she put it, "He is still a revolutionary man."

Ji Jaga's attorneys filed a motion for a retrial in the spring of 1991. Within 24 hours of delivering hundreds of pages and evidence, the Los Angeles courts issued a one-sentence ruling turning down the case. In December 1991, despite favorable recommendations from the prison staff and despite the decision of the city of Oakland to declare a "Geronimo Ji Jaga Pratt" day, ji Jaga was denied parole.

Simply agreeing with an action that another party takes against the U.S. could be cause for a charge of seditious conspiracy.

Experts believe that ji Jaga has served more time than murderers whose guilt was never in question. He has spent 22 years in a California state prison. As ji Jaga said on a CBS *60 Minutes* interview, "If I'd done the murder, I'd be out by now."

Dylcia Pagan

Like Peltier and ji Jaga, Dylcia Pagan, a 48-year-old Puerto Rican imprisoned for her involvement with the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, was targeted by the FBI. In fact, Hoover's efforts to stop this movement led to the expansion of COINTELPRO beyond its traditional surveillance of the Communist and Socialist Workers Parties. In an August 6, 1960, document, addressed to Special Agent in Charge in San Juan, and entitled, *PUERTO RICO (SUBVERSIVE CONTROL)*, Hoover wrote, "The Bureau is considering the feasibility of instituting a program of disruption to be directed against organizations which seek independence for Puerto Rico. ... In considering this matter, you should bear in mind that the Bureau desires to disrupt the activities of these organizations and is not interested in mere harassment."

Along with 10 other activists, Pagan was arrested on April 4,1980, and sentenced to 55 years in prison for "seditious conspiracy."

Seditious conspiracy is a political catchall. José Lopez, the Director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago, explains. "The charge is used, technically, whenever two or more people conspire to overthrow the government of the United States."

The trouble is that conspiracy does not refer only to illegal acts, but to legal acts as well. Nor does it refer only to violence. Simply agreeing with an action that another party takes against the U.S. could be cause for a charge of seditious conspiracy. For example, U.S. citizens who applaud the bombing of a U.S. embassy abroad could be accused of conspiracy, even if they had absolutely no connection to the bombing.

The charge of seditious conspiracy allows the government to try people twice for essentially the same crime. A person could be convicted of the illegal possession of a firearm, for example. That same person could then be convicted of seditious conspiracy, as evidenced by the illegal possession of a firearm.

Sentences for conspiracy are steep, far longer than those for the act itself.

Thus it happened that Dylcia Pagan, a community activist and filmmaker from New York City, was arrested in Evanston, Ill. Lopez describes the situation. "Some

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people in Evanston — a white, middle-class suburb — saw a group of Puerto Ricans milling around. They called the police. The police conducted a search and found firearms. The group was arrested."

To understand Pagan's situation, says Lopez, it's important to understand the situation of Puerto Ricans in the U.S.

"Puerto Rico is definitively a colony of the United States.The relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States has not really changed since 1898. Many Puerto Rican youth who grew up in the 1960s and 1970s were inspired by movements for national liberation going on in Latin America and Asia. They were frustrated by their inability to make a major dent in the system. And so they too wanted independence for Puerto Rico."

Lopez adds that struggling for Puerto Rican independence was considered illegal during this period, even when legal means were used to facilitate that struggle.

Pagan, who attended Catholic schools and was active in the arts, started offering ballet classes to neighborhood children when she was 15.

As an adult, Pagan came to political activism through community organizing. She worked in housing, health and education programs. During this time, Pagan says she believed that such programs would lead communities to "become self-sufficient and in turn acquire the power to affect change."

But while employed by the city to assess community programs, she concluded that the programs reinforced dependency. Her enthusiasim for electoral politics ended with the same discouragement.

Later, while a student at Brooklyn College, she became a leader of the Puerto Rican Student Union Organization. This activity led to the formation of the Puerto Rican Studies Department and her participation in demonstrations and study groups concerning Puerto Rican independence and socialism.

Pagan became a TV producer and writer who, in her own words, "attempted to create positive images of our people. ... To attain access to the media, the Puerto Rican Media and Education Council filed a series of lawsuits" against the major television stations. Pagan created films about the colonial situation in Puerto Rico. Pagan also edited a bilingual daily, *El Tiempo*.

"In light of my many observations, I decided to join the clandestine forces for the liberation of my homeland," Pagan says.

When charged with seditious conspiracy, the defendants deferred to international law, which states that colonialism is a crime against humanity and that actions to stop colonialism are not illegal. The activists took the position that their political and military actions were done in defense of their war of liberation against U.S. colonialism in Puerto Rico. They believe that they should have been tried in an international court. Taking this position, they refused to participate in the trial, even to defend themselves.

The National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War recently submitted a pardon request to Janet Reno, along with a document to the Organization of American States. The document holds the U.S. responsible for harboring political prisoners, and is supported by a diverse group of political leaders in Puerto Rico. The National Committee also plans an ad in the *New York Times*. TW

To offer support to the prisoners described here, contact: The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, PO Box 10044, Kansas City, MO 64111; The International Campaign to Free geronimo ji Jaga (pratt), PO Box 3585, Oakland, CA 94609, (510) 635-7933; The National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, PO Box 476698, Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 278-0885.

Remembering Fred Hampton

The Essence of Fred Hampton: An attempt to capture the spirit of a young man who influenced so many and pass it on those who didn't have an opportunity to meet him is a booklet prepared by the National Council of Churches. Killed by police 25 years ago, Hampton is raised up in these essays as "a model for young people today when there seem to be so few models around." Hampton was a Black Panther killed with Mark Clark in a pre-dawn raid in Chicago in 1969. The booklet sells for $5 with proceeds going to the Fred Hampton Scholarship Fund. Call Joan Ebert at (312) 275-5410 or fax her at (312) 275-6359.

Declaration of Life

Mercy Sister Camille D'Arienzo is championing a "Declaration of Life" statement which might save some from state execution. The declaration could function like a living will in which people leave their vital organs to others. This one would indicate that the deceased has requested that, if murdered, the person convicted not be executed "no matter how heinous their crime or how much I may have suffered."

The statement is not legally binding but could influence the punishment a prosecutor requests or the judge's sentencing.

"I see the rage, fury and fear on the subways and in the streets all the time," D'Arienzo says. "But to legislate violence removes from people the responsibility to look for alternatives. The more I see violence, the more I am sure I don't want it sanctioned."

You can write to Camille D'Arienzo, RSM, at 263 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11205-1487.

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Advent for Prisoners

by Paul Magno

Narrow gate, jail gate,
Birth canal to authentic life.
Gate of Calvary, show us in.
Gate of Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, receive us

Not unto the barren womb
of Holy Mother State — all steel and concrete,
To be born again, Americans into America,
Bearing her stigmata:
Torture and murder for hands,
For feet, pillage and pride
And for death's certificate, most mortally,
Hate ensconced where hearts should be,

But into the life chamber
of a true church,
Cultivating innocence until it comes to term,
Bearing us forth — viable at last,
Sisters and Brothers to others' lives,
No less
No more.

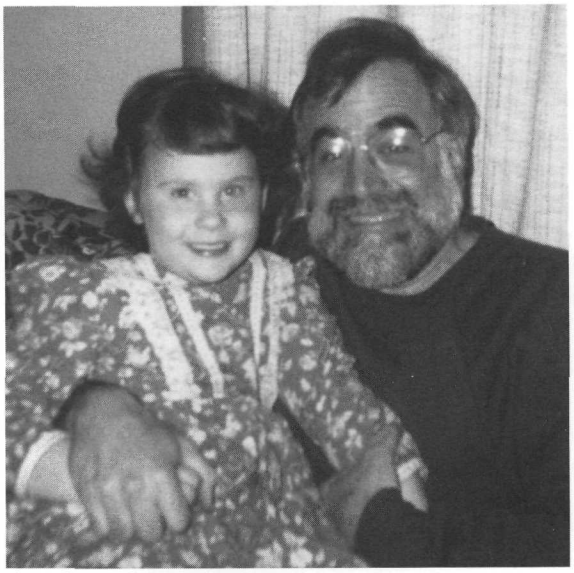
(On the anniversary of Dorothy Day's death, 1984. Modified 1989.)

— from *Hauling Up the Morning/ Izando la Manana: writings and art by political prisoners and prisoners of war in the U.S.,* edited by Tim Blunk, Raymond Luc Levasseur and the editors of Jacobin Books, Sea Press, Trenton, N.J.

"Where's Uncle Frank?"

by Tom Cordaro

"Why is Uncle Frank in prison?" my seven-year-old daughter says as she looks up at me with a concerned and serious face. I had just told my wife Brigid that Frank had been given another six-month sentence for his repeated nonviolent witness at Strategic Command Headquarters — the command and control center for all U.S. Strategic Nuclear Weapons.



Angela and Frank Cordaro

"Uncle Frank is in prison because he tried to stop the government from scaring people with big bombs," I told her. Angela takes it all in stride. This is nothing new for this little girl who has witnessed her Uncle Frank (and sometimes her dad) going to prison. For her, protesting and going to jail — to "stop the wars" as she puts it — is all a part of the daily rhythm of life. Once again Frank will become part of the litany of petitions we offer up in prayer at our evening meal.

This rhythm of life is something that my brother Frank has cultivated for nearly 20 years as part of what he calls "the resistance church." As a diocesan priest and a Catholic Worker from Iowa, Frank has been part of an informal nation-wide network of communities of Christians who have maintained a steady nonviolent faith-based stance of resistance to the culture of death in the U.S. Frank and many others like him were risking jail time and speaking truth to power long before Ronald Reagan came on the scene and they have maintained their resistance long after many others stopped worrying about the bomb.

Frank does not pretend to have all of the answers regarding strategies and tactics for bringing about a nonviolent world of peace with justice.

This rhythm of life includes solidarity with the poor and a commitment to a simple non-materialistic lifestyle. Frank calls it the path of downward mobility — a way for well-educated whites living in the First World to be faithful to the Gospel. It also

Tom Cordaro is director of campus ministry at St. Augustine's Catholic Student Center, serving the University of Miami.

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includes a good deal of humor, story telling and good times with friends and family. Frank has never been one of those somber prophets of doom. Celebration and laughter are all a part of the resistance lifestyle that Frank has cultivated.

Frank does not pretend to have all of the answers regarding strategies and tactics for bringing about a nonviolent world of peace with justice. He just seeks to be faithful to the call which he has been given. More than anything else that Frank does, his steadfast faithfulness to the Gospel of justice and his continued commitment to nonviolent struggle against the U.S. war machine stands as a witness of genuine Christian discipleship to me and many others across the country. I have learned a great deal from him over these many years. I love him very much. So does Angela. TW

Hiroshima anniversary plea

The Smithsonian Institute considered commemorating the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with a look at the holocaust aspect of it.

Instead, under pressure from Congress and Veterans' groups, an exhibition of the Enola Gay, the bomber that dropped the atomic bomb over Hiroshima) is planned in a display titled "The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the end of World War II."

In hope of altering the tone of the exhibit prior to its opening in May, the 1995 Disarmament Coalition is requesting letters to Dr. Martin Harwit, Director of the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

Copies can be sent to the 1995 Disarmament Coaltion, 3047 Fourth St., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017.

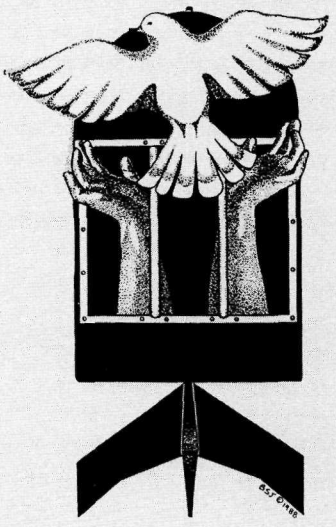
The Nuclear Resister

In the late 1970s, Frank Cordaro led a nonviolence training session that led to a number of people getting arrested at the train tracks at Rocky Flats, where the U.S. tests its nuclear weapons.

One of those arrested was Jack Cohen-Joppa, who now edits *The Nuclear Resister* with Felice Cohen-Joppa. The two met after she had helped organize a women's action at the Pentagon. When five women were convicted and moved to a federal penitentiary despite their short sentences, she had a first hand motivation to help provide a support network for those arrested in anti-nuclear efforts.

They launched the newsletter in 1980. In an eight page tabloid that comes out eight times a year, they post the names of those in jail in the U.S. and Canada for anti-nuclear civil resistance, details about actions which have happened and locations of upcoming public actions.

In the November, 1994 issue, for example, articles deal with autumn protests involving arrests at the Project ELF transmitter (to communicate with nuclear submarines) in northern Michigan; at the Virginia offices of the C.I.A.; at the Fermi nuclear plant in Monroe, Michigan; at a utility company in Minneapolis regarding the storage of spent fuel; at the Israeli embassy in Washington D.C. concerning the continuing enprisonment of Mordechai Vanunu who alerted the international community to Israel's nuclear research [Witness 1-2/93] — former contributing editor Sam Day was one of those arrested; at the Applied Physics Lab at Johns Hopkins University; at the Air Force Association's arms bazaar in Washington D.C.; and at the Nevada



Nuclear Test Site.

Articles are brief and lively. Subscriptions cost $18 annually.

"Over the last couple of years our subscriber base has declined so we are in need of subscribers who appreciate that for the movement's sake it's important to chronicle the resistance."

Asked if the *Resister* has a policy regarding actions that include violent protest, Cohen-Joppa said it does not. Noting that violent protests are much more common in other countries, Cohen-Joppa said *The Nuclear Resister* covers all protests that concern the manufacture, deployment and storage of nuclear weapons. In addition, they will cover some protests of U.S. foreign policy where nuclear attack is an implicit threat.

Subscriptions can be ordered by sending $18 to *The Nuclear Resister*, P.O. Box 43383, Tucson, AZ 85733. Contributions of $50 or more are tax-deductible if made payable to the Progressive Foundation.

— Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

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Religious freedom: a myth for Native American prisoners

by Iron Thunderhorse

Try to imagine what it would be like to be in a prisoner-of-war camp where only a small handful of people are Christians and the prisoners who are Christians are further separated from each other because your captors don't want any of you to congregate.

Every day you are subjected to ridicule. Your crucifix is confiscated and kept locked away. Your Bible is kept always out of reach. If you denounce your Christian traditions you can have anything you want. Religious leaders from all other religions are allowed to come into the POW camp regularly. You are under constant pressure to give up being Christian in order to enjoy the simple privileges that the "others" are allowed.

Let this feeling sink down deep into your bones, your heart and your gut. Each time you try to break the cycle of harassment and oppression the retaliation gets worse. Your oppressors rough you up and spread rumors against you.

If you could begin to imagine how this would feel, day and night, for 17 long years, then you have an idea of how it has been for me.

In 1978, after spending a year in county jails going through several criminal trials, I petitioned the District Court of Grayson County, Tex., for an injunction to keep the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC) from cutting my hair because it had been a part of my religious practice for many years. Judge William Ralph Elliott issued a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) to prevent TDC from cutting my hair.

I was taken to the TDC Diagnostic Unit on September 12, 1978. The reception area had been cleared. Along with Assistant Warden Billy Ware there were over a dozen ranking officers and inmates called "building tenders" (inmates who worked as guards), all carrying ax handles and bats. I was told to get in the barber chair. When I tried to produce the TRO, I was told, "You're in Texas now, Ol' Thang, we run this prison. Get your hair cut or get your head busted." I was beaten almost to unconsciousness.

While at the Diagnostic Unit I was asked what my race was. I said, "Native American" and they laughed, saying there are only three racial categories, black, white, and hispanic. They asked my religion and I said, "Native American shamanism" and they laughed again, saying, "There ain't no such religion."

I was assigned to the Ellis 1 Unit where I was interviewed by a major who told me that he hated Indians and jailhouse lawyers. "If you don't get your heart right, my boys will know how to handle it," he said.

Thus began a 17-year war, a holy war between the Texas prison system and Native American religious freedom. The first thing I did was prepare an appeal in the civil case which issued the TRO, but the court never received it. At the time, TDC was being sued by inmates for serious mail tampering.

In retaliation for my legal work the building tenders organized hit-squads and made several assassination attempts on my life. There were other inmates who rallied behind me and a series of confrontations developed. I was labeled a trouble maker and placed on death row, even though I wasn't sentenced to death.

Judge William Wayne Justice eventually abolished the use of building tenders and forced TDC to clean up its act, but TDC resisted. For the first six or seven years I would be given a haircut by force every few months until Judge Justice ruled that TDC could no longer use force against me. However, I was denied all visitation, commissary privileges, recreation privileges, etc. My typewriter was confiscated on several occasions because several of us organized to challenge TDC in the courts and in the media.

I was eventually placed in administrative segregation where I was kept out of sight and out of mind. I have spent 85 percent of my time in TDC locked away from others.

For a while TDC allowed me to have my medicine bag, ceremonial pipe, eagle feathers, etc. and in 1991 we formed a Native American Cultural and Religious Council. I was released into the Wynne Unit population with braids down to my waist. I was paroled in June of 1991.

My parole was violated in 1992 because I left a hospital without permission. I was charged with escape (although I was on parole and no warrant had been served on me) and given 20 more years.

I am now back in segregation after a year of solitary confinement and confrontations. As soon as I arrived back in TDC, officers of rank began harassing me, calling me "Thunderbolt," "Thunderturd." I was denied meals (unless I cut my hair) on several occasions. When these tactics failed, officers tried using force.

Last year, after the Religious Freedom

Iron Thunderhorse is a writer, artist and shaman incarcerated in Beaumont, Tex. In his book, *Return of the Thunder Beings* (Bear & Co., 1990) he writes that he was convicted on false testimony because of his involvement with motorcycle clubs which the government was trying to disband.

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Restoration Act was passed by Congress, TDC revised its religious policy. On its face it appears to give all inmates equal access to religion. The section on Native Americans allows inmates to have a sacred pipe, medicine bag, stone, shell, herbs, feathers, bandannas, etc. I made arrangements to have all these items sent to my unit so that we could practice our religion. The items were stored in the chapel. Soon after they arrived and I requested use of them, I was placed in segregated status and told I could not use them until I was released into population, which means that when I cut my hair, then I can have my religious freedom. The policy says nothing about being denied access to spiritual items for people in administrative segregation. Although it was the chaplain who advised me of this restriction, it was authorized by the warden. So much for separation of church and state.

In my culture (Algonquian) I hold the tradition of being a *powwau* which means "dream-power," alluding to the dream fasts we practice in ceremony to obtain divine revelations. I have been a spiritual leader of my people for over 30 years, and in our traditions only certain people who are trained after receiving a traditional calling are authorized to conduct our ceremonies. Numerous inmates have signed requests for TDC to allow me to work with prisoners leading the ceremonies, but TDC refuses. TDC does not know the fundamentals of Native American religions. They want to decide who can practice our religion and who cannot.

TDC spends a sizable budget each year for Christian inmates. Regular Christian revivals are the only events allowed. (TDC has to entice many inmates with football stars, magicians, and free soap and shampoo in order to get inmates to attend.) The TDC administration hasn't spent a penny on acquiring ceremonial items for Native American prisoners. I've had to do this on my own.

I have yet to see a multi-cultural revival in prison in TDC. In other penitentiaries this is a common thing and each ethnic religion is allowed a special day of celebration.

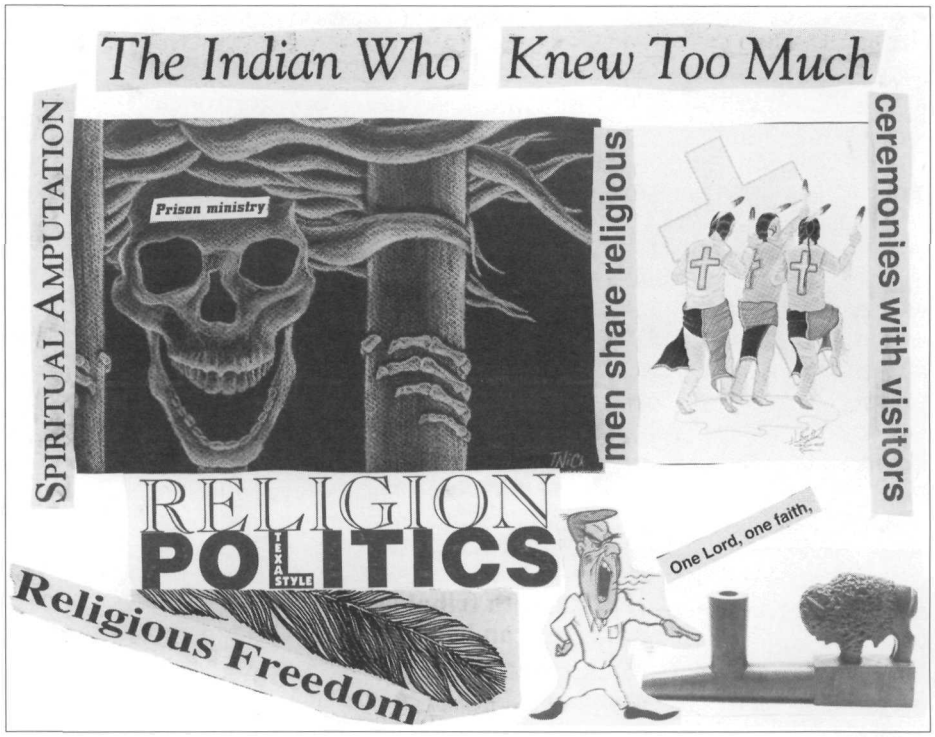
I do not think or act like white people because I was raised differently. I feel like an alien who has lived on another planet for the past 17 years — cut off from my culture and traditions. Instead of taking advantage of my status as a spiritual leader allowing me to conduct ceremonials for other Indian inmates, TDC has tried its best to break my spirit and force me to worship their way.

Change can only take place if and when the Christian people themselves take action. I ask that all true Christians make good on their promise to end the wrongs and injustices done to Native Americans in the past 500 years.

Christians can contact the ministries which come into prison on a regular basis such as: Chuck Colson Ministries, Bill Glass Ministries, Texans Do Care, etc. and request that multi-cultural revivals be provided. Many Native Americans have accepted a hybrid form of Christian worship in their spirituality. It can be done by Christians as well.

Christians could also visit Indian communities, get to know them and invite the elders to these multicultural revivals at the prisons so that they can visit the Indian prisoners, especially those in segregation who cannot attend the revivals. Since these elders have no transportation they should be helped so transportation is provided and they are welcomed.

By observing and participating in this way, Christians and the prison administration will see that our ancient traditions are not a form of devil-worship. People call the Great Spirit by different names and we each use our own symbols and instruments to honor the Great Mystery. But we are all saying similar things through traditions that have been handed down since the beginning of time. TW



Iron Thunderhorse

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Global mission at the church's doorstep: no colonialism, please

by Jerry Drino

At the last hearing of the 1994 General Convention's committee on Program, Budget and Finance, Fred Vergara, Asian Missioner for the Diocese of El Camino Real, struck a deep nerve as he spoke in favor of restoring funding for Province 8's coalition for InterCultural Ministry Development (ICMD): "In Santa Clara County, Calif., there are no majorities. A hundred languages are spoken and the census tells us that only 14 percent of the population attends any religious services on a regular basis. If we were looking at Africa, the Episcopal Church would declare this a crisis of faith and rush to raise money to send missionaries into a potentially rich ministry field."

Vergara's comments spread through the committee like wildfire: a missionary field of immense proportions on the West Coast! Committee members had already heard much testimony from world mission activists decrying the Executive Council's recommendation that all national church overseas missionary programs be eliminated from the national church budget. Was the church losing its grip on mission? And what of the fact that the very thing which the Executive Council was advocating, a new structure of shared ministry and ministry coalitions, was exactly the structure that ICMD has been modelling since 1985.

In the end, the Program, Budget and Finance committee voted not only to fund ICMD at $30,000 for each year of the new triennium, but to set aside $210,000 as challenge money to encourage the rest of the church to follow ICMD's lead in responding to the global community that is springing up, not just in the church's western dioceses (where an estimated five out of six persons moving in are of either Latino or Asian ancestry) but at every church's doorstep.

The challenge is great. Throughout this country, in every urban and metropolitan center, if not in every community and village, American Indians, Hawaiians, African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans and EuroAmericans are pushing against each other and changing each other's lives. Very few in the dominant culture, including those in the Episcopal Church's pews and pulpits, greet this phenomena with open arms. But if the Episcopal Church wants to be *embraced by* peoples who historically have not participated in the life of the church or have always been objects of "mission," *it will fail to make the leap.* The purpose of intercultural ministry, meaning ministry that is shared by equal partners, is not to transfuse new blood into an old body. Intercultural ministry is aimed at creating something new — it means literally dying to the old (in which EuroAmerican values, culture and persons systematically dominate) and trusting that what God deems essential will come back in some form, but not as we determine it.

Cornel West has said that white supremacy has not only had the effect of marginalizing ethnic and racial groups, but of homogenizing cultures and the ethnic heritage of European immigrants. The heart of racism is not just the threat to people in power of those who are different, but the buried and latent pain of ancestors who were forced to commit cultural suicide in order to be assimilated into the dominant white American norms — the vehement reaction of whites and the middle class of immigrant groups against the threat of the loss of their place and privilege in society that we see today is an indication of how deep this wound runs. If the implications of white supremacy are not addressed head on and kept on the table in every dialogue around intercultural ministry development, any real mission and ministry in a diverse society is doomed to become another colonial effort.

What would a truly intercultural church look like?

In more ethnically diverse areas, churches that used to be mono-cultural would at the beginning assume an identity more like that of a cathedral with multiple ethnic congregations that would share resources but operate separately. As first-generation immigrants become comfortable in this new country or as congregations who are recovering their ethnic identity reach a sense of stable identity, the enterprise would become one of building a united congregational identity based on a Pentecost model of diversity. In less ethnically diverse areas, churches that continue to be mono-cultural would begin to use at least two languages in worship and congregational life to signify their commitment to valuing diversity.

But part of the difficulty in developing a truly intercultural church is that our ordained church leaders have been trained and are being trained for a mono-cultural world, a world that no longer exists. ICMD, in partnership with provincial ethnic commissions, commissions on ministry, the Church Divinity School of the Pacific and national church staff, has spent years in hard dialogue at the grassroots level trying to assess how to retool present church leadership with the skills that will be needed in diverse congregations. Clergy will need to be prepared for team ministry in which they play the role of something like a mini-bishop, focussing on developing leadership for perhaps as many as six different cultural groups within the congregation (there is a parallel with rural areas where one priest might be working with several small congregations separated by many miles — in intercultural ministries the distances are cultural, not spatial). We may be at a point where seminaries must acknowledge that they can no longer claim to be able to provide

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all the training *all* the ordained leadership in the church need, although they may be able to provide important types of training — and it might be that for some persons it would be better to ordain them sooner and train them longer, with seminary training coming later in the process.

In an effort to explore these issues, the Board for Theological Education has entered into a three-year partnership with ICMD and a task force of seminary deans to produce guidelines on complementary ordination theological education. In addition, ICMD and congregational development staff from the national church have collaborated to produce an annual consultation on "Starting and Sustaining Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Congregations" in which congregational teams received advanced training. Based on these consultations, ICMD and the Church Divinity School of the Pacific have begun offering an introductory summer course titled "What Happens When Your Neighborhood Changes But Your Church Has Not?"

The future of the Episcopal Church lies not in recruiting minorities to revitalize its membership, but in acknowledging that ministry must authentically emerge from the community. The power of the dominant society to assimilate minority and immigrant population has too often been replicated in the church. It is time to die to the old and let a new mission and ministry emerge. No old wine skins, please.

— Jerry Drino is executive director of ICMD and rector of St. Philip's Episcopal Church in San José, Calif., an intercultural parish where there are six primary languages spoken.

A growth strategy for this already ethnic church

Province 8 has adopted Mark MacDonald's 1994 booklet, *A Strategy for Growth in the Episcopal Church: Joining Multiculturalism with Evangelism,* as a major resource in revisioning the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Church in the West. In it, MacDonald, who directs the Native Ministries Training Program in the Diocese of Minnesota, offers a growth strategy for the Episcopal Church based on the premise that "the Episcopal Church is, in fact, an ethnic church," reflecting the dominant American culture's English heritage.

"It must be admitted," MacDonald says, "that the ethnic identity of many of our congregations hinders the participation of members of other ethnic groups."

The growth strategy MacDonald offers encompasses 12 principles:

1. **Evangelism should be an important criterion for evaluating the church's activities.** "If our congregations do not grow we must face two questions: First, are we really committed to evangelism? Second, are we really helping people?"

2. **Evangelism and theology must test each other.** "We must not only make more disciples, but better disciples."

3. **Authentic evangelism addresses questions of inclusivity and justice.** "Without multicultural ministry evangelism is not Christian."

4. **One important goal of evangelism is the development of new congregations.** "The most successful evangelism is congregationally based."

5. **Congregational development should be culturally sensitive.** "Congregations that are made up of many ethnic groups should be encouraged ... [however] most people want to hear the Gospel in their own language and in the context of their own culture."

6. **Congregational development should be sustainable.** "Congregational development and ministry are now dictated by norms of the dominant group within the church. These norms ... require more money than is available ..."

7. **Leadership development should focus on lay ministry.** "The primary responsibility for bringing the Gospel to others rests with the laity."

8. **Lay ministry development should focus on small group ministry.** "Developing this model is a matter of urgent concern for our ethnic minority congregations, because in most cases they have not found ways to actively involve their lay members in the pastoral and evangelistic mission of the church."

9. **It will be necessary to develop different forms of training for ordained leadership.** "For those from other ethnic groups [than EuroAmerican], the present formation process for ordained ministry is a very effective program of acculturation. But [acculturation] ... often precludes effective leadership in the communities in which they will carry out their ministry."

10. **Liturgical inculturation should be encouraged.** "Inculturation means more than the translation of texts into different languages."

11. **New structures must be developed to encourage mission activity among ethnic minority groups.** "When it comes to this new style of congregational development, one size does not fit all."

12. **These structures must allow each group to control and develop its own program.** "If multicultural evangelism can be done in a structure which balances autonomy with connectedness to the whole church, we will be setting the stage for a new era of bringing the word of God's salvation and healing to the world."

Copies of MacDonald's booklet, published jointly by ICMD, the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota and the Office of American Indian/Alaska Native Ministries of the Episcopal Church, can be obtained from ICMD for $3, including shipping and handling. There is a 20 percent discount for study groups, vestries or bishops' committees which order one for each member of their group. Call ICMD at 408-251-8621.

— Julie A. Wortman

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Cross-cultural queries in light of Proposition 187

by Michael Wyatt

Prompted by the fact that the three Episcopal dioceses of the Bay Area in California were considering several active lay ministers in various local Latino congregations for ordination to priesthood, the School for Deacons of the Diocese of California began a new program in 1992 for Cross-Cultural Ministry Development aimed at providing these candidates with the necessary formal training. Classes were held on Saturdays, making it possible for the eight Latino/Latina students who opened the program to attend without quitting work or stopping their involvement in their own parishes.

In the first year, the new students took two courses in Spanish (worship and homiletics) and two in English with simultaneous interpretation through headphones (church history and Scripture). The division seemed obvious: the students were already involved in Spanish-speaking liturgies, but Bible and history were "content" courses, so it would be enough to transmit that content.

The storm broke over church history. The Latino/Latina students found a recounting of the vagaries that led to the Reformation and the peculiarities of the Anglican solution insensitive and arrogant. In addition, the class format reduced them to auditors — although the faculty insisted they were welcome to participate, the fact that they had to depend on an interpreter and sit together off to the side of the room reinforced a sense of marginalization.

The latent message, intended or not, was "you must assimilate; our story will become yours." The Latino/Latina students not only heard this as condemnation of who they were, but denounced it as a useless response to the immediate needs of struggling congregations.

In addition to teaching at the School for Deacons, **Michael Wyatt,** who was raised in South America, serves as Chaplain at San Francisco State University.

The second year of the program was far more experimental. An extended course in evangelism and theology, taught in Spanish, took up half the school day. In it, active Latino ministers came and talked about their congregations and their programs. This was coupled with readings in liberation theology and hispanic (U.S.) theology. A course in pastoral care, also taught in Spanish, explored the application of the Book of Common Prayer to Latino understandings of family and crisis and sacrament. New Latino/Latina students were placed directly in this second-year program, as a way of stabilizing them and enhancing a sense of mutual support in what might become a network of Latino/Latina clergy.

The question remained, "Should they take classes in English?" We administrators of the program answered, "Yes," reasoning that, at least for the foreseeable future, the Latino/Latina students' participation in the larger activity of our denomination would depend on their ability to follow and contribute to a discussion being held in English and dominated by Anglo-American cultural assumptions. Political realism should be part of their preparation, not as assimilation, but as crosscultural skill. It also seemed necessary that the Anglo students hear questions raised from socioeconomic locations that are figuratively off their map.

Much of our work has been cast in a new light by the passing of Proposition 187, a measure that bars undocumented immigrants in California from access to health care and education. Too often the church comes across as if it agreed with this kind of coercive and exclusionary action. Local ordination to specific congregations, for example, can seem an attempt to contain and reduce the impact of immigration. In the remainder of this article I want to explore two areas in which lively questions still trouble us.

Take the question of the institution and its inheritance. What, for example, does a prayerbook in translation mean? Years ago, the prayerbook was the "symbol of unity": you might find high or low churches, but all had a prayerbook in the pew. But what if it conjures up the blind rigidity of colonists, who imported chaplains and wool cassocks into the tropics, knocking aside what they found to set up what they thought should be there? The prayerbook today is a symbol for many of the imposed unity of imperialism.

In the secular academic world, the battle still rages over the "Western Canon," that is, the foundational texts authored by dead North European males — certainly Shakespeare and Goethe, but perhaps Thomas Cranmer, too. Under the guise of "cultural literacy," some have argued that the Western Canon should not be learned because it is superior, but because it was formative of the present dominant culture, a culture with which all should be equally conversant. However, others have insisted that alternatives must be set in place, which has led to the establishment of ethnic studies departments and so-called multicultural programs — the parallel in the church would be alternative liturgies and training programs.

The problem is that nothing has been solved by alternative liturgies and training programs — no fundamental structural change has been brought about. These alternatives simply force the question, where is the core? Alternatives ostensibly opened up for ethnic groups end up being drawn on by liturgical tourists and evangelical prospectors from the bored barren mainstream, who hail them as the church's hope for revitalization. David Rieff, in *Harper's* (August 1993), points out that "multiculturalism" itself is both the result of and a stimulus to transnational corporations, who convert the world into a marketplace for ethnic artifacts and universally available mass-produced items.

The question then becomes: Is the role of the alternative track to supplement or to subvert? to fill in the gaps or offer resistance? Behind this, of course, lurks the uneasy question of funding: If the

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training of ethnically specific clergy is an investment, how soon will the returns be expected? What are the interests of those who provide the funds? Guerrilla troops must forage for themselves; they cannot expect the palace to feed them.

The second question raised by our experience at the School for Deacons has to do with the training of ministers: What identity are we forming? To speak one another's language is not enough. Bilingual classrooms actively raise the question of cultural transmission: Who are the students to become? Tensions over the official language on ballots for elections also raise questions about how citizens are to recognize each other, if no longer by common language. Is a liturgy in Spanish, for example, designed to ease the arrival of a refugee or to help someone in the Southwest reclaim a heritage? The concern of immigrants and of families who look back over many generations in this country are not the same; in fact, they may move in opposite directions. For immigrants, the use of Spanish is often thought to be not a choice but a necessity until fluency in English is achieved — a primary wish may well be for help in understanding the dominant culture in order to establish a level of comfortable competence. But for the Chicano, the use of Spanish is a sign of endurance and resistance, an inheritance held on to with pride. In some cases, Spanish is relearned as part of the rediscovery of this submerged identity.

Offering a worship service in Spanish cannot possibly address both the immigrant and the reconstructionist: those who are trying to figure out the dominant culture and those who are trying to resist it. And this is not even to mention the mutual suspicion and jealousy that can arise between the two groups based on the illusion that one enjoys what the other cannot: cultural security and clarity.

We at the School for Deacons work with these questions and wonder. We know that we discover the answers person by person and that much, for the sake of God's reign, is being planted today which we trust God will bring to a full harvest.

Reflecting on the queries

by Hartshorn Murphy

Michael Wyatt raises several interesting questions for those of us who struggle with the "evangelistic emergency" that the church faces.

Firstly, the question of the transmission of culture through educational process. The true value of these alternative tracks is not simply that they transmit the same core curriculum in other languages. Rather, it is that they intentionally circumvent the impartation of an alien seminary culture (read: the dominant culture) to non-EuroAmericans by keeping them in their own communities. As we begin to acknowledge the contributions of other cultures and tribes to sacred experience, we discover the answer to Wyatt's question "where is the core?" by asserting the existence of many cores — the EuroAmerican strand is but one of many that make up the rich tapestry that is the human experience of the Holy. Fundamental structural change occurs not, as he rightly suggests, by adding competing stories, but by broadening the story to reflect the whole truth. Eurocentric "cultural literacy" has been experienced by others, apparently including the Latinos/Latinas at the School for Deacons, as exclusivity.

Secondly, Wyatt claims that "nothing has been solved by alternative liturgies and training programs" except as titillation for bored mainstream voyeurs. But from whose perspective is this true? If each tribe is free to engage in the evolution of liturgy (*the work of the people*) that speaks to their deepest spiritual selves, these forms will, of necessity, reflect, not obscure, their cultural needs. For the first generation (focused on survival), native language and custom may be preferred. For the second generation (assimilationists), liturgies in English with native custom may fulfill a need. For the third generation (reclaimers), worship may well return to the use of native languages but reflect a cultural hybrid in ceremonial.

Such a liberating movement will ultimately cause the dominant culture to re-discover their ethnic and tribal individuality so tragically silenced and subsumed into a generic, American identity. Our denominational fear is that of the loss of the unifying principle (the Book of Common Prayer). But in this church, I believe, there are more essential commitments we share, namely, our Christology, the centrality of the Eucharist, the discipline of authority grounded in scripture, reason and tradition, an English historical legacy and our diversity itself as part of the whole wide Anglican Communion.

Finally, Wyatt asks: "If the training of ethnically specific clergy is an investment, how soon will the returns be expected?"

This concern reminds me of the arguments surrounding affirmative action. To expect African-Americans, four hundred years in slavery, to reach parity after one generation of half-hearted affirmative action, is ludicrous. The same is true of alternative tracks.

Already, there are those preferring the language of "complimentary" tracks because to compliment something is necessarily to recognize the existing thing as normative, preferable and complete within itself. The danger ever lies in our tendency to replicate the existing process in other languages, rather than to explore true alternative roads to the same goal. Unless the alternative tracks being experimented with enable a more competent lay and ordained leadership to emerge, we are setting people up for heartbreak and failure. To the extent that these new, cheaper and experimental programs are but refurbished wineskins, they are already not prudent.

— Hartshorn Murphy is Archdeacon of Los Angeles.

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On being happy

by Melanie Morrison

In junior high and high school, I had a friend named Mary Jo. Being very good friends, we told each other everything we experienced at home, at school, at parties, and on dates when we had them. Everything. We imitated the voices and gestures of teachers and parents so that no detail of the story would be lost and especially during these theatrical performances, we would laugh ourselves silly.

Mary Jo and I also had serious times. When I stayed overnight at her house and we talked until the wee morning hours, a particular subject would frequently take hold of us. We even had a name for these conversations. We called them DTs. Destiny Talks.

In those late night hours, when we were convinced that every person in the world besides the two of us was sound asleep, we considered such questions as: What is life about, anyway? What will be asked of us down the road? Will we have the courage to respond? What or who will we become? Deeply spiritual questions actually, although we didn't often speak in explicitly spiritual terms.

Mary Jo and I shared our respective dreams, fantasies, and hunches with each other — about living alone, finding a life partner or having children; about writing a great novel, getting elected to Congress, living in foreign countries, devoting ourselves to some great social cause.

It was a serious game we played. We assumed that this thing we called destiny actually existed. It was a given, not entirely ours to create, and yet we believed it was within our power to discover if only we worked hard enough at it. This thought was both compelling and repelling. Just imagine, we said to one another, if we fail to discern our true destiny and pursue the wrong course!

As I remember those conversations, Mary Jo and I had one basic difference in the way we articulated our dreams. She said, "Most of all, I want to be happy. Whatever I do, whoever I am with, I want to be happy. " Although I didn't express it aloud to her, I found that sentiment somewhat frivolous. Already in junior high, I had appropriated the belief that happiness isn't something you strive for.

The past couple of years, I have reflected on my skepticism about being happy. In my spiritual world view, meaningful is okay. Productive is good. Doing something to change the world is *very* good. If, while doing meaningful, productive, socially responsible things, you find a little happiness — more power to you. But happiness is a by-product at best. A superficial goal at worst.

Now, in my case, it is not so simple as saying that I was the product of a Calvinist work ethic. H.L. Mencken once defined a Calvinist as a person who is haunted by the thought that somewhere, someone might be happy. I do not come from a joyless, humorless family that didn't value playfulness. But I think I inherited the assumption that if you strive for happiness, you will become materialistic and narcissistic.

I tend to identify things like destiny and spiritual depth with words or phrases like: openness to change, struggle, wrestling, being in labor, ferment, sensitivity to suffering, compassion, solidarity. Not a lot of happiness in that list. I've come to see that it is I who make happiness frivolous by not giving it sufficient room in my life. As a person whose spirituality has been much more activist than contemplative, I don't need to be told: In God's name, do something!

The psalmist said it this way: "Be still and know that I am God." Lao Tsu put it another way: "Practice non-action. Work without doing. Magnify the small, increase the few. See simplicity in the complicated." And Jesus said: "Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet they are cared for. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these."

But another objection surfaces within me: Is it okay to be happy when a brother or sister is in pain and when there is so much unhappiness all around; so much violence, so much suffering?

Is it okay to be happy when a brother or sister is in pain and when there is so much unhappiness all around; so much violence, so much suffering?

One of the people who has been a teacher for me is Etty Hillesum, the Jewish author who died at the age of 29 in Auschwitz. Etty believed that our human vocation, our spiritual calling, is to safeguard that little piece of God that is found in each of us — to make a safe dwelling place for God to be at home in this world. She believed our

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Melanie Morrison is co-pastor of Phoenix Community Church in Kalamazoo, Mich., and co-director of Leaven, Inc., in Lansing, Mich., which offers resources, workshops and retreats in the areas of spiritual development, feminism and sexual justice. This article will be included in *The Grace of Coming Home: Spirituality, Sexuality and the Struggle for Justice* to be published by Pilgrim Press. Artist **Claudia Bach** lives in Sarasota, Fla.

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vocation is to help God, not other way around. And she believed that no pain or joy ought to be discounted because it is too small. By listening to and deeply feeling every pain, every joy, we are not self-indulgent in some unspiritual way, says Etty. Quite the contrary, she insists. By attending to every pain and joy, we come closer to God who is within each of us.

I find it so moving that just before Etty's train pulled into Auschwitz, she flung a postcard from the train window that was later discovered by a farmer. On it she had scribbled: "We have entered the camp singing." She knew what lay ahead. It was not denial that had her singing. It was her resistant, victoriously joyful self that refused to let her humanity be crushed. For then the enemy would have truly won. I am likewise moved by her prayer, written during a bleak winter of German occupation and persecution: "The jasmine behind my house has been completely ruined by the rains and storms of the last few days, its white blossoms are floating about in muddy black pools on the low garage roof. But somewhere inside me the jasmine continues to blossom undisturbed, just as profusely and delicately as ever it did. And it spreads its scent round the house in which You dwell, oh God. You can see, I look after You, I bring You not only my tears and my forebodings on this stormy, grey Sunday morning. I even bring You scented jasmine. And I shall bring You all the flowers I shall meet on my way, and truly there are many of those. I shall try to make You at home always. Even if I should be locked up in a narrow cell and a cloud should drift past my small barred window, then I shall bring You that cloud, oh God, while there is still the strength in me to do so."

Etty is one of those teachers, like Jesus and Lao Tsu, who remind me at what cost I do the splittings, saying that feeling deep pain means I ought not feel deep joy. Or that being happy will somehow be a barrier to recognizing injustice. Those are false splittings. Can my fretting add a single hour to my span of life? Can my long face really do anything to reduce another's pain?

House of dreams Claudia Bach

During a visit from Dutch friends, Riet told of holding her grandson Peter on her lap. He is four and loves to climb up and snuggle with Riet. Recently he asked her: "Grandma, do you know what is the bestest thing in the whole world that people can do?" "What Peter?" asked Riet. Putting his cheek next to hers softly, Peter replied, "Skin on skin!"

Before it was shamed out of us, we naturally had the capacity to feel pain as pain, injustice as injustice, happiness as happiness. You know the sheer wonder that can overcome a child who is beholding something of beauty — a magic stone, the veins of a leaf, or the music of a warbling bird. Little Nathan who lives down the street from me cannot talk yet, but he is repeatedly pointing to things. He wants me to see. And he turns to me beaming. Even when it is the 14th squirrel he has seen that day, he is grinning at the sheer wonder of it all.

One of the challenges of being, and staying human, is to take life seriously without taking ourselves so seriously. As Emma Goldman said so many years ago: "If I can't dance, I don't want to be a part of your revolution." If there is no room left for dancing, for singing, for laughter and celebration — in the midst of all our work and efforts and struggle, then we have become grim and joyless. If we can no longer be surprised by joy, it is a sign that even our best intentions and good causes have gone sour. Because joy and happiness aren't things we can plan, calculate, organize, create, or demand. They can only be received and savored or passed by and lost. Like the intense happiness of being fully alive, of sensing a deep connectedness with earth and sky and water, of forgiving and being forgiven, or the delight of skin on skin.

Through the ages, the commonwealth of God has been pictured as a feast with much dancing and singing and joy. Communion is, among other things, a celebration of that commonwealth time when barriers will be removed and all people will eat together at the table of life.

Some years ago, while living in the Netherlands, I had an experience of communion I shall never forget. I had been asked by Piet and Gelda to perform their wedding. Piet worked at Rainbow House, a group home for developmentally disabled teenagers and young adults. Piet and Gelda had invited the residents of Rainbow House to the wedding. But shortly before the wedding, we learned that some of the parents, did not want their children to participate because membership in their church involved being able to recite the Heidelberg Catechism

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Maximum security prison to open

A maximum security, "control unit" prison in Florence, Colo., which activists have long dreaded and protested, has just been completed. Costing $60 million, the new facility, which is part of a four-prison complex, was custom-built for 416 prisoners deemed the most predatory, disruptive or escape-prone in the nation's penal system. Although the prison sits at the foot of the Rockies, none of the inmates will have a view of the mountains or of anything else except the sky.

In effect, the prisoners in the Florence control unit are under permanent "lockdown." Each cell is an isolation unit, larger than industry standards because a prisoner spends all but an hour or so of each day here. Staggered cells make eye contact between prisoners impossible. In addition to the standard barred door there is a windowed steel door intended to muffle voices. Prisoners eat in solitude.

Inside, the minimalist furnishings are designed to defy a prisoner's destructive urges — an immovable bed, desk, stool, and bookcase are all made of reinforced concrete; the built-in shaving mirror is polished steel. A wall device eliminates smokers' access to matches or lighters. Plumbing for a toilet and shower can't be flooded — the shower is controlled by guards who monitor a prisoner's every move, including his access to a 12-inch black-and-white television.

To leave the cell, the prisoner must don leg-irons and chains and be accompanied by guards.

After three years of such segregation, if an inmate has stopped "misbehaving," he will be slowly reintegrated into the general prison population, scrutinized every step of the way for signs of trouble. The theory is that if a prisoner is starved enough for human contact and a change of scenery, even the most recalitrant will toe the displinary line.

During the past 20 years the population of the nation's jails and prisons has increased fourfold. The completion of the new Florence facility heralds the beginning of new Federal spending intended to spark billions of dollars more in prison construction. The imprisonment rate in the U.S., now five times that of Western Europe's, is expected to continue to rise.

A newly formed coalition of groups opposed to control units like the one in Florence — the National Campaign to Stop Control Unit Prisons — is urging the U.S. Bureau of Prisons not to begin incarcerating prisoners at the Florence facility. The coalition and other prison watchdog groups like the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown based in Chicago, Ill., say that isolating prisoners in maximum security control unit lockdowns only generates a sense of rage, hatred and alienation among prisoners — some, they say, could go insane. They advocate for programs that educate prisoners and teach them employment and social skills.

In addition, some anti-control unit activists fear that the purpose of the new Florence facility and other maximum security permanent "lockdown" prisons such as the one in Marion, Ill., is not just to contain prisoners who have tried to escape or to kill prison staff or other inmates, as the Bureau of Prisons has claimed.

"Many are sent to Marion because they have written 'too many' law suits, participated in work stoppages or pursued their religious and political beliefs," say members of the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown.

"Currently, there are more political prisoners incarcerated at Marion than at any other penal institution, despite the fact that it is one of the smallest prisons. A 1985 Congressional study showed that 80 percent of those incarcerated at Marion did not have the level six security rating that is supposedly the threshold criterion for being sent there." TW

— Julie A. Wortman (This report was drawn from an October 17, 1994 New York Times *report and press information from the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown.)*

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and, unless you were a member, you couldn't receive communion.

When we heard this, we decided to scrap the idea of communion because it was unacceptable to us that these young people would have to remain seated and watch while the rest of us came forward . But at the last minute, the parents relented.

One by one, members of this congregation came forward — friends and family of Piet and Gelda. Most received the bread and cup with a serious expression, nodding silently.

Then the residents of Rainbow House came forward. Their faces were beaming. When I offered them the bread, they exclaimed loudly and gestured: "oooh, aaaah ..." Some of them took the bread and held it, examining it from different angles, smelling it, fingering it, putting it tenderly to their lips before eating it.

As they returned to their seats, they ran to Piet and Gelda and covered them with hugs and kisses, making a terrible, wonderful racket in the otherwise silent sanctuary. And I knew I had, at last, experienced what a communion service is supposed to be: a love feast, a passionate, sensual celebration of what the African American gospel song calls "that happy day." TW

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The fall of the prison

by Laura Magnani

The Fall of the Prison: Biblical Perspectives on Prison Abolition by Lee Griffith. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993, 228 pp.

It isn't a popular topic these days — talking about being kind to prisoners, much less abolishing prisons. In fact the nation is opting for wholesale madness in its prison-building binge, at the expense of every other government-funded program. Prison building is the new military spending and industries are jumping on the bandwagon of high-tech security contracts and new domestic weapons systems. Into this dismal arena comes Lee Griffith's wonderful, if controversial challenge. He does for criminal justice advocates what Ched Myers does for peace advocates: provide a biblical framework for faithful action.

Griffith covers the landscape, drawing from an exhaustive bibliography that crosses disciplines from history to criminology, through biblical and theological studies and even contemporary alternative press sources. This interdisciplinary approach is refreshing but, at some point, the reader may feel carried away by Griffith's easy narrative style. The biblical chapter contained no tedious textual analysis — no extensive exegesis — prompting the question: Does he make his case? The truth is that the texts are remarkably unambiguous. The Good News proclaims release to the captives. We see it, among other places, in terms of the concepts of sabbath and jubilee, or in Jesus' invitation to be in prison with him (Matthew 25). Both testaments present a consistent picture:

"The Bible does not present the prison as simply one of many social institutions ... The Bible identifies the prison with the spirit and power of death ... As such, the problem is not that prisons have failed to forestall violent criminality and murderous rampages; the problem is that prisons are *identical in spirit* to the violence and murder that they pretend to combat." (page 106)

The flaws in Griffith's analysis are minor, but two are worth mentioning. When he talks about prisons as big businesses he uses dated material from California about the lobbying done by the Department of Corrections to keep the industry flourishing. The formidable lobbying in the last 15 years has come from the guards' union which is the second largest contributor to state campaigns. They contributed nearly a million dollars to re-elect the Governor and over $100,000 to pass Three Strikes laws. Such measures will keep prisons with us for a long time.

> *"The Bible identifies the prison with the spirit and power of death. The problem is that prisons are* identical in spirit *to the violence and murder that they pretend to combat."* — *Lee Griffith*

Secondly, Griffith repeats the error of most prison historians that Quakers were responsible for developing the penitentiary in Philadelphia in the 1790s. Individual Quakers were actively involved, but the organization actually responsible was among the first ecumenical efforts in the country. The Pennsylvania Prison Society, as it is known today, was chaired by the Episcopal bishop and made up of people of many Christian denominations. (See *America's First Penitentiary: A 200 Year Old Failure,* AFSC, 1990.)

However, these are small, mostly academic details. What is amazing is the amount of material Griffith digests and reorganizes for conscientious seekers. Unlike 99 percent of other writers in this field, Griffith accepts no simple solutions — "no cheap grace." He spells out the pitfalls of prison alternatives, quoting David Rothman: "Innovations that appeared to be substitutes for incarceration became supplements to incarceration. On restitution, he writes that "the most meaningful restoration is not property but right relationship." He spells out the ways in which well-meaning church workers have tinkered with reform over the years with the ultimate result of perpetuating an evil system.

If the biblical message is clear, the road to discipleship is as risky and "foolish" as ever. "There are no alternatives to prisons. There are only alternatives to the ways in which we victimize and cage each other." We can only get there by experimenting with a new kind of truth, and expecting these experiments to be a lifelong endeavor. I hope *Witness* readers will read this book and take up the call Griffith so eloquently sends out. TW

Laura Magnani is Criminal Justice Program Coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee, Pacific Mountain Region.

book review

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Asking for church solidarity

by Marianne Arbogast

"Middle-class church people do not believe that these abuses are going on."
— Michael Yasutake

Seiichi Michael Yasutake Bill Wylie-Kellermann

In 1980, while Seiichi Michael Yasutake was director of counseling at the YMCA Community College in Chicago, one of the counselors on his staff was arrested, tried and convicted of sedition, and sentenced to 98 years in prison. As he cleaned out the desk she had abruptly vacated, Yasutake was disturbed and perplexed.

"She was a very effective counselor," he says. "She had never told me she was part of the Puerto Rican independence movement. I knew nothing about Puerto Rico."

After visiting Carmen Valentin in prison, Yasutake began to work with others who were active in support of her and her cause.

Now director of the Prisoners of Conscience Project sponsored by the National Council of the Churches of Christ, he has become an outspoken advocate of the rights of political prisoners in the U.S.

People imprisoned for acting on their political beliefs are subject to longer sentences, harsher conditions, and more harassment than other prisoners, Yasutake says. Labeled as high security risks, they are often denied ordinary contact with family and friends and isolated in the nation's multiplying maximum-control units.

"Middle-class church people do not believe that these abuses are going on, or tend to think the government is justified," Yasutake says. "They will accept any excuses for 'security.'"

Yasutake's wariness of such excuses has strong personal grounds. At the outbreak of World War II, his father — a poet and prominent leader in the Japanese-American community in Seattle — was torn from his family and sent to an internment camp in Texas. Shortly afterwards Yasutake, then 21, and the rest of his family were uprooted from their home and imprisoned first in Washington, then in Idaho.

In Washington, they were housed in "quickly built barracks at a county fair camp 30 miles south of Seattle," Yasutake says. "There was not much privacy. There were partitions between families in barracks, but you could hear everything."

His parents, and one sister who had been born in Japan, were classified, along with many others, as "enemy aliens." Although anti-Asian immigration laws prohibited their becoming U.S. citizens, "the media would talk as if they were not naturalized by preference," Yasutake says.

After a year and a half, Yasutake and his sister were released when they were accepted at the University of Cincinnati. Soon afterward, however, a government agent was sent there to interview students of Japanese ancestry. When he asked Yasutake if he would be willing to fight in combat for the U.S., Yasutake — who had adopted a pacifist stance — said no, and was expelled from the school. (Years later, the former dean met him at a conference on Teilhard de Chardin, and apologized for carrying out the army order.)

Yasutake's pacifist convictions had been shaped by experiences in both the U.S. and Japan.

"Before the Second World War broke out, I went to Japan for a year and a half. I observed the rise of militarism, and was able to see firsthand the propaganda against the western powers. I saw that both the Japanese and the U.S. governments would lie about each other and conscript young people for military service and then slaughter each other. I knew both countries were wrong."

Still, he was shaken by the expulsion.

"I was very worried," he recalls. "My

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*.

mother and younger brother were still in the camp, my other brother was in the U.S. army, and my father was in the FBI concentration camp. I was worried the FBI might do something terrible to my father."

He found counsel and support from Joseph Mitsuo Kitagawa, a Japanese-born Episcopal priest and member of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, who had been with Yasutake's family in the Idaho camp and led them in worship.

Yasutake was able to resume his studies, first at Boston University, then Seabury-Western Seminary in Evanston. In 1950, he became the first Japanese American to be ordained an Episcopal priest in the midwest.

After serving as a curate at St. Paul's in Chicago and then working with the Christian Social Relations department of the diocese, Yasutake became rector of a suburban parish. There he joined and hosted a group promoting open housing, which had been denied meeting space at the YMCA and other area churches. But he also "came to understand how wrong the majority of people could be," Yasutake says. "The people I was serving were the kind of people who were throwing rocks at Martin Luther King."

Last year, Yasutake earned a fifth degree black belt in *kendo*, Japanese fencing, which he had practiced in his youth and resumed 15 years ago. As an adolescent, it was a "way in which I was identifying myself with a kind of 'samurai' tradition," he explains. Today, he does it "to stay youthful doing something I'm good at." But beneath an unassuming manner, he retains a warrior's fierce dedication.

The people for whom he fights "are willing to suffer the consequences of imprisonment, being killed, or denied the chance to bring up their own children, for the sake of what they believe," he says. "It is the kind of commitment we as the people of God are called upon to practice. There cannot be change in society without a lot of sacrifice."

Yasutake visits prisons around the country, working to build support for prisoners and to raise awareness of both prison conditions and the motivations of those who risk imprisonment.

He frequently asks churches to "sponsor" individual prisoners.

Recently, he says, the rabbi of a sponsoring synagogue convinced Janet Reno to override a prison decision not to allow Susan Rosenberg, an imprisoned activist who had worked with the Black Panthers and Puerto Rican independentists, to visit her dying father.

But Yasutake believes that sponsorship "is often more helpful to the congregation than it is to the prisoner."

"The issue of political prisoners describes the situation in society like nothing else does. They are key signs that point the way to what we need to do. It is a dangerous thing when the church goes along with the government labeling these people as criminals."

He is critical of Amnesty International's policy of restricting its "prisoner of conscience" designation to prisoners who have not used or advocated violence.

"Amnesty International did not adopt Nelson Mandela as a prisoner of conscience, because he believed in using force," he says. "But if you were not supporting Nelson Mandela, you were supporting the white power structure."

Despite the outcome of the November elections, Yasutake feels that "more and more people are becoming aware of human rights and racism on a deeper level. There is more potential than there was when I started doing this work."

Currently, Yasutake is working to obtain permission for Human Rights Watch workers to inspect the Westville Maximum Control Complex, near Michigan City in Indiana. So far, permission has been denied, but reports of abuse have mobilized church and media support of the inspection.

In 1990, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed a resolution introduced by the Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project, calling for a moratorium on maximum-control-unit prisons. This year, Yasutake brought a resolution calling for amnesty for Puerto Rican political prisoners, but it was defeated in committee.

"We need to work on things like that," Yasutake says. "The church has to stand on its own feet and examine its role in society. It has to ask many hard questions of the government." TW

March issue:
Economies of sin

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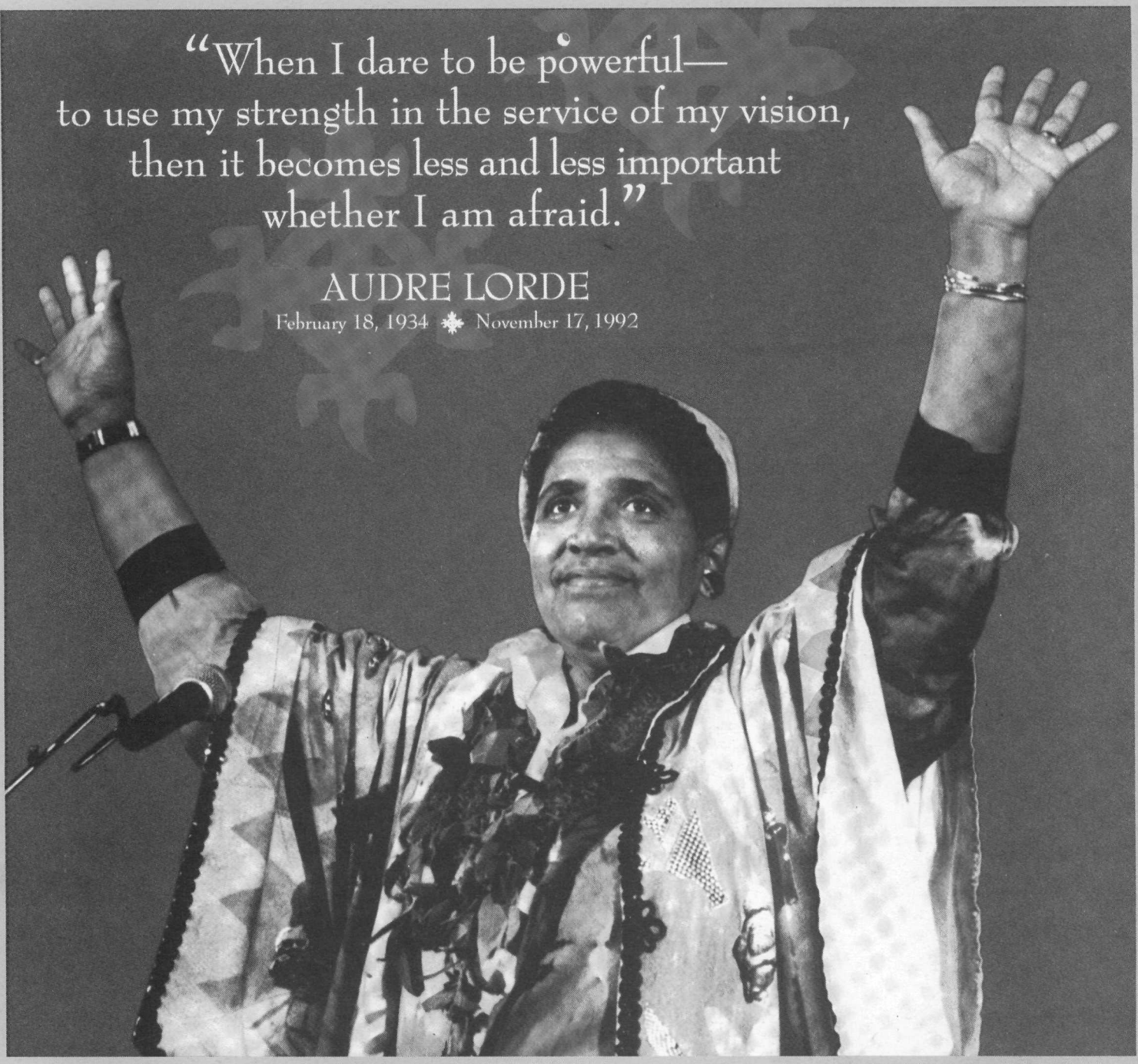

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The Witness

Economies of sin

Volume 78 • Number 3 • March 1995

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Political Prisoners

I CONSIDER IT REMARKABLE that a magazine that serves many of the "mainstream people" in our church and nation would devote an entire issue to concerns related to U.S. political prisoners. I appreciated the articles highlighting individuals who are willing to suffer through long imprisonment for the sake of the truth.

When I say that there are signs of hope in the midst of seeming hopelessness in our society, *The Witness* that raises hard questions with its readers is one of the signs of hope in the church and in our nation.

Seiichi Michael Yasutake
Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience
Evanston, IL

Family Values

THE WITNESS IS ALWAYS an inspiration and a challenge — but never more so than the incredible "Family Values" issue.

As director of Ministry with Single Adults and as a therapist, I work with men, women and children who are in their own lives redefining "family" and who understand what "family values" really ARE. I would like to order additional copies of this issue to have available through my ministry and practice, and also to use in my consulting work across the country. As always, the scope of your articles broadens the understanding, even as it cuts to the very heart of the issues.

Kay Collier-Sloane
SOLO FLIGHT
Lexington, KY

MS. PAYDEN IN HER REVIEW of Dr. Spock's recent book in the December 1994 issue makes reference to the decadent nature of her middle-class environment, presumably because of some lack of values, pointing out that she as well as her teenage daughters know of youth in that community who are on antidepressants. May I use the occasion to point out that DEPRESSION is an illness and is the leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 and 25, and is the leading cause of disablement in the population at large! The prognosis for its positive control, thanks to modern medicine, is probably as high as 95 percent. It is, like cancer and many other illnesses, genetic in nature and therefore hits those who are rich and poor alike with little discrimination; you will find it in the worst slums and in the best suburban areas. Because its symptoms have so many negative behavioral characteristics (all of which are antithetical to all relgious virtues — there is no religion I know of that condones laziness), it is attacked with a passion as the worst of sins.

Without a doubt, depression, like any other illness, is exacerbated by the environment and circumstances of one's life, but these are certainly not the cause.

What is decadent about our society is not those of our young who are ill, but the appalling lack of health care insurance provisions and services, both private and public, to deal with the crises.

I doubt if I will read Dr. Spock's book, for as Ms. Payden points out, all of us are responsible for all people, all the time, everywhere. Values and value systems (whatever they are?) only get in the way.

David Jones
Highland, MD

I ENJOYED THE DECEMBER 1994 ISSUE on "Family Values," but gender issues persist and there is no use in being gender-shy. It pops up where you'd least expect it.

For example, in the article, "Making love manifest," about Jennifer Walters and Alexandra Sciaky and their adopted child Ben, about 17 or 18 of the quotations definitional of the relationship and its meanig *vis-à-vis* the community, the church and the state — nearly all the quoted copy in the article — came from Jennifer. Only three or four quotes, mainly on satisfaction with the relationship and the pleasure of sending thank you notes following the baby shower, come from Alexandra.

Judging from the gender role-playing shown in the article, I'll bet that Jennifer Walters and Alexandra Sciaky are more traditional than the men who are bringing a presentment against their bishop in Michigan because of them!

Lloyd Moyer
Sophia Press
Montpelier, VT

Message from Cuba

DURING MORE THAN 35 YEARS we have carried out a pastoral work of companionship with the Cuban people. Never before has the embargo been so cruel: Torricelli's amendment and the new prohibitions imposed by the Clinton administration last August increase the suffering and the pain of the Cuban people, particularly for old people, children and the weak.

U.S. citizens should pray and struggle to put an end to this tragic situation. Meanwhile, without medicines, almost without transportation, lacking many essential things, but with lots of love, we remain at the side of the people. We are deeply grateful to all those who voted against the blockade at the General Convention in Indianapolis.

Juan Ramon de la Paz Cerezo
Episcopal Peace Fellowship,
Holy Trinity Cathedral Chapter
Habana, Cuba

[Ed. note: Juan Ramon says there is a desperate need for medicines in Cuba, especially for asthmatic sprays. Readers who

Correction

In the Family Values issue (Dec. 1994), Rosemary Radford Ruether's father was wrongly identified. The cutline should have read Robert Armstrong Radford.

can help provide these medications should be in touch with Pastors for Peace, 331 17th Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414.]

Talking about AIDS

I HAVE NEVER BEEN a no-holds-barred activist, but when it comes to AIDS, I find I am becoming just that. Is it enough to recognize AIDS on the second Sunday in October as the Presiding Bishop has asked, or the first Saturday in November (the date of the Diocese of New York's AIDS service) or World AIDS Day in December?

I say no, a thousand times no. How many more people in my and your life have to die before we pull in the reins and take a clear, hard look at what we are doing on a personal level to fight this pandemic?

We must openly, intelligently, incessantly talk about AIDS with the people who do not know and care about AIDS because they say AIDS does not affect them directly. Every single day, we must use the word AIDS in a sentence to someone new.

When we begin to accept a person's death from AIDS as just another fact of life, we throw in the towel. All we've got to do — and do it every day — is tell the world how we feel about AIDS, unedited. Our dignity and our very lives may depend on it.

Robert Davis
New York, NY

Witness praise

I LOVE *THE WITNESS* and find every issue thought provoking and quotable. Please reinstate my subscription and send me the issue that I just missed. I can't risk being so uninformed.

Barbara L. Garcia
Valhalla, NY

THANK YOU FOR THE ADVENT calendar. It's beautiful. I want you to know, it's the first Advent calendar I've ever had and I like it so much I'm never going to do without one again.

I'm enclosing my check for a subscription. It isn't really a renewal because last year's subscription was a highly appreciated gift and I'm now addicted, so it's a necessity. It's great and I thank you for making it so.

Ruth Garland
Brookline, MA

WHAT A DELIGHT TO RENEW my subscription to a publication which so helps me to "belong to the Truth" (John 18: 37)! I'm renewing as a "sustainer" and wish I could do more to adequately reflect how sustained I am by your publication. It never fails to provoke thought, inspiration, discomfort, tears, joy or all of the above. With you all — writers, editors, board, artists — for company it is good to belong to Christ.

And as for Julie Wortman's Advent calendar ... my daughters and I feel "highly favored" by it.

Holly Antolini
Stonington, ME

YOU AND *THE WITNESS* FAMILY continue to amaze me with the continuing high quality that you have brought to this journal. It's absolutely "first rate."

John Burt
Marquette, MI

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS AND thanks for a splendid, stimulating, challenging publication — always eagerly anticipated and passed on to many other enthusiastic readers, including seminary staff, bishops and young "radicals"!

Maureen Clegg
Rosalie, Australia

I HAVE SUBSCRIBED TO *THE WITNESS* for the past two years and have renewed for 1995. I, like many others, look forward to receiving your thoughts, ideas, experiences, and accounts of your individual struggles to make sense of something; as well as, your analysis and solution to a circumstance, or activity, by government, etc.

I was delighted to receive your Advent letter which had the "personal touch" and was written in the way a person writes to members of a family or friends.

Your ministry is valued by those of us who deeply care about others, no matter who they are and where they live.

Sandy Neubauer
Norfolk, VA

Classifieds

Kirkridge retreat

A midweek workshop at Kirkridge Retreat Center entitled "Futuring Our Ministries in the Congregation" will be led by Alban Institute founder Loren Mead April 18-20, 1995. Mead's widely acclaimed book, *The Once and Future Church,* yields practical insights for developing healthier congregational life and healthier roles for pastors and leaders. In dialogue and telling our own parish and leadership stories, we will honor the heritage of the past while freeing ourselves to shape our ministries in new and uncharted ways. Cost: $275 ($150 registration deposit). Write or call Kirkridge, Bangor, Penn., 18013. (610) 588-1793.

Urban interns

Episcopal Urban Intern Program: Work in social service ministry, live in Christian community in Los Angeles, share in spiritual formation. For adults 21-30. Apply now for the 1995-1996 year. Contact: The Rev. Gary Commins, 260 N. Locust St., Inglewood, Calif., 90301. (310) 674-7744.

Environment conference

Bishop Steve Charleston will give the keynote address at a conference on living out environmental spirituality in parishes and homes. Sponsored by the Diocese of Minnesota, the conference will take place July 21-22 at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn. Cost is $95 before April 1, $105 after. For details contact Eugene Wahl, 11684 Eldorado St., Coon Rapids, Minn., (612) 323-4913.

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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THE WITNESS
Since 1917

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8 **The political consequences of misconceiving sin** by Douglas John Hall
Hall challenges the simplistic logic of those who define sin as those things the Right abhors.

10 **Joining Christ on shifting ground: an interview with Verna Dozier** by Julie A. Wortman
Verna Dozier asserts that being a disciple precludes certainties and formulaic proscriptions of sin.

12 **Regarding sin: a survey of opinions**
Views are offered by Mary Hunt, Virginia Mollenkott, Jack Iker, Todd Wetzel, Doug LeBlanc, C. Christopher Epting, Edmond L. Browning, Kim Byham and Gretchen Pickeral.

20 **Countering hate and judgment with nonviolent love** by Herman Page
When people carrying signs reading "God hates fags" picketed St. David's Episcopal Church in Topeka, Kan., parishioners responded with a counter witness.

22 **Our sin and God's mercy: an interview with Madeleine L'Engle** by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann
Madeleine L'Engle is working on a book about mercy and struggling to stay in relationship with the "Fundalits."

24 **Protesting social evil: radicals and conservatives share roots** by Kenneth Leech
In examining racism and its social structures, Leech observes that in Nazi Germany and South Africa, church liberals did little to fight the prevailing order.

26 **Leaving the Episcopal Church: an interview with Ken Bieber** by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann
Concluding that no real dialogue was taking place in the Episcopal Church, Ken Bieber left in pursuit of a church that he felt would uphold Biblical morality.

30 **Surrogacy and redemption** by Delores S. Williams

31 **How sin works: the views of Ted Peters** by Marianne Arbogast
Ted Peters examines the workings of sin, a pursuit that resulted in his book Sin: Radical Evil in Soul and Society.

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Cover: Separation of Light and Darkness and *Fall of the Rebel Angels* by Master Bertram, Grabow Altarpiece, detail of wing, 1379. Kuntshalle, Hamburg.
Backcover: Calvary: "There was darkness over the whole land, until the ninth hour" by Dierdre Luzwick, an artist in Cambridge, Wis. This work is part of a series called "Christ Kin" for which Luzwick is seeking a publisher.

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Weighing sin and judgment: who will redeem the times?

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

The church calendar and the national political climate fuse to bring us the Lenten images of sin and the cry of the right that it can redeem the nation or at least mete out punishment.

This issue is dedicated to the topic of sin. It includes the voices of several who believe, like Douglas John Hall (p. 8), that the right wing's use of religious imperatives is actually in the service of the rich. It also includes the views of folks at Episcopalians United and of a conservative charismatic priest who left the Episcopal Church in pursuit of a church that he believes will uphold Biblical morality.

On the whole, the writers with the *Witness* perspective insist that hurling judgments at others is dangerous and usurps the authority of God. Likewise, these writers suggest that self-affirmation and concentration on the love of God will produce better disciples than will self-recrimination and holy crusades.

Short, clear moral imperatives and a life quiz that will put us over the top into heaven are not available to us, these writers say.

Verna Dozier goes so far as to say that in following Christ we *always* stand on shifting ground (p. 10). William Stringfellow, who is in agreement, says that our task as followers of Jesus is to exercise sanity and conscience in the face of the myriad forms of death — this means our responses will vary with historic context; there are no tried and true right answers (p. 6).

Widener Coll., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Woman weighing pearls **by Jan Vermeer**

> *We have to untangle the call of orthodoxy from the cries of those who through fear and self-righteousness hope to corral our consciences.*

Many writers propose that the very act of exercising judgment against others is the essence of sin. It lends itself to scapegoating and to suppressing the parts of yourself that may be complicit with the very sin being condemned.

But conservatives in this issue object, asking is there no criteria by which to assess the morality of our lives other than our own feelings? Are the Biblical admonitions of no consequence, to be laid aside as cultural and out-dated baggage?

Readers can discern which perspectives are most true for them, but there is a helpful caution in Ken Leech's article which notes that in Nazi Germany, church liberals cooperated with Hitler (p. 24). It was the evangelicals and conservatives who drafted the Barmen Declaration which in its simple way asserted the lordship of Christ in the face of the Third Reich. (And, innocuous as that assertion may seem, all the signers of the declaration were eventually exiled, imprisoned or executed.) Leech suggests that, unlike liberals, radicals and conservatives both cling to an orthodoxy that can witness to the powers.

Somehow we have to untangle the call of orthodoxy and committed faith, the kind that can prompt us to make sacrifices and to sign a Barmen Declaration, from the cries of those who through fear and self-righteousness hope to corral our consciences and proscribe, ultimately, even God's freedom. We offer this issue toward that end.

In the long run, of course, we are all like the woman in Jan Vermeer's painting, we weigh the material of our lives with the Last Judgment as backdrop. TW

editor's note

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

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The Church and the demonic

by William Stringfellow

The inherited churches in this society have not been bastions of resistance to demonic power, as embodied in churchly and ecclesiastical forms, in the state, or in other American principalities.

Indeed, the churchly denominations and sects have notoriously been among the most benighted institutions in America, remarkably undiscerning so far as the reality of the demonic in history is concerned. And, in the apparent hierarchy of principalities, the American churches have more often than not been among the most menial, manipulated, and degraded vassals of the power of death.

It is no great surprise, then, that so many churches on the contemporary scene are not communities in which the Bible has been esteemed or in which the biblical life-style has been much practiced or in which the Jerusalem vocation is deeply comprehended and loved. Still, if when looking at the churches the marks of Jerusalem are not readily beheld, that does not imply the departure of the Holy Spirit from America or the indifference of God to the militancy of death in the nation or the absence of the biblical witness amid the American babel and chaos. It means only that human beings must be open to the marks of Jerusalem where they appear — if only, as it were, momentarily — wherever that may be; that one is called to be truly discerning of the Holy Spirit and of all spirits and to be courageous in naming the same. It means further that a Christian freely affirms the biblical life and acknowledges *that* as the church however, wherever, or whenever that happens and regardless of whether the event of the church occurs in distance from traditional churchly existence.

Among the conventional ecclesiastical principalities, there are, mercifully, occasional congregations and paracongregations, and there are laity and clergy and some few ecclesiastics, that stand — together with more *ad hoc* communities and happenings and people — within the continuity of the biblical witness. Taken together, I believe, these constitute an emergent confessing movement in the United States: spontaneous, episodic, radically ecumenical, irregular in polity, zealous in living, extemporaneous in action, new and renewed, conscientious, meek, poor. It is to these phenomena, far more profound and much more widespread than is commonly recognized, that a person must look to sight the exemplary church of Jesus Christ acting as harbinger of the holy nation. It is in this confessing movement that the Jerusalem parable is verified, now, in America, right in the midst of the ruin of Babylon's churches and miscellaneous death shrines. TW

William Stringfellow, a lawyer, social advocate and theologian, died 10 years ago, in March 1984. These articles, originally published in An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land *and* Suspect Tenderness, *are currently available in* A Keeper of the Word: Selected Writings of William Stringfellow, *ed. by Bill Wylie-Kellermann, Eerdmans, 1994.*

Understanding conscience

The exercise of conscience is not the same thing as the arrival at consensus. In specific circumstances within a particular segment of the body of Christians, there may be a coincidence of conscience and consensus, but there may also be conscientious fitness not attended by consensus or there may even be many simultaneous voices of conscience, some of which seem inconsistent with each other. ...

Pietists, among them some partisans of natural law, will complain that this comprehension of functioning conscience within the Christian witness makes evaluation of any particular action, which is said to be conscientious, difficult. That we readily concede; it is, in fact, impossible, and we gladly recall that the prerogative of judgment of conscience is vested in God, not in human beings, not in laws, not in the state, not in the ethics of culture, not in the church, and certainly not in the churches, sects and denominations. What transpires, in decisions and actions of conscience, on the part of a Christian or of some community of Christians or of many Christians positioned diversely, is a living encounter between the Holy Spirit and those deciding and acting in relation to human needs in society. If either those who act or those who stand apart from the action presume judgment of what is said and done, they negate the visibility of that encounter. The practice of conscience, thus, is an extraordinarily audacious undertaking, disdaining all mundane or conventional prudential calculations and confessing the exclusivity of God's judgment and trusting God's judgment as grace. Conscience requires knowing and respecting one's self as no less, but no more, than human. The exercise of conscience represents — as 1 Peter remarks — living as a free human being. — *W.S.*

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On reading nadeshda mandelstam

by Dorothee Sölle

The poet
suspected and shadowed for a long time
has friends

One of them hangs up three times
when the marked man calls

Another sends his wife
to ask how things are
he's out of town himself

A third turns informer
he needs a better apartment

When the car came to pick him up
three close neighbors
happened to be sleeping

Denial betrayal abandonment and sleep
the old story of friendship
remember that christ died
for friends like these

— from *Revolutionary Patience*, Orbis Books

In complete control

by Rumi

In complete control, pretending control,
with dignified authority, we are charlatans.
Or maybe just a goat's hair brush in a painter's hand.
We have no idea what we are.

We donate a cloak

by Rumi

We donate a cloak to the man who does the washing.
We feel proud of our generosity.
We stare at the infinite, suffering ocean.
We fall in.

— Rumi was a 12th century Persian mystic

The Witness' *new poetry editor,* ***Ana Hernandez****, is a musician and singer, raised in New York, who performs with the Miserable Offenders. (They market a wonderful tape of Advent music called,* Keepin' the Baby Awake.*) She also staffs the bookstore at the Episcopal Church Center. Asked about political and artistic commitments, Hernandez responded, "Yes. I have them."*

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The political consequences of misconceiving sin

by Douglas John Hall

The vocabulary of Christian faith suffers from misunderstanding at every turn, but no one term is as badly understood in both society and church as the little word, "sin." Nor is this misconception an innocent or merely "religious" affair. Lives are ruined by it. Sometimes it destroys whole communities.

It is quite possible, in fact, that the false appropriation of what the Judeo-Christian tradition means by sin on the part of powerful sectors in North American society today constitutes one of the most subtle causes of our socio-political malaise. Cultures, as the term connotes, spring from cults, and the foundational cult of this society, whatever its present status, is Christianity. The residue of Christian dogmas, including their typical perversions, lingers long after the sincerity has gone out of religious observance. In their decline religions, like secular ideologies, regularly accentuate their most reductive beliefs and practices; for the correctives that were present in their heyday, stemming especially from the activity of critical, theologically informed minorities in their midst, are pushed aside by the true-believing simplifiers, who savour the power of their slogans and resent any interpretations that may muddy the waters of their "fundamentals."

What we are seeing in North American Christianity today is just such a triumph of religious simplism. As the old once-mainline denominations are relegated to the social periphery, and as theological scholarship retreats from active engagement with the community of belief, the sort of Christianity that was regularly regarded as "the lunatic fringe" as late as the 1950s becomes increasingly *normative* Christianity. The role of the "hot" media, especially television, in this process is of course vital. These media evoke — in our context, demand! — simple, straightforward stuff: one-liners, slogans, hype. Who would be fool enough to try to communicate the thought of Thomas Aquinas or Karl Barth on television? You can hardly manage it in a seminary classroom today!

Under these circumstances, sin has plummeted to its crassest forms of misconception ever. It has become, in fact, little more than a stained-glass version of the directory of "bad things" that the political Right abhors, most of them, predictably enough, having to do with sexual deviations from the rhetorical norm, lack of respect for conventional authorities, and crimes involving property.

By accentuating the private side of sin; by singling out precisely the vices that offend the rich, born-again Christianity performs exactly the same service that Establishment Christianity has been providing in the West since Constantine.

Whether the biblical concept of sin has ever been profoundly grasped by most Christians is a good question. Anyone who moves from the gospels and epistles of the newer Testament into the Christian writings of the 2nd and 3rd centuries C.E. will realize that the process of sin's reduction has begun. Already sin (singular) has become sins (plural) — the nasty little thoughts, words and deeds that punctuate every life. You can list them. You can distinguish them from their opposites, the virtues. If you are conscientious (or afraid of the consequences!), you try to make your good outweigh your evil, so that (with Jesus' and the saints' help, of course) you will be "saved."

By the Middle Ages, a whole ecclesiastical technology for handling sins was in place. It was not *all* bad. People need help with their problems. But lest we grow romantic about the confessional, let us also remember that the penitential system was enormously important to those in power, both ecclesiasts and princes (often enough the same people). If the biblical concept of sin has seldom been probed, the reasons are not all theological! Opposition to the Reformers from Wycliffe on came *mainly* from those whose status and powerbase would be greatly altered were the "new" ideas about sin and grace held by the protesting elements actually implemented.

Usually the Reformation is presented as introducing radical notions of salvation (it is "by grace alone, through faith") and authority (*sola scriptura*). But it would be just as instructive, in a way, to say that the Reformers entertained a radical understanding of sin — radical in the genuine sense of the term, because it goes to

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the roots (*radix*) of biblical faith.

Thus for them sin meant disobedience, rebellion, refusal, turning-away. In short, they saw it as a relational term. It refers to the abrogation of relationship. The modern equivalents, as Tillich and others taught us, would be alienation or estrangement. The foundational relationship of human life— our relation with God — is broken; and this brokenness shows up in all our other relations (read Genesis 3 again!).

Whether we should even speak of "sins" (plural) is questionable; but if we do, we should understand that they are *consequences* of what is wrong, not its causes. If my relationship with my friend is deeply flawed, most of what I do, say or think in relation to her will reflect the fact. The remedy for such a condition is not labouring to alter the surface patterns of my behaviour *vis-á-vis* my former friend but seeking (no doubt painful) reconciliation with her. Analogously, the Bible's answer to the broken relationship called sin, said the Reformers, is not "works of the law" but "faith" — that is, trust: a new relationship with God, initiated by God. That is why Sören Kierkegaard (still one of the best analysts of sin) declared that the opposite of sin is not virtue but love. In fact, what are usually thought to be virtues may be as much consequences of sin as are obvious vices — which is why Jesus had more trouble with the reputedly virtuous than with acknowledged "sinners."

While classical Protestantism at its best grasped this relational basis of the doctrine of sin, post-Reformation Protestantism soon slid back into reductionist versions of what is wrong with us. Moreover, the individualism fostered by pietistic and liberal expressions of Protestantism has greatly aggravated the tendency to identify sin with negative qualities (sins) — specifically, negative *personal* failings.

***St. Michael* by Martin Schongauer, c. 1480.**

It could be argued that the reduction of sin to personal "sins" is a *natural* sort of heresy, especially for those who adhere to the *New* Testament, with its particular interest in the inner life of the individual person. But the newer Testament is not one-sidedly personalistic, and if it is understood (as it ought to be!) as an extension of the Hebrew scriptures, then its development of the personal dimension will have to be kept in tension with the corporate dimension. For the prophetic tradition of Israel, sin applies to the whole people and to the species and not only to individuals; more importantly, the two dimensions are inseparable. "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips," cries Isaiah in his awareness of the just God (6:5).

The corporate nature of sin has only rarely been explored imaginatively in Christian history. Augustine in his late work, *The City of God*, came closest to such an exploration in the ancient church, and no one in the modern church approaches Reinhold Niebuhr's consistent attempt to counter American religious personalism and sentimentalism with a provocative social analysis of sin. There is a crying need in our context today for a continuation of Niebuhr's work. He was particularly conscious of the *liberal* reduction of the doctrine of sin. A contemporary critique would have to be more conscious of the so-called "conservative" reduction of the doctrine.

For it is a reduction, no matter how "biblical" its language or how fiery its denunciations. In the end, it is thoroughly in the service of the political Right, as the recent Congressional elections again document so concretely. By accentuating the private side of sin; by identifying what is wrong with the world in ways that call for no radical transformation of social structures and no *metanoia* on the part of the dominant classes and factions; by singling out precisely the vices that offend the rich, born-again Christianity in the United States (and to a lesser extent Canada) performs exactly the same service that Establishment Christianity has been providing in the West since Constantine invited the church to become chaplain to Empire.

A harartiology (doctrine of sin) that was truly— and not just rhetorically — biblical would turn *our* world upside down, just as the first disciples were accused of doing to theirs. TW

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Joining Christ on shifting ground: an interview with Verna Dozier

by Julie A. Wortman

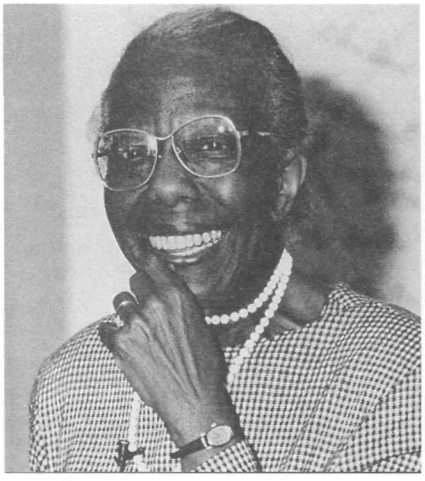
Verna Dozier is a lay theologian, biblical scholar and Christian educator. Her books include The Dream of God *and* The Authority of the Laity.

Julie Wortman: What's your quick definition of sin?

Verna Dozier: Violation of the first and second commandments as Jesus enunciated them: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Racism is a very flagrant violation of the first commandment. And we see it in the results of racism — in poverty, in homelessness. Poverty and homelessness are also violations of loving thy neighbor as thyself. I see it at the present time in the Republican Congress and in the meanspiritedness that prevails in this country. All of that's a violation of the first and second commandments.

I think that the basic thrust of the Bible has very little to do with private and personal morality. The Bible is directed to a *people* and to the issue of a *people's* morality. We play up individual morality — I think that if you love your neighbor and love God you *will* have a personal morality — but I don't think that is the thrust of the biblical story. One of the problems we have with the biblical story is that we go at it by bits and pieces and we don't get the whole sweep. So we concentrate on certain items, but I think they have to be played against the whole story. In one way *that* is a definition of sin because that's what we do — we cut God down to our size, so that's not loving the Lord God.



Verna Dozier David Zadig, Episcopal Times

J.W.: Is the church a force of resistance in the face of sin?

V.D.: No, not the institutional church. I make a distinction between the visible institutional church and the people of God, a number that no one can number. I think that there are within the institutional church those people who have a vision of what God was about in creation and what God is continuing to be about, but you can't identify the people of God by any denominational label or by any parish — even the congregations who try so hard to be different.

J.W.: What resources do the people of God have in the face of sin?

V.D.: Repentance. They can repent and live in the new creation of the Resurrection. Every single day can be a day of repenting and living anew — living as if yesterday had not given us any light because yesterday is darkness today. That's a very scary way to live — I certainly don't do it. I cling to the little truths that I find and I get disturbed when those truths are challenged. My vision is greater than my actions. And I think that is true for all of us. But I think that the awareness of that is one sign of God touching our lives, that we don't make our understanding God.

J.W.: Concretely, what do you do each day to try to live in the newness of the Resurrection?

V.D.: Well, one of the things I try to do is to know that I haven't done it. I try to be aware always of my shortcomings and my failures and my being just like the people with whom I have trouble. That's an uncomfortable way to live, but there are no answers. I suppose that's why one of the church's sayings, that "Christ is the answer" is so disturbing to me — what does that mean? In saying Christ is the answer, we're defending where we stand, making that stand God.

J.W.: What about some touchstones to live by?

V.D.: For me, the whole biblical story is the touchstone. But the difficulty is that in doing daily Bible reading you're only picking up a little piece of it and so you have to know that even the piece that you pick up that means so much to you that day is only a part of the story. And so it's always living in the incomplete and the unfinished.

Everything is unfinished. You have to be able to live perpetually without answers and that's the trouble — we want some certitude. (I call that faithlessness.*) Faith is risking that God is for you.*

J.W.: That seems very hard.

V.D.: It *is* hard. And it is perfectly pos-

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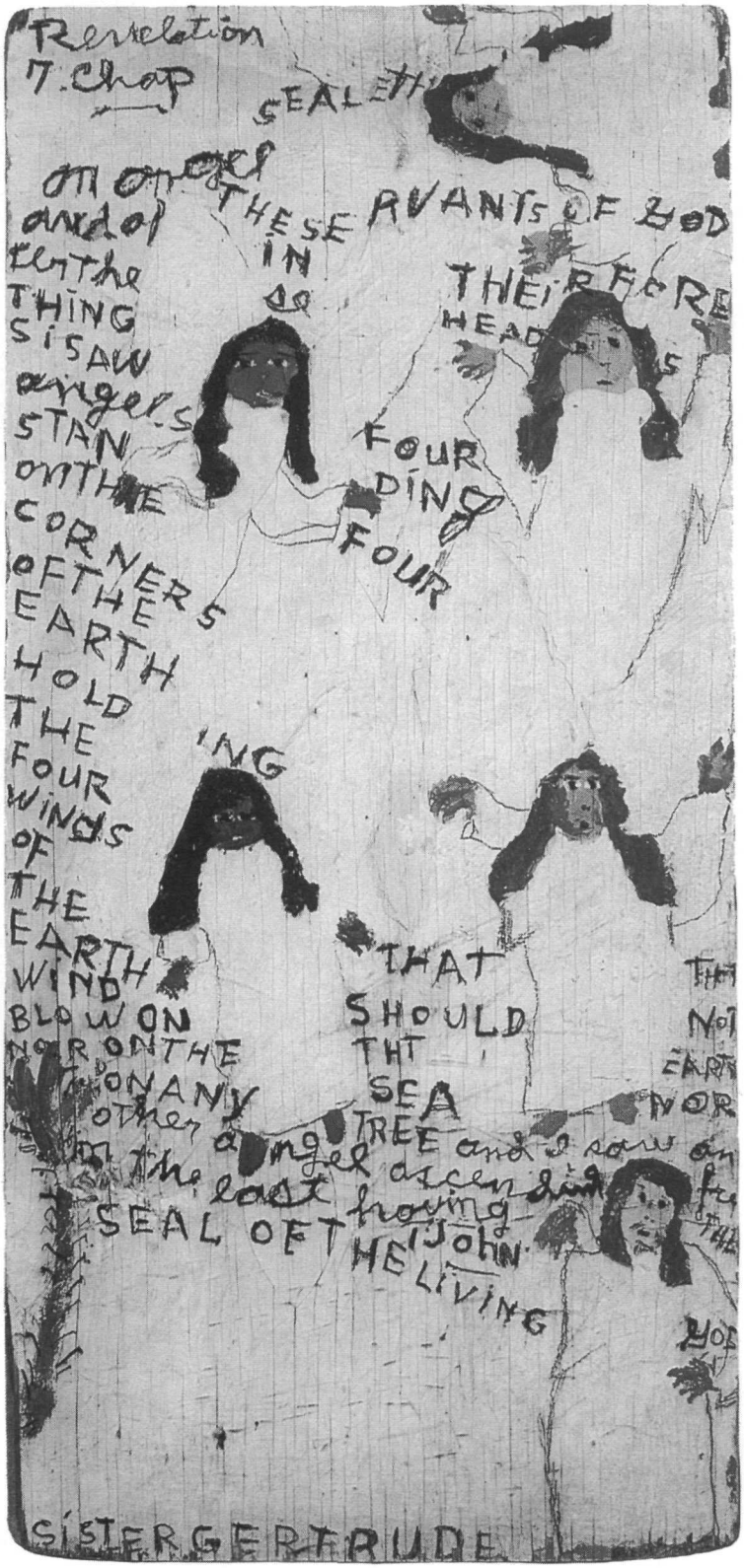

***Revelation 7 Chap.*, by Sister Gertrude Morgan, a street preacher in New Orleans in the 1940s.**
Courtesy of the Jaffe Collection

sible to become comfortable with *that*, that everything is incomplete and unfinished. There's no place where a human being can stand. Standing somewhere implies a permanence, a finite position. And I don't think there is any finite position. When I was a little child we used to sing a hymn, "On Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand." I found that very meaningful, but the thing about it is, what does it mean? *Where* is Christ the solid rock? Because I think the minute you stand on it, it shifts. You have to be able to live perpetually without answers and that's the trouble — we want some certitude. (I call that *faithlessness*.) Faith is risking that God is for you — Abraham went out from everything he had known.

J.W.: Without certitude, isn't it hard to act?

V.D.: That's because we've determined that our act is holy! We've usurped the place of God. We will never give up the original sin, which is playing God. We assume that we know better, that we know who is right and who is wrong, who is good and who is bad. And we believe God will see it exactly the way we do.

J.W.: What is the church's sin?

V.D.: The church's sin is worshipping Jesus instead of following him. We have elaborate liturgies and elaborate costumes. Or we have elaborate liturgies that don't *look* as though they're elaborate but they are just as elaborate — Quaker silence and retreats and so on, those are also liturgies. And we're using our liturgies to say, "We're all right, we're all right."

But we also have the Gospel possibility — "Behold, I make all things new!" And I think that's done daily. I love the story of the children of Israel in the wilderness — "And the *manna* on the morrow stank." I love that story — because the minute we settle on anything, that's it. But on the morrow it stinks, it's not any good. All things are new every morning. TW

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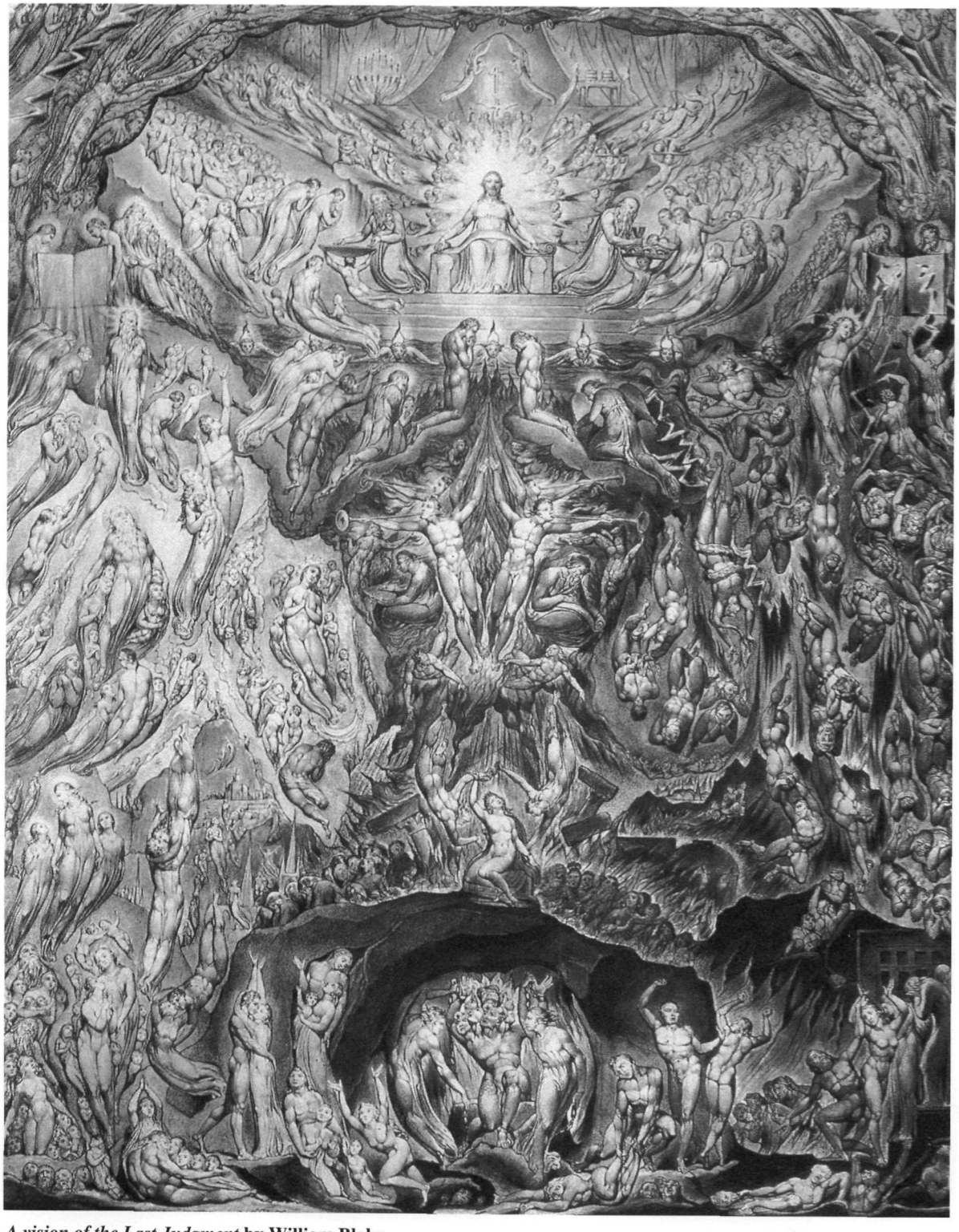
Sin: a survey of opinions



A vision of the Last Judgment by William Blake

'Sinning is being'

by Mary E. Hunt

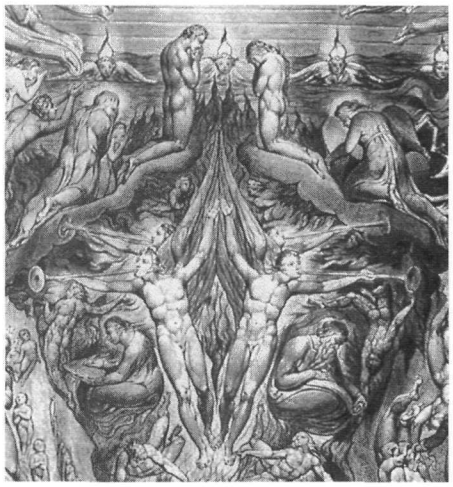
I do not use the term sin very often. But as a full-fledged human being, I have always liked the good Protestant phrase "sin and sin boldly" since we all do. Between that notion and Mary Daly's insight that "sinning is being," I derive my sense of sin as a negative part of the human condition which can and must be changed.

I understand sin as behaviors and structures that hurt other beings and the earth. What distinguishes sin from organic evil (like a plague or a flood) is that it can be controlled by human effort in ways that an earthquake cannot. The earth shakes and the consequences are dreadful but no one is accountable.

When sins are committed, people and structures can be cited as responsible and expected to cease and desist when the error of their ways is pointed out to them. Would that it were so easy — for me to stop my sins at least — but at least the theory provides hope.

Like the Supreme Court justice who said that he knew pornography when he saw it, sin is relatively easy to spot, relatively hard to describe.

In the current political climate I see lots of sins. Murdering women as they seek reproductive health services is surely sin. But so, too, is legislating the prohibition of payments to welfare recipients who have been on the rolls for more than a year or two when jobs are few and far between. Sin is sex without a condom if one is at risk of transmitting disease; sin is declaring that lesbian/gay people are "morally disordered."



I am as suspicious of the rush to forgiveness as the rush to judgment. I think we can learn to live with the unforgiven and a resolution not to allow it to be repeated (nunca mas) *more easily.*

In short, there is plenty to go around, which is why religious communities seek meaning and value for the common good and for the eradication of sin.

The knee-jerk call to "forgive and forget" has led to endless cases, especially of women who were sexually abused, where forgiveness has preceded the repentance on the part of the sinner. Some psychological professionals have repeated this mistake, assuring their clients that it is better to forgive and be freed of the burden than to harbor ill feelings against those who have wronged one. But whose burden is it?

I am more persuaded of the approach of Catholic sacramental theology, namely, that the ball of change starts rolling when the one who has caused the problem recognizes the wrong and asks for forgiveness. Then the aggrieved person can offer forgiveness and the one who has been forgiven can complete the process by making amends and resolving not to repeat the behavior.

Of course, it does not always, or even usually, work so neatly, but I am as suspicious of the rush to forgiveness as the rush to judgment. I think we can learn to live with the unforgiven and a resolution not to allow it to be repeated (*nunca mas*) more easily than we can or should learn to live with forgiving what finally demands our condemnation.

The churches' sins, like those of most hierarchical institutions, are embedded in their structures as much as in the behavior of their officials and/or members. My hope is that as the Christian churches move toward a "discipleship of equals," structures which reflect love, justice and equality, and styles of life and work which are inclusive, some of the structural sins of patriarchy will fall away.

Then we will see in clearer relief how the Christian message might be lived fully. TW

Editor's note: We sent out a survey on sin to a diverse group of people asking the following questions: What's your quick definition of sin? Do you know it when you see it (i.e., *when* have you seen it)? What are the church's resources in dealing with sin? What are Christians called to do in the face of sin? What is the church's sin?

The views on sin that follow come from the responses we received.

Mary Hunt is co-director of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual, based in Silver Spring, Md.

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Wounds and structures of privilege

by Virginia Ramey Mollenkott

I understand personal sin to be an error, a wrong relationship, a failure to "hit the target" of loving God with all our hearts and our neighbor as ourselves. Such errors arise out of profound inner wounds that cause us to be fearful and defensive. I understand structural sin to be the systems that privilege certain people and disempower others: racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, you name it. These structures arise from a consensus of erroneous thinking on the part of millions of individuals.

I have seen sin, certainly, "up close and personal": in my own or others' depressions, rages, or hatreds stemming from childhood physical or sexual abuse or neglect. (Because people cannot entirely help where they are in their journey toward wholeness, I think the term "damage" is a more accurate description for personal sin.)

I have seen sin structurally, too, in the dismissive contempt of people who think nothing I say could have any validity because I am a woman or because I am a lesbian, or because I am over 60 and/or overweight.

I will never forget the day a group of us gay and lesbian Christians held a meeting with a church group who were determined to keep homosexuals out of first-class citizenship in the church by denying ordination, banning rituals to recognize our unions, and so forth. The white male well-known well-heeled leader of that oppressive movement arrived sporting an enormous button saying, "Don't hassle!" It was as if a group of wealthy capitalists were meeting with some Latin American peasants whom their policies had impoverished, and had enjoined the peasants to passivity by wearing "Don't hassle!" buttons.

Christians are called to seek healing and wholeness through psychotherapy, self-help groups, readings, conferences, prayer, meditation and the like. Whatever enables us to love ourselves more fully enables us to love God and our neighbor more fully, and thus to avoid sin.

Our task both individually and collectively is to educate ourselves about structural sin and how best to transform it into structures that honor God's Presence in everyone. I often think about Aristide's revolutionary motto, "Every person is a person." Any behavior that denies that fact, any corporate or social policy that denies that fact, is sinful and in need of redemption.

Inasmuch as the church has involved itself in sexist, classist, racist, heterosexist, or other oppressive structures, the church is a sinful organization. Furthermore, to the degree that the church uses the concept of sin to foster guilt and shame and thus to gain power over weak psyches, that also is sin.

Guilt and shame are usually wasteful and often brutalizing self-hating states of mind; and to some, *mea culpa*! becomes enjoyable in a masochistic way, like psychic masturbation. Hence it is important to define sin as error rather than as a deep dire irrevocable unforgivable event. (I am not talking about legal repercussions, which must run their proper course.)

What do we do when we make an error in arithmetic? We erase it and continue our calculations: that's why there are erasers on the end of pencils. What should we do when we find ourselves involved in wrong relationships, either personally or structurally? Forget the *mea culpas*: acknowledge the error before God and the wronged person or people, correct the error, and get on with making amends. TW

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, an English professor at William Paterson College, N.J., is author of *Sensuous Spirituality: Out From Fundamentalism.*

Love and forgiveness

by Jack Iker

Sin is a selfish willfulness that places our own desires at the center of our lives and seeks our own will instead of God's. It is "missing the mark" as revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

I don't always know sin when I see it, for sin often masquerades as something good. I have seen it in unloving and selfish manipulation of others.

The church's resources in dealing with sin are grace, the power of the Holy Spirit, the sacraments, a supportive community where the love of Jesus is experienced and shared.

In the face of sin, Christians are called to repent and seek God's help, forgiveness, and strength to lead a new and better life.

The church's sin is a failure to love and to forgive as Jesus does, and to fragment the unity of His Body. TW

Jack Iker is bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth and a member of the Episcopal Synod of America, a group that opposes women's ordination to the priesthood.

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Sin and self-fulfillment

by Todd H. Wetzel

Something's not quite right with our enlightened world.

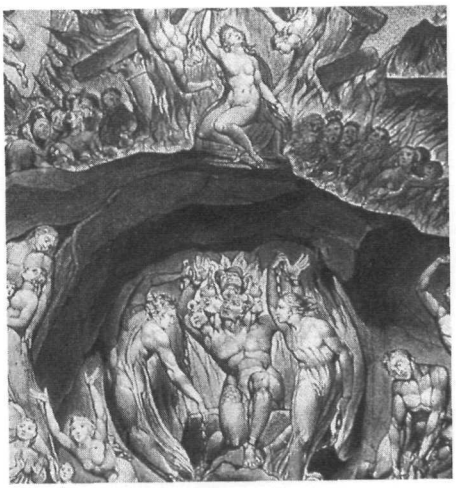
How did the Holocaust happen in one of the most sophisticated nations on earth? Why Bosnia, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Ireland and the host of other national and international crises? We don't lack technology, intelligence or compassion. Why do people starve in a world of abundant food?

People work heroically to make life better, but so often, life's tragedies grow worse. Why are prejudice and hatred, child abuse and neglect, so prevalent? Why are acts of violence on the increase? Why, with all of our technology, do so many lack jobs and homes?

Our century is not unique. Men and women, cities and nations, tear at each other constantly. What about me? I want to be good at the many roles I play in the drama of life. Truth is, I try but often fail miserably. In solving one problem, I create others. Sadly, what is true in the macrocosm of life "out there" is equally true in the microcosm of my own life.

Paul said it well: "For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I meant to do; no, the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it" (Romans 7:18-20).

Sin is the root cause of the world's constant dilemmas. And sin is at the heart



of my life as well. We're caught in a tragic drama: the good that we would, we do not; the evil we would not, we do.

John writes, "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). If sin is endemic to life, then we cannot "fix" it. Paul goes further in Romans 7 and states: "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

I would prefer to save myself. But I cannot. St. Augustine said that the human heart denies God, turns in upon itself, tries to better itself, wants to fulfill its own desires and ends up debasing itself. Down the path of self-fulfillment lie dismal failure and despair.

I am a sinner. Acknowledging my sins drives me to Christ Jesus. There I find healing for the brokenness of my life. My relationship with Christ has, in turn, led me to love and search the Scriptures which reveal God's holy standards to my unruly heart and mind. Obedience, though still a struggle, brings peace and blessing. God takes our lives, which otherwise are tragic dramas, and redeems them. TW

Todd Wetzel is executive director of Episcopalians United (EU), whose mission is to "influence the structures of the Episcopal Church so they may reflect the lordship of Jesus Christ more faithfully. EU holds Holy Scripture as the primary source for doctrine, discipline and worship."

Corporate sin

by Daniel Berrigan

The ecology of the world is ruined, consequent upon moral evil. This is the view of Revelation, in consonance with Genesis itself.

No one is saved in isolation, no part of the universe is destroyed apart from any other; evil in the moral order results in the destruction of the universe.

It is simply unimagineable that one stand alone in the universe, without roots, tentacles, moral vibrations outward; and similarly, no one gets reborn alone.

Sin, properly and biblically understood, cannot be regarded or judged solely on a one-to-one basis. One-to-one is all-to-all. The sins of corporations are corporate sins, a revealing tautology.

Moral evil, property-idolotry, threaten the world's well-being. The Bomb is by no means a chancy event. It was brought to pass by us — but prior to that horror, it exploded within us. TW

Daniel Berrigan is a Jesuit priest who works with cancer and AIDS patients when he's not in jail for resisting U.S. militarism. This is excerpted from *The Nightmare of God,* Fortkamp Press, 1993.

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'Woe to those who call evil good'

by Doug LeBlanc

Sin is the biblical word for our actions and choices that separate us from God's love and purpose for our lives. The Penitential Order in The Book of Common Prayer reminds us, week after week, that we have sinned "in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone."

I'm often slow to recognize sin, but sin soon reveals its destructive presence, wreaking havoc in my life, in the lives of those I love and in the lives of those I'm learning to love.

Sin reveals itself in the nagging feeling that something is amiss, that I'm not living in the way God has designed me to live.

Sin rears its head when I gossip, when I presume to judge another person's motivations, when I laugh at someone's expense, when I respond in anger or fear rather than in love. Sin is a constant companion, a cheap thrill, an act of conscious rebellion against my Creator.

Throughout history, God has used prophets, saints and the church to reveal sin for what it is, to call people to repentance, and to offer absolution. The church's greatest tools for confronting sin are Scripture, bold proclamation of the Gospel, the rite of reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

God calls us, as Christians, to repent of our sins and to amend our lives. God calls us to tell ourselves and our neighbors the truth about sin — first to acknowledge that sin estranges us from God, then to proclaim God's grace in delivering us from sin through the death and resurrection of Christ the Lord.

Like Christ, the church has experienced every temptation known in a fallen world. Unlike Christ, the church has succumbed to each of those sins, because the church is a society of people needing redemption.

Many traditionalists, myself included, understand sin first as an individual struggle, then perhaps in corporate terms. Many of my progressive friends understand sin primarily as a corporate dilemma.

I trust that we all recognize the sin in believing that sin is someone else's problem rather than our own. I also hope we all remember that, whether sin is individual or corporate, God is eager to forgive it.

The church sin that saddens me most is any effort to redefine sin as self-actualization, as enlightenment, as something only fundamentalists talk about, or perhaps even as the revised will of an evolving God.

Scripture warns us of this danger: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter" (Isaiah 5:20).

No one party or faction in today's church holds a monopoly on such self-deception. We're all fairly adept at kidding ourselves. Our first step toward redemption is to admit our culpability. TW

Doug LeBlanc edits *United Voice*, the newspaper of Episcopalians United.

The church's greatest sin

by Edmond L. Browning

I believe it was the first Ash Wednesday after I became Presiding Bishop that I was in Buffalo, N.Y. I celebrated the Eucharist, there was the imposition of ashes, and then a question-and-answer period. Having been the Presiding Bishop for a few months, I had begun to have some idea of the kinds of questions I was asked in such settings! Often they had to do with some of the controversial issues before our church, frequently sexuality. However this question, coming from a young man, stopped me. He said, "What do you think is the greatest sin the church has to face?"

I didn't think or try to make an intellectual response to this question; there could have been so many. I didn't think, but in the next moments my heart framed the answer. Images came to me. Images of dusty streets in the black townships of South Africa. And I thought, does anybody care? Images of the Gaza and the West Bank. Does anybody care? Images of a hospital ward for AIDS patients. Does anybody care? Images of the homeless who sleep on the sidewalks. Images of Indian reservations — symbols of promises betrayed. And I asked myself again: *Does anybody care?* These other realities are just as real as this room where I am sitting in warmth and comfort and safety, drinking coffee. Does anybody care?

All of this probably took place in 15 seconds, but it seemed like minutes later that I answered the question. I said to the young man, "Apathy."

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The greatest sin the church has to face is apathy. Though it is psychically uncomfortable to live in a state of outrage, we must not lose our outrage that God's children are suffering all around us. We must keep this reality before us and commit ourselves to transforming the images. This is what we are called to do. Yet, so very often, we just don't care. We slip into the mode of "if its good for me, it must be good." This is the antithesis of the message of the Gospel.

Sin, we know, is separation from God. When we are not in loving communion with God we quickly fall into sin. Our God is not an uncaring God, and when we become uncaring we are far from God and prey to sin.

Our first resource in dealing with sin is spiritual, as we develop our spiritual consciousness, our awareness of the presence of God and of God's hand moving through the world. Something good is trying to happen in the universe, I do believe. Our unity with this force is imperative to our battle against sin: sin outside and our own besetting sins.

God's spirit was given to the church. With the power of the spirit, we can vanquish sin. But we need, first, to care — and second, to tap the deep strength and power God has given us to make a difference in the broken world. TW

Gender-defined sin

by Gretchen Pickeral

A working definition sin involves not having God at the center of one's life, life-style and orientation but rather having the self at the center of one's existence.

This definition fits the masculine model of development and socialization well. For survival in familial, social and economic systems the male must be separate, independent and able to thrust the self into a world which has high expectations of his autonomy, strength and self-sustaining capabilities.

To be called into community of faith and a salvific life of grace in God, by God, this independent, "self"-oriented individual is called to look outward, to notice others and make allowances for their existence - widow, orphans, oppressed and hungry.

But an individual socialized with a more feminine frame of reference may find the message confusing and mixed.

When an individual is immersed in the notion of intuiting and meeting others' needs, sin might appear to be absent. If a systemic state of sin consists of living with self at center, then where does the sin occur here? But if this individual has no sense of self, then God is not at the center here, either.

This is a mirror image of the classic notion of sin as self at center — others at center. Furthermore it is more subtle and seductive because it can be made to look like the person is very giving and faithful, when in fact the person is not even a whole person.

If someone who is fully focused on the other — on nurturing, caring for, protecting and enabling the other — tries to find salvation in the notion of letting go of self and keeping God at the center, they will find only chaos, confusion and pain. Their spiritual journey may involve continuous cyclical questions and behavior along the lines of "Don't I already have God at the center? I am giving of my energy and my time constantly serving others. How can I do more?"

This state of being has serious dangers: A person in this state may remain in an unsafe environment for years and model to the next generations that it is acceptable to do so. This perpetuates self-centeredness in the abusing gender (unto the fourth generation...) and lack of self-ness in the abused gender of the household.

For those in the masculine orientation salvation requires a shift of focus away from self to allow divine presence to see others, identify needs and utilize the gifts of the self.

For those in a more feminine frame of reference, movement toward God requires a shift of focus to the self. Examination and discernment of gifts must occur so that the needs of others might only be fulfilled as a result of the divine presence.

The task of the church is to remind people that God belongs at the center of self and that you have to have a self to allow God in. TW

Gretchen Pickeral is the assistant rector at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in Florissant, Mo.

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Sins of commission and omission

by Kim Byham

With considerable disdain, the secular press once quoted Jimmy Carter as saying, "I am the worst sinner I know." Those outside the church apparently assumed that this represented some sort of puritanical hatred of self or a pervasive sense of guilt that is endemic to Christians. But I agree with the former president because, in my view, sin is that which separates us from God.

God never stops loving us, of course, but we can inoculate ourselves from experiencing that love. I know how often I separate myself from God because I feel the void I create.

It's comparatively easy to tell if a person is closely connected with God ("Spirit filled") because the fruits of that closeness are obvious. On the other hand, except for the rare "self-proclaimed and practicing" atheist and those with whom we are most intimate, we don't have a sense of how close to, or separated from, God other people are.

In the parable of the two sons — the one who said, "No," but did what was requested and the other who said, "Yes," but failed to do the work — we see two sides of sin. The speech of the first son, a sin of commission, led to a brief rupture with the father, but the subsequent action led to reconciliation. The other son was a hypocrite, avoiding a sin of commission in his speech, but by his omission separating himself from his parent.

The church's primary goal is to overcome sin by providing greater access to God. It more often, however, assumes the role of the second son, committing sins of omission.

As a gay man, I am always struck by the utter hypocrisy of "hate the sin, love the sinner." This simply never happens. To be sure, there are sincere Christians who think homosexual practices are "sinful," but most of these people cannot consciously "hate" the "sin" because it is as foreign to them as the sin of eating pork for an Orthodox Jew. Those who truly "hate" lesgay sex also hate lesgay people, or use a distorted definition of "love" to express the same emotion. For me, nothing is as clearly sinful as hating my neighbor.

Christ warned me and my fellow lawyers, and other hypocrites who compose the church, not to overlook the "weightier demands of the law — justice, mercy and good faith." The church constantly sins by paying only lip service to issues of justice and mercy. I feel blessed as a gay person to experience one of the few areas in which the church still sins by commission in its teachings. This awareness of the church's sinful nature in one area has made me more conscious of its slightly more subtle sins in other justice and mercy issues.

Together in the church we share God's grace; in sharing we also infect each other with sin. I pray for the day when the church itself will not be a stumbling block for so many in becoming one with God. TW

Kim Byham is publisher of *The Voice of Integrity*, the magazine of the Episcopal Church's gay and lesbian justice organization.

'Static in the atmosphere'

by C. Christopher Epting

My quick definition of sin is anything which damages or severs a relationship — impairs communion — with God or another human being. It's sort of like "static in the atmosphere" in our relationship with God. Biblically, it is falling short of the mark, and that mark for me is the fullness of our humanity as seen in Jesus.

Sin can be seen virtually everywhere since we live in a fallen world. It seems to arise from our selfishness, and I sense its presence most when there's an absence of love and compassion in the room!

The church's resources in dealing with sin are manifold, but I would emphasize three: the Bible which deals with the reality of sin and redemption from cover to cover; prayer which keeps us centered in God and so growing in love, and the sacraments — all seven of them! According to the baptismal covenant, Christians are first of all to resist the evil which leads to sin. But then, in a wonderfully pragmatic phrase, the Prayer Book says that "whenever we fall into sin" (not *if* we fall into it!) we are to repent and return to the Lord.

As far as the Church's sin, I would have to say that it is our fragmentation into the various denominations. This historical tragedy prevents us from sharing all our gifts from the one Spirit in the one Body. In other words, it keeps us from being a *whole* body of Christ in the world today, doing the things Jesus did — preaching, teaching, loving, healing, forgiving, suffering, dying and rising again. All to the glory of God! TW

C. Christopher Epting is bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa.

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Dissing Jocelyn Elders

The firing of Jocelyn Elders [former Surgeon General] is no bone thrown to the Right so that the President can get back to business. The dissing of Black people — and the over-lapping AIDS-affected, gay and women's communities Elders stood for — *is* the business at hand. From the crime bill, to welfare reform, to the do-nothing policy on AIDS, to the gays in the military debacle, to the cynical manipulation of Haitian President Aristide and the Haitian refugees, Clinton's legacy has been the entrenchemnt of increasing racism and homophobia.

— Stephanie Poggi
RESIST staff,
Somerville, MA

Rainbow Coalition

The ultra-conservative Republican Party takeover of Congress has spawned fightback efforts by progressive leaders and organizations around the country. Most prominent was the January gathering in Washington, D.C. of over 300 people hosted by the National Rainbow Coalition and its president, Jesse Jackson.

Largely ignored by the nation's media, the conference brought together an impressive breadth of people's organizations under the theme "Defending the Family: Strategies for Economic Justice and Hope." Sponsoring the conference were 11 national trade unions including the National Education Association (the country's largest), the United Autoworkers, and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers. Also sponsoring were the NAACP, the National Urban League, several national student organizations, community organizations, the National Organization for Women, prominent organizations of Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Asian Pacific and Native Americans, civil liberties groups, environmentalists, gays and lesbians, and national farmer groups.

The three-day meeting hammered out a programmatic "Working Document," soon to be released as a critique of the Republican Party's "Contract with America." Intended as a guide in the building of an "independent progressive movement," the document will offer pro-people legislative and policy alternatives around which to mobilize grass-roots support.

Among the bills proposed will be the "Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act," the "Family Reinforcement Act," the "Senior Citizens Equity Act," and the "Taking Back Our Streets Act."

At an opening press conference, Jackson declared, "We have analyzed the Republican contract. At its core, it is a statement to Americans that — in the new global economy — they are on their own. Radical conservatives say government can do little but give more tax breaks to the corporations and the wealthiest Americans. This is not acceptable and will be resisted."

Will Jackson or another member of the Rainbow Coalition enter the 1996 presidential campaign, and if so, will it be as a Democrat or independent?

While the answer is yet to be decided, base building is already underway with the announcement that Rainbow orgaizations are being established in all 50 states to investigate requirements of ballot status. They will also seek to build voter registration drives targeting key congressional districts, and mobilize grass-roots pressure on members of Congress to resist the right-wing legislative agenda.

More concretes will be discussed at the upcoming regular annual meeting of the Rainbow Coalition May 25-28 in Atlanta.

The conference also endorsed another effort to challenge the Republican Party agenda — a national "Rally for Women's Lives" April 9 in Washington, D.C. for an end to anti-abortion violence and other violence against women.

In announcing the rally, National Organization for Women president Patricia Ireland said, "We must fight for the White House and the Justice Department to launch a full-scale investigation into the anti-abortion massacre in Brookline and the nationwide network that is inciting and organizing these terrorist tactics."

The demonstration will also demand that Congress protect nutrition programs for pregnant women, infants and children, food stamps, Aid to Dependent Children, school lunch and childhood immunization programs — all of which are on the chopping block under the House Republicans' Contract on America, said Ireland.

— Pat Fry,
a freelance reporter
in New York City

Sacred sites at risk

Legislation has been introduced (HR 563) to alter the National Historic Preservation Act to exclude "any unimproved or unmodified natural landscape feature which does not contain artifacts or other physical evidence of human activity that have unique significance in history or prehistory."

HONOR (Honor Our Neighbors Original Rights) asks that letters be sent to elected representatives protesting the proposed change, because, if passed, many sacred Indian sites currently protected may be retroactively denied. More information is available from: HONOR, 2647 N. Stowell Ave., Milwaukee, WI, 53211.

Peacemaker teams

Anyone interested in joining Christian peacemaker teams headed for the Middle East (in April) or Haiti (in June) can call 312-455-1199.

Short takes

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Countering judgment and hate with nonviolent love

by Herman Page

"I want you to know that we're going to your big meeting in Indianapolis and watch all your bishops copulate with Bishop Tutu," Fred Phelps of Topeka's Westboro Baptist Church screamed at me and at others witnessing outside St. David's Episcopal Church last July.

While I was upset at the slander of one of the great bishops of the Anglican Communion, I was delighted that Phelps and his anti-homosexual pickets would be at the Episcopal Church's 1994 General Convention. "Now," I thought, "the rest of the Church will find out what we've been putting up with here in Topeka."

Phelps founded the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan., in 1956, as a "primitive" Baptist congregation. Over the years he and his family have comprised most of the membership. He has a large family, and several of his children are attorneys in the law firm of "Phelps, Chartered." Phelps himself was disbarred from the practice of law in 1979.

In 1992, the Westboro Baptist Church began its picketing against homosexuality at the city's Gage Park, which had some history of gay activity. His signs appeared stating such messages as "God hates fags," "Fags are worthy of death," and "Fags = anal sex = death." Included on other signs were negative comments about various public officials.

During the winter of 1992, an *ad hoc* group of citizens decided to try to counter the Phelps demonstrations, organizing several gatherings called "Sunday in the Park without Fred" as positive times for people to come together, play games, have picnics and witness to God's love for all. At least twice participants included members of St. David's, wearing shirts bearing the name of the parish softball team, "St. David's Deacons."

Later, an ecumenical group of clergy ran an ad in Topeka's daily newspaper distancing themselves from the Phelps' use of Scripture to condemn homosexual persons and others. Robert Layne, St. David's rector, and I missed signing the ad, so we decided to run a separate one for St. David's. About 100 parishioners signed it. Coming from laypeople rather than clergy, who are often thought to be "paid" to say such things, the ad was a strong witness.

In response, in March of 1992, members of the Westboro Baptist Church began to picket St. David's on Sunday mornings, harassing people coming to church with their "God hates fags" signs and with verbal abuse. Most of us thought that since Phelps and his followers seemed to thrive on publicity, we would try ignoring him, hoping they would go away. But they did not! A year later, they were still coming on Sunday mornings to picket St. David's.

It was sickening, week after week, to see the signs and hear the insults. I hated to hear the Episcopal Church blasphemed. I was angry at the cries of "Rectum Bob" directed at our rector and of "You drink rectal blood" in reference to the Blessed Sacrament. A parishioner of Asian descent was called "slant eyes" and an Hispanic church member was called "Greaser fag." At one elderly woman suffering from cancer, they yelled, "Why don't you just hurry up and die, you old whore!" To another person with a small oxygen tank, one picketer said, "I hope you drop dead on the church steps, you dyke."

In February 1993, Layne preached that we could no longer ignore picketing which denied the love of God for all persons. So a number of St. David's parishioners agreed to begin witnessing to God's love.

Bob Proctor, a parishioner and local psychologist, and two other parishioners agreed to head up the program. Layne insisted that we take "non-violent protest" training. Guidelines were prepared and we made signs that read "God loves all," "Jesus loves you," and "Love one another." The first public witnessing occurred at an ecumenical Palm Sunday procession.

Here are some of the procedures we used:

- Non-violent witnessing — we would not respond by word or deed to anything the Phelps people said.
- All people witnessing, whether from St. David's or from outside, would sign the guidelines *each* time and accept the direction of a team leader.
- Any individual bothered or stressed by the picketers was to come into the church, rather than chance an inappropriate response to the picketers.
- We required a minimum of ten persons before going out to witness and witnessers were to stay together.
- Sessions were to begin and end with prayer; other persons, if available, would keep a prayer vigil in the chapel.

The witnessing outside St. David's continued for over a year, in freezing weather and in scorching heat. Some Sundays the Phelps family came as early as 7 a.m. (St. David's has an 8 a.m. service); other times they arrived just before the 10 a.m. service. Some days they stayed all morning and occasionally

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they didn't come at all, although we would continue our witness even in their absence.

It seemed to me that we really were, as it says in Ephesians, struggling not just against "flesh and blood" but against powers of evil. The sneers on the picketers' faces, their language and their gestures seemed so opposite to what the ministry of Jesus was about.

St. David's attempted to get a city ordinance to prohibit picketing before, during and after church activities within a certain distance of our property, but failed. Twice the city commission voted an ordinance by a 5-4 margin, but the mayor, who feared the cost of a long court fight with Westboro Baptist, vetoed the measure each time. "Right-to-life" advocates also opposed the ordinance for fear of limits in their picketing of health clinics. The only relief for St. David's came when a temporary restraining order was granted by Judge Michael Barbara, on the grounds that the picket signs and verbal harassment were not a suitable environment for children coming to church. The injunction went into effect July 21, 1994, and with that, at the judge's request, we temporarily suspended our public witnessing.

At times, during those 15 months of public witnessing, we were scared. We wondered if someone might attempt a drive-by shooting. Also, on more than one occasion several young men in the Westboro group tried to provoke us to violence.

It was tempting to respond in kind. That's why we always prayed before we went out, hopefully not in the spirit that we were "good" and they were "evil," but to help us not return evil for evil and to pray for the Westboro group.

The hardest part for me was to move from the protest into celebrating the Eucharist. What a shifting of emotional gears! It was equally hard for many worshipers to run the gauntlet of hate and insult outside and then enter into meaningful worship time inside.

St. David's parishioners witness to God's love in the face of hateful protests at their Topeka, Kan., church.

When we came in after each session of witnessing, we would usually form a circle, have silent prayer, maybe debrief. We tried to share our own hateful emotions. We were often in need of absolution and cleansing, but we tried to commit what we had tried to do in a loving way to God's grace.

We learned a great deal from the experience. I personally had to rethink my whole approach about homosexuality. And many of us had to think and pray long and hard about the meaning of the baptismal covenant, to "respect the dignity of every human being." We could see how hate groups tend to pick on the most vulnerable constituencies in a community.

We were heartened by letters of support from other Episcopal parishes. One parish in southern California sent banners and a video of greeting in which they assured us of their prayers. The women's group of a rural Methodist parish in central Kansas sent a bouquet of flowers. We had frequent visitors from out of town.

Locally, many people drove by St. David's during our program of witnessing, saw our signs and gave us honks, waves, and cheers. Layne frequently asked other churches who approved of what we were doing to send delegations to help us. Over 80 individuals did respond, including Bishop Smalley, some other clergy and several laypeople from other congregations who were very regular in coming.

In the spring of 1993 I studied at St. George's in Jerusalem and while there spent an afternoon at the Holocaust Museum. It was amazing to reflect on the rise of the Nazi movement: its small beginnings, its violence and its "equal-opportunity hatred" of Jews, gypsies, homosexuals, labor leaders, the mentally ill and so on; and note the similarities with the Westboro group. The question arises in looking back at Nazi Germany: "Where were the churches?"

People understand where St. David's stands: we're trying, though imperfectly, to live out the Baptismal Covenant to "work for justice and peace and respect the dignity of every human being." TW

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Our sin and God's mercy:

an interview with Madeleine L'Engle

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Madeleine L'Engle, author of more than 50 books for children as well as adults, is an Episcopalian living in New York City and Goshen, Conn.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: There tends to be a left/right dichotomy regarding sin — the right focusses on personal sin while the left focusses on social sin. Do you have thoughts on this?

Madeleine L'Engle: There is a happy medium. People on the right say it's all sin and evil. The left says there is no such thing as evil. ...

Sin is separation from God. I blundered and struggled for years before I understood that Jesus was without sin, because Jesus was never separate from the source. He did things that were considered wrong, and that the right wing would say are wrong, but he was always in union with God.

J. W.-K.: Have you been in the presence of sin?

M.L'E: Walking from my apartment to the cathedral, I walk past drug dealers — I think that's evil.

On the other hand, I was at a church meeting when someone spewed forth judgmental hate. He said, "It says in the Bible ..." I responded, "I'm feeling judgmental towards you and that puts me in the presence of evil. In atonement, I'll bring a leg of lamb and the priest can put blood on his ears and toes — it says so in the Bible."

We find what we look for. If we look for evil, we will find it. If we look for Satan, Satan will oblige. As Christians, we should be looking for Christ, and for love.

Madeleine L'Engle James Solherm, ENS

J.W.-K.: What should Christians do in relationship to evil?

M. L'E.: Satan kept tempting Jesus to forego his humanity. I like the old translation that says we need to "resist steadfast in the faith."

On public radio I heard an interview with the most popular pop singer in Rwanda — he kept talking about the need for reconciliation. The interviewer said, "Have you lost anyone in this?" He answered, "Oh yes, my mother, my father, my little brothers." And they said, "You can talk about reconciliation?" Meanwhile, I thought, I'm in the presence of a saint.

I think there are powers of evil in the universe. One of the worst things the media has done is persuade us that normal is nice. Normal isn't nice. It's life with all its ups and downs — from a head cold to the loss of a child.

I went to the dentist and I had novocaine and gas. I was in and out of consciousness — I suddenly realized that to be conscious is to be able to feel pain. God came as Jesus to feel pain. In this culture we try to avoid pain at all costs — we have pills for every pain possible.

For lepers the biggest problem is the loss of pain — they have no warning system for breaks and disfigurement. Perhaps it's our soul's warning system too. Perhaps it's a good thing we're feeling pain in the church — if we deny it, it will become like a leprous sore. But if we say, "Yes there is pain between the left and right," maybe we'll work toward the kind of reconciliation that the man in Rwanda was talking about — with a total understanding that he had lost his entire family.

J. W.-K.: What are the resources that the church can bring to situations of evil? Do we in the church call on these resources often enough?

M. L'E.: I think the church has got to stop being polarized between the left and the right, the permissivists and the fundalits (fundamentalists/literalists). There are things that are wrong, behaviors that are wrong and have real and dreadful consequences. Self-indulgence is not the most important thing in the world. What has happened to our promises? In my marriage I was attracted to other men, and my husband to other women. We don't need to act out all that we feel!

J.W.-K.: Does the church have specific resources? Like sacraments?

M.L'E.: Sacraments are essential. When I receive the bread and the wine I am being given the original matter that the Word cried out. We are all made of the same stuff as the stars. Eucharistic bread is a sustainer, and it's cautionary — you've just eaten *this* and you can do *that*?

J.W.-K.: In the presence of something as destructive as nuclear weapons, does the church have a responsibility?

M. L'E.: If the church truly does its job

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and we truly believe that the Word lives among us, we cannot see these evils without doing something about them.

J.W.-K.: Do you have reservations about doing it as the church?

M.L'E.: We read about how the church confronted similar evils in the Acts of the Apostles. Can we do less? I'm only reluctant to do it in the name of the church because when you get involved in a cause you can lose track of human compassion.

J. W.-K.: I understand that you are writing a book about mercy. What's your understanding of mercy?

M. L'E.: In the 100s, William Langland wrote, "All the wickedness in the world which man might say or do is no more to the mercy of God than a live coal dropped in the sea." I'm calling the book *A Live Coal in the Sea.*

After I'd given a college lecture, a young man said, "Your books seem to indicate that God is forgiving." I replied, "What an extraordinary statement." He amended, "What I mean is that your books do seem to imply that ultimately God is going to forgive everyone." I responded, "I don't think God is going to fail with Creation. I don't worship a failing God. Do you want God to fail?" He said, "But there has to be absolute justice." I asked, "If you should die tonight, is that what you want? Absolute justice? Don't you feel the need of any mercy at all?" For some reason that had not occurred to him. I finally suggested that he read the Bible from beginning to end, and that he would find that mercy by far outweighs anger.

J. W.-K.: Do you see this in the natural world as well?

M. L'E.: Quantum mechanics and particle physics have certainly altered my faith in God. Everything is related to and affects everything else. The universe is more marvelous than we can have dreamed. Shouldn't our image of God and God's mercy have grown with that understanding? TW

A wind under the door

Madeleine L'Engle enthusiasts will recognize this passage from A Wind Under the Door *in which Meg seeks to save her brother's life by throwing herself into the echthroi, the demonic void, that is threatening his life.*

The pain.
It came again, as she had known it would.
Agony. Red anguish pounding against her eyeballs ...
....
Cold beyond snow and ice and falling mercury.
Cold beyond the absolute zero of outerspace.
Cold and pain.
She struggled.
You are X to me, Echthroi. I fill you.
....
She cried out, "I hold you! I love you, I Name you. I Name you, Echthroi. You are not nothing. You are."
....
I Name you, Echthroi. I name you Meg.
I Name you Calvin.
I Name you Mr. Jenkins.
I Name you Proginoskes.
I fill you with Naming.
Be!
Be, butterfly and behemoth,
be galaxy and grasshopper,
star and sparrow,
you matter,
you are,
be!
Be, caterpillar and comet,
be porcupine and planet,
sea sand and solar system,
sing with us,
dance with us,
rejoice with us,
for the glory of creation,
sea gulls and seraphim,
angle worms and angel host,
chrysanthemum and cherubim
(O cherubim)
Be!
Sing for the glory
of the living and the loving
the flaming of creation
sing with us
dance with us
be with us
Be!
....
Echthroi! you are Named! My arms surround you. You are no longer nothing. You are. You are filled. You are me.

— A Wind Under The Door,
Dell Yearling, 1973.

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Fighting social evil: Radicals and conservatives share roots

by Kenneth Leech

An anti-racist spirituality must be both radical and traditional. It calls for rootedness in a living tradition.

It is strange that today the word "radical" is opposed to "fundamentalist," since both *radix* (root) and *fundamenta* (foundations) are almost identical words. Both refer to the need for grounding, for rootedness, for secure foundations. Such a quest for roots is basic to all forms of racism and fascism: such roots are sought in the myths of blood and soil, of fatherland, of genetic purity. They can only be combatted by a faith whose roots are deeper and more universal, which transcend those of tribalism.

It is even stranger to find "radicalism" opposed to tradition."

Today, when I hear the word "traditionalist" I suspect that it refers to someone who is effectively ignorant of the tradition in its richness and complexity, but who clings to the conventions of several decades ago. The whole point of a living tradition is that it roots people within a history. Of course, traditions must be subjected to continual scrutiny and interrogation. But as Alasdair MacIntyre has shown in *After Virtue*, to be outside of all traditions is to be rootless, to exist in a state of intellectual and moral destitution, speaking the languages of everywhere and nowhere.

I believe we need to question the assumption that movements of social and political protest go hand-in-hand with theological relativism and "liberalism." Often radical protest and witness is rooted in a deeply traditional theology which calls the unjust order into question. Thus John Davies, Bishop of Shrewsbury, writes of his experiences in South Africa:

"The most powerful weapon in Catholicism's armory of imagery in the struggle against injustice is the doctrine of the Body of Christ. ... There has been nothing radical or intellectually daring about this: the South African situation has required Catholicism to be thoroughly conservative and oppose the novel nonsense of upstart racism with a traditional orthodoxy which insists that there must be a visible fellowship of believers and that Christian love must be acted out in visible terms."

This empahsis on the visible body brings me to my second characteristic of an anti-racist spirituality. Such a spirituality will be both materialistic and transcendent. Materialist both because it will be rooted in specific, concrete, material struggles and demands and because its theological sources are those of incarnation, resurrection and Eucharist.

Some approaches to racism see it primarily as a personally disfiguring disease, a type of psychological illness, of individual pathology. Yet racism is, of its very nature, embodied in structures. It was to emphasize this structural dimension that the word racism was introduced into popular English usage and entered dictionaries at the end of the 1960s.

The only spirituality which can be of use in combatting racism is one which takes seriously the principalities and powers, the truth that spiritual evil is concretized and embodied in earthly material forms.

Often radical protest and witness is rooted in a deeply traditional theology which calls the unjust order into question. The experience of Christians both in Nazi Germany and in South Africa show that, resistance to racism is bound up theologically with the assertion that Jesus is Lord.

Yet, as the experience of Christians both in Nazi Germany and in South Africa shows, resistance to racism is bound up theologically with the claims of transcendence and with the assertion that Jesus is Lord, and the refusal to acknowledge lesser gods.

There is a true "otherworldliness" which issues not in withdrawal from this world, but in the struggle for its transformation by the powers of the world to come. The insistence that all Christian life is *en Christo*, that we are all citizens of a new creation, is absolutely basic. As

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Kenneth Leech is an English priest who has spent his life in anti-racist ministry in the East End of London. This article is excerpted from Leech's keynote address, "Developing a Spirituality for Anti-Racist Action," delivered to the 1994 Episcopal Urban Caucus Assembly in Charlotte, N.C. The address forms a chapter in the EUC's publication, *"To Heal the Sin-Sick Soul": A Spirituality for the Struggle Against Racism*, which can be purchased for $12.50 from the EUC by writing them at 138 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass. 02111.

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long as we are conformed to this world, we will accept both its premises and its conclusions.

I believe, thirdly, that an anti-racist spirituality must be prepared to live with darkness and perplexity. This is as central to the meaning of the Cross as it is to the life of faith itself. We often talk as if the struggle against racism is primarily educational and that, if only we expressed ourselves in better language, people would understand. But the problem may not be that people don't understand, but that they do.

To be involved in the struggle against the demons of racism is to be brought into the very heart of the mystery of evil, to enter the darkness of the paschal mystery, to share something of that desolation and that upheaval.

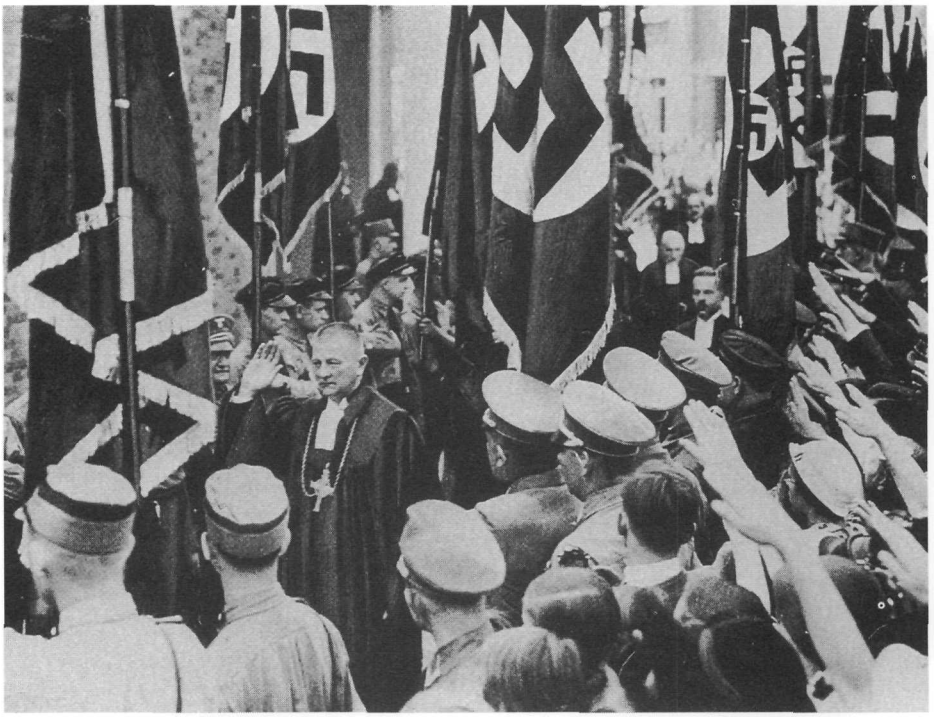
The encounter with racism, therefore, is a spiritual crisis of the most profound proportions. It is nothing less than a corporate dark night of the church and it is only out of this crisis that any of us can emerge whole.

Yet, such a spirituality is rooted in a vision of a better order, a vision of God's kingdom.

Earlier Christian social thinkers often confused the kingdom of God with the liberal doctrine of progress and missed the elements of crisis and apocalypse. But they did get it right that the kingdom of God involves this world. A spirituality to combat racism is a kingdom spirituality, a spirituality of a new order of things.

So the struggle against racism must be located within the wider spiritual and theological framework of the good news of the kingdom, involving the collapse of Babylon and the coming of the New Jerusalem.

And this involves vision and envisioning, dreaming and prefiguring, living the dream and holding fast the vision. TW



At a gathering similar to this one in Gustav Adolf Church, Berlin in 1934, the dean of Madgeburg Cathedral explained from the pulpit: "In short, [the flag] has come to be the symbol of German hope. Whoever reviles this symbol of ours is reviling our Germany. The swastika flags around the altar radiate hope — hope that the day is at last about to dawn."

Statements of faith

The Barmen declaration, which took issue with Nazi claims to power, was drafted by Karl Barth and approved by the Confessional Synod at Barmen on May 31, 1934. It reads in part:

"Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death.

"We reject false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God's revelation."

Similarly, the South African Kairos Document, authored by more than 50 black pastors ministering in the townships near Johannesburg in 1986, condemned apartheid as "heresy" and called the god of the South African state "the devil disguised as almighty god — the antichrist."

Both constituencies would probably agree with the words spoken in 1978 by Archbishop Oscar Romero (who was martyred in March, 1980 for taking the side of the poor in the struggles in El Salvador): "This is the mission entrusted to the church, a hard mission: to uproot sins from history, to uproot sins from the political order, to uproot sins from the economy, to uproot sins wherever they are. What a hard task!"

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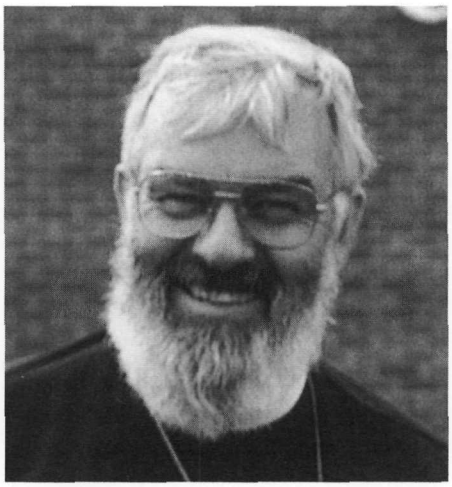
Leaving the Episcopal Church: an interview with Ken Bieber

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

[Ed. note: Ken Bieber, an Episcopal priest for nine years, left the church last fall feeling that many of the bishops and priests of the Episcopal Church do not take the creeds or the Gospel mandates seriously. Bieber, whose politics are conservative, served on many committees and on the Executive Council in the Diocese of Michigan. He was a deputy from Michigan to the 1994 General Convention in Indianapolis, resigning immediately upon his return. He is now establishing a congregation in the Charismatic Episcopal Church.]



Ken Bieber Herb Gunn

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: What drew you to the Episcopal Church?

Ken Bieber: My wife! We got married in her church because she was quite a committed Christian. I went to Vietnam right away and really didn't think much of religion until coming back.

A number of circumstances — a lot of it outside the church — led me to a deeper relationship with Christ. I began to get active. Then I began to look more and more at what it meant to worship. As I began to understand the liturgy and the prayer book, it just amazed me how neat and how clear the teaching of the church was. But the more I knew about what the church said even back then, there was a disappointment of not seeing it practiced.

J.W-K.: What are some examples of that?

K.B.: Well, like the creeds. I have this intuitive feeling that everybody who says the Nicene Creed, knows what it means: There is God and Christ and the Holy Spirit; Jesus was crucified, died, was buried and rose again.

Yet I ran into so many clergy who didn't believe that, or who said, "Well, it may be all right for us to believe it, but other people don't have to."

Bishop [John Shelby] Spong [of Newark] is an easy target, because in his writings he has simply said, "I don't believe anything that the creed says." And the church does not do anything about that.

Do you recall when Bishop [Richard] Grein [of New York] celebrated a eucharist that invoked the names of pagan deities? How could a bishop either do that or allow that when he was present? And again, there was not much of an outcry about it.

No matter how much we love the Scriptures, if we're wrong, we're still wrong. I don't think there are two sets of truth.

I think we *can* reach wrong conclusions and no matter how much we love the Scriptures, if we're wrong, we're still wrong. I don't think there are two sets of truth.

J.W-K.: And your feeling is that in the nine years that you were ordained in the church, increasingly the majority of the church was coming to the wrong conclusions?

K.B.: Either coming to or allowing the wrong conclusions. I don't think there's any difficulty understanding what the Scriptures mean when they talk about sexual behavior. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to say that some people have reached the wrong conclusion. The fact that people behave in a sexually promiscuous way doesn't change what Scripture says about that.

J.W-K.: It *may* take a rocket scientist, because people of good will and faith disagree. I agree with you on the issue of promiscuity, but I support committed same-sex relationships. And I do take Scripture seriously.

K.B.: I can see that in your writings. I would just say, from my point of view, you're wrong on that.

One of my favorite passages, is when Jesus was talking with the Sadducees and finally said, "Is this not why you're wrong? You neither know the Scriptures, nor the power of God." In the case of sexual behavior or same-sex unions you can know the Scriptures, but not accept that God can and will change your orientation and allow healing to come.

J.W-K.: Tell me about what happened when you and Diane realized you were serious about leaving the Episcopal Church.

K.B.: The question was never of finding *nirvana*, the question was of finding sanity and truth, clear doctrine that was practiced by those in charge.

We are both evangelical and charis-

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matic and have worshipped with Pentecostals and non-denominational charismatic churches. We liked what was there, but they really were, in our estimation, incomplete. They focussed on the Holy Spirit to the exclusion of liturgy, to the exclusion of church history. And they're too independent. There's no authority.

Rome didn't seem right either. I didn't see the papacy as being the place of *all* authority and in general there appears to be more emphasis on supporting the structure of the institution than on the welfare of the people. Instead of a personal relationship with Jesus, there is a works righteousness which implies if you go to church, attend mass, that's all you need.

The Orthodox Church had a lot of appeal. What was amazing was that in all their imperfections, the people that we met — lay and clergy — had no doubt about what the Gospel was and what the Truth was. They didn't live it necessarily, but the teaching was very clear. The bishops didn't say, "I believe in Jesus Christ, the only son of God," and then teach that Christ is only *one* way to salvation.

But then we learned about the Charismatic Episcopal Church. The CEC is not a break-away church. They began as Pentecostals. In their quest for more than what they were experiencing in their charismatic circles, they came to see Anglicanism as western orthodoxy and basically adopted almost everything about Anglicanism.

J.W-K.: Do they use the prayer book?

K.B.: They do and they allow the 1928 prayer book. People can also use Eastern and Roman rites.

J.W-K.: What about inclusive language rites?

K.B.: Probably not.

J.W-K.: By choice or by decree?

K.B.: Well, if it's radical inclusive language that changes what the Scriptures say, it wouldn't be allowed.

J.W-K.: When you mentioned the variety of liturgies that are accepted, it sounded really flexible and then I started to wonder what the limits are.

K.B.: I don't know the limits yet, because I'm not one who's going to be pushing in that direction.

***Last Judgment* by Petrus Christus, 1452.**

J.W-K.: Is there the same kind of hierarchy?

K.B.: There are bishops, but all bishops are parish priests. So all dioceses will be small. It takes a minimum of five parishes to form a diocese and the maximum number in a diocese will be between 24 and 30 parishes. There are about 100 parishes in the United States.

In its liturgy and in its canons, CEC specifically stresses the role of the Holy Spirit in liturgy. It's not mandated *how*, but all churches have to be open to the charismatic gifts — however they may be manifested.

J.W-K.: You're thinking mostly of speaking in tongues?

K.B.: Speaking in tongues, singing in the Spirit, words of prophecy, prayers of healing at the altar rail and seeing people being healed.

A lot of Episcopal churches have been trying to rediscover the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. These folks, coming from their background, were trying to discover liturgy, because they had the charismatic part down.

The whole structure of the CEC is designed towards the parish, because that's where lives are changed. It's not designed upward towards the dioceses where bigger things might happen.

J.W-K.: When people come forward with views that some people consider heretical, what happens then? You don't have General Convention — or maybe you do?

K.B.: Well, there is a convention, but there's not a House of Deputies. There is no voting on the truth in that sense.

J.W-K.: Though their bishops probably vote on exactly that.

K.B.: They use what's called a consensus form of government and they are dedicated to being a house of prayer. They spend most of their meeting time in prayer and study. It's like in the Book of Acts where James said, "It seemed good to us and to the Holy Spirit to make this decision."

J.W-K.: To me it sounds similar to the Episcopal set-up except that lay people and clergy won't have the voice.

K.B.: It's more orthodox in that sense. It's not that they won't have lay input, but the bishops are the ones who are called to

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guard and defend the faith and you don't do that by voting on it. It's less political.

J.W-K.: I'll want to talk to you in 10 years.

K.B.: Well, maybe. The governance is a model where the rector is the leader and his job is to lead people in worship and train them for ministry.

J.W-K.: Did you have any regrets when you went through the formal process of alerting the Episcopal diocese that you were changing denominations?

K.B.: Sure. I had a lot of regrets. In my heart I wish it was something I didn't have to do. I'm leaving something that has everything on paper that I think is important. Yet many people see certain issues as being more important. I wish people were as vehement for the Gospel as they are for abortion or gay rights.

J.W-K.: Somebody in whom I see that kind of enthusiasm and who's unabashed in his testimony to God's love is Louie Crew. His whole work is dedicated to gay rights and yet it would be hard to demonstrate that he's not alive with the Gospel. It doesn't seem to me that it's always terribly clear where faithful people are going to come down politically.

K.B.: We're all sinners. I don't have any trouble with my being a sinner, but I don't say because this is me and God made me this way, I have the right to continue doing this.

J.W-K.: Louie would say that he does not consider homosexuality to be sin which is different than saying I believe that I can sin and not stand before judgment.

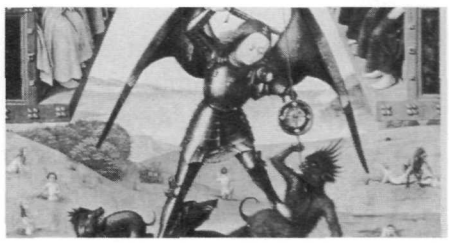
K.B.: The main problem for me is that sets up each individual to be the final arbiter of God's word and the church is not that way. The church is a community and it's a community led by the Spirit that maintains the standards.

One of the things about the Episcopal Church is that you're allowed to think, but we don't make doctrinal statements as individuals. That's what we have councils for.

I don't thunder from the pulpit. But I think we err when we put the truth out, but then modify it with today's slant.

J.W-K.: But in any good Bible study you move from what you've read in the text to your life and back and forth.

K.B.: What I like about the creed is that it's like a boundary. There's room to talk,



but there's also a point that says if you go beyond this then you're really outside the church.

J.W-K.: The creed *is* really clear, *and* there are lots of issues that aren't addressed in it — like gay rights.

One of the things that I really admire about your decision to change denominations is that you didn't get held hostage by the Church Pension Fund. What was your thinking with Diane about that?

K.B.: I do have a guaranteed small pension now for my years of service. We talked about it — the new church won't have those things. From our own life, we know that God is faithful. The Church Pension Fund is something we'll miss, but the word "hostage" is accurate. There are people who don't leave even though in their hearts they want to, because they feel they can't afford to.

I have no qualms about condemning the actions or teachings of people who violate their vows or play word gymnastics with the truth.

I didn't feel that it was appropriate to run to another diocese as some clergy have done. They just kind of isolate their parishes from all the political stuff as best they can and say, "We won't let that affect us," but then they are drawing into a shell which isn't good.

J.W-K.: Sometimes it's hard looking at the left and the right within the Episcopal Church to know if the gap is similar to the one in the culture at large. When you look at what's described as the religious, political right in the U.S. — does it reflect your views?

K.B.: Well, I think the religious right is a term which paints with a broad brush. I don't agree with everything that is attributed to the religious right.

J.W-K.: It's clear, from what you've said earlier, where you stand on the issue of gay and lesbian orientation and on abortion rights. What about the U.S. military, since that's a large focus of the Christian political right.

K.B.: I don't have any problem with a strong defense. I'm one who attributes the fall of Communism, in a large part, to President Reagan's determination to spend the Soviet Union into the ground and to quit playing footsies with them.

It was refreshing for me to hear him call them "an evil empire." We're not perfect either, but people weren't fleeing to the Soviet Union for salvation. They were coming to America.

One of the reasons that I don't mind having a strong, defined military is that our country has never had a problem of changing civilian governments. We've never had a military uprising with the generals deciding the president's off the wall and they're going to take over.

J.W-K.: There's more to say on that. There certainly have been, especially in the late 1960s and 1970s, assassinations within this country that were government initiated. It's not unusual — most coun-

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tries have that kind of experience. But since there are no end to the political things we could take on, I should probably let it go — I look forward to completing the circle after Judgment Day and having clarity about so many things.

K.B.: Don't you know that those who are in Christ have already passed from death into life? And don't go through the Judgment?

J.W-K: No, I think we do. My image of it has always been that there will be a time when we're called to look straight into the eyes of Christ. In that moment, things that we were pretending to ourselves were not sin, will be crystal clear to us. Things that we didn't know were sin will become clear to us as well. We'll have a choice in that moment — either to acknowledge it and repent or to reject Jesus. At least, that's the way I envision it. So, even though I'm alive in Christ and confident in the resurrection, there will still be that moment of accountability.

K.B.: If one is in Christ, one is *past* the judgment. The judgment is for the lost.

J.W-K: I really believe that you and I are both in Christ, and somehow there will need to be a sorting through of the things about which we disagree. That's not judgment in your mind?

K.B.: I don't think those things will determine that I'm right and you're wrong or you're right and I'm wrong, and therefore we go through the two different doors.

J.W-K.: You and I disagree about some crucial issues. Are we both saved?

K.B.: Yes we disagree, but as St. Paul said in Romans 10, "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

On the other hand, Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven." In that context he was speaking about false prophets and that we would know them by their fruit. So salvation is both simple and complex, requiring more than lip service.

I believe God's grace and love are far greater than most of us can imagine or accept. Yet, they don't wink at unrepentant sin. Although we can judge the actions and teachings of others (we have a standard by which to judge), we cannot judge one's salvation — that belongs to God. I believe we can be wrong, but still saved.

Paul wrote about that in first Corinthians: "If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire." The fact is that we all sin and we all err in our judgments. The difficulty comes when individuals, even with all good intentions, redefine sin according to science and feelings without having the church come to that place.

J.W-K.: Am I condemned in your eyes?

K.B.: No you are not. I hope never to be so arrogant as to act as that kind of judge. No one is condemned in my eyes, not even those whose actions and statements I find so appalling.

I have no qualms about condemning the actions or teachings of people who violate their vows or play word gymnastics with the truth. As a pastor and teacher, I have a responsibility to defend, or as it is written, "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints." But eternal judgment is in God's hands — thank God for that!

J.W-K.: How will things come clear?

K.B.: I think they will come clear when we see the Lord on that day.

St. Paul said it best: "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we shall see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known." TW

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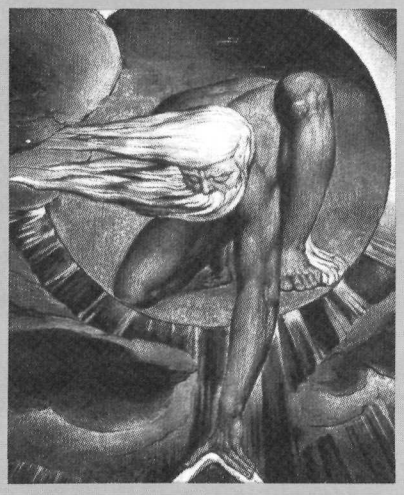

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Surrogacy and redemption

by Delores S. Williams

Black women are intelligent people living in a technological world where nuclear bombs, defilement of the earth, racism, sexism, dope and economic injustices attest to the presence and power of evil in the world.

Perhaps not many people today can believe that evil and sin were overcome by Jesus' death on the cross; that is, that Jesus took human sin upon himself and therefore saved humankind.

Rather, it seems more intelligent and more scriptural to understand that redemption had to do with God, through Jesus, giving humankind new vision to see the resources for positive, abundant relational life. Redemption had to do with God, through the *ministerial* vision, giving humankind the ethical thought and practice upon which to build positive, productive quality of life. Hence, the kingdom of God theme in the *ministerial* vision of Jesus does not point to death; it is not something one has to die to reach. Rather, the kingdom of God is a metaphor of hope God gives those attempting to right the relations between self and self, between self and others, between self and God as prescribed in the sermon on the mount, in the golden rule and in the commandment to show love above all else.

The image of Jesus on the cross is the image of human sin in its most desecrated form. This execution destroyed the body, but not before it mocked and defiled the Jewish man Jesus by publicly exposing his nakedness and private parts, by mocking the *ministerial* vision as they labeled him king of the Jews, by placing a crown of thorns upon his head mocking his dignity and the integrity of his divine mission. The cross thus becomes an image of defilement, a gross manifestation of collective human sin. Jesus, then, does not conquer sin through death on the cross. Rather, Jesus conquers the sin of temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11) by resistance — by resisting the temptation to value the material over the spiritual ("Man shall not live by bread alone"); by resisting death (not attempting suicide that tests God: "if you are the son of God, throw yourself down"); by resisting the greedy urge of monopolistic ownership ("He showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to him, all these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me"). Jesus therefore conquered sin in life, not in death. In the wilderness he refused to allow evil forces to defile the balanced relation between the material and the spiritual, between life and death, between power and the exertion of it.

Helen David Brancato

What this allows the womanist theologian to show black women is that God did not intend the surrogacy roles they have been forced to perform. God did not intend the defilement of their bodies as white men put them in the place of white women to provide sexual pleasure for white men during the slavocracy. This was rape. Rape is defilement, and defilement means wanton desecration. Worse, deeper and more wounding than alienation, the sin of defilement is the one of which today's technological world is most guilty. Nature (the land, the seas, the animals in the sea) are every day defiled by humans. Cultures and peoples (Native Americans, Africans, Jews) have been defiled and destroyed by the onslaught of Western, Christian, patriarchal imperialism in some of its ugliest forms. The oceans are defiled by oil spills, and industrial waste destroys marine life. The rain forest is being defiled. The cross is a reminder of how humans have tried throughout history to destroy visions of righting relationships that involve transformation of tradition and transformation of social relations and arrangements sanctioned by the *status quo*. TW

Delores S. Williams is an associate professor of Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. This article is excerpted from *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk*, Orbis, 1993, which will be released in paperback in July.

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How sin works: the views of Ted Peters

by Marianne Arbogast

Whenever we draw a line between good and evil and place ourselves on the good side, "bells should ring and lights should flash," says Ted Peters, a theologian at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, Cal., and the author of a new book on sin.

"That's the *structure* of sin; that's not the way you overcome sin."

Describing the way sin works — a task he feels is being neglected by the church — is Peters' concern in *Sin: Radical Evil in Soul and Society* (Eerdmanns, 1994).

Drawing on Augustine, neo-orthodox theologians, and an array of other classic and contemporary writers, Peters examines ancient doctrine in a contemporary context.

Though pastoral care has been enhanced by input from psychology and other disciplines, "the image is really western pragmatism," he said in a recent interview with *The Witness*. "You've got problems, we'll help solve them. We get close to a person's soul with that kind of thing, but the real question is, what is a person's relationship with God?"

New Age spiritualities, which Peters credits with filling the gap, tend to see only the good in human nature.

"I'm sympathetic with their motive for doing that — they believe with St. Augustine that the good has a power that the evil doesn't. But there's a lack of realism, a naiveté — in fact, there's an actual denial."

Original sin

"I want to deal with what's just observable about life," Peters says of his exploration of the meaning of original sin. "We enter into streams of action and activity into which bad precedents have already been set, we participate in them, and we contribute to the violence that they do. I love coffee, and I think of poor Juan Valdez's family in Columbia not having enough bread on the table. Well, the injustice of the coffee economy was established before I was born, but I can't help, when I drink coffee, contributing to that.

"A critic will say, 'I believe that babies are born free, and that as they grow up, they make these free choices, and they eventually choose patterns of selfishness.' The problem with that criticism is it doesn't account for this experience that we have of being drawn ineluctably into these pre-existing structures of evil."

He notes two understandings of freedom in Christian tradition which he sees as "only partially compatible.

"The first is the quasi-pelagian understanding, that we are free egos and we stand in a neutral position, and we've got good on the left hand and evil on the right — so freedom is the condition for the possibility of doing evil. It's that understanding of freedom which the Christian tradition has bequeathed to the western world.

"But there is another understanding of freedom that's really quite different, and that's freedom understood as liberation. You begin with the experience of bondage, and then when God's grace acts in your life, you experience liberation."

Steps to Radical Evil

Peters identifies "seven steps down the path to radical evil": 1) anxiety, 2) unfaith, 3) pride (from individual narcissism to patriarchy and homophobia), 4) concupiscence ("an unquenchable fire of wanting and wanting and wanting," symbolized by sexual lust but, extending to the creation and maintenance of an unjust international economic order), 5) self-justification and scapegoating, 6) cruelty (growing out of "the lie that is tied so closely to virtually every aspect of sin — namely, that we can gain our own immortality by stealing life from others"); and 7) blasphemy, or radical evil.

Self-justification

He writes compellingly against self-justification and scapegoating, which he considers "the most subtle and dangerous dimension of sin" (p. 162).

The entire mechanism [of self-justification] is shattered when it becomes clear that God has identified with the scapegoat rather than the righteous ones who slaughter with the best interests of the existing social order at heart.

Here, truth "flies in the face of the way we think things should work," Peters explains. "If we are to be moral people, we should try to make ourselves good and to stamp out evil, right?"

Wrong, he contends. For as soon as we identify ourselves with the good, we identify others with evil, opening the floodgates of exclusion, prejudice, and

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Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*.

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violence done in God's name.

"The entire mechanism is shattered when it becomes clear that God has identified with the scapegoat rather than the righteous ones who slaughter with the best interests of the existing social order at heart. ... One way to look at this is to suggest that when God draws the line between good and evil, God places the incarnate divine self on the evil side."

This insight, he believes, should lead Christians to avoid all forms of ideology, and to humility in their most cherished moral crusades.

Culture wars and activism

"It is the combination of morality and ultimacy that marks the danger" in the contemporary American "culture wars," he writes.

"What accounts for the tenacity and ferocity on both sides of each of these cultural battles [over abortion, gay rights, etc.] is the identification of those involved with an ultimate moral order, identification with what adherents to each ideology presume to be ultimate justice or goodness or righteousness. ... My point here is not to pick sides in the culture wars. Nor do I wish to propound a limp ideology of inclusivity that takes the passion out of moral activism. Rather, I simply want to suggest that in order to understand sin, we must be able to see it right in the very heart of our most moral endeavors."

If we really think about ourselves in terms of how it is that I justify myself, how it is that I do violence against others in the very process of trying to make myself look good, that's getting ready for repentance and forgiveness.

The model he would propose for activists is "the Dietrich Bonhoeffer paradigm. When Bonhoeffer participated in the plot to kill Hitler, the moral question arose, 'Does the evil that you would have prevented, had you been successful in killing Hitler, justify the means of having committed murder?' Bonhoeffer's response was no, committing murder is an evil pure and simple, it was sin. So the question of moral action is one in which the sinner sins boldly, to use Luther's words."

Peters believes that, in resisting oppression, "we don't have any alternative in which there isn't violence of some kind. I do think on a relative scale that economic violence is much better than military violence; but when you take away a company's profits, through a labor union strike or whatever, you just have to call it what it is.

"I think of ethics and social action as being eminently practical, that if I choose violence B I think it's better for society than violence A. It's not that the track I'm pushing is absolutely good, it's God's will, it's going to bring in an everlasting utopia; but rather that, on balance, this is better than the alternative. The pursuit of justice has to continue, but the pursuit of self-reflection, understanding myself as a sinner who's trying to take action, will mitigate a lot of the violence that could be done."

Theological pitfalls

Peters is sharply critical of liberation theology for conveying the impression that siding with the oppressed puts one in the camp of the righteous.

"I genuinely believe that the liberation theologians were right — there are structures of injustice that are built into society, and the church was wrong for never having paid attention to that. But the victimized group is subject to the same dynamics as the oppressive group."

Back issues

The following back issues of *The Witness* are available. 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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Prince of peace: When the church engages rage 12/92
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Staying in my denomination 10/94
Women's spirituality 7/94

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Likewise, he raises challenging questions for Christian feminists: Are there forms of feminism that function as self-justifying ideology? At what point might goddess worship signify "a return to old-fashioned idolatry?" (p. 112).

But many who take such questions seriously will dispute his interpretation of Virginia Ramey Mollenkott's affirmation that "because God is womanlike — women are Godlike" (p. 113) as idolatrous. (In a generally favorable 1994 book review in *Christian Century*, Walter Wink faults "the absence of a thoroughgoing critique of biblical patriarchy" in Peters' thought.)

Radical evil

Though Peters traces a logical progression in his seven steps, he is primarily concerned with showing the underlying connectedness of all sin. Sin is of a piece, and even if our sins stop short of blasphemy, or "radical evil," it is an outgrowth of the same weed.

Peters defines blasphemy as "the misuse of divine symbols so as to prevent the communication of God's grace."

Its covert form, or "the form of the lie," can be recognized when "the symbols associated with God become so identified with oppression that their original intent is subverted." The appeal to Scripture to justify apartheid is a case in point.

Overt blasphemy is evil in the name of evil, symbolized by Satan.

Peters — who explains in the introduction to his book that his initial impetus to write it came, in part, from his exposure to accounts of Satanic ritual abuse — devotes considerable space to an examination of the phenomenon of Satanism, examining the perspectives of Satanists, anti-Satanists and anti-anti-Satanists.

Because sin, by its nature, leads us to see evil outside us rather than within us, Peters says we need to be vigilant against the temptation to "trivialize radical evil by identifying it with every point of view with which we disagree," and thereby failing "to recognize the real Satan when he appears"(p. 248).

As a principle of discernment, Peters suggests that "Satan is present when we hear the call to shed innocent blood."

Meeting of Pilgrim and Envy, **c. 1390** — **Biblioteque Royale, Brussels**

Genetic sin?

Peters, a participant in the government-funded study of theological and ethical issues raised by the controversial Human Genome Initiative, devotes the final chapter of his book to this topic.

Noting that the balance of scientific opinion is shifting toward heavier weighting of biological influences on human behavior — even "aggression and altruism, vice and virtue" (p. 294) — Peters ponders the spiritual implications of this perspective.

Does it support Augustine's view of original sin as hereditary disease?

If propensity to sin is in our genes, is the grace to transcend it also genetically given?

What if someone were shown to be genetically predisposed to crime — would they be considered innocent — or would their genes make them guilty?

Apart from rejecting a determinist perspective that leaves no room for grace, Peters does not answer these questions, but holds them up as markers of a dawning theological frontier.

But while he reports that the genetic issues have generated the strongest interest among readers, his own assessment of the significance of his work stresses the dynamics of self-justification.

"If we really think about ourselves in terms of how it is that I justify myself, how it is that I do violence against others in the very process of trying to make myself look good, that's getting ready for repentance and forgiveness and renewal and that whole dynamic that we've thought, in the church, has been so precious over the centuries — but we've lost a way of understanding it." TW

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Offering a clear focus to a church in disarray: the EUC at 15

by Julie A. Wortman

One of the most successful coalitions that has ever been forged in the Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Urban Caucus (EUC), will meet this month in New Orleans to continue incubating ideas and strategies for making the church's urban ministries with the poor more effective. It's a process in which the group has been engaged ever since its founding 15 years ago in Indianapolis.

"We started with 500 people — the cathedral in Indianapolis was filled," says Mike Kendall, who co-chaired the first assembly with John Walker, the bishop of Washington and chair of the Urban Bishops' Coalition. "Since then we've maintained a dedicated core membership of between 150 and 200."

Like Walker and Kendall (who is New York's archdeacon and a past chair of the national church's Standing Commission on the Church in Metropolitan Areas), many in that core group have been influential in the councils of the church.

"We're not a powerful organization, no one would say that, but there have been major accomplishments by the members, like Jubilee Ministries [anti-poverty initiative passed in 1982] and the Michigan plan [for economic justice passed in 1988]," says Emmett Jarrett, EUC's current president. "Some of our members helped draft those pieces of legislation." In 1991 Caucus members were also successful in persuading the General Convention to make fighting racism in the church a priority until the year 2000.

The harder task, Jarrett says, has been holding the church's feet to the fire around implementation. "With all the recent budget cuts, Jubilee is now just an empty shell. The church also made a unanimous decision to support a major economic justice program and then there's been nothing. We were going to have the church *invest* its money in economic justice — we were going to have a national church mutual fund!"

An EUC-backed effort at last year's budget-slashing General Convention resulted in a "challenge budget" that would channel funds to Jubilee Ministries and to economic/racial justice programs if dioceses exceed the asking from the national church in 1995. But that's an eventuality that few expect, despite widespread enthusiasm for the idea among convention participants.

"We survived [the budget process]," EUC coordinator Ed Rodman told members in this year's pre-assembly mailing. "But with, I believe, a greatly diminished national church program and a weak process for raising additional funds needed to truly support the so-called challenge budget."

EUC board member Richard Bowden believes that EUC-supported programs would get better financial backing if more bishops were active in the group. "The Caucus came into being because of an initiative of the urban bishops," Bowden says. "But social concerns are no longer foremost on their minds. There are more pots on the stove now."

The EUC's agenda for the past 15 years, in fact, has deviated very little from that set by a series of public hearings that those 50 or so bishops held in 1978 and 1979. In *To Hear and To Heed*, the report produced afterward, Joseph Pelham, then the dean at the Rochester Center for Theological Studies, wrote that in listening to those who testified at the hearings, certain conclusions were inescapable.

"We must decide that we will be *for the poor*," Pelham said, noting that it would be a struggle "which has no forseeable end."

In words prophetic of the EUC's current focus on the church's racist institutional life, Pelham also asserted, "We must decide to recognize that without consistency between the church's own life and the ends and purposes of its mission, that mission will be fraudulent and impotent. Racism and sexism in the church itself are contradictions."

According to Kendall, EUC's single-minded focus on the urban poor and the "isms" which are used to keep them poor, in fact, is now one of its best contributions to a church some believe to be in disarray.

"The Episcopal Church is struggling with its future and identity," Kendall says. "The Caucus keeps a very clear focus on ministry in urban areas and with the poor — it isn't really caught up in the disarray. As far as we're concerned, the church can restructure any way it wants, but it *must* deal with our cities. Keeping the basic mission of eradicating poverty alive is so important."

Sandy Elledge of the Appalachian People's Service Organization (APSO) believes that with the Republican ascendancy in Congress, the EUC may now be in a position to strengthen its clout.

"Some people are almost *opposed* to ministry with the poor in these times of blaming the victim," Elledge says. "And there seems to be a backlash against anything liberal. The Caucus can be a place where people opposed to this trend can organize." New blood, Elledge believes, will also be an asset to the group.

"What's powerful about the caucus is that it's a place where black people and white people work together," says the EUC's Jarrett. "It's a place where people connect — just to know folks who care about the same thing really helps."

Vital Signs

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness*.

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Mandating anti-racism

by Herb Gunn

Less than 100 days into the life of a new, smaller Diocese of Michigan organized into regional councils of congregations, the diocese's bishop, Stewart Wood, with the endorsement of the diocese's Executive Council, has mandated that each new council will assume as part of its organizational mandate "a prime directive of becoming anti-racist in decisionmaking and in every other aspect of its corporate life."

The diocese's canon to the ordinary, Bonnie Anderson, stresses that Wood's anti-racism mandate is not a request for a new program. "What the bishop is asking is that everybody approach their ministry through a wider lens," Anderson said.

Anti-racism has been a central theme in Wood's episcopate since he became diocesan in 1990. A volunteer anti-racism training network formed by the Bishop's Anti-Racism Committee has been offering congregations and diocesan groups anti-racism training since 1992.

The new anti-racism mandate has its roots in the campaign to divide the old diocese which stalled in 1992 when black clergy charged that division was racially motivated — virtually no persons or congregations of color were to be included in the proposed new northern diocese (now the Diocese of Eastern Michigan). The 1993 diocesan convention withheld approval for division until delegates committed both new dioceses to eradicating racism from their institutional lives.

The two new dioceses officially came into existence on Jan. 1, 1995, and Wood's mandate was announced a few weeks later. The Bishop's Anti-Racism Committee will be providing the new deans and presidents of the new regional councils with anti-racism training during a day-long organizational workshop on March 11. Facilitated by staff from Boston's Women's Theological Center, the training is aimed at ensuring that the new councils will begin organizing along anti-racist lines so that decision-making, access to and allocation of resources, standards of behavior and definitions of problems will not perpetuate a situation of white racial supremacy.

"The training will give the councils some tools in dealing with the questions they need to ask themselves when they are trying to adhere to the bishop's mandate," explained Rebecca Morris, chair of the anti-racism committee. "It gives a mechanism to confirm the bishop's position that he would like to see us be a church for all races."

Wood told the diocese's Executive Council last January that it seemed necessary to issue the mandate because congregations and diocesan groups have not been seeking anti-racism training on their own. Only eight congregations, two youth groups and a handful of staffs have invited the diocese's anti-racism training network to lead anti-racism trainings in the past two years.

"We are anxious to move beyond waiting for congregations to invite us to come do the training," Wood said.

Herb Gunn is editor of *The Record*, the Diocese of Michigan's newspaper.

Scots now have women priests

One in seven Episcopal Church priests in Scotland are now women, following a spate of ordinations in December and Janaury that marked the ending of that Anglican province's male-only priesthood. The Scottish church eliminated the final barrier to women priests last June.

ATR focuses on urban ministry

Urban ministry was the focus of the Fall 1994 issue of the *Anglican Theological Review (ATR)*. Authors included a number of Episcopal Urban Caucus activists: G.P. Mellick Belshaw, recently retired Bishop of New Jersey and a former president of the EUC, Edward Rodman, canon missioner in the Diocese of Massachusetts and the EUC's staff consultant, and Maria Marta Aris-Paul, former executive director of the Instituto Pastoral Hispano. Norman Faramelli, a board member of the Episcopal City Mission in Massachusetts, Gibson Winter, whose groundbreaking book, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches*, posed an early challenge to the church not to abandon the cities, and English urban activist Kenneth Leech (writing with Alan Green and Hillary Russell), also provided essays.

Topics ranged from Winter's examination of violence and poverty and Rodman's survey of urban ministry in the black Episcopal Church to Faramelli's analysis of the future role of local congregations, Leech's reflections on England's urban church and Aris-Paul's question, "Can the Episcopal Church respond to the hispanic community?"

Belshaw, editor of this issue of the *ATR*, writes about "The Religion of the Incarnation," which he argues is "the theological ground for the church's presence with and ministry among the poor, whose poverty is a global phenomenon and whose proportions challenge the mission of the church as never before."

Single copies of this issue cost $6, subscriptions to the quarterly *ATR* cost $23 per year or $43 for two years. Contact *ATR's* Jacqueline Winter at 600 Haven Street, Evanston, Ill., 60201; (708) 864-6024.

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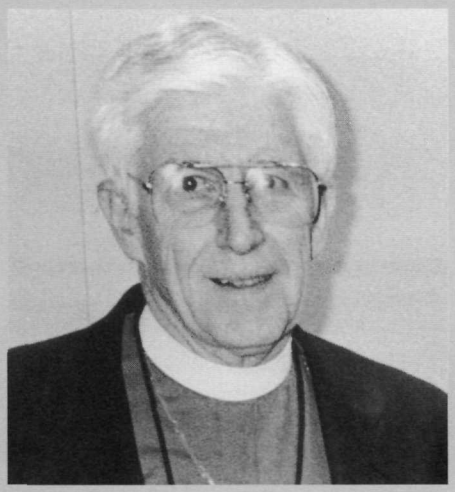
Massachusetts candid about bishop's suicide

Since the death of David E. Johnson, Bishop of Massachusetts, who died of a self-inflicted gun shot wound last January 14, the diocese has made an extensive effort to assist members of the diocese in working through Johnson's suicide.

A day-long gathering for 500 persons, including diocesan clergy, lay leadership and staff, was held at the beginning of February. In addition, response teams are reacting to the needs of congregations and individuals.

Perhaps most remarkable has been the diocese's commitment to candor during this process. Noting that honesty will contribute to "the critical process of healing," a diocesan press statement immediately acknowledged both the suicide and the fact that Johnson had been involved in extramarital relationships. The initial release, which was approved by Johnson's family, even indicated that "at least some of these relationships appear to have been of the character of sexual exploitation." The release also stated that Johnson had made at least one previous attempt at suicide.

"We realize that many would prefer that these hard truths remain undisclosed out of respect for Bishop Johnson's family and the many good things he accomplished," the release said. "But our



David E. Johnson

years of struggling in the church with the issue of clergy sexual exploitation and many other issues that cause such pain and division have shown us again and again that such healing can only take place when we begin to face such truths together."

Richard Shimpfky, Bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real, says he regrets that Johnson's death will interfere with the ability of Tom Shaw, Johnson's successor, to pursue his own vision for the diocese. But he immediately added that Shaw's first-ballot election as bishop in March 1993 is evidence of the Holy Spirit's work, "since he's clearly the right man in the right place at the right time." Shaw, 49, is a member of the Society of St. John the Evangelist and was for a time the community's superior.

Shimpfky added that he's heard many people react with anger to Johnson's suicide because "bishops are supposed to be a sign of hope."

Speaking to this, Bill Rankin, dean of the Episcopal Divinity School, observed, "Though to us he was the bishop, to himself he was nothing but a man. And there is no protection against the risks such a fact entails — not being outwardly a success, nor being in a power position, nor being idealized by others, nor even believing (as I do) that suicide is wrong. In the end, all of us are thrown upon the mercy of God. But we believe this mercy is infinitely larger than what's wrong, and what's disillusioning and death itself."

Church treasurer embezzling?

The surprise resignation of the national church's top financial officer, Ellen Cooke, has been followed by news that the church's funds may have been embezzled.

Rumors circulating now, which cannot be confirmed pending the results of an independent audit now under way, suggest that as many as one million dollars may be in question.

The presiding bishop's February 15 press release states that one month after Cooke's departure in early January, members of the Treasurer's office informed him that they had discovered irregularities that appear "to indicate misuse of Church funds by Mrs. Cooke."

The presiding bishop has engaged legal counsel and is awaiting the results of the independent audit.

Cooke was treasurer of the Episcopal Church and the General Convention for nine years.

Exploitation series begins in April

The church has turned a corner in its understanding and handling of clergy sexual exploitation cases — behaviors that used to be swept under the rug as unfortunate, but minor, unpleasantnesses in church life are now being recognized as damaging breaches of ecclesiastical discipline requiring aggressive, upfront adjudication. This shift in institutional attitude has likely been responsible for encouraging victims to come forward in unprecedented numbers (some diocesan officials say they have been inundated with complaints). But the increased caseload has not yet generated a consensus about causes, prevention or treatment.

In April, *The Witness* will begin touching into some of the complexities and foundational questions with which the church is dealing as it addresses clergy sexual exploitation. Nancy Hopkins, who works with congregations affected by clergy misconduct, will lead off our series with a piece about reclaiming the parish as sacred space after the removal of a clergy perpetrator. Future articles will examine presumptions about who has power and the potential to abuse it, the tension which arises as the Episcopal Church attempts to respond to cases as both a legal entity and as a Christian community, healing for victims and offenders and ethical issues that emerge when cases involve gay and lesbian persons and others.

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Celebrating William Stringfellow on the 10th anniversary of his death

by Timothy F. Sedgwick

A Keeper of the Word: Selected Writings by William Stringfellow. Edited by Bill Wylie-Kellermann. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994. Pp. 434. $24.95 (pb).

Radical Christian and Exemplary Lawyer. A Festschrift Honoring William Stringfellow. Edited by Andrew W. McThenia, Jr. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1995. Pp. 161. $14.99 (pb).

Born of disciples' gratitude and devotion for a master and friend, these two books celebrate the life of William Stringfellow on the tenth anniversary of his death. But more than narrowly honoring the person, they witness to his Christian faith and charism.

Stringfellow lived as a neighbor, whether in East Harlem or Block Island off the coast of Rhode Island. Always he welcomed those about him. Both the table and the circus were central to his life: He loved to cook and feast with friends, and he loved the circus — even spending one summer traveling as "theologian in residence."

He served as lawyer and theologian — not as an academic but as one who stood under and gave voice to the Word of God.

A Keeper of the Word reads less like an edited selection of writings than an autobiographical account of Stringfellow's life and the world in which he lived. Stringfellow wrote in order to create a space in which the Word of God might be heard. His life situation was the occasion for reading the Bible, while the Bible was the source of the Word of God necessary in order to read the world.

For Stringfellow the correlate to Scripture as the Word of God is the world as principalities and powers. The principalities and powers are matters of collective human action that are sustained in time by institutions — educational, cultural, artistic, political, scientific, domestic, etc. These powers are good. They bear meanings and values. They are, however, fallen and as such turn in upon themselves and seek to save their own lives at the expense of those they are to serve. They "claim autonomy from God and dominion over human beings and the rest of creation, thus disrupting and usurping the godly vocation or blaspheming, while repudiating their own vocation" (p. 207).

Falleness is a matter of an ethic of survival and death, only seen in light of freedom and life — life given and sustained by hearing the Word of God in our midst. "The resurrection," says Stringfellow, "means the accessibility, for human beings, on behalf of all of life, of the power of the Word of God, which the whole of Creation enjoys in being made, overcoming the power of death here and now" (p. 113).

What is so powerful is that the exploration of life and death as political and as personal are inextricably intertwined. Stringfellow moves easily from polemics against the church and nation to moving meditations on prayer, friendships, or the Christian seasons. This is vintage Stringfellow, not as an actor in the American drama, however much he was that, but as theologian, as one who in giving voice to his experience gives space for God to be heard as a sovereign power, terribly other. Stringfellow is not a disciple of Karl Barth but gives voice to the same reality of God, of judgment and of grace.

Wylie-Kellermann has masterfully woven together Stringfellow's confession of life and faith from the 15 books and more than 130 articles that Stringfellow wrote. This may restore Stringfellow's voice as one of the most significant American theological voices in the second half of this century.

Andrew McThenia's *Festschrift* is also an important contribution to this restoration. Like most collections that celebrate the life of a person, *Radical Christian and Exemplary Lawyer* includes a range of sometimes overlapping essays, some highly personal, others assessments of his thought. Powers and principalities, creation as apocalyptic, Stringfellow as political activist, Christian, biblical theologian, writer, friend, and advocate — these are some of the perspectives developed by a range of authors including Walter Wink, Stanley Hauerwas, Mary Lou Suhor, Jim Wallis, Liz McAlister, Daniel Berrigan, and Thomas Shaffer.

The personal stories and comments may be most revealing and interesting. In the final essay McThenia himself, for example, comments on Stringfellow as lawyer. For Stringfellow "a lawyer's work of justice is a form of prayer and praise. We do our acts of justice as a way of praising God, knowing that it is not God who is made whole by these acts of praise but we ourselves." TW

Timothy F. Sedgwick is Professor of Christian Ethics at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill.

book review

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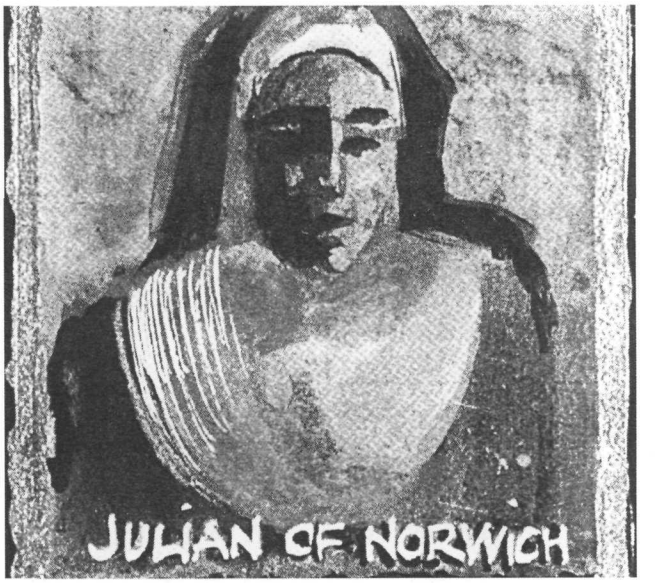

'All manner of thing shall be well'

by Marianne Arbogast

"In his lovers he regards sin as a sorrow and a suffering, and because of his love, not as blameworthy."

One of the most familiar assertions about sin by a Christian writer is, more often than not, quoted only in part.

"Sin is necessary," Julian of Norwich heard Jesus say to her in a vision, "but all shall be well. All shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."

The medieval mystic who called God our mother and spoke wonderingly of God's courtesy and tenderness, saw this graciousness clearly against the backdrop of human sin.

The little that is known of Julian's life comes mainly through her *Revelations of Divine Love,* an account of visions she experienced during a life-threatening illness at the age of 30.

She was born in 1342, and lived till at least 1416 (the date of a will of which she is a beneficiary).

Julian lived during the era of the bubonic plague in England. The first outbreak, which struck when she was six, killed over half of the population of Norwich. It erupted a second time when she was 18, and again when she was 27. More likely than not, Julian lost family members (a husband? children?) and friends to this "Black Death." In any case, as Robert Llewelyn writes, "the cries of the dying, the loneliness and suffering and grief of little children, the smell of decaying flesh in the streets, the burials in mass graves, the horror of rats and vermin would all have been familiar to her" (*All Shall Be Well*, Paulist Press, 1982).

At what point she embraced the contemplative life is not known, but she spent at least her latter years as an anchoress attached to St. Julian's church in Norwich (the probable origin of the name by which she is known).

Anchoresses of Julian's time lived in small homes — often with gardens — usually adjoining a church. Servants brought food and handled other necessary contact with the outside world.

One window of the anchoress' cell opened onto the church, enabling her to participate in the liturgy and partake of communion. At another window, open to the street, visitors seeking counsel or spiritual companionship were welcomed.

Julian struggled continuously to reconcile the suffering of the world with the unbounded love of God, in light of the visions she had received.

Sin, to Julian, is "known by the pain it causes": the passion of Christ and "all the suffering and pain of his creation, both spiritual and physical."

Christ, in her vision, affirms that sin is the cause of this pain, but repeats his pledge that "all will be well."

Julian chafes against this assurance.

"We see deeds done that are so evil, and injuries inflicted that are so great, that it seems to us quite impossible that any good can come of them."

Moreover, the church teaches that "many creatures will be damned. ... This being so, I thought it quite impossible that everything should turn out well, as our Lord was now showing me. But I had no answer to this revelation save this: 'What is impossible to you is not impossible to me. I shall honour my word in every respect, and I will make everything turn out for the best.'"

Christ's promise was spoken "most tenderly," she writes, "with never a hint of blame either to me or to any of those to

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*. Artist **Helen David Brancato**, of Philadelphia, painted this image in a series titled, "It was the women who stayed," which is available in poster form.

be saved. It would be most improper of me therefore to blame or criticize God for my sin, since he does not blame me for it."

But Julian goes further still, asserting that God will *reward* us for our sins!

"For the soul that comes to heaven is precious to God, and the place is so holy that the goodness of God will never allow the soul who gets there to have sinned without that sin being compensated. ...

"In his lovers he regards sin as a sorrow and a suffering, and because of his love, not as blameworthy. The reward we will receive will be no small one, but one rather that is great, glorious, and honourable. ...

"Our courteous Lord does not want his servants to despair even if they fall frequently and grievously."

As if struck with the sudden concern that this might make sin look attractive, Julian denies this emphatically.

"If, because of all this spiritual comfort we have been talking of, one were foolish enough to say, 'If this is true, it is a good thing to sin because the reward will be greater,' or to hold sin to be less sinful, then beware! Should such a thought come it would be untrue, and would stem from the enemy of the very love that tells of all this comfort. ... I am quite clear about this: the more a soul sees this in the courtesy and love of our Lord God, the more [s]he hates to sin."

Julian warns against paying too much attention to the sins of others.

"To consider the sins of other people will produce a thick film over the eyes of our soul," she writes.

Equally dangerous is excessive worry over our own sinfulness.

Christ wants us "to hang on to him, and hold tight always, in whatever circumstances; for whether we are filthy or clean is all the same to his love."

But "our enemy and our own blind folly" accuse us: "'See,' they say. 'You are a wretched creature, a sinner, and a liar to boot. You do not keep God's commandments.' ... It looks to me as though sin begins here ... This makes us dread appearing before our courteous Lord."

Julian counsels boundless confidence in God's love, since "mercy and pity dwell thus with humankind until at last we come to heaven." TW

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Asterisks indicate contributions of $100 or more.

New contributing editor

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott has agreed to become a contributing editor to *The Witness.*

Mollenkott, who teaches at William Paterson College in New Jersey, is the author of *Sensuous Spirituality: Out From Fundamentalism* and 10 other books.

She brings to *The Witness* a respect for and knowledge of scripture that stems from her childhood in a fundamentalist environment. She also contributes the perspective of a self-affirming woman who has struggled through the proscriptions, finding her own freedom and fidelity in God's love.

We will be announcing two other new contributing editors soon.

We give thanks for the long-term work of Barbara Harris, Carter Heyward and Manning Marable. Likewise, the support that Dorothee Sölle and Walter Wink have offered over the last three years has been invaluable. Both have assured us that their relationship to the magazine will be ongoing.

April issue:

Reclaiming land

If you are interested in subscribing, please send a check for $25 to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Boulevard, Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1822.

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❑ Check if this is a renewal

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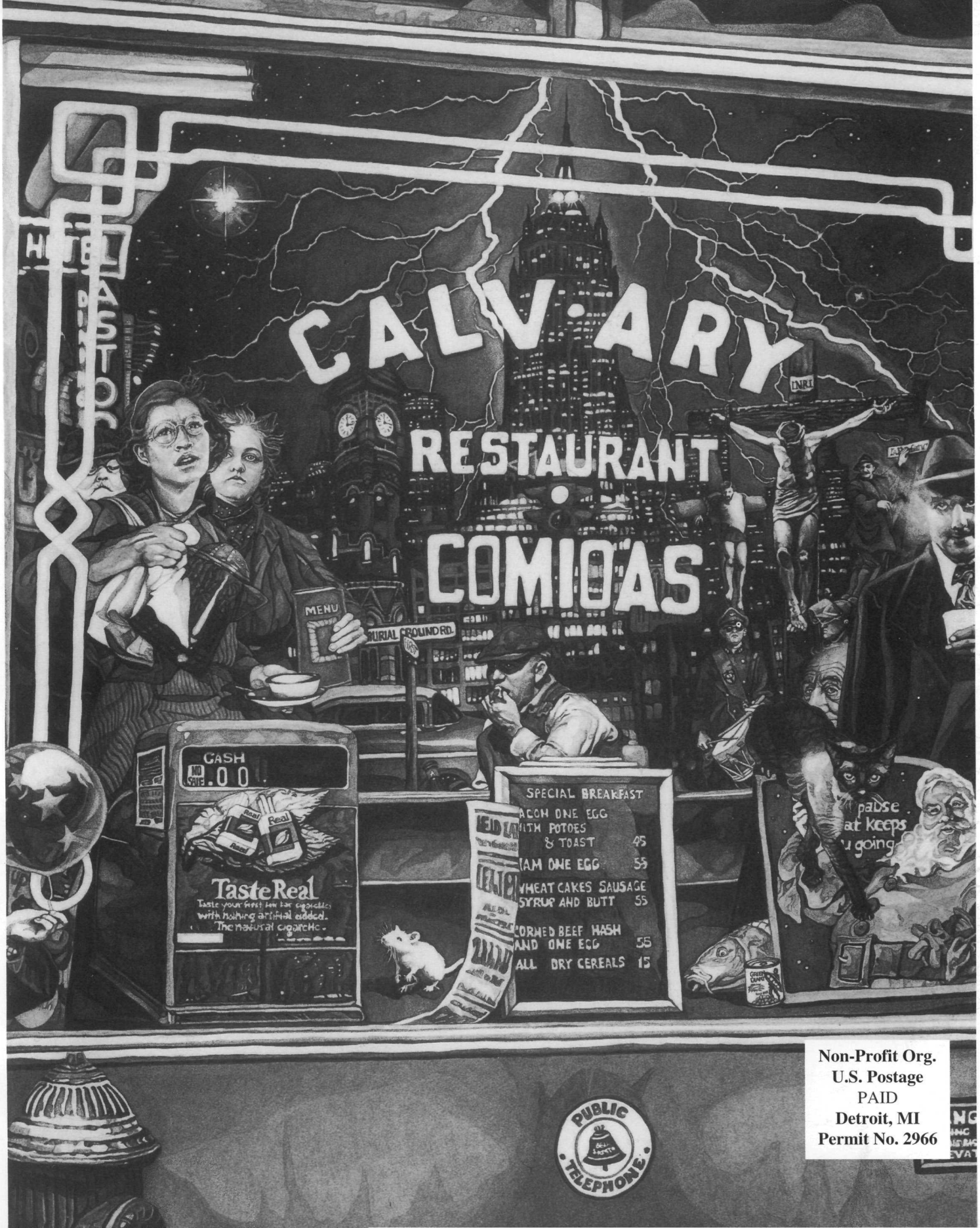

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Looking for *the passion* in everyday life?

Marek Czarnecki

Dear Clergy of ECUSA,

We often hear of people dismissing *The Witness* as didactic, passé, predictable. These criticisms usually come from people who haven't examined a copy in years. Our staff seems to have the enormous task of standing on rooftops yelling, "The magazine is not exactly what it was 10 years ago. Thanks be to God!" There's little point in putting 1990s wine in the wineskins of the late 1970s. It surprises us that so many imagine that we would.

The Witness is a Left-wing voice in the church. You may be able to anticipate our stands on the many issues facing the church today. However, we avoid the "ism" words when possible; we move into critical issues through personal stories and through theology; we periodically publish the views of those who disagree with us; we can entertain criticism; and, we enjoy the quirky and the unpredictable.

In the last three years:

* We have taken *The Witness* to Trinity School for Ministry to test our views in a challenging, yet hospitable, environment.

* We have published articles by Jack Iker, Todd Wetzel, and Doug LeBlanc.

* We have been self-critical, examining the Left and where it is now. We have put away some sacred cows, allowing the pages of *The Witness* to reflect the concerns within our readership about abortion. We even found a way, during a conversation of board members, to respect everyone's views in a way that resulted in a policy statement that affirms abortion but gives the editor freedom to voice her reservations and the chair room to dissent from the majority opinion.

* During 1995, our Vital Signs section, which is devoted to news of the Episcopal Church, has examined the changes in church policy concerning clergy sexual abuse. The voices of Nancy Hopkins, Sally Johnson, Gene Robinson, Sue Hiatt and Mary Meader are among those included. Some voices suggest that new guidelines for clergy are intrusive and chilling, while others see them as an overdue accountability. The role of the Church Insurance Company and the implications of presumptions of power and powerlessness are all explored. In 1996, Vital Signs will not cover a theme, but will include reports and editorials on issues in the church, marking the flat lines and the new life.

The Left and the Right both understand that our society is in crisis. We may even agree on some of the causes. The proposed solutions are where we are likely to divide. Meanwhile, the tensions within the church are excruciating. And both halves of the church are having a hard time communicating the vitality of our faith to the world which is utterly captive to the commercial powers.

The Witness is feisty and opinionated. It is one ofvery few Left-wing Christian magazines published by women.

We walk an edge, we have a sense of humor, we draw on art and poetry, we respect the humanity of our adversaries, we love the church. We are worth your time and the cost of a subscription.

Art, poetry, letters, reflection and analysis combine to make *The Witness* lively and provocative. Won't you send $25 to subscribe and consider sending a gift subscription (for the same price) to someone you know (perhaps one of your own children or an adult child of a parishioner) who may be on the verge of leaving the church.

Send $25 to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226. Study guide packets, including eight copies of the magazine and study guide questions, are available for $25.

If you already subscribe to The Witness, *please pass this issue on to a friend.*

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"The Witness *faces issues with profound honesty. More than unpredictable, the magazine is daring in its search for answers, in its search for the truth of God."*

— Pio Celestino, Harlingen, TX

"I am a former Episcopalian, now a Quaker — and your magazine is the remaining social justice journal we choose to get. You are doing spectacular work."

— Barbara Potter, West Buxton, ME

"The Witness *is unique: a popular Anglican journal with strong social and political convictions, well-produced, open to debate, and accessible to a wide range of people. I am delighted to be able to promote it in England where there is nothing of its calibre."*

— Kenneth Leech, London, England

"I haven't felt this good about a magazine in a long time!"

— Sue Ann O'Niell, Momence, IL

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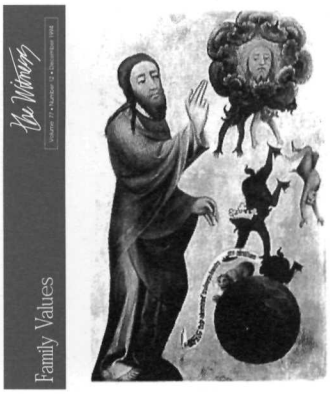
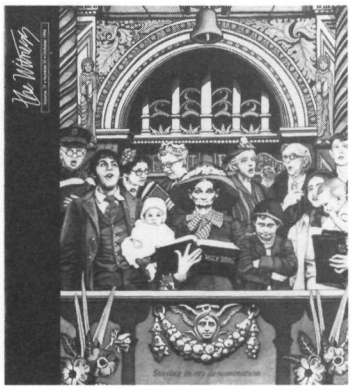
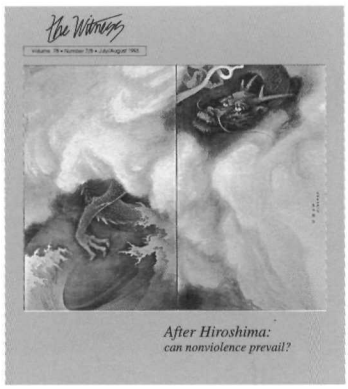


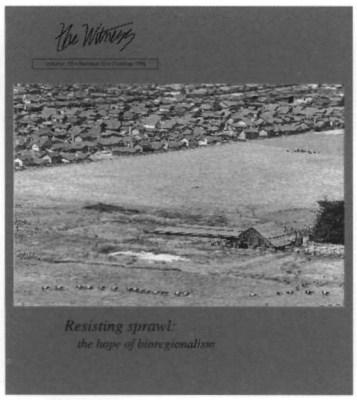
Douglas John Hall suggests that rigid rules of virtue are themselves sinful. Other writers include Ken Leech, Virginia Mollenkott, Doug LeBlanc, Edmond Browning, Todd Wetzel, Kim Byham and Herman Page.



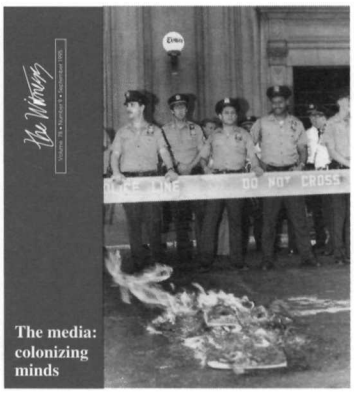
Progressives in the Episcopal, Orthodox, Baptist and Roman Catholic churches explain how they are able to remain within their denominations. Writers include, William Stringfellow, Demtra Jacquet, Ken Sehested and Edwina Gately.



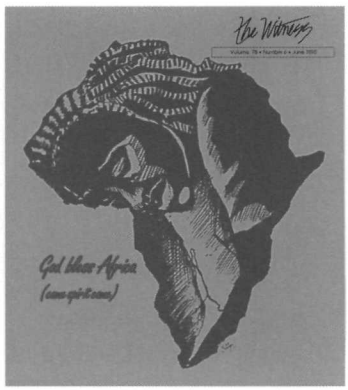
Writers describe the horror of the war in the Pacific and explore the ways that nonviolence can work toward social change. Writers include Dorothy Day, William Lanouette and Barbara Deming.



As suburban sprawl engulfs what's left of the natural settings we depend on to maintain our humanity, writers examine what the churches can do to help if they will think regionally. Writers: Gary Snyder, Franklin Vilas, Isaac Muringih, Julia Wells and Jim Berry.



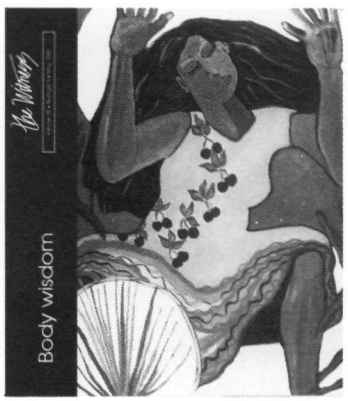
Assaulted by stories of violence and news articles that refuse to seriously examine the economics that shape our lives, readers are often unable to discern what could be done to improve society. Writers: Edward Herman, Camille Colatosti and William Stringfellow.



The songs, rituals and hopes of African indigenous Christian churches rise up in these pages. Included are the views of Brigalia Bam, Khotso Makhulu, Titus Presler and eight African priests in the U.S.

Rosemary Radford Ruether sets the stage by asking, Can women stay in the church? She proposes that women must fight for the soul of the church. Post-Christian women in this issue say it is too late.

The Witness presents its conviction that vigorous and opinionated exchange is good for the church, far better than murmured discontent. Writers: Steve Charleston, Walter Bruegemann, Virginia Mollenkott.



Many people of faith are attempting to draw a consciousness of their bodies into their experience and their prayer, rejecting a left-brain, analytical approach to life. Writers: Ched Myers, Michael Meade and Sy Safransky.

Every issue of *The Witness* includes art, poetry, reviews and profiles as well as articles on the theme. We are committed to including voices and artwork from many cultures. Created in 1917, *The Witness* is owned by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. It is an independent journal that does not receive national church monies.

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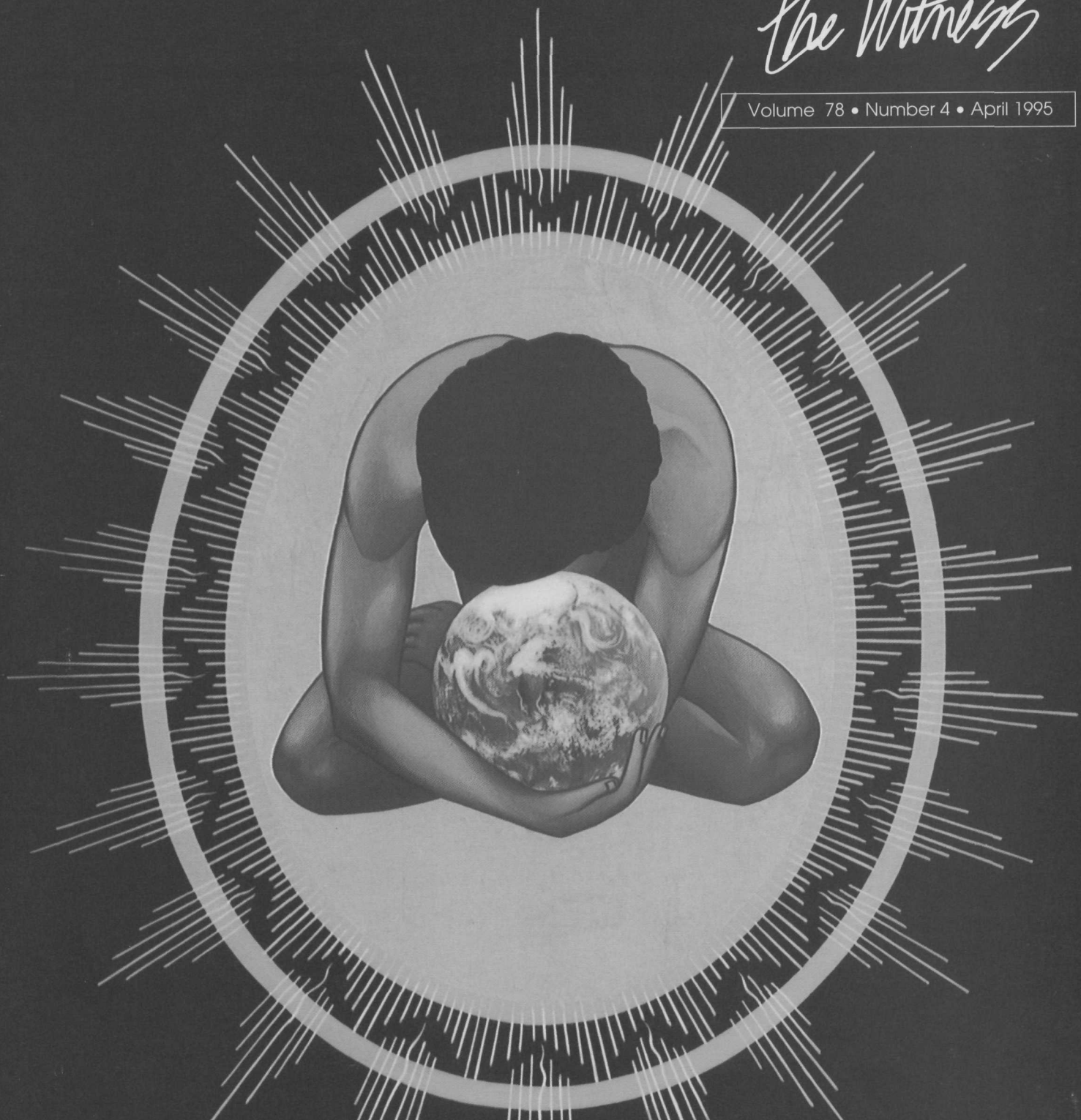
The Witness

Volume 78 • Number 4 • April 1995



Resurrecting land

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Political prisoners

THE JANUARY/FEBRUARY ISSUE of *The Witness* was outstanding.

We have been involved in the "Free Leonard Peltier" campaign.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation had a series with Nils Christy, professor of criminology at the University of Oslo. He has written a book titled *Crime Control as Industry*. He sees the USA moving toward a society of gulags and he is concerned that European countries will imitate it because of the persistent myth that anything American is good.

Dotty Dale
Bellingham, WA

THE WITNESS is filled with all we believe in and you supply names for networking as well! We had no idea of the injustices built into the American punishment system.

I liked "On being happy" by Melanie Morrison.

Don and Doris Cuddihee
Greer, South Carolina

THANK YOU FOR THE ISSUE on political prisoners. I have read it and will pass it on to other members in this community.

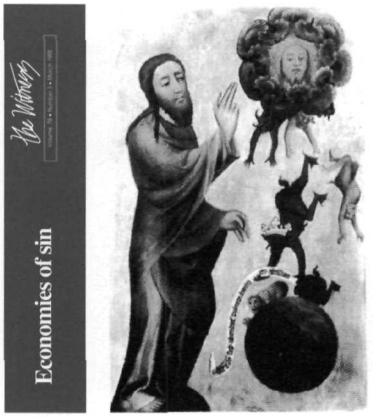
Klaus Meier
Hutterian Brethren Service Committee
Norfolk, CT

I DO LOVE YOUR WONDERFUL WORK. *The Witness* is worthy of its name and brings joy and food for reflection to so many of us here in Nicaragua. I even love your renewal letter!

Kitty Madden
Matagalpa, Nicaragua

Courtesy of Fortkamp

[We sent copies of the Political prisoners issue to those on the mailing list of Fortkamp Press.]



January/February *Witness*

TODAY my husband and I received a copy of *The Witness*. Once I started reading, I couldn't put the publication down. Not only was I emotionally moved, but I proceeded to highlight actions to be taken, materials to obtain for further information, etc. AND, since we are involved in several peace groups and forum meetings, I intend to bring *The Witness* with me to share and maybe encourage responses from others.

Enclosed is my subscription. I also intend to subscribe to *The Nuclear Resister* mentioned in your January/February issue.

Edith Herbert
Valley Stream, N.Y.

WE REALIZE HOW MUCH WE MISS *Witness* and want it. So put us back on the list.

Steve Senesi
Kalamazoo, MI

Classifieds

Urban interns

Episcopal Urban Intern Program: Work in social service ministry, live in Christian community in Los Angeles, share in spiritual formation. For adults 21-30. Apply now for the 1995-1996 year. Contact: The Rev. Gary Commins, 260 N. Locust St., Inglewood, CA 90301. (310) 674-7744.

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.

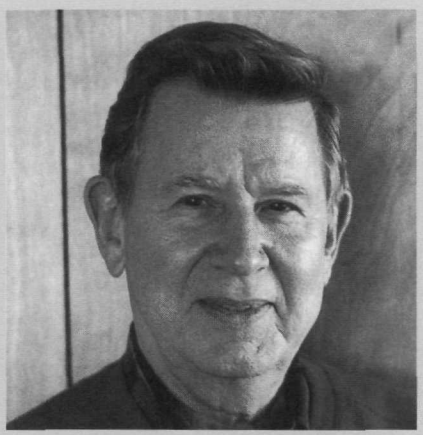
Fêting Bob Eckersley

Those familiar with the reincarnation of *The Witness* in 1974 know that it was accomplished almost single-handedly by Robert Eckersley. He was treasurer of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company for 20 years.

The board of ECPC will honor Eckersley's contributions on June 2 at General Theological Seminary with an open house gathering between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Come enjoy the music of the Miserable Offenders (let's see what Bob thinks of them!) and let Eckersley know how much we value his accounting, his loyalty and his humor!

Feel free to send greetings and memories for a booklet to be presented to him to *The Witness* office. We're also accepting donations for an investigative issue of the magazine on a topic of his choice.



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Dismantling affirmative action: history drawn full circle

by Reginald G. Blaxton

Senator Robert Dole's public call for a study of the fairness of affirmative action policies reminds me of another episode in American electoral history when a conservative majority effectively overturned what had been considered, for barely a generation, progressive public policy.

The year was 1876, and the conservatives were Democrats. In the wake of the bloodiest conflict that the nation had known, the Republican Party, acting with certain moral resolve, had abolished slavery, provided Constitutional guarantees of civil and political rights for African Americans, and had developed and imposed upon a recalcitrant South a full program of political reconstruction.

There were other social policies, of course, which the Republicans had championed: the protective tariff; a national banking system; a sound paper currency in national bank notes secured by government bonds; and federal subsidies for improvements in infrastructure and mass transportation, among others.

But undoubtedly for most white southerners and northerners, the policies touching the abolition of "the peculiar institution," and in consequence, the empowerment of black Americans, were the most galling, requiring on their part unaccustomed pain and sacrifice in an era of rapid social change.

Women, at that time, were not allowed to vote, and thus it is fair to say that the Compromise of 1877 signalled the recrudescence of white male power, after a brief liberal ascendancy.

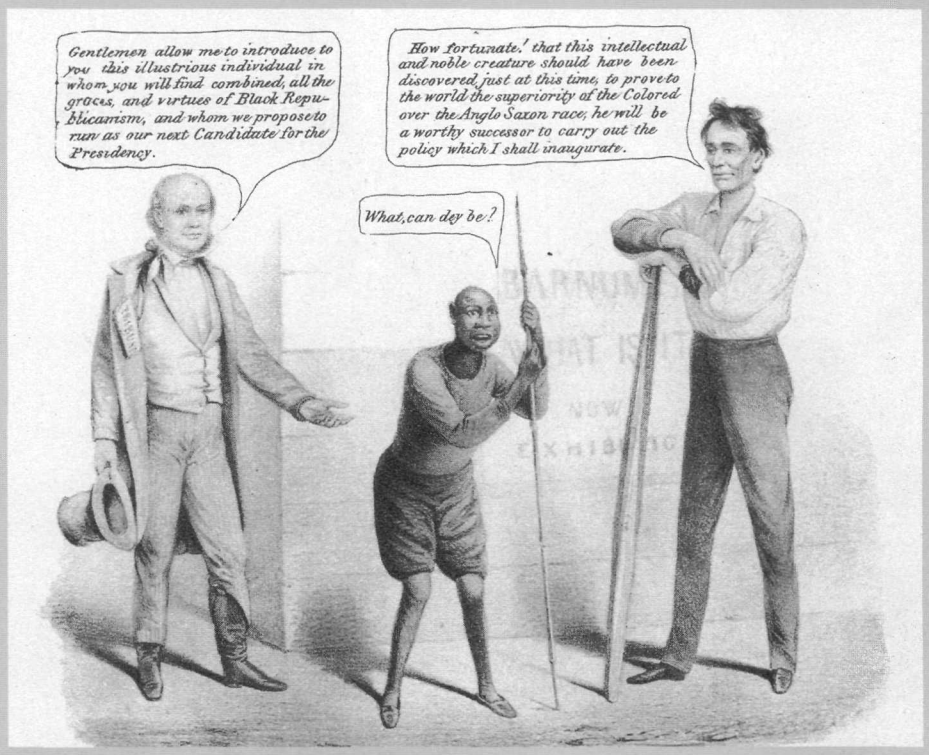
"Liberal" Republicans, following the lead of their conservative colleagues, abandoned African Americans to the tender mercies of the wicked, in order to secure the election of Rutherford B. Hayes in his disputed presidential contest with Samuel J. Tilden, a conservative Democrat.

By 1883, the Supreme Court had invalidated the Civil Rights Act of 1875. In 1894, Congress repealed the Force Acts. And in 1896, the Supreme Court, in an attempt to be "fair" to the Negro, so recently enslaved, approved as legally adequate the political cover of social segregation, so long as black people were provided with "equal" accommodations. Contrary to what Senator Dole seems to believe, this is not ancient history; it is recent history — conflictual and bloody at that.

The ethical issues surrounding affirmative action policies will not be fully engaged by reference solely to the social, political and economic discomfort of white males, regardless of whether, as Senator Dole says, "62 percent ... voted Republican in 1994."

As recently as a generation ago, such a political posture would have been readily identified as a form and expression of white supremacy. At some point in the

continued on page 16



***An Heir to the Throne, or the Next Republican Candidate*, c.1864** Currier and Ives

Reginald G. Blaxton is an Episcopal priest and member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company board.

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THE WITNESS
Since 1917

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Cover: Compassion Mandela by Robert Lentz. Lentz' icons are available through Bridge Building, P. O. Box 1048, Burlington, VT 05402.
Back cover: Lake Superior by Jim West

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Restoring the land

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

The Lord said, "What have you done? Hark! Your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground.

Now you are accursed, and banished from the ground which has opened its mouth wide to receive your brother's blood, which you have shed. When you till the ground, it will no longer yield you its wealth. You shall be a vagrant and wanderer on earth."

— Genesis 4:10-13

Seemingly in response to cries from the earth itself, hundreds of people are gathering to pray in places where blood has been shed.

They gather to pray for and to release the souls of the dead. They gather to pray for the earth.

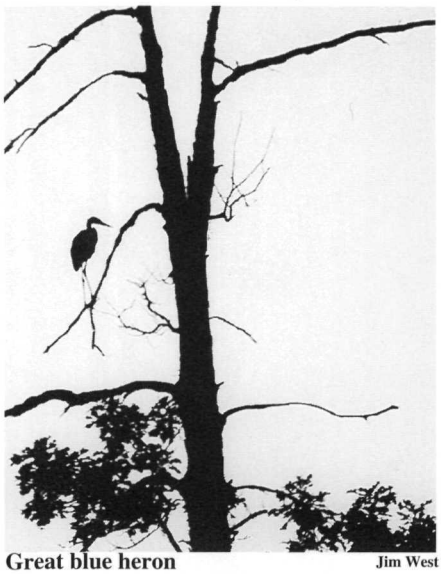
This issue is dedicated to people who are resurrecting the spirit of the land by acknowledging betrayals that have taken place. In most cases, these are places where indigenous people have been killed. In some, it's the location where women have been murdered or where someone took his or her own life.

Sometimes I wonder if it's Cain's curse that haunts this nation — built on the blood of American Indians, African slaves and cheap immigrant labor.

Does the unacknowledged pain and blood in the soil cause Americans to be transient and alienated from the sacredness of place?

Does the earth refuse to yield its joy and do we punish it with sprawling developments, pollutants and asphalt because we cannot bear to hear the cries of those who have died uneasy?

As we worked on this issue, we learned of many additional instances of people who claim to have heard the moaning of the dead and who have been moved to honor the dead in ceremony.



Great blue heron Jim West

Desmond Tutu has dedicated 1995 to studying rituals that might be used to help cleanse South Africa. He will be looking at the independent churches' ceremonies which are vigorous and physical, drawing on Christian and earth-based roots.

The Muslims have already built a shrine at Robbens Island where many died and where others, including Nelson Mandela, were obligated to pound rocks on a diet of porridge for decades.

In the U.S., we've learned of Indians who rode horseback to Wounded Knee in sub-zero December days to honor their dead on the 100th anniversary of the 1890 massacre (*Woman of Power*, Issue 23).

We've also read about Indians who did a pipe ceremony for the Nez Perce Indians who were killed just north of Little Big Horn where Chief Joseph was forced to surrender in 1877 (*The New Yorker*, 8/8/94). In that case an Assiniboine Indian offered the prayers for the Nez Perce and also for his own people who had been complicit in murdering some of the Nez Perce as they had tried to flee.

Last summer, a conference of Native-, African- and Asian-American journalists, meeting in Georgia, travelled to the beginning of the Cherokees' trail of tears for a ceremony.

People who have heard the cries of the dead say they feel the quieting of the land after prayers are offered. They say they feel a peace and a deep connection to the earth afterwards. Some say they've heard the earth singing.

It's striking how many people are now trying to listen to earth.

Even the township planning consultant of the last undeveloped community between Detroit and Ann Arbor, Mich., describes his community's resistance to real estate expansion by saying, "We're letting the land speak."

In the north, the land is creeping with new life, the perma frost is turning to mud, buds are bursting, animals are mating.

Earth-based cultures would be celebrating new life and the turning of the seasons.

The land in turn might yield its wealth.

May we have the stamina to atone for the spilling of our brothers' and sisters' blood.

May we learn to listen to the earth.

May we be instrumental in the resurrection of its life and of our place in it.

editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Photographer **Jim West** is an editor of *Labor Notes*.

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A tree of life

by Anne Cox

When I returned a parishioner's phone call on a Thursday night, she told me that Friday was the 10th anniversary of her son Bill's suicide. She wanted to celebrate communion by the tree where he had shot himself, and wanted to know if I would do this with her. Her friend Jean, who had been with her immediately after the suicide, would also be there.

Bill's suicide happened before I became rector of Nativity. I had heard Carol talk about Bill, and say that of her three sons, he was extremely sensitive, too sensitive; he felt the world's ache.

I was scared. This felt big and important. I was honored that Carol wanted to include me in this very private moment.

The next day, we drove to the park where Bill had shot himself. It was less than a mile from Carol's house. The afternoon was cold, with wisps of snow and blowing wind. We were very bundled.

When we reached the tree, Jean and I stood back and let Carol prepare the space. She put a photo of Bill against the oak tree, as well as some stones, some leaves, some toys. Jean had given Carol a little dancing, free spirit woman of paper maché on a long fishing line which she wrapped around a piece of bark; she danced in the wind the whole time. We put a candle in a mason jar in a niche at the base of the tree.

I asked Carol what she hoped would come out of this. She responded that for 10 years she had been very angry and bitter. She had often felt abandoned and she hated this tree. "I need to let go of that part of me," Carol said. "I know that my life was changed by Billy's suicide and even that there is some life in that for me."

I talked about reclaiming this place,

Anne Cox

reclaiming the goodness of Bill's and Carol's lives. Then we celebrated communion. It was very simple (and windy). We communed each other and then scattered the remaining bread for the animals. We poured the wine at the base of the tree. We were communing with the entire world — not only we are held in God's hands, but also the tree, the lake, the creatures.

Carol played "Tis a gift to be simple" on her recorder and Jean and I sang.

In the thanksgiving, we all articulated our hopes for Carol moving beyond Bill's death. Carol gave thanks that the ritual redeemed the tree as a holy place for her.

Then it was much too cold and we had to go in. We left the rosemary that Jean had brought for remembrance at the base of the tree.

Carol told me that she cried all day Saturday but that it felt incredibly cathartic and that she now feels like there is life. She said she has decided to commemorate Bill's birthday now instead of the date of his suicide, so on March 5 she baked communion bread for the Sunday service. She pressed the bread with a seal from the Orthodox Church. The seal has lots of different symbols — the lamb of God, a square with Greek letters for "Jesus Christ conquers," triangles that represent angels, prophets, apostles and saints. Both in the meaning of the seal and in the traditional understanding of the eucharist, breaking the bread joins the congregation with the communion of saints.

Going to that place was important. When I was taking environmental psychology courses, I read a study that showed — across cultural and income lines — that big trees are important to people. For me, the eucharist by the oak tree was very powerful. We had a circle that included the tree. There were four of us.

And Carol has moved from commemorating death to celebrating life. TW

When we reached the tree, Jean and I stood back and let Carol prepare the space. She put a photo of Bill against the oak tree, as well as some stones, some leaves, some toys.

Anne Cox is rector of Nativity Episcopal Church, Bloomfield Township, Mich. She also designs and manufactures rubber stamps.

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In Beauty

— Navaho chant

House made of dawn
House made of evening light
House made of the dark cloud
House made of male rain
House made of dark mist
House made of female rain
House made of pollen
House made of grasshoppers

Dark cloud is at the door
The trail out of it is dark cloud
The zigzag lightning stands high upon it
An offering I make
Restore my feet for me
Restore my legs for me
Restore my body for me
Restore my mind for me
Restore my voice for me
This very day take out your spell for me

Happily I recover
Happily my interior becomes cool
Happily I go forth
My interior feeling cool, may I walk
No longer sore, may I walk
Impervious to pain, may I walk
With lively feelings may I walk
As it used to be long ago, may I walk

Happily may I walk
Happily, with abundant dark clouds, may I walk
Happily, with abundant showers, may I walk
Happily, with abundant plants, may I walk
Happily, on a trail of pollen, may I walk
Happily may I walk
Being as it used to be long ago, may I walk

May it be beautiful before me
May it be beautiful behind me
May it be beautiful below me
May it be beautiful above me
May it be beautiful all around me
In beauty it is finished
In beauty it is finished

Poetry

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When the land weeps

by Ariel Miller

Arriving late at night at the retreat center, the visitor had been escorted by her hosts to a cabin near the Susquehanna River. They asked her anxiously if she needed company. A lover of the land, she reassured them she felt at ease being alone.

But an entire people awaited her in the night.

"All night long I had dreams about children who were not really children," recalls Diana Boycheck, a life-long Christian who was soon to embark on the journey of learning her Cherokee heritage as a healer.

"All night I kept waking up feeling that I had to give something to the land," Boycheck recalls. She knew of the Native American tradition of blessing and thanking the land by offering sage, tobacco or some other natural substance.

"I kept getting up to gift the land until I had given almost everything I had."

The next morning one of the Sisters of St. Joseph, who staff the Spiritual Center in Windsor, N.Y., returned to the cabin to show Boycheck the grounds which had earlier been used as a Jewish summer camp for children from Long Island, but had been purchased in 1979 by several nuns who had raised money to provide a retreat center that could be accessible to working-class people.

"I told Sister Paula my dream, and said, 'You have to tell me what happened here,'" Boycheck says.

"She told me that an Indian village camped here by the river. It was a friendly village, living in peace with the nearby American soldiers, but the soldiers got a message from General Washington that the Indians were to be removed from the river. They were slaughtered — only a few escaped."

Diana Boycheck

The religious community living at the site 200 years later could not rest easy.

"She, too, felt as if the land was crying," says Boycheck of her host, a sculptor. "She said to me, 'If only we could pray.'"

In fact, Sister Paula says for years she had cried whenever she mowed the land closest to the river.

Sister Elizabeth joined Boycheck and Sister Paula by the Susquehanna. Hills rose up, including the Oquaga Mountain, which was sacred to the tribe that had journeyed up and down the Susquehanna.

They prayed together. Boycheck created a circle with corn meal and tobacco, then began to drum and chant. The two other women sang.

Sister Paula explains that they sat facing the mountain.

"During the drumming I could feel a vibration underneath the earth," Sister Paula says. "It felt like an earthquake. Diana explained that the land was being protected."

"All of a sudden," Boycheck says, "I had a vision of faces rising to the sky. They rose and rose in a cloud, and the last was a beautiful little girl, the most beautiful face. As I was gazing at her face the women cried *'Look! Look!'*

"I did not want to take my eyes from this vision," Boycheck continues, "but finally I looked up, and there, circling and circling us, was a huge hawk, the hugest I have ever seen."

The sculptor — though she was not an Indian — had a vision, too: that she must carve Boycheck a peace pipe.

It would be years before Boycheck would learn the significance of the pipe. But she did recognize the hawk as a portent of joy.

"To see a hawk or an eagle during a ceremony is a great gift," she says. "It is a great blessing because they are closest to God."

After this prayer the land was relieved of its burden, so that when Boycheck returned later that summer to pray "I was so filled with joy I almost could not get up," she says simply. "It was and remains the most beautiful experience of my life; every molecule of my being was filled with God."

An entire people awaited her in the night. "All night long I had dreams about children who were not really children. All night I kept waking up feeling that I had to give something to the land."

Born in Syracuse, New York in

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a large, close-knit family, Diana Boycheck was raised by Methodist parents and Baptist grandparents.

First cousins, her grandparents were both grandchildren of a full-blooded Cherokee woman, Tempe Newport. Although they cherished their roots in Tennessee, they moved away from them physically and spiritually.

Drawn to spiritual things, the little girl would wake up on Sunday mornings and walk by herself to the nearby Methodist church, where she ardently learned about God.

She even made a trek to the Roman Catholic Church to ask if she could become a nun, which she was told was an impossibility for a Protestant child.

She later converted to Catholicism, but always had the sense of another essence — a spiritual invitation not readily understood in the practice and piety of a Protestant girlhood or of a Catholic adult.

Later, as a mother of three, Boycheck went through a divorce. She had to give up her home; she faced poverty. But events propelled her swiftly into a sense of profound blessing. At a conference that had nothing to do with Indian spirituality, she saw a stranger and her heart leaped.

"I walked over to her and said, 'You look like my family,'" Boycheck recalls. "All of us got tears in our eyes." The stranger was Cherokee medicine woman Wolf Warrior Woman.

From her, Boycheck learned the meaning of the pipe.

"The peace pipe is a portable altar. When you join the bowl to the stem, it's a direct link to God," Boycheck explains.

And although she could not know it at the time of her host's mystical vision on the site of the massacre, to the Cherokee the pipe ceremony was essential to the release of the souls of the dead.

The significance of the hawk was revealed as well. Part of the task of the shaman in training is to discover her emblem or costume. After searching widely Boycheck discovered a red tail hawk kachina — and knew that her quest had succeeded.

"The costume is the answer to the question, 'Who am I? What is my purpose?'" she explains.

"The red-tail hawk kachina helps people who are half in life and half in spirit to go on.

When I saw this kachina I had a vision, and knew that this was my purpose in learning the healing."

In a sweat lodge ceremony she was named Soaring Hawk Woman.

Boycheck now lives in Norwich, New York, where as a home health aide she quietly continues a ministry that weaves together her Native American and Christian vocations for compassion.

She takes particular joy in working with hospice patients — people, she says, who are hovering on the threshold of the light. TW

Knowing the spirit

The white people never cared for land or deer or bear. When we Indians kill meat, we eat it all up. When we dig roots we make little holes. When we built houses, we make little holes. When we burn grass for grasshoppers, we don't ruin things. We shake down acorns and pinenuts. We don't chop down the trees. We only use dead wood. But the white people plow up the ground, pull down the trees, kill everything. The tree says, "Don't hurt me." But they chop it down and cut it up. The spirit of the land hates them. They blast out trees and stir it up to its depths. They saw up the trees. That hurts them. The Indians never hurt anything, but the white people destroy all. They blast rocks and scatter them on the ground. The rock says, "Don't. You are hurting me." But the white people pay no attention. When the Indians use rocks, they take little round ones for their cooking. ... How can the spirit of the earth like the white man? ... Everywhere the white man has touched it, it is sore.

— Wintu woman elder

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Singing for the *wiliwili* tree: an interview with Ched Myers

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Witness *contributing editor Ched Myers joined a delegation to the sacred Hawai'ian island, Kaho'alawe, shortly after the U.S. Navy discontinued using it for bombing practice and returned it to the state of Hawai'i.*

*Myers travelled with members of the PKO — Protect Kaho'olawe Ohana (*ohana *means community or family) — which began a movement to liberate the island in 1976. In 1979, the PKO (through a lawsuit against the U.S. Navy) won the right to access the island for religious ceremonies.*

Finally, in 1994, the U.S. military signed the island over to the State of Hawai'i. A conveyance commission will oversee the island during the transition and ensure that the U.S. Navy will remove the unexploded shells and bombs from the island.

The State, in an unprecedented move, has written its own clause stating that it is holding Kaho'olawe in trust for "the future nation of Hawai'i."

Kaho'olawe is the smallest of the Hawai'ian islands. It was privately owned after U.S. annexation, during which time it was used for cattle and goat herding. The land was so over-grazed by the 1930s that it was turned over to the Navy as a bombing target.

Myers, author of Who Will Roll Away the Stone? Discipleship Queries for First World Christians *(Orbis), worked in the 1980s with the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Movement. As Program Director for the Pacific Southwest office of the American Friends Service Committee, his connections with the Hawai'ian sovereignty movement and PKO have continued.*

In June, 1994, Myers travelled with Robbie Brinton, his partner, to Kaho'olawe for the first time. One-third of the delgation were native Hawai'ian, the rest were locals of various ethnicities. The youngest was 6, the oldest was 78.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: I know that this trip was a critical one for you. You've described it as "a center point of my spiritual life" and as "a parable that stands right at the center of what it means to be human and connected or disconnected from the land." Would you tell us about it?

Ched Myers: When I reached Kaho-'olawe, I kissed the ground.

Through my work with indigenous people throughout the Pacific, which has focused on their struggles for self-determination and particularly their struggles around issues of land and land rights, I'd developed a fairly keen sense of the pain that U.S. militarism has caused Pacific islanders — in Micronesia, Tahiti, Melanesia, Hawai'i. So going on an access to Kaho'olawe was always something I had wanted to do.

Through my work with indigenous people throughout the Pacific, which has focused on their struggles for self-determination and particularly their struggles around issues of land and land rights, I'd developed a fairly keen sense of the pain that U.S. militarism has caused Pacific islanders — in Micronesia, Tahiti, Melanesia, Hawai'i.

I had a mystical dream about it two years earlier. In the dream, as soon as I set foot on Kaho'olawe, there was music arising from the land. It was just coming up from the land and through my feet and into my mind. The whole universe was singing. It's very much in my soul.

J.W-K.: How did you get to the island?

C.M.: A fishing boat, which was donated by one of the PKO supporters, shuttled 70 people in about five trips across the four-mile channel between Maui and Kaho'olawe. We went over at about four in the morning while the seas were calm. The sun was just rising over one of the two great volcanic peaks on the island of Mauias as we got to the island.

The fishing boat anchors 300 yards off shore and you pile into a little zodiac — one of those little rubber boats. It takes you in and drops you off about a hundred yards off shore. Then you wade in. Everybody is dropped off in shoulder-high water with all their gear, which is double-wrapped in plastic bags and floated ashore. This is both a practical and a spiritual matter as far as the PKO is concerned. It's practical because there is no natural harbor on the island. But it's also spiritual — as one of the elders, or *kupuna*, puts it, "We come to this island just as our ancestors arrived, by wading ashore."

The PKO is very clear that people are coming to the island to be a part of it and to live in the Hawai'ian way. People are asked to leave their electronic gear behind. It's just basic camping gear that you float

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Those who came to pray at Kaho'olawe, a Hawaiian island used as a U.S. Navy bombing target until last year, leave gifts of white coral wrapped in *ti* leaves.

Robbie Brinton

ashore — including all your water, because there's no fresh water on the island.

We were sitting on the beach at sunrise, exhausted from dragging all this gear and swimming ashore, but really elated.

J.W-K.: How was your time on the island spent?

C.M.: You're there for four days and three nights. The first day is setting up camp and adapting to the climate of the island, which is relatively hot and dry, and extremely barren — both because of the bombing, but also because of the ecological damage that has been wrought over the years. So there's not much growing on the island. There's lots of red volcanic dust though.

The PKO, while they're a very strong political organization, are very non-proselytizing on this trip. They want to bring people to be in touch with the *'aina* — that's the Hawai'ian word for land. They believe that by touching the *'aina* you will be converted to the cause, so there is almost no attempt to persuade you of the politics of the PKO or Hawai'ian sovereignty.

It would be a perfect opportunity for it, because you're a captive audience, but they end up saying almost nothing. And of course, they don't have to. You feel tremendous elation to be on an island that is basically uncivilized — no hotels or roads or anything like that.

On the other hand, you can see the land bleeding to death, with acres and acres of hard packed dirt, because of the erosion from the bombing. The coral reefs are dying because of the runoff from the erosion. You can literally see the wounds in the land everywhere you look, so it's a yin-yang kind of experience.

It's a very religious place. Everybody's spirituality is respected. People don't try to push Hawai'ian spirituality on the visitors, but they try to let people know what the *heiaus* (temples) signify and what the Hawai'ian traditions are. Yet most of the prayers by the leadership are Christian, because, of course, most of the Hawai'ians are Christianized.

The second day was the heavy work day. Robbie went to work with *pili* grass, which is a kind of a thin straw-like grass, from which they make the thatched roofs for the traditional *hale* or house. Other people were replanting. Others were repairing water systems. (Water *did* occur naturally on the island. There were a couple of springs in the old days, but the bombing has cracked the water table and so it has gone down and the springs stopped flowing.) So catchment and checkdams are the means of storing water after the rains.

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I worked on repairing one of the water tanks up on the hill where the water catchment systems store the water. The roof of the water tank had blown off during a storm and we had to rebuild it. It was all day in the hot sun, but people were working collectively, doing hard work and it just felt very, very good. People used what skills they could offer.

But there were a couple of skilled people coordinating the work and quite a lot gets done with so many people.

The third day, you take an all-day hike from the beach site where the camp is across the island about three miles, straight uphill, to the sacred mountain where the traditional navigational school was. It's a tough hike.

The trail has been specially cleared by the Navy in cooperation with the PKO — you cannot walk outside the designated zone, because there's so much ordnance unexploded. As you walk the trail you see the devastation. It is very, very sobering.

They invite you to remove your shoes for the last 200 yards up the mountain. You're walking over very sharp rock. You don't have to do this, but this is tradition and of course it's also biblical tradition to remove one's shoes when standing on holy ground.

We offered our *ho'okupu* (gifts) in thanksgiving. Knowing a little bit about the traditions, I had brought a few things that were really special to the place that I love (southern California) as offerings — some sage, some acorns and some shells.

The wind was blowing and you could see the whole island, you could see the currents going between Maui and Kaho'olawe and Molokai, and almost the entire Hawai'ian chain.

After that, we met members of the conveyance commission who were visiting the island to do some technical work.

At the saddle below the main peak is one *wiliwili* tree. We were told that *wiliwili* trees — a gnarly-knobby kind of tree — used to cover the whole island with a magnificent forest.

But the entire island has been denuded and there is this one last *wiliwili* tree kind of slunk over in the ground but still growing.

A *kupuna* — her name was Pualani Kanahele — asked us and the conveyance commission — which included some military personnel — to gather in a circle around the *wiliwili* tree.

She began this chant in Hawai'ian. Hawai'ian is like so many Pacific island languages; it rises and falls like the ocean in its intonation and mesmerizes you. As she was singing, one of my friends was translating.

She was thanking the tree for surviving the onslaught of the white man and of the military and of the holocaust that the Hawai'ian land and culture has seen. She thanked the tree for all it has seen.

It's a very old tree. It goes all the way back to traditional times, so she was asking the tree to remember everything that it had seen and never to forget. Then she asked the tree to give its seed as the seed of renewal so that the seeds of this one *wiliwili* tree would replant and reforest the whole island. She thanked the tree for its seed and its strength.

An elder chanted to the last wiliwili *tree — she thanked it for surviving the onslaught of the white man and of the military. She asked the tree to give its seeds so they could replant and reforest the whole island.*

She clearly named the tree as the central symbol of everything that the PKO is trying to do. In reflecting on this later, it was clear to me that Kaho'olawe is a place of revisioning, rediscovering language and culture. It's clearly a place of resistance and *now* a place of reclamation as people access it and access their identity as they do so. And finally, hopefully, it's a place of reinhabitation — where not only Hawai'ian sovereignty, but the social and economic and land-based reality of that, can be realized.

She's chanting all this and I realized that tears are flowing down my cheeks. I believe that trees represent the life and spirit of the land and when they're uprooted, we are uprooting something very spiritual.

I feel that way about the oak trees in California. I've seen so much destruction, so my passion for my own land was merging with hers and I just felt myself transported by both the pain and the promise.

It wasn't that I wanted to become Hawai'ian, it was that I saw what I have lost and what could be found, if we dare to reconnect with the land, if we dare to understand who we are, to also go through that process of resistance and reclamation and reinhabitation.

That night, our last night, there was a big party. There's no electric stuff there so it's up to the people to make the music just like it used to be. There was a ukelele and a guitar. Everybody sang old Hawai'ian songs. People got up and did hulas spontaneously. The old people were showing the little kids how to dance the hula.

It was all really fun and carefree but you could see that some serious cultural reconstruction was going on right before your eyes. We sat up late laughing and yet there was also a time when everybody had a chance to speak. It took hours and hours to go around the circle. The PKO is very committed to everybody getting a chance to talk about how this time has

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struck them — whether it's the elder who's rediscovering his Hawai'ianness after having had to give it up for decades, or the young, awkward 13-year-old who doesn't know why she's there and is really shy, but says, "It's great to be here and to be with everyone." People had a chance to get up and cry and talk about how much this means to them. It's what the Hawai'ians call sharing *mana'o*. It kind of means spilling your guts!

The next morning we left at sunrise. Robbie and I were the first of the group to get there and the last of the group to leave. We were leaving and you could see the sun rising on Kaho'olawe and I realized what a transforming experience it had been. We were tired. It's pretty basic living. You wash in the ocean. You get dirty and you live in it. But it was a wonderful experience.

J.W-K.: There's an island off your own coast with similar history. Can you say a word or two about it?

C.M.: I just came into the office today and saw a notice from the Department of Defense that says its environmental impact report on the bombing of San Clemente Island finds "no significant impact."

San Clemente is one of the southernmost Channel Islands off the coast of southern California, sacred to the Tongva people, as the first people of southern California were known. They commuted regularly to these islands and lived and fished on them.

San Clemente has also been used by the Navy for decades for bombing.

I've often wondered what is the difference between my place and Hawai'i? Why does it seem so impossible to build a movement here that could start small and yet become so significant that it could actually wrest the island back from the military?

I realize that the key is not political strategizing. The key is knowing who you are — reclaiming who you are and, of course, that's something that's so much more difficult for European-Americans and the dominant culture. Southern Californians scarcely know about San Clemente Island. You can only see it in the distance on a very clear day.

He never arrived. Two days later, Kimo Mitchell, a friend, tried to find George and was also lost at sea.

These were the early martyrs that really galvanized the movement. There is an altar to George and Kimo that stands a quarter of a mile from the main camp along a little coastal trail. We went out there. On the headstone, in Hawai'ian, is a quote from the gospel of John, which says "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord." People lay wreaths and shell *leis* and flowers and coral — coral is a particularly sacred *ho'okupu.* Lots of white coral is strewn around this memorial.

Pualani Kanahele (at the front) chanting to the only remaining *wili wili* tree on Kaho'olawe.
Robbie Brinton

J.W-K.: Is there access to it?

C.M.: There's no access.

I have to say one thing more about Kaho'olawe, because it reminds us of the price of resistance.

The non-violent occupations of Kaho'olawe began, as I said, in 1976. In 1977, George Helm, who was the best-known and best-loved Hawai'ian folk-singer, set out from Maui to Kaho'olawe one evening, paddling a surfboard across the channel to occupy the island to try to stop a scheduled bombing.

You just sit and it all comes to you. If we could come to the land in the name of the Lord, maybe healing could come, even at that cost. TW

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Resettling El Salvador

by Daniel Moss

My friend Eduardo speaks longingly of the four acres he owned and worked in the neighboring province of San Vicente before the Salvadoran war.

Beans grow in those moist and cool fields and, at 65, he yearns to dirty his fingers in his own soil and die there. But 15 years ago, his extended family used his property as collateral on a fertilizer loan for their corn crop. After his brother was killed by the army, Daniel didn't dare venture to the bank in town that was kitty corner to the soldiers' barracks.

If he manages to pay the accumulated interest, he will need to weigh the viability of a move. Transportation costs $80 he doesn't have and the small plot of land he farmed before wouldn't support his family, which has grown dramatically; he now has over 20 grandchildren.

He may choose to stay in Nuevo Gualcho — a former cotton plantation that is now home to 800 repatriated Salvadorans who fled bombings and military operations in the early 1980s, then spent 10 years in a Honduran refugee camp before returning to El Salvador. Residents are now attempting to build a sustainable community and are inching closer to defining just how to pay for that dream.

However feebly, the Chapultepec Peace Accords make this community of former FMLN (the guerrilla resistance) supporters possible. The Land Transfer Program is not land reform; the program is intended to allow 47,500 families to buy land at market value. These include 15,000 ex-government soldiers, 7,500 ex-FMLN combatants and 25,000 civilians working land they occupied and tilled during the war.

The Land Bank — a post-accords institution capitalized almost entirely by

Daniel Moss recently returned from El Salvador after two-and-a-half years of volunteer community development work in Nuevo Gualcho. He and his wife, Tyler Haaren, were sponsored by the Massachusetts Episcopal Diocese's Commission on Wider Mission.

Prayers for the earth

At 4 a.m., the community cattle truck honked and loaded Gualcho folks in their best ironed clothes. They carried bouquets of red and white paper roses for the commemoration of the Calabozo massacre. Concha passed up a basket of tortillas stuffed with beans wrapped in a steaming towel and hoisted herself onto the truck bed, doing her best not to get dirty. It was a three-hour journey to the deep river gorge where more than 300 people were killed in a 1982 army operation.

When the road deteriorated, we walked. There was an occasional stray cow, but most of the barbed wire along the roadside was rusted and broken, pastures were overgrown and saplings grew out of crumbled adobe walls of bombed houses.

Eduardo — like over half the Gualcho population — had lived in this area before the war. He pointed, "There's where we chopped down a tree to block the road. Incredible," he grinned. "In 1977, we cleared the rocks from this road so the priest could visit. By 1980, we were tearing it up again to barricade against the army." By 1980, their parish priest, Napoleon Macias, had been assassinated.

About 500 people from neighboring communities tromped through pastures and jungle, balancing on logs across bogs and streams, forever heading down to the Calabozo River bed. A woman stopped to erect a home-made cross to mark where her parents and two brothers had been killed. She cleared brush and dug a hole with a machete and positioned rocks to set it firmly.

At the actual riverbank massacre site , an artist had planted a 25-foot- high cross of soldered piping and etched panels depicting the peaceful peasant life, then the helicopters mortaring the village and piled corpses, and finally the new El Salvador — healthy corn stocks growing out of a mound of skulls. Local conservative priests refused to officiate at the commemoration; they still perceived it as a subversive act. And so Eduardo, the coordinator of Gualcho's pastoral team, led the songs and celebration. Survivors of the massacre gave testimony, prayed for the dead, for the land and for the future.

Just below, in a pool at a bend in the river, Saul stripped to his underwear and lathered himself with soap. It was in this river, 13 years earlier, that Saul stumbled blind and hid for six days, smelling — not seeing — the rotting corpses of his relatives. Now with his sight restored through corneal replacement surgery, Saul looked upstream to a sandy flat, wondering if watermelons would grow well there. He jumped into the Calabozo to rinse off. — *D.M.*

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U.S. AID and European Economic Community funds — offers 30-year mortgages at six percent interest.

FMLN ex-combatants were entitled to a range of re-insertion (into civilian life) vocational trainings ranging from cattle ranching to sewing to computers. Upon graduation, loans were made available.

A bakers' cooperative

Concha and other women enlisted in a training for bakers — there was a flurry of egg cracking and flour sifting as they attempted to supplement the mostly corn tortilla diet with bread products. The women were enthusiastic, week by week venturing into new cakes and cookies, looking longingly but thinking twice before joining hands and signing the dotted line on an 18 percent loan to buy an oven and build a cooperative bakery. The obstacles are formidable — the local market is limited, the rain-rutted dirt road is almost impassable.

Cattle farming

Juan invested his credit in two cows, but one fell into a ravine looking for scarce grasses and the other's hoof became infected and it later died. At least in the first case, he was able to sell the meat before it spoiled.

Juan had attended an agronomy training which, among other things, included a small stipend, agricultural tools, a bed, a table, machetes, and chairs whose cheap cardboard backs and seats have already rotted. Juan's wife, Estela, shrugged embarrassedly and offered me a chair covered with a board. After 12 years of war and sacrifice, the decrepit chair is an in-your-face reminder of what was not won during the war.

New wealth

Sabastian, on the other hand, has access to three credit packages through his wife and two children, all registered ex-combatants. He's got three sets of chairs. He bought 10 head of cattle and so far is riding high in the saddle that his son (working illegally in the U.S.) bought for him. He had an abundant corn and sesame crop this year, working his 10-year-old twins to the bone.

A Gualcho baby stands on his family's table, received because they are ex-combatants.

But one unlucky turn — a long drought or sick cow or child, and he'll be with Juan, staring at empty pockets and chewing on tortillas and salt.

With an unusual bumper crop, a small farmer might accumulate $500 of disposable income in a year. Will they be able to make the approximately $300 plus/year payments on the land, housing and production loans? Or will the land be repossessed by the banks and ultimately return to the wealthiest landowners?

Eduardo says he may stay in Gualcho. He has come to love the people with whom he struggled for a more just society and suffered the nightmare of war.

Eduardo

Recently Eduardo went back to look at the destroyed house over which he had sweated and sacrificed and which he could only inhabit for two years before it was bombed. He chopped back the weeds that grew out of the crumbling adobe walls, stacked the salvageable clay roof tiles and planted cashew trees to replace the ones burned in army operations. During the visit, he discovered that another family plans to return — his wealthy neighbors — the same family that had denied him an easement to their spring and later joined ORDEN (D'Abuisson's death squad organization that assassinated Eduardo's father and both in-laws).

Who would have thought that contrary landowners would return to areas in the heart of the FMLN's rearguard? Whoever would have thought that bank debts would be remembered or that communities would pay market prices for land they had "conquered" during the war? The Peace Accords are full of compromises and those once maligned as lawless communists are now, in the spirit of reconciliation, playing by the rules.

Eduardo says he may stay in Gualcho. Although it's a stumbling, neophyte cooperative with an impressive list of failed projects, on a good day Eduardo still believes that once the administrative problems and inexperience are overcome, Gualcho still offers economic and social opportunities that could benefit the entire community. He has come to love the people with whom he struggled for a more just society and suffered the nightmare of war.

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Hope persists; Salvadorans are world-famous for their perseverance and refusal to passively accept the yoke of oppression. Notwithstanding the Land Transfer Program's many bureaucratic snarls, the government's refusal to expropriate contested lands and the clock ticking down on the U.N. supervised April 30 deadline, there have been advances.

While angry soldiers of the ex-government occupy the National Assembly and hold deputies hostage to demand that they not be robbed of the indemnization, land and credit that they were promised, some people have and will be benefitted.

Perhaps Concha, Sebastian, Raul and Eduardo will be able to use their Christian inspiration and revolutionary ideals to sow productive seeds and plow a viable path through El Salvador's economic minefield. It remains to be seen if the agonizingly slow pace of the endeavor will be enough to prevent another outpouring of blood on the land. TW

Dismantling affirmative action: history drawn full circle

continued from page 3

mid-1960s, as the analysis of personal racial prejudice was extended to cover the workings of public and private institutions, white supremacists were commonly referred to in racial polemic as white racists, and later, simply as racists.

What was lost in the subtle change of nomenclature was the ready understanding that, historically, white Americans have tended to believe that their political interests, *as a race*, were in fact superior to everyone else's.

The point is that white racism — the belief that white Americans' interests, concerns and preferences ought to come first in the life of the nation — is so deeply imbedded in everyday attitudes and actions, over several centuries, that some kind of opposing, preferential policy will be necessary to offset and redress the social imbalances caused by such patterns of belief and practice.

I am certain that conservative Republicans will rush forward with a counter claim that we ought to be a color-blind society, in support of which they will approvingly quote the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. with selective precision.

I would respond that when Senator Dole reads the results of the Fall elections without looking to determine the skin color of those who voted for his party's candidates, our society will not be far from the realization of Dr. King's beloved community.

Republican conservatives will also invoke the scary specter of "reverse discrimination," which is real and disturbing to anyone sensitive to moral dilemmas, particularly as it affects individuals.

But as the ethicist Daniel Maguire argued in the early 1980s, "ethical problems are not just unfortunate; they are often brutal." Maguire's book, *A Case for Affirmative Action*, reissued (and renamed) in 1992, would reward the close attention of anyone interested in the topic.

Finally, I had hoped, as a Christian and as a priest, that the "religious" right might help frame the terms of this public discussion by reference to the prophetic tradition — *the values* — of biblical religion, shared by Christians, Jews and Muslims. In view of the shabby record of white Christians in matters of racial justice, notwithstanding recent outreach efforts of the Christian Coalition to theologically conservative African Americans, I should not have been surprised that this has not happened.

I am afraid that past and present history teaches that when the period of moral urgency passes, the national conscience can be fobbed off with the authorization of a national holiday or the issuance of a postage stamp.

The moral default of white Christians, over centuries, demonstrates the cultural captivity of religious authorities to the racial, class, and economic interests of their members.

But then, there is always the possibility that some ordinary American(s), inspired by a vision of transcendent truth — a Lincoln or a King — may clarify the moral challenges. Such figures in public life have too often been made to suffer vilification, exile, and the forfeiture of their lives before legislators catch the vision.

I am afraid that past and present history teaches that when the period of moral urgency passes, the national conscience can be very easily fobbed off with the authorization of a national holiday or the issuance of a postage stamp.

Another possible answer to the moral dilemma of affirmative action may lie in Harvard University Professor Cornel West's provocative suggestion that preferential policies in the future be based on considerations of social class rather than on race. Maybe his voice will be heard above the din of white male frustration.

In any case, I trust that Senator Dole will do his best (or his worst), depending on your racial and ethical vantage point. And in the meantime, as the Majority Leader ponders the moral requirements of equity and justice for all Americans, with special reference to affirmative action policies, may "justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24). TW

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Crazy Horse ban gains ground

The campaign to ban the sale of malt liquor under the name of Chief Crazy Horse has succeeded in two states, and one grocery store chain. Laws prohibiting it have been enacted in Minnesota and Washington, and A & P Vice President David S. Edwards stated in a letter to the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility that the beverage "is no longer an authorized item for sale in our stores."

G. Heileman Brewing Company, which has produced the malt liquor since 1992, has denied responsility for the label, which has offended native Americans who revere Crazy Horse as a spiritual leader who fought to protect his people from alcoholism.

HONOR requests that readers contact their local stores, asking them to refrain from stocking Crazy Horse Malt Liquor. An information packet is available for $1.00 from HONOR, 2647 N. Stowell Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53211.

Answering racist muttering

"I think that the nastier mood has been coming along for quite a while," said K. Anthony Appiah, a professor of African-American studies and philosophy at Harvard University, in a recent interview with *Emerge* magazine.

"There are a lot of white people in this country who are not confident about their futures. There are problems ahead in the American economy. There are long-term problems already, some of which Murray and Hernstein [authors of *The Bell Curve]* talk about. And so they are particularly likely to worry about anything that looks as though it might be getting in the way of getting the job. Any form of affirmative action for women or minorities looks like that.

"And so there's a lot of resentment, even among people who are employed, because they're not sure how long they will be employed or how easy it will be for them to get a job again, or whether the job they get will have an income that is like the one they had before. And so I think there has been a lot of muttering going on for a while. In that sense, Murray's claim that they are simply talking about something that people are muttering about is perfectly right. And I think at this point it's as well, since they brought it up, to go through and see which things they're right about and which things they are wrong about."

Nonviolence programs

Nonviolent Alternatives offers three- and four-week programs on wholistic living, nonviolence, and unlearning racism in Lakota communities in the U.S., and in India. For information contact Nonviolent Alternatives, 825 4th St., Brookings, S.D., 57006; (605) 692-8465.

Censoring anti-pornography feminists

Anti-pornography feminists, accused of supporting censorship, have themselves been effectively censored by media bias and slander, Ann Simonton writes in *Z Magazine*. She lists five myths which she believes have silenced debate: 1) Anti-pornography feminists are aligned with right-wing conservatives; 2) they are a movement of two people — Catherine McKinnon and Andrea Dworkin; 3) they advocate censorship; 4) they are anti-sex; and 5) they support anti-feminist and anti-gay legislation.

"A primary frustration for anti-pornography feminists is the difficulty of trying to get people to acknowledge the harm done to women, children and men through the pornography industry," Simonton says.

"The majority of women who appear in pornography are also prostitutes and have been sexually abused as children. They are poor and 90 percent would leave the business if they could. Pornography is also controlled by organized crime where force and violence are standard business practice. ... 'Anti-censorship' groups never give the microphone to the women with little access to free speech who, for example, live on the streets being prostituted."

Simonton charges that financial motivations underlie much 'anti-censorship' advocacy. She notes that Lavada Blanton, the treasurer for Feminists for Free Expression, works for *Penthouse,* and that *Playboy* and *Penthouse* both donate money to the ACLU.

Nuclear Study Guide

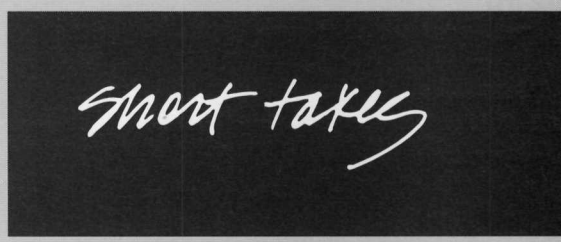
The Nuclear Story: Seeds of Life, Seeds of Death provides prayers, facts and study questions for Christians seeking to face and redeem the past in this year which marks the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Available from Pax Christi, the 84-page book costs $5. Pax Christi USA, 348 10th St., Erie, PA, 16503; (814) 453-4955.

Coming up

Upcoming *Witness* themes include: Out of Africa, Nonviolence – tactic or lifestyle? and the Suburbs.

Readers are welcome to submit ideas, art or short articles for consideration. We don't publish sermons or academic prose.

We always welcome short news articles about local events that concern workers, the environment, etc.



We respond to submissions when we think it's likely we can use them. We don't send rejections. We are open to simultaneous submissions.

We value wit and brevity. We particularly appreciate submissions with a twist.

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The Witness Project: commemorating slain women

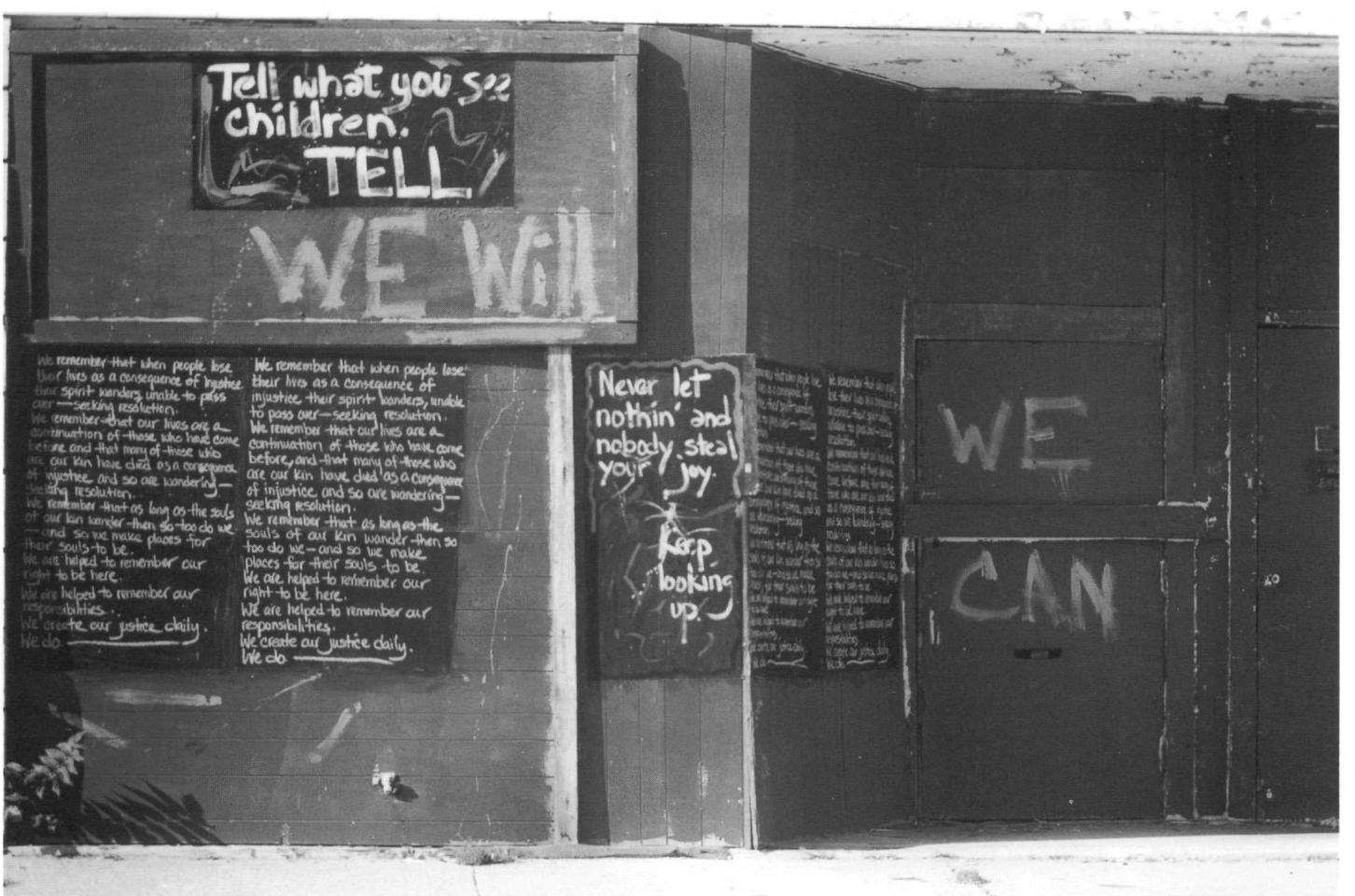
After the 1992 murders of 11 African American women who were found in abandoned buildings throughout the Woodward corridor of Highland Park and Detroit, artist Janet Young Webster began to create a new form of street art on the sides of abandoned buildings.

She composed a series of 11 messages, ranging from poetry and prayers to traditional African American sayings, then painted them onto over 200 large panels. The panels were adhered to the outside walls of buildings to create "word murals." The buildings became resting places, *descanso,* evidence that these 11 women had existed and were valued.

"We remember that when people lose their lives as a consequence of injustice, their spirit wanders, unable to pass over — seeking resolution," one of the murals read. ". . . We remember that as long as the souls of our kin wander, then so too do we — and so we make places for their souls to be. We are helped to remember our right to be here. We are helped to remember our responsibility."

The first mural was installed on September 24, 1992, on the building in which the body of JoAnn O'Rourke had been found.

Webster's original desire had been to install the panels onto the front of the Monterey Hotel across the street, where three women's bodies had been found in February of 1991. Taken over by the State of Michigan because of unpaid taxes, the huge hotel was left unsecured and was used for prostitution, drug activity, and



Graffiti-inspired art reclaims the site where the body of a Detroit prostitute was found. Gordon Judd

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dumping of various kinds. The building exuded a negativity that was palpable to Webster's five-member team, who found that they did not want to get too close to the structure, so they chose the building across the street instead.

The first word murals were installed in the spirit of civil disobedience. There was the expectation that the police would interrupt the installations, as permission from the building's owner had not been obtained or sought. The group had planned that, if fined or arrested, they would use the opportunity to bring attention to the owners who had left their property open and in disrepair in the middle of residential neighborhoods.

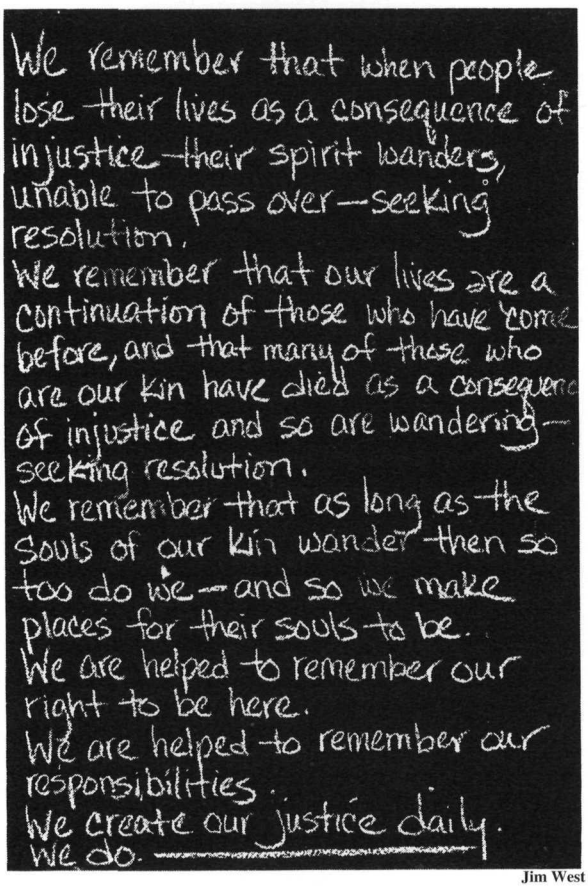
They quickly discovered that the police had no interest at all in what they were doing. One police car had paused as the installation began, but soon drove off and never appeared again.

The second mural was adhered to an abandoned building at the corner of Mack and Meldrum on Detroit's east side. The building, an old wooden grocery store built in the early 1900s, was chosen for its beauty, and because it was the site of drug dealing and prostitution. This mural was adhered with more confidence, but still with some expectation that the work could be interrupted. Again, the mural went up with no interference.

The significance of the project began unfolding in the weeks following the first installations. What occurred was completely unanticipated. The immediate areas surrounding the two buildings where the murals had been installed took on a completely different tone. The drug dealing moved across the street and one block down, and the prostitution moved with it. Life went on as usual in the general vicinity, but not within the square blocks in which the buildings were located.

In October, 1992, one month following the installations, a hole the size of a doorway in the side of the Mack and Meldrum building was bricked up by an unidentified hand. The building was finally secured and made inaccessible.

The Highland Park building was demolished in March, 1993, by the Edison Company to install a generator.



Jim West

Webster was subsequently invited to create a word mural for an abandoned cleaners at the corner of East Warren and Lenox on Detroit's east side. The building had been left open for several years and was used by a group of men who sat inside the building and drank the entire day long.

Webster covered the front of the building with 75 separate panels, all reading, "no endless supply of time." The inside wall space was covered with panels reading, "How long? Not Long?"

The art, completed in October of 1993, was demolished along with the building by the City of Detroit in January, 1994, after a neighbor reported that men were building fires inside.

Webster is currently working on a second phase of what she has named the "WITNESS Project." Her new series, entitled SOUL, is a multimedia art and educational project about childhood sexual abuse. As with her earlier work, its intent is to bring into the public domain stories and ideas that are kept shrouded, considered "personal" or "private business."

In the winter of 1993, following the installation of the first two murals, Webster began writing the story of all that she had witnessed while investigating the murders of the 11 women and creating the project. *Power of Conviction: A Story of Women* became a one-woman performance piece that was first presented in June, 1993, at the A.C.T. Gallery in Detroit.

"This is about silence and the loss of memory and the beauty and human tenderness that we're all dying for," Webster says in the piece.

"This story is about making places for the wandering dead so that we can be free to go on. So that we can be free to go on and create things beautiful enough to blast back this ugly."

TW

Material for this article was supplied by the artist. Photographer ***Gordon Judd*** *is a Basilian priest in Detroit studying non-violence. Photographer* ***Jim West*** *is an editor of* Labor Notes.

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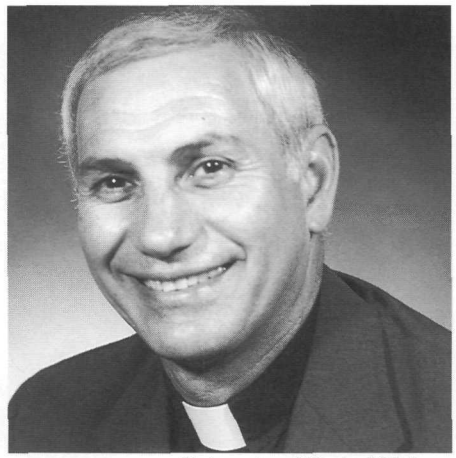
Whose promised land? an interview with Naim Ateek

by Ronald R. Stockton

Naim Ateek is Canon of St. George's Cathedral and Pastor of its Palestinian congregation. He is the author of Justice and Only Justice, *a memoir and treatise on Palestinian liberation theology. This interview took place in May, 1994, just eight months after the Oslo Accords had produced an Israeli-PLO agreement to create Palestinian self-rule, two months after a Jewish settler had massacred dozens of worshipers as they prayed in Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque, and one week after Israeli soldiers withdrew from Gaza and Jericho. Shootings occurred almost daily and Israeli soldiers still imposed curfews and patrolled Palestinian neighborhoods.*



Naim Ateek Photo courtesy of Maryknoll Missioners

Ronald R. Stockton: In America, Christians are over 90 percent of the population. Here, Palestinian Christians are a small group with no power. What does it mean to be Christian in the Palestinian context?

Naim Ateek: Our Christian community is very small in number. In other places, for example, South Africa, Christians are the largest group and they have many publications that describe their situation. Here we have few.

For most Christians the Bible is very accessible. With Palestinian Christians, the Bible is a problem in some of its parts. You have to liberate the Bible with the right hermeneutic before it can be a source of strength.

The Old Testament has two Exodus stories. The first has an exclusive theology in which the native people are negated and exterminated. It has been used by some Jews and Zionist Christians to justify their conquest of Palestine and the expulsion of the Palestinians. Jeremiah and other prophets speak of another exodus after the exile. The returning exiles will live side by side with others. Ezekiel 47 speaks of sharing the land with the inhabitants who are already there. In Leviticus, God says "The land is mine. You are all strangers." We must create an inclusive theology of God, not just a God of the Jews or a God of the Muslims. God is not for one people only.

I believe that the state of Israel should never have been created because it was established on an injustice. However, I have come to accept it.

R.S.: Jesus was a Jew. Does this create a problem for you?

N.A.: Our people cling to Christ as a Palestinian. We do not deny his Jewish roots, but because he lived in Palestine under occupation he was a Palestinian. It was under occupation that he told the people of his days to love their enemies. In light of the Resurrection, however, his Jewishness and his Palestinianism became insignificant. He is no more the Jewish Jesus but the lord of history and the redeemer of the world. The focus is not on his Jewishness but on his universality and on what God has done in Christ for the whole world.

R.S.: What do you teach about the Holocaust? It seems to be a very politically charged topic in America and Europe.

N.A.: After the Holocaust and because of Holocaust, some Christian scholars emphasized the Jewishness of Jesus. They wanted to help Christians see the affinity between Christians and Jews and lead them to reject antisemitism. I agree with this; but some of the scholars went too far theologically. The important point is that western Christians and Palestinian Christians had two different experiences with Jews.

In the west they saw Jews as an oppressed people; the Palestinians, however, experienced Jews as oppressors. The Holocaust is a terrible tragedy, but it should not be used as a weapon to silence any honest criticism against the unjust policies of the state of Israel towards the Palestinians. Furthermore, suffering can make people more compassionate but it can also make them more bitter. The suffering of Jews made many of them bitter so that there is almost a

Ronald R. Stockton is a professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and research associate at the U.M. Center for Middle East and North African studies. He is the author of "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Curriculum Unit for High Schools," published by the Center with support from the U.S. Institute for Peace. He is in the Episcopal Speakers Bureau.

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national complex that they must deal with.

Today there is a generation of Israelis who did not experience the Holocaust but who *can still imagine* it. Instead of making them more compassionate, they act very brutally against the Palestinians. By inflicting suffering on others, they imagine that they are preventing their own suffering. In the way they have treated the Palestinians, one can almost say that they see the Palestinians as Nazis.

Why would a soldier beat a Palestinian child? Does he see the Nazi in this child? Is this the way to express "never again"? Unless Israeli Jews begin to confront this part of their history and recognize that we are all the children of today, that we have all suffered and that we can all be oppressors, there will be no change.

R.S.: Is forgiveness part of liberation theology?

N.A. Very much so. We have to struggle with it because of people's experiences. Every member of our congregation has stories to tell. My own kids went to rent a video during the *intifada* and soldiers made them stand against the wall and beat them. We have been more fortunate than many others since we live in a protected compound, but think of those who do not. In spite of all this, we must continue to practice forgiveness and pray for the grace not to give in to hate.

We teach our people that, in the final analysis, the dynamic is that of oppressor-oppressed. Today the Israeli Jew is the oppressor, tomorrow the Palestinian could be the oppressor. We need to watch out and must stand with the oppressed.

R.S.: What is the appropriate political solution for the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians?

N.A.: I have changed quite a bit in the 27 years since I was ordained. I read old sermons and cannot recognize myself. There were times when I was very confused.

I was much affected by 1948. I was 11 when the Jews occupied my home town of Beisan. I can still remember how the soldiers went in, occupied the town and kicked everyone out. We had no choice but to leave. They took our homes and gave them to Jewish immigrants and changed the name of the town to Beit She'an. My father was a committed layman, a goldsmith by trade. He talked of our expulsion all the time.

A view of Jerusalem from the garden of Gethsemane.

I believe that the state of Israel should never have been created because it was established on an injustice. However, I have come to accept it and am willing to bear that injustice for the sake of those Jews who have no other home — and for the sake of peace.

Like the majority of Palestinians, I now accept the existence of Israel within the pre-1967 borders although that means 77 percent of Palestine.

In other words, most Palestinians have resigned themselves to 23 percent of the land of Palestine. We like to focus on a just peace and not on the destruction of the state of Israel. We accept Israel in spite of its injustice.

We emphasize a two-state solution — the state of Israel along side the state of Palestine. Our message is a message of justice, peace, reconciliation. I hope we can maintain this prophetic role.

R.S.: What produced your acceptance of Israel?

N.A.: I was fluctuating. I had to deal with my own bitterness and resentment. By the grace of God I was able to do it. It was a journey of faith. **TW**

Since the accords

After signing the Oslo Accords, people in the West Bank and the Gaza strip were euphoric, in spite of skepticism about the applicability of the agreement.

People went out into the streets in jubiliation and distributed flowers and olive branches to the Israeli soldiers.

Now, a few months after the partial withdrawal of the occupying army, euphoria has given way to despair. Palestinians find themselves in prison, because Israel has imposed border closures. Unemployment is at 50 percent. Negotiations are going around in circles on both sides.

There is an urgent need for the unbiased interference of the U.S. and Russia and for all the donor countries to live up to their promises.

Palestinians understand the need for Israeli security and are working hard on it. Israelis must work on redeployment of their army in preparation for Palestinian elections, lifting the border closure and, most importantly, stopping the expansion of Jewish settlements in and around Jerusalem and on the West Bank.

– Naim Ateek

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From witch trials to hope

by Rosemary Haughton

A 17th-century farmhouse stands within nine steep, forested acres in Gloucester, Mass. The house offers hospitality and has become a symbol of alternative economic development. It stands close to the sea which has been the "land" harvested by Gloucester fishing families for generations.

Seven friends purchased the house in 1981, desiring a low-profile, informal way to offer the hospitality of a shared home to people in crisis.

As it grew, we sensed that what we were about had to do with "coming home" — exiles returning, reclaiming the land that had never been legally theirs.

The history of the house had something to do with it. The homeless women who came to us were sisters to the women who had lived in it 300 and more years ago — but had never owned it.

When we bought the house we gradually discovered much of its history, partly from the formidable historical research necessary to establish title to the various parcels of land which went with it, and partly from a family descended from the original builders of the house.

Sylvester Eveleigh had built the house in 1649, it seems, or maybe it was his son John, and they prospered and were respected, and served as selectmen and did all the things good citizens should do.

Sylvester Eveleigh served as a juryman during the Salem witch trials. These were trials of women suspected of dealing with the powers of evil, because they knew more than most of their neighbors, or were more solitary, or owned things others coveted. There is no record of how Sylvester voted on that jury, or of how the women of his household felt in their secret thoughts about the trials and their fearful outcome.

There is no mention of the women in the recorded story of the house, apart from their names. Their fathers, brothers and husbands bought land, built houses, farms and saw mills. They administered justice, which was greatly concerned with land: the ownership of it, the disputes over it, the inheriting or disinheriting of it. Women were often part of the deal, as with Elizabeth Eveleigh who married a man called Rust, to whom the house passed in consequence.

The women were, then as now, landless and vulnerable, but they created life in the land. They grew food and healing herbs, they cleaned, made the clothes. They often dealt with all the financial details of the farms they could not own.

The women strewed the bride-bed and the floor of the room with sweet herbs to expel evil spirits and bring good luck and many offspring. Marriage was what women were for, to provide sons to inherit the land. And then as now there were the other women, the servant girls who slept in the attic and were well- or ill-treated according to the mood of the master or mistress, and who were regarded as sexually available even in Puritan New England, and could not complain because it was always their fault and they might lose their jobs, which meant food and shelter, or they might be suspected of witchcraft for ensnaring a man.

Wellspring is a house drenched in the stories of women living in space belonging to others, their lives directed to the purpose of others.

The house has a well in the front yard, and that was the reason naming it as we did. The well is almost certainly polluted as well as unused, like so many other wells in this land from which once everyone drew their water. So the well for which the house is named is also a symbol of desire to discover unpolluted sources of life, for women and by women.

There is a sense in which all women, with a few exceptions, are "homeless," even if they live in comfortable homes, because they belong to the sex that does not possess, that is, on the contrary, possessed.

The police once brought a young woman to Wellspring about midnight. It turned out that her boyfriend, who was drunk, had beaten her in her own apartment, for which she paid the rent, and had then fallen asleep on her couch. She called the police because she was afraid of what might happen when he woke, and their response was to remove her and leave *him* on the couch. It just did not occur to them to regard her as the owner of that space, with the right to inhabit it unmolested. It is *the women who leave.*

Even when there is no obvious violence, even when the relationship is regarded as "normal," the same underlying assumption holds: the house, the land, the nation, belong to the men.

After 14 years at Wellspring, the vision is clearer and more stark. As the public mood of unadmitted (but well-founded) fear for the future seeks its scapegoat, it is the women who are driven into the wilderness. In Massachusetts, for instance, homelessness has been *redefined* to exclude two-thirds of those currently homeless. (People are counted as homeless only if they have lost their homes through fire or natural disaster, or been evicted by court order.) Shelters for

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Rosemary Haughton, a founding member of Wellspring, is a widely published author in the field of theology and spirituality. She writes of her experiences at Wellspring House in *Song in a Strange Land: The Wellspring Story and the Homelessness of Women* (Templegate: Springfield, IL, 1989.

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women and children are de-funded, many forced to close. And it is proposed that, at the federal level also, poor women under 20 who have babies must live at home or in an institution in order to receive benefits; the pathetic little bit of independence they might have had is too threatening. As in the witch hunts of the Middle Ages, public fear (of war, sickness, economic uncertainty) is to be exorcised by punishing the women, whose gains in civil rights, legal rights, job equity and, above all, in personal independence are too threatening.

In this atmosphere, Wellspring House, and now a sister corporation, a community land trust, clarify the vision and continue to call exiles home, to teach and demonstrate that a just society must be founded in the obligation of all citizens to share and care for the land. Hospitality means making the earth home for all.

This 17th-century house, once the home of a Salem witch trial juror, now shelters women and is the center for a variety of development projects .

At the heart of Wellspring is a small group of people — six at present — who live in or near the old house and form the "core community." We see our role as bearers of the tradition, charged with ensuring that the mission of hospitality informs all the decisions and the work, and is expressed in the very look and feel of the place — the welcoming kitchen where volunteers prepare dinner, the winter fires on the 17th-century hearth, the fresh flower-bulbs in winter, flowers from the garden in summer — that say to all, "You are welcome, you are important, you deserve beauty." Most of the core community are also part of the staff. Dozens of volunteers do child-care, food preparation, telephone answering, wood stove tending and much more.

A lodging house for single men and women and two apartment houses now provide homes for low-income people. The community land trust, holding the land as a sacred trust, makes possible ownership of homes on that land for people who never thought they could afford it. It includes five condominium units so far, and 16 units now rented but moving towards cooperative home ownership, plus eight more condo units (one for handicapped people) in construction.

To reclaim the land means to understand oneself in the land — social analysis, awareness of the history of women and the poor, growth in confidence. It also means, very practically, learning how to find, keep and pay for a home, learning the skills to move from the dependence and isolation of poverty to both self-support and the interdependence of friendship. To reclaim the land means to dare to cross barriers of class and education, as men and women, poor and middle-class, share the work of the two boards of Wellspring, as volunteers and homeless women become friends.

A little bit of literal reclaiming of land goes on in the nine acres around the old house. Most of the rocky, forested land is wonderful for walking, camping, and meditation, but no good for cultivation. But on the level land, from the first year, we planted a vegetable garden and fenced it to protect it from energetic and hungry ground hogs. We grew food for the house, and made compost. (The green compost bucket in the kitchen has to be explained to new volunteers and homeless guests.)

The flower beds in front of the old house make passing cars slow down. Fruit and other trees have been planted. Three years ago a big area was fenced to make community gardens. Now, families who have no yards come to dig, plant and harvest, and the children play in the sandbox or on the swings nearby. One day, perhaps, we'll have a cooperative farm.

Gloucester is a traditional fishing port, and the ocean is the "land" where a third of local families make their living — or did. Now, many of the big fishing grounds are closed by government order and fishing is severely restricted. Boats are idle and fishermen are on unemployment. Families who are unable to keep up payments face the loss of not only boats but homes. The public is taught to blame the local fisherman for over-fishing. Nobody mentions the huge factory boats that sweep the breeding grounds. Nobody mentions the global phenomenon of pollution-induced abnormalities that make many fish incapable of breeding.

A group called The Gloucester Fishermen's Wives works with Wellspring on public policy and on creating new small businesses. Reclaiming the sea make take years, but the spirit is alive. Wellspring has a business called "Fish to People" that brokers low-cost "underutilized" fish species (when the boats are allowed to catch them) to hospitals, shelters, nursing homes, and food pantries.

We have created a little space in which we can claim "this land is home to me," and move on in the hope that one day all the world can be home. TW

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Facing presentments: looking for a little action

"Dialogue doesn't work in bringing us to a point of decision," Todd Wetzel, executive director of Episcopalians United, told *The Witness* when asked about the letter of presentment that has been issued by 10 bishops against retired Bishop Walter Righter. At issue is Righter's 1990 ordination of a non-celibate gay man.

"An ecclesiastical trial is the only way in which the church can honestly debate these issues," Wetzel added. "Either the church is going to ordain homosexuals or not. It's time to reassert discipline — not just on issues of sexuality but on a broader front."

Other presentments for the same offense are also expected to be issued against Stewart Wood (Mich.), Ronald Haines (Washington), John Spong (Newark) and Allan Bartlett (Pa.).This formal legal approach to settling theological disputes appears to fly in the face of the General Convention mandate "to continue the dialogue."

Edgar Kim Byham of Integrity, the advocacy group for gay and lesbian rights in the Episcopal Church, says that a heresy trial "would be an immoral waste of time and money."

"They clearly have no chance of success — but they want something more definitive than they got out of the Wood decision," Byham said, referring to the decision by a panel of five bishops appointed by the presiding bishop that there was no grounds for a call for presentment against Michigan's bishop, Stewart Wood. In that case six priests and 29 lay persons charged that Wood had violated a 1979 General Convention resolution in ordaining a non-celibate lesbian.

By charging Righter on the grounds that he violated the teaching of the church, i.e., committed heresy, the 10 bishops have asked for an ecclesiastical trial, circumventing the involvement of a board of inquiry appointed by the presiding bishop.

To hold a trial, one quarter of the bishops must give their consent. Supporters of the presentment predict that this will happen if they get the support of the bishops who signed the "affirmation" of the church's traditional teaching on sexual morality (i.e. married, heterosexual sex) during the 1994 General Convention.

"I think it will polarize the church and will signal that we can't talk any longer [if the trial takes place]," said Pamela Chinnis, president of the House of Deputies.

But for many, whether we *were* talking is an open question.

William Frey, former bishop of Colorado and dean of Trinity School for Ministry, recently declared a moratorium on discussing issues of sexuality because he believes both sides have made up their minds and neither side is listening. In the meantime, he says, the other work of the church is left undone.

While at the House of Bishops meeting in Kanuga, Frey said he spoke with those advocating a trial.

"The presentment is a desperate attempt to get one question on the agenda of the House of Bishops — it has little to do with human sexuality and everything to do with order. Does the Episcopal Church have any official teaching on the matter of human sexuality? If so, what is it, and are there any consequences for not adhering to it?"

For many, the questionof order invokes another problematic area: adherence to the canon that makes ordination equally applicable to men and women.

"It is ironic that bishops who have intentionally excluded women from ordination despite the canons would bring charges against Bishop Righter," observes Cynthia Black, president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus.

Four of the 10 bishops who signed the letter of presentment — William Wantland (Eau Claire), John David Schofield (San Joaquin), Jack Iker (Ft. Worth) and Keith Ackerman (Quincy) are opposed to women's ordination to the priesthood.

The others who signed are John Howe (Cen. Fla.), James Stanton (Dallas), Stephen Jecko (Fla.), Terence Kelshaw (Rio Grande), Maurice Benitez (ret.,Texas) and James Coleman (W. Tenn.).

If it comes to trial the bishops who will cast the verdict are: Fred Borsch (L.A.), Donis Patterson (ret., Dallas), Cabell Tennis (Del.), Arthur Walmsley (ret., Connecticut), Roger White (Milwaukee), Edward Jones (Indianapolis), Robert Johnson (N.C.), Andrew Fairfield (N.D.) and Douglas Theuner (N.H.).

Some observers suspect a trial would be a two-edged sword. A victory for Righter could be an important affirmation of gay/lesbian rights, but negative reaction to such an affirmation could lead to the nomination and election of a new presiding bishop (scheduled for 1997) opposed to the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals.

The bishops opposed to women priests could also interpret a verdict that supports Righter's conscientious right (based on a theological position) to ordain a non-celibate gay man as support for their claim that the "conscience clause" gives them the right to ignore the ordination canons.

At bottom, the frustration that prompted 10 bishops to issue a presentment may be the same frustration that has caused many bishops to ordain qualified homosexual priests and many clergy to bless homosexual relationships.

Both groups — those who perform the rituals and those calling for ecclesiastical trials — want action, not talk.

— Witness *staff*

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Making the sanctuary safe: an interview with Nancy Myer Hopkins

by Julie A. Wortman

Nancy Hopkins is an Episcopal Church consultant on helping congregations deal with events that have left them feeling traumatized. In addition to working directly with congregations, she conducts training sessions to prepare others for this work and spends time writing on the topic for a variety of journals.

Nancy Hopkins

Julie A. Wortman: Working with congregations in the wake of clergy sexual misconduct has become a specialty of yours — how did you get started doing this work?

Nancy Myer Hopkins: I've been working in this area for more than six years, dating from our move to Minnesota, where my husband, Harold [Hoppy] Hopkins, had taken the job of Director of the Office of Pastoral Development for the House of Bishops — he had been bishop of North Dakota and I had been using my background in family systems and family therapy in my work as a counselor for Lutheran Social Services in Fargo.

Hoppy was going to be dealing with clergy sexual misconduct issues a lot and wanted some extra education. So we went to a four-day training, one of the first being offered. I learned a lot about victims and offenders, but they did not mention the congregation at all and that seemed like a huge gap to me — there was a whole other big group of people out there that was affected by this and it appeared that nobody was looking at that.

So the person who organized the conference and I invited about 10 people to do research with us. We represented a broad range — three were offenders who were well into the recovery process, some worked primarily with victims, others worked primarily with families of offenders and some were trying to manage these cases for their various denominations.

We went to congregations where there had been cases of clergy sexual misconduct and asked, "What did you need that you didn't get?" These were congregations where the misconduct was well in their past. And they were very clear. The first thing they told us was, "To be told the truth." Even when the case was 20 years old, there was still a lot of very intense feeling that they had never had a chance to process together. We learned from this that regardless of the time element, these feelings go underground and are still there if they are not surfaced and worked through.

We also surveyed 18 "after-pastors," pastors whose predecessors had been offenders. We found that about half of these people were having a terrible time, that the anger in the parish seemed to be out of control, being directed at the bishop or whoever would be in that position in their churches, at anybody who was identified as the victim and at the after pastor — as is often true in the case of an incested family, seldom was the anger directed at the person who really did betray them. The after-pastors reported lots of conflicts and fighting in their congregations, particularly what I call "symbolic fights" involving displaced anger. In general, the trust levels were shot.

J.W.: Working with congregations sounds complicated — you've got a group of people reacting to the situation individually, out of their own personal lives and backgrounds, and you've also got to contend with a group dynamic?

N.H.: It's *very* complicated. A lot of clergy who have been power abusers — basically that's what sexual exploitation is, of course, power abuse — have attracted to their congregations people who would be dependent on them.

J.W.: So then it's also a matter of going back to basics about roles and power?

N.H.: Absolutely. That's one of the underlying themes. What we're talking about here is power abuse. The sexual stuff is a way that it frequently plays out, but it is by no means the only way. There are plenty of ways that clergy can abuse their congregation. They can be emotionally abusive, verbally abusive or go after the money — and sometimes these are combined.

What we're finding when we intervene in these systems is that there will also be lay people who are abusing what we call their secular power, related either to money — that's a primary one — but also to status, class, gender, and race. Power abuse is not only going on with the cleric. I think very often a person can get away with something because others are also getting away with something.

J.W.: Are most of the congregations you see, then, pretty unhealthy?

N.H.: Not always. You also get healthy congregations where abuse occurs. The abuse is still traumatic, but in those settings the congregations can recover more readily. As I do this work and realize how complex it is, I've been looking increasingly at the variables that predict if a congregation will be totally traumatized by a case of clergy sexual abuse or

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Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness.*

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whether it will recover relatively easily.

Recovery is aided if the congregation is well connected to its diocesan structure, if it's been open as a total system, if the people are healthy, if there is a broad distribution of lay people who are using power — not one or two who are abusing their power, if the congregation has not had a past history of being traumatized, and if the clergy who have gone before have for the most part left under reasonable circumstances. All these things make a difference. There are probably 10 or 15 more factors, but these come most readily to mind.

J.W.: How long before a congregation sorts things out after a case of abuse?

N.H.: It takes a long time. Congregations often want a quick fix. It almost seems like the sicker they are the quicker they want the fix to be. It's an indication of how ill they might really be if, after the first meeting, people are suddenly saying, "Oh, we've dealt with this and now it's time to move on."

J.W.: Is this where the truth-telling comes in?

N.H.: Yes. I don't have a way to help a congregation unless they can talk about what has gone on. There's an important difference between secrecy and protecting privacy. In the context of clergy behavior, information that can and should remain private does not legitimately concern people in the congregation — over-disclosure of a cleric's private life can be a boundary violation. But when a cleric has abused the power inherent in his or her role to harm or injure others in the congregation, this becomes an offense against the entire community. Keeping the behavior secret sets up a wide variety of damaged relational possibilities.

The laity have given away too much of their power to the clergy — across the board, not just where abuse has occurred.

J.W.: For example?

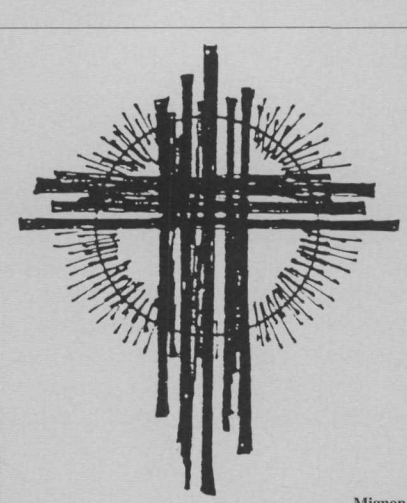
N.H.: When someone is covering something up, all their conversations and relationships, even if they seem unrelated, are colored by the necessity to be guarded. Those who know the secret tend to separate themselves from those who don't, because people who share a secret tend to be more comfortable with each other — and sometimes those who guard the secret send not-so-subtle signals that they have special knowledge and this compromises the power of all the other members of the congregation. Also, when the secret is finally revealed, those who were not in the loop feel profoundly betrayed.

J.W.: I suppose that the effectiveness of what you're doing has a lot to do with the support you get from diocesan authorities?

N.H.: That is a key factor. Luckily, more and more dioceses are getting on board with this. There are some very good people — perhaps in half the dioceses — who understand how important it is to do the congregational work and to also have policies set at the diocesan level. Still, some diocesan leaders ignore the policies that have been put in place, and that's a recipe for disaster.

J.W.: What is the key concept people need to grasp if they are to be effective in managing these cases in congregations?

N.H.: Why this constitutes abuse of power — especially sexual contact between a priest and an adult parishioner. If people don't have that understanding they won't go much further with discipline. They certainly understand if a child is a victim, but those tend to be the minority of cases in our church. We tend to have more



Mignon

Clergy sexual exploitation: reclaiming the church

This month *The Witness* launches a six-part series on clergy sexual misconduct. While church leaders have begun to publicly name the problem and offer adjudicatory solutions — the increased caseload in dioceses across the country indicate not only the need for, but the result of, doing so — there is still much confusion about causes, prevention and treatment. The conversation ranges from the power dynamics between lay and ordained and the fiduciary responsibilities of the institution to its members, to sexual and professional ethics, the purpose of congregational life and the mission of the church in general.

This month our interview with Nancy Hopkins touches upon why clergy sexual exploitation is so devastating to congregations and some of the ways the parish can be reclaimed as sacred space in its wake.

Future articles will examine presumptions about who has power and the potential to abuse it, the tension which arises as the Episcopal Church attempts to respond to cases as both a legal entity and as a Christian community, healing for victims and offenders and ethical issues that emerge when cases involve minority groups.

In all, we sense a continual grasping and groaning after resurrection in conflict with impulses to protect and defend the institution. It is our hope that the series will not only contribute to an expanded understanding of the issues involved, but also to a faithful response.

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sexual exploitation cases with adult victims. And an awful lot of that is male-on-female — not all, but almost all.

Another key understanding is the need for disclosure. If they don't understand the need for disclosure, they won't do much work with congregations. They'll leave them hanging.

J.W.: Aren't we also dealing here with a balancing act between asking our clergy to be personally involved in the life of their congregations and asking them to maintain a professional distance?

N.H.: Fifteen or 20 years ago clergy were into being "authentic." They were told, "Be yourself, be a good buddy, be vulnerable — this is the way to be effective." There is still something to be said for that. But you have to stack that up against the unconscious power that is in the role. There is power that clergy can take in the role, but there is also unconscious power in the role as well — all the transference and projection that people do with the ordained.

The laity have given away too much of their power to the clergy — across the board, not just where abuse has occurred. The result is that people put these massive expectations on clergy for them to be or do what *they* should be being and doing for *themselves*.

J.W.: What about the factor of how men and women relate in this culture?

N.H.: That's another underlying theme. The power imbalance in the role is greatly enhanced by power imbalances that are basic in a patriarchal culture. You've got this kind of double whammy with male clergy and female parishioners — there's all the unconscious power, the embodiment of the divine in the clergy person, and then there's the gender stuff in there as well. Women clergy experience power in the role very differently, but that's been relatively unexplored territory.

J.W.: So the issue of consent is a problem?

N.H.: Yes, but this is a controversial issue. There's an after-pastors meeting on Ecunet — it's a wonderful discussion! One of the topics has been, can a lay adult ever give consent to a sexual relationship with a clergy person and, if so, what would that look like? It's been one of the liveliest meetings I've seen.

Most people writing about this topic say that single clergy should never date single congregants. Others say it's possible if certain conditions are met — for example, that the dating is not a secret, that there is no major life transition in either of their lives, that there is no explicit counseling situation, that the congregant gets another pastor and worships in another congregation, that lay and denominational officials are told.

J.W.: Have you had any experience with liturgical services in which people have been trying to bring healing to the congregation after a case of clergy sexual exploitation?

N.H.: I've known of a number of healing services. But I try to caution people about offering such liturgies prematurely. As church people we tend to try to paste over things before we should. "Forgive and forget" is a phrase people often use when they are likely to be in denial.

On the other hand, there's one congregation I'm working with right now where they are having monthly healing services. The priest is making it clear to people that these are part of the ongoing healing process.

J.W.: With so many cases coming to light, I've heard some people, especially clergy, say that the church is engaged in a witch hunt. What do you think?

N.H.: Historically, witches were females and were basically either burned or hanged for getting out of line. Applying the term to this always brings me up short.

There is the remote possibility that someone could jump on this bandwagon and make a false accusation — and one false accusation is too many. But I think the fear of false accusations is greatly exaggerated. Based on what I've seen, most of the people who come forward and make charges are credible. To dismiss the whole thing as a witch hunt is a form of backlash and makes me very angry.

We will see even more cases coming forward. It is the kind of thing where one case gets publicized and 10, 20, or 50 others who have been victims read about it, hear about it, and may decide, "I have to tell my story as well." But I see that as hopeful, not hurtful.

If somebody is living with the pain of sexual abuse and they are enabled, by seeing someone else's courage and seeing that the church handles the case sensitively, to feel that they, too, might be heard, I see that as a positive step — rather than the person just living with the pain of that abuse and living with the continuing power of the abuser over them.

J.W.: Will that have an influence on the congregations where it happened?

N.H.: Yes, if it is an egregious case of power abuse, the congregation would have to deal with it because some people in the congregation most likely will have had knowledge of the abuse and have kept it a secret the whole time. It will have impacted on the health of that congregation. Because they've had this secret festering in the system, they could end up with later cases of abuses of power or clergy burnouts, one or the other.

J.W.: What gives you hope as you continue to pursue your work with congregations?

N.H.: The hope is global. As an institution, we are beginning for the first time to face a variety of abuses — the institution has been laced with abuses, even though — and I want to stress this — a majority of clergy have not been abusers. But every time the institution faces this and says, "This will stop and we can recover from this," we are taking a step toward health, not only for ourselves but in the church and the culture.

In congregations we work with, we see people begin to heal in front of our eyes. That's where the hope lies. I know from going back and asking people one, two and three years later, "How is it going for you?" they're saying it was a major turn-around for them. And it has spread out into the community so we have a community of people working to recover from a wide variety of illnesses, abuses, addictions.

You can have a ripple effect of good health going outward when you deal with this well.

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Reluctant in San Diego

by Julie A. Wortman

When church folks start talking about "evangelism," I usually leave the room. For one thing, most of the people I've encountered who *enjoy* talking about and doing evangelism have seemed unnaturally smiley and friendly. For another, they've also seemed homogeneously white, straight, clean-cut and likely to be comfortable with wearing American flag lapel pins (if they weren't already wearing clerical collars).

But the fates, combined with the fact that *Witness* board member Linda Strohmier twisted my arm ("Church journalism is a powerful form of evangelism," she kept chanting in my dubious ear), dictated that I participate in an "Evangelism Ingathering" in San Diego this past February.

Strohmier is the national church's new evangelism coordinator and she's nothing like my stereotype of an evangelism enthusiast. Asked during her interview for the coordinator's job what group of people she would like to concentrate on evangelizing first, her deadpan response was, "Gay men and lesbians."

The Ingathering in San Diego was to be her first official encounter with some of the people who have been working in evanglism for many years. A sprinkling of newcomers like me was there to add a little spice.

In the past, my biggest objection to official church evangelism talk has been that it has always seemed like double talk. Evangelism in this context is basically about church growth — about packing the pews and filling the collection plates — but we are not supposed to say so. Instead, we're told that evangelism is *only* about sharing our personal Christian stories with people who might like Christ in their lives.

No one likes to say that their major interest in having more people in the pews is about money, but I find it difficult to believe that it isn't. This is one of the

Linda Strohmier

fundamental disconnects we encounter so often in the church — between the principality of the institution and the Jesus movement the institution is supposed to serve.

A secondary but related aspect of this is that, recognizing that bringing *any* new people into the church changes the church to some degree, if you are trying to buttress up an institution that you know and love in its present form, the safest thing to do is to go after people like the ones you already have, people who will not pose the threat of bringing too much change — disconnect number two.

But thanks in large measure to Strohmier's straightforward and sometimes quirky willingness to grapple with questions others might prefer to dismiss, evangelism double talk was kept to a minimum in San Diego and the issue of the disconnects was put directly on the table.

Perhaps this was also because a significant number of the participants represented constituencies who have the numbers for which the church-growth folks are looking, but who pose a very deep threat to the homogeneity of the institution — American Indians living on reservations, migrant workers, inner-city Asians, college students, gay men and lesbians.

Julie Easley, Episcopal chaplain at the University of Iowa — a ministry that has grown from three to more than 75 (with a mailing list of 300) in less than three years — said that for her the issue is one of personal integrity. "How can I in good conscience encourage young adults to join the church when the church is not interested in offering them a chance to exercise leadership until they are in their forties?" Easley asked.

From my point of view, this applies to women, people of color and lesbigay folks as well.

But as Mark MacDonald, a priest who serves Indian communities in Red Lake and Redby, Minn., talked about the high rate of youth suicide among the Ojibwe, my feelings began to shift. It used to be, MacDonald said, that Ojibwe Episcopalians gathered regularly for hymn sings — community gatherings in which personal testimonies were interspersed with song from early evening until late in the night. But church officials told them they must stop the sings because it wasn't what Anglicans do and so they stopped. But now, convinced that the singing strengthens their people in self-understanding, faith and self-esteem, especially their youth, the elders have decided to begin singing again. This time, the church (personified by MacDonald) will support them.

"For me, evangelism is a justice issue," said MacDonald, "The poor don't know about Jesus and they need him."

His story reminded me that offering that kind of lifeline to people who face despair because of racism, poverty, homophobia or sexual abuse is, afterall, something I'm deeply committed to doing. I might even be willing to call this a commitment to evangelism now that coming to grips with the disconnects in institutional efforts to offer Jesus to the world appears to be what the Strohmier era of evangelism — she prefers the term "Gospelism" — will be about.

At least I should be able to stay in the room for the conversation.

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Stewardship without accounting?

by Dieter T. Hessel

One God, One Family, One Earth: Responding to the Gifts of God's Creation [an environmental curriculum for older youth and adult Episcopalians] by Eleanor Hill, Alfred Persons, and Jean Goodson; in consultation with the Education Action Group of the Environmental Stewardship Team. The Episcopal Church Center: NY, 1994.

An audiotape of four Paul Winter Consort pieces — one played in the Grand Canyon, and the others at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine — are included in this "interactive course exploring the spiritual dimensions of the Environmental Crisis."

Being a Winter Solstice Celebration enthusiast, I listened to the tape while browsing through the Leader's Guide. The music disposed me not only to think kindly of this parish education resource — which is well-written, and utilizes visual as well as musical arts — but to feel the deep sense of lamentation and celebration that Paul Winter evokes. While the curriculum encompasses both, celebration gets much better treatment than does lamentation.

The course caters to characteristic preferences of affluent Episcopalians for creation celebration and caring, plus cultivating less consumptive lifestyles, without venturing into much critical socio-economic analysis or exchanging any straight talk about how money is earned, invested and spent. As a venerable Presbyterian friend once observed, affluent congregations have an unholy compact wherein the clergy don't ask the laity how they got their money so long as they give some of it to the church.

Therefore, this curriculum offers some critical commentary on inappropriate consumption by affluent people in the northern hemisphere, but almost nothing about demanding community accountability from corporations (or participating in any corporate responsibility strategy). Nor does it illumine the church's role as advocate and model of sustainable livelihoods in a world dominated by profit-maximizing, labor-exploiting businesses colluding with weak governments to produce resource-wasting, unneeded stuff for "free" marketing to population groups that have the money.

"Environmental stewardship" is the prominent theme. Minor attention is also paid to the "environmental justice" movement for equity for the powerless who experience disproportionate toxicity on every continent. The curriculum does not quite get these together, probably reflecting a tug-of-war among the designers, who would have benefitted by paying closer attention to the ecumenical eco-justice thought and action which upholds the ethical norms of sustainability, sufficiency, participation and solidarity in community.

There is some irony in this curriculum's lack of attention to economics and ecumenics, since both words come from the same Greek root — *oikos* — as do ecology and stewardship *(oikonomos).* That was a missed opportunity. But *One God, One Family, One Earth* does do some good things well.

Insights of ecological and cosmological science are effectively presented. There is also some lite biblical interpretation, though not enough to reveal the Bible's rich resources for eco-justice ministry, nor possible interactions between Scripture and the world's other sacred source — the book of nature. Still, it starts in that direction.

The curriculum takes participants through a cycle of creation-aware spirituality that encourages them: a) to appreciate our place in the universe and stay in communion with creation, and at the same time, b) to think globally, act locally, and commit individually, as they begin a parish environmental ministry.

The last session brings them back to celebration creation-awareness, *after* doing action planning — an aesthetic, perhaps even inspiring touch. The six-session process is a "green" version of the awareness-analysis-reflection-action cycle that has gained prominence in social education. And it has ecclesial resonance, effectively utilizing collects from the Book of Common Prayer.

The developers of this course went to a lot of trouble to make it user-friendly (almost to a fault, since that results in very short readings, that can have intellectually thin effects). In the Leader's Guide, teachers will find thorough lesson plans, with precise, flexible instructions for all six sessions. A Resource Appendix lists religious and environmental organizations, other books and curricular resources, and "videography and audi-visual tips." I recommend it for the limited start-up purpose for which it is intended. I also urge Episcopal Church educators to become more ecumenical in eco-justice education and action as they proceed. TW

Dieter T. Hessel is a social ethicist and former national staffer of the Presbyterian Church (USA) for social education and social policy development.

book review

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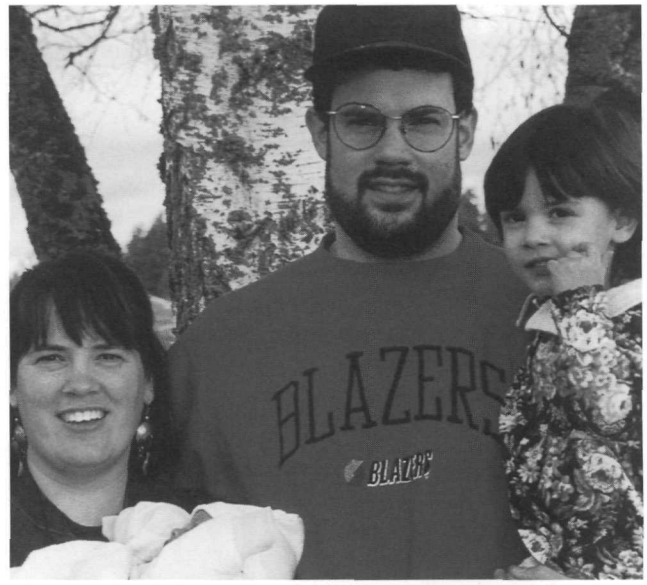

Jim Bronec and Celeste Kersey with daughters Naomi and Faith

I look at the land and it seems as though the soil is just used to hold the plants upright and then we pound on chemicals to feed them.

Resurrecting toxic land

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

When Jim Bronec grew up, the city folks whined about tractors running into the night and raised concerns about herbicide and pesticide spraying.

They were, Bronec understood, people who considered Oregon's farmland a scenic backdrop to their middle-class lives. They didn't understand.

Just recently Bronec has returned to his homeland after a tour with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps which introduced him to the needs of urban America and to his massage therapist/midwife-in-training wife. Bronec, large and steady, stands like the earth itself next to the quick-fire wit and demands of Celeste Kersey.

They have crafted a home for their two daughters out of the house Bronec was raised in. When he would say, "This is where the linen goes." Kersey would lean back, "Who says so, Jim?" The patterns he grew up with won't be adopted wholesale as the model for their life together.

Nowhere is this more clear than in their approach to the land.

The concerns of the city folks no longer seem so unreasonable and sometimes Bronec feels disloyal to the family friends he has known all his life. (He will add that it makes no sense to buy a home in farmland if you can't tolerate night plowing and harvesting, since they are necessary. And he'll add that city neighbors can be inconsiderate, allowing their children to ride horses through farm fields.)

"But I feel differently than I did growing up. I feel a lot more responsibility for the health of the land. Growing up I used to think the responsibility was solely, 'How am I going to make money to feed my kids?'

"Now I feel responsible to the land and to everyone for how I use it.

"Just down the road we have some neighbors whose house juts into our field. When I was a child, we were aerial spraying over his house -- he came out really angry. He said his wife was pregnant.

"My immediate reaction was, 'That stuff's not going to hurt you.' Now the whole idea is appalling to me. Country folks resist other people telling them what to do. There's a lot of built up resistance to environmental stuff.

"But I've come to the conclusion that what we've been fighting is actually beneficial. Being a person entrusted with the land — if I'm going to use poisonous chemicals, I have a responsibility to everyone around me. There's no way around that.

"The decisions I make are far-reaching. If I use petroleum-based fertilizer, it's imported. Plus the local runoff is going into the streams. And then there's the product."

Being a person entrusted with the land — if I'm going to use poisonous chemicals, I have a responsibility to everyone around me.

Bronec says he doesn't want to farm grass seed as the senior Bronec Brothers, his dad and uncle, have done for decades. This crop is particularly dependent on herbicides.

He's even disappointed that his organic garden, from which he can see the Cascade Mountains, may be subject to

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

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

herbicide and fertilizer runoff from the farm equipment parked nearby.

A small business counselor has been brought in to help the older Bronec Brothers figure out if and how they want their 1,000 acres used by the younger Bronec Brothers, Jim and Dave.

"He's great! There are some things my father and his brother have not discussed in years. Like my father has finally told my uncle that he wants to quit farming."

The younger brothers will face problems with the counsellor as well. Dave wants to make a good living as easily as possible, which may mean continuing the family tradition.

Jim has appalled his father and uncle by asking if he can farm a few acres organically now. He's convinced that it can be profitable.

"They won't give me even a few acres. I think my uncle thinks I'm going to go broke and it's up to him to save me. And, of course, in their minds, the land is clear now. They've worked for years to get rid of the weeds.

"But I look at the land and it seems as though the soil is just used to hold the plants upright and then we pound on chemicals to feed them.

"I think about what we'll give future generations — we'll have taken something alive and have turned it into dead matter."

For now, Bronec helps his father and uncle. He's even getting his license so that he can spray herbicides and pesticides.

But he also attends meetings of people committed to sustainable agriculture where he's introduced to farmers who share his values. He's making new allies.

"The hippies" who shared a commune near his family's farm when he was a child are still neighbors. And while they seemed foreign and exotic when he was little, they now have a desire to see their 33 acres farmed organically. They'd be delighted if Bronec would give it a try.

Bronec thinks of planting berries on the hillsides and maybe rice in the swampy areas. Multiple crops require more work (and harvesting fruit requires relying on migrant laborers which he knows introduces more justice issues), but the crops suit the character of the land.

And there is nothing he wants more than to conform his labor to the needs of the earth.

"I want to trust God's will. To me nature symbolizes God's working. When we say we can fix things that are wrong with chemicals we're ignoring the way God made it.

"We've tried to use chemicals and technology to solve our problems when we should have been looking to nature. If we can trust that there is a means within natural laws or natural boundaries to get a harvest off the land and to feed ourselves, then we'll have healthy soil and food in the future.

"It's a justice issue. We learn how God wants us to treat each other with respect. Why shouldn't that carry over to how we treat the land?" TW

May issue:

Tra la it's May. . .

body work

If you are interested in subscribing, please send a check for $25 to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Boulevard, Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1822. Please indicate if this is a renewal. Also, if you pass your copy of *The Witness* on to a friend who might subscribe, we'll be happy to replace yours for free.

Back issues

The following back issues of *The Witness* are available. Study guides are provided 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
The communion of saints 11/93
Confessing sin, confessing faith 9/91
Defense: A gift we give one another 11/91
Dialogue: conversing with adversaries 4/94
Disabilities 6/94
Economic justice 5/94
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Prince of peace: When the church engages rage 12/92
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Staying in my denomination 10/94
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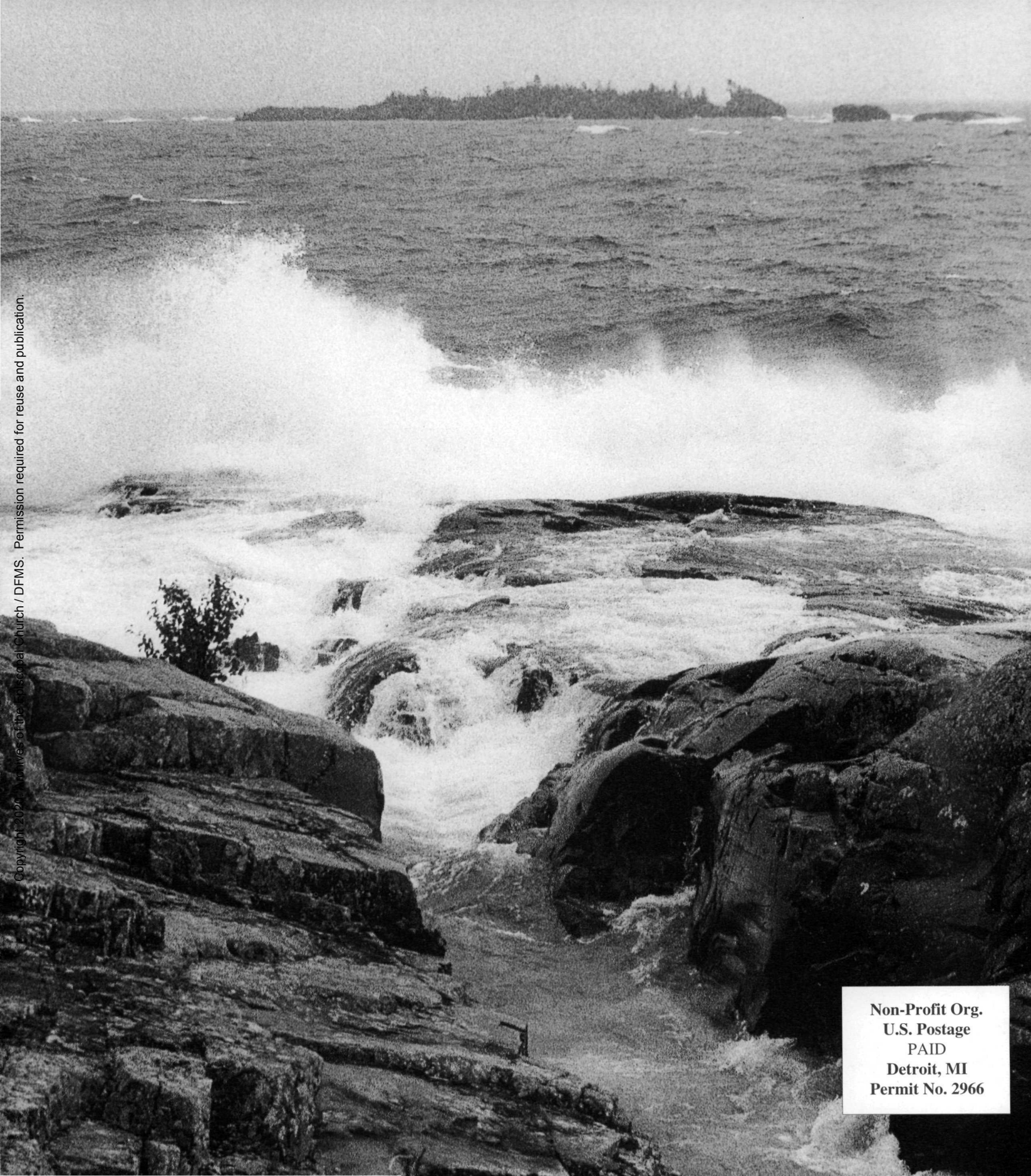

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The Witness

Body wisdom

Volume 78 • Number 5 • May 1995

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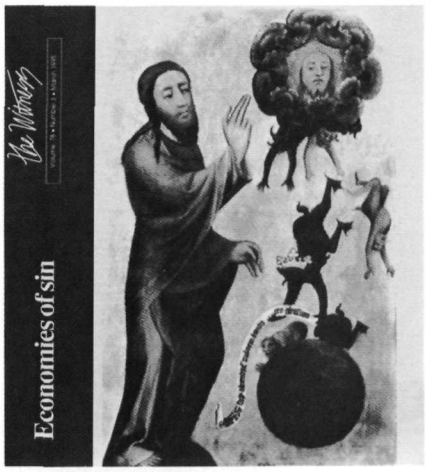
I HAVE BEEN A SUBSCRIBER to *The Witness* for several years and have always found it inspiring and challenging and especially helpful to me as a Christian educator. Your latest issue, however, which deals with "economies of sin" is really exceptional. Every article informs, uplifts and encourages. I keep a file of *Witnesses* but this one I have hole-punched to keep with my working notes for ready reference. Thanks again for a superb publication. I am hopeful that one day I will be financially able to be more than a subscriber. Also, thank you for including the information for obtaining the EUC's publication "To Heal the Sin-Sick Soul." I am sending for it today.

Anna K. Comer
Pittsburgh, PA

YOUR MARCH ISSUE IS A STUNNER. However, I looked in vain for comment on damnation and the flames of hell as the result of sin. There is a young man in our church who is deeply worried about my husband's sermons because he does not preach about hell, and the dangers of being condemned by God to spend eternity there. He worries about people who are not told about this danger, because if my husband never tells them, they could be consigned to the fires of hell for all eternity, simply because they are uninformed and it is my husband's job to tell them. This young man sees the task of any Christian minister as frightening people into good behavior and into a "belief on the Lord Jesus Christ" in order to avoid hell. I have two nephews who are also of this persuasion. One is a clergyman, the other is an engineer, and the two of them harassed their dying father who was unable to speak until he nodded that he accepted their particular brand of theology. I find it hard to deal with this level of "fundalit-ism."

It's easy to ignore these concerns which are deeply and sincerely felt, and wonder why our young man doesn't attend a



different denomination, one which agrees with his approach; he is, however, our organist, and a life-long member of a church of which his parents and grandparents were life-long members. This kind of relationship is common in the struggling inner city churches of main-line denominations.

It would also be interesting to examine why it is that "judgment" usually means "condemnation" and "justice" is used to mean "vengeance."

Priscilla W. Armstrong
Baltimore, MD

THANK YOU FOR THE PROVOCATIVE issue, Economies of Sin. The wide-ranging nature of the presentations stimulated my mind in a variety of directions. Two of the essays gave particular pause.

I am always disturbed by allegations that the writer or speaker "knows the Will of God." When Bishop Iker and I have differing interpretations, is mine based on my own will while his is based on the Will of God? Would that I could be so certain of my understanding about the nature of sin.

Easier to grasp is Bishop Browning's saying the church's greatest sin is apathy. What he discusses fits what Dorothy Sayers treated when she wrote of the deadly sin *acedia* or *sloth*. In her words "the world calls it tolerance." The images that came to Bishop Browning when he contemplated "the greatest sin the church has to face" are real for me. But I would extend the list. Is there an image in his mind of women priests in the Diocese of Fort Worth who are forbidden to function? Does he see a pair of devoted companions fasting in Seattle because the blessing of their relationship was not allowed? Does anybody care?

John S. McAnally
Port Townsend, WA

IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, we have had moments when we felt that the church-community was disappearing. However, we have been witnesses of how God as Leader of History, and Lord of the Church, guides it, directs it, protects it, and renovates it by sending men and women who know God on a first-hand basis. Men and women who have known how to respond to the Divine Call. Men and women who know that the Gospel is the Good News for the poor and who are conscious that in God's Kingdom exists a privileged class, that is, the neglected, the sick, the orphans, the widows and the smallest in the Kingdom.

When a church pays attention to and defends the interests of the powerful (rich), it's maintaining a political game, allowing a change not only in priorities but also working against the call. There is the sin.

The church's ministry should be an evangelistic, a prophetic and a missionary one, just as Jesus' ministry, and our goal should be to imitate him. The church's ministry should be to empower and transform the quality of life for the people. Only when this is done, it's then that we can say that we are starting to do ministry with the purpose of salvation-liberation that Jesus offered when he cured the sick.

Clemencia Maquete
San Juan Bautista Mission
Bronx, NY

THE REV. KEN BIEBER, who has now left our Church for the "Charismatic Episcopal Church" said in his recent interview [3/95] with you:

Bishop [John Shelby] Spong [of Newark] . . . has simply said, "I don't believe anything that the creed says."

I have heard Bishop Spong speak, and I have read several of his books, and I simply do not believe that he would make this statement. So I would like to know, exactly, where this direct quote comes from.

If Fr. Bieber can do so, I will apologize to

him for doubting his veracity.

But if he can not do so, he owes Bishop Spong, and the readers of *The Witness*, a retraction and also an apology.

Alex Seabrook

[A response from Ken Bieber follows:]

BISHOP SPONG HAS NOT SAID those exact words. But in his many writings, Bishop Spong has rejected virtually every statement in the Nicene Creed, which, according to the Book of Common Prayer Outline of the Faith or Catechism (BCP 845-862), is the creed of the universal Church, and is used at the Eucharist. I do apologize for being a bit unclear in my wording.

Perhaps after looking at the following examples from just two of the bishop's recent books: *Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism*, identified as "B," and *Born of a Woman*, identified as "W," Fr. Seabrook will see what I was attempting to say.

1. **The Creed:** *We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.*
   Catechism: "... there is one God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth ... The universe is the work of a single loving God who creates, sustains, and directs it."
   The Bishop: "We have come to the dawning realization that God might not be separate from us but rather deep within us. The sense of God as the sum of all that is, plus something more, grows in acceptability." (B-page 33) and "God is now perceived as the presence of life that animates the universe, that reaches self consciousness in Homo sapiens . . ." (B-page 241).
2. **Creed**: *For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven.*
   Catechism: "The Messiah is one sent by God to free us from the power of sin, ... The Messiah, or Christ is Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son of God."
   Bishop: "To see human life as fallen from a pristine and good creation necessitating a divine rescue by the God-man is not to understand the most elementary aspect of our evolutionary history" (B-page 234).
3. **Creed**: *By the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.*
   Catechism: "... by God's own act, his divine Son received our human nature from the Virgin Mary, his mother."
   Bishop: "Am I suggesting that these stories of the virgin birth are not literally true? The answer is a simple and direct, "Yes" (B-page 215); and "Virgins who give birth without a male agent exist for us only in legends and fairy tales" (W-page 84). And "Is there any possibility that the narratives of our Lord's birth are historical? Of course not. Even to raise that question is to betray an ignorance about birth narratives" (W-page 59).
4. **Creed**: *On the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures.*
   Catechism: "By his resurrection, Jesus overcame death and opened for us the way of eternal life. Jesus took our human nature into heaven where he now reigns with the Father and intercedes for us."
   Bishop: "Easter broke, I believe, not so much with a supernatural external miracle, but with the dawning internal realization that this life of Jesus reflected a new image of God ..." (W-page 39). And "A dead man became the means through which the living God was seen"(W-page 39).
5. **Catechism**: The Trinity is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
   Bishop: "I am not interested in preserving the doctrine of the Trinity" (B-page 232).

These, and many other examples, make it appear to me that Bishop Spong is not interested in preserving anything of the faith. Bishop Spong calls Jesus Lord, but his Lord is not the Lord of the Christian faith, but someone he has made up based on human reasoning grounded in the outmoded scientific evolutionary world view.

John Spong has a right to his opinion, but Bishop Spong does not have the right to publicly teach doctrine contrary to that of the church. Far from owing the bishop an apology, I believe he should apologize to the Church, repent of his sins of idolatry and false teaching, and then resign.

Kenneth R. Bieber,Vicar
Church of the Risen Lord
Bridgeport, MI

[Ed. note: Bill Wylie-Kellermann reviews Spong's book, *Resurrection: Myth or Reality?* on page 28 of this issue.]

Classifieds

Episcopal advertising project

A series of four 30-second television ads inviting persons to return to church is available in English and Spanish from The Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation. Dioceses or parishes can obtain the ads for broadcast on local TV stations at a reduced fee of $350 for one commercial, or $1200 for the entire campaign. Call (404) 233-5419 or (800) 229-3788.

IFOR position open

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation seeks to appoint a new coordinator for its Nonviolence Education and Training Project for Dec. 1995. This is a three-year position. IFOR is a multi-faith movement dedicated to active nonviolence as a way of life and a means of political and social change. The IFOR international secretariat is presently located in the Netherlands and operates in English. Further information is available from the IFOR office, Spoorstraat 38, 1815 BK Alkmaar, the Netherlands. Email: ifor@gn.apc.org; tel: +31-72 123 014; fax: +31-72 151 102. Send applications to IFOR President Marie-Pierre Bovy, Communaute de L'Arche, Bonnecombe, 12120 Comps Lagranville, France (fax: +33 6574 1309) before June 30, 1995.

Music tape

Martin Bell, author & priest, presents original songs performed by a diversity of gifted musicians. Includes settings for Lord's Prayer & other service music. *Just to Be Is a Blessing* is music that heals the soul, with lyrics that enliven faith. Cassette $10, CD $15. Order from MBA, 4683 Vintage Lane, Birmingham, AL 35244. 205/733-0455.

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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.

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Since 1917

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Vital Signs *examines issues of power and mutuality in this portion of our series on clergy sexual exploitation.*

Cover: The dancer: rhythms of the heart and soul by Mary Beckman. "When I saw this woman dance, I saw an incredible statement of personal power. She was celebrating a very aware mind, body and spirit connection. She also seemed to be expressing a deep connection to the earth and its mysteries. She was truly exploring and giving form to the dance within — something we can all do." Original artwork © Mary Beckman. Original artwork is in full color, greeting card published by: Caravan International, P.O. Box 17936, Boulder, Colorado 80308-0936; Phone: 1-800-442-0036. © 1994, 1995 Hope Springs Eternal Inc. *Back cover: Sanctified Joy* by Bernard Stanley Hoyes. For a catalogue of other work presented by the Syracuse Cultural Workers send $1 to SCW, Box 6367, Syracuse, N.Y., 13217; 315-474-1132. Camp meeting song cited in *Working the Spirit: Ceremonies of the African Diaspora* (Beacon, 1994).

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The ways of the flesh

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

I feel like a neophyte editing this particular issue. Body wisdom is not my strong suit. I've lived most of my life believing that that my mind and soul are primary; my body simply a vessel to transport them.

Patterns adopted in college persist. I readily exchange the things my body needs, like taking walks, preparing whole grains and relaxing, for over-achievement. I love persisting through obstacles to produce articles, magazines, conferences. I fuel the work with arrogance. My mind and soul think nothing of driving my body past mealtimes and then filling the gap with caffeine, sugar or alcohol.

Across the nation, people — and in particular women — are turning to "body work." For some this a form of psychotherapy focussed on the feelings and memories stored in their bodies. For others it is more varied: yoga, T'ai Chi, meditation, sweat ceremonies, dance therapy, prayer walking.

This work is distinguished from a preoccupation with physical fitness by participants' belief that through a body-centered discipline they will learn bodily of what is important. They will learn wisdom. They will know God.

I've joined a strong circle of women who meet from time to time to pray outdoors and to dance with the earth. I have been cultivating visions in which I begin to see bodies as earth-temples.

Outdoors, fasting and in prayer I caught a glimpse of a woman named "earth-bound woman." She is someone who is content to live one life in her one body. She would not consider trying to live multiple lives simultaneously.

Mary Beckman

I was surprised to learn later that the women at the Re-Imagining God Conference held last year spoke often of "earth-bound woman," referring to her as incarnational. They wove her easily into theological addresses that re-imagined God.

Rita Nakashima Brock (p. 6) asked, "What re-imagining of God would allow us to look in a mirror and say that we see, in our embodied whole selves, someone we love? How can we come to understand our daily, earth-bound, ordinary acts of care ... as images of sacred power, of God-with-us and in us in our very flesh?"

Listening, I felt relief; my work is part of the work of these women. Dancing alone, I had tapped their language. Perhaps they tap mine. It's a corporate work.

Some say that listening to their bodies, recovering stories and senses, brings them closer to the earth. They feel their bones to be like the earth's rocks, their skin like topsoil, their blood like rivers. They begin to recognize the earth's seasons and changes in relation to their own. And to love and trust the creator.

One can guess that less technological societies did not have to schedule evenings to work this wisdom. But neither did they have to go to Vic Tanny's to lift weights and stretch their legs.

The jingle dancers and shawl dancers, the warrior dancers at American Indian pow wows know the wisdom we've lost.

Michael Meade, a representative of the men's movement, talks in this issue about the ways less technological societies dealt with disease and violence. Interviewed by *Sun Magazine*'s Sy Safransky, Meade covers a wide-range of body topics (p. 16) — everything from gang violence to AIDS and the need to age well.

Meade calls together men who attend workshops with others from different racial, economic and gender-oriented backgrounds.

The work is not only for women.

We need to learn who we are and where we've come from and to understand organically that our lives are woven together with each other's, with the earth's and with the creator. TW

editor's note

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

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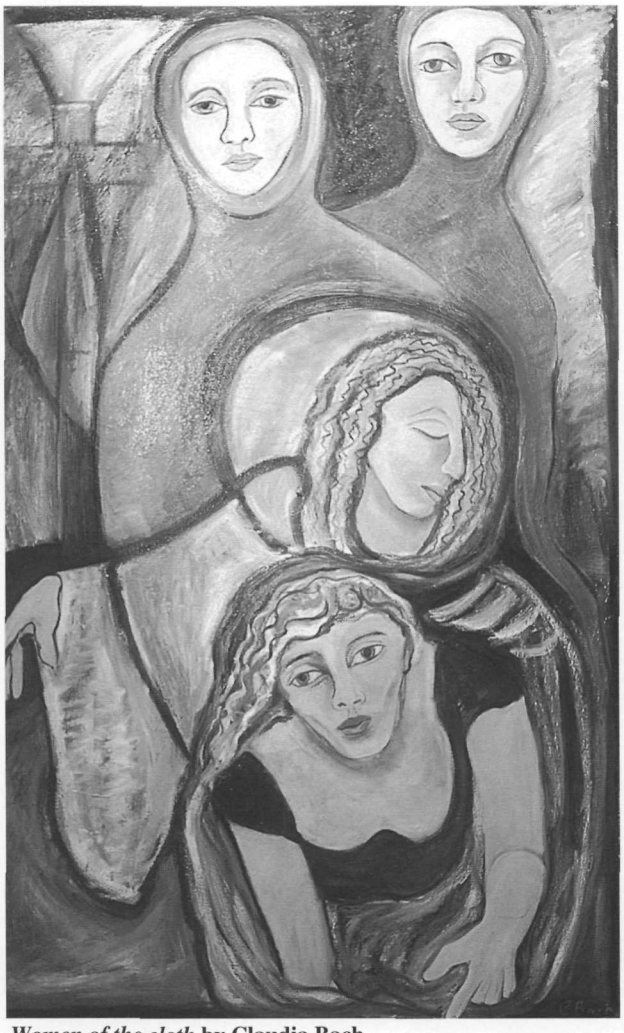
Reclaiming our flesh

by Rita Nakashima Brock

Barbara de Souza worked for almost eight years among poor communities in Sao Paolo, Brazil, and developed a two-year course in health education for women. The area she served had only one public health clinic for more than 80,000 people. De Souza provided basic health care information and instructions for doing community health work. Women gathered each week to learn anatomy from the head down, learning about the illnesses of various systems and their causes and about the politics of health care in Brazil.

To help them learn, she had her classes create a life-sized doll and put the correct anatomical features on her, and she had them draw posters to illustrate biological processes. A peak moment during the course was reached after about a year of instruction when they studied the reproductive system. The women lost their inhibitions with each other and developed a group spirit.



Women of the cloth **by Claudia Bach**

One woman's story stands out from the others, and I tell it with De Souza's permission.

Dona Julietta was from an abusive marriage. She could not handle money, was unable to do anything outside of her home without her husband's permission, and believed she was stupid, slow, and unable to learn. In order to come to the meetings, she told her husband she was attending a prayer meeting at church. And she had to bring her seven-year-old daughter along. As the weeks proceeded, it became evident that she was slowly able to learn. Although she could barely read, she was good at spatial relationships and made well-organized posters. She was also a lively member of the group, supporting and cheering others on as they struggled to learn new material.

At the time the peak of the course arrived, Julietta's husband said to her that he was tired of her going to prayer meeting every Wednesday. He beat her and forbade her to go by locking her in the bedroom. When she did not come and there was no word, the group discussed what to do. Because her husband was rude and abusive, they decided not to go to her house.

The next Wednesday when Julietta's husband saw her whispering to her daughter, he suspected something, so he repeated that she could not go. Her daughter, to be helpful, said, "But Papa, they don't really pray at the meeting; they look at a big naked doll and talk about it." Furious, he beat Julietta and locked her in her room again.

But Julietta had had a taste of feeling loved and important, so she climbed out through the window and arrived in her beaten state. She told the group that as a child she had been passed from one member of her family to another, because her mother had died in childbirth. No one

continued on page 27

Rita Nakashima Brock is associate professor of humanities at Harding University in St. Paul, Minn. She is the author of *Journeys of the Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (Crossroad, 1988) and of *Guide to the Perplexing: A Survival Manual for Women in Religious Studies* (edited with Judith Plaskow, Scholars Press, 1992). Brock told this story at the Re-Imagining Conference in Minneapolis last year. Her complete address is published in the May/June, 1994 issue of *Church & Society Magazine*, 100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, Ky., 40202-1396; subscriptions $12/year, $30/two years. Artist **Claudia Bach** lives in Sarasota, Florida.

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The bodies of grownups

Janet Morley

The bodies of grownups
come with stretchmarks and scars
faces that have been lived in
relaxed breasts and bellies
backs that give trouble
and well-worn feet
flesh that is particular
and obviously mortal
They also come
with bruises on their heart
wounds they can't forget
and each of them
a company of lovers in their soul
who will not return
and cannot be erased
And yet I think there is a flood of beauty
beyond the smoothness of youth
and my heart aches for that grace of longing
that flows through bodies
no longer straining to be innocent
but yearning for redemption

To find myself exposed

Janet Morley

To find myself exposed
where even the dark is not safe
to suffer my timid flesh
to be appalled with longing
to give up all my words
and unprotect my soul
to be searched with love
and scorched with the breath of you
I cannot so much as finger this fear
for fear of unforgetting

Janet Morley is the adult education advisor at Christian Aid in England.

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"Keep the attention on the body": a spiritual discipline

by Marianne Arbogast

"Keep the attention on the body." At one time I would have thought this to be strange spiritual counsel, but by last October, when it was offered by a Jesuit Zen master to participants in a weekend retreat, I could accept it as familiar and trusted advice.

A co-retreatant — a friend who loves to dance, does massage therapy, and speaks ecstatically of the physical processes of pregnancy and labor — says she is attracted to Zen practice because it involves the body. For her it follows a natural inclination; for me it provides something that was lacking.

My own inclination is to live in my head. For years I was content with a spirituality that moved from reflection to action. If I considered my body at all, it was as an instrument for living out my ideals.

But 10 years ago, at a time when I was finding little inspiration in ideals, a retreat director gave me a copy of Anthony de Mello's book on prayer, *Sadhana*. In order to pray, de Mello maintained, we need to "return to our senses": seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, tasting God in the physical world around us.

At first, exercises in awareness of breath or body sensation seemed pointless to me, and I was often restless. But as the retreat week progressed, I felt that a new and unsuspected dimension of my consciousness was awakening. The rushing of rain and wind outside, the shining green and black of tree branches, the hardness of the wood floor under my footstep, took on new intensity. At the same time I was inwardly quieter — not always while I practiced breath or body awareness, but afterwards, in the in-between spaces of the retreat days. Attentiveness to my body was leading me to deeper centeredness of my whole being.

Since then, I have continued to explore Eastern forms of meditation practice, finding in them some necessary spiritual balance. I know that a significant dimension of that balance has to do with body awareness.

As I began to be aware of breath and posture, I noticed changes. Slouching felt less comfortable; I wanted to sit with my back straight. My breathing became deeper, and a sporadic pain I'd felt in my chest for a long time disappeared.

At my first weekend Zen retreat, I was surprised to realize that I was literally unable to relax the muscles in my stomach for more than a few seconds. They would tighten again on their own, accustomed to a lifetime of training to "hold your stomach in." After the retreat, I was acutely aware of this, and gradually noticed an easing of the tension.

I began to be more in touch with my emotional responses, recognizing fear or anger in my stiffening shoulders or jaw.

I also became more attuned to physical needs; I learned that when I stay mindful, I can easily distinguish when I am hungry, for instance, and when I am eating out of boredom or anxiety.

Ruben Habito, a Zen teacher and writer who describes the Zen life as "coming home," names "recovery of the body" as one aspect of that homecoming (*Healing Breath: Zen Spirituality for a Wounded Earth,* Orbis, 1993).

Zen practice, he says, frees us from a false mind/body dichotomy, and teaches us to be at home in our bodies as our true selves. At the same time, it enables us to overcome an illusory separateness from the rest of creation.

"As I focus on my breathing in and breathing out, here and now, I literally put myself in connection with everything else that is connected with this very breath: all the living beings of the human and animal domain with which I share the air I breathe; all the plants who receive what I exhale and give me oxygen in return, and so forth. ... As I do so, I see my actual connection not only with the oak tree in the garden but also with the trees in the Amazon forests being depleted at a rapid pace. ... The pain of every sentient being in the universe is felt as my very own pain, *in this very body,* and naturally draws me to respond, in whatever way I can, toward its healing."

I am convinced that mindfulness affects my daily life in very practical ways. On days when I am more mindful, I seem to

As the retreat progressed, I felt that an unsuspected dimension of my consciousness was awakening. The rushing of rain and wind outside, the shining green and black of tree branches, the hardness of the wood floor under my footstep, took on new intensity.

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intervene more calmly and effectively in conflicts at the soup kitchen where I work. I feel different, and I believe my physical presence is perceived differently. It may be simply that, when I'm quieter within, I am better attuned to what's going on around me. Sometimes it feels as if the right words come out of my mouth — more from my body than my mind — without my having thought of them.

One Christian writer, J.K. Kadowaki, speaks of the Zen process as moving "from the body to the mind," in contrast to the Western method of mind to body.

"I have learned many things from Zen," he writes (*Zen and the Bible,* Arkana: London 1989), "but one of the most wonderful is to have become aware of the importance of the body in religious life. ... The Western way is to first reflect rationally, make a judgment, will to do something, and finally use the body to carry out the act. ... The way of Zen is in striking contrast to this. ... Learning through the body is a fundamental of Zen."

But if our cultural heritage has cut us off from bodily sources of wisdom, some compensating grace seems to be stirring in our collective psyche.

It seems that almost everyone I know is doing some form of body work, or spiritual practice which involves the body.

Julie Wortman does T'ai Chi. Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is part of a group of women who walk rope courses strung between trees and have danced all night outdoors in prayer. Marietta Jaeger participated in a sweat lodge ceremony with Crow women in Montana.

I know five massage therapists. Women on my block are currently meeting for a weekly yoga class. Three friends join me twice a week for meditation. Others have entered into various forms of body therapies — from rolfing (a deep tissue massage technique) to bioenergetics (a form of body-based psychotherapy). Still another participates in monthly "peace dances."

Conference centers across the country advertize meditation and body work retreats, which quickly fill to overflowing.

Living in wisdom with creation **Claudia Nietsh-Ochs**

Leona Sullivan, a friend who has prayed and offered spiritual direction for many years, sees this as "a response to the information age and high-tech.

"In an earlier age, there was a rhythm to nature that people followed," she says. "Now our society is so crazy in its pace. We're bombarded by such a glut of impact, through TV, computers, travel. We really need high-touch — inner connectedness with our deepest self, the core of who we are before God."

Massage and polarity therapist Pauline Feltner agrees that our society promotes alienation from our bodies.

"Our culture is very cerebral," she says. "A lot of people don't even know how they feel; they'll get a massage, and say, 'I didn't even know that hurt,' or 'I didn't know there was tension there.'

"Many of us, since we're all so good in our heads, can do talk therapy for years and not get at things that are important.

"Also, in our culture, we see pain as something to get rid of, rather than something to explore, and dialogue with, and see what it's telling us."

Sullivan has recently undergone bioenergetic therapy, a process of counseling and physical exercises ordered toward opening up the breathing and freeing energy flow.

"We have defensive body responses, connected to experiences in early childhood," she explains. "We tighten the body up, and cut off our breathing in certain places. When somebody is 'uptight,' their whole body is moving upward — their shoulders move up. The person who is grounded is well-connected with the earth, and doesn't lose their balance as easily."

This grounding has everything to do with the spiritual life, Sullivan believes.

"God can't be present to us in the past or the future, only in the present. I have to be grounded in my body to be grounded in the current reality."

Opening up our breathing "helps us be in touch with our deeper spirit and with God," she says. "It's a freeing process, so I can more creatively attend to other people and the world around me."

My Zen retreat companion, Susan Horvat, says that she first felt connected to God through her body.

"I came to prayer through movement first, through the body," she says. "During the years when I was doing a lot of liturgical dance, I really felt authentic. When I was moving, and focusing it as a prayer form, there was no doubt, no question. Meditation is, for me, the still point. The stillness is the backdrop of the dancing."

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Awareness of breath and posture is "starting with something real rather than something insubstantial," says Beth O'Hara-Fisher, another member of our meditation group. "For me, it's connected to seeking God at the center of your being, rather than outside yourself."

Feltner believes that "when one is coming from one's own center, what one puts into the world is more helpful."

Doing body work with others has deepened her spirituality and increased her "sense of awe," she says. She quotes Christina Baldwin: "When we are disconnected, mystery reaches for us again through the body, and by moving into the physical, by dropping into the body, we make ourselves available. The body is a trustworthy source of bringing the Sacred into everyday life." TW

Therapeutic body work

Stephanie Thompson, a therapist who practices a form of body work known as Integral Psychotherapy, offers this description of the process:

Usually people begin with individual therapy. At the point when the therapist and the client decide they are ready, they start body work, either individually or in a group.

We begin by having someone lie on a mat and do deep breathing, all the way through to their stomach. Basically, the therapist just facilitates their breathing.

What happens depends on the person. If people are just allowed to be, to breathe, they usually move into some kind of feeling.

Some people have a lot of resistance, a lot of armoring in the body that creates blocks to feeling. As the person and the therapist get to know where the blocks are, the therapist can facilitate, maybe by stroking the neck or pressing on the abdomen.

Usually talking is discouraged, because it pulls you back into the head. The therapist may say, 'You're safe. It's OK to be scared. It's OK to be angry.'

In a group, each person is paired off with a partner. One is on the mat while the other is facilitating. The therapist moves around, working with each pair.

Afterwards, clients participate in a process group, where they talk about what came up: where the blocks are, where there is pain, whether the person dissociates — splits off — or stays in the body.

Children who experience abuse have to disconnect from their feelings. During body work, when the person moves into feelings, they disconnect. Some say they feel like they are floating above their body. Some numb out — they won't be able to feel their feet or hands.

I know a person who had been choked a lot, who would actually get red marks on her neck in her body work.

Memory and experience are stored at the cellular level, and through breathing and touch, we are able to access them. There are different areas of the body where energy gets blocked, where there's not a good flow.

In my experience, this kind of work really helps people to get to core issues. Integrating the mind and body is a much more wholistic way of healing.

I have a real interest in my own process. When I'm taking good care of myself and feeling integrated, I have so much more love and energy to give to people, the earth, and things of value to me.

—*M.A.*

Back issues

The following back issues of *The Witness* are available. Study guides are provided upon request when ordering multiple copies of a single issue.

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The signature of the resurrection

by S. R. Skees

Students come together evenings, haggard from work and commuting but smiling the warmth of knowing much about one another. They sit in a circle in the cavernous gymnasium of an inner-city Methodist Church, playing with their bare toes as they talk.

They know the leaps and waves of each other's spontaneous moving bodies well, since many of the games they play entail follow-the-leader and mirroring skills. Here they learn to trust, lead, follow, create dance movements, and let out joyous passion.

"We want to get people to *be* in their bodies," laughs Cynthia Winton-Henry, the students' instructor, who left a Disciples of Christ pastorship in a slow-moving church in California's Silicon Valley to co-found an improvisational Christian dance company called *Wing It!* Dance, she adds, is "the signature of the resurrection of the body."

"We carry our theologies in our bodies," explains Phil Porter, Winton-Henry's colleague. "In the same way that we don't just talk about a relationship with Jesus — we take communion — we don't just embrace a belief in the body; we get up and dance."

Based in the Bay Area, the two have danced with homeless people, battered women and with Bishop Desmond Tutu in front of 10,000 people. They also tour the U.S., teaching in sanctuaries, businesses, hospitals and schools.

Wing It! students tap their creativity, enhance their ability to cooperate, and come into connection with the other dancers, says Porter.

Creative dance class at *Wing It!* S.R. Skees

"When you get people together to dance community happens," says Winton-Henry. "The 'corporate body,' which has long been a Judeo-Christian concept, needs to have its blood running through it. That body needs to be together, doing. We *do* through echoing early practices of dancing, singing, storytelling."

Winton-Henry and Porter have developed a philosophy and a dance technique called "Interplay" which combines physical, spiritual, and psychological data and action. Dancers become attuned to the sensations, knowledge, and wisdom of their bodies and express that in spontaneous choreography that often becomes three-dimensional prayer.

WingIt! participants leap about in black spandex, limbs outstretched, facial expressions exaggerated, fingers spread or toes pointed.

"So much of dance is communicated on a body-to-body level," Porter says, "or from the dancer's body to the viewer's body. When a dancer jumps, a member of the audience feels it in their body. That direct, body-to-body connection itself *is* the sacred."

The dance of Interplay seeks to heal the dualistic thinking in current society between body and spirit.

"The body is a big way of knowing," Winton-Henry proposes, "and the mind is a small subset within that, which does linear thinking.

"The body fullness that we see in children that we adore — that's the fullness we achieve in dance, in play. It's not about wildness," Winton-Henry says. "Rather, we can combine the freedom and self-acceptance of children with adult information and wisdom."

Sex pervades *WingIt!* dance. For a bodyspirit, spiritual ecstasy and orgasm emerge from the same place.

Dance technique employs the whole body, says Winton-Henry: "hips, thighs, ears, wrists, pelvis, buttocks, chest. But some church leaders have constructed intellectual religious worldviews that come close to condemning the body as sinful."

Their dancing, including the sexuality that comes through, they say emphatically, "is not pagan but Christian, because the dancing body *is* the incarnation.

"Mystics talk about all of this" — Winton-Henry's hand slices the air and the California twilight beyond — "being a cosmic dance. And that's what it is. It's about people tripping and falling and being terribly amused and relentlessly hopeful." TW

S. R. Skees earned a master's degree in world religions at Harvard Divinity School and now writes on international religion and women's spirituality.

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'This is my body': our bodies on the line

by Ched Myers

We live in a world in which history is being held hostage to ever bigger guns and ever more fabulous myths of redemptive violence. Perhaps only empowered political bodies can rehabilitate the hope for justice and freedom in our time, and heal our body politic. If so, the churches must follow Jesus in recovering the nonviolent power of body-politics.

On the eve of Jesus' showdown with the Domination system, he said to his betrayal-bound companions: "Take: this is my body" (Mark 14:22). This is not intended as a memorialization, however. Rather it is a direct statement that his body-politics will be ultimately revealed in the way of the Cross.

As his body hangs on that cross Jesus is revealed as the Human One, even as the Temple veil is torn (Mk 15:33-38). And at the end of the story Jesus' body is not there to solemnize (16:6). Instead we are informed that the practice of Jesus' political body continues, forging the Way we have been invited to follow (16:7).

The subversive character of Jesus' body-politics was not lost on those within his own cultural context. It has been missed completely, however, by the church today. By privatizing and interiorizing faith, the church mirrors the alienation of the political body from the body politic that so characterizes modernity. But what if Jesus was right that our bodies are indeed our most potent political tools? Perhaps "This is my body," which lies at the heart of the church's liturgy, should also lie at the center of our politics.

Practitioners of nonviolent direct action in the 20th century have rediscovered the truth of body-politics. Gandhi experimented with this approach in the conviction that the best weapon of the poor was their bodies because that was the one thing they could control and mobilize. Martin Luther King believed that only by violating real social boundaries with real bodies could the U.S. come to terms with the duplicity of its racist body politic. And Plowshares activists have pioneered resistance to imperial militarism by calling Christians to trespass into the most sacrosanct nuclear security areas.

Common to each tradition is the conviction that *where* we place our political bodies in the body politic makes all the difference. Philip Berrigan, as is his way, expresses the thesis of body-politics somewhat more bluntly: "Hope," he is fond of saying, "is where your ass is."

Perhaps "This is my body," which lies at the heart of the church's liturgy, should also lie at the center of our politics.

Civil disobedience attempts to unmask socio-political contradictions by representing them in public ritual, thus rendering the war of myths visible in real time and space. Such actions cannot be dismissed by the authorities as merely deranged opinion or antisocial behavior, because actual bodies must be dragged away, arrested, and jailed. At each point in the process the possibility of genuine political debate is opened up. To illustrate the alternative power of body- politics, I will make brief mention of three examples drawn from the last several decades of nonviolent struggle in the U.S.

When Rosa Parks refused to sit at the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, on December 1, 1955, she was not the first to do so. But her solitary gesture triggered a bus boycott that launched a civil rights movement that changed the character of the whole society. By not standing, Rosa made a stand against a racist body politic in her own political body.

King and other leaders subsequently became increasingly adept at the strategic use of political bodies — from lunch counter sit-ins to marches. The Civil Rights movement represented both "defensive" and "offensive" body-politics. African Americans protected the integrity of their political bodies against the daily assault of Jim Crow while also *attacking* that color line. In so doing they forged, for the first time, a politics of mass civil disobedience in the U.S.

When Bryan Wilson, a Vietnam veteran, was run over by a train loaded with armaments bound for El Salvador at the Concord Naval Weapons Station on September 1, 1987, losing both legs, he offered the penultimate expression of body-politics. His sacrifice triggered a campaign of nonviolent resistance on those same tracks, still stained with Bryan's blood, for years afterwards.

Nonviolent direct action has characterized the militant wing of the peace

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Ched Myers works for the American Friends Service Committee in Los Angeles, CA. The themes in this article are explored in more detail in his recent book, *Who Will Roll Away the Stone? Discipleship Queries for First World Christians* (Maryknoll:Orbis, 1994).

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movement in the U.S. Given the abstract and secretive character of U.S. foreign policy, activists have tried to respond with actions which unmask its true character. The politics of trespass was reappropriated from the Civil Rights movement in order to reveal the hidden geography — local and global — of militarism: weapons factories, distribution depots, missile silos, research and development sites, forward deployments, secret communications installations, even training centers.

The physical presence of resisters at these sites means to provoke what Jim Douglass calls a "moral and political crisis." The tactics vary. Sometimes the aim is token impediment, disrupting business as usual for a few hours, as in the re-enacted "die-ins" in front of Pentagon entrances or actions to obstruct the nuclear "White Train" on its route around the country.

On other occasions, the focus is on bodily violating the "sacred spaces" of the national security state, as in the case of Plowshares actions or prayer pilgrimages to nuclear weapons sites. Bill Wylie-Kellermann, in his book *Seasons of Faith and Conscience*, has shown how such nonviolent resistance to the "gods of metal" reinterprets traditional liturgical practices by moving the geography of worship to spaces in contention.

Finally, when Jack Elder was arrested on April 13, 1984, for transporting three Salvadorans from Casa Romero, a hospitality house in San Benito, Texas, he was representing a third tradition of body-politics. Through the 1980s, Central America solidarity work developed several notable aspects of creative nonviolence. The Sanctuary movement sought to protect Central American refugees from immigration and political authorities, as well as from mercenary *coyotes* along the refugee trail. This was done first by working for safe passage through an "underground railway," and then through offering hospitality in churches and families. The political bodies of refugees made the distant realities of U.S.-sponsored war on the poor *concrete* to middle-class congregations in the Palace Courtyard.

Coleman McGehee, eighth Episcopal bishop of Michigan, celebrates the eucharist outside a nuclear weapons plant.

Subsequently, some refugees returning to their homes asked First World supporters for *acompanamiento.* This spawned the flip side of the nonviolent partnership, as North Americans relocated their political bodies to war zones, hoping to provide a deterrent to further violence aimed at the refugees.

The best example is Witness for Peace, which trains nonviolent observers to place their political bodies in war zones between combatants, in an effort to deter fighting and human rights violations.

Witness for Peace was conceived as a way to expose the covert U.S. war on the Sandinistas. On the home front, Witness also developed an emergency response network, which prepared teams to mobilize sit-ins at congressional offices at crucial moments in the struggle against U.S. policy. Witness for Peace is now experimenting with this model in such places as the Middle East, South Africa, and even inner-city areas in the U.S.

Christians from diverse traditions have been deeply involved with each of the three examples of militant nonviolence. Martin Luther King, the black Baptist minister; Jean Gump, the Catholic mother of 12 and a nuclear resister; or Jim Corbett, the Quaker rancher and Sanctuary activist in the Southwest, have all appealed to the nonviolent Way of Jesus's cross for illumination and justification of their body-politics.

In a world of violence, body-politics invite us to drop all weapons from our hands and "take up" our political bodies in nonviolent struggle. Moreover, body-politics promote democratic renewal by preferring direct engagement over passive reliance on abstract, ideological discourses and remote institutional mediations.

For justice and freedom and in our time, the churches must follow Jesus in recovering the nonviolent power of body-politics. TW

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Body casts and ritual nudity

by Nkenge Z°!@

Renée Stout is currently a visiting artist at the University of Georgia in Athens, teaching an independent studies course in painting for undergraduates and a seminar for graduate students.

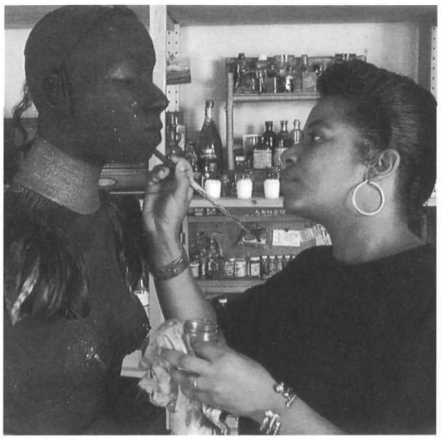
Her work, "Dear Robert, I'll see you at the crossroads: Blues & Conjuring," is in a travelling exhibition, now at the Yerbe Buena Art Center in San Francisco. Another of her works, "Fetishism," will be part of a show in England.

With each month's lunar phasing millions of Christians' lips lift to chalice, millions of Christians' tongues receive the bit of bread and wine symbolizing renewal, covenant, resurrection embodied in the flesh of Jesus the Christ. It is a sacred act.

And how many billions of beings perform sacred acts — inside and outside the practice of Christianity — daily, knowingly? Breathing. Practicing peace. Planting seeds. Grooming a loved one's hair. Witnessing the motion of light in water.

art and society

Sculptor Renée Stout injects herself into the realm of the sacred through her practice of art. In this place of creative foment she dances with time, the unconscious, space, and certainty, to shape objects that, if properly attended to, provide a portal whereby fourth-dimensional spirit might funnel to this third dimension, according guidance to those seeking.



Renée Stout Franko Khoury

Chronicler of artists in Afrika and the diaspora Nkiru Nzegwe describes Stout's activities as "transcending the realm of western art." Co-author of the book *Astonishment and Power*, Olasimi Michael Harris, says the sculptor has "confronted and successfully thwarted issues relative to the female body, nudity, and 'the gaze' that have risen to prominence during the past decade in art-historical and critical discourse." Her *Fetish #2* is "ritual nudity, not the available female nude of Western art."

Fetish #2 (1988) is a 64-inch-high object in which Stout has lived because to build it she used her own body, smoothing plaster about her form to make a cast. "I was empowering myself by starting from the point of using my own body and adorning it from things in the environment." Whereas a Central Afrikan fashioning a power figure might adorn it with herbs and leaves from his or her environment, Stout used from hers a broken key, bottle caps, and other items post industry.

Observing the figure, I realize my eyes are desperate to gobble every shape, tone, rhythmic interval of the work. But I don't immediately permit them. Why? Because to partake in the work, to *perceive* it requires that I *not* assume the position of the looker separated from the work by body, time, and my experience. Cowrie shells dressing the eyes of her figure signal me *look ahead to Afrika* if I am to comprehend the rich coloring, the neat round burlap pouches of medicine lacing the shoulders. The glass-faced box imbedded in its solar plexus says *this is also the home of the fire chakra where energy is transformed.* And so I am challenged. Will I enter the work or allow it to enter me? The question is not idle.

Always insightful Stout says, "I've ... dealt with personal things in my life on intuition so when I started doing this kind of work that I'm doing now, everything just sort of fell into place. ..." Comfortable with her own body, nevertheless, she muses, "... sometimes it's like trying to

Nkenge Z°!@ Ameen Howrabi

New Art & Society editor!

Nkenge Z°!@ is a longtime broadcaster in Detroit. An anchor-reporter at public radio station WDET-FM, she is intent on becoming an agricultural reporter.

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Fetish #2 **by Renée Stout** Dallas Museum of Art

step out of it and sort of realize — what is the body all about, and how is it connected to the spirituality, and when you die *does* the spirit leave the body and go someplace else?"

A keen sense of the dominant political forces in preceding eras emerges from her conversation. She speaks of menstrual blood being used for making charms "before men took control of spiritual matters." Like other artists in the United States exploring the inner reaches of their work, Renée Stout identifies "this sort of magic" in the female flow. Like other questing men and women, she remembers lore of societies where the monthly has been used for various circumstances until the eras when menstruation began to be considered taboo, dirty. As much investigation as statement, she works her own menses into the figures she shapes.

Concluding a lecture before the National Conference of Artists' regional Meeting in Detroit where Stout's work was discussed, Nzegwu was quite adamant that "The intention of one's spirit and the intent for which an object is created is something that really needs to be ... thought about, which in a sense makes artists much more than members of society, but really the shapers, the definers, the builders of the new society."

When Stout travels to Afrika she doubtless will head straight to the central part of the continent which has "spoken" to her through power objects housed in the National Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C. It is the work of Zairean and Congolese artists and medicine people which inspires her. The circumstances out of which she creates are quite different from those in which the Afrikan power objects were made. Yet the Philadelphian living in D.C. identifies a forward purpose for her energies that resonates with the historian's charge, "I think I'm creating what I'm creating for the same purposes, to overcome adversity." TW

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Violence, sex and aging: an interview with Michael Meade

by Sy Safransky

When I was growing up in New York City, I shied away from tough Irish-Catholic kids like Michael Meade. They ran in gangs, and they got into trouble with the cops, and sometimes they beat up nice little Jewish boys like me.

Gang fights on Friday night, dances on Saturday night, church on Sunday, school on Monday: these were the touchstones of Meade's life until his 13th birthday, when his aunt gave him a copy of Edith Hamilton's Mythology. *He was stunned by the stories, which he read and reread.*

"The tales of gods and goddesses and humans caught in extreme and mysterious situations seemed more like life than anything else I had heard or read," he says. They opened "a vast dwelling place within, where the imagination and emotions denied by family, school, and church were accepted. In many ways, I've never stopped reading that book."

Legends and myths became his passion as a teenager, even as his political sensibility was being sharpened by an unpopular war. At the age of 20, Meade was drafted but refused to be sent to Vietnam. He ended up in military prison, where he staged a 64-day hunger strike and spent three months in solitary confinement before he was discharged.

For the past 30 years, Meade has continued to study myth, as well as religion, anthropology, music, drumming, and storytelling — while fathering four children, marrying twice, and working a variety of jobs.

Michael Meade

Today, Meade — whom poet Robert Bly calls "one of the great teachers of men in the United States" — is at the forefront of an effort to make the men's movement more politically relevant. In week-long conferences, Meade brings together up to 100 men of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds in order to help them confront their differences as well as find what binds them together. To assure a wide mix of participants, conference fees are waived for those unable to pay. For information, write to Mosaic, P.O. Box 364, Vashon, WA 98070.

Sy Safransky: You've said that without elders a society begins to devour itself. What do you mean by that?

Michael Meade: The elder is a person who has a knowledge of survival, the wisdom of survival — darkened wisdom is how I like to think about it — not just someone who has gotten close to the big white light.

People can help other people only when they have learned about the depths in themselves. If someone hasn't dealt with violence in himself, hasn't been exposed to violence, he'd better not try to deal with gangbangers, because he won't be treated as an elder; he'll become a statistic. Likewise, people who have developed a deep capacity to mourn and to sympathize would be good hospice workers, helping people make that last transition toward death. So whether it's working with the dying or with violent young people or with drug or alcohol addicts, you go back and help people who are engulfed in the same fire you survived.

As a culture, we turn away from people just when they are in times of change. That's when most communities used to embrace people, so the individual and the culture both benefitted. A lot of young people today are in a rite of passage. They don't know it and our culture doesn't recognize it, but they are brushing up against death, they are pressing at the doors of greater life. We have to meet them there.

When the heat is too much, when the sorrow is too great, you can dance or sing. So all of a sudden, the whole group may start to sing.

S.S.: This used to happen more naturally in the extended family.

M.M.: Yes, it did. But I don't think we have the time to redevelop the intricacies of extended families or of village life. Right now, I'm interested in what I call sudden community, sudden family. I've been doing conferences that are ex-

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Sy Safransky is editor of *The Sun*, a provocative literary journal published in Chapel Hill, N.C. This interview is reprinted in a shortened form with permission. To subscribe, send $32 to *The Sun,* Subscriptions Service, P.O. Box 6706, Syracuse, N.Y. 13217.

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periments in sudden community. They bring together men not only of different races — whites, blacks, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans — but also of different cultural and economic experiences, from the poor to the very rich. Homeless people and doctors have participated in the same conferences. That's what I mean by sudden community. When we bring these different groups together, we find the elements of our common humanity, of hope and even of conflict.

S.S.: What gives you the ability to deal with the conflict that arises?

M.M.: (Laughs) I'm not sure about the ability. During the first conference of this sort, we said at the beginning that the only rule was no physical violence. There was no evidence that we could abide by this rule for six days. The fact that we got through it taught me that it is possible.

Ritual conflict

I've also been making a study of ritual conflict for 20 years. I believe one reason we have so many pointless wars and so much mindless aggression is that we don't have ritual ways of expressing conflict. Most cultures once had such rituals that were intended to bring out people's envy, anger, jealousy, rage — everything that can become increasingly damaging if it's ignored or denied.

S.S.: What's an example of such a ritual?

M.M.: In Zambia, there's a ritual about a tooth. When someone in the village is sick or disturbed, they imagine it is caused by an ancestor's tooth that has gotten inside that person. That person's sickness affects everybody in the village because they are connected with one another. So they make a ritual to get this tooth, this sickness, out of the person.

But the tooth won't come out unless the truth comes out. And the sickness includes all of the hatreds and conflicts felt by everybody in the village. The sick person has to express what's really troubling him or her, and it's usually not very noble. It's jealousy or rage or another of those darker human passions. But the tooth won't come out of the sick person until all of the troubled feelings come out of everybody else in the village. The release happens only when everything comes out, in the midst of dancing and singing and drumming. The whole village gets cleansed by the release of the tooth through the release of these difficult truths.

Jim West

As a culture, we turn away from people just when they are in times of change. Young people today are in a rite of passage. They don't know it and our culture doesn't recognize it. We have to meet them there.

S.S.: What difficult truths come out when white men and black men get together at these conferences?

M.M.: African-American people need to express their deep sense of outrage and anguish about the injustice that has gone on in this culture for many, many years. If it doesn't get expressed in words, in truthful words, it gets expressed physically. Either it kills them because they carry it around — like an ancestral tooth that each generation inherits — or it comes out through actions that can be destructive to others.

But it gets tricky. People inherit these injustices and these outrages as a group, so even though the anger may be expressed by an individual, the individual is also speaking for the community. The listeners must respect this. It takes the power out of the situation if the white people listening say, "Wait a minute. I understand that black people have been enslaved and brutalized, and that all this crushes a family and a race of people, but I've never done it myself." The ritual is destroyed when ancient pain is challenged in this way.

In the tooth ritual, the people who are participating don't disagree with the person who is speaking. They say, "Speak your truth, get it out, get that tooth out, get that anguish out." The idea isn't whether what they're saying is literally accurate. The idea isn't simply laying blame, but moving the anguished tooth by speaking emotional truths. But in a culture of radical individualism, people tend not to be able to hear when groups of people say they are oppressed and hurt.

What we learned in the conferences is that everybody has to listen to everybody else, not as individuals trying to defend themselves, but as representatives of a

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culturally meaningful group, as witnesses to the genuine anguish of the person speaking. We have to do a lot of breathing exercises to stay seated, to not flee the room or throw that first blow.

S.S.: Has it ever come to blows?

M.M.: It's come close many times. It's so hard to communicate just through words. It's hard to find words that carry the true anguish of what people feel.

We have found what people in many cultures have found. When the heat is too much, when the sorrow is too great, you can dance or sing. So all of a sudden, the whole group may start to sing. Everybody may be feeling different things, but we are all singing together. For a moment we're reestablishing a sense of community. Then we can take on a little more rage or a little more sorrow.

A relevant aspect of the tooth ritual is that the tooth is considered a spirit ancestor. It enters someone who is troubled or hurting, and it is painful while it's inside. But once it comes out, it becomes an ally, a source of spiritual support. Similarly, people become allies to each other if they can get through their points of conflict. Deep human connections are made between people who would otherwise pass on the street and not look at each other.

Ethnic gifts

By getting groups like this together you start to see the medicine that different ethnic groups carry. The cultural roots of people contain medicine just like the roots of certain plants. The willingness of people to remain in these conflicts stimulates medicine in their root memories, which can begin the healing process. For example, I think black people carry medicine that white people need — say, the capacity to carry an incredible weight of sorrow through the blues. The blues make it humanly possible to carry inhuman anguish. There are also medicines within the Latino memory that certain circumstances bring out. During one conference, five Latino Vietnam vets constructed an altar on the spot for all their friends who had died. They began to talk to the altar, to rage and weep at it. It just broke everything loose in the room. All of a sudden everybody had a place to direct sorrow, fear, anger.

You see, I don't think the concept of the melting pot was ever accurate. It was a bad image, an industrial image — the idea of melting everybody in this big pot, like in one of those old factories in Chicago. It didn't work. Individuals got melted down, but not groups. Not group memories, the old memories.

S.S.: Is there more of a political climate today for radical change? Do you think that Clinton and Gore being in office makes a difference?

M.M.: I think there is a definite difference. Clinton's propensity for consolidating groups, for gathering information, for consensus, is valuable. Whether it leads to immediate solutions or not, I think it makes the dialogue more open. And Gore's involvement in ecology is very encouraging.

But I don't see solutions coming from the top down anymore. I think now we're in a time of symbolic ascension, when things come from the ground up. Rituals, for example, traditionally are made from what's at hand. They are partly remembered and partly made up on the spot. I think that's what's going to happen politically. I think people are going to find solutions in their communities, by having their hands on things, by being involved.

One of the few ways to feel whole nowadays is to participate in these rituals of lament. To stand at the Vietnam Memorial or at the AIDS quilt can be a very healing experience. It feels very appropriate to just stand there and let the tears come down.

Reviewing Vietnam

I see peace coming from the ground up, too— from the Vietnam veterans who survived, who found a way to put themselves back together. They have this great capacity for survival, and they have ideas on how to deal with violence, on how to negotiate very dangerous circumstances.

S.S.: Isn't there a paradox in your seeing peace coming from Vietnam veterans, given the fact that you refused to be sent?

M.M.: I've had the good fortune to be in ritual conflict with those who barely survived Vietnam, men who were wounded physically, emotionally, spiritually. In conferences, these men were in the same room with men who went to jail as war resisters, men who had claimed to be insane, men who had claimed to be homosexual (some were, some weren't), men who got deferments because of privilege. There was anger. There was skirmishing. There was rage from a man who had lost part of his body and, more important, perhaps, part of his soul in Vietnam. There was anguish from a man who had been exiled in Canada. Slowly it came out that Vietnam was a life-changing experience for everybody, even if the nature of the change was different. The war was like an initiatory event that sent people in different directions. Yet by expressing their rage and their sorrow, everybody could for a moment be back together. You could feel the sense of genuine community of that generation.

The Vietnam Memorial is probably the most sacred spot in the country. The

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descent of that black wall into the earth is the place where America comes together. It's the one truly powerful monument in the country that sustains a continuous ritual of sorrow.

Vietnam is still unfinished. Personally I trace the increase of violence in this country to our taking men who were on fire psychically, bathed in napalm, and dropping them into the cities, as if no transition were required. I think the drug habit came into the city then, along with the habit of ignoring the use of drugs — both of which were part of the Vietnam military experience. I think the familiarity of carrying automatic weapons was transferred directly into the city. The unhealed aspects of that war have given birth to this increase of random violence in the cities.

S.S.: How is that different from the legacy of other wars — the Korean War, for example?

M.M.: Wars don't die unless they are fully spoken about, and Korea is the war no one spoke about. Korea lived silently, like a ghost, in the closets of America. It hung in the closets, and the uniforms quietly dripped blood. Korea was a ghost in the 1950s, and Vietnam was that ghost let out into the streets.

S.S.: What about the Gulf War?

M.M.: The Gulf War was like a drive-by shooting. It was a fly-by. In the Gulf War, we saw more bombs dropped in a few days than ever before in the history of the world. And then we decorated everybody. We announced that even those who were hurt in some accident on the back lines, even those who were hit by an ambulance, would get a Purple Heart. Such an act gives permission for all kinds of violence. It's very easy to connect the fires in the Gulf with the fires burning in Los Angeles.

S.S.: When you were growing up in New York, you were involved with gangs. What's the difference between gang violence now and then?

The AIDS quilt — 15 acres of it — in the shadow of the Washington Monument. Jim Solheim, ENS

M.M.: Luis Rodriguez, a great writer who grew up in the gangs in the barrios of L.A., wrote that every group of men is a gang. The Baltimore Orioles are a gang. The Chicago Bulls are a gang. The police department is a gang. Rock bands and rap groups are gangs. Gangs are what men do. I don't think we can ever get rid of gangs. The real question is what's the intention of the gang.

When I was growing up in the 1950s, there were neighborhood gangs everywhere, and everyone in them was experimenting. Loyalty was one of the major experiments. You learned who was going to stand with you. Everybody could be cool when they were putting on their jackets, but it was when the trouble hit that you found out who would "take your back," as we used to say. You also found out who and what you would die for. That's what it came down to.

We were always flirting with breaking the law, which is part of the nature of youth. Youth finds its connection to community by going against community. The rites of passage in all cultures have included antisocial behavior. Youths could get into trouble, find out who they were as individuals in the midst of the turmoil, and then return to the community without being judged criminal forever. The culture kept in touch with them while they did this. Now we don't keep in touch. Culturally we turn our backs to them.

There are three differences between the gangs in the 1950s and the 1990s: the lack of hope and expectation that one will live a meaningful life; the lack of connection between people, through family, church, or community; and the availability of weapons.

My feeling is that young people can't be abandoned in those circumstances. They have to be given signals that they and their turmoil are welcome. That's the job of elders in the culture. There's a fire in all people, but especially in young men, that can burn toward dominance, brutality, an excess of competition, and destruction. But when it's engaged and welcomed and appreciated it becomes part of the heat in the hearth of the community. The same fire that can brutally kill can also lead a young man to courageously risk his own life to save other people. Rage and outrage are the same essential energy that makes art and beauty.

I believe that art is the antidote to

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violence. Art can move the fires of passion from destruction to creation.

S.S.: We're losing many people to the AIDS epidemic, too.

M.M.: This is a time when everything has a long shadow of loss. Everybody is a member of a lost tribe somewhere in the modern world. All the tribes are lost. We've lost the sense of life. We've lost a sense of the stages of life. We are living, almost consciously, in an ongoing funeral, in a huge shedding of life.

I've watched the AIDS quilt going through the country. Each patch on the quilt represents a death, and that death is connected to all the other deaths. Stitched together, they make a piece of cloth that, when it's laid down, makes a funeral ground. Everybody comes there. People weep there. It's a blanket of loss, a moving funeral.

Learning lamentation

One of the things we are witnessing is the return of funerals within communities that have been hit hard by AIDS and by violence. You actually see improvisation of new styles of funerals — the return of ritual funerals through that shared experience of death. That's what I mean by rituals coming from the ground up. It starts with the idea of one person, or a few people, then it catches on. People begin to stitch their place into it. That's how ritual used to be made in most cultures. That's how it's being made again.

One of the few ways to feel whole nowadays is to participate in these rituals of lament. To stand at the Vietnam Memorial or at the AIDS quilt can be a very healing experience. It feels very appropriate to just stand there and let the tears come down. Sometimes someone else's tears provoke you, just someone standing near you; you don't even know who he is. That's another definition of what I call the water of life, when those tears come from that deep well of human sympathy, human sorrow. At that point we're human. We're connected.

S.S.: I'd like to talk about other ways we're connected to one another — in families, in marriage. You're married. You have grown children.

When you deny death, you automatically weaken the courage of the community. Then no one recognizes elders and adults don't act like adults.

M.M.: I've had two marriages, and my wife and I are adjusting to living on our own, now that all four children are on *their* own.

S.S.: What keeps your marriage alive?

M.M.: William Blake said that if people are going to remain in a marriage for a long time they both have to live in the world of art. Blake's idea, I think, is a fine one — that both partners have to be involved in making something. They have to be giving birth creatively or else they begin to expect the relationship to satisfy the human need for creativity and expression. And the relationship can do that only on occasion.

S.S.: Unfortunately, in so many relationships the passion seems to die, especially as people get older.

M.M.: We have a fantasy in this culture that everything good happens in youth. But in many cultures there are images of people deepening their sensuality and sexuality as they get older.

Sensuality and aging

I once saw a movie about people in a village in the highlands in Cuba. There was a great scene in which the drummers were playing and women and men were dancing and singing. Then this old man came out and sat down on a drum and played it with his heel and his hands in a very old style. He lent a sensuality to that drum that really got everyone going. After he played for a while, he stood up and went over to his wife. They both looked about seventy years old. And they began to dance, with none of the inhibitions that we typically see in our culture. Their entire bodies were moving — these old bodies that no longer had the shapes of youth but had subtle and confident moves. It was incredible. They danced with obvious sexuality and sensuality, and yet they had dignity like fine old instruments.

S.S.: The psychologist James Hillman says that where we are in life is as important as where we came from, but that our biographical sense of psychology overemphasizes childhood.

M.M.: Not everything can be run through the child loop. Not everything happens to people because their mother was this kind of mother or their father was absent. Some things happen because of some deep purpose or some spiritual awareness breaking out. Some of it has more to do with an awakening of the elder — someone who is going to carry authority and resources not just for the individual but for the community. And some of it has to do with learning about death rather than childhood.

A culture that denies death, like ours, weakens community. Community binds us together because of the awareness of death. When you deny death, you automatically weaken the courage of the community. Then no one recognizes elders. You just have old people. And when the elders aren't recognized, adults aren't adults. They don't act like adults because they don't feel they can become elders. Eventually people deny life-changing experiences, and everybody keeps going back to their childhood as if whatever is there could explain their lives. They don't value the life experiences that have happened since then. TW

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Freedom riders

Gays and lesbians from all across America will ride to the aid of a lesbian family and their besieged property outside Ovett, Mississippi on Memorial Day weekend, May 26-30.

Since November, 1993, lesbian partners Wanda and Brenda Henson, along with numerous volunteers, have defended their 120-acre "Camp Sister Spirit" folk school from an ongoing religious-right-inspired campaign of violence, harassment, intimidation and death threats. There have been over 60 incidents to date, including telephone death threats, mail bomb threats, explosives found at their gate, a dead dog tied to their mailbox.

The climate of aggression briefly attracted the attention of Attorney General Janet Reno who sent Justice Department representatives to Ovett to investigate the situation last year. The Justice Department concluded that the Federal government could not help because gays and lesbians are not covered under the current civil rights laws.

With no help from the government in sight, veteran gay and lesbian activists have decided to take the defense of Camp Sister Spirit in their own hands so that the camp can complete their dream of building a feminist lesbian folk school (an educational and cultural retreat center that makes available an opportunity for learning non-oppressive lifeways) and having food and clothing available to address the poverty in the area.

Robin Tyler, a prominent lesbian activist who originally called for and emceed the first March on Washington for lesbian and gay rights, says, "Following the tradition of the 1960s, the community of faith must rise once again. And we need to let gay bashers and homophobes know that when they attack isolated gays and lesbians, they aren't just taking on one or two people, they are taking on the entire gay and lesbian movement."

***Second Stone* 2/95**
New Orleans, LA

U.N. allows choice

The United Nations decided to allow Catholics for a Free Choice and three of its Latin American counterparts to participate in the upcoming United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, overriding strong Vatican objections.

Bowing to Vatican pressure in mid-March, the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, which is reviewing applications for the conference, suspended authorization for Catholics for a Free Choice and its sister organizations in Brazil, Mexico and Uruguay and referred the matter to a committee. The Vatican's move to block participation was a public effort to censor debate within the Catholic church about the role and status of women. Catholics for a Free Choice, which has been accredited without protest to previous international U.N. conferences, educated the public on the widespread disagreement among Catholics with Vatican positions on women, sexuality and reproduction.

Catholics for a Free Choice
news release, 3/21/1995
Washington D.C.

Sentencing Sam Day

Life-long journalist and peace activist Samuel H. Day Jr., 68, was convicted of "unlawful re-entry" at an Air Force base in Omaha, Nebraska and was sentenced recently to six months in federal prison. It was the second time Day has been given a 180-day maximum sentence for federal misdemeanor trespass. Day is a former editor of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* and managing editor of *The Progressive* magazine.

U.S. Magistrate Kathleen Jaudzemis tried Day March 5th, but postponed her verdict until March 27th. Day, who represented himself, has been incarcerated in the Douglas County Jail in Omaha since his President's Day protest February 20th. Special Assistant Prosecutor Air Force Major Victor LaPuma, referring to himself repeatedly as "the government," had requested that Day also be sentenced to one year's probation and a $1,000 fine. Magistrate Jaudzemis did not impose the additional penalties.

Day entered Offutt Air Force Base attempting to hand out a leaflet describing how U.S. targeting plans for nuclear weapons are in violation of binding international treaties to which the U.S. is a party.

Day told the court: "The Douglas County Jail is not a comfortable place to be . . . especially for someone of my age and disability. I am 68 years old and blind. I can no longer see the faces around me. I can no longer read books or magazines, or newspapers or even the mail that comes to me from friends and family. I can no longer play the chess games and card games that help to while away the days and weeks and months in jail.

"But I did not come to Omaha to seek comfort. I came here to say with my body what I have been saying with words for almost half a century. I came here to alert this court to our government's preparations for waging nuclear war. I chose to come to Offutt Air Force Base because it is headquarters of the U.S. Strategic Nuclear command, which controls the targeting and launching of many thousands of nuclear warheads. And I chose to come here now because, contrary to public opinion and despite the end of the cold war, our government has not relinquished one iota of its capacity for waging nuclear war.

"Under international law it is a crime to point weapons of mass destruction at defenseless cities. Under international law, it is the duty of every citizen to do everything possible to prevent such crimes. Many international laws are also the law of the land, having been ratified as treaties by the Senate of the United States. I have done my best to uphold the law."

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The power debate: Who do clergy (and the rest of us) think they are?

by Julie A. Wortman

Celibacy in singleness and fidelity in marriage. There are those who believe that if only the church would uphold this simple, traditional maxim there would be no need for special sexual (mis)conduct policies like those being widely promulgated in the church today.

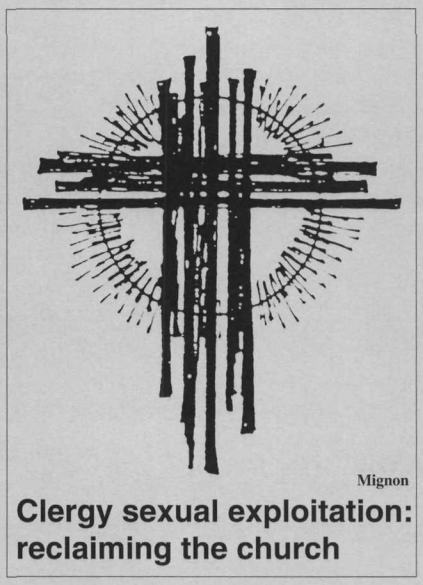
But these policies are now a requirement for liability coverage by the Church Insurance Company (CIC), which hopes they will help "increase the defensibility of potential claims" in the face of dramatic increases in the number of church workers being accused of sexual exploitation. In 1990 CIC handled 10 claims, up from six the year before; in 1992 the number of claims was 39, more than twice the number in 1991.

The publicity the increased number of claims has attracted has encouraged more and more victims to come forward, making it likely that more, not fewer, claims can be expected in the short term. The focus, many believe, must now be on preventing future misconduct by upholding clear professional boundaries in the church workplace. The formal detailing of limits on church-worker behavior in the new CIC-required sexual conduct policies, however, has intensified one of the most heated debates in the church today — that over the power relationship between the ordained and the people to whom they minister.

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness.*

Questioning mutuality

At issue is the presumption behind most of these policies that, for unmarried clergy at least (virtually no one questions that married clergy should not have sexual relations outside of their marriages, regardless of workplace temptations), it may never be possible to date or enter into a sexual relationship with a member of the community they serve because such relationships can never be truly mutual.



Mignon

Clergy sexual exploitation: reclaiming the church

Consider the policy recently adopted by the Diocese of Michigan, a policy which the drafters believe is relatively liberal. Citing two ways that authority may be granted to individuals within the church — by entrusting them with particular positions and tasks or by ordaining them — the policy states: "The authority accompanying a particular position or function ends when the position or function is given up. Ordination, on the other hand, is permanent, and carries with it an authority and a responsibility which remain regardless of the ordained person's position. This being the case, an ordained person's position in relation to those among whom he or she ministers can never be simply that of one person among peers."

Therefore, the policy concludes, clergy should not be romantically involved with people they have counseled or are counseling; to whom they are giving spiritual direction; from whom they have received confession or confidential information; people who are family members of persons to whom they have given or are giving counseling, spiritual direction or guidance; or patients, residents or students in an institution where they are serving as teacher, counselor, administrator, or chaplain. If an institutional relationship included counseling, the policy stipulates, "dating between an ordained person and a counselee is not permissible at any time after formal counseling has ended, even if one or both parties have departed from the institution in which the counseling relationship was established."

What makes the Michigan policy liberal, drafters say, is that it does permit a cleric to pursue a relationship with a parishioner if the cleric manages to find a potential date who doesn't fall into one of the above categories — but only if the cleric reports the fact to the bishop *and* bishop's designee *and* to a warden of the congregation (or to the priest in charge). The cleric must also find the parishioner another pastor and, if asked by those in authority, meet "with a professional counselor to evaluate the mutuality of the relationship" and be willing to follow the counselor's recommendations.

So much for the time-honored tradition of curates finding a suitable wife from among the daughters of the congregation, even though many clergy in the church have done just that.

"On a personal level, clergy face the same ethical issues other Christians do," the Michigan policy states. "As ordained people, however, clergy are accorded (and take for granted) a certain power in relationship with other Christians — teaching and interpretive authority, credibility in making moral judgments,

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sacramental authority, authority to be present with people when they are most vulnerable. Whether or not it is acknowledged, whether or not it is intentionally exerted, clergy have this power by sacred trust and its influence colors all the relationships of clergy within the church."

In effect, this and other such policies assume that a "pastoral relationship" exists between clergy and lay even outside the usual one-on-one-contact definition, a relationship established as, week after week, the clergy preach and lead congregational worship.

Challenging clergy power

But how much power is "a certain power"?

Some people — largely male clergy, sexual misconduct experts say — scoff at the idea that clergy have any special power in their relationships with laity and argue that they should not be required to observe any special standards of behavior.

"Male clergy find it hard to understand that sexual exploitation relates to institutional power and will often say, 'I don't know what you're talking about — I don't have any power,'" says Penelope Jamieson, bishop of Dunedin, New Zealand, who, like every bishop in the church today, has the responsibility for adjudicating charges of sexual misconduct in her jurisdiction. "But there's an easy answer to that. I say, 'Yeah, are you likely to put your arm around me?' And they'll say, 'No.' When you have a female in a position of institutional power, males recognize that power and clearly see that it is inappropriate for them to place a 'fatherly' arm around me, their bishop. That makes them realize that they as priests do have institutional power and if they attempt to place a 'fatherly' arm or anything else on a woman for whom they stand in a leadership position they are doing it from a position of power which makes mutuality impossible."

As Jamieson indicates, women clergy — and this probably also applies to persons of color, lesbians and gay men — are also less likely to possess the power that straight white male clergy do in this culture. "The professional woman's power is undermined by the fact that she lacks power in general," say Karen Lebacq and Ronald Barton in their 1991 book, *Sex in the Parish*. "We would still urge caution for the woman pastor who develops a sexual interest in a male parishioner, but here our concern focuses on protecting her as well as him."

Systemic abuses

But according to Eleanor L. McLaughlin, a priest in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts who helped produce that diocese's sexual conduct policy, the new policies being required do little to address the abusive "power-over" of sexism.

"As creatures of our culture, we the church are focusing almost entirely in our policies and practice upon *individual* complaints and the punishment of *individual* perpetrators, without reference or commitment to changing the overarching system of white and male power relationships which have existed forever in our church and culture," McLaughlin told a clergy gathering in her diocese last March. "Our sexual abuse policy follows the Republican Party's strategy for dealing with urban crime: lock up the delinquents, put no effort or investment into changing the power relationships, economic and political, which destroy families and neighborhoods and reward aggressive and accumulative behaviors. To 'change the neighborhood' would require transforming the balance of power, whether we are speaking of banks, renters and the homeless or bishops, rectors and the 'merely' baptized."

"Our sexual abuse policy follows the Republican Party's strategy for dealing with urban crime: lock up the delinquents, put no effort or investment into changing the power relationships, economic and political, which destroy families and neighborhoods and reward aggressive and accumulative behaviors."

— Eleanor McLaughlin

Professional misconduct expert Gary Schoener of Minneapolis' Walk-In Counseling Center, says that such analyses are important, but cautions that the systemic problem behind sexual misconduct is one "of hierarchy, not just patriarchy." He says that of the cases they see at his center (excluding cluster child-abuse cases), about 70 percent are cases of male professionals (includes clergy) abusing female clients (includes parishioners), but at least 20 percent are cases of female professionals abusing female clients. An estimated 5 percent of cases involve male victims of female professionals — "The most closeted people we now deal with are the male victims of female offenders," Schoener says.

One notch below the angels?

In the church, hierarchicalism means, among other things, clericalism. "Both clergy and lay people tend to believe that in ordination the clergy person is set one notch below the angels and that the rules don't apply to them," says Virginia Brown-Nolan, author of *Toward Healing and Wholeness: Facing the Challenge of Sexual Misconduct*, a 1994 publication of the national Episcopal Church's Committee on Sexual Exploitation. "It is part of the way our church is structured."

You don't need to search far for evidence that supports Brown-Nolan's claim — in addition to ordaining clergy for life, Episcopal Church commissions on ministry encourage those pursuing ordination to demonstrate that they have a special spiritual "call" to holy orders

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unlike the vocational calls of other baptized persons. In many quarters of the church, clergy make clear their station by wearing clerical collars with their street clothes; and a substantial number of clergy insist on being called (and many lay people insist on calling them) "Father" or "Mother" (never brother or sister).

"Lay people who would otherwise see the flags that a person is coming on to them romantically do not see those flags with clergy because they assume clergy would not do anything that would harm them, that they are holy people," says Brown-Nolan.

Restoring balance: the promise of mutual ministry

Critics of the church's clericalism worry that the policies may have a tendency to actively bolster the perception that clergy are superior to lay people and therefore dangerously powerful. "Church life should not be divided between potential perpetrators and potential victims," says Reginald Blaxton, a priest in the Diocese of Washington.

But under the banner of "mutual" or "total" ministry, a growing number of folks are nuancing the power discussion by noting that the clergy role should combine collaborative leadership in the church community with the responsibility to be its chaplain. Like Peter Rutter, author of the *Sex in the Forbidden Zone* (1989), proponents of this view recognize that the one-on-one pastoral/confessional contact between clergy and parishioners is a situation in which parishioners make themselves vulnerable to the clergy counselor in the pursuit of answers about how to proceed with their lives, spiritually and morally — a situation which therefore constitutes a "forbidden zone" for sexual contact. But they also acknowledge that there are many non-counseling situations in which clergy should be part of a team of workers, a situation that fosters a more realistic picture of the power dynamic in congregations, namely that lay people have power of their own — power which they can give away, use responsibly, or abuse.

"I think there are real skills of leadership that are asked of priests these days in terms of how they give a vision of God without claiming power in place of God in the community," says Dunedin's Jamieson. "The trouble is that the conventional analysis of power says that, 'If the laity have the power, then the clergy haven't and if the clergy have the power the laity don't.' And it's just not true. There's enough mission for everybody. There's more than enough to go around without getting into the one-on-one struggle that does happen."

"I think there are real skills of leadership that are asked of priests these days in terms of how they give a vision of God without claiming power in place of God in the community. The trouble is that the conventional analysis of power says that, 'If the laity have the power, then the clergy haven't and if the clergy have the power the laity don't.' "

— Penelope Jamieson

The possibility of true mutual ministry is also strengthened, many contend, if clergy step back from trying to fill the shoes of trained psychotherapists, a role many have found attractive. "Most clergy don't have the training to do that sort of counseling," says Brown-Nolan, herself a priest with formal training in social work. "We barely talked about things like transference in my one class on pastoral care in seminary. The problem is that lay people don't want to believe that they need professional psychotherapy, so they go to their pastor."

But even without pretending to be psychotherapists, clergy face a muddy workplace situation, Brown-Nolan says. "Clergy function in a very social way in their congregations," she notes. "They and their parishioners attend the same parties and go on picnics together — the kinds of things that friends do together. Many parishioners consider their clergy to be their friends."

In addition, the church is the place where people explore their spirituality. As Lebacqz and Barton write, "If spirituality has to do with being whole persons, then sexuality is an integral part of spirituality."

That makes the church a sexually charged environment, whether people want it to be or not. A 1988 *Ministries Today* article by Richard Exley cites a *Christianity Today* poll of clergy in which 23 percent self-reported engaging in sexual behavior they deemed inappropriate, only 4 percent having been found out by church officials. About half said they had had adulterous sexual intercourse, while more than two-thirds said they had engaged in passionate kissing, fondling or mutual masturbation with parishioners or other partners they in retrospect considered ineligible.

The power-imbalance dynamic which encourages such abuses, Jamieson says, may be exacerbated by the "mercenary" priesthood with which most people are familiar — professionally trained priests who come to a congregation from outside, stay for five or 10 years, and then move on.

"I find very attractive the idea of priests coming out of the communities they are to serve," Jamieson says. "I think the total ministry concept is about being part of the community and seeing discrete functions and roles within the community, but not that raising, not that setting above, setting over. Within tight communities, boundaries are known and they are mutually reinforcible and that's why this question of not raising the priest above becomes important."

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Fighting boundary fundamentalism

by Carter Heyward

I sometimes feel like a skunk at a garden party, suggesting that prevailing assumptions among, especially, white middle-class professionals about boundaries, dual relationships and other relational complexities can be too rigid, too unbending, to permit deeply human, mutually respectful connectedness between healers and those who seek help.

Like many of you, maybe all, I am a survivor of much spiritual and emotional violation which from time to time has culminated traumatically. One such realm of chronic diminishment in my life, as for so many women, lesbians, gay men and other "gender deviants," has been the Christian church, in which I am a priest and a theologian. About 10 years ago, some women students and I began to name the problem we experienced together — "church abuse," we called it. It was this arena of violence, more than any other, that in 1987 led me into a psychotherapy experience which became an occasion for further emotional and spiritual devastation — this time at the hands of a psychiatrist, a lesbian sister who did not touch me sexually at all but who, whatever her personal and professional reasons, used the concept of boundaries to distance and punish, to tease and confuse, to anger and bludgeon me emotionally and spiritually.

This experience provided the unspoken motive and primary insights of a theological text I wrote during the two months following the termination of the therapy in the fall of 1988. Writing the book, *Touching Our Strength*, or letting it write itself through me, more exactly,

Carter Heyward

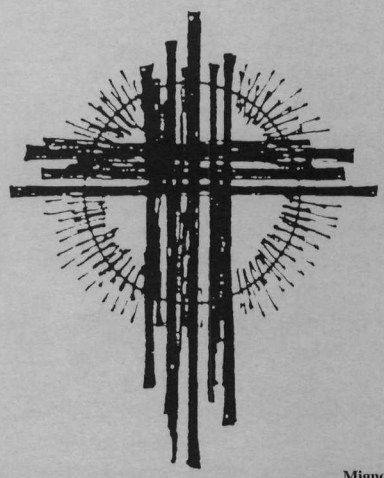
literally kept me sane that fall. Within a year I had begun working on another book related to the therapy, this time actually attempting to tell the story from my perspective and to offer some interpretations.

For the next three years I worked on this book, *When Boundaries Betray Us*, and I did so for several reasons. First, so that other clients and patients might not feel so crazy or alone. Second, so that therapists might be challenged to think about how even the rules upon which they rely in order to do no harm can become vehicles of emotional devastation. And most importantly, from my perspective as a theologian, to chart a theological passage through what I call in the book the patriarchal logic of our life together, that is, our assent to, by participation in, political, social and professional structures of static, hierarchical power relations in which an authority, be he God the Father or the local priest or pastor or shrink, holds an unchanging power in place — always, as Alice Miller notes, for our own good.

So while *When Boundaries Betray Us* can be read simply as a book about therapy gone wrong, it is, in my intention, one of several theological and ethical pieces I have done and am doing on our sacred power in mutual relation — what it is, how we experience and understand it, how we fear and deny it, what happens when we share it, what happens when we don't. I uphold a vision in which we are some day in community, accountable to and with one another, including those who seek our help. But I believe we need to ask ourselves and one another how we can move toward such a vision of community and mutual accountability if in the meantime we are framing our professions, our laws and our ethics around the same static hierarchical

Carter Heyward is Howard Chandler Robbins Professor of Theology at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass. This article is taken from a presentation Heyward made to the "It's Never Okay" conference held in Toronto October 14-15, 1994.

The articles in this month's Vital Signs are the second installment in The Witness' *six-part series on clergy sexual misconduct. The first installment, published in May, was an interview with Nancy Myer Hopkins on her work with congregations. Future articles will examine the tension which arises as the Episcopal Church attempts to respond to cases as both a legal entity and as a Christian community, healing for victims and offenders and issues that emerge when cases involve gay and lesbian persons and other minority groups.*



Mignon

Clergy sexual exploitation: reclaiming the church

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understandings of relational power that historically have generated dynamics of sexual, emotional, economic and other forms of abuse. Do we really imagine that our uses of hierarchical power in the long run will be any less deadly than those of our professional forbears to the human spirit or even less violent to the bodies of women, children and marginalized men?

As a feminist liberation theologian and even more as a spirited sister seeking sisters and brothers, I must tell you that I am dismayed by the contemporary turn it seems to me that our professions have taken toward the protection of patriarchally structured power relations even among many feminist clergy and mental health professionals. What I see is a rigid boundary fundamentalism — not only is it historically sexist, it is also culturally racist, that is, reflecting a Eurocentric preoccupation with self possession rather than with community building as the way to be safe and ethical. Moreover, patriarchal power relations in which one party is assumed to possess an unchanging power over another for the good of the other, reflects an economically classist underpinning of capitalist social relations which function to separate, isolate and further fragment us into parts, thereby battering the spirit within us that yearns more for wholeness, integrity.

Rigid boundary fundamentalism, I believe, will not keep us safe from others or others safe from us. Most likely it will, in the short run, drive most sexually predatory behavior underground while it wreaks havoc spiritually, emotionally and relationally with most folks' deeply human yearnings for right connection — to embody integrity, that is, through the struggle for genuinely right relationships in our professional lives as well as elsewhere.

Rigid boundary fundamentalism will not keep us safe from others or others safe from us. Most likely it will, in the short run, drive most sexually predatory behavior underground while it wreaks havoc spiritually, emotionally and relationally with most folks' deeply human yearnings for right connection

Ethics to help us be genuinely moral should be ongoing discourses, never-ending, about right and wrong through which we are literally encouraging one another to struggle for right, mutually respectful relationships. Psychotherapy, pastoral counseling and other healing connections should be, I believe, paradigms of what Jewish existentialist social philosopher Martin Buber called the I-Thou relation in which all parties participate in shaping one another's well-being, that is, one another's struggles for life and justice, for joy and compassion. I believe that an I-Thou relationship is intrinsically non-abusive because it is so profoundly mutual, that is, mutually respectful and attentive to others' vulnerabilities and well-being.

In our society it is, of course, immensely hard to imagine shaping our professional ethics around the possibilities of an I-Thou, so badly broken are we, and fragmented and afraid. And not just the patients or the clients or the laity — we all are. But unless we are willing to do the community-building and to take the risk, both professionally and personally, of opening our own lives and professions, the dynamics of our work, our connectedness, our love, our hopes and our fears and our yearnings, we are likely to wake up someday and find ourselves in Gilead, that not-so-far-away nightmare envisioned prophetically by the brilliant Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood in her chilling book *The Handmaid's Tale,* in which nobody is allowed to touch anybody without the permission of the white male commanders.

Our fear of one another will devour us and our professions unless we refuse to let this happen. As a wise Christian ethicist, H. Richard Niebuhr, once said, "We watch what we fear and we imitate what we watch." Today we fear violation. And we *should* fear violation. We fear that which breaks the body and wounds the spirit, but there is a real danger lurking in this and that is that in our fear we are stripping away, legally, ethically and otherwise, our own and one another's capacities to be fully human sisters and brothers together in this world — to be, in Martin Buber's words, an I in relation to another's Thou.

Farewell, Henri Stines

Longtime anti-racism activist and celebrated preacher Henri Alexandre Stines died March 8, 1995 in Chicago at the age of 71. Born and educated in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, he served in parishes in Charleston, W.V., Detroit, Washington, D.C., Berkeley and Chicago until his retirement in 1986.

In the 1960s, Stines served for two years on the staff of the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity based in Atlanta, working to persuade church people to become more involved in the civil rights struggle.

"Whether it was walking a picket line in front of a segregated church school, visiting Jonathan Daniels and his friends in a rural Alabama jail or meeting with bishops to advance the cause of equal treatment of clergy, Henri gave of himself and became one with Michael and his angels in striking down the forces of evil," said John Morris, a longtime friend and former colleague.

Stines is survived by his wife of 47 years, Gladys Robinson Stines, his two daughters, Denise Stines Francis and Suzette Stines, and five grandchildren.

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Reclaiming our flesh

continued from page 6

cared for her because she was plump and shy. She felt ugly and useless.

She hated mirrors all her life because she looked ugly and stupid to herself. But she told the group, "Now when I look in a mirror, I see someone I love!"

The whole group cried and began to tell stories of their own years of oppression. They ended that meeting by praying together for strength to continue toward the time when they could love themselves as made in God's image, the image in the mirror.

What re-imagining of God would allow us to look in a mirror and say that we see, in our embodied, whole selves, someone we love?

What re-imagining of God would allow us to look in a mirror and say that we see, in our embodied, whole selves, someone we love? How can divine images affirm the complex, ambiguous, often difficult lives of women all over the world who swim in the riptides of oppressive, exploitative systems?

How can we come to understand our daily, earth-bound, ordinary acts of care; our emotionally charged, demanding relationships; our solitary, reflective moments; our work for our societies, for our churches, for each other, and for our life on the earth; and our very physical selves as images of sacred power, of God with us and in us in our very flesh?

Incarnation compels us to look within ordinary, earth-bound existence for clues to divine presence, within the humble lives of those, in Adrienne Rich's words, "who age after age, perversely, with no extraordinary power, reconstitute the world." Looking for incarnation as verb is to look for the activity, not the individual, in which love is manifest. For the Spirit of God in our midst moves fluidly, finding homes for her presence as hearts open, looking elsewhere when hearts close. The revelation of incarnate spirit comes from the margins of life, from the heart of life-giving power. TW

Archivist alert!

The Witness is seeking to find an institution which would like to house a nearly complete set of *Witness* magazines dating back to 1917. Our goal is to make these issues available to as many people as possible since they cover nearly a century of national and church history. Please write to us at *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1822.

The Witness *can aid Christian educators*

The Witness offers issues on current topics for Christian education classes. Opinions in the magazine are strong, while adversaries are treated respectfully, which makes for great discussions. Study guides are provided upon request when ordering multiple copies of a single issue.

Planning a summer series?

Consider using the July/August issue which will examine violence and nonviolence in honor of those who died in the bombing of Hiroshima 50 years ago. The study guide will provide scriptural material to complement conversations.

Looking for something lighter? How about "Be ye perfect": From perfectionism to prophecy (3/93)? This issue examines the suggestion that the Bible calls us to perfection. Walter Wink contends that Jesus could never have said, "Be ye perfect." We also look at the lives and views of some wonderfully imperfect people.

Planning for the fall?

Celebrate St. Francis day with our Animal Rights (10/93) issue — an interview with Andrew Linzey offers a theologian's perspective on the role of animals in creation.

Mark Labor Day by reconsidering economic justice (5/94). Doug Theuner, bishop of New Hampshire, offers some suggestions about how to harness church funds for justice. Bill Wylie-Kellermann describes the role of the powers. Camille Colatosti reviews efforts to bring corporations under some community control.

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The resurrection of the body

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

Resurrection: Myth or Reality?
John Shelby Spong
Harper SanFranciso, 1994

There is an old joke, dating from the era in which theology was thought to be a European male enterprise. An archeologist, uncovering what he is convinced are the bones of Jesus, grasps the care with which this world-shattering news must be announced. Setting aside first Barth, then Niebuhr, he settles upon Paul Tillich as the best spokesperson for the task. When the incontrovertible evidence is laid out before him, Tillich rocks back in his chair and says thoughtfully to himself, "Ah, so he actually lived!"

In *Resurrection: Myth or Reality?* John Spong sifts the scriptures as if on an archeological dig and claims to have found the bones of Jesus in a common unmarked grave. Only then does he seem to be free to proclaim the Easter moment (his term of preference over the resurrection of Jesus) as a timeless reality which is "eternal, subjective, mythological, nonhistorical, and nonphysical."

In critical sifting, his first layer of discovery was Jewish midrash, the ancient method of interpretation which reworked scripture texts, creatively comprehending and expanding "a story or an event by relating it to another event in sacred history." Spong is correct to identify the gospels as written partly in the tradition of midrash. And he is further on the mark to suggest that a variety of antisemitism has blinded Christians to that connection in understanding the construction of these gospels.

Ironically though, instead of taking this as an insight in how to get at the meaning of the resurrection for the assorted communities who produced the texts, midrash is for Spong a synonym for fabrication. Identifying midrash becomes an essentially dismissive technique, as in "only midrash." Spong is correct that "Did it really happen?" is not the question writers of midrash would be addressing. "That is a Western question tied to a Western mindset ..." Strangely though, it's the question Spong treats as an obsessive preoccupation. And by dismissing every gospel narrative from the burial on as fabricated, he concludes it did not.

The first half of the bishop's argument, sparsely footnoted, follows the outline of Reginald Fuller's *Formation of the Resurrection Narratives,* now 25 years old. It begins with the church's earliest written affirmations found in Paul — including the noteworthy claim that his own experience be numbered among the resurrection appearances (1 Cor 15:8). None of this is particularly new. (Spong's book is a miracle of marketing and promotion if it is regarded so). The main differences are that he marshals the material smugly against the naivete of "the literalists." In that regard his guiding hermeneutical question becomes: should this be taken literally?

The other difference is a methodological confusion in critical history probably stemming from his polemic. Working from the texts, he confuses what we can't say happened, with what we can say didn't happen. That applies to the Jerusalem events as well as conclusions about what Paul knew or heard. For example, if one were to apply this method to his own book, one would conclude that the bishop knows nothing about the more recent movements of biblical criticism, in particular literary analysis and sociological exegesis — and in the best cases their fusion. I do not conclude this about him, but do regret his silence. Both would comport with his point of departure in midrash, and both would serve to illuminate the real question of what the resurrection meant to the gospel writers and their communities. Spong, however, is stuck in older questions and methods.

One irony of his approach is that the women, first among them Mary Magdalene, are written out of the narrative. He predicates, largely on the basis of Paul (who had a vested authority interest in framing his list of appearances between Peter and himself), that Simon was the first witness of the Easter moment. If that were so, it seems strange that no narrative of that appearance was ever constructed in the gospels. And against all cultural logic, indeed against the weight of church patriarchy already re-emerging, the women are attested in *every* gospel as first witnesses.

So, that resurrection body ...

In my view, there's something wondrously scandalous about the resurrection body. Not just the Hebraic unity-of-the-person over against the Greek bifurcation of body from immortal soul. Not just the scandal to Western rationalism and scientism. But the political scandal.

For example, one need make no objec-

book review

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is *The Witness'* book review editor. He reviewed Spong's book at the request of Bob Eckersly who will not agree with the review, but who we believe will be pleased to see it.

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tive history claims about the guard of soldiers placed at the tomb by the ruling authorities (Matt 27:62f) to understand what it means politically. Certain powers (in Matthew's moment as well as well as Jesus') want his body out of sight and off the scene. They want it dead and buried. And they want it to stay buried. But it won't. The solution of military repression fails. I think of that as good news.

Jesus hadn't just been drawn to Jerusalem "like a magnet" because it was the most fitting place for a prophet to die. The gospels portray him coming to town, at least on the last big trip, to confront the imperial center and its acolytes, the occupied system of the temple-state. He comes to put a choice, to offer a genuine alternative: embodied in the movement he called the kingdom of God. It was conspicuously subversive of established social arrangements. And it was enacted by bare-handed body politics: who you eat with, where you sit, what boundaries you cross, which sacred spaces you invade, and what urban center you refuse to be driven out of. The powers understood the affront and claimed his body in the arrest — processing, torturing, and doing away with it in a public ritual of execution. Put him in the ground they say.

Is Spong in some odd sense aiding and abetting them in that project? The politics of the resurrection seem to escape him. Imagine: a disposed body re-membered and present. Imagine: freedom from bondage to the power of death, freedom from the fear of death, freedom to die. The resurrection may be seen as the very emblem of that subversive imagination which is itself always incarnational, always embodied — in both the community and its text. It is the very opposite of "timeless truth," instead being always experienced in the concrete and historically specific: con-textualized. The subversive imagination envisions a world, a social order, which the powers say literally can never be. By the grace of God, it imagines and lives the impossible. Like the body of Jesus itself, the authorities want it off the scene, under control, or otherwise domesticated.

There is a struggle for the Bible. John Spong has intuited that, but I fear he's joined a rear-guard skirmish between literalists, as he calls them, and liberal rationalists, as I take him to be.

That is to say, there is a struggle for the text going on, a battle for the Bible, if you will. John Spong has intuited that, but I fear he's joined the wrong battle, a rear-guard skirmish between literalists, as he calls them, and liberal rationalists, as I take him to be. (I say this fully aware that he regards himself, under the mantle of John Robinson, giving the Honest to God movement "a mighty shove into the 21st century." He says this.)

Meanwhile the real struggle is over whether the Bible will be domesticated, whether its texts will be dismembered or simply dismissed to suit ruling forms of knowledge and power. And it seems to be the most politically radical narratives — concerning the way of the cross and the experience of resurrection — which always need the most taming. Literalists and liberals simply tame by different means.

The resurrection is spoken of biblically in such a diverse variety of ways, as though its power ought to be both evoked and guarded. Women returning like the mothers of the disappeared to a forbidden site, an empty tomb, an official seal broken, a messenger in martyr's robes, the shaking of earth's foundations, tears and turning, broken bread, a breath upon friends still locking the door for fear, a finger tracing the wounds, a seaside barbecue, promises uttered, the summons to discipleship and the risk of the cross put yet again. I'm sad to say these ways for Spong are an opaque and hopeless muddle of contradictions: simply evidence of their legendary fabrication.

Strangely, Spong proposes his own alternative, an elaborate historical fabrication. The second half of his book constructs an hypothesis about the first Easter moment. Following five clues, "authentic memories" that have "the ring of truth," Spong posits Peter's post-crucifixion return to Galilee. It is "admittedly speculative" but he suggests the route Simon took, whose house he stayed at, how long it took for him to get home, whom he sat with as "they processed their experiences and wondered what it all meant."

Spong articulates the inner struggle of Peter's mind, and has figured out what he was eating when it finally dawned on him that Jesus was actually alive. Finally, based on a close reading of Zechariah and Psalm 118 (lectionary texts for the feast of Tabernacles) he suggests the date of Peter's triumphal entry back into Jerusalem six months later. (Spong suggests that Luke's guess of the earlier feast of Pentecost is well-intentioned, but slightly inept). As history, it is, I suppose, a form of imagination, but one offered not in communion with the gospel midrashim, but in spite of them.

As for me, sometimes I feel like Thomas who the story says missed the first go round and with tough-minded resolve wouldn't settle for second-hand experiences. I understand his yearning to touch the body with his own hands. And like this Twin, I know how to recognize the Risen One: in the wounds of the Crucified One. To touch those wounds is to know incredible pain, and incredible love, and incredible joy. TW

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In pursuit of a dancing God

by Marianne Arbogast

June Keener-Wink used to try to hide her hands, feeling they were "big and ugly."

Now she talks about them to the thousands of people who take part in the movement and body work workshops she leads across the U.S. and internationally.

"I tell my own journey with the physical body, and how the culture and the church bound me," Keener-Wink says.

"Most people hate their bodies," she states bluntly. "They think of their bodies as something they have, an 'it.' 'It' hurts. 'It' doesn't look good. Look around — you see anorexia and bulimia, the cult of bodybuilding, the emphasis on health. All are signs of the splitness of our society."

Through her workshops — often teamled with her scripture-scholar husband, Walter Wink — Keener-Wink hopes to foster integration.

"We find the workshops which have both right- and left-brain experiences much more powerful," she says. "We work with all parts of ourselves, relaxing, moving our bodies, working with clay, using Cray-pas, or role-playing in connection with the study of biblical texts."

If the Bible study topic is love of enemy, for instance, Keener-Wink invites people to work with their self-image.

"We often see our bodies as enemies," she says. "We need to get in touch with those parts which have betrayed us, or which we've betrayed."

She invites participants to pray with their bodies.

"How would you pray if there were no other way except through movement? Asking that question and then doing the prayer that way is powerful."

Those who are more "right-brained" often feel a liberation in being given a way to express themselves, she says, while the "left-brained" can feel challenged. She laughs as she acknowledges that the movement work is more threatening to most people than her husband's sometimes controversial ideas.

"I want to create a safe space," she says. "Participants can move in or out of what is offered according to their comfort level or their physical abilities or disabilities, and there is no judgement whatsoever cast upon what they choose to do."

I had a strong desire to express myself in movement or dance, but my fear was tremendous. My childhood idea of sin was connected with my body.

June Keener-Wink

She tells of a man from Texas who arrived for a workshop attired in cowboy boots and hat.

"The first thing we did was ask them to take off their shoes," she says. "It was quite hard for him; he wanted to be a good sport, but there was a lot of resistance.

"But when we went to Bible study after movement, he looked like a different man. He told us that it was hard to be a big shot with your shoes off."

Why didn't I grow up with a dancing God? I decided that I was going to find that God and help others to do likewise.

Keener-Wink believes body work is crucial in helping people deal with issues of sexuality.

"One reason people are so afraid of the body is because of sexuality," she says. "It's important to recognize that God loves our sexual selves, and to approve and work with that energy."

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness.*

In her early workshops, she learned to recognize symptoms of sexual abuse at a time "when it was not out of the closet yet. I would see people, mostly women, breaking down, running out in tears. The body had a memory and the body was bringing all that up. It was often the first step toward getting some help."

Keener-Wink, who has been doing this work since 1982, describes it as a "calling that came from within.

"I don't remember anyone who combined spirituality, body imaging and the Bible," she says. "There was no one out there for a model."

At a time when she was feeling like "an uptight almost middle-aged woman cooped up year after year," she had intuitively turned to the body to find freedom.

"I had a strong desire to express myself in movement or dance, but my fear was tremendous," she says. "My childhood idea of sin was connected with my body. I did not have positive feelings about myself. I plunged into a movement class in spite of all those negative inner voices screaming at me."

At the same time, she began classes in pottery.

"I was centering my body, I was centering the clay; I was opening the clay, I was opening my body; I was learning to shape the clay, I was learning to shape my body. There was no end to this dance, this integration that was happening."

She wept when, on a visit to India, she learned that Hindus worship a dancing god.

"I was profoundly moved. Why, why didn't I grow up with a dancing God? I decided that I was going to find that God and help others do likewise."

At the start of each workshop, she lights an oil lamp which she fashioned out of clay in a way that allows the flame to dance, "symbolizing that we have a moving, dancing, active God."

She does not believe this God should be alien to Christians.

"As soon as I start talking about the body I use the word, *'nephesh,'* a Hebrew word which means all of me — mind, body, spirit, intuition, feelings."

Because there is no Greek or English equivalent, biblical translators often used the word 'soul,' she says, leaving the body out. "I try to help individuals move from 'I *have* a body' to 'I *am nephesh*.' To be incarnated, to be the temple of the Holy Spirit."

Keener-Wink, who has led workshops with her husband in numerous countries, says the most difficult was "in East Germany right after the wall came down."

When Walter Wink spoke, "they said we couldn't tell them anything about principalities and powers after what they'd been through. And that was true! But with the body work, they had no understanding at all. They were very rigid — they would laugh and run out of the room."

In other places, she felt there was less need for the body work component of the workshops.

In Latin America, she found that base communities already include the body with mime and role-play of Scripture.

And in South Africa in 1986, she felt there was a more urgent need for the nonviolence training her husband offered, so she cut back her sessions to give him more time.

But she sees their work as one. Activists burn out, she says, when they are "not in touch with their whole self.

"In our workshops we do a lot of groaning, getting those moans out, so we can lift them up to God, and not think we have to be the messiahs of the world.

"We strive for spontaneity in our bodies. Spontaneity is the ability to respond to what God calls us to do. It's being able to bend, to stretch and twist with God. I believe Jesus had soft knees. He could move in any direction God wanted." TW

Verna Dozier

"I never know what to expect next from The Witness. *Each month I look forward to finding out what issue, this time, has claimed the editors' attention. The recent issue on sin illustrates what I mean. The editors published the gamut of opinions, even those of people with whom they disagree — they seek them out."*

— Verna Dozier,
author of The Dream of God

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Fire take the church!
Heart commence to turn over!
Great Lord! The whole thing been jump!

— Camp meeting song

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The Witness

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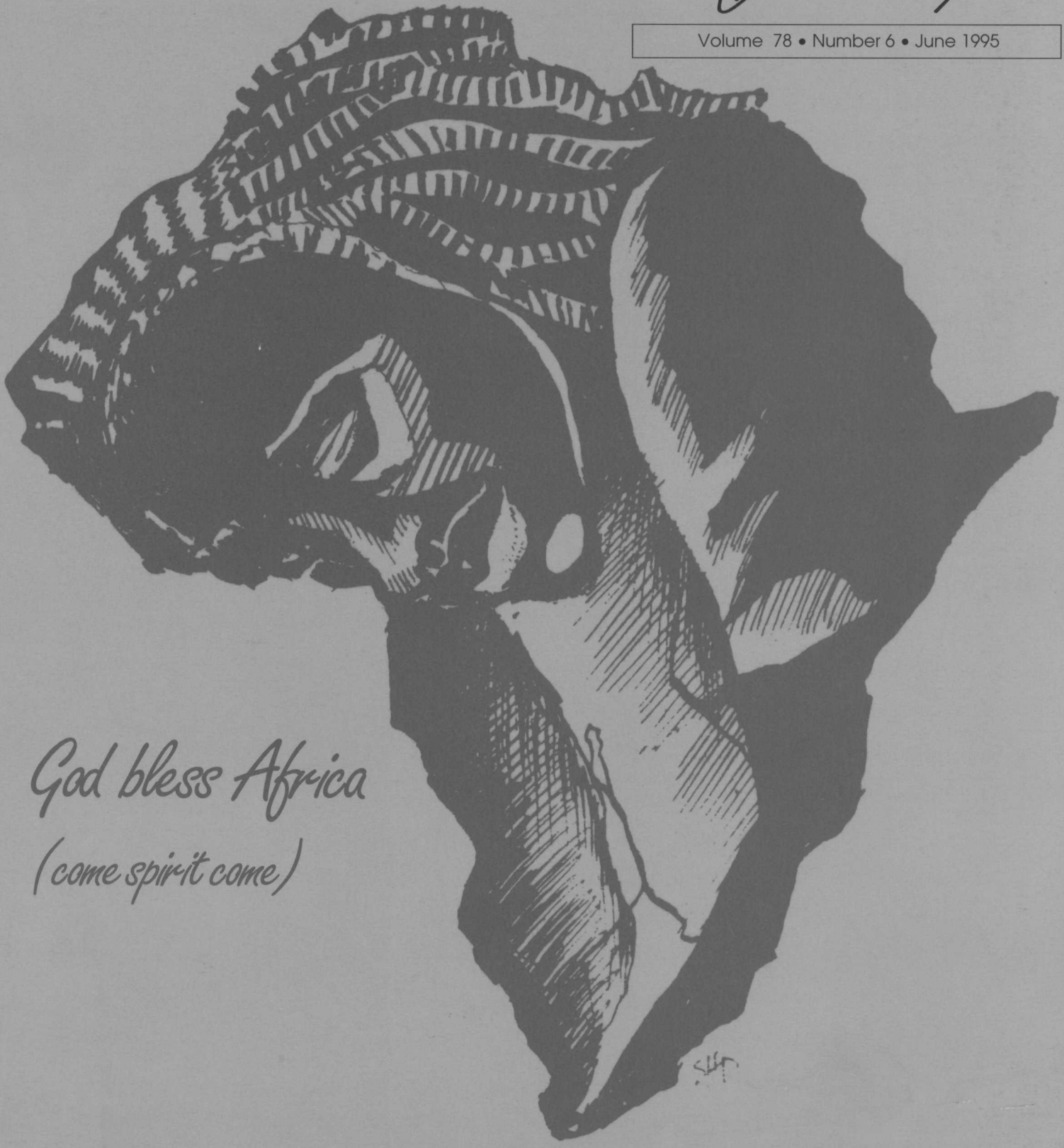

God bless Africa

(come spirit come)

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Sin

I ENCLOSE $3 FOR ANOTHER COPY of the March issue. My husband was in the midst of reading it when it disappeared, probably on one of his many travels to somewhere when it was carried along to be read while waiting. It was substantive and we need it!

Priscilla Armstrong
Baltimore, MD

Witness praise

I AM ENCLOSING a cheque as my contribution to your *wonderful* paper — it is most truly and aptly named, for in a world of increasing violence and cruelty by the *rich* nations and powerful men on those who are poor and powerless, your lovely paper shines out as a true witness to the love of God. I welcome its coming every month and save up my copies to read when I am feeling oppressed. I am proud to belong to the same community as you.

Nadir Dinshaw
St. Brelade's Bay, Scotland

THE WITNESS IS A COMPELLING source of Hope in a world gone mad with hopelessness.

Margaret Lowery
Sandy, OR

ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK for a one-year subscription. We have been reading issues fairly regularly for several years as they have been passed to us by a friend whose eyes no longer allow her to read. We are not Episcopalians but find ourselves frequently asking Episcopalian friends "Do you read *The Witness*?" Unfortunately, the answer is too frequently , "No."

Pat Shufeldt
Greenville SC

Clergy sexual exploitation

Letters

While in seminary, I was sexually victimized by a married fellow student who misbehaved when his life felt out of control. As Nancy Hopkins said [in the April issue of *The Witness*] it wasn't about sex, it was about power.

Because the man would not leave me alone, I went to the Dean. We had an informal hearing. The only person who dealt with the evidence and drew conclusions was the Dean. If he hadn't been a decent, good and unbiased person, the process would not have worked. And I was lucky, the Dean agreed the man's actions were inappropriate.

The Dean's job is to safeguard the institution. He seemed to assume its safety would also protect me. The Dean promised that if this seminarian did anything else he would be dismissed immediately. We did not define what "anything else" included.

After this, the man was more restrained, but he did not leave me alone. The man was talked to each time, but he was never forced to leave the school.

The process was confidential, but people knew something was going on. Rumors spread, causing harm to me and others. Moreover, because I was obviously hurt, many thought I should leave. So seminary officials called me in. I was told that I should smile and hide my hurt. I should ignore the man as if he were a two-year-old. I should not depend on our seminary community for help. I could cry or be angry or sad at home, or in my therapist's office. Finally, for my growth and empowerment, my protection was up to me.

Six months later the offender completed his studies and left with honors and *restrictions*. I worked to rejoin the seminary community.

Two years later everyone is kind, but despite good reports from a psychotherapist and others, I've been blocked in the ordination process. Those who have the decision-making power tell me that they are not sure I can handle stress, that maybe I should quit the process for a couple of years and then start over. But in writing, these same people tell me that they have insufficient information about me to make a decision.

Apparently, they can't believe I have recovered. And why? Because I wasn't a good enough victim. I didn't hide my pain well enough. I wanted help protecting myself from a man who was first searching for women to victimize and later wanted revenge. I didn't do it right. If I had hidden my hurt and ignored the man, there would not have been problems. No one acknowledges that maybe he should have been forced to leave seminary.

Name withheld

Visiting Cuba

I JOINED THE PASTORS FOR PEACE caravan to Cuba last November. I had also visited Cuba in 1982 and found that the hungry were fed, the homeless homed, the sick receiving the finest of care. I found these same things true today.

They have replaced selfish values with the common good of all. Loving your neighbor means practicing solidarity. William Temple, former archbishop of Canterbury, explained this by writing, "No one acquires the right to possess or to hold down their neighbour." The American blockade has tried to do this.

We experienced a test of our faith with delays from breakdowns and actions of U.S. customs at the U.S. border at Buffalo, N.Y., where we applied civil disobedience to help the Americans cross into Canada. We had inconvenience by sleeping two nights on a church floor in Toronto. We loaded 260 tons of aid on a ship at Montreal for Cuba. There was medicine, medical equipment, school supplies, solar ovens, bicycles and parts, computers, faxes and 40 tons of powdered milk from the United Church in Toronto.

This was the fourth caravan organized by Pastors for Peace to Cuba.

We spent a week in Havana. I attended church at Holy Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. We attended a five-day conference on Cuban solidarity. One hundred and nine countries were represented by over 3,000 delegates. We had people from all ages and walks of life expressing their support.

Jim Pence
Vancouver, Canada

Correction

Janet Morley's poems in the May issue are published in *All Desires Known* (Morehouse).

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When the center doesn't hold

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Since the Oklahoma bombing, I've joined millions of others poring over each day's reports of those who died and those who did not.

But the accompanying commentary worries me.

People keep asking, how could this have happened?

I want to respond, "How could the government possibly be expected to know the contents of every vehicle on a downtown street and do you seriously want to live in a society where it does?"

The clamor for the anti-terrorism bill is terrifying. As a member of the anti-nuclear movement and a sometime tax resister, there is no question files on my community will be pulled open (see page 27). I remember the harassment we experienced in the early 1980s (bank accounts garnished, threatening phone calls, lies from federal authorities concerning our commitments and a death threat to a friend in Central American solidarity work).

The harassment only eased when the government's campaign against CISPES (Committee in Support of the People of El Salvador) was exposed. The public complaints and curtailment of the government surveillance apparatus made a tangible difference in the quality of life for many of us.

Now, rather than listen to and address the issues being raised, however heinously, by the militarized right in this country, the government is organizing a military response and asking for the death penalty for the bombers.

On the very same news broadcasts, right-wing white guys are telling reporters that the Oklahoma bombing marked the anniversary of the destruction of the Waco community two years ago and the execution of a white supremacist in Arkansas this year.

It doesn't take much imagination to foresee what the results of executing Tim McVeigh *et al* will be. Nor is it hard to imagine what people who hate the government and who have placed their trust in mega-weapons will do in response to government harassment.

God help us.

The only thing offering hope in the face of the militarized right is conversation. It's not a conversation I look forward to. I get the creeps when I'm driving behind someone with a bumper sticker that says "A man with a gun is a citizen; a man without is a subject."

But we can do it.

Last summer a group of us, including local United Methodist Bishop Donald Ott conducted an exorcism at a gun and knife trade show. We carried a cross past tables of weapons (and books with detailed formulas for home-made bombs), then gathered outside.

Raging white men came spilling through the doors, crying out insults and threats, but were immediately shushed by their friends who said, "Be quiet. They're praying."

For ten minutes they stood in respectful silence while we finished the rites of exorcism. Then they leaped before us insisting that they carry guns to protect our right to pray. They itemized their complaints against public schools, controlling government agencies, etc.

They were anxious about conspiracies — just as those smug newspaper commentators suggest.

But, while I consider the right wing's analysis flawed and its conclusions wrong, it is not inappropriate to see conspiracies. You'd be crazy to insist there are not powerful mechanisms of social control aimed at us — we may not have microchips implanted in our butts (as McVeigh believes), but through advertising, through credit ratings, through subtle and blatant coercion we are corralled.

James Nichols (a Michigan farmer currently held for questioning) practices making bombs, turned in his driver's license and social security card and is experimenting with organic farming.

I think of a friend, Tom Jones, whose farm is 100 miles away from Nichols'. A Methodist minister and nonviolent activist, he is driven to distraction when he can't get bank loans for organic farming; he's denied government grants for alfalfa crops (which replenish the soil) because, despite great crops, he won't use chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Will we call it paranoid thinking, if Nichols complains that he is being forced to poison his land and his family?

Behind the militarism of the right is the reality of economic decline. When the middle class was made to pay for the retooling of American industry in the early 1980s, the editors of *Business Week* wrote: "It will be a hard pill for many Americans to swallow — the idea of doing with less so that big business can have more. Nothing that this nation, or any other nation has done in modern economic history compares in difficulty with the selling job that must be done to make people accept this new reality."

The nation is in trouble and the center is not holding. The church better have a word for Tim McVeigh — and I shudder if it is simply an expression of outrage, a cry for the death penalty or disparagement of conspiracy theories.

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THE WITNESS
Since 1917

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Vital Signs *examines Ellen Cooke's embezzlement of national church funds and the frustration of women waiting for progress to be made in the Committee for Dialogue on Canon III.8.1. The series on clergy sexual misconduct will resume next month.*

Cover: Africa by Helen David Brancato of Philadelphia. Brancato associates this quote from the South Africa Kairos Document with the image: "Often enough their bodies are broken but nothing can now break their spirit."
Back cover: Africa: Women on the Move by Betty LaDuke, who lives in Oregon. LaDuke is the author of *AFRICA: Women's Art, Women's Lives* (Africa World Press, 1995) and *Africa Through the Eyes of Women Artists* (Africa World Press, 1991).

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Challenged by African faith

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

This issue is about sources of life in Africa.

It is not about poverty, starvation, AIDS or tribal war.

This issue is dedicated to those who pour their vitality into rituals, into the deep community implicit in all their faith traditions, into art and into resistance.

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company board, which owns *The Witness*, asked me and Bill Wylie-Kellermann to go to Africa when I refused a raise.

I looked forward to meeting artists and people in religious movements — particularly indigenous ones. Watching people weave the fire of pain and hope into radiant light I believed would help us step beyond the paralysis and despair generated by overwhelmingly tragic news reports and even by most religious appeals for charitable contributions.

We were fortunate to be allowed to attend the second Afro Anglican conference, held in January, which was hosted this time by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in Capetown. The gathering, which examined Anglican commitments throughout the diaspora, drew people of African descent from the continent, the Caribbean, England and the U.S. Our particular interest, of course, was in meeting representatives of the African church.

In the course of that conference and a visit to Johannesburg we met many folks in the African Anglican church and beyond. Soon we became familiar with the assertive intellects and quick humor exercised by our sisters and brothers in the Anglican Church in Africa. We were teased, challenged and welcomed.

We were on the alert for answers to two questions: what makes the church in Africa so vibrant when services in American mainline denominations are generally dull and poorly attended? And, does the active spirituality in Africa necessarily go hand in hand with conservative moral values?

St. George and the dragon, 17th century Ethiopian miniature

God on the move

We met in small groups for Bible study in Capetown. One member of my group was Grace Ndyabahika, chaplain at Makhere University in Uganda. Her attention to the conversation was intense as contrasted to the Americans who dominated the group. Also unlike the Americans, she bared her soul in telling about God's hand in her decision to marry and a dream that led her to the right mate. She told us that her father raised her not to lie, saying, "Christians are different."

Her faith is at her fingertips, on her tongue, in her eyes — it is her currency.

When I mentioned a time when I had wept during a service on Madison Avenue and been told to "keep a stiff upper lip," Ndyabahika was appalled.

"Pastoral ministry is the heart for us," Ndyabahika said. "It's when someone is in distress that God is convicting them or calling them!" She added that pastoral visiting is frequent and that fellowship groups meet weekly to get "passions out for the community and for the self."

I was struck when reading (Harvey Cox's, *Fire From Heaven*, Addison-Wesley, 1994) book on Pentecostalism) that the indigenous African churches (usually referred to as African independent churches and called African-initiated churches by one author in this issue) concluded that the European missionaries must have deliberately kept the power of the Holy Spirit a secret because missionary services were so contained.

Articles in this issue will illustrate ways that the African churches make room for people to cry, to shout, to publicly confess their sins. I find myself drawn and repelled simultaneously — I want to acknowledge my passions and then work them through a refining fire, but I have been raised in such an individualistic culture that I am wary of allowing anyone authority over my moral health. Likewise, I want to dance and stomp my prayers, but I've never placed myself in renewal congregations where worship might be more spontaneous.

Yet, for all my reservations, I do believe that the African church has the antidote to our tepid worship. And their emphasis on community and confession

editor's note

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

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might well be the antidote to the despair and rage expressed by some folks in the shrinking middle class.

The Anglican church in South Africa is looking to exorcise the rage and hatred engendered by apartheid by drawing on the rituals of the African independent churches. They are devoting 1995 to studying the rituals.

Obedience

Ndyabahika talked freely, as many other Africans did, about surrendering to the will of God.

W.P. Khotso Makhulu, archbishop of Central Africa, expressed a sense of humor and freedom in obedience, even when it involves pain. Of his own country, Botswana, he said, "We're going the way of all flesh. We've depended on irreplaceable diamonds — some people have overstretched themselves and burned their fingers *but that's not all bad.*" He later spoke positively about Africans bringing their conflicts, pain and dreams to the community — for its welfare — rather than looking to psychiatrists to make things whole.

Likewise, Joseph Dadson, bishop of Tamale in West Africa, explained, "If you live what God asks of you, you live what you say and your life fulfills God's word — that is greater mission. Evangelism involves not just proclaiming the word of God, but being obedient to the will of God."

Dadson's understanding of obedience might sound simplistic to Western ears, but there is undoubtedly a deep challenge in his description of the courageous witness of priests (who earn $5 a month). He is too articulate about Western economic exploitation and prejudice not to have a clear message for us.

Biblical seeds of revolution

Lamin Sanneh, raised in Gambia, says that no matter how chauvinistic the behavior of European missionaries sometimes was, the Gospel they carried, and translated into indigenous languages, brought the seeds required for Africans to overthrow the European colonialists. (*Encountering the West: Christianity and the Global Cultural Process,* Orbis, 1993).

Sanneh rejects the currently popular view that Western missionaries were uniformly predatory and African tribal societies were innocent. He suggests that that view not only underestimates the mixed legacy of the Western missionaries, but also lends itself to another form of Western chauvinism by portraying the "innocent" Africans as victims.

Sanneh argues that by translating the Bible into indigenous dialects, missionaries actually preserved cultures by providing written languages and even contributed to the emergence of nationalism.

"As Africans faced the unforeseen situation of forcible foreign rule, they found that the accompanying foreign Christianity possessed the unsuspected antidote to the loss represented by colonialism, and since Christianity could ostensibly be adopted as evidence of capitulating to foreigners, it was an effective disguise for the cultural resistance it made possible. ...

"Ultimately mother tongue sentiments fused with the revolutionary message of the Bible concerning the *impartiality* of God towards all peoples and races and then inveighed against residual obstacles created by continued colonial rule and the doctrine of white racial supremacy," Sanneh concluded.

Sanneh's thesis is similar to one repeated by Desmond Tutu in the form of a joke: "When the missionaries arrived, they had the Bible and we had the land. They bent their heads and said, 'Let us pray.' When we looked up, they had the land and we had the book." Tutu laughs. And then he whispers, "But what we had was of inestimable value." TW

Hope in South Africa

In many ways the social concerns on the bulletin board of a Methodist church in Johannesburg could have been posted in Detroit. They dealt with AIDS education, a homeless union, a city council in disarray, anti-handgun efforts, suburbanites who commute in to work but leave an economic void in their wake. ... Welcome home.

I watched for signs of and read about a deeper underlying problem: the inherited pain resulting from decades of torture and abuse. Only once did we see the state police power in action. The airports and the streets appear demilitarized, but as we passed a rural township caged behind barbed wire outside Capetown, an enormous military vehicle, a Kaspir, rushed past us. It reminded me of the militarized vehicles I saw Jewish soldiers using in Gaza — all the windows were gridded with protective steel. It held an ominous power.

Most of the heart-sickening awareness of the vicious cruelty of the apartheid regime came to me through accounts that I was reading while there. I grew ill and for a brief moment longed for the comparative tranquility of the U.S. until I forced myself to recall America's long history — since its inception — of systematic oppression of several segments of the U.S. population.

Only then did my hopes turn, as have the hearts of so many revolutionaries in South Africa, to the Gospel.

— *J. W-K.*

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Odo Masquerade

— Igbo tribal song

May the congregation here listen,
Listen, for it is Odo hearing the market din
The Odo who lives near Nkwo market
Speaking his mind — his eternal mind:
I say to you
No other Odo gnaws into my trunk
And into my branches
Except Hornbill
Who thundered and ate his visitor;
I am the Odo who feeds on the market din —
I, Ogene-the-bell, who summons to conferences
I, the beaked singer, who rips open the maize cob
I, mysterious tripod used for cooking
So the pot can stand erect;
Two of my three legs give way
And the pot falls off, rolling
Seeking the eternal cook.

I ask the creator-scatterer of locusts
Please to retreat a pace
For almighty Odo is girded with cloth
And is going in peace —
If soldier ants advance, person advances
If they retreat, person retreats
He who has a basket should bring it to the wilderness
For the numberless locusts
Are a hovering host in the wilderness.

I, the *Ozo* who killed an elephant
I, the *Ozo* who wore palm leaves and rejected the hoe
I, the *Ozo* who took his title on *Eke* day
And performed in the village square on Olie day;
I, the beaked Singer
I, thorny weed never used as a carrying pad
I, the branch of the *Iyi* tree that becomes a medicine —
The killer of other trees.

Hornbill
I am the woodpecker
That destroys trees;
The tree we consecrated
Has ever been my walking stick —
Ha Ha Ha Ha —

I am the Odo that flew straight
And touched everywhere in Igboland
The Odo living in the courtyard of the king of contentment
The Odo whose gate is the *Ngwu* tree;
I am like the child who accomplished a hard journey quickly
And was said to have raced under supernatural influence
I am the craftsman of the spirit world.

I am a gong:
The gong is inspired
And begins to talk
I am the gong with a melodious voice;

The crowd is thick here
The white ants are fluttering in clusters;
My *uturu*-bird voice
Is singing in the Odo fashion;
I have come, I have come, I have come
Son of the Almighty Odo;
The scribe cannot pick up
All that flows from my voice
What I am singing
I, the warbler.

— from *Leaf and Bone: African praise-poems,*
edited by Judith Gleason (Viking Penguin, 1994)
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can be ordered by calling 1-800-253-6476

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What's the African church got that we haven't got?

by Daniel Moss

At a wake in the Newark Cathedral where Ugandan born Petero A.N. Sabune is dean, he departs from the prayerbook's "Almighty God to whom all hearts are open ..." and detours into extemporaneous prayer. "But when I do that," he says laughing, "I'm still holding the prayerbook right in front of me. I just don't tell the congregation the page number. You see, God doesn't live in a prayerbook." He is grateful to be a product of the African church.

Conversations with eight Africans currently living or studying in the U.S. generated insights into the vitality of the church in Africa. The African church is not a church one goes to on Sunday; it is a church that is lived and breathed everyday.

When Africa threw out the colonial powers, they didn't discard the white man's Christianity. There is an implicit irony that Africa absorbed imposed Christian concepts, molded them to fit their traditions and has now become the leading continent of Christian growth.

The reverse mission offered to us today doesn't arrive wrapped in slave trade and exploitation but rather washes up on our shores in inspirational stories of renewed spirit and commitment.

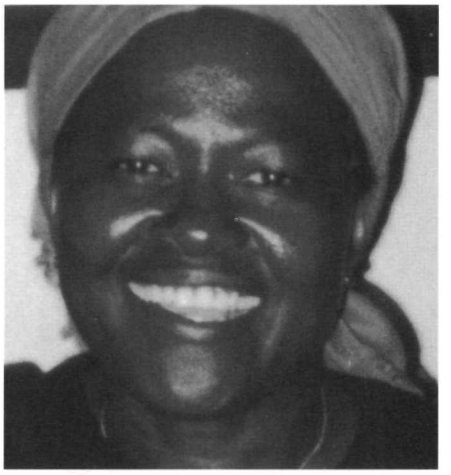
What can we in the U.S. glean from our African sisters and brothers?

Prayer

Through the speaker phone, Sabune sang me some bars of a song of praise that "we can use as a greeting or sing at a bus stop. There is such a sense of gratefulness." Many of the Ugandans, Kenyans and Zimbabweans described the spontaneity that characterizes their style of worship.

"At home," explains Maaraidzo Mutambara, a Zimbabwean woman studying at Harvard Divinity School, "people just pray from their hearts and the pastor can ask any member from the congregation, 'Mr. X, can you lead a prayer for us?' "

Benjamin Musoke-Lubega, a Ugandan serving as rector of Holy Spirit parish in Cincinnati, Ohio, laments the extreme formality and ritual of prayer in U.S. churches. "Without the service bulletin in the U.S., we don't know how to survive," he laughs. "In the African church, the (1662) prayerbook is used, but also there is time for prayers from the people. I know there are good prayers in the prayerbook, but I love for people to say out loud what is on their minds, what they are bringing before God." In the U.S., he adds, people fear being judged and so hold back on vocalizing their prayers.



[In Nigeria] people walk miles to go to church, they look forward to it. Here you find African students who don't find a church that fits their needs, that is warm. Everything is just cosmetic, words, even at coffee. — *Ngoci Obi*

African prayer is constant. It is common to pray before going to sleep, when getting up, and in some cases, before having sex. "I'm not sure how many people do that here," muses Musoke-Lubega.

Eucharists play a less important role than everyday prayer and Bible study; there are only two or three a month. People pray during lunch breaks, on a street corner or in a parish. They tend to go to their workplaces with their Bibles.

Musoke-Lubega observes, "In the U.S., religion is a private affair. In Africa, people share their faith and aren't ashamed of it. They talk about what God has done for them. Those who survive a car accident look at it as a miracle of God that their lives were saved. Here the first thing you do is look for who you can sue."

Prayers are said over seeds to help them germinate, for good weather and an abundant harvest. After the harvest, there is a day of thanksgiving during which people bring the fruits of their labors — bananas, goats, chickens, etc. — and offer them to the church. Although there is also offering of money, these farm products are later auctioned or sold and often comprise the parishioner's pledge.

Community

In Africa, a sense of community is not something unique to church settings, but rather is a pillar of African society repli-

Daniel Moss recently returned from mission work in El Salvador. He now lives in Dorchester, Mass.

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cated in church.

In the cities, where people have left the intimate extended families of their villages, Mutambara suggests, "Church elders feel like your parents at home."

Musoke-Lubega observes that in Africa "they take the body of Christ seriously, so when you lose a relative, they say it's one of us and if one of us is affected, the whole body is affected."

In Newark, Sabune has tried to encourage parishioners to open up weddings and funerals so they are not private affairs. In Africa, whole villages attend these rites of passage.

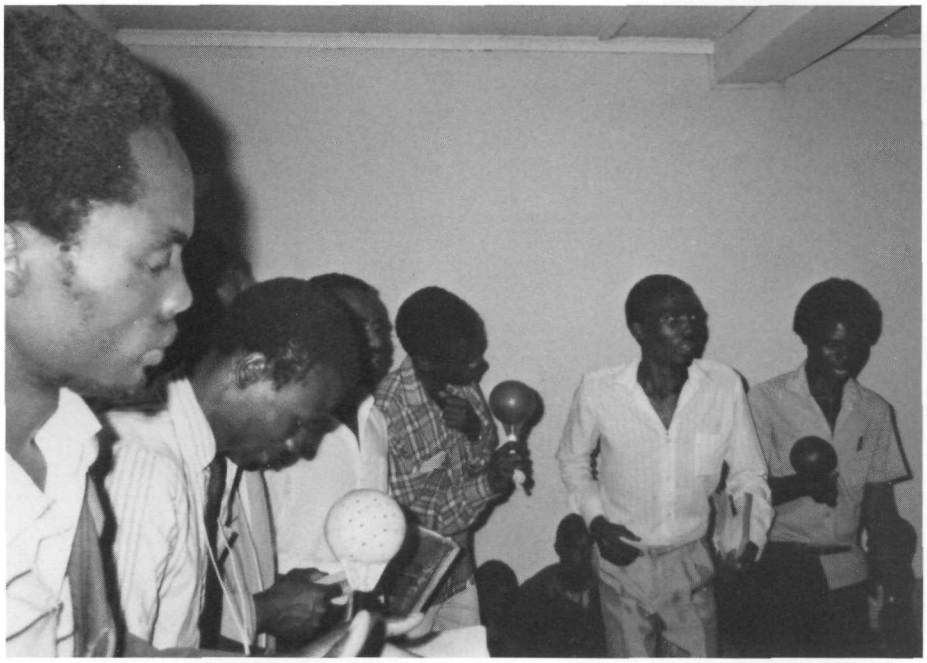
The Bible holds tremendous importance as a religious and cultural anchor and provides a framework in which to understand community. By 12 years old, Sabune says, most young children have learned the Bible. "You identify the characters in your village with the characters in the Bible. When you see an old man, you say, 'Oh, there's Abraham.' When you see a person who does good, you say, 'Well, that must be the Samaritan.' "

Ngoci Obi, a woman studying for ordination at the Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) in Boston, marvels at the warmth of her Nigerian church. "People walk miles to go to church, they look forward to it. At EDS, you find African students who after awhile don't go to church. They don't find a church that fits their needs, that is warm. Everything is just cosmetic, words, even at coffee."

Mary Tusuubira, the first of two women (the other was her twin sister) ordained in the Ugandan Anglican church in 1976, stresses the importance of sharing. She acknowledges the material poverty in Africa, adding, "but the little that we have, we share with those who are in need. Here at school, I hate weekends because we cook for ourselves and eat alone. You know, when you eat alone, the food doesn't taste."

Tusuubira said that since being in the U.S., she misses the sense of community generated by pastoral visiting, "because for us, we have no appointments as here. You just go among your people, praying for them, comforting them and trying to be with them. But here, well, maybe on Sundays. I'm really missing that."

The cultural importance of community and the spiritual sense of that community creating a single, unified body of Christ combine to embrace a walking sensation of "being surrounded by a cloud of witnesses." Sabune elaborates: "The cloud surrounds you no matter where you are. You're never alone at anytime anywhere, so you can call upon God in many circumstances."



Anglicans teach, pray and preach all night at a vigil in Zimbabwe. Titus Presler

Lay activism

Community in the African church is nurtured and expressed in "revivals." Christopher Byaruhanga, a Ugandan doctoral student at General Seminary, describes the revival movement begun in the 1930s as "a lay movement against the coldness seen in the missionaries."

Revival meetings are held monthly on a Friday evening and can continue right through Sunday. There is testimony, prayer and song. People spend the nights at the revival site, sharing food, fires and experience. Notwithstanding the revival's emotion, great emphasis is placed on spreading the message of God on a daily basis, not waiting until the next revival gathering.

You can also call upon your neighors. Byaruhanga surmises that because one's salvation is incomplete until "the entire community is saved, that's what motivates our vigor for evangelism."

It is perceived as a great and important step to bring the word of God to another person. That work is not considered to be the exclusive domain of the priest. House visits amongst the laity are a common feature of the African church. Byaruhanga concludes, "We believe that once you are a Christian, you show you are a Christian," by spreading the word of God. "Otherwise, it is just a title."

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Evangelizing

Lay evangelization in communities is one of the key reasons for the explosive growth of the African church. In African parishes, there is often one priest serving five to nine subparishes that are geographically separated and have their own church buildings. Religious activity in these chapels is coordinated by a well-trained man or woman known as a "layreader." The parish priest appears occasionally, taking as long as two months to travel around to each community. On those sporadic visits, sacraments are administered. The bulk of the pastoral work is carried out by the volunteer layreaders.

Lay missionary activities are fed, in part, by an African emphasis on giving back to one's community.

"Maturity is counted in terms of what one can contribute to your community," Mutambara observes. "It's almost like the philosophy of 'I am because we are.' I've yet to experience that in the congregations here."

"People flock to the church," says Emmanuel Sserwadda, a Ugandan serving as rector of the Church of the Messiah in Islip, N.Y. "They love the church. They understand God. All these challenges in their lives have been like a test, they have been tested and tested and tested. It has affirmed their faith."

Of Nigeria, Obi says, "The majority who go to church are common people struggling for life. If you ask them what something means in terms of their suffering — those who have no job or are dying of a disease — that's the church they're looking for. They don't want terminologies of theology." At Bible study, a portion is read, and a member of the congregation expands on it in the way they understand it. They share what the Bible means in terms of their lives, leaving aside theological jargon. The prayers and discussions speak to their everyday trials and provide a framework in which to examine and understand the world.

The role of women

Tusuubira and her twin sister were on the verge of entering an order of Roman Catholic nuns when their bishop proposed they consider becoming the first women Anglican priests. They attended Bishop Taca Theological College and Tusuubira described her predictably rough initiation.

"In Uganda many people who become priests are already teachers and nearing

Church hierarchy and politics

Among the eight Africans I interviewed there was a varied spectrum of responses with regard to the church's relationship to government and its ability to speak out in opposition when necessary.

All of those interviewed have enormous admiration for Bishop Tutu and the South African church's ability to show that "apartheid is not compatible with Christianity." Benjamin Musoke-Lubega, a Ugandan serving in Cincinnati, elaborates, "You cannot say that your feet are inferior to your hands. Every part of the body is important. With that kind of witness, Archbishop Tutu helped bring down apartheid."

In Uganda, an archbishop paid with his life for his outspoken opposition to Idi Amin. The Ugandans I spoke with express great pride in that prophetic voice.

But historically, the African church hierarchy had cozy relationships with the colonial governments; they were born of the same seed. The church leadership was often composed of Western European bishops who did not sympathize with liberation struggles. As the church became increasingly indigenous, a more critical voice was heard.

However, in many cases, the church has not spoken out and has been part of the oppressive regime. This places the church in compromised positions from which "the church could not speak out for the people," says Emmanuel Sserwada, a Ugandan serving in Islip, N.Y.

Tribal allegiances also present a significant challenge to the African church. Sserwadda explains that, "If the government leaders come from a certain tribe and if a church leader is also from that tribe, they get blinded and cannot see what the government is doing wrong and are not brave enough to speak on behalf of the people and condemn the wrongdoing."

In addition, Sserwadda says, in many cases new dioceses — now there are 26 in Uganda — are "demarcated according to a tribal basis, which is very unfortunate. Tribes come and say to the archbishop, 'Well, we want our own man.' Clergy can't cross the tribal boundaries. But Christ crosses all boundaries."

The position of the African bishops at Lambeth was that "the Church should be able to say, 'Thus says the Lord' without being actively engaged in party politics." They encouraged Anglicans to witness to Christian responsibility and ethics, to be informed about social issues, to insure that seminaries teach social issues, to speak ecumenically when possible and to "use public criticisms of governments as a last resort."

Anglican leaders in Kenya have recently come under attack for their support of Roman Catholic bishops' criticisms of the government. The government charged the churches with causing chaos by speaking out against abuse of power and the erosion of judicial and legislative authority in Kenya. — *D.M.*

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retirement, so at our seminary there were only old men, and one day in the dining hall a man stood up and said, 'Excuse me, Mr. Priest, I have something to tell you. You are going to kill the church by allowing these girls in.'

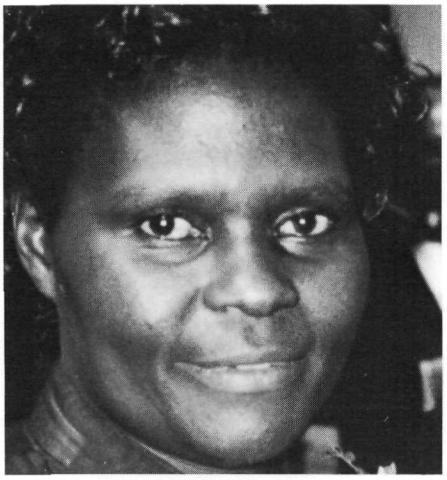
"Our priest just laughed and said, 'I'm surprised, have you ever read Jeremiah? He was chosen when he was young. Let them be here.' " Tusuubira wants to get a copy of Bishop Harris' ordination video to take back to Uganda to promote the ordination of women bishops in Uganda. I heard a distinctly dignified and proud tenor in the voices of Ugandan men and women who remarked that while the women were performing a wonderful ministry in some countries in Africa, they had not yet been ordained in the home of the mother church, England.

They raised the inspiring example of their female vice-president. Byaruhanga said that one of the positive values adopted from the traditional African religions is that of women in leadership as priests and throughout society. Sserwada felt that the tremendous growth of the church is due in large part to women's leadership.

Obi has not had it as easy. Women cannot be ordained in Nigeria in the Anglican Church, which she says "is unbelievable. It's the largest communion — 10 million people. That's why I'm here.

"It [sexism] is part of the culture and the church could do something to break it but is hindering it. My bishops don't want me to be ordained. I wouldn't dare go to Nigeria right now. The military is in everything so if the church says to the military, we don't want her, I would be in trouble." Obi works as a nurse's aide to put herself through school.

"Ordination of women is not a top priority in the life of the African Church compared with many other concerns which it is facing," declared the African bishops on the first page of their 1988 pre-Lambeth report. They asserted this even though on the same page they said that there is "an acute shortage of clergy" because the church is growing so fast. African churches now ordaining women include Uganda, Kenya, West Africa, Burundi and South Africa. Women are allowed to serve as priests in Rwanda and The Sudan.



Here, priests seem not to want to share. For the whole year, I was never invited to preach at a church I attended. In the Ugandan church, children are encouraged to preach.
— Mary Tusuubira

Coveting U.S. structure

I heard a great deal of admiration during these interviews for the governance of the U.S. church, perhaps the one area in which there was consensus that the U.S. Episcopal Church excelled. The U.S. church was perceived to be run more democratically. For example, Sserwadda laments that clergy deployment in Africa is "the same system as it was in colonial times when a white bishop from Britain was living like a lord and there would be no questions — whatever he said was it." Though the bishop is now African, "at the end of the year, he drafts a memo and says, 'I'm posting such and such a person here, moving them from north to south.'" Sserwadda is impressed by the vestry's close involvement in church business in U.S. parishes. He contrasts the superior lay leadership in ministry and liturgy in Africa to the minimal involvement of lay people in church administrative affairs.

Some of these Africans also see accountability as lacking in the African church. Sserwadda offered examples of times when money sent to a diocese did not reach the people it was intended to help.

Preaching

Many of those interviewed comment on how uncomfortable it felt in the U.S. for the rector to be the only one preaching. Ugandan priest Tusuubira admits to feeling offended that she was not asked to preach in her visits to other parishes. "Here, priests seem not to want to share," Tusuubira says in a horrified voice. "For the whole year, I was never invited to preach at a church I attended. I deserted it." At home in Uganda, she invites lay people to preach because "they have something for people. So I say to them, 'Can you share with us?'" In the Ugandan church, children are encouraged to preach and, in fact, lead entire services.

The participation of young people is another critical ingredient in the growth of the African church. In the U.S., Tusuubira has observed that youth are in the choir or serve the rector, but are not given any independent responsibility. Many of the churches she has visited were populated by predominately older parishioners, causing Tusuubira to wonder about the future of the U.S. church. "You are really lacking Christianity among the youth," she comments. In Uganda, young people are encouraged to

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Sexuality and sin

Progressives in ECUSA largely presume that the African Church is homophobic, sexist and moralistic. It's easy to imagine that the word preached by Africans is the bad theology of some Western missionaries coming back at us.

Yet, as is true any time a message crosses cultures, the truth is more complex. When Daniel Moss asked the Africans he interviewed about their home churches' position on homosexuality, he says they responded, "We don't have homosexuality." Many went on to talk about divorce instead.

"When you look cross-culturally at an issue like sexuality, it brings you back to reconsider the unspoken assumptions in your own culture," observes Ian Douglas, director of Anglicanism, Globalism and Ecumenism studies at the Episcopal Divinity School. For instance, he says, "Some Africans accuse us of being serial monogamists." He notes that the priorities of the African church can prompt us to wonder why we spend so much time examining gay and lesbian behavior instead of challenging the actions of heterosexuals.

"Traditionally you don't only marry the individual but also the family," explains Ugandan Christopher Byaruhanga. "We see marriage as a rite of passage and from the African point of view, you can't repeat a rite of passage. One who has divorced can't have an administrative post in the church. They can come to church but most will back off from holy communion. Divorce is not allowed because we believe there is nothing impossible that Jesus Christ cannot solve."

On the issue of polygamy, the conversation has shifted.

In 1888 Western missionaries raised concerns about polygamy at Lambeth and received direction to welcome polygamists into the church if they chose one wife and dismissed the rest.

One hundred years later, the African bishops raised the concern again, noting the injustice done to women in the interim. This time, Lambeth agreed that polygamists should be received into the church *with* their wives, but must not marry any additional wives.

According to observers, leaders in the African Church are most likely to spend time on issues of homosexuality when they are in an international forum and it is raised by Westerners.

In 1988, the African bishops at Lambeth were accused of minimizing the efforts of both gay and lesbian Christians and women interested in ordination when they interrupted Lambeth's agenda to insist that issues of more primary concern to them be addressed. (These included healing, youth, ecumenism, economic development, racism, polygamy and AIDS.) Yet, we need to acknowledge that the African bishops' rejection of the Western cultural chauvinism implicit when we presume that our agenda is the only agenda does not *necessarily* mean that the African bishops have no sympathy for or understanding of the pain involved in our concerns.

How homosexuality is understood in Africa may vary.

"In traditional tribal settings, especially Islamic ones, gender roles are highly differentiated," Douglas says. "There is an identification among people of the same sex. You go through rituals together, live together, work together, play together. When Africans say there is no homosexuality in their country, in their mind, that is probably correct. But that is not to say they haven't been close spiritually, emotionally and physically with same-gender people. One's God-given sexual orientation is there, but how it is exercised is culturally defined."

The primates of the Anglican communion, 11 of them African archbishops, issued a pastoral letter in mid-March which said the following concerning sexuality and Christian commitment:

"Around the world serious questions relating to human sexuality are being faced by the Church. The traditional response to these questions is to affirm the moral precepts which have come down to us through the tradition of the Church. Nevertheless, we are conscious that within the Church itself there are those whose pattern of sexual expression is at variance with the received Christian moral tradition, but whose lives in other respects demonstrate the marks of genuine Christian character. The issues are deep and complex. They do not always admit of easy, instant answers. A careful process of reflecting on contemporary forms of behavior in the light of the scriptures and the Christian moral tradition is required. We have to recognize that there are different understandings at present among Christians of equal commitment and faith. We invite every part of the Church to face the questions about sexuality with honesty and integrity, avoiding unnecessary confrontation and polarization, in a spirit of faithful seeking to understand more clearly the will of God for our lives as Christians."

— Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

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preach at an early age.

"If you have a gift, it's something that you can share," Mutambara states, "I don't know if it's a form of individualism," that only the rector tends to preach in the U.S., "but I enjoy the diversity of preachers in Africa." (One person interviewed wonders if rectors are reluctant to invite others to preach because they don't want to pay for a guest preacher.)

Preaching in the African church is not an exposition from a prepared text. Comments are not limited to the biblical readings of the day. Byaruhanga finds the difference of style and content difficult to adapt to.

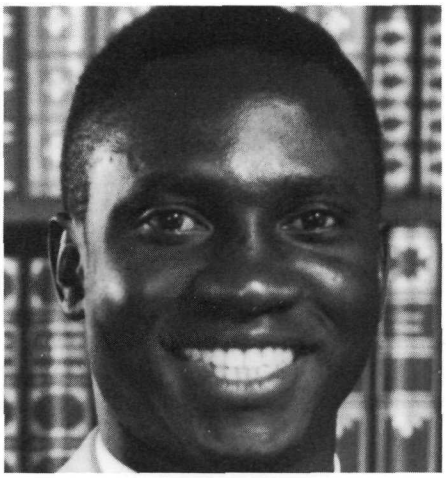
"Here, you read the lesson and then look at the problems of your congregation and sometimes realize they don't match," Byaruhanga says. "But if I don't preach from the text, I'll be out of context. In my country, you look at what most affects you. If you look at your congregation and see polygamists or many divorced people, you want to preach on those things from a Christian perspective."

Lay preaching is also considered to be extremely effective in offering a prophetic voice because the laity is not beholden to other parishioners in the same financial sense that a priest is. A priest may be timid for fear of losing support.

Confessing sins, everyone interviewed stresses, is critically important for the welfare of both the individual and the community. But many express a sense of walking on eggshells in talking about sin in the U.S. church.

Sin

"People here (in the U.S.) do atonement, but it's not widely accepted," Musoke-Lubega says. "Most people here want a pleasing Christianty, but we forget that Christ suffered on the cross. Christianity has happiness and freedom, but it doesn't mean all the time that it will prevent suffering and pain and agony and death. Some people don't want to be challenged and when they are, they respond, 'And are you not a sinner?'"



People here (in the U.S.) do atonement, but it's not widely accepted. Most people here want a pleasing Christianty, but we forget that Christ suffered on the cross. Some people don't want to be challenged.

— Benjamin Musoke-Lubega

Tusuubira expresses surprise that the sin of Bishop Johnson's suicide was never discussed. "Here (in Massachusetts), they nursed it and prayed for him and they never talked about it as a sin."

Nevertheless, those interviewed quickly dispelled images of fire and brimstone and harsh punishments for sinners.

The African church encourages parishioners to publicly confess their sins. Someone may stand up and "testify that I had an affair, or I embezzled funds or I stole somebody's chicken — may God forgive me," Sabune describes. He says the sinner is offered help and forgiveness, not ostracism. Love shown to that person encourages them to "conquer the power of the devil." The environment during these public confessions is highly charged and emotional. People cry when they think of their past sins. Even men break down crying in services; that is acceptable.

In addition, an individual's confession provokes a reflective questioning on the congregation's part. Did we as a community somehow sin to cause this individual to sin? What could we have done to prevent it? Personal and collective sin overlap.

Byaruhanga observes that sin in U.S. culture is considered a personal issue and people prefer that the church not interfere with their daily life. "Whereas in my country, what affects the individual affects society. Therefore, we encourage public repentance." At weekly meetings, the Bible is read and people repent their sins in front of the congregation. It is called "walking in light." Forgiveness is asked from both God and one's peers.

Private confession does not exist. Byaruhanga contends that "the priest and the laity are equal before God, so as a priest you don't have special powers. Actually, it's the congregation of believers that have more power." The priest also confesses publicly and asks for forgiveness. "In my country, priests who are saved are very much loved."

African traditions

When Bishop Taca first came to work in Uganda, he posited that in order to survive and grow, the church must have native-led leadership. But, while the Anglican church leadership became increasingly African, people were obligated to do away with all things African. African customs were considered heathen.

"People were deprived of their culture, and this is one of the unfortunate sides of the church in Africa," laments Sserwadda. "They were not given a chance to express themselves and try to compose various tunes and ways to praise God."

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It is only recently that African rhythms are returning to church music and children are no longer baptized with Western names like William and Mary.

In 1988, in their report to Lambeth, the African bishops urged that the church "make full use of its cultural heritage in order to enrich its life." Specifically, they advocated translating the Bible, alternative liturgies, locally produced vestments and eucharistic elements and local African architects for new churches.

Now, according to Musoke-Lubega, "the clergy come in dancing, the bishop's mitre could be made of animal hide and instead of a traditional chasuble, he could be wearing a lion or leopard's skin."

The lion is associated with the king and divine authority, so when a priest wears a lion's skin, "he is seen as a representative of God — this appeals to people because it's what their ancestors did and their parents have known. They feel at home." TW

Differing views on Rwanda

Pain and death in Rwanda are the devil's work in retaliation for the success of the church, Archbishop Augustin Nshamihigo told the Afro-Anglican conference.

"You have heard that bishops were killed, priests were killed, Christians suffer, but the church lives," Nshamihigo said. "Satan is jealous because there were so many Christians in the country."

Looking young and surprisingly sleek, Nshamihigo gave a rudimentary talk about Rwanda and then chastised the assembly for not sending aid.

"Other denominations sent aid, I am embarrassed by the Anglican Church. The World Council of Churches (WCC) aid lacked impact because it wasn't church to church," Nshamihigo complained. "I want a practical church with action."

A furor followed during which individual priests, primarily American, objected that they *had* sent money.

A Ugandan priest spoke up from the back, but the moderator cut him off. Again, the priest tried to speak. Finally, over the objections of the moderator, Emmanuel Sserwadda, now serving a parish in Long Island, asked "Why must so many bishops leave when the people overthrow the government?"

The moderator closed off discussion. I followed Sserwadda into the hall. There he and Benjamin Musoke-Lubega, a Ugandan serving a church in Cincinnati, Ohio, explained that international Anglican monies are being sent into Rwanda via the WCC and the Anglican Church of Canada (which has had a longterm relationship with Rwanda) because the archbishop, who was close to the Hutu government, fled to Zaire and later to Nairobi, Kenya.

"Bishops should stay in the mainstream and be faithful, confront bad governments and be on the side of the people," complained Sserwadda. "There's no reason they should be running away when governments change."

Musoke-Lubega explained that when the British left, the Tutsis, whom the Belgians had organized as an elite 10 percent of the population over the more numerous Hutus, continued to issue identicards that cited ethnic identity. And so did the Hutu government, which forced the Tutsis into exile in Uganda in 1959.

"The archbishop should have said, 'We sinned,'" Musoke-Lubega said.

The president of Uganda tried to warn the Rwandan government that Tutsi exiles from Rwanda had gained military skills fighting in the Ugandan civil war and were turning their eyes toward their homeland. "He urged them to open discussions," Sserwadda said. "But the Rwandan government refused."

I sought out Archbishop Nshamihigo later and asked him about the criticisms. He was surprisingly willing to answer questions, even those that challenged his integrity.

Nshamihigo said he had worked with Roman Catholic and Protestant bishops to encourage the government to develop a multi-party system to create reconciliation. During the recent coup which placed the Tutsis who had been exiled in Uganda in power, Nshamihigo said that three bishops were executed. "They said those bishops were biased. I was in Canada, the U.S. and England when that happened."

From Zaire, Nshamihigo says he organized the church so that Rwandan clergy could either function in Rwanda or amongst the refugees in Zaire.

Asked if he wants the previous government, now exiled in Zaire, returned to power, Nshamihigo answered, "We don't know. We don't know what would happen. Earlier refugees [the Tutsis] occupy everything.

"It is easy to judge us," Nshamihigo added. "But, because both sides want power, to be in the middle is impossible."

In the meantime, it is the judgment of those channeling international aid into Rwanda to do so through the WCC, bypassing the exiled archbishop. This is a decision that Sserwadda and Musoke-Lubega applaud.

— Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

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Weaving anger, wisdom and wit:

an interview with W. P. Khotso Makhulu

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

I met W. P. Khotso Makhulu, Archbishop in the Province of Central Africa, by accident when Bill and I asked to share his table in the cafeteria during the recent Afro Anglican Conference in Capetown. His conversation was initially weary and alienating. He complained that he had become an archbishop too young. I was afraid we had stumbled on one of those church patriarchs who have lost their faith but can't surrender the crown.

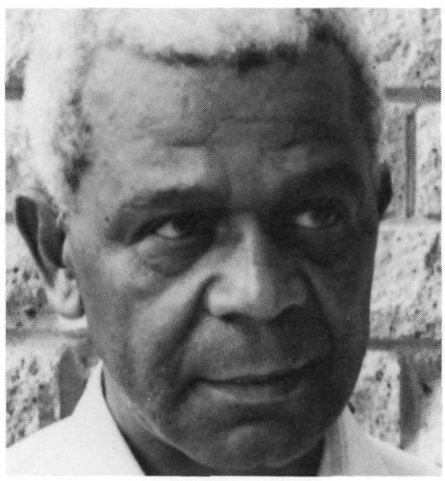
Then as the conversation progressed in a cat-and-mouse-like manner, he began to share some of his excitement about political change in southern Africa and I realized that his initial reticence may have had less to do with his own feelings than with his desire to test *ours*.

In the course of the conversation that followed, we talked about despair and Makhulu responded, "I am an eternal optimist. I have seen so many countries in the abyss and it's as if they are lifted up and pushed through the tunnel.

"In Mozambique, we never thought the Portuguese would go. On the day of the inauguration there was a different feel in the land." Makhulu added that he liked the church folks working with RENAMO, wrestling with Marxism, because he felt communism was never given a chance in the Soviet Union.

Many of South Africa's revolutionaries are known to Makhulu because his home is in Botswana, which offered safe haven for them.

As an apparent afterthought, Makhulu said "So many African leaders were, or will be, refugees. Nixon and Reagan should have been refugees."



W. P. Khotso Makhulu, archbishop in Central Africa. Bill Wylie-Kellermann

I pursued an interview with him after hearing him preach to the conference and to a Capetown congregation there to welcome us. I was struck by his authority, his humor and his anger. His facility with language — both ours and several others, including French and Xhosa — was breath-taking. (He had even taken the opportunity to challenge and scold the Archbishop of Rwanda in French, knowing that many participants would not follow the exchange.)

So many African leaders were, or will be, refugees. Nixon and Reagan should have been refugees. — W. P.K. Makhulu

My notes from his sermon indicate that he honored members of the congregation for having provided a place where "the demon apartheid was discussed, deplored and rejected."

He chastened those participating in the conference by reminding us that, "The currency of heaven is not about a sloppy sentimentality. We are to love our enemies. We are to want the best for our enemies, even if we must wring it out of them, so we may all live in salaam/shalom."

Makhulu then smiled.

"Lest I be accused of only espousing social programs, I want to articulate my belief in a God who is engaged in the lives of his creation. God inspires us so that we may dare to go and do great things. God draws us to communality, kinship, in an age of individualism.

"So what are you willing to do for the Anglican community?

"We would be blind if we closed our eyes to the effects of fundamentalism, regardless of its source. We think of Islam, but we have fundamentalists in our fellowship, people who preach the inerrancy of Scripture. It's easy to dismiss them. But nonetheless we must correct this with orthodox teaching."

Makhulu called participants to further activism.

"Those of you schooled in the ways of the world could help us read the signs of the times. If we don't act," he added, looking out at the many Americans who had each spent several thousand dollars to be present, "we are condemned to intermittent junketing.

"Afro Anglicans," he added, "God loves you as you are with your variety of complexions and cultures.

"As men and women of color, we can teach love of others. We have experienced diversity — that is why it is incongruous for any of us to emerge fascist."

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

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Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: In your sermon to the conference, you spoke out against Christian fundamentalism in Africa. Will you talk about their influence here?

W. P. Khotso Makhulu: The fundamentalist right, call it what you may, is a system of teaching buttressed by the belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. It's decidedly anti-Left and anti-Communist, and therefore advocates the cause of capitalism and so-called American values.

We are already flooded on some of our television programs. They are buying advertising time to put forward this brand of their religion.

J.W-K.: Are they from the U.S.?

K.M.: Yes. We have no money to go to radio stations or to do a kind of apologia. The point is to teach our people the basic orthodoxy.

J.W-K.: For instance?

K.M.: It is wrong to say the poor are poor because they've sinned. It's a simplistic distortion. Or to say that crooks are comfortable because God has blessed them. It is what we do with bounty in the service of others that matters.

I am appalled that your Congress is thinking of cutting out social programs. This runs contrary to my understanding of the Gospel: "In as much as you did it for the least of these ..."

J.W-K.: How do you respond to claims for the inerrancy of the Bible?

K.M.: It's a fact that the Bible has its particular contexts — some history, some prophetic utterance, some literature. There have been mistakes in copying and in translations. It's unrealistic to be so dogged and dogmatic. It almost makes it sound like one continuous thing when the Bible is covering periods of history.

J.W-K.: How do you respond when they say you are not saved because you do not share their beliefs?

K.M.: Salvation is not for them to challenge. Salvation is a gift from God. They have not been set up to judge. Anyone who is saved must also learn humility that it is a free gift from God.

J.W-K.: What do you do when they do condemn you?

K.M.: I simply treat them with the contempt they deserve.

J.W-K.: How do you feel about evangelization in the African context, particularly regarding Muslims?

K.M.: Evangelization does take place. It is one of witnessing to the God whom we believe in and worship when we seek to obey and follow. If others take cognizance and wish to engage in dialogue, I have no problem with that. In other words, I am prepared to entertain an inquirer.

I am prepared to go to an unbeliever — conditions being right — to make Jesus attractive to that person. But Muslims who are deeply committed — and I'm not talking about the fundamentalist (we have them on both sides) — I would want to respect.

J.W-K.: Some participants at the Afro Anglican conference were saying African constitutions should be strengthened to prevent abuses of power by Muslim populations. How do you feel?

K.M.: The constitution should be strong regardless of whatever religion is dominant. There should be safeguards. It becomes quite important to establish that if you're going to have people who want us to become Islamic republics.

J.W-K.: The Rwandan archbishop suggested today that the troubles in Rwanda were caused by the devil's jealousy that the church was thriving.

K.M.: So what? We know that we are living in a world full of committed people and full of weak people. What is important is not simply to respond with such a bland statement but to say, "What can we do for good?"

What does that statement mean? Does it mean we stand by and say, "The devil is at work"? No, it is a question of making choices — not resignation.

J.W-K.: Two Ugandan priests challenged the Archbishop of Rwanda, who has fled his country, saying that too often bishops depart with the exiled governments.

This carving, *Family Tree*, shows generations at work — it represents the African proverb, "I am, because we are."

We are not self-conscious about witnessing and are willing to talk about our convictions. Religion is communal.

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K.M.: I have seen bishops go for a variety of reasons — dominant tribes have pushed people out, the Archbishop of Uganda, Janani Luwum was murdered for criticizing Idi Amin, bishops fled Liberia. But the question raises the question of political alliances. They can be awkward.

The church has a history of supporting independence. It would be a strange African who wanted to remain under the yoke of imperial masters, but it's a question of degree.

In a number of countries we went through a period of absolute silence — paralysis, instead of making what is right and wrong known to the powers that be.

At the same time, one sees conversions. People become aware and have such a change of heart to the point of martyrdom. I think of the courage of the Ugandan bishops and church leaders in Namibia and South Africa.

J.W-K.: In your sermon you suggested that those attending the conference might be helpful in the struggle by using their worldly knowledge to read the signs of the times. Yet I'm more inclined to look to base communities of people without privilege for direction ...

Watch for the ATR

Major addresses and sermons of the Second International Conference on Afro-Anglicanism, held at the University of Capetown in Jan., 1995, will be published in the *Anglican Theological Review* in Nov., 1995. This issue will include talks by W. P. Khotso Makhulu, Desmond Tutu, Harold Lewis, Nan Peete, John S. Pobee, Sehon Sylvester Goodrich, Orland Lindsay, Joseph Dadson, and Cyril Okorocha. Single issues can be ordered from *ATR*, 600 Haven St., Evanston, IL 60201. Annual subscriptions cost $23 ($26 outside the U.S.).

K.M.: People in base communities know exactly what hurts and what's wrong. They may not know how to address the powers that be or they may know and not be able to address them. Sometimes sincerity alone is not enough. When you are dealing with a devious government, it is necessary to have people who are in the know. Some of the bullies are in power because the U.S. will do nothing about removing them.

Afro Anglicans — those who are students of international relations, those who understand the drift of foreign policy — can do a little interpretation here and there. And when you move to the structures of negotiation, it seems to me it is important to go well-prepared, well-briefed.

J.W-K.: The American church seems so sluggish compared to the church in Africa.

K.M.: I can't comment on the American church. I have seen parts of it that are exciting, doing some good work.

I think on this continent — I don't want to sit in a lofty place — people are willing to submit. People arrive in the Gospel because of the enthusiasms of those who promote it, because of bitter lessons in the school of life when you have tried everything.

We are not self-conscious about witnessing and are willing to talk about our convictions. Religion is communal. It may come to you as an individual but it takes place within the context of community.

J.W-K.: In the U.S., I often feel that I can only bring part of myself into the sanctuary. I leave a part of myself outside the door. Is that true in Africa?

K.M.: Some of the sophisticated stuff does not enable the person to emerge from the camouflage. But then something catches you and touches you in the raw — there is no way of avoiding it. You must let go. TW

Back issues

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.

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'Living through a miracle': change in South Africa

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

In the past we prayed for the oppressive government to fall, and now we pray for the democratic government to be elected. Guide us to choose what is best for your people. Give us the courage to resist intimidation; tolerance towards those with other opinions; willingness to accept the expression of a democratic choice; and the grace to recognize that political opponents are not our enemies, but sisters and brothers through whose shared views your will may be done.

— intercession from the South African Council of Churches prayer service, for election day 1994

En route to Johannesburg on a KLM flight from Amsterdam, Jeanie and I are astonished to find ourselves in a plane filled entirely with white folks. It is the first of many contradictions. We are in a flying first-world social location. In the seat behind us I overhear an exchange: "I'm anxious to see how things are now." The reply of quick comfort, "Don't worry, nothing has changed."

Set beside that the refrain we heard repeated in conversation with those who had struggled so long: "It's as if we have lived through a miracle."

Which then is it? Nothing changed? Or miraculous transformation? As in such things generally this is partly a matter of seeing and partly a matter of where you stand.

Brigalia Bam Bill Wylie-Kellermann

Housing patterns are already changing. We stayed with friends in a working-class suburb of Johannesburg where they would not have been free to live a year ago. There is a pervasive anxiety among white folks, even among those who opposed apartheid. A white choreographer of a dance company feels her professional days are numbered and begins to think again about going back to teaching. The white director of an anti-apartheid art gallery has begun to think about finding a new place in community-based art. White male university professors look anxiously at black graduate students and know instinctively that the old boys academic network is not the future.

And concretely, South Africa is no longer a police state. The architecture remains, of course, a barbed-wire testimony. And the economic structures of apartheid remain firmly intact. But the armored *kaspirs* are parked. The townships and squatter camps are no longer occupied militarily. Brigalia Hlophe Bam, the newly appointed General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), told us that she has recently been able to pass a policeman on the street without seething in anger — and to greet him as a person.

A human emblem of change

Bam is emblematic of the new role the church is struggling to discern for itself in South Africa. For 21 years she had been virtually exiled in Switzerland working for the World Council of Churches where she helped found its Programme to Combat Racism. She'd left behind a brother who, like Nelson Mandela, was digging every day in the prison quarry of Robben Island. However, in 1988, as the church struggle heated up, she felt called to return home, fully expecting to die. "Let me go back home to suffer with the people, I thought. I returned not full of hope but convinced that things would never change."

What ought to be the posture of church in relation to a fragile, emerging government whose announced program it largely supports? Where is its prophetic and critical function to be focused now?

— Brigalia Bam

Bam's expectation of meeting death was hardly idle. In August of that year, Khotso House (downtown Johannesburg home of the Council, where she came to work and where we met to talk) was bombed. A device detonated in the

Bill Wylie-Kellermann, a United Methodist pastor, travelled to South Africa in January. He is the editor of *Keeper of the Word: Selected Writings of William Stringfellow,* Eerdemans, 1994.

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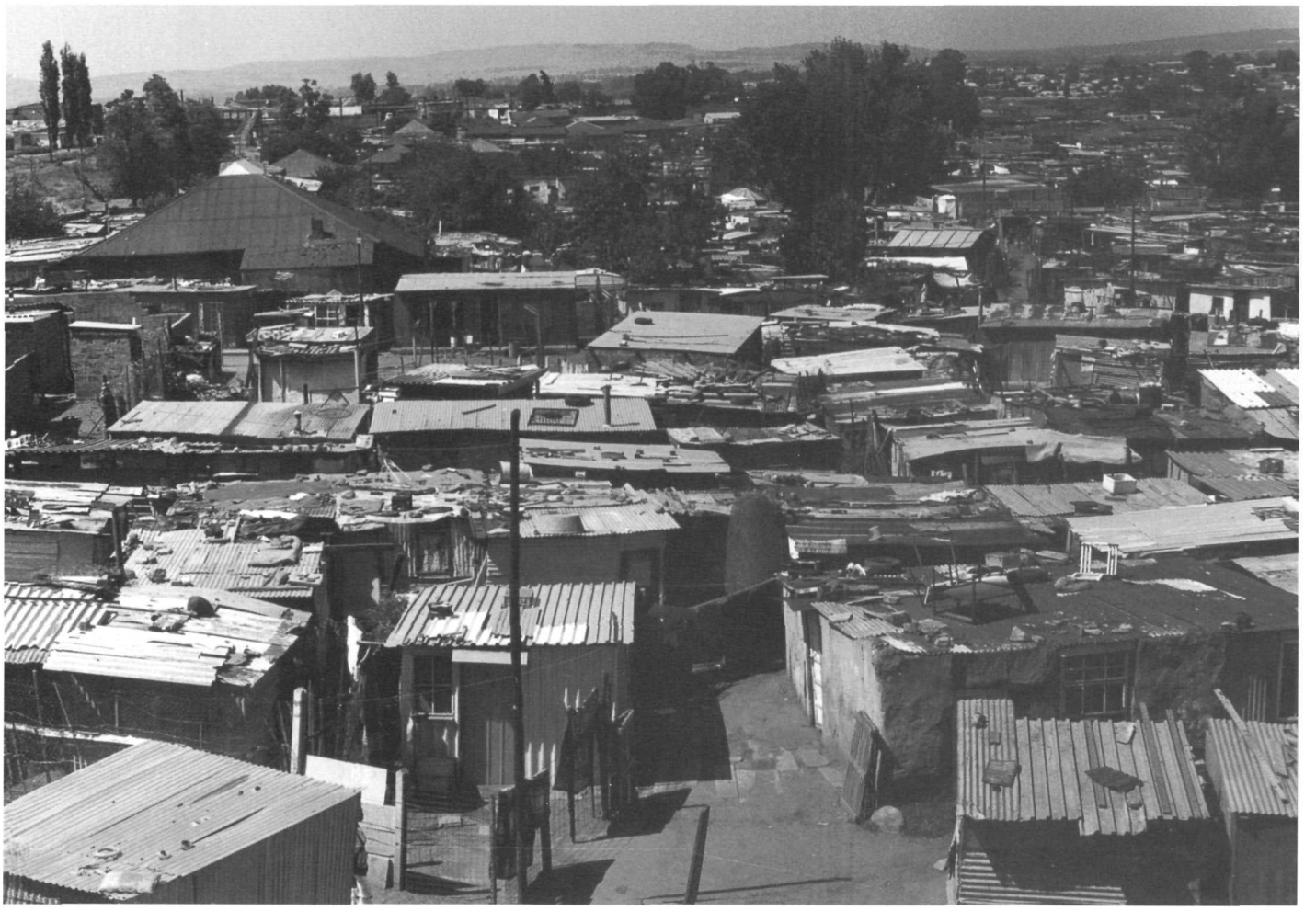


Soweto, the township outside Johannesburg, demonstrates the extraordinary demands now placed on the new coalition government in South Africa for housing, schools and social services.

Bill Wylie-Kellermann

basement blew off the roof six floors up.

The year following, several attempts were made on the life of Bam's predecessor as Secretary General, Frank Chikane. His clothes and/or luggage were apparently sprayed during airport transit with a deadly nerve toxin employed in chemical warfare.

Both events may be taken as measure of the import of the church in the political struggle during the State of Emergency years when the most basic organizations were declared illegal and banned. In such a period the church became the only remaining alternative for gathering and speaking. It was virtually thrust into the frontlines of direct action and of human rights work on behalf of political prisoners.

In the period following the release of Mandela, Bam served with Chikane as the Council sought to support the opening of the political conversation and help ensure the democratic process. The prayer above is an intercession for that moment.

Post-electoral poverty

Now, a year into the new ANC coalition government, the churches find themselves in yet another historical moment, a new context for reflection on theology and praxis.

One odd, but major, change has been the international community's presumption that with the election victory, there is not a continuing need for financial support. The human rights work which included financial support for families of political prisoners (paying legal fees, schooling for children, even covering funerals) and salaries for 24 very decentralized staff positions, was at one point 70 per cent of their budget. After the elections that was cut drastically. They are now in the novel position of needing a development officer and attending grants-

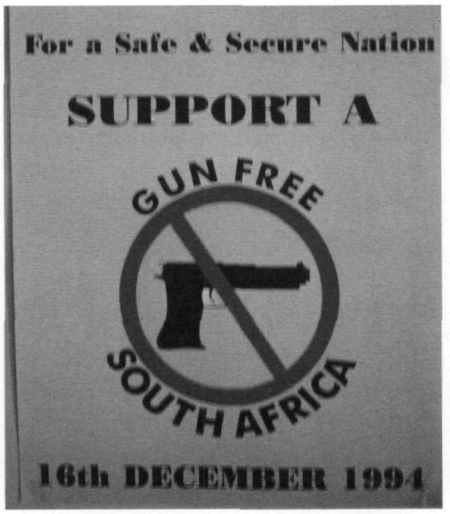
manship workshops.

Incidently, we observed the same phenomenon on other fronts. For example, the ANC's cultural program, organizing a network of community-based art centers, had been funded largely by grants from the Scandinavian countries. Following the elections, however, those funds have been cut off on the assumption that the government will now be supporting them directly. And yet the Government of National Unity is a fragile coalition beset with overwhelming expectations (like the need for massive housing development) and still negotiating budget priorities. Hence, such monies are not yet forthcoming. Or another example, a community center in Soweto, also previously funded internationally, is now operating largely on money from first world delegations who stay periodically at their facility, biding its time in hopes of future government program funds.

The unanimous election of Bam in October of last year is itself a sign of the changing times, the new moment. Culturally, South Africa remains a very sexist society. "We fight for the white women all the time, but they have never fought for themselves, being content with white privilege," she says. That is further compounded by the traditional tribal sexism of many African cultures. The ANC is the only party to appoint a woman to cabinet level position. Bam's visible public role is by no means easy, leaning into patriarchy and the customary old boy network. She has in the past contemplated gathering a circle of women to begin a new women's church.

Independent churches

Certain very strong women are, in fact, founders of some of South Africa's independent churches. These often large congregations, which fuse Christian faith with traditional tribal ritual, are springing up all over the continent. These groups focus on healing, using water for purification, slaughtering goats to ask the ancestors for strength, speaking in tongues, dancing. Their roots in traditional religion blend easily with Christian rituals.



Bill Wylie-Kellermann

For example, the communion of saints may be readily merged with the honoring of ancestors. Baptism introduces a child not only into the community, but into the larger circle of ancestral saints. Cultural sympathies incline them much more to the tribal-based stories of the Hebrew Bible. These churches employ the body in worship, with much dancing and singing, in liturgies high on spontaneity. The Holy Spirit, which some regard as a secret kept from them by the European missionaries, is theologically prominent.

Bam understands the importance the independents may play in the future of the South African church. They are beginning to relate to the council, though that is rendered difficult by SACC's formal membership criteria: the requirement to be a national body, have a formal constitution and a statement of faith. They are, nonetheless, able to join local councils.

Previously, their counseling focused on the trauma of apartheid violence, while now they find themselves attending to domestic abuse.

A new prophetic role

However, the new context for the church is set above all by SACC's relationship to the new political realities. Brigalia Bam framed some of those questions for us: "What ought to be the posture of church in relation to a fragile, emerging government whose announced program it largely supports? Where is its prophetic and critical function to be focused now? What is the church's ministry in the rebuilding of a nation?" In the earlier period many regarded "reconciliation" as a cheap grace synonym for evasion and denial of apartheid's reality. "What now is the work of reconciliation? So many blacks were bruised, but whites too. Their humanity was wounded, scarred, destroyed. I hope it does not take as long as the Holocaust. We must forgive, but not forget."

These suggest a range of issues to be addressed. One place SACC is exercising a prophetic function is with respect to Armscorp, the government corporation which manufactures weapons for lucrative export on the global market. The council is pressing for an immediate moratorium on all arms deals and a complete dismantling of the corporation. A government needing massive capital, even one by nature sympathetic, is slow to respond. (The African bishops noted in 1988 that 40 percent of Africa's debt burden pays for weapons.)

Challenging hand guns

They are also participating in the Gun Free South Africa Campaign, initiated by Methodist bishop Peter Storey, which involves disarmament by gun turn-ins. There are some 3.5 million registered guns in South Africa, and millions more illegal.

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Ipelingeng Nomkibelo, director of a Soweto community center, explains the importance of the church's role. "We support it, but it must be the church. If we received the guns people would believe the center was stockpiling them against a future uprising. Only the church can do this." She also identifies an interesting shift to which the center is attending and to which the church must: previously many of their counseling efforts focused on the trauma of apartheid violence, while now they find themselves attending more and more to domestic abuse.

Bam points to the rising number of street children in the cities. Much as in the U. S., the assault on the black family has been systematic. Fathers, for example, were separated from their wives and children in the homelands, while they were housed year-round in the township hostels. After so long, the fabric of the family is torn and disintegrating. The children must be ministered to, but so must the family as a cultural institution.

Liturgies of exorcism, reconciliation, and healing

"The first priority for the ecumenical movement at this stage in the life of our country is to work hard in the area of reconciliation and healing," Bam says. "Healing wounds will not be easy, but it is an essential task and it has to be faced with realism and courage and a great deal of creativity."

A concrete political focus for that work concerns the Truth Commission, which has begun the work of uncovering the violence of apartheid and identifying specific crimes. Bam is convinced this is a needed step in the process of reconciliation and the SACC supports the commission, though they oppose the hearings being televised. When we were there a public furor raged over whether former South African police could apply for a "blanket amnesty." No, said the ANC, tell us the specifics of your crime and apply for amnesty for those actions.

Grafitti outside Soweto commemorates Gandhi, the Soweto massacre, Mpanza, Chris Hani and Gabriel Mugabe. Bill Wylie-Kellermann

"Reconciliation," Bam says, "does not mean amnesia or denial. It includes facing the painful truth. For example, Father Michael Lapsley, the Anglican priest whose hands were blown off by a letter bomb, isn't looking for monetary compensation. He just wants to know the truth." Lapsley was an ANC chaplain exiled in Harare who is now a counselor in Cape Town at the Trauma Center for Victims of Violence and Torture.

The council is beginning to explore how the church might augment the Truth Commission's work liturgically. Its revelations could be placed in the form of a confession, for example, perhaps in services of repentance appropriate to the penitential seasons of Advent or Lent. Forgiveness and absolution could bear in the ministry of healing.

An Islamic community goes each Sunday to Robben Island, where Bam's brother and Mandela were held. They remember the host of Muslim prisoners also once confined there. They pray and are building a shrine to remember and reclaim the space.

Bishop Tutu is heading a year-long study of how liturgical practice can serve the process of national healing. He has begun to ask if some form of "national exorcism" is required to name, rebuke, and cast out the spirit of racism and apartheid. Interestingly, he has been listening hard to the Independent churches. Is there something in the liturgies of purging which they undertake? Can the wider church appropriate the Pentecostal healing which they evince?

Desmond Tutu is one who sees the miracle. As he told the Conference on Afro-Anglicanism which we had gone to attend, "Despite the poverty, despite the fact that not a great deal has changed materially, there is something new in the air. We have a new, free South Africa."

The question in this moment is how to live into and live through the miracle now being wrought. TW

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Communities on fire: African-initiated churches

by Titus Leonard Presler

Christianity in Africa is reaching down into the cultural roots of the continent's peoples and bringing forth new expressions of gospel faith and church community. As a result, it is growing exponentially, with almost 400 million people, about 48 percent of Africa's population, predicted to be Christian by the year 2000. Many of the mission-founded churches are flourishing, but much of the new Christian vitality arises from the over 7,000 African-initiated churches that have been founded in this century by indigenous prophets.

The newer churches exhibit great variety, but to communicate the dynamism of the movement I — like African Christians often do — tell a story, one story about one particular church among the Shona people in Zimbabwe. The story comes from research time I've spent with congregations in the Honde Valley on Zimbabwe's eastern border with Mozambique. This church is especially arresting because it's an instance of woman-church — a church founded by a woman, led mainly by women, and offering a ministry of liberation mainly, again, to women. It is called the Pentecostal Apostolic Church of God (PACG) or *Chechi yePentikosti*.

Woman-church

We started climbing the mountain about an hour before dusk, moving up a path from the tropical valley toward the top of Dombomapungu, a mountain overlooking the devastation of Mozambique. I was with about 30 members of Pentecost, and they were heading out on a Wednesday night for worship — not in their simple, thatched shelter in the village of Hamudikuwanda, but out to the wilderness; and not just for a couple of hours, but for the whole night, from dusk to dawn.

Men and women in the group were tired from their day of tending maize fields and tea bushes, but they were cheerful as they anticipated the long night of being with one another and with God. Elderly people joined us as we climbed, as did school children from church families, even though they must be in class the next morning. And, of course, there were infants on their mothers' backs. Everyone was fasting for the all-night vigil, called a *pungwe*, so we carried just jackets and blankets for what we knew would be a chilly night. Such intense communal spirituality is common among African-initiated churches (AICs), and among some mission-founded churches (MFCs) as well.

On this night, the preachers spoke vividly of closeness to God, resistance to evil spirits, family reconciliation, and the role of women. They often broke into songs that roused the group to their feet for a dance around the fire.

Darkness gathered until we were walking up the rough track by starlight, and each of us stumbled from time to time, but this was routine for Pentecost members. Tonight's vigil was one in a series of five wilderness nights that this congregation had been asked to undertake by the church's founding prophet, Mbuya Maunganidze, whose name means "Grandmother You-have-gathered-together."

Although the village's name means "You do not want to increase," the Hamudikuwanda congregation had grown from a handful of people to about two hundred in just one year, and now they wanted to construct a building of bricks and mortar. In order to help the congregation discern God's will and to test their resolve, Maunganidze directed them to hold all-night vigils on five different mountains over the course of five weeks. In common with other AIC founders, Maunganidze's prophetic gift of discerning God's will through the Holy Spirit strongly influences the congregations of her church, which she established in the 1960s when her ministry of prophecy was rejected by the Apostolic Faith Mission in which she grew up.

Confessional gates

As we approached the meeting place at journey's end, we could hear the singing of 100 church members swaying in the darkness as, one by one, they made their confessions through about 15 prophets, most of them women. In common with other AICs, the PACG requires members to pass through confessional "gates" formed

Titus Leonard Presler, Th.D., served three years in Zimbabwe as an appointed missionary of the Episcopal Church. He is preparing a book on the *pungwe* movement in Shona Christianity and coordinating a pilgrimage to the Bernard Mizeki Festival Centennial in June 1996. He teaches Anglicanism, Globalism and Ecumenism Studies at the Episcopal Divinity School. Presler and his wife Jane Butterfield are rectors of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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by prophets who hear confessions and are believed to discern unconfessed sins and alliances with evil spirits.

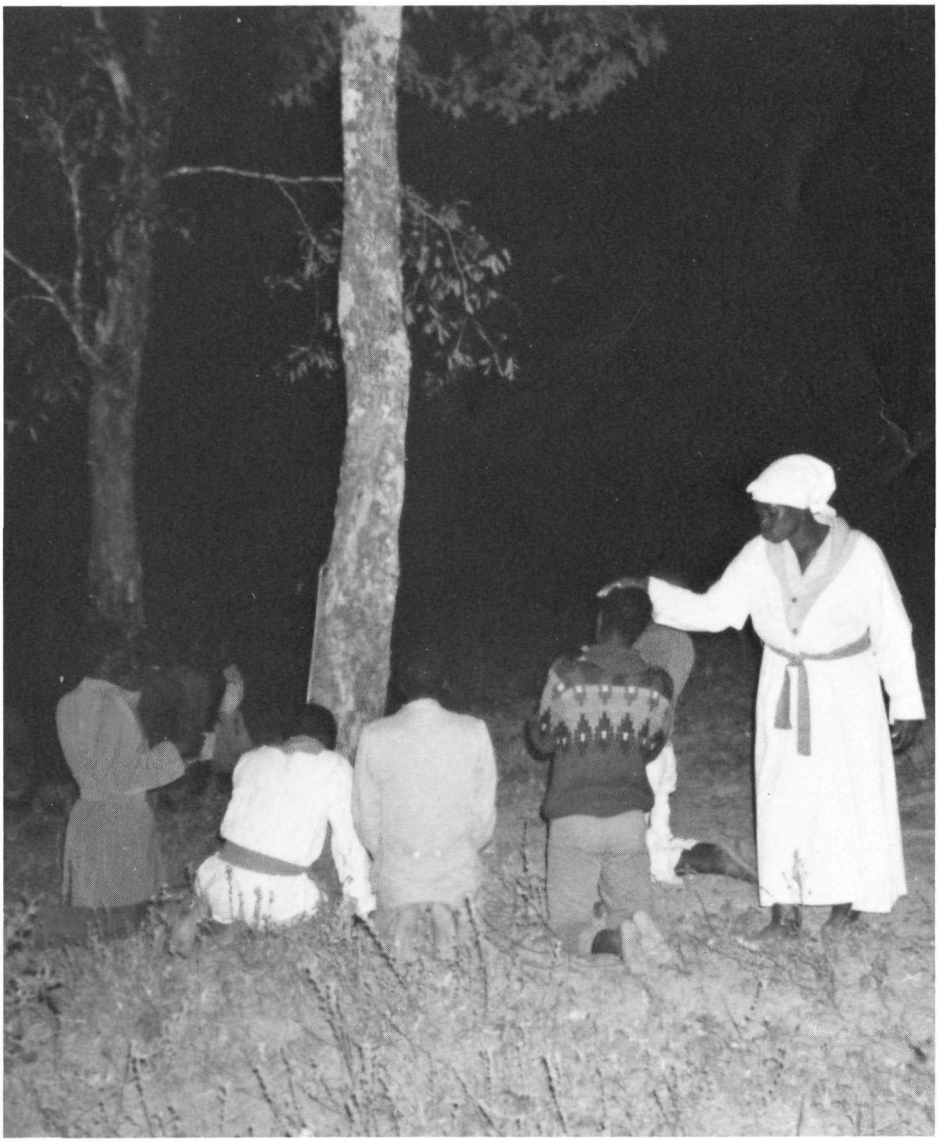
The gravity of the wilderness vigil prompted the Pentecostal Apostolics to have each member confess to *five* prophets in succession and, finally, to the congregation's chief prophet, Evelyn Mhlambo. Mai (Mother) Mhlambo projects a powerful and flamboyant presence as she presides over corporate worship, directs the spiritual lives of her members through healing and exorcism, and has veto power over the church council's management decisions.

A choir of women sang continuously a Shona confession song that focused the group's attention on the task at hand:

Come, let us confess to the Father,
and let us be righteous.
Confess, and go to Paradise.
We have waited to go to the Father.
Mothers, come,
Confess and be righteous.
Come, we are going to Jerusalem.
Jesus is coming,
He is coming with power.
Let us confess and be saved.

Improvised stanzas highlighted various sins that could be confessed: murder, wizardry, gossip, adultery, theft, and the like. After I made my own confession before the first prophet, I wondered "What now? How can I come up with more?" Then the pattern drew me on, for I was constrained to go more deeply into the dynamics of my life than I might with a single individual, and the prophets' assurances of forgiveness had a correspondingly cleansing effect.

After the confessions, the congregation moved to an open, rocky area toward the east and gathered around a large fire that burned throughout the night. Nocturnal journeys to such desolate spots are common among Shona AIC Christians, who point to Jesus' wilderness fast as their model and recall how Moses and Elijah met God in the wilderness. Experiencing God in the wilderness is what prompts AICs to call such meeting places their "Paradise." This night's work — which Mai Mhlambo described as "to talk with God, to be healed, and to be given various gifts" — included passionate singing, intense prayer, stirring sermons, and exorcisms that highlighted the liberation that such a church offers to African women.



Mai Mhlambo, a female prophet, praying with a group of men during an all-night vigil on Dombomapungo Mountain. Titus Presler

Preaching and prayer by firelight

Preachers around the fire included women and men, youths and the elderly, and sometimes even children. Such broad-based sharing of the word is common in African Christianity, although a few churches, both mission-founded and African-initiated, restrict the role of women. On this night, the preachers spoke vividly and compellingly on themes of closeness to God, resistance to evil spirits, family

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reconciliation, and the role of women in church and society. They often broke into songs that roused the group to their feet for a dance around the fire.

Long litanies of corporate prayer recurred during the night, all kneeling (on rocks!) toward the east as Mai Mhlambo bid them pray for particular concerns, such as youth, the church's leadership, evangelism, the ill, and, of course, the building of a new church. At the leader's concluding "Alleluia!" everyone burst loudly into individual prayer, which Mai Mhlambo brought to a close with another "Alleluia!" that signaled the start of another bidding.

At other times, Mai Mhlambo walked about the group and touched individuals as a signal that they should move out toward the forest and pray alone. Many would be scattered to the far reaches of firelight, most of them on their knees and praying loudly with arms raised. Tongues and other ecstatic utterances could be heard. While young people continued to sing by the fire, Mai Mhlambo visited the scattered individuals and counseled and prayed with each one as needed. This practice individualizes the wilderness experience, making each participant responsible for his or her own encounter with God and providing pastoral care to each member.

Later in the night, Mai Mhlambo dispersed the congregation into groups of five to go and pray for spiritual strength. With such ritual flexibility, the wilderness night becomes a setting where people engage their spirituality in a variety of modes: individually, in small groups, and in the assembled congregation.

The vigil came to climax in a full-scale confrontation with woman-oppressing spirits between 3:30 and 4:30 a.m., precisely the pre-dawn time, called *mambakwedza*, when many people expect the spirits of Shona Spirit Religion to come forth with special intensity. Early in the evening, Mai Mhlambo had declared that someone had brought "a four-footed animal," a reference to the spiritual presence of a hyena, a sign of wizardry. One person claimed to have seen a star shining on some people but not on others, and, in a clear allusion to wizardry, another said she had seen a small packet tied with a string. Preachers between midnight and 3 a.m. highlighted themes of spiritual conflict and expectation. One young man recounted a traumatic time with a diviner-healer, while another declared that Christians should reject all totems in favor of the single totem of Pentecost.

Exorcisms

For the exorcisms, about 20 participants, mostly women, gathered expectantly in a line, while others stood to the side, singing strenuously. As she worked down the line, Mai Mhlambo shouted for the evil spirits to come out, telling them to stop tormenting their hosts and commanding them to go elsewhere. She physically wrestled with possessed individuals as she invoked God's power and asked Jesus and the Holy Spirit to free supplicants from disease and harassment. Their reactions included falling down in a trance, speaking in tongues, and running off into the bush shouting and with hands aloft.

The AICs suggest that taking spiritual evil seriously on the biblical model may not be anachronistic but actually liberating.

For many of the women, the targeted spirit was a *chikwambo*, the spirit of a murdered man who returns to claim a woman from the family of the murderer so that she will bear him children. These children are then supposed to carry out the traditional rites of invoking and propitiating him as an ancestral spirit.

In patriarchal Shona society, a woman claimed by a *chikwambo* is shunned for marriage or, if already married, she is quickly divorced, for the visiting spirit endows the woman with unusual strength, with which she severely beats any actual man claiming marriage with her. Such women live on the outskirts of society, have children by a succession of male friends, but are able to claim little status or inheritance of their own. The PACG takes *chikwambo* spirits seriously by accepting that they exist, but, unlike traditional religion, it does not acquiesce to their claims but, instead, casts them out. As a result, the church is flooded with women, who account for 75 percent of its membership and for much of its phenomenal growth. The church's ministry constitutes a major contribution to the grassroots feminism that took root during Zimbabwe's Liberation War, when women fought side by side with men and could never again be regarded as the ancillary property of men.

God bless Pentecost

As dawn came, all stood and sang "God bless Africa," the African national anthem, with the important substitution of "Pentecost" for "Africa." After a trinitarian blessing, the now subdued group shared significant dreams that members had dreamed in recent days and retrieved jugs of water that Mai Mhlambo had blessed for healing. As the sun rose, people walked back down the mountain to the work that awaited them in their homes and fields.

The Pentecostal Apostolic Church of God is a fairly recent addition to the rich and varied landscape of African-initiated churches on the continent. The African Apostolic Church of Johane Marange began with the founder's 1932 vision of a bright light and a voice that designated him as a John the Baptist figure with a missionary vocation. Today the church numbers about a million mem-

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bers in several southern African countries and is noted for elaborate hierarchy, Old Testament polygamy, strict teetotalism, and its members handling fire at night. St. Luca's Apostolic Ejuwel Jekenishen Church, also founded in 1932 in Zimbabwe, stresses God's revelation through dreams, and its music is punctuated by enormous drums. Ndaza Zionists spend much of their worship in holy dancing in brilliant robes that emphasize their dignity as citizens of God's reign in defiance of their low socio-economic status. The Church of Simon Kimbangu in Zaire numbers millions of members who revere the memory of their founder, who healed the sick and raised the dead during a brief ministry cut short when he was imprisoned by the Belgians in the early 1920s. In the Ivory Coast, the Harrist Church today builds on the mass movement catalyzed by William Wadé Harris, a Liberian who traveled with a simple message of reading the Bible, rejecting fetishes, and turning to Jesus. Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, South Africa — most African countries have a flourishing collection of such churches, each with distinctive features, but sharing some common emphases.

Expressing God's *power*

The special openness to the Holy Spirit that many AICs share is nurtured by the emphasis that many African religions place on immediate, mystical experience of spirits, whether ancestral or earth-related. African Christians would affirm the Episcopal catechism's view of the Holy Spirit as "God at work in the world and in the Church even now," but, in line with the biblical witness, they emphasize the *power* of that work — God's power healing people from disease and liberating them from oppressive powers. Details of how that power is expressed in the AICs may seem alien, even bizarre, to western Christians, but the PACG illustrates how the gospel is being expressed and applied through the cultures and world views of African peoples.

Far from embodying an uncritical syncretism with traditional religion, however, the AICs often have the insight to *confront* the old matrix at crucial points precisely *because* they take the traditional cosmology and its spirits seriously. Here they depart from some of the early missionaries, who tended to discount the spirit world in favor of a cool spirituality and a scientific approach to the causes of illness and misfortune.

The liberation of women from spiritual and social oppression through the PACG illustrates how the triune God is brought to bear on people's real problems, both personal and systemic. The church's founding and leadership by women, while unusual, signifies that social movements are substantially changing societal structures through gospel witness.

During Zimbabwe's Liberation War, fought against the Rhodesians from 1966 to 1980, some AIC prophets saw God's hand at work in liberating the people from colonialism, and they sometimes offered the guerrillas strategic advice, their gifts of discernment.

African-initiated churches (a better term than "independent churches") have weaknesses as well as strengths. Some are so oriented toward the Old Testament that grace can be crowded out by law. Literal insistence on scriptural details sometimes limits vision of the liberative breadth of God's dance with humanity. Emphasis on spiritual healing can cost lives as church members are discouraged from taking ordinary infections to clinics and hospitals.

Mai Mhlambo exorcising evil spirits during the all-night vigil. Titus Presler

The polygamy that some churches encourage perpetuates the oppression of women and children economically and, therefore, educationally, socially, and politically. In some communities, the founding prophet becomes so elevated in the view of some believers that he or she rivals the role of Christ in their devotion. Some churches are very exclusivist, considering themselves to be the only legitimate Christians on earth.

It is important to note, however, that such views and practices are not unique to Africa, for we find them in the west as well. It is equally important to realize that AICs are not the only locus of vitality in African Christianity; mission-founded

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churches such as the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Methodists are also developing innovative ministries, often on an ecumenical basis.

Full-blown ecclesial communities

What are we to make of the AICs — are they off-track or on-track, aberration or inspiration?

In my own intensive experience of a number of churches, I have been profoundly affected by the spirituality, by the communal life, and by many individuals in the AICs. I have come away from many gatherings informed, edified, and, more important, rejoicing in an authentic experience of the presence of God. The AICs are not sects or cults, but full-blown ecclesial communities with the usual mixture of saints and sinners, and they have much to offer global Christianity.

The history of how African Christians early developed distinctive interpretations and communal patterns demonstrates that the mistakes of missionaries were not the last word. Instead, the incarnational dynamic of the gospel itself stimulates a creative appropriation of faith that helps grassroots Christians shape their own spirituality in dialogue with their traditional background. Receiving the Holy Spirit as God's power poured out in the world, the AICs suggest that taking spiritual evil seriously on the biblical model may not be anachronistic but actually liberating. AICs offer a model of how each church community can be authentic in its cultural setting at the same time that it witnesses to the universal gospel. The evangelistic and social outreach of many AICs enacts the enduring theme of mission at the heart of the gospel. Finally, the vitality and unique character of many AICs witness to the movement of God in the world and to how the Word is yet becoming flesh in all the diversity of the human family. TW

Artists as revolutionaries

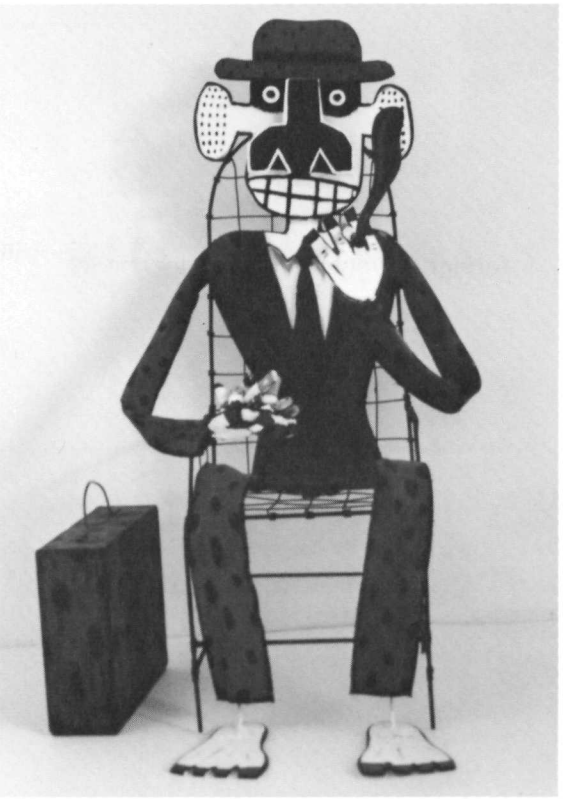
During apartheid, the South African government took two revolutionary groups most seriously: the armed forces and the cultural workers.

Bill and I visited the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg. Linda Givon gave us a tour and told us about the gallery's efforts during apartheid.

"In the 1980s, we wanted to be anti-apartheid. We decided to exhibit both black and white artists," Givon said.

"We experienced harassment. During shows we would have someone watch for the police. It was illegal for black and white people to gather together. If the police came, the black guests would put a towels over their arms and appear to be waiters."

The art filling the gallery space now includes a huge Trojan horse replete with Bible and machine gun, Masaego Johannes Segogela's carvings of angels battling devils and the sculptures of Norman Catherine, who presents white members of parliament with their suitcases beside them, ready to flee at a moment's notice.



courtesy of Linda Givon

The Minister of Foreign Affairs **by Norman Catherine**

Givon explained that under apartheid art could be challenged for reasons of blasphemy, pornography or treason. The ideas presented through art were considered real threats to the regime.

The Goodman Gallery was raided once, during a gay exhibit, but the last piece had been sold just before the police arrived.

Givon added that the future of the gallery is uncertain.

With the end of apartheid, she said, "the purpose of culture must change."

The new government's focus, she suggested, should be on strengthening community cultural centers. She didn't add, although she could have, that the future of white people who have run cultural enterprises like art galleries, dance theaters, etc. is also uncertain. Several white people in those fields with whom we spoke are anticipating shifts from working as directors, to becoming dance teachers and art instructors. —*J.W-K.*

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Post-Oklahoma harassment

Joe Roos, a founder of Sojourners community and publisher of its magazine, was denied entrance to Canada when he arrived in Ottawa on April 22 for an Associated Church Press/Canadian Church Press Convention.

At the airport, he was the only one on his plane taken aside and asked whether he had ever been convicted of criminal activity. When he answered that he had six convictions resulting from acts of prayerful, nonviolent civil disobedience in the U.S., he was told that he would not be allowed to enter the country.

Denied any appeals process, he was escorted through the airport by an immigration official and an armed Canadian Mounted Police officer, and put on a plane back to Washington, D.C.

"Since extreme right-wing people also protest government actions, even though it's for different reasons and involves totally different modes of protest, they're focussing on us," Roos said in a telephone interview. "But it was a good opportunity to testify about faith- and conscience-based actions to another government bureaucracy in the same way that we do in the U.S."

When Roos presented himself at the Canadian Embassy in D.C., he was asked, among other things, if he had ever bombed anything in the U.S. and if he planned to bomb anything in Canada.

Roos was told he would not be allowed access to Canada until he had been fingerprinted by the Washington D.C. police and then checked by the F.B.I. at his own expense. They also required certification from the police in every city he has lived in since the age of 18.

Lastly, he needed three letters of recommendation that would certify that "I was rehabilitated from my crimes."

It was only after members of the Canadian Church Press and two Members of Parliament sent letters of protest to parliament that he was told he could obtain, for $130, a four-day pass into the country. (The Canadian Church Press paid this fee, and purchased Roos' second $550 plane ticket.)

Roos was told that he could not enter Canada again until January, 1996, when five years will have passed since his most recent conviction, stemming from a Gulf War protest.

Roos arrived at the convention on April 24, and the next morning was elected president of the ACP.

Building a new South Africa

It has been one year since the historic elections created a government on national unity in South Africa and elected Nelson Mandela as president. On May 24, 1994, President Mandela invited his country and its supporters to eradicate apartheid's economic and social legacy, stating: "My government's commitment to create a people-centered society of liberty binds us to the pursuit of the goals of freedom from want, freedom from hunger, freedom from deprivation, freedom from ignorance, freedom from fear. These are fundamental to the guarantee of human dignity. They will therefore constitute part of the centerpiece of what this government will seek to achieve."

In building a new society the government has opened the door to foreign investment and dozens of companies that divested in the 1980s are returning to South Africa.

Anticipating the end of sanctions in 1992, the South African Council of Churches (SACC) began a year-long process of consultation with a wide diversity of labor, political and business groups which culminated in the July 1993 announcement of the "Code of Conduct for Business Operating in South AFrica." In the introduction to the Code, the SACC states its purpose: "In order to reverse apartheid's crippling legacy and to improve the economic well-being of all South Africans, investment by both South African and multinational companies needs to be reshaped in the image of an equitable, democratic and life-enhancing society. ... The code outlines ways in which business and other members of civil society, to lay the economic foundations for a stable and prosperous South Africa."

The ten-point code contains provisions on equal opportunity and affirmative programs, training and education, labor union rights, community relations, consumer protection, environmental practices and support for local black-owned business.

The code provides an avenue for the religious community in the U.S. to support the creation of a new society in South Africa. The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), which had it origins in 1971 when the Episcopal Church made business history by filing the first religious investor shareholder resolution calling on General Motors to withdraw from South Africa, is now calling on U.S. companies doing business in South Africa to endorse the code's principles and pledge to live by them. So far ten companies have publicly done so — Borden, Bristol-Meyers Squibb, Coca Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, Crown Cork and Seal, Ingersoll-Rand, International Paper, Kimberly-Clark, Pfizer and Schering-Phough.

This spring ICCR members have filed shareholder resolutions with Baker Hughes, Dow Chemical, Dresser, Microsoft, Procter and Gamble, and Upjohn calling on them to commit to uphold the code. Numerous companies were also contacted by church investors to urge their support. ICCR, a coaltion of 275 Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish institutional investors, will continue in 1995-96 to encourage companies to endorse the code as one concrete way to support the building of a new society in South Africa.

For information on the Code of Business Conduct, contact David M. Schilling, ICCR, 475 Riverside Dr., Rm. 566, New York, N.Y. 10115; 212-870-2928; fax 212-870-2023.

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Women soldier artists

by Betty LaDuke

Eritrea, a nation of three million in northeastern Africa, had been colonized by Italy in 1891. After Italy was defeated in World War II, the United Nations passed a U.S.-sponsored resolution federating Eritrea with Ethiopia. The U.S. received communications and military bases along the Red Sea, and Ethiopia received U.S. military and development aid.

The conditions of federation were soon violated by Ethiopia, and a clandestine Eritrean Liberation Movement formed. The armed struggle began shortly before the Ethiopian government officially annexed Eritrea in 1962.

When Emperor Haile Selassi was overthrown in 1974, the Ethiopian Military Junta forced the U.S. out and turned to the Soviet Union to train the Ethiopian army to crush the Eritrean revolution.

The Eritreans, fighting only with captured Soviet tanks and weapons, successfully opposed intensive land and air offensives, achieving liberation on May 21, 1991, after 30 years of war.

Terhas Iyassu and Elsa Jacobs are two of the thousands of women who fought with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) to free their nation from Ethiopian subjugation. Their military training included instruction in the use of a variety of weapons — not least of which were paintbrushes and oil colors.

During the war, a Department of Culture was formed within the EPLF to plan activities in music, dance, drama, writing and the fine arts. Iyassu and Jacobs — along with the others who form the nucleus of the contemporary art movement in Eritrea — were trained as artist-fighters.

I visited Eritrea in 1994 to meet with them. Their images taught me much about Eritrea's land, people, and cultural diversity, as well as the impact of war upon the role of women. While some of their paintings document women's traditional baking of *injera* (the Eritrean staple, which is like a very large sourdough pancake), spinning cotton, making baskets, or caring for children, new, non-passive role models of women as combatants and martyrs were beginning to emerge.

***Fighter* by Terhas Iyassu**

I learned much about the human side of this liberation struggle, the forming of interpersonal relationships and the birth of children in the war zone.

The idea for an Art Section evolved spontaneously among the fighters, and then was promoted when the EPLF realized that art can be "a weapon to help in the struggle for liberation."

Terhas Iyassu

Terhas Iyassu tells of the visit of two artists to her unit in 1978.

"Haile Wolde-Micheal and Berhane Adonais distributed papers and pencils to all who were interested in art. They asked us to draw something, anything, and then selected the 13 best drawings."

Her drawing was among them.

After completing military training, Iyassu and the others were sent to the Fine Arts Center at the Arag base.

Iyassu describes their studio as "an underground cave." Art supplies were scarce and they learned to improvise, making colors from local plants and outdated medicine. For an oil painting surface, a flour sack was cut open and prepared with a base of sugar and flour.

Their art work was used to promote awareness of the EPLF in the countryside.

"Most of our paintings made very clear our suffering, our hope, our longing for liberation," Iyassu says. "Most of our work was done in the simplest way, so nomads or farming people could grasp the messages of the paintings."

Often their work was interrupted when they were sent to the front to fight.

Thirty to 40 percent of the combatants were women. During the early years of the war, men and women lived and fought together, but sexual relations were forbidden. As the war was prolonged, the policy changed. There were mass marriages, but husbands and wives were not allowed to be together in the same regiment. Each brigade had its own maternity camp, and children were taken care of by their mothers.Child care was rotated, as women's work was necessary for building houses, paving roads and repairing them, especially after the rains.

Iyassu married and became pregnant.

"At the time I was not happy about

Betty LaDuke, an artist who teaches at Southern Oregon State College, is celebrating the publication of her latest book, *AFRICA: Women's Art, Women's Lives* (Africa World Press, 1995). Copies of the book can be ordered by calling 609-844-9583.

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raising a child, as we were living in caves experiencing bombardments, but the comrades who lived with me helped me." Iyassu gave birth to her first daughter, Martha, in 1981, and to the second, Janet, in 1986.

During most of the war, Iyassu taught art to orphaned children and prepared teaching aids and curriculum materials, while taking care of her own children. She developed the skills necessary for her current job at the Ministry of Education in Asmara, where she illustrates elementary and secondary textbooks.

Oil paintings, water colors and drawings fill the walls of her home studio. Next to her oil painting, *Soldier Cooking,* is a smaller watercolor, *Fighter*, which had been made into a poster and popularly displayed on store fronts throughout Asmara, the capital city. The symbolic image is expressionistic in style but carefully composed to convey the political message, *I'll Honor Your Pledge*, written in Tigrinya and English on the bottom.

Issayu drove with me from Asmara to Massawa, the port city whose capture by the EPLF marked their victory.

The narrow, rock-strewn road to Massawa is extraordinary. There are endless, sprawling turns and twists, dropping from the cool Asmara plateau of 4,000 feet to the level of the Red Sea. Ribbons of rock circle the mountains, forming terraces for planting grains, fruits and vegetables. Clusters of rock and mud-plastered huts with thatch roofs are nestled precariously on hillsides between some of the larger towns. There were also skeletal remnants of burnt tanks, trucks and long-nozzled artillery guns, indicating many battles and the occupation and isolation of the port of Massawa from the rest of Eritrea for most of the war.

Elsa Jacob

Elsa Jacob, a close friend of Iyassu's who also trained as an artist-fighter, had just completed the 10th grade when she made the decision to join the EPLF.

"I was very angry, as I was very, very interested in my academic studies," Jacob says. But she witnessed "much suffering ... women and children cruelly killed by Ethiopian soldiers, villages set on fire ... and I felt, 'Why do I try to learn under these conditions? I need to try to find a better solution.'"

***My son* by Elsa Jacob**

When Jacob joined the EPLS, "they tried to convince me to continue my work with the Eritrean Youth Association, but I decided to be a full-time fighter," she says.

This was a difficult decision, as she was the oldest of four daughters, and her father had died the year before, in 1976. Ironically, he had fought in the war as an Ethiopian soldier, "always against my will," he told his family, but this was his means of supporting them, and not an unusual occurrence. Jacob says that "he did not die a happy man."

Jacob experienced her first battle in 1979. She was just 17, and was told not to go, but she insisted.

"The Ethiopian soldiers pushed us against the hills, and then we had to retreat into the mountains for 10 kilometers," she says. "We were surrounded by too many Ethiopian soldiers and tanks, and we had to fight our way out of that. The battle took three days. I was the only woman in our group.

"Death is the hardest thing to bear, when your colleagues and friends suddenly disappear," Jacob says. "You feel you can't smile ever again."

The Woman Hero, a dynamic water color painted by Jacob in 1984, shows a woman fighter, whose face is covered with thick drops of sweat, standing over the body of a slain Ethiopian soldier. Today, a poster created from this powerful image hangs in Jacob's home. I also saw a recent portrait of her father, painted from a photograph, and one of her son, Tesfaledet Mengstab. The father's features are lean and stern and his eyes stare straight ahead. In contrast, her son's round baby face and dark, bright eyes look upward. A sky-blue background and many flowers surround him.

"Our children are like flower seeds," she told me, "and we have to find a way for a bright future, a better way of living, education, and opportunities for development."

Jacob is now married to a former fighter, who works as an administrator in the local government, and they have a two-year-old son.

Jacob has been assigned by the government to teach at the Asmara Art School, which will soon open. The school will develop a core of elementary and secondary art teachers, and an art program — the first ever in their educational system.

Even though the Eritrean government is struggling economically and facing severe housing shortages, education and art education are priorities. Jacob's child will not have to go to war to become a painter. TW

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Revealing the hidden

by Nkenge Z°!@

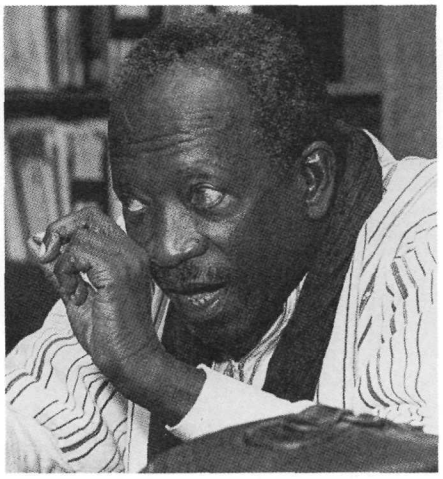
Black film can have as profound an impact in the next century as black music has had in this century

— Arthur Jafa, filmmaker

Born in the southern region of Senegal amongst fishing people, Ousmane Sembène's sophisticated creative vision is fed by indigenous custom and aesthetic and by profound sensitivity to the fallout bequeathed Afrikans by colonialism and its younger cousin *neo*.

Whether novel or film, Sembène's works are multi-level, rich with referent and charged with cultural significances. His first work of fiction, *Le docker noir* (1956), is a fictional reconstruction of race relations between the French and exiles from France's colonies in Africa and the black diaspora. This work is credited with setting the political tone for a new breed of works by French-speaking Afrikan writers (see *Ousmane Sembène: Dialogues with Critics and Writers*, Amherst: U. Mass. Press, 1993).

Sembène's 1968 film *Mandabi* ("The Money Order"), was the first full-length feature by a black Afrikan. Based on his short novel of the same name, the camera follows a vainglorious man who can't cash a money order sent from a relative living in France. In Wolof, with English subtitles, the portrait is rife with humour. Yet the audience witnesses the utter diminution of the protagonist's pretensions in the face of the machinations of the Senegalese *petite bourgeoisie*.



Ousmane Sembène

The 11 films written and directed by Sembène present a cornucopia of political, religious, social and cultural issues. Eschewing the deceptive rigors of exclusivist thinking, he says modes of thought prescribing "either capitalist or communist, either Christian or Muslim, either black or white, are inhibiting and oppressive." Sembène has also given voice to women, whom he sees as critical figures for resisting neo-colonialism.

In his last film, *Gelwaar: An African Legend for the 21st Century* (1992), the mystery of what happened to a Christian villager's body upon his death becomes the medium by which tensions over burial customs, indigenous wisdom, Islam, Catholicism, family relationships, city vs. village, urban, rural, foreign ideas, nationhood, youth and elders build to create a heady and inevitable confrontation between the "caretakers" of the state and the villagers who have maintained, despite pernicious times, a knowledge of custom.

Filmmaker Njia Kai says Sembène's accomplishments are all the more laudable because in addition to the usual difficulties, Afrikan and American Afrikan filmmakers are working with a medium not designed to focus on black people. As an example she cites the colors used in processing film, which are keyed by most manufacturers to the skin tones of European women. Indeed, she says, storytelling conventions and the very hardware of filmmaking, from lenses to cameras, emerged from societies dismissive of the world views of peoples of color. By engaging in cinema, Sembène has helped lay open the opportunity for black, brown, yellow and red people to redefine film by reengineering the equipment used to make film.

Ousmane Sembène dreams of a final work, a three-hour epic, a magnificent depiction of Samori Toure, a revered Muslim who led resistance to western colonialism. Doubtless it would reflect Sembène's unique cinematic eye and ear for detail.

Asked during an interview by Sada Niang in Toronto, "As an artist, what is your relationship with history?" Sembène replied, "The artist is here to reveal a certain number of historical facts that others would like to keep hidden. Since the dawn of time ... Wolof society [in Senegal] has always had people whose role it was to give voice, bring back to memory and project toward something."

While his works, when shown, resonate in the small villages of Senegal, they are also heavy with significance for those of us trying to envision and practice new ways of being in the West. TW

art and society

Nkenge Z°!@ is editor of the *Art & Society* section. **Ousmane Sembène's** films are distributed in the U.S. by New Yorker Films, 16 West 61st Street, New York, N.Y., 10023, 212-247-6110. They are available for rent or purchase in both 16mm and 32mm formats.

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Embezzling power: the Ellen Cooke affair

by Jan Nunley

After months of speculation and rumor, everyone was braced for the astronomical amount of the theft — in the neighborhood of $2.2 million — but what prompted howls of outrage, from *The Washington Post* to parishes across the country, was former Episcopal Church treasurer Ellen Cooke's claim that her theft of funds from the denomination were somehow linked to "the pain, abuse and powerlessness I have felt during the years I worked as a lay woman on a senior level at the church headquarters."

"If that's powerlessness, give me more of it!" exclaimed Jim Solheim, director of Episcopal News Service. "On a day-to-day basis, she was the most powerful individual in the Episcopal Church. She controlled the flow of money. She was not only treasurer, she was also the administrator of this building [the Episcopal Church Center at 815 Second Avenue in New York]. Not a single thing happened in this building without her knowledge and consent."

In a statement released two days before Episcopal Church presiding bishop Edmond L. Browning's own detailed message to the denomination about the results of a three-month audit of church financial records (see sidebar), Cooke said she began seeing a psychiatrist who attributed her actions to "many factors external to me and related to the workplace." She stated, "I am one of a small percentage of the population who by reason of personality are simply unable to stop in the face of enormous pressures and stress. [The psychiatrist] believes that my subsequent actions, blocked from memory during this time, were a cry for help which I fully expected to be discovered and questioned, and which escalated as I tried to escape from a situation which had become intolerable." Cooke added that an Episcopal priest — a woman — had offered her pastoral support and "consistently held up to me the truth of my inappropriate and wrong response to the situation in which I found myself," while helping her "acknowledge" her feelings of "powerlessness."

Ellen Cooke

[The psychiatrist] believes that my subsequent actions, blocked from memory during this time, were a cry for help which I fully expected to be discovered and questioned, and which escalated as I tried to escape from a situation which had become intolerable. — Ellen Cooke

Former Episcopal Church Center (often called "815") staffer Bruce Campbell, who in 1994 opted for voluntary severance prior to a round of staff cuts initiated by Cooke, believes most of the pressure Cooke experienced at the Church Center was of her own creation. "As a staff person at 815 while Ellen was treasurer, I observed her, not seeking ways to relieve herself of the burdens and responsibilities of power, but steadily amassing to herself more and more of them, to a level unprecedented in the existence of the office," Campbell wrote in a discussion of her statement on Quest, the church's international on-line service. "She did this at the expense of the abilities of qualified staff at her employ (who would gladly and competently have shouldered the responsibility) and over the objections, some six years running, of dozens of staff who saw what was happening."

Controlling information

While Cooke's ongoing dishonesty came as a complete surprise to the wider church — a *New York Times* report indicated that Cooke may have even lied about graduating from Georgetown University with a degree in economics in 1969 — her tight control over information was widely acknowledged. Marge Christie of the Diocese of Newark, now serving on the church's Joint Standing Committee for Program, Budget and Finance (PB&F), which watchdogs the church's national budget between the triennial meetings of its General Convention, recalled difficulties getting the most basic budget information from Cooke's office when Christie chaired the Executive Council's

Jan Nunley is a transitional deacon in the Diocese of Rhode Island and a frequent contributor to *The Witness*.

Vital Signs

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Committee on the Status of Women. "It was impossible to get the kind of information that I needed in order to know where we were with our finances during the triennium. Were we over budget? Under budget? We could never find out where we were. And I know that was true of other interim bodies."

Michigan attorney Tim Wittlinger, a member of the national church's Executive Council serving on its Administration and Finance Committee, complained repeatedly to Cooke about the lack of "timely and detailed information" about the budget. "She generally said, 'Well, I'll give you whatever you want, but my experience is that most of the council members won't read it,'" Wittlinger recalled. "There were several times when I literally had to go to the floor of the council and state that we're entitled to the information." Sometimes, Wittlinger said, the needed information would eventually arrive—but only moments before a crucial vote.

Others say Cooke did provide information, but only to certain people. "It depended on who you were," said Vincent Currie, Jr., chair of PB&F and administrator for the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast.

Where the money came from — and where it went

A three-month audit conducted by Coopers and Lybrand showed some $2.2 million dollars was taken from the Episcopal Church's national church budget by its former treasurer, Ellen Cooke, from February, 1990 to her departure this January. No other national church staff members were implicated in the thefts. A federal government investigation of the embezzlement is now underway.

A summary of the auditors' report released by the Episcopal Church's presiding bishop, Edmond L. Browning, on May 1 revealed that Cooke channeled approximately $1.5 million in unrestricted trust fund income and other unrestricted cash receipts to personal accounts in a Washington, D.C. bank and a New York brokerage firm. Some $225,000 went to third parties, including tuition payments for Cooke's two sons. Ninety thousand dollars went to the Vestry and Rector's Discretionary Fund at St. Luke's Church, Montclair, New Jersey — where Cooke's husband, Nicholas Cooke, served as rector until January of this year. He then became rector of St. John's Church in McLean, Virginia. In July, 1991, the Cookes purchased a farm in Virginia for $500,000; in March 1994 they purchased a home located near Nicholas Cooke's church in Montclair for $465,500.

It is still unclear how much Nicholas Cooke knew about his wife's misappropriations. On May 7 he told the congregation at St. John's that he would resign at the end of the month. Accounts are now being audited at St. Luke's.

According to the auditors, Cooke's misuse of the national church's corporate credit accounts came to $325,000. In addition, Cooke apparently wrote "unauthorized" checks totaling some $28,000. Church officials said purchases included clothing, jewelry (in one case a $16,000 Tiffany necklace), non-business travel and gifts for her staff at the Episcopal Church Center — such items as cut-glass bowls and glass apples.

What initially tipped national church officials off about Cooke's ongoing thefts was an improper request she submitted for $86,000 in back vacation pay at the time of her resignation in January, a resignation for which the presiding bishop had called because "her working style did not serve our common mission." Ironically, Cooke herself instituted the present "use it or lose it" policy, under which unused vacation leave is not included as pay in severance packages.

Most people aware of the Cooke's monied lifestyle assumed inherited wealth, more than high salaries, had a part to play. As treasurer, Cooke was paid an annual salary of $125,000 — the highest in the Church, next to the Presiding Bishop. Press reports say that as rector of St. Luke's in Montclair her husband's compensation package was approximately $70,000.

The auditors' report indicated that Cooke did not appear to have diverted funds from accounts earmarked for specific purposes, such as the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, the United Thank Offering and the Martin Luther King Legacy Fund. George Hunt, retired bishop of Rhode Island and a 12-year member of the national church's Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance, up until this year chaired the committee's work on that portion of the church's budget which supports "program" — church-sponsored efforts to address, among other things, youth ministries, women, congregational development, intercultural ministries and social justice issues. "I don't think any money was taken from the program portion of the budget — which constitutes about 75 percent of national church budget revenues," Hunt said. "However, I may be like the person who fell from a 10-story building and was heard to say, as he passed the fifth floor, 'So far, so good.'"

In a statement issued April 29, Cooke indicated "significant differences" with the auditors' report. Efforts to reach Cooke and her attorney for further comment were unsuccessful. Cooke is represented by Washington, D.C. attorney Plato Cacheris, a white-collar crime specialist who unsuccessfully defended ex-United Way chairman William Aramony on embezzlement charges.

— Jan Nunley and *Witness* staff

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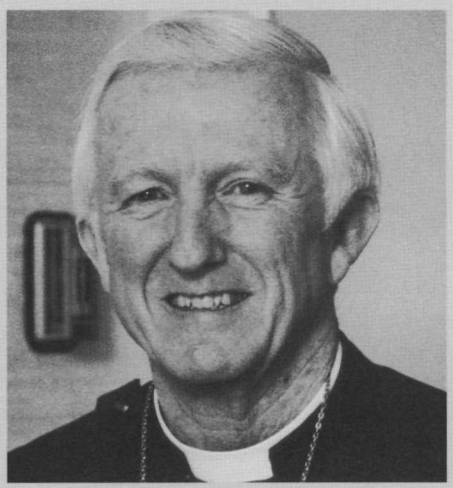
"In the job I had I could call up the treasurer and say 'What's the deal?' and she would respond." George Hunt, long a member of PB&F and now interim bishop of Hawaii, said that, with him at least, Cooke was more forthcoming with detailed information than her predecessor, Matt Costigan, had been. But, he acknowledged, "She may have used her knowledge of where the money was against others who didn't have that knowledge to keep control of the whole staff — and that's a pretty powerful control mechanism."

Selective sabotage

Cooke apparently directed that power against, among other things, social ministry programs with which she disagreed. In 1990, Wittlinger asserted, Cooke tried to block the $3.5 million Economic Justice Loan Fund mandated by a 1988 General Convention resolution. Wittlinger served on the committee charged with implementing the fund. "She introduced a proposal to put a moratorium on all future activity of the fund and didn't tell anybody on the Program Committee [of Executive Council]," said Wittlinger. "It literally hit everyone by surprise." He and others tried to work out a compromise with Cooke, but "she wouldn't budge." The proposal was defeated in a floor fight the next day.

"She had some philosophical differences with some of the movements in the church," acknowledged Vince Currie. "It's sad in a way that she chose to pick and choose the things that she would really scrutinize, and there was nobody scrutinizing her. I think she probably thought that some of the social ministries' money was being spent on special interest groups. And then for her to just blatantly steal enough money to fund one of those programs ..."

But what is consistently described as "cold-blooded" was Cooke's cutting of fully one-third of Church Center staff positions, while spending church money on personal luxuries — daily limousine service to the Church Center, Tiffany jewelry, a formal English garden and tennis courts for her 250-year-old New Jersey home. "There was a wince of deep pain when we saw what she'd done and how she'd done it during a period when we were losing colleagues and programs right and left," said Jim Solheim. Bruce Campbell wrote: "During staff cutbacks in two separate rounds, some staff were retired before they had intended, including two of the most devoted, productive, and field-popular staff I worked with. ... They and the church lost years of effective and servantlike national ministry because [the money] could not be available to salary them. The money may come back, but the loss in productivity, morale, and the usefulness of the national church to parishes and dioceses has been squandered, gone and unrecoverable."



Edmond L. Browning James Solheim

There's [Presiding Bishop] Browning, going out and doing his very best to provide some leadership, and she's coming along behind and undercutting everything.

— Jim Solheim

Gender bias?

In the face of such a legacy, for Cooke to attribute her actions to gender bias in the church was high insult to many. *The Washington Post* devoted a scathing editorial to the Cooke case, calling Cooke "more autocrat than pushover" and accusing her of "downright moral squalor." The Episcopal Women's Caucus released a statement which stated, "Citing discrimination for unethical behavior, Cooke denigrates the commitment and capabilities of all laity and all women. ... For her to discover only now that she has endured abuse because of her sex is tragic, for she is an intelligent woman whose competency and integrity were never questioned — only her style of relating and functioning with others."

Around the church the response from laywomen was the same. Diane Walker, communications officer for the Diocese of Olympia (in Washington), remarked, "I don't know which is more appalling, the extreme selfishness of [Cooke's] response, or the incredible damage it does to the lay women of the church while at the same time appearing to raise consciousness about the way they are sometimes treated." Barbara Caum of Trinity Church in Athens, Penn., expressed concern about "how her reasoning reflects on women in the church, especially laywomen. ... 'The good old boys' network got me down, so I took the money to feel better.' What's the next?"

Voices unheeded

But — whatever her motivations — how was Cooke able to conceal for five years the theft of millions of dollars? Former PB&F committee member George Hunt recalled "dis-ease" with the concentration of financial power in Cooke's hands as far back as 1990. "The treasurer should not be a voting member of the group that crafts all the workings of the church budget," Hunt said, explaining that Cooke was the elected treasurer of the General Convention, a salaried employee of the church — namely its chief administrative and financial officer — *and* a voting member of PB&F. "But that's the way the canons were written, and she was just doing what she was supposed to be doing. And then some."

Former Episcopal Church treasurer Matt Costigan observed, "All the staff that

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were highly trained, two CPAs plus the staff that was trained to do investigative work, they're all gone. And as long as you don't have experienced people on board who would challenge something irregular, no one's going to question it."

Many say Cooke manipulated the presiding bishop, playing on his desire to bring women into key roles in the church. "When he appointed [Cooke]," said Marge Christie, "he was enormously proud of bringing a woman into such a major leadership role. So he found it very hard to accept the fact that the woman he brought in wasn't a team player. But he never dreamed that not only was she not a team player, but she was ripping him off."

The apparent refusal of senior church officials, including the presiding bishop, to give credence to repeated staff complaints about Cooke's abrasive management style was a continuing source of frustration to church center workers. "Staff who complained that Ellen's management style was ineffectual were told in meeting after meeting to stick to their knitting, and were then held accountable to solve problems they had no power to solve," wrote Bruce Campbell to Quest. "Without exception, every executive at the church center took occasion to stifle staff complaints. Some staff who threatened to tell [Executive] Council members were threatened with their very jobs.

"Meanwhile, staff sat through sermons and exhortations about how the church stands firmly for justice on the side of those unempowered and disenfranchised," Campbell continued. "Bishops and a steady parade of consultants berated staff to do 'more with less.' ... I saw support staff get up and walk out of these meetings, some in tears, utterly embittered, rendered cynical by the deafness of those in control . ... Toward the end, staff were sent out into the field in a 'listening process' and subjected to sometimes blistering attacks on the competence and responsiveness of specific program offices and staff members — who were often our colleagues who we knew to be suffering under incompetent management. We would come back from these encounters and speak of them to each other in the hallways through clenched teeth, helpless to do anything about the malaise and cut off from any internal system of correction."

Cooke's high-handed style wasn't confined to the church center. It is Jim Solheim's opinion that, "if anyone really took the time, they could trace directly back to Ellen the suspicion and frustration that the dioceses of the church have with 815." "There's [Presiding Bishop] Browning, going out and doing his very best to provide some leadership, and she's coming along behind and undercutting everything." Ultimately, Solheim believes, some of the blame can also be laid at the door of "the Anglican style: civility at all costs.

Staff who complained that Ellen's management style was ineffectual were told in meeting after meeting to stick to their knitting, and were then held accountable to solve problems they had no power to solve. Without exception, every executive at the church center took occasion to stifle staff complaints.

— Bruce Campbell

"I think her survival instincts were very finely honed. She understood the kind of organizational setting that we have here," Solheim added. "She knew that people, if given a chance, would choose not to fight. She really played on the weaknesses of the church as organization."

Legal steps?

It's not clear yet how national church leaders are going to proceed. At most $1 million of the $2.2 million stolen is covered by insurance. Cooke's two homes, now owned by the Church, are up for sale. Lawyers for both sides continue to negotiate restitution terms.

Many are calling for the national church to file criminal charges against Cooke, but Browning has not committed to a course of action. She may face federal and state charges — a federal government investigation has now been launched — for such things as mail fraud (bank deposits were mailed from New York to Washington) and tax evasion.

Meanwhile, Cooke's successor, former assistant treasurer Donald Burchell, is working along with other church officials to reconstruct a shattered department. New checks and balances are being put into place that, officials admit, wouldn't stop a determined and clever embezzler. "There's no question that if somebody really wants to steal money, they'll find some way to do it," said Tim Wittlinger. But Wittlinger believes spreading financial responsibility over several individuals could slow down a would-be thief — and increase the chances a slow budgetary hemorrhage, such as Cooke created, could be averted.

Condemnation; loss of momentum

The presiding bishop is being praised for moving swiftly, once Cooke's theft was apparent, to investigate and to release a full accounting of the findings. But he's also been the target of criticism, mainly from conservatives already at odds with his policies, who say Browning should resign before his term ends in 1997. In *United Voice*, the newsletter of the conservative group Episcopalians United, Detroit priest Richard Kim drew comparisons with Watergate. "Perhaps it is time for the presiding bishop, during whose watch all of this is happening, to step down," said Kim, who served under Bishop Browning in Hawaii. "Traditionalists, who are often at loggerheads with the hierarchy, stand to benefit ... by the embarrassment of the church's liberal power structure," William Murchison, of the traditionalist Episcopal Synod of America, quoted an "observer"

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as saying in the organization's newsletter *Foundations*.

"I just grieve for [Browning]," said Furman Stough retired (and now assistant) bishop of Alabama, a former senior executive at the church center and a longtime friend of the presiding bishop's. "Thank God he's got only two more years, for his own sake and for [his wife] Patti and the children too. Fortunately, he really is trying to take care of himself healthwise. But I don't know what he's going to do about this stress."

Many are worried that an "unholy trinity" of recent Church troubles — the suicide of Massachusetts bishop David Johnson in January, presentments brought against retired Iowa bishop Walter Righter for ordaining an openly gay man to the priesthood, and the Cooke situation — have crippled Browning's administration. "There are very clear signs that the presiding bishop is listening more carefully than he has at any other time in his tenure. But there isn't much time for the team to regain momentum," observed Jim Solheim. But Marge Christie sees the next two years as sufficient time to regroup. "A lot can happen," she said.

"The three events have been successive 'kicks in the shin' for the presiding bishop," said Hunt. "Yet it is the church which has suffered the deeper wounds, for all these events will adversely affect the church's thinking as we go about electing the next presiding bishop."

Some observers think the church will opt for a stronger administrator as the next presiding bishop, one less likely to be "pastoral" or lead the way on social issues, as Browning has attempted. But institutional and pastoral roles needn't be in conflict, said Hunt.

"My basic premise is: Good pastors (at every level, from the parish to the presiding bishop) are also good administrators — or at very least, have the sense to have good ones running the affairs of the church," he said.

"Administration is *not* just making sure the records are well kept, but knowing that keeping good records can help you serve the people committed to your care."

[Ed. note: We publish this poem in recognition of the rage that many in the church — perhaps especially national church staff members and their friends and families — felt upon learning of Ellen Cooke's embezzlement. We consider this poem one of the more creative release valves now in circulation.]

A tract for Ellen

— from The Fundamental Things (Still) Apply Society, May 9, 1995 A.D.

by Deborah Griffin Bly

A former exec name of Cooke
was the friend of a guy with a crook.
Once known as "Ellen,"
now accused as a "felon,"
she prob'ly regrets what she took.

Some put the loss at 2 million.
Some say it's more like a zillion.
Gross betrayal of trust,
our school ties are mussed,
and our faces have gone quite vermillion.

Now please understand — no one loved her.
In fact, ere the theft, Ed had shoved her.
Her management style
was off by a mile,
she cared only for those up above her.

815 had some folks full of mission,
but the budget said some must go fishin'.
Those who were left,
tho' tired and bereft,
awaited new loss through attrition.

Now, the guy with the crook is a good guy —
The problem began cuz he's real shy.
A good-hearted man,
he does all he can,
but the circle is small he's informed by.

How'd it happen? Did nobody notice?
Or was everyone reading Duns Scotus?
Off in mid-air,
lost in musings and prayer?
Or whisp'ring the truth, but "Don't quote us"?

Imagine the Cookes, off in Jersey —
home of the *belle dame sans merci* —
contractors galore
in, out the door,
with cash from her money-stuffed pursey.

"Can I ask you a question, oh honey,
where are we getting this money?
I should wonder, at least
cuz I'm still a priest
and the parish might think it looks funny."

"Oh my dear mate, if there need be,
I just get more cash from the P-B.
Don't you like the new kitchen?
Isn't it bitchin'?
I can't help how the Church proves it
needs me!"

So to all who would lead: There's a tension
between what you do and don't mention.
Be just, and empathic
watch for signs psychopathic;
above all, avoid condescension.

Freelance writer Deborah Griffin Bly is a member of the musical group, The Miserable Offenders, based in New York, N.Y.

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Women in waiting?

by Carol Cole Flanagan

In 1976 the General Convention adopted a canon, (now Canon III.8.1.) stating unequivocally that the provisions of the ordination canons "shall be equally applicable to men and women." Since that time, all but four of the one hundred continental dioceses have moved to implement the canon, while the remaining four have become ghettos of discrimination and interpersonal violence against women.

In 1994, the Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) communicated to the presiding bishop its intention to begin exploring ecclesiastical and civil remedies. The presiding bishop requested one last attempt at dialogue, and asked for one year. This was a difficult request for the EWC. As our more radical sisters know, ours are the voices of moderation and reform. We have watched our sisters leave the church over the past 20 years. We have understood their impatience and despair, yet we have chosen to remain. We have continued to engage the church in the belief that right defeated is stronger than evil triumphant. And yet, we also know that "justice delayed is justice denied." We know, too, in some cases first-hand, that we have congregations and clergy in war zones, and we cannot turn our backs on them. We, the larger church, have helped to create those ghettos, and their people are our people. The EWC agreed to one year. The Ministry Committee agreed to one year. The General Convention agreed to one year. One year in which to fully implement the canon adopted more than 20 years ago. After that, all bets are off.

The committee charged with implementing the canon, (known as the Committee for Dialogue on Canon III.8.1.) met in Pittsburgh from April 17-19, 1995, under the leadership of Robert Rowley, bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania. Although the House of Deputies reflected a 9:1 ratio in support of the measure to fully implement the canon, the committee ratio is 6:4.

First, to provide "opportunities for full access to the ordination process in this church," the committee is considering a model from the Diocese of Eau Claire in which a female candidate is transferred to an "assisting diocese." The candidate bears all costs and penalties. This is the underground railroad approach, in which women and their families are simply uprooted and deported, if possible. This model would also be applied to candidates who oppose the ordination of women. Only the most pharisaic among us would claim that this constitutes "full access."

Second, to remove barriers to licensing and the acceptance of letters dimissory, the committee is considering a proposal for concurrent jurisdiction. In this proposal, the provincial bishop serving as president or vice president of the province would serve as the "alternative ecclesiastical authority" and perform such functions on behalf of the diocesan bishop. In addition to altering our polity by the establishment of an archepiscopate, this is segregation! This is the creation of a parallel structure. When has "separate but equal" ever been equal? This development would require a change in canon law, and the committee envisions that the processes would be monitored. By whom and with what safeguards and recourse?

This second model also provides that, where a congregation is "unable to avail itself of the sacramental services of its bishop" because she is female, application may be made to the provincial bishop for the appointment of an alternative bishop (in consultation with the diocesan bishop).

The committee itself appeared to be nearly as uncomfortable with the two current proposals as is the EWC.

It appears that we, as a church, are engaged in these bizarre conversations for at least two reasons. First, some who oppose the ordination of women use conscience as a sword, not a shield. No person is *compelled* to serve as a bishop. No person is *compelled* to serve on a standing committee. If conscience prohibits one from applying the canons equally, one must *in conscience* decline to serve. The fact that we have persons exercising such offices who are unable or unwilling to "conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Episcopal Church" is itself unconscionable.

Secondly, to suggest, as some do, that they really have implemented the canon because the canon is "permissive" is hogwash. With "permissive" canons and "mandatory" resolutions, we may soon be lost in Wonderland. An argument put before the committee acknowledged that the language of the canon is imperative, but claimed that legislative history made it "permissive." The EWC is decidedly unpersuaded. Our legislative history accommodated slavery and segregation, gave us suffragan bishops for "colored work," barred women from service on vestries, and banned the baptized from communion. Legislative history simply does not justify discrimination against women or the violation of canon law. After 124 years of dialogue on the role of women in the church, and 18 years of accommodation, enough is enough. It is time to implement the canon. As written. Now.

(An Open Hearing has been scheduled by the committee for the afternoon of July 6 in Washington, DC. For additional information, please contact Robert Rowley, Bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania, 145 West 6th Street, Erie, PA 16501; 814-456-4203.)

We have watched our sisters leave the church over the past 20 years. We have understood their impatience and despair, yet we have chosen to remain. And yet, we also know that "justice delayed is justice denied."

Carol Cole Flanagan is a longtime Episcopal Women's Caucus activist.

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Continuing her mother's journey

by Judith Ann Diers

Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy by Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Orbis, 1995.

In *Daughters of Anowa*, Mercy Amba Oduyoye identifies herself as a daughter of "the mystical woman, prophet, and priest whose life of daring, suffering and determination is reflected in the continent of Africa." Readers are swept into the life of a matrilineal Ghanaian culture, recently invaded by the western Methodist tradition. In this one African daughter, we enter the search and struggle to find an empowering definition of "woman" in the midst of seemingly contradictory and oppressive structures.

Oduyoye, widely regarded as the leading African woman theologian, demonstrates how the folktalk and oral tradition of Akan (Ghana) and Yoruba (Nigeria) cultures are in dialogue with western churches, within the community and within individuals. In this book, her attention is turned specifically to the way in which patriarchy emerges and is reinforced within each context.

Divided into three sections, she begins with a critique of culture as expressed in its oral tradition of storytelling, folktales and proverbs. She demonstrates the power this tradition wields in governing moral judgments of peoples' daily lives. In moving from language to a section on praxis she examines women in the context of culture, religion and marriage, showing the effect of uncritical examination of "folktalk" on women's lives, as they try to live up to the image portrayed in the oral tradition.

Oduyoye is critical of using solutions and methodologies that originate in the hands of the oppressor. This is most clearly reflected in her critique of western feminism.

In her final section, entitled "Dreams," she calls African women to use their creative powers to string their own beads to represent what is possible.

"Our dreams become a new cloth with an African pattern that fits into the global women's *asaasaa*" (a Ghanaian patchwork cloth, similar to American quilts). She makes a strong case for women throughout the world to identify our own pieces, and to bring together the solutions, the remedies and the cures which have been created and breathed into being by women in every particular situation in which they find themselves.

Readers are swept into the life of a matrilineal Ghanaian culture, recently invaded by the western Methodist tradition.

As Oduyoye knows, many other communities are working on their own particular patch, while also imaging the overall pattern of the quilt. These were some of the connections I was hoping she would make. In her position as a leading female member of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT), I anticipated more than a passing acknowledgment of the effect that Asian, Latin American and African American women have had on her development and understanding of patriarchy.

Oduyoye is no stranger to this intercontinental theological dialogue. When the 1991 EATWOT meeting in New Delhi included no women presenters, she was one of the leaders of the uprising of women who demanded recognition and hearings as full-fledged theologians. In describing that event, she coined the phrase "irruption with an irruption" (see her essay in *Irruption of the Third World: Challenge to Theology*, 1983). Since that time, she has continued to be one of the major interpreters of women's issues within that organization.

Oduyoye, more than any other African woman has the unique history, network and experience to draw upon those interactions, for she has devoted her life to this international realm. But her book screamed out for these references. What has been useful about the Latin American critique of class? Of the Asian focus on non-Christian religions and culture? Certainly the critique of patriarchy done by womanists such as Delores Williams have also contributed to her development.

Daughters of Anowa provides a wealth of information and ideas. Oduyoye has touched upon hundreds of issues in culture, religions and family that affect the lives of women in Africa and throughout the world. Through this work, she has opened the door through which many African women will walk. She has lifted the veil of silence, broken taboos and blasted open a way for women to be freed to discover what it means to be fully human. TW

Judith Ann Diers, a Union Theological Seminary graduate, spent three years in Namibia. She wrote on African women theologians and interviewed Oduyoye at the 1992 EATWOT conference in Nairobi.

book review

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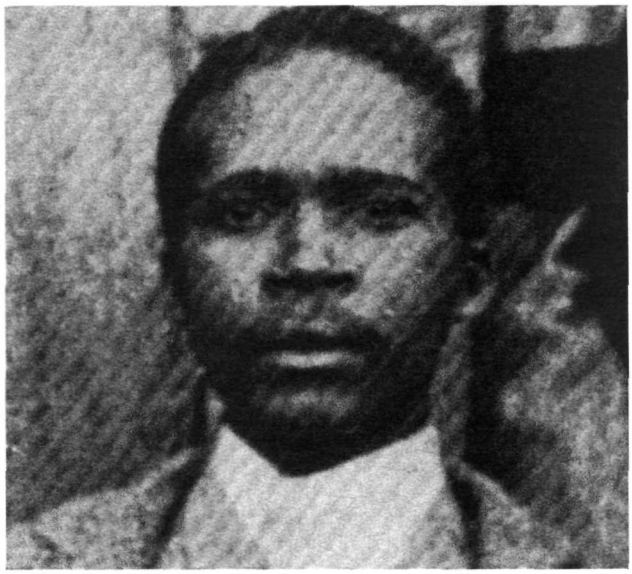
Witnesses, the quick and the dead

A brush with the extraordinary

by Julie A. Wortman

Bernard Mizeki respected the Shona spirit religion he encountered among Mangwende's people.



Bernard Mizeki Courtesy of the Society of St. John the Evangelist

The sound of flapping wings and a flash of light have indelibly etched the witness of 19th-century Anglican catechist Bernard Mizeki into the hearts of Zimbabwe Anglicans. This month as many as 8,000 or more will make the pilgrimage to the site of the hut and church he built near Marondera, on Zimbabwe's central *highveldt*, to participate in a four-day festival in Mizeki's honor — an annual event which has become the occasion for vigiling, testifying, preaching, praying, singing, healing and casting out demons.

"The Bernard Mizeki Festival is a unique event in the Anglican Communion," says Titus Presler, a U.S. priest now living in Massachusetts who served as rector of St. David's Mission and Bonda Church District in Zimbabwe's Manicaland for three years during the mid 1980s. "Nowhere else do so many Anglicans gather so regularly with such intensity. The festival recalls the ancient custom of pilgrimage to the Holy Land — a physical journey to a place where God is thought to have touched the human story in an extraordinary way."

The brush with the extraordinary which Mizeki pilgrims celebrate took place 99 years ago, on a June night, when two men dragged Mizeki out of his hut and attacked him with their spears. Wounded, Mizeki crawled into the protection of the night's darkness. Later that night, Mizeki's wife, Mutwa, and another woman heard a sound "like many wings of great birds" and saw a bright light in the direction where Mizeki had gone. When they went looking for the stricken man, he was nowhere to be found.

Probing Mizeki's life for prescient signs of this extraordinary ending, Zimbabwe Anglicans have found an icon of African Christianity, a phenomenon which may owe its beginnings to non-African missionaries, but which has been shaped by native peoples steeped bone-deep in the spiritual heritage of Africa.

Like his listeners, he had been afraid of all these spirits, and had honored them and made sacrifices to them, but now he had given his soul and life to the one Holy and Loving Spirit, whom we call God.

Mizeki was born in about 1861 on the coast of Mozambique, migrating in search of employment to Capetown, South Africa, as a teenager. There he encountered missionary Frederick Puller, a member of the England-based Anglican order of the Society of St. John the Evangelist. Puller baptized Mizeki in March 1886 and then trained him as a catechist. Puller also gave Mizeki charge over the St. Columba's Home for Africans, a boarding hostel on the outskirts of Capetown.

Eventually, Mizeki moved to what is now Zimbabwe, establishing a small mission to the people of Chief Mangwende. Here he met and married his wife, Mutwa.

A contemporary account of Mizeki preaching portrays him as an ardent Chris-

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness*. For information about the 1996 Mizeki pilgrimmage, write Titus Presler at 15 Clinton St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139-2303.

tian, but not a zealot. "Without any hestitation, he started to talk about the Father and Maker of all spirits, who could at will send them all out or call them all back to Him," the account reads. "Without His permission, [Mizeki] said, they were powerless to harm us. He said that at one time, like his listeners, he had been afraid of all these spirits, and had honored them and made sacrifices to them, but now he had given his soul and life to the one Holy and Loving Spirit, whom we call God. Because of this he had lost all anxiety, and no one could ever again disturb his peace and happiness."

Mizeki respected the Shona spirit religion of Mangwende's people, valuing its montheistic faith and its observance of a weekly day of rest for the land.

But as Mizeki made converts — the first was John Kapuya — he also made enemies. According to his biographer, Jean Farrant, on account of his Christianity some Africans saw Mizeki as an ally of the unwelcome western colonizers who were entering the area and against whom the local people were staging revolts. In addition, Chief Mangwende's sons, as well as the local diviner-healer, were jealous of Mizeki's influence with the people. For this latter reason, in particular, Anglican Africans see the fateful attack on Mizeki's life in 1896 as a martyrdom.

Next year will mark the centennial of Mizeki's enigmatic disappearance into the night. This time, among the thousands of pilgrims expected there will be Anglicans from beyond Zimbabwe's borders. U.S. delegations are planned from Presler's church in Cambridge, Mass., the Society of St. John the Evangelist and from the diocese of Massachusetts.

"Such a pilgrimage is incarnational: real people make a real journey; they meet other real people who become real friends in a way that transcends reading and theologizing," Presler says.

"Pilgrims to Mizeki next year will mark, learn and inwardly digest the spirituality of people among whom Chrstian churches are growing faster and with greater vitality than anywhere else in the world." TW

Bread for the World

While Congress considers sweeping cuts to the U.S. foreign aid program, Bread for the World is launching a nationwide campaign to safeguard development assistance to Africa, where 20 million are at risk of starvation. Thousands of Christians will join the campaign to retain federal funding for targeted self-help development programs in Africa.

"These are initiatives that are cost effective and will work," David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, says. "U.S. development aid to Africa amounts to less than one-tenth of one percent of all federal spending."

Half the people of Africa live in absolute poverty. Thirty percent of African children are malnourished. Across the continent, however, Africans are seizing opportunities and taking great initiatives through education, sustainable agriculture and democratization.

In an "offering of letters," more than 3,000 churches will write nearly 200,000 letters to members of Congress and place them in the offering plate. The letters will urge them to continue aid to Africa.

To become involved in the "Africa: Crisis to Opportunity Offering of Letters" campaign, write Bread for the World, 1100 Wayne Ave., Suite 1000, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or call 1-800-82-BREAD. Include $8 for an offering-of-letters kit or $25 to become a member of Bread for the World.

Kenneth Leech

The Witness *is unique: a popular Anglican journal with strong social and political convictions, well produced, open to debate, and accessible to a wide range of people. I am delighted to be able to promote it in England where there is nothing of its calibre.*

— Kenneth Leech, Author, priest and social activist

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"It may seem in some cases as if women's strong voices are being heard merely as whispers, but in many other cases, those same voices cause the earth to tremble."

— Musimbi Kanyoro

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The Witness

Volume 78 • Number 7/8 • July/August 1995

After Hiroshima:
can nonviolence prevail?

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Ellen Cooke

WHEN I SAW "A TRACT FOR ELLEN," a poem obviously about the Ellen Cooke scandal detailed in the preceding article (June 1995), I groaned. Please, Lord, not a smarmy forgive-her-she-knew-not-what-she-did bit of doggerel! But then I saw who wrote it, Deborah Bly, and I started to read, figuring it might not be so bad.

After I finished laughing, I immediately called my friends to read it to them over the phone. Thank you, Deborah, for giving me a good belly laugh about a subject that up until now had only generated outrage, embarrassment, disgust. You have successfully put the whole mess into perspective for me, and I hope, for many others. Yes, people can be deceitful, mean spirited, power-mad, selfish and worse. But they can also be downright silly. Praise God!

Nina Pratt
New York, NY

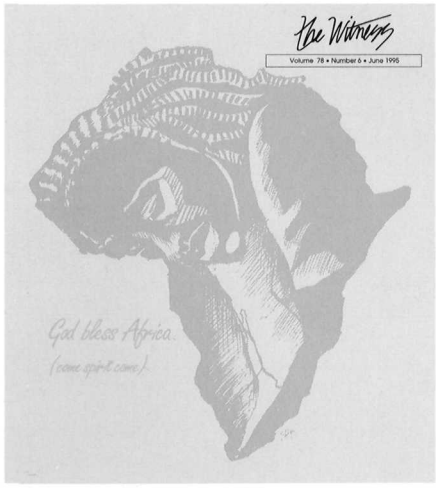
PLEASE BEGIN OUR SUBSCRIPTION with the May issue. I am interested in the continuing series on clergy sexual exploitation.

Marcia Dunigan
Langley, WA

Body wisdom

I HAVE JUST READ *Body Wisdom*. Once again you outdid yourselves. I really like the candor of Jeanie Wylie-Kellemann and Marianne Arbogast admitting a preference to live in the head and the "aha" of discovering body work. I think you are right that there is some compensatory grace stirring.

That is why I liked the piece on Michael Meade. It is the first thing on the men's movement that I have wanted to follow up on. I have written for more information. Julie Wortman confirmed my suspicion that the professionals in the church are not yet willing to look at professionalism as a principality. Bill Wylie-Kellermann's review of Spong was most charitable. It was also honest.



Andrew McThenia
Lexington, VA

Economies of sin

BISHOP BROWNING'S COMMENTS started out good. "Apathy" is one way of viewing the Church's "problem." However, I am inclined to view "outrage" as something that folk do rather than be "Just." "Outrage" may even feel good; may be cathartic. Justice is not so easy as "outrage."

Kim Byham is one person that I like. He has worked hard for we who are Homosexual. However, I have difficulty with Mr. Byham's article: Whenever any of we Gays agree to the concept of sin, a whole lot of folks assume that we are in some (usually unstated) way agreeing that Homosexuality is a sin. I am quite certain that Mr. Byham does not believe that; and, I noticed that his article tried to counter that concept. But, no matter how hard Mr. Byham and other folk try, the "We're all sinners" approach always ends up giving the impression that some folk are "more sinners" than others. And, "ten times out of ten" the sinfulness in question is allowed to be determined by the prejudices of the culture.

If I might, I would disagree with Mr. Epting: Fragmentation into denominations has been the salvation (if there is ever to be such) for the various denominations. What got the church in trouble in the first place was its combination of power and unity. As long as the church was persecuted things weren't too bad. But, once the church got into a position of power it became able to become apathetic. More to the point, it became able to slide towards conformity to the extent that the church itself became the oppressor. Indeed, the fragmentation into denominations was the church's method of trying to fight its tendency to be the oppressor.

Certainly, the result of the split into denominations has resulted in a multitude of oppressors. But, at least they have differed by degrees.

I do not believe there are any "sins" other than Racism, Sexism, and Heterosexism! I contend that when people of "minority races," women and Homosexuals inadequately defend their own natures (participate in the prejudices against their race, their womanhood, or their sexual orientation) that they also commit those sins against themselves. Rape, Spouse Abuse, and Child Abuse may merely be the expectable results of a culture that is distorted.

One strain of the Old Testament tried — albeit with difficulty — to contradict the prejudices built into its culture. That would be the tradition of the Prophets that ignored the Homosexual implication in the Sodom Story and emphasized "Lack of Neighborliness" instead. It would be the Mosaic concept that found a parallel in Christ; "Love God and Neighbor!"

I struggled with the question of suicide. And, bluntly, the conclusion that I came to was that I did not feel that Homosexuality "deserved death." It was my own struggle with that question that led me to rethink the entire Homosexual question. That decision that "Homosexuality did not deserve death" was but my first step in reconciling myself with my nature.

John Kavanaugh
Detroit, MI

Political prisoners

THANK YOU FOR YOUR EXCELLENT issue on political prisoners and especially on Mumia Abu-Jamal. Your company on this road towards justice is welcome. And your assistance at this critical moment means a great deal.

Noelle Hanrahan
Equal Justice

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MY NAME IS SCOTT CHALFIN. I am incarcerated at the Somerset Co. Jail in Somerville New Jersey. I'm in what's called a maximum security pod. In this pod we're not allowed to attend church in the Jail Chapel, receive papers or anything like that. We are allowed mail.

I and another Christian brother started a Bible study back in December '94. We call it "the Praise Bible Study." We do our best discipling to other men about Jesus. Recently and rarely, we came across a copy of your magazine (Political prisoners, 1/95). It was a GOD send. All the pages were there. Even an envelope inside. How appropriate.

We really enjoyed the article about "Religious Freedom" by Iron Thunderhorse. Oh how we can identify with him. We're kind of in the same boat! We love Jesus, but we're persecuted for our faith. We would like to know if you can help us by sending your magazine to us to share. We have no money but would use it with faith of Christ. We'd also like to know if you can send us Iron Thunderhorse's address so we can correspond with him and maybe he can send us a copy of his book. All these things we ask with the faith and hope of Jesus Christ so we can help further his Word. We testify to the glorious works of GOD and his Son and Spirit! In the name of Jesus, may GOD continue to Bless your ministry.

Scott Chalfin #26643
c/o Somerset County Jail
Somerville, NJ 08876

Witness praise

I REALLY APPRECIATE *THE WITNESS*. Everybody else in the world has turned into a member of the right. Yours is a fresh breeze.

Keep up the good work.

Ralph Parvin
Lakeland, FL

THE BRAZILIAN THEOLOGIAN Rubem Alves wrote, "Hope is hearing the melody of the future. Faith is to dance it." *The Witness* has heard that melody, and I always find it to be a faithful dance-partner!

Paul D. Burridge-Butler
Sheffield, England

YOUR APPROACHABLE, human-to-human tone is needed — And appreciated. You make us think. Thank you.

Jan Torgerson
Pettibone, ND

SPEAKING AS A DYED-IN-THE WOOL cradle Anglican, I find that *The Witness* makes for refreshing reading in what sometimes seems nowadays to be a wasteland of theological absurdity. For both me and my wife, your excellent magazine represents the acceptable face of the Episcopal Church.

Thank you!

F. Hugh Magee
Cashmere, WA

Promise Keepers alert

I INTENDED TO BE PART of the demonstration against the no-women-allowed Promise Keepers Conference at the Silver Dome. I arrived a half hour early, but left about 20 minutes later after becoming frightened by the enormity of the message presented just by the numbers of cars parked every possible place and several men just walking with their Bibles with determination on their faces.

I am a cradle Episcopalian, organist/choir director at St. Gabriel's, Eastpointe and a convention junkie. But as Chair of Michigan ERAmerica and an active member of Macomb County NOW I view the turn out last weekend as a backlash of the progress women have made in the U.S.

Any group that is exclusive bothers me. The angry white male is using huge amounts of money to undermine progress made in mainstream religions for women priests and the understanding of committed, monogamous relationships and problems for Lesbians and Gay Men in our homophobic society. Jesus Christ is my role model. He was very inclusive. That hatred and bigotry seem to be escalating shows that respecting those who differ from you needs to be taught. We can agree to disagree and still coexist and be friends. This should be our goal.

Barb Palmer
Utica, MI

[Ed. note: Fritz Eichland attended the Promise Keepers Conference to which Barb Palmer refers. See his report on p. 28.]

Classifieds

Biblical scholars available

The Anglican Association of Biblical Scholars (AABS) is a recently formed organization whose membership includes teachers of Bible at seminaries, colleges, and universities in the United States and Canada. Its main purpose is to involve the biblical studies profession more deeply in the common life of the church.

Preaching is an area of church life in which the AABS has often been urged to play an active role. In order to get some idea of what would be most helpful, suggestions from the grass roots are invited. If those who preach sermons and those who hear them could ask anything of the church's biblical scholars, anything that might make the communication of God's word more effective, what would it be?

Send suggestions to AABS Steering Committee, P.O. Box 2247, Austin, TX 78768-2247.

CLOUT gathering

CLOUT (Christian Lesbians Out Together) will hold its Third National Gathering Aug. 10-13, 1995 at SUNY Brockport (16 mi. west of Rochester, NY). For information call: 415-487-5427 or write: CLOUT, P.O. Box 460808, San Francisco, CA 94146.

AIDS/HIV Conference

Episcopalians, Lutherans and United Methodists are co-sponsoring a conference on AIDS/HIV Sept. 28 - Oct. 1, 1995 in St. Louis, Mo. For information contact Hope and Healing Conference, Suite 508, 2025 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20006; 202-628-6628.

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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Vital Signs *continues its series on clergy sexual misconduct with an interview with Massachusetts bishop, M. Thomas Shaw and a reader response to our story on "The Power Debate" on page 32.*

Cover: *Dragon* by Maruyama Okyo, 1781; Courtesy of the Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of Arts. Folded screens, gold on color. In Asia, the dragon is a sign of good favor, the cyclic nature of life and messages from the ancestors and gods.
Back cover: *Peace Dragon of Hiroshima* by Julia Barkley, acrylic on aluminum, 1976. This painting is in the permanent collection at the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima. It is also published in *Stars in Your Bones* (North Star Press of St. Cloud, Inc., 1990), a book of art, text and poetry composed by Julia Barkley, Alla Bozarth and Terri Hawthorne.

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The alchemy of community: turning rage into hope

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

When Three Mile Island leaked radiation 20 miles upwind from the home where my sister Mary was raising her babies, my anti-nuclearism began. I felt powerless, scared and enraged.

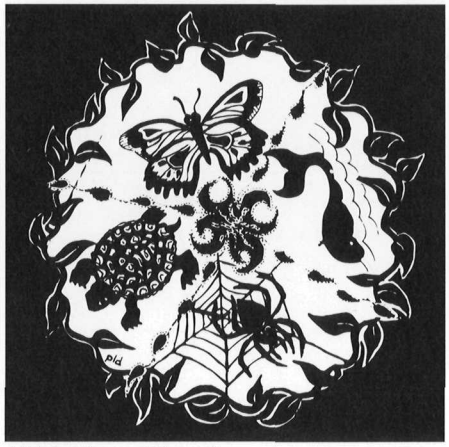
My roommate and her boyfriend took me to a demonstration at Three Mile Island on the fifth anniversary of the crisis. Chanting and singing with thousands of other people helped alleviate the despair I felt.

Standing in solidarity with others also helped when I attended a public service commission hearing and a utility spokesperson I had never met harassed me, saying, "You get more radiation sleeping with your boyfriend."

My first trial, for vigiling on August 6 at Bendix Corp., which at that time made the triggers for nuclear bombs, familiarized me with the comparable arrogance and contempt typical of many in the judicial system. When a grandmother explained to the judge why she had spilled ashes at the site, he responded "in my view, you've made an ash of yourself." It was downhill from there.

I feel fortunate that my experiences of leaning into authority, holding my own dignity, speaking or remaining silent were learned in a disciplined (if anarchic) community that regularly drew on its own strength and that of Dan Berrigan, Liz McAlister, Bill Stringfellow, Maurice MacCrackin, Ernest and Marion Bromley.

We spent a decade learning to stand in solidarity with one another as some engaged in property defacement at military sites and others didn't; as some hired lawyers and others represented themselves in court; as some decided to cross the line and others chose not to.



***Ahisma* (nonviolence)** Patricia Lay Dorsey

We learned the power of confessing the wrong reasons we might be attracted to an action (escapism, a need for admiration). When an action seemed right, we learned to follow the wave that our prayerful protest set in motion. We found a center from which to speak. We learned to cling to it in court and in jail.

I feel fortunate that my experiences of leaning into authority were learned in a disciplined (if anarchic) community.

Members of the Detroit Peace Community will vigil again on August 6 and 9. We will stand outside the Federal Building holding reminders of the atomic bombing as well of symbols of hope.

This year, I find myself reluctant to hold up photographs of Hiroshima's and Nagasaki's survivors. There is altogether too much horror already in the landscape. Detroit has been decimated in so many ways and the federal employees have technicolor images of death and destruction seared into their minds.

For years, the DPC — like so many others — has handed out leaflets suggesting that the U.S. decision to drop the bomb gave the moral victory to the Nazis and began a process that would lead to the climate of rage, despair and violence that is rampant in our country today.

The truth of this claim is now painful. Hope is so far gone that for both rural and urban Michigan residents, the gun is the only ally.

So instead of harping on the sin and the horror (although they must be named), we will raise up the antidote: the promise of hope in community, the promise in simplicity and freedom. We will bring our children and paper cranes. We will pray for the reconstruction of community in Detroit and around the world.

(In a break with tradition, we will write to the feds ahead of time, so that they don't experience alarm at our arrival. Since April, no parking has been allowed near the building and guards are posted around the circumference. Our vigil will include signs that read, "No more bombings, not here, not anywhere." We can commemorate the dead in Hiroshima *and* the dead in Oklahoma.)

continued on page 36

editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. **Patricia Lay Dorsey** is an artist in Grosse Pointe, Mich.

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The normalcy of nonviolence

by Holly Bridges Elliott

Nonviolence leads a curious double life. On the one hand, those who study it, catalog it, teach it and write about it tend to be seen (and sometimes to see themselves) as custodians of some exotic, fragile creature. On the other hand, the masses practice it with regularity. They just don't name it. They also never see it mirrored on the national news. So it's small surprise that so few Americans recognize it.

One of my neighbors is quite articulate about salvation through violence. "I can't understand why they don't let police have assault weapons," she calls out to me over the fence. I know she has been watching the network news.

"I don't see what's wrong with letting store owners livewire their doors and windows," she grumbles another day. "The criminal element is taking over. People are brutes. They don't understand that you mean business unless you get tough. Like Iran or Iraq, we should chop their hands off if they steal. What's the world coming to?"

Her symptoms, alarm and despair, are understandable when we consider the nature of the selective slices of so-called real life that bombard her senses. Her solutions seem fairly reasonable, given that the imaginative nonviolent solutions people use every day, in both private and public life, go unheralded in the media.

As the symptoms become graver, network-news damaged people begin to resemble Calvinists run amok: Humans, they cry, are a depraved lot. They'll always take their malignant mile if you give them a benign inch.

A similar assessment of human nature was once proposed to Gandhi. But Gandhi objected, saying "history" is the record of the *interruption* in the working of harmony and love.

"Two brothers quarrel," Gandhi said, "one of them repents and reawakens the love that was lying dormant in him. The two again begin to live in peace; nobody takes note of this." But if the two brothers "take up arms or go to the law — their doings would be immediately noticed in the press, they would be the talk of their neighbors and would probably go down in history."

The force of love and harmony is like an even rhythmic line on a heart monitor. The occasional seismic blips are the sign of abnormality.

Once we turn off the TV and look at the lives around us, we can see that every day families, friends, co-workers and neighbors get in serious arguments and don't kill each other. They find a way to patch it up. Like the sheep farmer who, instead of suing or attacking his neighbors whose dogs were killing his stock, made a present of a lamb to their children.

Once we turn off the TV, we can see that every day families, friends, co-workers and neighbors get in serious arguments and don't kill each other.

Every day motorists infuriate each other and don't shoot it out, or they do something clever to let off steam. A woman I know trots out her arsenal of Yiddish curses — "May your teeth go mad and eat your head!"

Every day police officers intervene in potentially violent situations without using lethal force. Gary Margolis of South Burlington, Vt., is a police officer imposing in stature as well as wit. Once he approached two angry men who had gotten out of their cars ready to fight. "Hey," cried Margolis. "There's gonna be a fight! Somebody call 911!" Then he looked at himself with surprise. "Wait, I *am* 911!" The men were diverted just long enough to defuse the tension so they could explain the situation.

Every day a mother somewhere checks the impulse to clobber her child and chooses a nonviolent way out. "I feel like I'm talking to an extraterrestrial!" she tells the kid, then retreats to the bathroom for a few minutes to cool off.

In 1989 alone, 13 nations comprising over 32 percent of humanity, experienced nonviolent revolutions that succeeded beyond anyone's wildest expectations in every case except China.

The term "nonviolence" has been equated with passivity and cowardice. Transforming "nonviolence" into something positive and popular may only happen when "violence" finally gets a bad reputation in this culture.

Once the disease of network-news damage has run its course, one may be able to see things clearly. Like a person whose fever has broken, we may rise out of delirium to see that violence is not the rule. It is the exception in human relation — the *interruption.*

In the meantime, focussing attention on the successful uses of nonviolence, telling stories that illustrate its creative but downright ordinary nature, is good medicine that the peacemaking community has to offer to the network-news damaged. And if they don't call it "nonviolence" so much the better. TW

Holly Bridges Elliott, a writer and editor living in Los Angeles, has researched a book on nonviolent tactics used in personal and public life.

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We Shall Bring Forth New Life

by Sadako Kurihara

It was night in the basement of a broken building.
Victims of the atomic bomb
Crowded into the candleless darkness,
Filling the room to overflowing —
The smell of fresh blood, the stench of death,
The stuffiness of human sweat the writhing moans —
When, out of the darkness, came a wondrous voice.
"Oh! The baby's coming!" it said.
in the basement turned to living hell
A young woman had gone into labor!
The others forgot their own pain in their concern:
What could they do for her, having not even a match
To bring light to the darkness?
Then came another voice: "I am a midwife.
I can help her with the baby."
It was a woman who had been moaning in pain only
moments before.
And so, a new life was born
In the darkness of that living hell.
And so, the midwife died before the dawn,
Still soaked in the blood of her own wounds.
We shall give forth new life!
We shall bring forth new life!
Even to our death.

— from *Songs from Hiroshima*

Sadako Kurihara was 32 when she experienced the Hiroshima bomb. She wrote this poem, she said, at the end of "the horrific month of August, at a time when corpses lay everywhere in Hiroshima. The people who were not suffering from the direct effects of the bombardment were slowly dying from the effects of the radiation. At a time like this, new life had been born; I was fascinated, and had to write it down."

Dirge Without Music

by Edna St. Vincent Millay

I am not resigned to the shutting away of loving hearts in the hard
ground.
So it is, and so it will be, for so it has been, time out of mind:
Into the darkness they go, the wise and the lovely. Crowned
With lilies and with laurel they go; but I am not resigned.

Lovers and thinkers, into the earth with you.
Be one with the dull, the indiscriminate dust.
A fragment of what you felt, of what you knew,
A formula, a phrase remains, — but the best is lost.

The answers quick and keen, the honest look, the laughter, the
love, —
They are gone. They are gone to feed the roses. Elegant and
curled
Is the blossom. Fragrant is the blossom. I know. but I do not
approve.
More precious was the light in your eyes than all the roses in the
world.

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave
Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;
Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the brave.
I know. But I do not approve. And I am not resigned.

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Revisiting VJ Day — with a U.S. bias

by Samuel Wylie

Ed. Note: *My father, Samuel J. Wylie, was a Navy chaplain on the St. George stationed off Okinawa. His letters home help illustrate the climate into which the atomic bomb was dropped. My mother and two older sisters, then babies, were waiting for him.*

My father believed Christians should take no delight in killing, but that soldiers must fight hard and unsentimentally. He even told his parents that people gathering signatures to protest bombing cities were "badly mistaken," adding, "It seems ridiculous to be so sentimental about the Japanese cities that you are willing to spare them at the expense of thousands of our 18 and 20 year old soldiers and Marines." He died in 1972, but I often wonder how he would have responded to recent assertions that Japan had been actively trying to surrender for six months before atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It would seem that some of the nightmare he describes here could have been prevented by a change in U.S. foreign policy.

I did not alter my father's references to "Japs" because the derogatory reference is the one many Americans used.

— J.W-K.

12 August 1945

On the day I reported aboard the St. George, the Captain said, "Chaplain you may have thought Saipan was a forward area, but you haven't seen anything yet. Within a week, we will be going to a Really Forward Area." And we did!

All the way North. There was a great deal of tension in the air. The St. George is well armed, but after all she is an auxiliary ship, and sitting at a point 300 miles South of Japan, 300 miles North of Formosa, and a little less than that East of China seemed like a daring venture.

I remember one Head of Department's meeting when the Captain addressed us and said we would have to be prepared to cope with:

1. the Japanese air attacks
2. swimmers — chaps who swim out from the shore
3. suicide boats — boats that do the same thing, but with a bigger charge of explosives
4. possible fire from shore batteries

By the night before we arrived, we were all pretty sober people in serious conversation.

We arrived at Kerama Retto at General Quarters (every man at his battle station). The Army was on the beach and mortar fire was going on all around. We waited anxiously to see if the Japs had any shore batteries that they could use on us. Evidently they didn't. We were spectators of the Army's War only.

A single Jap kamikaze had come swooping in. Nobody flinched, nobody tried to run away; every man who had a job to do went on doing it like the men our boys are — watching sudden death shooting straight toward them.

We were within rifle shot of the beach, and we could see the Japanese, but for some strange reason they did not try to harry us with rifle fire. The contrast in our relative positions that first day (Army and Navy) was brought out at dinner time. While we sat in the wardroom and ate shrimp cocktail, steak, pie and ice cream, the mortar firing on the beach was very audible. I felt guilty. But that night, the relationship changed, and for the remainder of the operation, the soldiers were very willing to eat K-rations on the beach rather than share our luxuries afloat.

All hands on deck

Sunset came and went. I had a Mark class in session in the library. It was the last one for four months. In the middle of it, the gongs went. It was the first time I had heard them. (We used the bugle for practice drills.)

The gongs on the St. George always mean the real thing. My Mark class began to tumble out of the library and join the teaming crowd out in the passage way. With amazing order, which makes a Navy, 700 men got up and down narrow ladders in a very few minutes.

I went to sick bay. Sick bay has no G.Q. telephone so we did not know what was going on overhead. We were at G.Q. far into the night. Then "secure" sounded; it came to be the most wonderful sound we ever heard. After a couple of hours sleep, "bong, bong, bong — 21 times. Then the bugle call, then "General Quarters, General Quarters, all hands man your battle stations!" This lasted almost till dawn. Our days went on like that. Two or three times a night; once or twice during the day. Sometimes, I took up my battle station on the gun deck. Up there people were alert. They had to be. And, of course, on the gun deck you could see what was going on.

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Suicide attacks

We saw a great deal. Several times Japanese planes were traced in from way out. Forty miles, 30, 25, 20, 10, 8, and then we could see the shooting. Many of them were shot down in sight of us. It seemed just like the newsreels and yet, less exciting somehow. The false glamour was missing. People didn't think of the pilot as a person, they were aware only of the plane. Then, we started to feel the weight of the suicide attacks. I can't say much about that [because of the censors]. We saw our own ships hit, first quite a ways out where we could see only fire in the night, and smoke by day. Then closer.

About the second week we were there, in mid-April, I went on a flight to Japan. I have never been so scared in my life. I went, not at all out of any great bravery. I am not afraid to fight aboard ship, but air combat doesn't appeal to me one little bit. I went along because the feeling of ship vs. squadron is sometimes strong, and I thought a ship's chaplain who made a combat mission would be able to quickly convince the squadron that he was a squadron chaplain too. I guess it worked.

Several times the plane went to General Quarters. Planes made that signal by blinking the lights (our seaplanes are huge affairs with a large crew, berthing compartments, flight deck, galley and gun stations so some such system is needed). I stayed up on the flight deck right behind the navigator. We went to G.Q. because radar had picked up Japanese planes trailing us. They followed us on two or three separate occasions but never came in to fight.

Back on the ship, we discovered the ironic fact that they had had their first night's sleep in a long time. And the last, too.

Life continued at the same pace. But people kept cheerful and good-natured. Discipline was only very slightly relaxed. The work got done. General Quarters occurred remarkably seldom during the day on Sunday. With from three to five services on as many ships, that is something to be grateful for. The days that it did occur played havoc with the schedule. But we made it, and between us chaplains on the larger ships, every man in quite a radius who wanted to get to Church on Sunday had the opportunity.

Samuel Wylie, a U.S. Navy chaplain in 1945, with a Japanese child.

More ships were hit. Some very close. I can't talk about that. One or two I boarded, and long as I live I shall never forget the horror of sudden death. I felt very inadequate and new to that kind of ministry. I helped, I guess, and I kept calm of course, but I felt that I hadn't much to give. But I was learning what I needed to know. And I was proud of the Navy.

Burying sailors

I buried many boys. I watched the cemetery on the Island grow by leaps and bounds. Sometimes the work got ahead of the men who made the arrangements. That was always bad, but it couldn't be helped. Now it is a beautiful cemetery. Respect and reverence were always shown — even when things were very primitive.

Then came Sunday, May 6. The Church Working Party was called as usual, and I was down in the mess hall setting up Church for our usual first Sunday of the month Communion Service. The gongs sounded, the bugle blew, all the fanfare of G.Q. let loose. We went topside; there were Jap planes within three miles, but apparently heading out.

The Captain gave a guess that we would secure from G.Q. in five minutes. I went below to the mess hall in order to get started the minute they sounded "secure." You can't waste time when you have three or four services.

Hit by a *kamikaze*

Suddenly, without any warning to those of us below deck, the ship vibrated with a sharp concussion. About 10 seconds later, the ship's bell broke out into wild ringing and the P.A. System blared: "Fire on the seaplane deck; Fire on the seaplane deck!" I tore up to see — then down to sick bay to help with the casualties.

Long later I found out that over the hills surrounding us a single Jap *kamikaze* had come swooping in, and though we and all the ships in the anchorage opened up on him nothing could stop him. The pilot may well have been dead when he hit us. Anyway, in he came, while gun crews directly in his path stood straight at their guns.

Nobody flinched, nobody tried to run away; every man who had a job to do

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went on doing it like the men our boys are — watching sudden death shooting straight toward them. Miraculously the damage was slight. The only reason we were not a mass of flaming wreckage like many another ship I saw was the providential way he hit us. I am not allowed to discuss battle damage except to say that we are most fortunate that he hit us in exactly the way he did; any other way could have meant grim things. After all, we carry aviation gasoline, bombs, torpedoes.

Soon after I got to sick bay, casualties started to come in. Two were critically injured. And one man brought in dead had to be removed to make room for the living. I did what I could. And because they were my own boys and I knew them, I was able to do a good deal, I think.

Ace flyer lost

By that time, it became known that we had three dead. One was our ace flier. The irony of it struck us all deeply. He had gone looking for trouble in the sky. He had wild adventures every flight, because he went where he knew he could find them.

We would not have been surprised to have had him die in his plane. But instead, he was killed getting out of bed. (Fliers have no G.Q. stations.) His stateroom was in what most people would call the safest part of the ship. But that is how he died. He had a wife, and a baby whom he had never seen. He was the most popular flier on the ship, a good friend of mine. He had received Communion from me the preceding month.

The other two boys who died were enlisted men from our plane-tending division. One was a Catholic; the other a Methodist lad. When we opened the locker of the Protestant boy to pack his things, we found a picture of his home Church pasted on the inside of the locker.

By this time, it was about 1300. I had a service on another ship at 1400 and felt that there was all the more reason to go on and conduct the Lord's supper for these other lads who might easily be the next to take a kamikaze. When I got back, we took our dead lads to the beach and read the committal service. They were buried with full military honors.

Then back to the ship and the regular communion service — just eight hours delayed. I wanted to have church. I above all did not want even the symbol of the changelessness of God's grace and favor to be prevented by the action of men.

I gathered my choir together and asked them if we could have the full service — Sung Call to Worship, choral responses, etc. I was afraid that maybe they had had too much. One of my big, rugged almost tough characters grinned back; "I don't see why in hell we can't Chaplain." And we had it. I have never conducted a service where the responsibility on the minister to bring comfort and assurance was greater; or where the congregation was more receptive. We had reached the consecration when the warning came that an air raid was imminent. The Captain left.

I paused in the service to say that we had finished the parts that preceded the reception of the sacrament and that the altar would remain set up and ready for them to drop back in small groups as they could during or after the raid to receive the sacrament. Then I started to administer the Lord's Supper.

About half way through, the gongs sounded. Scared boys, but disciplined boys, tore reverently (if they can do that) out of church and up to their battle stations. I stayed beside the elements. Those whose battle stations were in the mess hall came in — saw the Table and reverently stood in silence and respect. Then, individuals, or men in twos and threes started coming back, dropping down on their knees at the Communion rail, receiving the Lord's Supper.

G.Q. secured, and more came. Then Church was over.

I went back to sick bay. Our critically injured people were coming out of their shock a little and were aware of what was going on. The most seriously hurt one was pretty low. The other had his eyes burned shut, and of course, he couldn't move. The gongs sounded again. I knew the temporarily blinded boy would appreciate not being alone. The thought of abandoning ship in his condition must have been a nightmare to him. Of course, there would be corpsmen to look after him, if that happened, but I figured he would feel better if there were someone around all the way through. G.Q lasted all night, or almost.

I went back to sick bay. Our critically injured people were coming out of their shock . . . The gongs sounded again. I knew the temporarily blinded boy would appreciate not being alone.

Psychoneurotic casualties

Days went on. Other ships were hit; one badly and very close. It kept renewing the suspense and fear in our boys. One officer and one enlisted man became psychoneurotic casualties. We envied the fleet. They make their assault then steam away. Just being underway does wonders for morale. But we stayed and stayed and did all our fighting at anchor.

We shot down a plane. That gives the ship distinction. We now have two small Japanese flags painted on the side of our bridge; one edged in black. We stopped it the hard way.

To our great joy, we got orders to leave

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Okinawa on July 12 and proceed here for repairs.

It is now Sunday afternoon. We are still waiting, straining our ears for word that the War is over. Everyone is tense, but hopeful. Surely they will say "yes" to our statement about the Emperor, and we can cease firing.

Church was almost a hilarious occasion this morning. We had an unusually good attendance, and I spoke on our responsibilities as Christians — civilian Christians — pointing out that within a year they would be going back to about 135 parishes throughout the country in a couple of dozen denominations. *If* they and their fellows went back with some high purposes and covenants, it would be a nation widely influenced.

I can't write more. I can't think of anything or talk of anything but peace and the chance of seeing you in a very few months. I can hardly sleep at night.

15 August 1945

Dear Mother and Dad,

This is the happy day for which we have all waited. It came sooner than we expected, though the suspense of these days has been hard.

It is difficult to put into words how much the day has meant — all the hopes and dreams that now seem more likely to be realized, all the fears that we can put away from us forever.

Whistles and sirens on ships shrieked out all over the harbor, shouts went up from the decks—everybody has been hilarious, and deeply grateful. Tears came to my eyes as I looked out on our harbor, and saw one conspicuous white ship among the gray ones— taking no part in all the demonstrations. It was a hospital ship. I felt sorry for the lads aboard, but happy that soon the Navy would be releasing her back to the passenger line that used to own her, and she would be plying the seas on pleasure cruises instead of the grim job she was doing. TW

'Wars which none can win'

by Dorothy Day

Another point of view was offered by Dorothy Day, a journalist and founder of the Catholic Worker movement which offers hospitality to the homeless and protests war. She gave this address to the Liberal-Socialist Alliance in New York City on December 8, 1941.

There is now all this patriotic indignation about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and Japanese expansionism in Asia. Yet not a word about American and European colonialism in this same area. We, the British, the French, and others set up spheres of influence in Asia, control national states — against the expressed will of these states — and represent imperialism in the Orient.

We dictate to Japan as to where she can expand economically and politically and we declare what policy she must observe. From our nationalistic and imperialistic point of view we have every right to concentrate American military forces in the Philippines, confronting Japan at her front door. Were Japan to face us from Cuba what would be our reaction? If the United States insists upon a colonialist policy in Asia then this nation must be prepared for a militaristic backlash ...

Hitler is a madman; however, our American State Department is quite aware that — under treaty — Germany must declare war on any power which moves against the Empire of Japan. Need I remind you that the Fascists are allies of the Russian Communists? What action will Moscow take in support of Germany? Are we actually prepared to confront a German-Russian alliance? But let us suppose that the Soviet Union does nothing at the moment at least. Is it not probable that Hitler will observe her own dicta and move to the East where expansionism can readily be accomplished? How then can the United States justify a military alliance with Stalin whose blood baths have rivaled Hitler's purges? So we are faced with a dilemma: either we go to war against a German-Italian-Russian-Japanese alliance — a suicidal undertaking — or we become Russia's defender — an ideological crime.

But I waste rhetoric on international politics — the breeding grounds of war over the centuries. The balance of power and other empty slogans inspired by a false and flamboyant nationalism have bred conflict throughout civilized history.

And it has become too late in human history to tolerate wars which none can win. Nor dare we quibble about just wars. Evil enough when the finest of our youth perished in conflict and even the causes of these conflicts were soon lost to memory. Even more horrible today when cities can go up in flames and brilliant scientific minds are searching out ultimate weapons. War must cease. There are no victories. The world can bear the burden no longer. Yes we must make a stand.

Even as I speak to you I may be guilty of what some men call treason. But we must reject war: yes, we must now make a stand. War is murder, rape, ruin, death; war can end our civilization. I tell you that — within a decade — we will have weapons capable of ending this world as we have known it.

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Did the U.S. prolong the war?

by William Lanouette

Ed. Note: *The American claim is that the atomic bombs were dropped in order to save hundreds of thousands of lives by forcing Japan to surrender before a planned Allied invasion. But peace advocates have argued for some time that the U.S. deliberately made it difficult for Japan to surrender. William Lanouette, author of* Genius in the Shadows: A Biography of Leo Szilard, the Man Behind the Bomb, *examines these arguments.*

At 8:15 on the morning of August 6, 1945, the world got a glimpse of its own mortality. At that moment, the city of Hiroshima was obliterated by a fireball that sent waves of searing heat, then a deafening concussion, across the landscape. Three days later, a second bomb hit Nagasaki. In another five days, Japan surrendered, ending World War II.

After the bomb was dropped, President Harry S. Truman said flatly that its purpose was to save lives. But was ending the Pacific War promptly the only reason for leveling two cities, instantly killing 70,000 at Hiroshima and 40,000 at Nagasaki and, within the next five years, an estimated 230,000 more people from the aftereffects of the two bombs? The official view first came under serious challenge in 1965, with the publication of "Atomic Diplomacy" by historian Gar Alperovitz. Drawing on secretary of war Henry Stimson's unpublished diaries, Alperovitz argued that postwar relations with the Soviet Union were an important consideration in the decision to drop the bomb. During the three decades since, other evidence that raises questions about Truman's explanation has surfaced in the Manhattan Project records at the National Archives, the papers of physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, and the official and personal documents of America's wartime presidents, diplomats, military leaders and scientists.

Taking this information into account, it still seems fair to conclude that the predominant reason for dropping the bomb was the belief that it would end the war quickly and spare American soldiers. But other factors clearly influenced the decision. These include:

* Postwar diplomacy. Truman's new secretary of state, James F. Byrnes, and a number of military leaders saw the awesome weapon as a way to make the Soviets "more manageable" — first, by ending the Pacific war before they could join it in mid-August, as Stalin promised; second, by countering political gains the Soviets had already made in Europe.

* Bureaucratic momentum. Fearing that Germany was working on an atomic bomb, President Franklin D. Roosevelt had begun America's A-bomb research in 1939 and agreed to make it a high-priority project days before Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Building the bomb required enormous sums of money and the efforts of many of the nation's leading scientists — an undertaking that became known as the Manhattan Project. In the end, the commitment to build the bomb produced a powerful impulse to use it.

* Political justification. Some American military and civilian leaders pushed the White House to use the bomb before Japan could surrender in order to justify the billions that had been spent — without Congressional knowledge or approval — on the Manhattan Project. As an aide to Undersecretary of War Robert Patterson said, "If this thing works, they won't investigate anything, and if it doesn't work ... they won't investigate anything else." Its leaders had to justify the $2 billion ($26 billion in today's dollars) expense to Congress and the public, which had no idea of the scope of the A-bomb work, for the more than 160,000 workers at 37 top-secret factories around the country. Some scientists preferred bombing Japan twice to test both the uranium and plutonium weapons. The four urban targets considered for bombing had been spared conventional bombing so U.S. military observers could see the A-bombs' full effect on large cities.

*Psychological factors. After four costly years of war, Americans in high office were eager to crush the enemy and bring the boys home. Public feeling was running so high against the Japanese and their wartime behavior — the slaughter of civilians at Nanking, the surprise attack on

Truman's new secretary of state, took office on July 3. A novice at diplomacy but a skilled politician, he worried that public opinion would turn against the president unless Japan was brought to its knees.

An expanded version of William Lanouette's analysis is available in the January/February, 1995 issue of *Civilization,* the magazine of the Library of Congress. **Erika Weihs'** art is available as a postcard from the War Resisters' League, 5 for $2, 339 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10012; 212-228-0450.

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Pearl Harbor, the Bataan death march, the barbaric treatment of Allied POWs (one study after the war found that 27 percent died in custody, compared with four percent of those held in Germany and Italy) — that many American leaders were in no mood to take additional casualties. They were appalled at the thought of more American boys, who found glory in life, being killed by Japanese kamikaze pilots who found glory in death. In the eyes of war-weary Americans, the enemy had been demonized as "Japs," creatures who needed to be blasted and burned out of island caves.

Because all the principal figures have since died, it is chiefly with archival evidence that the various arguments are now being made.

As questions were raised after the war about whether it was really necessary to use the atomic bomb, administration officials cited higher and higher casualty figures to justify their decision. "When Truman wrote his memoirs in 1955, he said 500,000 American lives were saved as a result of the bombing," says Dartmouth College historian Martin J. Sherwin, whose 1975 book on the origins of the Cold War, *A World Destroyed,* examined in detail how U.S. leaders decided to use nuclear weapons. Winston Churchill, who later called the bomb "a miracle of deliverance," wrote that more than a million lives were saved. These upward revisions, according to Sherwin, suggest that the two wartime leaders felt a serious need to justify the bomb's use.

The debate over whether the U.S. was justified in dropping the bomb starts with two words: "unconditional surrender." With their defeat on Okinawa in June 1945, the Japanese clearly were going to lose the war. Should the U.S. have modified the terms of surrender, approved by the Allies at their Casablanca conference in 1943, and allowed one condition: a guarantee that the emperor and the imperial throne would survive? And if the U.S. had offered this guarantee, would the powerful war faction in Japan have allowed the nation to lay down its arms?

Peace cranes **by Erika Weihs** courtesy of War Resisters' League

Historical research since the war shows that in the spring and summer of 1945, there were profound disputes in Washington about unconditional surrender. Churchill had suggested mitigation of the unconditional surrender terms when he met with Stalin and Roosevelt at Yalta in February 1945. The U.S. Army chief of staff, Gen. George C. Marshall, and the White House chief of staff, Adm. William D. Leahy, both favored retaining the emperor. So did assistant secretary of war John J. McCloy and Joseph C. Grew, the former U.S. ambassador to Japan, who was then acting secretary of state. But other influential advisers held to the original terms, among them FDR's personal adviser, Harry Hopkins, and two assistant secretaries of state, Archibald MacLeish and Dean Acheson.

An ad hoc committee of Stimson, Grew and Navy Secretary James Forrestal was charged with drafting surrender terms. On July 2, the group recommended to Truman that the U.S. promise Japan it could retain a "constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty" as long as the regime remained peaceful. But a Gallup Poll that month showed one-third of Americans favored executing Japan's emperor Hirohito as a war criminal and another 20 percent wanted him jailed or exiled. Only 7 percent wanted him to stay on the throne, even as a figurehead of a new government.

Byrnes, Truman's new secretary of state, took office on July 3. A novice at diplomacy but a skilled politician, he worried that public opinion would turn against the president unless Japan was brought to its knees, and he was convinced that negotiating a surrender with a hated and all but vanquished foe would make the president appear weak.

When Truman went to the Big Three conference in Potsdam in mid-July, he took along the draft of the surrender terms prepared by Stimson, Grew and Forrestal. Truman also took along Byrnes. During the meeting, the Americans received word that the first test of the A-bomb on July 16 in New Mexico had been a stunning success. Byrnes persuaded the president to delete from the draft declaration the section that would have guaranteed the continuation of the imperial system.

The July 26 Potsdam Declaration promised the Japanese they would not be

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"enslaved as a race or destroyed as a nation." At the same time, it demanded the "unconditional surrender of all Japanese armed forces," warning that the alternative would be "prompt and utter destruction."

In Tokyo, pressures for a settlement had been rising all spring in various government circles. The Japanese had been fighting a losing defensive war for more than two years, and they seemed ready to break in April when allied forces invaded Okinawa and the government of retired Gen. Koiso Kuniaki resigned.

Japan's leaders had considered Okinawa a decisive battle that would show the Allies that continued fighting would be dreadfully costly. And it was. During the three-month island campaign, 7,000 American soldiers and Marines died, along with 5,000 sailors. It was the highest death toll for any single battle in the central Pacific campaign, surpassing the total of 6,800 in the yard-by-yard battle for Iwo Jima that had ended in late March. But the number of Japanese killed on Okinawa was far higher, with estimates approaching 100,000.

Hirohito and such older advisers as retired Adm. Yonai Mitsumasa and Gen. Koiso hoped to end a way they knew was lost. *Hirohito called in the chief cabinet members and urged them to seek peace by any diplomatic means.

Throughout the summer, Adm. Suzuki's government continued to approach the Soviet Union, which was still officially neutral in the Pacific war, about brokering a favorable peace with the Allies.

The Soviets, however, dragged their feet. Months earlier at Yalta, before Japan's crushing defeats in the central Pacific, the Americans and the British had thought it was crucial to get the Soviets into the Asian conflict. They promised the Soviets the use of Dairen and Port Arthur on the Manchurian coast, recovery of the southern half of Sakhalin Island and control of the Kurile Islands. In return, the Soviets pledged to enter the hostilities by mid-August. Now, with Japan enfeebled, it was clearly in the Soviets' interest to prolong the war until they could get into it — and collect the concessions they had won at Yalta.

The Americans had cracked the Japanese diplomatic code as early as 1939, and through radio intercepts they knew about Tokyo's urgent approaches to Moscow. "Unconditional surrender is the only obstacle to peace," the foreign minister, Togo Shinegori , instructed his representative in Moscow on July 13.

When Stimson told Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower in mid-July 1945 that the bomb would be used, Ike was disheartened by the news. "Japan was at that very moment seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of face," Eisenhower recalled in 1963. "It wasn't necessary to hit them with that awful thing."

Truman was in a weak position to reverse course on the bomb. While he is viewed today as a strong and successful president, in 1945 he was considered a lightweight. FDR's death badly shook the nation's confidence. Perhaps Roosevelt alone had the political stature not to use the weapon he had helped create.

As rational people, we like to think that momentous decisions are based on reason and conviction or, in the words used in 1944 at Hyde Park when FDR and Churchill weighed using the bomb on Japan, "mature consideration." Hiroshima reminds us that fear and doubt are every bit as important as reason and conviction. Whatever the verdict on the bombing of Japan, one thing is certain: it was not done after "mature consideration." At a time when humanity has developed weapons powerful enough to destroy the planet, that failure may be the most instructive legacy of the Pacific war. TW

Back issues with study guides!

The following back issues of The Witness *are available for study groups or personal use.*

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Just mark the issues you would like and mail a check ($3 per copy) made out to *The Witness* to 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1822. Study guide packets of 8 copies and a study guide are $25.

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Confronting the World Bank

Calling for an end to the World Bank and IMF's oppression of the poor, members of the Atlantic Life Community and students from St. John's-St. Ben's University in Minnesota held a nonviolent protest at the World Bank's International Finance office in Washington D.C. on Holy Thursday afternoon.

The action began when Phil Berrigan and I poured blood on the World Bank logo located outside the main entrance. Dominican sisters Carol Gilbert and Ardeth Platte, Berrigan and I then proceeded inside to the main lobby with a picture of a starving child, a bagful of earth, and several vegetables which were placed on the floor.

Gilbert and Platte poured blood around these elements to symbolize the death and destruction caused by World Bank policies, including the destruction of the rain forests and the relocation of tens of thousands of people due to "development" projects.

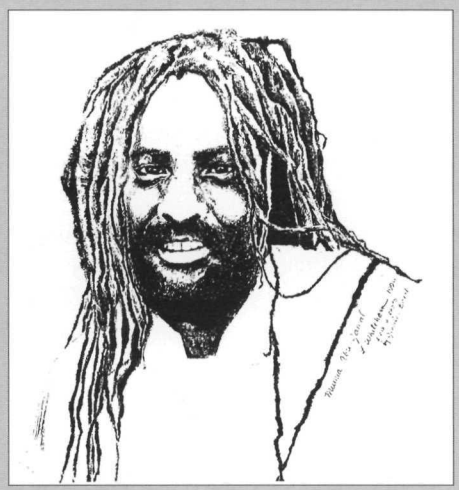
Meanwhile the rest of our community entered the lobby and, together, conducted a liturgy of repentance. A litany was offered, we sang, and read from the scripture. Bread was blessed and shared. World Bank employees were invited to share in the bread. Some did. We invited observers to join with us in proclaiming this year as a time of jubilee, a time to cancel all debts and to establish justice for the poor.

Police ordered the community to leave. Gilbert, Platte, Berrigan, Mike Walli and I remained in the lobby witnessing on behalf of the victims and the endangered earth. We were arrested and charged with "destruction of property," a felony, and "unlawful entry." We were jailed overnight. The felony was changed to a misdemeanor and we were released on personal recognizance. We were also given "stay away" orders from 13 World Bank and IMF owned properties in D.C. A trial date was set for August.

—Art Laffin
Atlantic Life

The year of Jubilee

A packet designed to help church people understand the theology of Jubilee is available for $6 from the United Church Board for World Ministries Global Education and Advocacy, 700 Prospect Ave., 6th floor, Cleveland, OH 44115. The packet includes sermon ideas, group exercises, ritual celebrations and media tips that support the release of slaves and forgiveness of debts with an emphasis on current international and domestic policy.



Mumia Abu-Jamal L. Whitehorn

Death warrant

The governor of Pennsylvania, Thomas Ridge, has signed a death warrant for Mumia Abu-Jamal. This is the third warrant he has signed, bringing to an end a 50-year moratorium on the death penalty in Pennsylvania. Abu-Jamal (to whom the 1/95 cover of *The Witness* is dedicated) is described by Michael Yasutake as the most important spokesperson against the death penalty.

Abu-Jamal was a prominent African-American radio journalist in Philadelphia and a Black Panther leader. Although he pleads innocence, Abu-Jamal was sentenced for the murder of a police officer in 1981. To protest his execution, scheduled for Aug. 17, write to Ridge at Main Capitol Bdg., Rm 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120. Tax deductible contributions can be sent to the Bill of Rights Foundation, marked "Jamal," Committee to save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, NY, NY 10023-5001. You can arrange to bring a political prisoners art show (created to support Abu-Jamal) to your city by calling Mary Taylor at (201) 435-3244.

Beyond the Creed

The interview underway, Uta [Ranke-Heinemann, a German author published by Harper] turned her criticism to the Roman Catholic creed. "What does it say about ze life of Jesus? Only zat he was 'born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified and buried.' In between is not interesting for Christians, because he said something — love you enemies — zey do not want to hear. Zey care only about zat fairy tale for children five year old — the Virgin Mary and redemption by blood. Zey can't live without blood. Zey vont to be redeemed by blood, the death penalty and military retaliation. Jesus may as well have sat at home all 33 years doing nothing but crossword puzzles. Doesn't matter."

—John D. Spalding
"My travels with Uta"
***Christian Century,* 4/19/95**

On the bright side

Students at the University of Michigan Law School raised $1,000 to purchase the right to spew five tons of acid-rain producing sulfur dioxide into the air. The pollution rights shares are auctioned by the federal government through the Chicago Board of Trade. By purchasing the rights, the students (who belong to the UM environmental law society) made them unavailable to corporations.

***Detroit Free Press*, 3/29/95**

Short takes

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Hiroshima school girl speaks
interview by Anne Chisholm

[Forty years after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, English writer Anne Chisholm interviewed a small group of survivors who had been schoolgirls at the time.]

Shigeko is a small woman with quick movements, smiling and full of energy. The top half of her face is sunny and open, with unusually pretty dark eyes; she has long thick black hair, falling casually over her forehead and round her neck and shoulders. The lower half of her face, from a line running below her cheekbones across the middle of her upper lip, is different; the shape is lumpy and the texture looks hard and smooth. Her mouth, drawn in with dull pinkish-brown lipstick, is oddly shaped; the lips are not really lips. Her neck is badly scarred too, and her small hands are misshapen. They are clawlike, bent back at the wrists and base of the fingers. The skin on her hands is brownish, shiny in patches, and curiously plump. The nails are well kept, but some are deformed. Nevertheless her hands are extremely mobile and efficient and she uses them without awkwardness or self-consciousness. Her voice and expressions are full of spirit and gaiety. Sometimes her face, despite its scars looks strikingly pretty; then suddenly it is as if something slips and she becomes ugly, but not for long.

We had been talking of other things; when I asked her to tell me what had happened to her on the morning of 6 August 1945 she readily agreed. But her voice became lower, more serious, and her expression anxious and intent.

"I was thirteen years old; I was ordered into the center of the city to clean up the streets. We were working about 1.6 kilometers from the hypocenter. I heard the airplane; I looked up at the sky — the plane had a pretty white tail, it was a sunny day, the sky was blue. This had happened many times before, so I didn't feel scared. Then I saw something drop — white I think — and pow! — a big explosion knocked me down.

"Then I was unconscious — I don't know for how long. Then I was conscious but I couldn't see anything, it was all black and red. Then I called my friend, Toshiko; then the fog goes away but I can't find her. I never see her again. Then I see people moving away and I just follow them. It is not light like it was before, it is more like evening. I look around; houses are all flat! I could see straight, clear, all a long distance. I follow the people to the river. I couldn't hear anything, my ears are blocked up — or maybe my consciousness is blocked out. I am thinking a bomb has dropped!

"I heard a baby screaming — that woke me up and I could hear things, but

For more on nonviolence ...

A number of organizations, committed to nonviolence, offer newsletters, projects or advice upon request. These include:

- American Friends Service Committee, 1001 Office Park Road, #107, West Des Moines, IA 50265
- Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, 499 Patterson St., Memphis, TN 38111
- The Catholic Worker, 36 East First Street, New York, NY 10003
- Christian Peacemaker Teams, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680
- *Desert Voices, The Newsletter of the Nevada Desert Experience*, P.O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127
- Episcopal Peace Fellowship, P.O. Box 28156, Washington, DC 20038
- Fellowship of Reconciliation (U.S.), 521 North Broadway, Nyack, NY 10960
- Jonah House, 1933 Park Ave., Baltimore, MD 21217
- *The Nuclear Resister*, P.O. Box 43383, Tucson, AZ 85733
- *Nukewatch Pathfinder*, P.O. Box 2658, Madison, WI 53701
- Parenting for Peace and Justice, 4144 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108
- Pax Christi, 348 East Tenth St., Erie, PA 16503-1110
- War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012
- Witness for Peace, 2201 P Street NW, Rm 109, Washington, DC 20037

And here are several favorite books:

- *Conquest of Violence*, by Joan Bondurant (U. of Calif. Press, 1971).
- *Who Will Roll Away the Stone? Discipleship Queries for First World Christians*, by Ched Myers (Orbis, 1994).
- *The Nonviolent Alternative*, by Thomas Merton (Farrar Straus Giroux, 1971)
- *Engaging the Powers*, by Walter Wink (Fortress, 1992).
- *Ten Commandments for the Long Haul*, by Daniel Berrigan (Abingdon, 1981)
- *Goatwalking: A Guide to Wildland Living, A Quest for the Peaceable Kingdom*, by Jim Corbett (Viking, 1991).
- *Hope and History: Why We Must Share the Story of the Movement*, by Vincent Harding (Orbis, 1990).
- *The Nonviolent Coming of God*, by James Douglas (Orbis, 1991).
- *Nonviolence in America*, edited by Staughton and Alice Lynd (Orbis, 1995).
- *Dorothy Day: Selected Writings* (Orbis, 1992)
- *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, by Gene Sharp (Porter Sargent, 1973).
- *Reweaving the Web of Life: Feminism and Nonviolence*, by Pam McAllister (New Society Publishers, 1982).

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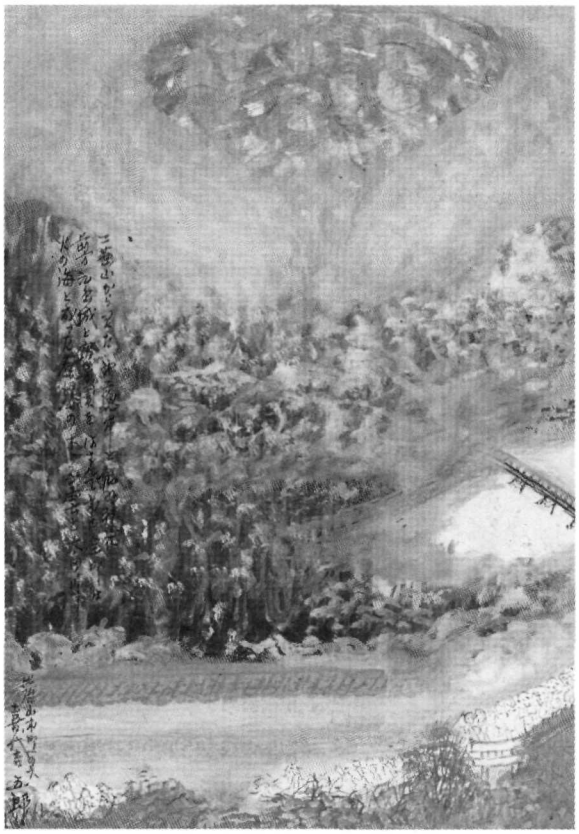
nothing sounded loudly. Then I heard a man say, 'Let's go to the hills' — and I thought maybe I should go back to the school. People started to push; I was afraid I would fall into the water, and I wanted to leave with the others. There was an old woman on the ground and people were stepping on her. I couldn't help her up! [Shigeko held out her hands: tears came to her eyes.] I didn't know my hands were burned, nor my face. Very very difficult ... all these years my regret ... why couldn't I help her? It still hurts me.

"Someone gave me oil for my hands and face. It hurt; my face had a swollen feeling, and I couldn't move my neck. My eyes were swollen and felt closed up. I got to my school yard and sat down, put my head back against a wall and — unconscious again. When I wake up — I don't know how long — it was so dark! I kept saying, 'Please give me some water; my name is Shigeko, I live at so and so, tell my parents ...' I thought if I say it once more someone will come and pick me up.

"I don't know where I was; I was lying on the floor. I had been sitting outside but someone had carried me inside into the auditorium. All I remember is that I had walked into the school yard. Then four days later, my mother came. She had been in the house,which fell down and covered her with rubble,but she managed to get out. My father saw the plane too — he was working outside, and he said to a friend, 'Run!' He ran into a concrete ice box in the old fish market building, and so he was protected. When he came out all the others were burned. My father tried to organize help for people; my mother was looking for me every day. For four days, she searched for me, she even looked at dead bodies. My father told her on the fourth day, 'Don't go out again, you'll get sick.' But she sneaked out anyway.



Drawing of atomic explosion from Mt. Futaba which overlooks Hiroshima by Goro Kiyoyoshi

"I was thirteen years old. I heard the airplane; I looked up at the sky — the plane had a pretty white tail, it was a sunny day, the sky was blue. Then I saw something drop."

— Shigeko

"That evening a man came and said he'd heard a voice at the school, a girl's voice so faint he could hardly hear, saying my name. My mother went out again with him, calling my name. I was unconscious; and I was dreaming of water. I saw a beautiful fountain, and the ocean all blue, blue, blue ... I went into the beautiful blue ... it was cool ... I felt no suffering, no thirst, I felt light like a feather, not frightened any more. It was a joyful, happy feeling. No one was there, but a glow; just so happy ... Then I heard my mother calling, 'Shigeko!' and I answered, 'I am here!' The next thing I knew, my mother was talking to a doctor and I came back to myself. There was a sharp pain in my chest, and I had to have an injection for the heart. 'This girl has a strong heart,' someone said.

"They put me on a wooden door with a blanket and took me home. I remember neighbors say, 'Oh Shigeko came home! How nice!'

"After that I was unconscious many times and they thought I was dying. My mother had to listen to my heart. Still breathing! Still alive! This went on for perhaps two or three months. No, I don't remember pain very much. Physical pain you forget, like having a baby. Treatment? Just a little soy bean oil to clean up my face. My whole face was burned. I had no eyebrows. My mother had to pull my eyes open. When they tried to remove the burnt clothes, my skin came off as well. Four days later my father peeled the burned skin off my face. It was all black; underneath was like a cream puff, full of pus. He cut all my hair off because of the infection. But before, I had a little girl's haircut, with a fringe. [She held back her hair from her forehead, which is smooth and youthful still, and took my hand and placed it on the fine, soft skin.] You see?" TW

— from *Faces of Hiroshima: A Report by Anne Chisholm*, (Jonathan Cape, 1985). Goro Kiyoyoshi's drawing is available in *Unforgettable Fire* (Pantheon, 1977).

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Militant nonviolence

by Barbara Deming

Ed. Note: This article is excerpted from a longer article published in Liberation *magazine in February, 1968. It stands over time as an excellent critique and defense of nonviolence. While Deming wrote this using "generic" male language, we have modified it.*

"Do you want to remain pure? Is that it?" a black man asked me during an argument about nonviolence.

It is not possible to act at all and to remain pure; and that is not what I want, when I commit myself to the nonviolent discipline. There are people who are struggling to change conditions that they find intolerable, trying to find new lives; in the words of Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth,* they want to "set afoot a new man." That is what I want, too; and I have no wish to be assigned separate quarters from those who are struggling in a way different from mine. I stand with all who say of present conditions that they do not allow us to be fully human and so they must be changed — all who not only say this but are ready to act.

At a recent conference about the directions the American Left should take, a socialist challenged me: "Can you call degrading the violence used by the oppressed to throw off oppression?" When one is confronted with conditions which are damaging, even murderous — it is degrading for all to allow such conditions to persist. And if the individuals who can find the courage to bring about change see no way in which it can be done without employing violence, I do not feel that I can judge them. The judgments I make are not judgments upon people but upon the means open to us — upon the promise these means of action hold or withhold.

The very people who speak of the necessity of violence are the first, often, to acknowledge the toll it exacts among those who use it. Fanon has a chapter entitled "Colonial War and Mental Disorders" and in it he writes, "We are forever pursued by our actions." After describing, among other painful disorders, those suffered by an Algerian terrorist — who made friends among the French after the war and then wondered with anguish whether any of the men he had killed had been men like these — he comments, "It was what might be called an attack of vertigo." Then he asks: "But can we escape becoming dizzy? And who can affirm that vertigo does not haunt the whole of existence?"

Barbara Deming Diana J. Davies

It is my stubborn faith that if, as revolutionaries, we will wage battle without violence, we can remain very much more in control.

"Vertigo" — here is a word, I think, much more relevant to the subject of revolutionary action than the word "purity." No, it is not that I want to remain pure; it is that I want to escape becoming dizzy. And here is exactly the argument of my essay: we can escape it. It is my stubborn faith that if, as revolutionaries, we will wage battle without violence, we can remain very much more in control — of our own selves, of the responses to us which our adversaries make, of the battle as it proceeds, and of the future we hope will issue from it.

The future

The future — by whom will it be built? By all those whom the struggle has touched and marked. The future will be built even, in part, by those who have fought on the losing side. If it is a colonial struggle, of course, a good many of the adversaries can be expected to leave at the end of a successful revolution; but if it is a civil struggle, those who have been defeated, too, will at least help to make the new society what it is. How will the struggle have touched them? How will it have touched the victors?

Carl Oglesby, in *Containment and Change,* quotes a Brazilian guerrilla: "We are in dead earnest. At stake is the humanity of man." Then he asks, "How can ordinary men be at once warm enough to want what revolutionaries say they want [humanity], cold enough to do without remorse what they are capable of doing [cutting throats], and poised enough in the turbulence of their lives to keep the aspiration and the act both integrated and distinct? How is it that one of these passions does not invade and devour the other?" Yes — the ques-

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An unabbreviated version of this essay is now available in *Nonviolence in America* (Orbis, 1995) by Staughton and Alice Lind.

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tion is one of equilibrium. How does one manage to keep it?

Nonviolence a failure?

At this point suddenly I can hear in my head many voices interrupting me. They all say: "Who among us likes violence? But nonviolence has been tried." It has not been tried. We have hardly begun to try it. The people who dismiss it as irrelevant do not understand what it could be.

What most people are saying just now is that nonviolence gives us no control at all over events. "After years of this," says Stokely Carmichael, "we are at almost the same point." [Nonviolent actions] have served to integrate a token few into American society. And the great majority of black people are actually worse off than before.

I won't try to pretend that progress has been made that has not been made. Though I would add that there is one sense in which things hardly can be said to be at the same point still. If one speaks of psychological forces that will make a difference — the determination of black people not to accept their situation any longer, the determination of some white people not to accept it either, and a consciousness on the part of other white people that changes are bound to come now, doubts about their ability to prevent them — in these terms all has been in constant motion.

Literally, yes, one can speak of gains that seem to mock those who have nearly exhausted themselves in the struggle for them. But I think one has to ask certain questions. Have gains been slight because nonviolent tactics were the wrong tactics to employ — or did many of those leading the battle underestimate the difficulties of the terrain before them? Did they lack a sufficiently radical vision? Can those who have now turned from reliance upon nonviolence say surely that resort to violence over those same years would have brought greater gains?

There are those who are implying this. One observer who implies it strongly is Andrew Kopkind, writing in *The New York Review of Books* in August about the uprisings in the ghettos. He writes, "Martin Luther King and the 'leaders' who appealed for nonviolence, CORE, the black politicians, the old S.N.C.C. are all beside the point. Where the point is is in the streets. ... The insurrections of July have done what everyone in America for 30 years has thought impossible; mass action has convulsed the society and brought smooth government to a halt." He itemizes with awe: they caused tanks to rumble through the heart of the nation's biggest cities, brought out soldiers by the thousands, destroyed billions of dollars worth of property. This violence (or as Dave Dellinger better names it, this counterviolence of the victimized) certainly called out the troops. The question that hasn't been answered yet is: Did this gain the rebels an advantage? It gained them many casualties. The powers-that-be paid their price, too, as Kopkind points out. But it is one thing to be able to state the price the antagonist paid, another to be able to count your own real gains.

Carl Oglesby, in *Containment and Change*, criticizes "the politics of the appeal to higher power ... the same thing as prayer ... a main assumption of which is that [the higher power] is not bad, only misinformed."

At Greenham Common, England, 3,000 women blockaded the U.S. Air Force Base to protest the nuclear cruise missiles.

Dealing with raw power

He goes on to describe how the "whimsical" hopes that are entertained about the powerful evaporate: "Sometimes mass-based secular prayer has resulted in change. But more often it has only shown the victim-petitioner that the problem is graver and change harder to get than [he] had imagined. ... It turns out that the powerful know perfectly well who their victims are ... and that they have no intention of changing anything. This recognition is momentous, no doubt the spiritual low point of the emergent revolutionary's education. He finds that the enemy is not

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a few men but a whole system whose agents saturate the society. ... He is diverted by a most realistic despair. But this despair contains within itself the omen of that final reconstitution of the spirit which will prepare [him] ... for the shift to insurgency, rebellion, revolution. ... At the heart of his despair lies the new certainty that there will be no change which he does not produce by himself."

With this description I do not argue at all. It is a very accurate description of the education those protesting in this country have been receiving. May more and more read the lesson. I argue with the contention that nonviolent action can only be prayerful action — must by its nature remain naive. Too often in the past it has confined itself to petition, but there is no need for it to do so — especially now that so many have learned "change [is] harder to get than they had imagined."

The trouble is that advocates of nonviolence themselves often write in terms that tend again and again to stress only the appeal that can be made to conscience. Bradford, in his paper on Black Power, notes: "Carmichael's vision isn't limited to Negroes. Machiavelli had it: 'A man who wishes to make a profession of goodness in everything must necessarily come to grief among so many who are not good. Therefore it is necessary ... to learn how not to be good.' " Then Bradford pleads that to put one's faith in coercive power is tragic, and his argument is "Throughout history, those who have most deeply touched the hearts of hardened men have been the ones who chose not to defend themselves with violence."

But the choice is very much wider (as Bradford of course knows); and the distinctions that seem to have been set up here are unreal. To resort to power one need not be violent, and to speak to conscience one need not be meek. The most effective action both resorts to power and engages conscience. Nonviolent action does not have to beg others to "be nice." It can in effect force them to consult their consciences — or to pretend to have them. Nor does it have to petition those in power to do something about a situation. It can face the authorities with a new fact and say: Accept this new situation which we have created.

Motivated by love

If people doubt that there is power in nonviolence, I am afraid that it is due in part to the fact that those of us who believe in it have yet to find for ourselves an adequate vocabulary. The leaflets we pass out tend to speak too easily about love and truth — and suggest that we hope to move people solely by being loving and truthful. The words do describe our method in a kind of shorthand. But who can read the shorthand? It is easy enough to recommend "love." How many, even among those who like to use the word, can literally feel love for a harsh opponent?

What is possible is to act toward another human being on the assumption that all people's lives are of value, that there is something about any one to be loved , whether one can feel love for him or not.

It happens that, if one does act on this assumption, it gives one much greater poise in the situation. It is easy enough to speak about truth; but we had better spell out how, in battle, we rely upon the truth. It is not simply that we pay our antagonist the human courtesy of not lying to him. We insist upon telling him truths he doesn't want to hear — telling what seems to us the truth about the injustice he commits. Words are not enough here.

I argue with the contention that nonviolent action must by its nature remain naive.

Gandhi's term for nonviolent action was "satyagraha" — which can be translated as "clinging to the truth." What is needed is this — to cling to the truth as one sees it. And one has to cling with one's entire weight. One doesn't simply say, "I have a right to sit here," but acts out that truth — and sits here. One doesn't just say, "If we are customers in this store, it's wrong that we're never hired here," but refuses to be a customer any longer. One doesn't just say, "I don't believe in this war," but refuses to put on a uniform. One doesn't just say, "The use of napalm is atrocious," but refuses to pay for it by refusing to pay one's taxes. And so on and so on. One brings what economic weight one has to bear, what political, social, psychological, what physical weight. There is a good deal more involved here than a moral appeal. It should be acknowledged both by those who argue against nonviolence and those who argue for it that we, too, rely upon force.

Learning to use force

If greater gains have not been won by nonviolent action it is because most of those trying it have, quite as Oglesby charges, expected too much from "the powerful"; and so, I would add, they have stopped short of really exercising their peculiar powers — those powers one discovers when one refuses any longer simply to do another's will. They have stopped far too short not only of widespread nonviolent disruption but of that form of noncooperation which is assertive, constructive — that confronts those who are "running everything" with independent activity, particularly independent economic activity.

To refuse one's cooperation is to exert force. One can, in fact, exert so very much force in this way that many people will be quick to call noncooperators violent. How, then, does one distinguish nonviolent from violent action? It is not that it abstains from force, to rely simply

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upon moral pressure. It resorts even to what can only be called physical force — when, for example, we sit down and refuse to move, and we force others to cope somehow with all these bodies.

The distinction is simply that those committed to a nonviolent discipline refuse to injure the antagonist. Of course if nonviolent action is as bold as it must be in any real battle for change, some of those resisting the change are bound to feel that injury has been done them. For they feel it as injury to be shaken out of the accustomed pattern of their lives.

But I can imagine the impatience of some of my readers with these various scruples. What, they might say, has this to do with fighting battles — battles which are in dead earnest? How can we hope to put any real pressure upon an adversary for whom we show such concern?

This is the heart of my argument: We can put more pressure on antagonists for whom we show human concern. It is precisely solicitude for their person in combination with a stubborn interference with their actions that can give us a very special degree of control. We put upon them two pressures — the pressure of our defiance of them and the pressure of our respect for their lives — and it happens that in combination these two pressures are uniquely effective.

One effect gained is to "raise the level of consciousness" for those engaged in the struggle — those on both sides. Because the human rights of the adversaries are respected, though their actions, their official policies are not, the focus of attention becomes those actions, those policies, and their true nature. The issue cannot be avoided. The antagonists cannot take the interference with their actions personally, because their person is not threatened, and they are forced to begin to acknowledge the reality of the grievance against them.

The more the real issues are dramatized, and the struggle raised above the personal, the more control those in nonviolent rebellion begin to gain over their adversary. For they are able at one and the same time to disrupt everything for them, making it impossible for them to operate within the system as usual, and to temper their response to this, making it impossible for them simply to strike back without thought and with all their strength. They have two hands on them — the one calming them, making them ask questions, as the other makes them move.

In any violent struggle one can expect the violence to escalate. It does so automatically, neither side being really able to regulate the process at will.

In nonviolent struggle, the violence used against one may mount for a while (indeed, if one is bold in one's rebellion, it is bound to do so), but the escalation is no longer automatic; with the refusal of one side to retaliate, the mainspring of the automaton has been snapped and one can count on reaching a point where de-escalation begins. One can count, that is, in the long run, on receiving far fewer casualties.

Paul McAdams

Protesters block the White Train, carrying nuclear weapons, in Portland, Ore. in 1982.

In nonviolent struggle one doesn't try to frighten the other. One tries to undo them. When — under your constant pressure — it becomes to their own interest to adapt themselves to change, they are able to do so. Fear for themselves does not prevent them.

Nothing is more certain than this and yet, curiously, nothing is less obvious. A very common view is that nonviolent struggle is suicidal.

Nonviolence suicidal?

The contention that nonviolent

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struggle is suicidal hardly stands up under examination. Which rebels suffered more casualties — those who, under Gandhi, managed to throw the British out of India or the so-called Mau Mau who struggled by violence to throw the British out of Kenya? The British were certainly not "nice guys" in their response to the Gandhians. They, and the Indian troops who obeyed their orders, beat thousands of unarmed people, shot and killed hundreds. In the Amritsar Massacre, for example, they fired into an unarmed crowd that was trapped in a spot where no one could escape and killed 379 people, wounding many more. There was a limit, nevertheless, to the violence they could justify to themselves — or felt they could justify to the world.

In Kenya, where the British could cite as provocation the violence used against them, they hardly felt constrained to set any limits at all on their actions, and they adopted tactics very similar to those the Americans are using today against the Vietnamese. In the struggle for independence, many thousands of Africans fighting in the forest and many thousands of their supporters and sympathizers in the reserves were killed. Many were also tortured.

One can, as I say, be certain if one adopts the discipline of nonviolence that in the long run one will receive fewer casualties. And yet very few people are able to see that this is so. Several things, I think, blind people to the plain truth.

Accepting casualties

First, something seems wrong to most people engaged in struggle when they see more people hurt on their own side than on the other side. They are used to reading this as an indication of defeat, and a complete mental readjustment is required of them. Within the new terms of struggle, victory has nothing to do with their being able to give more punishment than they

continued on page 24

Choosing to support armed resistance

by Marianne Arbogast

On January 30, 1972, Mary Nelis watched as British paratroopers opened fire on civil rights demonstrators in the streets of Derry, Northern Ireland. Fourteen unarmed protesters were killed on what came to be known as "Bloody Sunday." The commander of the paratroopers' unit was later decorated by the Queen.

"It was a great shock for us — we lost our innocence," explained Nelis in Detroit, now a grandmother and a Derry city councilwoman on the road for the cause of Irish solidarity.

Nelis had been active since the late 1960s in the struggle that had taken its cue from the U.S. civil rights movement — singing its songs, borrowing its tactics, and adopting its philosophy of nonviolence. Nelis and other activists fought for voting rights (tied to property ownership until 1969), fair housing and an end to job discrimination against the nationalist, mainly Catholic community.

"The Protestant state excluded Catholic nationalists," she says. "We were segregated in housing, education and work. They despised everything about us — our names, our culture, our music, our flag. We had absolutely no power and no dignity."

Though the nonviolent movement was effective in bringing about some reforms, "it was against a whole background of denying civil liberties," Nelis says. "Ten thousand people from the nationalist community were detained without trial."

The Bloody Sunday killings, which took place at a demonstration she describes as "very peaceful," ignited armed resistance. "The IRA went on the offensive. Thousands of young people joined, including my own children."

She agonized over her response.

Mary Nelis

"I believed that you have to consider all ways to resolve conflict without killing," she says. "A lot of us clung to the notion that there had to be another way."

In 1976, two of her sons were arrested. One would spend 11 years in prison; the other was released after one.

"Most of the women formed themselves into campaign groups, to resist the British government criminalizing both our children and the struggle," she recalls. "I had to ask myself very intense, fundamental questions. Should I support my children, and therefore the IRA? Would I ever be prepared to kill?

"After a lot of soul-searching, I came to the conclusion that the only people making peace in Ireland was the IRA. I

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saw no door open that would change the situation. All sorts of peaceful people had tried."

For Nelis, this meant accepting a new burden of obligation.

"Once you make the decision that you're going to support armed insurrection, it puts a great responsibility on you, because you have to accept responsibility for all the deaths of men, women, children, policemen, young IRA volunteers."

Nelis entered more deeply into the political struggle with Sinn Fein, Northern Ireland's nationalist political party.

Abuse of prisoners, which drew condemnation from international human rights organizations, became the focus of the campaign. Prisoners who demanded prisoner-of-war status, refusing to wear prison uniforms, were thrown into cells with only blankets.

"For five years they never got out of their cells," Nelis says. "They lay in their own excrement and dirt, never washed, never saw the sunlight. Many died."

Nelis drew widespread attention when she and other women stood in front of an Irish cathedral, wearing only blankets, to dramatize the prisoners' plight.

Nelis calls 1980-81 — the year of the hunger strikes in which 10 prisoners fasted to the death — "a catalyst year. The prisoners' struggle showed how neutralized the nonviolent struggle had become," she says. "The people who called themselves pacifists were the people who opposed them. There was an opportunity lost at that time.

"I remember going to conferences and being attacked for supporting the IRA's right to engage in armed struggle. I'd ask, 'How are you nonviolently addressing the situation?' It becomes a cop-out."

Nelis also suffered church censure, which transformed her faith.

"The churches are quite powerful in the north of Ireland, and exercise tremendous influence," she said.

"People like me were told in 1980 that we couldn't belong to the Catholic church and support the IRA. Some people were refused absolution. Our bishops refused to allow the bodies of dead IRA volunteers into church for Christian burial, while they allowed the bodies of soldiers and policemen, and let them bring the Union Jack into church. It caused division among people who had given their lives to the Catholic tradition."

At the same time, the resistance was supported by individual priests, many of them missionaries who had returned from Latin America committed to liberation theology.

"We dried our tears and decided they had left us," Nelis says of the hierarchy. "When two of our young people were killed in 1987, we went to the door of the church. The priest said we couldn't come in, and we said, 'Father, get out of the way. This is our church.'"

Nelis finds support in a base-community-style group that meets for Bible study.

"Christ's life was all about struggle with the poor and oppressed," she says. "I think Christ understands our dilemma, supporting violence, trying to find ways of nonviolence and still uphold the teachings of Christ."

Nelis believes that armed resistance, and particularly the IRA bombing of the British stock exchange that caused £2.2 billion of damage, forced the British to confront the conflict.

She is hopeful that they will withdraw from Northern Ireland, even though she says they "have been very reluctant to support this peace" (the ceasefire declared by the IRA last year).

"The only guns out at the moment are British guns," she says. "They're still arresting people and raiding people's homes. They are actively obstructing, asking for pre-conditions to talks, saying the Irish should hand in all their arms."

Still, she says, "I believe they are going to disengage. Recently British ministers sat down to talk with members of Sinn Fein for the first time in 70 years."

Also, she says, "some of the Protestant churches have been making very progressive statements," and a conference just before Christmas brought Catholics and Protestants together.

Nelis is emphatic in declaring that the conflict "is not a religious war. England has always been in Ireland for strategic reasons, and colonizers have always divided to keep control. In Ireland they were able to divide people on the basis of religion. But the conflict has always been England's absolutely immoral presence in Ireland."

She acknowledges that "there are hard times ahead. We're in dire straits economically. We are a third-world country masquerading as first-world.

"Our economy has been tied to the war. People have been employed in prisons, police forces, and security operations.

"But it costs Britain £7 million per year to remain in the war. That could be used to create the manufacturing jobs that have been lost in the last 30 years.

"I believe the first step is to secure the peace, to ensure a peaceful transition of power," Nelis says. "I believe we do have the creativity, imagination and goodwill to solve the problems."

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take (quite the reverse). Vengeance is not the point; change is. But the trouble is that in most people's minds the thought of victory and the thought of punishing the enemy coincide. If they are suffering casualties and the enemy is not, they fail to recognize that they are suffering fewer casualties than they would be if they turned to violence.

Actually, something seems wrong to many people, I think, when — in non violent struggle — they receive any casualties at all. They feel that they are not hurting anybody, then they shouldn't get hurt themselves. It is an intriguing psychological fact that when the ghetto uprisings provoked the government into bringing out troops and tanks — and killing many black people — observers like Kopkind decided that the action had been remarkably effective, citing as proof precisely the violence of the government's response.

But when James Meredith was shot in 1966 during a 200-mile voter registration walk to Jackson, Miss., any number of observers editorialized: "See, nonviolence doesn't work." Those who have this reaction overlook the fact that nonviolent battle is still battle, and in battle people do get hurt. If personal safety had been Meredith's main concern, he could have stayed at home. Battle of any kind provokes a violent response — because those who have power are not going to give it up voluntarily.

To recognize that people have greater, not less control in the situation when they have committed themselves to nonviolence requires a drastic readjustment of vision. And this means taking both a long-range view of the field and a very much cooler, more objective one.

Nonviolence can inhibit the ability of the antagonist to hit back. (If the genius of guerilla warfare is to make it impossible for the other side really to exploit its superior brute force, nonviolence can be said to carry this even further.) And there is another sense in which it gives one greater leverage — enabling one both to put pressure upon antagonists and to modulate their response to that pressure.

In violent battle the effort is to demoralize the enemy, to so frighten them that they will surrender. The risk is that desperation and resentment will make them go on resisting when it is no longer even in their own interest. They have been driven beyond reason.

In nonviolent struggle the effort is of quite a different nature. One doesn't try to frighten the other. One tries to undo them, only in the sense that one tries to shake them out of former attitudes and force them to appraise the situation now in a way that takes into consideration your needs as well as theirs. One is able to do this precisely because one reassures them about their personal safety all the time that one keeps disrupting the order of things that they have known to date. When — under your constant pressure — it becomes to their own interest to adapt themselves to change, they are able to do so. Fear for themselves does not prevent them. In this sense a liberation movement that is nonviolent sets the oppressor free as well as the oppressed.

The trouble is that in most people's minds the thought of victory and the thought of punishing the enemy coincide.

Nonviolence teaches us not to be naive about the fact that some people will see it as in their interest to try to destroy us; but to recognize that they never can see it in their interest finally to accommodate themselves to the changes we are forcing unless we give them the liberty to do so. And they will only believe that we offer this liberty, only be able to imagine new lives for themselves, if we have refused to threaten them with any personal injury.

Building a truth force

Again I can imagine certain readers interrupting — to remark that I am over looking one fundamental point. It is all very well to talk of the advantages of nonviolence but how many are going to answer the call to such battle? A certain form of struggle can hardly be called practical if one cannot recruit very many people to try it; and to get most people to fight, one has to offer certain things which nonviolent struggle does not offer.

I have heard people state, for example, that people from the ghettos would never turn to nonviolence because it does not allow them to speak out the full measure of their hatred for white people.

It is not only black people in our society who are suffering now from the sense that their lives are out of their control, and who are going to be satisfied only to take actions that give them some sense of beginning to assert such control. At this point in our history, nonviolent action had better be taken boldly or one need hardly bother to take it at all, for one will be taking it alone.

Those who believe in nonviolence face a sharp challenge. They must decide whether or not we really are engaged in a struggle that is "in dead earnest." If we are, we must act boldly; we can expect to be hurt. Those who commit themselves to violent struggle take this for granted — which gives them a certain advantage.

May those who say that they believe in nonviolence learn to challenge more boldly those institutions of violence that constrict and cripple our humanity. And may those who have questioned nonviolence come to see that one's rights to life and happiness can only be claimed as inalienable if one grants, in action, that they belong to all people. TW

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The earth's women

by Rosemary Haughton

The earth's women are coming to realize that their own age-old dispossession is likely to extend to all creation, if the earth becomes uninhabitable.

When women get together with other women or with men, to plan and carry out actions against the deployment of weapons which may destroy all life, they are engaging in a duty of public mourning such as that to which Jeremiah called the women of his time.

If one needs to be convinced of just how dangerous this political grieving is felt to be it is only necessary to read accounts, or see newscasts, of the behavior of British police and American military towards the women who maintained the women-only peace camp at Greenham Common, outside the heavily armed perimeter of the base where nuclear weapons were stored. None of these women had ever been armed, they had done nothing more dangerous than sing, weave colored wool through the barbed wire, and periodically shake the fence until it fell, as a kind of symbol of the vulnerability and folly of patriarchal structures. But mostly they were simply there, camping and cooking and talking and trying to keep dry, or warm (or cool). Yet they were beaten, sometimes severely, insulted, their tents and equipment taken away and destroyed, even the plastic shelters they took to instead of tents periodically removed. They were imprisoned in high security prisons as if they were dangerous criminals.

In a collection of essays called *Reclaim the Earth*, Anita Anard tells a story of women in a remote village in Northern India called Resi, who did something very peculiar — they hugged trees. What they were doing was saving the future of their families and their land. Hugging the trees, women and children prevented 70 lumberjacks from felling the oak trees as the contractor had sent them to do.

The local people had lived off the forest, which supplied their basic needs and provided a surplus to sell. The new ways offered jobs, but tied them into an economy that depended on export. Moreover, as the trees were felled, the fragile topsoil was washed away, resulting in major floods which washed away bridges and roads and farms and people. The men were compelled to leave home to work for the incomers in order to survive.

So in 1974 the women organized. They and their children went out and wrapped their arms around the trees, crying out, "The forest is our mother's home, we will defend it with all our might."

She defied him to shoot her first before touching the trees. Phyllis Wong Kun

This movement forced the State government to investigate the concern of the women. Its committee reported that 12,000 kilometers of sensitive watershed area was endangered by the felling, and the felling was stopped.

There really are practical ways to begin to reclaim the earth, to come home. The return home of the dispossessed, most of whom are women, is also how the earth herself may have a future. TW

Rosemary Haughton, who raised 10 children as well as several official and unofficial foster children, is a founding member of Wellspring. She is the author of *Song in a Strange Land: The Wellspring Story and the Homelessness of Women* (Templegate: Springfield, IL, 1989).

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Looking for Jesus amongst the Promise Keepers

by Fritz Eichland

Ed. Note: *Promise Keepers are taking the nation by storm — with conferences in 14 cities sold out, they expect to evangelize nearly one million men this year. Since their interpretations of faith include "honoring" women and working at race relations, Promise Keepers (PK) may positively address issues of violence in our culture. At the same time their condemnation of homosexuality causes irreparable damage. This article is not an analysis of the movement. It is a vivid descriptive piece which may make it possible to reach your own conclusions.*

Sporting all the trappings of a 1990s rock show, Promise Keepers swept into Metro-Detroit's Pontiac Silverdome one Spring-like April weekend. Seventy-six thousand men attended the event and, reluctantly, like a bear waking from a winter's hibernation — I was there too.

I say reluctantly because I figured that I didn't need — and didn't want — to hear the message these guys were preaching.

I'm a card-carrying Christian, an Episcopalian — one of God's frozen chosen. I attend church every Sunday. I'm active in my parish. My family tithes. I recite and believe in the Apostles' Creed. That's on the good days.

On the bad days I waver. I vacillate in my faith. I have an arms-distance relationship with God. I am uncomfortable with Jesus talk. The son of an alcoholic, I find it hard to trust.

And trusting in God — someone you can't see — is a very scary thing indeed.

When Jeanie first approached me to write a story about Promise Keepers I didn't bother to return her phone call. I did do some online research and didn't like what I found. One cybercritic called them a bunch of "politically right-wing fundamentalists."

A week later Jeanie and I bumped into each other at a church meeting. "I want you to do this story," she said. "You're good at these kind of things."

I was busy, I said. I had other projects I was working on.

She kept after me. "Just let me send you my file."

When I read it, my worst fears were realized. They sounded like a bunch of right-wing, Bible thumping, women-in-their-places, gay bashers.

I read about PK getting masses — we're talking tens of thousands — of guys together for a weekend of preaching, singing, sharing their fears, talking about their personal relationship with Jesus, and praising God.

Because of the way I work as a writer — getting down in the muck and the mire with my subjects— this could be a pretty scary story to work on. But, on the other hand, I did need a bigger hard drive for my computer and the fee would certainly help. I called and said I would do the story.

Then a strange thing happened. A couple of weeks before I attended the Promise Keepers meeting, I came across Romans 6:3-11 during a parish Bible study.

Beyond sin and death

Reading the passage was like getting whacked upside the head by a two-by-four. I felt that for the first time I might have an understanding what this Christianity thing was all about. And that maybe, just maybe, I was ready to start moving down the road of my spiritual life.

So there I was on a sunny, spring Friday afternoon, when I would like to have been outside riding my bike, sitting in the press box waiting for the show to start.

The Silverdome is the largest domed stadium in the world. It's three levels tall and capped with a fabric dome. It seats 80,311 football fans. During religious events they tear out the artificial turf and put ten thousand seats more on the playing field. The event had sold out — without advertising, just word of mouth — in two weeks.

A record, the PK media people said.

Inside it would be a real show. The sound system control board parked in the center of the main floor looked every bit as impressive as the ones I'd seen at the

By quarter of seven the place was packed with 76,000 guys. The band slipped into a lite-rock version of "Crown Him With Many Crowns." Then "Rise Up, O Men Of God." I've never experienced anything like what happened next: 76,000 men on their feet, everybody singing, cheering and yelling at the end.

Fritz Eichland is a teacher, freelance writer/phtographer and bicycle enthusiast living in the Detroit area.

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Seventy thousand men gathered to pray with the Promise Keepers in Pontiac, Michigan. F.E.

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Twisted Sister and AC/DC concerts I'd attended. The side sections of the stage stretched to the top of the second deck. The main section overflowed with ferns, ficus trees, speaker banks, and band equipment.

The draping around the stage was an abstract swirl of Plums and Teals. And that color scheme carried over to all the PK guys and gals at the press conference and running around the stadium. They looked as if they had just stepped out of a Gap ad: khaki pants, braided leather belts, teal shirts with plum trim, loafers.

By quarter of seven the place was packed — except for 1,000 women volunteers — with 76,000 guys.

Beach balls bounced around the lower deck. Paper airplanes floated down past the second level press box. Two or three Canadian flags poked up out of the crowd. There were church signs: Alpha Baptist; place signs: Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti; and people signs: John, I'm in section 131. Like a tisumi, waves rippled around the lower deck. Every 10 minutes the same group of guys would launch a four-foot Styrofoam glider from the second deck.

The band — five singers, guitar, keyboard, percussion — moved on stage and slipped into a lite-rock version of "Crown Him With Many Crowns." A few guys in the crowd got up to sway to the music. Some hands were up, waving to the beat. Still lite-rocking, it segued into "Come Thou Almighty King." More guys on their feet. Then "Rise Up, O Men Of God." I've never experienced anything like what happened next: 76,000 men on their feet, everybody singing, cheering and yelling at the end.

"No matter how we got here, from near or far we all came together by the prodding of God," yelled Glenn, the MC. "For the next 36 hours this place is the home of the lions of the tribe of Judah." (The Silverdome is the home of the Detroit Lions.)

Live theater

I'm a big fan of live theater. Besides the play itself I love watching all the other action — actors entering and exiting, the lighting, the scenery, how things are put together. And at the PK Conference I wasn't disappointed. This was live theater at its finest.

These people were organized! There was a three- or four-song warm-up set, Glenn told a joke or two and introduced the speaker who talked for 30 minutes. We would see a PK commercial on the big Diamond Vision screen. There would be a short break.

And then the band started up again.

The idea behind PK is to help us guys become better men. Better men by becoming Godly men. PK believes that

society and the country is in a mess because us guys are promise breakers, not promise keepers.

We've broken our relationship with God. We evade responsibility at home. We cheat on our wives. We abuse our kids. We're addicted to sex, drugs, and alcohol. We can't ask for directions. We are a mess.

And the conference is designed to start housebreaking us. There are eight sessions in the conference — each dealing with one of the PK's seven promises, plus an extra walk-up call.

Less than an hour into the conference evangelist Luis Palau asked me: What was my relationship with Jesus? And he wanted to know about my morals. They were pretty pointed questions too. Like, did Jesus reign and control my life? Was I struggling with homosexuality, masturbation, pornography, fantasizing? Did I give in to these temptations? Would I put my sexuality under the control of Jesus? What about my business morals? What about my family? Do they see the hand of God in my life?

This was hot and heavy stuff. Jesus wants to have a personal relationship with you, he said. And you with him, but you're afraid. You know if you surrender it will cost you. People will call you crazy.

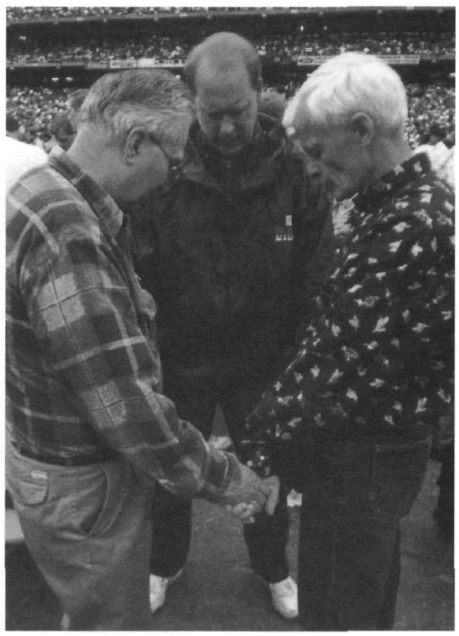
But what will happen is you will have a thinking, exciting, personal relationship with Christ. You will know your sins are forgiven.

Here's what you need to do, he said. Confess. Renounce all evil in your life. Say, "I don't understand Christ, but come into my heart."

He invited those of us who wanted to commit or rededicate our lives to Christ to come forward.

In an instant — like they had been waiting for it — guys were out of their chairs, moving forward, streaming down the aisles onto the main floor. I sat stunned in the press box. I had expected an altar call, but not now. I had figured it to come about five o'clock Saturday afternoon when everyone was sleep deprived.

The area in front of the stage looked like a huge mosh pit. Guys were crying. Hugging each other. PK volunteers passed out Bibles. The band played lite-rock



F.E.

hymns. Smooth-talking Glenn the MC moved on stage.

"We don't want anyone to leave without assurance of eternal life ... your sins are forgiven ... be filled with the holy spirit," he said .

"Put your family under the blessing of God," said Luis. It took almost 45 minutes to get everyone back into their seats.

Later on Glenn announced that 7,500 guys had asked for salvation that night.

This was standard stuff, I thought. I could get this on Cable. I talked with a couple of local religion writers I knew. We agreed that so far we hadn't seen or heard much out of the ordinary.

What would it be like and what would we have if we accept Jesus Christ as our personal savior? asked E. V. Hill, the next speaker. His answer: peace with God, the peace of God, and God as a guide in life.

"The way things are now," he said, "you need a guide."

If you have the peace of God and God as a guide, you will rise up and lead your community to righteousness, he said. "And you will do it in the name of Jesus Christ."

He started to pace back and forth across the front of the stage.

"Men of God love," he shouted at us. "They love, help, and save. They have the power to turn America around."

Guys were on their feet now cheering and clapping.

"Go do it," Hill hollered at us.

"Go do it.

"Go do it."

The band started lite-rocking "I Have Decided To Follow Jesus" and we all sang along. After the song, Glenn told us to write down one key thought for each session in our PK workbooks, don't forget our wrist bands, and he would see us at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

John grabbed my hand and we started to share and pray. John's prayer was about spending time with TV sports instead of his family. I was kind of embarrassed. I didn't know this guy. Episcopalians don't do things like this, even in the house church I attend.

I sat in the press box thinking about what I had heard and seen.

An interesting spectacle, but lacking in emotion, I thought. I heard the speakers, but they

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weren't reaching me. I was envious of the 7,500 guys that allowed God to move in their lives. I had wanted that, but like the five virgins, had been asleep at the switch.

Wait a minute! It reached those 7,500 guys that came forward. They were involved. Those 7,500 had come with the thought of allowing God to move into their lives.

Then I realized: I was just watching. I was the one that was unemotional. I was the one that was withdrawn, sitting in the press box. I was the one that was cynical, questioning.

If anything was going to happen, be it story-wise or movement down my spiritual road, I was going to have to participate and allow whatever happened to happen.

7 a.m. With cleaning crews still moving through the third deck, the doors opened and like coffee slowly filling a cup, the guys covered the main floor, bubbled over the first level, filled in the second level in a flash, and by 9 a.m. lapped at the stadium's top row of seats on the third level.

The band started a lite-rock warm up. Glenn asked us to pray for a bus load of Illinois guys coming to PK who were involved in an accident. Six were in critical condition.

Joe Garlington told us that if we are to become men of worship, regular prayer is important. We needed to find a place, a time, and a partner, he said.

For most of Joe's talk I moved around the Silverdome, from the main floor to the last row in the third deck, shooting photos.

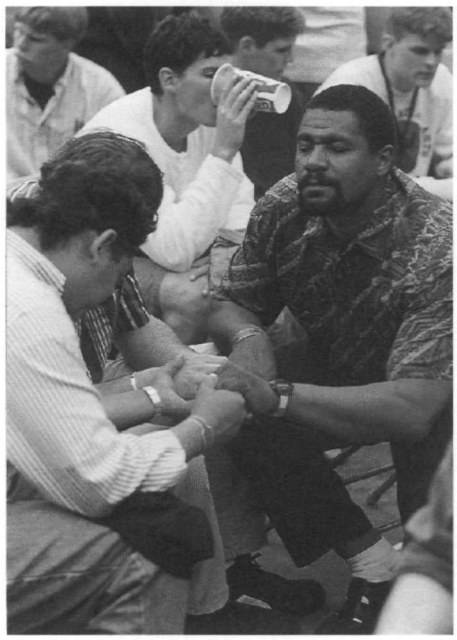
Want to pray?

But I got back to the press box just in time for Joe to tell us to break into small groups to share and pray together.

John, a writer sitting next to me, asked me if I wanted to pray.

Okay, I say to myself, you can sit and watch or join in and see what happens. I said yes.

John grabbed my hand and we started to share and pray. John's prayer was about spending time with TV sports instead of his family. I was kind of embarrassed. I didn't know this guy. Episcopalians don't do things like this, even in the house church I attend.



F.E.

Get with the program, I yelled at myself. I shared the first concern that popped into my head: Too much time with my computer.

John prayed for me. Let the Lord come into my life, he said. I prayed that he could tear himself away from his TV. I kept looking at my watch. I had to leave and cover the gay and lesbian demonstration. And I felt uncomfortable as hell and wanted to get out of there.

Demonstrating outside

The people at the anti-PK demonstration —representatives from Macomb County NOW, the Triangle Foundation, and Affirmations were angry for a variety of reasons: PK represented a repressive version of the family. They promoted male dominance. They are anti-gay. They

Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper

1. A Man and His God: A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. A Man and His Mentors: A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.

3. A Man and His Integrity: A Promise Keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity.

4. A Man and His Family: A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages, families, love, protection, and biblical values.

5. A Man and His Church: A Promise Keeper is committed to supporting the mission of the church by honoring and praying for his pastor, and by actively giving his time and resources.

6. A Man and His Brothers: A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

7. A Man and His World: A Promise Keeper is committed to influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (see Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (see Matt. 28:19-20).

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proof-text the Bible.

A counter-demonstration of pro-PK forces formed. Sixteen anti's and four anti-anti's. The anti-PKs shouted a few slogans — "Men don't own women and children, Liberation not domination." The anti-anti's carried a Christian flag and a Bible and were on a first name basis with some of the anti's.

Both sides argued at each other about being polite and whether Scott Amadore, a gay guy from a Detroit suburb who was murdered by the straight fellow he embarrassed on the Jenny Jones Show, deserved it or not and whether he would burn in hell.

I left. Things could only get worst. And I didn't want to miss lunch.

I got back to the press lunch room and found a seat with a bunch of radio guys. Then a fellow I had noticed sitting in front of me in the press box came up to the table and asked if he could sit with us.

"I've been saving the seat for you," I said, sort of my own private joke.

David and I started talking. He was an Episcopalian from Virginia visiting the conference as a guest of the publisher of *New Man,* a magazine that covers the Godly men's revolution.

"I find a real sweetness here," he said. "Any movement that can get men to appreciate women to the point of serving them has to be given credit."

What do you think? he asked me.

I didn't find anything objectionable yet, I said. But I did feel uncomfortable around all the Jesus talk. It's just not my style.

A divine encounter?

David shifted around in his seat looking me in the eyes.

"I have to tell you this," he said.

Uh-oh, I thought.

"I saw you sitting at the table when I got in line," he said.

"I felt this wave sweep over me. God was speaking to me and He said go sit with this fellow. If the seat next to you was still empty when I got through the line I would come over.

"It took me 10 minutes to get through the line and the seat next to you was still empty. When I came over and asked if I could sit there you said ..."

"I've been saving the seat for you," I finished for him. "I say that a lot, it's a private joke."

Then, with all the finesse of a blindside punch, he said: "What's your relationship with Jesus?"

"Well," I said, hemming and hawing, thinking, trying to figure out what to say and do. "I'm not sure."

"Do you want to have a personal relationship with Jesus?" he asked.

"I'm afraid of that language," I said.

"That doesn't matter," he said. "Do you want to have a personal relationship with God? He's here now."

I thought a minute.

"I did have this weird experience recently with Romans."

One of the reasons I came to the conference, I told him, besides to do this story was to move down the spiritual road I felt was opening before me.

"Fritz," he said, "has anyone ever prayed for you? I mean really prayed?"

"I don't know," I said. "I'm not sure. I mean, yes, I guess."

"Do you want to have a personal relationship with Jesus?" he asked.

"I'm afraid of that language," I said.

"That doesn't matter," he said. "Do you want to have a personal relationship with God? He's here now."

I thought a minute. This is one of the things I had come for.

This is what the 7,500 guys that had witnessed last night had come for. Same place. Different way.

"Sure," I said. "I'm frightened. I don't know what to do."

"Fritz," he said, "just pretend Jesus is sitting across the table from you and say what comes into your mind."

Hey, I thought, stop being so stiff-necked. What could go wrong?

"Jesus," I said, focusing on the salt shaker, "I want to have a personal relationship with you."

Thunderbolts, rushing wind, burning bushes?

No.

David reached over and put his hand on my shoulder and, in the middle of the Silverdome press room, with people trooping by and lite-rock hymns in the background, prayed for me.

He prayed that my new relationship with Jesus would deepen. He prayed that I would fulfill God's wishes for my life.

Then we traded cards and went back to work.

'Out-servant her'

Did I see the conference any differently? I did feel like I was one of the gang now.

Does that mean I liked all that I heard? No.

Wellington Boone told us not to dominate our wives, leading out of fear, but to become a spiritual leader by outservanting them.

"Surprise her," he said. Surprise her by writing love letters and giving her time for herself.

"Outservant her, men. Got that?" he shouted at us.

I also heard him call homosexuality an abomination and cringed because I

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thought of Rick, my best friend and a guy I love like a brother, who is gay.

I heard Joe Stowell, the president of Moody Bible Institute, tell us to spend more time with our kids, that the most important thing we could give them is time.

"They don't care about your day or work or office," he said. "They care about you."

I heard Tony Evans, a black man, complain about gays getting together and organizing for political power.

"There is nothing wrong," he said, "with Christians getting together. It's time for *us* to come out."

But I also heard him speak forcefully on racism.

"We might have come over on different ships," he reminded us, "but we are all in the same boat now."

Overcoming racism

Race and color have kept us apart, he said.

"How can we be the people of God on Monday if we don't worship together on Sunday? The only color that matters is red — the color of the precious blood of Jesus Christ."

Then he commanded us to get our lives together and be brothers.

"No more niggers, honkies, wops ... brothers!" It brought all 76,000 guys to our feet shouting, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus."

I didn't shout Jesus, but I was on my feet cheering and clapping.

Boone and Randy Phillips, the white president of PK, stood face-to-face before 76,000 guys and apologized to each other for the past racial discrimination and bigotry each of their races had shown toward the other.

It was gutsy. A real model of reconciliation each of us could take home and use in our lives.

One woman's perspective

Holly Phillips, Randy's wife and the only woman to speak, soberly warned us that many women have a difficult time with change.

"Some wives will be thrilled and overjoyed by the strange, changed man that just walked through the door," she said. "Some will be cautious and uneasy."

Change in your family could take a couple of years, she said. And for some it may never come because it is just too late.

She told us to find a small group of men to talk with at home, to find a partner and become accountable.

"I'm a fraud," Bill McCartney, the PK founder told us. I shouldn't be up here, he said, because of what I was.

His change from a driven, obsessed football coach came, he said, when one day he looked at his wife in church and instead of happiness saw pain on her face.

I knew I needed to change, he said.

Forgive, Give and Live. Those were the three words that helped him change.

Forgive everybody of everything. Give and you will receive. And Live as Christ would live His life, he said.

A steady trickle of tired looking men moved from their seats, into the aisles, and out of the stadium as he spoke.

McCartney's talk was an odd rambling letdown from the others we had heard.

Randy came back on as the trickle of men leaving became a flood and talked about money, the only time during the conference it was mentioned. We prayed together and lite-rocked about leaving as Godly men.

Looking for changes

A couple of weeks after the conference I asked Patricia, my wife, if she saw any changes in me.

"You're less cynical and more open to seeing God move in your life and the lives of other people," she said.

I liked that. Beside the story, that's what I went for. TW

What the critics say:

"I'm concerned when they take first-century morality and try to apply it to the 20th century. They take one sentence from Leviticus and use it to condemn gays. In the last part of the 20th century we don't do that. Bill McCartney was involved with Colorado Amendment Two. During the time it was debated hate crimes went up 300 percent. When it passed there was another big increase."

— Jeff Montgomery, Triangle Foundation, Detroit area Gay Rights group

"Men ought to be in football stadiums and be told how to behave in light of change in family structure and the roles of women.

"These people are preaching old wrongs about men being the head of the household. It's about control. It's a network. The religious right really wants to make a democracy into a theocracy. They want to make Christians out of everybody."

— Sharon Bogucki, Macomb County National Organization for Women

"I think it is less of a men's movement and more of a new angle on the old Evangelical Crusade. It reminds me of the 1950s and 1960s Billy Graham big group crowd phenomena.

The Men's Movement is much more focused on the issues and concerns of men's lives: a particular faith or form is not that important. I see patriarchal leanings and homophobia in the Promise Keepers."

— David Brower, Detroit Episcopal priest in the Men's Movement

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Prayer and renewal in the midst of misconduct: an interview with M. Thomas Shaw

M. Thomas Shaw, S.S.J.E.,the 15th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, succeeds the late David E. Johnson, who committed suicide in January, 1995. Shaw, 49, had been serving as bishop coadjutor of the diocese at the time. The Society of St. John the Evangelist, of which Shaw is a member, is a religious order of priests and lay brothers in the Episcopal Church involved with ministry to the urban poor, retreat work and spiritual direction.

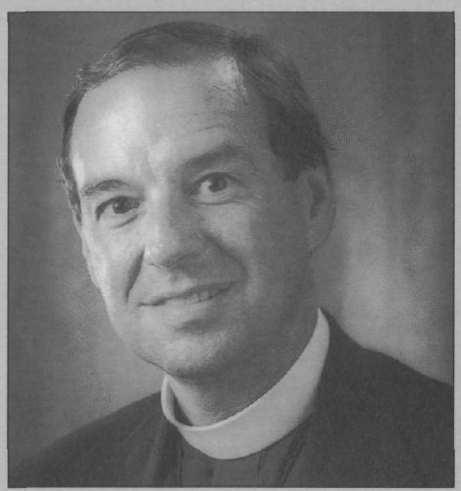
Julie Wortman: The Diocese of Massachusetts and you were thrown into the public spotlight rather suddenly last January after Bishop Johnson's suicide and the subsequent revelation that he had been involved in adulterous sexual relationships. People are interested in the way you handled the disclosure of both. Some would say you told too much.

M. Thomas Shaw: With the suicide, I took my lead from David's wife, Jodie Johnson. Initially we were the only two people except for the police who had the information that David had committed suicide. I said to her, "Jodie how do you want to deal with this?" And she said, "We're going to be honest about it." Once she gave me that permission, Paul's words about "the truth will set you free" became the thing that guided us in making our decisions about disclosure.

When I say "the truth will set you free," I think that people don't need and shouldn't have access to all the information that's there. But it is the honesty people need in order to bring about health and encouragement of Christian community in the future.

J.W.: Did you also take your lead from Jodie Johnson about disclosure when it was revealed that David Johnson had engaged in extra-marital sexual relationships?

T.S.: It was certainly something that we talked about, but I knew enough from dealing with such situations that if we were going to be concerned about the health of the church we didn't really have any choice. It has become increasingly apparent to me that in forming Christian community secrecy is almost never helpful. The kind of secrecy that allows people to collude with the power of sin or evil is always destructive.



M. Thomas Shaw David Zadig

If I really take the time to pray about each of these sexual misconduct cases before they come to me, I feel I can go into the whole thing with an openness — and a lack of defensiveness, because as a white male I obviously come into these situations with a lot of baggage.

J.W.: That sounds simple, but I imagine it isn't. Where have you bumped up against the greatest difficulties with disclosure?

T.S.: It is difficult to know how much information one should release at a given time, especially when there is conflicting evidence or extenuating circumstances.

J.W.: So what do you do? I assume most cases have extenuating circumstances.

T.S.: Yes. I don't want to sound overly pious, but I think that it is prayer that has helped me in dealing with these cases. If I really take the time to pray about each of these cases as they come to me, the Holy Spirit gives me some clarity. And by that I don't mean that an answer suddenly comes on my mental screen, but when I walk into a situation and I have to respond to the pain and the people, in some way the Holy Spirit gives me some clarity in speaking. I also have found that I need a lot of guidance and counsel from other people — I try to avoid making decisions in isolation. Lay women, especially, have a lot of insight that's helpful to me.

J.W.: Does the praying help you avoid presuppositions?

T.S.: It gives me a kind of space. You know that wonderful phrase from the psalms where the psalmist says, "You brought me out into an open place and I feel as though you've rescued me"? I feel that if I can pray about a situation beforehand I can go into the whole thing with an openness — and a lack of defensiveness, because as a white male I obviously come into these situations with a lot of baggage. I think prayer helps me not carry quite as much baggage or at least gives me some compensating perspective.

J.W.: Is there a prevailing dynamic that you see as you deal with cases of clergy misconduct?

T.S.: I often see in the perpetrators

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness.*

Vital Signs

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people who are ministering in isolation and who don't have colleagues or the kind of spiritual resources to deal with the hard issues around ministry and so they don't have any clarity. They have affection needs and recognition needs that more appropriately should be expressed in an intimate relationship with a spouse or a friend or in their own prayer time, but they don't seem to have access to that.

And some of what I see, too, is that offending clergy don't "get it" as far as the power issue and the issues around sexual ethics. It's obvious to me as a bishop and also as somebody who's been a spiritual director that whether or not we want the power or whether or not we believe that's what the church says theologically about those positions, we have that power. The abuse of that power is something that can be incredibly damaging to people.

J.W. : What is the power clergy have?

T.S.: I think we have power as far as access is concerned, an *entree* into peoples' lives. I think defenses are a good thing for people to have and that there is a reason why people have defenses, but there are times when people should feel they don't have to put up those defenses. One of the sacred places is the relationship between a priest and a person who comes to a priest for help.

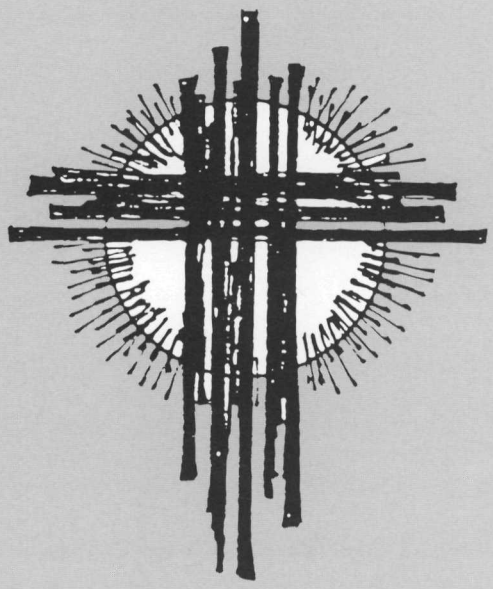
J.W.: What don't offending clergy "get" about sexual ethics?

T.S.: A lot of us clergy were brought up in the church in the 1960s and early 1970s, when there was a muddled sexual ethic — I think there's a muddled sexual ethic now, only it's a different one. But in the 1960s and 1970s there wasn't much guidance; there wasn't much in the way of standards or ideals that were held up to people. I don't think the Christian church in the West has had much of a clear understanding of Christian sexuality since the 5th century — since Augustine. Augustine kind of cut off the debate.

From my own pastoral experience before becoming bishop, I think that how Christians live out their sexuality is something that's not understood. The institution of Christian marriage is in a lot of trouble and should be the focus, more than whether or not we allow same-sex unions.

Many marriages, when it comes to the issue of sexuality, are really not in great shape. And I'm not sure the church has provided much help, nor have men and women in Christian marriages been willing to be honest about that. All this stuff about homosexuality is just a red herring to distract us from the much deeper issue of sexuality and contemporary culture and the lack of Christian guidance.

J.W.: Can you give an example of what you mean?



Clergy who have the long view recognize that while this is a terribly difficult thing we're going through right now, it is part of some very powerful renewal in the life of the church that has to do not just with sexuality but with gender issues and lay and ordained ministry.

T.S.: Take married relationships that are 15 or 20 years old. What role does sexuality play in those and how does sexuality contribute to the health of the relationship and the wholeness of the human being?

J.W.: Are you saying that people aren't talking about whether they are having sex and what their expectations are from the sexual relationship?

T.S.: Yes, and they're not talking about the role their sexuality plays in their wholeness as Christians and how they connect that to their prayer, to their life with God and to their ministry. I think that most of us who are Christians in the West compartmentalize our sexuality. And that's one of the things we discovered as we tried to unravel David Johnson's life — that he had this tremendous power of compartmentalizing, that he could see his sexuality in a very different way from the rest of his life. I don't think everybody is as extreme as he was, but the healthy integration of sexuality and spirituality is not there for most of us.

J.W.: I've heard it said that a lot of the clergy in the church are demoralized right now, partly because of the current focus on clergy sexual misconduct.

T.S.: I think a certain segment might be. I think that the power of evil will always try to draw us into the negative around these difficult issues, the depression and the loss of morale, but I think there's tremendous grace and resurrection in it. We have been having a lot of discussions in our diocese about background checks. Some clergy are very much against this, but others think this is the right thing to be doing. Clergy who have the long view of things recognize that while this is a terribly difficult thing we're going through right now, it is part of some very powerful kind of renewal in the life of the church that has to do not just with sexuality but with gender issues and lay and ordained ministry. If we're faithful to this I think it is something that's going to really help all of us — and help us be the body of Christ.

J.W.: Can you envision an institutional church in which ordained folks can be in mutual relationship with lay folks, not in

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power-over relationships with them?

T.S.: We have lots of congregations like that all across the Episcopal Church. Unfortunately, they're not the ones that are reported on in the press. I go into congregations Sunday after Sunday where clergy and laity understand who they are, understand how they are to relate to one another and what is appropriate.

I've received letters from people who think we disclosed too much about the Bishop Johnson case or say the women in the Bishop Johnson case were really the ones to blame, but overwhelmingly I've had men and women, lay and ordained, say to me that they are grateful that we've been so honest with all of this and that it means so much to the life of the church. To me that is an incredibly healthy response. *The Boston Globe* even did an editorial on it. That's a sign that a lot of people understand what a healthy relationship between clergy and lay people in a Christian community is supposed to be.

J.W.: What is your hope for the clergy under your authority who are guilty of sexual misconduct?

T.S.: I think it is like any other issue in the Christian pilgrimage. Out of every sin we commit, out of every difficult time we go through, because Jesus Christ has been victorious over death, God can bring something towards wholeness that is quite wonderful. I guess my hope for the clergy I deal with is that they're able to experience something of the power of the resurrection as they go through this painful experience.

For congregations, I hope they have some assurance that there will be some protection from this in the future. As a bishop, the health of the local Christian community is very important to me.

New York's new suffragan!

Catherine S. Roskam, 52, was voted suffragan bishop of New York in a three-ballot election on June 10, making her the fourth woman to be elected to the episcopate in the Episcopal Church, USA, and the sixth woman to be elected bishop in the worldwide Anglican communion.

Catherine Roskam

"Many people in the diocese were interested in electing a woman bishop," Roskam said following the election, citing a widespread desire for further "diversity" in diocesan leadership. New York is currently served by three male bishops — of European, African and Caribbean descent. Three out of five of the candidates in the election were women.

The bishop-elect began her ordained ministry in New York but has been missioner in the Diocese of California since 1991.

The election must now be ratified by a majority of the bishops and diocesan standing committees in the Episcopal Church. She expects some opposition. "The fact that I am a woman will be a problem for some. But I am also an inclusive person — I expect to sign the 1994 *Koinonia* statement [put forward by Newark bishop John Spong calling sexual orientation "morally neutral" and ordination "open to all baptized persons"] — and that will be a problem for others." Roskam said she has been a member of Integrity, the Episcopal Church's gay rights organization, since 1984.

Roskam is scheduled to start work in New York on January 1, 1996. Her husband, Philip, is a licensed psychologist, and their daughter, Gemma, attends college on the west coast.

Power, influence and authority: a cautionary tale

by Reginald G. Blaxton

Ed. note: The following was written in response to the second installment of The Witness' *six-part series on clergy sexual exploitation. Reginald Blaxton takes issue with "*The Power Debate" *by Julie A. Wortman, 5/95. We recognize that much of Blaxton's analysis is also at odds with the preceding Tom Shaw interview.*

Proponents of the view that Episcopal clergy serving congregations are powerful individuals would do well to step back from their advocacy for a moment and reflect on a single statistic. *During the space of a decade, approximately a million parishioners have left the Episcopal Church.*

There are probably a million reasons for this exodus. But the fact remains that any sort of clerical "power" that can be so readily resisted and repudiated by so many people should not be considered power at all.

In secular perspective, most congregational clergy in mainline denominations, outside of employer-employee relationships are *not* powerful people.

In a hierarchical church, the potential for clerical power increases the closer one moves to the Ordinary's office. But even an Episcopal bishop's power — his or her ability to achieve purpose — is subject and constrained, by design, by many other checks and balances, in law and custom.

It is true that the authority of presbyters as ordained ministers may enable them at times to significantly influence the decision-making and actions of genuinely powerful members of their congregations. But authority is not power, and it should not be confused with power.

I believe that the idea that parochial clergy involved in sexual misconduct

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exercise "power" in relation to their adult victims has been appropriated, without critical reflection, from analyses of sexual abuse in other professional contexts, principally the practice of psychotherapy.

But pastoral care — what parish clergy practice professionally — is not psychotherapy. And the kind of counsel which clergy are trained, ordained and expected to provide, across the full range of theological learning, i.e., in *Divinity* — is not "psychological" in the commonly accepted sense of the word.

Professionally speaking, clergy are counselors in the same sense that lawyers are called and considered *counselors*-at-law.

I suspect that the secular psycho-therapeutic/counseling model has been appropriated to shore up a professional identity weakened by the pressures of secularism and specialization, questions about the intellectual and moral credibility of Divinity as a field of professional expertise and profound skepticism about the sometimes unconscionable ways clerics have exercised power in the past, in church and state, when they had it.

Clerical sexual abuse does entail an abuse of *authority* — the right to command and the correlative right to be obeyed. It is particularly troubling that "experts" on sexual misconduct in the church setting, most of whom are women, do not seem to recognize the distinctions between power, influence and authority.

In the current controversy over clerical sexual misconduct, there is but one genuinely powerful player: the Church Pension Fund and its subsidiary, the Church Insurance Corporation (CIC).

Conceived during the late 19th century as a service agency to relieve clergy and their widows of the burden of poverty during their retirement years, the Church Pension Fund was granted in 1913, as a condition of its establishment, a monopoly over the business of the Episcopal Church.

Monopoly is the effective source of power. This private, commercial enterprise (in an action for which I can find no precedent in modern church history) has now grown rich and arrogant enough to dictate internal church policy. *That* is an example of institutional power.

Sexual misconduct policy, in its formulation and enactment, depends on the authority of bishops, as religious community leaders, for its effect. If the process used in the Diocese of Washington is a reliable guide to the wider church's practice, there will be no opportunity for critical review, public debate in convention, or a vote on the wisdom of these measures. (And so, I would have to say that the headline in *The Witness* — "The Power Debate" — is both misleading and inaccurate.)

If the CIC is truly powerful, and sexual misconduct policies rely on the extra-canonical authority of bishops for their force and effect, the "experts" are, at present, highly influential (though I suspect that *they* view their influence as power).

Reader response

I believe that the idea that parochial clergy involved in sexual misconduct exercise "power" in relation to their adult victims has been appropriated, without critical reflection, from analyses of sexual abuse in other professional contexts.

Their expertise goes unchallenged by the holy common folk of God, clerical and lay. And their claims that they are merely acting "pastorally," as advocates of "victims" and "survivors" have been accepted with a surprising degree of docility.

So long as these "experts" are able/enabled to hide their own power interests in the enactment of sexual misconduct policy, and the political and financial interests of other players, behind the benign, apolitical, unexamined rhetoric of "pastoral" concern and responsiveness, I believe that more people, demoralized by superficial thinking about power, and the malign effect of such thinking on the quality of Christian community and inter-personal relationships, voting with their feet, will have ample reason to leave the church.

The posture of victimization, finally, is neither powerful nor spiritually healthful. It represents a flight from, an immature refusal to accept, personal responsibility for being/becoming a sensitive and competent moral actor.

The experts' focus on victimization is anti-pastoral in that it encourages passivity in the face of injustice; for where the nature and dynamics of power are misconceived, and the social context of ethical action and response is misconstrued, the support and nurture of the holy common folk of God — i.e., *empowerment*, in political parlance — cannot be effectively practiced.

Consider for example, a recent news article concerning former national church treasurer Ellen Cooke's theft of 2.2 million dollars. In addition to her appointment as treasurer, Cooke, at the time of her firing for reasons unrelated to her stealing, was the senior administrator of the national church staff, second in authority to the primate, a position hitherto only held by a bishop.

According to Cooke's statement an Episcopal priest now counseling her had stressed "the truth of my inappropriate and wrong response to the situation in which I found myself." The priest, who is a woman, "has helped me to acknowledge the pain, abuse and powerlessness I have felt during the years as a laywoman on a senior staff level at the church headquarters" (*The New York Times*, May 8, 1995).

A cautionary tale? You bet.

Reginald Blaxton is an Episcopal priest who lives in Washington, D.C. He is a member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company board.

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continued from page 5

This issue offers several perspectives on the atomic bombings in 1945 and on nonviolence.

It opens with letters recently rediscovered that my father wrote to his parents from Okinawa in the summer of 1945 (p. 8). These letters are humbling for me — reading his accounts, I realized that I had previously viewed the atomic bombing in a vacuum, without factoring in the destruction and carnage that were already in action.

As a Navy chaplain, my father was burying American boys on a Japanese beach (p. 8). He writes, "The quicker, harder, and more often we bomb Japan, the quicker the war will be over and that many more men's lives will be saved. That is what I want."

I suspect that my father, who died in 1974 — by then a passionate critic of Richard Nixon, might have modified his views had he had access to the articles now in circulation which suggest that the U.S. had strong incentives to prolong the war (p. 12).

Dorothy Day, an advocate of nonviolence, was shrewd enough to anticipate these kinds of U.S. interests at the time; she opposed the war (p. 11).

At a recent contributing editors' meeting in Detroit, people at the table, each with long histories in justice struggles, had radically different views on nonviolence. For some it is a life-discipline, for others it's an occasional tactic that usually needs to be backed by the threat of force.

Drawing on both perspectives, we have included the convictions of an Irish grandmother connected to *Sinn Fein* (p. 23) and those of a couple who cashed in their retirement pensions to provide a neutral setting where divorced people can exchange their kids in safety (p. 38). We also found that Holly Elliott is studying common usage of nonviolence (p. 6).

But we needed someone to speak to the division between those struggling for justice who rely on armed resistance (p. 22) and those staking their lives on nonviolence. We found Barbara Deming (p. 18). She acknowledges that people can use nonviolence as a cover for passivity. She is also clear that while nonviolence *does* mean that you cause an adversary no bodily harm, it *does not* mean that you abstain from using force. Some will question her belief. But I find it a relief. And it's the antidote to a friend's desperation on my block.

"I'm not sure I believe in nonviolence anymore," a neighbor complained. He explained that he hurls rocks, or eggs, at the cars of men who bring street prostitutes into the alley where his children play.

"I'm not sure I believe in nonviolence anymore," a neighbor and friend in the community, complained recently on his front porch.

He explained that he hurls rocks, or eggs, at the cars of the men who bring street prostitutes into the alley where his children play. Day in and day out, suburban and local men park their sexual desires in the corners of our neighborhood.

"I don't think I'm ever going to have the soul force to protect the neighborhood just by concentrating on goodness," he said in disgust.

Then he went on to give a very thorough explanation of what serious nonviolence would look like in our neighborhood.

"We need teams of people to go door-to-door to build the block club. Everyone needs the phone numbers of neighbors. Last week an elderly lady over by where they're digging up the street heard a bang on her basement window and then a guy came to the door, shouting, 'We've got a gas leak. I need to check your basement. I think it's going to blow.'" She let him in. He robbed her. She needed to call a block captain — forget about the police.

"We need to police the area — we need to confront people together. It would take discipline and time."

Of all of us, this friend is the most vigilant and active in the neighborhood. He's also closest to despair because so few of us make the neighborhood meetings at the library. Without solidarity, we can arm our cars and homes with alarms. Or we can give up our homes and flee, as urban refugees, to another community. Bottom line, we can try to protect them with guns.

The dilemma is the same regionally and internationally.

Lip service to a nonviolent ethic will not suffice.

We can't afford to be simplistic or self-righteous. Nonviolence presupposes a willingness to understand our adversaries' motivations. This is why we need to have conversations with members of citizen militias. It's why this issue includes an article that is not entirely unsympathetic to the Promise Keepers, a group which will pull together hundreds of thousands of men this year to teach conservative moral values (p. 26). It's why we can't float candles for the dead in Hiroshima but refuse to acknowledge the agony of U.S. soldiers in WWII.

We can't demonize those with whom we disagree. We can't be detached or naive about power. For nonviolence to work, we need to be smart, engaged and able to strategize. With luck, or discipline, we'll stand in community and find ways to decrease the violence around us. TW

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Bonhoeffer's resistance

by Michael L. Westmoreland-White

The Cup of Wrath: A Novel Based on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Resistance to Hitler, by Mary Glazener, Smyth & Helwys Press, Macon, GA: 1992.

In most historical novels the main characters and most of the action are fictional, but the setting and (perhaps) some of the minor characters, and actions, are drawn from historical events. Mary Glazener has not written that kind of book. Rather, hers is a nonfiction historical novel, a genre new to me. All of her "characters" are actual historical persons, and only two of them have been disguised with fictional names. The plot, most of the action, and almost all the dialogue is historical as well. Glazener's work is a "novel," rather than a biography, however, because she describes emotions, gives an omniscient viewpoint, and creates probable conversations out of the actual words of her major characters. The result is an *interpretation* of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, his family, friends, and their resistance to Hitler, that has all the power of a novel and none of the heavy-handed didacticism of more straightforward interpretations.

In this 50th anniversary of the end of World War II and the Holocaust, looking again at a small handful of Germans who opposed Hitler and Naziism is quite instructive. *The Cup of Wrath* sheds light on a time of great darkness. It allows us to view a very human Bonhoeffer, seeing him develop from a young theologian to the creative prophet of the *Letters and Papers from Prison.* Further, we confront painfully the failures of most Christians (even the Confessing Church), of that era, fearing that our own churches might be as susceptible to ideological captivity. It sheds light on Bonhoeffer's fellow conspirators, mostly secular, and we wonder how they found courage and clarity where so many did not.

Glazener does not answer all our questions, but brings the importance of the questions home to us in a decisive way. One place this is most obvious is the perpetual question of how Bonhoeffer speaks to the question of the morality of violence. Bonhoeffer scholars debate whether or not he was ever a complete pacifist, and Glazener makes no attempt to answer that question. Instead, she faithfully portrays all of Bonhoeffer's challenges to Christian participation in warfare. She also displays Bonhoeffer's decision to participate in the assassination attempts on Hitler when all other choices seemed absent.

As Glazener notes, Bonhoeffer knew that the conspiracy entailed guilt, but he took on that guilt, claiming Christ's forgiveness. In the end, Bonhoeffer is a challenge to both an easy pacifism (passivity) and a cheap acceptance of justified violence.

Bonhoeffer would probably not be happy that for some his actions justify Christians' use of violence. That focus obscures all of the resistance Bonhoeffer was doing from early in the Hitler regime, while there was still time to stop him without the desperate measures of the conspiracy.

Further, it is very clear that Bonhoeffer's theological and ethical thought was still evolving at the time of his execution. I am not certain that he ever fully resolved the issues of violence and nonviolence. It is too easy to concentrate on Bonhoeffer's participation in the assassination conspiracy and to ignore the incredible captivity of the church to the principalities of fascism, racism, militarism, etc., and the absurdity of an ethic of unquestioning obedience to authorities. I have heard fellow pacifists ask what might have happened if Bonhoeffer had been able to make his trip to India and visit Gandhi; would the Confessing Church have been able to resist Hitler with Gandhian nonviolence? I doubt it. Most of the Confessing Church, including many of Bonhoeffer's students, were eager to be drafted into the war and thus prove their "patriotism." They were baffled by Bonhoeffer's objection. I find it hard to believe that he would have had much success teaching them Gandhian techniques of nonviolence. The failure of Christians to be nonviolent is only a symptom of a much larger captivity to the powers, and it is those larger questions that are most illumined by Bonhoeffer's witness.

All who struggle to have faith in Jesus Christ and to faithfully respond in discipleship in these United States should read this book. Why? Because our struggle for faith and faithfulness takes place in a context of militaristic and racist nationalism, violence, homophobia, misogyny, and national selfishness; a context to which much of the church seems thoroughly captive. *The Cup of Wrath* allows us to learn from others who had similar struggles in a time even darker than our own. If we are willing to drink such a cup, we too may hope for resurrection. TW

Michael Westmoreland-White, a new member of the International Bonhoeffer Society, recently completed a doctorate in Christian ethics. He lives in Louisville, KY.

book review

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Shielding kids, changing attitudes

by Marianne Arbogast

When their plan to reduce family violence was turned down by one agency after another in Collier County, Florida, Chuck Leigh and Tricia Bratton put their money where their convictions were and began the program themselves. Cashing in their pension funds and moving to a low-income neighborhood in Naples, the couple launched Safe Children — Strong Families in January 1994.

As shelter and foster care workers, Leigh and Bratton had often seen children caught in the crossfire of battles between estranged parents.

"I had done work at a women's shelter," says Leigh. "In a lot of cases, when we came across physical fighting in front of the children, it took place during visitation."

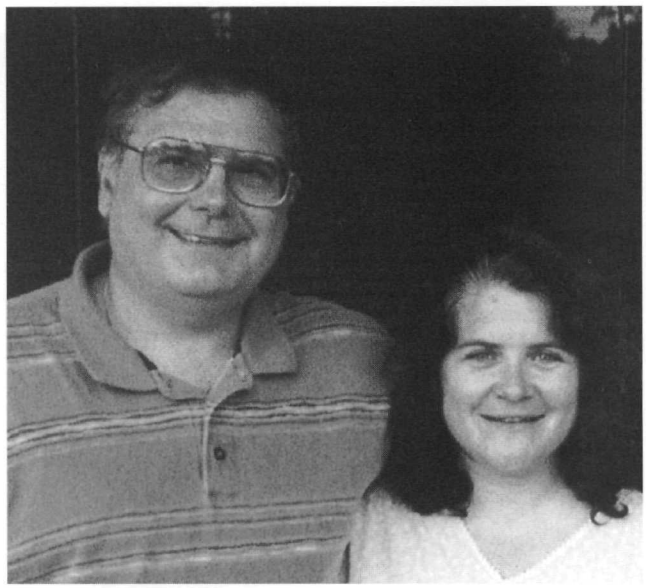
Leigh and Bratton have found a way to avert the violence by providing neutral territory where parents can drop off or pick up children for visits, and where supervised visits can take place between children and parents who are learning to work through their anger.

Leigh is full-time director of Safe Children. Bratton, a former county foster care supervisor, works for the public health department, earning enough income to enable her husband to work for $9,000 a year. Along with other volunteer therapists, Bratton devotes weekend and evening hours to Safe Children.

A cornerstone of their work is the conviction that people can change.

"Physical abuse has more to do with attitudes than with psychosis. Men have the attitude that their job is to control their family. We can help make a change in what people see as acceptable."

—Chuck Leigh



Chuck Leigh and Tricia Bratton

Leigh, who runs a group for men who have been physically abusive, is critical of agencies that seem to be "always interested in assigning blame and punishment, but seldom interested in stopping violence in the long term. Just putting someone away for six months or a year is going to do more harm than good. I've never seen anyone come out of jail better than they go in — they come out madder and more bitter."

Bratton concurs. "We provide a service that allows a man to visit his children, giving him some hope that his life can change, that he can still be a father while he's working on his problems. I don't want to minimize what they did, but we really believe in the concept of redemption, that people can change their behavior."

Both Bratton and Leigh have experienced profound change in their own lives.

Leigh, now 46, moved from military service in Vietnam to an utter commitment to nonviolence.

His convictions were shaped by his involvement in the sanctuary movement, working with illegal Central American refugees. "My dad was a Belizean citizen, and he gave me a perspective on how we were missing the boat on the gospel," he says.

"I don't believe violence is acceptable at any time for any reason. I don't think we'll ever get away from domestic violence or child abuse as long as systemic violence is acceptable in society. I find it difficult to explain why it's okay for the state of Florida to kill people, but it's not okay for men to slap their wives."

Bratton, who is 38, recovered from substance abuse after joining Glide United Methodist Church in San Francisco in 1983.

"I found the acceptance there I had always looked for," she says. "My ideas and my faith coalesced. There was a message of internal change along with

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

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social change."

While at Glide, Bratton took a class from Gustavo Gutierrez, whose liberation theology helped her to process what she had learned during a six-month stay in an Indian village in Mexico.

"I got to understand the way it works in Latin America, and also why it's so hard for it to take place here. We're so individualistic, even in our faith. In Latin America, there are communities of people in poverty. It's not a personal shame, it's something they can unify around."

Bratton's fluency in Spanish, and her more recent study of Creole, have proved invaluable in her current work. Many clients are Mexicans, Guatemalans, and Haitians who work in the area's tourist industries and farmlands.

Rootlessness contributes to violence in families, Leigh believes.

"Everyone here is from somewhere else," he says. "People are away from families who could back them up. They don't have a brother or mother or dad to work with them in times of stress. In a lot of ways we do what the extended family is not able to do."

Leigh and Bratton work to keep children's needs from being lost in the torrent of hurt and anger that can accompany divorce. "Most parents love their kids, or they wouldn't be involved in visitation," Leigh says. "When they come here, we get a chance to talk to both sides and the children, and over a period of time, most get through the anger."

"We try to promote a healthy role model for non-violent communication," Bratton adds. "We try to keep our focus and the parents' focus on the children and their best interests."

The courts have come to rely on Safe Children for objective evaluations.

"A lot of what we do is to verify what's really going on," Leigh explains. "In one case a woman was completely hysterical. Everybody thought she was crazy, and the man always appeared very calm. But over a period of time we were able to see that he was setting her off, that he was the aggressor.

"Another woman accused her ex-husband of abuse, and was trying to have him charged with stalking, but after some time, we saw that she was actually self-mutilating." Leigh adds that this was an extreme case, saying that it is more common for men to harass their former partners.

But "a lot of times physical abuse has more to do with attitudes than with psychosis," he says. "Men have the attitude that their job is to control their family. We can help make a change in what people see as acceptable."

By relying on volunteers, charitable donors, and payment for court-ordered evaluations, Leigh has been able to keep Safe Children open for a year and a half. So far, whenever they have hit rock bottom, money has come through. Last week, when just $109 was left in the bank account, he was thrilled to open an envelope containing a $4,000 grant from Trinity Episcopal Church in New York.

His own small salary, along with Bratton's, has to stretch to cover child support for a 16-year-old daughter from Leigh's first marriage, as well as living expenses for themselves and a seven-year old son.

"We moved into a house in the neighborhood," Bratton says. "It needs work. To put up with water not working right, and not having air conditioning in Florida, is a struggle. But it helps put me in touch with the people we are working with.

"This is our ministry, rather than just our work," she explains. "It's not considered cost-effective," Leigh adds. "But when you consider the trauma to children, it's very effective."

[Donations may be sent to Safe Children — Strong Families, 2740 Bayshore Drive #18, Naples, FL 33962.]

Jane Dixon

I love The Witness
because it teaches me, it challenges me and best of all, it helps me to know that I have some degree of sanity in a crazy world.
— Jane Holmes Dixon
Suffragan bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington

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When I visited Hiroshima in 1976, I was profoundly touched. Upon returning to the U.S., I painted my prayer for world peace — a mythologic dragon dropping lotus blossoms (an Asian symbol of everlasting life) on the bombed-out shell of the city of Hiroshima. *— Julia Barkley*

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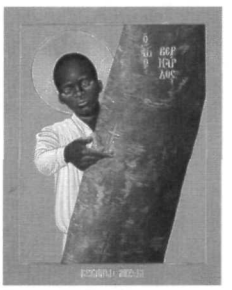
The media: colonizing minds

Africa

THE JUNE ISSUE RESONATED with all of us at Bridge Building Images. As you know many of the individuals chosen for icons by Robert Lentz have their native or theological roots in Africa. Your article on Bernard Mizeki (the *Witness* profile) gave us new insight into the newest icon painted by Robert and commissioned by the brothers of St. John the Evangelist. Reproductions of him in several formats will be available soon. The cross etched in the bark of the tree as Mizeki is depicted by Robert Lentz references that evangelical habit which Mizeki had which displeased some Africans who saw it as nothing but defacement.



Bernard Mizeki
by Robert Lentz

Ken Horseman
Burlington, VT

Body wisdom

I WAS RE-READING LETTERS TO THE editor in Body Wisdom issue [5/95]. Ken Bieber's response to Alex Seabrook's challenge regarding Bishop Spong's beliefs made me realize why the traditional church feels so alien to me. Where does Vicar Bieber think the catechism — and indeed the creed before that — came from? Weren't these beliefs and their interpretations written by men (no doubt white, Anglo-Saxon) influenced by the traditions and beliefs of their particular culture at a particular time in history? The living God that I believe in is rejoicing that other people (women and men of many colors and traditions) are also interpreting the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God in ways relevant to their particular culture at this particular time in the 1990s. Alleluia!

Carol Houillard Wolf
Portland, OR

I AM SO GLAD YOU RAN YOUR AD in *The Living Church*. I thought you had ceased to exist.

J.R. Tinsley
Shreveport, LA

Letters

Classifieds

Disability resources

The Office on Ministry with Persons Who are Handicapped of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota has become the nexus point for contacting The Presiding Bishop's Task Force on Accessibility (now called The Episcopal Disability Network) and for obtaining resources and assistance about disability concerns. This office is located at 3225 East Minnehaha Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55417; (phone) 612-721-1103 or 1-800-440-1103; (fax) 612-722-7424.

The office maintains lending libraries of taped books, multi-media resources, and books and periodicals on disability concerns. All materials may be borrowed on a free-loan basis. The "Book of Prayer" is also available on tape, for purchase at $25.

Remembering Dorothy Garner

Friends of Dorothy Garner give thanks for her life [TW 10/91]. She died in Detroit this spring. Outraged when a friend's life was threatened because she had yelled "Thank you Jesus!" when drug dealers on her block were arrested, Garner organized. She led a small crowd through her neighborhood, beating drums and passing out leaflets, reclaiming the streets. Whenever Garner was discouraged, she said she'd go to the nursery to watch plants grow!

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.

Sabbatical wanderings

by Dick Gillett

Ed. note: *Dick Gillett, a former staff member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, sent notes from his recent sabbatical.*

THREE MONTHS is not an exceptionally long time to withdraw from the constant pressures and demands of parish life (in my case an urban Hispanic ministry in California). But it was a wonderfully renewing time; a time to travel, to observe, to study; a time to allow the Divine Spirit to begin to pull my life together, and to endeavor to knit it more closely to the loving purposes of God for all humankind.

I have a lifelong love of trains, so it only seemed natural that I take the train across the country, all the way to Boston, after which I spent a month in England. Through the Southwest and across Texas the train moved, through America's back yards (for that is where the train takes you in America), past heaped up auto junk yards (jarring testimony to our culture of waste), along the streets of the small towns, glimpsing a poorer America with neglected children playing along the tracks; past lots of abandoned factories and warehouses. Is this the America that according to the new "Newtonian" vision in Congress, will come "on line" with their CD Rom's and prosper in the new Age of Cyberspace?

But the country is beautiful, and I'm captivated by the change of the terrain from desert to grassland as you move east, until by Houston and New Orleans you're awash in green (will the train tracks sink into the swamps and bayous?). And it is raining, and now the rivulets of water are running off the wet red clay of Alabama. On to one of our seminaries in the South, where I had a two-week fellowship. Worship is very well carried off, student morale seems high and the faculty excellent. But I get the impression that the students here are being prepared for a ministry in which the assumption here in the South seems to be that churchgoing and church loyalty are still community norms—hence no new radical direction is required. And I wonder whether they are truly reading the signs of the times, whether

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"church" is being presented as a haven from the entropic forces now flinging apart the American social fabric.

A night train from Atlanta takes me into Washington, D.C., and a pilgrimage to the Jewish Holocaust Museum. The visit was almost unbearable. Its most moving aspects were not the appalling and mind-boggling tableaux of the specific horrors inflicted upon the Jews from 1933 to 1945. They were the photographs of children and the reprinted or recorded words of survivors. One photo that got to me was of a little child clutching her doll amidst the chaos and confusion of disembarking from the cattle cars. This child of God, minutes away from extermination ... How? How? How? The notion of a master race: Have we, even after the Holocaust, really exorcised this demon from the world? Oklahoma City's aftermath suggests not.

And what to do? One opportunity to translate into action the lessons learned from the Holocaust is not difficult to find, in California especially: to protest the immigrant-bashing so fashionable after the passage of Prop. 187, and now a chief campaign plank for the governor of our state as he runs for president.

Thence to England, Anne having joined me for nine days of the 30-day visit. Ahead, fun and sightseeing in London, a visit to Cambridge, visits to different churches on Sundays; and study at St. Deiniol's residential library in Wales. And my sabbatical questions themselves: How is the Christian Gospel to be presented in all its redeeming power amidst a world sliding into chaos and extremism? Specifically, how do we address the increasingly global economic forces that are now decisively shaping not only our economic but our cultural life at every level? And what has the church during the last several centuries had to say to these questions?

But first to church on Sunday in London: St. James, Picadilly, is a church where everyone is made to feel included. All are invited to stand around the altar for prayers and receiving the bread and wine. There was no choir; instead we were given a 10-minute rehearsal before service by a cantor, who miraculously made us 300 persons present the choir — roughly half of whom were visitors! The church is deeply involved in support of environmental causes, women priests, gays and lesbians, and a just, multicultural society.

Another church trying to be the Church was Coventry Cathedral. It had a thoroughly progressive liturgy and women clergy with laity at every level in the service including a Lutheran woman preacher from Dresden, Germany. Reconciliation between nations has been that rebuilt-Cathedral's ministry since its destruction by German bombs in World War II. But it may need to reach out more to its own multicultural city.

In contrast, the principal Sunday eucharist at another cathedral was positively depressing, with 150 persons (including about three children) solemnly and stiffly following the 1662 prayer book, the priest celebrating back to the people, with no laity reading any scripture or prayers. The sermon, delivered in impeccable Oxford/Cambridge accent, sailed above the people into the stratosphere. Meanwhile, an old priest in the congregation looked fearful and depressed, a woman wept silently, and a boy perhaps 10 years old sat obediently. Sadly, I found this church more the rule than the exception in the Church of England. Still, I did not get to visit some of the very active and involved parishes in east London and Liverpool which are grappling seriously with racism, unemployment and poverty.

At St. Deiniol's residential library, near the medieval city of Chester, I settled in to read church history. I hoped to discover what happened to the medieval synthesis, in which the Church understood the Gospel to apply to all of life, including wealth, poverty, economic justice and the use of money.

Why did the churches of post-medieval Europe abandon that holistic vision and begin to accept emerging economic theories? Did they have a theological rationale for doing so? Or did theology and church life begin to so spiritualize the Christian Gospel as to practically exclude economic life from their purview? And to what extent are these questions relevant to our late 20th century failure as churches to formulate an effective theological and social critique of the increasing dominance of global market forces as primary shapers of social and cultural life?

For in our time we have lost even the recognition that the church *should* be concerned with large economic and social structures. These structures are now largely setting the values, right down to family level, for global society: covet, consume, compete and co-opt. These are our real operating "family values"! We perceive but dimly, how thoroughly we have all been corrupted in this process.

And lest these observations be interpreted as merely the rantings of a dyspeptic Left-winger, let me quote from a new book titled *Arrogant Capital*, by Kevin Phillips, a moderate Republican and columnist. In a chapter titled "The Financialization of America," Phillips writes, "Since the early 1970s, the clout of the financial sector has exploded ... into today's trillion dollar megaforce. ... The consequence two decades later is a massive, revolutionized and largely unregulated financial sector armed with the latest high-tech weaponry and pursuing profits on any battlefield ... shooting the economic wounded and outgunning 'the real economy,' in its transactions by huge ratios."

At the end of my sabbatical, I wanted to understand much better the history of the Church, and the vast complexities of the economic, social and cultural forces that are now so definitively shaping our individual and community lives.

I believe the need is overwhelming to get back to an authentic Incarnation-based ministry. *First*, to reassert the prophetic voice of the gospel at all levels, but especially at parish level, that is prepared to take the heat when the truth is proclaimed. *Second,* to work to transform our churches into much tighter and more disciplined communities who are seriously committed to modeling an alternate behavior and values. (I am aware of the magnitude of these challenges.) *Third*, to explore the creation of new movements and organizations within the larger Church, for prophetic advocacy and concrete witness, in a way perhaps analogous to the creation of the radical mendicant orders (e.g. the Franciscans and the Dominicans) in the Middle Ages. These responded effectively to the Churches' widespread neglect of poverty as an issue.

It will take concerted strategies and the careful building of a thinking, activist constituency within the church to begin to realize these objectives. But there is good church history on our side. And most of all there is the Gospel imperative!

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THE WITNESS
Since 1917

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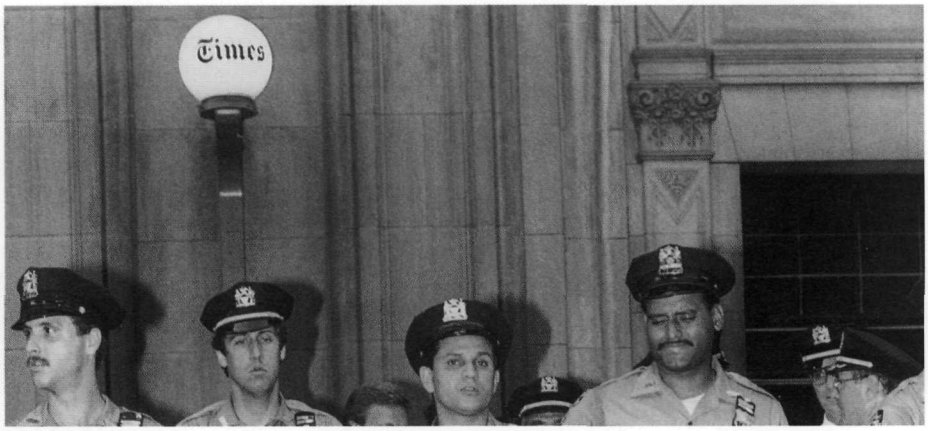

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Cover: *The New York Times* burns in front of the Times building as ACTUP demands more responsible AIDS coverage in 1989. T.L. Litt, Impact Visuals.

Back cover: *William Stringfellow: Keeper of the Word* by William Hart McNichols of Albuquerque, N.M. Original in full color. See story on page 6.

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'What can I say? We like murders.'

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Fresh out of Columbia's Journalism School in 1980, I went to work for the Associated Press. I was asked to report on Detroit's Arab community, which is the largest outside the middle east.

When I brought back my story, which described mosques and markets, but also the fear of neighborhood people who said they were harassed by the F.B.I. I was told, "Jeanie, just go out and find Abdul Schmuck. Find out what kind of car he drives and how many relatives he has on welfare."

That summer, the Republican Convention came to Detroit amidst headlines that Motown women were being murdered. I was asked to cover women's reactions. When I filed a story questioning the statistics since there didn't appear to be an unusual wave of murders *and* outlining women's self-defense efforts, the New York desk responded, "What can I say? We like murders. Find some women who are afraid."

AP let me go. The year that followed, during which I had to examine whether there were outlets for what I understood to be good journalism, was excruciating. I hadn't anticipated the degree of blatant chauvinism in the media. But what I also learned at AP is that you *can*, by talking to people and then doing homework with public records, get to the bottom of many stories. You *can* reach a conclusion about whose interests are being served and how. You may not be able to get it published, but it is usually not true that the world is too complicated, poverty too insoluble, competing interests too intense for there to be a justice critique.

This issue of *The Witness* examines ways in which the media feed our frustration and confusion. William Stringfellow says they attack our "sanity and conscience" (p. 16).

A Detroit Summer participant with friends in gangs asked me, "Why does the media always focus on violence?"

I think those who own the media (and they are a *very* few corporations) understand, perhaps unconsciously, that people saturated in reports of violence become wary and anxious. People in this shattered frame of mind cannot form communities. They cannot organize. They cannot find a collective identity strong enough even to maintain that they do not need brand name products, much less provide an alternative vision.

We need to understand the mechanics of the media. We need to know what is being promoted and what omitted (p. 8). No other people in history have had such a high percentage of their vision and hearing, their very air waves, glutted with other people's packaged thoughts.

People in shattered frames of mind can't form communities.

Part of the power of the media is the myth that we must consume them in order to be good citizens. We need to trust that there are more vital ways for the Word to travel — we can learn through forums at church or at the union hall; we can read alternative media; we can apply the gift of discernment to what we do pick up from radio and T.V.; we can deliberately leave ourselves open to the Holy Spirit in confidence that when Moses and Esther and Paul were needed to step up to injustice, the Word was able to reach them despite cultural and imperial efforts to control their thoughts.

David McMichaels, a one-time consultant to the C.I.A. who underwent a conversion of sorts, says "power is the ability to define reality." He told the Sojourners community in Washington D.C. that the biggest threats to the Pentagon are small religious groups and alternative media. Both provide forums where reality can be examined and discussed. They also build people's sense that they can work together for change.

Part of the challenge is to find a way to prevent the billboards, the corporate logos on public school children's projects, the radio news reports broadcasted in stores from seeping into our unconscious. Holding a critical posture when reading or viewing corporate news, never forgetting that they have an agenda, is essential. We also need to find a sheltered place for our psyches, whether it is in the sanctuary, a quiet corner of our homes or at a friend's kitchen table, where our own thoughts can emerge — not in response to the media output, but in correspondence with our own hearts. (We'll do an issue sometime on disciplines which contribute to a cleared mind and open heart — we welcome suggestions.)

We need to fight the colonizing our minds. And it can be the source of our joy that, in faith, we can love and serve God — preserving the freedom of sanity and conscience — despite the persistence of the idols that surround us. TW

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

editor's note

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Iconography as resistance

by William Hart McNichols

I never knew Bill Stringfellow, but I heard Dan Berrigan speak of him and read his writings. I came to understand him as someone constantly engaged with the Word.

When I did this icon, I got a call from a gay organization in Chicago. They wanted it immediately, because *they want Bill*. They identify Bill as a gay man.

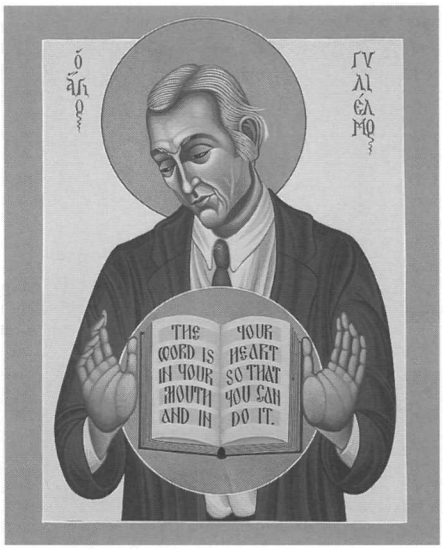
But when I unveiled the icon at a 10th anniversary celebration of Bill's life, I heard nothing about that. I wondered, are people ashamed of his being gay? Did he talk about being gay? Would he have lost *everything* had he said he was gay? Would people have said, "You have no right to talk about the Book?"

But the "Word of God" comes to people in many ways and forms. In the Scriptures, is the "Word of God" literally letters or a book? No. The "Word of God" is the experience of the presence of God. This attempt to control the form that the Word takes or who the Word comes to is the source of rage and iconoclasm.

One of Bill's friends spoke up, saying, "I'm his age and also gay. In those years he would have been destroyed. If you made a catalogue of the theological schools or colleges where he spoke, he never would have been accepted."

I understand that, but gay people today — we need gay saints. Maybe some day all gay people will be able to say who they are and be heard and accepted; the Word of God could come to a gay person as it came to Mary.

William Hart McNichols is a Jesuit priest who has studied iconography with Robert Lentz for five years. He lives in Albuquerque, N.M. Cards and plaques of this icon are available by calling 800-522-4266.



William Stringfellow: Keeper of the Word

People have always used icons to broaden the community of faith. People who didn't feel included in the Word or in the services — and these were mainly women — took icons home and set up their own altars. They began to speak to God and the saints and the Mother of God, because they couldn't speak in the church. This is another one of the causes of the iconoclastic controversy. Church leaders understood the subversive nature of icons. For over 100 years iconographers had their hands chopped off, their eyes put out and they were beaten to death.

People who didn't feel included — and these were mainly women — took icons home and set up their own altars.

When I went to do the icon of Bill, I realized this man was completely absorbed in contemplating the Word. The only way that I could represent him was to have the book inside of him as the child is inside of Mary. I decided to make him a mother of the Word.

Mother of God icons are shown with a circular *mandala* or a *mandorla*, which is an almond-shape, with the child inside. Mary is shown often in the *orans* position, the prayer position, with her hands raised. She's contemplating what's in her — the child, the Word made flesh. I've made Bill with his hands raised, contemplating the Word within him.

I chose Deuteronomy 30 to appear on the book where it says, "The Word is very near you. It's in your mouth; it's in your heart." The *New International Version* says, "so that you can obey" it, but the *Revised Standard Version* says, "so that you can do it." I chose the latter for Bill.

Some icons are burning or on fire — orange-looking. I chose to make Bill's coat aflame because the Word inside of him is burning. He can't keep it in. Some people found him very harsh and uncompromising. It seems that's the role of many prophets.

People have told me, "Bill would never want an icon made of him." But the icon is not a picture of a dead person; the icon is not an idol. The icon is literally a window, a relationship to that person that gives some kind of hope about being able to speak to God, and the "holy ones" or heavenly family of God.

The U.S. is very iconoclastic in terms of religious images. We're a people who make fun of statues and icons for contemplation, but spend 15 hours a day watching television. People worship that. What you watch is what you become.

An icon will not allow you to have a quick relationship. You have to sit with it and know it. The East is big on *gazing*. You see the Mother of God gazing at the child and the child gazing back. Somehow when you gaze at this, you're asking to become more like this. TW

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The Burning of Paper Instead of Children

by Adrienne Rich

I was in danger of
verbalizing my moral
impulses out of existence.
— *Daniel Berrigan, on trial in Baltimore.*

1. My neighbor, a scientist and art-collector, telephones me in a state of violent emotion. He tells me that my son and his, aged eleven and twelve, have on the last day of school burned a mathematics textbook in the backyard. He has forbidden my son to come to his house for a week, and has forbidden his own son to leave the house during that time. "The burning of a book," he says, "arouses terrible sensations in me, memories of Hitler; there are few things that upset me so much as the idea of burning a book."

Back there: the library, walled
with green Britannicas
Looking again
in Dürer's *Complete Works*
for MELANCOLIA, the baffled woman

the crocodiles in Herodotus
the Book of the Dead
the *Trial of Jeanne d'Arc*, so blue
I think, it is her color

and they take the book away
because I dream of her too often

love and fear in a house
knowledge of the oppressor
I know it hurts to burn

2. To imagine a time of silence
or few words
a time of chemistry and music

the hollows above your buttocks
traced by my hand
or, *hair is like flesh,* you said

an age of long silence

relief

from this tongue this slab of limestone
or reinforced concrete
fanatics and traders
dumped on this coast wildgreen clayred
that breathed once
in signals of smoke
sweep of the wind

knowledge of the oppressor
this is the oppressor's language

yet I need it to talk to you

3. *People suffer highly in poverty and it takes dignity and intelligence to overcome this suffering. Some of the suffering are: a child did not have dinner last night: a child steal because he did not have money to buy it: to hear a mother say she do not have money to buy food for her children and to see a child without cloth it will make tears in your eyes.*

(the fracture of order
the repair of speech
to overcome this suffering)

4. We lie under the sheet
after making love, speaking
of loneliness
relieved in a book
relived in a book
so on that page
the clot and fissure
of it appears
words of a man
in pain
a naked word
entering the clot
a hand grasping
through bars:

deliverance

What happens between us
has happened for centuries
we know it from literature

still it happens

sexual jealousy
outflung hand
beating bed

dryness of mouth
after panting
there are books that describe all this
and they are useless

You walk into the woods behind a house
there in that country
you find a temple
built eighteen hundred years ago
you enter without knowing
what it is you enter

so it is with us

no one knows what may happen
though the books tell everything

burn the texts said Artaud

5. I am composing on the typewriter late at night, thinking of today. How well we all spoke. A language is a map of our failures. Frederick Douglass wrote an English purer than Milton's. People suffer highly in poverty. There are methods but we do not use them. Joan, who could not read, spoke some peasant form of French. Some of the suffering are: it is hard to tell the truth; this is America; I cannot touch you now. In America we have only the present tense. I am in danger. You are in danger. The burning of a book arouses no sensation in me. I know it hurts to burn. There are flames of napalm in Catonsville, Maryland. I know it hurts to burn. The typewriter is overheated, my mouth is burning, I cannot touch you and this is the oppressor's language.

1968

— from *Poems: Selected and New 1950-1974,* by Adrienne Rich (©1975 W. W. Norton & Co.)

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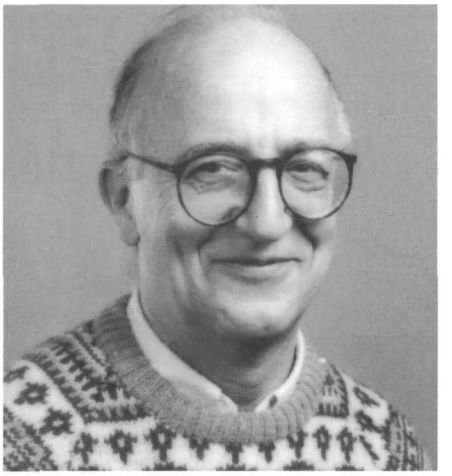
The media and thought control: an interview with Edward S. Herman

by Bruce Campbell

Edward S. Herman has been a skeptic of the media for many years. The Witness *approached him in hopes that he would help us untangle the unrelenting messages of media outlets that assault us daily. Herman, who taught for over 30 years at the Wharton School, has successively shifted his focus from finance to the corporate system to the media, a path he has described as a "natural evolution." His collaborations with MIT professor and media critic Noam Chomsky include the book* Manufacturing Consent. *He has edited* Lies of Our Times, *a newsletter monitoring biased news reporting in the mainstream media, and he is a regular columnist for* Z Magazine.

At his home outside Philadelphia, Herman spoke with Bruce Campbell about ways the mainstream media manage to blind us at the same time they claim to offer insight.



Edward S. Herman

Bruce Campbell: If people are consuming mainstream media, what issues will they *not* see or hear about? What important items are off the agenda today?

Edward Herman: The military budget, for one thing. The Republicans and [President Bill] Clinton both agree that we must maintain the military budget, whose immense size was based heavily on an alleged Soviet threat that is now gone. There are real power interests that want to build the weapons.

Silencing the middle class

The Labor Department just reported that the average American income fell 2.3 percent in the last year. That's really a sensational fact. Remember, too, that the real wage-rates of ordinary citizens of the U. S. have been falling since 1973.

Here we are in a prosperity period. The papers are reporting that the stock market is doing wonderfully well. Profits are up, but the income of the ordinary American is still falling. That should be front page news and should elicit all kinds of discussion.

Soft programs and entertainment provide a favorable advertising environment. Even the news becomes entertainment. It becomes light, not challenging, not controversial.

Ordinary people are being taken advantage of in the development process that's now occurring in the world. We have a globalizing system in which business is able to play off workers here against workers in the Philippines and in Indonesia. Capital can move around and is even subsidized to go abroad. Clinton and the Republicans are soliciting tax breaks for businesses going overseas. This is something that should be taken very seriously and we should be considering policies to alter the situation. But the people who own the media, benefit from the military budget, fund the Republican party, and love Gingrich's Contract with America are the ones that are thriving.

It's just ordinary Americans who are losing out, so that news was in section D, page 4, of *The New York Times.* Now if the GNP had fallen 2.3 and profits had fallen there would be screaming headlines and Greenspan would do something.

B.C.: There are those who say that the mass media is reaching for people who stand at polar extremes — the Leftist *du jour* and the Rightist *du jour* — to turn them loose on each other like pit bulls. *You* say that the individuals chosen for the debate don't even represent the Left and Right.

E.H.: There are no debates in the media involving the Left. If you listen to McNeil-Lehrer, which is one of the better shows, it's essentially government people debating with one another. Or it is the Right Wing versus various cautious and vaguely liberal centrists.

The Left in the U. S. is very small and very disorganized. But the Left calls into question the assumptions of the system and will say when a policy is wrong at its root. That kind of critique surfaces with extreme rarity in the mainstream

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media.

The genuine Left never had a voice during the Vietnam War and it has no voice in America now. Somebody like Noam Chomsky is almost totally marginalized. He has never had an opinion column in *The New York Times.* His marginalization is indicative of how the Left is treated in the U. S. Chomsky actually has much more access to British television or Canadian television review than he does in the U. S.

B.C.: Is it that the Left has no voice or is it being systematically excluded?

E.H.: Public access for the Left to mass media that can reach large audiences is practically zero. *The Reader's Digest* has 29 million circulation and *Time* about 5 million. The largest dissident publication in the U. S. has about 85-100 thousand — *The Nation* is in that vicinity; it reaches an insignificant number of people.

The development process of the media in the U.S. has been one of centralization and commercialization. What is crucial is who has money and power in the society.

The people who have money own the newspapers and the television networks. And the people who fund the media are advertisers — many are multinational corporations. They don't intervene directly very often, but they want what is called a "friendly program environment." That friendly environment would not involve putting on Chomsky or stirring up a lot of trouble. When Barbara Walters proposed having a program on abortion, it was canceled — she couldn't get advertisers.

And in the early 1970s, when environmental issues were hot, NBC put up a quality set of programs on the environment, but it couldn't get advertisers. The NBC program, which tried to be balanced, could hardly escape the fact that the paper, chemical, and power companies were serious polluters. So they couldn't get sponsorship. That takes its toll over time.

Kirk Condyles, Impact Visuals

Soft programs and entertainment provide a favorable advertising environment and therefore over time commercial television becomes an entertainment vehicle. Even the news becomes entertainment. It becomes light, not challenging, not controversial.

Beyond the questions of who owns the media and who advertises in them, there are other deeper forces in the system that affect the media.

Controlling government

On the political level, with the rise of TV and the expense of running for office being fantastic, anybody who wants to survive has to be able to raise big money. And they also have to worry that big money will attack them if they're not doing the right thing.

Thomas Ferguson, in *Golden Rule* (University of Chicago Press), points out that when the investors are unified, there's no competition between the parties and therefore there won't be any debate in the media. For example, all the major investors in the U. S. have been in favor of the military build-up of the 1970s up to the present. Therefore the parties never discussed the military build-up; it was just accepted. It was bi-partisan. The mainstream media did not debate the Reagan military build-up. It was spending hundreds of billions of dollars on weapons, many of which were idiocies like Star Wars, and huge redundancies, but it wasn't discussed. And Tom Gervasi, who wrote a superb book, *The Myth of Soviet Military Supremacy,* published in 1986 — right at the heart of the build-up by Reagan — did not even get a book review in *The New York Times.*

When you try to explain these things, you have to look at this multi-levelled structure of power in the system, in which the media themselves are controlled by

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monied interests, but then you can see how the people who make opinion, who shape what the intellectual environment is like and who shape what the parties will debate are also monied interests.

Academic thought-control

The academic system and the development of "experts" is affected by money. There's a new book, *Leasing the Ivory Tower* (South End Press) by Larry Soley: he discusses how academia has moved into the orbit of commerce. There are some 100 free enterprise chairs in American universities. There's also a thing called the Law and Economics Program which was funded by the Olin Foundation to influence law schools (and the judiciary itself) to put their focus on fundamental economic principles as espoused by Milton Friedman and others.

Of course, they fund the universities in other ways, providing very large sums for research programs.

There are dozens and dozens of think tanks that are explicitly oriented to pushing free enterprise, like the American Enterprise Institute, the Hoover Institution, the Manhattan Institute, the Heritage Foundation. They have millions of dollars and they are policy oriented and their ideological position is that which is espoused by the business community. They give hundreds of fellowships to people who are subsidized to do research that says the right thing.

Money is going into the intellectual community and very profoundly shaping its thought and shaping who will be considered credible authorities. Then they become the experts, repeating what the corporate community wants said.

B.C.: One of the lines that publishers and TV producers promulgate is that "We produce what will sell." Is it true that audiences are complicit in creating the media environment?

E.H.: The public does watch the programs that are offered, but it's not given a lot of alternatives.

The promise of radio and TV

When both radio and TV began and public policy was being formed, it was agreed even by the media magnates that these new cultural instruments would allow for higher levels of education, children's programming, and diversity all around. The magnates even made many promises of "public service" programming as a condition of setting free rights to the airwaves.

That all went slowly by the boards, because advertising revenue would be greater if you just had entertainment. It wasn't discussed and it wasn't debated and these magnates now get free use of the public airwaves in order to make money, having sold down the river these public service responsibilities. In fact, the reason they allowed PBS (CPB) to come into existence in 1967 was that they wanted to be able to slough off their public service responsibilities altogether, so they figured if we get the taxpayers to pay for a network that will be devoted to culture and public affairs, then we will be off the hook. But then it turned out that PBS was doing too much public service, so they are trying to push them back into the advertising sphere so that commerce will marginalize citizenship functions again.

Media magnates get free use of the public airwaves in order to make money, having sold down the river their public service responsibilities.

B.C.: Over the next 10 years, given the trends that are evident in the centralization that you described earlier, what do you think will happen to what we have in the media as the general level of noise and babble?

E.H.: It's going to blow up. It's a very pessimistic scene. You have to face the fact that capital has really won. There's the death of the Soviet Union and all this global privatization process. Capital is stronger every day. Government power is being weakened and labor is still weakening. So the forces to contest are weakening and the media are still centralizing.

The forces of regression are flourishing and even enhancing their power. Ergo, we can't expect any improvement in the next 10 years. The only thing that's going to cause any improvement in the long run is if people are hurting enough to think and to resist. It's a terrible thing to say, but there have to be a lot of people hurting. They have to be hurting so badly and reacting so negatively that the establishment is forced to respond.

In the Great Depression, capital was discredited. All its forecasts were shown to be false and people were hurting on a massive scale. Capital was discredited and therefore modest legislation could be enacted and new organizational developments could occur.

We're going to need to have systemic challenges sufficient to call into question the rules.

The dominant idea now is that only free enterprise is something we can count on: "Government is bad; it can't do anything. We must privatize. Let business do it. Therefore we must create an environment favorable to business."

That's the crucial element of the basic agenda that nobody contests. The liberals are in full retreat. Witness Clinton accepting the balanced budget as the prime objective. Refusing to defend government as a potentially creative agency is a moral defeat for liberal causes and for the cause of elemental decency.

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B.C.: In your book *Beyond Hypocrisy,* you talk about what makes a revolution historically. Will the fax revolution — I'm thinking of China in 1989 — help the masses to rise up? Or will we be subject to Right Wing domination?

E.H.: What makes me a little pessimistic about revolt is that I can easily imagine the American people getting very upset and anti-government sentiments growing, but people are not putting forward a credible new vision of society even *with* access to fax machines and to the Internet.

You can't have a decent revolution come out of chaos. When you have chaos, there will ultimately be a crackdown by people who have money and who control the army.

To have a decent revolution, you have to have organized groups who support an agenda that's good and meaningful. You could maybe have a military government of the Right under some conditions in the U.S., but it would have great difficulty in keeping this vast population, which is very restive, under control.

B.C.: Would you say that the media create an environment which fragments the ability of a Left revolution to coalesce?

E.H.: Absolutely! They not only fragment, they don't allow any alternative to the status quo to be considered. People who have alternative ideas are so marginalized they can't get a word across.

B.C.: Do you think it's worth turning off CNN and canceling *Time* and *Newsweek* for a while? Will that be helpful to anyone trying to pursue a different agenda?

E.H.: I myself boycott them. I refuse to shell out money for them. I look at them occasionally in the library. I do subscribe, I must admit, to *The New York Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer,* and *The Financial Times,* all of which I dislike intensely. I get the minimum establishment material which I must have to do my job as a media analyst.

I don't get *The Reader's Digest, Time, Newsweek* or *U.S. News and World Report.* I believe in boycotting them and putting my support into magazines that represent something decent.

B.C.: What about the Republican mandate? Was it a media creation?

When soldiers returned from the Gulf War in June, 1991, the New York Police tried to prevent photographers — even those with valid credentials — from photographing counter-demonstrators. Andrew Lichtensten/Impact Visuals

E.H.: Reagan had a "mandate," Thatcher had a "mandate" although she was always a minority candidate. And now the Republicans with Gingrich are alleged to have a mandate. The media does not point out that the vote count was extremely small and the Republicans represented maybe 17 percent of the total eligible voting populace.

Also they don't discuss the fact that there are a lot of polls showing that two-thirds of the public didn't even know that there was a thing called the Contract with America a week before the election. The contract is a masterpiece of obscurantism, filled with clichés; it is straight Orwell, saying exactly the opposite of what is really intended.

A poll of 338 CEOs of business in *Forbes* Magazine last January indicated that they loved Gingrich and what the Republican Party stood for. They said it was "too good to be true."

The public is confused and insofar as you can ascertain what they want by specific polls on specific issues like the environment, they absolutely don't want what Gingrich is going to do. If you ask specific questions about the public's attitude toward the environment, the public still supports environmental control, but the Republicans are ripping off the environment immediately. If the media were democratic and honest, these things would be front and center and they would be screaming at the deception.

It's essentially a *coup d'etat* of the business community. Unbelievable.

B.C.: The militia movements seem to be a very interesting case. People who might not have been able to identify the phrase "militia movement" three months ago, now have it on their tongues every day because the major media filled the air-

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waves with discussions and videos created by the militia movements.

E.H.: I have a complex view on that. After the Oklahoma bombing, the media were in a frenzy. If it had been Islamic people — they said Islamic terrorists from the word go — there would have been no holds barred.

Catering to militia violence

As soon as it turned out that they were "patriotic" white Americans, the media's tone changed greatly. They became more sociological, more interested in understanding the social roots of the action. The Congressional hearings held concerning the militia were extremely brief and rather friendly. Some people who analyze the militia were interested in showing militia ties to the Klan and to anti-semitic groups, but they haven't been heard.

Now Congress is having extensive hearings on the Waco incident which is no doubt deserving of hearings, but it's going to be trashing the government. It feeds into the logic of Rush Limbaugh and Gingrich and the rest. They're all attacking the government violently so the militia, in a sense, is a derivative of this Right Wing claim that it wants to get the government off our back. Of course, it only wants to do that for certain spheres — not the military, the police or prisons.

Ignoring militia economics

On the other hand, neither the Right Wing nor the media dig very deeply into the economic roots of the militia movement. The militia movement and the tremendous insecurity of ordinary citizens of the U. S. is a result of the fact that the American economic and political system is not working for ordinary people. It gets back to that 2.3 percent fall in average income.

B.C.: What suggestions might you have that would help people who *are* organizing for change to cope with the current media environment?

E.H.: I think in the long run what's going to make for progressive change is grassroots movements that are close to people, and the development of new, more democratic ideologies, ideas, models.

The crucial thing is to organize, to organize people who are being crushed and to try to educate them to understand what's going on. Also maybe sketching out some possible alternative models, but to get them to have the insight to see how the existing global system development is without any regard for the lower 80 percent of the population.

I also think it's extremely important to build up a democratic media from below — by generously supporting local newsletters and whatever alternative media exists .

It's extremely important to develop a democratic media from below. I subscribe to them just to support them — even when I can't read *them all — I think they have to be generously supported.*

Supporting alternative media

I think it is perfectly OK to write letters to the establishment press. I don't think it's going to get you very far, but there is something to be said for constantly assailing them for their apologetics for the status quo.

But it's extremely important to develop a democratic media from below. That means local newsletters, it means supporting *In These Times* (Chicago), *Extra* (of Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) and all the progressive media institutions. I subscribe to them just to support them — even when I can't *read* them all — I think they have to be supported.

I believe in non-commercial broadcasting and radio, so every one of them should be supported and pressed to the Left, pressed into a democratic frame.

B.C.: Has the revocation of the fairness doctrine been critical in all this?

E.H.: The fairness doctrine was always almost entirely nominal. Insofar as it was effective, it caused the media not to show programs for which they would have to compensate with offsetting material.

I'd put back fairness and maybe impose some requirements on the media for carrying out the mandate that they were obligated to uphold when getting their licenses to the air, but I would also charge them a fat percentage of their advertising revenue as a franchise tax and turn it over to the non-profit media as compensation for their doing public service work.

A moral imperative to fight

We are now losers. We have been subject to serious defeats and we're still losing, but you have to keep on fighting. You have to assume that the public will wake up when it is hurting enough and will be more receptive. You have to believe that institutions can be changed democratically. If you give up on that totally, you're dead — you're spiritually dead.

I'm coming out with a book called *The Triumph of the Market* (South End Press, 1995) that ends quoting Brazilian Catholic Bishop Casadaliga, who says, "We are the defeated soldiers of an unbeatable army."

We *are* the defeated soldiers of an unbeatable army. Our army is the 90 percent of the global population — the ones that are being victimized by the existing system. We are beaten now. We're getting trampled on. The system is riding high. But it's not going to go on indefinitely.

There's a moral imperative that we continue to fight. TW

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On-line insurrections

by Camille Colatosti

Students across the country are plugging into school computer networks which they often understand far better than their teachers. Through these networks, students can participate in personal e-mail, computer bulletin boards and global communication networks, like the Internet.

The benefits to students are enormous. As the *Technology Mission Statement* for public schools in Princeton, N.J. explains, "The pervasive nature of technology makes us increasingly dependent on our ability to understand and use it effectively."

Yet, troubles for administrators and faculty arise when they realize that students have the ability to receive unedited information and to send their opinions out to an enormous audience, using the technology much more effectively than educators do.

In school after school, administrators who began offering students broad access to new technologies have backtracked when they discovered unexpected student uses of cyberspace. Fearing an inability to control student discussion, administrators have chosen to shut down bulletin boards, to limit student access to specific networks and directories, and — in some cases — to censor students' communication and to punish students who discuss information over the Internet it considers embarrassing to the school.

"The power of networked speech and its capacity to evade the censor are just now becoming clear," says Barry Steinhardt, associate director of the American Civil Liberties Union. "In use by more than 20 million people worldwide, Internet allows millions to both provide and consume almost unlimited amounts of largely uncensored information. At stake," he continues, "are three basic civil liberties: free speech, including access to information; privacy and equality."

Equal access versus control

Unfortunately, the vastness of the Internet has left educators feeling that they lack control. To reassert authority, they have made censorship decisions masked as efforts to promote "equality."

For example, administrators at Princeton High School introduced a computer system in the 1993-1994 school year. To facilitate the bulletin board, the administrators drafted students who understood the system better than the faculty.

The students believed they were being conscientious when they established "monitored" conferences which students could join only by getting the password from a designated student. This, they said, would preclude elementary school students from entering into the conversations of teenagers which, although not designed to use profanity or to allude to sexuality, sometimes did.

Known as Robin Hacker, a 1993 sophomore made a game of hacking through the administration's attempts at security.

But when then assistant principal Ralph Heyman realized that, as he put it, "some bulletin boards were hidden," he became worried.

"I realized that there were dozens of bulletin boards," he explains, "created by students and controlled by students, that I didn't have access to. I was concerned that other students, whose parents paid taxes, would also be denied access to these discussions. We are talking about public monies that are being used for purposes not consistent with [school] board policies."

Tensions were sharpened by the fact that the school board had just replaced a liberal high school principal with one whom it believed would run a "tight ship." Students resented the newly required hall passes and changed atmosphere. Naturally their complaints were prominent on the bulletin board.

Heyman started reading all public and private conferences on the school's computer. On occasion, students were called down to the office of the assistant principal in charge of discipline and asked to apologize. To students like Princeton High School senior Dwight Rodgers, this was an invasion of privacy.

"By reading the private discussion of the students, the administration was censoring thoughts and intimidating people," says Rodgers, who was a National Merit Scholarship semi-finalist. "Students felt that they couldn't say what they wanted."

Soon students learned that the school had severed the computer system's direct link with the Internet, which confined all messages to computers within the school. Frustrated, students reconnected to the Internet by locating a computer in Taiwan through which they could route their messages.

Asked how they reconnected, Peter Rodgers, Princeton class of 1994, ex-

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plained that every message posted on the Internet carries the telephone number of every machine it passes through.

"Basically, it's like multiple postmarks. You can call each machine. They will all allow you to read messages, but every now and then you'll find one that allows posting. We passed through the gateways until we found one in Taiwan."

Unfortunately, a few students provided the administration with an excuse to shut the system down.

Known as Robin Hacker, a 1993 sophomore made a game of hacking through the administration's attempts at security — posting notes in areas to which the students weren't supposed to have access.

Dwight Rodgers and a friend found assistant principal Heyman's password.

"We logged in and sent mail under his name to all discussion groups informing them that he [Heyman] would no longer read students' messages. We did this because we believed that the administration shouldn't be reading student discussions and conferences. We thought that breaking into Mr. Heyman's account would be effective."

To Heyman, the stealing of his password proved that "things were out of control." He shut the system down until the school could create a network that was "more secure." He admits concerns about maintaining authority. "Kids know so much more than teachers and administrators about the working of the bulletin boards. As administrators, we need to be clear about the educational goals of everything we do."

Upset about the administration's decision, Rodgers and other students began publishing an alternative paper, entitled *Power to the People.* Their first issue criticized the school for censoring student ideas and for punishing all students for the actions of a few. Rodgers believed that the administration "made it seem like we destroyed everything, that the system was down because of the work of hackers. We wanted to inform students of why we did what we did and rally students against the administration."

About one year after the administration shut down the bulletin boards, a new system was put in place. "This has more security," says Rodgers. "The administration doesn't allow private conferences." At the same time, Rodgers adds, when faculty ask him to help them with a problem in the system, he sometimes responds that he would have to suspend the security to be able to help. With faculty permission, he has frequently done so by hacking his way through.

Heyman wonders how secure the current system is. "I have no idea when I go on if there are things I'm denied access to."

Rodgers says he hasn't come across any.

Still, both Heyman and Rodgers believe that the controversy had a positive outcome. The controversy led to discussions between students, teachers, administrators and school board members about the role of technology in the schools. These talks, says Heyman, have resulted in a unified view of the purpose of technology in education. A recently instituted *Princeton Regional Schools Technology Mission Statement* recognizes the importance of new technologies to education, recommends professional development for teachers and administrators, and promotes "rules of conduct related to the ethical and legal use of technology." The school board is currently debating the boundaries of these rules of conduct. Nevertheless, the resolution in Princeton represents a degree of understanding both of the importance of network communication and the free speech rights of students that remains absent in other school districts.

The fear of what adults do not understand, and children do, leads to efforts to limit what the younger generation can learn.

Embarassment and lawsuits

As in the case of Princeton High School, school administrators' concerns about new technology seem to have more to do with control than with a desire to promote equality in education. Perhaps no example makes this point more clearly than the case of Paul Kim, a senior at Newport High School in Bellevue, Washington. An exceptional student with an overall grade point average of 3.88, a candidate for a National Merit Scholarship, Kim, on his own time, off school property, created a parody of his high school newspaper and made this available to users of the Internet. Entitled the "Unofficial Newport High School Home Page," this document was linked to other documents located on the World Wide Web.

Under "Favorite Subjects of Newport High School Students," Kim listed "sex," and linked this subject to publicly accessible documents of a sexual nature on the Internet.

Principal Karin Cathey, embarrassed by the parody, imposed severe discipline on Kim — even though the document was not created or accessible on school grounds and was in no way officially connected to the school. She revoked the school's endorsement of Kim as a National Merit finalist, thus preventing him from winning that scholarship. She also sent letters to the colleges to which Kim had applied, informing them that the school no longer recommended Kim for entrance into their institution.

The extreme nature of the Newport

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High School response suggests some of what is at stake with cyber communication. Fearing the unknown, fearing embarrassment and lawsuits, administrators censor students' free speech and limit student access to various network groups.

Carnegie Mellon University, for example, offers its students broad access to the Internet, but prohibits student access to six network news groups that deal with sexual topics. The University fears that it will be held responsible for the distribution of obscene material to minors.

According to ACLU's Steinhardt, the University's concerns are grounded in false conclusions. These news groups are not "obscene merely because they contain sexually explicit materials." Many discuss safe sex, responsible sexual behavior and other issues important to college students.

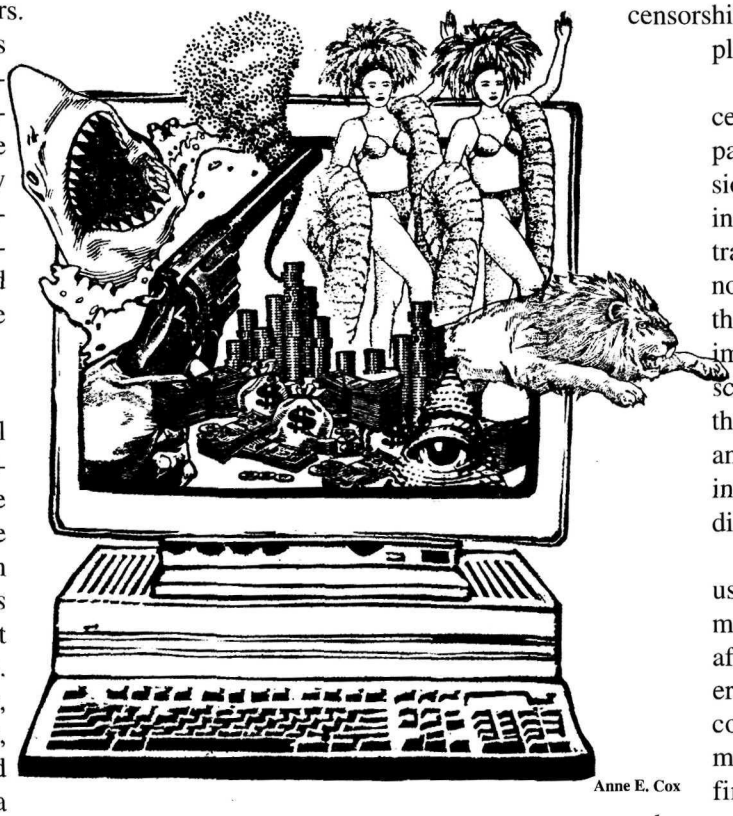
Government control

Steinhardt worries that "the full potential of information technology will never be realized if people are afraid to use it." Not only are institutions like Carnegie Mellon wary of lawsuits, but individuals worry about repercussions that stem from invasion of privacy. This worry is founded in reality, for the Clinton Administration has, according to Steinhardt, advocated installing the Clipper Chip — "a special window in telecommunications equipment through which the government alone, ostensibly for law enforcement and national security reasons, could peer into private communications."

Ominous as this sounds, Peter Rodgers says the usefulness of the Clipper Chip has already been destroyed. The purpose of the chip, which would be installed in every computer and telephone, is to encode messages supposedly to protect consumer privacy. The government would have the key to the encoding and thus be able to surveil as it considered necessary. The government might then outlaw all other encoding programs.

Asked if people could remove the chips, Rodgers responded that one could reject new phones and computers. But one could also sidestep the government's intent by using an encoding algorithm called RSA on top of Clipper.

" RSA requires thousands of hours of computer time to break through one message. People who are security conscious are picking this up off the Internet. Unless the National Security Administration has found a way to decode it, these messages would be super-secure even from the government."



Anne E. Cox

Meanwhile the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee debates the Communications Decency Act of 1995. Introduced by Senator J. James Exon (R-Neb.), this bill would make all telecommunications service providers liable for every message, file or other content carried on their networks. To avoid legal liability, private carriers would need to censor e-mail messages and public forums.

According to Laura Murphy Lee, Director of the ACLU Washington National Office, "The Exon amendment would make the interactive environment one of the most censored segments of communications media when logic dictates that cyberspace should be the least censored. At a minimum, the safeguards against censorship in print media should be applied to online communications."

For Lee, the motivation for censoring cyberspace comes, in part, from the mistaken impressions of those unfamiliar with new information technologies. "Contrary to the fears of those who are not yet online," she explains, "neither pornographic nor indecent images flash across the computer screen when someone signs on to the Internet. It is not easy to find anything in cyberspace, and the individual must willingly—even diligently—seek it out."

In fact, the knowledge gap in using information technologies may be the single biggest factor affecting the responses of teachers and politicians to computer communication. The truth remains that children, in general, find it easier to maneuver in cyberspace than do adults. The fear of what adults do not understand, and children do, leads to efforts to limit what the younger generation can learn. This fear is one that adults will have to counter. As Steinhardt urges, new technologies are a fact of life, and students must have the opportunity to learn. In addition, many students will undoubtedly consider any security system a challenge and one through which they may be quite able to hack. TW

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Resisting Babel: preserving sanity and conscience

by William Stringfellow

William Stringfellow wrote this essay during the Vietnam War. We reprint his observations about how words are used to disable our critical thinking and confuse our consciences, because they are prophetic as well as an accurate indictment of the early 1970s.

If the powers and principalities be legion, so are the means by which they assault, captivate, enslave, and dominate human beings.

Yet all of the demonic claims against human life have a common denominator. Typically, each and every stratagem of the principalities seeks the death of the specific faculties of rational and moral comprehension which distinguish human beings from all other creatures. Whatever form or appearance it takes, demonic aggression always aims at the immobilization or surrender or destruction of the mind and at the neutralization or abandonment or demoralization of the conscience. In the Fall, the purpose and effort of every principality is the dehumanization of human life, *categorically.*

Demonic tactics and the prevalence of Babel

I do not attempt, here, any exhaustive account of the ploys and stratagems of the powers that be. But I do cite some of those most familiar, as a matter of illustration and, moreover, in order to underscore the significance of the verbal element in the tactics which the principalities mount against human beings. That the verbal factor is so prominent among multifarious stratagems is related directly to the fact that it is the human mind which is being contested and it is human conscience which is being threatened. Indeed, I regard the verbal as definitive in all the ploys of the principalities.

The denial of truth

A rudimentary claim with which the principalities subvert persons is that truth in the sense of eventful and factual matter does not exist. In the place of truth and appropriating the name of truth are data engineered and manufactured, programmed and propagated by the principality. The truth is usurped and displaced by a self-serving version of events or facts, with whatever selectivity, distortion, falsehood, manipulation, exaggeration, evasion, concoction necessary to maintain the image or enhance the survival or multiply the coercive capacities of the principality.

Babel means the inversion of language, verbal inflation, libel, rumor, euphemism and coded phrases, rhetorical wantonness, redundancy, hyperbole, such profusion in speech and sound that comprehension is impaired. And, in all of this, babel means violence.

This ploy is commonplace commercially in American merchandising and advertising, and has been for a long time. It has lately been transported into politics and sophisticated for political purposes on a scale and with a persistence that is profoundly ominous for human beings.

If citizens realize, by now, that they have been contemptuously, relentlessly importuned because of untrustworthy versions of Vietnam, they may also begin to sense how their humanity is similarly insulted by official falsehood and propaganda concerning Watergate, the cost of living, taxation, crime, product safety, certain notorious indictments, and practically anything else in which the same political principalities are implicated.

What is most significant in any of these examples is, I think, not the doctoring of the truth per se, but the premise of the principalities that truth is nonexistent, that truth is a fiction, that there can be no thorough or fair or comprehensive or detached discovery and chronicle of events, and that any handling of facts is ideologically or institutionally or otherwise tainted. Official aggressions against the media have been based upon this proposition. They take the position that the public media, by definition, have been engaged in indoctrination of a viewpoint and version which, insofar as it departs from the authorized administration line, must be either supplanted by official propaganda or suppressed.

Ominous, indeed! This presumption of the principalities that truth does not exist or cannot with some human diligence be uncovered and conscientiously

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William Stringfellow, a frequent contributor to *The Witness,* died 10 years ago. This article is excerpted from *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*, 1973, and is reprinted in the Stringfellow reader, *Keeper of the Word* (Eerdmans, 1994).

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communicated outreaches the subversion of journalism. It abolishes any work of scholarship; it renders education — both teaching and learning — partisan and farcical and, in the end, condemns and banishes all uses of human intelligence.

Doublespeak and overtalk

The preemption of truth with prefabricated, fictionalized versions of facts and events and the usurpation of truth by official lies are stratagems of the demonic powers much facilitated by other language contortions or abuses which the principalities and authorities foster. These include heavy euphemism and coded phrases, the inversion of definitions, jargon, hyperbole, misnomer, slogan, argot, shibboleth, cliché. The powers enthrall, delude, and enslave human beings by stopping comprehension with "doublespeak," as Orwell named it.

Orwell's prototype of the phenomenon of doublespeak declares "war is peace." That very example of doublespeak has become by way of the war in Indochina the literal watchword in America, more than a decade before Orwell's doomsday date of *1984*. The plethora of doublespeak contrived and uttered because of this war has been fantastic and evidently inexhaustible. Doublespeak has been solemnly pronounced to deceive citizens, not to mention the Congress, about every escalation, every corruption, every wasted appropriation, every casualty report, every abdication of command responsibility and every insubordination, every atrocity.

If the war has furnished innumerable instances of the doublespeak ploy, so has American racism. In the 1960s, it will be recalled, "violence in the streets" became the slogan for suppression of peaceful black protest.

Sometimes doublespeak is overtalk, in which the media themselves so accentuate volume, speed, and redundance that communication is incapacitated (even where the data transmitted may not be false or deceptive). The auditor's mind is so insulted, inundated, or transfixed by verbal and visual technology that it is crippled or immobilized.

Secrecy and boasts of expertise

An aspect of the delusive aura enveloping the demonic powers is the resort to secrecy. Secrecy in politics is dehumanizing *per se*; political secrecy begets a ruthless paternalism between regime and citizens which disallows human participation in government and renders human beings hapless against manipulation by trick or propaganda or other babel.

Nowadays, Americans are told that secrecy is an indispensable principle of government. Frequently, that claim is embellished by pleas of expertise, that is, the assertion by a principality — like the Pentagon, the CIA or the Henry Kissinger operation — that certain affairs are too sensitive or complicated for human beings to know about or act upon.

In ferocious application this really becomes a boast that bureaucratic routine or computer programming or institutional machinations are superhuman and obviate human abilities to be informed, to think, to decide and to act, thus relegating the person to a role of spectator or acolyte, submissive and subservient to the requirements of the principality.

Activists clash with police while protesting the lack of accurate AIDS reporting at the *New York Times*.
T.L. Litt/Impact Visuals

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Surveillance and harassment

Ancillary to secrecy in politics and commerce and in other realms is surveillance and the abolition of human privacy. The prevalence of industrial and commercial espionage; the monitoring of shoppers and elevator passengers and similar, now commonplace, so-called security precautions affecting ordinary business; the everyday atmosphere of apprehension in which people have come to live in America — all have worked to enlarge the tolerance of citizens toward political surveillance and the loss of privacy.

The kind of open society contemplated by the First Amendment seems impossible — and, what is more ominous, seems undesirable — to very many Americans. So there is little outrage when Senate hearings expose illegal military oversight of civilians or when the unprecedented political espionage at the Watergate is exposed or when education (if that is what it can then still be called) is conducted in so many schools in the presence of the police or other "security" forces.

It is not necessary to dwell upon such contemporary citations, however, because surveillance is a very old ploy of the principalities and not at all an innovation of electronics. One recalls that the purpose of the famous journey to Bethlehem of Joseph and the pregnant Mary was to be enrolled for a special tax applicable only to the Jews. It was not only a means by which the Roman occupiers collected revenue but also harassment of potential dissidents and minute political scrutiny of a captive and oppressed people.

Exaggeration and deception

In certain situations principalities act or overact so as to engender a belief that their conduct is warranted though no empirical justification exists. It is the audacity of the deceit, the grossness of the falsehood, the sheer excessiveness of the stratagem, the massiveness of the exaggeration which works to gain public credence or acquiescence.

In American merchandising this wantonness has foisted a huge quantity and a startling array of phony, worthless, dangerous goods and services upon purchasers. What may be more significant, such commercial deception has been so common, and practiced for such a long time that when the same techniques are politically appropriated human resistance has already been made pliable. This was a weapon of Nazi anti-Semitism. It was the snare of McCarthyism. The Department of Justice inherited it and has utilized it more often than one cares to recount.

The relentlessness of multifarious babel in America has wrought a fatigue both visceral and intellectual in millions upon millions of Americans. By now truly demoralized, *they suffer no conscience and they risk no action.*

Cursing and conjuring

The demonic powers curse human beings who resist them. I mean the term *curse* quite literally, as a condemnation to death, as a damnation. In earlier times, American Indians were cursed as savages in order to rationalize genocide. Somewhat similarly, chattel slavery involved cursing blacks as humanly inferior. In more recent American experience, has been the official defamation of the Black Panthers through indictments which conjure images of them as bloodthirsty black revolutionaries. If, by now, most of these prosecutions have failed and the charges have proved to be false or frivolous or fantastic, the curse nonetheless survives.

Usurpation and absorption

A somewhat more subtle tactic which principalities initiate against humans who do not conform involves the usurpation of human resistance. To be concrete, in the Catonsville case in 1968 [in which draft board records were burned], the federal authorities prosecuted in circumstances where an admitted offense had been committed. If that prosecution can be faulted as overkill in its scope, the government nevertheless kept within the bounds of a prosecution.

In the Harrisburg trial a few years later [in which Liz McAlister and Phil Berrigan were accused of planning to kidnap Kissinger], the role of the State reached beyond prosecution. The Department of Justice was implicated in entrapment and use of a paid informer in procuring an alleged or imagined offense.

By the time of the Camden matter [in which a draft board action was attempted], the political and legal authorities moved from prosecution to perpetration, the offense having apparently been conceived, sponsored, subsidized and implemented by agents of the government. Thus the stratagem of the principalities destroys the witness of human resistance by preemption, fabrication, absorption.

This, too, is no new ploy. In the first century, the Apostolic Church suffered enormous pressures to accede to a politically innocuous position as one of the religious sects of Judaism existing under a comity of protective custody of the Roman State. Saint Paul's vocation to preach the Gospel of the resurrection from death to the Gentiles — including even the Roman authorities — and the traumatic vision which enlightened Saint Peter concerning the same outreach and mission, saved the early Church from being ignominiously absorbed into the Imperial *status quo.*

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Diversion and demoralization

It must be borne in mind that any effort to designate and describe or illustrate characteristic ploys of the principalities is artificial to the extent that it necessarily abstracts a particular stratagem from the havoc and frenzy within which all the powers exist and act. None of these tactics can be sharply defined; they all overlap, and, moreover, they most commonly can be cited in simultaneous use.

The matter is, of course, further compounded by the intense rivalries and apparent collaborations as much as by how many of the powers besiege humans all at once. This is most pertinent to those ploys which have a distracting or diversionary aspect. That is illustrated by the political importance in contemporary American society of commercial sports. Sports engage the attention, time, and energies of multitudes of human beings, diverting them from politics as such and furnishing vicarious activity in substitution for their participation in political struggle.

More than that, in circumstances where there is little citizen involvement in the realpolitik of a nation, the persecution and punishment of nonconforming persons becomes itself a form of public spectacle. For the governing authorities, and for citizens who acquiesce to a spectator role, the American political prosecutions of Angela Davis or Daniel Ellsberg or Philip Berrigan serve the same purpose as the arena events involving lions and Christians in ancient Rome.

This same distracting factor is prominent, obviously, wherever scapegoats are sacrificed for the survival of principalities, whether the scapegoat be an individual (as Stokely Carmichael was for awhile in the 1960s, for instance) or a class of persons (as welfare recipients have now become).

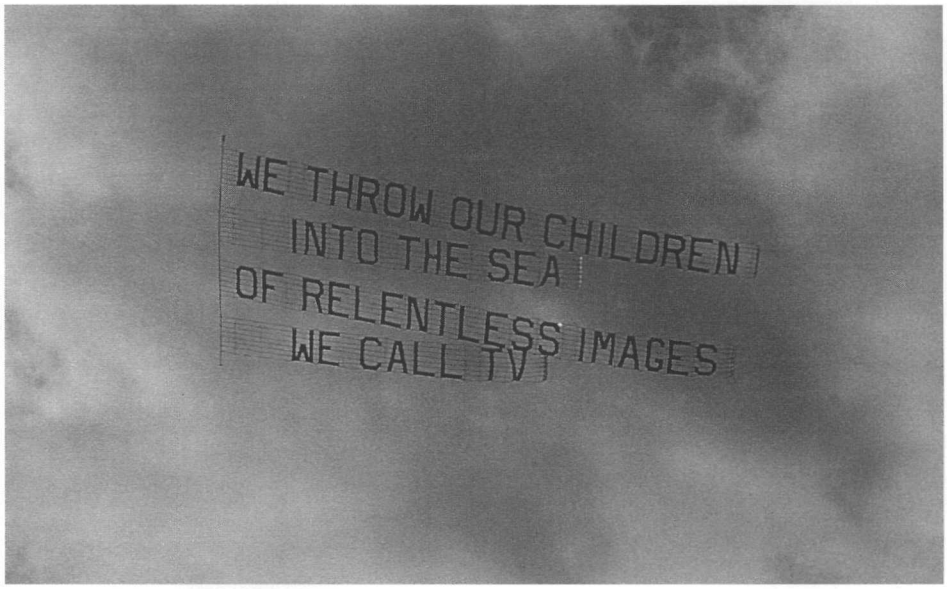
There are numberless other diversions convenient to the demonic powers, some of which may be thought of as dividends which accrue when other ploys are at work.

The relentlessness of multifarious babel in America, for example, has wrought a fatigue both visceral and intellectual in millions upon millions of Americans. By now truly *de*moralized, they suffer no conscience and they risk no action. Their human interest in living is narrowed to meager subsisting; their hope for life is no more than avoiding involvement with other humans and a desire that no one will bother them. They have lost any expectations for society; they have no stamina left for confronting the principalities; they are reduced to docility, lassitude, torpor, profound apathy, and default.

The demoralization of human beings in this fashion greatly conveniences the totalitarianism of the demonic powers since the need to resort to persecutions or imprisonments is obviated, as the people are already morally captive.

The violence of Babel

All of these snares and devices of the principalities represent the reality of babel, and babel is that species of violence most militant in the present American circumstances. Babel means the inversion of language, verbal inflation, libel, rumor, euphemism and coded phrases, rhetorical wantonness, redundancy, hyperbole, such profusion in speech and sound that comprehension is impaired, nonsense, sophistry, jargon, noise, incoherence, a chaos of voices and tongues, falsehood, blasphemy. And, in all of this, babel means violence.



***Sacrifice*, this image was flown over the 1989 Superbowl.** M. Mendel

Babylon is the city of babel. The language and liturgies of emperor worship in Imperial Rome were babel. The Nazis practiced babel against the Jews. Babel spawns racism. In *1984*, babel is the way advanced technocracy dehumanizes persons. By the 1970s in America, successive regimes had been so captivated by babel that babel had become the means of ruling the nation, the principal form of coercion employed by the governing authorities against human beings.

It is not just that babel incites violence — though it does, as the American experience in racism for nearly four centuries documents — but, more than that, babel *is* violence. TW

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Liberation radio

by Nkenge Zo!@

"If you're wondering why it's so quiet in here, I just kicked the radio to death."
Albert Brock to the psychiatrist in "The Murderer" from Ray Bradbury's *The Golden Apples Of The Sun*

Ray Bradbury's 1953 fiction anticipates the glut of media babble presided over by corporate United States in 1995. Since "The Murderer" entered the annals of American literature, production of electronic signals and their convenient receipt by "consumers" has ensnared even those who once may have been wary of submitting to such technologies.

Early this century the presumption was that communities/society would ultimately benefit from the 40-hour work week and eight-hour work day. Yet the increase in free time for the individual pursuit of happiness seems, rather, to have contributed to the dissolution of cogent, functioning neighborhoods and communities. Likewise, the information age was supposed to enable common access to secrets presumably held in thrall by the privileged. How sad the reverberation of familiar image, sound and ideas.

"Before we start..." He moved quietly and quickly to detach the wrist radio from the doctor's arm. He tucked it in his teeth like a walnut, gritted and heard it crack, handed it back to the appalled psychiatrist as if he had done them both a favor. "That's better."

—from "The Murderer"

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) declared on its formation that the airwaves belong to the people. Yet, who is ignorant? Quality, style, substance, quantity in most media (exempting such as *Ms. Magazine*, celebrating five years *sans* ads) is determined by the expected return of ducats, loot, moola, presidents, enchiladas for fun and profit of fewer rather than more people.

The FCC has been upholder of decency on the airwaves, arbiting fair time and equal-access disputes, and awarding broadcast licenses for stations of from 100 watts to 50,000 watts. (How many nights has your radio brought programs from other states that weren't carried on a local station?)

Meantime, without government sanction, women and men in California, Illinois, and Michigan have become broadcasters. They use the technology of "micro" transmitters. Hosts with names like The Goofy Girls, Rad Man, Judy Generic and MC Rot-A-Lot have become part of a network of micro-power broadcasters.

As a participant in broadcasting for almost 20 years I am invigorated by micro broadcasters. They are going beyond protest, living the road to their vision.

Micro stations are those using transmitters of under 100 watts. They can be assembled for free or with kits costing as little as $50. Many people access the 40 watts of Free Radio Berkeley in Oakland, Cal. For two years FRB has maintained a 24-hour signal; on a clear night it can cover a five-mile radius. Music and call-ins are programming staples, but the talk is exceptional. MC Rot-A-Lot spends three hours each Friday boosting composting as part of the way to a new society; the host of BLA Street Alert waxes on about bicycles as an antidote to pollution and poor circulation; Stephen Dunifer, founder of Free Radio Berkeley, co-hosts with Laura Drawbridge a weekly program "Acting Globally, Revolting Locally."

"Friends were always calling, calling, calling me. Hell I hadn't any time of my own. When it wasn't the telephone it was the television, the radio, the phonograph. When it wasn't the television, radio or the phonograph it was ..."

— from "The Murderer"

Free Radio Berkeley, broadcasting at 104.1 FM, emerges from the traditions of white anarchism. In the middle of the country a housing project in Springfield, Ill., is the base for 107.1 FM, the frequency for Mabana Kantako's broadcasts of Black Liberation Radio. Kantako experienced no interference from the FCC or the police— until he put on the air victims of police brutality.

Illegal broadcasts—those not licensed by the FCC — pose political questions much more profound than whether or not those with millions of dollars should be the only ones with access to the minds of citizens. For instance, how can broadcasting serve to truly encourage and sup-

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Logo for Free Radio Berkeley and SF Liberation Radio

port face-to-face communications with individuals and groups? Can letter writing be revived, thus developing the potential for a more subtle and refined discourse?

Many proponents of underground radio, pirate radio, or, as it is now called, micro-power broadcasting, believe each community should have its own station which would address the specific needs of the people of its area as determined by the residents. A ruling in January by Federal Judge Claudia Wilken denied the FCC a preliminary injunction to stop micro-power broadcasts of Dunifer and Free Radio Berkeley. The ruling is seen as a historic precedent because it is the first time the regulatory agency has been denied an injunction to stop the broadcasts of an unlicensed radio station.

The National Lawyers Guild's Committee on Democratic Communications has published a brochure, "What to Do When the FCC Knocks on Your Door," to prepare those who dare.

Free Radio Berkeley and the Free Communications Coalition are making available transmitter kits, with the proviso from FRB's legal department warning they are for "the furtherance of one's knowledge regarding radio frequency *design* and *principles* (our emphasis). ... Part 15 of the FCC rules prohibits an antenna being used" which would direct a broadcast signal.

As a participant in broadcasting for almost 20 years I am invigorated by these developments. Those who have chosen to express their commitments through micro broadcasting are helping push the contradictions of U.S. society from another direction. And they are going beyond protest, living the road to their vision. I welcome their strength. Yet I cannot help identifying with the protagonist of Ray Bradbury's story.

All out access to the waves encircling Earth does cause me to temper my applause for even micro broadcasting. Like Albert Brock, I am trying to know silence. The interior landscapes, complex as they must be, by nature provide surcease from the glut of media babble.

"What made you think of spooning ice cream into the radio?"

"It was a hot day."

The doctor paused.

"And what happened next?"

"Silence happened next. God, it was beautiful."

— Ray Bradbury's "The Murderer"

art and society

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CIC: What should be its bottom line?

by Julie A. Wortman

In every respect but one the Church Insurance Company (CIC) appears to be an arm of the Episcopal Church. A not-for-profit company, it is run by the Church Pension Fund, which is listed in the *Episcopal Church Annual* as an "official agency" of the Episcopal Church and whose trustees are elected by the church's General Convention (see box). The Episcopal Church shield adorns the company's letterhead and its many other printed materials. CIC accepts only Episcopal Church entities as clients. Even the music you hear if you are temporarily consigned to the telephone limbo of "on hold" when calling the company's New York headquarters is of the tasteful cathedral-choir-and-pipe-organ sort.

But the company's decision-making bottom line is money, not the Gospel.

"In the end," says Vincent C. Currie, Jr., a Church Pension Fund trustee, Episcopalians should realize that CIC "is just an insurance company."

For the most part, this reality hasn't posed a problem to the company's clients, who have welcomed its help, as CIC's motto puts it, in "Protecting Episcopal People and Property" when fires, floods, accidents and Oklahoma-type bombings occur. Now, however, with a steady stream of claims involving clergy sexual misconduct coming in, some see a disturbing conflict between CIC's churchlike image and the way it handles sexual misconduct claims. Some critics even argue that by acting more in accordance with church efforts to "do the right thing" in misconduct cases CIC could dramatically reduce the cost of claims.

Vital Signs

'What is the insurance for?'

At issue is CIC's responsibility to those who purchase sexual misconduct liability insurance. "What's confusing to me is what is the insurance for?" asks Gay Jennings, the Diocese of Ohio's canon to the ordinary. "CIC's responsibility is to defend the diocese if a suit is brought against us, but is that all?"

Jennings notes that in two civil suits where plaintiffs claimed that the Diocese of Ohio was responsible for a cleric's sexual misconduct, the lawyers CIC hired to defend the diocese "did a phenomenal job." But she and others who work with clergy sexual misconduct cases would like to see CIC more willing to pay for victims' therapeutic expenses if that is all they are asking as restitution for the injury done them.

"In adjudicating cases we always try to get restitution from the offender — we see it as part of the offender's potential healing," says Harold Hopkins, who in his role as director of the Office of Pastoral Development for the House of Bishops is often involved in church disciplinary proceedings stemming from instances of clergy sexual exploitation. "But it is often impossible for offenders to cover the cost of their victims' therapy because they may no longer have a job."

In such situations, Hopkins notes, dioceses do not always have the financial resources to help. While more and more dioceses are creating line items in their budgets for the psychological evaluations, assessments and legal fees adjudicating misconduct cases usually entail — the Diocese of Ohio, Jennings says, has paid out about $50,000 for such items in the last three years — bishops have been relying on discretionary accounts to fund the therapeutic expenses of victims (and sometimes of accused offenders).

The diocese could file a claim with CIC to cover the victim's therapy and claims personnel would process it like any other claim, investigating what happened and the severity of the injury, according to CIC's claims manager, William Fischer. "But if the insured has already made payments to the complainant themselves, we won't pay," Fischer says. "Our policy says we will reimburse the insured only for first-aid treatment at the scene of an accident. That's the industry standard."

'Compassionate expenses'

But Hopkins and other church officials believe the definition of "first aid" should be broadened in sexual misconduct cases. "A diocese will often pay 'compassionate expenses' [for therapy] to complainants while still working to figure out what has happened," he says, a practice which runs counter to CIC's preference for waiting to be certain that the insured could be legally liable before paying out any money.

"We have discussed the need for CIC to be pro-active in responding to the needs of the victims for counseling and that kind of help," says Church Pension Fund trustee Currie. "But we tend to think that it is not appropriate to become a victim's advocate because you might be admitting liability." Currie, who is diocesan administrator for the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, also sees such payouts as an invitation to frivolous claims of wrongdoing. "We don't want to be paying out money every time someone claims someone brushed up against them at the water cooler," he says. "I'm a Southerner. I always believe a man is a gentleman unless proven otherwise. Women believe men are not gentlemen unless proven otherwise."

Chilton Knudsen, however, a Church Pension Fund trustee who works on sexual misconduct cases for the Diocese of Chicago, disagrees. Not only does she believe that helping victims with their expenses early on is a way of demonstrating that the diocese cares about their welfare, she finds that most of the victims with whom she deals are happy to accept a "pastoral settlement" of money for therapeutic expenses — in Chicago this usually comes from the bishop's funds — and leave things at that.

"The vast majority do not come back

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for more," she says. "In a few instances victims with whom we've had a good relationship do come back, but those have usually been cases where someone several years later has advised that they get a lawyer and the lawyer says, 'Let's go for the big money.'"

Taking off the gloves

Once a suit is filed — whether prompted by an opportunistic lawyer or a victim's frustrated efforts to get a remedy — everyone agrees that the dynamics change dramatically.

"It's an odd kind of justice system we have," says Knudsen. "In an adversarial action, the gloves must come off. The plaintiff will trash the priest, the bishop and the diocesan standing committee — and the insurance company will do likewise [to the plaintiff]. This kind of process forces us into behavior that contradicts our values. It puts us in the position of having to defend being compassionate. In one case, I had a good pastoral relation with the victim but when the suit was filed I was told to have no further contact with her."

Hopkins particularly dislikes that the lawyers defending church officials restrict them from speaking openly about the church's responsibility for the misconduct. "How much we say about a case is frequently at issue. [The lawyers] say it will weaken the case to say too much. But if what the victim says happened is true, I'd rather have the case weakened by acknowledging it."

Another problem, Knudsen says, is that "there's a kind of 'legal liturgy' the lawyers are used to, in which each side begins with the most extreme position possible, holding out as long as possible. The whole process eats up a lot of legal time and is very adversarial." Revictimization of the complainant, she and Hopkins both point out, is a common by-product.

'A fair, cost-effective resolution'

CIC's fiduciary goal, Fischer says, "is to get a fair, cost-effective resolution" as quickly as possible, and that can't be done without disputing at least some of the complainant's claims (see Sally Johnson, "The role and obligation of insurance companies").

"We take on the claimant regarding damages and value," CIC's Fischer says. "We *have* to respond or we might exceed the policy limit [on damages]. The plaintiff's attorney's thrust is to get to the employer, so it's a question of vicarious liability, not one of crime or intent."

CIC & the Episcopal Church

The Church Insurance Company (CIC) is an affiliate of the Church Pension Fund (CPF), which manages the company and controls its finances. The canons of the Episcopal Church authorize the CPF "to establish and administer the clergy pension system, including life, accident and health benefits, of this Church." The church's General Convention elects the CPF's trustees. The CIC, together with the CPF's other affiliates comprise the Church Pension Group.

Keeping the cost of claims down, Fischer says, is critical with such a small company — with 85 percent of all Episcopal Church entities already buying their insurance from CIC, Fischer notes, "there is not much room for growth." CIC's closest competitor, Church Mutual Insurance Company, sells policies to church customers of any denomination and is five to seven times larger. CIC averages 2,200-2,500 new claims a year. "We have lost money in the last few years, I don't know how much," says Fischer. "Misconduct cases are a factor, but not exclusively."

But misconduct cases make up a significant portion of CIC's claims load. In 1993 the company stopped providing liability coverage for misconduct claims as part of its basic property and casualty policy because, as Alan Blanchard, president of the Church Pension Group, told the church's national executive council, "cases are coming out of the woodwork." At the time, Blanchard said, claims were costing twice the amount of premiums. CIC customers must now select a separate rider to get sexual misconduct liability coverage. The old limit of $2 million per claim has been reduced to $350,000, with an annual cap of $700,000. In 1993 an out-of-court settlement that involved the sexual abuse of six teenaged boys had a price tag of $800,000 and in 1991 a jury awarded $1.2 million in a judgment against the Diocese of Colorado, a decision which was later reduced by the Colorado Supreme Court but which still eventually cost CIC a six-figure settlement.

Recognizing that preventing misconduct from occurring in the first place should be the primary goal, CIC is now requiring that purchasers of its sexual misconduct liability protection institute sexual misconduct policies, educate clergy and other employees about proper conduct and screen applicants for employment — requirements that the Church Pension Group's David Rider equates with the fire codes purchasers of fire insurance are expected to observe.

But in the short term sexual misconduct cases will likely continue to be a significant fact of church life. With complainants in sexual misconduct cases highly represented by legal counsel — only one in 20 goes unrepresented, CIC's Fischer says, as opposed to one in three complainants in other cases — settlements will take time, and perhaps should. As Tom Carpenter, the Diocese of Iowa's chancellor, admits, "If I were a complainant's lawyer I might not advise that she take a simple settlement to cover the cost of therapy — there has been more damage than that."

Laughing at mediation?

But is there a way to avoid lengthy legal proceedings and minimize the money CIC pays out? Although few of its cases actually go to trial, Fischer says, they usually involve multiple church defendants, each with their own lawyers, and take an average of two years to settle.

Margo Maris, a pioneer in developing fair and compassionate procedures for responding to complaints of clergy sexual misconduct during her tenure as canon to

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The role and obligation of insurance companies

by Sally Johnson

An insurance policy is a contract. In the case of sexual misconduct liability insurance, the insured pays a premium to the insurance company for the coverage and promises to cooperate with the company in defending claims. In exchange, the insurance company generally promises to defend the insured if a lawsuit is filed against the insured for a wrong that the policy covers and to pay any damages (money) that the insured is *legally obligated* to pay as a result of the lawsuit.

The important qualification is that the insured has to be *legally* obligated, not morally obligated to pay. The role of the lawyer hired by the insurance company is to defend the company's client and to try to prove that it is not *legally* obligated to pay any money or to minimize the amount of money that is owed. This is because premiums for insurance are based, in part, on the number and size of claims the insurance company expects to be legally obligated to pay plus amounts for operating expenses and profits (if it is a for-profit company). If the company pays claims it is not obligated to pay, there may not be enough money to pay the claims it is obligated to pay or to pay its owners (shareholders or members) the dividends to which they are entitled. It used to be rare for insurance companies to go out of business but in the past 10 years a number of large insurance companies have filed bankruptcy.

Claims for misconduct that occurred many years ago pose particular problems. When insurance companies set premiums for church clients 15, 20, or 30 years ago, they did not expect to pay for clergy sexual misconduct claims out of those premiums because few, if any, lawsuits had ever been filed against churches. No money was set aside for such claims. If they are paid today, the money comes from premiums that have been paid more recently to cover current risks, not risks from decades ago.

Another reason insurance companies are reluctant to pay claims they aren't legally obligated to pay is that it may encourage other people (lawyers or claimants) to bring frivolous or unjustified claims. While the number of such claims may be small, they can impose significant costs in legal fees or settlements.

The victim usually sues not only the clergy person (90 percent of the sexual abuse and exploitation that occurs involves a male offender and a female victim) but also the cleric's congregation and denomination (diocese, synod, conference or association) and sometimes the national church body. The lawyers for each of those "defendants" has to decide how to defend their clients in the lawsuit. Our legal system is an adversary system where each side has their own lawyer who advocates vigorously for their client's interests. Our system is based on the belief that the truth emerges from that process. The job of the church's lawyer is to gather information to evaluate whether the claim is justified or frivolous.

The church defendants can raise a number of different defenses to the victim's claims:

1. *The conduct didn't happen.* The church's lawyer may argue that the alleged sexual misconduct didn't occur. This can include defenses such as, "something happened but not what she said happened," or "she's lying," or "she's not capable of remembering or telling it accurately because she is mentally unstable or mentally ill." The church's lawyer must question the victim about the details of what the clergy person did. The church may also claim that the victim's memory of the misconduct isn't accurate because it has been affected by hypnosis or suggestions made by therapists. Or, the church's lawyer may argue that while the victim was abused, she was abused by someone else. All of these can involve painful and embarrassing inquiries into the victim's background.

2. *The conduct wasn't illegal.* The church's lawyer may admit that the misconduct occurred but argue that it wasn't illegal. This can include such arguments as "she consented," or "it's not wrong for a clergy person to have a sexual relationship with someone in their congregation or someone they're counseling." The church's lawyer may delve into the victim's sexual history to show that she has been sexually involved with a number of people to prove that the clergy person did not coerce her or exert power of any kind to obtain her consent to sexual contact.

3. *The church isn't responsible for what the clergy person did.* The church's lawyer may claim that regardless of what happened it is not legally responsible for what the clergy person did because the church didn't know or have any reason to know what the clergy person was doing or isn't responsible for the clergy person's deliberate, intentional wrongful acts.

4. *She wasn't damaged by what happened.* The church's lawyer may argue that the conduct occurred and was illegal but that the victim wasn't harmed by it or wasn't harmed as much as she claims because, for example, she was sexually abused as a child, is a battered spouse, is exaggerating, or is making things up about the harm she's claiming. The church's lawyer may investigate the victim's background and question her about her abuse history and psychological and psychiatric history to show that her damages were caused by experiences in her life having nothing to do with the clergy person's misconduct.

5. *Courts can't regulate what the church does.* The church's lawyer may argue that it doesn't matter what happened; the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution

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Lawyer **Sally Johnson** is chancellor of the Diocese of Minnesota.

prohibits secular courts from examining and passing judgment on appropriate behavior for clergy and how the church supervises its clergy. The church, this argument goes, should exert its right to be free from government regulation (through the courts and legislatures) so that it can live and act according to what it believes it means to be the church.

6. *Too much time has passed.* The church's lawyer may argue that the time for bringing a lawsuit has expired. Each state sets it own "statute of limitations" for bringing lawsuits. If the victim was an adult at the time of the misconduct, the statute of limitations varies from two to six years. In some states the time is extended until the victim remembers the misconduct and recognizes the harm it caused. If the victim was a minor at the time of the misconduct, the time limit usually extends several years after the victim reaches the age of majority. If the claim is made after the statute of limitations expires, it is dismissed.

Many of these defenses appear to be inconsistent with what a "Christian" or "religious" or "church" response should be to a person who claims they've been abused or exploited by a clergy person. However, the role and obligation of insurance companies, even insurance companies that insure churches, is to use premium dollars paid by policy holders to pay claims the company is obligated to pay under the terms of the policy when a suit has been filed against a church. The insurance company has the right to fully and vigorously defend the lawsuit to eliminate or minimize the amount of money it has to pay even when that process seems to be contrary to how some think the church should respond to such claims. A church may choose to pay claims that the insurance company is not obligated to pay, but the church must pay them out of its own funds. TW

continued from page 23

the ordinary in Minnesota, believes there is, although she admits that CIC is skeptical. "The process I developed involves negotiation and mediation around the question of 'What do you need in order to heal?'" Maris says. "I told the Church Insurance Company that I would take their five toughest cases and use my process to get them settled. Then, I said, they could take the next five toughest cases and settle them their way and then see who comes out ahead in terms of wellness, healing and money. They didn't take me up on it. I know they were probably laughing at me, thinking I was hopelessly naive, but I have a track record of getting settlements that help everyone involved in a healing way. I have shown them that the cost is less, but they won't listen."

Chicago's Knudsen also supports the idea of using some sort of mediation. "I want to honor Church Insurance Company's fundamental metaphor of protecting its assets and I want to help victims but I don't want to make attorneys rich," she says. "I realize that settling too readily could open the company to abuses, but I think we could build an investigative body to sort cases out. Church Insurance fears that sympathetic people might give away the store because of concern about the victims, but there could be checks and balances."

The question, Maris says, is "Who is the client? To whom is the Church Insurance Company accountable? They think they are accountable to the great insurance gods in the sky. The rub comes from the fact that Church Insurance is operating in a sacred world in a secular way — they don't appear to reflect behavior that is compassionate and/or religiously ethical."

Getting CIC to even consider deviating from normal industry standards, however, is difficult, as Harold Hopkins knows too well. His efforts to get CIC to change its policy about not reimbursing dioceses which pay for therapeutic "first aid" — or to contribute to a carefully administered sexual misconduct "super fund" that would create a pool of money that dioceses could use to pay for victims' therapeutic expenses following church adjudication of cases — have met with polite but firm refusal.

A mandate from the church

Curiously, however, it is true that the Church Pension Group, which controls CIC, does not always let "industry standards" dictate how it operates. Witness last year's General Convention, when Church Pension Group president Alan Blanchard urged a legislative committee to take definite action on a resolution from the Diocese of El Camino Real requesting that the General Convention sanction the Group's selling of medical insurance for the domestic partners of employees. Blanchard admitted that insurance carriers now routinely sell such coverage, but said the Church Pension Group wanted the church's opinion about whether to do so, since "domestic partners" could mean homosexual couples. In the end, the committee signalled its disapproval of the coverage — it would interfere with efforts to "continue the dialogue" on human sexuality, some members said — by deciding not to take the resolution to the convention for a vote.

But Church Pension Fund trustee Currie says there is no comparison between asking the church's advice about what sort of insurance to sell and asking the church for advice about pursuing models of negotiation and mediation like those suggested by Maris and Knudsen and endorsed by Hopkins and many diocesan chancellors.

"The point is that homosexuality is such a volatile issue in the church that Church Pension Fund could not get involved in that unless they had a mandate from the church — that would become a plank in the platform of those who want same-sex unions."

Does that mean CIC, as an affiliate of the Church Pension Group, might be considered more than "just" an insurance company after all? The answer depends, no doubt, on just how volatile the company's handling of sexual misconduct cases becomes. TW

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Taking a 'clear stand' on women's ordination

by Katie Sherrod

At a meeting held in Arlington, Va. on July 5-7, 1995, the committee charged by the 1994 General Convention with the task of determining how the church's ordination canons can be "fully implemented" — that is, made equally applicable to men and women — in every diocese of the Episcopal Church gave the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA), which opposes women priests, the "clear stand regarding the question of ordination" it called for last year. The committee's recommendations, passed by a vote of five to four, would render the so-called "conscience clause" inoperative, and would clarify that Canon III.8.1 is mandatory, not permissive, thus removing the two primary arguments so-called "traditionalist" bishops have used to justify their refusal either to ordain women to the priesthood or to allow women in their dioceses to pursue ordination to this order.

The Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) praised the committee's work as "the first time ... [the EWC] has found support within the church to hold accountable those bishops and dioceses which have refused to implement the canons concerning women in Holy Orders." Currently, this applies to Fort Worth, Eau Claire, San Joaquin and Quincy.

William Wantland, bishop of the Diocese of Eau Claire, spoke for the committee's ESA members when he branded the committee's action a "Final Solution" aimed at "extinguishing one of the two recognized theological positions in this church." In a July 12 memo to a diocesan committe, the Diocese of Fort Worth's ESA bishop, Jack Iker, called the committee's action "a very dangerous and destructive proposal" that would leave "those who hold my position" only three options, to "acquiesce and compromise ... one's conscience," "active resistance to the canons," or "resignation from any leadership positions in the Church and probably from membership in the Episcopal Church as well."

The committee made its recommendations following testimony by Jane Holmes Dixon, suffragan bishop of Washington, who testified on behalf of the church's women bishops, and more than 25 lay persons, deacons and priests. "Speaking for myself, Barbara Harris, and Mary Adelia McLeod," Dixon said, "we will no longer participate in a dialogue intended to delay implementation of Canon III.8.1."

Others who testified detailed how difficult life in the church is for those who support women's ordination in dioceses whose bishops do not. "It's not just [Clarence] Pope and Iker who are draining my strength," said Cindy Hearne of Fort Worth. "It is you! My church! You have abandoned me and my family and left us in the care of evil and deceitful men who cry to you of their own pain and persecution while holding us hostage to their consciences."

Two people, Dorothy Spaulding, of Washington, D.C., and Earle Fox, a priest from Ambridge, Penn., protested any compulsory implementation of the canon.

Later, reflecting on the testimony, Dale Balfour, a General Convention deputy from Maryland, said, "I just had no concept until now of the shaming and shunning to which men, women and children are subjected in some of our dioceses. A decent attempt to honor conscience on the part of the church has led to abuse and hostility, and to the persecution of people who simply want to bring their dioceses back into the Episcopal fold."

EWC president Cynthia Black noted, "The Committee's proposals draw a careful distinction between belief and practice. While people may hold a variety of theological views, they will be 'obliged to obey and implement the canon law of this church.'"

The resolution which created the committee and defined its mission included a statement that "those who support and those who oppose the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate each hold a recognized theological position in this church." The ESA trumpeted the inclusion of this phrase as a victory, but failed to acknowledge that the dialogue was to be focused on implementation of the canon in every diocese, not on simply more talk about the validity of women's ordination. This point apparently continued to elude the ESA members of the committee at the conclusion of the July committee meeting.

"In our two meetings no real time was given to dialogue leading to understanding. Instead a rather rushed agenda was pushed aimed at completing the business of the committee by midsummer, 1995, in order to present a 'solution' to the House of Bishops in September 1995," committee member Wantland said in his minority report.

The committee's recommendations will go to the 1997 General Convention in Philadelphia. The committee also voted five to four to recommend to the Bishops' meeting in Portland, Ore., this month that it adopt the following resolution: "It is the mind of this House that Canon III.8.1 is mandatory in all dioceses of this church."

The chair of the committee is Robert Rowley, Bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania, and members are Frank Allen, Bishop of Atlanta; James Bradberry of Southern Virginia; Gay Jennings, a priest in the Diocese of Ohio; Sarah McCrory of Upper South Carolina; Rita Moyer (ESA) of Pennsylvania.; David Rawson (ESA) of Pennsylvania.; Anne Robbins, a priest in the Diocese of Southern Ohio; Rebecca Conrad Spanos, a permanent deacon in the Diocese of Pittsburgh; and William Wantland (ESA), Bishop of Eau Claire. TW

[Ed. note: The recent announcement that three of the four nominees in the Diocese of Rhode Island's upcoming episcopal election are women — a "first" in Episcopal Church history — will undoubtedly be received as further salt in "traditionalist," anti-women's ordination wounds.]

Katie Sherrod, lives in the Diocese of Fort Worth. She is vice-president of the EWC and editor of the group's magazine, *Ruach.*

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Sexual misconduct in light of a theology of evil

By Chilton Knudsen

When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches, by Neil and Thea Ormerod, Millenium books, Alexandria, Australia: 1995. (Distributed in the U.S. by Seven Hills Book Distributors, 49 Central Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.)

When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches is a brave title. No euphemisms here. No "ministerial stress," "boundary problems," "betrayal of trust," or "pastoral dysfunction." This book is blunt indeed, but strikingly compassionate and responsible. We have in this work an important and unique contribution to the developing conversation on a painful and complicated issue. Neil and Thea Ormerod, theologian and social worker, husband and wife, manage to integrate in one manageable volume the relevant clinical and ecclesiological issues within a deep theological core.

What Peter Rutter has done in his important clinically-oriented work, *Sex in the Forbidden Zone*, the Ormerods do here with a slightly different emphasis. Rutter's work took us inside the mind of an offender, tracing the kinds of thought processes, rationalizations and self-deceptions into which offenders enter as they encounter the women who trust them. *When Ministers Sin* examines the same issues in light of a theology of evil, evil which is manifested in both individual and systemic patterns of denial, deception and the abuse of power.

Fundamental to both works is the conviction that power differentials in care-giving relationships are always present to a greater or lesser degree, but that this difference in power presents a significant life moment to both parties. Such a moment presents an opportunity for the deepening of trust, the empowerment of the vulnerable and, indeed, the experiential re-ordering of oppressive dynamics into movements of mutual respect. Or, in the tragically frequent "missed opportunity" which occurs when abusive and exploitative dynamics are unleashed, the life-moment becomes not opportunity but opportunism.

When Ministers Sin includes a sensitive discussion of the experience of a victim as the journey is made from victim to survivor. There is a clear discussion of the important roles of anger and remembering in this healing process. Anger, the authors assert, like prophetic anger and the anger of Jesus at the cleansing of the temple, is the normal and appropriate human response to an experience of wrong. The authors write: "Such anger is not just inevitable, it is necessary and good. ... It is a righteous anger which rejects evil done, rejects it in the name of justice and truth" (page 39).

The process of remembering, which the authors call "the descent into hell," is explored in the context of Dante's *Divine Comedy* and the descent of Jesus after his crucifixion.

This is but one example of the profound theological and scriptural grounding which threads through the entire book. I especially appreciate the frequent references made to the vital role of trusted friends in the healing process. Too often, we think of healing as the exclusive province of mental health services. They also mention that important element of friendship in the section on offenders and their repentance and healing. In a world where "support" often means "give unquestioning affirmation and protection from consequences," we need to take deeply to heart the sacred vocation of friendship, which embraces truth-telling, attentive listening and tough love.

Another particularly strong section of the book is the material in the chapter entitled "A Theology of Abuse." It's all here: idolatry, guilt, original sin (here framed as "the logic of evil"), the generational nature of abuse, the disappearance of true empathy, the tenacity of oppressive structures, the refusal to be accountable. This accountability is helpfully described as accountability to "those below": "This is the accountability that Jesus speaks of in the Gospel. It is not the accountability to a harsh and exacting superior, waiting for us to step out of line so that he can pounce — the archetypal abusive father. Rather, it is an accountability to those below, to the victims, the abused, that Jesus speaks of" (page 107).

The reflection in this same chapter on the sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 is, by itself, a provocative and fresh consideration of faith, fanaticism, and redemption. Readers may not agree with this interpretation, but the very impulse to dispute this interpretation will prompt the reader to examine the text anew.

In Part II of *When Ministers Sin* the authors have gathered together several first-person stories of sexual abuse by church leaders. Those who have not faced such issues directly or personally may be tempted to disbelieve these stories, for the horrors they describe are incredible. But as one who has spent the last several years in this area consulting, training, investigating, and seeking avenues for healing, I find the stories utterly typical, utterly true. Not only the abuse at the hands of an offending minister, but the cover-ups, re-traumatizing behaviors, and institutional denial of the church are all detailed here. In the epilogue, the authors offer a reflection on the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Like the rest of this book, the truth stands gentle and powerful in the re-telling of this parable. There is the truth: simply presented, clearly articulated, without the kind of finger-pointing which perpetuates the abusive dynamic. The authors prayed over this book, they tell us in the introduction. It was difficult for them to write, they say. It is not easy to read either. But, like painful truth which sets us free, it is Good News indeed. I hope many of us will dare to read it. TW

Chilton Knudsen is the pastoral care administrator for the Diocese of Chicago.

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Execution staid

Mumia Abu-Jamal, the radical radio journalist in Pennsylvania whose questionable murder conviction and death sentence mobilized a worldwide campaign on his behalf, has been granted an indefinite stay of execution.

The stay was issued late and "very reluctantly," said Kwasi Seitu of Equal Justice U.S.A. "Judge Albert Sabo issued the stay as a result of growing national and international publicity."

Seitu, who called the stay "a small victory in a continuing bad situation," said that it should not be allowed "to dissipate public interest and support in the case." He urges continued pressure on the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to remove Judge Sabo from the case. For more information contact Equal Justice U.S.A., Quixote Center, P.O. Box 5206, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

Journey of hope

Marietta Jaeger, *The Witness'* circulation coordinator, will speak out against the death penalty with this year's Journey of Hope, a two-week public action/education tour sponsored by Murder Victims' Families For Reconciliation (MVFR). MVFR members, accompanied by friends and abolitionists from across the country, will travel from San Diego to Sacramento (9/22-10/8) telling their stories and why they oppose the death penalty. Daily events will include church presentations, media events, university classes, tree-plantings, town hall meetings and concerts. To participate, contact Mike Penzato, Journey of Hope, 9000 W. Washington Blvd., 2nd Floor, Culver City, CA 90232; (phone) 310-815-0450 or (fax) 310-815-0457.

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Short takes

Observations from Haiti

Haiti was once the sacred home of the Taino-Arawak Indians who regarded earth as Mother. Over 500 years later, their memory and spirituality is still very strong and influential in the minds and lives of the Haitian people.

Christopher Columbus re-named this holy land "Hispaniola" and responded to the gentle welcome of the natives with brutal force. Within a short period of time, Columbus had murdered every Taino Indian (over two million) and had to bring in slaves from Africa — the true ancestors of today's Creole people. The Spirits of the new black slaves united with the Spirits of the Taino. This is most evident in the practice of Voo Doo.

Thanks to an unscrupulous media, Voo Doo has been misrepresented, much like Christianity was in the first century. I was surprised to hear Voo Doo drums coming from a Roman Catholic Church during a celebration of the Mass. I found it delightful!

A few days later, I followed the sound of drums through pitch black darkness and found myself in the middle of a Voo Doo ceremony. To my surprise, I and my white companions were accepted as guests of honor. I was shocked to see so many similarities between Voo Doo and the Charismatic Christian Church. Speaking in tongues, falling under the spirit, joy, singing, and being possessed by a spirit of love and devotion. I also observed that the dance steps they were doing are the same as my people, the Odawa Nation of Michigan. I was quite disturbed, however, by one dance which paid honor to the white race as being superior to the black Haitian people. I attribute this to the slave mentality which is still very prevalent among Haitians.

In the Parliamentary elections on Sunday, June 25, local election officials did a marvelous job. If there was fraud, it was fraud which could not be controlled by local election officials nor even President Aristide — the fraud perpetuated on the Haitian people by the U.S.A. Several Haitian election officials told me that the U.S. State Department told the country's wealthy Haitian leaders that if they wanted to maintain their status and continue receiving financial aid they would have to subvert the will of the people and establish a U.S.-type democracy in Haiti, one in which property is more important than people — what I call "U.S. Imperial Democracy." Over and over again, Haitian people told me, "This is not a Haitian Democracy!"

—Tom Trimmer, deacon in the Diocese of Eastern Michigan

One million women

Elsa Tamez, president of the Latin American Biblical Seminary (*Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano*) in San Jose, Costa Rica, is asking one million women around the world to contribute one dollar each for the construction of a smaller, more efficient building to house their school, which will soon become a full university. Tamez is committed to a decentralized model of theological education which responds to the special needs of women and men who have historically been excluded. She is asking for only one dollar from each donor so that all women — "poor and rich, black and white, indigenous and mestiza" — will share equally in the project. You may donate one dollar in your own name, or in the name of a woman you wish to honor. The names will be recorded in a special place in the university's new home. Send checks (payable to: *Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano* — One Million Women) to: Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano, Dept. SJO 2174, P.O. Box 025216, Miami, FL 33102-5216 USA.

Fourth World publication

Stories of very poor families from the U.S.A., Guatemala, Thailand, Burkina Faso and Germany are collected in *This is how we live*, a new publication of the Fourth World movement. The study, which also contains analysis by Fourth World Volunteers, is available for $12 from Fourth World Publications, 7600 Willow Hill Dr., Landover, MD 20785; (phone) 301-336-9489, (fax) 301-336-0092.

Centering on culture

by Errol Henderson

Moving the Centre, by Ngugi Wa Thiong'O, Heineman, 1993.

W E.B. Dubois spoke of the cultural duality of African-Americans that resulted in "two warring souls" within blacks who struggled with their ostensible citizenship as Americans juxtaposed against their caste position as a denigrated people.

Today, Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's *Moving the Centre* devolves from the Duboisian view of cultural centrality. Ngugi's essays change both the Eurocentric ordering of the world and the dominance of Eurocentric culture among Third World elites — a by-product of enslavement, colonialism, and neocolonialism. For Ngugi, cultural resistance to Eurocentrism through the practice of indigenous culture lays the basis for political and economic resistance within the Third World. In the global system such resistance takes the form of cultural self-determination and practice — not simply in the arts — but in the unfettered expression of cultural norms of political legitimacy, social responsibility, economic development and political and spiritual expression.

For Ngugi, the role of the intellectual is to be the living expression of the best of this cultural practice. Europe is not denounced, in this view, for its European culture. Instead, it is denounced for its white supremacism, economic exploitation, political-military subjugation and cultural repression of Third World people.

Much of this we find rationalized if not valorized in European culture. It is the racist and economically exploitative aspects of Eurocentric culture that Ngugi views as the biggest impediment to world peace and prosperity.

World peace cannot be left to Europeans but it must emanate from the multicultural global family liberated from the fetters of domination. Cultural self-determination, then, is a key tool in Ngugi's liberation strategy. His main thrust is to achieve a cultural reaffirmation of the world's people starting with his own Kikuyu of Kenya. Ngugi berates intellectuals for neglecting their own culture and instead imitating the West.

Ngugi became an international *cause célèbre* as a political prisoner and exile whose troubles began as he steadfastly rejected publishing his writings in English, opting instead for his native tongue. His anti-government tone brought him censure from the corrupt Arep Moi regime of Kenya. He and other African centered *literati* were the subject of police terror as they attempted to revive in literature and art the vision and valor of Kenyan resistance.

Ngugi was forced into exile. It is apparent that Ngugi understands both the need and the cost of his cultural resistance undertakings. Nonetheless Ngugi's attempts should not simply be reduced to their impact as tools of resistance within a neocolonial African state.

The beauty of his thesis — centering culture both globally and locally — resonates even to our urban centers in the U.S. For example, the most propitious attempts in recent years at organizing peace within and among urban gangs is rooted in a process of cultural reaffirmation.

In some of my work with SOSAD [Save Our Sons and Daughters, Detroit — *TW* 12/93], cultural symbols and imagery are wedded to issue-resolution techniques which allow us to challenge gangs — using their own criteria — to represent the best aspects of their own culture. This process has a strong spiritual element. It also roots gang youth into a broader historical context within which their responsibility to the vulnerable and their ethical interplay within the group are enlarged beyond the original gang context.

Only culture appears to be able to serve as the template for this process. At this point —with agendas broadened — long-term issues and concerns begin to emerge and become salient. Discussions turn away from impulse and towards investment. Community concerns enlarge beyond personal concerns for reputation. Value begins to take precedence over money and victimization. Principles emerge where preferences once ruled. When this is done successfully, the seeds for a justice-based peace may be planted.

This process is rooted in cultural reaffirmation, challenging youth to represent the best views and values of their culture group. Discourse between culture groups then truly becomes multicultural. Moving the center towards the best — human and non-chauvinistic — aspects of one's culture can be very reaffirming.

In sum, Ngugi reemphasizes the long legacy of cultural resistance and reaffirmation of Third World people. This cultural emphasis reminds us in the U.S. that our country is not a finished multicultural product, but one that is ongoing. TW

Errol Henderson is a political science professor at the University of Florida and author of *Afrocentrism and World Politics* (Praeger, 1995). He was a participant at the 1994 Kansas City gang summit.

book review

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Opposing the powers

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Oriana Fallaci is at war with "The Power"; her weapons are her intelligence and her audacity. She has interviewed many heads of state and, although she has a reputation for asking shocking questions, presidents and generals grant her interviews because they're flattered and because Fallaci is one of the few people who knows most of their colleagues and expresses her opinions freely.

"Whether [power] comes from a despotic sovereign or an elected president, from a murderous general or a beloved leader, I see power as an inhuman and hateful phenomenon," Fallaci writes in the preface to *Interview with History* (Houghton Mifflin, 1976). It's small surprise that few of the world leaders interviewed in the book receive her praise, and she is free with adjectives like "squat," "fat," "swollen," "unbearable," "clumsy," and "diabolically shrewd."

Yet the objective of her sometimes rash and always lacerating observations is not to aggrandize herself, but to liberate the minds of readers who may find a way to join the resistance.

She describes journalism as an "extraordinary and terrible privilege," because one is a "direct witness" to the making of history who may, sometimes, help shape it.

Fallaci was born in Italy under Mussolini's fascism. Her father was part of the resistance in Florence. When his young daughter came home with an underground pamphlet that disputed the official propaganda, he answered her query: The official propaganda was a lie.

"I was so *shocked*, so *scandalized*, that I shouted, 'Some day I shall write for papers that speak the truth and are sold in the news stands,'" Fallaci told students at Amherst College in 1976.

For the remainder of the war, Fallaci worked in the resistance. She saw executions, arrests, and tortures. Her father was arrested and tortured. She ran guns and messages to the mountains.

But she says she was most influenced by a resistance newspaper called *Don't Give Up.*

"I loved that paper as if it were a person. Once I risked my life under a bombing to save 50 copies of it. But what I cared for mostly was reading it myself, to *know* through it my right and my duty to be free. Because freedom is first a duty, then a right."

Fallaci told Amherst's students, "I hope you comprehend what this story means for me — it means that journalism must exist not to fulfill banal curiosity, not to feed gossips or amuse. It must exist to help people to find or to keep their dignity, to fight their ignorance, to defend themselves. It also means that journalism is not only facts, but interpretation of the facts through ideas."

The U.S., Fallaci believes, has eroded the power of journalism in two ways.

First, through magazines like *Life* and *Time*, it has overwhelmed readers with visual images and content which "pretend to say all but end with saying nothing."

She speaks of carrying the Sunday *New York Times* into her apartment in New York with a warm feeling that she'll do her civic duty reading it.

"Each time I buy a Sunday paper, I get nervous. It's so well done from a techni-

Our job is to inform and raise the political consciousness of the people, that consciousness which The Power always tries to put to sleep.

Oriana Fallaci in 1993. Yusef El-Amin, Courtesy Library of Congress

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

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

cal point of view. I take it in my arms as a baby —so heavy it is! I wonder how shall I read all of it? Once I tried. I shut myself at home the whole Sunday. And I read and read till nightfall came. But I hadn't read half of it. And I knew much less than I would know after reading *Le Monde*."

The second way American journalism has damaged the industry, she says, is through the myth of objectivity. The illusion of facts-not-opinion journalism is a method of social control, she says.

"How? Through an *impossible* objectivity that gives the license of the truth *only* to the official truth. Aware of it or not, we all followed that road, without understanding the fraud it contained, the lies it propagated, the omissions it was guilty of. Hysterically afraid of not being 'objective' enough, we forgot the simplest truths: Yes, truth usually stays in the middle. But sometimes it stays on one side only.

"In order to understand the truth, one must be offered many interpretations of the truth, many opinions — exactly what the industrial press prohibits. Because of it, our political consciousness has been delayed. Because of it, we have been denied truth *and* facts."

Fallaci gave Amherst's students another illustration. A few months earlier, she had attended a dinner in Washington. A U.S. senator asked her about the Italian Communists. To her horror, he did not know the names of the key Communist leaders in Italy or France. He did not know about the schisms within the party.

"His lack of knowledge was so frightening, so hopeless, that I felt lost. Then I say, whose is the fault? Technically speaking, the Americans have the best press in the world. Don't they read it? Sure they read it. But what is given to them, in the name of the objectivity, reflects The Power's interests."

In Europe, Fallaci says, "We are richer because our press is not monotone. Some are liberal, some are right-wing, some are moderate, some are leftist. Plus, every political party has its daily newspaper. Hence, its dialectics has its opposite poles to develop. And truth can be searched."

Working as an international correspondent, Fallaci provoked the Ayatollah Khomeini by yanking off the obligatory veil in the middle of an interview. Likewise, in a series of questions to Henry Kissinger about Vietnam, she suddenly asked why people labelled him President Nixon's "mental wet nurse" and asked him to describe his "fascination with power." The interview ends with Kissinger saying, "There are those who depict me as a mysterious, tormented character, and those who depict me as almost cheerful, always smiling, always laughing. Both these images are incorrect. I'm neither one nor the other. I'm ... I won't tell you what I am. I'll never tell anyone."

In order to understand the truth, one must be offered many interpretations of the truth, many opinions — exactly what the industrial press prohibits.

She claims that Kissinger later said consenting to this interview was one of the stupidest things he'd ever done.

But while provoking her subjects and pushing personal questions, she also gets them to offer evaluations of themselves and each other, evaluations that may explain a great deal about why a war does not end or a border gets redefined. In the provocative mish-mash of the answers are glimmers of what beliefs and idiosyncrasies are ruling international and domestic affairs.

Unlike the industrial product that journalism has become, Fallaci says she is wedded to the vocation of the *menante* who passed out hand-written tracts in Italy in the 1500s criticizing the rulers, their courts and administrations. In return, they were persecuted, tortured, sometimes executed.

"I pay a high and constant price," Fallaci told Amherst's students, "in anguish, in rage, in solitude, and also in threats, in insults and hate.

"The moment journalists add their comment, either positive or negative, they take a position. And taking a position, they become political. Is it possible to write about politics without having political ideas? A journalist is *always, inevitably* political."

The question of course is the nature of the political allegiance that reporters have made. Have they exchanged their consciences for a considerable salary, for benefits, for the perks of access to the halls of power?

"A journalist who has not enemies, who does not disturb, who does not live in trouble — even the minor trouble of having his telephone tapped, as I always have, or the major trouble of being condemned to death by fascists — very rarely is a good journalist."

Fallaci, who survived gunfire while reporting on several wars, is now battling cancer. Quite inaccessible and always idosyncratic, she can be counted on to continue her irrascible and pointed exposure of The Power.

"A good journalist should *never* be a comfortable person, even less an innocuous one. If all goes smoothly for him or her, it means that he pleases The Power. Our job is *not* to please The Power. Our job is to inform and raise the political consciousness of the people, that consciousness which The Power always tries to put to sleep." TW

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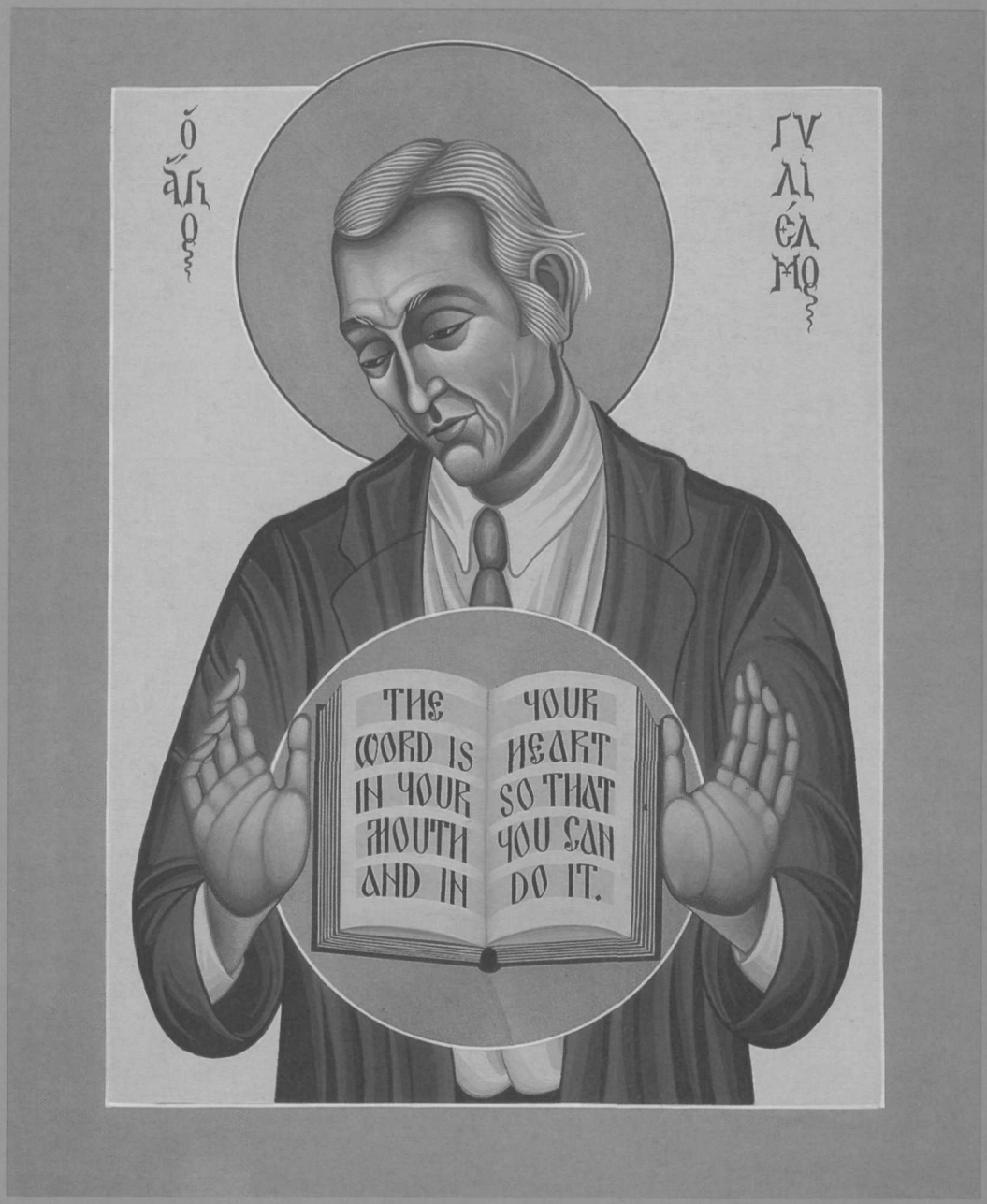

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The Witness

Volume 78 • Number 10 • October 1995

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Resisting sprawl:
the hope of bioregionalism

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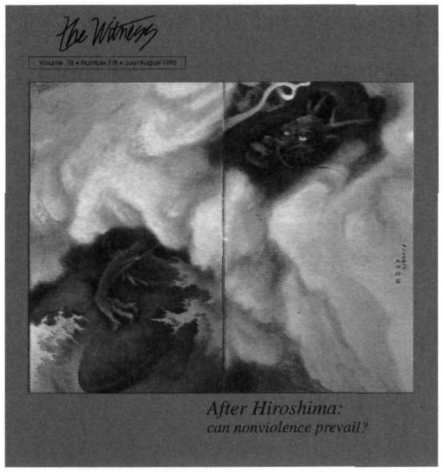
After Hiroshima

I WAS IN HIROSHIMA IN 1990, and we can get some sense of what must have happened. We must never forget. I do, however, have a real problem with some of the rewriting of history which is going on. Some of the "historians" I have recently heard seem more to be trying to prove a point than to be seriously studying documents in the context of the time. I hope you have read "Why We Did It" in *Newsweek* for July 24. It comes closer than anything else I have seen to giving a "feel" for the time in which the decision was made. I was in the Bureau of Naval Personnel training personnel for advance base duty — including Japan. We were glad when we heard about the bomb — a surprise to us as to everyone else. It meant that the war would be over soon, and that our people would not have to fight their way ashore on Japan.

The documents being declassified shed light on a good many things which were going on at the time, but most of the people who are reading them and second-guessing the decision makers were not even born yet, much less having any sense of the circumstances, and of the conflicting reports coming to the president and others. We knew none of that at the time. We simply knew that a good many thousand American lives were at stake.

I don't want to forget Hiroshima. Lucie and I have a great many Japanese friends who have been in our home and in whose home we have been in Japan. Some of them were evacuated as children from Tokyo to the country during the war. Most were born since. But I get the sense from most publications, including *The Witness*, that it was all our fault.

I would, I know, have a lesser problem were there more balance in the recall of WWII tragedies. Why are not the men in the hull of the Arizona remembered? What about my friend in the Montana National Guard who survived the Bataan Death March only to die



After Hiroshima: can nonviolence prevail?

of disease in the prison camp at the end? What about the Filipino with whom I worked who survived the Death March, and would talk about it only to the extent of saying, "Ve haf a heel uv a time"? What about the Filipino civilians who were tortured, or the Chinese in the "Rape of Nanking"? What about the shell marks on the waterworks of the City of Manila, in an attempt to knock out the water supply? What about the shell marks on the building of St. Benedict's mission at Besao, Mountain Province, in the Philippines? Should we not honor these and many others? Maybe we don't because there are too many.

To have been truly responsive to the issue *The Witness* would have had to include an article by an equally qualified person, who, using the information now available, reached a different conclusion. There are many such, and I, personally, happen to find them more credible.

Oliver C. Reedy
Sykesville, MD

[Ed. note: Publishing my father's letters from the Pacific was an attempt to show the horror and the context in which one might decide to use an atomic weapon. The problem, revealed in Bill Lanouette's article, is that our nation's leaders had more information than the public did and more options. — J. W-K.]

letters

THANK YOU FOR PUBLISHING in your July-August, 1995 issue extracts from a speech by Dorothy Day on Dec. 8, 1941, for it reveals how utterly out of touch with reality she was. She refers to an alliance between Fascists and Russian Communists and a German-Russian alliance. Was she not aware that almost six months prior to her speech, on June 22, 1941, Germany had invaded the Soviet Union, putting an end to the cooperation inaugurated by the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of August, 1939 on the eve of World War II? Hitler had already moved to the East, yet she asks, "What action will Moscow take in support of Germany?" It is difficult to take such an ignorant woman seriously.

Edwin S. Sunderland
Islesboro, ME

I GREATLY APPRECIATE THE *Witness* issue on Hiroshima. As an elderly male, who has lived through many wars, I am convinced that God's greatness is not in military might. In these tense times, response to violence with counter-violence — with the backing of government authorities — seems to have become popular; there is clamoring for an increase in police protection, reliance on military buildup, for more and more repressive prisons supposedly to keep the bad people away from the good. But the heart of God's authority lies in pain, suffering and self-sacrifice — life giving and life sharing.

Seiichi Michael Yasutake
Evanston, IL

"MILITANT NONVIOLENCE" by Barbara Deming speaks to a very important issue, the dangers of using violence as a means to stop violence. This is one of the better articles in the July/August issue. The contrasting view in the article, "Choosing to support armed resistance," presented the alternative clearly.

It would have been informative, I think, to complement these two articles with item 2(b) of the 1988 Lambeth Conference resolution on "War, Violence and Justice," as this statement by Anglican bishops also became an issue in Northern Ireland. Our bishops solemnly proclaimed: "This Conference understands those who, after exhausting all other ways, choose the way of armed struggle as the only way to justice, whilst drawing attention to the danger and injustices possible in such action."

When the IRA thanked the Lambeth Conference for its understanding of their struggle

in Northern Ireland, another resolution was quickly adopted which said that all violence in Northern Ireland was hereby condemned.

Ah, but that is the rub, is it not? My violence may be necessary and moral, but your violence is wrong and evil. It is widely reported that item 2(b) was added at the insistence of Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Nathaniel Pierce
Cambridge, MD

Witness/militia coalition?

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO YOU PUBLISHED my essay on movement and electoral politics (which you entitled "Woe unto the non-voter") in which I suggested that they need each other. Reading *The Witness* since then confirms my judgement that it is essentially a movement politics house organ which ignores or disparages electoral politics. For example, in the March, 1994 issue you describe the "best of left activity" with a list of movement activities such as non-payment of taxes, offering sanctuary, enduring jail sentences, etc., but with no reference to electoral activities.

Also in your recent issue on political prisoners [1/95], the main response you propose is demonstrations, which from my years in prison chaplaincy and reform work I believe has little effect on the issue.

Why does it never occur to you to propose as well work of the selection, nomination, election and guidance of attorney general, DA's, governors, legislators, and even a president who would move to correct these abuses?

I continue to believe, after many years of experience in politics, that we as a nation (but not as individuals) get exactly the government we deserve. This is in striking contrast to the underlying message of movement politics and *The Witness* that the government is the enemy.

The conclusion of this syllogism is that *we* are the enemy in so far as we fail to participate in the process of government. Cynicism about the latter is self-fulfilling.

Finally, I note that this underlying message is exactly the same as that of what you call the "militarized right." I note that in your June, 1995 editorial you agree with the tendency of these groups to see government as a giant conspiracy. I am very pleased that you propose conversation with them. The Michigan militia is handy! This would be in line with your courageous conversation with the ecclesiastical right at Trinity School for Ministry. I suggest as questions for conversation with the militias the following: Do we agree that government is the enemy? If so, do we agree as to why it is the enemy? If so, should we not join forces?

Owen C. Thomas
Cambridge, MA

A manual for success?

by Verna Dozier

I am not a biblical scholar so I do not know when the biblical record was cut up into those little verses that mean so much to so many people and that have provided Sunday School teachers through the ages with countless hours of memorization tasks for their young charges.

But I am a student of the biblical story — a listener, a learner, a participant, a struggler, a seeker and a finder, and a seeker again.

I believe that the story that the Bible points to bursts the confines of our Bible and that no book of the Bible and surely no verse of the Bible can capture it all. The best that a single verse can do is call to your attention that there is more. Where did that verse come from? Where does it lead? What other voices are there?

From this stance I was of course troubled by the favorite Bible verses offered by Christian capitalists as part of a cover story on them in a national magazine.

These seven rich, successful corporate executives found the following verses most meaningful to them:

John 5:24: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."

What is Jesus' "word"?

Romans 8:28: "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose."

What is the purpose of God?

Proverbs 22:1: "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold."

Who is being instructed? By whom? To what ends?

Proverbs 16:3: "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established."

What are the standards of the Lord?

Isaiah 40:3: "But they that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not faint."

What are the signs of waiting?

Philippians 4:6: "Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

What was the situation to which these words were addressed?

Of course the answers I would give to my questions are not the answers these men would give. By ignoring the troubling specifics of the biblical story we can turn the Bible into a manual for success. Obviously this is not the first time this particular distortion has gained credence and awe in the U.S. In fact it is difficult to think of a time when it hasn't.

I will resist the temptation to conclude with a Bible verse!

— Verna Dozier is a lay theologian and author of The Dream of God *(Cowley).*

Witness praise

WERE IT NOT FOR YOUR publication, I might have concluded this past year that who I am and how I understand the Gospel have no place in the Anglican Communion. Thanks!

Martha Cornish
Savannah, GA

I HAVEN'T FELT THIS GOOD about a magazine in a long time.

Sue Ann O'Niell
Momence, IL

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THE WITNESS
Since 1917

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Vital Signs' *series on clergy sexual exploitation continues with Katherine Ragsdale questioning whether the church has been too quick to offer "formulaic answers" which further marginalize the laity, gay and lesbian clergy, and congregations with less compartmentalized lifestyles.*

Cover: Suburban encroachment on dairy land in Sonoma County, Calif., 1985, by Evan Johnson, Impact Visuals.

Back cover: *One who guards his home* by Nell Hillsley, an artist in St. Paul, Minn.

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Reinhabiting dreams

by Julie A. Wortman

While working on this issue on "resisting sprawl" I've been thinking about building a house. Nothing conventional, of course. Just the perfect one-house-fits-all-our-needs-from-now-until-death kind of place that would be perfectly in tune with our environment, both inner and outer, if we ever get to make the move to the coastal "promised land" about which we've lately been dreaming.

The house I've been imagining is nothing like the suburban house I live in now or grew up in as a child, even though both, from my own and my parents' perspectives, were havens in their own ways from "the world" of bad air, capricious landlords, asphalt and lack of garden space.

To tell the truth, I mostly disliked life in our west-side Cleveland suburb growing up and I cried when I arrived at our house in one of the inner suburbs of Detroit four years ago. Suburban life as I've known it can be devoid of sponteneity, diversity and "higher consciousness," whether of the sort fostered by natural/rural surroundings or that engendered by trying to fathom Babylon 1995. As a person who hasn't been much suited to uniformity and the accepted conventions, I rebel.

But I'm also glad for the sense of safety, privacy and relative quiet I've had in the suburbs — qualities my friends and colleagues who live within Detroit's city limits don't always find readily at hand. They are compensated, however, by having lower housing costs — and by the satisfaction that goes with standing on the side of those who refuse, or are unable, to abandon this particular shell-shocked city where *The Witness* now has its offices.

"Abandon" is no idle word choice. From their beginnings in the later 19th century, suburbs have been marketed as offering "escape" from urban ills, a way to keep congestion, pollution and the seamier aspects of street life at arm's length without giving up the city's amenities — museums, symphonies, fine dining establishments and a wide selection of retail outlets. Of course, not everyone could afford or had the racial pedigree to make the move. As late as my high school years in the early 1960s, the homes of upwardly mobile black families who ventured into our side of Cleveland were set on fire as a warning to others of their kind that suburban life required more than an ability to swing the mortgage.

The only barn we saw, complete with silo, was surrounded by the vast modern headquarters complex of a corporation — a carefully preserved decorative piece of real live Americana designed to show the corporation hasn't lost its Norman Rockwell heart.

Still, despite their racist and classist foundations, the suburbs I knew growing up were truly sub-urban. My father and most of the other suburban fathers I knew as a child commuted daily into Cleveland by bus or train for work. My mother drove us to the big department stores and specialty shops "downtown" for the annual back-to-school, Christmas and Easter shopping expeditions, timed so that we could pick my father up at the end of the day and save him the bus ride home.

But by the time I hit college, as manufacturing and other enterprises began to outmigrate, any semblance of urban-suburban symbiosis was being destroyed. My father and his partners in Seaway Lithograph were forced to sell their business to their biggest client, Perlmuter Printing, because Perlmuter was moving its operations to an industrial "park" south of the city. In this more remote location, Perlmuter's president told my father, they would need their lithograph work done on-site — working with a Cleveland-based company such as Seaway would be too inconvenient and costly.

As a result, my father's bus commute was replaced with a solitary drive via clogged rush-hour roads that took him from our suburb through several others to the one further out where Perlmuter had relocated. And my mother's shopping expeditions by this time were taking her to one or another of the new malls which had begun springing up on land that used to sustain truck farms and orchards where our family had gone in search of fresh corn-on-the-cob and apples.

For a while, it seemed that the Back-to-the-Cities movement could reverse the trend toward more and more sprawl development. With a graduate degree in architectural history, I joined up as an

continued on page 22

editor's note

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness.*

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Defined by land

by Mike Maloney

Most people who have written about Appalachians have emphasized the importance of a "sense of place." This was done most eloquently in Harriet Simpson Arnow's book, *The Dollmaker*. The heroine, Gertie Nevels, forced to leave the mountains when her husband finds work in Detroit, connives to buy a piece of land in Kentucky for her family. In Gertie's view, ownership of land is synonymous with dignity, pride and most importantly, access to the sights, sounds and smells that only the mountains can provide. Gertie Nevels' story is the story of my family and hundreds of thousands of other mountain families who have experienced the displacements of economic dislocations in the past 75 years.

My childhood home was in the middle of east Kentucky's Cumberland Mountains. Although my family had to move several times, I always lived in the general area where the three forks of the Kentucky River converge. On the North Fork there was a place called Rose Bend, known to be the original home place of the Maloneys. On the Middle Fork a few miles away was Maloney Bend, another place that my ancestors had occupied not long after the tragic expulsion of the native Americans from Ohio had made Kentucky safe for white settlement. In between was Spencer Bend, the site of the 50-acre farm on which I was born in a log cabin in 1940. Two of my brothers married Spencer women.

Mike Maloney is a city planner and consultant based in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is vice-president of Episcopal Appalachian Ministries (formerly the Appalachian Peoples' Service Organization).

In such a world one could trace his/her genealogy in the landscape. Every part of the landscape was associated with one or more families. It was the goal of the early settlers to help each child obtain a piece of land. The landless had a harder time with identity but they, too, could be tied to the genealogical landscape by saying, "I live on the old McIntosh place," "at the mouth of Jones Creek," etc. Even in death, identity with the land was maintained as mountain people were likely to be buried on a favorite mountaintop in a family cemetery.

By the time of the great migration of mountain people during and following World War II, families like mine had lived on the same land or nearby land for over 100 years. When we had to leave the land in order to find work in the city, or lost our land, we experienced grief and disorientation. We tried to maintain our ties with the land through periodic trips to visit relatives. Many urban factory workers scheduled their trips "down home" to correspond with the hunting seasons or good fishing weather. My brother-in-law, Bennie Frazier, descended from Scottish Highlanders, spent long weekends in the Kentucky and Virginia mountains hunting deer and wild turkey for 30 years. The mountains reminded him of all that he had lost. After his parents died about 10 years ago, he could no longer make these trips. But Bennie soon found a new place to hunt in the Appalachian foothills of Adams County, Ohio. He also found farmland he could rent as garden space and a place to pick blackberries.

In inner-city communities, the sense of place for second-, third- and fourth-generation Appalachians becomes the neighborhood.

I still own the Maloney home place in Breathitt County, Ky. My visits to this long-abandoned mountain farm, long since reclaimed by the forest and the deer, have enabled me to remain connected and to share this connectedness with my children. As my children get older and the trips to Kentucky become less frequent, I find myself, like Bennie, finding places in the nearby southern Ohio hill country in which to go experience the sights, sounds and smells of the country. This summer I spent extra time in my backyard making a rock garden and an attractive space for the birds and squirrels. The transfer of my affections to the urban landscape has begun.

In inner-city Appalachian communities, the sense of place for second-, third- and fourth-generation Appalachians becomes the neighborhood. Like residents of many other ethnic neighborhoods, Appalachians are reluctant to leave the neighborhood in search of goods and services. In the more viable neighborhoods many small businesses thrive and survive the ascendancy of Walmarts and the suburban malls. Community life centers around family ties. Social workers and educators do not understand Appalachian resistance to school consolidation and the centralization of services.

When the neighborhood is destroyed by urban renewal or taken over by other ethnic groups, Appalachians generally move to other blue-collar neighborhoods in the city or the suburbs where they try to reestablish their bonds of community to kin, friends and perhaps even a church. Some give up on urban living and move back to the country. Suburbs with their uniformity and expectations of conformity attract only the upwardly mobile who are willing to adopt a new lifestyle free of old ways and associations.

But even in suburbia it is no surprise to find some expression of individualism or love of nature — a stalk of corn, a whole garden, or a dog tick plant. TW

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The Big House

by William Stafford

She was a modern, you know.
He, you know, dealt in land.
They maintained, you know, several gardens.
You know, when the wind blows, their flowers are famous.

Their house was well built, they say.
And they say the foundation had rock under it.
Some of the walls, they say, were two feet thick.
An artist, they say, designed the door handle.

Construction took I don't know how long,
and I don't know how many bedrooms.
They needed I don't know how big a plan.
But the whole thing — I don't know how — fell down.

They're gone, they say, you know. I don't know where.

—from William Stafford, *An Oregon Message* (1987, Harper).

Coming into the watershed

by Gary Snyder

Watershed: The whole region or area contributing to the supply of a river or lake; drainage area.
—Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

The question of "place" is curiously cogent to our present political, social, and environmental condition. Economically we're in misery, politically we are hopelessly stagnant, educationally we're a disgrace, and socially we are watching the emergence of a multi-racial multi-ethnic population that will radically shape the future direction of the culture of our country. We are also seeing the re-emergence of a crude racism and chauvinism that may destroy us all.

As for the land itself, we see fine agricultural soils and orchards being steadily converted by real estate development. The publicly owned forests of the West are being overcut, and the long-range effects of erosion and air pollution raise the very real possibility of their gradual slide from productive forest lands to steady state brushfields.

There's a parallel deterioration of grasslands and semi-desert. Yet, at the same time it looks as though non-indigenous North Americans are on the verge of discovering — for the first time — their place. People are slowly coming to the realization that they can become members of the deep old biological communities of the land in a different kind of citizenship.

Recognizing bioregions

I have taken to watching the subtle changes of plants and climates as I travel over the West. This vast area called "California" is large enough to be beyond any one individual's ability to travel it and take it all into imagination clearly enough to see the whole picture. Michael Barbour, a botanist at the University of California at Davis, is bringing out a book to be called *California's Changing Landscapes*. He writes of the complexity of California: "Of the world's 10 major soils, California has all 10. As many as 375 distinctive natural communities have been recognized in the state. California has more than 5,000 kinds of native ferns, conifers, and flowering plants. Japan has far fewer species with a similar area. Even with four times California's area, Alaska does not match California's plant diversity, and neither does all of the central and northeastern U.S. and adjacent Canada combined. Moreover, about 30 percent of California's native plants are found nowhere else in the world."

People are beginning to wake up and notice that the U.S. is located on landscape with a severe, spectacular, spacy, wildly demanding, and ecstatic narrative to be learned.

But all this talk of the diversity of California is a trifle misleading. Of what place are we speaking? What is this "California"? It is, after all, a recent human invention with straight line boundaries that were drawn with a ruler on a map and rushed off to an office in D.C. This is another illustration of Robert Frost's lines, "The land was ours before we were the land's." The political boundaries of the western states were established in haste and ignorance.

Landscapes have their own shapes and structures, centers and edges, which must be respected. If a relationship to place is like a marriage, then the Yankee establishment of a jurisdiction called California was like a shotgun wedding with six sisters taken as one wife.

California is made up of what I take to be about six regions. (The numbers could be argued, but the main outlines of agreement will remain). They are of respectable size and native beauty, each with its own makeup, its own mix of bird calls and plant smells. Each of these proposes a slightly different lifestyle to the human beings who live there. Each leads to different sorts of rural economies — for the regional differences translate into things like raisin grapes, wet rice, timber, and cattle pasture.

I am not arguing that we should instantly re-draw the boundaries of the social construction called California, although that could happen some far day. We are becoming aware of certain long-range realities, and this thinking leads toward the next step in the evolution of human citizenship on the North American continent. The usual focus of attention for most Americans is the human society itself with its problems and its successes, its icons and symbols. With the exception of most Native Americans and a few non-natives who have given their hearts to the place, the land we all

Gary Snyder lives in the northern Sierra. He is a founder of the Yuba Watershed Institute and author of *Turtle Island, The Practice of the Wild* and a volume of poetry, *No Nature* (Pantheon). A longer version of this essay can be found in *Futures By Design: The Practice of Ecological Planning*, a collection of essays edited by Doug Aberley (New Society Publishers, 1994) which can be obtained by calling the publishers at 1-800-333-9093.

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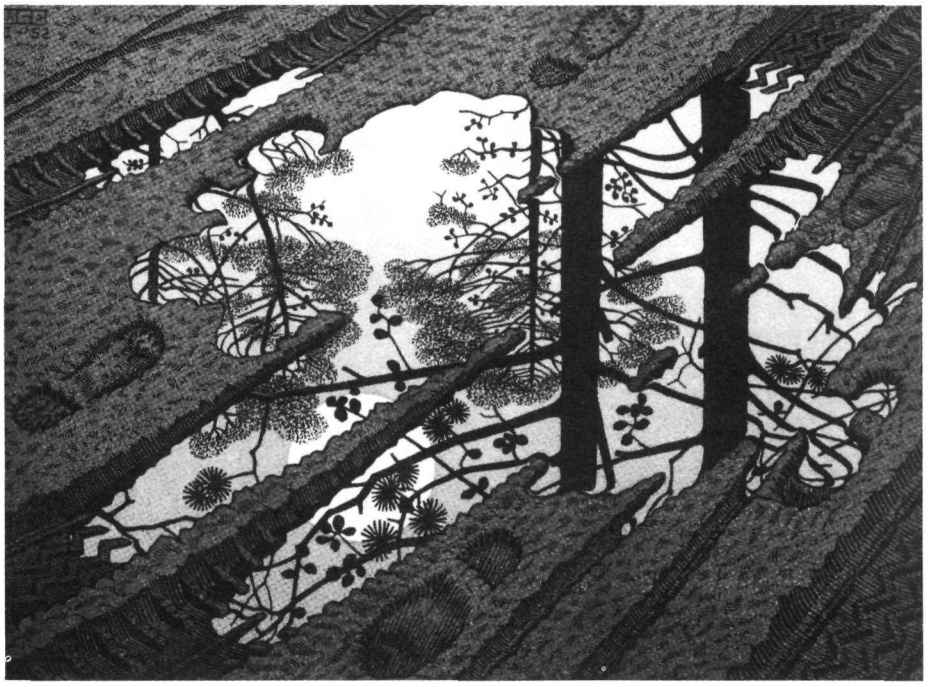
live on is simply taken for granted — and proper relation to it is not taken as part of "citizenship." But after two centuries of national history, people are beginning to wake up and notice that the U.S. is located on landscape with a severe, spectacular, spacy, wildly demanding, and ecstatic narrative to be learned. Its natural communities are each unique, and each of us, whether we like it or not — in the city or countryside — live in one of them. When enough people get that picture, our political life will begin to change.

Those who work in resource management are accustomed to looking at various maps of the West, each of which addresses a rich set of meanings. Land ownership categories give us (in addition to private land) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, national forests, national parks, state parks, military reserves, and a host of other public holdings. The idea of public domain is descended from the historic institution of the commons in Europe. These lands host much of the water, forest, and wildlife that is left to us. Although they are in the care of all the people, they have been too often managed for special interests.

Conservationists have been working since the 1930s for the preservation of key blocks of public land as wilderness. There has been some splendid success in this effort, and we are all indebted to the single-minded (and often unpaid) dedication of the people who are behind every present-day wilderness area in which we and our children walk into and take heart. Our growing understanding of how natural systems work brought us the realization that an exclusive emphasis on disparate parcels of land ignored the insouciant freeness of wild creatures.

No single group or agency could keep track of or take care of grizzly bears, which do not care about park or ranch boundaries and have ancient territories of their own. A recognition that habitat flows across private and public land is needed to provide the framework for the "management" of bears, owls, or redwoods. A definition of place unencumbered by the illogical boundaries of states and counties is essential. Such a territory would have its own functional and structural coherence. It often might contain or be a watershed system. It would usually be larger than a county, but smaller than a western U.S. state. One of the names for such a space is "bioregion." The concept is basic and sensible, that of the simple fact of naturally observable regions.



***Puddle* by M.C. Escher**

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"New paganism?"

The word "bioregion" has begun to be common vocabulary in California, but in a context of some dubiousness. A group of California-based federal and state land managers trying to work together on biodiversity problems saw that it must be done in terms of natural regions. Their "memorandum of understanding" calls for us to "move beyond existing efforts focused on the conservation of individual sites, species, and resources ... to also protect and manage ecosystems, biological communities, and landscapes." The memorandum goes on to say that "public agencies and private groups must coordinate resource management and environmental protection activities, emphasizing regional solutions to regional issues and needs." The group identified 11 or so such working bioregions within California, making the San Francisco Bay/Delta into one, and dividing both the Sierra and the Valley into northern and southern portions. It is entirely appropriate that the heads of the BLM, the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Forestry, and such should take these issues on: almost 50 percent of California is public domain.

Hearing about this agreement, some county government people, elected officials, and timber and business interests in the mountain counties went into a severe

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paranoid spasm, fearing — they said — new regulations and more centralized government.

An anonymous circular made its way around towns and campuses in northern California under the title "Biodiversity or New Paganism?" It says that "California Resource Secretary Doug Wheeler and his self-appointed bioregional soldiers are out to devalue human life by placing greater emphasis on rocks, trees, fish, plants, and wildlife."

It quotes me as having written that "those of us who are now promoting a bioregional consciousness would, as an ultimate and long-range goal, like to see this continent more sensitively re-defined, and the natural regions of North America — Turtle Island — gradually begin to shape the political entities within which we work. It would be a small step toward the deconstruction of America as a super power into seven or eight natural nations, none of which have a budget big enough to support missiles."

I'm pleased to say that I did write that. I'd think it was clear that my statement is not promoting more centralized government, but these gents want both their small town autonomy and the military-industrial state at the same time. Many a would-be Westerner is a "libertarian" in name only, and will scream up a storm if taken too far from the government tit. The real intent of the circular seems to be — as it urges people to write the state governor — to resist long-range sustainability and the support of biodiversity, and to hold out for maximum resource extraction.

As far as I can see, the intelligent but so far toothless California "bioregional proposal" is simply a basis for further thinking and some degree of cooperation between agencies. The most original part is the call for the formation of "bioregional councils" that would have some stake in decision-making. Who would be on the bioregional councils is not spelled out. Even closer to the roots, the memorandum that started all this furor suggests that "watershed councils" be formed, which would be the truly local bodies that could help design agreements for the preservation of natural variety. Like, let's say, helping to preserve the spawning grounds for the wild salmon that still come (amazingly) into the lower Yuba River gravel wastelands.

Watershed councils

The term "bioregion" was adopted by the signers to the Memorandum on Biological Diversity as a technical term from the field of bio-geography. I'm sure they couldn't have known that there were already groups of people around the United States and Canada talking in terms of bioregionally-oriented societies. They could not have known about the first North American Bioregional Congress held in Kansas in the late 1980s, and subsequent gatherings right down to a "Shasta Nation" (northern California) gathering held a few years ago in the Napa Valley. (Continent-wide gatherings have dropped the name North America and refer to our larger place as "Turtle Island," after the Native American creation myth.) They had no idea of the 20-year history of community and ecology-minded dwellers-in-the-land living in places called "Ish" (Puget Sound and lower British Columbia) or "Columbiana" (upper Columbia River) or "Mesechabe" (lower Mississippi), or "Shasta" (northern California), all of whom had periodicals, field trips, gatherings, and were active in local politics.

For the watershed, cities and dams are ephemeral, and of no more account than a boulder that falls in the river, or a landslide that temporarily alters the channel.

That "bioregion" was an idea already in circulation was the bad, or good, luck of the biodiversity agreement people, depending on how you look at it. As it happens, the bioregional people are also finding "watershed councils" to be the building blocks of a long-range strategy for social and environmental sustainability.

A watershed is a marvelous thing to consider: this process of rain falling, streams flowing, and oceans evaporating causes every molecule of water on Earth to make a complete trip once every two million years. The surface is carved into watersheds — a kind of familial branching, a chart of relationship, and a definition of place. The watershed is the first and last nation, whose boundaries, though subtly shifting, are unarguable. Races of birds, subspecies of trees, and types of hats or rain gear go by the watershed. The watershed gives us a home, and a place to go upstream, downstream, or across in.

For the watershed, cities and dams are ephemeral, and of no more account than a boulder that falls in the river, or a landslide that temporarily alters the channel. The water will always be there, and it will always find its way down. As constrained and polluted as it is at the moment, it can also be said that in the larger picture the Los Angeles River is alive and well under the city streets, running in giant culverts. It is possibly amused by such diversions. But we who live in terms of centuries rather than millions of years must hold the watershed and its communities together, that our children might enjoy the clear water and fresh life of this landscape we have chosen. From the tiniest rivulet at the crest of a ridge, to the main trunk of a river approaching the lowlands, the river is all one place, and all one land.

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The water cycle is our springs and wells, our Sierra snowpack, our irrigation canals, our carwash, and the spring salmon run. It's the spring peeper in the pond and the acorn woodpecker chattering in a snag. It's where our friends live, it *is* our friends. The watershed is beyond the dichotomies of orderly/disorderly, for its forms are free, but somehow inevitable. And the life that comes to flourish within it constitutes the first kind of community.

The agenda of a watershed council starts in a modest way: like saying, "Let's try to rehabilitate our river to the point that wild salmon can successfully spawn here again." In pursuit of this local agenda, a community might find itself combating clearcut timber sales upstream, water-selling grabs downstream, Taiwanese drift-net practices out in the North Pacific, and a host of other national and international threats to the health of salmon. A small but significant number of watershed councils are already in existence, fully awake and conscious, with some strong views about what should be done. These include the Friends of the Los Angeles River, The Putah Creek Council, the Yuba Watershed Institute, The Greenwood Watershed Association, The Redwood Coast Watersheds Alliance, and the Mattole Restoration Council.

They are ready and willing to play ball with the California BLM, the State of California, the Pacific Southwest Region office of the Forest Service, and the others who signed the 1991 Agreement for a "coordinated regional strategy for saving biological diversity in California." If a wide range of people join this effort — people from timber and tourism, settled ranchers and farmers, fly-fishing retirees, the businesses and the forest-dwelling new settlers — something might come of it. But if this joint agreement is implemented as a top-down prescription it will go nowhere. Only a grassroots engagement with long-term land issues can provide the political and social stability needed to keep the biological richness of California's regions intact.

All public land ownership is ultimately written in sand. The boundaries and the management-categories were created by Congress, and Congress can take them away. The only "jurisdiction" that will last in the world of nature is the watershed, and even that changes over time. If public lands come under greater and greater pressure to be opened for exploitation and use in the 21st century, the local people, the watershed people, will prove to be the last and possibly most effective line of defense.

The mandate of the public land managers and the Fish and Wildlife people inevitably directs them to resource concerns. They are proposing to do what could be called "ecological bioregionalism." The other movement could be called "cultural bioregionalism."

Living in a place

The notion has been around for decades, and has usually been dismissed as provincial, backward, dull, and possibly reactionary. But new dynamics are at work. The mobility that has characterized American life is coming to a close. As Americans begin to stay put, it may give us the first opening in over a century to give participatory democracy another try.

Daniel Kemmis, the mayor of Missoula, Montana, has written a fine little book called *Community and the Politics of Place*. "What holds people together long enough to discover their power as citizens is their common inhabiting of a single place," Kemmis argues. Being so placed, people will volunteer for community projects, join school boards, and accept nominations and appointments. Good minds, which are often forced by company or agency policy to keep moving, will make notable contributions to the neighborhood if allowed to stay put. And since local elections deal with immediate issues, more people will turn out to vote. There will be a return of civic life.

This will not be "nationalism" with all its dangers as long as sense of *place* is not entirely conflated with the idea of a nation. Bioregional concerns go beyond those of any ephemeral (and often brutal and dangerous) politically designated space. They give us the imagination of "citizenship" in a place called (for example) the Great Central Valley, which has valley oaks and migratory waterfowl as well as humans among its members. A place (with a climate, with bugs), as Kemmis says, "develops practices, creates culture."

Another fruit of the enlarged sense of nature that systems ecology and bioregional thought have given us is the realization that cities and suburbs are parts of the system. Unlike the ecological bioregionalists, the cultural practice of urban bioregionalism ("Green Cities") has made a good start in San Francisco. One can learn and live deeply in regards to wild systems in any sort of neighborhood — from the urban to a big sugarbeet farm. The birds are migrating, the wild plants are looking for a way to slip in, the insects live an untrammeled life, the rac-

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coons are padding through the crosswalks at 2 a.m., and the nursery trees are trying to figure out who they are. These are exciting, convivial, and somewhat radical knowledges.

An economics of scale can be seen in the watershed/bioregion/city-state model. Imagine a Renaissance-style city-state facing out on the Pacific, with its bioregional hinterland reaching to the headwaters of all the streams that flow through its bay. The San Francisco/Valley Rivers/Shasta headwaters bio-city-region? I take some ideas along these lines from Jane Jacobs' tantalizing book, *The Wealth of Cities*, in which she argues that the city, not the nation state, is the proper locus of an economy, and then that the city is always to be understood as being one with the hinterland.

Such a non-nationalistic idea of community, in which commitment to pure place is paramount, cannot be ethnic or racist. Here is perhaps the most delicious turn that comes out of thinking about politics from the standpoint of place: Anyone of any race, language, religion, or origin is welcome, as long as they live well on the land. The Great Central Valley region does not prefer English over Spanish or Japanese or Hmong. If it had any preferences at all, it might best like the languages heard for thousands of years such as Maidu or Miwok. Mythically speaking, the region will welcome whoever chooses to observe the etiquette, express the gratitude, grasp the tools, and learn the songs that it takes to live there.

This sort of future culture is available to whoever makes the choice, regardless of background. It need not require that a person drop his or her Buddhist, Voudun, Jewish, or Lutheran beliefs, but simply add to his or her faith or philosophy a sincere nod in the direction of the deep value of the natural world, and the subjecthood of non-human things.

A culture of place will be created that will include the "United States," and go beyond that to an affirmation of the continent, the land itself, Turtle Island. We could be showing Cambodian and Vietnamese newcomers the patterns of the rivers, the distant hills, saying "It is not only that you are now living in the U. S. You are living in this great landscape. Please get to know these rivers and mountains, and be welcome here."

Euro-Americans, Asian-Americans, African-Americans, can — if they wish — become "born again" natives of Turtle Island. In doing so, we also might even (eventually) win some respect from our Native American predecessors, who are still here and still trying to teach us where we are.

Watershed consciousness and bioregionalism are not just environmentalism, not just a means toward resolution of social and economic problems, but a move toward a profound citizenship in both the natural and the asocial worlds. If the ground can be our common ground, we can begin to talk to each other (human and non-human) once again. TW

How many days 'til the moon is full?

A series of questions and challenges developed by *Co-Evolution Quarterly* (1981-82) offers a sample of the kind of ecological knowledge most of us need:

- Trace the water you drink from precipitation to tap.
- How many days 'til the moon is full? (Two days slack allowed.)
- What soil series are you standing on?
- What was the rainfall in your area last year? (Slack: one inch for every 20 inches.)
- When was the last time a fire burned in your area?
- What were the primary subsistence techniques of the culture that lived in your area before you?
- Name five native edible plants in your region and their season(s) of availability.
- From what direction do winter storms generally come in your region?
- How long is the growing season where you live?
- On what day of the year are the shadows the shortest where you live?
- When do the deer rut in your region, and when are the young born?
- Name five grasses in your area. Are any of them native?
- Name five resident and five migratory birds in your area.
- What is the land use history of where you live?
- What species have become extinct in your area?
- What are the major plant associations in your region?
- From where you are now, point north.
- What spring wildflower is consistently among the first to bloom where you live?

To the degree that we can respond to these questions and challenges, we know where we are with respect to our local bioregions. To the degree that we cannot respond, we do not know where we are. Obviously, the quiz favors country people over urban dwellers, indigenous over industrial. People in rural areas and in indigenous societies are much more knowledgeable of and attuned to the bioregions in which they live than those who live in cities. If we want to know the green grace of knowing where we are, we best sit at their feet.

— Jay McDaniel, *With Roots and Wings: Christianity in an Age of Ecology and Dialogue*, Orbis, 1995.

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National Cathedral: 'no view on military or atomic bomb'

Some worshipers attending a Hiroshima service at the Washington National Cathedral Aug. 6 were disconcerted by a disclaimer which appeared in the program, stating that the Cathedral "has no official view on the history or morality of the first atomic bombs or on any foreign or military policy."

It was later learned that program participants — many of them leaders in Pentagon resistance activities marking the 50th anniversary of the bomb — were told not to mention the civil disobedience actions taking place at the Pentagon.

The spirit of resistance prevailed when Dan Berrigan, in an unauthorized departure from his assigned reading, asked whether anyone could imagine the Cathedral, which once hosted Martin Luther King, Jr., disavowing King's stance against racism. Berrigan received a standing ovation.

"We were appalled at the official statement," said Mary Miller of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship.

When *The Witness* approached Dean Nathan Baxter for clarification, we were directed to public affairs director, Robert Becker.

Asked if the Cathedral was really foreswearing its right to have official views on the morality of any U.S. foreign policy, Becker replied, "Holy smokes, no. But we were not interested in being drawn into the revisionist history debate that was raging about whether a land invasion or dropping the bomb" was efficacious.

"We wanted to pray for peace. Unfortunately, Fr. Berrigan chose to make an issue of it. Some people brought banners. They were not prepared for a quiet prayer service."

Asked whether the Episcopal Church has an official position on the morality of using nuclear weapons, Becker said he did not know.

In fact, the 1994 General Convention passed a resolution which recommitted the church to working for the "complete abolition of nuclear war." In 1982, the General Convention passed a resolution which "urges all members of this Church to support by prayer and by such other means as they deem appropriate, those who engage in non-violent action" against war.

Becker said controversial issues are handled by the Cathedral in forums not services. The Cathedral's disclaimer was drafted by its resident ethicist, Alan Geyer.

"Frankly," Becker added, "the Cathedral had received inquiries asking, 'Why is the Cathedral taking a position on revisionist history?' These people were members of the Cathedral."

The Pentagon was the site of daily resistance actions from the anniversary of the Trinity test (July 16) through the anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki (Aug. 9). Ninety people were arrested for blocking entrances, pouring blood and ashes, or similar acts of protest. One group carried out a "Let them eat cake" action, cutting up a Pentagon-shaped cake to symbolize the dismantling of the Pentagon, and offering it to Pentagon employees; and spreading bread crumbs at a Pentagon exit to symbolize the crumbs left over for the poor when nuclear spending consumes a massive portion of the federal budget.

Six people calling themselves the "Jubilee Plowshares" hammered and poured their own blood on weapons — four at Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Va., and two at the Lockheed-Martin plant in Sunnyvale, Cal. The East Coast activists are in jail pending a mid-September hearing; the two in California were released after 48 hours, but expect to face federal charges.

Corbin Harney, a spiritual leader of the western Shoshone nation, led morning prayer at the Nevada test site on the anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing. Afterwards, 184 people crossed the line onto the site and were arrested for trespassing.

A peace walk and encampment Project Elf in Wisconsin culminated in the arrests of eight people.

Further details, and ongoing coverage of nuclear resistance activities, will be published in *The Nuclear Resister*, P.O. Box 43383, Tucson, AZ 85733. (Free sample copies available upon request.)

Land restored to Monacans

The Diocese of Southwestern Virginia is transferring a 13-acre parcel of land to the Monacan Indian nation. The land, at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is the site of a 90-year-old Episcopal mission. A log cabin schoolhouse — which served Monacan children who, until the 1960s, were not included in either of the two racially segregated public school systems — will be converted into a museum and cultural center. The church will retain a quarter-acre of land for St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

—Ikhana, Newsletter of the American Indian/Alaska Native Ministry of the Episcopal Church [See TW 10/92]

Ordaining trees

Buddhist monks in Thailand are "ordaining" trees in an effort to reverse the catastrophic depletion of forests through logging. Adapting a traditional ritual of blessing bodhi trees on temple grounds to signify their sacredness, monks are tying saffron robes around trees in endangered forests.

"If a tree is wrapped in saffron robes, no one would dare cut it down," said Kru Manas Natheepitak, the northern Thai abbot credited with being the first to perform a tree ordination ceremony. The movement has spread despite severe opposition from the Thai government, including the beating and jailing of one monk.

— Fellowship, 3-4/95

Short takes

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A new captivity of the churches: the views of Gibson Winter

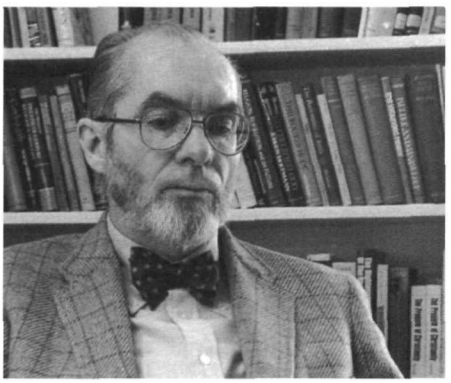
by Craig R. Smith

In 1961 Gibson Winter called for a revitalized and inclusive urban church in his seminal work, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches: An Analysis of Protestant Responsibility in the Expanding Metropolis.* In the face of urban flight to the suburbs, along with increasing poverty and unrest in the inner city, the new urban church, Winter said, should be welcoming of diversity. To do this, it needed to affirm the idea of community by ministering to the *whole* city; exemplify community in the congregation's own life together; and embody a prophetic concern for social justice.

Thirty-four years later, many urban churches are still finding such a three-fold strategy to be key to their survival, both economic and spiritual. These days, however, Winter's strategy may be even more important for their suburban counterparts.

"We came out of World War II in an inevitably optimistic mood," Winter says today. Retired from the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary, he is now an adjunct professor at Temple University. "We had proven ourselves to be both a major political power and a major economic power. The metropolis was exploding in size, America was on the move, growing, and there was a seeming abundance of jobs and money, particularly in the suburbs — and we had a hunger for more.

But we also had a hunger for a more



Gibson Winter

socially just world, and we thought we could create it. We wanted to make our cities fairer, more equal. In fact, optimistic thinkers like H. Paul Douglass were very hopeful about the prospect of large urban churches, and there were many projects like the Urban Training Center, the Parish Field Community, city-wide lay ministries, coalitions between churches and labor unions, all with the aim of a fairer American society.

"The urban churches were trying to relate the Christian faith to the real struggles going on in society, particularly the struggles of poor people and minorities. And it was at about this time that we became aware of liberation theology, which had become an important force in the South American churches. We were looking for a theology of the Americas, with a much stronger emphasis on social justice concerns than the Protestant churches had had in the past.

"Underneath the suburban sprawl is a profound spiritual and moral crisis, a huge anxiety about the future."

"And that did happen, to some degree, with the civil rights movement in the 1960s and the other social justice movements that followed. But the one thing that no one looked at carefully was the real domination of our society by free-market capitalism; it was a wonderful invention, but it eventually pulverized the poorer communities, financially and socially, by undermining both personal and cultural identity," Winter said.

"What we didn't anticipate — though we should have — was that if a society undermines diversity and plurality and a sense of self, then people enter into a moral crisis, a crisis of spirit. The crisis in the cities is not just the poverty and the crime, it's that there is a tremendous spiritual hunger that is not being met."

Winter grew up in New York City and went to New York public schools. His own questions began to surface while working as a chaplain in the Navy.

"I had a long assignment on a ship with a lot of seabees who were doing highly skilled repair work on minesweepers and other naval ships. And I found that Christianity just didn't have much relation to their lives, even though most were raised in the church. It was as if there were two separate and distinct worlds: Christianity and America. So after the war I worked with the Urban Training Center trying to understand what was happening in society. I've been asking, 'What is the role of Christianity — and therefore the role of the Church — in American society?'"

In *Suburban Captivity*, Winter described the Church's dilemma this way: "The parochial form [of congregation] had represented a geographical area in which economic, political, and communal interests intersected. When the residential area became a place for social and

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Craig Smith lives and writes in Silver Spring, Maryland. Gibson Winter's new book, *America In Search of Its Soul* (Morehouse Publishing), will be released next fall.

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economic insulation, the parish became a highly segregated community which could barely survive the rapid population changes to which most metropolitan neighborhoods were subject. In either case, the breakdown of local community gave rise to an 'organization church' as a substitute form of community.

"The principal difficulty lay in the fact that the organization church was neither a community of faith nor a truly universal form of organization which could bring together the conflicting and estranged elements in the metropolis, for the organization was anchored in a segegated context rather than a ministry. The organization church can be a platform for a mission and an appropriate form for reconciling diverse elements in the metropolis only insofar as it can be freed from the shackles of local enclaves. This is the real problem confronting Protestantism in the metropolis."

In the intervening decades, according to Winter, the dilemma has become even more acute. "Increasingly, the trend is toward the mega-churches on the edge of the city, those 10,000- and 25,000-member churches with all their support groups and young adult groups. It seems to be what people want these days. They long for some substitute for their eroded communities and personal lives. And these mega-churches *are* an answer: you can go and get your needs met, you can quickly get a sense of belonging, and you can still leave in five years."

The mega-church phenomenon has grown out of the practice of "planting" new churches in areas that have seen dramatic population increases due to outmigration from the cities and older suburbs. The problem, Winter says, is that it has turned the church away from a struggle for justice and toward a market mentality.

"Just look at the marketing approach to ministry that many of the mega-churches have taken. Such a strategy ignores the inner problems. Underneath all the suburban sprawl is a profound spiritual and moral crisis, a huge amount of anxiety about the future: People fear the loss of jobs and pensions, they fear the impact on their families."

And increasingly, he says, such fears are being realized.

"The market is downsizing America's social life in a radical way. The dropping employment rate is hitting not just the inner city but the suburbs as well. Major employers who moved to the suburbs in the 1970s and 1980s are now starting to lay off thousands of workers in one fell swoop. We're seeing the same declining standard of life in the suburbs that we saw in the cities. Call it the urbanization of the suburbs: The suburbs — and their churches — are finding that stereotypically urban ills are increasingly universal. With the decline in wages, fewer good jobs, and the increasing tendency to farm out even service-sector jobs overseas where the wages are lower yet — with increasing wealth in a very small segment of our society and increasing poverty in a very large segment — the churches are presented with a tremendous challenge, albeit one fraught with possibilities."

Mignon

Winter believes that urban churches have a lot to teach the suburbs about the reality of people's lives and how to minister to them.

"Poverty is the urban church's central ministry; the churches in the inner city have been struggling with community organizing and setting up relief services and doing social-justice work for decades now, while still trying to find the spiritual heart of the people: They've become the paradigm for true Christian community. Now the suburban churches will have to deal with the same problems. The question is, will they have the capacity for coping with the spiritual and moral suffering they'll be seeing, or will they continue to cater to the established middle class, the 'made-its' who were their original target audience? In the 1980s, when many of the large, urban, socially-oriented churches found their money leaving for the suburbs, or dying off as its donor base got increasingly older, they found they had to take on a different *type* of ministry, to cope with their changed circumstances and the needs of both their parishioners and the community they served. What happened there is what is happening in the suburbs now: they must rethink what community means, what sort of ministry they really want to have.

"The American dream is collapsing; it's *kaput*, and all we're left with is an idolatrous, spiritually bankrupt yearning for the past. Conservatism, in my view, is part of a crisis of self-identity. When the meaning, the purpose and the power of people's lives become ambiguous and filled with uncertainty, one of the normal reactions — what the therapeutic community would call 'reaction-formation' — is to solidify certain values that they hope will keep them grounded. But they're fictitious values, frankly: they're based more on nostalgia for the past than they are on any real truths, and they fail to realize that the diversity from which they're running is really what we're all about. The uncertainties in the world just make them acutely aware of their need to know who they are, both as individuals and as a Christian community." TW

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Searching for sustainability:

Will the church speak for God's creation?

by Franklin E. Vilas

An "ecological reformation of our religious traditions" is urgent, according to James Nash, executive director of the Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy in Washington, D.C., speaking recently to a conference on "Sustainable Community" at Drew University in New Jersey. He claims that for nearly all faith traditions, the ecological crisis is also a theological-ethical crisis. "Dualism and anthropomorphism," he says, "remain as prime characteristics of most contemporary Christian theological perspectives in churches and academies."

That is to say, most Christians still perceive the ecosphere as theologically and ethically trivial — the scenery or stage for a divine-human drama, which alone has redemptive significance. St. Paul's vision of the Gospel of Jesus as the source of redemption and healing — not only for the human race, but for the whole of creation — has been ignored.

It should come as no surprise then, that over the past two decades the religious community has been notably absent from discussions involving regional planning that have stemmed from the emergence of bioregionalism as a vital force in the environmental movement. Those involved in what has been called the "planting of churches," for example, seem only too eager to follow the developers into suburban sprawl, rather than taking leadership in planning for the future of bioregionally conscious congregations concerned about environmental justice. Vital decisions affecting both the environment and human beings are left to the political struggle between secular environmentalists and developers.

Caught in the grip of internal debates over sexuality, the Episcopal Church, in particular, has turned a blind eye to events reshaping the nature of civilization itself. For the last six years the Episcopal Environmental Coalition, comprised of environmental leaders in the nine provinces of the church, has sought to change that situation by bringing to the church's attention the global dimensions of the ecological crisis facing us, and its impact on the human race, particularly the poor and the marginalized citizens of the planet.

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At the General Convention in 1991, their efforts led to the establishment and funding of a National Environmental Stewardship Team, which worked over the next triennium, seeking to place the Episcopal Church in a position of leadership on this crucial issue. But the General Convention of 1994 eliminated the funding and dismantled the team before it could have a major impact on the church's program. Torn by the crisis in morale resulting from the scandal of the embezzlement of church funds by its treasurer, the Episcopal Church has lost any momentum it had in dealing with the major issue of our century.

Meanwhile, other denominations have exercised exemplary leadership in the field — most notably the United Church of Christ. Their groundbreaking study in 1987 on the statistical relationship between communities of color and environmental degradation led to the first national People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in 1991 and the recognition of environmental racism as a factor in the siting of toxic dumps and incinerators. It also led to the awakening of national political figures to the environmental justice issue. "In today's world," Vice President Al Gore wrote in his powerful book, *Earth in the Balance*, "the links between social injustice and environmental degradation can be seen everywhere: the placement of toxic waste dumps in poor neighborhoods, the devastation of indigenous peoples and the extinction of their cultures when the rain forests are destroyed, disproportionate levels of lead and toxic air pollution in inner-city ghettos, the corruption of many

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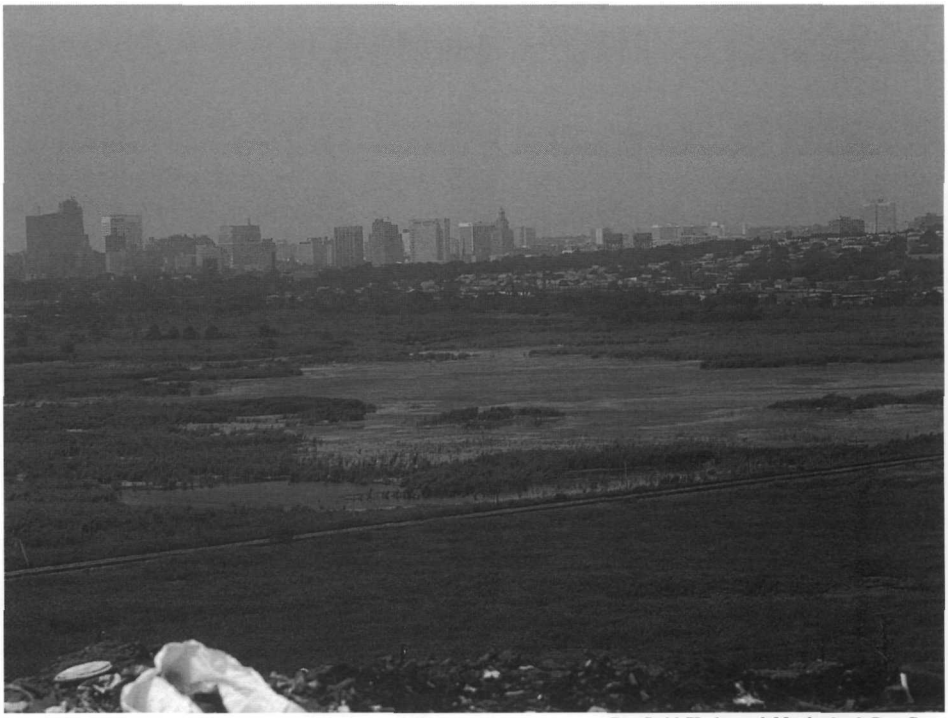
government officials by people who seek to profit from the unsustainable exploitation of resources."

Meanwhile, the conservative wing of the Republican Party is leading a concerted effort through the new congressional majority to gut the environmental laws and regulations developed over 25 years, without submitting the issue to public debate. The first victims of diminishing environmental protection will be, as always, the poor and people of color. The attack on environmental regulations is being led by special-interest groups, whose greed for wealth is driving the new national environmental policy.

This is the time for the religious community — and especially the Episcopal Church with its avowed sacramental theology — to collaborate in a concerted effort to speak for God's creation and for environmental justice. It may be the last opportunity for our staggering national church to lift its sights from the detritus of its limited conflicts and take leadership in the most pressing theological and social issue of the new millennium. TW



Don Smith/Hackensack Meadowlands Dev. Com.

View from landfill looking across the Kearny Freshwater Marsh, a vital urban wetland in the heart of the Hackensack Meadowlands District in northern New Jersey, which contains the reservoirs and aquifers that supply water to the city of Newark and the urban areas of Hudson County. Suburban sprawl threatens not only the natural areas that are left in that highly populated state, but also the health of those living in the northern cities.

A church response to outmigration

Anthony M. Pilla, Catholic bishop of Cleveland, Ohio, recently issued a call, excerpted here, for development of an action plan for a church response to suburban outmigration.

We are challenged on two fronts: we must recognize and respond to the needs of the urban poor who have been terribly hurt by the outmigration of the non-poor and employers; and we must join with others to change the practices of our governments that have contributed to the disastrous situation before us. These challenges should be met in keeping with the following principles:

• Social justice: We are called to work for changing underlying causes of what has transpired, focusing on policies and practices of government that strongly favor outmigration over moving inward or simply staying in one's community. The point is not to halt outmigration, as people must be free to move as they wish, but to balance the role of government in such a way that redevelopment and maintenance of cities and inner suburbs is given as much support as the development of new suburbs.

• Redevelopment: Government policies which support development of new suburbs while neglecting the redevelopment of older cities have contributed to the problems caused by outmigration. The church can fall victim to this same strategy by concentrating on development of newer parishes in the suburbs, while older parishes in the cities are allowed to decline. Redevelopment means renewing commitment to the cities.

• Interdependence: City and suburbs are linked by a single economy. City and suburban churches are similarly linked by a common mission. There are gifts present in every church, whether urban or suburban, that can be shared with all the churches.

• Restructuring: In order to more effectively serve the people living in the cities, it will be necessary to restructure parishes so that they can offer proper ministry to their people. We must also work to make these parishes financially stable and, as much as possible, independent of diocesan subsidy.

• Preferential love for the poor: Acknowledging that there are many poor people living in the suburbs, we must still admit that more and more the results of outmigration have contributed to the existence of two societies: one poor and living in the older cities, the other more affluent and living in the suburbs. The love of Christ compels us to turn our attention to the needs of our poorer sisters and brothers, who have been most hurt by present policies.

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Interpreting Pharaoh's dream in Kenya

by Isaac Muringih

Isaac Muringih, a development officer for the Kenya West Diocese of the Anglican Church of the Province of Kenya, describes an encouraging instance of a church's involvement with earthkeeping. Despite the obvious differences between the situation in Kenya and that of communities in the U.S., congregations and community groups in this country might take to heart his approach to helping villagers achieve and demand a Christian ethic of land use as they work at strengthening their own commitments to sustainable development.

Africa on the Farm **by Betty LaDuke**

There are many bodies speaking about development in Kenya, but very few are helping to develop the community ownership and internal attitudes that will result in sustained interest and work. The people have come to the point where they just wait for the next expert to come in and tell them what to do.

What is needed is to restore the capacity of communities to identify and respond to their own development problems. With this in mind, the Christian Approach to Development in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Kenya (CADASAL-K) has developed a participatory program that is changing community attitudes toward the land in the village of Karambari. It is a program that is based on the premise that achieving positive development depends on achieving positive human development. In fact, development *without* human development is probably not development.

Karambari is about 800 families, giving it a population of between 4,000 and 5,000 people. It is on a plain between two streams. The people grow maize, beans, peas and cotton and they keep some cattle for the production of milk and some meat.

Until the mid-1980s, people from the outside would come to teach us Africans how to develop our land. But the introduction of innovations by people from outside the local community — based on their own "feasibility studies" — generally creates confusion. Unless the people understand the process and motivations behind what is taught, the people abandon the innovations after the experts leave. In addition, the newest experts on the scene often propose still one more innovation and often imply by their actions that their ideas are superior to those brought by previous experts.

In 1990 CADASAL-K initiated a participatory approach to development in which the community is involved from the very start. Community members' first task is the development of needs assessments in which they discover and define the problems that need to be solved. Following this, the community is involved in conducting an inventory of the resources available. They then work to discover the solutions to the identified problems. Finally, the solutions are applied to the problems at hand. Each member of the community contributes to each other and to the whole community as they apply their own abilities and talents.

When such a rich and deeply rooted community is developed, the community will find itself doing what otherwise would not happen: the members may well deny projects proposed from outside because they would be counterproductive. People soon come to have the same mind on priorities of things that need to be accomplished. At this level of community maturity comes a willingness to share in costs for a particular activity.

Of course, there may be people who refuse to cooperate with other members of the community and thus may engage in efforts to halt the project. This is where the government is helpful, because all projects are officially registered and ap-

An Anglican priest, **Isaac Muringih** is executive director of Christian Approach to Development in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Kenya (CADASAL-K) and director of Karambari Rural Development Centre.

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proved by government officials. This means that anyone who wishes to destroy the project is liable to the government for any adverse actions they might take.

I have three officers who assist me in working with groups in Karambari and other villages in the area. The different groups focus on such things as roof-catchment, health and sanitation, agricultural work and livestock. Each group meets once per week for four hours. Meetings begin with a Bible study, then the study of course books, followed by visits to specific sites such as farms, where they engage in practical discussion in the context of what they observe. An example topic is conservation methods. When a group is ready to conduct a project, CADASAL-K informs the village's assistant chief of their intention. The assistant chief is also regularly informed of their meetings.

One of the course books used in the CADASAL-K approach, *The Environment and the Christian*, a book by Calvin DeWitt (Baker Books, 1991) of the Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies, has helped provide a model for problem identification and response. This book describes "Seven Provisions of Creation" and a corresponding "Seven Degradations of Creation." Using the biblical analogy of the story of the seven fat cows and seven lean cows which Pharaoh saw in his dream, the people learn that healthy communities (the fat cows) are destroyed (eaten by lean cows) when they do not recognize and uphold the provisions. Once this is established as a baseline, the people are asked to investigate the land around them to see if they can discover whether any of these degradations are taking place. These may include, for example, overgrazing, slash-and-burn on steep slopes that leads to the erosion of topsoil and the clearing of watershed lands with the resultant drying of streams and lack of water in the village below.

Land is inherited from our forebears, not something we own. Therefore we have the right to respect it and work on it. No development should deny the community of life. There can be no proposed development that denies these rights, because it is an inheritance. Thus, everybody will get involved in deciding the right kind of development. TW

The politics of green space in East Jerusalem

Due to the lack of zoning or the zoning of available land as a "green area," building permits in East Jerusalem are almost impossible to obtain. Building on these "green areas," usually large expanses of privately owned Palestinian land in the middle of villages, is forbidden. If there is a need felt to build Jewish settlements on these lands, however, the Jerusalem Municipality simply abolishes the "green areas." Sara Kaminker, former council member of the Jewish Municipality of Jerusalem, has referred to this as the municipality practice of "painting in green" only to prevent the Palestinians from building on their own land. In some cases, Jewish housing units are built on confiscated sections of former "green areas" next to a remaining section of Palestinian land which must be left vacant.

Palestinians are often surprised to learn that they cannot build on *their own* property because it has been classified as either a "green area" or has not been zoned. This should mean that the land is to remain an agricultural or park zone for public use. In practice, it means that it will eventually be confiscated from the Palestinians for Israeli use in the building of exclusively Jewish neighborhoods. The Shufat Ridge and Har Homa settlements are two recent cases in point.

Adnan Abu Nijmeh applied for a building permit in spring 1991, to build a house on his property in the Wadi Qaddoum area of Jerusalem, but was rejected. With no place to live, he decided to build a house on his property without a permit. By the end of the year, the family moved into the house. Several days later, a municipality official told Abu Nijmeh to stop building because the area was classified as a "green area." After receiving a demolition order in May 1993 Abu Nijmeh hired a lawyer, paid a hefty fine to the Israeli authorities and assumed his house would be safe from demolition. To his and his family's surprise, his house was demolished on Nov. 16, 1993 on the basis that it was unlicensed. Border guards, police and special force units accompanied by municipality officials raided the house without warning. The intruders forced Abu Nijmeh's wife, Nufuth, and her 13 children out of their house without allowing them to remove any of its contents before the house was demolished. The family still lives on an open hillside in two shipping containers, donated by friends, on the site of their demolished home. The municipality has since claimed that the shipping containers are illegal and must be removed. To add insult to injury, municipality social workers threatened to place the youngest children in foster care because the parents had failed to provide a habitable and safe environment for them.

—Miloon Kothari, UN representative for Habitat International Coalition, and Jan Abu Shakrah, former director of the Palestine Human Rights Information Center in Jerusalem

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Fighting development in an island community

by Julia Wells

Ask Dick Johnson, a leading conservationist on Martha's Vineyard, about sustainability and he will probably tell you the story of the license plate.

He first saw it when he was traveling with his family last year, a decorative license plate which is now a popular adornment for the front bumper of recreational vehicles. It says: "We are spending our children's inheritance."

The message is of course intended to be humorous, but it is a haunting *double entendre* for Johnson, who is executive director of the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, a Martha's Vineyard land trust. "Because that is exactly what I fear we are doing with our land," he said. "Spending our children's inheritance."

Johnson's words have a familiar ring on Martha's Vineyard — an island of some 120 square miles located off the southeastern coast of Massachusetts. Widely known for its miles and miles of pristine beaches and thousands of acres of conservation land, the Vineyard is also a sanctuary for many rare and endangered plants and animals.

Since the early 1970s the Vineyard has emerged as something of a leader in New England for its methods in managing the land and fending off development pressures, methods which are at once visionary and vigilant.

The results are impressive.

Today over 11,000 acres, nearly 25 per cent of the island, have been put into conservation. And while there certainly have been bits of imperfect planning in places, the Vineyard remains largely unspoiled. Among the six diverse townships on the island, development for the most part has been carefully controlled, thanks in large part to the Martha's Vineyard Commission, a unique regional planning agency created in the early 1970s by an act of the state legislature with unprecedented powers to regulate development and also land use.

The Vineyard also has six major conservation organizations, each with a distinct mission. One buys land for biological and ecological research, while another preserves land through planned, limited development communities. Another — the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank — collects a 2-per-cent fee on most real estate transactions and uses the funds to buy public conservation land. Since its inception at the outset of the regional building boom in 1986, the land bank has purchased well over 1,000 acres of land including public beaches, woodlands, old farms and saltwater marshes.

Still, development pressures have been enormous in the last two decades. A regional master plan done by the Martha's Vineyard Commission in 1991 shows that between 1980 and 1991, 4,000 building permits were issued on the island. For perspective, during the same period of time in all of Berkshire County in Massachusetts — which has a land area 10 times as large as the Vineyard — 3,000 building permits were issued.

The numbers continue to be compelling. Forty years ago only 2.5 per cent of the Vineyard was developed, while today 33 per cent is developed and an additional 20 per cent has been subdivided. The commission master plan projects that at "build-out" the year-round population of the Vineyard will be 23,000, double what it is today.

The Vineyard has attracted the interest of national conservation organizations as well; two years ago The Nature Conservancy named the coastal sandplains of the Vineyard and Nantucket as one of the "40 Last Great Places on Earth" in an ambitious, worldwide ecosystem initiative. It put the global spotlight on the island's pristine and fragile natural environment. But it also brought into sharp relief a problem which is both old and new, a problem which has become the Vineyard's personal conundrum.

"By making the place more attractive are we inviting more people? Absolutely, it is true and it is a problem we all still have to come to grips with," said Tom Chase, a lifelong Vineyard resident and naturalist who is the new manager for The Nature Conservancy bioreserve on the Vineyard.

And now there are other new pressures. As the Vineyard approaches the 21st century with a rapidly rebounding real estate market, a burgeoning population of year-round as well as summer residents and a whole array of attendant social complexities, the dialectic between conservation and development once again comes into sharp focus. To some the central question may be shopworn but

"I think the die has been cast. The Vineyard in 20 years is going to feel just like any other suburb."

— James Lengyel

Julia Wells is a senior staff writer for the *Vineyard Gazette*, a weekly newspaper published on the island of Martha's Vineyard.

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when looking ahead it remains critical: How can the Vineyard protect its rural character and rare natural habitats and still allow for development?

Some say it may already be too late.

"I think the die has been cast. The Vineyard in 20 years is going to feel just like any other suburb," said James Lengyel, executive director of the land bank. Lengyel has provocative views on the subject which may not be widely shared, but his factual knowledge is unshakable. He points to the roadsigns of suburban sprawl already visible on the island, including the erosion of the village "centers" as businesses like post offices and hardware stores move to commercial strips on the outskirts of towns. He also points to the huge number of lots which are subdivided and waiting to be built out.

Lengyel's unsettling picture is one of the new-money Martha's Vineyard, a place where old summer camps and cottages are rebuilt into what some wryly call trophy houses — opulent homes which are more reminiscent of the Hamptons than the New England coast.

"When all is said and done this is going to be one of the most beautiful suburbs in America. But there is going to be significant change in the character and fabric of this community," he predicted.

Others share Lengyel's concern but not necessarily his dire predictions. "The Vineyard is moving in a direction that a number of people are not particularly comfortable with," said Brendan O'Neill, executive director of the Vineyard Conservation Society.

He said: "While it is true that simplicity is what attracts people to the island, on an ecological level the essence of the Vineyard is its rich complexity. As suburbanization creeps in and these natural areas are increasingly fragmented by roads and lights and swimming pools, we will increasingly fracture that biodiversity."

O'Neill also echoes a theme which is also heard around the country today: that protecting the land for future generations will take an enormous effort on the part of both public and private property owners. "There must be a major philanthropic contribution," he said. "We are at an opportunity juncture where the natural systems are intact and the lynch pin is really the private property owner.

In the debate between development and conservation on Martha's Vineyard, the two sides are no longer very far apart. Even real estate brokers these days are talking about conservation. "I think the island is going to dictate its own limitations and we don't have enough land to continue this business of transforming the island into a glamorous place with large houses with pools and all these amenities," said Justine Priestley, an Island realtor. "The island is itself an area out in the sea — it is kind of an escape and people have always been attracted to the island for its simplicity, but now we have a situation which is sort of like when large herds of animals come to an area and the deer begin to strip the trees."

Along with the land, many say island values are endangered.

"The most important thing people have to decide is if they want to save the values that make the Vineyard what it is," said Charles W. Clifford, longtime executive director of the Martha's Vineyard Commission.

Priestley agrees: "At this stage we are in a very sanguine, very happy stage on the island, but we really are having to confront the problems of overpopulation. We have a little bit of room left but not much — the difficult thing is to figure out a way to stop," she said.

One of the Nature Conservancy's "40 Last Great Places on Earth," Martha's Vineyard is a mecca for persons seeking respite from urban/suburban development, perhaps to the island's long-term detriment. Alison Shaw

Which brings the story back to Dick Johnson's license plate.

"We are using up our resources at an incredible rate," he said. "But this is not about people versus the birds or people versus the land — not anymore. This is about us versus our children and our grandchildren." TW

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continued from page 5

historic preservation specialist. Drawing on an emerging environmentalism that promoted conservation — and appealing to the aesthetic sensibilities of the cosmopolitan-hearted — the movement lured "homesteaders" into old urban neighborhoods where they coaxed despondent brownstones back to their former genteel glory. In a few cases, as in the Mexican War Streets area of Cincinnati, efforts were made to improve the fabric of historic neighborhoods without forcing low-income residents out.

But the outmigration continued and today seems unstoppable. Yesterday we drove to a town some 20 miles from our 1940s suburb for an autumn festival. Neither going nor coming could we find a route that would take us through farmland, though more than one fresh subdivision sported "farm" as part of its romantic-sounding name. The only barn we saw, complete with silo, was surrounded by the vast modern headquarters complex of a corporation — a carefully preserved decorative piece of real live Americana designed to show the corporation hasn't lost its Norman Rockwell heart.

The forces that make open land available for subdivision or commercial development, however, have nothing to do with heart. Land conservation activist Don Cox [see *TW* 6/93] likes to use the plight of hog farmers near Chapel Hill and Durham, N.C., as an example. They are being forced out of business by huge corporate hog-farming operations in the eastern part of the state. The local farmers practice soil and water conservation measures while the industrial hog-farming operations in the east do not, owing to zoning variances offered as enticements to locate there. The local farmers cannot operate as inexpensively as the large operators can. If they stop raising hogs, the county stops taxing their land as agricultural property, assessing it at the market rate for residential property. If they can't pay the higher taxes, they are forced to sell. Developers are allowed permits to build houses that have their own wells and septic fields, but when the septic fields fail and the ground water is contaminated there is a demand for the county to run sewer and water lines to protect the new residents' health. This new infrastructure, in turn, opens up more land for development. New, wider roads are needed to handle the increased traffic. Better roads make it possible for more people to live further away from work. More people living further out in the country draws more mall and shopping-center development. Corporations decide they can move their headquarters to sites along the interstate since housing and services are now also located in the vicinity.

Bottom-line economics and a presumption in favor of any entity offering jobs in exchange for zoning and environmental concessions have made over-development a reality.

The churches say little to this situation. They may have called for justice when the poor were left trapped behind in the cities, but they have responded to outmigration only as an opportunity for some new development of their own — chaplaincies, it seems, for those in search of encouragement that, amidst the disappearing open space, they haven't also lost their humanity.

The Gospel seems most alive in bioregionalism and its call to "reinhabit" the land based on a new set of categories. In this scattered but growing resistance to forces that would keep us from understanding the true connections between industrial hog farming in eastern North Carolina and polluted ground water a hundred miles to the west, there is support for Jesus' rejection of those dinner guests he refers to in Luke 14, people who could not come to the great dinner set out for them because the rules of the day dictated contrary personal obligations.

Growing up, my family placed its hope in the continued pristine existence of its own summer Eden, Martha's Vineyard, but even there the dehumanizing temptation to think only in terms of personal need for escape and private profit has held destructive sway.

So it seems unlikely we'll ever build that house we've been conjuring as we plan our future. We'll need to reinhabit our dreams. But preparing this issue has led me to hope that the qualities of life we've been celebrating in our dream home's design are still available in places where others have already made their mark, though the boundaries we respect will be far different. TW

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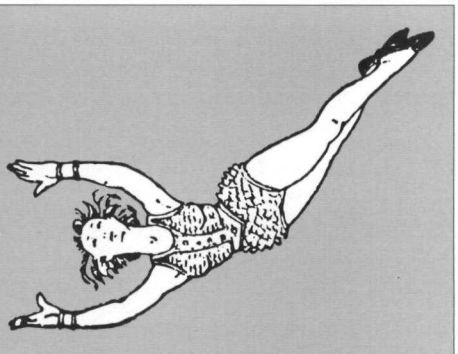

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Corporations: 'Persons' who take

by Jim Berry

The abuses of corporations against environment, labor, safety and citizen's sovereignty started with the acquisition of free, or nearly free, access to millions of acres of public land by railroads, mining, grazing and timber interests in the nation's earlier years. Then, in 1886, the Supreme Court awarded corporations the status of "persons" before the courts. Since then their power to control government has grown.

The minions of GE and Exxon, Weyerhauser and the rest of the almighty corporations who elect our legislators and write our laws have become deadly enemies of the living. The work we do is organized and directed by bloodless and soulless institutions in pursuit of their own ends. Because they have been endowed with the prerogatives of the living they have accumulated money and power sufficient to deny to living beings the essentials of life. Citizens no longer exert sovereignty in this nation; the corporations do. If the situation continues we will all die or wish for death. Our government is in the hands of forces who don't care about what happens to air and water, soil, wilderness or anything except money. Corporations don't depend on air and water for life but they have more control over air and water than do all the air-breathers and water-drinkers together. Corporations don't die because they are not mortal and so they have no compulsion to safeguard mortal life. Corporations have an identity and a longevity that is beyond the control of their constantly changing executives. It makes no sense to place one's reliance on the statement, "Corporations are run (really, they are not run, they are attended) by living people so they will act sensibly to provide safeguards." That is directly contradicted by their demands on a subservient Congress for the legitimation of their poisoning of the air and water.

Richard Grossman, of the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy, has definite views on the current threat posed by corporate power and the failure of environmental organizations effectively to halt or significantly retard the corporate devastation of the land. "Corporate lawyers and corporate legal foundations, the Federalist Society and assorted corporate front unwise-use groups have been bringing together smart committed people to craft legal strategies for the purpose of changing legal doctrines and undermining environmental, labor and other case law," Grossman says. "Out of these intentional and well-funded efforts have come, among other things, the resurrection of takings, unfunded mandates, efforts to assert local corporate control over public lands held in trust by federal and state governments, 'economics and law' education for judges. These tactics have empowered the foes of environmentalism and democracy, and thrown the institutions of the environmental movement for a loop."

U.S. regulatory and administrative law, Grossmans says, is "a stacked deck" in which corporations are granted "legal clout while disadvantaging people, communities and nature. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) does not mention corporations and requires nothing of corporations. The Taft-Hartley Act was written by corporate lawyers. Yet our environmental and labor lawyers let these laws define our arena of struggle, our aspirations. And *we* let the lawyers shape what and how we think."

Grossman is particularly exercised over the failure of mainline environmental organizations to fight corporation abuse with dedication and vigor. He accuses the Environmental Defense Fund, the National Resources Defense Council and the Conservation Law Foundation of compromising away essential principles and goals: "They have helped utility corporations get higher rates of return. They have helped utility executives move decision-making behind closed doors, all in exchange for some voluntary corporation conservation-and-efficiency investment."

Our understanding of land ownership in this country is far from being just. Land and the fruits of the land should serve the needs of the life community. The land is not given by God to lifeless, bloodless, fictional "persons" called corporations or to humans called landholders. "Who can own the land?" asked Chief Seattle, and he was right. The land is sacred and that sacredness must be taken into account with every decision affecting the land. The well-being and fruitfulness of every tract is of vital concern to the entire community of life.

I want to see us transfer political and economic power away from corporations and over to those who represent the long-term interests of the life community. I want to define clearly what is right and what is wrong so that it is plain to legislators and the public in general what course to take when decisions are to be made. This is not terribly complicated once we realize that we all belong to the community of life and depend on it for survival and joy. TW

Jim Berry is director of the Center for Reflection on the Second Law in Raleigh, N.C. **The Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy** can be contacted at 211.5 Bradford St., Provincetown, Mass. 02657. They put out a pamphlet, "Taking Care of Business," by Grossman and Frank Adams that costs $5.

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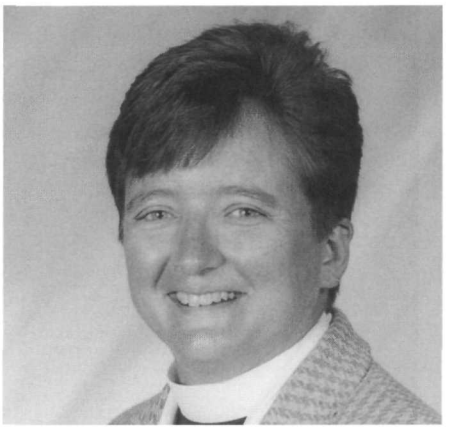
Failing the marginalized in responding to clergy sexual exploitation

by Katherine Ragsdale

We're in an era of changing definitions so it's important, when talking about categories of sexual misconduct, to be clear about what, exactly, we mean. When we speak of sexual exploitation we do not mean sex, or sexualized behavior with a minor — that's sexual abuse. Nor do we mean forced sex with an adult — that's rape. Nor do we mean repeated unwelcome sexual advances toward an adult — that's sexual harassment. Sexual exploitation is, rather, sexual advances toward, or sexual activity with, an adult who has consented, or at least not refused consent (which would catapult the behavior into the categories of either harassment or rape) but who, because of power differentials in the relationship, is deemed unable to give meaningful consent.

Thanks to the remarkable courage of survivors of such exploitation, who have been willing to tell their stories publicly and repeatedly, we have begun to recognize the pain and destruction that such exploitation (whether motivated by malice or ignorance) can cause. Motivated, one hopes, more by compassion and integrity than by fear of litigation, the church has begun to address this situation. The question at hand, then, is not, "Should the church do something?"



Katherine Ragsdale

but, "Are the things that the church is doing the right things?"

Formulaic answers

I contend that, in its quite defensible rush to do the right thing, the church has fallen into a trap that should be familiar to it by now. The church has given in to the temptation of providing simplistic answers to complex questions. We who are the church too often shy away from the difficult and ambiguous work of ethics, providing instead formulaic answers that are the antithesis of true ethical reflection. We have done so once again in our response to the problem of sexual exploitation. And, once again, the ones who will bear the brunt of this failure of imagination and courage are those who are already marginalized within the institution: the laity; feminists and others who are actively working to create non-hierarchical, mutual models of ministry; church members, clergy and lay, from non-dominant cultures; lesbian and gay clergy; and clergy in small towns or rural settings.

To understand how these groups of people are adversely affected it is important first to acknowledge that this conversation is only incidentally about sex. It is essentially about power in relationships between clergy and those lay persons to whom they minister.

The rules defined by the Church Insurance Company and unquestioningly adopted by much of the church prohibit sexual and romantic relationships (including dating leading to marriage) between clergy and anyone to whom they have ministered. This prohibition is grounded in an assumption that a lay person is always incapable of giving meaningful consent to a relationship with a clergy person with whom s/he has had a (broadly defined) pastoral relationship because in every case there is an inherent and insurmountable power imbalance between the two.

Consequently, while regulations only prohibit sexual and romantic relationships, training sessions and, in some cases, policies discourage friendships, or other "dual relationships," as well. Foremost, then, among those who will find their legitimate interests compromised by such regulation and the adoption of the premises upon which it rests, are the very laity whom the regulators seek to protect.

True, vulnerable lay persons may be protected from those clergy who might otherwise have violated their trust through ignorance. And they will have recourse when they are harmed by those who continue in ignorance or act from malice. However, the formulaic response that defines all laity in all circumstances as vulnerable and incapable of meeting their clergy as equals is not merely infantalizing and insulting; it compromises the ministry of the laity, and, thus, the ministry of the church. Codifying clericalism and creating by legislation more power imbalances than already exist, reinforces the marginalization of the laity from the power structures of the institution.

Feminists and others who have long worked to eradicate clericalism in our church and to create a church less dependent on hierarchical power structures, as well as those who question the hegemony of the distance-model as a norm for healing relationships, see our work threatened not only by these new

Vital Signs

Katherine Ragsdale, an Episcopal priest, is editor of *Boundary Wars: Intimacy and Distance in Healing Relationships* , which is due to be available from Pilgrim Press in June 1996.

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regulations but, more importantly, by the increasingly unquestionable premises that undergird them. Reflecting on current trends to insist on clear and rigid boundaries, psychotherapist and author Miriam Greenspan has noted, "I worry that some of the most feminist and innovative aspects of my work are the most likely to be construed as unethical." When attempts to mitigate power imbalances and renegotiate clergy/lay relational norms are dismissed as sloppy boundaries and occasions for abuse, those whose efforts to reinvent "church" have already relegated them to the margins are placed at further risk.

Cultural/urban imperialism

Church members, lay and ordained, whose cultures place a high value on community and who, for reasons of community size or tradition, do not compartmentalize their professional, social, family, and spiritual lives also pay. The new boundary regulations exercise classic cultural imperialism making no room for different cultural norms. Mari Castellanos, a Metropolitan Community Church pastor, points out that as a lesbian and Cuban American she belongs to two marginalized cultures both of which place a high premium on community cohesiveness. Regulations which would prevent her from ministering to the same people she sees at social events or from whom she buys her groceries severely hamper her efforts to do effective ministry among her own peoples.

Similarly, small town and rural clergy are placed at a serious practical disadvantage by policies which implicitly condemn socializing or doing non-church business with the people among whom they minister. How does one manage when the only dentist within 80 miles is also a member of one's congregation? With whom does one socialize when Virtually everyone in town has seen you officiate at one of the community religious services that are still a staple of small-town life?

These practical considerations are important but should not mask the even more problematic insidious urban chauvinism that assumes that a compartmentalized life is always preferable to a communitarian one.

The 'no secrets' rule

Closeted lesbian and gay clergy are further imperilled because those regulations that do make provisions for dating tend to insist that one of the markers of a non-abusive relationship is lack of secrecy. Those clergy whose jobs depend on their remaining in the closet are denied access to this loophole. Similarly, all lesbian and gay clergy, closeted or not, are aware that regulations are always selectively enforced. Many fear giving the institution an additional tool which may well be wielded capriciously against those who are already marginalized and at risk.

Small town and rural clergy are placed at a serious practical disadvantage by policies which implicitly condemn socializing or doing non-church business with the people among whom they minister. With whom does one socialize when community religious services are still a staple of small-town life?

Unless one does, however, ban all friendships between clergy and those who are declared sexually off-limits to them, one faces an additional practical problem. Avoiding romantic relationships with one's friends and those one sees socially requires a moderate degree of sexual sophistication. One has to be able to recognize flirting. One has to recognize the first stirrings of attraction in time to redirect that energy before both parties fall head-over-heels in love. This may not seem particularly problematic to those who learned to recognize and deal with these signals during adolescence and young adulthood. However, precisely because of the church's condemnation, many lesbians and gay men have been unwilling to acknowledge their own sexuality and, so, have not learned to "recognize the signs" prior to falling in love. Please understand, I am not suggesting that gay men and lesbians are unable to control ourselves sexually. Nor am I implying that the above description fits those of us who have come to terms with our own sexuality. I am suggesting, however, that the degree of sexual sophistication needed to stay clearly on the "right" side of these boundary regulations is hard to come by in a church that doesn't talk much about sexuality at all and that has actively suppressed curricula which might help gay and lesbian teens come to terms with themselves as sexual beings in the same way that society helps their straight sisters and brothers.

Even more alarming than church regulation is secular legislation prohibiting sexual relationships between clergy and those with whom they have had pastoral relationships. Several states have enacted laws criminalizing such relationships. One might wonder how, given First Amendment protections, states would presume to regulate pastoral relationships. The key lies in the nature of First Amendment protection. Diocese of Minnesota's chancellor, Sally Johnson, explains that protection is afforded only to religiously motivated behavior. Proponents of state legislation argue that sexual activity with a parishioner is not "religiously motivated behavior"; i.e.: our religious beliefs do not require such a relationship. What they fail to note is that our religious beliefs may, indeed, require building communities of mutuality within which such relationships cannot be automatically ruled out because power imbalances are not automatically presumed.

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Stories of victim/survivors as well as our own common sense and life experience make it clear that, despite our best intentions, power imbalances do exist in this world and, in some cases, these imbalances are constructive forces in our lives. Think about parents and children, admired mentors, perhaps a therapist or pastor. All of us have had relationships with people whose power in relation to ours was so great that we could not have given meaningful consent to them. All of us have the right not to have power imbalances used to coerce, manipulate, or seduce us. Similarly, we have a responsibility not to use our own power, whatever its source, exploitively.

Such situations impose upon us a particular responsibility for careful ethical discernment. But complex ethical work is not well served by simplistic formulae. It is not true that every lay person is vulnerable to every clergy person or that lay/clergy relationships are the only places in the church where power imbalances can occur. Prohibitive regulations obscure these realities and eliminate the opportunity for real on-going ethical work. As usual, those who are already marginalized pay the highest price for this failure. TW

Pope becomes Episcopalian (again?)

Clarence Pope, then newly retired as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Forth Worth, made church headlines last February when he and his wife were received into the Roman Catholic church by Bernard F. Cardinal Law, Archbishop of Boston. Long a vociferous opponent of women's ordination, and by his own account someone who firmly believes himself "to be a Catholic priest and bishop," Pope apparently had hoped that years of quiet efforts to get approval for some kind of jurisdictional home for Rome-oriented Anglicans within Catholicism would now pay off —hopefully with his appointment as the entity's first bishop.

But despite his own self-perception as a Catholic cleric, Rome didn't consider him so. As the time for his "re-ordination" as a Catholic priest approached, he decided he had made a mistake. "I could not shake the image of my consecration [as bishop]," he told *New York Times* journalist Gustav Niebuhr last August. "I thought I could lay it aside. I couldn't."

That seems an understatement. According to a recent Ecunet posting by Bryan Taylor, even after February Pope was seen in Forth Worth wearing his purple bishop's shirt and collar.

Pope has withdrawn a letter of resignation he sent to the Episcopal Church's bishops and Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning has welcomed the prodigal back into the Episcopal fold. "I am delighted by his decision," Browning said in an August statement. "This church is his home, his family and with joy we welcome him home."

Other supporters of women's ordination have been less positive. "I think it was a mistake for him to go and I think it was a mistake for him to come back," commented Ed Luke, vice president of a group opposed to Fort Worth's continued official opposition to women clergy.

What's driving most observers wild, however, is Pope's denominational and ordained status. Did he become a lay person when he was received into the Roman Catholic church? Doesn't he need to go through some similar reception ceremony to "return" to the Episcopal fold?

According to the church's national canons, however, a person hasn't "abandoned the communion" of the Episcopal Church unless the church — not the would-be emigrant — decides he/she has. According to a reliable source close to the Presiding Bishop who refused to be named, the applicable procedures in Pope's case had not been completed when the retired bishop withdrew his letter of resignation. And so the process was aborted.

So the Episcopal Church has retained a bishop — and a Pope. But at least few believe this one — especially with his views on women's and gay/lesbian ordinations — is infallible.

— Julie A. Wortman

'Heresy trial' in offing

As this issue of *The Witness* goes to press, it looks as if a "heresy" trial in which Walter Righter, retired bishop of Iowa, will be the defendant will be taking place soon.

The charge, brought by 10 bishops last spring, is that in ordaining an openly gay man to the diaconate five years ago Righter violated a canon law of the church by "teaching a doctrine contrary to that held by this church." Twenty-five percent (75) of all bishops had to agree to the trial, a referendum which was completed in August. Seventy-six, more than half retirees, gave a thumbs up.

Integrity, Inc., the church's lesbian and gay justice ministry, said it was "disappointed" by the vote. "Integrity is aware of at least 117 persons who were known to be sexually active gay men or lesbians by their bishop at the time of their ordinations," an Integrity press release stated. "Over 35 bishops have performed such ordinations. It is a mockery to accuse Bishop Righter of heresy for doing what so many others have done."

The trial could still be derailed, however. Moderates may try to persuade the bishops to institute a moratorium on gay/lesbian ordinations and the blessing of committed relationships at a meeting of the bishops scheduled for late September in Portland, Ore. But there are also rumors that some bishops may seek to have themselves declared "co-defendants" in the case in a move hearkening back to the decision by Danish citizens in Nazi-occupied Denmark to wear Star-of-David armbands as a sign of solidarity with their Jewish neighbors. *— J.W.*

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Steve Charleston steps down

Steve Charleston, Bishop of Alaska, is making a radical witness for family and for balance by laying down his miter in order to be present to his wife and son.

Charleston's decision to resign, effective at the beginning of 1996, is prompted by his wife's precarious health and his son's plea that he needs more of his father's time.

In his announcement, Charleston said he has tried to be faithful to his family and to the diocese, but cannot "do justice to both." He added that "the strain of travel alone in a diocese like ours makes it almost impossible."

The crisis is specific to the Charleston family, but the tension is experienced by many clergy families. In fact, it may be the norm given the way clergy roles are defined today.

The Witness staff applauds Charleston for his courage. We affirm his decision to honor his commitments to his family by letting go of a ministry he loves and has worked at for five years.

We find a wellspring of hope in his choice.

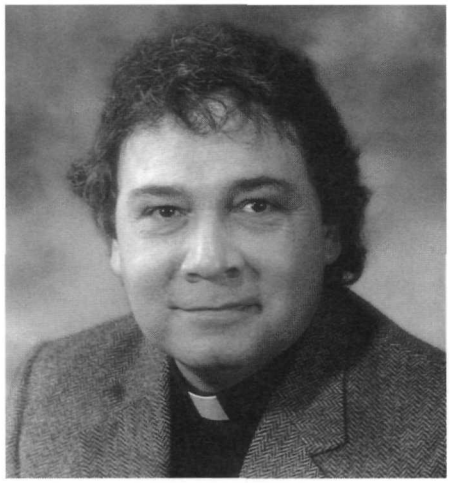
The freedom that Charleston demonstrates is breathtaking. It is grounded in a biblical faith that contradicts the ethos of our culture and which challenges many of the presumptions in the church's understanding of ministry.

We look forward to hearing what his next work will be. We hope that it will be within the Episcopal Church.

Steve Charleston consented to be interviewed for *The Witness'* December issue on marriage. A portion of that interview is published here to clarify the reasons for his resignation.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: Could you say a little bit about what preceded your decision to step down as Bishop of Alaska? What have the last two years been like for you?

Steve Charleston: My family has been struggling for a long time. I've been trying to take care of the family and at the same time be a bishop.



Steve Charleston

J.W-K.: What kinds of hardship has your family been experiencing?

S.C.: A whole series of events occurred over the last two years which added to the pressure on me to make a choice — my wife's illness; my son leaving Alaska for boarding school when we were experimenting with different ways of trying to be a family; his coming back; and, ultimately, my wife's need to leave Alaska to live somewhere else.

J.W-K.: Can you say how your work interfered with your family's well-being?

S.C.: I was on the road constantly as the diocesan bishop, so Suzanne was struggling to get her feet back on the ground, but very often without my being there to help.

The advice she received from her doctors was that for her recovery to be complete she would need to live in a place where she could experience relative normalcy in light and dark. The swings in seasons and in light, dark, hot, and cold in Fairbanks were not good for her.

At the same time, Nick, my 16-year-old son, was at a point in his life where things could have gone in different directions for him, some of them not very healthy.

I had to choose.

J.W-K.: Growing up in a clergy family, it took my breath away to hear that you had decided to resign from Alaska. I can imagine how affirmed your son must feel. It's ironic, as a clergy child, hearing how good your father is at counselling while you know your father rarely has any time for you.

S.C.: That's right. Alaska can always find another bishop; my son will only have one father. If he tells me with all of his heart that now is the time for me to pay attention to our love for one another, if he says I need you to stand by me, then I believe the choice is really clear.

J.W-K.: How does it feel to step away from a job that I presume you really love?

S.C.: I feel a tremendous grief. Leaving Alaska is not something I would have chosen to do or that I want to do. Our diocese is a family now and I feel very much a part of it. I was really overjoyed to watch what was happening in Alaska.

On the other hand, I also feel a sense of conviction about what I've done — that it steps up to a higher calling. I *didn't* try to sweep things under the rug or ask my family to suffer silently for my own self-interest. I was willing to place *that* form of love as a priority in my life and by doing so to try to say to other men, in particular, that there *is* no calling in our lives — no career, no job, no title, no honor — that is more imperative than the love Jesus Christ has asked us to live out.

J.W-K.: A lot of clergypeople would agree with your last sentence, but they would interpret living out the love of Christ as extending themselves as far as they are able to on behalf of almost anything or anybody *other* than their family.

S.C.: I believe that one of the messages in all of this for our church leadership is to challenge the notion that we love best as priests or church leaders, when we love *only* through the broadest scope of our ministries. In doing that we often miss seeing the people right next to us, who may be in *great* need. TW

Look for the full-length interview with Charleston in the December Witness.

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Our readers tell us ...

Bosnia: The madness must be stopped

by Clare Overlander

Clare Overlander, an attorney living in Newburgh, N.Y., visited Bosnia this summer with a human rights group.

Fifty years after the Allied victory over Fascism and Nazism, and in the midst of celebrations on both sides of the Atlantic, fascism is alive in Europe.

It has violated the U.N. Charter and the Genocide Convention of 1949. It has defeated the once-victorious allies in the halls of diplomacy. In today's Serbian and Croatian concentration camps, the allies' right to retain the mantle of liberator has been obliterated by the slaughter of Muslims in the concentration camps of 1995.

The pincer movement of Serbian and, previously, Croatian forces driven by rabid national fundamentalism has squeezed the Bosnian countryside and its Muslim inhabitants almost lifeless. Only fragments of homes and villages remain. Many Bosnian Muslims are refugees in their own land.

In Jablanica, not far from Sarajevo, the refugee camp of crude blockhouses includes a common lavatory and toilet where the only water flows from cold water spigots into a washing trough. The "living quarters" are rooms made from concrete blocks 10 feet long by 15 feet wide. Food is served at the Red Cross shed where Spam, greasy canned soup and pureed baby food comprise the tasteless diet. Small vegetable gardens are planted everywhere, even in range of snipers' bullets, to supplement the donated menu.

Mostly women, children and the elderly inhabit Jablanica. Their young men were taken by the Croatians when they destroyed the villages.

I spoke with a team of Sarajevan doctors and teachers at the bus stop in Jablanica. They were *en route* to the U.S. to study post traumatic stress syndrome. Bent nearly in half and trudging through deep mud, they walked single file for a half mile through the infamous tunnel dug under the now closed Sarajevo Airport. "Run for your lives!" shouted the Bosnian Army soldier at the tunnel's end. Only an hour before, five Sarajevans had been killed by a mortar lobbed down on them by Serbian gunners in the mountains above. This bizarre route remains the only lifeline into or out of Sarajevo.

Clare Overlander

Refugees in Jablanica, a refugee camp for Bosnian Muslims

"I don't know who the U.N. protects," said one doctor bitterly, "but it isn't the Bosnian people." Even U.N. soldiers sometimes share the outrage expressed by Bosnians. One U.N. soldier, from Kenya, put it this way, "I'm a professional soldier. But here, even though we're armed to the teeth, all the U.N. allows us to do is to pick up body parts after the slaughters. In Tuzla we carried away over 100 teenagers blown to bits by a direct mortar attack. I'm trained to prevent these things, but those old men in the U.N. in New York just sit and talk and talk."

In *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), David Rieff decries the Western powers' policies toward the genocide of the Bosnian people as morally deficient: "The Bosnians had already grasped, after two years' exposure to U.N. 'peacekeeping,' the impotence and sterility of a system of world order that supposedly was enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations ... There was no order, old or new."

This was a common theme. Some say, if there were oil in Bosnia, the Western powers would have stopped the campaign for a Greater Serbia three years ago. But, they concluded, the West does not value Muslims as highly as it values oil.

NATO is now acting forcefully to break the Bosnian Serb stranglehold around Sarajevo. Although I represented conscientious objectors during the Gulf War, and would do so again, I find myself relieved by the NATO attack on the Bosnian Serb positions. The madness must be stopped; but must it be this way?

Rieff's book outlines the many times that diplomatic initiatives in this crisis were weak, vacillating and unsupported by real economic sanctions.

Perhaps those of us who are committed to justice should send representatives of the international peace movement to diplomatic talks. At least, we could shadow them and press for consistent nonviolent interventions. A people's diplomacy, if you will. A wild idea? So is peace. TW

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Mapping for empowerment

by Joe Wakelee-Lynch

Boundaries of Home: Mapping for Local Empowerment, edited by Doug Aberley, New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, Pa., and Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Canada, 138 pp., $9.95, paper, 1993.

"What do we see around us?" and "What don't we see that's needed?" Whether addressed explicitly or not, these are the questions before all activists. These questions are the very point of *Boundaries of Home: Mapping for Local Empowerment.*

Boundaries of Home is a handbook for creating maps that may serve as organizing tools for a variety of purposes. Edited by Doug Aberley, a map-maker and town planner in British Columbia, Canada, this slim volume offers a glimpse at the uses of maps in aboriginal civilizations, a smattering of case examples in which small local organizations decide they need maps that will portray specific truths about their regions and a step-by-step guide to creating maps that will serve the needs in most areas.

According to Aberley, people today have tremendous access to maps, but those they see the most are maps of the world depicting the property of nation-states. Those they use most are highway maps and topographic maps — useful but sterile. *Boundaries of Home* provides a method of locating and mapping the things and places of value in an area in order to better understand the relationship that should exist between human beings and the places in which they live. As one contributor puts it, "[O]nce we become aware of our surroundings, it becomes easier to conserve them."

Aberley's collection is a product of the work undertaken in the name of bioregionalism, a word that is, if truth be told, poorly defined in the book. The meaning offered by the editor is "to wed dynamic human populations to distinct physical territories defined by communities of land and life." One gathers, however, that bioregionalism is the practice of defining and understanding geographic areas according to the physical characteristics and biological life forms that characterize them. Bioregions are ecosystems, in other words, and the issue for humans is to find out how they fit in. Jargon, in fact, is a bit of a stumbling block in *Boundaries of Home*, unless the reader is already something of an environmentalist. The book's strengths, however, render that problem a small one.

People today have access to maps, but those they see the most depict the property of nation-states. Those they use most are highway maps and topographic maps — useful but sterile. Boundaries of Home *provides a method of locating and mapping the things and places of value in an area in order to understand the relationship that should exist between human beings and the places in which they live.*

A primary strength is this primer on how to construct a map of one's own bioregion. In fact, that project sounds like tremendous fun and one that anyone can do, including — and maybe especially — kids. Tracing government maps, studying climate patterns, locating water resources and identifying watersheds — these are all enjoyable and interesting activities that will educate people of any age about the political, geographic and economic history of an area.

Perhaps the most interesting case example is that of the Mattole Restoration Council in northern California near Mt. Shasta. While studying land-use issues, the Council in 1985 decided it needed to know the status of current forestry resources in their watershed. They soon discovered no useful information existed about the extent of logging or the presence of old-growth tree stands for privately held lands. The MRC devised an ingenious method to find answers by using U.S. Forest Service maps, Oregon state aerial photos, field expeditions, and collecting oral history from long-time landowners. Finally, they found backers who agreed to mail their map to every landowner and resident in the watershed.

Boundaries of Home is an extremely useful tool, and for those seeking a better world it proves that (paraphrasing the old saw) what you go to the trouble of seeing is what you may get. TW

Joe Wakelee-Lynch is a free-lance reviewer and host of a radio literary interview program in Claremont, Calif.

book review

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Promoting regional bonds

by Marianne Arbogast

As a child attending Friends School in Wilmington, Del., Maggie Tyson was enthralled by rumors that the steam tunnels under the 19th-century school building had been part of the underground railroad for slaves journeying to freedom. Learning the stories of Quaker abolitionists and playing among their tombstones, Tyson must have caught something of their spirit — she has spent a lifetime building connections, risking unpopular stands and crossing conventional boundaries in the struggle for justice.

Now 68, Tyson lives on the suburban side of the Eight-Mile-Road divide separating Detroit from wealthy Oakland County. But unlike some who might choose suburban living as a refuge from urban problems, she has worked for more than three decades to build a regional sense of community.

Tyson fumes over the desire of some of her neighbors to tighten border security.

This year, when cuts in federal funding forced SMART — the bus system connecting city and suburbs — to appeal for local money, the proposal met with considerable resistance. Although a campaign to save SMART helped win millage allotments in most of the region, 41 municipalities — including Tyson's home of Bloomfield Township — refused to put it to a vote, opting out of bus service.

"I'm furious that I wasn't allowed to vote," Tyson says. "I'm sure racism entered into it; I'm sure they thought in terms of blacks invading their lily-white suburbs."

I hear right-wing Republicans saying, "Why don't those lazy bums get off welfare?" Then, when jobs are available but there's no transportation, they decide to cut off access to work.

Maggie Tyson

Tyson, who serves on the board of SORT (Supporters of Regional Transportation) insists that city/suburban bus service is a matter of justice.

Entry-level jobs at hotels, restaurants and shopping malls — scarce in decimated Detroit — abound in the suburbs, she explains. Few pay enough for workers to afford cars.

"I hear all the right-wing Republicans saying, 'Why don't those lazy bums get off welfare?' Tyson says. "Then, when jobs are available but there's no transportation, the same ones decide to cut off all access to work. It just seemed so unfair."

Tyson adds that mass transit is crucial for elderly and disabled citizens in all economic brackets.

For the past three years, the SORT campaigners have met monthly in a chain restaurant on a SMART bus line. In the months leading up to the spring elections, they gave slide shows, posted flyers, phoned voters, and paraded through towns carrying an eight-foot-long Naugahyde bus.

Upon learning that shopping mall developer Alfred Taubman was a SMART supporter, Tyson called his office persistently until she reached him, then persuaded him to contribute $400 to buy bumper stickers.

Tyson moved to Michigan 31 years ago when her husband received a job transfer. A dedicated gardener who grew up in the country, she craved connection with the earth. "I've never lived in the city — I've always loved trees and space," Tyson says. She remembers hearing a pheasant call when she stepped out of the car to view her house for the first time; the familiar song and the 30 evergreens sold her on the home.

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness.*

But shortly after moving in, she began shaking up her neighbors by joining the Bloomfield Commission for Open Housing and accompanying African-American home-shoppers who were looking at houses in her neighborhood.

In May of 1967, Tyson helped found VOCAL (Voice of Oakland County Action League), which met in the Oakland County city of Pontiac and took on police brutality, housing, and welfare concerns. In 1969, she and five others were arrested for sitting in at a Pontiac school board office to protest a plan to relocate a high school out of a low-income neighborhood, which would have required a long bus ride for poorer students. (The protesters won, and the subsequent remodeling of the old school building received an architectural award.)

Once, Tyson invited Black Panther sons of friends to the Birmingham Community House to talk about their breakfast program — horrifying the conservative community, drawing an audience sprinkled with detectives, and earning her a place in the Red Squad Files (state police political surveillance data).

Last October, she received an award from the Northern Oakland branch of the NAACP for her civil rights work.

Tyson's involvements were sparked in part by her membership in Northminster Presbyterian Church in Troy during her early years in Michigan. The church's pastor, MacKay Taylor, led a Bible study which stressed social commitment.

"I remember reading the Book of Amos," Tyson says. "It really hit me between the eyes — 'Let justice roll down like waters.' I compared Amos to Stokeley Carmichael."

She still reads Amos and loves Jesus, though she rarely attends church, preferring to spend Sunday mornings in her garden.

"I'm a faith-based person — I guess you could call me a Christian," she admits reluctantly. "Now, the word 'Christian' curdles my blood because of the Christian right."

Undaunted by the specters of rampant crime and random violence that keep many suburbanites outside the city limits, Tyson ventures regularly into Detroit. Often, she is headed for meetings with the Homeless Union or Central American solidarity groups, but sometimes she comes simply to enjoy the Detroit River. She tells suburban friends how much they're missing if their fear of Detroit keeps them away.

"I keep raving about the river, how blue the water is ... When you're used to the thick, muddy, green water of the Delaware River, it's a thrill to see such clean, beautiful water."

Tyson has not given up hope of bus service between Detroit and her own community. Though SMART buses continue to run through Bloomfield, they no longer stop, making it necessary for employers hiring Detroit workers to send minivans to pick them up at bus stops in neighboring suburbs. But SORT members continue to meet and strategize.

Though she is linked to a supportive network of like-minded suburban residents, Tyson acknowledges that campaigns such as this one have not endeared her to her neighbors.

"They look at me as a real kook," she says. "When my picture appears in *The Birmingham Eccentric* they say, 'I saw your picture again,' between clenched teeth. A lot of them don't approve, but I don't really care — I have such wonderful friends in the movements I belong to. I don't think of us as city and suburbs — I think of us as metro Detroit. I think we should be one great big region, and have interconnectedness." TW

PERSONALS

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"Many church leaders have sacrificed family for the sake of others. Good spiritual leaders must be balanced between the most personal expressions of love and their ability to stand publicly for larger issues of love."

— Steve Charleston, Bishop of Alaska

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The Witness

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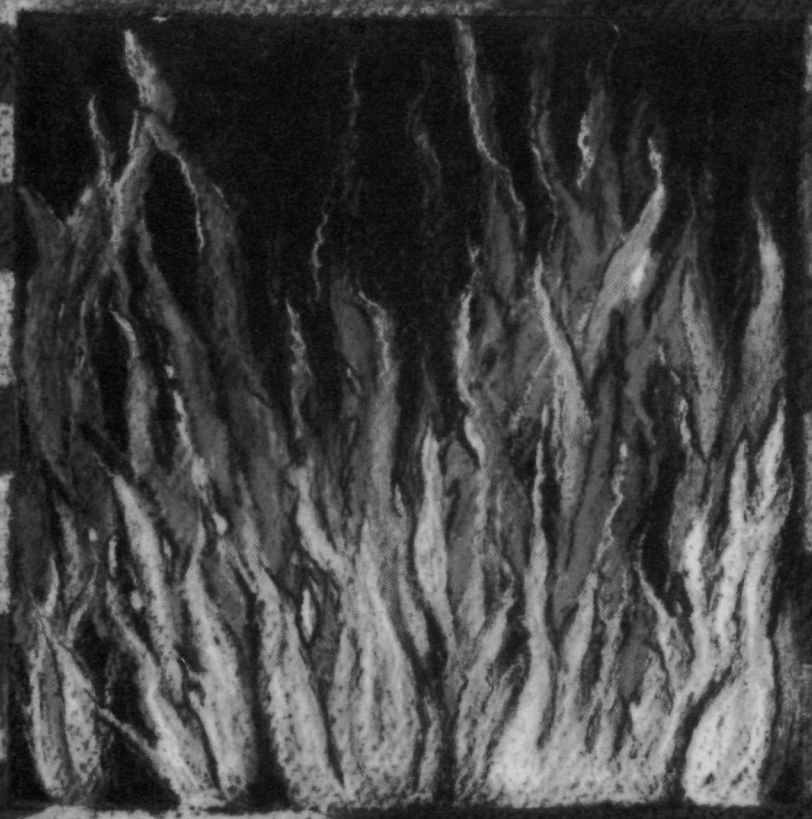

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The New Party:
Working to restore democracy

The media: colonizing minds

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE *SUPERB* latest issue on The media: colonizing minds [9/95]. I'm teaching a course entitled "The Global Search for Justice," a large part of which involves students looking beyond the mainstream U.S. media to get at questions of justice. I'm trying to convince them that names like Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman (names they'll see in "Manufacturing Consent") are names worth knowing. And then you come along with a great issue to back me up!

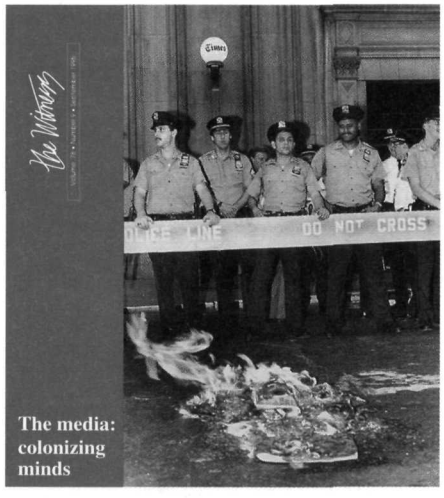
Neil Elliott
College of St. Catherine
St. Paul, MN

THE MESSAGE THAT ED HERMAN AND Noam Chomsky are voicing needs to be repeated until it wakes us up to how we are being manipulated by the Powers. If anyone doubts the danger we face through this Orwellian process let them recall how Goebbels was used by the Nazis to establish dominance.

We are witnessing a not-so-sophisticated development of information access by the monied powers. They seek, for example, to force NPR and public television into the commercial bullring while ABC, NBC, and CBS pay nothing for their use of broadcast frequencies, a quasi-subsidy by the government. They seem to be afraid of objective reporting, which they label "bias."

Fortunately, the next generation, unless they be seduced, may yet outsmart the Powers, as Camille Colatosti illustrates. It will be more difficult to control the Internet than NPR and public television.

Of course we each need the silence Nkenge Zo!@ is seeking. But we also need to realize that we are members of an "unbeatable army" and that "there's a moral imperative that we continue to fight." Dick Gillet's perceptive



The media: colonizing minds

and constructive statements urging the Church to implement the Gospel imperative are so to the point.

Thanks for a stimulating feast.

C. Mallory Graves
Lynchburg, VA

SEVERAL THINGS IN THE SEPTEMBER issue of *The Witness* have moved me to write. One is Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann's early experiences as a journalist, where she learned that you can get to the bottom of a story, and you can "reach a conclusion about whose interests are being served and how." She also learned that you may not be able to get it published.

Then Edward Herman talked of the average American income falling 2.3 percent last year — even though this is a time of prosperity for business. He says Noam Chomsky is almost totally marginalized. He talks about big money being unified behind both parties so that there won't be any competition between the parties, and the corruption of the academic system — money going into the intellectual community shapes who will be considered credible authorities.

And William Stringfellow's article, though written in the 1970s, is certainly prophetic. He could just as easily have written his description of Orwellian doublespeak today.

As Herman says, "We have been subject to serious defeats and we're still losing, but you have to keep on fighting. You have to assume that the public will wake up when it is hurting enough and will be more receptive. You have to believe that institutions can be changed democratically."

It's important to know that there is a way to turn our nation around, there is a way to reverse the ever increasing poverty and hopelessness, the constant fall in income for ordinary people, the rising violence and incarceration particularly among people of color; and even a way to work toward healing and restoring the environment.

Dorothy M. Malcolm
Sacramento, CA

Ellen Cooke

THE LONG REPORT ON THE ELLEN Cooke affair [6/95] leaves me concerned that nothing seems, at least at this point, to be planned with regard to healing the wounds of the employees who have been damaged by what appears to have been a brutal and devaluing management style, and taking steps to ensure that such destruction of the psyche doesn't take place again in the Episcopal Church.

My concern is formed from my own experience. In England I worked for a well-respected charity whose female director, whom I will call Isle, was without a doubt the most vicious person I have observed in over 20 years of working life. In the year and a half that I worked there, Isle drove out of the organization two valuable employees, one of them my closest workmate. (You can tell from my language that the experience still disturbs me, though she did not directly abuse me.) Many employees shared with me their increasing fear and demoralization, all the more distressing because none of us had any recourse or choice about mitigating or stopping her abusive behavior. We could "vote with our feet," but, in an increasingly economically depressed Britain, that was a dangerous choice if others are dependent on your income. And it did nothing to solve the problems of the organization or of the many dedicated and talented people who remained.

The military style of traditional management, the top-down, me-talk-you-listen — systemic sin at its covert best — facilitated the organizational fascism that Isle instituted and was supported by. I suspect the lack of respect and trust in "subordinates" made Ellen's as-

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tonishing fraud that much easier.

With regard to 815, it seems that steps are being taken to safeguard the money. Are there any plans to safeguard the employees?

In my view, real healing for 815 will not be effected by instituting listening and healing sessions, or raking Ellen Cooke apart in court. There must be fundamental change in the philosophy and operation of organizations. We need to develop effective and respectful ways to manage dissent, anxiety and suspicions, and I don't mean an anonymous suggestion box. At the very least, employees must become an integral part of the process of performance review of their supervisors, including senior echelon staff, who should be officially accountable to the people who carry out their policies and plans. The mental health and professional vigor of employees depend in great part on informed, compassionate oversight — and the success of any enterprise depends on our diligent and talented cooperation.

Mayne Ellis
Victoria, BC

Northern Ireland

THE SIDEBAR, "Choosing to support armed resistance" (an interview with Mary Nelis, *TW* 7-8/95), raised some provocative questions. First, has any international body, such as the UN or the International Court of Justice, considered whether the British presence in Northern Ireland is *per se* illegitimate, or whether the Republic of Ireland has a valid claim to the area? If so, what has been the result?

Second, should Great Britain simply abandon its presence in the Six Counties, or should it hand over governmental authority to the Republic? Or perhaps to the IRA or Sinn Fein?

Third, should a British withdrawal be preceded by a plebiscite? If those voting in the plebiscite clearly reject unification with the Republic, what should then be done? To ensure a favorable result, should Protestants be barred from voting?

I would appreciate feedback on these issues, in your pages.

Lowell J. Satre, Jr.
St. Paul, MN

[Ed. note: We asked Maria Catalfio of Irish Northern Aid (which sponsored Nelis' U.S. visit) to respond:

The overriding reality that Lowell Satre's letter ignores is that there currently exists an opening for peace in Ireland — an opening largely created by the political party to which Mary Nelis belongs. The primary obstacle in these delicate peace negotiations has been the unwillingness of the British government to work to bring all the parties together to talk. Even U.S. efforts to encourage its ally to work constructively in this process have fallen on deaf ears.

The creation of the state of Northern Ireland in 1921 was imposed on the Irish when British Prime Minister Lloyd George promised devastating aerial bombing unless the Irish accepted his partition proposal. The greatest use of force in Ireland has always come from British guns, tanks and soldiers.

Satre's question about Britain abandoning its presence in the Six Counties strikes to the core of the problem in Ireland: *Who* would Britain be abandoning? The Loyalist population planted in Ireland by the British beginning in the 17th century has enjoyed considerable privilege at the expense of the native population. The legacy of this imperial strategy has left us with the tragedy of present-day Ireland. British involvement in Ireland should center around the principle that the Irish people as a whole have a right to self-determination. The first step in this process is to get all the Irish parties together, planning their future as one people.]

Witness praise

NOW THAT I'M BACK at seminary, and after 11 incredible weeks of clinical pastoral education, I realize now more than ever the relevance of your periodical and the issues you address. I commend you for your courage and am inspired to take up that same courage whenever I share the Good News of Jesus Christ with my brothers and sisters. For future priests in the Episcopal Church, *The Witness* should be required reading!

W. Thomas Warne, III
Sewanee, TN

Classifieds

Singing hymns

The Miserable Offenders, who produced an amazing selection of Advent and Christmas music last year, called *Keepin' the Baby Awake*, are releasing their second cassette this month. Titled *God Help Us*, the tape offers a variety of hymns in tight harmonies. To order, call Morehouse Publishing at 1-800-877-0012. Cassettes cost $10.95, c.d.s are $14.95.

Priest wanted

Full time priest for family size parish in historic village of Essex, NY on Lake Champlain. Send resume and CDO to St. John's Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 262, Essex, NY 12936.

Pilgrimage

A 13-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land, sponsored by the Episcopal Peace and Justice Network, offers an opportunity to meet with political and religious leaders, human rights activists, and residents of settlements, villages and refugee camps. Six trips are scheduled with departure dates in January through March, 1996. Cost from New York City is $1,925. For more information, contact Jess Gaither, Convener, EPJN, 76 Market St., Salem, NJ 08079; 609-935-1798.

Sexuality document

Continuing the Dialogue, the bishops' pastoral study document on human sexuality, is available from Forward Movement Publications, along with a discussion guide prepared by the Committee for Dialogue on Human Sexuality. Copies are $2.95 each plus shipping; call 1-800-543-1813 to order. A Spanish translation is available from the Presiding Bishop's office, 815 Second Ave., N.Y., NY 10017.

Classifieds

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Since 1917

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Cover: *New Glory* by Dana Cibulski, an artist in Decatur, Georgia.

Back cover: *President Mandela Voting, 1994* by Masaego Johannes Segogela. Courtesy of Linda Givon.

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Taking electoral politics seriously?

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

I had my first date on election day, 1972. It was lousy and I was home in time to cry during George McGovern's concession speech.

For months I had joined others leafletting, door knocking and visiting the Democratic headquarters. The old guard welcomed us, telling us that soon we would be the leadership.

But, of course, a lot that was good and decent seemed to die that night. Richard Nixon maintained his clutch on power. The Vietnam War continued. Dirty political attacks on artists, movie stars, candidates and activists continued, only to be brought to national consciousness several years later.

Since then most candidates I have voted for have lost. Opinion polls dominate the electoral news and yet there's no substantive reporting to inform people's views. Our national electoral process is as inane as TV sitcoms, while the fallout from our nation's policies is frequently lethal at home, abroad and for the earth.

I've become savvy about corporate influence. On the rare occasions when the corporate powers lose, they are often virulent in their efforts to malign the people who have bested them. Too often the local police and the FBI come to corporations' aid, working to destroy the credibility of their opponents.

For the principalities, elections may simply be the first skirmish. Around the world, when good candidates win, the powers coalesce to force their hands, to initiate compromise, to corrupt or to thwart. The presidency is a vortex of power that converted Jimmy Carter's campaign commitment to disarmament into an administrative policy that sanctioned the cruise missile, neutron bomb, and Trident submarine.

As Phil Berrigan likes to observe, "If voting meant something, they wouldn't let us do it."

Linda Rosier/Impact Visuals

Entertainment at the 1992 Democratic Convention

Where I have found meaning in my political work is in community, in forming a living environment with others whose values are similar and channeling our energy into vocations that affect Detroit — construction, housing, teaching, nursing, social work, law, printing, writing, church work.

On occasion, nonviolent direct action has helped me keep clear about my commitments. It has sometimes felt critical to do something that embodies the urgency I feel — to pray in a driveway at a nuclear missile parts manufacturer, to leaflet at a Strategic Air Command base, to occupy a congressman's office, to blockade the federal building. There is a simplicity and a clarity in these acts that helps me recall what matters. There are consequences that help diminish the cloying confidence that builds when I feel safely middle class, obedient and protected.

But I felt chilled when my sister-in-law explained last winter that her school district was overrun by the Christian Coalition. Fear was so pervasive that a principal told a kindergarten teacher that she could not read a Berenstein Bears Halloween story because it included the word "witch."

The threat of corporate domination is now coupled with the threat of small-minded people prescribing mores for the entire community.

So this issue is dedicated to the electoral reform efforts of the New Party, a group attempting to change election laws and to run candidates in local elections where voting still has some meaning, while building the party from the ground up.

The Witness staff does not suggest that the New Party has all the answers. But it may offer a path that can lead to our votes mattering. Its leaders call on us to be creative and proactive.

"Right now people think, 'There's no way for the economy to work, so let's just build some prisons and throw the keys away,'" observes Daniel Cantor, national organizer for the New Party. "But what would happen if you put something on the ballot that said for every dollar invested in building new prisons, a dollar must be spent on job development? I think that would be quite popular."

Maybe, even though our cynicism is well-founded, engaging in electoral politics at the local level *is* an appropriate first line of skirmish with the powers. TW

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

editor's note

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Beyond the two-party system

by Manning Marable

Speculation about the potential presidential candidacy of General Colin Powell has once again highlighted the inherent weaknesses of our two-party system. In head-to-head competition in public opinion polls, Powell is much more popular than either of the most likely presidential nominees of the two major parties, President Bill Clinton and Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole. Powell is probably "too liberal" to win the Republican nomination through the primaries, although there are strong indications that Dole may select him for the vice presidential nomination. Powell has said privately that any independent campaign like that of billionaire Ross Perot has little likelihood of success.

Rarely have conditions been more favorable to a third party, which would provide a genuine alternative within our political system. There is deep disenchantment with government and the absence of accountability by elected officials.

The two major parties have a stranglehold on the legislative process, utilizing the government to control and reallocate resources to their clients and constituents. This sorry fact of public life is true, regardless of the ideological affiliations of the politicians in both parties. *The Wall Street Journal* recently noted that Congressional Republican leaders, despite their anti-government rhetoric, have become "cozy controlling the levers of power."

For example, Republicans promised to eliminate or radically restructure the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). But once in power, New York Republican Congressman Rick Lazio, who had just become chairman of the House Banking Subcommittee that supervises HUD, fought a rear-guard action to maintain the federal housing bureaucracy. Lazio recognized that "doing away with HUD could shrink his brand-new congressional fief," the *Journal* noted. Pennsylvania Republican Bud Shuster, chairman of the House Transportation Committee, brags openly about his control of highway construction funds, declaring, "There's no such thing as a Republican or Democrat on bridges."

Two years ago, Republican Senator Larry Pressler of South Dakota was one of the leading critics of corporate and special-interest political action committees (PACs), which flood millions of dollars into the political system. Pressler even introduced an amendment which would have outlawed political action committees.

But when the Republicans seized control of the U.S. Senate, Pressler was catapulted from his obscure status to become chairman of the powerful Senate Commerce Committee. Because this committee controls new legislation on the telecommunications industry, Pressler overnight became the principal recipient of PAC donations from cable television, telephone and broadcasting companies. Within months after assuming leadership of the Senate Commerce Committee, Pressler received thousands of dollars in donations from the corporate PACs of AT&T, NYNEX, US West, Walt Disney Co., Sprint, GTE, and the Home Shopping Network.

Before the November, 1994 election, the Chicago-based Ameritech Corporation gave 56 percent of its PAC funds to Democrats. Since November, the PAC has been overwhelmingly pro-Republican. Pressler alone received $6,500 from Ameritech's PAC from January through April, 1995. The South Dakota Senator expects to raise $3 million toward his 1996 reelection campaign. Although Pressler's committee is now considering a comprehensive bill which is described as "strongly favorable" toward the telecommunication industry's interests, the Senator stoutly denies that their PAC contributions have had any influence on this legislation.

As the New Party has argued, instead of focusing on Powell, who has no intention of building a third party, we need to consider what it will take to develop a genuine alternative in American politics. One place to begin is by supporting more liberal election laws, permitting smaller parties to gain access to the ballot. The winner-take-all electoral system must be challenged in the courts and eventually replaced by a more democratic proportional representation process, in which voters could rank candidates according to their order of preference. A proportional representation system allows minorities to concentrate their votes, lowering the threshold for election to below 50 percent in multimember districts. Blacks, Latinos, labor and independent progressive candidates would find it much easier to be elected, giving us a more effective voice in government.

To end the corporate stranglehold on U.S. politics, we need to break up the two-party system. The Congressional Black Caucus may represent a "liberal alternative" within government, but its agenda will never win the acceptance of the mainstream of the Democratic Party. Our next step must be strategies for progressive independent politics. TW

Manning Marable is director of the Institute for African American Studies at Columbia University.

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Hoeing

by Tom Jones

Hot!
Sweat running down his back.
He came early,
wanted to finish by now,
before it got so hot!
His eyes
filled with sweat,
blurring the corn rows.
He could
not see the weeds.
Chopped a corn plant.
His wife would sing,
"An ass, an ass, thinks
weeds are food and
corn is candy and eats
them both!"

He had six more rows.
Perhaps tomorrow? No!
He has to finish today.
Tomorrow
is the rally for the election.

He watched a Bronco drive by,
filled with *Blancs.*
He knew
they did not work the corn.
Imagined sitting
in the soft seat
of the Bronco.
He tried to remember
if he had ever sat
in a soft seat.
Imagined
white people
in a huge tub of hot water.
Getting in
like you get in the river.
He wondered
why a person
would want the water
hot?

His family was
better off before. Before
the *Blancs* and their aid.
They gave rice away
free.
He and his wife
had a rice field.
She went to the market on
Wednesdays and Saturdays,
to sell their rice.

After the aid
no one bought their rice.
They let their field dry up.
They tried to tell the *Blancs*
when they came to the village.
They told them
not to give away the food.
That they knew
how to grow food.

Told them
they needed water. A
pipe from the spring,
and a well. That would
help them all. They all
needed water.

A cloud gave him a
moment of shade. He
stopped chopping the weeds.
Thought about the election.
He knew the candidates.
They had told lies before.
Before there were
elections. Before
democracy and elections.

Now the candidates were saying,
water
was their first priority.
What could they do? The
Blancs had soft chairs,
tubs of hot water,
food to give away.

He leaned on his hoe.
Thought about his son,
Gone to Port,
to work in the *Blancs'* factory.
Said he would send home money,
but the factory didn't pay
any better than the corn.

No money, no son,
just the corn,
the weeds, the heat,
and tomorrow
the rally.

Tom Jones, a United Methodist pastor and organic farmer in Farwell, Mich., was an observer at the recent elections in Haiti.

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Restoring democracy, the New Party's work: an interview with Daniel Cantor

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: Tell us about the New Party. I've got documents going back to 1990. Is that when it began?

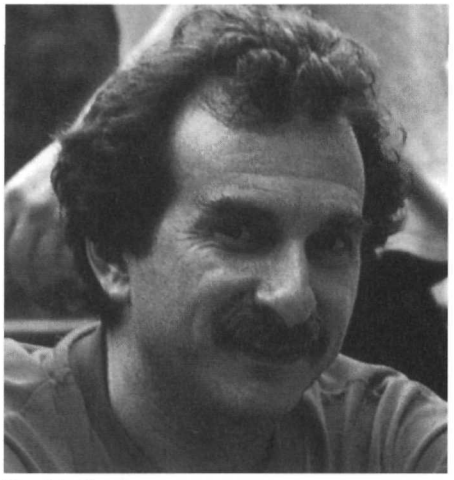
Daniel Cantor: The New Party opened its doors in 1992.

We're active in 12 states. We've run 120 people for office and nearly 80 of those have won their elections. It's modest level work: city council, county board, school board, zoning commission. We think that's the right place to start. We'll move up as our confidence and our competence increase.

J.W-K.: Why is there a need for the New Party?

D.C.: The Democrats are programmatically bankrupt and the Republicans are spiritually and morally bankrupt. Neither of the existing major parties is especially interested in participation and equality and justice. They covet re-election and the exercise of power as its own reward. My view, and it's one that is widely shared, is that we need a different set of values to be made concrete in civic life if we are going to redeem the promise of democracy. Electoral politics in an advanced industrial democracy like ours is one crucial way you can do that.

J.W-K.: What makes you think that the New Party might be able to do this when other third parties have risen and fallen so quickly?



Daniel Cantor

D.C.: A "new party" is not a new idea. But there is a desperate need now for a non-corporate-dominated, multi-racial, progressive political party in the U.S. I say this knowing that lots of people have tried and failed in the past. Only the Republican Party has metamorphosed from a minor to a major party.

But even acknowledging the obstacles to building a durable, new political force in America, there's something in the air that's different now. The decomposition of the major parties is *quite* advanced. Poll data shows that people across the board favor the creation of a new political party that can do some of the heavy lifting that American politics and economics require. So for us, the question is not *do* we need a New Party? It's *can* one be built? Here we're up against a skepticism and cynicism which have been inculcated by the major parties.

We want to take advantage of the "electoral moment" in American life, the moment when society pauses and reflects. I realize it doesn't pause very deeply or very long. But it does pause. We have to move our ideas and values in that moment.

J.W-K.: How do the candidacies of people like Ross Perot, Jesse Jackson and Colin Powell affect your work at the New Party?

D.C.: It proves the opportunity. But we think it also proves the necessity of the New Party's bottom-up strategy. Running an independent — even one so well-heeled as Perot or so well-known as Powell or Jackson — is not the same thing as building a political organization that day-in and day-out does the unglamorous work of talking with people about what kind of society they want to live in.

We need to ask ourselves what kind of schools do we really want to have? What's the social contract between business, labor and communities that *we* would like to see established?

J.W-K.: Say a little bit about how the New Party is structured to create conversations about the social contract.

D.C.: The Party has chapters. Chapters are formed by a combination of individuals and institutional supporters — community organizations, local environmental groups, trade unions. Chapters are internally democratic.

Daniel Cantor is national organizer of the New Party in N.Y.C. **Eleanor Mill** is an artist in Hartford, Conn.

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J.W-K.: And multi-ethnic?

D.C.: The Party is at the moment nearly half white and half people of color.

J.W-K.: Who is included in your membership?

D.C.: We have about 6,000 members. The goal is to have 10,000 by the end of this year. If we can get to a critical mass, the thing will begin to self-generate.

People should know the Democratic Party has about 100,000 dues-paying members. The Republicans have 700,000.

J.W-K.: Who are your members?

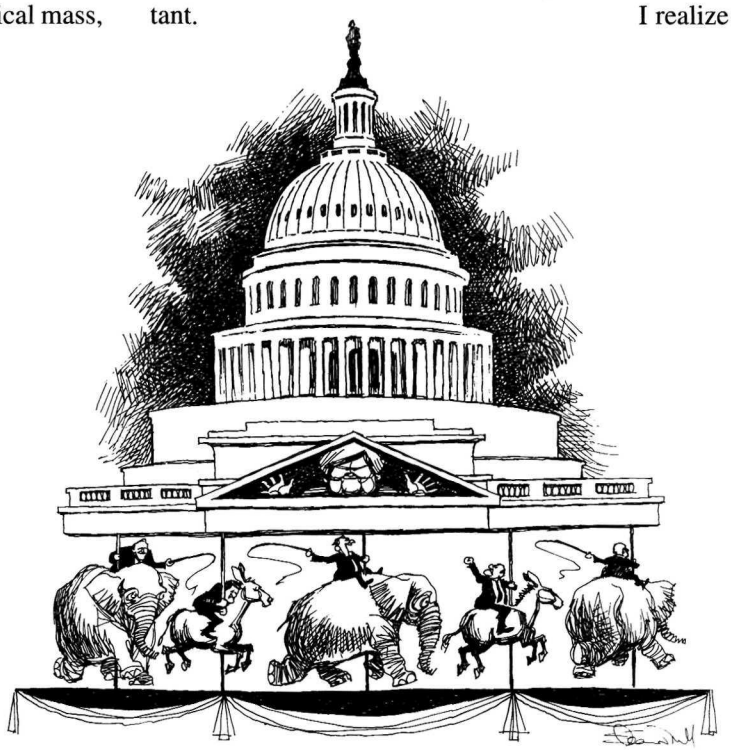
D.C.: Our members are regular citizens. Some have ties to community groups, unions, environmental groups, churches, schools. We have some prominent supporters — Noam Chomsky, Cornel West and Barbara Ehrenreich, for example, but what unites our members is a commitment to democracy.

J.W-K.: What about church interest in the New Party?

D.C.: Some chapters have substantial interest from progressive church folk, most commonly members of African American churches. Some members have ties to the Catholic Worker movement or are progressive Protestants. I personally think that churches and unions are the two most important institutional forces that provide some counter-weight to the market mentality — the market religion — that currently rules American life to a perverse degree. But the New Party is not based in the churches the way the Christian Coalition is. It's based in communities, geographic communities.

J.W-K.: Your focus is not so much on a presidential campaign as on local elections?

D.C.: It is definitively *NOT* on presidential politics. Our work is on city councils, county boards, state legislatures and school boards. That's where we can be effective. But also with the Republicans' devolving power down, it makes these kinds of offices *more* and not *less* important.



Washington merry-go-round Eleanor Mill

J.W-K.: The elections that you're targeting are the same that are being targeted by folks in the Christian Coalition. Have you had any confrontations with them in elections?

D.C.: Absolutely! We've bested them in some cases and lost in others. They have a head start, obviously, and we're nowhere near as powerful. But we'll get there. One advantage we have is that we don't have to hide our views. We don't run stealth candidates who don't disclose their convictions until after the elections. In school board elections, we can be forthright and say we're for *excellent* public education for *all* children.

J.W-K.: What is the objective of the New Party?

D.C.: Ideologically it's about moral equality.

We want to take advantage of the "electoral moment" in American life, the moment when society pauses and reflects. I realize it doesn't pause very deeply or very long. But it does pause. We have to move our ideas and values in that moment.

Of course, in between elections we have to educate ourselves, hold workshops, retreats and summer schools and get ready for the next battle. It never ends.

J.W-K.: You have some creative ideas about how to avoid throwing the elections to the conservatives by splitting the progressive vote. Can you say something about that?

D.C.: We do not want to be spoilers. The way to avoid being a spoiler is to revive the old American tactic known as "fusion." It refers to a candidate's ability to appear on the ballot *twice* for two separate parties. A decent Democrat could run as a Democrat and as a New Party candidate. The advantage is that New Party votes are a *signal* to that candidate that they need to pay attention to our concerns. It allows a minor political group to have its voice heard. In theory we could fuse with a progressive Republican, if there are still any out there.

J.W-K.: You say you want to "revive" fusion. Was fusion at one point legal?

D.C.: Yes. Fusion was the electoral strategy of all of the third parties of the 19th century in the U.S. — the Greenbackers, the Independents, most prominently the Populists. It was a way for urban, Catholic, immigrant, Democrats who drank, to unite with rural, native-born, dry Protes-

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tant Populists. Culturally these two did not fit together. Politically it was the worker-farmer alliance, or the Democratic-Populist alliance of the 19th century.

Fusion was made illegal after the election of 1896 — by some readings the central election in American history. It's the election that marks the beginning of corporate domination of U.S. politics and culture. My favorite quote is from a Minnesota Republican who said, "We don't mind fighting you one at a time — but the combination, we detest."

So they changed the rules of the game. They outlawed fusions. If you change the rules of the game, you change the outcome. We want to change the rules back. There are some other rule changes that need to be made. Campaign finance reform couldn't be more important, right? Proportional voting ought to be considered, so that minority groups, whether ethnic or political, can be represented.

There are lots of good reforms that can be made. I favor shortened campaign seasons. I'd also really like someone to figure out how to prohibit the publication of opinion polls. All reporting is now about the polls, not about the issues.

J.W-K.: Reading the NP's position papers, I've wondered if your spectrum of political causes is too broad. But you mention the 19th century and I understand that was a time when political movements *were* extraordinarily inclusive.

D.C.: That's right. We know we can't do *everything* at one time. At the moment, we have three "signature" concerns: economic reconstruction, democratic reform, and children's needs. If we did just those three things well for the next five years that would be a useful contribution to American life.

A political party has to be broad, but it also has to be deep. I think we've done reasonably well on that score at the local level.

You know, people really do love their kids and they want to leave a better world behind them. They're scared to death about where things are going. If the New Party or some political force emerges, saying, "Here's a different way to think about where we're going as a nation," I believe people will respond.

It's hard to get that message *heard.* The media din is enormous and it's hard for a thoughtful and complex view to get airtime, but it *can* get heard if you have organization.

J.W-K.: How has the New Party been funded so far ?

D.C.: It's a membership-funded organization. The budget in 1995 is about $300,000. We need to get to $3,000,000, which I believe we can do over the next couple of years.

We are *ferociously* promoting the idea of sustainers, people paying $10 or $50 per month, whatever they can afford, in an automatic contribution — credit card or bank draft. We're very modern in that regard! The point is to have a routine source of income so we can plan and be disciplined.

J.W-K.: Do you have any grants from foundations or from unions?

D.C.: We get some union support. Foundations are not legally allowed to contribute. Sixty or 70 percent of our money is in small dollar contributions and the last 30 percent is $250 or above.

We have lots of people who have very little time who *can't* work for the NP, but who *can* help pay for it. People need to

What is Fusion?

NEW PARTY

Fusion, or cross-endorsement, allows two or more parties to nominate the same candidate on separate ballot lines. The candidates' votes on each ballot line are added together to determine the winner.

Case 1 — Two minor parties endorse the same candidate

❑	Mr. Bigbucks Elephant Party	Gets **33%** of the vote
❑	Mr. Sellout Donkey Party	Gets **31%** of the vote
❑	Ms. Green New Party	Gets **20%** of the vote
❑	Ms. Green Green Party	Gets **16%** of the vote

With a combined **36%**, Ms. Green WINS!

Case 2 — A minor party endorses a major party candidate

❑	Mr. Bigbucks Elephant Party	Gets **45%** of the vote
❑	Mr. Rainbow Donkey Party	Gets **35%** of the vote
❑	Mr. Rainbow New Party	Gets **20%** of the vote

With a combined **55%**, Mr. Rainbow WINS!

Bans to Fusion are Unconstitutional

The New Party is involved in legal challenges to fusion bans in Pennsylvania and Minnesota — two of the 40 states where fusion is illegal. In the few states where it is still legal, such as New York, it has played a central role in local, state, and national politics. Fusion was crucial to the victories of N.Y. governors Fiorello LaGuardia and Mario Cuomo. And both Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy would have been turned back from the White House without fusion votes from New York.

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see that as an essential ingredient.

The Right certainly does. To be a member of the Christian Coalition in Athens, Ga., you've got to pay $30 a month!

We'll never match the Republicans in dollars, but we can out-organize them, as implausible as that seems in the Age of Gingrich. But if people put aside just the tiniest ounce of their cynicism and help, it will get done.

J.W-K.: How do you respond to cynics who feel the electoral process is largely in place to give us the illusion that we have democratic input?

D.C.: Is the system rigged? Absolutely. But the great thing about democracy is that it contains within it the seeds of its own redemption, because people can organize.

Might there be some crushing hand that comes down? Well, you know, I suppose so if we threatened to do away with the Federal Reserve ...

J.W-K.: You wouldn't have to go to that extent. There have been plenty of social movements in this country that have been crushed long before they had that kind of power. Right?

D.C.: Sure. The state is going to be the state and their allies in corporations and the media will first try to ignore us, then try to silence us and so on. But if you believe ahead of time that that's the outcome, then there's literally nothing to do. And of course that plays into their victory even more! Things changed in Eastern Europe and this system can change too.

J.W-K.: In your literature you talk about the work of the Left being "episodic." But the Christian Right or the political Right is *relentless*. What factors do you think account for the fact that progressives aren't having the same kind of impact?

D.C.: The cruelest irony is that grassroots organizing, which *we* invented, is now more identified with the Right than with progressives. It makes you want to weep! But I think we got a little complacent. Getting control of the federal government was seen as the be-all and end-all, and it's not! What's important is having people organized, because that's where real power lies in a democracy.

Religious right, GOP, NRA Eleanor Mill

Another central problem is the relative weakness of the American labor movement. The weakness of labor here is just a crushing problem for us. Having a strong labor movement can help underwrite so much else that goes on.

J.W-K.: Does the Right have more time, more money?

D.C.: They have more money. They have the institutional base of *some* sections of the fundamentalist and evangelical church movement. And they have some *verve!* They know what they believe in. Our side is quite confused.

We'll never match the Republicans in dollars, but we can out-organize them if people put aside just the tiniest ounce of their cynicism and help.

The fact that Bill Clinton expended *so* much political capital on, for example, *NAFTA* is just a small signal of how confused the Democratic Party is. Do they want to be the party of international business or do they want to be the party of working- and middle-class America? You can't have it both ways!

Republicans are clear. They want to be the party of business. But they're willing to respond to people's anxieties — and people are *right* to feel anxious — by naming a "problem": the government, immigrants, blacks, women changing the roles in the home. You can blame *them.*

Democrats tell people — and this is an unbelievable failure — it's *your* fault! You are to blame! You're not educated enough; you didn't get enough training to compete in the new world market. This approach is morally repugnant, but it's also politically suicidal. The NP says, the problem is the system. Unless we democratize it, it's just going to go from bad to worse.

Here's the bedrock question: Do you think people — if they're not scared about what's happening to them — are generous or mean-spirited? Progressives believe that *most* people, if they have decent information and they're not scared to death, will make decent decisions. Conservatives believe that they can endlessly manipulate people even against their own interests. (And the evidence for that is pretty good.)

J.W-K.: In the NP literature of 1992, you were optimistic that if Clinton got elected there would be progress for the New Party. How has Clinton's presidency affected you?

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D.C.: The Clinton presidency has been disastrous. It will go down as one of the great missed opportunities of our lifetime. The reason he's failing is not because he's a bad or an incompetent person. He's obviously incredibly bright and skillful. The reason he's failing is that there is no progressive presence in American life, so *all* political debates become a debate between Clinton and everything to his right.

J.W-K.: You note in your literature that people have no *time*. Would you say a little about that?

D.C.: People are stretched unbelievably tight between work and home. Many families have two earners and young kids. They've got no time. So you need to find a way for people to express their political values *even* if they can't go to a meeting.

There's that great Oscar Wilde line, "The trouble with socialism is it takes too many evenings." Well, the trouble with democracy is that it takes too many evenings.

We need to find a way for people to express their views with*out* requiring that they give their lives over to the building of the local political organization.

We need activists and we have some. But we also need people, who can't make meetings because their kids are home, to register their views. And the best way to do that is to vote.

J.W-K.: It sounds like writing a monthly check to the New Party is also important?

D.C.: That's an organizer's dream question. Yes. And we won't waste it either.

J.W-K.: For people who are interested in doing something locally, how can they relate to the NP?

D.C.: The best thing is to contact the national office and we'll put you in touch with a chapter if there's one nearby. We can also help guide people in the process of forming a chapter. So the thing to do is to call 1-800-200-1294. We have to get on the offensive. We have to get creative. TW

Who else is out there?

Who is working on the reorganization of American progressives? The answer is both more and less satisfying than one would like. There are many, many organizations and activists — community, religious, labor, environmental, and so on — whose initial shock and despair at the Gingrich Ascension has now been replaced by strategizing and organizing. But fragmentation of these organizations remains a daunting obstacle, and the task of getting to *scale* in countering a very confident Right-wing remains an important challenge.

Some of the more prominent actors on the progressive electoral stage include:

Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) — Founded by Ralph Nader more than two decades ago, the state-based PIRG chapters are the leading force in the nation for progressive campaign finance reform. Importantly, the PIRGs have constructed an alliance to place a campaign finance measure on the ballot in California next year.

People for the American Way — focuses on monitoring, exposing and challenging the activities of the fundamentalist Right in local school board and other elections.

Northeast Citizen Action Resource Center — provides issue and technical electoral support to candidates at the state level.

Californians for Justice — does community and electoral organizing around issues such as the anti-affirmative action proposal on the ballot for Nov. 1996. Their main strategy is to expand the electorate in California — now 81 percent white, despite a population which is only 53 percent white.

League of Women Voters — seeks to increase citizen participation in the democratic process. It is currently working on campaign finance reform and on a "Get Out the Vote" campaign.

ACORN — organizes low and moderate income people in 20 states for progressive political action at local, state and federal levels, including ambitious efforts on campaign finance reform.

Project Vote — intensive, targeted voter registration work designed to increase minority participation in elections.

Project '95 — union-based coalition to try to win Congressional seats back to the Democrats next year;

State/Local Political Coalitions — From Georgia's Urban-Rural Summit to Minnesota's Alliance for Progressive Action to Los Angeles' Coalition '95, there are promising sub-national efforts to develop political skills, infrastructure and candidates.

Progressive Caucus — Based in the House of Representatives, this is the Bernie Sanders, Ron Dellums & Co. effort to provide the Democratic Party with a consistent, progressive voice in national politics, leading over time to a realigned Democratic Party.

Constituency Based Projects — Usually geared to one or another self-identified communities of interest (gay and lesbian, Latino, environmental, etc.) groups like the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, or the League of Conservation Voters, or the Southwest Voter Education Project each engage in political education, training and mobilization. There are hundreds of such efforts of varying sophistication and reach. — *Daniel Cantor*

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Winning elections in Milwaukee

by Steve Watrous

Four years ago, local activists formed Progressive Milwaukee, a New Party chapter, with the intention that a few members would become candidates, but nearly everyone dodged the draft. It could have killed the new party.

Finally Roger Quindel agreed to run for county supervisor in his district on the city's outskirts. He challenged an entrenched, high-spending incumbent and, with the help of over 200 volunteers, won the non-partisan race with 51 percent, 273 votes to spare.

One good election attracted other people to enter successful campaigns for county board, school board and state legislature.

Quindel is a forceful personality and long-time progressive activist who helped initiate Milwaukee Jobs With Peace (JWP) and served as its director for nearly a decade. JWP became a major force in the peace community and also organized around housing and city budget issues.

Previously Quindel had worked in a factory where he was elected union steward. He was disabled in Vietnam and supports vets' struggles. And he helped start Progressive Milwaukee.

Quindel quit his JWP job to run for county supervisor just three months before the primary, focusing all his organizing skills on the campaign.

"I want to include people in the process of changing things," said Quindel, "through this campaign, creating a neighborhood association, and other ways. We can't just order things from on top — we need grass-roots involvement. All county proposals should be discussed with the workers or community groups affected." He needs both hands to count off his points, grabbing each finger in turn.

Quindel proposes major changes in many areas. On the crime issue, he recommends a "community service corps" in which youthful offenders would spend weekends cleaning parks and vacant lots. "They have to learn that they are responsible for their behavior immediately," he almost shouts. "We can't wait until the 11th or 12th crime and then finally send them to jail."

County Supervisor Roger Quindel at a New Party conference. Steve Watrous

Since the election Quindel has successfully organized his neighbors around district issues like airport noise and an irresponsible bar owner. He has persuaded his county board colleagues to support his resistance to bus fare increases and welfare cuts. Quindel, now 49, spends his spare time putting more PM members in office.

As he prepares for the 1996 re-election campaign, Quindel has cautioned PM to select candidates it can count on. He doesn't want to see any more endorsees drawn and quartered by dysfunctional local government. A few more progressive colleagues might just be enough to transform that system.

Because of its advances both in and out of elections, PM has attracted national interest among people wondering whether a third party can succeed in a mid-sized city. PM has become one of the strongest chapters of the national New Party, receiving write-ups in publications as varied as the *L.A. Times*, *The Nation*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Amsterdam News*.

PM has backed several candidates in the Milwaukee area for county board, school board and state legislature. Most were first timers but only two have lost, and not by more than 2 percent.

Incumbents pay attention to what PM says and worry about challenges. Because the statewide affiliate, the New Progressive Party of Wisconsin, won enough votes in a state treasurer's race, the Party now has permanent ballot status. Between Milwaukee and Madison, the state party has 24 members in office. "We have become a force in Milwaukee politics," said John Goldstein, a PM leader and president of the bus drivers' union.

State Representative Spencer Coggs, a veteran black member of Wisconsin's legislature first elected in 1982, runs as a Democrat, but views his public service role much more broadly than just voting on legislation. His long-time support for community and union struggles brought him in touch with PM organizers. He's now a Democrat and a member of PM. He's the kind of candidate who could run on both tickets if fusion were allowed.

Milwaukee is a strikingly average place that has been thrust into the national spotlight by politics on both the Right and Left. Moderate voters favored both a Democratic president and a Republican governor in recent elections, but now Milwaukee has become the national testing ground for conservative welfare reform and state funds for religious schools.

Steve Watrous is a freelance writer and member of Progressive Milwaukee.

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Pushing these policies is the very rich and very conservative Bradley Foundation.

PM has faced this challenge by making education its most important issue, largely because many leaders of the national school reform magazine, *Rethinking Schools*, have become active in PM. They emphasize major changes within the public system, such as a school they established run by teachers and parents.

PM organized a coalition to promote a major school bond referendum in 1993, but lost. In 1995 PM backed three school board candidates. The issue became school privatization and only one candidate lost, by a narrow margin. Now PM is gearing up for a special election to fill another school board vacancy.

The connection between reform struggles and elections has always existed but, as PM has started winning, many peace, environmental, union, religious and other issue organizers — who used to give elections as much respect as Wisconsin cowpies — have started doing doors and making election eve calls. Over 300 have joined.

Broadening PM to include all of Milwaukee's communities is a constant effort, and the finances are not nearly as green as PM's politics. PM has also agonized over candidates that won and turned out not to be so progressive. Consequently, it has tightened up its "contract" with endorsees. But the victories have brought momentum.

One county supervisor likens PM to Milwaukee's "Sewer Socialists," a party of pragmatic Leftists that controlled this town for decades during the Progressive Era of the 1920s and 1930s by providing superior public services, building the infrastructure, and valuing the average person. That program once had majority support here and, if more community leaders like Roger Quindel and Spencer Coggs join PM, it may again soon. TW

Steve Watrous

The executive committee of Progressive Milwaukee in 1994. (L to R and top to bottom) Bruce Colburn, John Goldstein, Bobbi Lipeles, Stephanie Walters and Tammy Johnson.

Working for change

When Tammy Johnson became Progressive Milwaukee's community organizer in early 1994, the party couldn't handle more than one election campaign at a time, claimed fewer than 100 members and owned a money machine so creaky that opponents would have laughed if they had only known.

Largely due to her work, PM now has over 300 members, has just completed successful house party and banquet fundraisers and will probably support half a dozen candidates in the spring.

"I learned organizing in church," says Johnson. Her family belonged to the St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church and she grew up helping the poor and homeless through clothing drives and soup kitchens. "Church was a great training ground for skills in public speaking and fundraising."Johnson got involved with election campaigns before she could even vote.

Johnson put these skills to use as president of the Black Student Union, vice president of the student association and president of the United Council for University of Wisconsin Student Governments. Then she pushed PM from limping to sprinting. At 25, she is PM's best link to the next generation.

"My top priority is maintaining basic human rights like housing and health care," says Johnson. "Part of maintaining these rights is maintaining a democracy, which we don't have now. Someone is always left out. PM is revitalizing and redefining democracy, rebuilding the infrastructure of politics so that we can actualize some of these human rights that are being stomped upon now." — *S.W.*

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Taking a hit from *The Wall Street Journal*

The Wall Street Journal recently targeted Sustainable Milwaukee, slamming it for doing anti-corporate work in the milieu of "radical retreads" who share office space at the Peace Action Center.

Sustainable Milwaukee (SM) is a group that often works with New Party members and others against "the loss of unionized manufacturing jobs, racial discrimination and suburban sprawl," according to Bruce Colburn, secretary/treasurer of the Milwaukee County Labor Council and an executive committee member of SM.

Writers Daniel McGroarty and Cameron Humphries, fellows at the Institute for Contemporary Studies in San Francisco, were, however, not as angry with Sustainable Milwaukee (SM) as they were with local corporations who have made contributions to a project that will be managed by SM.

McGroarty and Humphries report that more than a dozen businesses have promised $2.6 million to entice the Annie E. Casey Foundation to provide a $5 million grant.

That corporations would contribute to a program that will be managed by progressives has McGroarty and Humphries apoplectic.

"Like a gullible spinster who loans a Lothario her credit card, the Milwaukee corporations appear to be doing it in order to be loved. So smitten are they with their own civic-mindedness that they haven't stopped long enough to ask hard questions about the group they're preparing to fund."

They mock the Annie E. Casey Foundation folks for failing to see that other tenants in the office building are retrogrades who read Angela Davis and Marx. They suggest that Sustainable Milwaukee has no standing with the state, no incorporation papers, etc.

They also mock SM's campaign for a "living wage" as inane, saying businesses will simply cross the city line to avoid paying $7.70 an hour plus health benefits to employees.

McGroarty and Humphries erred repeatedly and perhaps knowingly.

First, before *The Wall Street Journal's* article was in print, Sustainable Milwaukee had received its 501c3. The writers were aware that SM had applied for it and that the University of Wisconsin was SM's fiscal sponsor in the meantime.

Secondly, McGroarty and Humphries misrepresented or misunderstood the extent of the business community's investment in the project. It is true that over the course of eight and a half years, the community would need to provide $2.6 million, but that money is drawn from agencies, community groups and local businesses. There is no spinster here offering up her credit card.

Lastly, McGroarty and Humphries leave an impression that the $7.7 million grant is being used to support SM's other activities because they *never* explain what the money is to be used for.

Bill Dempsey, staff for SM, explains that the grant will be used in a Jobs Initiative Program. The goal is to reform the systems that are supposed to connect people, especially low income people, with jobs. SM will work with business leaders, union members, government officials, service providers and community groups.

In addition to connecting people with existing job opportunities, SM will explore job creation options. Dempsey points to the work of *Esperanza Unido*, which has created several small companies to meet the needs of people in low-income Milwaukee neighborhoods. These businesses offer asbestos removal, day care, auto repair, welding, food services and a banquet hall. The goal, of course, is to create jobs with incomes adequate to support families.

Despite McGroarty's and Humphries' arrogant criticisms, the businesses that contributed to the first phase of the Jobs Initiative may well be participating in the project because it is in their interest to do so. The businesses may benefit directly from the program or simply reap the advantages of operating in a community that grows more stable as people earn incomes that allow them to meet their needs (probably at local stores). In return for investing some portion of $2.6 million, the businesses will experience an influx of $7.7 million into their community. Not a bad return for the most intransigent capitalist.

(Representatives of the Annie E. Casey Foundation visited the Sustainable Milwaukee office after the advent of the *Journal's* critique. They determined that the *WSJ's* charges were "unfounded.")

Perhaps what insults McGroarty and Humphries the most is that businesses that are rooted in their communities might prefer to work with progressives than to continue to watch their inner-city-rust-belt communities be destroyed as big corporations move to union-free environments down south or overseas.

Imagine a model of businesses and community activists working together for their mutual gain.

Imagine sustainable capitalism.

Imagine a day when even *The Wall Street Journal* can see the advantage of businesses choosing not to use threats of relocation to win public concessions, choosing instead to improve their home community — even if it means working with people who have the audacity to hope that full-time work might provide people with health care and an income on which they can live.

— J.W-K.

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Watchdogs of democracy

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Detroit's watchdogs of democracy are hobbled by corporate greed at the moment.

Workers in six unions have been on strike since July 13. The strike was precipitated by the Detroit Newspaper Agency, an entity that administers both the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News* under conditions of a Joint Operating Agreement. Not content with a $55 million profit in 1994, the DNA provoked the strike through "unfair labor practices," according to an initial ruling by the National Labor Relations Board. This ruling is reassuring to the unions because it means that the more than 2,000 strikers are guaranteed their jobs when the strike ends, but in the meantime many families are trying to subsist on strike pay and some, at this point, are close to losing their homes.

Rumor has it that the DNA was preparing for this strike back in January. They arranged a deal with the Sterling Heights police that they would pay $400,000 for security at their printing plant in that northern suburb. Not surprisingly, the police were extremely harsh with strikers, engaging in body searches and rough arrests. The Oakland County prosecutor found grounds to investigate the abuses in a case now pending.

The Witness staff has become involved in the fray. We have helped to form Readers United, a group that is presenting the voice of the community in a struggle that had been characterized as a union-versus-management struggle.

Readers United is asking the company to negotiate round-the-clock with the unions. Many of us believe that the DNA's intention is to break the unions. Knight Ridder, which owns the *Detroit Free Press,* has 28 papers of which nine are unionized. Gannett, which owns the *Detroit News*, has 83 papers of which only five are unionized.

©Daymon J. Hartley, striking photographer

Vance guards open the gate and move into a crowd of picketers at the Clayton distribution center on September 23.

Knight Ridder is involved in another labor struggle in Philadelphia where they are attempting to fire 100 people in order to raise their profits from eight percent to 15 percent. In Miami, Knight Ridder has eliminated 70 jobs and intends to fire 300 more people within the next year, according to *New York Times* reports.

The national trend is for corporately owned papers to decimate their local reporting staff, filling pages with syndicated material, according to David Remnick's recent *New Yorker* article. Remnick adds that most corporate papers now have less content than *USA Today*, which he calls "a sprightly brand of fish wrap."

Readers United is also doing research to expose the security guards hired by the DNA during the strike. Self-identified as "asset protection teams," the Vance guards are the new Pinkertons. They boast in their advertisements that they make sophisticated use of cameras. And they do. Time and again, Vance guards will sweep into a crowd of picketers outside a DNA printing plant or distribution center. When picketers lift their signs to ward off billy clubs and truncheons, Vance takes pictures that win court injunctions against the "irrational" strikers. Observers insist that on two occasions Vance guards have set vehicles on fire, the flames being confused in news reporting with the militance of the strikers.

The tactic is not new. Vance worked for the Pittston Coal Company during the United Mine Workers strike.

"I lived on the ground in Pittston for 11 months," said Ron Baker of the UMW. "We encountered Vance daily. Their m.o. is to create situations where they can turn to courts for an injunction."

Andrew McThenia, a Washington and Lee law professor and chair of the board that owns *The Witness*, says that Vance guards used to follow him in a jeep when he was involved in supporting UMW strikers.

Readers United has two requests of the unions in Detroit.

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

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We want the unions to bring in the UMW to teach nonviolence to picketers so that they cannot be so easily manipulated by Vance. A disciplined nonviolent protest in Detroit would be an invaluable witness to the community and would certainly correct the public's impression that the strikers are out of control.

We also want a strike paper that can provide community news. Those of us who refuse to read newspapers produced by "permanent replacement employees" brought in from other Knight Ridder and Gannett papers — at least 30,000 people who have canceled their subscriptions — have no adequate source of news about area health concerns, city hall, the police, the schools, local development plans. Local businesses have no viable outlet for their advertising.

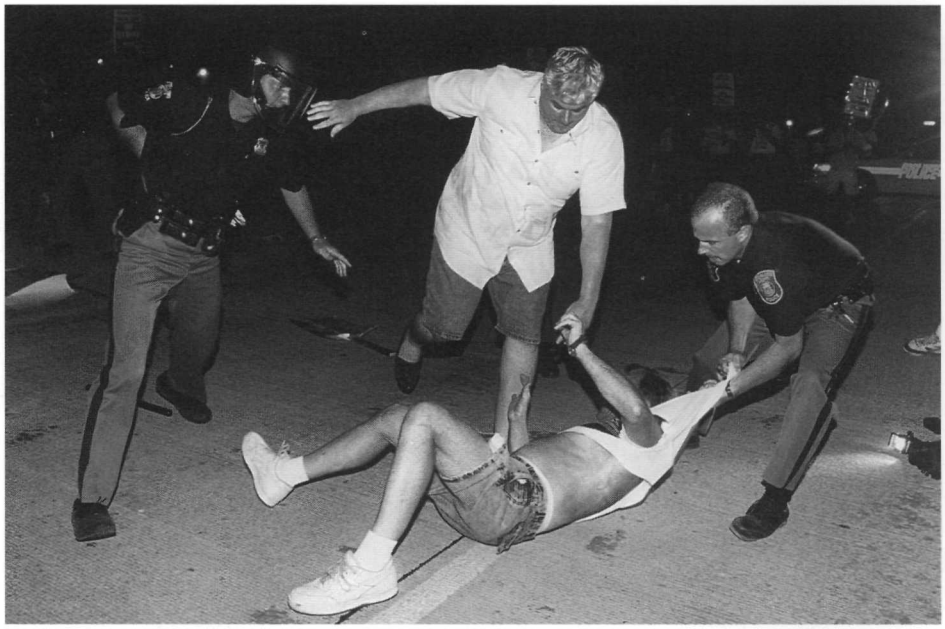
We're mindful that in Wilkes-Barre, Penn. a strike paper, *The Citizen's Voice,* created in 1978 is still in existence. Owned by the original strikers, the paper gives the still-dominant corporate paper a run for its money.

It is our hope that a strike paper in Detroit would not only meet the community's current needs and provide an income for striking reporters, photographers, mailers and drivers, but that it might survive as a community-based, unionized paper.

We believe that newspaper publishing companies have a debt to the community. Newspapers owe us responsible journalism — not because they are philanthropic or nobly minded — but because it's in the unwritten contract.

News organizations create a product that is composed of the lives of the people in the community. *We* are the news. The balance is delicate — so long as a newspaper provides enough accurate news, many of us will subscribe and the papers can charge profitable prices for their advertising space.

The relationship between Detroit and the daily newspapers has been out of balance for some time. Until now, we have lived with the imbalance. But the Detroit Newspaper Agency has brought this relationship under scrutiny by precipitating the strike and by refusing to deal fairly with its employees.



Off-duty lieutenant Jack Severance kicks striking pressman Frank Brabanec as Sterling Heights police move to clear the driveway at the Detroit Newspaper Agency's printing plant. Picketers had been standing quietly in the driveway with linked arms before the attack.

©Daymon J. Hartley

Detroit is an excellent news town. It has supported two daily papers for years. Detroit is also a premiere labor town. Many people carry union organizing in their memories, some carry physical scars, still others grew up listening to their parents' accounts of the sacrifices and the victories.

Some corporations are too expensive to keep in Detroit. Knight Ridder and Gannett are in that category.

Readers United has been invited by City Council chair Maryann Mahaffey to develop creative ideas that might force the DNA to negotiate. At our demonstration, she observed, "There is a drive on the national level to break the unions. We have a right to organize, to bargain, to strike. Yet the DNA has the gall to say they can't negotiate around-the-clock because the issues haven't been narrowed down. How do you narrow them down other than by talking? I'm hunting for ideas that can force management to come to the table. There is a point when we can't continue to spend public money to protect the private property of companies that won't bargain with the unions."

Readers United will research the city tax abatements that have been given to the DNA, the concessions that the unions made at the time of the JOA, and the quality of the current papers. We will make our voice heard, because we believe that whatever else may be said, the function of newspapers is to provide information about the community so that citizens can make intelligent decisions in their private lives, in their collective efforts and in the direction they throw their ballots. TW

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America's radical past

by Paul Buhle

[Ed. note: The New Party makes overtures to citizens with concerns ranging from civil rights to the welfare of whales, from economic justice to public education. It's intriguing to note that 19th-century progressives were just as varied and inclusive.]

It has become more and more important, amidst the current world and domestic crises, to recall what might be called the old "Green Dreams" of America's radicals, and to grasp how much they have in common with the best hopes of today's visionaries. Here and there we recover a little glimpse of this story, mostly through folklore and anecdotes about Johnny Appleseed, Nat Turner, Henry Thoreau, Tom Paine, Tecumseh, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Wendell Phillips, the Shakers or the Abolitionists. The larger story remains unheard, almost untold.

One might look all the way back to the centuries of life in Walpi, the Hopi cliffside community in today's Arizona which is the oldest continuously occupied site in North America, and a place of relatively peaceful, cooperative peoples centuries before the arrival of Europeans. We could also start on the other side of the world: the Europe of popular unrest against royal and religious oppression arising intermittently from the early Middle Ages to the Radical Reformation. In Central Europe, the survivors (and their descendants) of uprisings drowned in blood set their eyes upon a New World.

Religious-communal Germans spread out their little colonies, mostly from colonial Pennsylvania westward, during the 17th and 18th centuries. Often they practiced celibacy and adhered to a vision of equality of men and women. Indians knew them as friends. A handful, like Christian Priber, actually settled with Indian tribes and helped guide resistance against the invaders. English perfectionists, the "Shaking Quakers" or Shakers, immigrated to establish their productive, picturesque communities based upon egalitarian faith, non-wastage of resources and non-cruelty to animals. Like the huts of Walpi, Shaker villages, labyrinths (shrubs arranged to express the mysteries of faith) and remnants of colonies like Ephrata can still be found by the tourist.

Nineteenth-century radicals set themselves against Empire, against expropriation of Indian peoples, against slavery, for equal rights of the sexes and for cooperative economic development.

Political resistance leading to the American Revolution represented other strains. "Jack Tar" seamen, drawn from races and peoples around the world, had frequently resisted British impressment, and many such sailors residing in Boston provided recruits for angry crowds attacking royal institutions. Tom Paine, a former British corset-maker, issued in 1775 one of the greatest revolutionary pamphlets in American history, *Common Sense*. Radicals of the 1790s managed to hold off deepening conservative trends after the Revolution. But former colonists who sought to carry through a wider social revolution, like the followers of Daniel Shays in western Massachusetts, were put down in force. So were Indian leaders like Tecumseh, who sought to unite various tribes and carve out spheres of relative freedom. America's establishment power-brokers determined to build their own empire.

Nineteenth-century radicals, then, set themselves against Empire, against expropriation of Indian peoples, against slavery, for equal rights of the sexes and for cooperative economic development. They ranged from Nat Turner, leader of an unsuccessful slave uprising; to Sojourner Truth, the former slave who rose to popularity as an agitator for black and women's freedom; to Amelia Bloomer, whose "Bloomer" style of pants offered women new freedom of motion; to George Lippard, the first massively popular socialist novelist, who hailed the dignity of working people and savaged the hypocrisy of the rich.

These radicals nearly all had in common a religious or spiritual vision distant from the justification of race superiority and wealth heard in most white churches. Some were influenced by dissident European strains of Christianity, like John Chapman (Johnny Appleseed) the Swedenborgian, who preached nonviolence as he walked westward planting apple trees. But most worked out their own religious beliefs from an interpretation of Christianity developed within the churches: that Christ was a friend of the

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Paul Buhle is author or editor of many books on American radicalism, including *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (University of Illinois), *The American Radical* (Routledge) and a new picture book, *Images of American Radicalism* (Christopher House). He was raised a Congregationalist in Illinois.

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poor and oppressed, and that faith meant not so much personal salvation as a way of bringing egalitarian values into the world.

Sojourner Truth, George Lippard, utopian leader Robert Dale Owen and the first agitator for women's sexual emancipation, Victoria Woodhull, were all touched by Spiritualism, the strongest organized religious movement of the new faith. Rising to great popularity in the 1850s-60s, Spiritualism portrayed a commonality among all people and all things alive or formerly living. The spirit world, believers insisted, could be reached just on the "other side" of perceptible reality, part of a cosmic consciousness waiting human recognition. Poets like Walt Whitman continued to believe, but Americans en route to industrial and urban society lost interest in Spiritualism by the 1870s-80s.

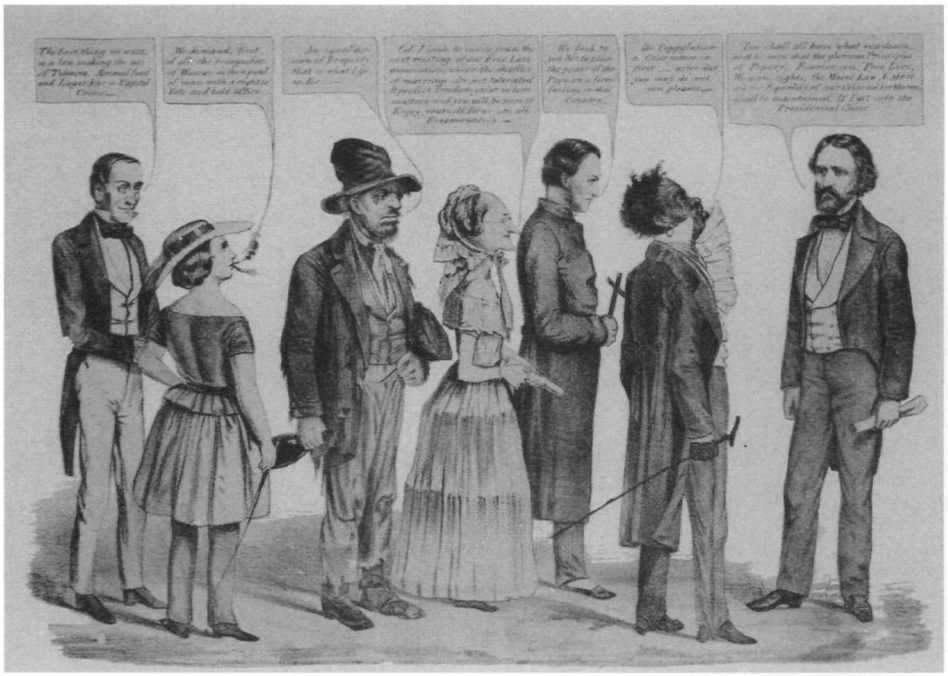
A small fragment survived, and took on new life, in the utopian dreams of Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward* (1889), the best-selling novel of the century after the Abolitionist classic, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Followers of Bellamy tried to establish their own little colonies and, in failing, joined up with a Populist movement setting up rural cooperatives and briefly establishing black/white unity in political campaigns of the South.

Meanwhile, a final current entered play in American radicalism. Immigrant socialists from Germany and Bohemia, and later, Russia, Poland, Italy, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, China, India and elsewhere brought the idea of the working class as the central source of radical transformation. As industrial conflict spread, so did socialist ideas, even when distorted by the press, and cruelly crushed by suppression of socialistic institutions and newspapers after the 1886 Haymarket bombing incident in Chicago.

When socialists from many lands found their symbolic leader in railroad unionist Eugene Victor Debs, the old cause readied for a new century. At once a believer in class unity of working people, an ardent supporter of women's rights and a Christian mystic, Debs carried the currents within him. For the 1900 presidential campaign, his Terre Haute, Indiana friend James Whitcomb Riley (America's favorite sentimental poet) composed a rhyme which might stand for the entire tradition:

And there's Gene Debs, a man who stans'
And jest holds out in his two hands
The kindest heart that ever beat
Between here and the Jedgment Seat.

Born a thousand years before his time, some said of Debs. But he was just in time to remind Americans of what radicals have to offer, if only they will listen. TW



Currier & Ives

***The Great Republican Reform Party, Calling on their Candidate* — petitioners request everything from outlawing tobacco, meat and beer to women's suffrage, an equal division of property, free love, the power of the Pope and the primacy of race issues.**

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Kierkegaard's view on nationalism

by J. Norris Beam

[Ed. note: J. Norris Beam explores ways that Sören Kirkegaard's thoughts challenge Christians who feel drawn to nationalism. While this essay does not offer ways to "redeem democracy," it is included here because Kierkegaard offers several warnings relevant to all of us, but particularly to the Religious Right. Beam considers Kirkegaard's condemnation of nationalism to be a prophetic forewarning of the ascendency of Naziism.]

It is obvious that one of the factors in Christ's death was that he repudiated nationalism, wanted to have nothing to do with it. Nowadays the orthodox are the true nationalists; they produce theories about Christian states and Christian people. —*Sören Kierkegaard*

When Christendom lost sight of the Christian message, it subordinated the category of the "individual" to that of the "public," according to Sören Kirkegaard.

Christendom shifted from personal actualization to external social and utilitarian political goals, thereby abandoning the rigors of following Christ as the "pattern."

In the absence of true Christian loyalty, Kierkegaard envisions a new form of tyranny appearing in the modern period, one which supersedes the older forms of tyranny (emperors, kings, nobility, clergy) in the enslavement of human beings. This new form of tyranny is based on the "fear of men," but appears in the guise of a strictly rational, utilitarian political defense of equality. Of all the forms of tyranny, this latest form is most dangerous and pernicious, says Kierkegaard, because of its alluring positivity.

Stated religiously, the political ideologies of modern societies offer the public beguiling promises which constitute forms of idolatry wherein *real* equality, freedom and justice are lost to the self-interests of states and political parties.

The origin of such behavior, for Kierkegaard, is contained in the presumption of human self-reliance in assertiveness over against *trust in* God; in the false confidence of humans that through collective endeavors implementing political ideologies humankind can solve its greatest problems without giving heed to the more arduous task of becoming a concrete individual, and ultimately becoming a Christian.

Replacing God with politics

Kierkegaard explains that the public participates in a phenomenon of prideful projectionism. That is, when the God-relationship of individuals is lost sight of, then people readily participate in an illusory abstraction in which they willingly give up their freedom and even their dignity in obeisance to their government, even enslaving themselves to mediocre rulers who may prove tyrannical.

"It flatters their arbitrariness that the government they obey is of their own making. It is like a pagan worshipping the god he himself has made." — *S. Kierkegaard*

Why do they do this? Kierkegaard says: "Because it flatters their arbitrariness that the government they obey is of their own making. It is like a pagan worshipping the god he himself has made — it is about the same as worshipping oneself." Thus Kierkegaard ultimately blames the increasing demoralization of humanity (specifically its pride) for the creation (projection) of a false, idolatrous nationalist ideology, by means of which through these ideological abstractions persons enslave themselves, remain enslaved, and allow themselves to be deceived and live in perpetual delusion.

In their cowardice and self-deception, delusioned nominal Christians look to secular political rulers for solutions. In this way power is held by the state and nationalistic goals displace genuine religious interests in promoting social welfare. Deluded clergy and professors lead people to embrace nationalistic ends as the hope for their future, and appeal to their pride (the "Volk" idea in Germany is relevant here) to gain support for idolatrous ideologies. Thus the few truly good individuals (those who, at least, are striving to become persons and Christians) are made to suffer at the hands of evildoers, as did Christ:

"To be specific, when in a certain situation evil has gotten the power and the others keep still, participate in it, and the good is to be expressed, the relationship is turned around in such a way that the good comes to suffer the punishment the others should have suffered. The evil world in all probability punishes the good on account of that for which the world itself should be punished."

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Science and imperialism

Kierkegaard's assessment that human nature without loyalty to the Absolute (God) will necessarily give false obeisance to human authorities — whether right or wrong — is particularly instructive (and agrees with major interpreters like Greenberg and Paul Tillich on the role of idolatry and the loss of an objectivist ethic in Western history).

In the 19th century Kierkegaard was witnessing a transition to science from religion as the conceptual framework from which Europeans viewed their world and human behavior. Humans were reduced to the level of animals, and thus indignified. Science did not consider the one thing Kierkegaard considered most important: to become an individual with dignity and integrity, and ultimately to become a Christian.

Moreover, Kierkegaard specifically associated Danish nationalism with the developing modern tendency to make of science a kind of religion. He saw that the entire world of Europe wanted a "new culture-consciousness," identified as a "Christian consciousness," in which natural science is made into a religion, and is supported by the state (and *vice versa*).

Although Kierkegaard did not reject science *per se*, he did see the dangers of its perverse use by the "public" as an all-encompassing ideology. The ultimate *motivation* of this elevation of science into a worldview or religion is human pride and defiance of God, historically expressed in the Enlightenment's trust in reason. The ultimate *consequence* of this false confidence in human intellectual powers is the development of imperialistic attitudes which result in dehumanization and the creation of a dominating bureaucratic mentality which enforces a rational ordering mode of existence upon human beings. Thus a totalitarian mindset arises out of pride of intellect of humans in their arrogantly rationalistic domination of the world, a characteristic for which modern Western humanity is noted, and which appears especially in Nazi totalitarianism.

Without love

In Kierkegaard's view, love for God is essential in adequately loving oneself and other persons. When love of God is not evident, a host of psychological maladies sets in; including envy and resentment , and the psychological and spiritual indisposition of "despair," expressed as a refusal to be oneself, a defiance of self-assertiveness, or a defiance to relate to God as the power constituting one's being. In the absence of neighborly love, a preferential, selective love uses (exploits) other persons as a means to a selfish, dominating end.

Brian Palmer/Impact Visuals

Elephant at the 1992 GOP convention

Collectively, when societies dismiss the Absolute, they invite social conflict, chaos and disruption. When individuals renounce the task of becoming "spirit" (as a finite entity participating in infinity), they invite servility to external sources of power, force, manipulation and domination, and look solely to politics for self-fulfillment in life. Kierkegaard goes so far as to say that the modern phenomenon of persons looking to the state as a means of self-fulfillment is demonic, one of two attempts by human ambition to gain an upper hand over God and Christian values. The state has cleverly tried to gain the support of the clergy so as to employ religious sanction in its dominating role over human beings.

Numerous acts of indifference during the Holocaust can be diagnosed in Kierkegaardian terms as the failure of persons to achieve a personal level of development with the capacity to love, specifically to love one's neighbor (the *true* basis of fairness and equality, according to Kierkegaard).

Kierkegaard's insights are confirmed by the striking contrast between official church leadership and those relatively few Christians who *did* help others survive. For instance, the previously persecuted Huguenot community of Le Chambon, France instinctively understood the perils of church-state alliances, and the churchly abuse of power, since they had been victimized by such authoritarian religion. Collectively, this community saved numerous Jews.

Another exception was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who, like the Christians of Le Chambon, had grown up respecting Christian values and independence, those very values so egregiously violated by the Nazis and betrayed by the "Christian" community (on the whole). Bonhoeffer had read Kierkegaard, and like other members of the Confessing Church, swam upstream against the "shoals of herring" which Kierkegaard identifies as the "crowd" or "public" that is demoralized in its mediocrity and superficiality.

Thus the very contrast of the lives of the relatively few dissenting Christians, compared with those of Christendom, confirms the importance of Kierkegaard's exhortation to be a self-developing individual in a world constantly demanding conformity. TW

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Elections/jazz

by Nkenge Zo!@

Hosting a daytime jazz show some years ago, I took calls on the question, "Should jazz be used in commercials to sell products?" Duke Ellington's music was audio vehicle at the time for a TV campaign marketing Saran Wrap.

After a series of calls, I asked the last caller, "You have something to say about our topic?"

A voice blossomed into air using English seasoned thoroughly with German. His emotion free of ambiguity, he said, "I was — we were *jailed* for our loff of jazz. *Jailed* because we listen to the music on records of the jazz people. It was in da war and *verbotten* to listen. I want to say that music of the Black American jazz people was *liberation!!"*

Learning more appreciation, I developed a taste for the peculiarities of our time, of friends, parents, strangers. I want so to have days for muse.

But for walking through 3 a.m. bus stops, watchnights, new years. Putting best foot forward, best foot forward, best foot forward down Woodward Avenue's miles half-paved, half-exposed. Past Value Village, The Turkey Grill. Watching citizens go about their business to enter a clinic, a wig shop, hat shop, look for a mail carrier, drive up to Burger King in luxury rides, in hoopties. Fly and bedraggled, neat and dirty citizens. Loud spewing throats, sweet greet lips.

Thinking past words staked by Doles, Gingrichs, Schlafleys, I wonder: Through what metaphysic do beauty, harmony, joy ignite our convergence to the sublime?

It's got to be art.

Politics as a bill of rights, sale, or goods cannot be the only *sine qua non.* With so much cogent exploration of negotiation, consensus, prayer, listening, meditation by dedicated and happy delvers, elections must not be the sole *sine qua non.*

Courtesy of MCA and 1993 GRP Records, Inc.

Ella Fitzgerald: The Early Years

When "democracy" is pronounced *The American Way,* I rail. So much is left to be desired. Like how about jazz as template? Select a work and artist of your preferred era. Duke Ellington? Basie? Mary Lou Williams? Miles Davis with Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter Live at the Plugged Nickel in 1965? Sun Ra any time? Gil Evans, Lester Young with his boys, Teddy Wilson, Miss Billie Holiday, Don Byron, Charles Christopher Parker, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn, Pops, Straight Ahead? Lester Bowie? Venus? The Decoding Society? Regina Carter? John Coltrane, Alice Coltrane, Griot Galaxy, Max Roach — and the thousands who live a jazz life. Jazz presents a metaphysic for community as it existed in community practiced largely by Afrikan Americans. I see it. And it's easy.

The rhythm section. Bass/tuba player. Trap drummer. Piano/Maybe no. Those "holding down the rhythm." Providing support. And the players (significant word for this weary heavy age!) — hold it down and move — swingin'. Responsible. And while those players hold it together, they engender a phenomenon so like "community" — a place wherein the beings involved feel, grow, learn, help.

It's the relationship of human beings in formation and proximity to one another. So whether playing horn, harp, harmonica, drums, bass, piano — support is rendered. And the solo persons are allowed the time to express themselves, do so within the confines of their creativity, sense of style, love, commitment, hearing, knowing full well that the ability to go it alone is learned with others.

And so it is. Those digging for SOCIETAL REMEDIES, UNITY and all those capital letter desires? Open to the metaphor. Open to jazz as metaphor for healthy society.

Politics as declaration, politics as electing someone to do for is such a stagnant experience when held as THE best way.

I can't be satisfied with knowing of jazz as *the* metaphor for a way. Cause there were certainly some Nations here before the many, many black folks arrived. And I know their ways are expansive and pointedly grand. Musing might get me to them. TW

art and society

Nkenge Zo!@ is art and society editor of *The Witness.* She works for WDET public radio in Detroit, Mich.

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News from Beijing

by Claire Woodley-Aitchison

Burma's Aung San Sun Kyi, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, linked the issue of gender equality to peace, human rights, tolerance and economic security in her opening remarks at the Fourth World Conference on Women and Non-Governmental Forum in August. "In practicing tolerance, it is not enough to live and let live. In societies where men are truly confident, women are not merely tolerated, they are highly valued ... Intolerance breeds insecurity, without security there can be no peace." Women from 170 countries, indigenous nations and state governments convened in Beijing and Hairou, China to explore how the world looks "Through the Eyes of a Woman," make plans to remediate the harms they suffer and celebrate the gifts they bring. Their focus was the Beijing Declaration and draft Platform for Action that had been created through the intensive interactive process of lobbying, drafting, debate, compromise, revision and proposal that marks the dialogical process of the U.N.

Both the declaration and final platform document now join the two other great international treaty documents that have emerged from the four-meeting, 20-year history of the international women's conferences, the 1979 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 1985 Forward Looking Strategies.

The Platform for Action is a "non-binding treaty." The word "non-binding," however, is misleading because assenting governments are under pressure to prove they honor the commitment. "This is the mission of Beijing," said Gertrude Mongella, FWCW Secretary General. "Each government must now set priorities, specify the resources it will contribute and declare what steps it will take to hold itself accountable to the world's women."

"We are worried that you Americans are not human. You don't do most of what makes humans human. Do all your people sing? Does your community dance together? Do you incorporate your young into the tribe? Do you have laws of stranger hospitality?"— a Namibian delegate

To see the growing global impact of, collectively, the international women's conferences, the women's movement, and feminist analysis of world problems, one need only look at the international Conference on Development and Population in Cairo held earlier this year. There it was made clear that to address population issues effectively, governments must put literacy and education of women and girls at the top of their agendas because educated women have fewer children. The second half of the analysis reframed economic and energy issues to indicate that there are not "too many people" in developing countries; rather, developed countries consume too much and too many of developing countries' resources.

Every one of the 40,000 women at the Non-Governmental Forum was an expert in her field, with a constituency and power base that she can use to translate the work of the conference into immediate and long-term actions. Each day in Hairou there were literally thousands of opportunities for these women to exchange information and ideas, build strategies and network.

At a panel on the rise of fundamentalism and conservatism, Rebecca Sevila of Peru presented strategies from a lesbian perspective saying, "We are all so different at this conference ... In order to start solving problems in this world we must begin developing an ethic of diversity within a culture of respect because conservatism is based on fear, on greed, and on divisions between people. Developing an ethic of diversity, especially as a daily practice, is a challenge. But this is a rich culture which will allow us to find new solutions to old problems because we will base them on agreements and peace, not fights."

The International Tribunal, made up of women jurists from four of the five global areas, heard testimony on crimes against women from around the globe. "The world governments cannot simultaneously preach peace and base their economies on military arms sales and acquisition," the tribunal stated.

The link between structural adjustment policies, globalization of the economy, militarization, the exploitation of women's labor, environmental degradation and the exclusion of women from decision-making were made explicit. Winona LaDuke, co-chair of the Indigenous Women's Network, spoke of the

Claire Woodley-Aitchison is interim rector of St. Mary the Virgin Episcopal Church in Chappaqua, New York, and a member of the U.S. Ecumenical Women's Network B2 (Beijing and Beyond). She was part of the film crew documenting the Fourth World Conference. The film will be available from the National Council of Churches' Justice for Women office after January, 1996.

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destruction of the earth and indigenous societies by industrial societies. "Decisions at the United Nations are made not by thousand-year-old nations of indigenous peoples, but by the 180 member states who have been in existence for only 200 years. And, in truth, most of those decisions are made by the 47 transnational corporations. The right to make those decisions is not based on human rights, but rights based on wealth and power, which are being made at the cost of millions of lives, species of plants, animals, forests and entire ecosystems and people."

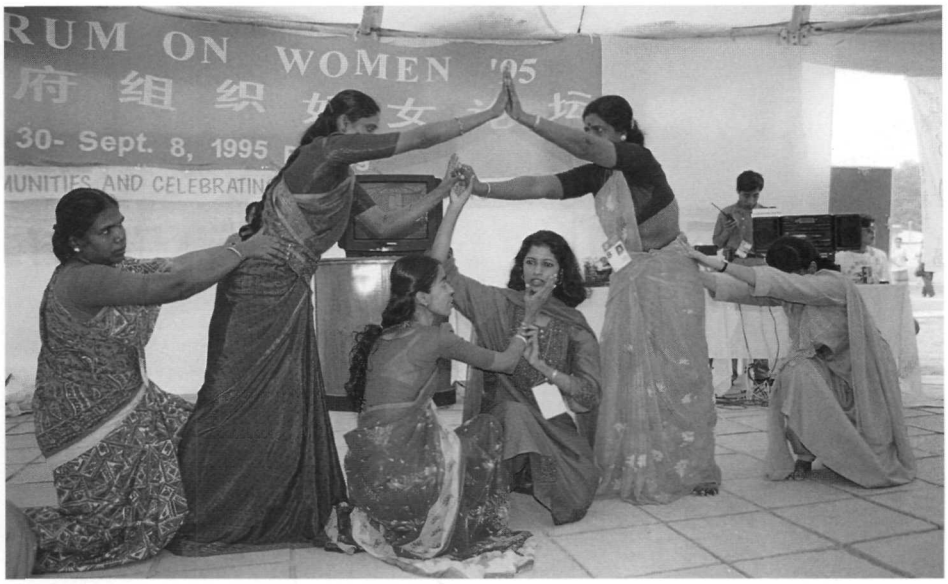
The Peace tent provided a focus for discussion and strategy for nonviolent means of resolving world issues. Many workshops focused on the necessity for, and the strategies to promote, women in leadership who act, not as tokens speaking for male-identified power structures, but as humans seeking peace. The milestone of recognizing women's rights as *human* rights will substantially change the international peace and justice dialogue.

In a personal conversation with a woman from Namibia (she asked that I not use her name) we spoke of the basic issues at stake. "We are worried that you Americans are not human," she said. "You don't do most of what makes humans human. Do all your people sing together when they work or are happy or are sad? Does your community dance together? Do you incorporate your young into the tribe? Do you have laws of stranger hospitality?" I had to answer "no" to her questions. Then she said, "My people's identity is in their culture, in our songs and rites and stories. Where is yours? In your things. You become what you love, and your people love things before people. We are afraid, you see, that you will not stay human, but become things." She ended by saying, "The way you live is killing my children."

This was the first U.N. conference where religion and spirituality was one of the major themes. At an historic meeting during one of Betty Friedan's "Conversations With ..." series, Helen Hunt, Ada Maria Issasi Diaz, Chung Hyun Kyung and Rifat Hassan presented a panel on what feminism can look like from a faith base. The recognition that in their spirituality and religious practice faith-based women have power and encouragement to share is beginning to take root and gain positive agenda time. In her address to the NGO conference, Hillary Rodham Clinton spoke of the importance of faith in the work of transforming the world. An interfaith noonday prayer prepared by the U.S. Ecumenical Women's Network was prayed daily at the NGO and U.N. conferences.

Betty Friedan noted that "identity politics," arising out of the concept that the personal is political, is a step individuals must make in order to move out of the box of patriarchal structural oppression — and there is life beyond the box, a life being shaped by the concept of community. Many women shared Aung San Suu Kyi's experience that, "There are no gender barriers that we cannot overcome." She spoke of her experience in Burma of working with male compatriots with trust and respect.

Around the world, where there is great destabilization — from military, economic, religious and ethnic wars — empowered women, working with men who are confident in who they are as equals, are providing a new stabilizing force. A new paradigm, based on trust, respect and nonviolence is emerging. TW



Participants at the NGO forum in Beijing courtesy Church Women United

Perez named to AIDS council

Altagracia Perez, an active member of ABIL, an Episcopal Church women-of-color caucus, has been named to a 23-person presidential advisory council on AIDS. Perez, 33, is rector of the Church of St. Philip the Evangelist in South-Central Los Angeles. She has helped write a national agenda for treating HIV-positive women and has created an anti-AIDS peer advising program for teens.

— based on a *Los Angeles Times* report

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Vetting the Vatican

by Rosemary Radford Ruether

During the Fourth World Conference on Women , a petition was circulated asking the U.N. to evaluate the observer status of the Holy See. The petition was organized by Catholics for a Free Choice in Washington D.C.

The impetus for this petition came from the experience of women's groups at recent United Nations' conferences on social issues, in Cairo and Copenhagen, as well as at Beijing. In these conferences the Vatican was perceived as exercising undue pressure to promote views on population, reproduction and the gender "nature" of women seen as inimical to women's welfare. For example, in the preparatory document for Beijing, Vatican spokesmen bracketed all references to gender, insisting that this term sanctioned homosexuality.

Underlying this objection was an insistence on a fixed nature of men as active and women as passive, seen as God-given and not as socially constructed. Not only opposition to abortion, but also to family planning that entails contraception have been fixed points of Vatican interventions in U.N. conferences over the years.

Although this role of the Vatican at United Nations conferences sparked the petition, its substance lies in a query concerning the legitimacy of the Holy See, as representative of the papal government of the Roman Catholic Church, to be represented at the U.N. as a state. On what basis is a church represented as a member state in an organization of nation states? How did the Vatican achieve this anomalous status as a "Non-member State Permanent Observer" in this international body of states which allows it not only voice without vote in regular U.N. meetings, but an equal vote in U.N. special conferences, such as the one at Beijing?

From medieval times until 1870, when the Italian armies under Guiseppe Mazzini abolished the papal states as an independent territory and unified Italy, the popes ruled central Italy as temporal rulers. Pius the Ninth refused to accept this confiscation of the papal states and declared himself a "prisoner of the Vatican," appealing to Catholics to reject the legitimacy of the new state. In 1929 a Concordat between the Pope and the then Italian Premier, Mussolini, settled this conflict, compensating the Vatican for the confiscated territory and giving the 108 acres of Vatican City in Rome titular status as a city state.

Although having only a few hundred residents, mostly clerics, this titular status allows the Vatican certain state roles, such as its own postal and telecommunications services. It was on the basis of its membership in the Universal Postal Union and International Telecommunications Union that the Vatican began to attend meetings of the General Assembly, World Health and Education, Scientific and Cultural Organizations of the U.N. in the 1950s, being named a permanent observer in 1964.

Although the Vatican is present at the U.N. on the basis of the historical city-state status of Vatican City, it has made clear from the beginning of its relation with this international body that it represents, not Vatican City as a temporal entity, but the Holy See, that is the papal government of the world Roman Catholic Church. Here lies the confusion of church and state in the definition of the Vatican status, for while Vatican City is a titular state, the Holy See as the papal government of the World Church is a church, not a state.

This distinction was once more reiterated by Vatican Press Secretary, Joaquin Navarro-Valls at the end of the women's conference in Beijing. When asked whether the Vatican intended to implement the various decisions on equality and justice for women in the final document approved at the conference, he replied that the delegation "did not speak for the 400 citizens of the Vatican, but only for the 900 million Catholics around the world" (*NCR* 9/29/95, p. 14). The question raised by the petition asks whether it is just and appropriate for an organization representing a church to have a status at the United Nations that allows it full voting rights at United Nations' conferences along with nation states. Does this not give inappropriate power to one church and one religious voice, while other churches and religious groups can be present at the United Nations only as Non-Governmental Organizations?

The supporters of the petition are not arguing that the religious voice should not be heard at the United Nations, but rather that it should be heard in its diversity, including the diversity of views found within Roman Catholicism itself.

Moreover, these religious voices should be present as NGOs, not as official representatives of states. Those supporting the petition might not oppose many things the Vatican says, for example, on peace, economic justice and the rights of immigrants. The issue is separation of church and state, and the need to hear many religious voices as NGOs, rather than one church monopolizing the "spiritual" voice, by claiming special status in international relations as a state. TW

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Heresy trials and order

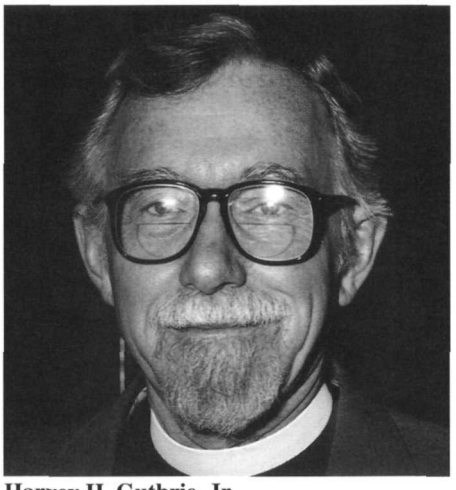
by Harvey H. Guthrie, Jr.

[Ed. note: Whether Walter Righter, the retired bishop of Iowa, was "teaching a doctrine contrary to that held by this church" when he ordained an openly gay man, Barry Stopfel, to the diaconate five years ago will be determined in an upcoming ecclesiastical heresy trial. The Witness *will be publishing a round-up of perspectives on the trial in December.]*

Walter Righter's presenters rightly see church order and orthodoxy as the basic issue. I believe it is that, but in a deeper and more radical sense than they recognize.

The concepts of order and orthodoxy emerged when early Christians sought to understand and intepret the Gospel in their cultural setting using Greco-Roman ontological philosophy. For that cultural idiom, ultimate reality was a static, stable state. Thus, the One witnessed to by the Bible and present in Jesus was interpreted as that reality, as the unchanging norm against which to test truth and righteousness. But it is important to note that those early Christians were clear that the cultural idiom was secondary to what it was seeking to interpret, to the dynamic, involved-in-history, divine One. The understanding of God as Trinity, quite illogical in that cultural idiom, but faithful to dynamic, narrative biblical witness, is evidence of that.

Harvey H. Guthrie, Jr., was dean of EDS from 1969 until 1985 and rector of St. Andrew's, Ann Arbor, Mich., from 1985 until 1995. He and his wife Doris are now retired and living in Fillmore, Calif.



Harvey H. Guthrie, Jr.

In more recent centuries modern science, critical historical research, sociology, and psychology have increasingly displaced Greco-Roman ontological philosophy as the idiom through which our culture understands and interprets reality. That is the reason for the often noted dearth of work in systematics, dogmatics and traditional moral theology in this century, and for the emergence of things like process theologies and situation ethics. Absolute, unchangeable norms are absent from our culture's experience and assumptions. Significant attempts to understand and interpret the Gospel in our contemporary cultural idiom have arisen.

At the same time, those who were on the outer edges of the theological enterprise have, in Harvey Cox's metaphor, been moving to the center: third-world folk, women, people of color, gay and lesbian people. That movement has revealed the extent to which "absolute norm" orthodoxy and order assumed European, male humanity and its tradition to be normative. As the movement of cultural history undermined the presuppositions of inherited theology and ethics, sociological history has been undermining European/male assumptions about the nature and functioning of institutions. Thus the contemporary "culture wars" which are reflected in the church in connection with the ordination of women and the unions and ordination of lesbian and gay people.

Walter Righter's presenters rightly see church order and orthodoxy as the basic issue. I believe it is that, but in a deeper and more radical sense than they recognize.

Also at the same time, biblical studies over the past century, mostly independent of what I have been describing, have led to the realization that the "theology" implied in the Bible is not what came out of the Greco-Roman, ontological-philosophical cultural idiom. "Process" may turn out to serve better as an interpretational principle for the Gospel than "stability."

Faithfulness to the Gospel may have to be defined in terms of intrinsic adequacy in specifically given moments rather than adherence to an external, absolute norm. Prophetic revelation demands datelines, incarnation demands the particularity of narrative, rather than validation on the basis of abstract formularies. Indeed, it could be that the character of the One, to whom the biblical narrative witnesses, radically undermines understandings of "stability" and "process" as opposites.

I believe we, the church, are now going through a time analogous to those early Christian centuries in which we struggled to understand ourselves as church in Greco-Roman cultural terms. We, the contemporary church, are seeking to understand ourselves as church in post-ontological/philosophical cultural terms. I believe Bishop Righter's presenters and those who have given consent to the presentment are seeking to resolve all this — or to deny all this

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A statement made by certain bishops in the face of the impending trial of Bishop Righter

We the undersigned recognize the witness of the Rt. Rev. Walter C. Righter to the Christ who lived, died and rose for the salvation of all. Walter Righter's trial is a trial of the Gospel, a trial of justice, a trial of fairness, and a trial of the Church. We stand with Bishop Righter. We feel charged as Bishop Righter is charged. We feel on trial as Bishop Righter is on trial. Should he be found guilty, we are guilty. Should Bishop Righter be sentenced, we will accept his sentence as our own.

Allen L. Bartlett, Jr., Pennsylvania
George S. Bates, Utah
William Burrill, Rochester
Steve Charleston, Alaska
Jane Holmes Dixon, Suff. of Washington
Ronald H. Haines, Washington
Sanford Z.K. Hampton, Suff. of Minn.
Barbara C. Harris, Suff. of Mass.
George N. Hunt, Acting Bishop of Hawaii
James L. Jelinek, Minnesota
M. Thomas Shaw, Massachusetts
Richard L. Shimpfky, El Camino Real
John S. Spong, Newark
Orris G. Walker, Long Island
R. Stewart Wood, Jr., Michigan
Roger Blancahrd, Ret. of Southern Ohio
John M. Burgess, Ret. of Massachusetts
John Harris Burt, Ret. of Ohio
George C. Cadigan, Ret. of Missouri
Otis Charles, Ret. of Utah
David R. Cochran, Ret. of Arkansas
Robert DeWitt, Ret. of Pennsylvania
A. Theodore Eastman, Ret. of Maryland
John E. Hines, Ret. Presiding Bishop
John Krumm, Ret. of Southern Ohio
H. Coleman McGehee, Jr., Ret. of Mich.
William Marmion, Ret. of SW Virginia
Paul Moore, Jr., Ret. of New York
Quintin E. Primo, Ret. Suff. of Chicago
George E. Rath, Ret. of Newark
Francisco Reus-Froylen, Ret. of P.R.
Robert R. Spears, Jr., Ret. of Rochester
Richard M. Trelease, Ret. of Rio Grande
Frederick B. Wolf, Ret. of Maine

— by appealing dramatically to a static norm, a norm which may fit well with the conscious cultural location of most of them, but not well with either the actual cultural location of the church today or the Gospel.

When the General Convention of 1979 sought to deal with the vocations of homosexual people in a resolution assuming a static norm, 20 bishops and a significant number of deputies with responsibility for decisions about ordination stated for the record that they would not be bound by such a resolution in evaluating vocations. That statement stands as part of the official record of our church. Many bishops, standing committees, commissions on ministry, vestries and seminary faculties have acted on it over the past 16 years, Bishop Righter (actually acting for the bishop and standing committee of the Diocese of Newark) not being the first. Whether or not they theorized along my lines, they were acting faithfully in terms of loyalty to the Gospel in the church's present cultural location.

That the lack of presentments and trials of bishops leave the present court without precedents to follow is probably witness to the church's unconscious recognition for a long time of what I have tried to describe. It is certainly in line with Anglican pastoral, pragmatic, common law tradition. The presentment — with its appeal to an absolute, external, static norm — is not only out of line with that tradition, but also hampers faithful struggling with the issue it claims as its concern. The court for the trial of a bishop might best be faithful by ruling that, along the lines of the 1979 statement, the presentment is without justification.

Eschewing triumphalism

The leadership of the Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) had originally chosen Fort Worth, Tex., as the site of the group's late-September1995 annual meeting to show the group's solidarity with those still fighting for women's ordination to the priesthood — Fort Worth is one of four dioceses where the bishop and diocesan leadership have steadfastly continued to categorically oppose women priests.

But following a "mind of the house" resolution passed by the Episcopal Church's bishops on Sept. 27 in which, by a vote of 122 to 17 with 18 abstentions, they firmly declared that the 18-year-old church canon permitting women access to the priesthood and episcopate is mandatory and not permissive, the purpose of the EWC meeting shifted — to embrace the question of how to move forward into "a new chapter in the church's life" without succumbing to triumphalism.

"Some people fear that now that the bishops have taken this stand that the oppressed will become the oppressors," observed EWC past president Sally Bucklee. "But I don't know any man or woman in the EWC who wants to do unto others as has been done unto us."

The group resolved "to assist in any way it can in the implementation" of the ordination canon while also "extending its hand in love and friendship to all in our church" and praying for reconciliation.

Church historian Pamela W. Darling noted that it is "not an accident that the mind of the house resolution [on the ordination canon] occurs as the bishops face a heresy trial [on the question of whether non-celibate homosexual persons should be ordained]."

Darling elaborated in her keynote address: "The traditionalists are right. It *is* all connected — women, ordination, language, sex, authority, Scripture. Patriarchy rests on their interlocking foundation. If you change one piece, all the rest will be destabilized."

Sixteen of the 17 bishops who opposed the bishops' ordination resolution also endorsed the Walter Righter trial.

— Julie A. Wortman

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Clergy background checks:

a conversation with Sue Hiatt and Gene Robinson

Over the past several months, a debate has developed over the clergy background checks required by the Church Insurance Company (CIC) for purchasers of its sexual misconduct liability insurance. The seven dioceses in New England's Province I have collaborated on a detailed "screening questionnaire" for this and other purposes. Some clergy in Massachusetts and elsewhere are protesting this approach to weeding out perpetrators. Gene Robinson, a priest who is Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of New Hampshire and Executive Secretary of Province I, served on the committee that developed the questionnaire. Sue Hiatt, a priest who teaches pastoral theology and canon law at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., is one of those opposing use of the questionnaire. Witness *managing editor, Julie A. Wortman, moderated their conversation.*

Sue Hiatt

Julie Wortman: Gene, some people say that in comparison with CIC's requirements, Province I has gone overboard, delving into church workers' backgrounds and infringing on their privacy. What's your response?

Gene Robinson: I think there's no doubt that CIC is the group that got the church to pay attention to these issues, although many women and organizations have tried to raise these issues with the church before. But our goal here in Province I was not just to meet and satisfy CIC's requirements. Our goal has been to make our churches safer places. In fact one of our largest dioceses, Connecticut, is not even insured by CIC, yet they have been a full participant in this process. I think this has been an appropriate effort to select, train, supervise, evaluate and discipline our clergy.

I also want to point out that this questionnaire is for use with clergy, not with all church workers. Clergy are people under authority. At our ordinations we sign an oath of conformity and submit ourselves to the church's authority. That's not true for church secretaries, sextons or other lay workers doing various kinds of ministry. We have on our agenda to develop an appropriate background check for lay church workers, but it will probably look nothing like this one.

J.W.: How would it differ?

G.R.: I think there will be many fewer and much simpler questions. The screening questionnaire was developed to meet a number of needs relating to the ordination process, the deployment process and to the ongoing supervision of clergy. We all know some horror stories about clergy who have been passed along from one bishop to another, from one diocese to another, without some relevant — and in some cases disturbing — information being communicated. This is an effort to fill in some of those gaps and to be more responsible and accountable for the people we introduce into our congregations.

J.W.: Sue, you've been among those raising questions about the Province I screening questionnaire. What are some of the difficulties you see?

Sue Hiatt: I don't agree with Gene about the efficacy of these questionnaires in terms of the stated goals. I don't see how these questionnaires are going to make parishes safer places because the clergy need to feel safe, too. What I hear repeatedly from the 76 Massachusetts clergy who signed a letter of concern and from others is that we don't feel safe if we feel our bishop is suspicious of us.

The clergy in Massachusetts are very fond of their present bishop, but they don't like the idea of that office being someone of whom they have to be wary. The tradition is that the bishop protects the clergy as much as he or she can — although not if they are out of line. But a lot of clergy see these kinds of questions as a breach of trust between them and their bishop — and they are quite alarmed about the invasion of their rights as citizens. This all ties in with the amended Title IV [clergy disciplinary canon]. A lot of clergy have memories of McCarthyism and see that in these invasive questions, which they feel violate their rights to privacy, against self incrimination, various things like that.

I'm concerned about that, too. Not in terms so much of personally losing my rights, although I am concerned about that, but when you start to erode the rights of leaders in the society there's a kind of creeping disempowerment of people who have been in leadership positions. If you start hinting around that clergy are really a very dishonest bunch and you have to investigate them and find out about their pasts, that has a very chilling effect on how we do counseling and on how we remain "soul" friends. It is similar to current efforts by some politicians to discredit the American Association of Retired Persons in order to dilute that organization's championing of Medicare.

G.R.: I have no doubt that this process is somewhat shocking to clergy. Clearly, we are being scrutinized by society, by our parishioners and by our own leaders in ways that were heretofore unknown to us. And I think that some of my colleagues' feelings about this have to do with the loss of privilege, prestige, and esteem in the society at large. But I would say that it is not the background check that is causing

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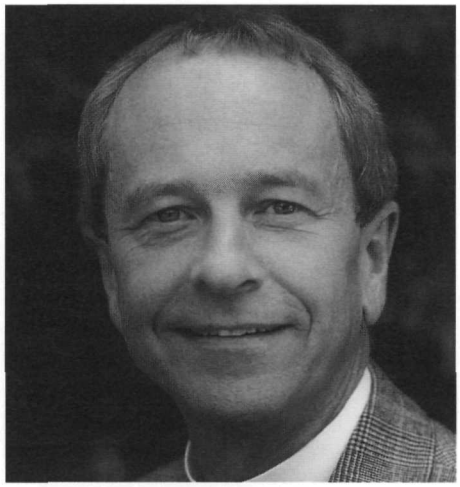
that change, but the misconduct of some of our clergy. I feel victimized, too — not in the same way, of course, as those who are sexually victimized, but clergy who violate the pastoral relationship damage *my* credibility, both in the world and in the church and thereby lessen my ability to function as a priest. So in a sense the background check is for my benefit because it is at least one attempt to police ourselves in a way that protects my credibility as a priest.

S.H.: It is very hard to see how abridging one group's rights protects the rights of another group. I think something must be done about sexual misconduct, but I don't think this is it. This just exacerbates the problem rather than solving it.

G.R.: What strategies would you employ, in addition to training and education — which I think we both agree is very important and is going quite well in the province's seven dioceses?

S.H.: Training is important because the content does get at the sexual misconduct problem, which I don't think the background check does. I don't know if we need to do any more than what the pastoral relationship between a bishop and priest — and the canonical requirements as written before the Title IV changes — require. The problem is that those things haven't been being done. You don't fix that by coming up with another procedure that appears to be wide of the mark. You fix that by doing what you should have been doing in the first place. That's been my main problem with this in terms of sexual exploitation — I don't see how this stops it. You might uncover a few people with notorious histories, but that's not going to get at the attitudinal problem that is behind this — which is, I suspect, a disrespect for women.

It also seems to me that to treat sexual abuse as a crime that needs to be ferreted out and punished is retrogressive. We don't think that about alcoholism anymore, we don't think that about various other forms of addiction. I think there are all kinds of indications that sexual abuse is a form of addictive illness and should be treated that way. But because there are victims we have been very quick to say, "No, just get the bastards out of there and stop it." But it doesn't seem to me that this background check does anything about



Gene Robinson

that. As you point out, sexual predators have gotten around safeguards before.

G.R.: I see a huge difference between how the church responds to clergy who abuse alcohol and to clergy who sexually abuse children or exploit vulnerable parishioners. But I would agree that the background check alone will not solve the problem of sexual abuse in the church or anywhere else. It's meant to be one part of a larger strategy which we would also agree needs to focus on education, training, discussion and raising these issues in the church. Where we disagree is that I think that this is a helpful strategy to employ along with the other ones.

We are moving into a different time than when the so-called "good old boy network" existed. Bishops now know, because they have been held accountable, that their failure to pass along pertinent, disturbing information renders them accountable and liable. I think we are going to see the passing along of information in an unprecedented way. I think that's a good thing.

S.H.: I'm not sure I understand why that is so, but I also have a difficulty with this particular questionnaire and with Oxford Document Management Company, which is apparently an offshoot of an accounting firm, formed especially to look into the backgrounds of Episcopal clergy.

G.R.: What allegations are you making about that?

S.H.: Well, that if investigatory procedures are going to be gone into, let's get some expertise involved. An area of dis-ease for some of us is the sort of vague answers you get about who is going to have access to the information and for how long.

G.R.: The information is given to the bishop — it's not given to search committees, it's not given out willy nilly. In our larger dioceses, there is a small number of people assisting the bishop in this and that's why the form talks about the bishop or the bishop's "designated agents." In New Hampshire, for instance, the bishop is the *only* person looking at the information coming back. The only other person who has access to that information is the clergy person.

Oxford Document Management Company, Inc., *is* a subsidiary of an accounting firm. In effect, they are providing nothing but secretarial services for us. That is, they are licking the envelopes, licking stamps, sending out mail on our behalf. But they are making no decisions, no judgments whatsoever, on information that is obtained. When that information comes in, whether from a clergy person or a reference, if it contains anything but a "no" answer to those questions, anything at all, the entire form is sent to the bishop. Usually, what gets written in the comments section of the form are very positive comments, indicating that "Fr. Smith is a wonderful person and we'd love to have him back." But if anything is written, positive or negative, it goes to the bishop.

In addition, nothing is recorded or put on computer with respect to the content. The only thing that is on computer at Oxford Document is the clergy person's name, the references that that clergy person listed, and a record of when the letter went out to the reference and when it was received back. They do not enter any of the information that comes back on

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those forms into a data base. They retain copies of the forms for five years and at the end of five years everything is either sent to the bishop or the bishop may renegotiate for a longer storage period.

S.H.: We probably have a basic disagreement here. I don't want a lot of written material about me to be in anybody's files — even the bishop's, but certainly not a subsidiary of a CPA in Minneapolis. Also, there just are not the guarantees that these materials won't be shown to whoever comes down the pike — the FBI, the CIA or whoever it is. We have the experience in this church of the FBI running rampant with church files and people serving time in jail because of that and that I find very scary. [Former Presiding Bishop Jack Allin gave the FBI permission to look through files at the National Church office. Church staffers went to jail for refusing to testify about Puerto Rican revolutionary activity before a grand jury.]

G.R.: You raise a good point. I wish that there had been some kind of decision made at the national level about how to go about this process. It is sheer lunacy for there not to be a coordinated effort amongst all of our dioceses so that we are all doing the same thing, everyone is experiencing the same thing and so that the information is transferable from diocese to diocese. It makes no sense to have as many processes as there are dioceses. We here in New England were trying to bring some kind of order out of all the chaos, at least for our seven dioceses.

S.H.: But until the safeguards are there, I just can't afford to participate, knowing the history of what happens in this country. Protecting one's rights is a very important thing. It is not a matter of convenience, it's a matter of basic ways of being and operating in this society. If I am fighting for the rights of minorities and gays I certainly can't sign away my own.

J.W.: Can we spend a little time talking about this rights question? There are people who have different things to say about what rights clergy have and what rights they don't have.

S.H.: Gene mentioned the oath of conformity which clergy take at ordination. That oath certainly says nothing about giving up one's rights as citizens and I think this, "Well, you gave your rights up as citizens when you were ordained," sort of thing is disturbing. I did no such thing. If someone thinks we did do that or we do do that, let's get it out in the open, because I'm not willing to do that or to say I did so 24 years ago when I was ordained.

G.R.: I come down on the side of those people like Sally Johnson, the chancellor of Minnesota, who would contend that the First Amendment wall separating church and state is operative here and that that wall permits the church the freedom to rule itself with little interference from the government. The church is free to select, supervise, deploy and oversee its own clergy by its own rules. It's a question of what we give up by being under authority and what we do not. There are a lot of misconceptions about that.

When you start to erode the rights of leaders there's a kind of creeping disempowerment of people who have been in leadership positions. If you start hinting that clergy are really a very dishonest bunch and you have to investigate them and find out about their pasts, that has a very chilling effect on how we do counseling and on how we remain "soul" friends.

— Sue Hiatt

S.H.: Under whose authority? Just "people under authority" is something we could debate until doomsday. But the constitution and canons of the Episcopal Church do not give bishops absolute authority over clergy. In our polity clergy and laity have a part in making the rules.

G.R.: I would agree when you use the word "absolute," but Title III Canon 24 Section 4b is the canon that does give the bishop the right to examine the life and ministry of clergy and congregations.

S.H.: Yes, but the assumption is, within the bounds of English common law. Also, "examine" does not mean "dictate."

G.R.: Can you point to a couple of examples in the questionnaire that violate your civil rights?

S.H.: Yes. The right against self-incrimination. It asks if you have been accused of or involved in various things. The right to privacy I think is pretty clear.

G.R.: That is not clear. We quite specifically eliminated anything that was self-incriminating. We had a long discussion about this with the bishops, chancellors, administrators and the committee. So, for instance, it does not say, in general terms, "Have you ever misbehaved?" It asks for factual information — "Have there been formal charges brought?" That's a fact, not self-incrimination.

S.H.: I don't agree with that. My recourse is to resist and not fill out the questionnaire. And my bishop's recourse is to bring charges against me for disobeying a godly admonition should he give me one.

G.R.: That's not his only recourse in the case of clergy who refuse to comply. Yes, the bishop could issue a godly admonition or direction to fill this out and then if she or he did not comply, that would be grounds for a presentment. But I don't hear a single one of our bishops remotely favoring such a course of action.

S.H.: That would be disastrous, but it could happen.

G.R.: A second approach, which is the one I hear them taking, is the pastoral approach which is based on a relationship between themselves and their priests. I think the way most of the bishops will handle this is that if, over time, the person still cannot fill out the questionnaire, then the priest is to understand that should any

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kind of allegations be made against that priest for misconduct, their refusal to participate in the process will obviously be discoverable evidence by any prosecuting attorney. That's a fact and the priest and the priest's vestry or employer should know that.

J.W.: I've heard people — especially women concerned about sexual misconduct in the church — raise suspicions that people who are opposed to the background checks have something to hide or are refusing to be accountable.

G.R.: I don't hear anyone saying that, certainly not the people I have worked with on this form. That is impugning the integrity of people who are questioning this process — which I don't do and don't hear being done by people who agree with this process.

S.H.: I have heard that said, indeed some clergy have told me they are complying primarily because they are afraid people will suspect them of misconduct if they don't.

That brings me to the whole question of whether this way of going about things really catches perpetrators. I'm quite clear in my mind that it does not, that the "old boy" way of doing things knows how to get around background checks. You write down the people you know who are going to give you a good reference and we protect our own. The people who get caught in this are the new kids on the block — women, gays, the people who in some way deviate from the standard Episcopal clergyman pattern. They are not protected by this informal network of back-patting and winking.

I have no objection to my bishop knowing everything there is to know about me — that is part of the relationship which comes with ordination. My objection is to having it on file, having it written down where all sorts of folk, you know not who, can get hold of it.

G.R.: Would you feel comfortable, then, with something similar to this questionnaire if there were some way of safeguarding that it is only for the bishop's and the clergy person's eyes? Or are you saying there is no way to ensure that?

S.H.: I find it hard to believe that there is a way. I don't like this information being on computer databases.

G.R.: You did hear my point that it is not being entered on a computer anywhere?

S.H.: I simply don't believe that. I think you believe that, but I don't, because my experience is that once you've got something written down it has a way of perpetuating itself.

J.W.: I've heard there has been considerable objection to the last question on the reference questionnaire which asks, "Is there any other information that you think the bishop should know? Please explain at the end of this form or on a separate sheet of paper."

We are being scrutinized by society, by our parishioners and by our own leaders. And I think some of my colleagues' feelings about this have to do with the loss of privilege, prestige, and esteem in the society at large. But I would say that it is not the background check that is causing that change, but the misconduct of some of our clergy. — *Gene Robinson*

G.R.: Let me point out that that is one of the most widely asked questions in the church. Every day, deployment officers and bishops and others talk with one another about candidates in the deployment process and in probably 99 percent of those conversations that question is asked. What's horrifying to me is that I have no way of knowing what my bishop or my deployment officer is saying about me. Because in this form those questions are asked and the responses are in writing and I have access to the forms, I have a way of knowing what is being said about me and by whom.

S.H.: But the practice of off-the-record comments is not going to stop because of the use of these forms. And I don't see how having this information written down protects anybody, especially when you've signed a waiver that you won't sue the person who says these kinds of things.

G.R.: The chancellors of the province have said that the waiver that the clergy person signs only waives their right to sue someone for telling the truth about them but does not waive their right to sue for libel or defamation when something untrue is said about them. But I understand that Sue has checked with lawyers who disagree with that interpretation and feel that the waiver is for *any* legal recourse.

S.H.: Yes. Whose lawyer are you going to listen to? In an adversarial proceeding the chancellors are the bishops' lawyers, not the clergyperson's.

J.W.: Much of this was set into motion by CIC as a condition of liability coverage. Do you feel the church has allowed the CIC to dictate too much or that because we're being driven by that kind of requirement we've forgotten to do some original thinking about how to respond to abuse in the church?

S.H.: I certainly feel that way. My brother is a physician and I have watched the way insurance requirements have dictated medical practice in the last 10 or 15 years. An insurance man said to him at one point, "You want to practice Cadillac medicine but we're only going to pay for Chevrolet medicine." That concerns me as a professional. We're allowing insurance companies who really don't know much about it dictate medical practice and now they want to control ministerial practice. I object strongly to that.

G.R.: I don't think that CIC has dictated too much. From time to time it has felt a bit like the tail wagging the dog, but I keep holding on to the fact that these are issues that we should have been paying attention to for a very long time now and I'm not

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sure, frankly, that if we hadn't had CIC bringing it to our attention as a result of some lawsuits that we would be any closer to dealing with these issues than we were five years ago.

S.H.: But this investigative approach seems to me to have a chilling effect on relationships between clergy and parishioners. You increasingly get the feeling, "Don't put your arms around that person because they'll sue you." And what does that do to the healing power of relationships and warmth? Do we have to avoid intimacy entirely and go back to a very cold kind of practice of ministry? I consider that a sea change.

G.R.: I think that's a red herring. That's an overreaction. We teach small children good touch and bad touch — if they can understand the difference, surely clergy can. And I would be appalled at anyone suggesting that clergy no longer touch parishioners. It is important that we understand that being touched by another human being is not experienced the same way by everyone. I had an amazing conversation with a woman priest from a neighboring diocese who was the victim of abuse as a child who described to me the kind of terror that still comes over her at the passing of the peace. She described to me what it felt like to her to have a man, especially, approach her with arms outstretched for a big bear hug and what that did to her insides — believing fully in the liturgical action of the passing of the peace, but being conflicted by all of these feelings. And so I have been educated about being sensitive to how my "warm" embrace might be received by someone else. I wouldn't call that a chilling effect. I've become much more sensitive to how my actions might affect someone else. I would not want a priest to hold back from doing the appropriate kinds of touching that are part of our history and tradition. After all, we use the laying on of hands for lots of actions in this church and I would not want us to pull back from that at all. And I don't think appropriate education would suggest it.

S.H.: No, but I think the background check does, because what it is saying to people is that you have to be very careful because somebody is going to sue you.

G.R.: You don't think that's already in the culture?

S.H.: It may be, but if you're talking about making churches safe places they've got to be safe for the clergy, too. What this background check says is that it is not safe to do anything like this.

G.R.: What do you mean, "It's not safe to do anything like this"?

S.H.: It's not safe for you to touch people.

G.R.: Where do you find that in the questionnaire? It talks about harassment, it talks about child abuse, it talks about pornography.

S.H.: A priest I know has been sued in civil court for touching someone inappropriately. An unstable person charged him with assault and battery in passing the peace in the liturgy. The judge threw it out of court, but he went through legal proceedings, meanwhile, with no support from the diocese. He felt battered by the experience, not to mention financially drained by it. So he's going to be wary of touching people in the future. And he doesn't feel safe or supported by his church.

G.R.: But it *was* thrown out of court. However, something you raise which causes me great concern is that the liability policy is for the church, the parish or for the diocese. CIC will defend the church or the diocese, but the clergy person is on his or her own to mount his or her own defense. I think that is horrifying. I pushed CIC on this point and asked, "Do you mean if I am falsely accused and I spend every dime I have to defend myself and am acquitted CIC will have no part to play in that?" And they said, "That is correct." That is a fact that is not widely known and is something we have got to deal with as a church.

S.H.: Yes. I think people have gone along with this background check because they thought it would protect them, but in fact it doesn't. I recently talked with a clergyman who said he asked his insurance agent about getting his own insurance for this and was told the premiums would be prohibitive. So that is scary stuff.

G.R.: It has always been true, but we just haven't been aware of it.

J.W.: Sue, what comes next with your protest of the background checks?

S.H.: We have a resolution before Massachusetts' diocesan convention to suspend this background check and to have the bishop appoint a committee to look at alternative ways of looking at this. I have heard that the Diocese of New York and other dioceses have voted to do exactly that and are in that process.

J.W.: What alternatives might you have in mind that a committee would explore?

S.H.: I would like a committee to look at all these issues. What is the business of insurance and what is the business of ministry? What is the Christian position on confession, absolution and amendment of life, which I think is a theological issue involved here. There are all kinds of exciting theological issues that are potentially raised by this. I would like a process that does not violate my rights as an American citizen because I think whether the church is allowed to do that under separation of church and state or not, I am not willing to waive those rights.

When I raise questions of rights and responsibility and trust and so forth, the response I get is, "We have to catch these perpetrators." I don't know how we get anywhere with that conversation because we are not talking about the same thing. I've heard what Gene has to say, but I am not convinced.

G.R.: I agree that this has a lot to do with trust between clergy and their bishops, between clergy and their congregations. For the lay people I have worked with, clergy sexual misconduct is a real issue — and they are proud that the Episcopal Church, as their faith community and/or employer, is naming and dealing with this issue. The pendulum has swung to one particular side now and we may end up in a more centrist place in the future. But I'm willing to be in this place right now so we can come back to the center because we paid too little attention to these issues for so long.

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Dueling ideologies and evangelism

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

When ECUSA's evangelism officer, Linda Strohmier, began her report to the recent international evangelism conference called by the Anglican primates, jeering broke out and one man was observed pretending to vomit before walking out.

The uproar was symptomatic of a split amongst the 200 American "observers" who attended the conference and pulled 120 delegates from 60 countries into the fray with them.

The number of official U.S. delegates was limited to three, which could have kept the U.S. role more proportionate than it has been at Lambeth where American bishops easily afford the trip and thus hugely outnumber others. But hundreds of U.S. observers were invited to help subsidize the conference held at Kanuga, N.C. September 5-9.

As usual, many participants from overseas felt the Americans, by virtue of their numbers and their brazen manner, placed their concerns too high on the agenda.

The character of those concerns was dictated in large measure by Kanuga's decision to invite its own evangelism mailing list which is composed of folks in Episcopalians United, Pews Action, Daughters of the King and Faith Alive. A minority of folks represented the church's gay/lesbian, feminist, rural and ethnic constituencies.

During plenary sessions, the American conservatives sat dead center, while the progressives sat in the back. The location of the applause indicated whether the speaker's comments were directed toward personal piety and denunciations of homosexuality or toward a corporate understanding of sin and economic injustice.

"You would have to have been insensate not to know that there was real fractiousness in the American church," noted Strohmier.

She added that she felt sympathy for the international participants.

"They were still recovering from jet lag.

Linda Strohmier and Kaveinga Vaka, a youth from Tonga. ENS

Most of these folks travelled alone and were the only representative from their country. And many were operating in their third or fourth language when speaking English," Strohmier said. There were no translators, which was roundly criticized.

Homosexuality

Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, the church's gay/lesbian justice ministry, says the conference was the most painful he has attended. As an out gay man, he caught a lot of fury and patronizing attempts to "convert" him from both right-wing Americans and from Africans. [Zimbabwe's Council of Churches recently condemned homosexuality. See p. 37.]

George Piwang of Uganda told the gathering that he didn't want North Americans exporting "the homosexual agenda through resources and people. Homosexual imperialism is just as bad as the missionary imperialism we rejected in the past. This conference has been an eye opener about how agendas from America can become agendas through the communion. This is a travesty for me."

Fundamentalism

When George Carey, archbishop of Canterbury, spoke about the Anglican Church as a place for "slow conversion," for "intelligent faith," and for a mid-point "between fundamentalism and extreme liberalism," many criticisms were raised. Again right-wing American Christians were buttressed by participants from overseas.

"Bishop Ben Kwashi of Nigeria complained that talk of fundamentalism is a luxury for Christians in the West," according to Doug LeBlanc writing in *The United Voice,* the newspaper of the conservative group, Episcopalians United. "Kwashi spoke of converts who do not have any theological training but who believe and obey Scriptures.

"'I'd rather have those people than those who are asleep or dead,' Kwashi said to loud cheers and applause."

Archbishop Carey, on the defensive said, "We've had 200 years of critical scholarship, and we have nothing to be afraid of in that scholarship. I have found many resources in that scholarship and I still say the Creed with full conviction."

Tolerance

John L. Peterson, secretary general of the Anglican Communion, spoke to the hazards of unrestrained fundamentalism in those committed to Islam, but also in Christians. His comments were directed to the experiences of Christians in Africa and South America who are trying to maintain the faith in the face of the energetic and bank-rolled preaching of Americans who suggest that the poor are poor because they've sinned and who preach unbridled capitalism [See *TW*, 6/95, p. 15]. In fact, representatives from the South Pacific testified to the renewal that has occurred in their churches as they combat the influence of pentecostal sects.

"I hold my head in shame to hear Jesus' name being affiliated with political

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movements that isolate, inhibit and breed hate and discontentment between human beings," Peterson said. "Might we be a church where people know that they are loved no matter what their race or color, no matter what their sexual orientation, no matter what their tribe? A church that is not inclusive is not a church of Christ."

Some considered Peterson's observations an attack on simplicity and faithfulness.

Chinedu Nebo, of Nigeria, told the conference that the dioceses of West Africa have experienced phenomenal growth while insisting on repentance.

"When the heathens and the pagans come to Christ, we do not tell them that since serving countless worthless idols has been their lifestyle for generations, they may continue to serve other gods. We tell them to repent and serve only Christ," Nebo said.

"When prostitutes come seeking Christ, we don't tell them that since prostitution is their chosen lifestyle they could serve God unblamably while remaining in the sinful lifestyle. We teach them that Jesus said, 'Go and sin no more.'"

Church growth

Many participants, both domestic and foreign, defined evangelism in terms of church growth. Bishop Yong Ping Chung from China outlined his plan to double church membership in the next three years.

Samir Kafity, bishop of Jerusalem, took a hit from an American traditionalist who chastised him for not converting Jews and Muslims.

But others were offended.

Jane Bass, ordained in England, commented during the conference, "I am quite dismayed by much of what I have heard. When will we stop hyping up the success stories of thousands of people coming to Christ and focus on our call to share the Gospel with the marginalized and the very poor?"

Observer Steve Kelsey's observations were similar.

"Evangelism is not about recruiting new members to fill our pews. That would be an agenda of the maintenance of the Church as institution, rather than the new course of mission.

"Evangelism is a compelling proclamation to a world yearning for life abundant, for justice and for peace," Kelsey noted. "Bishop Jubal Nevas of Southwestern Brazil said that the church must 'prepare people not only to be transformed but to transform the society, to proclaim not only personal salvation but also transformation of society.'"

Public repentance

Carey affirmed Christian leaders who have publicly repented for institutional sins: Anglicans in Japan have apologized for Japan's imperialism; Michael Peers, archbishop of Canada, has apologized for the church's oppression of Indian communities under the guise of evangelism; and Carey himself apologized to Ireland for the role of Protestants in hostilities there.

"Ninety-five percent of the people in the church don't know or care if there is an evangelism officer. They are not involved in the politics. What they're doing is trying to live like Christians."

— Linda Strohmier

Linda Strohmier

Meanwhile, much of the tension at the conference revolved around ECUSA's evangelism officer Linda Strohmier.

Strohmier has become a target for the conservatives who single her out as the fourth indication of the presiding bishop's errant leadership in their booklet *A Catalog of Concerns,* recently released from Mobile, Ala., by An Association of Concerned Episcopalians to Inform and Awaken Our Church.

The booklet presents quotes that indicate that Strohmier is critical of evangelism if it is exclusive, focussed on money-raising, or unthinking, "only about sharing personal Christian stories." They also fault her for referring to the Holy Spirit at "she" and for endorsing same-sex blessings.

Asked what she makes of the jeering, Strohmier said, "My vision of myself is as a grandmother, someone who cares benevolently about everyone that she's involved with. It's hard to have people you care about reject your caring. It feels awful."

Asked how she takes care of herself in the face of such opposition, Strohmier answered that she visits local churches. "Ninety-five percent of the people in the church don't know or care if there is an evangelism officer. They wouldn't know Walter Righter if they met him. They are not involved in the politics. What they're doing is trying to live like Christians. That's what the grandmother cares about. Living in this kind of conflict, I ask constantly, 'What would Jesus do?' "

After the furor

When the observers left and the delegates had several days alone together, the tension dropped markedly.

"I regretted that the predominant number of observers seemed to be in agreement with negative commentary toward the American church," observed delegate LaDonna Wind, evangelism and congregational development coordinator for the Diocese of Kentucky.

"The negativity was focussed primarily on our presiding bishop's call that there be no outcasts, that we be a church of inclusivity."

Wind attributed the drop in tension both to the departure of the American delegates and to the time pressure on the delegates to complete reports in the remaining day and a half. Weary, but buoyed by the relationships developed within their small groups, delegates turned their attention to listing priorities for accomplishing evangelism. They were surprised by the commonality of their vision.

[This report is drawn from telephone interviews, reports from ENS, Episcopalians United *and from the Internet.]*

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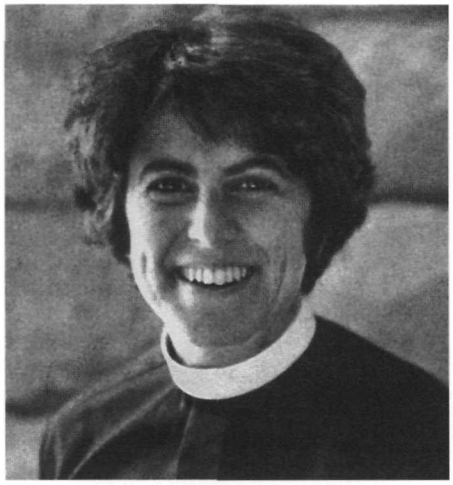
Geralyn Wolf elected bishop of R.I.

On September 30 the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island elected Geralyn Wolf its 12th bishop. Currently dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Louisville, Ky., Wolf, 48, is the second woman to be elected head of a diocese in the U.S. church and the fifth woman elected bishop.

In comparison with her predecessor, George Hunt, Wolf does not consider herself a "social activist" who can be expected to be seen "marching in the streets" on behalf of progressive causes. "I'm just a different type of person. I have tried to live my commitments as a Christian in my daily life," she said, noting a six-year stint as vicar of an inner-city Philadelphia neighborhood mission that preceded her current work in urban Louisville.

Impatient with *The Witness'* questions about her views on a variety of social justice issues currently under debate in the church, she asked, "Why haven't you asked me anything about faith? I believe the essential question for the church today is whether we are willing to root our lives in the Gospel of Jesus Christ."



Geralyn Wolf

In Rhode Island she'll be pushing for an affirmative answer to that query by focussing on the spiritual and theological needs of that particular diocesan community — and by challenging church members to walk their theological talk.

"We'll be doing more retreats and we'll also be looking at the theological basis for everything we do," she says, "from the budget to mission and ministry. Tithing, for example, is to me not a question of choice but of justice. A person might find it possible to write their congressperson every day on political issues of concern but find it impossible to tithe," a stance she finds problematic for committed Christians.

But while Wolf considers herself a "centrist," walking a line, she says, between contemplative spirituality and the radical positions of her *alma mater*, the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., she is no reactionary. For example, after determining that a candidate for ordination is acting on his/her sexuality in a responsible way, she believes "the church should get out of the bedroom."

News of Wolf's bishop-elect status came as the Episcopal Women's Caucus was holding its annual meeting in Forth Worth, Tex. Coming on the heels of the Episcopal Church's bishops' meeting in Portland, Ore., where the bishops passed a "mind of the House" resolution affirming that the canon providing for women's ordination is "mandatory in all dioceses," the Rhode Island election was greeted in Fort Worth as serendipitous icing on the women's ordination cake.

— Julie A. Wortman

Fifty years is enough: Anglicans take on the IMF and World Bank

The Anglican UN Office is developing a Round Table Policy Forum to work on a response to the burden of international debt carried by many third world nations.

The Forum will bring together prominent government, economic, academic and religious leaders to consider practical policy alternatives.

The Anglican UN Office has expressed basic support for the "50 Years is Enough" campaign, which is pressing for major reform of the World Bank and IMF. Information/action packets can be obtained by writing 1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20005; or phoning 202-IMF-BANK.

An educational video, *Who Runs the World?*, is available from Christian Aid, P.O. Box 100, London SE1 7RT, England; phone 011-44-171-620-4444.

Anglican indigenous peoples angle for self-determination

Native Hawaiians, First Nation Peoples of Canada and the U.S. mainland, along with aboriginals from Austrailia, New Zealand and the Torres Strait islands meeting in Alaska in September called for a non-geographic province with its own bishops for indigenous people in North America and an "indigenous training center" to preserve and nurture North American indigenous culture. In large part, the model for such a province is the non-geographic bishopric of Aotearoa in New Zealand, which has jurisdiction over Anglican Maori. *— Owanah Anderson*

Women bishops in S. Africa?

In a landslide vote Sept. 26, the Province of Southern Africa — which approved women's ordination to the priesthood in 1992 — agreed that women can become bishops.

Dean Colin Jones of Cape Town said: "I am desperately afraid that in a few years' time we'll have women who will look like our current bishops who are, without wanting to cause offense, tired old men, heavily overworked. I hope that if we do ordain women to the episcopate that we will be open to the special leadership they can give." *— ANS*

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Congressional Black Caucus

The Republican-dominated Congress made it virtually impossible for members of the Congressional Black Caucus to participate in their 25th anniversary forum in late September, according to Detroit City Councilwoman Sheila Cockrel.

In a move that Cockrel described as "mean-spirited and vindictive," the Republican majority denied the Caucus space in the Capitol and scheduled major social welfare debates during the days of the forum.

"Before the Gingrich gang took over, many of the brain trusts and issue forums were held right on the hill so members of the black caucus could easily participate and still vote when they needed to," Cockrel explained.

Held at the Washington Convention Center September 20-23, the forum was "an excellent opportunity for a white elected official to gain a deeper appreciation of the experiences and perspectives of African-Americans in a profoundly racist country," Cockrel said.

"The Caucus' office and staff were decimated by the Republican majority earlier this year," Cockrel added.

"The entire organization has had to retrench to deal with the attack from the Right and to maintain itself as an organization — no small feat."

Troubling news on the Net

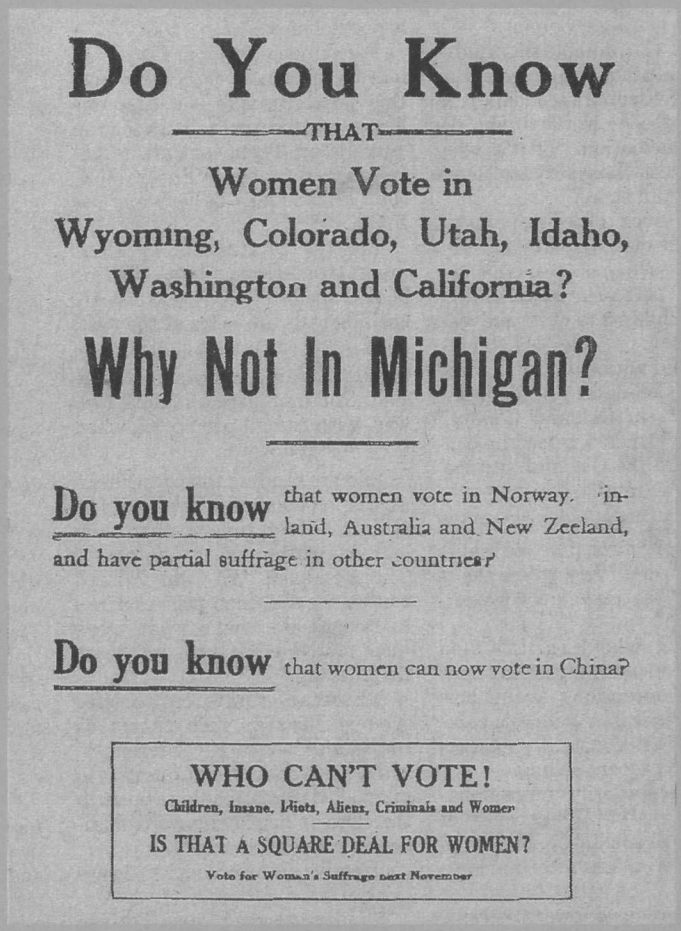
Miami (AP) A Wal-Mart store pulled a popular T-shirt proclaiming "Someday a woman will be president" off its shelves, saying it was offensive to some shoppers.

A Wal-Mart spokeswoman said the company stopped selling the shirts at the only store that had them after one customer complained. The store sold about two-thirds of its 204 shirts.

The shirt is emblazoned with the child character Margaret from the cartoon strip Dennis the Menace, smiling with her arms spread wide, making the proclamation.

Ann Moliver Ruben, 70, the psychologist who designed the shirts ... said that Sharon Higginbotham, a buyer for women's clothes at Wal-Mart's national office in Bentonville, Ark. told her that the store would not carry the shirt nationwide because the message "goes against Wal-Mart's family values."

[By the end of September, Wal-Mart had apologized, calling the decision "a mistake."]



Do You Know

THAT

Women Vote in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Washington and California?

Why Not In Michigan?

Do you know that women vote in Norway, Finland, Australia and New Zeeland, and have partial suffrage in other countries?

Do you know that women can now vote in China?

WHO CAN'T VOTE!

Children, Insane, Idiots, Aliens, Criminals and Women

IS THAT A SQUARE DEAL FOR WOMEN?

Vote for Woman's Suffrage next November

Suffragist flyer circulated in Michigan. The nation celebrates the 75th anniversary of women's enfranchisement this year.

Zimbabwe's churches condemn homosexuality

(ENI) Homosexuality is "totally new and out of step with the Zimbabwean tradition and culture" according to a statement issued by the Zimbabwean Council of Churches (ZCC), which has 20 Protestant churches as members, following an increasingly strident campaign directed against gays and lesbians by Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

The ZCC's president, Bishop Jonathan Siyachitema, and the organization's general secretary, Murombedzi Chikanga Kuchera, said that Zimbabweans "should not be coerced into a practice which is totally alien to them."

Mugabe's campaign has aroused concern in international church circles because the next assembly of the World Council of Churches is to take place in 1998 in the Zimbabwean capital of Harare.

Ancient rage

Mary Lee Wile, whose imaginative portrait of the rage Elizabeth may have felt after John's and Jesus' deaths ran in *The Witness* in November, 1993, has recently had a book by the same name published (Larson Publications, 1995)! It has been well received with reviews in *Publishers Weekly* and the *Library Journal.*

short takes

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Pursuing electoral reforms

by Rob Richie

Real Choices, New Voices, by Doug Amy; Columbia University Press, 1993.

As a committed political reformer, I have a confession to make. Not many years ago I looked with disdain on elections. Seeing them as a shallow exercise in "lesser-of-two nitwits" logic, I plunged myself into the *real* work of social change with community and public interest organizations.

A persuasive friend argued that fighting for political power was too important to neglect. Her campaigns showed that good people can be elected and that, in the process, you can move public opinion, both in legislatures and at the local bowling alley. I ended up working to elect one of the most progressive members of Congress in a tight race, yet still felt frustrated with the system's limitations.

Douglas Amy's *Real Choices, New Voices; The Case for Proportional Representation Elections in the United States* is for both those who avoid electoral politics and those who try to make it work. Amy gets at the core of why we so often give up on politics and why we so often are left with a bitter taste when we don't.

Amy argues that the fundamental problem with electoral politics in the United States is a "winner-take-all" voting system that is "unfair, outmoded and undemocratic." He makes a clear, strong case for adoption of systems of proportional representation: ones in which self-defined groups of voters can win seats in a legislative assembly in proportion to their share of the vote. With proportional representation, 10 percent of the vote for a certain political force earns its supporters one out of ten seats.

In simple terms, this means that the United States would become a multi-party democracy, one in which voters had a range of choices and the ability to help elect the ones they liked best. There are several forms of proportional representation, some based on voting for political parties, some based on voting for candidates. All could be adopted in the United States for all levels of election without constitutional amendments. All have been well tried in the majority of democracies around the world that use proportional representation voting.

I have a confession to make. Not many years ago I looked with disdain on elections. A persuasive friend argued that fighting for political power was too important to neglect.

Amy succinctly explains the different forms of proportional representation, provides an excellent chapter debunking objections to proportional representation and lays out the key advantages. Reciting them risks accusations of pollyanna optimism, but the evidence is overwhelming that proportional representation indeed would:

• Encourage higher voter turnout: The fact that voters have more choices at the same time that their top choice is more likely to be elected is an obvious spur to voter participation.

• Elect more women: In countries like Germany and Australia that have both winner-take-all elections and proportional representation, it is not uncommon to find that women are three times more likely to be elected in proportional representation than winner-take-all.

• Elect more people of color: We have only one African American or Latino in the U.S. Senate in large part because all states are majority white; as Lani Guinier argues, proportional representation systems would allow more candidates of color to win by allowing all voters to have a better chance to win the representation they want.

• Break the two-party monopoly: Our winner-take-all is the single most important reason that we have a system limiting us to two choices (if we're lucky — over a third of state legislative elections in 1994 were uncontested). The need to win 50% of the vote suppresses political dissent and new parties.

When Amy first wrote *Real Choices, New Voices* in 1993, the early glimmerings of a movement for proportional representation did not prevent it from seeming a theoretical exercise. No more. Now Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney is advocating proportional representation in Congress, most new political parties put it high on their agenda and cities like San Francisco and Eugene may vote to adopt proportional representation.

TW

book review

Rob Richie directs the Center for Voting and Democracy which promotes proportional representation through national and local projects. For information on CVD and its Nov. 11-12 national conference in Boston, contact them at 695 Fifth St. NW #200; Washington, D.C. 20012; 202-828-3062.

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Witnesses, the quick and the dead

'Balancing our very human desires'

by Bill McKibben

Harriet Barlow leafs through her in-basket, the stack of papers that need to be dealt with by day's end. "I'm helping some people think through how they can help restore postwar civil society in Bosnia by such means as mediation work with women's groups," she says. "I'm helping to plan a conference in February about the problems of concentration of the media in few hands, and here's something for a meeting I'm working on about biotechnology and its impacts. This letter is from a network I'm working with on campaign finance reform, this is a book I need to write a blurb for, and this is a recipe for tapioca with sauteed nectarines."

It's hard to describe Barlow's job with any precision. She runs a progressive artists' colony and conference center in New York's Adirondack mountains, she administers a foundation, she serves on the boards of dozens of non-profits (at one time or another everything from the Family Farm Coalition to Libraries for the Future), she's trying to help midwife the nascent New Party into an electoral force. In short she does *everything* — she's a flesh and blood Internet, an unelectronic bulletin board, a classic *organizer* who began working in the civil rights and anti-war movement and somehow just never stopped.

"There's no one else I know in the United States who is so intelligently knowledgeable and caring about a wide range of issues," says Adam Hochschild, cofounder of *Mother Jones* and a writer who's worked with Barlow for 15 years. "She'll often say to me, 'So and so is important to "the work."' I like the phrase and the feeling behind it — the idea that there's some set of larger moral purposes which progressive people share."

When she slows down from time to time — to swim the clear Adirondack lake by her home or to play with her grandchildren — she can articulate what those overarching purposes are. "The simple way to express it," she says, "is that my work is aimed at helping to build the community of commitment and practice in which a just and loving society is possible." In three decades of social justice activism, she says, "the consistent benefit of my work has been in discovering that virtually every human being chooses to act on behalf of his neighbor as himself if given the conditions and opportunities to do so."

The key, then, is creating those conditions. Church, she says, is one of the forums where neighborliness can rear its lovely head. Civic institutions are equally crucial — public schools and parks, and especially the public libraries that Barlow has worked hard in recent years to preserve from funding cuts.

And so, she insists in this political season, is a new political party, "one based in communities of experience, that's a ground-up, people-centered proposition." The New Party, which she helped to found, is studiously ignoring the glamorous presidential and senatorial races, and focusing instead on the kind of contests that the Christian Right has long targeted: local school boards, county commissioners, aldermen. "We've had over a hundred races and we've won three-quarters of them," she said.

It's a matter of balancing our very human desires with generosity, love, and a sense of the future.

Harriet Barlow

Bill McKibben is author of *The End of Nature* and *Hope: Human and Wild*, a contributor to *The New Yorker* and Sunday school superintendent of Johnsburg United Methodist Church in N.Y.

"I'm not abandoning the principles of the Democratic Party that brought me to it originally," she says. "I am abandoning hope that the structure that calls itself the Democratic Party can be reformed from the top, which is where all its resources and energy are now."

She's never worked from the top — some of her earliest political experience came from working with a Quaker direct action group. "I remember getting arrested reading the names of the Vietnam dead on the Capitol steps, and realizing right then that the simplest acts of witness have consequence," she said. "A lot of the faith-based work in which I've participated has been work in which I've witnessed to the consequences and then people have had to make choices. Starting a food co-op, for instance, and witnessing to the positive consequences of working together, eating healthy food, using that co-op as a community center."

Her search, then, is for a way of taking the countless scattered acts of witness across the nation and distilling from them some transforming political force. Twenty years ago, she says, in the lingering wake of the 1960s, "I believed that a just society could be accomplished in my lifetime — sweetly naive, yes? I no longer dream that dream, but I believe we can build together some of the institutions that can provide the basis for what younger people will accomplish in the next generation."

The rapid gains of the right in recent years have sobered but not deterred her, she insists.

"I think they've won a battle of rhetoric, not of hearts and minds," she says. "I think they have successfully distorted our sense of what government is, so we no longer understand that government is us, that the public sector is our sector. I think it's all happened very fast, and that it's been more about confusion and anxiety than about the conversion of people — and I think there are going to be some more big shifts in the next few years."

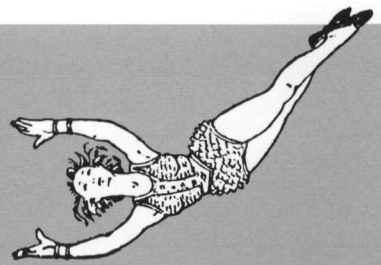
At some level, anyone's view of political possibility stems from their view of human nature. Barlow says she's unconvinced that the current emphasis on self-interest will necessarily triumph. "I think of what Ralph Carmichael, the Episcopal priest in my small town, would talk about with me. The human animal has always been tempted and diverted by short-term temptations and gain. The Christian faith is about balancing those with the more far-reaching needs of one's neighbor, and of the future. It's a matter of balancing our very human desires, of which we shouldn't be ashamed, with generosity, love, and a sense of the future. So that we can pass something on to our children with some satisfaction instead of fear."

I am abandoning hope that the Democratic Party can be reformed from the top.

And so she turns back to her desk, and to her telephone. There's a conversation to organize about the Federal Reserve Bank and the impact of its policies on the environment. There's money to be raised so that the National Organizer's Alliance can keep publishing its newsletter. "I'm a circuit-rider at heart," she laughs. "One can be just as effective a faith-based activist in one's neighborhood as working nationally or internationally. It just happens that my experience has positioned me to do more macro work."

The most crucial thing on Barlow's calendar this day, however, is a memorial service for Carmichael, which will be held in the tiny Chapel of the Transfiguration, perched on the edge of Blue Mountain Lake, where he preached for 38 years. "He was one of my most important teachers. He articulated something I'd seen in my life — never to confuse charity with justice, or tolerance with love. The feeling of justice, which comes to us from the Old Testament prophets, is a precondition for being able to live the golden rule. He gave analytic form to my intuition that a just society wouldn't *guarantee* the human capacity for love, but it would help to make it possible." TW

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.

Designed by managing editor Julie A. Wortman, the calendars are ironic and faithful. This year's theme is the circus, which William Stringfellow calls "an eschatological parable and social parody."

(Wortman's 1993 and 1994 Advent calendars won awards from the Episcopal Communicators. Copies of them are available for $6.)

Order a $25 Christmas gift subscription now — we'll send a card announcing the gift in December and start the subscription in January, 1996. And we'll make sure your Advent calendar is in hand by December 1!

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The Witness

Holy matrimony

Volume 78 • Number 12 • December 1995

Witness praise

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK — you're a breath of fresh air in a sometimes stifling world.

Sandra Clark
Houston, TX

KEEP UP YOUR INSPIRING MOVEMENTS with the Holy Spirit! Although my faith denomination is light-years behind yours, what joy to see the spirit dance in Her beauty, unshackled.

Marilyn Huyghebaert
Chicago, IL

WE'RE VERY GRATEFUL to be part of this great enterprise.

Jerry and Carol Berrigan
Syracuse, NY

I GET MUCH INSPIRATION — as well as information — from *The Witness.* You do a great job!

Edwin Prong
Grand Rapids, MI

THANKS FOR YOUR THOUGHT-PROVOKING and action-oriented magazine.

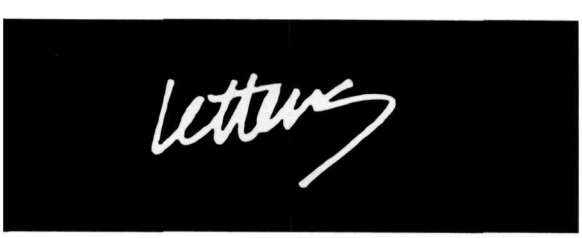
Debbie Wollard-Kidd
St. Clair Shores, MI

I AM A MEMBER OF THE United Methodist Church but enjoy very much reading *The Witness* — you speak to many of the issues and concerns which I have.

Katherine Heidel
Buhl, ID

I HAVE BEEN GOING OUT OF MY MIND because I misplaced your first renewal notice and do not wish to miss an issue — I collect them! They get better every month.

Alice Lewitin
Amherst, MA



Church Insurance Co.

AS PLAINTIFFS' ATTORNEYS involved in litigation with various dioceses and the Church Insurance Company (CIC) arising from sexual abuse of children by Episcopal priests, we can offer a unique perspective to some of the observations and comments in *The Witness* September 1995 article entitled "CIC: What should be its bottom line?" and "The role and obligation of insurance companies." We concur with the view held by many Episcopalians that the CIC is not, and should not transact business as, "just another insurance company."

The conflicts of interest and conflicting fiduciary duties of CIC are more profound than either article indicates. Certainly CIC owes a fiduciary duty to its "owners" to refrain from unreasonably depleting the resources of the company. However, it seems that CIC has lost sight of who its "owners" are. The individual dioceses and other church entities that pay premiums to CIC for liability coverage are composed of the body of the Church: the parishioners. When CIC refuses to pay a claim, or litigates against a member of the Episcopal Church, CIC is fighting against the very person who paid the premium for coverage. Further, when CIC denies insurance coverage, or defends under a reservation of rights, it forces the individual dioceses, bishops and/or priests to retain legal counsel at their own expense to protect their own interests and it exposes the assets of the diocese, or other entity, to forfeiture, in the event the plaintiff recovers a verdict and CIC refuses to pay.

CIC's hypocrisy is evident whenever it attempts to take advantage of its unique posture as an "agency" of the Episcopal Church. It is quick to cloak itself and the insureds (and instructs its lawyers to do so) in the principle of separation of church and state embodied in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution on a number of legal issues, including discovery and punitive damages, but asserts that on other issues it is no different than any other defendant and is entitled to employ all technical legal defenses. It is undisputed that the CIC and its respective insureds are entitled to assert all available defenses, including civil statutes of limitations and scope of employment defenses. (Interestingly, the defense of contributory negligence has been asserted by representatives of CIC claiming that *a minor child* who was sexually molested contributed to his own injuries by "not removing himself from harm's way.") However, one wonders whether such defenses *should* be employed by entities that seek immunity from a number of civil laws because they are uniquely religious entities. The selective use of the civil law does not reflect the "Christ-like" image that the Episcopal Church strives to project.

CIC should recognize what every major liability coverage carrier in this country has already recognized: that arbitration and/or mediation saves money, time and emotions for all involved. To refuse these highly effective dispute resolution techniques on the grounds that it might open the floodgates to frivolous claims is itself a frivolous argument. Frivolous claims can be detected and weeded out by good arbitrators and mediators, but at a lot less expense of money, time and emotions. Bishop Harold Hopkins, Reverend Margo Maris and Reverend Chilton Knudsen, mentioned in the first article, should be commended for their efforts in attempting to educate CIC about these issues. Unfortunately, the same trite arguments and extreme, rare anecdotal information promulgated in favor of tort reform in this country, have been used to thwart attempts to deal with sexual abuse by clergy in a reasonable, compassionate and Christian manner.

One aspect of these cases not mentioned in the articles is confidentiality agreements, also known as "gag provisions." A demand for confidentiality in any settlement document is counterproductive to the Church. Gagging the victim only perpetuates the conspiracy of silence that permits the abhorrent behavior to continue. The Church should be attempting to place scarlet letters on the foreheads of the perpetrators, rather than muzzling the victims. Moreover, true healing for the victims is hindered by forced silence.

Much too often, the dioceses are quick to forgive the offender and quick to condemn the victim. It should be stated here, and in every training seminar sanctioned by CIC: *All claimants are not liars.*

Since, at the 1994 General Convention,

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the Church courageously created the "window" beginning in January 1996 for the presentation of charges against alleged perpetrators under canon law, no matter how old, in order to deal with these extremely difficult factual, moral, and legal issues, it should likewise do the following to help the victims:

(1) Impose a similar "moratorium" on asserting the statute of limitations for any civil claim presented, no matter how old, beginning in January 1996 until January 1997;

(2) Put in place an optional mechanism to arbitrate and/or mediate all claims presented during that time period;

(3) Create a fund to pay the meritorious claims either in a lump sum or over time; and

(4) Create a fund to pay for therapy while the claim is investigated and/or the case is pending.

In our experience, most victims of clergy sexual abuse simply seek some expression of compassion and an offer of help from the Church. Invariably, the unreasonable fear of litigation on behalf of the local dioceses and CIC creates an adversarial atmosphere from the beginning. If a church activity bus went off a cliff with children on board and a priest at the wheel, the Church would certainly do what it could to provide assistance to the families. It would not instruct its lawyers to draft creative arguments to blame the children or their parents for the wreck. Sexual abuse cases should be no different. Further, *cost of therapy can be offered without any admission of liability*. CIC's blanket refusal to pay for therapy if the diocese has already made payments is ludicrous and not based on rational or humane grounds. A diocese should not be penalized for a compassionate gesture made while CIC circles its wagons and loads its guns.

Plaintiffs' attorneys do not enjoy the subject matter of these cases. They are difficult, legally and emotionally. As a result, many attorneys refuse to take them. These clients are not typical. They are deeply tormented by the psychological injuries inflicted upon them by a trusted figure in their life. The Church itself could put plaintiffs' attorneys out of business by conscientiously dealing with this issue, as one commentator has pointed out, in a manner similar to the way in which the United States Navy dealt with the Tailhook scandal: by acknowledging that this is a serious problem that requires serious attention and resources, by deciding that the only effective solution involves a fundamental change in procedures, and then by implementing those painful but necessary steps to effect real, meaningful and long term change. Unless CIC takes heed, survivors of clergy sexual abuse will continue to seek help and bring about change by the only means CIC makes available to them.

Denis L. Ventriglia
Wilmington, N.C.
J. David Flowers
Greenville, S.C.

"A merry revolutionary Christmas" from Grant Gallup, Casa Ave Maria, Nicaragua

Classifieds

Campus chaplain

The Episcopal Student Foundation at the University of Michigan seeks Episcopal priest to direct their Institute for Public Theology and to serve as chaplain for the campus ministry. ThD./PhD. preferred. Send letter and CDO profile to ESF, Box W, 721 East Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Pastors for Peace

Join an upcoming IFCO-Pastors for Peace Project in Mexico, Cuba or Nicaragua. Youth Delegation to Chiapas, Mexico, Dec. 29, 1995 – Jan. 5, 1996; Faith Delegation to Chiapas, Mexico, Jan. 5-12, 1996; INFOMED Caravan to Cuba, Jan. 24-Feb. 7, 1996; Research Trips to Cuba, Dec. 1-10, 1995; Feb. 10-18, 1996; Work Brigade to Cuba, Mar. 9-16 or 9-28, 1996; Construction Brigades to Nicaragua, Dec. 7-17, 1995 & Jan. 5-15, 1996. Contact: IFCO-Pastors for Peace; 610 W. 28th St., Minneapolis, MN 55408; Phone: 612-870-7121; Fax: 612-870-7109; E-mail: p4p@igc.apc.org

Classifieds

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Since 1917

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Cover: *L'offrande de Coeur* at Cluny

Back cover: A California wedding, Rick Reinhard/Impact Visuals

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Tending a sacred flame

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Witnessing a friend's wedding in 1983, I was awed by the clarity with which she and her partner committed their lives to one another. It was a wedding stripped of the cultural excesses and fairy tale pretensions, but grounded in evangelical simplicity and the Book of Common Prayer.

I knew in a heartbeat, or maybe through the fog of the next morning, that I would rather live celibate in hope of this kind of union than live with the occasional comfort and constant uncertainty of a lesser relationship.

Bill Kellermann and I met for a 7 a.m. service on All Saints Day that fall at the Episcopal church in the Catholic Worker neighborhood where we both lived. It was thick with shadows. We sat in the choir and joined the priest in the ancient words of liturgy.

By the end of that month, Bill and I were living a forced monastic routine in the Oakland County Jail for an antinuclear Advent protest. We had three weeks to begin a correspondence on sex, commitment and the Holy Spirit.

Bill suggested that marriage in this culture is an act of resistance.

"Vocations of celibacy or marriage, as far as I can tell," he wrote, "are both ways of disciplining and channeling energies that tend toward chaos, selfishness, even reckless indifference. In this culture, they are stirred up by the commercial powers for commercial ends (also, for the political powers, toward distraction and dissipation). I like marriage as discernment, as service, as community, as vocation," he added.

We committed our lives to one another and designed a liturgy that allowed us to state our vows to one another before a cloud of witnesses. But the focus of the service was communion. No longer the center of attention, we moved back into the congregation. Everything was simple and low budget. The music was superb.

Marriage did not seem anti-feminist to me, so long as one avoided certain texts and vows. So I was surprised when during our honeymoon, I dreamed of a woman accused of being dangerous and crazy by a militia. The soldiers killed her. Looking for a trace of what had been on her mind, I found a cassette recorder playing two naive voices reciting wedding vows.

Something archetypal was shifting in me and not all of the new alignments were easy.

Three months after our church ceremony, we approached the district judge who would try us for conspiracy, a charge related to the one for which we'd been jailed during Advent the year prior. Not wanting a friend and minister to act as an agent of the state, we asked the judge to do so since we had no objection to merging our property and rights.

The births of our children reintroduced the sacred as well as heightening our exhaustion and perception of one another's limitations.

Most of that fall was bathed in warm light as we discerned the rhythm of our life together. The years since have been good ones.

So, is a committed relationship a piece of cake? Or dumb luck? Hardly.

I remember hearing my father preach that divorce should be easy, but marriage should require serious preparation and should never be imposed on people who did not have recourse to the Holy Spirit.

The romantic projections of courtship wore thin in time. The births of our children reintroduced the sacred as well as heightening the levels of our exhaustion and our perception of one another's limitations.

Bill and I juggle constantly — who is taking the kids where, can we afford car repairs this month, who is calling to make doctor appointments or to find a sitter, whose work needs take priority? Sometimes we laugh when it occurs to us that romantic suitors would never ask these questions. They would, instead, see in us the poet, the dancer, the one who loves hiking and cooking outdoors.

Eleven years into this we have work to do — creative, imaginative work to keep this relationship alive, to free one another from endless rounds of duty, to see the flickers of who we are in God's eyes.

If we do this work well — neither naively nor chauvinistically — we will feed a sacramental flame that can keep our hearts alive and can serve the community.

This issue on marriage is the first of several eventual issues that will scrutinize sexual ethics, holding heterosexaul relationships to a standard as stringent as that applied to gay and lesbian relationships.

Can we discern an ethic? Does our rhetoric reflect our experience? Can we, in community with people of all orientations, feed the sacramental fire that reveals who we are called to be? TW

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

editor's note

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On not making it 'official'

by Julie A. Wortman

We decided that this relationship was "it" more than 10 years ago. We had met in church. Talk and topics came easily and we quickly became friends. Slowly, our feelings for each other changed and our relationship became sexual.

By this time we were living in different cities. Our phone bills skyrocketed and our mailboxes were seldom empty. Visits were much anticipated, farewells accompanied by tears.

Eventually, realizing we were so much more fully ourselves together than independently, we took the "plunge," announcing ourselves to friends and families.

Since then, we've worked hard to build a life that celebrates God. We've tried to tell each other the truth. We've learned both the limits and benefits of accommodation and compromise. We've even learned to accept each other's families as part of the bargain.

Most importantly, however, we've resisted the temptation to infidelity. Neither of us wants to risk breaking the trust which allows us to be as fully vulnerable — and committed — to each other as we hope to be to God.

But we've never longed for marriage, either civil or sacramental. Both church and society would have to change dramatically first.

In the best circumstances, people embrace marriage as a "let's make this official" kind of a thing — the deep commitment to each other has already been made. But it is the making-things-official aspect that troubles my partner and me.

With civil proceedings a couple receives many benefits — public recognition that the partners are a "true" couple and that their children, should they have any, are "legitimate"; special tax status; spousal insurance coverage; the knowledge that even without having drawn up wills or durable powers of attorney the partners will inherit each other's property and have unquestioned access to one another if a medical problem arises.

In return for these benefits, the community gets clarity about which relationships are "official" and which are not — with all the legal, economic and social-welfare implications official status implies in this country. Considering how reluctant civil authorities are to interfere in cases of domestic violence and the second-class status of unmarried mothers and their children, those implications are to us more than a little suspect.

With the celebration and blessing of a marriage in the church, the benefits are less material but perhaps even more seductive, because through this ceremony the couple is identified with the godly side of things. "The bond and covenant of marriage," the bride and groom are told in the usual prayerbook service, "was established by God in creation." As married people you also gain new status in the faith community since "Holy Scripture commends [marriage] to be honored among all people."

In return, since the church links children to marriage, the institution receives endorsement of its assumptions about "family values." The gifts the couple traditionally receives are intended to encourage them to observe the faith community's feasts —and its norms. The "head" of the household wields the carving knife but seldom irons the linen tablecloth on which the bone-china turkey platter rests.

It is little suprise to us that the priest acts for the state as well as the church at most weddings. In both religious and civil marriage the assumptions about gender dominance and roles, affectional norms and inheritance are the same. The marriage vows a couple makes may have something to do with celebrating that two people are committing themselves to working out their salvation and livelihood together, but those authorizing those vows seem to us mostly concerned with maintaining patriarchy.

A lesbian couple, of course, is, by definition, an affront to patriarchy. For that reason few people and no institutions are clamoring for us to make our committed relationship "official," although most everyone in our parish would be only too happy to ring wedding bells for the happily unmarried, committed, heterosexual couple that attends the early service.

For the powers that be, treating our relationship as equivalent to a heterosexual one would be unthinkable precisely because the institution of marriage means *so much more* than living in a committed, monogamous, lifelong relationship dedicated to celebrating God. It is easy for my partner and me — we seldom feel safe even holding hands outside our home — to understand that. And it's a relief. We have no wish to pay even lip service, as many of our heterosexual friends feel forced to do, to the values and assumptions which dishonor us and so many others, gay and straight.

If there is anything we long for that marriage offers, it is the occasion a wedding presents for gathering friends, family and community together to celebrate God's presence in a couple's joy. That's why we plan to throw a party someday for ourselves — a celebration of life-giving commitment for which we believe Jesus would want there to be plenty of good wine, marriage or no marriage. TW

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness.*

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Sonnets

by William Shakespeare

CXVI.
Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me prov'd,
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

CXXXVIII.
When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her, though I know she lies;
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue;
On both sides thus is simple truth suprest,
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

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Practicing what we preach:
an interview with Steve Charleston

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

[Steve Charleston critiques some of the church's expectations of clergy and the way our society devalues matrimonial commitment as he prepares to step down early next year as Bishop of Alaska so that he can find time to care for his wife and his son. The reasons for Charleston's resignation after five years in Alaska are published in Vital Signs 10/95.]

JW-K: What are you looking forward to and where are you anchoring your hope right now?

SC: I have absolutely no idea where I will be after I leave Alaska or what I will do. I have *no* place to go, no job. I suppose that speaks to the seriousness with which I made this decision. I didn't do this because I wanted to change jobs. I saw this as a personal decision in which I tried to live out what I believe.

I *do* have anchors. One is my ongoing relationship with my wife and my son and our commitment to keep working together and caring for each other.

Another anchor is my absolute faith and commitment to God. I am not at all scared of stepping out into space because I believe so strongly that the Holy Spirit is there to help me. Stepping out into the unknown — which I've done before — is not something that frightens me because I *know* God will not let me fall. Nor will God allow my family to be hurt or the Diocese of Alaska to be hurt. I'm confident of that.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist **Michelle Gibbs** lives in Oaxaca, Mexico.

JW-K: How have your son and wife responded to your decision?

Steve Charleston James Solheim/ENS

SC: My wife understands the decision I've made and supports me in it. My son is extremely happy that I've made this public commitment to him. Both my wife and my son have shown a tremendous amount of courage and faith through all of this.

JW-K: I have images playing in my mind of my own childhood. It was not extreme, but my father, who was an Episcopal bishop, was certainly absent a lot of the time for church activities and often exhausted when he got home. A friend of mine had parents who were missionaries in Africa. She and her sister were left in a Canadian boarding school. She describes agonizing over who these people were that her parents loved so much that they were willing to leave her behind and who this *God* was who insisted that her parents were needed somewhere else.

SC: If we could somehow touch the life histories of a great number of Christians, we would hear stories of children who had suffered through family lives where they did *not* feel they were the priority. That's particularly true for the children of ordained leaders.

What have we *learned* from all of these stories? Where does it appear in the institutional or structural decisions we've made? How have we responded to the realities of people's lives that have been deeply hurt by our church?

I hope my decision is one example that will call this to our attention. I don't think my story is all that unique. In many ways Suzanne, Nick and I are speaking to a reality shared by many others. I hope that by making the choices we've made, we're giving some hope to people.

JW-K: Have you heard from many people?

SC: People here in Alaska feel genuinely sad and we share that sadness. On the other hand, people have been incredibly understanding about the dilemma that my family has faced and are very supportive. I received a message from a woman here in our diocese whose son had committed suicide. She said, "I only have four words to say to you: 'Take care of Nick!'"

I've also gotten letters and phone calls from people outside the diocese. All have been very helpful and supportive.

Our society wants *to see people who are addicted to the climb for success. And that's why it's so important to question what we're living out as an* alternative *as Christians.*

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Examining the episcopacy

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: If you cast an eye across the House of Bishops, do you sense that bishops have much time for family?

Steve Charleston: The episcopacy really needs reform. Many leaders of the church have sacrificed family for the sake of *others*. I believe the majority of the House would say the greatest frustration in their ministry is that they don't feel able to live out a spiritual style of leadership. They find themselves constantly enmeshed in the managerial sides of leadership.

We need men and women that we can look to as spiritual guides and partners in the Episcopal Church.

J.W-K.: Does your Choctaw heritage inform your views?

S.C.: Sure, the image of spiritual leaders who focus *all* of their lives as a witness comes from the native tradition. Seeing those people in a horizontal relationship — giving up their claim to worldly authority in order to live out *spiritual* values — is very much in keeping with the tradition of the native medicine person.

J.W-K.: Would the community have had much tolerance for a native medicine person who was not careful with his or her family?

S.C.: The dichotomy or the pull between career and family would not have existed in traditional native society. That dilemma, that pain that we've created for ourselves as a community, is not something that is normative culturally for others. It's something that we have created. We have defined and institutionalized it, so it's up to us to take responsibility to *change* it.

J.W-K.: What are the temptations in the current structuring and understanding of being a bishop?

S.C.: There is a temptation to become a workaholic. The whole system is designed to seduce a man or a woman into a feeling of being constantly involved with all the decisions. We believe, in the Western system, that people must be constantly occupied with business (under the rubric of the Protestant work ethic) if they are to be found acceptable or successful.

Times for reflection, quiet prayer, daydreaming, conversations, story-telling, listening, walking, looking at the earth — all of those things are not prized. So the temptation is to minimize the spiritual and to maximize the managerial.

J.W-K.: And what's the seduction in it?

S.C.: Most all the bishops I have met deeply care about the church. They feel that if they could just work harder, work longer, somehow they could fulfill their best intention and dream for the church.

That's a wonderful comment on our bishops — it speaks to the quality of men and women that we have. We need to help our bishops by giving them permission to entertain new ideas, to stand down from the artificial image of the perfect manager who *always* knows what's happening and is on *top* of it.

J.W-K.: Won't there be bishops who would miss making all the decisions?

S.C.: Some bishops would miss the self-satisfaction that you get when you feel that you are in a position of ultimate authority. It's an addiction that is encouraged by our larger culture. Our society *wants* to see people who are addicted to the climb for success. And that's why it's so important to question what we're living out as an *alternative* as Christians.

J.W-K.: Is a misunderstanding of the theology of sacrifice at the root of this? The model that you're holding up — for spiritual leaders to be in balance — is very different from that of Abraham sacrificing Isaac.

S.C.: There are two elements of sacrifice. The first is an image of ordained service that implies a sacrifice of self and of close intimate relationships for the sake of the greater need or the bigger cause. And that sounds noble. In its practice, it has often resulted in burned-out leaders, leaders seduced by power, and broken families.

On the other hand, the sacrifice I'm trying to talk about is sacrifice for the sake of love which places self in a balanced relationship with others.

J.W-K.: What about the emphasis that Christ puts on moving out and leaving family behind?

S.C.: The Gospel image of single men leaving their world, going off in small bands of religious pioneers to spread the Good News is a wonderful one.

But if you look at what the messengers are saying, we are to love ourselves — to understand who we are in relation to everyone else — and to love others. That is the greatest commandment and on this commandment *all* the rest of it depends.

Christian ministers come in all shapes, sizes, and conditions — single, married, divorced, whatever. But the message is that we are to be people who live in very strong love relationships with each other. It is much easier to win recognition, to get an award or to get your picture in the paper, than it is to stand your ground in love, as completely as humanly possible, with the other men and women around you. Love is the hardest thing to live out. Jesus understood that, which is why he put it at the very center of everything he said and why he claimed it for the ultimate identity of God.

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I'm getting a lot of letters from people who grew up in clergy families. They speak so honestly to the great disparity between what we practice and what we preach in loving relationships. Here is someone who should be the object of the greatest sense of affection, devotion and love from a parent, shunted to the sidelines so that the parent can go out and preach love and affection for others.

JW-K: Would you say a little about your understanding of your marriage vows?

SC: My understanding is that it is *one* of the most intimate ways that we can live out the Gospel.

Suzanne and I share a very strong sense of faith that the vows that are exchanged between people under the Spirit are holy and sacred. She and I both take our vows to cherish, to love, to support one another very seriously. Those vows are the heart of what we're standing on together now.

Even if the solemnity of the marriage contract were ended, my sense of being connected to Suzanne, my responsibility with her and my love for her would continue. That's what I mean about deeper bonds of the Spirit than society holds up as a convention. It's important to live out love no matter what and to *stand* on it, to make a stand on it.

The truth in modern life is that vows can be lived out in different ways. It is very difficult in this society to make commitments to one another and keep them. Commitments are disposable in America today.

It may seem somewhat hopeful for a family to say, "No, we're really going to try to keep our commitments, even if we are separated by distance, even if we're assaulted by illness, even if we have to struggle through financial problems. No matter *what* we encounter we will still try to move forward in loving one another and in keeping our commitment."

I made a promise, a commitment to Suzanne, and I'm not going to back off from it. I made a commitment to Alaska and I believe I'm fulfilling that by doing this, because I made a commitment that I would give all of my heart and all of my energy to the church in Alaska. If I believe I've reached a point where I'm not able to do that 100 percent, then my job as a good leader is to say so. If I *didn't* do that, then I *wouldn't* be showing my commitment to this diocese.

Spiritual leadership is always filled with irony. Sometimes the most powerful thing a truly spiritual person can do to exercise leadership is to let go of power and the job in order to show humility, obedience to a vow, care for others. Sometimes the best thing we can do is to step aside and the worst thing we can do is to believe that we could never step aside.

JW-K: Would you say a little more about marriage generically?

SC: The whole concept of marriage in our society is obviously undergoing radical transformations and by that I'm not speaking of issues like same-sex unions. What I'm speaking of is the dramatic redefinition of marriage in heterosexual society.

Good spiritual leaders must be balanced between the most personal and intimate expressions of love and their ability to stand up publicly for larger issues of love. Both *must be there. One-dimensional leaders ultimately do not serve the other; they only serve self.*

The big question for us in the Christian church is, what are we saying about this change and in what constructive ways are we helping to shape that change?

We're undergoing the breakdown of the exoskeleton that we had so carefully crafted over the years as an industrial society to hold a man and woman in the contract of marriage — the images of what is masculine and feminine, of the working roles between the two partners, of the lines of authority.

We had an image of marriage as being Ward and June Cleaver, or Ozzie and Harriet, Father Knows Best. That has been collapsing all around us with the divorce rate, the rise of single parents, women in the work place.

We are moving as a society toward a new definition of what the relationship between men and women *is*. What does marriage mean to us now? If you have two people who are completely equal, if they are both to be open to work on fulfilling their own lives, if they are to have a true partnership, both spiritually as well as economically and socially, what does that *look* like? What kind of commitment and covenant do we *make* with each other? How do we *talk* about that now? And how does the church then bless, sanctify and nurture those new relationships?

The problem is, as the church, we haven't quite caught up with the change. We're still running several steps behind, as in so many other things. Shouldn't we be focusing on this and catching up to it? Because the rest of society is obviously undergoing stress and change.

JW-K: A big part of what the secular society is doing is switching over to serial monogamy — a succession of relationships. What do you think the church should say or do?

SC: The church should offer to people the option of making commitments that are forever. That's not something that we want to *say* right now, because the change

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seems to be propelling us toward conditional commitment. Conditional commitment is more popular — commitments of short duration, negotiable commitments, qualified commitments. In a sense, we're watching the evolution of a relationship of men and women along much more self-centered and legal lines.

It sounds very odd to the world's ear when a Christian comes along and says, what about *un*conditional commitment? What about *absolute* fidelity? What about a love that does not have pre-negotiated limits to it?

As a Christian, I can understand the reaction which led us to break the old stereotypes. We need a new way to talk and relate to one another, but I'm *not* convinced that we have to do that by abandoning our ability to make a commitment to another human being and to keep it.

What is *wrong* with saying I'm capable of making a commitment to someone else and of believing with all of my heart that I can keep that commitment for the rest of my life? If we do not have things that are so precious to us that we are willing to make that level of commitment, then our lives are impoverished.

I think it's wonderful to believe of myself that I'm able to make a promise, to enter into a covenant, to take a vow, and to stay with it come thick or thin. That says something about who we are as people of God that we need to hear again.

I'm going to do it. I don't know about the rest of the world. I figure the rest of the world is going to think I'm nuts because I've stopped being a diocesan bishop. They're going to think I've given away all of the political leverage that I had so carefully amassed and that I should have found a good military academy for this troubled kid of mine.

JW-K: And gone on to be the next Presiding Bishop!

SC: Sure! And turned my wife into Pat Nixon. There you go. I know a lot of folks will think that I was nuts because I have caused a lot of confusion and pain by standing up and saying, "No, I can't keep doing both of these things at the same time right now in my life. I *wish* I could, but I can't do justice to both my family and the diocese simultaneously."

Hope held high Michelle Gibbs

I want to witness to living in a state of true love and covenant with two of the most important people in my life. It's a radical, revolutionary thing to do in an age that sees people as disposable. You know what I'm saying?

JW-K: When Bill and I got married, he described marriage as resistance to a consumer culture.

SC: I'll tell you something else — for my liberal brothers and sisters out there — it is imperative for those of us who care about a reform of the church and a reform of the society, that we of *all* people, make commitments and stand on them.

Otherwise all of our rhetoric about solidarity rings hollow. If you can't stand in solidarity with one other person, no matter what comes, no matter what you've got to give up or what struggles you face, then it's going to be very difficult to have a lot of confidence that you're going to stand in solidarity with the world's poor, or stand in solidarity with the whales. You can't stand in solidarity with your own child, how are you going to be the great revolutionary leader and get the working masses together?

The *beauty* of the Gospel is that Jesus had the wisdom to see that we are only as strong as that smallest part of our lives. Our greatest dreams grow from that smallest seed. Insofar as you are able to do it to the least of these, you are doing it for *all* of us. Inasmuch as I am able to stand by my convictions, to practice what I preach, to have the courage to give up anything that the world would offer to seduce me away from the absolute commitment to love and the vow to solidarity, my ability is a clear message that if we can stand firm *then* we have the right to claim moral authority and leadership and to begin to break open a new reformation for our church and for our society. Otherwise, we're just paying lip service to it.

I don't feel beaten down by this at all. I believe that when the dust settles, I'm going to emerge with a closer commitment to God and my family, and I think my voice is going to be much stronger. I'm grateful to God for that. TW

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Is marriage God-ordained?

by Walter Wink

Is marriage God-ordained? Well, of course, if by that you mean that marriage is an order of creation. But like all other institutions, marriage and the family are good creations of God, fallen in their actual practice, and in need of redemption. In that full sense, marriage can be said to be *normal,* but it is certainly not *normative*. Neither Jesus nor Paul were married, so we can scarcely say, as many have argued, that marriage is God's intent for everyone. Single persons, homosexuals, priests, and nuns are not outside the will of God if they do not marry. Neither marriage nor singleness is normative. God can bless our lives and the world through our being married or unmarried, equally.

Thus, when Marion Soards (*Scripture and Homosexuality*, Westminster/John Knox, 1995, 23) writes that "God's purpose for humanity ... was for man and woman, male and female, to find fulfillment in the complementary sexual union that God intended for creation," he commits a logical fallacy. Certainly God purposes thus, but God also purposes other arrangements as well, as the singleness of Jesus demonstrates.

Actually, marriage and family life have been oversold by Protestants. Our anti-papist past still colors our disrespect for celibacy. And despite our focus on family-centered churches and our nostalgia for "family values" (which generally turn out to be simply a longing for the restoration of patriarchal dominance, as in the Promise Keepers movement), Jesus has very little good to say about families. He sees in them the basic cell of the domination system, and deems it necessary to call his followers out of their biological families and into a new family not based on blood lines, but made up rather of those who do the will of God: "Here are my mother and brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" (Mark 3:34-35). In the new family of Jesus there are only children, no patriarchs: "Call no man your father on earth, *for you have one Father*—the one in heaven" (Matt. 23:9). "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). "Do you think that I have come to bring peace to 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" (Luke 12:51-53). In violation of a religious duty known to every culture, Jesus tells a man to leave his dying father's side, ignore the filial obligation to see to his burial, and to follow him peremptorily (Luke 9:59-60).

The Bible has no sex ethic. It only has a love ethic, which must be continually brought to bear on whatever sexual mores are dominant in a given time.

The first person to attempt to squelch any act of courage, defiance, or revolt is often a family member. So deeply is the family enmeshed in the values of the Domination System that people's own flesh and blood may even betray them rather than see society's values jeopardized: "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death" (Mark 13:12 par.).

Paul's surprisingly anti-family attitude in 1 Cor. 7 becomes more intelligible in the light of Jesus' teaching. Paul is not simply anticipating an immediate end to history; he is trying to disentangle believers from the most profoundly soul-shaping institution in human society. Some women may have found welcome relief in being freed from having to marry, bear an unlimited number of children, and live a life restricted to the household. Paul may have been closer to the mind of Jesus here than he has been credited with being.

In respect to the holiness code, the law, relations with the Gentiles, the Temple sacrifice and other issues, the church developed the implications of Jesus' teachings further. In the case of the family and the role of women, however, and all other matters dealing with male supremacy, the church generally softened, compromised, and finally abandoned his position altogether.

Human beings will of course continue to be born to biological families. The family is not intrinsically evil. To repeat: like every Power the family is created by God, and thus holy and just and good; it is fallen; and it is capable of redemption. The family is therefore to be protected: radical discipleship must not be allowed to issue in callous disregard for parents (Mark 7:9-13), or spouses (Mark 10:1-12), or children (Mark 10:13-16 par.; 9:37 par.) But families are also to be critiqued and challenged, a function

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Currier & Ives

performed by the new family established by Jesus. Redeemed, marriages and families can become cells of the new family of Jesus, though still under the condition of fallenness.

What then of gay marriages? It is dishonest to deny that the Bible condemns homosexual acts. The issue is, however, hermeneutical: What do we make of that judgment? For the Bible also countenances slavery, violence, and the subjugation of women. And at point after point, the Bible *condemns* sexual behaviors that Christians today *permit*: sex during menstruation, masturbation, birth control, a limited amount of nudity, explicit language about sexual organs, marriage outside one's ethnic group, and celibacy. And it treats semen and menstrual blood as unclean, while we would only consider them messy. And at point after point, the Bible *allows* sexual behaviors that most people today would *condemn*: prostitution, polygamy, sex with a deceased husband's brothers to produce a male heir, sex with slaves and captives, concubinage, the treatment of women as male property, and very early marriage. The only points on which most of us and the Bible agree are rejection of incest, rape, adultery, and intercourse with animals. Moses permitted divorce; Jesus forbade it. Yet we not only permit it, but ordain those who have been divorced.

The Bible clearly has no recognizable sex ethic, but only a shifting set of sexual mores which changed even within the thousand-year composition of the canon. We ourselves have watched sexual mores change in our very lifetimes: from the ideal of virginity in marriage to "shacking up" for two or three years before marriage; from anti-miscegenation laws in the South to intermarriage. The Bible has no sex ethic. It only has a love ethic, which must be continually brought to bear on whatever sexual mores are dominant in a given time. TW

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Internalizing the rules

by William C. Frey

Talking about family and marriage, like marriage itself, is not to be entered into "unadvisedly or lightly." Marriage, after all, is one of the major metaphors used throughout the Bible to describe the loving relationship between God and God's people. And, at least one of the meanings of the Cana story is to announce that, through the messianic ministry of Jesus, this marriage covenant is being renewed.

I therefore applaud Walter Wink's hint that the family, under the tutelage of Jesus, might yet become, not simply a means for the transformation of society, but even a model of what such a renewed society could look like. Sort of a "preview of coming attractions," a beacon of hope in a dark word.

Wink's conclusions about the radical demands that Christian discipleship makes on the family are, for the most part, helpful. I don't believe they go far enough, however, and I would suggest that for the renewed family to fulfill its function, relatively healthy married couples might be encouraged to seek ways of including the singles — unmarried, divorced, widowed, etc. — in some sort of extended family. Widows and orphans appear to be among God's special concerns.

Strictly as an aside, I believe that Promise Keepers is probably doing more than any other movement to reduce domestic abuse in this country.

The assertion that "The Bible has no sexual ethic" surprised me. At a recent meeting of the House of Bishops, Wink admitted that the Bible is univocal in its condemnation of homosexual behavior, but proceeded to argue for its acceptance on other grounds. I thought he was saying that there *is* a biblical sexual ethic, but that he disagrees with the part of that ethic which deals with homosexuality. That's different from saying that the Bible has no such ethic.

Jewish readers would be surprised. Dennis Praeger, for example, comes to a totally different conclusion. "When Judaism demanded that all sexual behavior be channeled into marriage, it changed the world. ... Judaism has a sexual ideal — marital sex. *All* other forms of sexual behavior, though not equally wrong, deviate from that ideal" ("Judaism: Sexual Revolution," *Crisis Magazine*, 9/1993).

Most Christian scholars would be surprised, too. Perhaps reading the Bible without a guide, like the Ethiopian eunuch, might lead to that conclusion. But Christians have, from the very beginning, used Jesus as the hermeneutical lens through which to interpret the Scriptures. Though Wink does that elsewhere, he appears to neglect it here. Viewed through that lens, which distinguishes what was "in the beginning" from that which was added "for the hardness of our hearts," an ethic which, at least, commends faithful marriage and condemns adultery and fornication begins to emerge.

I get nervous when words like "love," "mutuality," and "authenticity" are invoked as biblical themes without clear definition, particularly in our culture which has so disastrously sentimentalized them. Too often, love is interpreted as indulgence, mutuality is reduced to whatever consenting adults consent to do, and authenticity begs the question, "By whose standards?"

To "love others as Christ loved us" means that the behavior of Jesus is the norm for defining love. That behavior reveals both a severity and a tenderness which, in Christ, are not contradictory. It is love which invites us, and love which warns that the gate is narrow. It is love which says, "Neither do I condemn thee," and love which says, "Go and sin no more." It is love which lays down its life for the beloved.

Mutuality is a bit more problematic. The closest biblical word is "*koinonia*," the sharing of life. *Koinonia* knows nothing of "consenting adults," and in fact assumes that there are relationships where our consent is immaterial. Some, such as those with God, family, neighbors, and fellow believers, are simply given. *Koinonia* says that we are not autonomous units, but members of one another and, as such, owe each other a "fierce loyalty."

My final concern lies with Wink's apparent theory of human development. He acknowledges fallenness, yet when he invokes a "love ethic" as opposed to a sexual ethic, the Fall vanishes.

A love ethic, divorced from rules and norms, seems to imply that we can somehow leapfrog the normal processes of maturation in which we have to crawl before we can walk. Most developmental studies affirm that "mature" stages presuppose the earlier ones. The individual practices a behavioral code which is first learned by rote, then reinforced by the peer group, and later owned as an ideology. Then and only then can improvisation happen. Freedom to improvise, in any discipline, comes only after the rules have been memorized, practiced and internalized. Surely this was what Augustine had in mind when he said, "Love God and do as you please." TW

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Wink's response to Frey

My comments on marriage need to be understood in the wider context of Jesus' proclamation of God's domination-free order.

It may be true, as William Frey notes, that Promise Keepers are doing more than anyone to reduce domestic abuse in this country; but they do so by reasserting patriarchal domination.

It may be that Judaism idealizes marital sex; but it saw no contradiction between that ideal and polygamy, concubinage, prostitution, and the reduction of many women to male property.

I do take Jesus as the hermeneutical lens through which to interpret Scripture, and he clearly affirmed marriage as divinely ordained; yet he himself never married.

I agree that rules and norms are necessary; that is what sexual mores are. But rules and norms also tend to be impressed into the service of the Domination System, and to serve as a form of crowd control rather than to enhance the fullness of human potential. So we must critique the sexual mores of any given time and clime by the love ethic exemplified by Jesus.

Defining such a love ethic is not complicated. It is non-exploitative (hence no sexual exploitation of children, no using of another to their loss), it is non-dominative (hence no patriarchal treatment of women as chattel), it is responsible, mutual, caring, and loving. Augustine already dealt with this in his explication of "Love God and do as you please."

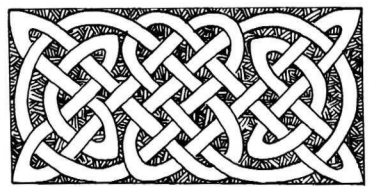
But my main question is why do we consider it ethically acceptable to ignore or even violate the vast majority of biblical sex mores, yet single out others as in violation of biblical teaching? When we have more light than they on human sexuality, why shouldn't we be free to take a different position? The problem is that we *have* "internalized the rules," and some of them are *bad* rules, like the biblical acceptance of slavery and the suppression of women. It's time we changed. TW

Roman and Judaic traditions

Marriage in ancient Israel, in many ways, had more of the character of a commercial transaction than a religious event. According to Mishnaic law, "A wife may be acquired in three ways ... by money, by deed or by intercourse." Notice that a wife is acquired in the same way as any other property: "by money, by deed, or by usucaption (long possession)." The understanding of the woman as an object acquired is reinforced by the fact that in the marriage ceremony it is the man who speaks, not the woman.

Yet it is not the woman as a person who is treated like a piece of property, but the woman in her sexual function. In other respects, the personhood of the woman is strictly protected; even in her sexual function, it is her rights which are defined, not the husband's. She has a right, for example, to intercourse on a regular basis, depending on the man's occupation.. If he is a sailor, she has a right to his attentions only once is six months; if a camel diver, once a month; if a laborer every other day, but daily if he is unemployed ...

In ancient Rome, marriage was clearly a religious event. Roman religion was centered on the household gods and each husband and wife served as priests of the household shrine. Through marriage a woman was inducted into her husband's religion: he carried her over the threshold



in a simulated capture and then shared with her a piece of a special cake, so establishing co mmunion with her and with the household gods ...

From ancient times, Roman citizens, including women, had had a remarkable freedom in terms of marriage. In the fifth century before the time of christ, the Law of the Twelve Tables provided free marriage as an option available to women. A girl could choose at the age of 12, which was the acknowledged age of marriageability, to declare herself a free woman and, although she then usually chose a guardian to administer her estate, she was free to betroth herself and to marry whomever she might choose; on one had the relationship to her of pater familias. True, custom required fidelity of her while allowing her husband easy access to concubines, prostitutes, and female slaves, but nonetheless her status was unique in the world of that day. She was regarded as her husband's equal in social status and was equally entitled to dissolve the marriage if she chose.

By the time of the empire and the birth of the Christian church, this freedom had replaced the ancient religious ceremonies with a free marriage that was a transaction with no stated form at all. No exchange of gifts was needed and no contract required unless great wealth and estates were involved. It sufficed that both parties to the marriage be citizens, that they have the desire and will to be married to each other, and that their mutual consent be verified.

— *Excerpted from* Re-Inventing Marriage *by Christopher L. Webber.* *See review on page 37.*

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The church and marriage: looking for a new ethic

by Jean Ponder Soto

During my lifetime, my own Roman Catholic tradition has undergone a major shift in its official thinking on marriage. The Second Vatican Council, in its document on *The Church in the Modern World*, proclaimed that there are two purposes in marriage: (1) the procreation and education of children, and (2) the mutual love and support of the spouses. The document broke with centuries-old teaching by refusing to prioritize these two purposes. Previously, the Roman church taught that the begetting of children is the primary end of marriage.

The staying power of patriarchy

This understanding of marriage reflected the Roman society from which it sprang. In the Greco-Roman world, marriage and the begetting of children were considered a duty one owed to the Roman state. The survival of society depended upon the fertility of families. In the best of times, the population barely managed to replace itself. Further, the patriarchal family structure was the basic unit of that society. Men married (1) to establish a family, (2) to produce heirs and carry on the family name and fortune, and (3) to provide citizens to maintain the Roman state. In those early centuries, the church saw marriage as an almost entirely civil matter, which indeed it was.

After the barbarians invaded and the Roman empire slowly crumbled, the church took on the functions of the civil marriage courts. In time, the institution of marriage accumulated more church laws than anything else. Church law on marriage dealt with the rights and duties of the parties and with the conditions of validity of the marriage; church law

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Sex in other sacred traditions

• **Hinduism—** Along with spiritual salvation, moral duty, and material wealth, sexual pleasure is considered one of the four basic goals of life. Hinduism produced several sex manuals that are regarded as sacred texts. The most famous, the *Kama Sutra,* was composed between the 1st and 4th centuries C.E. In it, men and women are urged "to have pride, not shame, in their sexual activities, since the joy of sex reflects the joy of divine union." Joy in sexual union is found by harmonizing the passions of the couple. This skill is effective only in the context of true love, which is necessary for sexual fulfillment.

• **Buddhism—** Followers seek to still all desire — including sexual desire — as a condition for enlightenment. The Zen Buddhists of Japan distinguish between desire and pleasure; the absence of desire actually increases the pleasure of sexual intimacy. Without desire, violent feelings and aggression are absent, and intercourse becomes "a true celebration of spiritual harmony."

Tsogyel, a Tibetan woman and a religious teacher, taught that without lustful desire coitus is a divine gift that brings pure joy and is to be received with gratitude. In such sexual activity each partner sees her/himself as the medium through which the gift of pleasure is bestowed on the other. Focused completely on the partner's pleasure, the pair create a divine nectar from the mingling of the man's white seed and the woman's red seed. It is absorbed into their bodies and brings a wonderful peace that is a "pleasure beyond pleasure." A person who is thus able to transform desire "experiences sexual activity as a fragment of nirvana."

• **Taoism —** The way of Tao is to achieve harmony by balancing the male principle, *yang,* with the female principle, *yin.* The goal of sexual activity is not only pleasure and children, but the maintenance of physical and spiritual health through the union of *yin* and *yang* elements.

• **Judaism —** In the mystical literature of the Kabbalah, one's inner union between the male and female principles is a prerequisite for sexual union. The couples' sexual union brings perfect joy and perfect unity of body and soul: "When male and female are in union, God abides."

• **Islam —** a 16th century Muslim Nefzawe wrote *The Perfumed Garden.* The manual writes of "What a man despises and desires": "above all, a man loves a woman whose sexual joy is also religious joy ... God gave us sexual love as a reflection of his love for all mankind. So when a woman gives her love to a man, she is responding to God's love for her." In the chapter "What a woman despises and admires": "Thus above all, a woman loves and respects a man who regards sensual love as part of his religion, through which he learns to praise and glorify God."

— Material drawn from Robert Bates, *Sacred Sex. Erotic Writings from the Religions of the World* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993). Bates notes that in classical Greece and Rome intercourse between husband and wife was "usually a hurried, loveless business, whose sole purpose was procreation." Thus, he finds little in western classical literature "where religious and sexual feelings unite."

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treated marriage as a contract and modeled itself on civil contract law. Marriage was not considered a sacrament in the Roman church until the 12th century. There was little concern with the intersubjective relational aspects of marriage.

The Christian church inherited a body/spirit dualism and a Stoic philosophy that devalued the body, seeking the strictest possible control of it and of sexual activity. Augustine of Hippo set the tone for centuries when he taught that sexual intercourse was always sinful — even in marriage — because of the element of pleasure in it. He believed that sexual intercourse should take place within marriage only to conceive children; it was otherwise permissible (again, within marriage) only when necessary to quiet the fires of concupiscence or to prevent a greater sin. When the Roman church reacted to the Protestant Reformation at the Council of Trent, it proclaimed again that celibacy was a state more perfect in virtue and closer to God than the married state. Trent declared that anyone saying otherwise should be declared *anathema* (*Canons on the Sacrament of Marriage*, Canon 10, Nov. 11, 1563).

Before the declarations of Vatican II, the "good" marriage was one that had been validly contracted by a baptized couple who agreed to have children (or to be open to that possibility) and who would remain united to each other until death.

New perspectives

The early part of this century brought forth a number of new thinkers who emphasized the subjective aspects of marriage and the relationship between the spouses. One writer, Herbert Doms, a German priest, was especially influential. He believed and wrote that sexual activity in a marriage served chiefly to foster and express the mutual love between the spouses. This thinking was, at first, condemned by the Roman church— but was later incorporated, with qualifications, into the Second Vatican Council's teaching on marriage.

From *"L'art de bien vivre et de bien mourir,"* Paris, 1492 Visminis Co

Today the sexual love of spouses is spoken of in a positive light — as a reflection of divine love and as caught up in divine love — but in the Roman church it is still inseparably linked to the procreation of children. The Roman church has maintained an official prohibition against "artificial" means of birth control and permits only the use of periodic abstinence as a means of regulating births. The Anglican Lambeth Conference had already moved past this stance and allowed birth control in some situations by 1930.

The reality, however, is that Roman Catholic women in the western world use artificial birth control. For the first time in human history, reliable and inexpensive means to prevent conception are widely available and used. What is not yet worked out is a solid, thoughtful, and comprehensive Christian vision of conjugal sexuality.

What is a vision of marital sex unlinked from the intent to bear children? The next important step is to hear from married couples themselves on the role of conjugal sexuality in their lives. Nothing can substitute for their lived experience. Couples can tell us of the concrete patterns of development within their marriage and their sexual expression. This information needs to be used to enrich a renewed theology of marriage.

Sexual intimacy "unlinked" from procreation forces a rethinking. If we agree — and not all would — that it is good, within a marriage, to unlink the intent to procreate children from the intent to engage in sexual intimacy for its own sake, then the question can arise about the role of divine

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mystery in such a sexual union: "What is God doing when a couple makes love?" The short answer is that God is making love too. One can say that God permits lovemaking, or gives lovemaking as a gift, or that sexual love is a reflection of God's love. But it is another matter, a further step, to say that God is present and active in sexual intimacy.

A spirituality of conjugal intimacy could call upon the Christian conviction that in Christ we become new creations, and that the Spirit is given so that we are co-actors with Christ; we live, suffer, rejoice, pray, and love joined to the Risen Christ. The life of married love — and its sexual expression — is not only a mirror of God's love, it is the very activity of the Trinity that lives in the marital relationship. The Vatican II document describes marital love as "caught up into divine love." Conjugal love is one of the best instances we Christians have of what the Incarnation means.

Sexual intimacy as aesthetic

Like fine art, lovemaking can be undertaken for its own sake. Its value is intrinsic. The spouses, as artists, "make" love. With God, they become co-creators of their corner of the universe.

Conjugal love, like the dance, is ecstatic. The original context and meaning of *ecstatic* is "to be transported beyond oneself into the presence of God." Dance and lovemaking create a sacred space and arouse the ecstasy that pierces the boundary between the human and the divine.

Conjugal love is like an icon. Lover and beloved, by their touches and caresses, reveal and call forth the divine presence which each one possesses.

Christine Gudorf, in *Body, Sex & Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics*, makes a case for mutual pleasure as the purpose of marital sexual love. Her work is a corrective to the tendency to spiritualize marital sex excessively. It also aims at ending church "demonization" of pleasure. Far from being something to despise or fear, Gudorf notes that experiences of pleasure are necessary for human growth and wholeness.

The notion of sexual union as an art work yields an ethic — just as the notion of procreation as the chief purpose of sexual union did. The ability to reveal God's love to one another, the gift of mutual self-donation, demands that the equal dignity of each spouse be recognized. The lovers in the *Song of Songs* are an example:

"The mutuality of their delight in one another, the totality of their self-giving, and the finality of the love itself, which seems in no way oriented toward the producing of children or the continuation of the tribe, are a celebration of equality between the man and the woman" (Sandra Schneiders, *Women and the Word*, p. 35).

Respect and appreciation, gratitude and awe — and all of the attitudes we associate as fitting in the presence of the holy— will also characterize sexual expression.

***The Wedding Dance*, 1566, by Pieter Bruegel the Elder** courtesy of Detroit Institute of Arts

If procreation of children is no longer the primary end of sexual intercourse in marriage, the prohibition of same-sex unions seems superfluous. Same-sex relationships possess the same capacity for love as do heterosexual marriages. In fact, aspects of the mutuality and equality operative in gay and lesbian couples at their best could well be a model for heterosexual couples that still labor under a dominant/submissive model.

Gudorf points out that a purpose of mutual pleasure in

Conjugal love, like the dance, is ecstatic. The original context and meaning of ecstatic *is "to be transported beyond oneself into the presence of God."*

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sexual intimacy creates an ethic that calls for sexual union to be free from any kind of violence or coercion, and requires the knowledge and circumstances necessary to give one another pleasure. Judith Wallerstein's *The Good Marriage: How & Why Love Lasts* (May, 1995), the first in-depth study of successful long-term marriages, shows that sexual intimacy is central, but that other demands tend to crowd it out. The time and place, then, for conjugal love must become sacred time and space and be protected. It is time that has the character of the Sabbath.

A couple's intimate life together needs the seasoning of time in order to grow in beauty and depth and strength.

When sexual expression truly is lovemaking, it is a journey into vulnerability. It is an aesthetic and ascetic discipline to begin the journey again and again with the same person. This is because the ability to disguise one's nakedness is eroded by that repetition. Over time, the journey can lead from a desire to hide or protect oneself to the discovery of new dimensions in self and other.

A terrible tenderness can be found behind the layers that peel away. It is paradoxical, amazingly powerful, and almost too frightening; it reminds us of dying and rising.

Such a vision of married sexual love is one that lays full claims on the Incarnation. The making of an act of love is understood as a joint endeavor of the spouses and God. It is love—God's love and the spouses' love—that is revealed and expressed.

Through bodily pleasure, the Spirit touches and is touched. Such love can be transforming: for as the couple grow in their love for each other and in their recognition of the source of their love, they are changed. "God," the first letter of John tells us, "has loved us first." We respond in kind—loving spouse, and self, and God, with God's own love. TW

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Perspectives on marriage

Facing into the ceremony

I have heard more than one member of the clergy express a preference for officiating at funerals rather than weddings. Families tend to be emotionally volatile around weddings: crucial participants can show up very late to the rehearsal or ceremony, family members get into shouting matches, someone's drinking problem comes to the fore. The stress levels for families seem to run very high around weddings and the minister can be easily caught up in the fray.

Upon hearing such tales from my colleagues I remember thinking that I would never allow or excuse such behavior from a couple or their families. But now I am on the bridal hotseat, involved and invested in preparing for my own wedding and I am now faced with my own tempest of emotions.

The image of bees and hives has come to me more than once in the last months. I picture my family and the groom's family as separate bee hives; each hive has agreed to part with members and resources to set up a third colony. In and around the original family hives, there is much excited activity. But that is not all, if I look within I find that same buzzing energy inside of me as if I had swallowed my own small swarm.

I first noted my extra reserves of nervous energy when I started to shop for a wedding dress. By donning one of these costumes, I unleashed long buried fantasies from childhood. In a wedding dress I was a cross between a fairy princess and the lead in the school play; I was dazzled. When I told a friend who had recently married, she confessed to hearing "The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies" play in her head whenever she tried on one of these dresses.

The bride is in costume and the question is: What drama or dramas is she cast in? If marriage is a sacrament what hidden things does it reveal?

A bridal fashion show Jack Kurtz/Impact Visuals

One possible answer is revealed in the moments when congregations are moved to tears. Tears commonly happen at two key moments: when an infant, often in baptismal gown, is received at the fount; and when the bride approaches the altar. I wonder if the bride and the newly baptized are icons? I see in them dual images of the human soul before God, both are received and claimed.

I am intrigued by the wedding imagery in the final chapters of the Book of Revelation. "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb (19:9)." The final reunion of God and redeemed creation is pictured as a great cosmic wedding banquet where the thirsty drink from the water of life (22:17).

I saw a set of wedding photographs in which a number of the guests were regulars in the soup kitchen where the bride worked. These unposed, black and white pictures struck me as modern day snapshots of Luke's parable of the great banquet: the poor and the lame, the addicted and the mentally ill were guests of the bride and groom. These photos moved me to think of heaven.

When I stir up images from my soul regarding the meaning of my wedding I cannot help but acknowledge the mythic images that I find there: the bride in baptismal white as an image of the human soul before God; the wedding banquet which celebrates the union of God with all creation at the end of time. I do not actually think that I will feel like an icon when I walk up the aisle. I will likely be worrying about tripping on my dress or keeping my headpiece on. But I won't be surprised by my own tears or by anyone else's.

As for the buzzing bees, they have been lying low since I bought my wedding dress. My fellow sugar plum fairy had the same experience: Buying the dress was the biggest hurdle. I await the drama of my wedding with eager anticipation and for the minister's sake I hope my behavior and punctuality are exemplary. And maybe there will be a moment at the reception when I will know that I am playing my part in a cosmic drama and I will remember to bless God for this day and for this marriage supper.

— Erika Meyer is a priest in rural Michigan.

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The twinkling of an eye

For his wrath endures but the twinkling of an eye... Psalm 30:5

We got kind of a late start this morning, so we had to dash tensely around the house getting ready for work. With only five minutes to make my train — the station is nearby, but five minutes is a little too tight — Richard speeds along the street and jerks to a stop at the light. He is fuming about the mess one of the kids left in the bathroom, and he barks at me when I ask him why he's bothering with that right now.

"Because they don't have any consideration for others at all!" he roars.

"So why are you yelling at me?"

"Who else am I going to yell at?" he demands, still furious, until what he said has dawned on both of us and we begin to laugh: me first, of course, but then even he cannot stop the grin from stealing across his face. He shakes his head, and we part with a laugh and a kiss.

Well, who else is he going to yell at?

People shouldn't take out their frustrations on the ones they love, of course, but once in awhile it doesn't hurt me to take a hit that by rights belongs to somebody else.

Especially if it can end up like it did this time: with both of us laughing and feeling glad to be loving someone who can handle our less-than-attractive moments.

This time it was Richard, but God and he both know about my occasional tirade in our kitchen that's really about something that happened far from there.

Richard is remarkably wise when I do this: he is quiet, content to wait it out without trying to argue me back into lucidity. It passes. I remember my irrational behavior and am sorry. He says it's okay, and I know it genuinely is.

There is a thin line — but one which must be strictly observed — between the occasional decision to absorb someone's misdirected anger and a consistent acceptance of the whipping boy's role. One is an accomodation to a normally loving partnership; the other is sadomasochism.

In one case, wrath is brief: "the twinkling of an eye."

Love demands equality in power and in freedom of expression, even the expression of things about which we feel silly or ashamed later on.

In the other, it is a dispiriting daily reality.

Love demands equality in power and in freedom of expression, even the expression of things about which we feel silly or ashamed later on.

— Barbara Crafton is on the staff of St. John's in the Village, New York City.

Baptismal vows at home

Divorce is a sad thing. It can also be empowering. The church's attitude toward divorce always casts it in the light that people gave up. It doesn't recognize that there can come a time when people are dying.

The church was not there for me and it was not there for my wife Jennifer when we each experienced divorces prior to our marriage to each other — and we are both priests of the church.

I began to really feel bad about myself that I didn't know how to be a spouse. As a priest I felt I was supposed to be setting an example. You almost forget your humanity. Here you are failing.

I'm the one who decided to get myself into therapy and to pay for it myself. I thank God that I realized that I needed to get myself some help.

In my first marriage, we never got premarital counselling. Because I was a seminarian, the priest assumed I knew what I needed to know — bad assumption!

In my second marriage, my wife contributed her own issues. I had all the rhetoric of being a feminist husband, but it was all rhetoric. I didn't help with the early childcare. My wife did all of it. I never helped in the kitchen. I never helped in the house.

Realizing a partnership is practicing your baptismal vows in your home. I know now that part of my ministry is being present to my wife and my children.

Now I do childcare two days a week. I do a lot of the cooking. I'm more aware that this really is a partnership, not a relationship where one person is subjugated to the other. In a lot of cultures, especially Latino culture, there is a perception that the woman is there to take care of the man.

Realizing a partnership is practicing your baptismal vows in your home. I know now that part of my ministry is being present to my wife and my children.

There's more to marriage than love. Our marriage is very much one with Christ at the center. We talk about our spiritual lives, our work, our sexual life — she is my best friend because I am not afraid to stand naked before her.

I'm thankful for this third opportunity.

— Butch Naters Gamarra is rector of St. Stephen's, Boston.

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Souls in touch

Neither of us is the person we were when Patti and I stood before Bishop David Rose in Corpus Christi, Texas and made our vows. Since that time, we have been on a journey together, and I continue to give thanks every day for all that Patti has brought to my life. We have been enormously blessed in one another, and in our mutual willingness to trust one another, encourage one another, learn from one another, grow together, laugh together and — perhaps most important — to be bearers of God's grace to one another.

Faith is an essential element of our marriage. We know that each of us belongs first to God, and all we are together comes from God.

Marriage is a vocation. It requires a particular kind of commitment that not everyone can, or should, make. It is sometimes difficult to remember this in the midst of our cultural images about love and marriage! The church has an important role here. In the marriage service, the celebrant says that the marriage covenant "signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his church, and Holy Scripture commends it to be honored among all people." Because marriage signifies the union between Christ and his church, it is a foundational element of our life as Christian community. We, the church, must take seriously our responsibility to help couples as they live into their marriage vows. We honor marriages when we offer both friendship and practical support to families.

Many years ago Patti and I attended a Marriage Encounter weekend that we both found very helpful in naming some of the common-sense habits of good marriages. One of these is dialogue. How many people there are who lead single married lives. They are married but their souls have lost touch. Patti and I have been carrying on a dialogue — in person, by phone, and through notes over all these years. I think of marriage as an ongoing conversation, listened to by God, in which we define who we are, and where we are as we go about the business of loving one another into becoming our best selves.

— Edmond Browning is Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

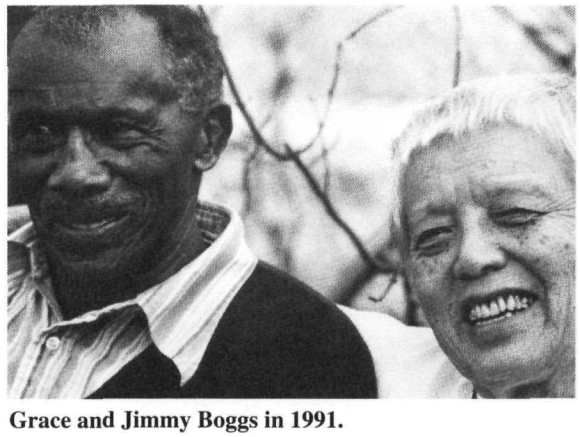
United by vision

Jimmy and I were so different that if we hadn't both been committed to the struggle to change this country, we might not have stayed married for 40 years.

I am a first-generation Chinese American, born in Providence, R.I. and raised in New York City. An African American, Jimmy grew up in Marion Junction, Ala. where white people were gentlemen by day and KKK by night. While I was in graduate school, Jimmy was bumming his way through the western part of the U.S. or working on the WPA until World War II opened opportunities at the Chrysler-Jefferson plant where he worked on the line for 28 years.

I like my vegetables crisp, Chinese-style; he liked them cooked to death. Traveling along the highway, I would have my head in a book, while he was pointing out the cows and counting the freight cars. I have a New England accent; he talked "Alabamese." I hate housework. He (fortunately) actually enjoyed vacuuming and mopping the kitchen floor. My approach to political questions came more from books; his from experience.

We struggled over almost every issue, often so vigorously that people had to switch their eyes from one side to the other as if at a pingpong match. Through these struggles we both grew.



Grace and Jimmy Boggs in 1991.

Jimmy's mother, like mine, had never been to school and could not read or write. But there was a difference. Our home was not in the Chinese community and my mother had no one to talk to about her problems. So she saw them as personal, not social. Jimmy's mother had a social perspective on life.

From the moment that I began living in the black community, I was impressed by the social and political consciousness of grassroots blacks who had been raised in the segregated South. Those with education and those without had to live next door to one another. So over back fences folks discussed what was going on in the community, how black folks were being treated and how world and national events affected their lives. On front porches and in barber shops folks testified from their own experiences, wondering collectively why white folks were so inhuman, usually concluding that it was because they were more interested in material gain than in human relationships.

When I married Jimmy, I joined this community. It was an enormous privilege.

—Grace Boggs is a community activist in Detroit.

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Million Man March

On Monday, October 16, 1995, well over one million Afrikan-American men descended on the nation's capitol for a day of atonement, fasting, prayer and reconciliation. As a participant in many Washingon marches, I can say this is the high point of my life.

Sunday, 10/15/95 - 4:33 p.m.: It has been amazing to watch our communities organize and respond to this historic event. As I sit on the bus with 46 other brothers, old, young, working, unemployed, handicapped, I realize that all classes of black men are present for this event.

I reflect on the massive show of support from the black women; the mothers, wives, sisters, girlfriends, all feeling the utmost pride and determination as they watched, worked and prepared their black men for this historic journey.

10/15/95 - 5:44 p.m.: As we sit at the State Fair, I am totally swept away with a group of sisters singing: "Oh! I know you can change ... , Oh! I know you can change ... , Oh! I know you can change ..., the Million Man March is gonna change some thangs!"

10/15/95 - 9:40 p.m.: The last several hours have been spent developing the brotherhood on our bus. The conversation has already begun to take place about what will happen when we return to our respective communities. The dialogue is spirited and emotional ... The younger brothers on the bus are transfixed.

10/15/95 - 10:25 p.m.: Upon arriving at the service plaza in Springfield, Ohio, I saw a magnificent sight. Hundreds of buses filled with thousands of black men.

10/16/95 - 9:30 a.m.: I am now at the Mall in Washington D.C. I am surrounded by an endless sea of black men. In every direction, proud, disciplined, loving and caring brothers by the hundreds of thousands.

10/16/95 - 12:18 p.m.: Just a few minutes ago, I spoke with my wife at home who shared with me that on the noon news at CNN, they estimated that the crowd was at two million and growing! As I walked around meeting brothers from Philly, South Carolina, Los Angeles, New York, Connecticut, Memphis, all around the country, I am not surprised. Some have estimated that between 45,000 and 50,000 black men came from Detroit. I am encompassed with a new attitude, one that gives me supreme confidence in our ability to make things right in our communities.

For so long I, as a black man, have carried a special burden. That is, no matter what I accomplish as an individual black man, it is always overshadowed by the misdeeds of other brothers who have given up hope. I have watched the evening news with shame, as the insane acts of lost black men are paraded across prime time. I have experienced the fear of white people on the elevator, on downtown streets, and as I travel across the state. Today that personal burden has been lifted.

This event has provoked a powerful presence from our proud ancestors. The spirit of the 250,000 black people that stood on this same exact location 32 years ago are all here today. I envision the beaming stares of all of those that have sacrificed their lives for the advancement of Afrikan people in this country. The 150 million souls lost in the treacherous journey to these shores are all shouting in unison today: "Go black man, it's finally time that you've stood up!"

I have on several occasions today, been overwhelmed with emotion, tears just streaming down my face. As Bishop George Stallings from the Imani Temple led 1.5 million black men in prayer, I felt the pain of our children and women as I atoned for the sins of black men. While Maya Angelou read an original poem for the march, tears returned to my eyes. Again and again and again, as a young sister from Maryland read a poem, begging black men to protect her until she became a black woman, I cried. As a 14-year-old brother pleaded with black men to assure his future, I cried. And as I thought about the millions of black folks across the country, as they marveled in pride at our historic gathering here in D.C., I cried. All day I screamed, hollered, shouted and cried. Tears of joy, tears of atonement, tears of pride, and tears of a future, unseen yesterday, but very clear today. I cried.

Richard Trice is the training and technical assistance coordinator for the Hunger Action Coalition and father of five in Detroit, Mich.

Adopt a striking family

The six unions on strike against the *Detroit News* and *Detroit Free Press* are asking individuals, union locals and churches to pledge a monthly contribution for the welfare of a striking family. Pledges of $50 a month can help feed a family, $200 could save a home, $10 might prevent a utility cut off. Checks can be sent to DNA Striker Relief Fund, Metro Detroit, AFL-CIO, 2550 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48208.

FBI wiretaps

The F.B.I. has proposed a national wiretapping system of unprecedented size and scope that would give law enforcement officials the capacity to monitor simultaneously as many as one out of every 100 phone lines in some high crime areas of the country.

The plan, which needs Congressional approval for the money to finance it, would still require a court warrant to conduct wiretaps. Still, the proposed expansion of the Government's eavesdropping abilities raises questions among telephone industry executives as to why the F.B.I. believes in may require such broad access to the nation's phone network.

— *New York Times*, 11/2/95

Sydney defers lay presidency

The Anglican Diocese of Sydney, Australia, has deferred until 1996 a final vote on whether to allow lay persons and deacons to preside at the eucharist.

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Clinging to the alien 'other'

by Harvey H. Guthrie, Jr.

As I understand the biblical perspective, the significance of marriage goes deeper than society's laws and transcends the success or failure of any particular marriage. It is infinitely more profound than just staying together legally. It is grounded in God's inclusive call to all humanity and the Bible bids us allow its "logic" continually to undermine all the unconscious assumptions through which divisive chauvinisms seek to drown out God's inclusive call.

I base this claim on two classical biblical statements about marriage. The first is Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh." The second is Jesus' response to a question about divorce in which he refers to this Old Testament passage.

Genesis 2:24 is from the contributor to the Old Testament narrative called the "Yahwist." Based on cultural assumptions equating "human" perspective with "male" perspective, it holds that human fulfillment and wholeness come only by abandoning the familiar for the mysterious — abandoning the ambiance which formed one's persona, which imparted one's identity, for another ambiance defined and characterized by relationship with a mysteriously alien other. This parallels another Yahwist passage, the call of Abraham: "Leave your homeland and kindred and immediate family," God says, "for the land that I will show you ... and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed." By birth Abraham shares in the prestigious heritage of illustrious Babylon. But it is precisely in abandoning that defining heritage for a locale, lineage and family beckoning from a mysteriously alien future that Abraham becomes what he is meant to be, and new, salvific possibilities open up for the whole human community.

Before Abraham's call the Yahwist recounts various human efforts to establish one group's identity as "normative" and to impose that identity on others. Examples stretch from Cain ("Farmers are normative!") and Abel ("Shepherds are normative!") to the Tower of Babel ("Babylonian culture mediates God's presence!"). Those examples expose as clearly today as they did millennia ago how we human creatures deal with the threats posed to our identity by those alien "others" out there whose presence challenges the validity of our claims to normativeness.

But the narrative of Abraham's call begins to set out an alternative understanding of humanity, and of God. In that understanding, God is not the God of one variety of humanity, but of all humanity — precisely in its innumerable, multifaceted, multicolored varieties. God is not a tribal God but the caller of a variety of tribes (twelve is a mystical, holistic number) into a league in which their unity guarantees the integrity of the specificity of each. This God calls varied genealogical groups into an Israel — Jews and Greeks, slaves and senators, women and men — into an *ekklesia*. The central biblical story, in fact, is about how God is at work — humbly, patiently, noncoercively and non- imperialistically — on an alternative way to human fulfillment and wholeness.

That way is not some idealistic "humanity" in which the particularity which goes with being human is removed, nor is it the assertion of some one particularity as normative. It leads to a wholeness in which each particular, incomplete piece of humanity is necessary. To set out on God's way is to leave homeland, kindred and immediate family for a mysteriously alien set of future relationships. That is the fundamental theological — and anthropological — statement of the story of Abraham's call. And the allusive phraseology of Genesis 2:24 locates the meaning of marriage in that call.

Both the powerful drive of sex impelling human beings toward one another, and the primal abhorrence of incest with its insistence that the drive must lead to alien others, bespeak God's inclusive purpose for variegated humanity. Human fulfillment and wholeness is to be found only in a relationship with an alien other. The drive that leads individuals to marriage is rooted in God's inclusive purpose for all humanity.

We are called to allow the logic of marriage to undermine all the unconscious assumptions through which chauvinisms seek to drown out God's inclusive call.

The nuanced meaning of Genesis 2:24 prepares the way for Jesus' own profoundly nuanced statement about marriage in Mark 10:2-12. The questioners ask about the legality of divorce, "to test him," the implication seeming to be that Jesus will take some foolish, fanatical position undermining his credibility. Having had them quote what the law said on the subject, Jesus

Harvey Guthrie, a former dean of Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., has now retired to a rural acre outside Fillmore, Calif., which he says he married into and on which he and Doris Peyton will celebrate 50 years of marriage on December 29.

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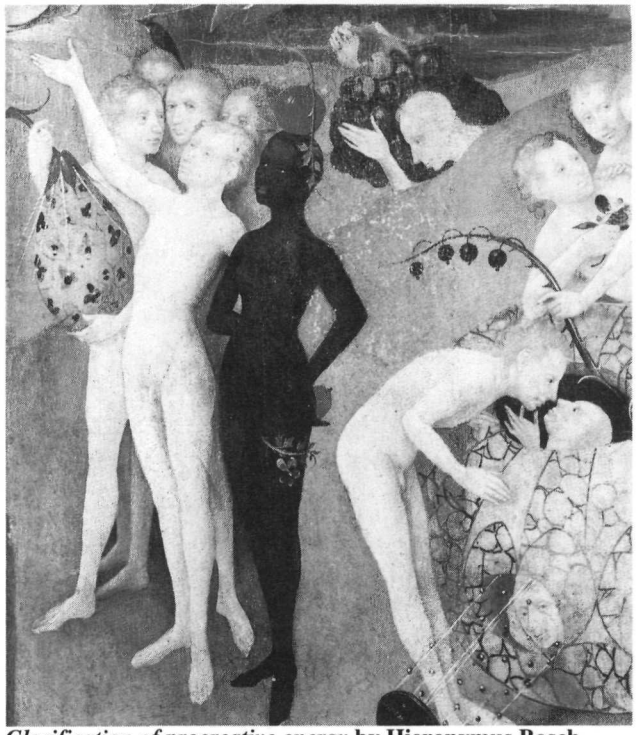
says, "Sinful human nature, and legalistic approaches to complicated things taken by the likes of you, make laws governing the termination of marriages necessary. But marriage is not, finally, about a legal contract. It is about something of a different order, something deeper."

In typical fashion, Jesus says this allusively, not by citing marriage or divorce law, but by reciting the Yahwist's allusive statement in Genesis 2:24 about how human incompleteness is to find fulfillment in the purpose of God. Again, when he gets back home and finds that the disciples don't get the nuance either, he employs inflated ironical hyperbole in branding as adulterous any marriage after divorce.

Put prosaically, Jesus is saying to both antagonists and disciples that the significance of marriage goes deeper than we think, that the significance of marriage is rooted in God's inclusive purpose for all humanity — in God's call to the separated varieties of humanity to find fulfillment and wholeness in relationship to one another.

Jesus seems subtly to underline the logic of that significance by going deeper than the statement of the Yahwist in Genesis. The "therefore" with which Genesis 2:24 begins refers to the creation of woman from a rib taken from the man, an understanding that sees woman as derivative of man and male humanity as normative humanity. But Jesus prefaces Genesis 2:24's "therefore" with a reference to Genesis 1:27, "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female,'" which understands women and men together to constitute humanity and neither to be derivative or normative. Further, the earliest manuscripts of Mark omit "and be joined to his wife" after "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother." Given this, and given Jesus' reference to Genesis 1 in which "man" clearly includes both male and female human beings, it is entirely possible that Jesus is saying, "From the beginning God made [human beings] male and female. For this reason human beings shall leave father and mother, and the two shall become one flesh ..."

That is the point. We are called, along with Jesus, to allow the logic of marriage continually to undermine all the unconscious assumptions through which divisive chauvinisms seek to drown out God's inclusive call.



Glorification of procreative energy **by Hieronymus Bosch**

Neither the nuances nor the allusivenesses I believe I rightly discern in the Genesis and Mark passages warrant my drawing pedantic, legalistic, prosaic conclusions. I will, though, say that I believe the Episcopal Church's honest canonical recognition of the fact of civil divorce in 1973 at my first General Convention honored what marriage is about by distinguishing between sacramental significance and legal contracts; that it is a desecration of what marriage is about to use it in some "family values" ostracization of divorced persons, single parents, or gay and lesbian couples; that "to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death" is of a piece with "[to] strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being"; that racism and sexism and homophobia and economic oppression are as sinful, and in the same way, as adultery.

And I will say, too, that I am thankful for a wife, Doris Peyton, and a marriage that are as responsible for what I have said as any exegetical expertise. After almost 50 years you would think I should know Doris completely, know everything about her, and in lots of ways that is true. We often say the same thing about something spontaneously at the same time. But just when I think I've got her, she comes across as a mysteriously alien other, and my prejudices are confronted for what they are, my limited perspectives challenged, my chauvinist assumptions shown up. It is not always without pain, but it is undergirded with an acceptance of *me* (not my pretenses) and a respect for me that is wonderfully affirming. That has a great deal to do, I think, with what I see in Genesis and Mark. We both agree that we have been downright lucky and that it would not be appropriate to get too theological about it. But we do believe it is grounded in an inclusive purpose best glimpsed in nuances and allusions, usually obscured by profundities, and quite often well served by ironic humor. TW

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Witness year-end report

Fêting Eckersley

Members of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company board and friends of *The Witness* magazine gathered in New York City in June to pay tribute to Robert Eckersley, of Scranton, Penn., ECPC's treasurer for two decades!

"It is hard to imagine the Episcopal Church without *The Witness*," said Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning in a written statement, "and it is hard to imagine *The Witness* without Robert Eckersley."

Eckersley's work was applauded by Robert DeWitt, a former bishop of Pennsylvania, who became its editor in 1974.

"Since the mid-70s, Eckersley has been attending staff and directors' meeting, preparing budgets, counselling perplexed and/or erring editors, and generally keeping watch above his own," DeWitt said. "And all this he does with a serenity born of confidence and competence."

Current editor Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann noted that "Bob was invaluable for extending his advice with an invitation to disregard and to challenge his views — as long as his perspective was understood."

Those working for peace and justice in the Episcopal Church have, at times, shared a tumultuous history, Wylie-Kellermann added.

"But Bob was always intent on getting people to work together. He gives great thumbnail sketches of members of the board, staff and Consultation. He has opinions about our strengths, weaknesses and hearts. He becomes frustrated when people in our camp are at odds."

She ended by saying, "Bob is a man who is cautious about religion — not too comfortable with doctrine or miracles — who has spent much of his time with bishops and Christian radicals.

Robert Eckersley

"He's a man who denounces emotionalism, but quotes poetry and is known to cry. He often quotes:

They drew a circle that shut me out
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win
We drew a circle that took them in."

Reader survey

Many thanks to all who responded to our readers' survey. We're still digesting the many comments, but a quick review indicates that most of the respondents are European American with household incomes under $70,000. More than half are women, most are Episcopalian. One-fifth are gay/lesbian. One-third are ordained. Most have graduate degrees. Most consider themselves liberal and vote Democrat, although numerous other labels were offered, including one "contrarian communitarian." Many readers described themselves as "compassionate" and "intelligent."

Witness awards

The Witness won 12 awards and four honorable mentions in the Episcopal Communicators and Associated Church Press competitions this year.

The Episcopal Communicators' Polly Bond Award of Merit was given to *The Witness* for General Excellence. *The Witness* placed third in the ACP Best in Class competition.

The following 1994 *Witness* features were also honored:

- 1994 Advent Calender, by Julie A. Wortman. Polly Bond Award of Merit [specialized print].
- "Dance of the Soul" by Claudia Bach, 7/94. Polly Bond Award of Merit [original graphic].
- "Daughters of Prophecy" by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, 7/94. Polly Bond Award of Merit [editorial].
- "Engaging the Powers" by Bill Wylie-Kellermann, 3/94. Polly Bond Award of Merit [critical review].
- "Family: Icon and Principality" by Bill Wylie-Kellermann, 12/94. ACP honorable mention [theological reflection].
- "Family Values" issue, 12/94. Polly Bond Award of Merit [in-depth coverage of a current issue].
- "February Thaw" by Skip Renker, 5/94. ACP honorable mention [poetry].
- General Convention coverage, coordinated by Julie A. Wortman. ACP honorable mention [convention or meeting coverage].
- "Glamour," 11/94. Polly Bond Award of Merit [magazine cover design].
- "Passion and Dialogue: An Interview with Steve Charleston" by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, 3/94. Polly Bond Award of Merit [magazine interview].
- "Selling Cars" by Jim West, 11/94. Polly Bond Award of Excellence [photo].
- "Why I am (Still) a Baptist" by Ken Sehested, 10/94. ACP Award of Excellence [feature article].
- *Witness* profiles by Julie A. Wortman and Marianne Arbogast, 4,6,12/94. ACP honorable mention [department].
- "Women's Spirituality: In the Church and Beyond," 7/94. ACP Award of Excellence [readers' favorite].

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The church and the unmarried

by Kay Collier-Slone

General Convention, Phoenix. The "official" statement regarding sexuality offers a caveat which "recognizes that many of its members live in 'discontinuity' to the standard as stated" (i.e. life-long, heterosexual, monogamous marriage).

Conversation buzzes in the corridors among the single, separated, divorced and widowed in attendance. Marriage is *not* the only norm. As single adults, these people live in a new paradigm that is not "discontinuous"; it simply is the way of nearly half of the U.S. population —the way they live, work, make decisions — and, yes, choose whether or not to be sexually active.

• 48 percent of the adult population over the age of 25 is now single.

• This figure may reach 52 percent by the year 2000.

• In the 1980 census, the average age for first marriage was 21-23; in 1990, that figure was 27.5, including high-school drop-outs.

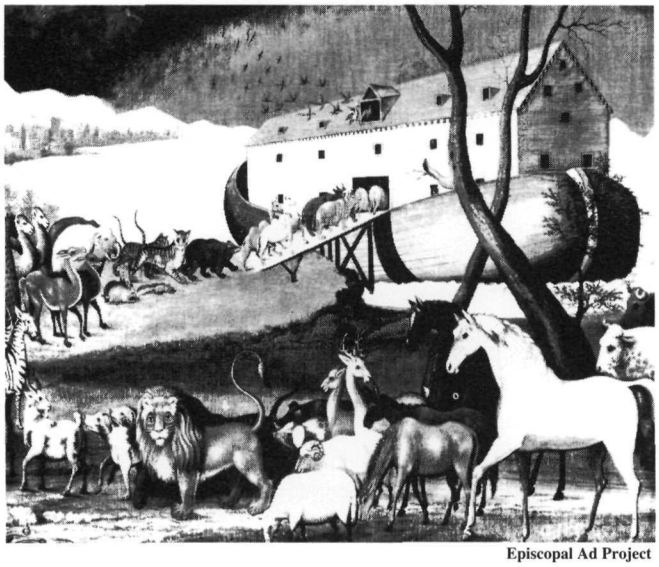
• The post-80 age group is the fastest growing in America. Many are single.

• 60 percent of today's children will live in a single-parent home before they are 18 years old.

• 50 percent of first marriages end in divorce; 60-70 percent of second marriages end in divorce; and 70-82 percent of third marriages end in divorce.

Jesus was single. Yet, as a denomination, and as parishes and missions, the Episcopal Church has programmed and evangelized around married people.

Ministry with single adults is largely a ground-up effort in this church at present, driven by the need of growing numbers of spiritually hungry single adults to have their issues recognized and ministered to; to be fed by the one place which should be uniquely qualified to address the experience of loneliness, of separation, of the need for community. It is also driven by the clamor of a growing number of single adults that unless the Episcopal Church begins to be intentional about reaching out to the many single adults who are unchurched, efforts at evangelism will be minimal at best. The numbers do not lie. Ministry with single adults is not anti-marriage; it is pro the new reality of the major portion of the population of this and other countries.



Episcopal Ad Project

What are the issues the church should address?

• The pain of loneliness, with its often-resultant non-marital mini-marriages, relationship addiction and anesthetizing through abuse of damaging substances and behaviors.

• Marginalized grief—of divorce, of break-ups and deaths in long-term non-marital relationships, of broken dreams and societal pressures.

• The promise of personal wholeness and individual relationship with Jesus Christ — the only relationship which will never fail, in a lifetime in which most persons will spend some period of time alone.

• Community-building, companionship, mentoring — concepts which are crucial to balanced, healthy lives in a society where the institution of marriage is no longer either given or certain.

• Evangelism outreach which can truly say "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You" — and mean it — to single adults, as well as to youth and couples.

• Young single adults who are the first generation to face nearly 20 post-puberty single years.

• Provision of funds, resources and training for parishes and missions of all sizes which will state loudly that single adults are recognized as normal "members" incorporate in the "blessed company of ALL faithful people"—not half-persons waiting in some ante-room to life.

As we enter the 21st century, it is unconscionable that any thinking church could be without some intentional ministry with single adults.

The numbers have it—and they are likely to go higher, not lower. TW

Kay Collier-Slone is director of Ministries with Single Adults at Christ Church Cathedral in Lexington, Ky.; and author of the book *Single in the Church: New Ways to Minister With 52% Of God's People* (Alban Institute). Artist Nell Hillsley works in St. Paul, Minn.

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Promise Keepers revisited

Thank you for your coverage of the Promise Keepers (7/95). The article by Frtiz Eichland was exactly as you described it, "a vivid descriptive piece which may make it possible to reach your own conclusions." I was fascinated to read about the experience of a man who went to the Promise Keeper gathering dubious and found that there was something in the message that was appealing to him and his faith. To me that is one of the reasons the Promise Keepers are an effective movement right now: They speak to men who are struggling to find a place to be as Christian men. However, many elements of the Promise Keepers represent backlash at its finest: scapegoating feminists, women, gay and lesbian people as the cause of the breakdown of the family and economy. Moreover, the Promise Keepers represent a palatable and effective stream of far right extremism in the U.S. Hopefully, future coverage of the Promise Keepers will include this type of analysis. Again, congratulations on your work with such a fine publication as the *Witness.*

Julie R. Enszer
Director, Affirmations [Gay/ Lesbian Center],Ferndale, MI

A packet of information, sent with this letter, included several outrageous comments from Promise Keepers' organizers and supporters.

For instance, *Church & State* quotes Tony Evans in *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*, "Don't misunderstand what I'm saying. I'm not suggesting that you ask for your role back. I'm urging you to take it back. Unfortunately there can be no compromise. ... Treat the lady gently and lovingly. But lead. ... [And] to you ladies who may be reading this: Give it back! for the sake of your family and the survival of our culture, let your man be a man if he's willing."

Fritz Eichland
Promise Keeper in Pontiac, Mich., 1995

Yet, another article, published in *New Age Journal* (3/95), reveals the same ambivalence that Fritz Eichland describes. Like Eichland, Jeff Waggenheim was skeptical of Promise Keepers when he took the assignment and hostile to ideologies that suppress women and condemn gays and lesbians. But when Edwin Cole denounced infidelity and advocated celibacy, Waggenheim writes, "I listen harder, and for a while Cole sounds — dare I say it? — positively feminist as he talks about how respect for women is lost when a man is pursuing sex without love. Then, suddenly, per Cole's request, dozens of young men all around the stadium are standing to take a vow of chastity, and nearby men are moving closer to them to lay a hand of support on their bodies, all heads nodded in prayer."

Wagenheim, like Eichland, is moved by the discussion groups within the press room itself. He's "stunned" that reporters who a moment earlier had been watching a Colorado-Nebraska game turn to each other and talk honestly about their marriages. He, too, notes the camaraderie "among the whites, blacks, and Hispanics who are filling the place" and finally, with reservations similar to Eichland's, takes the hand of the man next to him in the press box and joins in the hymns with "chills running up and down my body."

At the end, Wagenheim concludes it is an open question whether Promise Keepers "will be able to blend moral values and personal change to truly bring integrity into the lives of American men" or will "descend into the demagoguery and extremist politics that have come to characterize the religious right."

M.E.N. Magazine [10/95] notes that the Promise Keepers have borrowed rhetoric from the men's movement: "The idea that men have not been good, safe partners. Men have been adversely affected by pornography and sexual fantasies. Men spend too much time at work and not enough time with their families."

But *M.E.N.* attacks PK's anti-feminism, homophobia and Christian chauvinism. It also critiques the core of PK's reasoning: "The economic system, which they enthusiastically endorse, is working aginst them. Loss of family-wage jobs, declining real income, job insecurity, and long-term unemployment, all of which are characteristic of our advanced capitalist economy, are the very things that force parents, children and grandparents to work long hours, to suffer depression , and to be alienated from each other."

At *The Witness,* we have serious reservations about Promise Keepers. We are skeptical of any stadium-sized gatherings. Some of the rhetoric of Promise Keepers' leaders is narrow-minded and dangerous. Yet, we consider it significant that men with good politics can attend these events and be startled at the level of honesty in the exchanges between men about promises they have made to their families. Millions of men are being drawn into these conversations. The Left needs find a way to talk honestly about sexual ethics and commitments.

— Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

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Leveling the play field

By Kate DeSmet

The playfield on which women and men wrestle and sweat in sexual give-and-take may appear to be the place where male and female connect in passions freely offered. But Linda Hirschman, a Chicago law professor and feminist, says the playfield is more like a minefield for women who dangerously couple with partners far more powerful than themselves.

"I think women would be better off having less sex," says Hirschman of the Chicago Kent School of Law at the Illinois Institute of Technology. Hirschman, currently serving as scholar-in-residence at Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Va., is co-writing a book about modern sexual behavior called, "After Vice-Politics, Feminism, and Legal Regulation of Sexuality."

The book, to be published in late 1996 by Oxford University Press, will challenge what Hirschman calls America's "libertine paradigm of heterosexual sexual relations" that champions free expression of sexual behavior by consenting individuals. Like some feminist scholars, she believes women pay a higher personal cost for the consequences of sexual behavior and, as a result, suffer more in a freer sexually practicing society.

But Hirschman's answer to the situation may unsettle some feminists. She advocates staunch enforcement of laws prohibiting fornication among unmarried adults, and believes current statutory rape laws should be used to jail teenagers who engage in sex.

"Frankly, I'd raise the age of (sexual) consent to 18, maybe even 21, so that a girl is out of high school before she's harvested for sex," Hirschman said.

The Chicago professor said she does not desire a return to old notions of purified females practicing chaste behavior as a sign of submissive obedience to God and men. Instead, she believes laws can help women enhance their "sexual bargaining power" by preserving their sexual access from men until they are in committed, responsible relationships.

"What's happening now is a kind of free-for-all between players who are unequal," Hirschman said. "Men are, on the whole, larger, stronger and not vulnerable to childbirth and nursing. They are not tagged with the natural consequences of sexuality. And, on the whole, they are richer and more politically powerful. So when they bargain for sexual access in society they wield a lot of advantages."

When men get sexual access from women without committing to a responsible and loving relationship in return, the result is loss upon loss for women. Men offer women money in return for sex, or they offer an escape from "the rigors of the market economy," Hirschman said. Many women convince themselves that these are adequate returns for their sexual favors.

"I'd raise the age of consent, so that a girl is out of high school before she's harvested for sex." — *L. Hirschman*

"Women and girls can delude themselves that they are making free choices when it comes to sexual activity with men, but often it is not a morally meaningful act of consent because the alternatives for women in society are so lousy." Hirschman said.

"So even if they believe they're acting freely it is still morally indefensible because the female remains an object, and that is inconsistent with any moral theory of what it means to be a person."

Hirschman turns to the law to help fight the sexual power imbalance. Besides statutory rape laws, she cites others on the books that already address domestic battering, child support, and sanctions against men who use fraud for sexual access to women. Hirschman also wants strict enforcement of laws prohibiting fornication between consenting heterosexual adults but admits "the machinery it would take to enforce (such laws) would make even a 'femi-nazi' like me shudder."

Ultimately, women should understand that their ability to give men sexual access is a powerful commodity, said Hirschman, who developed the idea of sexual "bargaining" from her experience as an attorney for labor unions. Women with a collective sense of their sexual power can gain more leverage in attempts to control their bodies, relationships, children, finances, and future.

Hirschman, who is married and the mother of a college-age daughter, said her philosophy of sexuality is rooted in a Judeo/Christian understanding of the moral role for humans living in community, as well as ancient Greek teachings about human equality that were expressed anew in the Age of Enlightenment. But she admits that in a modern society that celebrates free sexual expression, she carries a "relatively repressed vision.

"I happen to be one of those people who doesn't think our society should be rated by how many orgasms can be achieved in a 24-hour period. So I am radically unwilling to accept the libertine paradigm of sexuality," Hirschman, said. "It just doesn't work for women." TW

Kate DeSmet is a *Detroit News* reporter on strike.

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When the church insists on heterosexual appearances

By Elvira Latta Charles

[Ed. note: In 1994, The Witness published Otis Charles' letter to the House of Bishops revealing that he is a gay man. We affirm his courage. This year, Elvira Latta Charles, formerly married to Otis Charles, offered her story, saying that if church and society didn't damn gay and lesbian life-styles, leading people to try to live duplicitous lives, she might have been spared a situation that caused her pain. Charles added that because homosexuality is a politicized issue, it is hard for people in her position to find their voices, but she hopes that telling her story may "forearm others until that time when education as well as the voicing of our experiences will help enlighten society so that this sad tragedy can be averted for both the gay and the heterosexual person."]

We have read so much about the release of coming out of the closet for the gay person. It is euphoric — to be able to be who you are to your family, friends and neighbors is to feel tall, perhaps for the very first time in your life.

But, if the person revealing their identity is married, what is the experience of the "other" in the marriage?

I am speaking now of my own experience discovering after 25 years of marriage (including the birth of five children) that the man I loved and lived intimately with was gay. One can say, today, after front-page articles in leading newspapers and magazines, that this is not unusual! But that was not the venue of my world 20 years ago when my husband, then the bishop of Utah, broke this astounding news to me.

The closet my husband began to move out from in 1976 suddenly enclosed me and even silenced me before my parents, my children and my friends. We did not openly share this secret that we both now knew. This transferred secret began to gnaw at my insides, as it had his perhaps, and it obsessed my every thought. I realized the enormity and power of this secret. Living within a deception can feel like an encounter with evil — it can call into question one's faith in God. I felt almost paralyzed in its grip and yet some life-force within me forced me to look outward for help.

Elvira Latta Charles on her wedding day in 1951. Diana Latta Baude

The closet my husband began to move out from in 1976 suddenly enclosed me and silenced me before my parents, children and friends.

In the process of therapy and recollection, I realized the ways that this secret, even when unknown to me, had been controlling me and my marriage. Communication and intimacy became its victims. We didn't share truths about our past and spontaneous intimacy was kept vigilantly in check.

For the gay spouse, workaholism can become a pattern as it is the only positive and socially approved outlet. The relationship becomes disempowering for both partners as the secret holds sway. And the gay spouse can begin to let out his or her frustration with sudden anger leaving the unknowing spouse to wonder, and in my case in need of psychological help.

I don't even like to look back on those years between 1976 and 1981, for I see a woman in almost a catatonic state. I had to rediscover who I was, for my image of myself, my spouse and my marriage had shattered. I knew, that like a broken mirror, the various pieces could never be reformed as they had been before and that made me feel desolate and so sad. So, I had to begin the process of refiguring myself.

Thank God for my strong belief in a caring God, a practice of prayer, a great psychiatrist and supportive children who gradually learned of their father's sexual orientation. And I mean gradually, for it took many years before I was

Elvira Latta Charles lives in Washington, Conn.

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able to acknowledge the secret as reality.

I tried every workshop on the planet to make myself able to reconcile this truth with my faith and my values. I did volunteer work for the church, for social service agencies and women's centers. I took assertiveness training courses, others in building a self image; I studied t'ai chi and practiced it daily and shared its beauty with others. I did my work as the Bishop's wife, built a columbarium at the Cathedral, led retreats for women, coordinated an art gallery, remained active on boards of social service agencies, all the time carrying within me his secret. I hated the duplicity and I hated myself for the shame and embarrassment I felt.

And I was angry — oh, the anger and the rage I felt. To hear your husband preach to others what he cannot live himself and to be constantly measuring your reality against the belief system which you espouse and hold dear, adds to the pain.

Today, younger people will say, "Well, you could have left the marriage and saved yourself a lot of grief." That is absolutely true. I can only say that I did not. I suppose I lived in the hope that we could work "things" out, but I could not continue to live within a marriage that included both sexualities and so we divorced in 1994 after 43 years together. To be perfectly honest, I still grieve for what I would have loved as companionship and enduring love for the days ahead.

But the years just prior to my husband's decision to tell the church of his orientation laid a good foundation for the decisions that have followed.

While Otis Charles was dean of the Episcopal Divinity School, I studied feminist theology and received my M.A. in 1993. My years at EDS nurtured a theology of interdependence as opposed to co-dependency. Therapy and reading in feminst literature modelled for me the alrightness of looking out for myself and acknowledging myself as a God-given gift. I had always viewed my marriage as a blending of "two halves to make a whole" and felt so betrayed as well as poorly prepared to face the future alone. I had to learn to be more honest in my communication with others and to gain my own voice.

Like so many women of my generation I like hearing myself more certain and more direct with others. And I appreciate the affirmation of knowing that my particular life experience, my ability to learn and absorb new information and create new patterns in my life, is a great cause for celebration.

I am now enrolled in a training program for Spiritual Directors, sponsored by the Diocese of South Carolina, and am beginning to work with women as a listener to their faith journeys. Perhaps other women whose paths are similar to mine will want to journey with me also. I think there are many men and women who share a similar story to mine. Our stories need to be told because they are about our very soul's health.

Women have learned as they try to unravel the particular trials in their own lives that nothing happens independently of its social context. While my journey is unique to me and I alone am responsible for how I played it out, much has changed in terms of the issue of homosexuality.

But in spite of all the talk, much remains the same in the area of the institutional church and the family. I am saddened to realize that young boys and girls may still experience the fear that leads to inappropriate decisions for one's life. I am saddened that they probably make those decisions without the nurturing of caring family members and wise clergy.

Perhaps I will ultimately learn the purpose of my particular journey. In so many ways it has been so dreadful and yet I am so grateful for the gifts that I have uncovered. I am very conscious of those who have lovingly held me in prayer, including Edmond and Patti Browning, Jungian therapist Demaris Wehr and my spiritual director Jeannette Normandice.

I pray that the love that has been extended to me in the particular will be offered into the arena of the universal where we can share solidarity with all who have experienced grief and somehow been restored to life. TW

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The ethics of monogamy

by Louie Crew

As a gay Christian soon to begin the 23rd year of marriage with another man, much of what I recognize as God's presence in my marriage does not square with the values of our culture.

Every state, for example, treats as grounds for a divorce the fact that a couple has not lived in the same residence for the past year. Thirty-eight allow less than a year to qualify. Ten states require only three months' separation to qualify (Source: Gary N. Skoloff, Skoloff & Wolfe, Livingston, NJ).

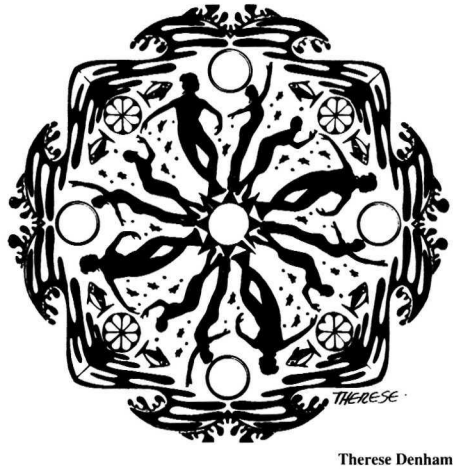
Yet I count it as one of the most important achievements in our marriage that for justice's sake we were able to sustain, with God's help, the stress of living 12 time zones apart for over a year at a time on three separate occasions. Without doing so, my spouse would never have had the opportunity to work at a life-enhancing job in China; nor would I, since our assignments in Asia did not synchronize.

It's important to account for our strange behavior in the few times of great stress which we have faced — times when one of us has not been kind or loving or responsible. Miraculously, each of us when offended has experienced a double portion of God's grace to love the other when he was least loveable.

Though our marriage has been blessed almost all the time with much joy and kindness and with abundant material comfort, these do not mark a marriage as Christian. God values more what we have given away than what we have consumed.

It's easy to look like good Christians, especially if you're a nice couple anyway. It's much harder to be good disciples. Many who call ourselves Christians live comfortably in mutually caring domiciles with little or no regard for the strangers outside our gates.

"If you love those who love you, what



Therese Denham

credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same" (Luke 6:32-33).

Lesbigays are no less prone to deceive ourselves about the virtue of our marriages than are our straight neighbors. Since fewer of us are parents, we often enjoy a great deal more "disposable income" than most straight couples working the same jobs.

"From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded" (Luke 12:48). I sicken when I see lesbigays, spurned by the church, turn and accept instead the invitation of moguls that we sell our souls for mammon.

Lesbigays need strong preaching to call us into the riches of living in full community with all those in need. Instead, we have 76 bishops lined up to try a bishop for heresy for daring to ordain one of us at all.

"One issue which concerns me is the nature of the relationship the church is asked to approve," wrote a priest to me recently out of the blue. I was disconcerted at suddenly becoming a specimen, but I had to admit that I too scrutinize any two people who bid for my blessing of their union. Integrity/NYC won't even consider sponsoring a service of union until the couple has been coming faithfully to the chapter's weekly eucharists for at least six months, nor until they have been to counseling with one of our priest associates.

"I have always assumed that the intention was life-long as the Prayer Book vows seem to imply," my importuner went on. "I know there is some 'cheating' in hetero-sexual relationships, but I just don't know anything about the gay and lesbian ones." Ah, yes, back at sex again.

I am in a commitment for life. It is a monogamous commitment. I'm distressed, however, that almost every conversation about marriage stresses sexual criteria first. It's as if we really buy into St. Paul's no-

Though our marriage has been blessed with much joy and kindness and with abundant material comfort, these do not mark a marriage as Christian. God values more what we have given away than what we have consumed.

Louie Crew, founder of Integrity and professor at Rutgers University, edited *A Book of Revelations: Lesbian and Gay Episcopalians Tell Their Own Stories,* Integrity, 1991. Artist **Therese Denham** is a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

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tion of marriage as essentially Lust Control. I disagree with Paul: We both see but through a dark glass, and each may be wrong. Through it I view sex as integral, but not definitive. Surely at least a dozen issues deserve higher priority if we want to evaluate the qualities of a good Christian marriage. Justice issues, for example. How will the couple spend its money or its time? What kind of equity will exist in deciding? How will the couple divvy up the messy chores? What will the couple do to assure the fullest realization of the talent of each partner and of any children that become their responsibility? How will the couple connect to the full community?

I question the integrity of some of the recent interest in getting lesbigays to marry. Too often what masquerades as concern for lesbigays' welfare, is merely self-interest: "Better they marry their own kind than have one of us risk marrying them!" There is wisdom there, yes, but wisdom devoid of good news, wisdom devoid of simple kindness.

I'd have more trust if I saw a concern for all lesbigay persons, not just those who want to unite. Christian communities rightly encourage straight persons to date for years before they marry. Rarely do straights now talking about lesbigay unions say a word about lesbigay courtship, or lesbigay dating. If straight youngsters need a long period of discernment about who they are and whom they would best connect with, should we expect less need for lesbigay youngsters? Few couples come to priests for pre-marital counseling who have not already been involved intimately. It's important not to hold lesbigays' courtships to a separate standard.

I'd presume good will if I saw welcome for lesbigays commited to being single.

It is not a question for theology to answer, nor even an issue for Emily Post or Amy Vanderbilt to arbitrate. We must be born again. We don't have to petition whether the servant is really a servant or maybe a boyfriend when the foreign outsider says, "Oh, I'm not worthy that you should'st come under my roof." We have only to speak but the loving word. Only then can we be healed. TW

Rites for same-sex blessings

Blessings of relationships, same-sex unions, commitment ceremonies, lesbian/gay marriages — call them what you will, they have been around for a long time. Indeed, the late John Boswell said in his book, *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe*, that such ceremonies began in the 8th Century and predate heterosexual marriages inside church buildings.

In the Episcopal Church, the history is varied. In the past, some couples simply used the marriage service from the Prayer Book without benefit of clergy (as did Louie Crew and his partner, Ernest Clay). Probably the most common "blessing" of lesbian and gay couples comes from using *The Book of Occasional Services'* form for a house blessing. In many areas of the country, the vast majority of Episcopalians who have their homes blessed are same-sex couples. *The Book of Occasional Services'* brief anniversary rite is also easily adapted to same-sex couples. (My partner, Scott Helsel, and I had our 10th anniversary celebrated at our parish's main Sunday service.)

Services approved by a diocesan date from 1975 when the Diocese of Rochester, under the leadership of Bishop Robert Spears, authorized Walter Szymanski (now in the Diocese of Pittsburgh) to conduct such ceremonies.

In 1987, both the Dioceses of California and Newark prepared reports supporting such ceremonies. California published a rite.

In 1993, an *ad hoc* group met at the Episcopal Divinity School to again look at this issue. They developed a proposed rite in early 1994 that celebrates life commitments by people of any orientation, but did not release it prior to General Convention that year. That convention approved a resolution (C-042a) directing the Standing Liturgical Commission and the Bishops' Theology Committee to present "a report addressing the theological foundations and pastoral considerations involved in blessing same-sex unions" to the 1997 convention. It went on to provide that the committees not develop a rite for such unions until authorized by a future convention. Some who oppose such rites contend that the ban applies to everyone in the church and severely attacked the EDS ad hoc group when it released its previously developed rite after the convention. [Copies of *An Illustration of a Rite for the Celebration of Commitment to a Life Together* can be obtained by sending $5 to Charles Bennison at EDS, 101 Brattle St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.]

In 1990, Integrity conducted a survey which revealed that some form of service recognizing lesbian or gay couples had been performed by an Episcopal priest in every domestic diocese.

— Kim Byham. Byham is publisher of The Voice of Integrity

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The Righter trial: on the brink of the millenium

By Julie A. Wortman

There is something utterly appropriate about the fact that the Episcopal Church is gearing up for a heresy trial in early 1996. It has to do with the millenial tenor of American life right now. Who will we be in the new era? As writer Steven Langerfeld recently pointed out, we are "post" so many things these days — postmodern, post-Cold War, post-New Deal — but, he says, "we are pre-We Don't Know What."

Everyone is eager for a "better" future, but there is no consensus about which prophet to follow into which wilderness. People are clamoring for clarity through ballot referenda, newspaper strikes, Million Man marches, national and local elections, Supreme Court decisions and, yes, heresy trials.

But mixed in with the genuine call for clarity is a lot of double talk and sleight of hand. This is no less true in the church than in politics.

The most disingenuous claim about the Walter Righter presentment is that "it is not about homosexuality," but about church order. Some pro-presentment folks go so far as to claim that it is really about sex outside of marriage, gay or straight. If either claim were true, of course, the presenters wouldn't have wanted to confuse the issue by selecting a bishop who ordained a non-celibate gay man. Putting a bishop who had knowingly ordained an unmarried "practicing" heterosexual on trial — there are plenty to choose from, I would think — would have been more to the point.

The presentment may have something to do with church order, but it is absolutely about homosexuality. The question is whether the Episcopal Church of the 21st century will find gay and lesbian people upfront acceptable and, if it will, whether its evolving sexual ethics and sacraments will reflect that position.

Also disingenuous is the presenters' claim that singling out Walter Righter was just a matter of rushing to beat the statute of limitations on presentments. They could have chosen Washington's bishop, Ronald Haines, who ordained Elizabeth Carl, an "out," non-celibate lesbian, to the diaconate in June of 1990, three months prior to the ordination Righter performed.

"No one in the group of presenters knew or talked about the ordination [Haines performed]," presenter James Stanton said when asked about this.

"The only reason for making the Presentment against Bishop Righter was simply that his action, which gained widespread publicity across the country, was the only one known to all of us."

But some of the presenters had pushed for censure of Haines at the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix, the same convention at which the bishops refused to censure Righter for ordaining Stopfel.

Righter was probably a more attractive target than Haines for at least two reasons. First, being retired, Righter lacks the status — and resources — of an "active" bishop. Second, putting Righter on trial is as close to putting the "king" of homosexual ordinations, Jack Shelby Spong, on trial as the presenters could get without actually risking taking on the articulate, media-savvy Bishop of Newark directly. Righter was acting for Spong when he ordained Stopfel, the presiding bishop having persuaded Spong not to perform the ordination himself because of the unresolved furor over Spong's splashy ordination of the outspoken Robert Williams some months before. In this sense, as Righter and others have frequently noted, the presenters do bear some resemblance to schoolyard bullies trying to get at a rival through his underling associates.

Finally, given the extreme unlikelihood that Righter will be found guilty — Righter has clearly broken no church law, the General Convention has repeatedly refused to make "sex outside of marriage" an impediment to ordination and the 1979 resolution which speaks of the inappropriateness of ordaining non-celibate homosexuals describes itself as a recommendation — it is reasonable to conclude that an important, but unspoken, goal of the presenters is to smoke out who will qualify for the conservative vote when it comes time to elect the next presiding bishop.

"The present presiding bishop has taken sides [in this matter of ordaining non-celibate homosexuals] — he is not a moderator," West Texas' bishop, John MacNaughton, recently said. "The next guy is really going to have to be a moderator."

But the trial leaves little room for those who may wish to remain impartial. A vote is what those who wanted this heresy trial desired and that is what they will get. And it will have everything to do with determining whose vision will guide the church as it moves into the millenial wilderness. TW

Everyone is eager for a "better" future, but there is no consensus about which prophet to follow into which wilderness. People are clamoring for clarity through ballot referenda, newspaper strikes, Million Man marches, national and local elections, Supreme Court decisions and, yes, heresy trials.

Vital Signs

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Views on the Righter trial

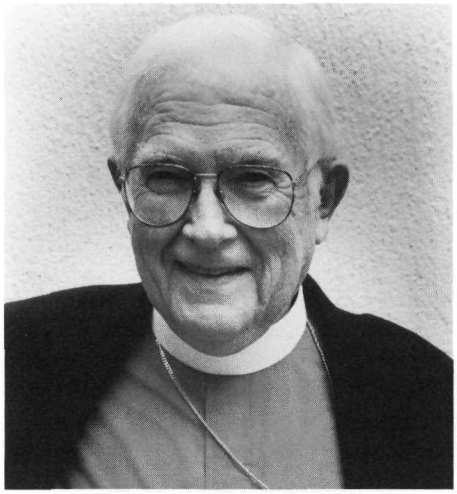
In 1979 the General Convention of the Episcopal Church said, "We re-affirm the traditional teaching of the Church on marriage, marital fidelity and sexual chastity as the standard of Christian sexual morality. Candidates for ordination are expected to conform to this standard. Therefore, we believe it is not appropriate for this Church to ordain a practicing homosexual or any person who is engaged in heterosexual relations outside of marriage." The point of the presentment has from the start been to raise the question of order: What does it mean when the church reaffirms "the traditional teaching?" What does it mean when the church says persons are "expected to conform" to the standards of its teaching? Are bishops or others in leadership in the church free to act contrary to or in disregard of such declarations?

Order serves the mission and ministry of the church. Order minimizes confusion, frustration and division. Prophetic witness and challenges to change also serve the mission and ministry of the church. But when such witnesses and challenges work to break down order, rather than move through an ordered process, the result is brokenness, anger and pain.

If the court finds against Righter, I would hope that we would all refrain from following the course he took until and unless the church changes its teaching. If the court finds that Righter has not acted contrary to the teaching of the church, it would signal that the church has no teaching in this area of sexuality and that every bishop is free to do what is right in his or her own eyes. Such a finding, I suspect, would lead to greater division and dissolution. In any case, a finding in favor of Righter would not by itself establish a new teaching of the Church.

Many of us presenters and supporters of the presentment are committed to dialogue and to following the truth wherever it leads. At the same time, we feel bound to honor the processes and heritage of our common faith. Those who have sought to bring change in the church by unilateral action are those who have resolved the questions to their satisfaction and sought to impose their answers on the church. They have departed from the agreed statements and affirmations of the church. That is schismatic. It is this move which has brought us to the present state of division and bitterness which infects our communion.

— James M. Stanton, the Bishop of Dallas and one of the presenters



Walter Righter, on trial for heresy early next year. James Thrall, ENS

The most frustrating thing to me is that this debate encourages people to first see me in terms of my sexual orientation. There has been no effort to look at my ministry as a piece of the debate. I become nameless and faceless. That dehumanization enrages me most.

— Barry Stopfel, rector of St. George's, Maplewood, N.J., the man Walter Righter ordained

The great 17th century poet and theologian John Milton wrote (in *Of Christian Doctrine*) that people are "unjust and foolish" who "stamp with the invidious name of heretic and heresy whatever appears to them to differ from the received opinion without trying the doctrine by a comparison with Scripture." I wonder what he'd have to say about the bishops who are crying heresy where there is, in the first place, no doctrine to compare with Scripture, where the received opinion (heterosexism) flies in the face of biblical and churchly injunctions toward justice and love, and, indeed, where an abundance of Scripture scholars support Bishop Righter's action? I am embarrassed for the Episcopal Church.

— Virginia Mollenkott, author of Sensuous Spirituality *(Crossroad, 1992)*

[Walter Righter's conscientious decision to ordain Barry Stopfel and the invoking of conscience by some bishops to justify their refusal to ordain women] are not in the same ballpark. When the church decides to do something it has never done before, it provides for a conscience clause. It has always been possible to exercise conscience in such instances. With respect to the ordination of homosexual persons, we have said it is not appropriate, not admissible. Objecting to women's ordination is different from saying, "I need to be an exception to the moral 'no.'"

The purpose of the trial is to create a platform to lay before the whole church the split between the way we come at what Scripture says [about sexuality]. My fear for the church is that we will wind up doing something by deciding not to decide. The presentment focuses the issue. Then the church gets to decide if it agrees with the verdict. People will know a decision has been made and then they can decide what to do.

— John MacNaughton, Bishop of West Texas and a supporter of the trial

It is possible that the decision of a court and, ultimately, a vote of the bishops, will clarify things for people in the middle. Whatever the decision is, it won't change things for people on either end of the spectrum. The bishops ducked the issue [of homosexuality] in their pastoral "study document," *Continuing the Dialogue.* This is another chance for clarity, but it's an expensive way to get clarity.

— Jane Garrett, co-chair of the Committee for Dialogue on Human Sexuality

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By default the church accepts diversity on this issue. That's okay for some but not others. The trial will fracture a fragile communion. I believe the presenters feel their own consciences have been deeply violated. There is no governing mechanism to address that except to defer to a final reckoning.

— Timothy Sedgwick, professor of Christian ethics and moral theolgy, Seabury-Western, Evanston, IL

The people prosecuting Walter Righter ought to be ashamed of themselves. Heresy implies orthodoxy, and we have no such thing in the Episcopal Church.

Civilized, educated, dignified people do not bash others — for any reason, including sexual orientation; nor do they hide behind a phony smokescreen such as presumed church order or presumed correct thinking.

— William Rankin, Dean, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass. [Rankin wishes to make clear he is not speaking for the seminary; however, the seminary's board of trustees has formally declared its support for Walter Righter.]

I suspect that the presenting bishops think that the trial will help clarify various things — like the status of General Convention resolutions and whether the church has traditional teachings on sex outside of marriage. They probably also hope the trial will deflect resources and energy from the "liberal agenda" which they think has the Episcopal Church in a death grip. If Ellen Cooke can't bankrupt us, this trial and the ones to follow will — and I do believe there will be ones to follow if this one doesn't turn out as they want it to.

Regardless of the outcome of the trial I will continue to support gay/lesbian ordinations because almost since the day I became an Episcopalian I have been richly ministered to by gay and now lesbian priests who bear every mark of having been called by God to their ministry and who serve God and God's people extraordinarily well.

—Elizabeth Downie, St. Jude's , Fenton, MI

But there are other things a trial may be intended to accomplish, although no one will say this out loud: publicity for conservatives; further embarassment and discouragement for the presiding bishop and other liberal bishops; clarification of the positions of a number of candidates for presiding bishop who serve either on the trial court or the appeals court.

What I am afraid the trial will accomplish: further division, despair and breakdown of communion within ECUSA; exhaustion of resources and energy on the Left; trivialization and disparagement of all the rest of what we stand for by association, on both Left and Right, inside and outside the church.

— Ellen K. Wondra, assistant professor of theological studies, Bexley Hall, Rochester, NY

Bishops have been knowingly ordaining gay and non-celibate people for a long time. The charge here is that Walter Righter did so publicly. Gay and lesbian people are not willing to hide so much anymore. The church has to adapt to that. The trial is trying to prevent the discomfort that arises when people have to acknowledge that things are not as they appear, i.e., many clergy are gay.

— Bill MacKaye, journalist

I think the presenters sincerely believe that ordaining [non-celibate homosexuals] is wrong. They'd like to bring order to the House. But it hasn't been my experience that the House of Bishops is an orderly place. When we were considering the ordination of women, there were views expressed against it and those who asked that no one act. And then Bob DeWitt and others went off and did it. There's no situation in which a bishop *has* to ordain anybody, but that doesn't mean the ordination process isn't open. A bishop's conscience cannot preclude the ordination of women or of homosexual persons. The church has refused to pass canons to bar homosexual persons from ordination. It is a matter strictly for the local diocese to decide.

— Coleman McGehee, Bishop of Michigan, retired

Out for the church

While the upcoming heresy trial of Bishop Walter Righter has provoked a wide range of responses, few have been as personal or potentially costly as that of Tracy Lind, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Paterson, N.J.

Convinced by the presentment that her hopes for the quiet, gradual acceptance of gay and lesbian clergy were unfounded, Lind decided to come out publicly, owning her lesbian identity and committed partnership in a sermon preached to her parish on October 15.

Tracy Lind

"I wanted to be able to speak out about the Righter trial in the first person, not in the third person," Lind says. "I decided to take a dare — and see if others will take the dare with me."

Parishioners received the sermon with tears and a standing ovation.

While acknowledging the need to respect individual journeys, Lind hopes her action will encourage other gay and lesbian clergy to follow her lead.

"If we are in places where we can do it, it can have an incredible impact," she says. "If priests can't risk, who can?"

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Stephen Duggan is new church treasurer

Stephen Duggan, who has served on *The Witness'* Board of Directors for the past year, was named treasurer of the Episcopal Church October 31.

A certified public accountant, Duggan worked for 33 years with Arthur Andersen & Co. in New York before retiring in 1994. His career included four years in Brussels, where he headed the firm's audit division.

Chosen from among 200 applicants, Duggan is "extremely competent" and "has an open, easy-going manner and a collegial style," said House of Deputies President Pamela Chinnis.

Duggan, 57, said he was drawn to the position out of a desire to serve the church.

"There's a lot of healing that has to happen, and credibility that needs to be re-established" after the embezzlement of over $2 million by Ellen Cooke, the church's previous treasurer, he said.

The church will receive $1 million from an insurance policy against theft, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning told the church's Executive Council October 31. He also announced that the church has filed suit to claim $60,000 found in a bank account held by Cooke and her husband, Nicholas Cooke. In addition, the church will receive the proceeds from the sale of two pieces of property previously owned by the Cookes.

"The bottom line is that we do not yet know what the outcome will be regarding the serious criminal charges against Mrs. Cooke," Browning said. "Neither do we know whether the federal government will be able to bring about further restitution from Mrs. Cooke to the church."

David Beers, the presiding bishop's chancellor, said that federal prosecutors appear to be working on a plea agreement with Cooke.

— drawn from Episcopal News Service reports

JPIC conference

A new creature took form in Columbus, Ohio last month. It is a creation of General Convention and a consequence of the shrinking national church budget. Called Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC), it includes what used to be the church's networks for anti-racism, environmentalism, economic justice, Jubilee and peace ministries.

"What JPIC hopes to do is to create a web. We have to find a way that the strands fit together," explained Will Wauters, consultant for JPIC, during the Nove. 2-4 conference.

JPIC's formation raises questions: What will happen to the merged programs and budgets? Can Economic Justice still issue grants? Can Jubilee? Will JPIC be more or less than the sum of its parts?

Underwritten by the presiding bishop, the conference provided time for 250 people affiliated with the church's justice ministries to discuss reports from the groups within JPIC and to working on a theology of justice.

Keynoter Bill Wylie-Kellermann, indicated that the struggle for justice is one that engages the principalities and powers. "The vocation of *every* principality is to praise God and to serve human life," he said. But, because of the Fall, that relationship is inverted to the extent that the principalities imagine they are God and enslave human life. "Sin is substantially our complicity in that reversal."

"The powers' greatest fear is death," Wylie-Kellermann added, "consequently they make survival their primary ethic and come to worship death, drawing on its power."

The challenge to the church is "to use its gifts of discernment to call a power to repentance, to summon it back to its vocation. Does a bank exist to make money or does it rightly broker resources so they can be available throughout the community?"

The role of the church is key both in terms of its gifts of discernment and in light of its freedom to die. "William Stringfellow, who catalyzed this work in the principalities, called the church 'the exemplary power' because it was free to die, free to risk everything.

"A church free to die is: free to stand and fight; free from bondage to other powers; not beholden to the imperial state; not in bondage to Mammon; not divided by racism; not suppressing the gifts of its people because of sexism or homophobia. It is free to call the powers to their vocation, because it is fulfilling its own."

The role of principalities in the church's justice work was addressed in the presentations and small group discussions that followed.

Max Bell, of Delaware, giving one of the anti-racism presentations, spoke of a pilot congregation project with shared homilies that drew members of African- and European-American congregations together for eight weeks. Participants concluded that "our usual style of worship creates comfort rather than the discomfort required to deal with issues like racism. But if worship isn't used to address the issues that divide us, we are missing a great opportunity to reconcile ourselves to one another and to God."

Speaking for the environmental working committee, Jeff Golliher, canon for the environment at St. John the Divine, pointed out that the experiences of people in Appalachia are similar to those of people in L.A. or the South Bronx. "We are experiencing at the hands of big corporations a loss of land and environmental habitat. Black lung for miners is equal to asthma for kids in the city. In one way or another, we all know this already. This really comes down to self-respect. It's easier in churches to say 'I have sinned' than to say 'I don't know how to live.' The peace of God will not be realized as long as God's creation is being ripped apart."

Addressing economic justice, Urla Price, director of the Episcopal credit union in L.A., said "We reach out to the community and to people whom the banks will not touch." As an example, she mentioned that the credit union advanced money to a man on disability with HIV whose SSI check had not arrived.

Participants remarked that it was fascinating and deeply appropriate to be in conversations that began with racism, turned to the environment, moved into economic justice and Jubilee ministries and ended with peace.

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Bearing witness

by Patricia Klindienst

[Ed.note: Retired priest James H. Clark was deposed in July, 1995, after admitting to sexual misconduct. Robert Denig, former bishop of Western Massachusetts, began canonical proceedings against Clark following complaints of sexual exploitation and harassment by parishioners and church employees. (After Denig's death in May, 1995, Robert Rowley, bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania, completed the proceedings.) Clark initially insisted that it was a misunderstanding, but later, according to the diocese's standing commission, he "waived a church trial, admitting to the truth of the allegations and voluntarily submitting to discipline."]

...but the light insists on itself in the world
a voice from the nondead past started talking,
she closed her ears and it spelled out in her hand
'you might as well answer the door, my child,
the truth is furiously knocking.'
— lucille clifton,
"the light that came to lucille clifton"

The call came last December: Bishop Robert Denig had informed the congregation of Grace Church, Amherst, Mass., of formal complaints of sexual misconduct on the part of the retired rector. The bishop believed the allegations were "credible, clear and compelling," and would be returning in a matter of days for a second meeting.

I had thought I was finished with this, that I had laid to rest the turmoil of this priest's role in my life. I had endured enough and did not want to hear any more about him. But for weeks, it worked on me: *I was not the only one.*

It has been exhilarating. I have been released from captivity to a lie and to the isolation I have endured since the summer of 1979, when, in my twenties, I had suffered a blend of sexual and spiritual violation. I had taken overwhelming responsibility for it all until 1982, when a wise psychiatrist named Clark's behavior for what it was.

I confronted Clark via the mail and was met with denial and subterfuge. The same year, I now know, other women confronted Clark. Some complained to their bishops.

He was confronted again and again over the years by women he would characterize to his defenders as unstable and untrustworthy. His abuses continued up to, and after, his retirement. An 18-year pattern of sexual misconduct.

I wept with rage and grief for days when I heard these things. Though I was no longer alone with my truth, the betrayal had been even more profound than I had thought. It had included not only a blinded congregation but other clergy and bishops who had been protective of Clark. He might have been stopped before he got to me, or to those who came after me.

I thought of the difference it might have made in my life, in my marriage, had the truth been accurately and publicly named and justice done in 1982. Perhaps my husband and I truly would have healed. Instead, we struggled on with the damage of "my relationship with Jim" buried between us, "forgiven," mis-named.

What has it been like to participate in a clergy sexual misconduct case? It has been exhausting. Hundreds of hours of thinking. Remembering. Grieving. It has been expensive. A good therapist costs money. Thousands of dollars — and not just this year. I have lost wages in order to make out-of-state meetings. And paid enormous phone bills. But these are the lesser, material costs.

A little at a time, feeling as if I would throw up, I narrated for my psychiatrist the story of how Clark seduced and exploited me. Clark's pattern unfolded over time. He began by brushing his alb against me in passing, then progressed to tugging at my long hair before liturgy or afterwards, as I stood visiting with friends and former teachers. Soon, he touched my hand as he passed our pew. This early touching was done from behind with an air of the casual. I noticed how flamboyant, if not exhibitionist Clark's public behavior was — and how much people seemed to enjoy it. I heard no criticism of his dangling babies over his head at the close of baptisms, or striding down a pew in a hooded cape, or moving through the crowd, touching, hugging, teasing and flirting. An atmosphere reigned at Grace Church, one unfamiliar to me. Not just tolerance of the rector's style — implicit license to touch — but adulation.

Many times I had seen him come up behind someone and press his knee into the back of theirs. When, unbalanced, the person instinctively turned to see who'd touched them, Clark would put his arms around them for a prolonged full body hug, if it was a woman, or tease and laugh with them if it was a man. In time, I too was "kneed," turned, and "hugged." My first Jim Clark hug included him pressing his pelvis to mine and rubbing his genitals against me — while dressed in his alb, with people all around. I was shocked and embarrassed, but assumed it must be unconscious or accidental, since no one else ever pushed him away. It became increasingly difficult for me to trust my own perceptions in the face of such acceptance by people I not only respected but loved.

The turning point in Clark's slow wearing down of my boundaries was the ritual cleansing he performed on me on my living room couch one day when he paid a pastoral call knowing my husband wouldn't be there. It was done to "help" me with my spiritual struggle with "demons" from my past. Quoting Jesus in Aramaic, Clark performed an exorcism on me which concluded, "Be gone, dark spirit. You have no place here," with his hand on my groin. "Do you trust me?" he

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asked. When I stiffened and did not reply he said, "Yeah, you can trust me," then lay down on top of me, grinding his pelvis into mine while describing his theology of spiritual "gifts."

The dissonance between what he was doing (touching my breasts, my belly, my groin) while wearing a priest's collar, and what he was saying ("Ephphatha," Jesus' speech-act: "Be opened") paralyzed me. It was over before I realized what was happening. But I would relive this moment, and those words, countless times, fixed by shame, horror and a sense that I could tell no one.

Clark had actively begun to court my husband and me a month earlier, in June of 1979, when we had been attending services for a little less than a year, and he had learned that we were soon to move to California. It was a time of major changes for us. We were leaving our families and oldest friends so that I could go to graduate school. My husband was giving up a job and facing the challenge of starting over again in a place where we knew no one. And I was struggling to understand a spiritual awakening I had experienced at my god-daughter's baptism (at which Clark had officiated) the previous summer.

At Pentecost, I had told Clark I wanted to become a Christian, and that I was experiencing a recurrent nightmare from childhood of a man who stalked me. When Clark pressed me for details of the nightmare, I hesitated — I had never told anyone, not even my husband. He urged me to tell him because it would be good for me. This became the pretext for his offer to "take him from me" by way of the private ritual that gave him access not only to my body but to my most private inner life. Until I heard the testimony of the other women, and their husbands, I blamed myself for having created this opening into my life.

This was part of the pattern: Clark made his moves on strong, smart, spiritually intense women in times (or places) of vulnerability. He used the spiritual opening that a life transition or crisis presented to sexualize his role as employer, pastor or pastoral counsellor, sometimes over time, incrementally, as with me; sometimes with sudden, gross gestures.

He was adept at distorting reality by misnaming things. Presuming to speak in the plural, he framed "our relationship" as a "special friendship," a "gift from God" that "must be consented to" because it was "graced" and "holy." He used words to disarm our partners, his secondary victims, as well. Telling my husband how much he admired the integrity of our marriage, how wonderful the two of us were together — anyone could see that

Clark's pattern unfolded over time. He began by brushing his alb against me in passing.

— he assured him that there was nothing to fear in the "gift" of relationship our pastor was "sharing" with me.

This summer, when I wrote to tell my ex-husband, on the eve of his remarriage, of Bishop Rowley's sentence, he wrote back: "... the 'punishment' hardly seems sufficient — having to give up something he never honored to begin with."

Sixteen of us made a list of Clark's actions so that no woman would have to disclose her particular experience but rather could refer to everyone's testimony.

Here is the list:

- 'Full-body hugs' in which he would press his body to the woman from knees to shoulders or cheek, press his hardened genitals against the woman's groin, sometimes rubbing back and forth.
- Encircling a woman from behind and pressing his body against hers, sometimes in the sacrament of confession while she was kneeling, pinning her against the kneeler.
- Lying on top of a woman, clothed or naked, pressing himself against her and performing what was presented as an act of healing, while quoting the words of scripture.
- Pulling adult women onto his lap.
- Sexualizing everyday parish life, verbally and with actions.
- Reinforcing silence with his verbally abusive temper.

Each of these happened to more than one woman.

Why did it take so long to bring him to justice? Because there were — and still are — people at Grace Church and in the church hierarchy who were being protective of him. Then there is the larger church's failure: like most other dioceses, Western Massachusetts had no official clergy sexual misconduct policy until 1994. As recently as 1992, when Clark and a bishop were once again confronted with allegations of sexual misconduct, a witness was betrayed and turned back in confusion. [Sexual misconduct policies are now in place in all dioceses that purchase sexual misconduct liability protection from the Church Insurance Company.]

Why do I feel so little resolution when the sentence given was precisely what I asked for? Because I worry about others still out there who were hurt by Jim Clark, or someone like him. And because I am angry for the spiritual and psychological costs we have borne, each alone, for so many years. I want to hear more about "justice" and less about "healing." The sentence is not the end. It is the middle.

What has it taken to bear witness? The courage to remember, to name the truth and to speak it out loud and persist in the desire to be heard. The strength to overcome the humiliation of having been taken advantage of. The patience to wait for those who judged us, sometimes those we loved the most, to get it.

What have we gained by bearing witness? Our freedom, our dignity, a new sense of self-respect. For me, a community of strong women. Release. Gratitude. Joy.

It is the vulnerable and the exploited we have stood up for — for ourselves as we once were and now are not. We are no longer victims. We have never liked being "complainants." We are *witnesses*: to the church, *for* the church, even those of us who, like me, choose to remain outside. TW

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Standing accused

by Patricia Montemurri

When he first learned he was under investigation for sexual abuse of a minor, Jason Samuel says he was stunned and disbelieving.

Only three months into a new job as rector of a suburban Milwaukee Episcopal church, he continued to minister to the small parish while the investigation was underway.

Roger White, Bishop of Milwaukee, told Samuel to tell no one while the investigation continued.

For the next six months Samuel, while ministering to the 42 families of St. David's, New Berlin, received counseling, cooperated with the investigation and, he says, prayed for his accuser.

Samuel and his superiors were confident the investigators would find no merit to the accusation that he had sexually abused the 13-year-old stepson of a fellow seminarian at Wisconsin's Nashotah House in 1987-1988.

But in October 1994, Samuel was charged in what became known as the Nashotah House scandal. In total, five former seminarians have faced charges that they abused the same boy. White, even as he publicly said he believed Samuel's proclamation of innocence, now told the young priest "he couldn't be my pastor anymore; he had to be my judge."

In the face of similar accusations, clergy say they are branded with an immediate assumption of guilt, rather than innocence. Experts say that while the overwhelming majority of cases that have been tried result in convictions, there is the potential for injustice in the few cases where clergy confront accusations that are false.

That's what Samuel says happened to him before a jury acquitted him in July 1995.

Clergy feel increasingly vulnerable to character assassination. In the past, the devastating misdeeds of clergy were covered up to a fault. But in its push to deal with the problem, Jason Samuel says the church has failed to be a pastor to ministers falsely accused.

"I'll put it real bluntly. From the first day, I was on my own," said Samuel. "Completely on my own."

On the day before he was to be fingerprinted and photographed at the police station, before his name would be smeared in newspaper articles, Samuel called an emergency meeting of his church's vestry to tell them about the pending charges. He also had to reveal to parish leaders, some of whom knew and some of whom didn't, that he is a celibate gay man.

Scott Stoner, Samuel's friend and counselor who is an expert in counseling both victims of abuse and offending clergy at Milwaukee's Exodus Counseling Center (no relation to Exodus International Ministries), came with Samuel to the meeting in St. David's rectory.

Stoner told the nine-member vestry, "I have no doubt that this man is innocent and you have every reason to stand behind him."

Samuel told the vestry he would voluntarily step down from priestly functions. If he hadn't, White could have imposed the restrictions on him. It was up to St. David's vestry to decide whether to continue Samuel's stipend while he was suspended. They did so.

> *"If you are gay and you're accused, people just assume you're capable of doing those things. I went through a year-and-a-half of hell."*
>
> *— Jason Samuel*

But for the first few weeks, Samuel felt he couldn't even worship at the church he had been pastoring. Church leaders counseled him to stay away. But parish members petitioned Bishop White to allow Samuel to worship with them.

"They told the bishop, we want to go through this together as a parish family," Samuel recalled.

A few families left the parish.

"People thought I was a dead fish. If you're gay and you're accused, there's no way of winning. People just assume you're capable of doing those things. I went through a year-and-a-half of hell. My whole life was taken away from me."

Until the trial in July 1995, Samuel lived in the rectory, produced the church bulletin and newsletter. He found an attorney on his own, chosen from a list provided by the church.

"I experienced feelings of extreme isolation, even abandonment," said Samuel, even as he received support from individuals and many parish members.

He had to pay his own legal fees, which totalled about $32,000. After his acquittal, the Church Insurance Corporation refused to pay his legal fees, saying he wasn't covered because the case stemmed from his time in seminary.

The victim in the Nashotah House cases had a history of being sexually abused. Samuel's accuser had been abused by at least two other seminarians, Eugene Maxey and Charles McCray, who are serving prison terms.

The accuser's past sexual victimization, says therapist Stoner, likely contributed to the false accusations levied against Samuel. "There was a clear history of abuse. This kid's life was so out of control. He was confused by all that had happened to him," said Stoner.

It is not unusual for parishioners, for example, to develop strong attachments and inappropriate feelings toward their pastors. Sometimes when the priest sets boundaries, a rebuffed suitor may turn the behavior around and accuse the priest

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Patricia Montemurri is a Detroit journalist who is currently on strike from *The Detroit Free Press.*

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of inappropriate conduct, explains Stoner. Most of those allegations are proved groundless by the local diocese or church vestry, and don't end up in a criminal trial.

"I think false accusations usually stem from, and I think this was the case for Jason Samuel, from a person who is rebuffed," explained Stoner.

During the trial, Samuel testified that his accuser had made a sexual advance, which Samuel rebuffed. That testimony was bolstered by a witness who said he saw an angry Samuel turn away the boy at the door of his seminary apartment. Moreover, a therapist testified that Samuel had told him years before any accusations surfaced about rebuffing the boy's advances. His accuser also never mentioned to police that Samuels had a six-inch hernia scar near his genitals, as evidenced in photographs.

"Unfortunately, with sexual misconduct you're guilty until proven innocent," says Stoner. "That's how the church treats it. That's how society treats it."

Another defendant in the Nashotah House case, Russell Martin, says that has been his experience. A month before Samuel's trial, Martin went to Waukesha County Circuit Court on charges that he had abused the same boy while a seminarian. Martin, married and the father of two, was the Canon for Youth and Christian Education at St. John's Cathedral in Jacksonville, Florida when he learned he was being investigated in February 1994.

The cathedral dean placed Martin on immediate paid leave. After a few months, even before he was formally charged, cathedral leaders demanded his resignation. He went to work at a phone company to help pay legal feels of over $50,000.

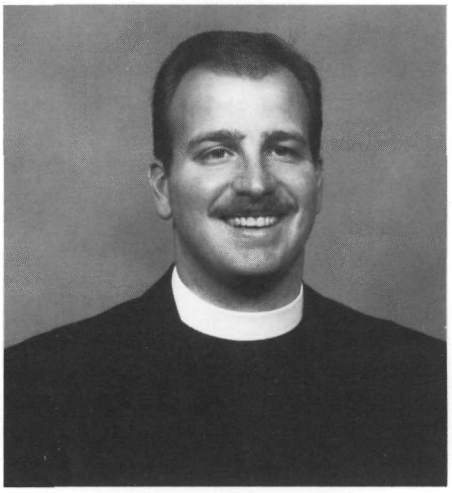
At his trial in June 1995, it was Martin's word against that of his accuser, who claimed Martin engaged in sex acts three times in one day in Martin's home and car.

A jury found Martin guilty. In a somewhat unusual move, the judge has allowed Martin to remain free while his case is on appeal. Martin steadfastly maintains his innocence, and says he believes the emotions involved in the case, and the previous admissions of guilt by Maxey and McCray, influenced the jury's verdict.

Another priest, Anthony Miller of Connecticut, is awaiting trial in the Nashotah House case.

Both Samuel and Martin feel they were abandoned by the national church.

"It would have been nice to have an advocate from the church to guide me about how to get a counselor, how to get



Jason Samuel

an attorney, what steps I needed to take," said Martin. "I could be that person for the next person in line."

Samuel feels betrayed by some church leaders. For example, he says he never was contacted by the national church's Office of Pastoral Development, which oversees many of these cases. That office appointed an advocate for his accuser, "but where was my advocate?" asks Samuel.

"Nobody ever called me to hear my side of the story, not before the case, and not even after," says Samuel.

Harold Hopkins, the bishop who directs the office, says it's up to the individual dioceses to provide support for accused clergy members.

Samuel also fears that it will be "open season" on clergy come January, when the statute of limitations on clergy sexual exploitation cases will be suspended for two-and-a-half years. The suspension is part of the implementation of revisions to the church's disciplinary canons passed by the last General Convention.

"That means someone can claim something happened 50 years ago," says Samuel, "and who's going to be around from that period to defend the clergy?"

Hopkins says he understands why clergy feel vulnerable. "There are some who feel the pendulum is swinging too far back against the clergy, and I think in a couple of cases that's true."

But Hopkins defends the upcoming suspension of the statute of limitation, saying that changes which make it easier for a person to bring a complaint, "will not jeopardize due process for the defendant.

"It's very, very difficult to make sure you give pastoral support to the accused. You must make sure they have recourse to legal counseling, so they know what their rights are and they don't feel trapped."

But Hopkins understands why some clergy feel betrayed by church superiors.

"The clergyman feels betrayed by the bishop, often because the bishop has had to go forward according to canonical regulations," he says. "Many bishops are saying 'I can't be your pastor, but can I provide somebody who can be there.'"

Whether a clergy person found guilty in such cases can minister again, says Hopkins, depends on who is involved and what the accusation is.

"The problem will be knowing when a priest is a predator and has a deep psychological problem that makes him or her seek out vulnerable people, or when a person showed one-time bad judgment, such as when his or her own marriage wasn't going well," said Hopkins.

Susan Moss, rector of St. James on the Parkway in Minneapolis, Minn., and a longtime instructor of seminars on boundaries, said she understands why so many priests feel under siege. As ministers, they routinely enter very intimate settings. They go to parishioners' homes, to their bedsides when they are ailing, to counsel them when marriages are failing.

"What we need here is a really good superhighway and a really good map. The fact is we've got some highways, but also some dirt roads and foot trails." TW

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'Loving the heterosexual'

By Tobias S. Haller, BSG

The church is faced today with a pastoral problem of some gravity. It has become more and more apparent that many heterosexuals now consider themselves faithful members of the church, while committing acts at variance with the church's solemn teaching. The problem is far from new; the Scriptural witness, and the unbroken tradition of the church, attest to the ongoing nature of this tragic discontinuity.

The inability of heterosexuals to form lasting, stable relationships has long been noted. A survey of the biblical material provides a sad witness to this inability. One explanation for its source is God's judgment upon Adam and Eve. This judgment provides a climax to the creation account in Genesis (3.16), and may therefore be taken as substantive testimony to God's eternal plan for humanity. This passage explains the tragic inability of heterosexuals to work together as equals: The female is cursed by being placed under male rule, rather than coexisting as the full and equal partner that a healthy and life-giving relationship requires. This order or hierarchy — a veritable "civil war of the sexes" — fosters the incapacity for mutuality that renders stable heterosexual relationships nearly impossible.

The rest of the biblical material portrays the unfortunate consequence of this constitutional incapacity. Even the patriarch Abraham, who in all other respects was a model of fidelity, was willing to deny his wife and turn her over as a potential concubine (Gen. 12.13). The overwhelming majority of heterosexual relationships portrayed in Scripture are devoid of any appearance of human care, affection, mutuality, or concern. Few of the heterosexual relationships that do evince a degree of personal commitment (e.g., Elkanah and Hannah) are monogamous. One is hard pressed to find even a handful of faithful, loving, lifelong, monogamous, heterosexual relationships in the whole of Scripture.

We must remember, however, that God's power is perfected in weakness. The people of Israel departed from the true path time and again, yet were capable of repentance and redemption. So too, God will be patient with erring heterosexuals who repent of their sinful behavior and return to God.

Disease and heterosexual acts

It would be irresponsible of the church not to warn heterosexuals of the dire medical consequences their behavior might cause. When medical conditions (childbed fever, sexually transmitted disease, ectopic pregnancy, etc.) can so clearly and directly be linked with a form of behavior, the church is obliged to provide at least warning and counsel.

Many today would argue that the injunctions placed upon heterosexual contact in the Law of Moses are no longer relevant to a discussion of heterosexuality. We must point out, however, the general ritual opprobrium attached to heterosexual acts. All heterosexual acts render both parties unclean at any time, due to emission of semen (Lev 15.18), and abominable at other times, due to contact with menstrual blood (Lev 15.24, 20.18). The continued condemnation of the latter in the prophetic literature (Ezek. 18.5-13; 22.10), and in early church tradition (e.g., the *Didascalia*, Jerome, Clement of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, and Thomas Aquinas) warrants our caution in disgarding the Mosaic material as simply "cultural baggage."

Marriage and ordination

Given the statistics on infidelity, divorce, abortion, rape, and the abuse of spouses and children by heterosexuals, it would appear that few heterosexual persons are capable of the fundamental, mutual self-giving required to support a lifelong, committed relationship.

The question of the ordination of active heterosexuals is not a new one. While it appears that some apostles were married (Mark 1.30), Paul clearly regards the whole matter with unconcealed condescension (1 Cor 9.5). The Deuteropauline material relents slightly, and allows bishops to be married "only once" (1 Tim. 3.2). The catholic church, however, in its wisdom, determined within the first few centuries of its institutional life that bishops (and in the West, all clergy) should permanently abstain from all heterosexual activity. Since the Reformation, some churches have decided once again to permit avowed, open and active heterosexuals to serve as ministers, sometimes with disastrous consequences, as the natural tendency toward infidelity and instability evinced by so many heterosexuals emerges in socially and morally inappropriate ways.

After all is said and done, we must affirm that heterosexuals, despite the sinfulness of their behavior, are children of God, and worthy of our care and pastoral concern. They are more to be pitied than censured. With the pastoral care and counsel of the church, they may grow to that "full stature of mature manhood in Christ" promised to all faithful believers. TW

Tobias Haller is a Gregorian friar, a second-year seminarian (GTS) and sometime satirist. This essay is an excerpt from a larger ironical work-in-progress.

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Re-inventing marriage

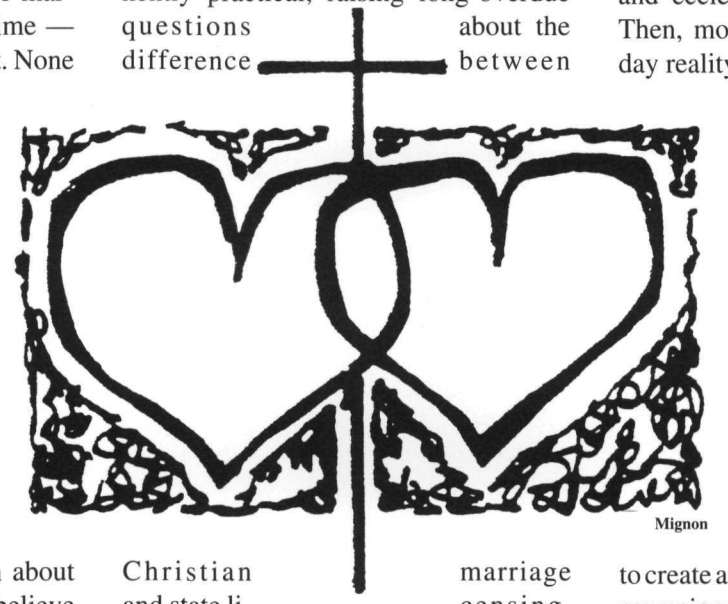
by Jan Nunley

Re-Inventing Marriage: A Re-View and Re-Vision by Christopher Webber, Morehouse Publishing, 1994, 275 pp.

Last July, right around the time I was ordained as a priest, it seemed all of my friends who'd been dancing around the issue of marriage suddenly decided it was time — and that I was the perfect officiant. None of these couples resembled the fresh-faced, starry-eyed dreamers of domestic bliss assumed by some of the clergy "marriage manuals" I consulted. All had some degree of familiarity with how youthful illusions can be shattered by divorce, their parents' or their own. All were heterosexuals, but none believed that marriage in its deepest sense — two distinct persons becoming an ultimate unity — is the prerogative of heterosexuals alone. What could I say to them about marriage that would honor what I believe are its essentials, yet make room for its diverse expressions?

That's when I picked up Christopher Webber's *Re-Inventing Marriage: A Re-View and Re-Vision* — a book which has become the inspiration for my wedding homilies these days, and should be in the library of anyone who's doing serious thinking about sexual ethics and the church's blessing of relationships of all kinds. Webber states his purpose as providing "a voice in the middle of [the] conversation" about the purpose of Christian marriage, "saying first, 'Wait a minute; let's look at how we got here in the first place,' and second, 'Now that we've got that clear, how about re-building this way?'"

His project is at once radical and eminently practical, raising long-overdue questions about the difference between Christian marriage and state licensing, the relationship between marriage and procreation, the sacramental nature of marriage, and the possibility of reviving church-sponsored betrothal as a kind of novitiate for the modern Christian marriage.



Mignon

Webber begins with an engaging, historically accurate account of the evolution of marriage in all its variety in human cultures, most often as a contractual relationship. He moves through the understanding of matrimony in both Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and into the early Church's increasing assumption of responsibility for the supervision of a primarily secular institution. There are some surprises here: I wasn't aware, for example, that the early Church broke definitively with the surrounding culture's rigid class divisions by blessing "illegal" unions between slaves and free citizens — as controversial in its time as the blessing of same-sex relationships today — while, sadly, never actually challenging the institution of slavery itself. Through the medieval period, the Reformation and the Industrial Revolution, Webber delineates the relationship between European folkways, secular law, and ecclesial accommodation to both. Then, moving from history to present-day reality — the "re-vision" of the title — he skillfully separates the time-bound cultural chaff from the more enduring, and more biblically sound, purpose of Christian marriage: to serve as a sign of God's faithful, steadfast love for the world.

Although Webber is clearly addressing heterosexual marriage, his theology of relationship presents worthwhile guidance for the Church's thinking about what it means to create a sacramental honoring of same-sex unions as well, by cutting through the historical misconceptions and cherished illusions about marriage that form so much of the polemic surrounding this issue. And everyone, conservative or liberal, who's concerned about "family values" can learn much from Webber about the real source of those values — not in human customs and structures but in the love of the living God. TW

Jan Nunley serves as assisting priest at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Tiverton, RI. She is also newscaster for National Public Radio's environmental journal "Living on Earth."
Artist **Mignon** lives in Chicago, Ill.

book review

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Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Marriage and the church

by Marianne Arbogast

Preaching the sermon at a friend's ordination, Barbara Schlacter juggled three bean bags — representing her relationship with God, with her spouse and family, and with the church.

"If you have to let one go, let the church go," Schlacter counseled.

Schlacter's husband and co-rector at Trinity Episcopal Church in Troy, Ohio, shares her priorities.

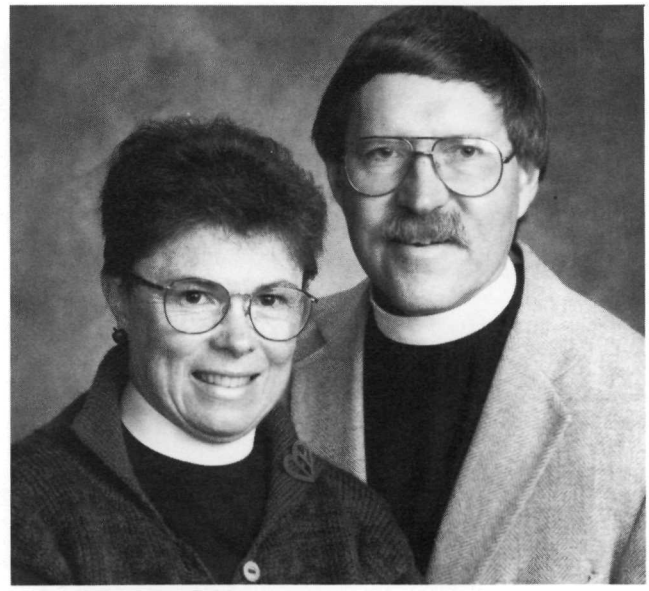
"Clergy often put commitment to priestly vocation above commitment to family," Mel Schlacter says. "A lot of bishops want us to. A family systems person said a long time ago: For clergy, time invested in family always helps the church, but not vice versa. That's mostly true."

"We have seen too many clergy and their families get eaten up by the system," says Barbara Schlacter, now president of the National Network of Episcopal Clergy Associations.

For the Schlacters, who helped found the Episcopal Clergy Couples Association in 1986, their marriage commitment is at the core of their spiritual lives.

"We've come to see it as a spiritual discipline or spiritual path comparable to a monastic path," Mel Schlacter says. "It has all the same features: a call, vows, demons along the road. Like any spiritual path, it gives a framework for the rough road we will encounter. It has to do with the way God wants us to grow and change, to leave our neurotic baggage and childhood attachments behind."

"We've come to see marriage as a spiritual path comparable to a monastic path."
— Mel Schlacter



Mel and Barbara Schlacter

Barbara Schlacter points out that the basic elements of the Rule of St. Benedict are equally applicable to Christian marriage: stability — "to see a relationship over time"; continuing conversion — "constantly being aware of God's presence, and growing"; and obedience — recognizing that "we are living under God," a context "bigger than what the two of us, or either one of us, wants.

"Another element is community," Mel Schlacter adds. "The household and extended family is our community."

Married 28 years, the Schlacters are quick to name points of tension and growth.

"Finding the balance of how much togetherness and how much apartness goes into the relationship" is important, Mel Schlacter says.

Because they face the added intensity of working together, "we have to give each other quite a bit of room," says Barbara Schlacter. "We are independent — we each have our own ideas and opinions and they don't always coincide."

On occasions when they have to work through conflict in the fishbowl of a vestry meeting, she believes they can offer "a model of how to appreciate differences without being threatened by them, being willing to disagree and live together till a clear idea emerges.

"One of the things I had to let go of was thinking that what Mel did was an extension of myself," she says. "If Mel was praised, I felt good; if Mel was criticized, I felt criticized. It was very co-dependent.

"Everyone should have a real self before they get married, if possible. The trend toward waiting is a healthy one. And I think we need to be aware that living together [before marriage] is perhaps not such a bad thing. Maybe there needs to be another way of legitimizing or recognizing other ways to be together

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Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness.*

that are okay in Christian life besides marriage. To me, Christian marriage is a unit of ministry, a unit of spirituality."

A family counselor, Barbara Schlacter believes that "often people give up at exactly the moment when God is saying, 'Now the real marriage is going to begin.'

"Faithfulness means valuing the other person and valuing the commitment made to that person to hang together for the long haul. When we've had dry periods, we've believed God would see us to the other side of the desert."

Spouses need to realize that "our partner can't be everything," Mel Schlacter adds, recalling his early disappointment that his wife didn't share his enthusiasm for running each morning at sunrise. "It was the beginning of the realization: She's not sculpted quite the way I had in mind!

"We've been able to laugh about most of these things," he says. "Having a sense of humor is a *sine qua non*."

In addition to letting go of romantic images of each other, the Schlacters have had to cope with others' inflated expectations of them as clergy.

"It's inevitable we're going to get idealized," Mel Schlacter says. "You know you're going to be an example, but you have to live as if you're not."

"We try hard to be ourselves," says Barbara Schlacter. "We need to be different from each other, and from all the projections of each of us and our relationship. A lot of clergy couples have gone down the tubes because others' expectations have dictated what they expect of themselves."

The Schlacters — both of whom work as counselors outside their parish — try to support each other's individual pursuits, while carefully structuring time together into their schedules.

"One of the things that has been very helpful to us is a sense of trust," Barbara Schlacter says. "If one of us was working with another person or set of colleagues and needed time away, that was okay, our marriage could withstand that."

"There is a real fight for the human soul. People haven't figured out what to give up yet, and go year round at breakneck pace. The church needs to offer a counter set of values. So many times the church puts more burdens on families, pulling people out for youth group meetings, vestry meetings."

— Barbara Schlachter

Once, shortly after the Schlacters had taken a parish together, Barbara Schlacter was offered a fellowship from the College of Preachers. Though she assumed she'd have to decline the invitation, her husband urged her to accept, taking full responsibility for the parish and their two young children for six weeks. On other occasions, she has reciprocated.

But time apart is balanced with time together.

"We need to keep our friendship," Mel Schlacter says. "What does it take to stay interested and have things we share as friends?"

They recently took a sabbatical month together, traveling to the British Isles to explore their common fascination with Celtic spirituality.

Taking time to maintain relationships is an endangered value in today's world, they believe.

"We live in an achievement-oriented culture," Barbara Schlacter says. "There is a real fight for the human soul. People haven't figured out what to give up yet, and go year round at breakneck pace. The church needs to offer a counter set of values. So many times the church puts more burdens on families, pulling people out for youth group meetings, vestry meetings.

"We need to teach people the importance of coming to the family table just as they come to the church table, with the awareness that this is sacred time, sacred space." TW

In memoriam: John Krumm

John McGill Krumm, retired Bishop of Southern Ohio and early member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company's board, died in California October 23. He was a lifelong advocate of justice causes in both church and society.

During the McCarthy era, Krumm petitioned President Eisenhower for amnesty for prisoners jailed under sedition laws. He also lobbied for passage of civil rights legislation and helped organize the church's Committee on Institutional Racism.

Krumm was among the first bishops to speak out in favor of ordaining women.

Last month, he presided at a eucharist commemorating victims of AIDS.

"He was one of the most significant persons in the church in my time," said Coleman McGehee, retired Bishop of Michigan. "He was knowledgeable and intelligent, conscious of feelings and very concerned with ecumenical relations. In terms of vestments and worship, he was a minimalist. But he had a deep spirituality."

Krumm once expressed to McGehee his intention to "die with my boots on." Active until his death, he did so.

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