HITCHHIKE

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> According to the Teachers, there is only one thing that all people possess equally. This is their loneliness. No two people on the face of this earth are alike in any one thing except for their loneliness. This is the cause of our Growing, but it is also the cause of our wars. Love, hate, greed and generosity are all rooted within our loneliness, within our desire to be needed and loved.
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> --Hyemeyohsts Storm
> *Seven Arrows*

In the last issue, which was published in ten days last May, I concluded a description of my present environment by saying, "The things I need to do now don't involve moving so much as cultivating where I am." This has certainly proven to be true, as a glance at the return address in the colophon will attest ("You mean six months have gone by and *he hasn't moved?*"), and I'll probably get into some of the centering and the struggle to focus that has been characterizing my life this year a little farther on, but the end of the summer has seen me traveling once again, and I think you might like to hear about some of that. In the two months that straddled the worldcon, roughly from early August to early October, I spent very little time at home in Seattle, and my travels drew a very odd ideograph across the face of the North American continent.

There's a certain symmetry to those two months. Both at the beginning and

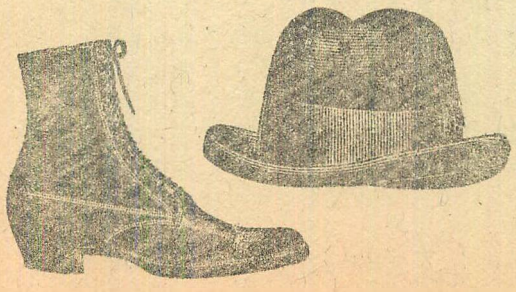
at the end I spent periods of a week or more in Vancouver. In August, my visit was inspired by the presence of Sharon and doug barbour, who were spending the summer in Vancouver while doug taught a summer class at the University of British Columbia, and the two weeks I spent in the city were punctuated by such events as an evening expedition to Orestes, a huge, brawling, elegant Greek taverna, where Susan Wood and I, doug, Sharon, and Sharon's sister all got glowingly high on good food, good wine, and good conversation. (I also had an opportunity, for a few minutes before I changed it into more convenient denominations, to hold in my hands a new Canadian $50 bill, which is bright red and has a full-color picture of the Mounties' Musical Ride on the back.) At the end of September, I spent a good deal of time acting as almost-native guide, showing DUFF winner Christine McGowan around Vancouver and some of the adjacent elevated portions of the landscape (with the aid of a car that Susan rented for the occasion), then putting her on her plane back to Melbourne; going to a Humphrey and the Dumptrucks concert at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre and helping to throw flowers all over the bemused Dumptrucks; and showing Carey Handfield the inside of Banyen Books, the outside of the mountains, the inside of a forest, and the exposed outsides of a lot of people along Wreck Beach, at the base of the cliffs of Point Grey on the last warm day of summer.

The month in between these sojourns in Vancouver was taken up by the convention. You understand the concept of the expanded convention, don't you? Oh, the con proper only lasted for five days in Kansas City, slopping over a little on either side of Labor Day weekend, but the month's travels were so intertwined with the emotional focal point that is a convention as to be part of the same event.

I had one week back in Seattle in August, between coming back from Vancouver and flying east on the first leg of my trip, to get my bearings and catch up on mail and do all those ordinary day-to-day things. I took the Greyhound bus down to Seattle on Sunday, and on Monday evening, before I had fully worked my way through the stack of mail that had accumulated, the phone rang and I heard a voice with an Australian accent say, "John? Eric Lindsay here; I'm down at the bus station."

Right. The convention had begun. Eric had flown into Vancouver, but when he discovered that Susan was about to leave on *her* trip east, he hopped a bus down to Seattle. I gave him the couch, and when he finally gave in to exhaustion, I think he slept soundly for the first time in far too many hours.

Eric Lindsay is amazing. He speaks very quietly, he looks unprepossessing (especially when he has just shorn his hair so as to look innocuous to US and Canadian immigration officials), and he is so modest as to be self-effacing. Yet he is a most fascinating man to talk to. He appreciates many of the same things, and the same ways of thinking, that I do, but he comes to them from an entirely different direction; which meant that while he was here we both had a wide variety of things to turn each other on to. He pretends to an attitude of cynicism that doesn't reflect the heart of Eric Lindsay at all, and when he forgets the rôle I think he surprises himself.



Two days after Eric's arrival, he was joined by Carey Handfield, who was flying into Seattle as his first stop in a three-month tour of North America. Eric and I went out to the airport to meet him, and I very nearly slunk out of sight and let him be welcomed to America by the smiling but familiar face of Eric Lindsay. (Eric later was on hand to greet Christine McGowan on her arrival in San Francisco, and I think he gave some thought to becoming the official greeter for Australian fans

arriving in the United States.) Both Eric and Carey showed much less strain after their trans-Pacific flights than I remember feeling last year, but just the same I made a conscious effort to let sightseeing take a back seat to relaxing and recovering from the flight. I took great delight, though, in leading them through the Pike Place Market, Seattle's combination farmer's market, fish market, and permanent crafts fair, and in taking them on a ferry ride across Puget Sound to Bremerton, through narrow, Douglas fir-lined waterways, on a dark, rainy day. (What better way to experience the typical weather of the Pacific Northwest? For most of their stay, though, it was bright, sunny, and smoggy.) I introduced both of them to an excellent Mexican restaurant in town; Carey joined me in finishing off a bottle of hot sauce, but Eric looked a bit askance, and wondered what time-delay reaction was in store for him after we had put him on a bus to San Francisco later that evening. (He survived.) That was Friday evening. Monday morning, at an unfortunately early hour, I hoisted my backpack, left the door key with Carey, and caught a bus out to the airport for my flight east; Carey left, on the ground, later that day, to follow Eric's tiretracks toward California, Bubonicon, and Kansas City.

It took pretty much all day to get from Seattle, via Boston, to Martha's Vineyard, where my mother met me at the airport. The through flight to Boston was a marvel of modern airline luxury (which means that it beat hell out of my experience with Air New Zealand), but the flight down to the island was delayed by a pilots' slowdown, and the little twenty-seat plane (which was a delight) took a roundabout route via Hyannis and Nantucket, and stopped to refuel on the way. The extra stops, though, enabled me to see that Nantucket, the island farther out from Cape Cod, had managed to keep the white picket fence around its tiny weathered-shingle airport terminal. The Vineyard had surrendered its white pickets several years ago in favor of a modern cyclone fence, when the fear of hijacking was at its height and security became the watchword of the day. (Who would hijack a twenty-seater going to Martha's Vineyard?)

The island was still crowded with summer visitors, especially around my mother's house, in the most populous town. I would have preferred to visit in September, after the families had gone home so that the kids could go back to school, when the weather is usually fine, the water's warm, and the island is host only to those who come for the fishing derby. But I still had the opportunity to spend several days lying on the beach, developing the Perfect Tan, and swimming in the warm waters of southern New England, and I borrowed my mother's car several times in order to revisit all my favorite spots on the island. And my mother and I talked, as we had not had a chance to do except by long-distance telephone in nearly a year and a half. It was not as relaxing a week as I had hoped it would be, but it gave me a chance to touch base after a long time away. And I discovered something unexpected: while I walked along the familiar sandy beaches of the Vineyard, I found myself looking around in search of the Douglas firs and the mountains. I think I'm getting acclimatized here in the Pacific Northwest.

In fact, I know I am. That's the most important thing that I brought back with me from my trip east: in getting back in touch with my life there and the people and places I hadn't seen since I came west the spring before last, I integrated the past year with everything that had gone before, and I realized just how much I feel at home in Seattle, how thoroughly the things that are important to my life now are centered in the Northwest. It felt good to get home.

But before I could come home, there was a lot more traveling to be done. There was the worldcon in Kansas City. I thoroughly expected the con to be a disaster, but I intended to have a good time within the larger experience, since I knew that a lot of people I wanted to see would be there. As it turned out, everybody I spoke to agreed that the con was quite a good one, although in its official aspects it got fouled up a bit. There were a lot of good people there, and somehow a good con grew out of the mix. (This is not a conreport.) I met

several people who had only been names to me, I had a lot of good conversations, I got to see Rusty Hevelin's DUFF slide show (including the slide, provided by Eric, of Keith Curtis asleep in a bathtub), I renewed old friendships, and I found myself, on the last day of the con, regretting very much that it had to end. I followed worldcon tradition, although not my own usual behavior, by never venturing farther than a few blocks from the hotel throughout the entire weekend. The con, for me, was another form of touching base. I was appalled by Robert Heinlein's Guest of Honor speech, which was both shrilly reactionary and incoherently rambling, but I was delighted by the sense of humor that the committee brought to bear, at the opening of the Hugo Awards ceremony, on its own pretentiousness. (It still could have used some balloons and a rousing chorus of "Waltzing Matilda.") It was a worldcon.

Following the con, I flew east again. East? Yes, I know it doesn't seem to make sense, but in some twisted way it really does. My cousin, you see, was about to become a graduate student at Oregon State University, in Corvallis, and because of time hassles she was looking for somebody to drive her car west for her. If she could have had it ready to go before Labor Day, the whole trip would have been much simpler. I agreed to drive it west, despite the timing, because it would allow me to bring some of my belongings with me without paying to have them shipped. So I spent a week after the con in the Washington, DC/ Falls Church area, seeing old friends and old places (and enjoying an old-time Falls Church fannish dinner in Terry and Craig Hughes's basement apartment, with the unanticipated addition of Tom Perry and his youngest daughter). On my last day there I brought the half of my belongings that had been stored in Falls Church down out of rich and Colleen Brown's attic, piled it into a rental car, and drove up to New York, where I was to pick up my cousin's car.

The rental car was large, deliberately so; my cousin's car was a hatchback Vega, which is not large. What's more, Carey Handfield (who is large) was coming with me on the drive west, along with his backpack (which is also large); the result was that only about half of what I had brought up from Virginia would fit in the back of the Vega, even with the expert packing and cramming assistance of Mr. Handfield. I shoved the fanzines into the car, but packed the books in well-reinforced cardboard cartons, to be shipped later, figuring that the books could be replaced if lost, but the fanzines could not. The rest of my stuff went into my mother's attic in Bronxville--which is still 3000 miles from me, but at least it's in the family.

I took great delight in the prospect of driving across the country with Carey, since it had been he who had driven me and Susan across one corner of Australia last year, from Melbourne to Canberra to Sydney. I felt I should return the favor. Or perhaps get back at him for it.

We left the same day we loaded up the car, although we only made the three-hour trip up the Hudson Valley to the Catskills, where we stayed overnight with Les and Sandi Gerber, who live on the banks of a trout stream in the mountains. We would both have liked to stay for a week, but we got up the next morning, not nearly as bright and early as we intended, and set out in earnest on our trip west.

It took five days of driving to get across the country. We saw the least attractive parts of the Midwest, along the toll roads of northern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, but that part of the trip was punctuated by having the pipe to the muffler break in Indiana (and getting it fixed promptly and efficiently, which was a pleasure) and by seeing several Nigerian Army buses on the highway. (What?) Our second night out, we reached Madison, Wisconsin, where we were welcomed by Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell, fed, conversed with fannishly, and shown a small part of the delights of the town. There is a bookstore there that I knew would delight Eric Lindsay (and I gather that it later did), and a pizza joint that makes marvelous pizza with a crust of stoneground whole wheat. Once again we would have liked to spend a week, or at least another day, but we

stoically climbed back into the car and set out, north and west.

I had never been in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, or Idaho, all of which we traversed on the way, nor had I been east of the mountains in Washington. I found Wisconsin delightful, rolling dairyland where the trees were just beginning to turn, but Minnesota disappointed me, at least in the fairly tacky areas we saw; I must admit, though, that I slept through the latter part of the state, as Carey continued his lessons in driving on the right-hand side of the road (easy enough to do, except where the freeway hadn't been built yet), and I woke up just in time to see Fargo, North Dakota, spread out on the nighttime horizon. North Dakota is a lot like Saskatchewan. Flat. Empty. Wheatfields. A spectacular nighttime sky, upon which the Northern Lights danced gaily. Montana is higher, and drier, and more western-feeling once you start getting into the foothills and the mountains, but it goes on even longer than North Dakota does. Over the Continental Divide, down through pine-clad mountains in northern Idaho and eastern Washington to Spokane, and out into the flat, dry semi-desert that comprises the middle of Washington State. Where it's irrigated, they grow wheat; where it's not, they grow rattlesnakes. I loved it, in a way completely different from the way I love the wet lands west of the Cascades; I intend to make a few journeys over the mountains just to explore the rest of the state. Carey was most surprised at this aspect of Washington, "The Evergreen State." We stopped for lunch, on our last day, in George, Washington, where we ate at the Martha Inn. I would not recommend stopping for lunch in George, Washington.

But once I got back to Seattle, I had still to get my cousin's car down to her in Oregon. We stayed in Seattle for a couple of days. I voted in the primary election--the first time I haven t voted by absentee ballot. One afternoon I took advantage of the car to drive Christine McGowan around town, discovering in the process just how thoroughly my knowledge of how to get around Seattle is based on the bus routes. Carey and I had planned to drive down to Corvallis at a leisurely pace, then spend a day with Paul Novitski in Eugene, before heading north again to catch the Humphrey and the Dumptrucks concert in Vancouver, but our departure was delayed a day by the cold I had picked up on the trip west. On Thursday, we drove south out of Seattle, marveling at the lightness of the car with only my cousin's filing cabinet and Carey's pack in it (and the fact that we could see out the back now), on a slightly roundabout route to Corvallis. We detoured via Mount Rainier National Park, where we drove up into the clouds and saw phantom mountains and cliffs through the drifting mist, then back to the main highway and on to Portland. We stopped there for "half an hour," which quickly stretched into an hour and a half, visiting Ursula Le Guin, who had just arrived home from a year in England only two weeks before. The Le Guins have an unpretentious but elegant old wooden house, on a hillside, with the back yard abutting the gigantic city park that stretches, so I've been told, fifty miles west to the Pacific. Ursula and Carey swapped tales of the participants in last year's sf workshop in Australia and what they had been doing since then, and we discussed bookstores in Portland, London, and Eugene. (Ursula lamented that London seems no longer to be the pre-eminent city for used books. The bookdealers there attribute this to the fact that no "fine editions" have been printed for thirty or forty years, and the best used books, the ones that the bookstores make their money on, have all been bought. Evidently the normal turnover of people dying or selling collections is not enough to replenish the supply.)

We drove on that evening to Corvallis, listening to the Ford/Carter presidential debate on the radio (they both lost), then caught a bus down to Eugene. We spent only a few very brief late-night hours talking to Paul. The next

morning, we hiked down to the Eugene train station and caught the train north again, stopping in Seattle only to change trains for Vancouver.

When I came back to Seattle, to get back to such mundane activities as earning a living and sorting through all the stuff I had brought west with me, Carey headed east across Canada. He didn't make it all the way, though. ("Carey, meet Newfoundland.") Both he and Eric have passed through Seattle again in the past month, Carey on his way to California and finally home, and Eric on some sort of mammoth triangle jaunt from Iowa City to Vancouver to Bellingham to Seattle and back to Iowa City (just a quick trip between Midwestern conventions). But now, I think, the extended summer visiting season has come to a close.

I've made one other trip recently, a much shorter one. Early in November I took advantage of Amtrak's new round-trip rail fare to ride the Coast Starlight down to San Francisco and back, with five days to fool around in the Bay Area. Actually, a good part of those five days were spent packing up the other half of my belongings, the ones that were stored in San Francisco, and shipping them back to myself via rail express. (For some obscure reason, this is cheaper than carrying them along with you on the train as excess baggage.) The train ride was fun, although I did wish that it had been late June instead of early November, so that I could have seen more of the countryside in the daylight. At this point in my life, a leisurely rail trip lasting only a week is the perfect scale of travel. My enjoyment of traveling hasn't abated in the least, but my center has become very local, and every time I get off on a long, rambling trip, I am kept from appreciating each moment fully by the feeling that, for me, now, it's beside the point.

The trip to San Francisco was another kind of touching base. I've been musing a lot, lately, on how so much of my traveling for several years has been essentially that; I've put down different sets of roots in different places far away from each other, and I keep returning to each one in turn, to keep myself in touch with people, places, and the different parts of my own personality. I wonder if I am, in a sense, a true nomad: that is, most nomad cultures, as I understand them, are highly mobile, but over a definitely bounded area--seasonal migrations, summering one place and wintering another, or a variation on that. I recall the description in, I believe, an old *Place* magazine of a hippie nomad whose range included a considerable portion of the northern and central California coast; he had no fixed abode in all that area, but he knew it intimately, and at many a hidden corner of the landscape he had stashes of food, clothing, and other useful items for survival. The pattern of my own life seems to have something in common with the traditional nomadic life, although over the long run I have continued to expand my territory. I don't know whether the pattern has simply expanded to include a new place (the Pacific Northwest), or whether a new pattern is weaving itself. Certainly I have entered a new stage of my life in the last couple of years--since the day of my 24th birthday, in fact, when I sat on a California hillside and took stock of my life up to that time, and looked ahead to the next two dozen years. It has taken me a while to settle down into one place, but basically the past two years have been a focusing process, an attempt to get myself *located*, so that I can convert some of that mass of energy and experience that I've taken in during the previous several years into creative energy flowing out of me. I'm still working on it.

The process has been a narrowing one in some ways, and perhaps the most disturbing thing about it is the feeling of claustrophobia that easily creeps up on me. I sometimes wonder if I'm really following my true direction in what I'm doing, or if I'm simply getting hardened, crusty, and enmired in old patterns. But at other times I know that I haven't really lost my way, that it's just a long, convoluted road that sometimes dips down into a hollow where it gets hard to see the sky.

This is a very difficult road to walk, though. One of the deadends is

allowing myself to postpone things, to go beyond self-discipline into letting myself put off living until later. Another one is to counterbalance the occasional feelings of despair by becoming convinced that I'm really a misunderstood hero, to flipflop from one extreme to another. One deadend that I have allowed myself to follow too long is simply that of trying to walk the road alone.

> And still...if you are twenty-five and have exhausted the dilatory possibilities of college and parental support, you *do* want to "grow up" and "be responsible." Which, of course, means you must put your hand to the political things that demand attention. But you must also "make do"...and there are forty or fifty years ahead (if the bomb doesn't fall) and they must be shared with home and family, and be buoyed up by dependable subsistence, or that future will be a gray waste and the consciousness of life you want to expand will shrink and become bleak. So how *do* you grow up? Where is the life-sustaining receptacle that can nourish and protect good citizenship?
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> The answer is: you make up a community of those you love and respect, where there can be enduring friendships, children, and, by mutual aid, three meals a day scraped together by honorable and enjoyable labor. Nobody knows quite how it is to be done. There are not many reliable models. The old radicals are no help: they talked about socializing whole economies, or launching third parties, or strengthening the unions, but not about building communities.
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> It will take a deal of improvisation, using whatever examples one can find at hand: the life-way of Indian tribes, utopian precedents, the seventeenth-century Diggers, the French communities of work, the Israeli kibbutzim, the Hutterites.... Maybe none of them will work. But where else is there to turn? And where else can one any longer look for the beginnings of an honest revolution except in such "pre-revolutionary structure-making" (as Buber calls it)?
>
> (...)
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> If the counter culture is to have a future that saves the best that is in it, these frenzied and often pathetic experiments in community will simply have to succeed.

These paragraphs were written in 1968 by Theodore Roszak; you'll find them, with some of the ellipses filled in, on pp. 202-204 of the hardcover edition of *The Making of a Counter Culture*. It's probably not surprising that Roszak's words should speak to the questions that I am wrestling with now, at the age of twenty-six, only one year away from the tenth anniversary of both my highschool graduation and the "Summer of Love." In the late Sixties, I couldn't read *The Making of a Counter Culture*; I remember picking it up on recommendation, looking through it, and trying to read it without success. It may have been partly a matter of chance, that I happened to glance at the more political parts of the book and miss the more psychological and spiritual ones that might have hooked me, but I think that it was simply impossible for me to read the book at that time, when I was too much in the middle of what Theodore Roszak was trying to get some perspective on. I could feel in the first sentences that he was an outsider, someone who did not understand the generational experiences that "we" were all going through; I especially objected to what I saw as his judging the whole countercultural experience by political standards, which in fact was my misreading of what he was saying. (It's easy to misread Roszak if you skim, because he often plays Devil's advocate for pages at a time.) During the past few weeks, though, I've been reading this book with eagerness and fascination, and what Roszak wrote eight

years ago has been igniting so many insights and recognitions in my mind that I feel like a display of fireworks.

The book is valuable to me now for precisely the reason it put me off in the late Sixties: it was written by a man who was older than the generation he was writing about, who was trying to set it in a larger context and see through the surface to the meaning of the phenomenon. What I didn't recognize at the time was that he did know what he was talking about.

I don't know if Roszak foresaw how valuable his book might prove to be after the sound and fury of the late Sixties had died down and the people who lived through it were looking back, trying to figure out where they'd been and where they were going from here, but I've been finding that his synthesizing survey throws a great deal of light on our shared experience: most especially, it is providing me with a number of structures and patterns with which to look at all the questions and sort out my own experience. The book gives perspective. I'm still encountering it too freshly to distill it any further than this, but at least I want to point to a potentially valuable tool.

I wish Theodore Roszak were writing in the lettercolumn of *Hitchhike*.

He isn't, but his book has shed some light for me on someone who is, or who has been: I've started to see just what was getting to me in the letters from Redd Boggs. I owe Redd an apology, I think, for saying something as sweeping and useless as, "You've missed the point, Redd"; at least I owe my other readers an apology, since the exasperation that produced that outburst came from several years of remarks that Redd had made in his FAPAzines, and from some of the insightful challenges that he got from Gregg Calkins on those remarks--but most of you could not have read them, and so you probably had little idea of what I was talking about. Jay Kinney wondered what "the point" was that Redd had missed. Reading Roszak has clarified the answer for me, because Roszak, like Redd Boggs, is not of the generation that formed the "counterculture"; but, unlike Redd (or at least what I perceive of him), Roszak understood the profound changes in consciousness, in perception of just what reality is and of who "we" are who are doing the perceiving, that underlay the entire countercultural experience and made it different from traditional radical politics. "The point" is just that: what Roszak calls, as one of his chapter headings, the myth of objective consciousness. The traditional radical critiques of western society are based as firmly upon the mass-industrial, technocratic assumptions that have gotten us into this mess as the capitalist philosophies are.

Hmm. I think I'm getting muzzy-headed again. Have you read Theodore Roszak, Redd? Recently?

> Education cannot help us as long as it accords no place to metaphysics. Whether the subjects taught are subjects of science or of the humanities, if the teaching does not lead to a clarification of metaphysics, that is to say, of our fundamental convictions, it cannot educate a man and, consequently, cannot be of real value to society.
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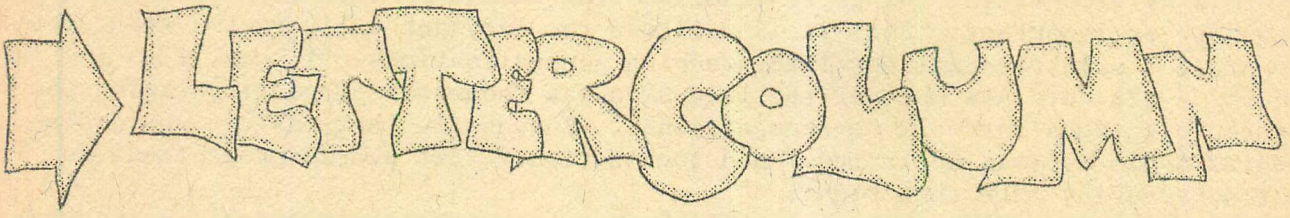
> --E.F. Schumacher
> *Small Is Beautiful*

This issue is a short one for the simple reason that I cannot cope with running off as many pages as I did last time, and I cannot afford to mail them if I do. This is not, obviously, the "Great Big *Special* Non-Bicentennial Issue" I spoke of at the end of my last editorial. I have enough letters--good letters, long letters, letters deserving of being printed--to fill twenty or thirty pages and make an All Letters issue. But I hate All Letters issues; they lose the balance and rhythm of a good fanzine, or at least they interrupt it.

What I've chosen to do is publish this small issue (only small relative to the last one; this is more the size I would prefer to do), printing only some of the letters, ones that seem to form a whole. The next issue, which will appear just as soon as you see it, will contain the rest of the letters, with whatever I feel like writing at that time; it will also contain a 7½ page article that doug barbour has sent me, about his and Sharon's travels in Europe in June and other things. If I get the next issue out Real Soon, maybe I can have it in print before too many of my faithful readers, who are used to my increasingly leisurely schedule, have sent in new letters that demand to be printed immediately if not sooner. You all know how likely this is, though, don't you?

This page is the Continental Divide of this issue of *Hitchhike*; from this point, all rivers flow into the



JAY KINNEY: I found your piece on "travelling" interesting and absorbing. It was particularly intriguing in its juxtaposition to Will and Jeff's pieces on their own particular travels. Perhaps because it dealt mainly with one city which Will settled in for a while (tho for only 10 weeks), his column seemed to radiate the positive virtues of "non-tourism" you spoke of. Jeff's tale, by contrast, was much more of a grand latter-day Kerouacian exercise in travel as an endless party (or so it seemed, despite truck breakdowns and such), which struck as most ironic when I realized that he had stayed in S.F. for a week practically on my doorstep (I live 3 blocks from Haight and Ashbury) and I was never aware of it. But I enjoyed both accounts, and your insights too. An intriguing combination.

And now on to the letters! Though I feel that I share a certain intuitive sympathy and understanding with Alex Panshin, based on some past talks we've had (too rare) and past writings (mainly in *Syndrome* and *Hitchhike*), I have to admit that his letter made me grit my teeth more than once. His paragraph regarding mass media was perhaps the most frustrating to me. Alex says:

> "Comic books, rock music and tv are good places to look for signs and portents. They are responsive media: work for them is done fast and appears fast. This makes them highly reflective of the social and mental climate from one moment to another. Their vulgarity means that they escape set canons of art. It is possible to do work that expresses innerness in these media, without having to meet accepted standards of seriousness."

Well, I would *like* to believe this, I guess, but to be honest I don't believe it and, in fact, find almost the opposite to be the case. The notion of looking to those media for signs and portents might be valid enough. Lord knows, when I'm in the mood to find signs and portents I can even find them in billboards and bathroom grafitti. And I've certainly spent my share of time over the past decade stoned or tripping and finding great meaning and solace in select rock records and visual media. But, damn it Alex, it is my experience and observation that "innerness" expressed in those media is *in spite* of the media. To me it is blatantly self-evident that Marvel or DC have consistently muted the power of their writers and artists, grinding good people under, switch-

ing artists from character to character and book to book like so many spare parts in a machine. That some rare quality shines forth from under all the shit, occasionally, is more a testimony to the irrepressible human spirit than to the responsiveness of comics. With underground comix (or what remains of them) you may score higher, but that's another matter.

As for rock music in 1976, I find it far less honest than ever before, and in advanced stages of decay and self-indulgence. Of course this may, indeed, make it "highly reflective of the social and mental climate," or maybe it just means that "what you see is what you get." Naturally gems stick out, and if Alex wants to spotlight the rare beauties as "portents" of the "New Headism" descending upon us all, all the more power to him. All I ask is that we pay a little more attention to that which Alex acknowledges in passing early in his letter: "We have to learn to trust and to use our inner recognitions--*in conjunction with the ordinary rational mode*." (My emphasis.) I feel that the process of recognizing things in other people (famous or not) with which we resonate *is* important. But, it is a little too easy and a little too seductive to project such recognitions into sweeping generalizations. I know, I do it too. We all do. And much of the late 60's was thousands of people sharing the same projections (as well as recognitions). Supposedly that was the rationale behind Abbie Hoffman declaring "Woodstock Nation." But shared projections do not necessarily make them right.

I guess the thing that ultimately bothers me with Alex's spiel, is that I don't really see this "New Head" as *new* at all, and that hyping it on that basis is misleading. Creative individuals, writers, artists, musicians, and such have been aware of the value of paying attention to "the heart" as well as to "the head," for centuries and centuries. That Dylan cops to an inner voice is cheering but not exactly surprising to me. But when he is quoted, on the other hand, as saying that he "didn't consciously pursue the Bob Dylan myth. It was given to me--by God..." I *am* rather surprised at his disingenuousness. Unless, of course, by "God" he means Albert Grossman. But here we have in a nutshell the whole problem with deriving omens from the media. Any quotes or articles/photos in *People* magazine are part of the same corporate machine (the Record/Media/Show *Biz*) which just happens to place ads for records in the same issue of *Creem* or *Rolling Stone* where those records are reviewed and spotlighted; which just happens to "coincidentally" spout forth with simulteneous cover stories on Bruce Springsteen or Paul McCartney in 5 magazines at once; where movie stars run for president, and presidents appear on comedy shows. It's the Dream Machine, Alex, and Bob Dylan is one of its clients. He's talented, near-genius maybe, but he also is making his record company millions of dollars and indirectly employing hundreds of people, and you can be damn sure that he and they are VERY ATTENTIVE to the Bob Dylan myth. And any fluff in *People* magazine is *part* of the myth.

Onward. To respond to a couple of your comments on my letter in this last issue. Perhaps my use of the word "just" in prefacing my description of the "counterculture" was largely a confusing use of language. What I *meant* to imply with that sentence was that much of the countercultural experience was defined (and limited) by *who* was experiencing it and *when*. That the war and the draft opened our eyes to the possibility of unjust warfare and Imperialism, but that the artificially active war-economy gave us an illusion of "post-scarcity" and an abundant-enough society that we could live on its fringes (perhaps forever) and still get by. That being in college (and out of the job market) or in youth ghettoes enabled us to look around and see numerous reflections of ourselves, thus fostering the notion that "the revolution" was directly connected to us: the "youth." Just over 50% of the country was under 25 (glow glow) and we were the best, brightest, tallest and most beautiful generation yet (beam beam). The "Drug culture" was superior to the Pentagon's "Alcohol culture," or so we said. Rock was "our" music, and when our parents admitted

that they kind of liked the Beatles' "Yesterday"--well, gee, the world was finally coming around to where it was at.

All of that is a lot to try to imply in one sentence, and I didn't do the best job, last letter. But, my point was that perhaps you, John, should step back and see ~~just~~ which of your (and my) assumptions about the countercultural experience were based on our being 18 (or 19, etc.) in 1968. You berated Redd for missing the point "nearly a decade ago" and still missing "it" now...and that seemed to me to be blaming him for not being born in 1949. You said to him: "You not only don't share the common experience to any significant degree, you seem to have no idea of what it's all about." The lesson I think I've learned over the last few years is that "the common experience" was only available to (by and large) middle-class youth and those who identified with them--and that was the *heart* and *core* of its weakness and disintegration. The solutions to our national problems will have to be able to engage city-hardened Blacks, proud Indians, Teamsters, Gays, the whole range of people of all ages and classes. I think that "politics" *can* be an empty and destructive headtrip, but that is not *always* the case, and that sometimes it is important for those people "who recognize the underlying unity of the spiritual and political" to "line up under radical political banners" and help radiate some of this "self-understanding."

The prospects of what will have to be done in the years to come in the U.S. in order to help it change in the most humane direction possible are truly mind-boggling, and it is easy to get discouraged if one tries to do it all at once. You know this. And it is all too easy for us to become self-righteous in our now "more mature" view of things. So, I'd like to recommend a couple of books which have impressed me as humanely political and have encouraged me to try and integrate a spiritual and political outlook. The first is *Dear America* by Karl Hess, the former Goldwater conservative and now left-libertarian. The 2nd is *America After Nixon* by Robert Scheer, the former editor of Ramparts.

Part of the balance I hope for in my own life is also between City and Country. Clearly those of us in the City wouldn't be alive and eating without those in the country, and vice versa. It is very easy to become alienated from nature and non-man-made things when you live in the City. I prize the awareness of that which the Country brings. But living in the country it is easy to disengage oneself from much of the decay and yet vital variety of our culture. Ray Nelson seems to revel in the City polarity and Robert Lichtman in the Country. It seems to me that neither is 100% correct (as extremes), but that certain environments suit certain folks better.

I felt an intuitive agreement with Angus Taylor's letter ("Angus, meet Alex. Alex? Angus. Now, let's you and him fight...."), but now I'm really burning out, so I'll let it lie at that. I will say in passing though, John, that I think that you use the word "Ecology" in a wider sense than most people --rather than most people using it in too narrow a sense. Following my letter, you define it as "the system of how things work"...which is sort of like everything and nothing. Your later definition of it as "the whole-systems study of how life interacts with its environment" is a little more manageable. My dictionary (Webster's New World) defines it as, "1. the branch of biology that deals with the relations between living organisms and their environment. 2. in *sociology*, the relationship between the distribution of human groups and cultural patterns." Most of us use it in the sense of #1, and when we don't include humans as among those "living organisms" we are at fault, true. But interestingly enough, #2 sounds very close to "economics" if in "material resources" you include the means of production, and the accumulation of wealth, etc. So, in the end (and not too coherently) I'd say that ecology and economics are both contained within the other and that definitions for either can get out of hand. The last sentences in Greg Burton's letter seem to sum this all up. It's all circular.

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((I think that part of Alex's point about the responsiveness of the mass media was that, whatever the strictures placed on the creative artists, comics, rock, and tv do reflect changes in our *mass* self-perceptions. That is, if it shows up in these media, it must be beginning to sink into the society as a whole. This may or may not be true (for that matter it may not be what Alex had in mind), but it would be a valid point in spite of your description of conditions in the comics industry.

One useful concept that I originally got from Alex and Cory is that the generation that I feel I'm on the tail end of--roughly those born from 1935 to 1950, as I recall--happens to be a strongly creative generation (for various reasons of history and circumstance), and that we will most likely continue to be so as we grow older; we are used to thinking of "youth" as Where It's At, because when the idea was formulated we were young, but in fact it's our generation, in its particular matrix of time, that is the creative font, not "youth" itself. This certainly seems to match up with what I see of the people who are now college-age kids, and I think that a lot of the dismay and disappointment that many of us feel when looking at the current "younger generation" is based on that confusion of "us" with "young." (I'm not trying to paint our generation as the saviors of the world, but it is a particularly seminal group in our society--and a *big* group--and I don't think it has shot its wad by the age of thirty.)

The addition of the idea of whole systems to the definition of ecology is essential, I think, to what the ecological ethos means today; it's more than "just" (that word again!) a branch of biology. I meant to quote the "Declaration of Interdependence" that Greenpeace has been circulating, but I'll have to dig it out for next issue. The fundamental ideas behind "ecology" have some profound implications that go far beyond most dictionary definitions.))

CREATH THORNE: There are so many things I could comment on here, but I want to address myself particularly to Alexei Panshin's letter, perhaps the most fascinating *and* disturbing five pages you've printed in the current series of *Hitchhike*s. I admire Panshin's writing so much: he writes with such clarity, such force, such balance. And yet, it seems to me that at base he's entirely wrong, that the principles he espouses in this letter are principles that have led him away from that great talent he does possess.

I'll ignore the rather embarrassing passage in his letter where he sounds more as a publicist for Bob Dylan than anything else. (That's a whole fascinating question in itself--how Bob Dylan, much as Ernest Hemingway, has been consumed by his public self.) I think that passage simply demonstrates the dangers of basing one's hopes on the press releases and hype that surround popular musicians today. Rather, I'm more concerned with the structure underlying that admiration that Alexei plays out in the opening paragraphs of his letter.

To begin with, I'm deeply skeptical of any structure that divides the world up into Old Head and New Head orientations. I suppose it's a carry-over from the conflicts of the sixties, when it did so often seem that it was Us against Them. I bought that division then; I don't buy it now. I don't think that two thousand years of western culture can be so easily discarded, so easily written off as "the old hyper-rational orientation."

There's a passage in one of Gary Snyder's books where he writes:

"Comes a time when the poet must choose: either to step deep in the

> stream of his people, history, tradition, folding and folding himself in wealth of persons and pasts; philosophy, humanity, to become richly foundational and great and sane and ordered. Or, to step beyond the bound onto the way out, into horrors and angels, possible madness or silly Faustian doom, possible utter transcendence, possible enlightened return, possible ignominious wormish perishing." (from *Earth House Hold*)

It seems to me that Snyder says in that passage much of what Alexei says here. And yet, Snyder has left a final chapter unwritten. The poet who steps beyond the bound is not left there by his readers; rather, he becomes part of his "people, history, tradition." The history of our culture is a history of thousands of dividing lines that have been stepped over. The division between Old Head and New Head that Alexei postulates will meet, I believe, the same fate.

I'm not only bothered by Alexei's lack of perspective here, I'm also bothered by his rejection of what he calls "hyper-rational orientation." "There isn't any way that I could 'prove' anything to Ray or Redd, as you well know," he says. Well, I'm not so sure that that impossibility of proof is so well known. Alexei seems to be asserting the impossibility of one mind actually meeting another and moving it. I doubt very much that impossibility, but even more important is the fact none of us really acts as if that were the case. "All you can do is point and there is either a recognition or there isn't," says Alexei. Why, then, did he write *Heinlein in Dimension* the way he did? He does more than "point" in that book; he constructs a critical argument.

This whole problem is something I've run into in working with first-year students here in writing courses. When I've asked them to write about a poem or story and then have marked their papers for weaknesses, their usual response is, "What right do you have to mark up my paper? After all, it's my interpretation of the poem?" What I then try to do is show that not all acts of criticism are equally valid, that some papers *are* better than others. Just because the standard of proof is different for a critical paper than it is for a mathematical theorem doesn't mean that *no* standard of proof exists for the former. Essentially, Alexei is asserting the impossibility of real communication; "there is either a recognition or there isn't." I'm more concerned with how acts of recognition come about, with what we practically can do to increase them. I think there's far more to them than the immediate and intuitive communion of like souls. I don't think many of us would bother to write if we felt that this was all our writing would amount to. Certainly I wouldn't bother to write *these* paragraphs if I accepted the principles Alexei espouses.

Alexei here speaks of "innerness," what Bob Dylan calls "God's work." I have no quarrel with his emphasis on that internal spirit which forms (or should form) the foundation for all the work we do. What I do object to is his assertion that such "innerness" is both the starting-point and stopping-point for all human activity. Gregory Bateson in his paper "Form, Substance, and Difference" addresses this problem:

> "It is told of Johann Sebastian Bach that when somebody asked him how he played so divinely, he answered, 'I play the notes, in order, as they are written. It is God who makes the music.'"

So far this is much what Alexei says. But note the step that Bateson now takes:

> "Please do not misunderstand me. When I say that the poets have always known these things or that most of mental process is unconscious, I am not advocating a greater use of emotion or a lesser use of intellect.... It is the attempt to *separate* intellect from emotion that is monstrous."

It's just such an attempt that I sense running through all of Alexei's letter. I've indicated how reductive I think it is. Surely the greater part of Alexei's own writing gives the lie to the principles he's espoused here.

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ELI COHEN: Your piece on cities was fascinating. I've always been interested in the subtle social and psychological effects architecture and physical structures can have. Like the traffic planners in Brunner's *Squares of the City*, who can create slums or city centers with the stroke of a freeway. I remember glancing at a book called *Defensible Space*, I think (it was while I was waiting to see someone in an office, so it wasn't what you would call a thorough reading), and one thing that especially struck me was a comparison between a high-rise and an old brownstone type of apartment house, from the viewpoint of child recreation: As long as the building is low enough for mothers to keep an eye on their kids playing out in front, you get a particular kind of neighborhood pattern. The key thing, as I recall, was that the space in front of the building stays part of it, people will use it, there's lots of interaction between people, kids yelling at windows and vice versa, etc. (I guess it's also safer for neighborhood people to walk around in, too.) But the high-rise destroys all that, because mothers now can't let their kids out without keeping an eye on them, and this automatically wipes out a lot of neighborhood feeling. Besides, the space around the high-rise is no longer defensible. (I suppose with the usual no pets/no children clauses, it doesn't make much difference anyway.) One doubts that's the sort of thing an architect usually worries about.

I can think of at least one other clever example of managing people: You've got an office building, and every day at five o'clock there's an incredible rush for the elevators, long waits because of all the people, and so forth. You can put in more elevators, at large cost. You can suffer with the complaints and decreased morale. Or you can put mirrors next to the elevators.... Strangely, this keeps people more contented while they're waiting, or even slows down the rush itself.

Re Stringband: I'm not sure I agree with "Dief Will Be the Chief Again" "taking on" ole Dief--I thought it was rather complementary to him, certainly compared to "that man up in Ottawa with cold water in his veins" who "doesn't give a shit about you." (Poor Trudeau. My favorite line is that he's gone from Philosopher-King to Mackenzie King.) (But I can't remember where I heard it.)

There is something that disturbs me in Alexei Panshin's letter. Though he says "We have to learn to trust and to use our inner recognitions--in conjunction with the ordinary rational mode" (a statement I thoroughly agree with) he seems to discard that balance thereafter; I get the feeling from the rest of his letter that his pendulum has swung too far over, and he much prefers to throw out the old rational mode in favor of his mystical inner recognitions, certainly whenever they conflict.

I dunno. In my experience, when a thing is true, it's true. What I find so awesome about Zen is that it makes such perfect, rational sense, at the same time as it *feels* so right. (Mind you, Alexei is right that when you try to explain things in words, they tend to be meaningless to someone who hasn't experienced the feeling. But I would say that the "rational" version of a great truth sounds merely trite, or tautological--it should never sound wrong.) The universe *is*. And people are part of the universe. I think there is a great complementarity principle involving intuition and rationality, akin to the wave/particle daulity in physics. Each mode is uniquely adapted to certain areas, and each misses certain things--you can get into a hell of a lot of trouble relying solely on either one.

Ideally, when they work together they can check and confirm each other. Instinct is far from infallible--anyone who's ever watched a cat fall into a

bathtub has to feel differently about our wise animal instincts. Conversely, when doing statistics, you *have* to keep your intuition going--you have to have a *feel* for the right answer, because otherwise a tiny arithmetic mistake will lead to absolutely ludicrous results (I've seen published tables which, if anybody had thought about what they *said*, would have been tossed out instantly--but nobody bothered, and the calculator came out with that answer, so in it goes). (Great cartoon I once saw: Two guys sitting in front of a computer console. One says to the other, "The computer says 3452967.36587912. Does that look right to you?")

Somehow, looking back over the last forty years of history, they don't seem particularly hyper-rational to me. And I don't see the Thirties as a time of transition from headstate to another, even just in the U.S. Maybe certain characteristics were highlighted by the external circumstances; maybe the American self-image, if there is such a thing, changed somewhat, as it has since Vietnam and Watergate. But I can't see any major changes. Certainly nothing comparable to the (gradual) switch from the pre-Scientific/Industrial Revolution headstate to the present. In the West, of course. (I think a belief in an orderly universe is more basic than a preference for a rational vs. intuitive mod of thought, either of which are compatible with an orderly or an arbitrary universe.)

Speaking of balance, Saskatchewan's marvelous oil and uranium resources will indeed bring the province wealth--and lose it its equalization payments from Ottawa. It's not much, only a hundred million or so.

On vegetarianism: Don Fitch sounds eminently sensible. I think what we need is more reverence for life--which is not the same thing as a horror and avoidance of death. In ye olden times, slaughtering animals, as harvesting crops, involved a great ritual, necessary to appease various forces. A little human sacrifice didn't hurt either, before you killed John Barleycorn. I presume this meant that killing wasn't done lightly, but was seen as a proper part of the ecological system. A moral block is a moral block--if I had to slaughter my own supper, I'd rather wrestle with a corncob than a lamb, but that's sheer squeamishness; I just wonder at the artificial distinction between animals and vegetables, since both are alive. Le Guin has a good deal to say about Life and Death in *The Farthest Shore*. The attitude I would like to cultivate is beautifully expressed in the *Tassajara Bread Book*:

"Waiting-on-yeast is to feed, keep house, keep it warm, clean its air, empty its garbage, and cater to its whims.... Bake the bread, and the yeast dies. Slice it, butter it, eat it. Be thankful."

Re Power in man-made objects: I get a Sense of Wonder watching the telephone poles march across the prairies. There is such an incredible feeling of *space*, of distance, of sheer territory, all the way out to the horizon, as far as you can see in any direction--and there are those telephone poles, tying it all together into one world-wide network. (John Pierce pointed out that the telephone system is the most complex artifact that has ever existed on this planet. Thank of that, the next time you get a wrong number at 5 AM.)

I've got a fragmented note here, and I don't know what it belongs to, so I'll just toss it in: Image of the city as a thoroughly natural construction of Homo sapiens, akin to a bird's nest, a beehive, or a beaver dam. (That gets in the Canadian content.)

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((I think of not only the last forty years, but pretty well all of the 20th Century thus far, as the period of the disintegration of the "hyper-rational" mode of thought that has characterized

western civilization for at least the past three centuries (with roots that go back much farther, of course). As far as I can tell from what I've read of western philosophy before it's put me to sleep, western thought has worked its logical way into a corner, a deadend, and we have spent the last century reacting to that fact.))

CORY PANSHIN: *Hitchhike* came this morning, and I read it right through in an attempt to lift myself out of a state of considerable distress. We forgot to close the henhouse door last night and some predator got in. It killed most of this spring's crop of half-grown chicks, and the mother of the three youngest of them.

I mention this because I think it casts light on the discussions of vegetarianism and killing animals in *Hitchhike*. Our situation here is an unusual one. We don't own the place: We rent the carriage house, and the only animals which are attached to us personally are our two cats. A farmer who lives a couple of miles away rents the land to plant crops. He also keeps a few cows and pigs, but we don't have much involvement with those.

However, our landlady has a few dozen ducks, geese, and chickens. We share in taking care of these and hunting for their eggs. They are pets, more than anything. Our landlady doesn't like to kill them. (She has told me that as a child she was once served her pet duck for Christmas dinner.) And, because she's not in the poultry business, she doesn't have to kill them. The hen that was found dead this morning was an old biddy who stopped laying a couple of years ago. We had given her some of the other hens' eggs in order to satisfy her nesting impulses.

From the "humanitarian" standpoint, this situation ought to be ideal. But it is never possible to exclude death. Chicks and ducklings vanish every spring. An unlocked chicken house can lead to sudden wholesale slaughter. Domestic ducks are even more vulnerable because they can't fly. We have bred them to be helpless. Only the geese seem equipped to defend themselves and their young.

And even beyond losses to predators, animals do have to be killed from time to time. This spring, something killed one of two ducks that had gotten shut into the barn and left the other badly mangled. That one had to be shot. Our landlady started out by letting all her roosters grow to maturity, until she saw the results of a few cockfights. Now she asks the farmer to kill the extras for her.

The ecological net is a tightly-woven web of birth and death, growth and decay. When we humans unravel that web for our own purposes, we ourselves become the part of it that we have destroyed. When we deprive animals of their natural defenses or camouflages, we are forced to become their defenders. When we deprive them of their natural predators, we are forced to become their executioners. And in either case, there is the certainty that we will not perform these functions as well as the ecosystem itself does--that we will from time to time fuck it up.

And vegetarianism is no less an intrusion upon the ecosystem than meat-eating. Our domestic plants are as helplessly dependent upon us as our domestic animals. They too have a profusion of enemies. Deer invade our cornfields. Rabbits nibble at our gardens. Rats swarm through our granaries. Weeds and insects and blights take a toll.

How do you deal with these adversaries, these rivals for the earth's shrinking supplies of food? Do you fight against them, perhaps killing some of them --or do you refrain from killing and invite them in to feed?

Do you outlaw cats because they might catch mice?

Death is inevitable. Suffering, I suppose, is inevitable too. Even disharmony between humankind and its environment may be unavoidable. On the level of the individual being, none of this makes any sense. On the level of the ecosystem as a whole, the level on whichall life is One, patterns of higher meaning

may emerge.
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((What do you mean by "the ecosystem itself"? We are an integral part of the ecosystem. We define our environment as much as our environment defines us.))

ALEXEI PANSHIN: Well, well. From Ray Nelson's letter in *Hitchhike* #26, it becomes apparent that it's not just me and Cory that Ray thinks are out-of-it because we live on a farm. It's anybody who lives on a farm. Any farm, any place, any time. As Ray says, "It is simply not possible to live on a farm and continue to grow intellectually."

That's a narrow and limiting point-of-view. Almost--dare I say it--insular. It doesn't take into account that the circumstances on one farm might be completely different from the circumstances on another. Bob Lichtman's situation on a communal farm in Tennessee seems as far-side-of-the-moon to me as Ray's situation in shave-your-head California, but to Ray one farm is equivalent to another.

Would it make any difference, Ray, if I were to tell you that within a fifteen-mile-radius of us there are towns of 10,000 population, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, shopping malls, universities, factories; that half-an-hour away from us is the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton metropolis, population 200,000; that Philadelphia is one hour's drive away, and New York City only two hours distant? Down here on the farm, we can order any book we like from our local public library system, and they will get it into our hands. We actually have electricity down here on the farm, and our tv set pulls in thirteen different channels. How many can you get, Ray?

Nobody is any more isolated than he wants to be--or is limited to being by his background and his ideas. I'm sure that it is true that many local people here, living on farms or not, are dreadfully narrow. But it is also true that there are people living in the heart of Brooklyn who have never managed to set eyes on Manhattan. Hey, Ray, there's no law of the universe that says you can't use your mind when you live on a farm. If your mind is closed, it doesn't matter where you live. If your mind is open, any new circumstance will offer its opportunities for growth. I wouldn't want to spend the rest of my life here on Open Gate Farm, any more than I would want to spend it in the suburb I grew up in or in El Cerrito, California. But I'm immensely grateful to the powers of the universe that directed us here for the opportunity I've had to live on a farm these last seven years. Perhaps the best part of it has been the chance to learn about the natures of animals--a chance I'd never had before. I'm a broader human being for it. I think kids who grow up in the city and never know animals are horribly deprived. And, for all Ray's expressed fears about vegetating down on the farm, I can say with all due confidence that I've produced the best and deepest work of my life while living here. No more than Ray does do I think that Steve Gaskin's Farm is a final Utopia that answers all questions of living. Whatever Bob Lichtman's current feelings, I doubt that he will spend the rest of his days living on that farm. But when he leaves--if he does--he will have had a vital and unique experience in communal living that I've never had. All unique experiences carry their own validity.

I knew a man once who lived all his life in his own armpit. He thought he was at the center of things. But as it proved, he was just intoxicated by the familiarity of the smell.

One of these days, we are all going to start in-gathering from the various places we've been. You, Johnny, from your travels. We from ours--outwardly very different, and not necessarily visible to the casual observer. Bob Lichtman from his commune. Susan Wood from her special Canadian circumstances. Ray from El Cerrito. And we are going to discover to our mind-widening delight,

that all the pieces we bring, seemingly separate, fit together to make a greater whole. And then who amongst us can be excluded? Whose experience can be denied? No one. Do we deny the validity of an elephant's tail because it's shitsville back there? All the pieces of the universe, all the modes of experience exist because they are necessary parts of the greater whole.

Even farms, Ray.

Speaking of unique experiences, one of the continuing themes in *Hitchhike* has been places of power. But places of power aren't always places of power. As the saying goes: "right time, right place, right people." Places that hit you with their power may not always do it, but depend on being encountered at just the right moment, with the right state of mind.

I very definitely stood on a place of power once--a sacred mountain in Korea. It happened fifteen years ago, and the experience still remains with me, and may be there as long as I live. But a lot of the impact of the experience is wrapped up in the climb I had to make to get there; in the surprise unfolding of the miniature landscape at the top, a sweet, temperate plateau higher than all the surrounding mountains; in the time of day and the angle of light; and in the fact that the day I had this little epiphany was by coincidence the same day as Korea's last revolution, when Syngman Rhee was deposed.

Time of day is very important. Early morning and late afternoon light carry great power. They reveal aspects of being that more direct lighting swamps out.

A few weeks ago, on a Saturday morning, I got a phone call from a young dope-dealer friend of mine. He was about to leave for an immense outdoor concert being held at JFK Stadium in Philadelphia and he had an extra ticket. Did I want to go along for the day and hear Gary Wright, Peter Frampton and Yes? Sure, I said. So I drove with him to the far side of Phillie. We arrived shortly after noon, but already the stadium was so filled that the best seat we could find was in the far end zone. We spent the whole afternoon sitting in the hot sun while the stadium filled fuller and fuller, until the whole surface, football field and seats, was a carpet of young humanity, mostly between fifteen and twenty. We tripped on window-pane acid, the first acid I'd taken in five years. We smoked Colombian and Thai stick. And we waited. And we waited.

JFK Stadium in itself is not a place of power. At least, I don't think it is. But somehow, out of the heat, the mass of sunburned humanity, the drugs, and the waiting, there was produced a moment of exquisite power which Peter Frampton was sufficiently in tune with to catch and amplify. Right time, right place, right people. Gary Wright came on too early to catch it--the light was still too direct. Yes, for some reason, wasn't able to take full advantage--even though they had an exquisite full moon rising over the side of the stadium while they were on. But Frampton played from 6:30 until 8, while the light of the sun was perfectly angled, and the moment was unique. It can't be laid just to the drugs. By the time Frampton came on the acid I'd taken at 1 o'clock had largely worn off. What happened was a gestalt--a realized unique configuration. And I wasn't alone in feeling the power. *Happytimes*, a Philadelphia music and entertainment paper, headlined their report of the event: "Halfway back to the Garden." Their sense of the relative power of the different performers was much the same as mine, and they report that "Frampton came alive and stole the show." And they begin their story: "Let's face it. This wasn't a concert, it was an event." They don't say anything about angles of light, or the dynamics of crowd mood. But on some subliminal level, they were as aware of them as I was. It was a True Moment--and like the Korean experience, it will remain with me, and, I think, with most of the 105,000 people who participated in it. I still haven't assimilated it to the point that I can put the uniqueness into words. But somehow, there was a Moment of Power, and I was there for it. Moments like that can't be planned for. Like Right Places, they are unlooked-for blessings.

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WE ALSO HEARD FROM ("we" in the sense of all of us who participate in this ongoing conversation; me in the literal sense of who is receiving the mail): Will Straw, Jerry Kaufman, Michael Carlson, Eric Lindsay, Harry Warner, Jr , Angus Taylor, David Piper, Jonh Ingham, Chas. Jensen, Rick Stooker, Darroll Pardoe, Jill Jamieson, Moshe Feder, Gil Gaier, Brian Thurogood, Deborah Knapp, Mary Altland, Tom Goodhue, Terry Hughes, Sandra Gerber, Rob Jackson, Joe D. Siclari, Len Berry, Gary Deindorfer, Mike Gorra, and Mrs. Ward L. Berry. Quite a number of these letters deserve to be printed, and the next issue will contain them; there is especially a whole cycle of letters touching on the question of cities and their nature that I wrote about last issue. Keep those cards 'n' letters coming, folks!

> Commercial vulgarization is one of the endemic pests of twentieth-century Western life, like the flies that swarm to sweets in the summer.
>
> --Theodore Roszak
> *The Making of a Counter Culture*

Further Notes: After what I wrote last issue about the visit that Susan and I paid to the Zen Center in San Francisco, where Andrew Main was living last year, you might be interested in the following paragraph from the Fall, 1976, issue of *The CoEvolution Quarterly*. It's in Stewart Brand's "Gossip" section at the back of the issue (not too different from this page, as a matter of fact):

> Another gearshifter is Andrew Main, our camera and printer-liaison man, who after several years of practice at the San Francisco Zen Center is moving up to the varsity zazen squad. He's going to the Tassajara Zen Mountain Center for a year or more. His expertise and attention to detail were exemplary; Don Ryan is taking over the slot. We celebrated Andrew's retirement with a rare midday party featuring cakes, a gift certificate for the warm garment of his choice (Tassajara is glacial in the winter), and champagne, which made volleyball even looser than usual.
>
> When Andrew was on his way out through the library I called after him, "Come back when you get enlightened!" "Sure!" he replied.
>
> He was still laughing as the front door closed behind him.

Travelin' Fan: It was nearly six years ago that I met Peter Roberts. I was studying in France, and only a couple of weeks after my arrival I took a trip across the English Channel to attend the British Eastercon in Worcester. It was well worth the trip. I met a great deal of British fandom in Worcester, but the circle I was traveling in resolved itself down in the course of the con to a trio: me, Gray Boak, and Peter Roberts. We would sit in the hotel's plush overstuffed lounge chairs and discuss the silly cultural differences that absorb people from different countries whenever they get together; we would wander up and down the corridors from party to party, meeting people and talking and laughing and drinking. I found Peter a very easy person to be around, a good companion for a convention. His sense of humor was quietly crazy, and it was always present.

It's been six years since I last saw Peter Roberts. This year he is running for TAFF.

I just sent in my ballot.

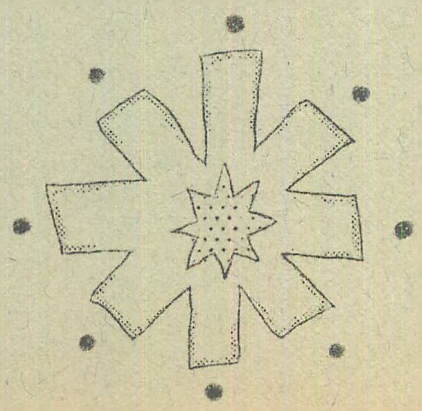
'Nother Travelin' Fan: As I write this, the ballots for this year's DUFF race have not yet come out; the nominations have not closed.

hitchhike--xx and last page

So I won't say anything about the other possible candidates. Both of the two people who I've heard are also running are fine folks, and either of them would make a good candidate. But even so, the choice is obvious. This year, Bill Rotsler is running for DUFF.

Rotsler is an artist. He condenses thirty years of experience and talent into a few lines of apparently-effortless cartoon, and the results must grace fully half of the fanzines published. If you recall the columns that Ted White and I published a few years ago in EGO-BOO, and you read Rotsler's recent published fiction, you'll realize what an entertaining trip report he would turn out. And if you've spent an hour or two in his company at a convention, you'll also realize what a warm presence he would bring to Australia's wintry national convention next year.

Coda: This issue has been typed mostly on Susan Wood's IBM Selectric with the funny Québecois keyboard; it is being finished up on the Selectric at a Temporary Place of Employment, in a slack moment. ("Tighten up, moment!") Thanks are due to Frank Denton for stencil procurement and for the use of his mimeography machine in running this off, and to Loren MacGregor for attempted stencil procurement (not a crime in most states and provinces). The illustrations all come from the wonderful kipple file of Paul Novitski, just like last issue, and the electrostenciling is also courtesy of him. Headings are hand-stenciled with no artificial additives by me. This is *still* Quand Même Publication 98, even though twenty pages have passed. This final stencil is being cut on December 9, 1976. Ha!



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