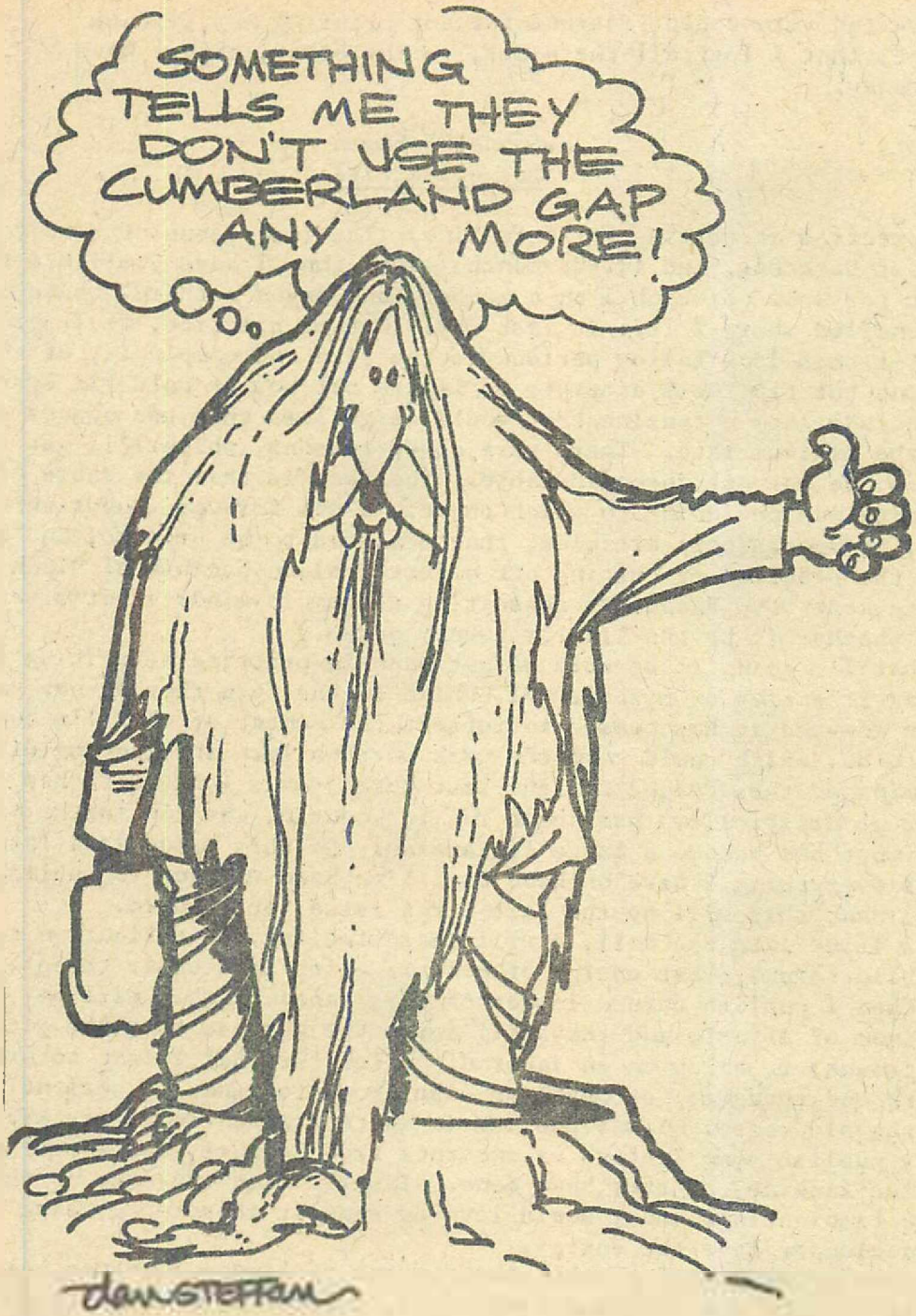
SOMETHING TELLS ME THEY DON'T USE THE CUMBERLAND GAP ANY MORE!
dan STEFFAN

Ritch-
Rike

Sir, I have two very cogent reasons for not printing any list of subscribers; one, that I lost all the names, -- the other, that I have spent all the money.

--Samuel Johnson
Boswell's Life

I feel out of practice at writing for a fanzine. The last issue of this journal was completed last December, and in the months since then I have published two short fanzines, both for apas of which I am a member, and begun a third, which is languishing half-stenciled where I left it last May. Out of practice, as I said. Part of the reason for this long fallow period was the size and complexity of this issue, and my frequent but fruitless attempts to figure out how I could fit everything I wanted to include into a fanzine that would weigh less than two ounces and so be mailable for the minimum rate. There were other reasons, which I'll get to in a minute, but this one was not inconsiderable. The fact is that the chore of publishing this fanzine was beginning to weigh on me. I was forever inundated with exceptional letters, and occasional articles, that demanded to be printed, and I have always scorned the practice of cutting off a lettercolumn because of "lack of space." (I have long kept Boyd Raeburn's fanediting dictum in mind: if it's worth printing, print it, whether it be one line or twenty pages.)

The only way that I'm going to be able to get back in practice at writing for fanzines is by making it easier on myself. HITCHHIKE in the form that it now has is too much work for me--and it has ceased to reflect the center of what I'm engaged in and what I want to do, which would make the work worthwhile. The running discussion that has dominated these pages for the last three years (and which has increased their number so drastically) has about run its course, and I'm loathe to continue publishing what has become a large letterzine. So this issue is a large one, and it includes everything I have on hand that I've been wanting to publish (other than artwork); and this will be the last large issue for a while.

Once I get this issue into the mail, I will cease feeling the obligation to make HITCHHIKE a public forum. That energy of mine is going into other things, in other directions. When I publish future issues of this fanzine, they will be short, taking a minimum of effort, and they will serve the purpose that has gotten obscured in recent issues: to allow me an informal outlet for what I want to write about my present life and thoughts, or whatever else comes to mind. A personal journal, again, in the old sense. I may publish it quite frequently; I may hardly do it at all. I may publish some letters or excerpts from letters, but I will not let them take over the fanzine, as they have done. I still find the sort of thing I've been doing here fascinating, and I would love to read it if somebody else would do it, but I no longer have the energy.

Where is my energy going, then? Within the context of fandom, one may become "an old fan and tired" at the age of twenty-seven--or, indeed, much younger, in the accelerated time scale of the microcosm--but it should hardly be that my energy really is at a low ebb. And it's not. (It feels a bit so on this grey Seattle day, but that's only local weather.)

I've been engaging in such unnatural acts as Writing For Pay, and, much more common and within the experience of the average reader of this fanzine, Attempted Writing For Pay. I've done this off and on for several years, now, but it seems that whatever connection within my head was failing to be made for so long has

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finally clicked (the sound was clearly audible) and I've been spending a good deal of small change lately on manuscript postage. (No, I don't write science fiction. Perhaps, someday.) I'be been digging out old manuscripts, dusting them off, looking at them afresh, and in a few cases deciding that they are worth trying again with. I have also been applying myself to the typewriter--despite my many and varied means of avoiding it, which I practice constantly--and turning out pieces of writing. They're generally magazine articles and personal journalism. It's slow work. I've had articles published in two newspapers, one of which paid. I have, most recently, sold an article to the People's Almanac (second edition), and as I type this I'm waiting to hear on another one. I have been wrestling with the problem of how to put together a book along the lines of the discussion in HITCHHIKE. I have collected an extremely varied set of rejection slips and letters. It sometimes feels as if I'm not really doing much, but when I look back on this year I realize that indeed I have.

The best of the many other reasons why I haven't been publishing this fanzine is intertwined with the first. Since last winter, I've been engaged in the effort to start a new magazine. Loren MacGregor and I found that there was no publication that spoke intelligently about books in the Northwest, so we decided to publish it ourselves. We acquired two more partners, Skip Berger and John Kennell, and a number of lessons in hubris and what it really takes to start a magazine, and as I write, we are on the verge of publishing the pilot issue of the PACIFIC NORTHWEST REVIEW OF BOOKS. We intend it to be a general book review magazine, written from a Pacific Northwest perspective but not limited to Northwest books or authors, and if our plans work out, the pilot issue goes over well, and we get the money to go on, we intend to be publishing a monthly regional magazine by this winter. (Wish us luck!) It may be evident to you why I have less energy to put into editing HITCHHIKE as a discussion forum than I used to have.

In addition to the writing and publishing projects, I've also participated in, and during the spring helped to facilitate, an Experimental College class on Ernest Callenbach's Ecotopia, with all the activities and friendships attendant on that. Ecotopia is a utopian novel about a future society in what is now the northwestern United States, if this part of the country broke off and formed its own nation along ecological principles, creating, or attempting to create, a stable-state society. (The book is due out in a mass market paperback edition this fall, from Bantam, I believe.) The book is good but hardly great literature (it has some interesting parallels to The Dispossessed, but it's much less of a novel), but it has served as a focus for most of the energies you might vaguely lump together as "alternative" in the Pacific Northwest. Callenbach's book puts together a lot of diverse strands that belong together, but often get spoken of separately, and he shows how they are really parts of one overall vision of society. At any rate, the class has served as a way to meet a lot of interesting people (what better function could it serve?), and it has led me, by devious routes, into such activities as going to the Northwest alternative community's equivalent of a worldcon, The Equinox Gathering, down on the Sandy River near Portland last spring. I've been busy.

Add to this the uncertainties and frustrations of living marginally and not always being on the right side of the margin, and a certain amount of personal upheavel and reappraisal, and you get some sort of picture of my life since you last heard from me in print. You may even get an inkling of my life in the months to come--probably as clear a one as I have myself, or perhaps clearer. (If the latter, please tell me!) This has been an active period of my life, but not an easy one.

All this could be taken as a very elaborate sort of "Why This Issue Is Late," but I won't take it that way because I hate people who write such things; or it might be considered as the latest, somewhat sketchy chapter of the continuing story of my life and times. If you should turn the following pages and find all manner of odd folk standing by the side of the road with their thumbs out and the air of having something interesting to say, why, pick them up....

LANDSPACE, LANDSCAPES, AND PATISSERIES

BY DOUG BARBOUR

What is to follow will seem, & probably be, at time unfocused (to say the least), perhaps even chaotic. Is it a loc? Or something more. It is, allusively, an attempt to respond both to the last issue of HITCHHIKE & to the many changes even a short journey outside my known space brought about. I have been meaning to write you about this for some months now, but time, the many things I've had to do, there has been so much interference. Yet I've been thinking about it, thinking it thru, & I hope this will not come too late to be of some use in the continuing discussion HITCHHIKE centres.

To set the scene for what follows: this summer past, Sharon & I travelled overseas for the first time in our lives. We spent a month in Britain & France, most specifically in London & Paris (& that fact brings many ideas to birth & to bear upon the various comments in HITCHHIKE 26 in some of the notes to follow), with a few days in the middle of Scotland, touring the landscape there. We were very lucky, because Stephen & Maureen Scobie had been living in Paris for the year, & were able to guide us about that city; as well, Stephen took us about Scotland, his original home. Thus we were privileged to have guides for our eyes as we lookt about us. The diary notes in what follows, then, are notes of sightings, of what I saw, looking as best & as hard as I could. I am not going to give you the dates or all the things we did. But I hope that these notes will resonate, will allow you, the reader, to make your own connections between some of the things I say, & the continuing search for articulation this zine makes possible.

(1)

In a way, my procrastination has paid off for me, for, although I have been thinking about & thru this piece for some weeks now, I just had not been able to find a sufficient amount of time free to sit down & type it out. Well, here it is, Saturday morning, & I'm taking the time, but last night I attended the opening of a show at the Edmonton Art Gallery that proved more than just awesome & wonderful to see; it has given me a means of entry to my journey. Norman Yates is an Alberta-born artist, &, surprisingly (since he has had many exhibitions in Canada, Britain, the USA & Germany), he is still almost unknown (he has never been mentioned in any Canadian art history). He should be known, for he's a master in his own right, & the paintings I lookt at last night were extraordinarily powerful evocations of the space we live in here in the Canadian west, a space unique, & the space from which I travelld this summer. I could spend a number of pages trying to articulate for you what he has accomplisht in these new canvases & what I saw in them, but that isn't my purpose here. Let me quote, however, his personal statement in the exhibition catalogue: "Landscape into Landspace":

> In the development of my ideas and work over the past few years, the landscape has become a landspace. The landscape tradition has been described as a prospect of inland scenery, such as can be taken in at a glance from one point of view. My experience on the land gives me more

> of a notion of space, that is a vision of an expanse of country combined with a feeling of continuous and unbounded extension in every direction --landspace.
>
> My current work consists of multiple space drawings and paintings extending from my experience of space in the actual natural environment. My attempts to express retroactively my idea of space while in the confines of an urban studio have been replaced by a process of amalgamating directly the experience of the landspace with the action of painting on large canvases. My land-studio, 160 acres of trees and fields located 60 miles west of Edmonton, works well for my purpose.
>
> I have a conviction that the history and development of the prairies is integral with a love for the land. We discard that love and we lose our soul. My drawings and paintings are based on the landspace and the people I find there.
>
> --Norman Yates, 1976

& who said painters are inarticulate with words? Yates has said a great deal for me in this statement. His drawings & paintings say more, of course, & say it with a sweep of colour & light that is sometimes nearly blinding. But I know that light & that colour. This fall, as the snow has stayd away, & the days have grown shorter, & the sun travelld across the sky at ever lower levels (it's 10 in the morning, & it hangs in the south, just topping the roofs across the street, & burns into my eyes thru the front windows of our house, the western sky I love has demanded my attention: it is always there, & always larger than you think possible, till you lift up your eyes once more, & cannot take it in. I admit I seem to be getting off topic here, but this is important. Yates's paintings do contain people as well as space, but the people are usually dwarft by the space. That is the Canadian prairie fact (possibly the North American fact, but it's starkly clear on the plains that lead slowly up, to, the mountains). & I have always known this, have indeed discusst the growth of Canadian literature in terms of native-born writers slowly coming to a personal confrontation with the land they could see personally & then articulate in a new metaphorical language that had to be born here because the European equivalent didn't exist. I knew that, but I didn't know it. Until this summer & the journey into Scotland. Landspace, not landscape. Yes, that is how to say it, how to see it, clear. I gazed, rapt, at so many glorious landscapes in the art galleries of London & Paris, but they too only expresst what I had already discovered in Scotland: that the European landmass is humanized in a way the Canadian landmass has not yet been. It is landscape, as Yates defines it; here it's landspace, & we had to discover the vocabulary to speak it, once we had seen it. I try to in my poems; Yates does it in his drawings & paintings, & many others are working together to accomplish this statement, too.

(2)

Scotland, as noted down quickly in passing thru. The diary begins. I cannot keep adding comments, but I hope that the juxtaposition of entries, plus the implied juxtaposition of these entries to Part 1 & to the various comments made & alluded to in past issues of this magazine, will make their own commentary.

June 1: I sit here early in the morning in Mrs. Scobie's front room, looking out over Crieff & the hills beyond. Almost preternaturally green in shades of light & dark. I feel I know Middle-earth better for having seen this country the hobbits & the rest of the fellowship would have been at home in. You would walk thru these vales & hills & woods as they did theirs, seeing lochs, the rivers always turning into gentle rapids, the little rills running down the sides of high hills. The trees are really no different here I am sure, but they stake their claim to parts of the land differently. Their presence is at once familiar & proper to the way we see. Maybe it's the perspective (& the size?!), but I think it's

also likely the fact of human habitation for so long. It is beautiful for sure, & there are all the patterns, roads etc., which both humanize it &, in some strange manner, render it all a work of art(ifice) (not quite perhaps--but the homes, roads, churches, etc., articulate the whole as at least within (if not under) human control). I like it. Yesterday, while driving over the hills, passing field after field of sheep, & all the 'dry stane dykes'--often stretching up & over hills, crisscrossing all over the place (men built these 3 feet high lines of stone & they geometrize the land, divide it into pieces we know are ours) (not like looking over the foothills to the Rockies where it's all just huge, & empty mostly)--I fell in love with this countryside. The trees are old, & the trunks are thick & twisted. As Sharon noticed--at least at this time of year--the leaves still reveal the trunks' & branches' articulations as we don't seem to notice trees in Canada doing. We were seeing the lines of the basic tree more clearly even tho the leaves were there.

June 2: Yesterday Stephen, as he put it, gave us a tour of his soul, & we travelld the map of his early poetic development: St. Andrews & Cambee. Fascinating. St. Andrews is a city & college drencht with history. Learning (from 1431 yet!) hung in the very air. We enterd the library & Sharon turnd to me, saying, just before I did, 'It smells like books!' Sharon loved the pier, where the students take a weekly walk after Sunday morning service, stretching out into the North Sea washing far below & up against the castle.

Today we went to Edinburgh & Stonypath (home of concrete poet, Ian Hamilton Finlay, who also deserves a long essay to himself, for he is a major, yet largely unknown, artist. One of the things he has been doing over the past few years is turning his farm into a huge poetry collection; he is slowly 'writing' the landscape of the farm into a marvelous anthology of his own work. I took many photographs that day; more could be taken. I loved the place. I can't possibly explain him here). More lousy generalizations: why England/Scotland seems more human-controlld: looking down into valleys or across at the sides of hills & seeing the copses, small woods--the edges are sharply defined, curves or straight lines (I've seen a few squares, even a diamond, & some other, odder, but nevertheless made shapes). These woods, some of them, may be quite old, but they are there by man's will (yes, I know that, on the prairies, most groves of trees are also planted, but they are also small within the space, as these woods are not--these woods of Scotland fit in--&, as well, where they do take root, the woods of Canada soon burst the bonds of man's design, or at least, so I still see them). Also, tho Ontario & the Maritimes are rolling countryside like Scotland, here everything is contextualized by the markt fields & woods, the many stone fences or dry stane dykes, the roads, the carefully ordered fields, etc.: all this too is part of the humanization of nature. Man is (alright, perhaps only barely, but I feel it) in control here; in the Rockies, in Canada, nature is in control (the sublime: because you know you are overpowered). So: the scale here is human, especially insofar as the natural is 'under control'; & meanwhile, up hill & down dale (I understand the phrase perfectly now) you are always being given new (yet ordered by their comprehensible, human, size) perspectives. & the woods, the variety of trees, are splendid & beautiful; also the many small streams, especially on the hills where they make small, almost petite, falls.

(Yes, the scale: to try & put this into terms we can all appreciate, this: we drove most of the day each day we went on tour in Scotland, yet we covered only 200 or so miles, often less. We used to have a friend from Germany who would go fishing in the mountains on weekends. His relatives back home found it difficult to comprehend that he would willingly travel a distance that covered at least a couple of countries in Europe just to go fishing, &, of course, on our thruways, as opposed to the lovely, narrow, winding roads of Scotland, he covered the 450 miles in an afternoon--that's landspace, not landscape. Of course, we have put our lines down across it, but what fascinates me as I drive thru, is that if, say, you drive over a bridge across a river, you know looking down the cut of the water

that around the bend down there is country that few, perhaps very few eyes have seen. Certainly it has not been seen sufficiently to be under human imaginative control. The Scottish landscape is under such control; it is beautiful, it is lovely, but it is also essentially safe for the mind as the landspace here is not.)

I shall, shall I? try to say something about Finlay's farm, tho I am still attempting to sort & discover my responses to it (I'm saying that in November). So here's the first take, from a few days later:

Stonypath has a small gallery of Finlay's works, but it also is a gallery, as also a collection. & it is beautiful even if you don't, & won't, accept what he does as poetry. I think I do. In referring to a visit from Kathleen Raine, he allowd as how she hand't understood his 'poems,' but that with her background she couldn't be expected to, really, & after all she had enjoyd the garden as garden. Stephen (who is a sutdent of Finlay's aesthetic) was remarking on his basic interest in the metaphorical/metaphysical interaction of the four classic elements in his poems, & that the ecological aspects of many of the 'poems' in the garden emphasize the metaphorical metamorphosis of element into element. There are also the rich puns (which--'aiether/or' (in blue/gold)--often play with that elemental metamorphosis). & the allusions: at one point on the path to one of the ponds a little sign says (to us looking over it at the landscape): 'see Poussin / hear Lorraine,' which is both fun in itself & a comment on artistic qualities Finlay perceives as differentiating these 2 18th century landscape painters. Stephen just commented on a remark of Finlay's on minimal art: 'as the quantity of choice decreases, the quality of choice increases.' Every smallest detail carries a great weight of meaning in other words. I added (& add) that Finlay may be a minimalist, but (at least with the poems of Stonypath) he is so in a maximalist setting, & that contextualization counts. Again, a landscape is as maximalist a setting as he could work in (I say this now) & he could not create his Stonypath collection on a prairie homestead in landspace. But in the comfortable rolling hills & vales south of Edinburgh, he can, he does, & it is a vastly satisfying work of art he has created there.

June 4: Overnight from Scotland to London, & across the channel to Paris. So many changes, so much change. France, what I saw of it thru a train window, is like Britain in being humanized landscape (& from this I now say the contrast is Europe/America). I suspect that if I tried to generalize about the differences I would reveal what an illiterate in these things I am. So I will generalize only America/Europe dichotomies, because they show up immediately. Like, this morning, on the train to Dover, & for that matter this afternoon, on the train to Paris, I noticed how many large fields lookt like lawns. Now, that's a humanized landscape.

(3)

Cities: London & Paris. The problem is I have taken so long on just the first 5 days of a month-long trip. & what I am trying to articulate here is not 'all we did on our vacation' but something concrete that I learnd about new places by being & seeing there. So what follows is not going to be the history of our trip, but a culling of diary entries that seem to bear upon the ideas being discusst in HITCHHIKE. How they all fit into this continuing discussion will not always be immediately clear. But I call upon ol' Ez & the whole concept of juxtaposition, & beg your indulgences. For these two are the cities, or two of them. There are a few others, but even in decline, these two represent the concept city as well as any place could. &, because they are so ancient, have been built, have almost grown, around centuries of human endeavour, they comment, by their very presence, on both the cities built more recently to plans, & on the plans being made right now for cities which will mathematically, so to speak, do the right thing. Is there a right thing for cities to do? Without my ever thinking about it, I now can say that my random jottings during that trip do comment idiosyncratically upon the ideas being batted about herein during the last few issues & even on that book

notes from a journey--v

I recommended to John but have not read myself, Jane Jacobs's The Death and Life of the Great American City. So: a few notes from the journey thru the cities.

I suppose I should at least provide the temporal context for the scatterd remarks which follow, however, so here goes: after two days in London (during which we walkt all around the central 'City of London' with Bill Beard, another friend who had studied at U. London a few years previously, & saw 'The Marriage of Figaro' at Covent Garden) & 3½ days in Scotland, we hurried across to Paris, where we spent two weeks taking in all we could manage of what that city offers travellers & residents; after which we returnd to London for a week, in which we tried unsuccessfully (as in Paris) to do the same. One lesson for the virgin traveller, so to speak. Once initiated, you're done for. We can't wait to get back. Tho I am a Canadian nationalist, & believe I have much more to see in & learn about my own country, I know I have to return to Europe, to those great cities & others. Anyway, what follows, flows out of this first encounter. But I'm not going to bother with dates, & I can't even start to talk about all we saw & experienced Those readers who get AMOR will have read about the Rolling Stones show our first full night in Paris. The next night we saw Leonard Cohen with a fulltilt rock band & sounding better than ever. We also saw 'Cosi Fan Tutte,' another Mozart opera, another fantastic evening at the opera, at l'Opéra in Paris. & films, films, films, in both Paris & London. & a couple of plays. But that's not what I'm going to talk about here. I don't want to go on for ever, or even for too many more single-spaced pages. The reflection of/on cities will not be as lengthy as those on landscape versus landspace. But, like the latter, they flow from a sense of profound difference. Yes, I could go to the Edmonton Art Gallery last night & see an incredible show by a local artist of real stature. But the experience of (especially for me) le Jeu de Paume & the basement of l'Orangerie, of, that is, the great work of les Impressionistes, was utter. Complete & completely new, startling & revisionary. I saw anew thru these studies in the art of perception. What the Tate & the National Gallery had to offer was also mindboggling. But this trip it's les Impressionistes who truly altered my awareness. Tho a lot of others were also having their effect. & so:

(In fact, I begin to suspect that the countryside brought out the comparative analyst in me, for as I searcht thru my diary notes on Paris & London I found a lot more disjointed commentary, & I now realize that, in many ways, my slides tell more, more succinctly, about what impresst itself upon me in the two cities than do these entries. However. Having been in Paris for two days, & walkt about the 7th Arrondissement where Stephen & Maureen lived, seen the market in operation on Saturday morning, begun to recognize a few street signs, & seen the 2 rock concerts (Why else go to Paris you might ask. Well.... We began to notice that the French are given to a kind of overstatement in their architecture. Paris is a city to live in, no doubt: there is something of everything available to everyone. But magnitude, ah, that is what they love in public monuments.)

& on Monday we went to two monumental monuments--les Invalides (Napoleon's tomb) & le Tour Eiffel--both of which we walkt to from the Scobies' residence. Les Invalides is too much, it skirts absolute silliness only by transcending it. It is so totally an example of architectural hyperbole that tho you cannot take it seriously you cannot not do so. It is fun, & I would not want to visit it again. It represents the worst aspects of the French love for gargantuism in the monuments; le Tour Eiffel represents something much finer, & it is a magnificent structure.

This morning, when Sharon & I went for a walk & came back picking up une bagette & some croissants at the corner bakery, we discovered some of the real delights of the city as a place to live: the manner of using the little shops, how it is probably not only fun but the only way to shop--daily. Meanwhile, the walk itself continually reveald new delights, as we moved roundabout, across the river & back, & yet, although we had the impression of covering a lot of space we were not tired by the effort. The main city is large & yet, somehow, also tuckt to-

gether. Partly this is simply a result of much narrower streets, & many more of them.

A typical lunch: after a morning of late walking about, we stop anywhere, like the small tabac on Ile de Cité at Pont Neuf, which has its own vineyard & therefore its own wine & some terrific countryham sandwiches. Typical, yes. & this is one of the true glories of Paris, that, no matter what price range you are interested in, the high likelihood is that you will get a good meal at that price. The chances of getting a poor meal in Paris are very low, tho it is possible (as we discovered one day to our horror).

Last night we went up to the Montmartre district to see THE BED SITTING ROOM, & with Stephen's careful instructions & a copy of PARIS PAR ARRONDISSEMENT we found the theatre (note: this is as good a place as any to tell the untravelld reader that the money spent on this book in Paris or on LONDON A TO Z in London is among the best you will spend. The cities are large & complex & these little books are invaluable, to say the very least). Afterwards, we walkt, as directed by Stephen, back via the rue Pigalle, which used to be the centre of the nightscene, & in its way still is. 'Le sex shop' is what just about every door said, also lots of live sex shows & up the side streets, tho we didn't really check, lots of whores. Because it was late & dark & the crowds were heavy, Sharon & I both felt somewhat out of place (we might have felt ok if it was light, say an hour earlier), the language barrier truly asserting itself.

This morning we walkt about the other mont, Montparnasse, the artistic arrondissement from whence so many memoirs have emanated. We walkt down montparnasse only to rue de Rennes, back up to boulevard St. Germain, along to rue de l'université, where we ate an overpriced English breakfast (note, again: the best eating, for breakfast & lunch anyway, is not on major streets, but down the many side streets, off the usual drags. The food is always cheaper there (because tourists aren't expected) & usually better). Back to rue de Belle Chasse, down to where it becomes Vaneau, along Oudinot to Rousselet. I am beginning to understand the great problem the newcomer faces in trying to find per way around Paris: everything curves! So, tho block by block you move in a straight line you may not notice that after 10 or 15 blocks you could be facing almost the direction from which you came originally. This is why, without a true sense of direction, I am not sure, in these narrow, high walld streets, where I am most of the time.

(I guess I'm going to have to not go into detail about all the museums & art galleries. The problem is simple: I was totally blown out by what I saw. I have pages upon pages on my responses to the impressionists (I shall likely come back to that as I attempt to round this series of takes off), to the incredible 'les symbolistes' exhibition at the Grand Palais, to le Musée de l'Art Moderne, & later to the National Gallery & the Tate, as well as to all the medieval craftwork & the unicorn tapestries in Cluny. There's too much to say, & even now, months later, I haven't fully assimilated it (perhaps I'll be doing that the rest of my life), nor even assimilated enough to really make a stab at articulating the nature of the response with any chance of capturing its complex totality. So, we spent a lot of time looking, & were astounded, & changed, by it. & such great museums & art galleries are another sign of a great city. Take it on faith.)

Another great lunch, followd by lots of window shopping at all the expensive shops, tongues hanging out of our mouths, pant, pant, & Stephen bought us very expensive chocolate cake slices at Fauchon's, the store with rich food from everywhere. Then to le Grand Palais for the symbolisme show--which brings home the great, real, civilized glory of a city like Paris: that such a show, gatherd from all over the world, could be there, among all the painti gs & sculpture that are always there at Jeu de Paume, the Louvre, le Musée de l'Art Moderne, & the other smaller musées. Too much, &, of course, just enough.

After another noon movie, we went to the Luxembourg Gardens, wanderd about & then off to a superb, & relatively inexpensive dinner, considering, at Le Pot d'Etain, where both food & ambience were superior. We walkt home, looking in at

more windows & stopping to watch a young acrobat perform on a ladder which he kept balanced by his body. Just another summer evening on a streetcorner in Paris, the city with everything.

Of course we explored Notre Dame, & finally, after always finding it closed when we came by, we got in to see the Cathedral Sainte Chappelle, the almost all-window gothic cathedral. An incredible engineering feat still, & utterly breath-taking in the almost transcendent beauty of the staindglass windows. A British teacher was talking to some students & telling them how Liverpool Cathedral has been under construction now for over 50 years, while Sainte Chappelle was built in 3! Well, they cared about their god more in those days, I guess.

& so to London (in the heat which had begun in Paris & would continue this summer long after we had flown back to Edmonton). After having had so much use of our carte orange using the Paris underground & buses, we bought a week's card for London. In both cities, I believe, only fools would drive. The public transportation is super, & it works as one never believes it really does in a smaller but also so car-crazily American city like Edmonton. Again we walkt a lot, but also used the underground to get to specific points from which to walk. We were near Knightsbridge & we did see, at least from the outside, most of the tourist musts. A typical ramble: up Cromwell Road to Knightsbridge, stopping off in Beauchamp Place to look in shop windows & eat a hamburger at The Great American Disaster, & then on to Hyde Park corner & down to the National Gallery.

We spent more time in the large stores in London (of course with the pound/dollar ratio last summer we bought too). But also saw the sights in the galleries & out. London is not as safe to eat in as Paris, but if you know where to go it's great. We were lucky, for we had dinner one evening with friends of the Scobies & they told us of some good places. We ate well & yet inexpensively in London, & enjoyd the meals immensely. Especially the lunch we had at The Boot & Flogger, an ancient tavern attacht to a vintners which opend in 1750. This was in the old town, near London Bridge, & the clientele were mostly businessmen & government people. The 'boot' & the 'flogger' by the way are implements used in opening wine casks. After the wine & food we lookt at the Tower of London & went to St. Paul's Cathedral, where we both lookt at the crypt & climbd up to the first gallery & I climbd (pant, puff) all the way up to the outside one, where you get a great view of London, but it ain't what it used to be, even tho I've only seen what it used to be in pictures (as recent as, say, 1965, even): lots of glitter & glass, but it hasn't the same savour. In the centre of London that flavour remains, carefully kept I suspect. & a long leisurely walk thru St. James' Park, with its vistas of fountains & trees, up by Buckingham Palace & thru Green Park to Hyde Park corner allows us to revel in that London, past & present, which has so long existed for us in books & film. & which, like a book, we finally had to put aside, to come back to the real world: Edmonton & home. Not a bad place, either, & necessary, after the highs of the journey. You have to get your feet back on the ground sometime. After all.

(4)

I promised a return, a rounding off, so to speak, & that's where I'm heading here. Via the glories of the great impressionistes--which made such an impression on me I don't know if I'll ever fully recover, but then I don't want to. They workt, often, Monet & Cezanne, the two I want to talk about most, with landscapes in some of their greatest works. At Jeu de Paume one can see how they took certain techniques & pusht them as far in different directions as they could go before becoming something else. (In what follows, I, an artistic illiterate I suspect, am picking up clues scatterd by my good friend Stephen Scobie, who spent the last year studying the art of the early twentieth century & its progenitors, & expressing them as I can with my own thoughts on what this painting means to me as viewer.) The something else was cubism, which owed much to Cezanne's work. There is a mar-

velous painting in Jeu de Paume of a stream with a bridge over it which, as well as any, shows where Cezanne was heading. The landscape is seen clearly, yet there is a sense of geometricizing of it which, lookt at with the hindsight provided by cubist painting, obviously is moving towards a vision that must eventually express itself in cubism. It's a lyric celebration of what's there, as seen by a visionary eye. Monet moved in a different direction, & nothing like cubism resulted. Nothing more, perhaps, than his own masterpieces of old age. Monet taught perception of the light. The light of the world, he might have said, & he would have been correct. & for him a landscape, as small a landscape as his own small pond with its lilies, was enough. After being awed by the various paintings in Jeu de Paume, & realizing both how seeing them had truly changed my sense of what can be seen & that no reproduction, no matter how good, had come close to allowing me to see what the actual painting did, I enterd the basement of l'Orangerie. I thought I had been prepared: I had not. There are eight panels, each one far larger than even the largest of Yates's 'landspaces,' & they are studies of that small pond at different times of day, therefore under different conditions of light. For me, les Numpheas teaches me the real meaning of the term masterpiece. 80 years of living & almost as many of craft & study are summd up &, possibly, transcended in these huge, heartbreakingly beautiful avatars of impressionism. For surely these paintings are the perfection of impressionism, delicately balanced at the very edge of abstractionism, full of the living light of Earth Imperatrice, full of the rhythms of Eros, full of transcendental joy. They are more, beyond, yet fully, complexly, paintedly, there--a presence which compels vision. I sat, or walkt about, for 3 hours or so, spellbound. Every shift of viewpoint was a shift of vision. The incredible control of the paint, the oils, is only utter. Each stroke counts, & up close you can find the most incredible daubs of every colour contributing to a tree trunk, or light on the water, or a lily. To think of that 80-year-old man slowly making these! 'That he could make them so perfect! Stephen suggests they are (almost) abstract, at least parts of them. But it's not that simple. The abstract expressionists could plant paint with the best of them, on huge canvases too, & could at least talk of working with organic rhythms, etc., but I would give all their work for one of these panels. Is it simply genius then? That's an argument, for Monet was a great artist at the very pinnacle of his craft, but that's not the whole story. &, after all, he is creating an impressionist painting. The lilies, the leaves, the water, the light, are on the flat surface of the canvas as analogues of the lebenswelt; for what he is painting is the world he lived, as well as the world he lived in. The craft of 80 years plus the vision of 80 years plus the knowledge of the world as lit by grace plus what intangibles all coexist in these paintings. I know little of painting, but walking alongside these panels, my eyes less than a foot from their surfaces, I can see their multiplex construction, how they are in-formd with all that Monet's considerable technique could command of the very structures of light & shadow & colour. Standing or sitting back I saw the pond & the garden &, most of all, I saw the light, changing within a painting let alone from one to the next, but always alive, there, on the canvas before my eyes. Les Nympheas are truly great works of art/& worship of 'earth, you nearest.'

And it would be wrong of me to compare Norman Yates's work with them. Not to compare then but to see them both, & see that Yates is doing a similar &, to us here, important articulation of his surround. Monet was working in Paris, & out of a tradition of civilization that stretcht back for centuries. &, in that little landscape which was a microcosm of the larger landscape that is civilized Europe, he teaches us lessons in perception that will never date. In a new, rawer, landspace, Yates attempts a similar feat &, in so far as he accomplishes it, teaches me how to perceive a different light, tho still the light of the world, here. To be able to reach these lessons you have to come to a city, Edmonton or Paris. Paris has more, much more to offer the civilized citydweller than Edmonton, but Edmonton is my home (& am I that civilized?). So I am glad we have the galleries we do have, & the pitifully few really good restaurants. & hope we will get more.

& that we shall also learn the lessons of Los Angeles & San Francisco (as well as London & Paris), & build more like San Francisco--that most European of American cities--than Los Angeles--that parking lot with rooms.

(5)

& I see that without meaning to I have become confusing, bringing a comment upon cities into my peroration about Monet. Well, I shall hope that all this has somehow held together, & that such juxtapositions aren't too janglingly jagged. I have, finally, not said too much about how I felt those two great cities workt, so well. Yet, I look at that list of chapter headings from Jane Jacobs, & I see positive answers in Paris & London. They are cities where people feel at home, & visitors too, walking the late night streets & gazing into shop windows, stopping in some small tabac for a snack & some wine. There is a physical generosity to these cities, & the human spirit can breathe there if it wishes. To say more would be to falsify thru generalization even more than I may already have done. I was there such a short time, & I had money enough & to spare. But I gaind so much even in such a short time. That in itself is something. Is much. & I have come back with a sense of my own desire, nay need, to return for the succour those places can offer. That another form of necessary succour is here, in the land-space where I was born, cannot be denied; my poetry bespeaks this fact over & over again. In balance, joy & the necessary breathing/space. In remembering, much of both as well. Bp nichol, one of the finest young Canadian poets & a close friend, titled his first book, JOURNEYING & THE RETURNS. In that pun my sense of what last summer gave. Was the trip worth it? Yes, & yes again.

--douglas barbour
21.11.76

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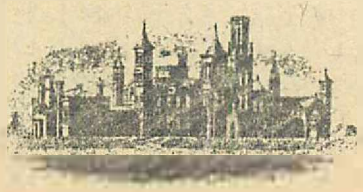
> The usual literature of the West is concerned with the period of exploitation and expansion west of the tree line. This is what we mean when we talk about the "epic" or "heroic" period of the West. A period of rapid expansion, first-phase exploitation. It is not a literature of place. It's a history and a literature of feats of strength, and of human events; of specifically white, English-speaking American human events. It's only about this place by accident. The place only comes into it as a matter of inhospitable and unfamiliar terrain; Anglos from temperate climates suddenly confronted with vast, treeless, arid spaces. Space and aridity; confronting that and living with it is a key theme in Western literature, but only incidentally. It could just as well be an Icelandic saga or a heroic epic of Indo-European people spreading with their cattle and wagons into any other unfamiliar and new territory as they did in 1500 B.C. when they moved down into the Ganges River Basin or into Greece.
>
> --Gary Snyder
> The Old Ways



THE NEXT FIVE YEARS...

How wretched and agonizing and lonely these past half-dozen years have been, particularly for those of us who remember the high promise of the Sixties' counter-culture.

It's not just been Cambodian bombings and Kent State, Vietnam and Watergate. It's not just been the economic roller-coaster ride. It's not just been the sickness of Nixon and the stupidity and failed leadership of Ford. It's not just been good old innocent idealistic America acting as the bully-boy of the world. It's not just been the exposure of the cheap cynical corruption of the men and institutions we were given to respect as children.

All that's Them--and we rejected Them 'way back in the Sixties. They've just been proving that everything we thought about Them was true.

No, the really hurtful part has been Us.

Our clothes, our music, our art, our drugs have been co-opted, merchandised, trivialized, taken away from us and made into nothing. The singers and writers and artists we loved ten years ago have fallen silent, or sold out, or committed suicide. Burnt-out cases. The bullhorn voices who cried to lead us in the Sixties have sunk back into anonymity. We've been left without positive example in a negative time. And so many of us haven't borne the burden well. Friends have forgotten how to be friends. Lovers have found it impossible to live together and support each other's best nature.

It's almost as though Altamont, in the last month of the Sixties, set a psychic tone for the years that have followed, and we've been living in some film-loop nightmare world in which Hell's Angels club all innocence to the ground again and again and again, while all that we could do is watch helplessly, mouths open, with no conviction that this endless bummer would ever grind itself to a conclusion and enough would be enough.

In times like these, caught in the eternal unpleasantness of the moment as we have been, what hope can we have for the America of five years from now? What possible reason can we have for thinking that it won't be just more of the same, only worse?

Well, there is this. Present actualities may hold their own immediate conviction, but no moment lasts forever, however overwhelming it may seem at the time. Moreover, that which is publicly visible in society at any one time is only that which is noisy and noticeable. It may not be the true whole.

Five years from now could be immensely different in character from this agonizing present we've all been suffering for so long. Not only could be, but will be.

What is our best hope for the America of five years from now? It's this (and we wouldn't offer it if we didn't believe in our heart-of-hearts that it will be the truth):

In the Sixties, a visionary generation perceived the moral bankruptcy of American society and spoke and demonstrated against it, buoyed by the discovery that what each of us had taken to be his own individual secret conviction was in fact the common property of all those under thirty. But, in time, we also came to perceive that conviction and assertion were not enough, that it was necessary for us to learn how to live our alternative vision and bring it into actuality. At the end of the Sixties, the generation dispersed itself. It retired. It moved to the country. It went off to the woodshed to get its licks together.

The kind of fundamental self-evolution we've all been engaged in doesn't actualize and fulfill itself overnight. It takes time and work. Much time. Much

work. And neither is it anything that can be performed en masse, in the full glaring light of public scrutiny. Following a vision inward is private work, pursued by individuals experimenting alone in their alchemical laboratories. Each of us teaching himself.

Some of us have given up. Some of us have failed. Some of us have fallen. But not all. By no means all.

In the midst of public chaos, in this time of creative silence, working in our individual isolation for our own hypothetical goals, it has been possible for each of us to wonder if we stand totally alone. We don't. We are still the visionaries that we were in the Sixties--but now we have become older, more mature, more self-realized beings.

In our absence, the hollow men and empty institutions that we railed against so vainly in the Sixties have done us the favor of destroying themselves. Now, one by one--not yet visibly, unless you should happen to be looking in the right corner of our society at the right moment--we children of the Sixties have begun our return, the fruits of our separate searches in hand.

As we come together in these next five years, we will find to our surprise and delight that the individual pieces we bring, seemingly separate, fit together to form a new and radically different picture. The pieces will fit together because the vision that underlies the very private and individual efforts of these past half-dozen difficult years is a vision common to us all. We are pieces of a whole, and vast synergetic energy will be released by our coming together.

The re-emergence of Bob Dylan from self-exile is one sign of these new and fruitful times. So is the appearance of a new magazine like MOTHER JONES, which never could have existed in the Sixties. So is the unheralded arrival of a presidential candidate who quotes Dylan, wears an Allman Bros. T-shirt and blue jeans, and speaks of healing wounds and actualizing our ideals rather than making vain backward-looking programmatic promises of the kind that experience has taught us to loathe.

But do we need signs?

What we need is for us to bring our hard-won gifts together, reinforcing each other, each of us doing his own thing, all of us forming a new ecological wholeness. New people. Earth Persons all.

Here's to the future. Here's to a new America.

--Alexei and Cory Panshin

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> How scarce we were in the '50s--a very small population who had to travel very long distances to find one another. San Francisco, New York, Denver, a few places, were the only places where we could meet--not the universities, as they are now. Having a habitat--a place where you could fall into a warm supportive soup full of nutrients and good feelings--really was essential; it helped to keep us from going crazy, helped us to realize how to go about our work. For me, being in San Francisco-North Beach-Berkeley at that time gave me a place to work with people; maybe it saved my life. Prior to that I thought there were only two or three of us--Phil Whalen, Lew Welch, and myself--in the world. Now I look at it in a somewhat different way. There are tens, hundreds, of thousands of people who have gone through the '50s and '60s. They tend still to cluster together too much; they don't need all of that mutual support. They would serve things better by scattering out, being seeds, and letting themselves be planted where they end up. People need also to be alone, to find strength in solitude outside of those supportive group situations.
>
> --Gary Snyder
> EAST WEST JOURNAL, August, 1977

RECIPES I NEVER GOT BEYOND THE SECOND SENTENCE OF

FELICE ROLFE

A couple of days ago I ran across another recipe to add to my small collection of recipes I never got beyond the second sentence of. This collection started about fifteen years ago, when my mother gave me a "humane" cookbook. In the lobster section, under "Preparation," it said:

"Place lobster on its back on cutting board. Kill it."

The first sentence was relatively innocuous--relatively, you understand, considering a lobster's natural weapons. But the second sentence eliminated lobster from my diet, permanently.

A couple of years later the San Francisco Sunday Magazine contributed the following:

"Catch octopus by one tentacle as it swims by."

It then went on to describe a perfectly good way of cooking octopus. At least I assume it was perfectly good; the author was talking about forty- or fifty-pound octopi swimming in the Pacific Ocean, which is cold around here. As you have to jump into the one to catch the other, the recipe remains untested by your humble servant even today.

The latest was in a seafood cookbook (it's strange what us mammals are willing to do to denizens of the deep, even aside from eating them, which is bad enough if you happen to be a denizen of the deep). This recipe was in the crab section, and it started out:

"Poke crab to make sure it is still alive."

Poke crab, indeed. I didn't have to go as far as the second sentence. Crabs have these big claws, see, which I figure are there for a reason; and the reason is probably to make sure I don't poke crab for any purpose whatever.

The recipe continues,

"Cut off its eyes and face."

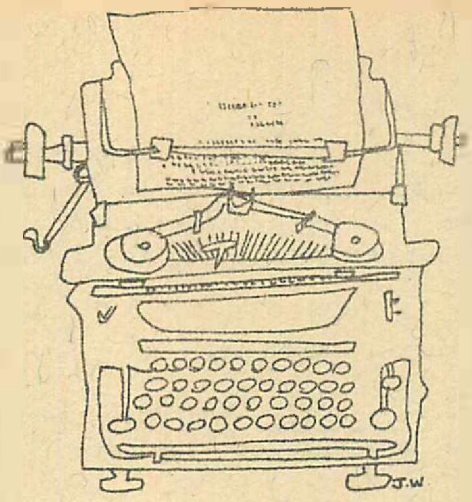
Sure!

Why on earth do they put things like that in a cookbook? Don't cookbook authors know what it does to one's appetite to read that kind of thing in fiction, let alone in a set of instructions? I can't even shell scallops because they have twenty sad blue eyes that look at me. I ain't gonna cut off no eyes and face from no crab, never mind what the crab--which I am previously to have made sure is still alive, remember--has to say about it.

On the subject of lobsters, by the way, this same ridiculous book advocates the traditional method of cooking: "Put lobster head first into boiling water" after ascertaining--by poking, naturally--that it is still alive. This book has a great weakness for poking. That is not its only weakness: it is also deficient in the imagination department. I have no trouble imagining what this lobster will be doing while I'm trying to cram it head first into boiling water. But does the book tell you what to do about the lobster's (I must say justifiable) objections? Not on your life. You would think, if you believed that book, that lobsters just love boiling water, and that a lobster's idea of heaven is to be allowed into a nice sauna or Japanese steam bath.

I tell you, some cookbooks ought to be rated X. They are Not Nice.

--Felice Rolfe



LETTERS

MOSHE FEDER: It was Jerry Kaufman who recommended I read Jane Jacobs, and Jerry must know me pretty well, because just a glance or two at pages picked at random convinced me that this was a book I'd been looking for without knowing it and I had to put everything else aside and read it right away. I read it with a growing sense of wonder, joined eventually by a sense of outrage and frustration. The sense of wonder was in response to the experience of simultaneously being told so many things that were so obviously right once you heard them (they are confirmed instinctively) and having so many ideas I'd picked up or been taught and taken for granted overturned with such ease. The outrage and frustration stemmed from the realization that these so-obviously-right ideas were still being mostly ignored and that so much being done in and to our cities (based on conventional wisdom I now recognize as nonsense) will only help to kill them. Yet there are signs of hope--take for example that study issued a couple of years ago showing that the "towers in a park" concept of "urban renewal" was failing and would continue to fail for just the reasons Jacobs discusses: because there is no sidewalk life (stores and storekeepers) to observe the street and deter crime, because the spaces between the buildings lack human scale or human use and therefore repel rather than attract people, because the world of the "projects" has no room (even if it has "community rooms"!) for a neighborhood community to develop, & the residents remain an agglomeration of strangers. Now that a new generation of sociologists and other students of city life are doing research and coming forward with statistical and other such evidence supporting ideas Jacobs developed close to two decades ago simply by walking around and really paying attention to and trying to understand what she was seeing, perhaps the people with the money and authority to apply those ideas will finally begin to pay attention.

By the way, you did a fine job capsulizing Jacobs' ideas. I especially liked your observation about Alexandria's Old Town, "The front doors...are as ordinary as any door between two rooms."

One of the things I liked best about Jacobs was her refusal to make blanket statements merely to be impressive. I don't think her warning not to apply her ideas to smaller communities is, as you say, begging the question. It is leaving the question to someone else, yes, but it is also a further application of Jacobs' vision of the city. She is saying that the planners who look for a "unified field theory" to explain all human living places are wrong; that cities must not be viewed mechanistically, as if a subject of physics. She is saying that cities are biological, or, to use a more precise but more faddish word, ecological. As you noted, she tells us that cities are organisms--ever-changing processes of complex interactions that die when a lack of diversity causes stasis to set in. In biology, every species lives in its own unique way. If you care for a guppy as if it were a horse, or vice versa, the animal you are caring for is not going to do its best (there's an understatement!) and the same applies to cities and smaller communities.

Despite what I've just said about Jacobs' not wanting us to view cities mechanistically, she doesn't mean for us to ignore the importance of the city's physical environment. As you know, she actually places a great deal of stress on it. Perhaps the best example I could give of an idea she just pushed right out of my head has to do with the subject of city streets. I felt as if she were addressing herself directly to me when she made reference to people who talk about streets in terms of "wasted space" and then showed how wrong they are. Influenced by a feeling that the streets were the domain of the car rather than the pedestrian (certainly not an unjust observation in some cities or parts of cities), and perhaps affected also by some of SF's visions of the future, I can remember a number of occasions when I thought or said something about the streets being space going to waste--but, of course, I never really thought it through. What did I think we could put there, more buildings? Jacobs' observations on streetfront/sidewalk-space being a socio-economic interface (like cell walls through which oxygen and nutrients pass, perhaps) and the importance of the availability of a variety of alternate paths to the same destination (the existence of which enlivens Manhattan's Upper East Side and the lack of which hampers the Upper West Side) provided by shorter blocks and more cross-streets are examples of her brilliant ability to make what is invisible because it is all around us and taken for granted, so vividly visible that it becomes unarguably obvious.

You ask some good questions and I have no answer for most. I've never been to Europe or China and anything I said about them would be pure speculation. Obviously, Peking and the older cities of Europe work just as well in their own ways as our cities do, and perhaps better in some cases, but I'm not in a position to say if they do this in a manner consistent with Jacobs' observations and conclusions (or some logical extension of them) or not. I will comment on what you ask about her schema's dependence on a small-capitalist economy by reminding you of what she says about the importance and effectiveness of pure diversity--even if it isn't diversity that includes small-capitalist enterprises (as it rarely is in the downtown portions of our great cities). In the densest downtown parts of the largest cities, where (despite Jacobs' ideals and a relatively recent trend apparent here in New York) few if any people live and the kind of small business and sidewalk life Jacobs describes is rare, the key to viability is diversity of the type that will keep large numbers of people pasing through the streets throughout the day. Problems arise when many large institutions cluster together and leave too little room for anything or anybody else (and we'll probably never succeed in completely eliminating large institutions, despite the rightness of what Schumacher has to say--but that's another mind-changing book and another discussion), and Jacobs has already used the example I would choose, that of NY's financial district. I'm not going to repeat her convincing arguments here, but instead direct the reader to go to her book for her discussion of this and, in a less specific way, of the dynamics of downtown business districts (she uses the examples of banks and shoe stores, if I remember correctly) and how they are spoiled when diversity is reduced. I would, however, like to cite an example of how well diversity can work that has come into existence since Jane Jacobs wrote her book. Since that time, the portion of Manhattan's Third Avenue from the 50s to the 70s has seen a simultaneous influx of movie theatres, bars, restaurants, shops, etc., and the construction of many new office buildings. This combination of business, service, and entertainment, supported by, but not dependent on, the old townhouses and old and new apartment buildings on sidestreets and nearby avenues, has made the area one of the most vital in the city and it teems with people all through the day and late into the night. (It's worth noting that it satisfies most of the other criteria Jacobs sets up--it has a mix of old and new buildings, for example.) The point is that while it is on a large scale and it's nothing like the neighborhood Jacobs lived in and described and used as an example, with its mix of residences and small privately-owned shops and light industry, it works in the same way and just as well.

As you may have gathered, The Death and Life of the Great American City really hit me where I live and I'm still in the process of absorbing it and applying it. In a way reminiscent of the changed way I perceived my city surroundings after I took an architecture course, reading that book has made every walk through the streets here richer, and it will be a long time before I stop admiring the "illustrations" of Jacobs' book.

Now if I could just figure out an occupation that combines my interests in cities, language and its origins, literature, graphic media....

I've never done much traveling, but I think I agree with what you say about tourists. Doesn't it all come down to viewing the people of a country you're visiting as just another part of the landscape? No one who tries to remember and appreciate the position of those people as the individuals who will still be there long after you're gone, as the people rightfully there watching all these strangers passing in and out of their lives, with the same dignity you try to muster when visitors come to your own city, can ever be a "tourist" in your pejorative sense. As I've recently said in Apa-Q, it's all too easy (because we can only hear our own thoughts) to forget that other people are just as real and human as ourselves. It's all too easy to think about them or treat them not as people but as objects, not as sentient entities with free will and minds all abuzz with thoughts we can never know, but as automatic, mobile mannequins. I catch myself doing it on the subway sometimes (when I forget that everyone else is just as hot and crushed by the crowd as I am, when only my own discomfort is real and matters), and for tourists, who usually can't understand the language the natives are speaking, it is just that much easier to fall into this worldview. It takes real vigilance to avoid this attitude; perhaps only saints ever manage it.

Bike riding has been both my means of personal transport and my main (almost my only) athletic activity for a long time now. I have a driver's license but I don't own a car (thank Ghu, New York is one of the few places in America where you can really get along without one and not be at a serious disadvantage) and I haven't driven since I got my license (although I renewed it twice now). So, for as long as I can remember, it's been subways (or a friend's, usually Stu Shiffman's, car) for long distances and bicycle for short and medium trips. I've been all over the city by bike; explored Manhattan as Jeff Schalles did, crossed darkest Brooklyn to visit my girlfriend in Brooklyn Heights (surprising myself by just about cutting the subway travel-time in half) and even rode, via the ferry, to Staten Island. Still, the siren call of the open road, the dream of the transcontinental trek were never far from my consciousness. I have a good bike, a Peugeot, like Jeff (although my model is a rank below his and hasn't been customized as his was), and it's quite capable of making it across the country, I think, and many's the time that, with such a trip in mind, I perused the maps put out by the AYH. I thought in one grand, epic journey to find America, to find myself, to make up for my cloistered youth. Alas, it still hasn't come to pass. But how I wish sometimes that I'd given in to the temptation I felt when I learned of Jeff's plans, instead of worrying about not being in shape or finding a job. For Jeff is right, the only psychologically practical way to get in shape for such a trip is to make such a trip, suffering during the early days to earn the possibility of those later rewards. Maybe, someday....

What a fantastic, "up" of a letter from Alexei Panshin! I'm tempted to say, "inspiring." My head's not quite in the same place his is, I haven't abandoned the linear and rational yet, but I know people who have and I think I recognized the change they'd undergone even before reading Alexei's letter--but he conveys it very well. I think I understood and was aware of what he talks about as much as four years ago when I wrote the story I sold to Damon Knight for Orbit (my one poor claim to fame!), which is precisely about the two kinds of heads Alex is talking about (depicted as extremes, rather than as a good balance of the two). I wonder to what extent you are familiar with all the cultural phenomena Alex cites. Do you agree that all of them are "the first strong expressions of the new head

state"? I am another person who's had some difficulty getting into Dylan. I'm still put off much of the time because, as Alexei says, he "isn't aesthetically winning." That kind of thing makes a difference for me still, and I'm not convinced yet that it shouldn't, although at the same time I can't deny the validity of what Alexei and others say they "recognize" in his work. On the other hand, NBC's Saturday Night is something I definitely disagree about. I watch it fairly regularly and usually enjoy it. But I don't see that it represents anything new in ways of looking at the world. Isn't this the same mentality and style we've had for a few years now in The National Lampoon? And isn't that, in turn, a style that goes back to that most jundane and linear of eras, the 50s? Well, perhaps Alexei is recognizing something I don't or can't. In all events, whether we agree on the particulars or not, it's good to know that some people can still find cause for hope.

(142-34 Booth Memorial Avenue, Flushing, New York 11355)

DARROLL PARDOE: HITCHHIKE was as usual most welcome, and full of thought-hooks. Ebenezer Howard, for instance, and the Garden City idea. The British Garden Cities are quite nice to look at, mostly because they have so many trees in them, but they started a trend in town planning which has caused a lot of grief in the years since. They were designed with their physical environment in mind, without much thought of the people who would have to live in them. The example that comes to mind most readily is Hampstead Garden Suburb in London, which was laid out around a central square where the "public buildings" were concentrated --a church, a library, and municipal offices. This is presumably the sort of buildings the designers of the suburb thought would be the most important to the inhabitants. But, more important to the inhabitants though not apparently to the designers, are shops where they could buy food and anything else they needed. There were no shops on the suburb at all! Until quite recently the residents had to go right out of the area to do shopping--hampered by the fact that there was no public transport either. Things have got a bit better in recent years, but Hampstead Garden Suburb is a monument to myopic planning.

A lot of planners nowadays seem to operate on the basis that if an area is a bit run down and in need of renewal the only way to do it is to raze the lot to the ground and rebuild in new materials, first removing the inhabitants elsewhere. A large chunk of my old home town (Stourbridge) has disappeared in this way over the last ten years. Why can't any renewal that is needed proceed on the basis of repair of existing buildings, with replacement only of those that are past saving? That way the character of the area would not change radically, and the inhabitants could go on living there.

London has always fascinated me as a city, because as it expanded it engulfed a lot of villages and small towns that had had an existence of their own for as long as London itself had. The suburban tide of the 19th century swept around them and left them embedded in it. The result is that London is still more a collection of villages than a monolithic city. We lived in Tottenham from 1970 to 1972; this was just such a place, and it didn't feel like living in "London"--Tottenham was quite distinguishable as a place with its own individuality (and its own "High Street," though in this case called "High Road"--High Streets are important to British towns). The fact that there is a proportion of West Indians (green bananas on sale in the shops) and Cypriots (branch of the Bank of Cyprus at the end of our road) didn't make any difference--it was Tottenham we were living in, with its own individual "feel"; not a suburb of a faceless city.

I have to agree with your comments on travel vs. tourism, though in the past I'm afraid I have often been guilty of the tourist attitude myself. I think I'm out of it now, though. Over the last few years Ro and I have travelled extensively around England, but our travels were neither tourism nor travel for its own sake: we had a particular purpose in mind, namely Ro's heraldic researches. Still, we've managed to see a lot of places, talk to a great many clergymen and church officials, and get a fair insight into the problems faced by that peculiar body

the Church of England with regard to the upkeep of its thousands of ancient but often crumbling churches.

Surely if people are willing to be tourists, then the people who exploit them are merely taking advantage of the heaven-sent opportunity to make money out of them. I blame the tourist mentality, not the innkeepers and shopkeepers who are merely doing what their predecessors have always done.

Stratford-on-Avon (you know, Shakespeare's home town) is my favourite (?) example of a place exploited (raped, as you put it) by tourism. In the summer you can't move for the press of bodies in the town, and the dozens of coaches and cars trying to force their way over the narrowish bridge over the river, and to squeeze into car parks which are already full. Part of the trouble is that Stratford is on the 'circuit' of London-Oxford-Stratford-Sulgrave-London that is practically obligatory for the American tourist in Britain. But what do all these people do when they arrive at Stratford? Stroll through the 'antique' and 'gift' shops; visit 'Shakespeare's birthplace'; take in a play at the theatre if they're lucky enough to get tickets; and then leave knowing no more about what's going on around them than when they arrived.

The rape of Stratford is pretty complete. Already the whole town is practically all geared to servicing the tourist industry (industry it is: the tourists seem to be pumped around like some sort of industrial process). 'Shakespeare's birthplace' is a good example. The 'birthplace' itself is carefully preserved in all its half-timbered glory. Next to it is a modern building catering to the needs of the tourist, with a cafeteria, museum displays, and so on. Next to that down the street is an old inn, 17th century I believe, and also half-timbered, which until recently provided homes for two or three people. The Birthplace Trust acquired it and have let it get into disrepair, and now they want to pull it down...to extend the parking lot. Put back in order it could still provide a place for people to live (with their doors straight on to the street, too), but it seems it'll have to be sacrificed to the needs of the tourist flow.

(24 Othello Close, Hartford, Huntingdon PE18 7SU, ENGLAND)

JONH INGHAM: Speaking of cities, Thessalonike always stuck in my mind as a place six stories high, with shops on the ground floor and everything above flats, with very few suburbs. A city living in a city. The energy at night was blinding, a real hotbed of action. There was also one of the best souvlaki bars it has been my pleasure to encounter directly across the road from the Youth Hostel.

(143 Chesterton Road, London W. 10, ENGLAND)

I want every peasant to have a chicken in his pot on Sundays.
—Henry IV of France

JERRY KAUFMAN: I'm getting active in local, very local, politics. The politics of the block. It goes so: I found out in August that our area (two adjacent blocks, not really one) had acquired a block association in June, and that it was planning a block party. I attended one meeting and was unimpressed, but through a variety of motives (I have this notion that such organizations are Good Things, for instance) I volunteered to help with the used book table. The response was, essentially, "What used book table?" So I decided to be the used book table (combination of disgust at the lack of planning and hopes of getting bargains myself (I got

them but I paid for them at my own prices)) and gathered the books, set prices, recruited a bit of help. I found at the next meeting I attended that some of the kids on the block also wanted to help me. Fine. Block party day dawned, I went to the street, got my helpers together, and laid out the books. The kids, in age from eight to twelve (one of whom spoke almost no English), were eager...and about as much help at times as chimpanzees, arranging books higgledepiggle and arguing over which of them had jurisdiction over which table of books. (My, there were a lot of books.)

The party over, we (the block association) found we had brought in almost six hundred dollars, with no idea what to do with it, and no formal way of deciding. (Maybe the association could give me a buck or two for a typer ribbon?) So now the politics begin, as the people who have been most active begin to advance ideas about the money and general positions about the structure, one group being essentially elitist and the other egalitarian. It seems to me that almost all the active people are young and Anglo, except for a couple of Puerto Rican kids twelve years old or less. I am being asked in on these meetings (and seeing or hearing from the block ass president almost every day) even though I am such a late arrival on the scene because I seemed to come from nowhere, pretty much handled my own project (which seemed to me nothing more than straightforward huckstering), and pulled in almost a fifth of the money made at the party. (Frankly, I am proud of that because I don't usually accomplish things. The egoboo looks bigger here because this is, at the moment, a small pond even smaller than fandom.)

(This should be two or three separate paragraphs.... The line about the make-up of the block activists is meant to show why some of them are elitist. They feel no one in the neighborhood but themselves has the knowledge or the energy to decide what the block association should do. "Oh, they don't care!" is the attitude toward the average block dweller--and this in effect means the average Spanish or older person in the neighborhood.)

Things could become even more overtly political, since one of the questions we are talking about is the need for a constitution, and what shape it should take if we have one. I will probably write more to you about this as things develop.

(880 West 181st Street, #4D, New York, New York 10033)

JILL JAMIESON: Haven't read Jane Jacobs but sounds good: London is another core city like your Old Town Alexandria. Applegarth is in the exact centre. Then around several quite different small towns, all in walking distance, east, north, and south. Then beyond that a jungle of suburbs and shopping plazas, types of people we never see, completely different centres and styles. Time as well as space warps as you pass out through the concentric circles of influence. Even the buildings are layered, form following function.

(Applegarth Follies, Box 40, Station B, London, Ontario N6A 4V3, CANADA)

ANGUS TAYLOR: I'm writing this from a farm near Thornbury, Ontario--that's at the southern edge of Georgian Bay. I'm just in North America for 4 weeks, then back to Europe, possibly for several years--assuming that I do a Ph.D. at the University of Amsterdam.

It's interesting to come back to North America after 15 months in Europe (Portugal, Spain, Franc,e and--mainly--the Netherlands and England). It's like coming back to your own house or apartment after you've been away for quite a while: you know how everything is still the same, but still it looks somehow strange? That's the way I felt the first couple of weeks back here.

First impressions of Canada after returning:

The streets are wider, the cars are big, the traffic is slower and less noisy. People's lawns come right down to the sidewalk or road; usually there are no fences separating them from the public spaces or from each other--and if there are fences, they're not great solid barriers that proclaim, "Private, Keep Out." Everything seems more casual. Rawer. Newer. Often cruder and shabbier too. Good taste and

bad taste exist side by side everywhere here. The shop signs and other advertising signs stick out everywhere like sore thumbs.

The funny thing is: although the vulgarity hits me over the head every which way I turn, I can dig it. I imagine a good European would be having multiple heart attacks, but I'm easy about it. I even enjoy it. To me Europe is a fantastic place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there--well, a year or two or three, sure, but not for good. There's almost nothing here in North America in the way of historic buildings, quaint, picturesque villages, etc. What passes for quaint or historic here just doesn't match Europe at all. In Europe the houses and people and cultures have merged right into the landscape; here they haven't. Here the towns sit on the land like an open wound. At least, that's one way of seeing it. But I feel more at home here, even so. There's a vastness, an openness to North America that's very difficult to explain to a European.

There's a great two-way flow of people across th Atlantic. Tourists going to Europe; emigrants going to North America. The funny thing is, the life styles and living standards aren't that different any more. I think North America is partly, if not primarily, a state of mind. Something to do with the land, the geography. If Europe is a garden, North America is a meadow.

(Fleerde 34, Bylmermeer, Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS)

ALLYN CADOGAN: Enjoyed your "trip report" and musings; well, I like the easy laid-back way you write. I'd like to comment on all the other comments about the counter culture of the 60's and the now culture (I also read the zine while listening with one ear to Robin's dinner table conversation about dump trucks and cats--Robin is 1½; and am now trying to write this while listening with one ear to Jody's dissertation on the exquisite flavour of lime jello--Jody is 5), but am not really sure I can. For at least a year I've been trying to sort out my thoughts on just what did happen then and where it got us, if anywhere, besides brighter clothes for men.

I moved to San Francisco in January of 1966 and lived at 5th and Geary for five months until a rock musician friend, Sam Andrew, talked me into moving to the Haight. I lived there, except for a two-month stint in Vancouver, B.C., till August of 1967. During that time I variously lived in my own apartment, alone and with a roommate, shared an apartment with six other people, lived with bikers and lived "on the street." I worked in the Post Office, at an art shop (the art owl), and sold Oracles and Rolling Stones on the street. Oh, yes, I also lived for a couple of months in the "ghetto," on Laussat St., just a block from Haight and Fillmore. We sat out the riot in that place.

I lived there, in Haight-Ashbury, during the height of the "drug and philosophy" revelation-thing, and spent a lot of time paying close attention to just what was going on, if anything, and even then trying to Sort It All Out. At one time I sat through an argument between two friends--the guy was giving his lady shit for going out of the house with her hair in curlers (both of these people would have been described as hippies by anyone who saw them) and she was saying that was why she had moved to H-A, so she could look any way she wanted without anyone laying the "what will people say" and "what will people think" crap on her. She was one of the freest spirits I met during that time; despite objections to the contrary, people in H-A were just as appearance-conscious as anyone anywhere else.

I talked to tourists who came to the area to see the counter culture close up. "Are you a hippie?" was usually the first thing they said to me. If I answered "No," they usually looked disappointed and went away. Generally, tho, my response was, "I don't know; what is a hippie?" to which they would respond, "Then you must be one." My question was not entirely facetious; I honestly did want to know what <u>they</u> thought a hippie was; obviously, in those days, appearance alone, or place of residence, did not automatically qualify one as a hippie. I

never could get any of the "straights" to define hippie for me, though we would occasionally sit down and discuss philosophy and life styles, and, frequently, discover the life styles only appeared to be different and the philosophies were pretty much the same.

This could go on and on--I have considered as a way of finding the answer of what did happen then simply to write down all of my experiences, and to try to recall my thoughts and feelings of the time and maybe see where it all ended up. Early one morning of maybe May, 1967, my "old man" and I were walking down Haight Street on our way to the Donut Shop for breakfast. The street was pretty well deserted at that hour. Coming up behind us was a truck with a television camera mounted on the back paning the street. Someone jumped out of the truck and asked if they could photograph us. I was horrified to hear my socialistic idealistic friend reply, "Sure, for a dollar each." He bought the media hype without batting an eyelash. Did we all? Was Haight-Ashbury all merely a product of media need for a new idea to promote? Just who did invent it?

Sorry 'bout that, but I'm serious.

About Alexei's places of power: Well, I don't think I'm really going to comment on places of power, not knowing what's been said before. What I want to say is that his descriptions always knock me out--it seems that whenever he describes a place I see very clearly a place that has happened to me that is like what he is describing. I probably didn't put that very well, but he is one of the few people whose descriptive writing does that to me. For example, his description of the mountain in Korea took me back to Mt. Tamalpais. I had taken a whole pile of speed one night and somehow ended up around midnight in a car full of people tripping out on various drugs, and, driving, a certified nut case. I spent a thoroughly miserable night cramped up in the car scared shitless because this guy had decided we should drive up the mountain. It took all night, half the time with the lights out--and it was a black night. We finally made it to the top just as the sun came out. Two of us got out of the car and climbed a little higher and watched the sun rise over San Francisco bay. At first everything was completely enshrouded in fog, but as the sun rose the fog just sort of fell apart, revealing more and more of the bay and city until the fog was completely gone. It was incredibly beautiful and incredibly magical. We all went back to the city feeling great and attended Chocolate George's wake.

Alexei's talk about light brings to mind another trip up a mountain, this one when I was maybe 12 years old. I was driving with my father somewhere in southern Oregon. The grass on the hills had gone all golden brown so it must have been autumn. There were a lot of sheep just wandering around and no people for miles. It seems my father was intending to take one of the sheep and I talked him out of it (my father is not the coolest individual I've ever met), but what is mainly remembered and most important about that ride is the colour of the sunlight. We must have been driving into the sunset because we had to drive very slowly as it was so bright we could hardly see. The light was so rich I almost felt as if I could have reached out and grabbed a handful and against the backdrop of solid light the soft sounds of the sheep baaing. There's really nothing important there, but it stayed with me for some reason and was brought to the surface of my memory by Alexei's comments.

(1916 West 15th Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia V6J 2L3, CANADA)

SUSAN WOOD: This is truly a post-literate generation. My English 100 class of nice, normal, intelligent people does not read books. I mean, as a collective mass, it does not read. It cannot comprehend the idea of reading for fun. Moreover, its vocabulary is shockingly small. We were taking a Dylan Thomas poem, "Fern Hill," in which there is a reference to a "rick" (the book isn't at home, but it was something like "the rick's high hay"). OK, these are urban kids ...but not only did no one know what a "rick" was, but several people were quite hostile about it, on the order of "howcome this Dylan person can get away with mak-

ing up words, and you won't let us use words unless they're spelled right?"--I tried to point out the difference between creative use of words, and writing an essay in which you're trying to communicate a logical argument, but it didn't wash. At any rate, the hostility came first, and only later did I have sense enough to ask what the problem was, what the word was. "Rick?" I said, "it's in the dictionary, look it up. He's talking about a haystack, read it again." So one person did look it up, and, since he had one of those tiny paperback dictionaries, it WASN'T there. And so the class got even more hostile. How DARE I impose a strange word on them? In fact, they were hostile to start with, because I had just had to announce that 9 out of 30 of them, or 30%, had failed the Christmas composition exam, which consisted of reading a passage of modern prose (from Aldous Huxley), answering a couple of factual questions to test reading comprehension, then writing a coherent, grammatical 300-word essay on one of two topics, in two hours. I might point out that, since I'd been teaching composition rigourously (at least, I hope that's the reason), I had a much higher pass rate than the collective first year average. But the hostility...these people resent taking literature, they resent having to read.

It is a Cultural Trend that, two years ago in Saskatchewan and right now in British Columbia, the Average First Year Student thinks that Dylan Thomas "is some kinda folksinger from back then in the 60's."

I wouldn't dare ask if they've heard of Muhammed Ali.

Maybe it isn't the 1970's, maybe it's just normal; I've been in fandom too long, I'm used to people who love words.

Still. Still. I didn't like math, but I didn't express my contempt for it, loudly and repeatedly. And I damn well did my homework, instead of watching five hours of tv. Ah, tv--educate the masses. We're also taking Yeats, but do these people know anything about conditions in modern Ireland? "Aren't they fighting there about something" said one of my A students....

OK. Positive trend. Today, I stood in my bank getting a money order in Australian dollars (Dollard des Wombats?), and noticed that the bank manager was wearing a very attractive pantsuit. Ten years ago, women were not bank managers, or much of anything else. And the males who ran companies and so on sat in conclave, remember, and determined whether or not their female file clerks could possibly be permitted to inflame the passions of the mail-delivery boy by wearing skirts two inches above the knee, or *gasp* trousers. (When I was working my way through school in various libraries, until 1968 or so, I was not permitted to wear slacks --even though a lot of my work consisted of stretching up to find books, or to put books away, or alternatively kneeling, in the children's section, while six-year-olds trompled on my skirt-hem with snowy boots.

It is marvellous to see a woman bank manager, of course. It is even more marvellous to reflect that the cheque I deposit in that bank is equal to that made by a male colleague of the same academic rank and experience. Until the spring of 1976, at the University of British Columbia, Canada's second largest university, this was not the case; it took a special commission investigating the hiring and salary of the over 300 women here to discover that, indeed, we all suffered from serious salary inequities. I got a $500 raise, immediately. No, we did not get back pay.

But what really impressed me, in the bank today, was that the women--and the men too--didn't look bank-y. (Remember that bank in St. Kilda, with the women in uniforms, but not the men?) The women wore pants, most of them, an entirely sensible idea since we were having The Annual Vancouver Snowstorm. The women, most of them, did not wear makeup. There, Alex, is a sign of what the 60's did. It liberated us from uniform ("appropriate clothing," "looking businesslike," "looking ladylike") into costume (for us costume freaks) or, simply, into comfort. (I stopped wearing skirts altogether when I moved to Saskatchewan and -40° weather, and have never really regained the habit, primarily since I teach sitting cross-legged on a desk, most of the time.) And it destroyed (well, weakened) the idea

that someone in authority had the right to dictate one's dress and behaviour.

Trend 3: I own a refrigerator. Not to mention a very small washing machine. I can understand owning the 47 boxes of books I moved out here a year ago. But a washing machine? I am not married, I do not have a child, and I do not have a suburban house. However, I also live in a neighbourhood sans laundromats, and I do not have a car to drive to a laundromat, and somehow a neighbourhood laundry collective did not materialize, alas. And I wasn't about to open my own laundromat.

That is, I own material goods. So do we all, even you, John. I was talking with Paul Williams (author of Apple Bay and other books, she said, free plug, having had fun doing local promo for Paul on his tour up through the Pacific Northwest) last summer, about cars, and how convenient they are for carrying groceries, and how we managed without them and wished, though, that some system of community cars existed like wherever-it-is in Italy where you can rent a car within the city for carrying parcels or whatever, just when you need it, from a fleet of cars owned and maintained by the city--anyway.... Paul pointed out that the single great population bulge, us, the baby-boom era babies, were brought up in a consumer culture, and are now right IN that consumer culture: out of school, getting jobs (or trying to find them), getting married, having children, Settling Down, getting to be about 30, and getting hungry for some of that lovely material wealth that we so selfrighteously rejected a few years ago (because it was always there to fall back on). (God, what an awful run-on sentence. Never mind, forge ahead.)

Immediately after that conversation, I seemed to see magazine articles everywhere with titles like "How the New Rich Spend their Money" (SATURDAY NIGHT) and "Baby Boom Babies off on a Spree" (MACLEAN'S), all about the 25-to-35-year-old consumer society. I also read a lovely article in MACLEAN'S about how the high-powered fashion industry has latched onto a new field to exploit, men's underwear.

> "Will it be an import like Pierre Cardin's Wild Horses ('Savage horses print, Discreet fly front'), Hom's Slip ('Transparent nylon mesh with modesty panel. Black and Flesh only') or Stanley Esq.'s Briefest Brief ('Just a strip on your hip')--or perhaps, since this seems to be a Canadian phenomenon, will it be Stanfield's low-rise with the red and white maple leaf flag design?"

Gad. Thinking of men of whom I currently can judge in these matters, I only know of one who even wears underwear. Though my Australian male guests this fall, come to think of it, borrowed the aforementioned washing machine to launder such things, amid the socks. Cultural differences?

Would you pay $10 for "fashion undies"? I bet my well-dressed English 100 students would; they wear $45 lumberjack shirts (tailored) and $100 ski jackets in the latest colours. And Eaton's department store is apparently doing a brisk trade in $150 denim suits.

A further random note, from the July 1976 PSYCHOLOGY TODAY. "Students who enter the working world lose much of their hostility towards authority, while their graduate school peers keep on scowling.... Moving from the protective university to the new, rather frightening outside world stifles self-assertiveness." It seems that students in the final years of professional classes, like engineering, especially, become "more tolerant of and submissive to authority." What a depressing thought, when already English 100's main questions are "Are we responsible for this for the exam?" and "What do you want? What answer do you want us to give on this essay?"

But with an 8% unemployment rate in the province, I wouldn't be rocking any boats either--except that, in 20 years, I am finally beginning to learn just who I am, what I do believe in, and how best to accomplish those things I believe most passionately are worth fighting for. Finally beginning. It took losing a lot of property to know that (kvetching about it sometimes notwithstanding) possessions are not high among my priorities. Except possibly for my teddy bear.... And my

fanzines.... And this typewriter you love so well. Ah yes. This lovely, expensive toy here, on which I have become so dependent, the line from my head to another person's eyes and thoughts.

It is 1977, and I idolize my Selectric. Sign, portent, or phobia?

(2236 Allison Road, Vancouver, British Columbia V6T 1T6, CANADA)

JAY KINNEY: Regarding the "myth of objective consciousness," I recently came upon the following gem. It is from the Dec. 76 issue of REVOLUTION, the monthly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), a Maoist group. It is excerpted from reprinted comments by Bob Avakian, RCP Chairman, made recently during a conference on the international political situation.

> "But to say that there is only one correct line means simply this: there's only one reality out there, not ten realities. There's only one correct analysis and only one correct method (which is the method of Marxism--dialectical materialism--) to understand that, and there's only one correct political line, one programme for how to change that reality in accordance with those laws in order to make proletarian revolution, which is on the historical agenda."

Whatever one may make of Marxism (and I probably make more of it than you), I think it's clear that such deifying of it as Avakian's above is deadended and dogmatic...and exactly the problem you discuss. There may be only one reality out there, but I believe it to be so complex and multi-faceted as to elude the ability of any one system or person to successfully nail it down. Our perception of reality is based on our own individual interaction with it, and each ego's interaction with it is so unique that practically speaking there exist millions and billions of different perceptions of reality. It is rather cosmically arrogant to declare that there is only one correct analysis of reality. It's an arrogance that is shared by numerous dogmatic institutions including the RCP and the Catholic church.

From what little I've readoon the subject, modern quantum physics has been running up against the limits of the myth of objective consciousness, and it is now acknowledged that the act of observation of an event itself so affects the event that the notion of a "pure event" observed by a totally disengaged observer is obsolete.

However, short of transcendant religious experiences (which occurred to some, but hardly a majority, of those in the counterculture), I'm still not quite sure of what the "profound changes in consciousness" were that happened. You only touched on this fleetingly and then drew the topic to a close. Perhaps good ol' Roszak would elucidate more of this for me, but my copy of his book is back in Illinois at the moment. I recall reading it back in 69 or 70, being impressed, and yet at the same time cognizant that the entity of which he spoke was even then losing coherence and credibility.

I guess that at this point I've so internalized the changes in my own consciousness that occurred then, that I no longer recall them as changes, but just utilize them now. However, those changes, then, have been succeeded by changes that have occurred since, most of which have been outside of the context of any "counter-culture" but which have been no less meaningful to me because of that.

At any rate, I hope that you can nail down even more of what you are getting at in #28.

Moving on here, I'm afraid that I don't see eye to eye with you and Alex regarding this concept of a generation born from '35 to '50 as a particularly creative font. It would be nice to think that, I suppose, in that since I was born in '50 I get to scoot in on the tail end of this supposed phenomenon. But I think it is a continuation of the self-complementary illusions which were rampant within the counter-culture. (In the future I will refer to the damn counter-culture as the "cc" for convenience sake. However I am not very fond of the term at this point,

as I think it was and is misleading. I think we had a subculture, but not a counter-culture.) The '35 to '50 crowd encompasses 8 years of 50's college students, for instance, as well as the college students of the 60's. It includes years of gangs and gang fights in big cities, as well as the relatively brief period of so-called "peace and love."

By missing the worst of the Depression and being too young to fight in WWII this crowd avoided two of the major programming periods which heavily influenced our parents. The McCarthy period happened while this crowd was in diapers, shorts, or high school. And all this made for a singular difference in our perception of things. But I see those things as happenstance and can't trace a causal line to "strong creativity" on our part because of them.

Your reply to Cory's letter was succinct and to the point. Her letter bothered me a little in that it seemed to come from a point of view which tends to see any human action as an "intrusion upon the ecosystem." Which, as you note, is simply not the case. The ecosystem is not a pristine world by which mankind has committed original sin by getting kicked out of it. Man can potentially wreak greater havoc in it than other life forms, true...but we're actually wreaking it on ourselves.

(1786 Fell Street, San Francisco, California 94117)

((Aren't basic readjustments in your view of the nature of reality "transcendant religious experiences"? They may not occur in a blinding flash of white light, all in a moment, but by their nature such changes seem to me to be essentially spiritual. And it is exactly that sort of underlying difference that, to me, characterizes the upheavals and "movements" of the Sixties. Purely political changes are not fundamental. It is the nature of our reality that is changing; the common assumptions of Western civilization are in a state of flux.

As to Alexei's broad concept of a creative generation, I don't believe that we are divinely gifted in some way; I do see that, for whatever reasons (your accidents of timing may be just that), this group is --as a whole--an especially creative one. I offered the observation mainly as an antidote to the despair some people of our generation feel at the conservatism of the people coming after. It isn't always that the youngest are the most creative, but, to those of us in an especially fertile generation coming of age, it seemed so.))

ALEXEI PANSHIN: It was a happy surprise to see HITCHHIKE show up. Since it is bound to generate more mail, I can only be sorry you didn't publish all those other letters, the ones you are intending to print next time. I want those letters now! I want all those letters! I want to know what HITCHHIKE people are thinking and doing. In one sense, HITCHHIKE is the collective autobiography of a generation. It is a very sensitive and valuable source of information. At least as good as comic books.

I have no doubt that Jay Kinney is right in thinking that comic writers and artists are muted and ground down by corporate owners. I wouldn't want to suggest that commercial comic books are an ideal medium within which to work. Clearly not. On the other hand, I do want to say again that a person uninvolved in the problems of making comic books can learn a lot from watching comic books. From watching price changes, changes in ad policy, experiments in format, changes in content, in art, in layout, titles begun, titles dropped. Comic books are artifacts that come to the consumer bearing all sorts of information. Comic books, like tv, are in this sense very responsive media. You can pick up a lot of information from them. I'm quite sure that for someone working in it, tv is a frustrated medium. The evidence is there for anyone who looks at tv, just as it is there for anyone who looks at comic books. Nonetheless, the fact that it is frustrated is an important bit of information. Just as the total failure of 90% of the tv series brought on in the last year and a half is an important bit of information. There is a lot of ferment

going on in both the comic book publishing and tv industries. Much visible failure. Much experimentation. Strange, wild successes. Change in progress. Places to watch.

I have great sympathy for Jay's problems. He is a comic artist, concerned with problems of quality in a medium controlled by commercial interests who care nothing for quality. I have exactly the same problem in science fiction. At Philcon one week ago, Cory and I were taken to dinner by an editor who works for a long-established, well-respected publishing house. After dinner, the editor took us to his room, sat us down, and said, "And now to business." And proceeded to tell us for forty-five minutes that he has no control over quality, that the owner of the company speaks of the books he publishes as sardines, but that this place is better than the last publishing company he worked for because here they sometimes let him do something halfway right because he is a pleasant person and they respect his pleasantness. In short, he confirmed every suspicion we ever had that our concerns with quality are incompatible with so-called commercial publishing. I've looked for editors, agents, and publishers that I could work with. If I recognized a publishing situation I could be part of with pride, I would gravitate there instantly. But I don't see any. I wonder if my frustrations are shared by others. I think of self-publishing and look into costs of typesetting, book manufacture, and distribution. Worry about raising money for the venture. Dream and fret.

And even so, I would never deny that someone at a distance from these problems might find sf an interesting place of ferment and change, might learn a lot from watching it, might learn a lot from watching writers struggle with the unresponsiveness, the lack of intelligent appreciation of the nature of the work, the money-oriented thinking of the publishers.

That's one of the reasons that I admire Dylan. Jay Kinney and Creath Thorne seem to think that Dylan is a product of hype and a creature of the corporate interests. Not so. Not so. I admire Dylan because he has managed, as an artist, to speak clearly and to continue his personal growth in spite of corporate priorities, corporate values, corporate pressures, public attention, public adoration, public rejection, public analysis of every eyebrow twitch.

I demand my right to admire Dylan without being accused of sounding like a publicist for Dylan (Creath Thorne) or, alternatively, sounding like one blinded by mythmaking corporate publicity for Dylan (Jay Kinney). I bought my first Dylan album in 1963, and I only came to my present opinion about the man as a creative artist in the Seventies--at a period when he was as lightly regarded, as Out, as he has ever been since he first caught public attention. My respect, my understanding, my admiration for Dylan as an artist of unique depth and power came slowly, and is by no means complete. He has accomplished more than I have yet been able to appreciate. That's not hype. That is a simple and true factual statement.

I take Dylan's comments in PEOPLE with complete seriousness. Dylan, speaking as one human to another, made several comments to a reporter who was intrigued enough by them to repeat them--along with a lot of other remarks, as interpreted by the reporter and stitched together and edited and edited. Yes, there is distortion. Yes, there is media mentality. And yet, something does get through. Certain of Dylan's remarks strike me--as an artist who is trying to follow truth in the midst of a wicked, materialistic world--as just the sort of thing another artist who is trying to follow truth in the midst of a wicked, materialistic world might say.

Let me give the quotes again, a little more fully quoted.

> "I didn't consciously pursue the Bob Dylan myth. It was given to me --by God. Inspiration is what we're looking for. You just have to be receptive to it."

> "I don't care what people expect of me. Doesn't concern me. I'm doin' God's work. That's all I know."

"What I'm trying to do is set my standards, get that organized now. There is a voice inside us all that talks only to us. We have to be able to hear that voice. I'm through listening to other people tell me how to live my life."

I take Dylan to be sincere. I take his words with utter sincerity.

Dylan is an artist, attempting to do God's work, attempting to hear his inner voice, which is the voice of God. I can just see Dylan, his eyes crossed as he attempts to hear the voice of God and follow it, reeling around the landscape, doing word and sound magic that leaves people reeling sympathetically as he passes. And, as he passes, other people say: "It's all hype, you know. He does it for money." or "It's not the same as it used to be." or "I refuse to be impressed by a bad harmonica player." But none of it has anything to do with what he is doing and why he is doing it. And some people do pick up true vibes from his word and sound magic.

A couple of years ago, I picked up a book called Bob Dylan: A Retrospective, edited by Craig McGregor, that reprints just about every serious interview Dylan ever gave prior to 1972. Even in his most twisty and surreal mid-Sixties interviews, he always took care to speak truth. The ring of truth, of sincerity, has always been perceptible in remarks honoring the inner voice and the pursuit of truth. Dylan has always followed his innerness, and people who judge him from outward action, outward appearance, will invariably misjudge him. He is doing his best to do God's work and not to care what people expect of him. He is trying to set standards. To hear that voice. To be receptive to inspiration. He says so, and I believe him because along with Jay Kinney I think that this is the wellspring of artistic creativity, to pay attention to the inner voice.

What is remarkable about Dylan is not that he makes mistakes. What is remarkable is that considering the heavy burden of public attention he carries, he makes so few mistakes. He seems to have heard his inner voice more clearly, and done the work of God more successfully than any other artist of his generation--and under more trying outward circumstance. That is admirable, by God. Passing negative judgment on Dylan seems so fruitless to me. If you can, watch him. If you can, learn from him. If you can, enjoy him. If you can't, quietly pass him by. But don't discount him--especially not if you aspire to be an artist.

Two books of interest as contributions to our collective autobiography are Paul "Crawdaddy" Williams' Das Energi and Apple Bay. Both of these books are quality paperbacks from the Warner Communications empire. But in spite of these tainted origins, they manage to be effective statements. The books were both written in 1971 when Paul was living in a wilderness commune in British Columbia. Das Energi is a collection of aphoristic utterances expressing the highest ideals arrived at in the Sixties Awakening. Common wisdom. Paul's name does not appear on the front cover, which has a psychic and mythic tone. This anonymity gives the book the feel of something tossed up by the collective unconscious. It has a cumulative power to it, so that quotes can only give a faint indication.

One page says:

You know what has to be done.
Why don't you do it?

Another page says:

At the depths of despair, nothing matters, I can't do anything, got to get out of here, walls falling in, throw me a rope, I can't move, can't stand it, nothing, throw me a rope...

And one day, like any other day, finally tired of waiting for help that never comes, make a rope, tie it to a rock throw it up pull yourself out and walk away...

And on another page:

We are on the verge of a new age, a whole new world.
Mankind's consciousness, our mutual awareness, is going to make a quantum leap.
Everything will change. You will never be the same.
All this will happen just as soon as you're ready.

Das Energi was published in 1973, and has sold fantastically well. I got it through a young friend who brought it to my house to show it to me as a meaningful object, not having heard of Paul or knowing that I knew him. I did not expect to be impressed by the book, and was.

"Apple Bay, or Life on the Planet by the author of Das Energi" is what the cover of Apple Bay says, and the book cover is evocative of Das Energi, though it shows a wilderness cabin, water, sky, and greenery. Apple Bay is Paul's account of the disaster that his communal idyll became. First Paul gives a partial account written concurrently with Das Energi. Then a longer and more considered account that tries to get at more of the reality. Taken together, these two books are important as a statement of the problem of the Seventies--how to make our ideals and our reality compatible. How to live our ideals. I found Apple Bay very painful to read--more painful than Cory did. But it is well worth reading. And Das Energi is a very useful book, a contemporary expression that is genuinely inspiring.

I think some of the differences between Jay and Creath and me are attributable to the ten years difference in our ages. I don't want to pull seniority here. I merely mean to say that I've seen the world change twice. Once from the long Sunday afternoon torment of the Fifites into the activity and idealism of the Sixties, which I thought would last forever. Then yet again from the activism and idealism of the Sixties into the cynicism, decadence, apathy, and inner search of the Seventies. Jay was 18 in 1968. He has just seen one change--the Great Crash of Hopes, the Era of Nixon. He doesn't quite dare to believe there will be another change. But I've been looking for the change--and I declare that it is here, right now. Jimmy Carter is one sign--but only one outward sign of the change. Soon it will be unmistakeable. Soon you will be so swept up in it that you will forget again that it was ever any other way. Until the world shifts into another new phase.

I expect that things will get tougher, but that people will feel better, will feel able to join together and meet challenges, and that the result will be a period of rapid change and great creativity.

Anent this subject, I am enclosing a statement we wrote for a San Francisco magazine called MOTHER JONES. Last summer they wrote to ask us to contribute a thousand words to a symposium on the question: "What's the single most important thing you'd like to see happen in America in the next five years?" MOTHER JONES describes itself as "A Magazine for the Rest of Us." Well, who is that? To me, it is HITCHHIKE's audience, so we wrote the 1000 words as though they were spoken as part of this HITCHHIKE debate. Strange to say, MOTHER JONES didn't want to print them. Perhaps HITCHHIKE is where they belong.

(RR 2, Box 261, Perkasie, Pennsylvania 18944)

DOUG BARBOUR: & then, Roszak & the thinking around his words. there i am not sure how to proceed. what you have to say about yr changing responses is most interesting, & i think i under/stand. but will i read him? to jump to Jay Kinney's most thought-provoking letter, & also Creath Thorne's, has there been that big a change, are you part of a really special generation? or is it simply that yr generation was larger, richer, & therefore better able to make the money machine pay attention to you even if they corrupted all you wanted by trying to give it to you? Jay says a lot i must agree with. & yet, & yet, tho i didnt do so many of the things that made the 60s generation (i am a 50s teenager, & watcht the 60s from the side), the music, as it changes & opens up in the best (a very few) & dully ex-

plodes as puffballs (most of it) for the much more quietistic (if not just dumb) younger generation, the music, i say, is one of the few places where so many of us truly meet. still, if there is a communitas (& i would dearly love to believe there is, or could be) it's a tentative one, & it's SPREAD OUT. it will not speak politically with force, & just possibly that is how it should be. i find the anarchist vision more & more congenial, & it proposes awareness but also acceptance of the fact that the non-anarchist political system probably will not wither away during my life. adaptability is a key to making it thru. & living well, where you find yourself. farm or city. town. & country. with the friends who can help however. sometimes they do that by writing letters. indeed, isnt it a delightful irony that you find yr community, you child of the tv age, in correspondence(s). that web, that great network which holds the world (we each know) together. yeah.

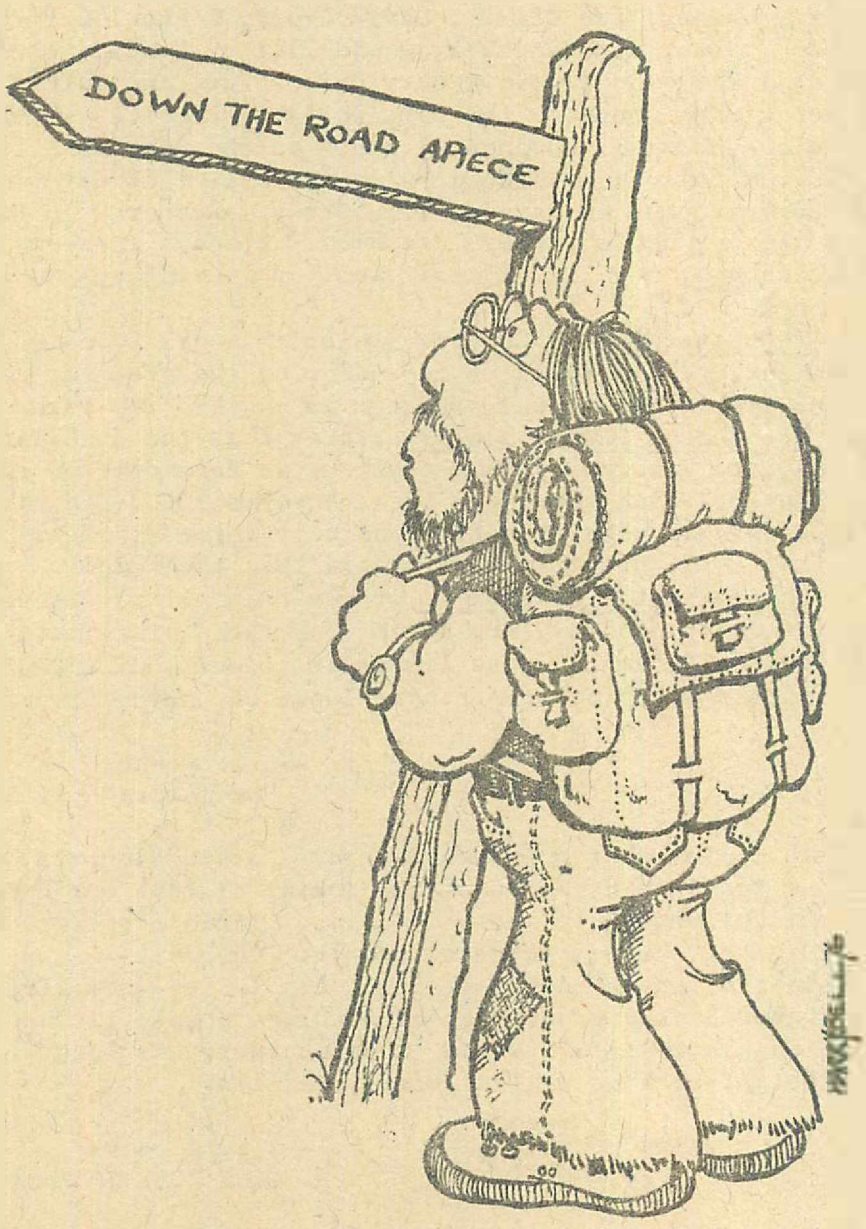
(Department of English, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA)

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Eli Cohen, Sheryl Birkhead, Keith Curtis, Eric Lindsay, Gil Gaier, Harry Warner, Lee Carson, David Piper, Michael Carlson, Tom Goodhue, Will Straw, Chas Jensen, Rick Stooker, David Miller, Sandra Hemzek, Darroll Pardoe (again), Jill Jamieson (again), Gary Deindorfer, and Calvin Demmon (who sent a postcard of Mickey Mouse as the Sorceror's Apprentice, which was labeled on the back "Scenic Landmarks: A peaceful pause at the edge of a tranquil Canadian lake," and quoted the following wisdom: "Dans ce pays-ci il est bon de tuer de temps en temps un servent pour encourager les autres. Hector Hugh Munro, 1810-1817"). And Frank Denton, whose letter I remember although it seems to have disappeared. And doubtless you, too, and I apologize for leaving you out.

> The First Law of Ecology states that all forms of life are interdependent. The prey is as dependent on the predator for the control of its population as the predator is on the prey for a supply of food.
>
> The Second Law of Ecology states that the stability (unity, security, harmony, togetherness) of ecosystems is dependent on their diversity (complexity). An ecosystem that contains 100 different species is more stable than an ecosystem that has only three species. Thus the complex tropical rain-forest is more stable than the fragile arctic tundra.
>
> The Third Law of Ecology states that all resources (food, water, air, minerals, energy) are finite and there are limits to the growth of all living systems. These limits are finally dictated by the finite size of the earth and the finite input of energy from the sun.
>
> --Greenpeace
> "Declaration of Interdependence"

> The point that many contemporary anthropologists, like [Marshall] Sahlins and Stanley Diamond, are making is that our human experience and all our cultures have not been formed within a context of civilization in cities or large numbers of people. Our self--biophysically, biopsychically, as an animal of great complexity--was already well formed and shaped by the experience of bands of people living in relatively small populations in a world in which there was lots of company: other life forms, such as whales, birds, animals.
>
> --Gary Snyder
> EAST WEST JOURNAL, June, 1977

CODA: This issue's last stencil is being typed on October 19, 1977, thus demonstrating that I have become hopeless as a fanzine publisher. The cover is by Dan Steffan, the back cover by Harry Bell; mimeography by Frank Denton.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