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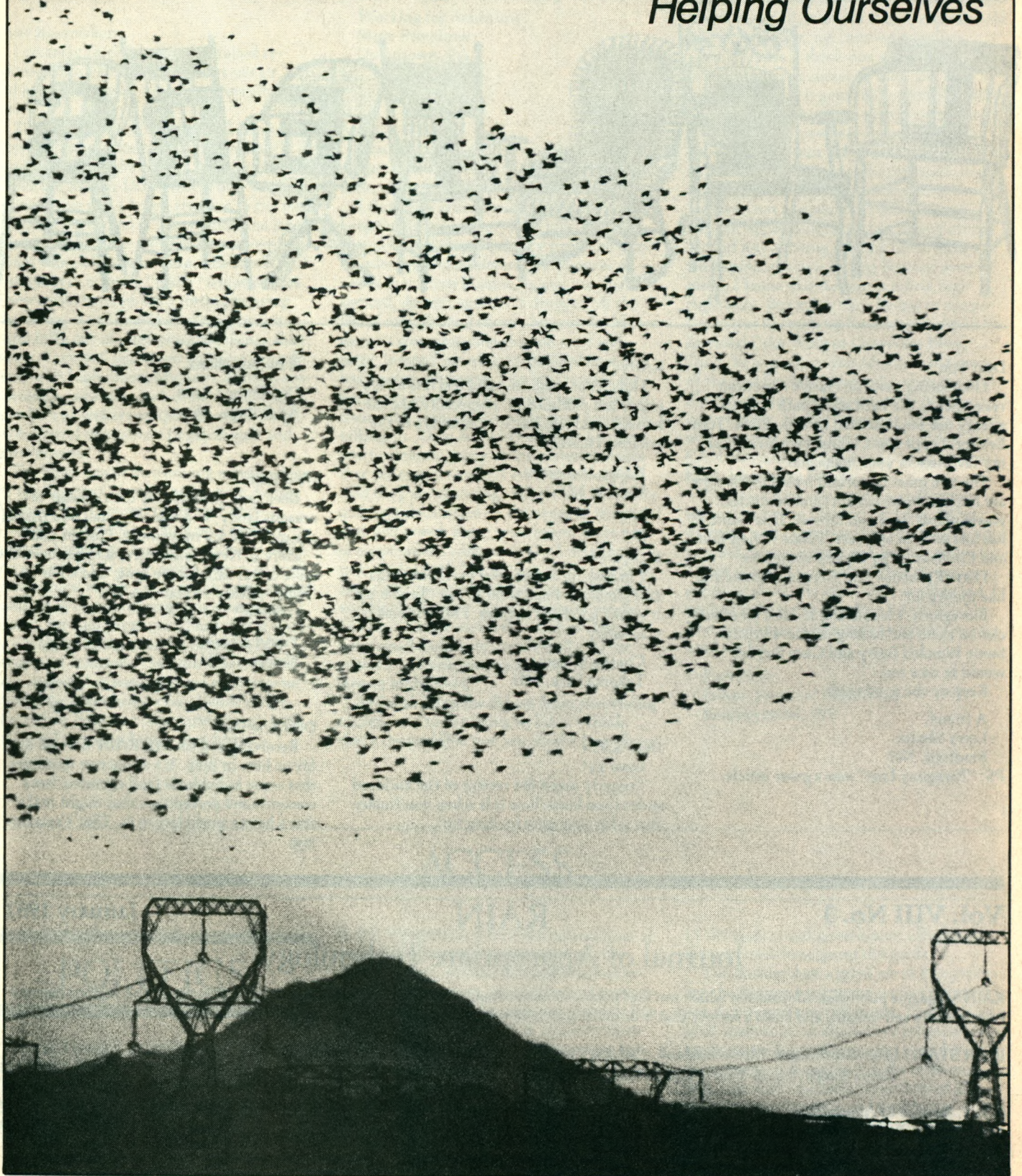
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# RAIN

*Whither Water?  
Imagine Peace  
Helping Ourselves*



Volume VIII No.4

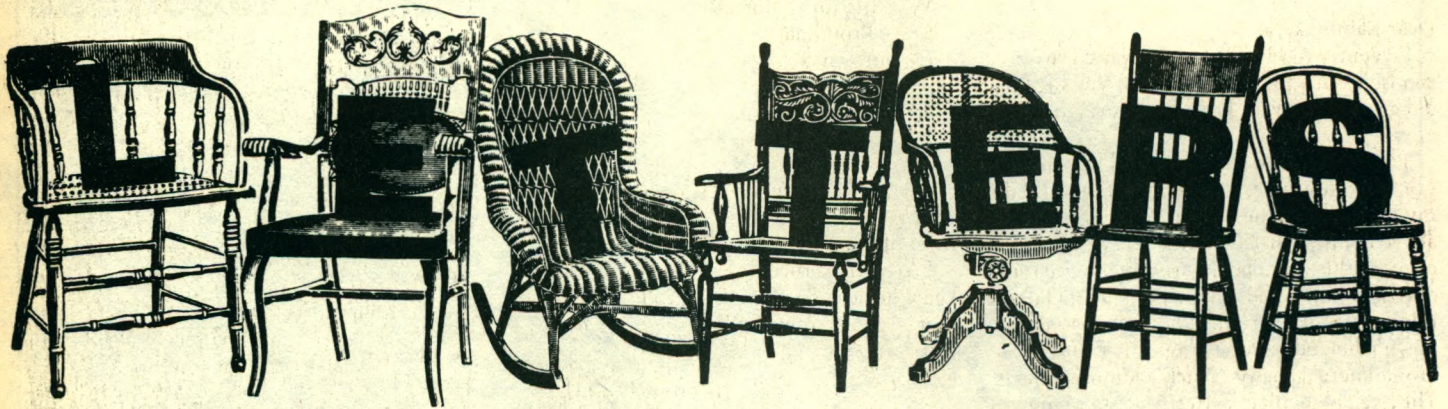
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**ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!!**

All you librarians and mailbox watchers might want to note that there will be a longer-than-usual delay between issues next time. This is not a mailing problem. Our combined February/March issue

(Vol. VIII, No 5) will be coming out in late February. Nothing to worry about—just some time for us to work on some other projects and regain our damaged sanity! —The Rainmakers

*P.S. Speak for yourself, John! —MR*



Dear You:

I like seeing news on Native American resistance to the hard social path with its energy use implications. Lovins, Illich, Tom Bender, Lappé and Collins, Henderson are my favorites in your magazine.

The two most important issues to me now are nuclear disarmament (and no nuclear power plants, too) and topsoil. This country has lost 40% in 50 years. Please review *Soil and Civilization* by Hyams sometime.

I have *Rainbook* and *Stepping Stones* and like them a lot.

Bioregions: I would like to see a lot of articles on them and ending nation-statism. Some Wendell Berry and Gary Snyder would be nice too.

Keep up the good work.

A friend,  
Larry Shultz  
Bradford, NH

PS. "Paraguay Lost" was a *great* article.

RAIN:

I love your magazine and feel it is a very important publication. I especially like the feminist and non-racist perspective of the articles. Thanks.

Nancy Metheson  
Helena, MT

Rainpeople:

I'm making use of your excellent magazine (finally). I just want to say "keep it up." It's very good and current. I hope it makes you happy.

Charlie Martin  
Takoma Park, MD

Dear RAIN:

Love ya!

I eagerly await the receipt of the enclosed order (you know how it is when you finally find what you were looking for).

A million thanx.

Drummond Reed  
Anchorage, AK

Dear Rain:

Been goin through my own change-of-seasons lately, and wanted to tell you that in the midst of my movement, I found you!

Here in New Hampshire, acid has been the taste of our rain for *too* long, and so, it's a 'sweet-release'—your RAIN.

Grateful!

Patryc Spanos  
Newport, NH

Dear Friends:

Receiving and reading RAIN is a real joy for us here in Juba. It's a concrete reminder that some individuals (and agencies) have concerns and perceptions that might make this a better world to live in. That's reassuring.

**Vol. VIII No. 3**

**RAIN**

**January 1982**

**Journal of Appropriate Technology**

RAIN Magazine publishes information which can lead people to more simple and satisfying lifestyles, help communities and regions become economically self-reliant, and build a society that is durable, just, and ecologically sound.

RAIN STAFF: Laura Stuchinsky, Mark Roseland, Carlotta Collette, John Ferrell, Kevin Bell, Steve Johnson, Steve Rudman, Nancy Cosper, Tanya Kucak, Salena Baker. Linnea Gilson, Graphics and Layout

RAIN, Journal of Appropriate Technology, is published 10 times yearly by the Rain Umbrella, Inc., a non-profit corporation located at 2270 N.W. Irving, Portland, Oregon 97210, telephone 503/227-5110. Copyright © 1982 Rain Umbrella, Inc. No part may be reprinted without written permission.

*Typesetting: Irish Setter Printing: Times Litho Cover Photograph: Ancil Nance*

Thanks for what you do and for being an example of what can be done.

John M. Villaume  
U.S. Embassy, Khartoum

Dear Rainmakers:

I recently received a much awaited response from ya'll telling me that yes sir, you did get my renewal. I can stop worrying now.

To fill you in on some regional information from southwestern Pennsylvania, I'll do my best. This is the start of Appalachia just above the Mason-Dixon line. Forty years ago or more this was a boom area due to the tons of coal being mined in many small and large mines around here. Most of them closed down when oil became king. The result around here is many "patch" communities. They're old hamlets with rotting housing sheltering many people who are genuine rural folks out of work since the mines shut down. Fayette County has its share of problems with high unemployment, ailing transportation networks, lack of industry, high numbers of welfare recipients, and strong mob control of business (legal-illegal) and government.

The work worth mentioning is being done by the Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc. (I'm interning with them). They are currently working on a salvage project where they hope to recycle old building materials to use on aging homes in need of structural repair. It is a much more logical solution as compared to giving away free money for fuel payments. The latter is purely a political solution and is far short of a long-term solution. They are also working on a project that uses salvaged materials to build solar greenhouses for eligible recipients. They built one demo greenhouse with an NCAT grant and since then have

broadened the project. Twenty solar window heaters were built last year using funds from DOE Small Grants award. Now private money is aggressively being sought.

It's a very positive action group.

Working for tomorrow,  
Steve Proudman  
Uniontown, PA

Mark:

Your piece on survival was the best on the subject that I've read and, I believe, I've read most of them over the past year or so.

I think it is crucially important for you to keep the door open for these folk. I believe that you need them and they need you—as broadening and moderating influences on each other. Tom Bender, as you may have noticed, doesn't agree. He dropped off the list of contributing editors because he felt we weren't covering enough good stuff and were, instead, catering to the hard core. He has a point, of course. I do lean toward the hard core because it's the only way to talk to them, and I sincerely believe they are worth talking to. They are, after all, doing in very practical terms many of the material things that the counter culture tried to accomplish. And they are changing. Where the literature once was dominated by the sense of isolation that you noted, there is more and more now of cooperation, community and neighborliness. Miles Stair has written about it—even about getting into local politics. So have Mel and Nancy Tappan. I don't suppose people like Kurt Saxon ever will but, then, they have small audiences. Incidentally, at the moment, I think, our newsletter is the largest in the field.

As for shifting the debate from preventing nuclear war to surviving it, I don't think that's the problem you see. In the first place,

these people haven't been involved in the debate at all so far. Now, however, there are signs that they'll come down on your side! There is a sharp anti-nuke flavor in the literature and also a fairly wise recognition of the imperial foreign policy that could get us all killed. After all, many of these people are old line isolationists, i.e., anti-imperialists.

At any rate, I think you must be very practical when it comes to war. The Administration, as it gears up for the SHOW DOWN, undoubtedly is going to emphasize civil defense somewhere down the line. I hope that the scene may be set—by survivalists—to oppose that as a bureaucratic nightmare, with a double-barrel emphasis 1) on local and not national civil defense, and 2) on flat-out opposition to nuclear or any other kind of war as being, among other things, the ultimate excuse for Big Brother government. I know that Reagan is riding high right now. But every time he has to use police power to crank up for the next step in his Imperial Cake Walk or Corporate Wing Ding, he is going to piss off more and more of the middle class. And only when the middle class finally understands that NO big government, big biz president is their friend, will the stage be set for a good, solid AMERICAN movement toward—I pray, a decentralized, libertarian society.

But, of course, we are all just dreamers when it comes to this sort of thing. What probably will mark our lives most in the long run will be our actions and not our opinions. I hope you will understand that my actions continue along the same lines as when last we had a chance to chat [see RAIN VII:2]. The newsletter is just an opportunity to extend it a bit.

Karl Hess  
Editor, *Survival Tomorrow*  
Kearneysville, WV

## ACCESS

### POLITICS

**Questions and Answers About the Reagan Economic Program, by The COIN Campaign, 1981, 36 pp., \$4.00 (bulk discounts available) from:**

COIN  
Box 53361  
Temple Heights Station  
Washington, DC 20009

The COIN (Consumers Opposed to Inflation

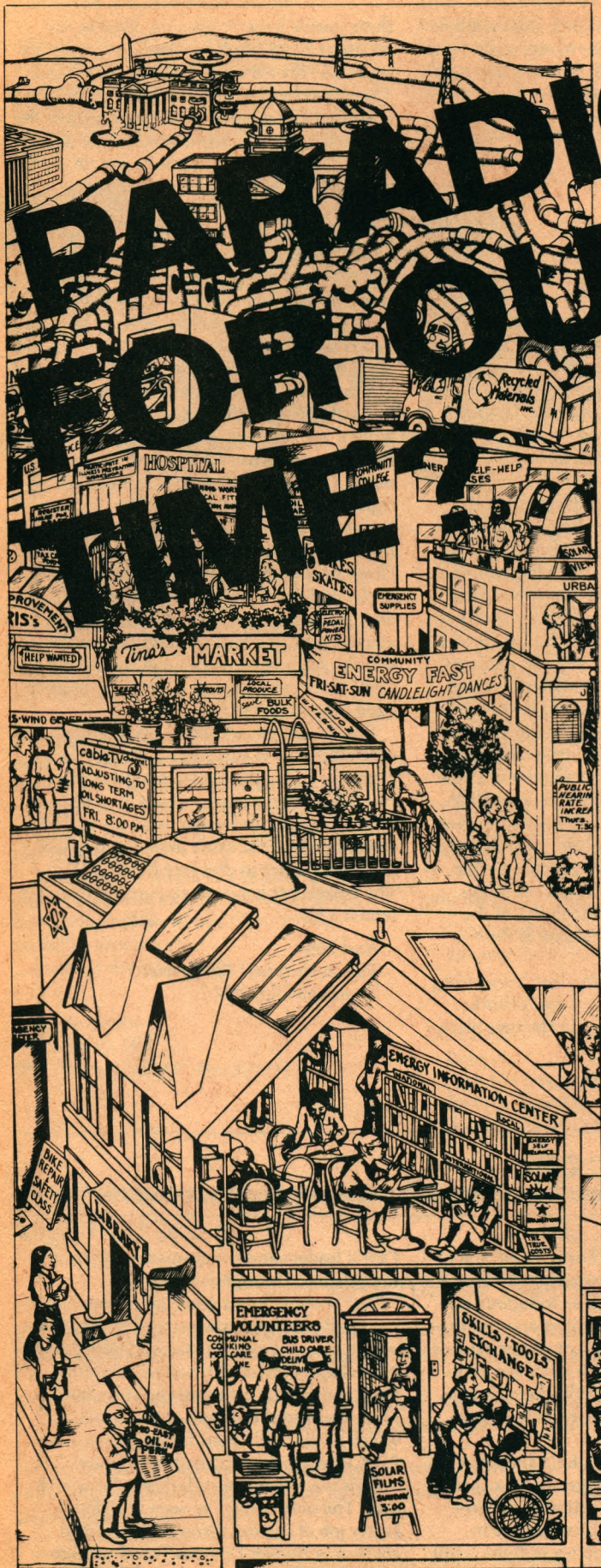
in the Necessities) is an informal coalition of some 70 organizations representing consumers, labor, senior citizens, religious organizations, women, minorities and community groups. The Campaign put together this common-sense handbook in response to requests from people all over the country concerned about the impact of the new Reagan economic program.

The five major points of the Administration's program—huge budget and tax cuts, de-regulation (drastic reduction in government protections), enormous increase in military spending, and a policy of tight credit and high interest rates—are discussed in an easy to read question and answer format. Political cartoons and pithy quotes from both

COIN leaders and government officials are interspersed throughout the guide.

The booklet does a good job of demystifying the Reagan program as well as pointing out its internal contradictions. There's even a brief chapter on an alternative program based upon controlling inflation and stimulating investment in the sectors of the economy which produce the basic necessities of life—food, energy, housing and health care.

This is a simple and effective educational tool. The only thing I've seen that does a better job of cutting through the Reagan rhetoric is Budget Director David Stockman's embarrassingly-revealing recent interview in the *Atlantic Monthly*. —SR



# PARADIGM FOR OUR TIMES?

**"Community Alert: Preparing for Energy Emergencies," full-color 31"x44" poster by Diane Schatz, available for \$6.00 ppd. from Rain, 2270 N.W. Irving, Portland, OR 97210.**

This September Joel Schatz (Oregon's first director of Energetics, the state energy office, under then-Governor Tom McCall) had the opportunity to speak at the National Passive Solar Conference. His talk provided some positive images as an overview to the Solar scenario. We agreed later to run it as an article and I spoke with him to find ways to introduce the piece. I was concerned that the corporate turnaround he seems to describe might appear naive.

His response—"It is not naive to leave out images of a potentially violent future. Flying bullets are on the news each day. What signals people are exposed to are what they respond to. Everything you can say that is beautiful, that reduces the general paranoia and teaches people whole vision thinking brings on higher possibilities. The magnitude of change we're capable of is completely unknown at this time." —CC

There is a Thomas Jefferson quote in the Library of Congress engraved in marble: "He thinks too small who looks beneath the stars." I always thought that was one of the best early plugs for solar energy. In fact, my wife, Diane and I liked it so much that we inscribed it on a new poster that we did called "Community Alert: Preparing for Energy Emergencies." The title is a disguised slogan for economic optimism.

*The picture was used as some kind of cultural Rorschach test of the future.*

In the early 70's, I became involved here in Oregon in the formulation of energy policy for the state government. I was actually a bureaucrat. It was the first state energy office in the country. At that time, I and many people were trying to take advantage of the incredible amount of wisdom generated for decades and break the news, essentially, to government people and to business people about the nature of stability. I felt at that time that I was doing the most noble, honorable, honest, spiritually intact activity imaginable—and found that I was continuously under attack by a variety of institutions in both the public and the private sector. At that time I met Howard Odum at the University of Florida. In my view he is a pioneer in the understanding of the relationship between energy and value and money and behavior and culture. I tried to interpret his understandings to state government and businesses in Oregon and throughout the United States and, as it turned out, to many nations of the world, and found some success but not very much understanding. My own concern was how to explain more clearly

what we were talking about.

Well, years went by, and I experimented quite awhile with new and innovative ways of trying to explain the nature of money and energy and behavior, and in just the past year a development has occurred in my life that I find extremely exciting and nearly unbelievable in its implications. It has to do with the "Community Alert" poster and what's about to happen to it. Let me run this down for you, because there's a lot of lessons that we've learned that have extreme implications for people who are trying to influence public policy.

Just before the end of the Carter Administration, Diane and I were asked to put together that poster for the U.S. Department of Energy and National Council of Churches. This was partly because

## *In the Fortune 500 there's tremendous talk of nuclear war.*

the State Department and the Defense Department jointly felt that it was a near certainty that the United States could lose oil from the Middle East because of the increasing turbulence in that part of the world and there was no preparation at the community level in this country to deal with that implication. We reviewed the emergency plans (if you can call them that) of every state in the Union. I would say that if you had to stake your personal stability on the sanctity of those plans, you'd have lots of problems. The cities assumed the states had something in place. The states assumed the Federal Emergency Management agency had something in place. The feds assumed the states had something in place. There is really no preparation. It hasn't been taken seriously and the challenge put to us was how do you begin to communicate to people en masse about the need to get their act together quickly in such a way as not to cause panic and make it socially acceptable to begin to do things.

We resorted not to a format of scientific analysis, but to a childhood book illustration in extraordinary detail. We tried an experiment: we told a variety of people, "put the picture together." We assumed the Reagan Administration would not be interested in the picture because it stood for decentralization and all the things which are at least outwardly opposite to the philosophy coming out of the White House. The project just about died, so we asked for the copyrights in the hope we might do something with it.

About April of this year I visited the governor of Oregon, Vic Atiyeh, who is a moderate/conservative Republican. I showed him the picture and talked about it in great detail. He liked it quite a bit and wrote a nice letter. I thought "well it's nice to have a good letter from the governor; I think I'll take that letter and generate more." So I went on a fact-finding mission to the administrators of Oregon's major state agencies. An amazing thing began to occur. They weren't simply writing endorsement letters, they were becoming very honest! They were saying things in writing on official letterheads that they don't usually say. The language was very emotional and they were extremely optimistic. In fact, the picture was used as some kind of cultural Rorschach test of the future. For example, the labor commission looked at it and said that if communities started behaving that way it would create more jobs, and people would have something to look forward to instead of something to dread. The director of environmental quality said that we would be using fewer fossil fuels, and so we would simply have a cleaner place to live. The administrator of state corrections said that he felt strongly that the major cause of crime is lack of identity, lack of community identity, lack of purpose, lack of neighborhood, and if communities began to behave the way they behave in the poster there would be an absolute reduction of the overall crime rate. The welfare director said it would give hope to people on the low end of the economic scale. The public utility commissioner said it would put a lid on es-

calating utility rates. It went on and on. We had some 20 letters from state agency administrators, each from his or her own point of view, saying if communities began to behave this way, it would only do good things.

Now, for me that was astonishing, because I've had an interesting history in the Oregon state government and I guess I had given up on their learning process. The stress of the times, the information that's available is so extraordinary right now it's caught up with everyone. I thought, "why, this is just astonishing information." So I went to Washington, D.C. and I met with a variety of members of Congress—Republican, conservative members of Congress. I went to the White House recently (in fact, that was a marginal experience for me, partly because I was dressed in jeans and had to be checked out with the F.B.I. just to get in the gate even though Senator Hatfield had arranged the appointment for me. There were a few tense moments when I began to wonder "hey, you know, is this going to be like back in the 60's," but everything was fine).

What I found in the White House was extraordinary receptivity to all this information. I found that the White House is essentially under seige. It's a very unpopular place with just about every special interest group in the U.S. In fact, the cab ride to the White House was pretty amazing. The driver was a grandmother about 60 years old, black, who said, "I don't mean to be disrespectful to the President, but if this don't get straightened out soon, there's gonna be guns in the street, baby." That was my opening line when I met with the White House people, and I found that messages like that are pouring into the center of government. There's an enormous amount of concern, a terrific amount of discontinuity among advisors who don't really know what they're doing. Many of the people making economic policy now are not experienced business people. It's a very insecure environment right now.

I found terrific opportunities and potentials coming out of that bastion of government, believe it or not, because the business community in the U.S. is very, very unhappy about the untested, puzzling decisions that are being made and are producing paranoia and uncertainty in so many millions of people. In New York City I met with the heads of several major corporations in the Fortune 500. Some of those corporations have had tremendous increases in profits in the first quarter of the year, and you'd think they'd be

## *Now is the time to do it. You can't be too outrageous.*

really happy but they're not. They're very upset, and there's tremendous talk about nuclear war. The water systems are failing, New York City now has 36,000-40,000 homeless people, and on and on and on. Their concerns are very real.

I came back to Oregon, and with the help of a very dear friend, Norma Paulus (who, for those of you who are not Oregonians, is secretary of this state) went to visit primary businesses in the state to raise money to distribute the poster. The question which I put to corporate leaders in Oregon was if they would take a decentralized picture of society with all that's on that image and help us put many copies in the 1,500 schools in the state, all public libraries, all the city halls, all the college libraries, all the county seats. Recently, two Oregon private utilities and the Nike Shoe Company began the venture.\* I frankly was very puzzled that the utilities first agreed to do this. Here in the state, food companies, all kinds of major mainline industries are now saying "we want our name to go on that picture because that is the future that makes sense." One inter-

\*Since Joel made these comments nine other corporations have signed on as sponsors of the poster.

# IMAGINE PEACE



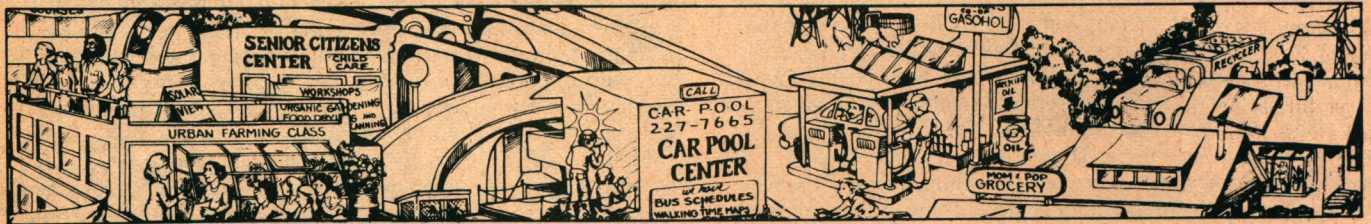
Our next project is to try to visualize peace. We're asking ourselves the question that hurts our brains: "If peace broke out, what would it look like?" It sounds terrific. We've thought about it now for two or three months and collected some notes. We're going to start consulting and writing letters and talking with thousands of people—whichever has an idea.

We're not talking about these ideas in the abstract—the ultimate political folly of the United Nations and most government foreign policies is that the conversation is so abstract that no one really knows what they are talking about. If peace were really pursued (given the extraordinary decadence of this culture and the extraordinary poverty of Third World nations whose materials we use to power our extraordinary decadence) what would life be like for us here next week? How would our clothing be different? How would our travel plans be different? What would we be doing differently

in school? What kinds of jobs would we have? What would be the nature of business? What would be the nature of government? What would life be like for 153 countries plus the United States? What would it be like given the fact that the U.N. now records 5,000 religions on this planet? How do you strike some common sense resource balance and then picture it? What would it look like? How would we proceed? I'm convinced we can't move in that direction until we see where we're moving. Madison Avenue has known this forever; lay the image out and people will go for it.

What we're doing now is building a systematic set of questions for widespread distribution to gather *specific* answers for the composition of wholistic peace imagery.

Want to help Joel and Diane envision peace? Send your ideas to us at RAIN!



pretation is that many people feel bad times are coming and it's important for people in the corporate world to do anything possible to become leaders and say what's happening, to put out useful information so that their public relations are intact when people consider buying their goods and services.

There are so many changes occurring so fast in the corporate world that it's dizzying. So many people want to get on a track that's popular, that makes sense, that adds stability, even if it means a 180 degree reversal from values or practices that have generated profits in the past. These are not simply events occurring in Oregon, which has been known to be advanced in certain ways (much of that is illusion; some of it is true). This is typical of the business community in general. There's an enormous amount of information moving around. The game that's going on is "how do you make money from what has now become fashionable?" I expect that the utilities, for example, in addition to selling insulation will get into the business of marketing solar packages, hydro packages, wind generators for rural areas and anything else that will turn a profit.

It's an extremely interesting time when most people involved in high finance know that the stability of the system is so fragile that if enough people don't support the ideas that are tried and tested and make sense, that they'll blow the entire experiment. This was particularly true of conversations in New York City where most of the orientation and dialogue had to do with increasing prospects for nuclear war. Partly because New York is United Nations headquarters, policy booths have been set up on the streets, closed-circuit TV cameras have been set up in front of foreign missions because of bombings and so forth. It's increasingly tense. The Second Special Session on Disarmament is coming up in the spring of next year and many people are now asking the most basic questions in the most unlikely places you can possibly imagine.

What I'm hearing is that it's easy to go talk about whatever

things you're interested in working with and talking to the people about what you're doing if you've got something that fits any way at all with the kind of public image and corporate direction that might make sense. Now is the time to do it; you can't be too outrageous. I believe that so strongly—I can't find the words to impress more strongly that I believe that's true. How long that window will remain open is a big question.

I have travelled all over the world talking energy policy with all kinds of people and never found such receptivity to these kinds of ideas as I have in the past few months. And the diversity of support is totally astonishing. Ultra-liberal people, very conservative people, very young people, very old people, all wanting to take some

*What I found in the White House was extraordinary receptivity.*

common sense and figure some way to make the money system do it. I love it. It's exciting. Someone asked me recently whether I think it's foolish to continue working towards all of these wonderful goals when our country is manufacturing plutonium and we'll probably all blow up. My instinctive response was "we'll never blow up in a nuclear war—it's not profitable." I hadn't even thought of that before. It just kind of flew out. That is, in a way, my consolidated interpretation of what I've been hearing, what I've been exchanging with people these past few months. □□

—Joel Schatz

## ACCESS

## WORK

***Honest Business: A Superior Strategy for Starting and Managing Your Own Business* by Michael Phillips and Salli Rasberry, 1981, 209 pp., \$6.00 from:**

**Random House  
201 E. 50th St.  
New York, NY 10022**

If you're thinking of starting a small business, or even if you already have, you may find this book to be indispensable. "Being honest is a superior way to do business. Being open about business is important, beneficial and necessary. . . . The authors have worked with over 450 open businesses [the Bay Area's Briarpatch Network] in the past eight years. Of these, less than five percent have since failed." They ought to know. Phillips, who co-authored with Rasberry the successful *Seven Laws of Money*, is a former vice-president of the Bank of California and was a key organizer of Mastercharge (now Mastercard).

In this handbook-of-sorts they outline, with numerous examples, the principles and methods of honest business, from studying and opening the books to honest business management. The chapter called "Short Bits of Advice" is a mini-encyclopedia of essential information, which alone is worth the price of the book. The people and businesses the authors describe in illustrating their points are at least as interesting as the honest business techniques they employ. Filled with models, methods and inspiration, the book is clear, direct and refreshing!

The book's only weak part is the discussion of "honest business in the broader context"—stuck in the back under "Appendix B." The authors skirt over the relation of "honest business" to "benign capitalism" and sidestep the issue of business' responsibility (not just goodwill) to its community. Likewise, the questions of growth and scale are addressed apart from concerns such as worker control (not just profit sharing), which somewhat sterilizes the political implications of honest business.

Those who see "the system" as "the problem" might be a little put off by stories of enlightened California entrepreneurs, but they would be sadly mistaken to dismiss the message of *Honest Business*. Open, honest business has proved very successful in major industries in West Germany and Japan as well as in the co-ops and boutiques of the West Coast. It is also the guiding philosophy, claim the authors, behind the successes of J.C. Penney, A.P. Giannini (founder of the Bank of America), Theodore N. Vail

(founder of American Telephone and Telegraph Co.) and William Cooper Procter (of Procter and Gamble—"honest return for an honest dollar").

*Honest Business* will not tell you how to make a lot of money. In examining the facts and fancy of money the authors tackle the illusions that money provides freedom, respect or security. "Rather than seeking possessions, develop strong friendships and become an interesting person. . . . You can have a great deal of freedom and respect during your life and security in your old age." What *Honest Business* will tell you is how to start in business and how to *stay* in business—you could hardly ask for more. —MR

A few quotes from *Honest Business*:

- Tradeskill is the cluster of attributes that allow people to effectively start and run a business. The people who have this set of attributes find them extremely valuable in their business lives. These attributes can be boiled down to four: persistence; the ability to face the facts; knowing how to minimize risks; and being a hands-on learner. Each of these is a necessary element of tradeskill, yet none of them individually is sufficient for business success.

- What are the things we can learn about our businesses from studying the books? Two good things are: what days off you can take, and when you can take a vacation.

- To survive the onslaught of the mammoth agency [the IRS], keep accurate records and pay your business taxes. If you are not withholding your employees' taxes in your business when you should be, we suggest that your resulting anxiety is probably not worth it. Partnership is the solution we suggest. In the long run, you'll find that the emotional benefits of openness are worth finding a way to achieve it.

- The concept of community is significantly different from the traditional business view of "the market."

- In the successful collective, the issues of administration are separated from the issues of decision making. Individuals are selected from the collective to administer the decisions and report back to the decision making body.

- Should you incorporate your business? There are four alternatives to incorporation: form a cooperative, operate a muddle, be a sole proprietor or become a partnership.

- If you have a business that can avoid having employees, don't hire any.

- Instead of "marketing plan," substitute the phrase, "two-year budget projection with explanations." Nearly everyone in business can tell you how to do this, and recognize one when it is done. Most of all, those people can realistically appreciate how unreliable such a projection can be in the real world.

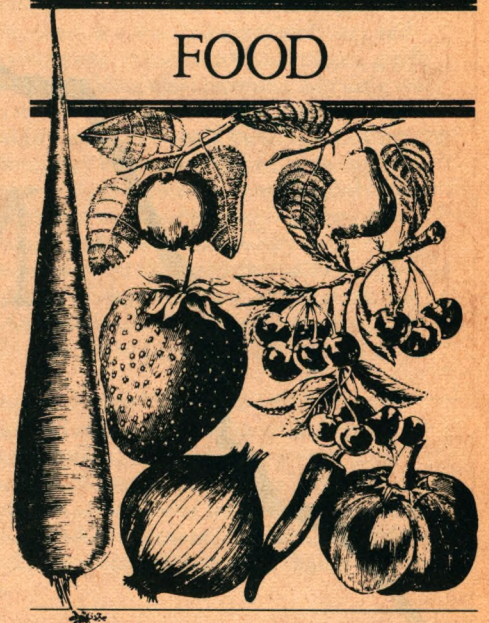
- "A partnership is a divorce agreement

signed when the parties involved are still in love."

- The unfortunate fact is that one out of five sexual relationships end with antagonism and sometimes hostility between partners. Thus, if your business relationship is important, it's not worth the 20 percent chance of jeopardizing that. Otherwise, you may have to quit your job or fire someone or do something drastic that will probably end up to be out of proportion to the sexual rewards in the first place.

- Retirement is not discussed here. We don't know clearly what it is. Some people seem to have "retired" at age twenty-four, and others like Bucky Fuller never retire.

## FOOD



***Solar Food Dryer*, by Ray Wolf, 88 pp., \$14.95 from:**

**Rodale Plans  
Rodale Press  
33 E Minor Street  
Emmaus, PA 18049**

Though not particularly elegant in appearance, this latest useful item from the Rodale workshops is one of the better designs I've seen. The simple front/back pass air collector utilizes a downdraft baffle for increasing airflow through the dryer, and there is room for an electric backup for supplementing the solar heat if necessary. In general, it looks like it should work pretty well. The book is geared for beginners, with clear plans and instructions, and includes some useful information on food drying and storage times. Like the other books in this series, it also contains a considerable amount of fluff and is vastly overpriced, one of my pet peeves. Rather than attempting to appeal to the hot tub hobby farmer set, Rodale would do well to stick with a tighter, less slick format that is more affordable. —KB



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*Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*  
by Ellen Cantarow, Susan Gushee O'Mally and Sharon Hartman  
Strom, 1980, 166 pp., \$4.75 from:  
The Feminist Press  
Box 334  
Old Westbury, NY 11568

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# MOVING THE MOUNTAIN



*Moving the Mountain* is an unusual, useful, and powerful book. It is at once an introduction and a contribution to recent American history (and, especially, herstory); it brings us as close to its subjects—three women active in the social struggles of this century—as any good novel does to its main characters; it illustrates how to use interviews, or “oral history,” so that events and movements come to life and can be understood from the perspective of those who engaged in them.

The book draws most of its power from the lives and voices of its three women: Florence Luscomb, now in her nineties, who has worked in feminist, labor and peace movements for over seventy years; Ella Jo Baker, a civil rights organizer who developed cooperatives in black communities during the Depression and helped form SNCC (the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee), a key organization in the 1960s struggle of black Americans for political equality; and Jessie Lopez De La Cruz, the first woman organizer for the United Farm Workers, who has recently joined with other Mexican-American ex-migrant workers to purchase land and operate a successful cooperative farm. Taped in hours of sensitive interviews, Luscomb, Baker, and De La Cruz reflect on the movements they helped form and still influence, on their personal and political

development, on the strains and satisfaction of lives committed to social change, often at the cost of other concerns, such as those of family life. All three emerge as real and many-sided—independent, perceptive, strong-willed, humorous. We learn not only what they did and when and why, but how they felt and feel about those long years of dedicated, and often lonely and frustrating, activity. This by itself makes the book a rare one, for studies of activists too frequently turn them into historical monuments—distant, one-dimensional, preachy. *Moving the Mountain*, on the contrary, reads like a collection of fresh and life-filled letters. The authors have edited their interviews around key questions and provided background information and occasional analysis, but they wisely refrain from tidying everything up. The result is a labor of care and love: filled with starts and stops, thoughts and afterthoughts and with the vibrant coherence of whole human beings who have preserved their integrity over decades of struggle.

Thus, Florence Luscomb not only takes us through the Woman's Suffrage and Labor movements in the first third of this century, but tells us why she never chose to marry and why she feels men will be “very great gainers” from the feminist changes still to come. Ella Baker conveys the “deep sense of . . . being part of humanity,” ac-

quired in part from her early family life, on which she built her conception of community organizing (e.g., start where the people are, re-establish bonds of unity between the poor and not-so-poor, appreciate whatever contribution ordinary people can make to the struggle). And she reveals conflicts within the black civil rights movement, in particular, how she challenged "male-dominated leadership" to ensure that crucial decisions would be made by those living "under the heel" of racial oppression and by those young southern students who combatted that oppression at the risk of their own lives. And from Jesse De La Cruz, we find out about the degrading and criminal conditions of farmworkers (rampant sickness, malnutrition, and unsanitary housing; \$7.35 in wages for a ten-hour day, as late as the 1950s) and how the UFW, after years of failure, finally became strong enough to reverse most of those conditions. But we learn as well of her own development late in life, from a full-time wife and mother of six children who viewed politics as "something foreign, something I didn't know about. . . . *True Romance* was my thing" into a courageous and articulate field organizer, adept at coping with hostile police spraying tear gas and

*With no little envy I have watched as members of my family, progressive and conservative, teen-aged and elderly, have all been touched and engaged by it.*

pesticide on strikers and with teamsters armed with clubs, dogs, and "huge rings."

The uses of this book are as varied as its protagonists. For anyone interested in his/herstory, it illustrates how face-to-face interviews can rescue important and neglected areas of common past; for organizers and social critics/theorists, it sheds light on how to build and maintain organizations that do not become top-heavy with age, and it provides models of organizers who have not been "burned out," but remain intact and resilient despite years of setbacks and dead-ends. And it gives us all a vivid (and to my mind, unsurpassed) sense of how women approach social transformation—the distinc-

tive supports they create, their way of using, sharing, and restraining leadership, the connections they make between friends and home-life, on one hand, and their organizational and political activities on the other.

But for me the book's most remarkable feature is its wide, seemingly universal, appeal. With no little envy, I have watched as members of my family, progressive and conservative, teen-aged and elderly, have all been touched and engaged by it. There is a kind of *magical inclusiveness* about it; it crosses boundaries easily. Though written by and about women, it speaks no less fully to men; for readers of movement magazines like *RAIN* or *Community Jobs*, it can convey much of what a career of full-time organizing is like; but at the same time, the book makes organizers seem more approachable, more credible—almost next-doorish—to those distant from, or even suspicious of, their aims. Part of this magic comes from *Moving the Mountain's* generous reliance on direct and eloquent photographs, its simple but solid and unpatronizing way of supplying essential background data, and its adroit blending of personal and activist dimensions in the lives of De La Cruz, Baker, and Luscomb. But mostly, again, the women themselves are veteran boundary crossers, and in giving us such clear access to their voices, the book itself moves a bit the mountain that usually divides us from those unlike us in sex, race, vocation or age.

*Moving the Mountain*, then, is not only an extraordinary and useful book but a hope-giving one. It can help build bridges, guide us toward new (or assist in rebuilding old) coalitions. My only reservation is that it seems to shy away from raising critical (or self-critical) questions. What (for example) would Baker, De La Cruz, or Luscomb have done differently? What assumptions or tactics did they discard along the way or do they now see as misguided? How do the three contrast in terms of vision or strategy: do they disagree, for example, on where and how contemporary social change can best take place? How far do their ideas and approaches really threaten contemporary forms of oppression and exploitation, e.g., the nuclear arms race? And how could their diverse concerns and organizations be brought together to augment their isolated impacts?

A final "summary" or "re-visions" section in which the organizers and their interviewers reflect on questions such as these would, I think, sharpen the book's focus and make it even more coherent and instructive. But the omission of such a section is a minor and reversible defect in an otherwise fertile and compelling book, which, more than any other I know of, can open the reader—almost any reader—to the heart and spirit of social change organizing. —Len Krimerman

*Len teaches philosophy at the University of Connecticut.*

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## ACCESS

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### WOMEN

*International Women and Health Resource Guide* edited by ISIS (Women's International Information and Communication Service) and the Boston Women's Health Collective, Inc., 1980, \$5 from:

Boston Women's Health Collective  
Box 192  
West Somerville, MA 02144

This 177-page annotated resource list includes references across the country and continental boundaries specific to women and health. A plethora of organizations and publications have addressed women's health issues, yet rarely, the authors claim, are these pursued from a women's perspective.

Concise descriptions of women-run, women-authored and women-oriented publications and organizations reflect both the range and similarities of women's concerns around the world. Citations are made in English, French, Spanish, Italian and German, varying according to the source. Although this first edition is geared toward English-speaking readers, future editions—a goal of the

editors—will be geared toward those of other tongues.

Interspersed throughout the *Guide* are brief article excerpts, introducing chapters on reproductive issues, women's role in health, drugs and drug companies, food, child bearing, menopause and aging, health and the environment, and self help. A brief chapter on audio-visuals features films on topics such as a sterilization program in Brazil, and women and occupational work hazards.

Organized by subject area and cross-indexed by region/country, the material in this guide is easily accessible. A valuable reference tool for anyone interested in health or women's issues. —LS

**Women in a Hungry World Study/Action Kit**, by Lucy Richardson, Gerald Ciekot and Judith Sherk, 1979, from World Hunger/Global Development Project  
 American Friends Service Committee  
 15 Rutherford Place  
 New York, NY 10003

"Agricultural extension officers visit the men, not the women, with their advice about new tools and fertilizers. . . . Intermediate technology inventions—for making bricks or better ploughshares—have almost all been directed at lightening the male workload. . . . And as women are expected in most societies only to work in connection with the home, parents do not see the same purpose in sending their girl children to school as sending their boys. Girls grow up, therefore, steeped in the old ignorant ways of their mothers. Society and home make rural women into the first enemies of progressive change." (Waking Up To Women)

*Women in a Hungry World* is a study/action guide designed to inform people of the issues facing women in developing countries, explore the relationship between their experience and our own, and educate oneself and others to take action—effectively. The guide is divided into three sections: "What's Happening to Women" (the experience of domestic workers in Peru, the impact of "modernization" on women); "Population" (the impact of unemployment and education of rural women, on attitudes toward population levels, the power relations behind family planning) and "Solution and Action Suggestions" (examples of successful programs, policy suggestions, ideas for action, and an evaluation of the US AID Program and potential). Additional readings, audio visual resources and discussion questions are included for the leader's use.

Since 1975 the role of women in development has gained recognition and the goal of "integrating women into development" has been repeatedly hailed. Slowly the needs of women are being recognized; informed and active support will move us further along.  
 —LS

## RESOURCES

**Municipal Composting: Resources for Local Officials and Community Organizations**, by David McGregor et al, 1980, 42 pp., \$4.50 ppd. from:  
 Institute for Local Self-Reliance  
 1717 18th St. NW  
 Washington, DC 20009

I wish this book could appear on the desk of every local bureaucrat burdened with such decisions as choosing a new landfill site or approving a garbage-to-energy plant. Cer-

tainly, the book is a must for citizen activists concerned with garbage and recycling. It has always made more sense to me to compost organic wastes in my own backyard, but some people (apartment dwellers) can't or won't. Starting a composting program on the neighborhood or municipal level educates people and turns organic wastes into a renewable resource instead of a landfill addition. You won't learn *how* to run a composting program from this book, but you'll get a concise introduction to the ideas (composting of yard waste; sludge, and refuse; use of earthworms; source reduction; as well as government policy and community action) and an invaluable list of resources—not only books and articles, but also addresses of municipal officials and community groups with

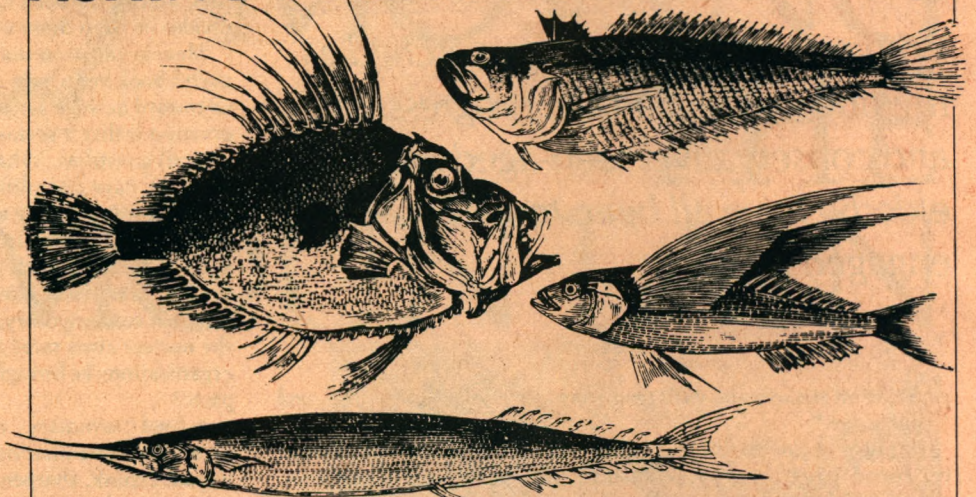
experience in some form of composting. Let's start treating garbage not as a problem, but as a resource! - TK

## GOOD THINGS

**The Daily Planet Almanac for 1982**, Terry Reim, Editor, 1982, 224 pp., \$3.95 from:  
 Planet Books  
 P.O. Box 1641  
 Boulder, CO 80306

This is my favorite book for bathroom reading. It even comes with the traditional al-

## FISHING PREDICTIONS FOR 1982



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From Daily Planet Almanac

manac punch holes so you can hang it where it'll be handy. There is more information of a somewhat random nature in each little quick-read chunk than most books put across in far more formidable formats. Learn the secrets of giant vegetables, how to forecast the weather, who started some of my favorite rumors and even a lot more practical stuff. Standard almanac fare: sunrise and set times; lunar cycles, planting info, tide tables and fishing guides are all included, too.  
—CC

***Basin and Range*, by John McPhee, 1980, 1981, 216 pp., \$10.95 hardcover, from: Farrar Straus Giroux  
19 Union Square West  
New York, NY 10003**

I was biased from the the start: John McPhee is one of my favorite writers, and I majored in geology at Princeton. McPhee writes about geology and Princeton geologists (his characterizations are right on mark!) and Nevada.

Have you ever driven through Nevada? I did, fast, on my way to Portland. There's a bar every 100 miles, a jackrabbit every 100 yards, sagebrush between jackrabbits, salt flats, test ranges, gravel roads turning into the horizon with signs like "Cortez Gold Mines, 62 miles" or "Deadhorse Well, 31 miles."

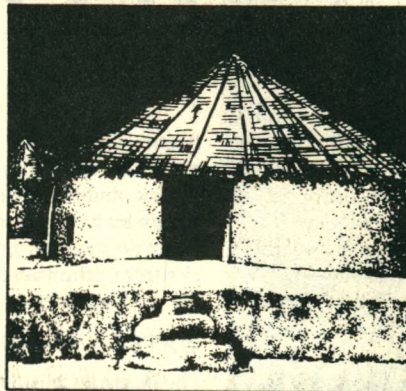
Why Nevada, of all places? McPhee wanted to learn how the New Geology was different from the Old Geology: "What I did first off was what anyone would do. I called my local geologist." His local geologist, Princeton professor Kenneth Deffeyes, told him that "This Nevada topography is what you see *during* mountain-building. This is the tectonic, active, spreading, mountain-building world." Basins and ranges are the "stretch marks of the continent." It's the cutting edge, it's where things are happening, and it's exciting.

Geology is an adventure story, what with the geological time scales and encompassing "Big Picture" that have always entranced me, but not many geologists write as if it were. Deffeyes talks and McPhee writes that way. To McPhee, maps are "as prodigally colored as drip paintings and equally formless in their worm-trail-and-paramecium depictions of the country's uppermost rock."

Like an alchemist, he absorbs the jargon of whatever subject he's writing about and turns it into enthusiasm. "Geologists communicated in English; and they could name things in a manner that sent shivers through the bones. They had roof pendants in their discordant batholiths, mosaic conglomerates in desert pavement." That's just his warm-up exercise.

This is the most exciting book I've read in a long time. You won't learn everything about geology, but what you don't learn here you'll certainly hunger for after tasting this book. (Re)discover the wonderfulness of geology. —TK

## BUILDING



From *Daily Planet Almanac*

***Adobe: A Comprehensive Bibliography*, by Rex C. Hopson, 1979, 127 Pp., \$6.95 plus \$.50 shipping from:**

**The Lightning Tree  
P.O. Box 1837  
Santa Fe, NM 87501**

Browse through the 1321 references in this book and you'll discover a long and varied history of building with earth. References are sorted into three categories: books, journal articles, and films/maps/plans.

This list would be more useful if the citations were annotated or at least if the best sources were indicated. It is a comprehensive list, though, at least up to 1979. Particularly well-covered are articles from American Southwest periodicals. —TK

***Mud, mud—the potential of earth-based material for Third World housing*, by Anil Agarwal, 1981, 100 pp., \$6.25 from:**

**Earthscan  
10 Percy Street  
London W1P 0DR  
United Kingdom**

Tubali, torchis, soddys, cajon, kacha, nogging, cob, adobe, teroni, swish, bauge, chika, pise, jalous, tapia, wattle and daub, and mud are some of the words used to describe the use of earth for building.

Gounberilles, bustees, jhuggis, callampas, gecekindu, and favelas are some names for slums or squatter settlements, where about a quarter of urban Third World populations live.

This book is about the potential of earth-based materials for Third World housing. Like a Borges story, the length of the piece belies its contents: not one muddy sentence or spare word. It is a solid, clear, concise, and comprehensive account with chapters on the housing problem, building materials, the case for mud, and country surveys—examples of mud buildings around the world (including a Detroit cooperative formed in 1942 to make rammed earth houses!).

I'm tempted to use jargon to describe the book. Agarwal gives examples of poor people preferring a high-status but substandard cement block tin-roofed house to a lower status but high quality mud house. I'm tempted to call this the "gray revolution"—the introduction of a piece of American or European technology with no regard for local climate, needs, or resources. Echoing the thoughts of most architects and planners, Hassan Fathy realized that "we, with our modern school-learned ideas, never dreamed of using such a ludicrous substance as mud for so serious a creation as a house." (Fathy, an Egyptian architect, wrote *Architecture for the Poor*—reviewed in RAIN I:9.)

And what could be more appropriate technology than building with mud? Not only is it cheap and readily available, but mud houses are cooler in summer and warmer in winter than concrete houses. Various indigenous architectures have evolved to cope with the idiosyncracies of mud: vaulted roofs instead of unstable flat roofs, additions of other materials to stabilize and waterproof the mud, overhanging eaves to prevent water erosion, platforms of baked bricks to eliminate water seepage from the ground. Without architects, most societies have created beautifully designed and crafted forms of shelter suited to the bioregion and the needs of the people. (Five and six-story houses are made out of mud in Yemen!)

Agarwal also advocates self-help, quoting Fathy: "One man cannot build a house, but 10 men can build 10 houses."

Facts presented honestly, in a soft voice, have real power. We read of a housing project that, because of bureaucratic delays, doubled the cost of houses being built cooperatively—from \$150 to \$300. Our concern over rising housing costs pales in the face of statistics on housing costs in other parts of the world. In Madras, for example, 63% of the households can't afford to buy a \$570 dwelling (average cost) because they don't make the minimum monthly income of \$36 required to repay the \$5 due each month on the house. My own book-lined garret feels extravagant compared to what most of the people in the world live in.

Read this book not for any "romantic notion about earth buildings or about living in harmony with nature," but for excellent information on the potential of mud for basic shelter and for insights into how people live in the rest of the world—a good lesson in cultural relativism. Put it on your bookshelf next to *Food First*; it's that good. Highly recommended. —TK

# WHITHER WA

By Diane Jones

In the Pacific Northwest there are still thousands of "small" irrigated family farms—160 to 500 acres. But the new wave in agricultural development is the monolithic spread: thirty thousand acres of green circles, revolving automated center-pivot sprinkler systems, monoculture. Some of these large spreads are owned by families—wealthy ones; others are owned by large corporations—U and I, Inc., Prudential Life Insurance Company, Burlington Northern Railroad. Although many family farmers do not feel threatened by the presence of these giant competitors, statistics from the last 30 years spell the demise of family farming and its replacement with large-scale agribusiness. In Oregon, Washington and Idaho, we have lost close to 3000 farms each year since 1950. Between 1950 and 1974, the number of irrigated farms in the Northwest decreased by 22,000, while the amount of irrigated acreage increased by 1.7 million acres and the average size of an irrigated farm almost tripled. But, for us non-farmers, what difference does all this make?

There are plenty of good arguments for preserving or returning to a family farming system. These arguments have to do with equity of land distribution, the avoidance of a petroleum-based monopoly in our food production system, the proven greater production efficiency of the single family farm over larger entities, and the applicability of appropriate, energy-saving, non-polluting and possibly organic technologies to family-scale farming. But beyond these mostly philosophical arguments is the fact that important public resources—water, energy, and in some cases land—are being used in the Pacific Northwest to promote the growth of large-scale agribusiness. Thus, if we care about the allocation of these resources, or about our pocketbooks when it comes time to pay our electricity bills, then the issue of irrigated agribusiness becomes our business, too.

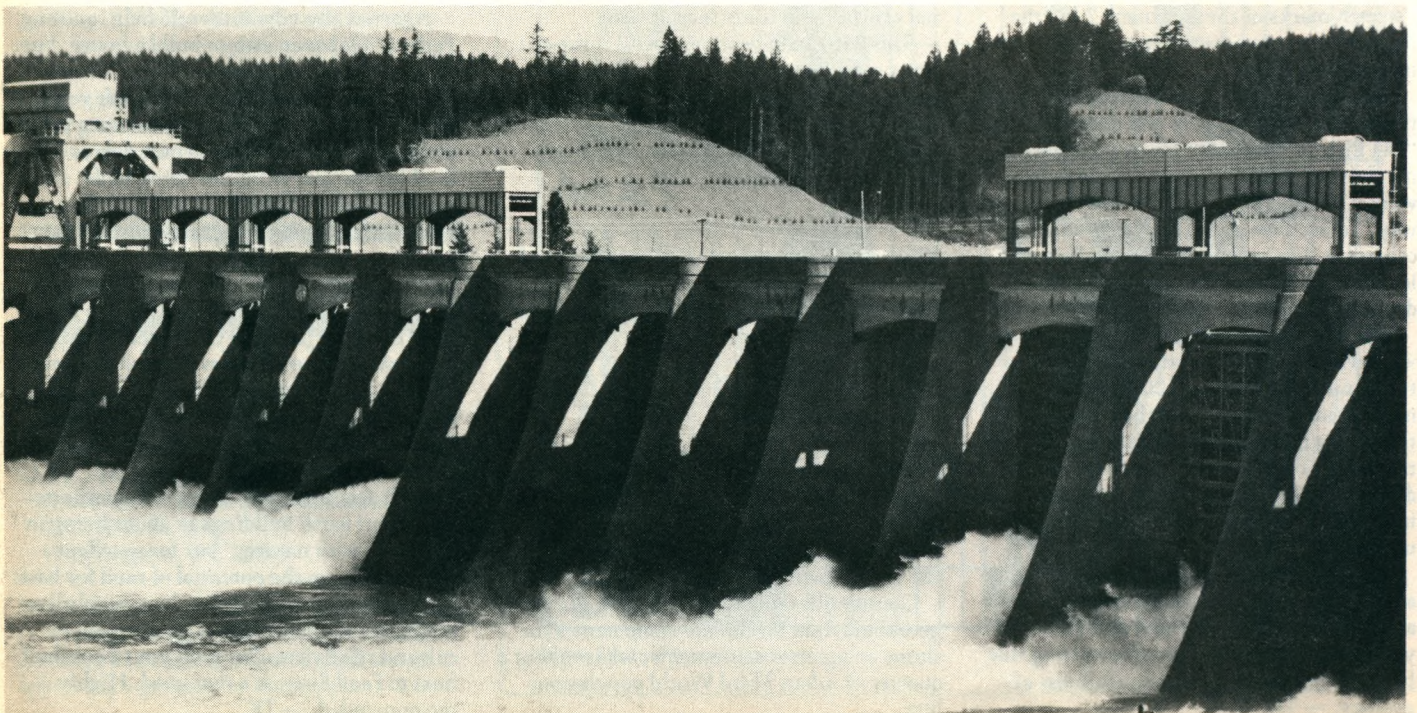
Seventy-five percent of the Pacific Northwest's agricultural pro-

duction comes from the east of the Cascades, in the arid basins of the Snake and Columbia rivers. Irrigated acreage in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho now stands at about eight million acres, having grown by nearly one million acres during the last decade. The three states predict that growth will continue, with the addition of another three million acres of irrigated land over the next 30 or 40 years.

## WATER AND ENERGY—PUBLIC SUBSIDIES

The mighty Columbia River and its tributaries, including the Snake, are the lifeblood of the Pacific Northwest. Originating at Columbia Lake in the Canadian Rockies and flowing 1200 river miles to the Pacific Ocean, this vast river system drains 259,000 square miles and generates nearly 80 percent of the region's electricity. Yet, as vast and formidable a resource as the Columbia River may seem, virtually all of its water is already claimed for one or more useful purposes.

Irrigation diversions do not occur year round—they are concentrated in the summer months, and so is the effect on streamflows. For example, future irrigation depletions could reduce the August flows of the Columbia at The Dalles, Oregon, by as much as 30% in a drought year. August flows on the Snake River at Hells Canyon could be reduced by nearly half in an average year, or 55% in a drought year. These figures, which indicate the proposed magnitude of future diversions, also point at major impacts in terms of fish runs, wildlife habitat, recreation, and navigation. Dependent upon the availability of water is another vital resource, hydropower. This resource is "public" in the sense that it is generated with publicly-owned water. All of the dams on the main-stem Columbia were publicly constructed, by the federal government or by public utilities. Even a private utility such as Idaho Power Company, with dams on the Snake River, is publically regulated and its dams are



# TER?

paid for by ratepayers.

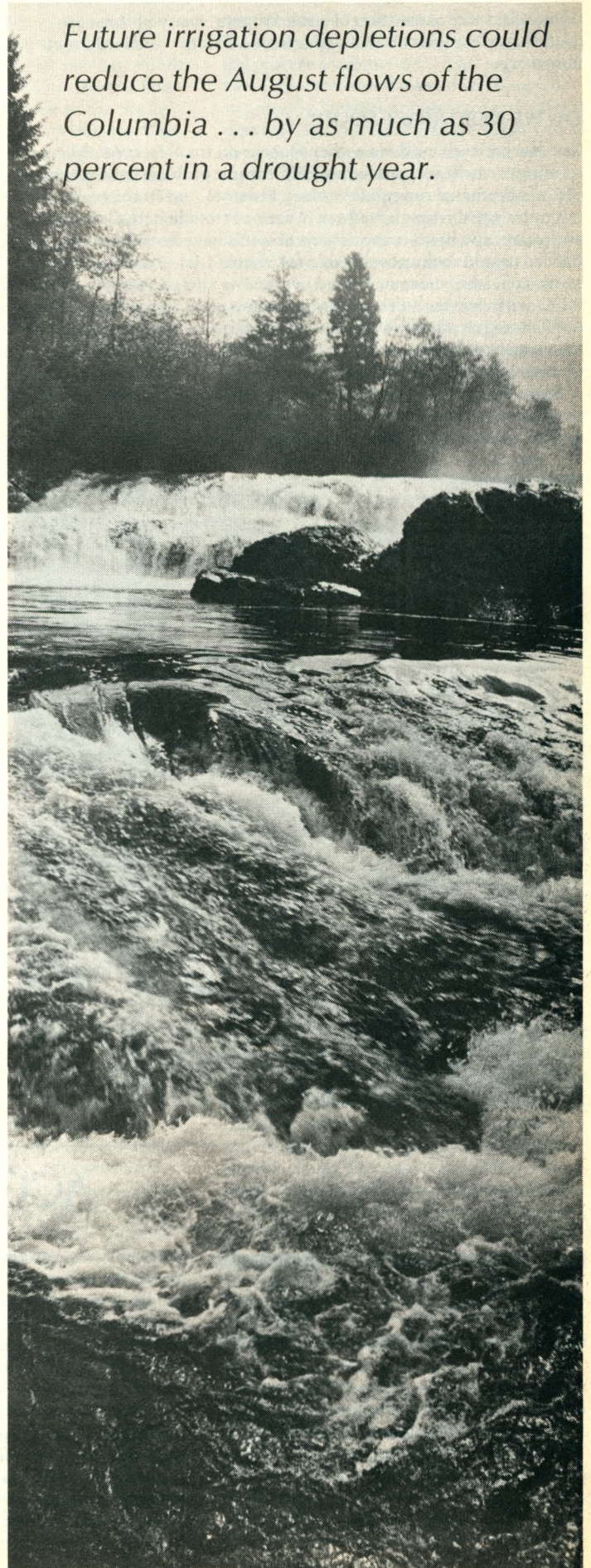
Because virtually all of the water in the Snake/Columbia system is used to produce hydropower, any increases in streamflow diversions for agriculture or other purposes result in a loss of hydropower production. The problem with losing hydropower is that this relatively cheap energy source will have to be replaced by more expensive power supplies. The Northwest has long enjoyed low-priced electricity due to the abundance of hydropower in the region; but recent and upcoming large rate increases on the part of the region's private and public utilities reflect their growing reliance on coal and nuclear sources, which produce power at 30 to 60 times the cost of existing hydro facilities.

Planned irrigation development, which will divert large quantities of river water, therefore involves a direct tradeoff with energy production. According to Dr. Norman Whittlesey, a Washington State University economist, if only 5% of the Northwest's hydropower production (about 5 billion kilowatt hours per year) were lost and replaced with thermal generation, the average cost of Northwest electricity would rise nearly 30%. Unfortunately, not everybody benefits from new irrigation development, but virtually everybody pays the higher rates.

Furthermore, irrigation development requires large amounts of electricity to pump water onto the land. Since most land with easy access to water has long since been developed, the new sites either have high pump lifts, as much as 800 or 900 feet in some places, or are located long distances from the river, sometimes 15 to 30 miles. The amount of electricity to pump large quantities of water that far is staggering.

The rising electricity rates that accompany new agricultural development compound the problem for existing farmers. Unlike utility companies, small irrigators simply cannot pass on the increased costs of electricity production to the consumer. As evidenced by the

*Future irrigation depletions could reduce the August flows of the Columbia . . . by as much as 30 percent in a drought year.*



# WET FIELDS OR WATER POWER?

tremendous rate of attrition of small farmers, many of them are operating in the jaws of a cost-price squeeze from which they may not emerge.

### DO WE NEED MORE FOOD?

The market itself creates another squeeze on small farmers. Many existing farmers are contending with chronic problems of oversupply and depressed commodity prices. Potatoes, one of the region's major irrigated crops, have been in serious trouble in the last several years, and literally mountains of spuds have been dumped, burned or sold to the government for animal feed. Recently, potato growers in Idaho have succeeded in *reducing* their acreage by about 10%, with the result that prices have again gone up to a reasonable level. Recognizing this situation, potato farmers in eastern Idaho have organized to try to discourage any further irrigation development in the Columbia basin.

Since there is little market locally or nationally for increased production of major commodities, developing new markets overseas is the key to future agricultural expansion in the Northwest. Experts



predict that Northwest wheat exports will double by the end of the century and that exports of french fried potatoes and other processed fruits and vegetables will also increase considerably.

Basing an agricultural system on export, however, has its problems. In a recent report, the U.S. General Accounting Office warns that "Policies to foster foreign sales have put agriculture in a precarious position. Agriculture's new role in the economy has made U.S. farmers vulnerable to the uncertainties of world market conditions and as a result has placed the U.S. in a position which may demand increased government activity to help buffer fluctuations in supply and demand."

Furthermore, there is serious doubt whether expanded agricultural production will actually have a positive effect in balancing our foreign trade deficit (incurred through energy imports) if *all* costs are taken into account. According to University of Idaho agricultural economist Joel Hamilton, when a crop such as irrigated grain in the Snake/Columbia Basin is produced through a massive energy subsidy, that production is not something for which the United States enjoys a comparative advantage. Instead, Hamilton suggests that new irrigated land development "has far more potential for damaging the balance of payments than it does for helping."

### WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM NEW IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT?

Irrigation development in the Pacific Northwest over the last ten years has been almost exclusively in the form of large-scale, mechanized farms, and there is no reason to believe that this will not continue. The establishment of large agribusiness enterprises has only served to make times harder for struggling family farmers. According to University of Idaho economist Leroy Blakeslee, if 100,000 acres of prime desert land proposed for development in south Idaho were irrigated and used to grow potatoes, 80 to 90% of the new production would simply *replace* potato production on existing land. Existing farmers would have to figure out something else to grow, or go out of business; there would be little net increase in potato supply, only a change in the supplier.

Given the fact that public resources—water and energy—go into the development of irrigated agriculture, the public deserves to be aware of the direction of this development and should be involved in decisions about it. Should we be subsidizing, through our electricity rate and through provision of our public waters, the establishment of large agribusiness, when these same resources, well-managed, could be used to encourage family farming? Should our resources be used for new production which is headed primarily for an export market? Should they be used to open up new lands which by creating competition and higher electricity prices will simply force existing land out of production? The answers to these questions concerning our most basic industry—food production—will have an impact on us all. □□

## ACCESS

### AGRICULTURE

***Endangered Harvest: The Future Bay Area Farmland, by People for Open Space, 1980, 80 pp., \$5.00 from: People for Open Space 46 Kearny San Francisco, CA 94108***

The accelerated loss of agricultural land is

gradually gaining national attention. California, the major produce exporter in the nation, is no exception to this trend. The nine counties of the Bay Area region produced an annual crop value of \$750 million in 1980, fully half as much as Oregon. Yet of 2.8 million acres in production in 1949, 708,000 have been pulled out of production, with a chunk two-thirds the size of San Francisco shut down annually. While a variety of reasons account for the loss of farmland, urban sprawl is one of the key factors. Generously illustrated with photographs, *Endangered Harvest* creates an intimate portrayal of its subject matter—the *living*

farmbelt. It is a portrait particularly useful for urbanites. Who are these farmers and what do they grow? What is the value of the farmbelt—economically, culturally, environmentally—and what is the effect of its loss? Who loses and how?

The book concludes with a chapter on strategies. The authors suggest an approach that deals with the issue on a regional level—a method that has been used successfully for other Bay Area issues such as mass transit. Regardless of the specific method used, *Endangered Harvest* provides a useful backdrop to the issue, fostering the mutual ties between urban and rural dwellers. —LS

*Water, Energy & Land—Public Resources and Irrigation Development in the Pacific Northwest: Who Benefits and Who Pays*, Idaho Citizens Coalition, 1981, 109 pp., \$5.00 from:

Idaho Citizens Coalition  
216 N. 8th St., Rm 604  
Boise, ID 83702

The idea of a water shortage in Oregon seems absurd as I look out my window on our fourth straight day of rain. Yet the fact remains, increasing demands for a finite supply of water are depleting Oregon's groundwater supplies. A host of reasons can be offered for this, among them urban growth, energy development, projects and irrigation of farmlands. Each of these contributes to a problem that has intensified

with our rapid population growth. The Idaho Citizens Coalition report, *Water, Energy and Land* offers a probing and insightful analysis of one aspect of that tension. Public subsidies in the form of higher electric bills have played a significant role in the development of this region's agriculture. The expanded use of irrigation in agriculture, a trend that is expected to continue, is examined in light of its impact on the region: The demise of the fishing industry, the expansion of industrial farms, the loss of family farms, and increased agricultural exports. Amply documented and clearly written, *Water, Energy and Land* poses a challenge to the current path of agricultural development and the justification for the use of a public subsidy for irrigation. The accompanying article explores some of the arguments contained in the book. —LS

Skolimowski argues that "knowledge does not provide enlightenment but confusion; the amassing of information only furthers the process of alienation." This is evidenced by an unprecedented scale of learning (and supposedly knowledge) occurring in conjunction with an unprecedented estrangement of persons from one another and their environment. "The cause must lie, then, in the nature of the knowledge we pursue. Knowledge alienated from the human mind and human values in turn de-sensitizes and alienates the people who acquire that knowledge. . . . The twilight of scientific reason, which we are witnessing today, is not necessarily the twilight of humanity. Scientific reason will have to wane and to release us from its overpowering tentacles so that we can repair the strained relation between knowledge and values."

What Skolimowski proposes is an alternative to alienated knowledge, an attempt to integrate knowledge and values. "Eco-philosophy insists that the human project is a re-discovery of human meaning, related to the meaning of the universe."

After demonstrating the ecological and holistic inadequacy of contemporary philosophy and neatly disposing of several major philosophers, past and present, Skolimowski reins in on architecture, arguing that alienated space is the visible expression of an alienated, mechanistic philosophy. The true purpose of architecture, he claims, is "to continue, enhance, and celebrate life." So far so good.

A bit later he argues that "real progress is not made by loud, ostentatious, pushy majorities, scientific or otherwise. It is made by small and obstinate minorities." This is certainly true in an evolutionary sense, and some interpretations of social history concur as well. So far still OK.

Where Skolimowski goes overboard, however, is with this statement: "In our lowbrow culture, which is so often proletarian in the worst sense, the architect must assert his role as a patrician, must lead instead of bowing to acquisitive and material preferences. . . . the egalitarian ethos (or the anti-elitist stance) too often tends to be standard, undistinguished, careless and morbid, thus ultimately leading to anti-quality spaces." Yug! That may be a valid assessment of typical suburban developments, but some of us "lowbrows" have been designing and building spaces that are environmentally sensitive and pro-quality for many years now, and the last thing we need is a class of (even benign) architect-patricians telling us what to do!

It's too bad. This book is great ammunition for those taxing discussions with conventional philosophers who don't seem able to understand anything but philosophese. What Skolimowski needs to do now is descend from the ivory tower, walk down the hill, and discover the social ecologists, appropriate technologists and others who, without waiting for him to pave their way, built the road in the first place. —MR

*A RIVER is more than an amenity,  
it is a treasure. It offers a necessity of life  
that must be rationed among those  
who have power over it.*

JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, 1931

## PHILOSOPHY

*Eco-Philosophy*, by Henryk Skolimowski, 1981, 117 pp., \$6.95 from:

Marion Boyers, Inc.  
99 Main St.  
Salem, NH 03079

*Alternative life styles do not [only] require living differently but also knowing differently. We must be able to provide a rational justification for our new life styles, which will amount to nothing less than providing a new rationality. We must be convinced in our hearts and minds that frugality is not a depressing abnegation and self-de-*

*nial but an act of positive manifestation of new qualities; only then will it become elegant frugality. Therefore, alternative life-styles must signify not only changes in our technology, economics and patterns of living, but changes in our morality, rationality, and conceptual thinking. . . . The overall aim [of Ecological Humanism] is not only to provide a new philosophy but, above all, to provide a new purpose, a new inspiration and a new hope for mankind; to pave the way for new tactics for living.*

With this ambitious objective set out in front of him, Professor Skolimowski attempts to outline a systematic "eco-philosophy." Apparently this is the first time this project has been undertaken by a professional philosopher. Professional philosophers will want to read this book. Amateur philosophers will be happier reading this review.



# HELPING OURSELVES

## Reality vs Rhetoric

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*Some months ago (RAIN VII:9) we told you about Bruce Stokes' important new book, Helping Ourselves: Local Solutions to Global Problems. The book, as we noted then, is "a superb synthesis of self-help concepts and strategies," and it is one we can turn to often here at RAIN as a source of good insights and inspiration. Recently, I had an opportunity to visit with Stokes in his office at the Worldwatch Institute (Washington, D.C.) where we had the following discussion. —JF*

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**RAIN:** In his article "Involuntary Self-Reliance" (RAIN VII: 9,5) Steve Rudman cites examples of a recognition among some political conservatives that there is a need for government to assist community "mediating structures"—churches, voluntary groups, and neighborhood associations. Do you see any evidence that this position is gaining strength within the Reagan administration?

**Stokes:** I see just the opposite, unfortunately. The Reagan administration is rhetorically committed to the voluntary sector, but practically speaking, their initiatives again and again undermine it. They have this "pie in the sky" view of the voluntary sector—that somehow, if we just leave people alone, they will self-initiate and do all of these creative things. That is so unrealistic! It's just not dealing with the realities that people have to face out there on a day-to-day level in terms of financial constraints, in terms of organizational, technical and structural constraints, and in terms of motivation. The reality is that people do often need a bit of incentive and push, and providing that is a role that government can logically and consistently play. The Reagan administration is pulling back from that, so you see things like Reagan tax policies which the Urban Institute has shown will reduce giving to the voluntary sector, because as you reduce the upper income bracket of taxation, you reduce the advantages of giving away a dollar to a voluntary organization. The budget cuts are going to reduce the amount of federal money that goes to the voluntary sector . . . and you see cutbacks on the very programs that were designed to help the voluntary sector help itself: elimination of H.U.D.'s Office of Self-Help Development, the cutback on the Co-op Bank and the attempt to eliminate the Solar and Conservation Bank.

**RAIN:** It's the "philosophically neat" position you talk about in *Helping Ourselves*: sink or swim, do it on your own. No seed money.

**Stokes:** Right. And you realize what's going to happen. It means that the United Funds of the world are going to live. They're organized. It's the housing co-ops, the newly-founded energy co-ops and the community garden groups that are going to suffer, and many of them will go under. You know, the United Fund has had a great deal of pressure on it to open itself up to non-establishment activi-

ties, but if, in fact, private and public giving to voluntary organizations declines, I think you're going to see people like the United Fund say "we've got to pull our horns in; we have to protect our old establishment activities." That makes things even worse, because it's a double whammy for the progressive self-help groups in the community.

**RAIN:** They can talk about establishing an alternative United Fund, but it's not easy.

**Stokes:** Sure. The blacks, for instance, have done that, and in some cases have been able to get into major corporations, but there you have a very definable goal and a definable group. Among progressive and alternative groups that we're talking about, the community is not as closely defined.

**RAIN:** One suggestion for community group funding which has come from the conservative side is the Neighborhood Improvement Voucher Plan proposed by Reagan advisor John McClaughry (see RAIN VII:9,8). This would involve giving each resident of a neighborhood a government voucher which would then be partially matched by the resident's own contribution and deposited in the account of any of a number of self-help projects which the resident considered legitimate and deserving of support. There would be a varying ratio of government to individual money depending on

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*People do often need a bit of incentive and push. Providing that is a role that government can logically and consistently play.*

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how poor the particular neighborhood was. Do you see any potential problems with such a program?

**Stokes:** I like the idea, but I think it might be a little too democratic for its own good. You might create a situation where, with every citizen having, in essence, a vote, some of the more progressive ideas might never get funded, because you would first have to convince a large number of people that they were good ideas for the community. Unfortunately, in many cases, you need several years

to do some educating, do some pilot projects. Lord knows that we wouldn't have moved very far at all in appropriate technology and solar energy in this country without some government money in there doing some of the seed work. My guess is things would have moved much more slowly if we had left it totally up to the people in the local community to vote with their dollars because some of the projects on paper seemed a bit far out, and some of the salespeople for those projects were a bit far out.

One of the issues I raised in *Helping Ourselves* is that there should be neighborhood councils that have a certain amount of money which they can allocate to different self-help projects. I think one of the values of that idea is that you can develop a group of five or ten people at the community level and, through communication and exposure, get them up to speed in terms of what are some of the more progressive things they do in the community. It's a far more difficult thing to do that across the board in almost a voter education effort. What is needed is to set up situations where the people who have control are *accountable* to the public, and that's why you have to have a decentralized government form: so they can be very accountable. But to make it a *pure* democracy at that level—I don't find it dangerous, I just think it would be slow. RAIN: Another point you make in the book is that existing social networks in the community—the churches, the Kiwanis clubs, etc.—should be used to spread self-help values. Have you seen much evidence of a shift in emphasis toward self-help among these kinds of organizations?

Stokes: No. There's been no concerted effort to get to them. I've been trying to do some articles for their magazines to raise that issue. It's especially important given the Reagan initiatives on voluntarism. The old-style voluntarism is passé, and the new style is self-help. The level of traditional voluntarism has not increased much at all in the last decade and that's understandable. More women (who once made up the prime resource for voluntary activity) have entered the workforce. Inflation has forced people to either work more or do more for themselves, and that has led to a real upsurge in self-help voluntarism—either individually (planting a garden, putting a solar collector on one's roof) or community-oriented in terms of things like weatherization. The importance of the Kiwanis clubs, women's home auxiliaries and so on is that they can help turn self-help voluntarism (which as I said, is often inwardly directed) outward into the community. They have the experience, the know-how, the legitimacy in the community to do that kind of thing. As irrelevant as the Kiwanis clubs have been in many communities other than as old boy networks for the small businessman, their record of good deeds in raising money for crippled children and so on has, over time, built up a certain trust, and it's important to see to what extent one can work with these groups.

But I also see a whole lot of potential problems there. The best example of that I can think of is my mother is president of the hospital auxiliary in my home town. They raise scads of money for the hospital and put in thousands of volunteer hours. But they use the money they raise to buy things like CAT scanners. I pointed out to my mother that that was an incredibly capital intensive piece of technology and asked if they had ever considered using the money to hire part-time physician assistant types who could do door-to-door health care planning and in that way cut down the strain on the medical care system as well as improve the people's health. No. It was just an idea which had never crossed their minds.

RAIN: You describe in *Helping Ourselves* how self-reliant values flow out of personal involvement in self-help projects. For example, by getting involved in an energy conservation program, people come to realize how their personal behavior relates to dwindling energy resources. Yet you also note that many people don't make the first move to become involved because of an apathy or fear of taking risks which is rooted in long-term poverty or powerlessness. Do you have any thoughts on ways that this barrier can be overcome—that existing community groups can draw the net wider and encourage more people to make the first move?

Stokes: That's a good point. It's an issue I only deal with slightly in the book because I don't have a whole lot of what I consider to be very firm well thought out answers. I think we have to realize that the history of organizing in this country, or any country, is a history of two steps forward, one step back. We're talking about moving a very large and ponderous system, turning it in a totally new direction, so the failure rate is going to be real high. And we will get discouraged and burn out, there's no doubt about that. But hopefully we can reduce that to a bare minimum and hopefully we can take some of the negative side of organizing—what you're saying about people being difficult to organize because they've been beaten

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## We need people to say "No, we can handle this ourselves."

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down so many times—and minimize that, too. But I don't think we can ever avoid it, because there's a utopianism involved in the idea that somehow we can devise a scheme that will bring everybody along at the same speed. It's almost a politician's technological fix: the belief that somehow we can find the perfect system rather than recognizing that maybe the chaos that is reality cannot be solved, only managed. In a political sense, the way that we manage it is to realize there's going to be a lot of fallout and a lot of people are never going to become involved. They're just too burned out or lazy or uninformed or whatever. We have to assume that's always the case, and yet, while assuming it, not lapse into an elitist approach that says "alright, that means a handful of us are really going to do it." That was Lenin's argument in *State and Revolution*—that what you need is the "vanguard of the proletariat," the party. Well, that led to the party running the country, and people having nothing to say about it.

RAIN: The next question is somewhat related. You refer in your book to the Mother's Clubs in Indonesia and South Korea as examples of self-help efforts which began as one-issue campaigns (birth control) and gradually expanded to include a whole range of economic and social issues. But, you also note that many other self-help efforts have remained one-dimensional and have been frustrated because they were not part of a broader movement for change. What are some of the elements which help successful groups like the Mother's Clubs to achieve a larger view of the world and expand their concerns?

Stokes: One element is the severe, almost desperate nature of problems facing these women. Their poverty is so all-pervasive that there are a hundred things they want to accomplish. Family planning probably wasn't even the first one on the list, but it was the first thing they could get some government money for and some government organizers to help them with. So, they had some good leadership and some good initiatives from government, coupled with really severe conditions. The programs may possibly also have been helped by the fact that in both Indonesia and South Korea there are certain sectors of the economy which are moving ahead very rapidly, leading to hope that things can get better.

I think that in the United States one of the difficulties in building the coalitions, building on different actions, is that our problems are not that severe—especially those we've been dealing with in terms of quasi-middle class organizing. For example, I organized a housing co-op in the building I lived in here in Washington. Well, we thought of taking that co-op the next step and putting in a food

co-op or maybe an energy co-op. But the reality was the people in the building weren't ready for that. They had faced a housing crisis and that's why they were gungho to do a housing co-op. But they weren't facing a food crisis. The price of food was going up, but it wasn't so severe that they were up against the wall. The local grocery store hadn't closed. . . . [Still] we had people who were socially backward and they flowered! They became very active.

**RAIN:** So even though they weren't ready to consider a food co-op, their new spirit did manifest itself in other activities they took on in the community?

**Stokes:** Yes. Probably this leads to the conclusion that I draw from the activities I talk about in the book: even if you can't show a direct one-on-one relationship where one activity builds to the next and all-of-a-sudden you have a self-reliant local community, people are being trained in citizenship, and this is the main value of the types of self-reliance projects now being engaged in the United States and around the world. People are learning how to organize meetings, how to assert themselves, how to use power, how to identify and solve problems. Those are skills which are terribly useful in crisis

situations. As society itself moves toward an economy that is increasingly unsustainable and unstable, an environmental situation that is increasingly dangerous, and a situation where the resource base is being undermined dramatically, we need citizens who are trained in the skills of crisis management. Even if that community garden we organize doesn't do a whole lot to solve food problems, people have learned some skills, and these people are going to be around to react to the next major crisis which happens in their community or in the country at large. I think as we face those crises, the tendency is going to be to move towards centralized responses—highly authoritarian. They may be corporate state responses, they may be socialist state responses, but in either case they are centralized responses—and that's undemocratic by its very nature. We need alternatives. We need people to say "No, we can handle this ourselves," and in fact repulse attempts by the centralized authority to impose a response on the community. That's the most important result of all these self-reliance activities going on: that people learn the rules of citizenship so that we can insure that we're a democracy not only in name, but in fact. □□

## ACCESS

### WRITING

***Writers in Residence: American Authors at Home*, by Glynne Robinson Betts, 1981, 159 pp., \$16.95 hardcover, from: Viking Press  
625 Madison  
New York, NY 10022**

There is more than the "just-so" arrangement of desk and window in this tour of the homes of a sampling of American writers. There is the bell clear ringing of daily rituals that led the authors in and out of some of our favorite works of literature.

Up before dawn; tucked away in her odd little "shanty" in the woods, Edna St. Vincent Millay penned poems when she couldn't sleep. Walker Percy (*Love in the Ruins*, *Lancelot*, etc.) leaves home in the morning to sit typing in the unkempt kitchen of the studio he rents.

Glynn Robinson Betts never really delineates the relationship between the workplace and the work but her photographs indicate the writers through their rooms. No easy task when the rooms are more often than not in the stiff and silent sanctuaries of museums. But all the richness of the pictures and the accompanying evocative quotes didn't content me half as much as the exoneration I found in what Christopher Lehmann-Haupt in his excellent introduction calls "an absolute cornucopia of discomfort and clutter."

The photo of Ray Bradbury grinning over the mountain of doodads on his desk cheered me. Maxine Kumin's attic study with industrious heaps of mail and other paraphernalia

filled me with relief. I've never figured out how anyone can really work amid clutter, but I've also never gotten around to eliminating my own, so I felt vindicated by the apparent disorder from which others have fashioned their works of art.

But *Writers in Residence* arouses more curiosity that it satisfies. I wanted more insights, more dialogue between place and person, more intimacy. Maybe I'm just greedy, or intrusive, but I closed the book with my appetite more whetted than sated. —CC



*Harriet Beecher Stowe's writing room.*

**From *Writers in Residence***

***Becoming a Writer, Dorothea Brande, 1981 (first published 1934), 196 pp. \$4.95 from:***

**Houghton Mifflin Co.  
2 Park Street  
Boston, MA 02107**

With very few obvious and specific modifications, Dorothea Brande's *Becoming a Writer* can serve non-writers as wholly as it does the rest of us. Her focus is not so much on the techniques of writing (i.e., grammar, spelling, plot, narrative, or character development) as on the taming and training of the unconscious mind to work in collaboration with the conscious. In 1934, long before gurus drove Rolls Royces and lived in castles (their modern-day reward for "teaching" us to sit still), Brande was offering simple techniques for inducing what she calls the "artistic coma," releasing "one's individual endowment of genius." Long before it cost \$300 or more to purchase a mantra (a little word to help shut out all the other words) Brande proposed exercises for holding "mind as well as body in a kind of suspension while the higher, or deeper, faculty was at work."

Her advice to "young writers" ranges from the particular ("rise half an hour, or a full hour, earlier than you customarily rise. Just as soon as you can—and without talking, without reading the morning paper, without picking up the book you laid aside the night before—begin to write. . . . Write any sort of early morning reverie, rapidly and uncritically") to the seemingly general ("turn yourself into a stranger in your own streets").

Brande is the wise, encouraging friend needed when our confidence *and* our creativity wanes, but she is also the master com-

manding us to choose a time each day to write and "at the moment, on *the dot* of that moment, you are to be writing . . . no excuse of any nature can be offered when the moment comes."

I can't imagine why this book fell out of print and remained so till now, but I'm delighted at its reissue. —CC

***The Synonym Finder (revised edition), by J.I. Rodale, 1978, 1361 pp., \$19.95 hardcover from:***

**Rodale Press  
33 E. Minor Street  
Emmaus, PA 18049**

RAINHOUSE MEMO  
TO: MR/CC/LS  
FROM: JF

SUBJ: editing of new article on co-ops

On second look, it seems clear that the author's use of the term "run smack in the face of" (para. 6) definitely doesn't work. You can "run smack into" and you can "fly in the face of," but you certainly can't "run smack in (or into) the face of" something unless you are incredibly careless or clumsy, it's a very dark night, and the face in question has somehow situated itself directly in your path. In other words, it's a mixed metaphor.

Our new Rodale *Synonym Finder* (it's great, check it out!) shows we would do well to go with "fly in the face of." It means (among other things) defy, flout, ignore, disregard, slight, treat with contempt, scoff at, thumb one's nose at, oppose, go against, contradict, contravert, counter, and go contrary to. It would surely be difficult to run in the face of linguistic evidence like that—smack or otherwise!



From Writers in Residence

Home of Thomas Wolfe

***The Literary Guide to the United States, edited by Stewart Benedict, 1981, 246 pp., \$15.95 hardcover from:***

**Facts on File  
119 W. 57th St.  
New York, NY 10019**

America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the imagination, and it will not wait long for meters. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

This book takes us on a delightful guided tour of the United States, making frequent stops along the way to explore how a sense of place has influenced our literary artists—and how they, through their writings, have influenced ours. We visit the New York City of Edith Wharton and the San Francisco of Jack Kerouac. We stop in the small town Minnesota of Sinclair Lewis and the plantation Georgia of Margaret Mitchell. We view the puritan New England of Nathaniel Hawthorne and the frontier Southwest of Zane Grey. In all of our travels, we are made aware of the special challenges which America's "ample geography" has posed for her writers and we see the immense variety of literary responses elicited by America's diverse landscape, transformed repeatedly by successive waves of culturally diverse people in search of a better place to live.

*The Literary Guide to the United States* is a cultural history. It is also a literary geography and a poetic travelogue. But perhaps it is best to forget all that and simply think of it as a book to be packed along on a vacation and enjoyed for its zest, its insights about America, and its memorable anecdotes. The spirit of the book is well captured in the story it relates about the least likely of all Wild West travelers, Oscar Wilde. Visiting a Colorado mining camp in 1882, Wilde noted a sign hanging in a local saloon which read, "Please Do Not Shoot the Pianist. He is Doing The Best He Can." It was, said Wilde, "the only rational method of art criticism I have ever come across." —JF



Ray Bradbury at his writing desk.

From Writers in Residence

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## WOOD

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**Tri-State Region Fuelwood Resources: An Assessment by the Regional Self-Reliance Project, 1980, 100 pp., inquire for price, from:**

**Antioch/New England Graduate School  
Keene, NH 03431**

**Ulster County Wood for Fuel Project ERDA 80-18 by Ulster County Community Action Committee, 1980, 304 pp., inquire for price, from:**

**New York State Energy Research and Development Authority  
Rockefeller Plaza  
Albany, NY 12223**

**Wood and Energy in New England: A Review and Bibliography ESCS Report No. 37 by Lynn Palmer, Robert McKusick and Mark Bailly, 1980, 76 pp., single copies free from:**

**Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service  
Room 0054 South  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20250**

Wood is booming as a national energy source, far surpassing the feeble contribution of nuclear power. Nearly half the homes in New England and the Pacific Northwest use wood as primary or secondary heating source. Although cordwood prices have risen sharply over the last couple of years, wood remains cheaper than fossil fuels, a situation that will probably continue. Wood lends itself to locally-based development, being one of the few truly decentralized forms of heat that can be easily stored.

*Unlike any other fuel, wood is democratic by nature. It is accessible to virtually anyone (with the necessary physical stamina) who owns a woodlot, knows people who do, or can afford the relative bargain of buying cordwood from a dealer. This is a resource that is owned by the people.*

— Tri-State Region Fuelwood Resources

A lot of the excitement about wood has focused on residential applications, but in some parts of the country there is significant industrial potential as well. The Northwest wood products industry already derives about half of its energy from wood residues, and improved energy efficiency and co-generation could increase that contribution to 75% of the industry's needs. Wood-powered industry on a small scale could make a big difference in areas that would otherwise import most of their energy as part of an export economy.

Because wood is renewable doesn't mean it can't be abused. Air quality problems and

local climatic changes are appearing in cities and towns from Bar Harbor to Bellingham as a direct result of wood use. Solutions are at hand in the form of wood furnaces, catalytic converters, and improved stove and flue designs, but air pollution from wood is not yet a widespread concern, and it will probably be awhile before the new generation of wood burning pollution control technology comes into widespread use.

Even more important over the long run is the need for a truly sustainable approach to the wood as an energy source, with a clear understanding of the non-renewable aspects of what amounts to mining the forests over the short term. Like many other forms of renewable energy, wood is most efficiently used, from both an economic and an energy perspective, when it is used locally. And like electricity, wood is a high quality resource that is considerably more valuable when used as something other than a heat source (see diagram). Construction materials made out of wood, for example, are over six-and-a-half times more energy efficient than comparable non-wood materials.

That doesn't mean that we shouldn't be burning wood. It does mean that with few exceptions, the only wood we should be burning is wood that isn't good for much else. In some cases that can mean copping on a relatively small scale. It can also mean using underutilized species, such as alder, that are part of a natural succession to more valuable timber. Most often, at least in the short term, it means taking trees for fuel in a way that enhances the future value of the remaining trees by thinning marginal and competing timber from commercial quality stands.

Those sources are always going to be around, but not on the scale that many people seem to assume. Some marginal trees need to be left for wildlife habitat. Branches and leaves should be left to return their nutrients to the soil. In fact, the main reason there's so much wood around that's suitable for burning is because our timber resources have been so poorly managed. This is particularly true for the 50% or so of the nation's commercial timber resources that are held by private landowners instead of timber companies and public agencies (which is due in part to misguided government forestry policies that subsidize timber companies to clearcut federal and state forest lands while discouraging small private owners from developing their land for sustainable timber production).

The implications of timber stand improvement are considerable. As the Antioch report points out:

*The market for fuelwood represents a unique opportunity to the tri-state region just as it does to much of New England. One danger is that wood which is useful or potentially useful for other purposes will be cut and burned. If this activity can be minimized, though, and non-commercial grade trees are the only ones removed for fuelwood, our forest stand could be improved, benefitting the local*

*economy in three important ways—providing residents with cheap fuel, local mills with good timber and the community with greater job opportunities.*

However,

*If we coupled firewood production with forest management for enhanced, long-term quality timber production, then we need recognize that the long-term implications of this strategy are upgraded stands we won't want to burn.*

While there will always be some wood available for energy production, and while other forms of biomass may come to play a greater role in our energy future, the use of wood on a major scale is not a permanent solution. But we can get a tremendous amount of fuelwood over the next generation or so by doing a one-time cleanup of our timber resources, making wood an excellent transition fuel as renewable resources are developed and widely implemented. It is a vast improvement over President Carter's abortive attempts to justify nuclear power as a transitional energy source.

*Tri-State Region Fuelwood Resources and Ulster County Wood for Fuel Project are great examples of two different approaches to local planning for local development of local energy resources. The Antioch study strives to put local fuelwood resources in perspective, focusing more on the issues and implications than the practical mechanics of getting the wood out of the forest and into the stove. The issues are more obscure in the Ulster County study, but the details of where the wood is, how much there is, and how to get it are exhaustively covered, and there is some good information on how to set up a wood cooperative. If you're thinking of doing a fuelwood plan for your community, *Wood and Energy in New England* has over 130 different bibliographic sources on a wide range of topics relating to wood.*

Taken together, these reports act as a second level energy plan, providing the specific information that is needed to implement specific parts of an overall plan. They also capture an interesting moment in the move towards a renewable energy future—the spontaneous and widespread local development of a major energy source. —KB

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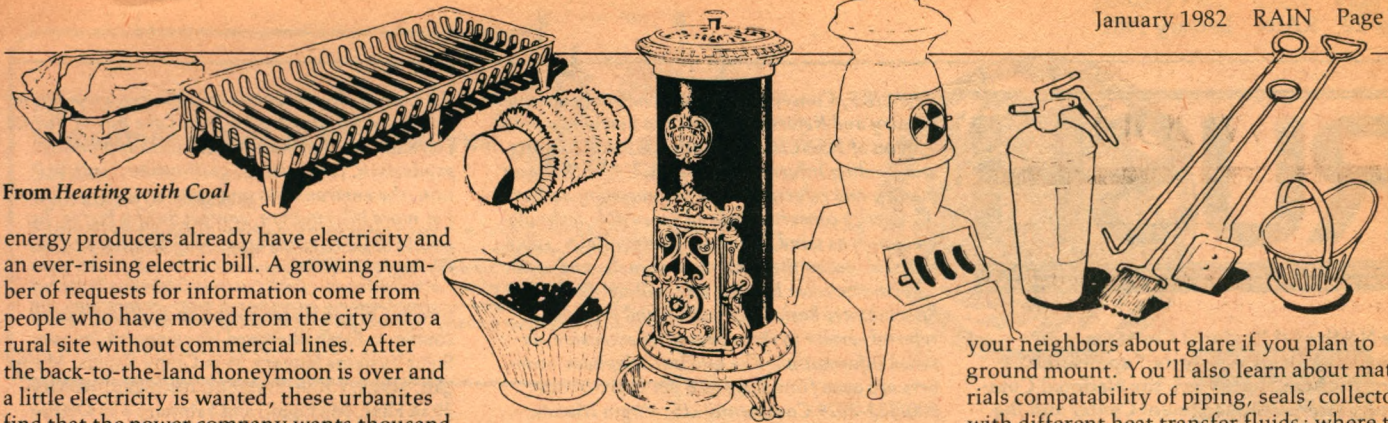
## ENERGY

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**Better Use of (Electric Lights, Home Appliances, Shop Tools—Anything That Uses Electricity), Michael Hackleman, 1981, 144 pp., \$9.95 from:**

**Peace Press  
3828 Willat Avenue  
Culver City, CA 90230**

I get a lot of requests from people interested in using photovoltaics and producing their own electric power. Most of these soon-to-be

From *Heating with Coal*

energy producers already have electricity and an ever-rising electric bill. A growing number of requests for information come from people who have moved from the city onto a rural site without commercial lines. After the back-to-the-land honeymoon is over and a little electricity is wanted, these urbanites find that the power company wants thousand of dollars to bring in a power line and the monthly bill. So they turn to some alternate form of energy and home production.

Unfortunately, very few people understand the basics and why their bills are so high. To get the most from electrical power, whether you produce it yourself or buy it monthly from the utility company, is the first step towards lower bills and greater degree of energy independence. Michael Hackleman's newest (best to date) book will provide the necessary information to get the most power for the least dollars. This book is not just for the rural solar or windpower producer. It also contains valuable information for the person who is grid-connected and dependent on the power company. By following Mr. Hackleman's tips and suggestions, do-it-yourselfers can increase the range of uses of their home-produced power. For the rest who still buy their electricity monthly, this book can help to cut that bill, sometimes by half or more, and show the potential of home electrical production.

The book is realistic, pulls no punches, makes no false promises and lays out the facts in such a way that the reader is encouraged to at least consider the first step toward energy independence: conservation. Once a person has followed the recommendations in this book, he or she is well on the way to enjoying the electricity without being punished by high costs. I highly recommend this book for use by both those people al-

ready producing their own power and those seriously considering reducing their power consumption. Now there is finally a book I can recommend to the person who would like to know more about using and producing electricity. Thank you, Michael Hackleman, for sharing your knowledge and experience.

—Joel Davidson

Joel is an energy consultant who lives in Pet-tigrew, Arkansas.

**Installation Guidelines for Solar DHW Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings, Second Edition, by Franklin Research Center, Philadelphia, PA, for U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Energy, May 1980, 107 pp., \$4.25 from:**

**Superintendent of Documents  
U.S. Government Printing Office  
Washington, DC 20402**

Once you've decided on a domestic hot water draining system, picked a system type (draindown, drainback, antifreeze, etc.), and sized the components, sit down and read this book before picking up a hammer and wrench. I've never seen anything as good as this on structural support for both rooftop and ground level collectors. Nice touches include advice on protecting your installed collectors from vandalism and checking with

your neighbors about glare if you plan to ground mount. You'll also learn about materials compatibility of piping, seals, collectors with different heat transfer fluids; where to locate sensors, gauges, pumps and valves to optimize operation and eliminate freeze-up problems; insulation; and safety procedures. At the end of this book is a useful start-up checklist. —Gail Katz

**Heating with Coal, by John W. Bartok, Jr., 1980, 188 pp., \$7.95 postpaid from:  
Garden Way Publishing  
Charlotte, VT 05445**

As gas and oil supplies dwindle and prices increase, the powers that be have been looking to coal as an alternative. This book jumps on that particular bandwagon and tells you how to heat your home with coal. It includes a description of types of coal, stoves and grates, together with information on safety and methods for keeping a coal fire burning overnight.

What the author briefly glosses over or neglects entirely are the social and environmental implications of burning coal. Coal is not a renewable resource. Some types of coal contain substantial amounts of sulfur and produce pollutants which result in acid rain. Strip mining disrupts delicate ecosystems, and in the East it has been wreaking havoc with Native American cultural integrity (see RAIN, VI:5,6).

Maybe you should try storm windows and insulation instead of this "alternative" fuel. —Gail Katz

## FUTURES

**Alternative Futures: The Journal of Utopian Studies, quarterly, \$10/yr. from:  
Alternative Futures  
Human Dimensions Center  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Troy, NY 12181**

I have always liked utopias. I think they offer an invaluable opportunity for studying alternative *whole* systems in a way that allows us to better understand what is wrong with our current one. So naturally I was delighted to find out about *Alternative Futures*, a scholarly journal that takes utopian thought

seriously and attempts to learn from it. It was the article titles that got me interested—e.g., "Women in Utopia," "Utopian Socialism in America," "Efficiency and After," "The Economics of Utopia"—but it is the consistently excellent writing that prompts me to recommend it to others.

Articles, for the most part, are written by academic types, so they tend to be lengthy and heavily referenced. But this is well balanced by clear, precise writing and authoritative knowledge. There's more than enough enlightening information here to justify the price.

One article I found especially worthwhile was entitled "The Anti-Politics of Utopia" that appeared in the Winter 1978-79 issue. The author, Gordon Beauchamp, argued persuasively that utopian thought as a whole leaves no role for politics in its social vision.

Utopias are usually projected to emerge as the result of one great transformation—what might be called the big bang theory of social change. After that, when everything is ideal, there is no longer a need for political change and thus no need for politics. Beauchamp contrasts this attitude with the more evolutionary approach posited in the democratic, pluralist ideal which prevails in most western democracies. The skill with which he draws out the best aspects of both visions and alerts us to the problems of each is dazzling in its insight and clarity. His conclusion would stand well as the credo of this powerful little journal: "The hope embodied in the image of utopia sustains man in his darkest historical hour and motivates him to seek the transformation of his world in a way that the sobriety of limited, piecemeal reforms never can." —Scott Androes

# RUSH

**The Northwest Regional Conference on "Financing Energy Projects,"** sponsored by Energy Forum Northwest, the National Community Energy Management Center and the Conference of Local Energy Officials, is tentatively scheduled for the last week of January. "Financing Energy Projects" examines public and private financing opportunities for energy generation and conservation projects. Conference fee is \$125. For further information contact Mickey Riley at the University of Washington: Energy Forum Northwest; DW-25; University of Washington; Seattle, WA 98195, 206/545-2746 or 543-0980.

"Solar Under Reagan: How to Survive and Win Through Better Marketing" will be a one-and-a-half day seminar, sponsored by Solar Energy Intelligence Report, scheduled February 23-24, in Washington, DC. The seminar is designed to assist solar manufacturers, retailers and distributors, solar design engineers, contractors and builders. Topics to be examined include: where are the opportunities to sell more; ways to incorporate and potentiate marketing techniques; how to finance your company and stretch a small promotion budget; the needs of your buyers—residential, industrial, utility and agricultural markets; and what can be expected from legislators and regulators during the current administration. Direct inquiries to: Oyez Seminars, 2031 Florida Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20009, or call Ms. Maggiora at 202/332-0389.

The Ninth Annual Energy Technology Conference and Exposition is scheduled for February 16-18 in Washington, DC. Advances in solar, wind, biomass, engines and new transportation fuels will be discussed. For further information contact Conference Managers, Government Institutes, Inc., PO Box 1096, Rockville, MD 20850.



Domestic Technology Institute is offering a series of passive solar and renewable energy workshops early this year. The series will include "Passive Solar House Design," February 20; "Passive Solar Greenhouse," March 13-14; and "Site-Built Solar Collector," April 17. For more information, contact Domestic Technology Institute, PO Box 2043, Evergreen, CO 80439, 303/674-1597.

CAREIRS, Conservation and Renewable Energy Inquiry and Referral Service, is a newly expanded version of NSHCIC, the National Solar Heating and Cooling Information Center. CAREIRS is an inquiry and referral service for questions concerning energy conservation and renewable technologies, such as wind, biomass, photovoltaics, solar thermal, ocean thermal, alcohol fuels, and active and passive solar heating and cooling. CAREIRS disseminates basic information and provides a referral service to those requiring extensive, detailed information. The toll-free telephone numbers are open from 9 am to 6 pm Eastern time: 800/523-2929 Continental US, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico; 800/462-4983 Pennsylvania; 800/537-4700 Alaska and Hawaii. The mailing address is: Renewable Energy Information, PO Box 1607, Rockville, MD 20850.



Public Scholars Research Bank is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Responsive Law, a public interest organization. The Research Bank solicits research topics from citizen groups and then offers undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to gain course credit by writing papers on these topics. For example, topics for anthropologists are focused on institutions, such as Washington law firms, trade associations, and corporations. The Center for the Study of Responsive Law, founded in 1968, is a forum for the central issues of our time and an umbrella for many diverse groups. For more information: PO Box 19367, Washington DC 20036, 202/833-3400.

The University of Wisconsin-Extension will offer a two-day workshop on Passive Solar Design Tools-Small Computers, February 10-12, at the Madison campus. The basics of computer modeling for solar energy systems will be explained: terminology, climatic data sources, thermal networks and system analysis. Various software will be reviewed and calculations demonstrated. Developers of several calculator and mini-computer programs will discuss in detail the operation of each program. Fee for the two-day workshop is \$325. Inquiries should be directed to: Donald Schramm, Program Director, Department of Engineering and Applied Science, University of Wisconsin-Extension, 432 North Lake Street, Madison, WI 53706, 608/262-2061.

An Energy from Biomass and Wastes workshop is scheduled for January 25-29 in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. Topics of sessions will include biomass production, combustion, gasification, liquefaction, the environment and government programs. For more information, contact Sunny Pierce, Institute of Gas Technology, 3424 South State St., Chicago, IL 60616.

Jordan College is sponsoring an alternate energy course on Earth Sheltered Housing and Passive Solar Systems January 16 in Grand Rapids, Michigan; January 23 in Fremont, Michigan; January 30 in Flint, Michigan; and February 6 in Detroit. For more information contact The Energy Group, Jordan College, 360 W. Pine Street, Cedar Springs, MI 49319, 616/696-1180.

A special request for people who are (or know) parents without cars: RAIN reader David Bellefeuille-Rice needs information from carless parents. How do you get places? How do you explain your carlessness to your children and enlist their cooperation? Parents who send David their stories will receive his gratitude and a summary of his findings. David lives at 3138 Overhulse Road NW, #108, Olympia, WA 98502.

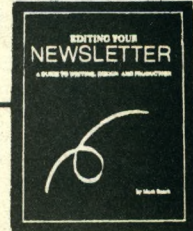
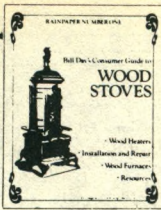
The Illinois South Project announces two staff openings starting early in 1982. The Project is a collective where all staff members share in decision-making and have input into program direction and design. Coal development and agriculture have been the primary areas of concern since the Project began in 1974. The Agricultural Team Member will work half-time on administration and office duties and half-time on the 1982 agriculture project (focusing on agricultural preservation and family farm vs. corporate farm issues). The Office Administrator will handle budget planning, circulation and editing for the publications, office coordination, fundraising and other office responsibilities. For more information, contact Illinois South Project, Inc., PO Box 237, Herrin, IL 62948, 618/942-6613.



**RAINPAPER NO. 1**  
**Consumer Guide to Woodstoves**

*Bill Day*  
 16 pp., Revised Jan. 1981, \$3.60

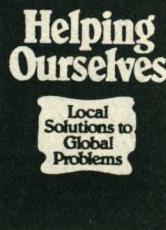
No matter how you split it, wood is re-emerging as an important factor in home heating. To help insure the wood energy transition is one committed to safety and efficiency, wood stove consumerist Bill Day has closely monitored the availability and reliability of these products. His newly revised and expanded *Consumer Guide* is a compilation of his articles in *RAIN*, covering the selection, installation and repair of woodstoves, wood cookstoves and wood furnaces. Included are helpful notes on fireplace retrofits and chimney maintenance. Essential reading for those of you interested in this revitalized energy alternative.



**Editing Your Newsletter**  
 A GUIDE TO WRITING, DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

*Mark Beach*  
 76 pp., 1980, published by Coast to Coast Books, \$7.75

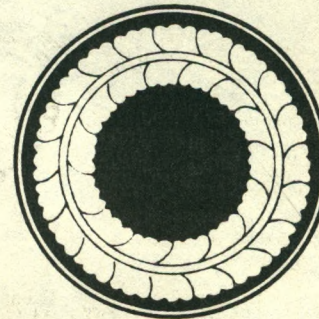
Mark Beach provides valuable information for all kinds of editors, and tells you *everything* you've always wanted to know about editing your newsletter: sources for free/cheap supplies and services; instructions for building a light table; tips on writing clearly; definitions for dozens of printing terms; words of wisdom from experienced editors; pointers on graphics; and—best of all—lots of excellent examples.



**Helping Ourselves**  
 LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL PROBLEMS

*Bruce Stokes*  
 160 pp., 1981, published by W. W. Norton & Co., \$6.00

This superb synthesis of self-help concepts and strategies contains inspiring examples of successful local projects in countries all across the political spectrum, indicating that what we are trying to accomplish in our towns and neighborhoods is part of a worldwide movement with a momentum of its own.



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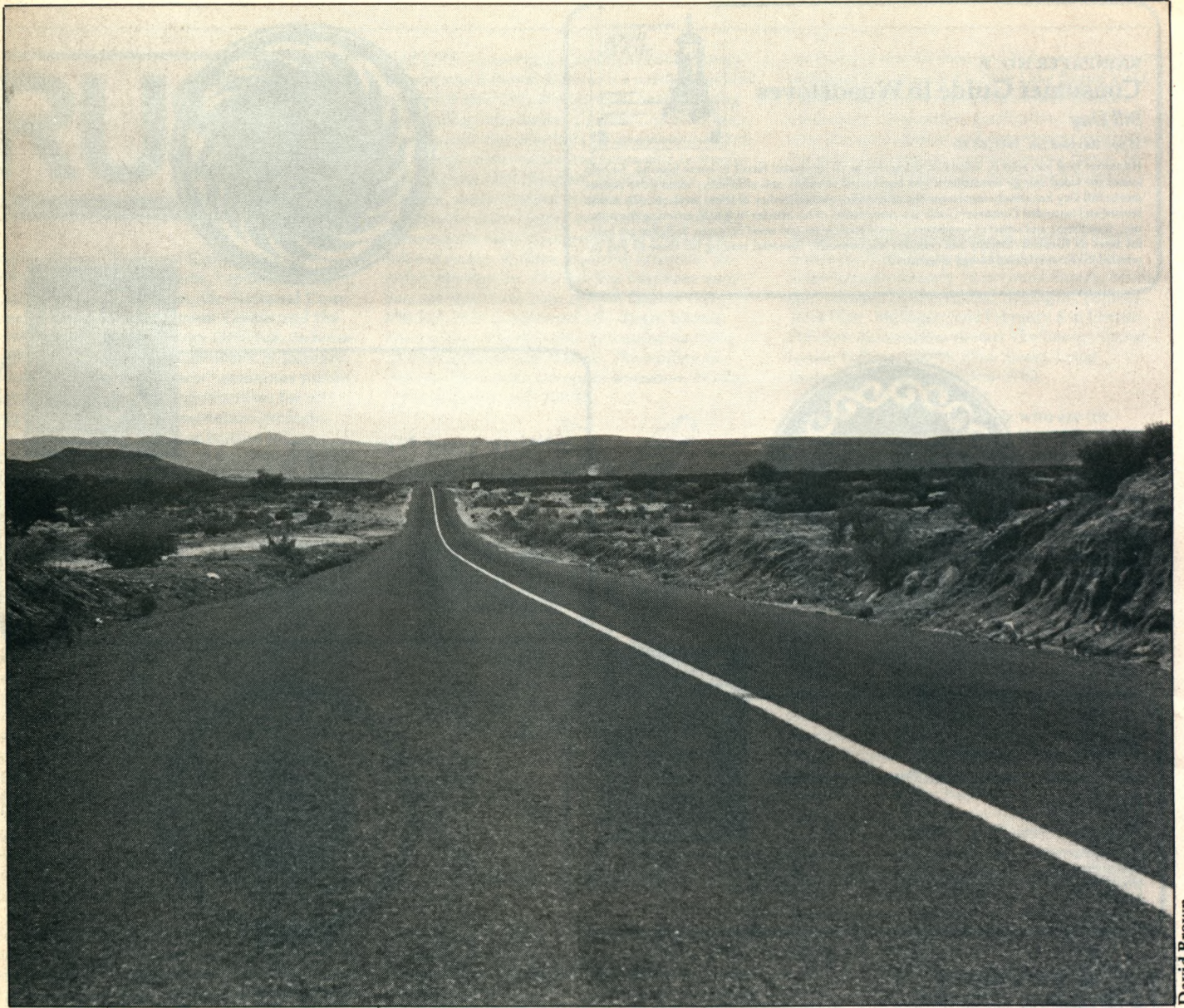
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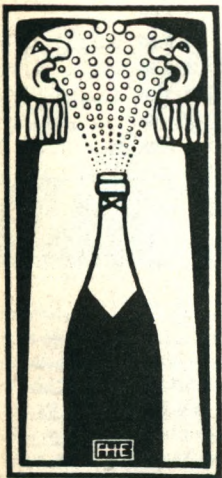


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