

This is the 23rd issue of HITCHHIKE, published in April, 1975, for a small circle of friends by John D. Berry, 1749 18th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. HITCHHIKE is a personal journal and something of a letter-substitute, although it's turning into a personal journal for a great number more persons than just me, as you can see by the lettercolumn. You can get HITCHHIKE by being interested and interesting; I'll send it to you if you send a quarter, but I won't accept subscriptions. This issue is being sent to the members of ANZAPA, because I haven't had an opportunity to contribute to that group for quite a while. My apologies to anyone who has sent me a tradezine or a request since the last issue came out; I didn't make many extra copies of that issue, so I've had to wait until this one is done to send you anything. Artwork this issue is by Dan Steffan, Jay Kinney, and myself. This is Roach Press Publication #87, I think.

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It is one of the noblest employments to assist nature in her bountiful productions. Instead of being ashamed of their employment, our laborious farmers shall, as a great writer says, "toss about their lung with an air of majesty."

--Samuel Deane, The New England Farmer, 1790

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One of the topmost things on my mind lately is the DUFF race, and the approaching deadline at the end of May. You'll find ballots with this issue, again, as you no doubt expected, and I hope you'll use them right away if you haven't already. Remember, if two or more of you get one copy of this fanzine, that doesn't imply that only one of you can vote. Don't sit back silently, just because your husband or wife or lover or roommate tends to dominate in things fannish; you are a fan, and you can vote.

Have you voted yet, Hilary Benford? And how about you, Blake Maxam? Catherine Canfield? Jaida Bethke? The deadline is May 31.

I've gone through several changes in thinking about DUFF since I decided seriously to run last summer. I'd been toying with the idea for a while, talking it over with local people and even asking a couple of them if they'd be nominators (if I ran), but I didn't really leap whole-

heartedly into the idea until the Discon, where I started telling a lot of people about it. At that point I realized that I'd committed myself. The idea gave me quite a sense of wonder, since I'd never even considered running for any fannish fund before. People had occasionally suggested that I run for TAFF, but it had always seemed obvious to me that it would be inappropriate for someone who has been in Europe three times and already attended an English Eastercon to try and get fandom to pay for his fourth trip. But Australia...! Now, that's outside of my range.

Quick, let me give you a little rundown on Campaign Finances. I've been traveling around a lot over the past eight years, and I seem to have given the impression that I do it effortlessly. It's not quite that simple. While I was in college, at Stanford in California, my mother was willing to pay for me to fly back to New York for vacations so she could see me, and that generosity got me into the habit of bouncing back and forth across the continent every three months. Even before that, during the summer between my junior and senior years of highschool (1966), my parents had put up the money for me to go on the summer travel program of the American School in Switzerland. That was a turning point for me, as I didn't realize at the time; even though it was an organized program, it was loose enough that it afforded me my first opportunity to roam around strange cities on my own. (The opportunities hit right from the start, in fact, when I and another boy got separated from the rest of the group in the Zürich airport and had to find our own way into the center of town.) That summer gave me the confidence to take off on my own and go traveling, and being a liberal arts student at Stanford in the late Sixties gave me a lot of free time for that travel. I had always regarded the university as a stimulating environment in which to pass four years, an educational experience in its way of life rather than in its classrooms, and there was always an excuse to go barrelling off to Seattle or Los Angeles for a few days. Fannish friends of mine got used to hearing news and impressions from me of life on the opposite side of the continent.

I always had money for these expeditions, because it came in every month whether I did anything or not. My father had died the week I graduated from highschool, and as a result I got a monthly check from Social Security (something over \$100) as long as I was a full-time student. My father had left plenty of money for my college education, so my tuition and room-and-board were all paid for, and my only concern was casual spending money. When I graduated from college, and coincidentally turned 21 just a month before, I inherited about six or seven thousand dollars directly (I don't remember exactly how much it was, and since about half of

it was in stock it varied with the stock's price). That, plus some savings from the Social Security money, was what I lived on, essentially, for the next two years. I christened myself a member of the Idle Poor, and I dedicated myself full-time to finding out what it meant to live well, and trying to do it on a shoestring. I lived very cheap, stretching that money so it would last me as long as possible, and I moved around a lot. You know, it doesn't cost you very much to live if you just keep moving.

Anyway, most of that had run out by the summer before last. I found



in Northern Virginia and needing to pick up some more money. So I started working as a temporary typist, at first through agencies and then directly for some people and groups, and that, with an occasional other, one-shot source of income, kept me going through last spring. I had a little bit of the inherited money left in stock, but my brother the stock broker put me into the wrong stock, and it shot down to half, then a third, of what I paid for it. It's stayed there, too, or dipped even lower, over the ensuing months. The stock is CMI Investment Corporation (which annoys me even more, since it's the kind of company I don't want to own stock in, and I wouldn't mind seeing it go broke if it were that my money is tied up in it), and, if I remember right without looking, I own 80 shares. You can look it up in the New York Stock Exchange listings if you're interested in knowing exactly when I stand; the last time I looked it was hovering around ten dollars a share.

And that, essentially, is what I have to work with when it comes to getting to Australia. I've been working a regular job for the past six months, but I haven't managed to save much in that time; I had a debt to my mother to pay off, I pay a large rent every month in this house, and I took a much-needed trip in February to Québec City for the Winter Carnival. I should get a healthy tax refund (which I have to figure out in the next few days), but that's essentially it. If the stock doesn't drop yet again, I might have just about enough money to get to Australia and back, with hardly any to spend while I'm there. And I might not. If I did it, I would arrive home virtually penniless.

So, you see, I don't expect to be there in Melbourne next August if I don't win DUFF.

When I first got into the race, I thought, well, I'll just sort of sit back and see what happens; I won't really expect to win, so I won't be disappointed if I don't. That kind of thinking never works very well, I've found. When I started, of course, I thought I'd be able to save heaps of money from this full-time job, so that I could go even if I didn't win. Well, as time wore on, it got more clear to me that I would not be able to afford the trip on my own, and at the same time I found myself counting on it more and more. Somewhere in there I realized: I really want to go to Australia! I want to see the land and its people; I want to meet Australian fandom and participate in what may well be its finest hour; I want to drink that bottle of wine John Bangsund is holding for me. Over the past couple of years, I've found Australian fanzines the most vibrant and fascinating ones to come my way, and I've made a conscious effort to put myself more in touch with that community. There are friends I've made or started to make whom I want to see on their own ground. I'd like to have the chance to talk to John Bangsund over a bottle or two in some low dive; I'd like to continue the conversation I began with Bruce Gillespie while sitting in the mezzanine of the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. There are scores of others I haven't met and would like to get to know better, in person.

I wouldn't say that my increased activity in Australian fandom has just come about because I've been running for DUFF, although it wouldn't be an unworthy result from such a race; it's more that the increase and the impulse to run for DUFF both came out of the same feeling: an intense, growing interest in Australian fandom. I'm not likely to lose that interest even if I lose the DUFF race.

There is one more thing I want to make quite clear: if I win, I will write a DUFF report. There's not the slightest doubt about it. An idea I've toyed with is that of writing it up as I go along, every few days, in the kind of compressed style I used when I was doing a weekly fanzine. (That's what occasioned the thought that Mike Gorra reported

of calling the thing HOT SHIT DOWN UNDER. It was just a stray thought, but it amused me to think of giving the report a title that might get it banned from the Australian mails.) More likely is that I'll simply write it up in the usual way, from notes taken as I go along. Lately I've been refraining from devoting my full energy to writing up the trips that I take, simply because it doesn't seem worth the time and effort it takes to tell the tale properly. There are lots of other things begging to be written, and the response to a trip report tends to vary from "Gee, I liked it" to nothing at all. Very few people pick up on any of the ideas or comparisons or new perspectives expressed in it and make their own comments. But with a DUFF report, the situation is different. There I know there's an audience that really wants to read it, just as I want to read Pete Weston's TAFF report and Tucker's write-up of Australia. With that encouragement and motivation, I'm not so likely to take shortcuts.

If I do win, I'd like to take an extended trip, since it seems silly to me to go half way around the world only to come back in three weeks. I have yet to delve fully into the travel possibilities, but the best plane fare would seem to be the 30-45 day affair, which at least approaches being long enough to get some feel for the country. I'd like to visit Western Australia and see the forests of eucalypts whose branches, supposedly, don't begin for 150 or 200 feet. (It's right there in the Australia Handbook 1970.) I want to spend time on the seacoast, and time in the mountains, seeing the wild country as well as the big cities. If possible, I'd like to stay a bit into the spring; I've also read that Australia possesses more varieties of wildflowers than the whole rest of the world, and I'd like to see them in bloom. For sure I'll need times within that time to crawl into a hole somewhere (or onto a beach) and get away from the feeling of constant traveling; to recuperate, write up some of what's already transpired, and recenter myself. To be better able to plunge right into it again.

I've also toyed with the idea of coming back by ship, stopping on various islands for extended periods, but I haven't yet bothered to see if such a thing is practical. It just seems the obvious thing to do; there are an awful lot of islands between there and here.

"That guy wanted me to tell him an Indian story, so I said All right I'll tell you one. There was this old chief who had two sons, Red Stone and Falling Rock. This chief was getting up in years so he told his two sons You go out and hunt buffalo and whichever gets the biggest buffalo will replace me and be chief. So Red Stone and Falling Rock went out and after a time Red Stone come back and he had a big buffalo, but the other son they never seen him again. That's why even today along the highway you see those signs Watch Out For Falling Rock."

--Irene Butterfly, Blackfeet

It's one of those gorgeous, sunny spring days. The trees are all green with leaves, which seem to have sprouted in just the last few days, and I'm not sure what weird perversity of will is keeping me inside this afternoon in front of a typewriter. I walked over to Wisconsin Avenue in Georgetown earlier today, a walk of perhaps a mile each way, to buy some more decaffeinated Bourbon Santos coffee, and more simply to enjoy the day. As I walked down 19th Street under a canopy of leafy green, I found myself staring wide-eyed at everything around me, feeling the

cool breeze blowing through my shirt, across my skin, and my leather jacket that I had tied about my waist flapping against my legs. (I never put it on.) As I crossed the Q Street Bridge (which I just noticed today was named the Dumbarton Bridge when it was built in 1915, a name that nobody calls it now), a short bridge over the small, deep valley of Rock Creek, I stopped in the middle to gaze up the valley across a sea of trees. In winter they are brown and grey, like a blanket of prickly fuzz, but today some are green and the vista is softening. It astounds me. Even the smells are different, new, yet old and recalling other years. Especially the smells.

In Georgetown, Washington's oldest section and its most fashionable, full of well-kept brick sidewalks, tiny close 18th Century houses, and taller, ornate Victorians, everybody was on the streets, looking slightly thunderstruck by the onset of spring. On the narrow sidewalks of Wisconsin Avenue, street vendors had set up their stands and hundreds of people were standing, strutting, buying, parading, cruising, and watching each other do these things. I dug the crowds for a little while, but the scene is too hectic to relax in, so I bought my coffee and headed back to my own neighborhood. (On the bridge I passed a French-speaking couple with a small child, and I immediately started imagining how I would describe to them where I lived. The Dupont Circle neighborhood became in my mind a quartier, in the finest tradition of the Latin Quarter in Paris--and I realized as I said it to myself that there was a certain truth to my fantasy.)

On my way home, I stopped into the local record co-op to order a couple of records I'd been searching for, and I found another Gordon Bok record in their Folk section. Gordon Bok is a folksinger from the coast of Maine, and his songs reflect the life of the fishermen there. He has a very deep voice that adds a tinge of mystery to everything he sings. I got turned on to him through Mary Cliff's folk show on WETA (Washington's public radio station); she tantalized me by playing a string of beautiful, haunting sea songs and then explaining that it was almost impossible to find the man's records. So naturally I've snatched up the two that have appeared in the record co-op's bins. Come visit me sometime and I'll play you the tale of Peter Kagan and the Wind.

At the moment, though, I'm listening to the first and so far only album done by Hickory Wind, a local bluegrass group whose members come from the hills of West Virginia. Washington is one of the nation's best cities for bluegrass, and Hickory Wind is one of the most talented bands working here. They recently toured with John Hartford, but they're back in town now; they played for three nights this week at the Childe Harold, which is right in the neighborhood, and I went with Robin White to see them. The club was tiny, uncrowded, and friendly, and they served Guinness on tap. The audience was mostly Hickory Wind regulars, and people like us who will undoubtedly become regulars. The band plays very fast bluegrass, very skillfully. (Robin complimented one of the members as he passed our table on his playing such complex tunes so fast, and he said, with a smile, "Those other fuckers play so fast that I've gotta play fast just to keep up with them.") They also play a lot of songs with a medieval flavor to them, and others that have the sound of the sea. The band members play several different instruments, including a couple of highly unusual ones: a hammer dulcimer and a "banjolin" (a combination of banjo and mandolin, both of which are instruments I love anyway). Hickory Wind's first album, At the Wednesday Night Waltz, is on the Adelphi label, which comes out of nearby Silver Spring, Maryland. (The Gordon Bok albums, by the way, are on Folkways.)

And there's some new music for you.

An idea has grown in my mind over the past summer and winter. It's fed on a lot of talks I've had, things I've seen, and musing I've done, some of it stretching back for several years.

What first started me thinking was the way I'd keep running across books and magazines that turned me on to new ways of living and feeling. I guess the only common thing about them was the way they reinforced the parts of me that were growing and reminded me of the directions I was growing in. They might be books like Wendell Berry's The Long-Legged House, or The Tassajara Bread Book, or magazines like the one I discovered in Richard Labonte's livingroom in Ottawa recently, NATURAL LIFE STYLES. They all made me feel good in some way, and I kept wanting to share them with everybody I knew. Sometimes I'd buy them, and then I'd have them on my bookshelf where I could show them to people or even loan them out, but most of the time I couldn't afford to buy them and I'd end up borrowing them myself, from friends or from the library. I usually found these books and publications, if not on someone else's bookshelf, in cozy hippie bookstores and places like that, which gave me the urge I've carried around for years to work in or run a bookstore.

In Hemingway's book about his early days in Paris, he said a great deal about Shakespeare & Co., the English-language bookstore and lending library that Sylvia Beach was operating there during the 1920's. He said enough to excite my curiosity. Three years ago I got hold of Sylvia Beach's autobiography, and I got a much better and even more tantalizing picture of the shop she ran and the literary life that revolved around it. She gathered writers and artists to her through her shop and her natural inclinations, and she even got so much involved as to publish the first edition of James Joyce's Ulysses. All this started me thinking.

The best kind of bookstore, to my way of thinking, is the kind that is full of big, over-stuffed armchairs and well-displayed books, and that encourages you to sit and read all you like. The most comfortable bookstore I've ever been in is Chimera Books in Palo Alto. It's an old wooden house with a new-and-used record store in one downstairs room, and the rest of the building filled with second-hand books. They're arranged by subject, with compatible types together as much as possible, so that you'll find, for instance, one upstairs room full of poetry, Eastern mysticism, Thomas Merton, and a comfortable couch and chairs on an old, soft rug. A delightful place to spend a rainy afternoon.

So I started thinking about creating a place where people could come, a comfortable place for spending some time, a sort of combination reading room and lending library. Maybe make it a bookstore too, but try to avoid the commercialism inherent in such a business. Just make enough to break even.

It would have to be a comfortable place, physically, and a welcoming place in its vibes. Wood and carpets and easy chairs and a little quiet music. Maybe a perpetual pot of tea, like some bookstores I've been in.

The idea began dovetailing with another love of mine: fine coffee-houses. I've been a frequenter of cafes and coffeehouses for years, and I once worked in one briefly. I love the atmosphere: the people-watching, the taste of fine coffee or tea, the sense of a gathering-place where all the most interesting people pass through at one time or another. It's much the same atmosphere, the same feeling of exchange and communion, that attracts me to a good community bookstore. So why not combine the two?

I could have a coffeehouse with bookshelves lining the walls. Or perhaps two separate rooms, one a step down from the other, one of them the coffeehouse proper and the other the book room. There'd be a certain problem of books and magazines getting coffee-stained very quickly, but

some sort of natural balance would work itself out. I like too much the idea of browsing through books as I sip a cup of coffee to keep them totally separate.

This dovetails nicely with the idea Alice Sanvito and I came up with when we were kicking around San Francisco with Terry Hughes a couple of years ago. I took her and Terry to one of the Basque hotels in the city, where for a fixed rate you can eat whatever meal is being served to the guests that night. It used to be that you had to show up at 6:30 sharp for supper, but in recent years the owners have made one concession to the non-Basque restaurant trade and allowed you to come anytime within a period of an hour and a half. The fare is hearty peasant food, several courses of it in nearly unlimited quantity. Everybody sits together around a couple of big tables, and you find yourself becoming convivial with complete strangers over a bottle or two of red wine.

Alice had cooked for a local community restaurant in St. Louis, Duff's, and one of the things that had made her quit was having to cook a lot of different things all at once, with new orders coming in every minute. But she said she'd love to cook in something like a Basque restaurant, where there was only meal to do each night, and we both liked the idea of seating everybody together family-style. We started spinning fantasies of what it would be like to run such a place.

It could be combined with the coffeehouse/reading place very easily. All it would take is a kitchen, and for a couple of hours each night the place could be transformed into a family-style restaurant. People come together and eat whatever is being cooked that night, and after everyone is through and the place is cleaned up it becomes a coffeehouse and reading room again. Perhaps it would require an extra room as a dining-room; perhaps not.

The beauty of the idea is that all this could be done with one place.

I could throw in, perhaps, a sidewalk cafe, of which I feel there are far too few in this country (and none that really capture the ease and openness of those in Europe, where it is normal and common). Or some sort of inner courtyard where you could eat, drink, and read under the trees. A place that embodied a slowed-down, aware pace of living; a place for community. If it were done in a neighborhood that was ripe for it, it could become a true community center. What I would like most is to create a center of energy, the kind of place where I would go to revitalize myself and to remind myself of all those things that I forget so easily faced with the enormous weight of ordinary reality.

Well, who wants to join me?

/On the island of Corfu/ For hours at a stretch I would lie in the sun doing nothing, thinking of nothing. To keep the mind empty is a feat, a very healthful feat too. To be silent the whole day long, see no newspaper, hear no radio, listen to no gossip, be thoroughly and completely lazy, thoroughly and completely indifferent to the fate of the world is the finest medicine a man can give himself. The book-learning gradually dribbles away; problems melt and dissolve; ties are gently severed; thinking, when you deign to indulge in it, becomes very primitive; the body becomes a new and wonderful instrument; you look at plants or stones or fish with different eyes; you wonder what people are struggling to accomplish by their frenzied activities; you know there is a war on but you haven't the faintest idea what it's about or why people should enjoy killing one another.... We don't

need the truth as it is dished up to us in the daily papers.
We need peace and solitude and idleness.

--Henry Miller, The Colossus of Maroussi

It seems obvious that this fanzine isn't going to come out on any "monthly" schedule. Over the past few months I've found myself trying to cram the things I wanted to do--including relaxing--into short evenings after work and weekends that were just long enough for me to unwind to the point where I could begin to work at writing, when suddenly it would be Monday morning again. (Know the feeling, you say?) As I write this, I'm in my last week on my job with NLADA, and looking forward to a carefree month of May, in which to write everything I've put off over the winter and still have time for gazing at the sky. I've found myself in recent months hurrying through the streets on my way to places, thinking about where I'm going rather than where I am. That's not a healthy way to live. So I'm going back to a freer way of living. I'll be moving out of this house at the end of May, but the rent's paid up till then, so I'll have a month just to play. And work, at what really is my work. (Don't worry about a change of address, though; I probably won't move very far, and I can just stop by here and pick up mail if it accumulates. And when in doubt you can always use my mother's address at 35 Dusenberry Road, Bronxville, NY 10708. I'll let you know when I've got a new address.)

So perhaps this will give me the time to do another issue very soon, or perhaps it will mean I don't have the chance for another three months. More likely the former, because this fanzine really is a central part of my creativity these days. (It has served this winter as the only bastion I've had, but now with spring and freedom from a job I hope to expand in all directions.) Someone in a not-so-recent issue of RATAPLAN (which I just read this evening, because it came in the last FAPA mailing) described a fanzine as "a clearing house for wandering minds." This one is going to keep coming out, no matter how irregularly.

I was going to say a bit about my recent trip to Québec City for the Winter Carnival, and attendant side-trip to Ottawa, but once more I think I'll leave ^{you} tantalized, with a whiff of untold tales in your nostrils. Terry Hughes tells me I should publish a trip report because it would boost my DUFF candidacy (or maybe he was just trying to persuade me to finish the one I'd begun), but I was only going to write a few musings about the styles of living I found in Ottawa. I plunged back into the student milieu at Will Straw's co-op house, the very same one he was describing in his column last issue, and I dined at one of the finest, warmest group houses I've ever been in when Richard Labonte invited us to dinner. Richard, too, was going to write up the True Story of the origins of Will's house, since Richard was head of the student government at Carleton University when the houses were first started as an alternative form of living, but so far no such real-life story has found its way through the mails to me. And it can't all have been due to Canadian postal strikes. (Richard? I told you I'd tell them all about it. Aren't you ashamed? Write it for the next issue, eh?)

This is a special "catch up" issue; I'm going to send it to all the people I should have sent a fanzine to over the past few months (or even years) but didn't. At least that's what I'm going to try to do. I may also send a number of copies out to people who are not involved in the microcosm known as fandom--but then this fanzine isn't particularly tied to any limits. It's mainly a gathering point for written community. So write a letter if you want the next issue.



"John--These are the notes for my 'last fanzine' which I which I didn't get around to publishing. 'You want them?'
--Calvin"

When John Berry & I published our last issue of Hot Shit a few months ago, I swore it would be the last fanzine I ever published. Writing those Hot Shits was making me dizzy, like breathing too fast. And I was beginning to gain some control over my life & didn't want to dissipate it by writing little paragraphs for a fanzine. Well, I have dissipated it in other ways, now, have lost all control, and so here is another fanzine. This is dedicated to the concept of virtue.

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SCIENCE FICTION ANALYSIS MONTHLY a new monthly column

I have been reading sci-fi extensively and now offer my observations to the public.

Ever since the invention of the Steam Engine science fiction has been in serious trouble. It is no longer possible to write a plausible "steam engine" science fiction story, as the steam engine is now a reality and attempts to "invent" the steam engine for plot-advancement purposes can only be laughed at.

In spite of this several science fiction writers (notably Greg Benford) have written steam engine novels recently. These deal with the impact of the steam engine on 21st Century mores. For example, in a recent novel, "Steaming Up To Jupiter," the author posits a world in which the entire technology is run by steam, including steam rockets and steam-powered telephones which allow you to talk to a person in a distant place, and also to see a steamy little picture of him on the side of the boiler as he talks. In this novel, the hero, Jon Clarke-Szorgy, a Russian/English aristocrat and scientist, builds a steam rocket and travels to Jupiter, where he sets up a large fire and proceeds to make steam by boiling water. Soon the natives are captivated by the steam and come to his aid. By the end of the story Jupiter has been civilized and Clarke-Szorgy returns to the Earth

whole hog--ii

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--Calvin Demmon

"ONLY WITH WORDS CAN YOU SPEAK."

Mal Ashworth, ROT 1 (Sept., 1955)

--also Mal Ashworth, same source



TERRY HUGHES: This is a time of subgroups in fandom, as any and all will agree. Therefore each fanzine has its own following, its own scope of coverage. STARLING has been delightfully concentrating on the field of popular culture (which is one of the widest areas to cover). Many (most) cover the field of published science fiction. WHO PUT THE BOMP concentrates on rock music of the 1960's. RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY concentrates on boring topics. Now I think it is possible to put HITCHHIKE into a similar pigeonhole. The emphasis seems to be on lifestyles.

In earlier issues, HITCHHIKE was the #1 zine covering the life of John D. Berry. Now that you've opened the door widely for your readers to participate (and since they accepted your invitation so readily), the fanzine covers lifestyles of many people in many places. Your reader response was quite large, but then that is to be expected (not only this time, but in the future as well) since what you are doing is giving them the opportunity and the forum to discuss their own lives. What fan can resist the opportunity of talking about himself? With an advantage like that, John, you need never worry about comments pouring in.

We must live in a time of color-coding reality. Both you and Will Straw engaged in this and I'm sure everyone else will in their letters. Why should I be different? I will only go so far as to say that the Sixties were obviously Electric Blue. But, John (and you too, Will), how can you even attempt to place a color code on the Thirties and Forties? Neither you nor Will were around then to receive sensory inputs. Better stick to 1950-on.

The best letter, I feel, was Jonh Ingham's. But how can he compare Los Angeles to those other places and still keep a straight typeface? Oh well....

I sure hope someone like Robert Lichtman writes a lifestyle letter to you.

(866 N. Frederick Street, Arlington, VA 22205)

((You hear that, Robert? It's been a long time since I last heard anything from you.))

RAY NELSON: I've always been able to tell what the next "movement" was going to be simply by walking down Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley. Without fail, whatever is happening today on Telegraph Avenue will happen in the World within five years. I saw, and took part in, the Beat and Hippie movements that way, and I can predict what's happening next that way.

Predictions: (1) Costume: The next "movement" will be transvestite; chiefly men wearing women's clothes and women with short haircuts, even shaved heads.

(2) Music: Electric music out, acoustic music in. Chicano roots--the new music doesn't come up the Mississippi on a riverboat, it comes across the Rio Grande on a wet back.

(3) Literature: We'll discover South and Central America. Writers nobody ever heard of north of the Rio Grande will suddenly sweep the campuses (in translation) and many will learn Spanish to read them in the original.

(4) Drugs: Acid out, pot out, cheap wine makes a comeback.

(5) Religion: The Catholic Church will suddenly seem very attractive because of the Virgin Mary, the South American influence, the near-transvestite robes of the clergy, and the beauty of the churches and ceremonies.

(6) Politics: The big issue will be illegal aliens. The establishment will want them deported; the kids will fight to let them stay. Other issues: a man's right to wear skirts; the UN (the kids will be against the UN); Israel (the kids will be for Israel, against the Arabs).

(7) Economics: More and more things will be handmade and sold on the streets by the maker. Middlemen will be in trouble. Communes will buy direct from the farmer, the maker, the builder. Many will live in trucks.

(8) Morals: Monogamy in, polygamy and sleeping around out, but homosexual relationships will be accepted, and a new profession emerge--the Househusband--and a new personality type--the She-Man.

(9) Mysticism: Zen out, Hinduism out; pilgrimages to Rome and Mexico City.

Every person has his own "place of power," but the world's place of power is Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley.

(333 Ramona Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530)

((I've had a latent fascination for South and Central America for several years now; does this mean I'll be in the forefront of the New Movement? (Not if I don't learn Spanish and make it a little less "latent," I won't.) I think my fascination mainly comes from the fact that Latin America is so little paid-attention-to in North America; it's like an unknown civilization to me, almost as distant and mysterious as the ancient Minoans or the Etruscans, with perspectives that will be fresh and unexpected for me. I wanted to travel through South America, but one of the chief places I was eager to visit was Chile--but since Allende's fall, I don't think I'd want to set foot in the country. Not for quite a while, anyway. One of my chief disappointments with Latin America is that I'm not very interested in most of the literature I've seen. But I've hardly read enough to make any judgments.

I wonder about the chicano influence in music. I certainly haven't noticed much yet. Is it just that your being in California warps your perceptions more than they would be in the rest of the country, or will the chicano influence really spread out into the rest of the culture?

I'd like to see your "Economics" paragraph come to pass. It seems much farther from reality here in the East, though, than it does in sunny California. (sigh*))

ALICE SANVITO: We just had an incredibly intense house meeting concerning animals recently. If you know any vegetarians who gave up meat because they didn't want to kill animals, but still eat

eggs, cheese, and milk, you might give them this to think about. I told a veggie friend of mine in St. Louis about this and he said at first that it's all theoretical, but when you're in the country raising animals it's no longer theory.

Everyone here eats milk products and eggs, but not meat for varying reasons. I eat meat sometimes and so does Jerry, but mostly not. We have had an agreement here not to eat meat or hunt on the farm. :: Well, chickens only lay well for about a year and a half. After that most farmers eat them and start a new batch of chickens. :: Goats and cows need to be bred once a year to keep them giving milk. The young females can be added to the herd but the young males are usually slaughtered. :: Some of our chickens are ceasing to lay. We have two young roosters. Our goats are bred and will kids soon. What do we do with the young males and the old chickens? :: We finally decided to eat them or give them to someone else who'd like to eat them, since we don't want to give up animal products. :: Jerry did quit eating animal products for eight months and Ann said if she were living alone she'd give up animal products. Anyway, it was a situation I was never aware of until about a year ago. I don't know too many urban vegetarians who are aware that the beef industry is the other half of the dairy industry, and it might be a good thing for them to think about.

(Heartfelt Farm, Rt. 2, Box 13, Centerville, MO 63633)

JERRY KAUFMAN: Your current life, and Will's, seems heavily slanted to communal living. I mean, you both are living in what amount to urban communes or coops (co-ops?). (Now I have to admit I don't know the difference.) The closest I've come to such a life was at the Avocado Pit. The extent of our cooperation was that we bought household supplies and food together, ate together, shared some duties together. (We even bought our typewriter together.) But we didn't start with a conscious agreement as to duties, and as time went on we found that some of us refused to clean, certain persons were depended on to do all the cooking, and so forth. In the last few months that Suzle and I lived there, no one ate together and little of the basics got done.

While it worked, it was working well. We all liked one another, we each had our own room, and we each added to the others' lives. I'd be willing to try it again, with a group that was purposely aiming at a commune, with understanding and agreement. Falling into such an arrangement by accident eventually causes falling-outs.

From Zen What Happened? by Benshimana Furankuranu: A novice approached a teacher to be tested in his knowledge of Zen. The teacher related a story to the novice.

"When the great monk Eli was asked by a novice, 'What is the purpose of life and Zen?', Eli reached out his hand and dropped...the subject: Please explain this."

The novice was dumbfounded. He replied that he could not possibly explain what sounded like nonsense to him.

"Then take a lesson from Eli. Drop the subject!"

(622 West 114th Street, #52A, New York, NY 10025)

((Will lives in a student cooperative house, which means that they rent it from the Student Association, and they run everything about it themselves. The house I used to live in on Quinten Street might be called loosely a commune, but Mary used to insist that it was a collective, as distinct from a commune, the distinction being that we didn't pool all our resources. We bought food in common, and we generally ate together, but

other than that everything was individually owned; we had common use of things like the livingroom furniture, but it all belonged to one person or another. We did a lot together, though, and we became friends in the course of our living there. One of the principles of our living arrangement there was open and honest communication of our feelings, but at the same time we knew we were only living there for a finite amount of time --from late fall to the end of June--so we didn't really have to come up with permanent solutions to all our problems. It was the best living arrangement I've ever been in.

What we've got here in this house is sort of a cooperative approach, where three of us, at least, buy our food in common and try to eat together as much as possible, but we lead essentially separate lives. We don't have a definite date when the household will break up, but both Bruce and Alex expect to be leaving Washington sometime this spring, and Leslie already moved out, last month (to be replaced by Mark). I've been giving a lot of thought to the outrageous rent we pay here, and I don't know just what I'll do when I go to Australia (cross my fingers!), so I think I'll probably more out of here sometime in late spring or early summer. I may come back and get together another house in DC, but in a cheaper location. Whatever. Anyway, this is only marginally what I'd call an urban commune. That implies to me a greater sense of permanence, and a greater commitment to living together and growing together. We approached it on Quinten Street, but I've never really lived in a true commune.))

TED WHITE: HITCHHIKE #22 is definitely thought-provoking, and I have been sitting here for the last forty minutes reading it and having my thoughts provoked, despite being in the terminal stages of flu. Herewith, a few of the thoughts it provoked.

One of the central preoccupations of the issue--both in your Dialog and in the letters--seems to be the question of life-style and life-direction. This got me to thinking about my own.

As you know, I recently turned 37. Thus, I stand somewhat outside the current "generation," with its concerns over the "movement" of the sixties and What Happened To It. I seems to me I've been outside most of the cultural movements of the last two decades, and yet I have identified with parts, while feeling impatience with other aspects. No doubt this is because these movements did not parallel my own development from teenage into adulthood.

(I remember reading On The Road in 1958 and feeling some identification with it, but I knew that the book described the events of the forties and early fifties, and I always rejected the Beat or "Beatnik" identification. Later I considered myself a bohemian, but of course that label was applied to a much earlier generation, so I felt little affinity with any culture of the time. I decided some time in the last five years that I could live with the term Freak; more recently I decided I was a Drug Fiend....)

My chief concern, I think, is to exist in an environment which pleases my senses. I've always considered Hedonism a Good Thing (when taken in moderation--"Moderation in all things--including moderation") and, coming from a parental background of New England waspishness, I suspect my direction is one pointed toward sensuality and away from the self-contained virtues of Puritanism. But there's much to be said for the Older Values, and I cherish many of them. As you've no doubt noted, I rarely throw away

anything I can fix or which remains of some intrinsic value. Indeed, I have been throughout most of my adult life a scavenger, picking over others' discards for items of value or use to me.

But, "an environment which pleases my senses." That's a phrase rich in implication--in all directions. Today I all but finished remodeling a room of my house--a bathroom. Yesterday I did the final coat of paint, today I put up the mirror (involving glass-cutting, to salvage a very large, but broken, mirror). Tonight Kitten baptized the room by taking a bath in it. I have only the floor left to finish. I like the room now. It pleases me. I designed it in every dimension, I built it--walls, ceiling, electrical wiring, pipe and radiator enclosures--and I am enormously pleased with its completion: it is what I wanted it to be, what I visualized in my mind four or more years ago. That's one aspect of creating an environment which pleases my senses. So is this entire house, which will no doubt take me years to put entirely into the shape which I desire, but which is already a source of emotional comfort to me.

On another level, my environment is the sounds I hear. This is a quiet neighborhood--such a relief from the city--and the sounds are largely natural ones: birds, an occasional dog barking somewhere, the wind in the leaves in the summertime, or sleet against the window (last night; strangely comforting) in the winter. Japanese cutleaf maples grow within touching distance of my bedroom window, creating a lovely reddish-green shade when in leaf. And inside, whenever I desire it, music, reproduced as cleanly and perfectly as possible from my four-speaker system--or created live on organ, piano, or saxophone (or all three). These too are aspects of my environment which please my senses.

To whatever extent I can achieve it, I create my environment without using money (as you know, I live on very little), and with as much self-sufficiency as I can manage. This too is pleasing to my senses: it gives everything which surrounds me more meaning and personal value.

What has any of this to do with "the counter-culture," etc.? Well, I'm struck by the quote in your letter to Tom Goodhue about "all the freaks I know around the Virginia suburbs who strike me as straight under the skin, the ones who smoke a lot of dope and buy dope pipes and listen to rock, but who are terribly sexist and ego-centered and into their own individual things, with a strong hold on private property and not much development in a communal direction."

Although I'm not sure you intended it to sound that way, the context which surrounds that quote implies a moral condemnation on your part. As though it was "straight" and therefore Wrong to possess any or all of those characteristics. Well, that's your problem and not those of the freaks you describe. I'm astonished that you seem to feel "a communal direction" is Right and "into their own individual things, with a strong hold on private property" is not. Perhaps your direction is into communalism and a shunning of property--but you have indirectly and directly taken advantage of those whose directions are



kimney

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otherwise. My property--a Gestetner 360, for which I paid \$1100 fourteen years ago--ran off your fanzine, for instance. And you have lived in my house as well as those of others, as a guest, for extended periods of time.

I personally have no interest whatsoever in communalism. I have tried it a number of times in the last twenty years, and its faults remain too great for me to tolerate. One of the largest is that collective responsibility is weaker than individual responsibility. Take records, for instance: when communally owned or used, they are rarely well taken care of and quickly ruined by poor handling, use on inferior equipment, etc. Books are similarly too often mistreated. The entire environment sinks to the lowest common level. I'm sure you can quote to me individual cases in which a small group of people, each of whom had a high level of personal responsibility, managed to maintain a decent level of communal responsibility, but these cases are exceptions--and can't be counted on.

More important, from my own point of view, is my dawning awareness that I like living alone better than I like living with other people. I find I am a more effective person, with a higher energy level, when I live alone. Put simply, I accomplish more. When I do not have to concern myself with the needs or requirements of others I function better. I am not required to compromise. I do what suits me. And that returns us to the environment that pleases my senses. There is no guarantee that my environment will please others' senses--there is too much individual variation in taste and what pleases people--and to the extent that I must accomodate others, I must sacrifice some of what I want.

This rarely occurs in a big way; it's subliminal all too often--and I am aware of it only by its cessation. Right now, for the first time in quite a while, I am living alone in this house (my only companion my daughter). It feels good. It feels better than living with others.

As a philosophical anarchist, I see no reason why I should not live my life as best suits me. Equally, I see no reason why others should not live their lives as best suits them--providing we can all do it without harming each other. And it annoys me to see you apparently criticizing those who live the lives they want to live, simply because it isn't the way you want to live. Really, John--why can't people be "into their own individual things"?

As for being ego-centered, well, that's a semantic problem, I guess. I think being ego-centered is a desirable state, probably because I define it differently than you do. I've lived around and with people who were not ego-centered, and they lived lives of depression and despair. They did not feel in control of their lives and it made them unhappy. Being ego-centered, to me, means knowing who you are, what you want, and achieving it to your own satisfaction. By my definition, you are as ego-centered as anyone I know. And I think that's fine.

The real problem with your Dialog, however, is that it is so generalized as to be meaningless. I mean, trying to compare East Coast Life with West Coast Life in this way is superficial, to begin with: the individual variations are greater than any similarities within each area, and it ignores the fact that many of the people on each coast came from the other, or move back and forth (as you have), bringing with them to each area their conditioning and preoccupations. I think the only generalizations which stand up are those relating to climate and the way this affects behavior. The rest is just superficial stereotypes, based on a narrow range of observations, largely (I gather) in a university environment.

Moving right along, I find myself bristling at your description of "the suburban system" as "such a stupid mistake." There is no "suburban

system." Nor is it "a mistake." The suburbs have existed for nearly as long as there have been cities. As cities have expanded in density, the suburbs have expanded in area. The cause is very simple: the cities offer the most employment, but have become increasingly unlivable (and I speak as one who lived for eleven years in the largest city in this country). Thus, those who must work in them have sought to live outside them. This simple situation created the suburb, and will continue to perpetuate it, until a basic solution is found--such as the depopulation of the world through disaster, a foresaking of the work-ethic (not too likely in our lifetimes), or the decentralization of employment centers (occurring in some cases, but impossible in others). The basic cause of the modern suburb, of course, is population growth. I live eight miles from Washington, D.C. In the past thirty years this area has gone from rural to suburban to (officially) urban (as everything inside the Beltway is now classified; I disagree). I don't enjoy the population density, and I miss the trees and fields which used to surround my house. But I understand the reasons: people need places to live, and there are more and more people.

Given my ideal, I'd live in the open country. But I need access to the city--both for social reasons and for practical reasons (access to materials). Thus, I compromise, and live close to, but not in, the city. As places to live go, Falls Church is not at all bad. I would not consider it a "stupid mistake." Nor do I think this area was created as part of any system. It simply grew--evolved to meet needs.

It seems to me you're allowing your prejudices to color your observations in this and previously noted instances. Your prejudices may be well-founded, but your observations are occluded by them nonetheless.

I first heard of Anais Nin while reading Henry Miller. I can't recall the details, though. Were they lovers? Or merely contemporaries? (I should read the Henry Miller interview in ROLLING STONE; it might answer that question. I agree with Jonh; it's not a music paper of substance any more--not the way it was during its first fifty issues, say--but its standard of writing is one of the best.)

(1014 North Tuckahoe Street, Falls Church, VA 22046)

((Your letter, too, is thought-provoking, and I appreciate the check of other people catching me in what they see as mistakes or blindnesses, and calling me on them. That's why I publish my thoughts in this fanzine, rather than just thinking them to myself. I don't expect what I say to be final or conclusive--even when I come to what seem like conclusions at the time--and I am most fascinated by the interchange among a lot of thoughtful people.

The line you quote from my letter to Tom was written in the context of the many conversations he and I have had on this sort of subject, and the directions we have in common. Before stenciling it, I thought about the way it would sound to someone else--like a putdown, at least partly--but I decided to leave it in, as is, and let people pick up the context. It could serve as a good taking-off point for a discussion by its very assumption. And it has. It's the assumptions behind our thinking that I'm interested in questioning.

I should get one thing straight right off, though: I don't feel that it's "straight" and therefore wrong to possess any or all of those characteristics." My description didn't really get at what I meant as well as it might; certainly being "into their own individual things" isn't a term of approbrium in my book.

What bothers me is the identification of the way of life of suburban Virginia freaks with the counterculture. You see, the growth of this subculture did, roughly, parallel my growth from adolescence into maturity, and I've become used to identifying myself with it. Roughly. With reservations. Always with the caveat that I won't accept some things just because a lot of other people do. But the general direction of the counterculture as I've seen it unfold, particularly in California, seems to me to be the growing edge of a historical movement that's moving out of the old rigidities and patterns --particularly those of western civilization in the last 300 years--and into something more fluid, more flexible. That seems like a good direction to me, and I want to move with that flow. So it's important to me that it keep flowing freely, and I've been bothered by the surface evidence that what was once a "movement" (in the social and cultural, not the political sense), no matter how many diverse currents were contained within it, seems to have dried up and stopped flowing anywhere at all. That's why I'm encouraging this sort of exchange here in HITCHHIKE: almost everybody I know who's had anything to do with the counterculture has been touched by that same feeling that it's all disappeared somewhere, and I'd like to get some of us together to talk and reflect and see if we can find the loose ends hidden in there somewhere. To figure out where we are going. Together.

I've given a lot of thought to the question of communal living, partly in response to your letter. (You have a knack for making people clarify their thinking, just to be able to answer you. Which is great; even if I end up disagreeing completely, at least I have a better idea of why I disagree.) I haven't ever wanted to live in a fully communal situation--all property in common, everything done together--although I've thought Maybe Someday, but I have definitely felt that, from our present American super-individualistic private property culture, this would be a healthy direction move in. I think that in personal terms what I want is more cooperative living than strictly communal. I value each individual (a crowd is just a lot of individuals, after all), and it's the personal in life that I look for and write about, which is why I feel uncomfortable in anything as general as these paragraphs. Anything that ignores people's individuality isn't right. But that doesn't mean we have to be isolated and clutch frantically at our private property as though it were an extension of ourselves, or that we have to do everything alone. I guess the greatest thing I've seen come out of the development of the counterculture was the realization that people together can accomplish a lot more than people separately, and that our nature is to cooperate and to love each other. I feel that moving in that direction is the heart of what we've all been doing in creating a "counterculture," despite the superficial trappings of long hair, dope, psychedelic art, and rock. Those things are just expressions of our basic direction; they're not themselves the point. Some of the long-haired dope-smokers I've seen and met in Virginia, although they are fine and interesting people, seem to have missed or lost the heart of it all. (That seemed especially so when I wrote that letter, less so now.)

So what I look for in a living situation, and in interaction with the people around me, is cooperativeness. A sense of sharing. Inclusiveness, rather than exclusiveness. For most of us who grew up in this culture, it takes a lot of learning--and a lot of unlearning--to be able to realize that in ourselves, but I look for the spark of recognition in people that they are moving in that same direction.

It takes responsibility, and a clear notion of what your own needs are, where you have to draw the line and say, with compassion, "I need this and I can't give it away yet," whether "it" be a physical thing or an emotional quality. It's no good to give yourself away all the time and leave yourself empty and neglected; that creates resentment in yourself. But I feel that I've learned to give away a lot as I've grown older, become less attached to a lot of the things I clutched to me fearfully when I was younger and thought I couldn't do without, and I see my eventual enlightened self as able to give up anything without regret. Freely given and freely received, yes; compulsiveness, no.

Given this goal of freely sharing--no, not a "goal" in the sense of an end result, but a constant direction and tendency--I find the greatest adventure and the most worthwhile hard work to be finding the ways to accomplish it. And it's a good direction to move in, whether your attempts to realize it work out or not.

The only thing that bothers me about your molding your environment to your own specifications is that, of course, it's really all of our environment, and we are all part of it.

I agree completely with you about being ego-centered--using your sense of the term. But that was not the way I was using it.

There are other ways to cope with population pressure than the modern suburb. Your description of the origins of suburbs is entirely too simple and ignores the specific historical development of the idea, as though it were inevitable. I don't know anywhere near enough about this as I'd like to; I know just enough to realize that there's more to it than that. As my housemate Bruce pointed out to me the other night, our government encouraged suburbs to develop in their present form after the Second World War, by the restrictions they put on who could get housing loans and who couldn't. Things like that make me realize that it's neither inevitable nor unchangeable. And it is a system in the same sense that we speak of an "eco-system": not a planned, conscious structure necessarily, but a coherent system nevertheless. For the last couple of years I've been thinking about, and occasionally working on, an essay of some sort on the nature of cities (and by necessity of suburbs as well) and the possibilities we have in their future development. It's all very amorphous at this point, and I want to do a lot of research in the course of writing the thing, but I will do it someday. With no deadline for the project, I let it lie dormant quite often, but I'm constantly picking up new information and perspectives for it, and wondering. Perhaps I'll do a bit of that research on the suburban part of the question, just so I can continue this dialog with you.

I wouldn't call Falls Church "a stupid mistake," either. Within the context of our culture, Falls Church is a rather

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pleasant place to live. (And I don't mean that in a "Well it's pretty shitty, but under the circumstances" way at all.) But I don't think much of what suburbanization has done to the city. Since I know that you don't either, I'm a little surprised at your defense of that process. In any case, I do think the suburban system is a stupid mistake, as direction for us to go.

Anais Nin and Henry Miller were friends, but as far as I know not lovers. Presumably still are friends. I'd like to read that interview myself.))

SUSAN WOOD: HITCHHIKE is valuable precisely for the same reasons you are: because you are supremely you. Or to put it another way, what is this Movement nonsense? This us-them business? ("They say here 'all roads lead to Mishnory.' To be sure, if you turn your back on Mishnory and walk away from it, you are still on the Mishnory road. To oppose vulgarity is inevitably to be vulgar. You must go somewhere else; you must have another goal; then you walk a different road.")

I am, and have been for the past year and more, angry and resentful of the people who try to "label" me, as if their concepts sum up my reality: "freak" or "well, she may be bright but she's...a divorced woman you know" (read, "failure") or "prof" or...well. I stay on the Mishnory road, yes: I try to shock people who label me by confounding the label. Hey! People are not one-dimensional! Hey! I have my own reality!

Even more though I am upset by the people who read about a role in ROLLING STONE or whatever and think that--goshwow! I'll put on the costume, play the role, I'll have an instant identity. And of course, everyone defined as not-that-group is instantly reduced to a stereotype: "they," the enemy, a non-human. Eli and I recently had the experience of watching a "grass is groovy, save the world" type trying to force dope on a friend at a party. "No, thanks, I prefer my beer." "Aw, c'mon, man...." Well, you know the scenario. I was doubly angry because, zap, back five years to when a segment of fandom decided that Mike was an unworthy human being, a "they" because he drank beer. And of course I was unworthy by extension.

"The Movement"? You mean, if I put on my black turtleneck and go out in the sun so my photogrey glasses darken into, er, shades, I'll be a--gosh--beatnik?

Perhaps I'm more aware of this because Regina, being remote from Where It's At as the mediafreaks define it, tends to live by adopting others' definitions--several years late. Several years ago, somebody on the Regina LEADER-POST staff got hold of a copy of TIME (about the same time as every teenager's mother did) and discovered H*I*P*P*I*E*S. (I told you it was a while ago.) Hippies had long hair. They wore jeans. They were young. They were rumored to be involved with narcotics and the opposite sex. Etc. So the newspaperpeople went out, and they found my friend Dianne who had long hair and was wearing cutoff jeans and was, most of all, hanging around the Guild with her boyfriend John: the Guild being the local coffeehouse where this Saskatchewan kid was singing folk-songs. Right, Joni Mitchell, I told you it was a long time ago. (Dianne got offensively superior when I told her how great Ian and Sylvia were. "I know the girl that writes their songs," she said. I was Properly Impressed.)

They took Dianne's picture. They splashed it over the LEADER-POST with captions: "One of Regina's Twelve Hippies."

Dianne's parents got terribly upset and made her stop wearing blue-jeans.

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In a town where everyone wears bluejeans--because what else do farmers wear? And, as my friend David Miller, the actor/luthier/farmer, points out, "All farmers are freaks. They have to be. I mean: so you got flooded out last year, and hailed out this year, and you grin and sow another crop. And get burnt out. And keep on. That's a freak."

Now it's hard, in some ways, for me, not to put Regina people down as simple and naive. Backwater, taking their labels from TIME. Today I had to explain to Lit 100 what a yin-yang symbol was. But I don't know how to run a Massey-Harris combine. And I like my friends/students here for the same reason I like you. They know who they are, mostly. They aren't dressing, acting, talking to prove anything to anybody about who they want to be mistaken for.

(2920 Victoria Avenue, Apt. 12, Regina, Sask. S4T 1K7, CANADA)

((A good point: people are not one-dimensional. I don't mean to talk in one-dimensional terms when I mention the counter-culture (I don't usually think in terms of the Movement, because I don't think primarily in political terms); what I mean to do is illuminate a common experience, perhaps the common experience to those who respond to the discussion, so that we can get a little perspective on it. I feel almost embarrassed at the sweeping generalizations I got into in replying to Ted; that kind of thing is trying to pin something down, something elusive and elastic, so of necessity the terms are flexible, trying to evoke rather than to define.

And this reminds me of something I forgot to mention above to Ted: that the discussion of lifestyles in New York and California is not "so generalized as to be meaningless." The similarities are enormous, especially when viewed in the light of the rest of human culture, but in the context of our own culture the differences are significant. What I wrote was only a beginning, an attempt at sparking further thinking. I'm curious about the subtle differences in way of life between the two coasts. It's the differences, when the world is looked at from one specific, personal, particular place and then another, that fascinate me.

You know, I'd like to see what your dulcimer-making friend David Miller would think of HITCHHIKE. I've come to realize that my dream has come true, long after I'd given it up: some years ago I had the idea of publishing a countercultural fanzine, something for More Than Just Fandom, so I got together one issue of something called PAPER SOUL, with a lot of great stuff by mostly fanwriters, and it never went anywhere at all. It was a hybrid, with no true life of its own. (There are lots of copies left, if anybody wants one.) So with HITCHHIKE I figured I'd just do a small, relatively frequent lettersubstitute-cum-journal, and I'd send it to my friends and anybody I thought would be interested, and I'd print letters from anyone who wrote something in tune with what I was doing. And now I'm publishing all kinds of letters and the fanzine is growing, and it's become something I can show to almost anybody who is interested in the personal stories of where some people are at, whether they have any connection with the subculture it grew out of, science fiction fandom, or not. Full circle, without even trying.

Well, hardly even trying.))

ELI COHEN: It's kind of strange, sitting here in Saskatchewan, reading about culture and counterculture; in many ways Regina is 10 years behind the times, with a young dope scene, undergraduates just getting turned on, long hair still fashionable. I sit at a party and watch a college kid earnestly trying to turn on a beer-drinking geologist--grass is beautiful, grass is gonna change the world.... (10 years later, across the border, Mike Gorra is out guzzling beer with his high school buddies.)

Yet it's not really 10 years behind (you can't step in the same river twice, at least not without getting your feet wet), because people here read the same magazines, watch the same TV shows as you do. There's a chance to see the mistakes made in the U.S., and possibly correct them (e.g., Saskatchewan is making valiant attempts to keep the simmering Natives from exploding, the way Blacks did in the U.S. in the 60's).

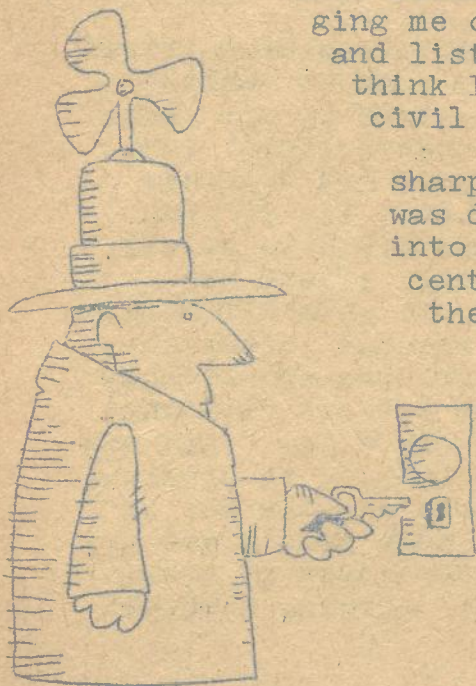
I get a weird kind of split vision, because to, say, most of the students at Regina University, this is the big city, this is Where It's At, and they come flocking from Moose Jaw and Melfort, Nipawin and Carrot River, to the provincial capital, the largest city in Saskatchewan, pop. 150,000.

And here I am, survivor of more than a quarter century of New York life, jaded veteran of the Columbia riots.... You know, I never particularly belonged to the counterculture, or to any subculture except fandom. (I remember a friend at Columbia in 1968 telling me that the student strike was the most important thing that would ever happen to me: why was I just sitting there? And what did all that hysteria produce? Coed dorms and a gaping pit in Morningside Park!) If it comes to uniforms, I much prefer propellor beanies and zap guns to long hair and jeans (though there's absolutely no incompatibility between them), if only because no one could possibly take a beanie seriously.

Yet here I am, sitting on the frozen fringes of Western civilization, divested of almost all my worldly possessions (last week my \$400 stereo system was burgled out of Jerry & Suzle's apartment, apparently by a midget acrobat who came in through the bathroom window), getting into Taoism, living with an ecology freak who keeps dragging me off to her friends' survival farm, getting stoned and listening to The Band or Yes...why, someone might think I was a bearded hippie, if I wasn't a highly-paid civil servant.

Which is another point--the Buddha, a rather sharp individual, all in all, certainly knew what he was doing when he threw "right means of livelihood" into the Eightfold Way. "Earning your living by decent means" or somesuch. I think the trouble with the counterculture was its de-emphasis on earning a living, so that the only really viable lifestyle within it was the hard-headed, economically self-sufficient commune (which, even so, generally depends on straight society for needed goods and implements). Your job is the primary way you plug into human society, and besides, everybody spends a good chunk of time obtaining food, etc., so it stands to reason that how you go about the obtaining is going to have great effects on your spiritual life.

Through little fault of my own, I lucked



hitchhike --xxiii

into a fantastic job, that not only provides intellectual stimulation, positive feedback, lots of money, and fanzine articles; it also provides a real sense of doing something worthwhile--like, the recommendations I'm working on now may determine whether a student busted for smoking dope rots in prison or continues his studies while in some community-based diversion program. I get a terrific sense of self-worth, which does wonders for my ego. And let's face it, you can't throw out your ego until you get a good grip on it.

Eric Mayer is right--selling yourself out is a disastrous path; so is being unemployed. They're both alienating, whether from yourself or from society (not as separate as we'd like to think, as witness all those women trying to carve non-housewife self-images out of recalcitrant sub-consciousnesses).

Re East & West Coast culture: a friend of mine (New Yorker who moved to Berkeley) defined the essential difference between the two life styles--in one, you live in a beautiful, relaxed land of perpetual sunshine, where life is wonderful, but at any minute you may go over the edge of the San Andreas Fault into utter catastrophe; versus the other, where you travel in constant fear of being mugged, breathing polluted air, living a life filled with petty annoyances, but with little chance of any true cataclysm rescuing you.

This is clearly the typically biased view of the ex-New Yorker.

A few comments on David's letter: Maybe this isn't what he has in mind by a creative forefront, but I offer a hypothesis: such diverse sources as Gregory Bateson, J.R. Pierce, and Rolling Stone all agree that we are at the beginning of a cybernetic breakthrough. Cheap and sophisticated minicomputers, synthesizers, and computer graphics devices are starting to arrive (with the emphasis on cheap, i.e., within the means of your typical freak, however defined), and the whole thing could burst quite suddenly into amazingly synesthiac art forms. Sensory syrnix, anyone? There is actually already a thriving subculture of computer freaks, and electronic music and graphics is the perfect bridge into the arts.

But if you really want a clearly-identified group of people, with the same hair style and clothes, common interests, a ubiquitous, spare-changing presence that reaches from New York to Saskatchewan, and above all, the dynamic growth to take over the world, I give you...The Krishna People!

(2920 Victoria Avenue, Apt. 12, Regina, Sask. S4T 1K7, CANADA)

((As something of an expert in unemployment, and contemplating it as a reasonable possibility again in the near future, I don't agree with what you said about unemployment being a disastrous path. Not, at least, in the usual sense of not having a job. I want to get out of my job because it leaves me no time to write, which is my real work, and little enough time to cultivate my personal relationships (which are also part of my work). Now I might go along with you if you mean having no creative work of your own, which is not so different from creative play.))

HARRY WARNER: Will Straw's color-the-decades idea is a new one to me. It's probably evidence that I'm word-oriented rather than picture-oriented when I admit that I don't get any immediate color impressions when I try to think of decades in that manner. Or maybe my trouble is the way big events in my personal life have consistently run two or three years behind the change of decades, and this confuses the

issue. Betraying once again the way my mind works, I find it much easier to think of the decades as printed matter: books in the 1930's, newspapers in the 1940's, fanzines in the 1950's, books again in the 1960's but this time mostly paperback. I've been too busy trying to catch up on locs during the 1970's to look at any printed matter.

If a fellow really wanted to stay out of suburbia's worst manifestations, I think he could do it with careful planning and a bit of luck. Most suburbs spring up because people want to live in them. You can find common factors in most of them: nearness to a fairly large city, a location on or very close to a highway which goes to another fairly large city, in valleys or plains but not on mountainsides, and so on. I don't want to live in the suburbs because I prefer being within walking distance of the necessities of life. If I wanted a rural residence where suburbs probably wouldn't spring up around me, I'd look first for a general area at least ten miles distant from an interstate highway or other expressway, then within that area I'd look for roads that connect really small towns, those with only a couple thousand inhabitants or less, and on those roads I'd hunt houses which are at least five miles from any town with a population in five or six figures. There's always danger some hotshot promoter will choose the same spot I've picked to start a get-away-from-it-all vacation community, but there's a good chance that the economy and energy situation will discourage such ventures from now on.

The photography magazines claim that cameras are consuming much of the interest of people who used to create rock music or beat poetry. I doubt if it's true but there are certain trends which seem to have some effect on other schools of photography. It's no longer considered incompetence to take blurred photographs and there's considerable interest in photographic sequences for exhibition which tell some kind of story or have some sort of relevance to one another, quite possibly derived from the graphic story in inspiration. But I doubt if photography will ever be to the counter-culture what rock and comic books have been in the past, simply because cameras and supplies involve a lot of spending.

(423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740)

JEFF SCHALLES: But anyway, didn't Peter Gould write a book called *Burnt Toast*? Or was that someone else. It was a fine book, or as much of it as I got read before the chick who owned it took off with it (and three or four of mine, too).

There is one True Place of Power (lots of minor ones, but one true one) in north-western Pennsylvania, literally the bones of the earth thrusting up from a shoulder of a large hillside. It's in a state game land and fairly well overgrown (though I'm certain it got logged off last century around). It's extremely hard to get to, very beautiful, and quite awesome; I spent an entire day there once and didn't even get around to lighting up my joint, I got so high just from sitting on top of the rock and looking down into the deep valley all around. I found myself talking to birds and squirrels and gibbering like an idiot, sitting naked in the sun on a tuesday afternoon. The rocks are bigger than houses, and just sort of sit, perched, on the ridge, thrusting above the surrounding trees, with trees growing from them, too. Western Pa. has some of the most fantastic countryside this side of New England or Oregon, like the Slippery Rock Creek Gorge, the deepest gorge in the East, the glacial till, a giant lip of rock and gravel from where the glaciers began to retreat--this was within walking distance from the cabin I lived in last winter. Lots of stuff. Great place to hang out, I sometimes think.

Though sometimes I don't....

I'm not sure as to if D. Emerson is missing the point on Where It's At these days, though then again, maybe I'm the one who's missing something. I dunno, it is 1975 (jesus, how'd it get so late? kind of like smoking pot all night and forgetting the time...) and nothing has stood out lately, but, then again, what could ever stand out like the late sixties, or earlier sixties, or late fifties, depending on your viewpoint, when psychedelics hit the young masses? I hope that hasn't been forgotten yet, really now, how could anyone forget, unless they were so hopelessly lost in the ensuing befuddlements of quaaludes and Jose Cuervo and the waterbed. The way I look at it, when the country in general is prospering economically (or at least pseudo-economically) and Joe Citizen is happy, the spirit moves on other levels till everything begins to peak at once and finally something breaks, and everyone gropes around for a while in smoke-filled rooms till something sparks again. The art is not a cause but more a manifestation of what is going on in the people. Too often the people are ignored, high-art is touted and esoterically hidden away, and greed moves in. Le dig it? Unless you were to call technology (such as the technology involved in mass-synthesization of hallucinogenics and stereo equipment) art.

(173 McClellan Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15236)

((Yes, Pete Gould wrote Burnt Toast, although I haven't seen it. He is just one of the many authors of Home Comfort, which has twenty-five names on the title page and is copyrighted under the name Monteverdi Artists Collaborative, Inc. In one of the chapters/essays/fanzine articles that make up that book, there's a list of the other books by various Total Loss Farm people: Famous Long Ago and Total Loss Farm (Dutton) by Raymond Mungo, Burnt Toast (Knopf) by Pete Gould, The Body's Symmetry (Harper & Row) by Verandah Porche, The Food Garden (NAL) by Marty Jezer, and Living on the Earth (Random House) by Alicia Bay Laurel. The last one I know was written and published before she came to the Farm, but I don't know about most of the rest.))

ERIC LINDSAY: Alleyways are something that should have been retained in the modern city, if only so that electricity, water and utilities can be set in them, and repaired etc. without ruining the streets. Gets rid of unsightly garbage tins also, by putting them out the back. When I was much younger I lived in a suburb about 3 miles from the heart of the city, and had an alleyway behind the house used for just those purposes. Kids used to run billycarts down the slope there.

I still don't know how you manage to find these little restaurants; I've been living up here for about 8 or 9 years and have yet to find out what the restaurants in the nearest town are like. Come to think of it, I don't even know where they are.

The Dialog item about the counter culture activities & reactions in California were interesting. I know nothing about the subject, except for the possibly inaccurate views in some recent books, and of course the ideas promoted in things like Whole Earth & similar. However, every now and then places like the state library write me letters seeking information about "the alternative society," to quote a recent such letter. I think I can sympathise with the ideals of people who do want to deal with each other on a more open level, but have learnt all my life to keep my own personal views and feelings hidden, lest they be derided--which happened often enough when I was young. Again, my ideas of purpose in life

do not derive from the youth culture books, although in essentials they may not be all that different. They come more from Thoreau's "Walden," Bradford Angier's various books as a more modern version. Huxley on mescaline, rather than Timothy Leary (I only enjoyed a few lines of "The Politics of Ecstasy"), George Orwell on cheap living rather than whoever the modern equivalent is. It does make for a different, if similar, attitude.

(6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, AUSTRALIA)

((Could it be that you simply aren't very interested in eating in restaurants? The first prerequisite for finding them, of course, is having the desire to; the second is looking. Try the suggestions of friends, keep your eyes open as you move around, or even look in the Yellow Pages under "restaurants" (or rather the Pink Pages in Australia, if I remember correctly from the last time I was in the Library of Congress perusing the foreign telephone books). I'm always curious about exotic cuisines. I'm also usually close to broke, so I appreciate the European practice, which seems to be slowly catching on here, of posting a copy of the menu in the window. Perhaps if I make it to Australia we can investigate one or two of your local restaurants, if you're interested.

The way of thinking projected in The Whole Earth Catalog, and now in the new Epilog, is an example of California alternative culture at its finest, and it has a lot to do with what's at the heart of the counterculture, as far as I'm concerned. Whenever I want to get back in touch with my cultural center, I just open up the Last Catalog and read at random.))

LOREN MACGREGOR: About emotional commitments.... It's hard for me to react emotionally, honestly: I spent my first 17 years in a shell which grew harder and more difficult to pierce every year. Now it's almost impossible for me to admit to anyone I care, I like, I love. As a result, I've spent the last several months in a fog of depression that's only now beginning to lift...I hope.

Things have started coming together for me, as well, though possibly not as well, or as smoothly, as they seem to have done for you. Having decided, finally, that the world (i.e., 20th century middle class America) is not going to get any better, I'm beginning to learn within its restrictions, by doing what I can as far as I can, and ignoring the rest.

And so: basically I am straight. Sort of. I don't listen to rock music, much; I don't smoke dope, much, and I really don't give a damn about my "property" as such. I'd miss my records, if somebody took them, or my books. But the only thing I'd really miss is the ability to just pick up and leave, when and if I get the urge. You can't do that if you own a lot of things.

Enough; it's maudlin and middle class, and I promised myself I'd exercise some restraint.

Ah, I wish I could have something good to say about Discon, as it seems everybody else in the world (you mean there are more than 5,000 people?) enjoyed the spectacle. I didn't. I wandered around in a daze, mumbling pleasantries, and wishing to hell I was someplace else. It may have been parcel and part of my depression (op. cit.) but whatever it was, I would rather have been elsewhere.

Sometime, I don't remember when, I found myself in a corridor, going noplac, and looking at one of the conveniently-supplied corridor maps

to find out which particular place I wasn't. I was so confused by that time that I dug out a piece of paper, scrawled a cartoon (Bjo-like style) of two fans, one carrying a map and looking up at another, the other looking down at a skeleton on the floor; the skeleton also carrying a map. It wasn't too bad, so I pinned it on the wall. I don't know what happened to it after that.

It's interesting, on a purely personal level, to note that many of the fervently middle class people I know, those who practice consumerism as a living, have now adopted many of the ideals of the hippie freaks of times past, and feel quite comfortable with them: my sister and her husband, two of the most fanatically middle class people I've met, now recycle, brown bag, bicycle to work, and cook organic food in "natural" earthenware. They buy from a food co-op; their presents to one another are hand-made items, from factory-line headshops. And they hate dirty, filthy hippie perverts. I would dearly love to talk to my sister and brother-in-law sometime, but wading through an ocean of rhetoric grows tiresome.

Harry's comments, and yours, about photographing old houses brought to mind an old project of mine, that has been lying in a box in the back of my mind for some time: a tour guide of Seattle, decade by decade, using buildings that are still around. In a way, it brings to my mind your Places of Power.... Certain houses, certain stores, certain buildings, bring to mind one decade or another. On First Hill, there's a white-painted cafe-delicatessen, with old red- inyl booths, lined with brass upholstery tacks; in the corners of the building, rows of pinball machines flash, none of them younger than 15 years. It's a late 40s, early 50s place. A tavern by my house is late thirties, early forties; it has a juke box, and the newest song is from 1944. And so on. My original plan was for four books: Touring the 30s in Seattle, Touring the 40s, and so on.

Now I just tour the 70s.

(Box 636, Seattle, WA 98111)

((Why don't you go ahead and do your project? It sounds like an excellent idea, and one that a lot of people would love to see. Just go ahead and do it.))

DARROLL PARDOE: After reading Jonh Ingham's letter I find it hard to believe that he and I live in the same country. He says he has become an Owner of the Land, joined the Middle Classes in Suburbia, and loves it. Strangely enough, Ro and I have been Owners, etc. etc. and joined the middle classes etc. etc. (though I don't know; we hardly ever see our neighbors) and are on the verge of chucking it all for something more meaningful. And his gloom about British politics and being deprived of the 'desire to get rich': I on the other hand am a bit more hopeful than I used to be. I read the other day of a couple of people in London (in their late 50s) who have moved into a derelict house and set up as a community bakery for their neighbours (most of whom are 'squatters'). A few years ago such a thing would have been unheard of. I suspect that when Jonh Ingham talks of a 'major breakdown in western civilization' he means a break up of the cosy money-oriented suburban society he's obviously loving having become a member of. Well, maybe a breakup of that wouldn't be as bad a thing as he thinks. (I often get my colleagues at work worked up by arguing a viewpoint totally opposed to their capitalistic one. They're always going on about how the ups and downs of the stock market will affect their investment in the company pension fund, for instance, which is totally an alien viewpoint to me.)



Rosemary and I turned vegetarian a few months ago. We'd been thinking about it in a desultory sort of way for a long time, but finally got round to it on our way back from SFANCON last September, when we went into a restaurant in Bruges and saw a tank of live lobsters which people could select one from to be boiled alive on the spot. We knew that sort of thing happened, but seeing the evidence of it right there put us off. So now we don't eat meat, which amazed my mother when we spent Christmas with my parents and my brother's family. Apart from the heckling we got during Christmas dinner, little odd comments kept coming out like 'you will have some gravy won't you?' They couldn't understand that it wasn't just meat but other meat products as well that we didn't want. They think we're crazy, but then they always did, so that's not much change.

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WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Jay Kinney, John Bangsund, Redd Boggs, David Emerson, Sutton Breiding, Beverly Reams, Lesleigh Luttrell, Mike Glicksohn, John Carl, Greg Benford (by word of mouth, while he was in town this week), and John Smith (who called up one night on his WATS line). And, of course, all those fine folks whose letters I've lost or forgotten. Thank you all. (And, late but much appreciated, Peter Roberts and John Brosnan. Peter's comments really deserve to be printed next issue, and they probably will.) :: I'm not sure exactly when I began work on this issue of HITCHHIKE, but it's being wrapped up like a dead fish on Thursday evening, May 1, 1975. Mimeography will most likely be done by my own hand on the mighty QWERTYUIOPress, thanks to Ted White. This fanzine is sent or given to my friends and to anybody else I think might find it interesting and stimulating--and to most anybody who asks me directly. It's done strictly ^{with} for the hell of it, which is the way ^{with} most things of any worth. :: The Calvin Demmon article was once to have appeared in EGOBOO, but that fanzine is not likely ever to appear again. :: Rumpelstiltskin.

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