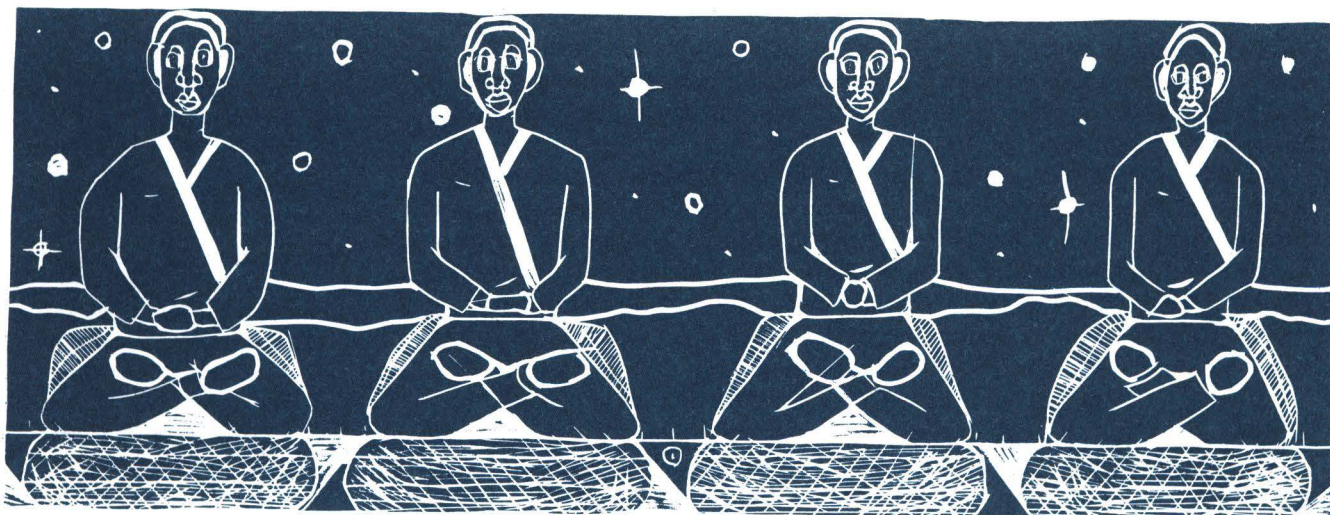




TURNING WHEEL

Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship

Spring 1993 \$4.00



Barbara Sandidge

Racism and Buddhism

Racism in Buddhism

❖ *Voices of Asian American, African American
and Latino Buddhists*

❖ *Environmental Racism*

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
P.O. BOX 3470
BERKELEY, CA 94703-9906

FROM THE EDITOR

I've had a sort of mental block about writing this editorial – Racism is such a vast and horrible subject, so daunting, so important. But at least I know the *Turning Wheel* you have in your hand is full of thought-provoking discourse on racism, most of it from people of color. So whatever I say is extra.

I like to think I'm not a racist. When you boil it down, I think racism is "us-and-them mind." I hate people who divide everybody into "us" and "them," don't you? How could people be so ignorant? People in the KKK, neo-Nazis, people who bomb abortion clinics – "they" are deluded and full of hate. "They" are wrong. But "we" are right. We Buddhists don't have discriminating mind.

OK, I hear what I'm saying. I take it back. We're all "us." All beings on this green globe are caught in Indra's net together, silver fishies all, flashing and flapping about. But we have to watch ourselves.

And we can learn from unexpected quarters. When I was in college I spent a summer in South Africa working on an anti-apartheid newspaper, and I stayed with a white couple who were courageously struggling against apartheid (and later served long prison terms for doing so). They loved American jazz, and knew a lot about the U.S. in general. When I exclaimed in horror at the racism I saw in South Africa, they said, "Yes, it's bad here. But it's bad in your country, too. Just subtler." Because of them, I became involved in the civil rights movement when I went home. I went to Mississippi to help with voter registration, and I saw that my friends in Johannesburg were right. It was very bad. So it was white South Africans who taught me first about the racism in my own country.

People are saying there's no such thing as race. There's ethnicity, but as Andrew Cooper reminds us (page 34), race is a relatively recent historical construct. A friend told me recently: "If you're talking about distinct gene pools, there are only two races on Earth: the Bushmen of Southern Africa and everybody else. We're all mixed up together."

As Carl Anthony points out (page 18), the word "white" was invented for people of European descent to join together in oppressing people of color in the American colonies. The word wipes out ethnicity, wipes out cultural diversity. Irish Catholics, Russian Jews, Baptists from Oklahoma, Quakers from Philadelphia, all disappear into whiteness, like polar bears in a snowstorm. In "Unlearning Racism" workshops (page 23), people are encouraged to find their own ethnic or cultural roots. Nobody's plain.

There are lots of traps. I'm remembering a ride at Disneyland, called "It's a Small World," which my kids enjoyed when they were little. You ride on a boat through a tunnel, and all along the way, animated doll children of many lands open their robot mouths and clap their robot hands and sing an idiotic song: "It's a small world after all!" They all have the same smile and they're all cast from the same mold, but they're painted different colors and dressed in different costumes: Dutch caps, dashikis, Eskimo furs, etc. Each one is cute as a button, and they all know English, and none of them would ever insist on speaking some obscure language with a difficult alphabet, or refuse to sign for a foreign aid loan that required them to plow under their sustainable vegetable garden and grow coffee for export instead. May Manjusri help us to cut through such cultural imperialism.

That's the trick – to cherish diversity without going to war over it. And on the other hand, to recognize that we all have Buddha nature without pretending we're all the same. ♦ – *Susan Moon*

Coming themes for *Turning Wheel*:

Summer '93: Right Livelihood, money. Deadline: May 17.

Fall '93: Right speech, censorship. Deadline: August 16. Please send manuscripts and other material for this issue to: Denise Caignon, 720 Columbia St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060. She will be guest editing the Fall issue.



TURNING WHEEL

Editor

Susan Moon

Assistant Editor
& Advertising Director
Will Waters

Consulting Readers & Editors

*Thelma Bryant, Denise Caignon,
Melody Ermachild, Veronica Froelich,
AJ Kutchins, Alan Senauke,
Meredith Stout*

Production & Design

*Lawrence Watson,
Thelma Bryant, Susan Moon, Meredith
Stout, Orite Abramowitz, Jordan
Thorn, Paul Walker, Will Waters*

For advertising rate sheets, please
contact the National Office

International Advisory Board

*Robert Aitken, A.T. Ariyaratne, V.B.
Dharamawara, Christina Feldman,
Maha Ghosana, Ane Pema Chodron,
Mamoru Kato, Joanna Macy,
Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa,
Gary Snyder, Tenzin N. Tethong,
Christopher Titmus*

National Coordinator

Alan Senauke

*The Buddhist Peace Fellowship was
founded in 1978, to bring a Buddhist per-
spective to the peace movement, and to
bring the peace movement to the Buddhist
community. Membership and subscription
information are on the back cover. Single
copies \$5.00 postpaid from:*

BPF National Office.

Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704
510/525-8596

© 1993 Buddhist Peace Fellowship
ISSN 1065-058X

printed on recycled paper

Cover: "Buddhas . . . and Buddha's
Rejoice," by Barbara Sandidge, 1987

C O N T E N T S

REGULAR DEPARTMENTS

- Letters/4
- Readings/11
- Education Column/16
- Ecology Column/17
- Coordinator's Report/44
- Announcements and Classifieds/45



RACISM AND BUDDHISM

- Eco-Justice: An Interview with Carl Anthony/18
- Unlearning Racism, *by Ricky Sherover-Marcuse*/23
- The Death of Ian Freedman, *by Melody Ermachild*/24
- A Dialogue with African Americans in Soka Gakkai International/29
- Becoming Humble, *by Thubten Chodron*/33
- Starting Points, *by Andrew Cooper*/34
- Freeing Ourselves from the Oppression Within, *by Joeritta de Almeida*/35
- Three Interviews
 - John Hall*: Closer Than Our Nose/36
 - Ryo Imamura*: Honoring the Source/38
 - Anonymous*: An Open Door is Not Enough/40
- BCA: The Lotus That Bloomed Behind Barbed Wire, *by Ken Tanaka*/41

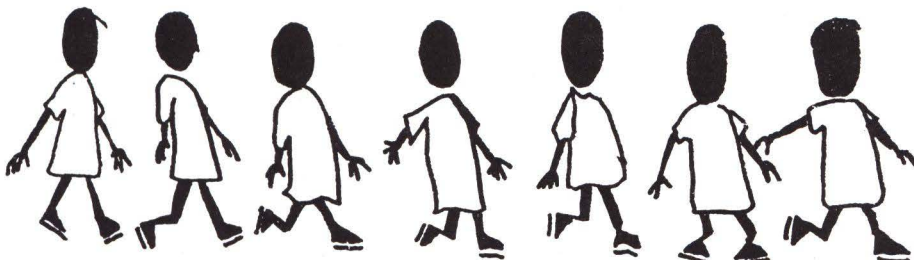
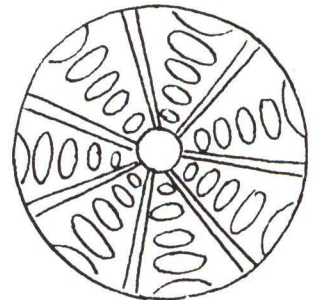
The Helpers, *by Jill Schireson*/42

BOOK REVIEW

Thelma Bryant on *Refuge*/43

ART

- Barbara Sandidge/cover
- Robert Kostka/32
- Philip Sugden/37



Barbara Sandidge

NAROPA Summer

INTERFAITH RETREAT DWELLING IN UNITY

June 27 - July 3

Bernard Glassman Sensei, Sandra Jishu Holmes, Jack Engler, Rabbi Tirzah Firestone, Fr. Robert Kennedy, Sister Janet Richardson, Rabbi Donald R. Singer

This series of three two-day retreats is an interreligious dialogue meditation program which explores the Psalms and their meaning from the perspectives of the Jewish, Christian, and Buddhist traditions. Based on the form of a zen sesshin, this retreat uses a week of sitting meditation practice as the foundation from which faculty and participants can explore the Biblical Psalms while cultivating a common ground of understanding.

Entire Program
June 27 - July 3

Jewish Retreat
June 28-29

Christian Retreat
June 30 - July 1

Buddhist Retreat
July 2-3



Tibetan Language Seminar

Lama Tashi Thöndrup & Sarah Harding

This seminar will provide an opportunity to study intensively the rich oral and written traditions of Tibet within a supportive practice environment. JUNE 14-26

The Naropa Institute

2130 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, CO 80302
303-444-0202 Free Summer Catalog Available
NCA Accredited BA-MA-MFA Degrees

The Naropa Institute supports civil rights for everyone regardless of sexual orientation.



LETTERS

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

I appreciate the way the latest issue of *Turning Wheel* discusses issues from different angles. I was particularly interested in the contrasting articles on the First Precept: Reb Anderson's and Thich Nhat Hanh's. They seem complementary; each balances the other, makes the other more complete. Reb's view, with Dogen in the background, represents the absolute perspective: "In order to practice this precept, you've got to expect no other result than just not to kill. Not to kill is the entire world. There's no application. That's the precept."

Thich Nhat Hanh places the precept in the context of social action: "Not to kill is not enough. We have to learn the ways of preventing others from killing. This precept does not allow us to say, 'I am not responsible. They did it. I did not do it.' If, during the Gulf War, we did not do something to stop it, we committed an offense."

I hope our sanghas can keep this tension present for lively, ongoing consideration. During a recent discussion at the Berkeley Zen Center, the question arose as to whether social action is a "necessary form" for the Bodhisattva vow to save all beings. A vigorous discussion ensued.

The "necessity" view was not popular. Many people stressed the need for being aware of our motives. If our actions are not well centered in practice, they may not be useful. Our first responsibility is to save all sentient beings within our own heads.

While this is certainly true, I think we cannot wait so long to act. My own motives are rarely pure. I often am initially motivated by anger, idealism or confusion. However, once I take action, I learn more about my motives; my own sphere is enlarged and the personal concerns are widened into communal concerns.

In the discussion, someone asked the good question of what social action is. Is it sending a check to a good cause? Pursuing right livelihood? Perhaps it is finally a personal decision. Social action for me is locating an edge on which I can work, an edge which nudges me out of my particular social slot, which puts me into a closer relation with the suffering in the world.

Aitken Roshi comments, "I find that students who seek out the zendo as a sanctuary from social pressures may tend to object to the emphasis on compassion in Zen practice. I believe this reveals the self-centered nature of their original motive for doing zazen. Unless this self-concern is turned about, there can be no maturity" (*Zen Wave*, p. 78).

I think that if, as sangha, we ignore the consideration of how to address suffering in the world, we also ignore an aspect of our own suffering. There is a danger of becoming too engrossed in considerations of form. The suffering beyond our gates is ours. Not to

address it actively, as an aspect of our formal practice, is to be out of balance with our world.

—*Maylie Scott, Berkeley, California*

Animal Rights

Dear Turning Wheel:

When thinking about exploring racism in our practice of Buddha's Way, I cannot help but think of a broader form of racism — what Peter Singer calls "speciesism." Even when we work for animal rights, we often justify it as a way to benefit humans, forgetting or belittling the value of the individual lives of countless non-human sentient beings.

There are even some startling similarities between the way we treat animals and human slavery. Slavery, due to extreme racism, was a habit of many people for thousands of years, acknowledged and abandoned only a mere hundred years ago. In another hundred years maybe eating animals, another ingrained habit, will be illegal and thought to be disgusting, but it may take longer because animals cannot speak out against injustice and wake us up the way that most humans can.

One unique aspect of Buddhism that has always impressed me is the term "all beings" as opposed to "all people," or worse yet, "mankind." I surely do not want to downplay racism in any way, only to expand it to include all beings. This seems especially important as racism is probably seen as a problem already by most people, whereas speciesism is not often acknowledged as a problem at all.

—*Charlie Henkel, Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery, California*

Dear Turning Wheel:

I have been both a Tibetan Buddhist practitioner and vegetarian for 18 years. It was no mean feat to maintain a vegetarian diet during three trips to Tibet! Thank you for your animal rights section. Better late than never for Buddhists to begin dialogue on animal issues. As animals are the only other seen realm according to the Tibetan Wheel of Life, it must be some form of denial that has kept discussion from our Western Buddhist publications and groups.

It is precisely because we are on the top of the food chain that we may choose what we eat. Here in Seattle the mixture of vegetarianism and environmentalism seem to go hand in hand. It is wonderful to see many young people follow both. They might not know the phrase "relative bodhicitta," but they do think that meat is gross. All you hard burnished Buddhists, please think before you order chicken satay or salmon teriyaki. By now you know all the benefits to others of being vegetarian. Clever philosophies are being used to make eating other beings acceptable. It is time to deeply reexamine these choices.

—*Eileen Weintraub Johnson, Seattle, Washington*

Buddhist Peace Fellowship's **Meditation in Action** **Summer Workshops**

in Berkeley, California

Buddhist Economics: Living as if Interconnectedness Mattered: May 16

with Helena Norberg-Hodge

This day-long workshop will be followed by
a **Public Talk & Slideshow**, 7 PM at Unitarian Fellowship Hall,
1924 Cedar St. at Bonita, Berkeley



A Buddhist-Based Training in Group

Dynamics: June 26–27

with Larry Sheridan & others



Education as a Field of Engaged Buddhism:

July 23-25

with Jennifer Biehn, Patrick McMahon, Alan Oliver

*Registration forms for workshops are available from
BPF National Office: 510/525-8596.*

New Dharma for the West



The Maitreya Buddhist Seminary under the direction of Ven. Samu Sunim, offers 3-year residential or non-residential practice-study programs for the priesthood and lay Dharma teachers. The Seminary program incorporates traditional monastic training into a Western Buddhist setting and points to new directions for the Buddhist movement now emerging in the West. Inquiries welcome.

MAITREYA BUDDHIST SEMINARY
Buddhist Society of Compassionate Wisdom
1710 W. Cornelia, Chicago, IL 60657-1219
(312) 528-8685

Are We Interconnected or What?

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

Congratulations on your animals issue. I applaud the passionate efforts of research and composition that went into it. I do, however, find examples of inexact thinking — subtle and skillful inexact thinking that, when taken to a fuller measure, breeds confusion and a one-sided view.

These recent essays were written by what I will call for the sake of convenience “animal people.” Such people feel genuine connection to animals, and from that develops affection and protective impulses. I feel that way myself. (There’s a large dog sitting here with me right now, wishing I would take her for a walk, occasionally nudging me, and licking my hand.)

But I would instead categorize myself as a “plant person.” I think about plants a great deal; I worry about them — my own and other people’s plants — and I watch them. I read in your last issue precious little about plants.

Plants are clearly living creatures, though several of your authors seemed to feel they were not “sentient,” or were at best sentient in a different, less significant way. Thus killing plants for ornament, for shelter, for medicine, or for food — cutting them, skinning and drying them, boiling, roasting, or eating them alive — are permissible activities for Buddhists, whereas doing these things to animals is considered very bad behavior.

When Issan Dorsey was the head cook at Tassajara Zen Mt. Center, he was pressed on this point, in a formal dharma dialogue. A student asked, “We are vegetarians, so we don’t kill animals. But we eat carrots and potatoes. What do you think about killing vegetables?”

Issan replied, “Well, I definitely think we should kill them before we eat them.”

The crucial distinction seems to be that animals remind us of ourselves — we are animals in fact — and so we observe, imagine or project our sense of suffering very effectively in animals. With plants, our imagination falters. We can’t somehow “get it” that a diseased tree, being pecked to death by birds, might suffer. There is, however, a growing body of understanding that plants do feel many things — pain among them. This understanding is being revealed both by Western empirical scientific methods and by the more direct shamanic approach.

It feels strange to find oversight on this point in a publication that gives unchallenged credence to the Gaian theories. If in fact the Earth herself is alive, and sentient and feminine, as the popular version of this approach says, then how could her primary products — plants — be less? Are we interconnected or what?

The most dangerous thing about ignoring a rather large part of life on earth — a Kingdom, speaking phylogenetically — is that it points to underlying prejudice, something like: I can sympathize with beings that

look like me, or remind me of me, but those that look different and act differently, I can trample. This rationale has been used, after all, from before recorded history. Once history begins, it seems to record, pretty much exclusively, activity based on this logic, i.e., the Hittites don’t look like Dynastic Egyptians, therefore let’s war; Infidels worship God all wrong, therefore let’s Crusade; Indians are savages, let’s take that land; black Africans don’t really look like we Colonials do, therefore let’s import and enslave them; women don’t really look like men . . . The us-them dichotomy is at the basis of racism, sexism, chauvinism, and now speciesism, with the us side getting a lot better deal than the them. Am I stretching this too far? Are we interconnected or what?

Let’s get scientific. For a long time there was no life on earth. A billion years or so. Not much oxygen floated around in the atmosphere either. Then deep in the seas some cells appeared with chlorophyll called blue-green algae. Plants — 3.5 billion years ago. These thrived, and released oxygen into their environment. After another couple billion years, enough oxygen had been released by photosynthesis to support primitive animals. Eventually plants came onto land, and then animals, and then extremely recently, human beings appeared. If Earth’s history were the length of your outstretched arm, then we humans — we who cast judgment about who is important, and who is not — we humans could be erased with just one pass of an emery board over your nail.

Without the oxygen created by plants, and the food web begun and spun by them, no such thing as human life could ever have arisen on Earth, much less Buddhadharmas. I think gratitude is in order, actually. Along a bodhisattvic spectrum, plants are the only creatures that can produce food within their own boundaries, using the elements — sunlight, water, air and earth. The plants sustain themselves and all other life on earth with the food they produce. Everything depends on them.

This pretty much shoots, for me, the moralistic reasoning behind vegetarianism. Eating low on the food web makes sense, and there are the terrible conditions inflicted upon animals and humans in the meat-processing cycle to think about — conditions described in such heart-breaking detail by Stephanie Kaza and Vanya Palmers. Unquestionably horrible, but, I would argue, unrelated to the thing being processed. Equally horrible conditions can be found in every industry, from mining to agricultural canning and packing, to textile processing, to — in the most despicable job conditions that I’ve ever heard about — brick manufacture in India. I would say that this degradation results though from a pervasive and unbridled human materialism, rather than from blindness to animal rights specifically.

Having raised these issues, it seems only fair to point toward a response — otherwise this is just more complaining, and we have enough of that. I would offer that a sense of sacredness combats materialism most effectively. Since we have to kill something to eat and to survive, let us find out how, like American Indians, and like tribal people everywhere for that matter, we can conduct this business in a sacred way. We already have the teachings of mindfulness, and of oneness, and of the precious quality of our universe. The application of these teachings must surely be where the dharma is either propagated or defiled — not in slavish adherence to a rulebook of right and wrong. Given the nature of the First Noble Truth, this might be about the best we can do.

—David Schneider, San Francisco, California

Dear Turning Wheel:

Your issue on animal rights was thought-provoking, consciousness-raising, and fun to read. Like Susan Moon, I had previously kept our relationship to animals on the back-burner of my priorities stove. But I will never hover over a meat counter with the same interest, or consider a Pig in the same Pigness Frame again (or Henny Penny or anybody else, for that matter).

I was reminded of an incident several years ago. I attended the Big Top at the Oakland Coliseum with a group of family/friends. Not exactly an old-fashioned canvas circus tent, but I looked forward to the popcorn, clowns, animal acts, etc. with the enthusiasm of my childhood. At the gate, animal rights activists were handing out leaflets. "Spoiling the fun again," I overheard someone say. As we went through the turnstyle, I glanced down at the xerox of an elephant's foot in a chain and a tiger's face behind bars.

The show began with a giant parade, blaring music, a shouting announcer, and strobe lights. Elephants, dressed in pink skirts, lumbered by in time to the beat. Tigers followed in cages. The announcer assured us we would soon see them jump through flaming hoops. I stayed in my seat for a clown act, some fantastic poodles, and a trapeze artist. Then it was time for the dancing elephants. I found myself groping up the aisle for the exit. During intermission one of my friends found me sitting on the floor in the lobby. "You're over-reacting again," he said kindly. "You're missing all the fun." I thanked him and stayed where I was.

My appreciation to the Turning Wheel for validating my "over-reaction." It was good to see.

—Meredith Stout, Berkeley, California

Buddhocentrism

Dear Turning Wheel:

I feel the need to respond to Inge Sterk's letter to the editor regarding the "discovery" of America by a Chinese Buddhist monk in 409 C.E. Whereas she rightly rejects Eurocentric claims, she falls into the very

**ZEN MOUNTAIN
MONASTERY
1993
Special Retreats**

APRIL 16 - 18

TRUE NATURE:

**The Practice of Meditation and Ecology
with Joan Halifax**

APRIL 30 - MAY 2

**GAY & LESBIAN PRACTICE & THE
SEVEN ACTS OF COMPASSION**

with Jeffrey Hopkins

JUNE 1 - 6

WAY OF REALITY POETRY FESTIVAL

**with Diane di Prima, John Giorno,
Andrew Schelling, Armand Schwerner,
Clark Strand, Anne Waldman
and Linda Montano**

JULY 2 - 4

BUDDHISM AFTER PATRIARCHY

with Rita Gross

OCTOBER 27 - 31

THE ATTENTIVE HEART:

**A 4-Day Deep Ecology Retreat
with Joanna Macy**

1993 is an exciting year for special retreats at Zen Mountain Monastery. Come explore, encourage, and deepen your spiritual practice with some of the finest teachers of our time. Each program emphasizes the integration of monastic Zen training with that retreat's topic.

The retreats daily schedule begins before dawn with zazen (Zen meditation). The day unfolds with chanting service, work practice, and retreat seminars. In the evening we let go of all the day's activity and return to the stillness of zazen. Come taste for yourself authentic Zen training, and an unbeatable array of retreats. At ZMM you will meet the cutting edge of Zen practice.

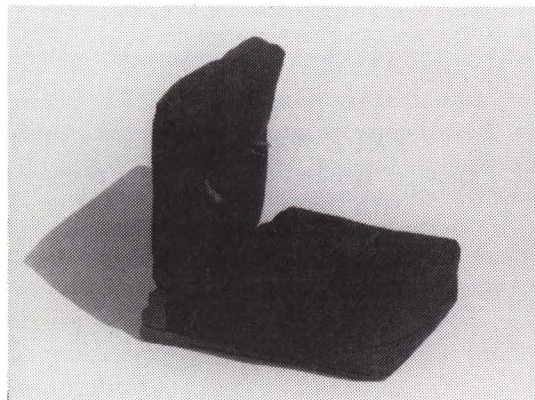
Call today for a free retreat catalog

ZEN MOUNTAIN MONASTERY
Box 197BPF, Mt. Tremper, NY 12457 (914) 688-2228

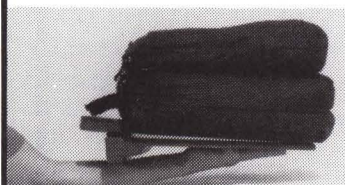
TOMPA™



MEDITATION SEAT



- **HAND MADE** of fine crafted finished hardwood laminate.
- **PATENT PENDING** design of changeable heights and angle of forward tilt.



**SUPPORT
COMFORT
ASSURANCE**

- **DURABLE** canvas cushion formed with an extra firm poly insert wrapped with cotton that supports all styles of sitting.
- **BACK** cushion shaped for maximum lumbar support.
- **TOMPA** seat folds and fits into a sturdy slip pocket sewn into the cushion itself.
- **EASY** to carry.
- **MANY** versatile uses and applications.



for **FREE BROCHURE** or to order:

1-800-949-3427



The Dharma Works

115 S. TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. • TOPANGA • CA • 90290

same trap that the Europeans did in advancing her claims of Buddhist "discovery." How can one "discover" a land that is already well inhabited? She, too, passes over the whole Amerindian (or, more accurately, Native American) presence here, dating back several thousand years. It is possible, I fear, to be "Buddhocentric" as well.

—Jared Allen Fogel, Coventry, Connecticut

Not Homophobia

Dear Turning Wheel:

In her article "Mindful Struggle in Oregon," Ms. Kuya Minogue charges that one of our priests prohibited her from staying overnight in a temple of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives because Ms. Minogue is a lesbian, thus discriminating against her because of her sexual orientation. It is indeed true that Ms. Minogue was refused lodging on the occasion she mentions, but not because we discriminate against people of gay and lesbian orientation; she was refused lodging on that occasion precisely because we do not discriminate, and thus we extend to people of gay and lesbian orientation the same concern and respect that we extend to those of heterosexual orientation. Let me explain how this comes about.

The issue is one of protecting priests, congregation members, and the partners of congregation members from false rumors and accusations of sexual involvement between priests and their congregations. While it is obvious that true occurrences of sexual intimacies between priests and congregation members are a breach of ethics and trust which can have devastating consequences for all concerned, false accusations of such conduct are also capable of causing serious damage to the reputations of, and relationships between, the priest, the congregation member, and the congregation member's partner, and other members of the Order and congregation. Since it is almost impossible to prove such accusations to be untrue, the Vinaya (rules for priests) has for millennia recommended measures to prevent this. Chief among these is the rule that a priest not spend the night alone in the same house with one person of the opposite sex. Because it is apparent that when either the priest or the congregation member is of gay or lesbian orientation they are open to the same false accusations if the priest were to spend the night alone in the house with a person of the same sex, the rule is naturally extended to cover this situation. In our view, to fail to make this extension would be to deny to people of gay or lesbian orientation the same protections we provide to those of heterosexual orientation, and thus would be a form of prejudice. Hence the refusal of our female priest to allow Ms. Minogue to spend the night in the priory on the occasion in question, an occasion on which the priest could not find a third party to stay with them

and thus there would have been no one else in the building other than the two of them.

Some readers may ask, "Why are these people so concerned about someone's reputation?" The foundation of the relationship between churches, clergy and the public is based on trust. Trust is taking a terrible beating nowadays; until trust and toleration become more widespread, we want to be able to protect our priests, congregations and Buddhism in general from innuendo, rumor and scandal. We are saddened by the misunderstanding which arose in this case, since the priest did attempt to explain her reasons for declining Ms. Minogue's request. I assure your readers that people of gay and lesbian orientation are welcome as members of our congregation, as lay disciples and lay ministers, and as priests of our Order. While our Order does require celibacy of all its priests, it makes no distinctions whatsoever on the basis of sexual orientation in ordination or promotion. Indeed, a significant number of people of gay and lesbian orientation have been granted the highest level of recognition given by our Order and occupy positions of great trust and responsibility within it.

We join with Ms. Minogue, and you and your readers, in praying for a gentler, more tolerant, less judgmental world. We believe that the Buddha's teaching is for everyone.

—Rev. Eko Little, Vice-Abbot, Shasta Abbey,
Order of Buddhist Contemplatives, California

Miscellany

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

The Winter 1993 issue of *Turning Wheel* contained many good articles, but I would like to commend in particular Jon Berkowitz's "Report from a Burma Borderhead." Writing about that troubled area, Berkowitz skillfully blended personal experience with historical background in a compelling way.

Over the past few years I have read a number of news articles about the problems in Burma, but none better. Thank you for an excellent journal.

—Jordan Thorn, Green Gulch Farm, Muir Beach, CA

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

Pam Weiss's very direct article, "Shark Fin Soup," left me with one nagging question. Why was Bill Wong allowed to die "writhing with pain . . . wrapping and unwrapping his legs and then his arms around the metal safety bars on the sides of the bed, wrestling with his pain, moaning"?

Did Mr. Wong request that pain-killing narcotics not be administered? Was his pain so intractable that narcotics were not effective? Did his physician and/or hospice nurse determine that he would have a more human/humane death not sedated by narcotic drugs? The scene Ms. Weiss describes continues to trouble me.

—Dennis L. King, Seattle, Washington

Coming up in the next Shambhala Sun, **Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche** discusses his work on Bertolucci's new film *LITTLE BUDDHA*. * The January issue of The Sun presented *Fully Human: An Introduction to the Shambhala Tradition*, by **Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche**. *



In May, **Abbot Reb Anderson** says the true precepts are realized only  through sitting practice—& vice versa.

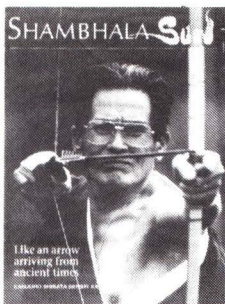
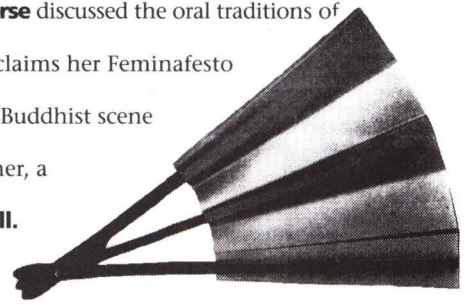


In January,  **Dr. Arvol Looking Horse** discussed the oral traditions of the Lakota Sioux. **Anne Waldman** proclaims her *Feminafesto*

in March. * Sun editor Melvin McLeod surveys the Buddhist scene

and asks, "Where are the young practitioners?" * and a Buddhist prisoner, a

Christian investigator, and a "friend on the outside" practice **Dharma in Hell**.



Nothing is
really happening
in the Shambhala Sun.

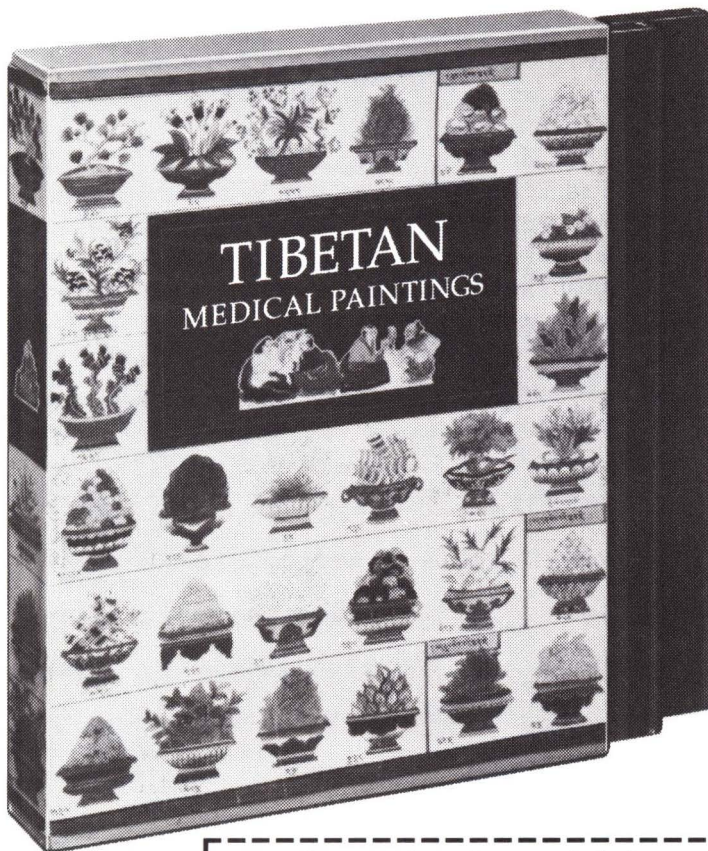
Bimonthly. \$20 US, \$28 elsewhere. 1345 Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302. Visa/MC: (902) 422-8404

A lavish two-volume facsimile edition of
illustrations from *The Blue Beryl*



TIBETAN MEDICAL PAINTINGS

Illustrations to *The Blue Beryl* Treatise of
Sangye Gyamtso (1653—1705)



Edited by Yuri Parfionovitch,
Fernand Meyer, and Gyurme Dorje
Introduction by Fernand Meyer
Foreword by His Holiness
the Fourteenth Dalai Lama

Created between 1687 and 1703 by Sangye Gyamtso, regent of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, *The Blue Beryl* treatise integrated Tibetan medicine's complex and diverse wisdom into a coherent body of knowledge. The roots of this rich, thousand-year-old system of treating the body—still in use today—are exquisitely illustrated in 76 brilliantly colored, highly detailed paintings.

Reproduced exactly in this edition these remarkable paintings have been used for centuries as teaching aids and depict topics as diverse as the diagnosis and treatment of illness, dream interpretation, embryology, sexuality, and the necessity of preventive medicine.

Of great appeal to those interested in alternative medicine, and to medical historians, physicians, pharmacologists, and lovers of Tibetan culture, this unique publication will also fascinate art lovers.

Two volumes, slipcased. Appendix, bibliography, chronology, notes, index. 0-8109-3861-8 \$195.00



ABRAMS
100 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10011

Please complete and return with check-money order or credit card information to:
Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Attn. Special Sales Dept.,
100 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011
 Or telephone credit card orders Mon.-Fri., 9am-5pm EST to:
 (800)345-1359, ext. 506 or 482 (212)206-7715, ext. 506 (within NY State)

YES, please send me _____ copy(ies) of TIBETAN MEDICAL PAINTINGS @ \$195.00 per copy, plus NY, NJ or CA sales tax. Order now with this coupon and SAVE \$10.00 shipping and handling charge.

() I am enclosing a check or money order for \$ _____

() Please charge my credit card: # _____

() Amex () Visa/MasterCard Exp. date _____

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime telephone# _____

Pam Weiss responds—

Dear Mr. King:

I appreciate your concern regarding Bill Wong's pain as he approached his death. As far as I know, Bill received the full complement of pain-killing narcotics to ease his physical pain as he died. Following my description of Bill: "wrapping and unwrapping his legs and then his arms around the metal safety bars on the bed, wrestling with his pain, moaning," I wrote: "He was literally hanging on, refusing to let go." It was not the physical pain, but the hanging on that I was struck by. I believe his pain was less about body than about psyche and spirit.

In my experience, how a person dies often reflects how they live. I have watched people pass with great ease, and even joy. But Bill was a fighter. He went out fighting. Whether in Chinese checkers or life, he didn't like to lose. So letting go was particularly painful for him. And as uncomfortable as that was for me, it felt appropriate for Bill.

Like you, I was also deeply troubled by what I witnessed. Yet what I am left with in the wake of Bill's "pure absence" is the utter incomprehensibility of death. And I am increasingly cautious about my assumptions of what a "good" death looks like.

Thank you again for sharing your concern.

—Pam Weiss, San Francisco, California

Dear Turning Wheel:

Greetings. I'm an indigent inmate in California's Folsom Prison who is trying to turn my violent-prone life around. Thanks to PBS and Liliás Folan, I've been able to calm my thoughts and relax my body by practicing hatha yoga.

To expand my journey further, I've learned how to meditate by reading *Inquiring Mind*. Meditation practice has helped me to ground my thoughts and center my being – which is very important in a hostile, violent, intolerant environment like prison.

But I still have a ways to go. It is extremely hard being the only inmate who openly practices yoga and meditation on the yard. I get ridiculed, mocked and laughed at. It hurts. But I continue; I know the importance of spiritual growth.

But it would help a lot more if I had others to assist in my spiritual sojourn. I need to interact with people who share similar goals and interests. Folsom Prison has no meditation or yoga groups here. Would you be kind enough to place my name and address in your letters column? I want some penpals to correspond with.

Thank you for your consideration. May Divine Mother walk with you.

—Lance Fleming C55598, Box 29, B-7-119,
Represa, CA 95671 ♦

READINGS

Sulak Sivaraksa Nominated for Nobel Prize

Thai activist Sulak Sivaraksa, who returned to Thailand in December after 18 months of exile following charges of *lèse majesté* (defamation of the monarchy), was nominated for the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize on March 5 by Mairead Maguire, winner of the Prize in 1976 for her work for peace in Northern Ireland. In her letter of nomination to the Nobel Institute, Maguire wrote, "I am extremely impressed by his lifelong dedication to nonviolence and truth . . . for more than 30 years he has been working nonviolently for peace, social justice and a form of development which truly expresses the culture and answers the needs of ordinary people. . . . Sulak seeks to uncover in Thai Buddhism, and by extension all threatened cultures, a development model which is faithful to tradition, while answering the human needs which Western development models are unable to provide. . . . I believe that nominating Sulak will not only aid in his personal situation, but help him and his colleagues in his nonviolent work for Thai human rights and cultural development."

Nobel Peace Laureates Ask Release of Aung San Suu Kyi

Six Nobel Peace Prize winners and representatives of two Peace Prize-winning organizations met in Bangkok on February 17 to call for the release of 1991 Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese democracy leader who has been under strict house arrest since July, 1989.

The six Nobel laureates were the Dalai Lama, former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias Sánchez, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Northern Ireland peace campaigners Mairead Maguire and Betty Williams, and Adolpho Pérez Esquivel, an Argentine human rights leader who exposed the activities of Argentina's government-run death squads in the 1970s. Members of Amnesty International and the American Friends Service Committee, two organizations which have won the Peace Prize, joined the group; three other winners – Mikhail Gorbachev, Mother Teresa, and Rigoberta Menchú – sent messages of support for Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and appealed to the Burmese military-led government for her release.

Following the announcement, the group traveled to the Thai-Burma border to meet with Burmese refugees, including representatives of the Karen, a persecuted ethnic minority which has been struggling for autonomy for more than 40 years. The laureates' request to enter Burma was denied by the military regime, which has called the international support for Aung San Suu Kyi "unwarranted interference" in the country's internal affairs.

Help Revive Buddhism in Mongolia

India's ambassador to Mongolia is the 20th Bakula Rinpoche, recognized as the reincarnation of one of the 16 arhats of the Buddha's time and long revered as the head lama of Ladakh, a role comparable to that of the Dalai Lama in Tibet. He began visiting Mongolia (then a Soviet-inspired communist state) in the late sixties to provide Buddhist teachings to an area long deprived of its traditional religion.

Now as ambassador, Bakula Rinpoche carries on the regular diplomatic business of India during the week, but on weekends, the 76-year old lama works in his other capacity — teaching dharma to monks, nuns and laypeople from all over Mongolia, and giving public audiences as the highest ranking spiritual leader in the country.

Buddhism once flourished in Mongolia, developing art and architecture and vast libraries of Tibetan Buddhist texts. But during the 70 years of Communist rule (which came to an end with the dramatic democratic reforms of 1989), these treasures all but disappeared. According to the Mongolian Cultural Fund, over 5000 architectural monuments and 700 monasteries were destroyed and thousands of monks were executed or imprisoned. The few monasteries left have only a small number of monks, and they lack knowledge and experience.

Furthermore, the difficult transition to a free market has brought poverty and a 200 percent annual inflation

rate to Mongolia, and along with the social ills that have accompanied these changes there is a growing spiritual uncertainty. Christian missionaries, seeing Mongolia as religious "virgin territory," are flooding the country (15 new missionaries arrive every week).

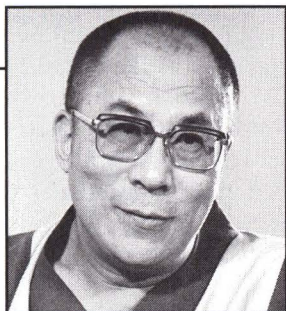
There is still a lineage of teachings alive in Mongolia, including the profound teachings of the highest yoga tantra and Dzogchen. However, Bakula says the number of people who have enough understanding of Buddhism to receive these teachings is very small. Most Buddhists do not have a sufficient level of understanding to request specific teachings, and, Bakula adds, "If nobody requests teachings, it is difficult for me and other teachers to give any."

At the same time, there is some reason for optimism. Since 1989, interest in Buddhism has grown steadily among ordinary people, certain monasteries have been reopened, and new novices are being initiated. "There will be a time," Bakula says, "when the Buddhadharma flourishes again in Central Asia. It is a sacred area, and the presence of Buddhism in the world is cyclical. The dharma has disappeared from countries many times in its long history, but it always surfaces again in other periods and regions."

The Mongolian government has offered Bakula land in the middle of Ulan Bator for the construction of a new "International Buddhist Center of Mongolia" — a monastic university and study center to be managed separately from the existing monasteries in the country. The monastery, whose foundations have already been laid, will be built in traditional Tibetan style; its internal decorations, thankhas [iconic paintings] and sculptures are to come from Nepal and India, and its spiritual teachers from the Tibetan community in exile. The monastery will also function as a study and retreat center for Mongolian and visiting Western lay people and Western monks. It will be run by an independent board of trustees comprised of distinguished Mongolian and foreign individuals.

Though some funds have been raised for the completion of the project, it is still short about \$100,000. This amount is necessary to complete the four buildings — the main monastery, a school building for young monks, a hostel with accommodations for 30 student monks, and living quarters for about 30 senior monks. Contributions are warmly invited; checks can be made out to "International Buddhist Center, Ulan Bator" and annotated "Bank Account No. 053264, State Bank of Mongolia," and sent to the following address: The Bank of Tokyo Ltd., Operations Center, International Division, (Account No. 653-0453625 USD, State Bank of Mongolia), Nihombashi, P.O. Box 191, Tokyo 103-91, Japan.

One can write to Bakula Rinpoche directly at the following address: Kushok Bakula, Ambassador of India, 26 Peace St., P.O. Box 691, Ulan Bator, Mongolia.



WITH GREAT PLEASURE WE ARE ANNOUNCING THE VISIT OF

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

San Francisco Bay Area
September 16 - 24, 1993

A Conference on

SPIRITUAL CARE FOR LIVING AND DYING



DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS

Rigpa Fellowship

P.O. Box 7866, Berkeley CA 94707
Phone (510) 644-3922 or Fax (510) 644-9517

Formation of Interracial Buddhist Council

For some time, a number of us in the various traditions of Buddhism whose membership is mainly European American have been concerned about how often Buddhist groups in the United States reflect the racial segregation so prevalent in this country. Often we have felt isolated when we tried to raise issues of race and racism.

At an Insight Meditation West retreat in the summer of 1991, the idea for an organization addressing these issues came up. In the spring of 1992, a letter was sent to Buddhist groups across the country urging them to address racism both within our Buddhist communities and in the world. At the same time, a multiracial group of Zen and Tibetan Buddhist practitioners in the San Francisco Bay Area conducted a workshop on overcoming racism using the Buddhist teachings of compassion, and the Buddhist Peace Fellowship held a town meeting on racism, in response to the upset triggered by the Rodney King verdict. Addressing racism was an idea whose time had come among Buddhists!

Since then, a group of us have been meeting monthly here in the Bay Area. We call ourselves the Interracial Buddhist Council. We are a multi-ethnic band of people who gather at homes, meditate, drink tea, and discuss our encounters with racism. Topics we have discussed include: What is racism? What is an example of institutionalized racism that we have experienced? When have we interrupted racism? What tools does our practice offer us for living in a racist society? We've talked about how racial identity is a fiction, a social construct with historical causes, many of them economic. We've talked about how the oppression of people of color is acknowledged by most people, but it is often more difficult for those of us of European descent to recognize the privilege that comes with our ethnicity. Some members of the group feel that these meetings have deeply changed their awareness of racism, and thus their very lives.

We have put out one issue of a newsletter, *The Interracial Buddhist Council Forum*, and sent it to over a hundred Buddhist groups and individuals. In this first issue, Lewis Aframi writes about the IBC-sponsored monthly sittings for people of color which he helped to organize: "We meditate and share with each other from our experiences as people of color who have a meditative Buddhist practice. Informal discussions cover such topics as: the particular forms *dukkha* takes in the lives of people of color, and the ways we can bring an awareness of this to the sanghas where we practice; the conflict between wanting to practice with others and feeling marginalized in predominantly white sanghas; the healing that Buddhist practice is bringing to our lives as people of color; and the ways that Buddhist practice can heal the wounds all of us in

American society have suffered as a result of racism. And always, we sit without apology, yet mindful of the tension between the need to come together as people of color on the one hand, and the danger of perpetuating the divisiveness of race on the other."

There have been two all-day sittings for people of color at Spirit Rock Meditation Center. We have also sponsored a couple of workshops on oppression from a Buddhist perspective.

The Interracial Buddhist Council is still in its beginning stages. What form it will take we don't yet know. We encourage individuals and centers everywhere to set up your own activities, meditations, discussion groups, workshops, etc. And please let us know what you're doing and thinking. We'll continue the dialogue in future IBC Newsletters. We leave you with the IBC Statement of Purpose:

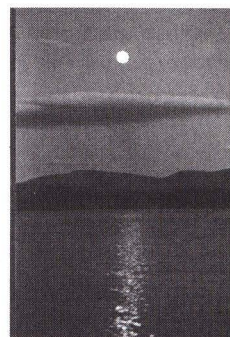
1. To bring the Dharma to the West in a way that is open, honoring and inclusive of all races and cultures.
2. To bring awareness to the suffering created by racism and prejudice in order to heal and eliminate the pain we have inflicted on one another by our ignorance.
3. To support and sponsor activities, publications, retreats, conferences, teachings and education to implement these ideas.

Our address is: Interracial Buddhist Council, PO. Box 11211, Oakland, CA 94611. Tel: 510/869-2767.

— Sue Supriano and Marlene Willis for the IBC

NEW!

from Dharma Communications



THE EIGHT GATES OF ZEN by John Daido Looi

"This new book from Zen Mountain Monastery is probably the most authoritative work on the subject of Zen training to date. It gives clear and useful answers to almost all the questions that anyone might ask about Zen practice."

— Zenshin Philip Whalen

Send \$12.95 plus \$3.50 s/h to:

DHARMA COMMUNICATIONS

P.O. Box 156TW, Mt. Tremper, NY 12457

(914) 688-7993

Berkeley Passes Plutonium Ban

Plutonium is the primary component of nuclear weapons and of about 40 percent of the world's nuclear reactors. Created only in laboratories, it cannot be destroyed. As little as one-billionth of an ounce of it can induce fatal cancer in human beings, and it has a half life of 24,000 years.

The City Council of Berkeley, California, passed a resolution in February supporting the goal of a plutonium free world. Berkeley, where plutonium was first created in 1941 by Glenn Seaborg, has called for an international ban on the use and production of the most dangerous radioactive substance ever created, and has reaffirmed city restrictions against transporting plutonium. The resolution is essentially a political statement without force of law, but proponents said they hoped it would draw attention to the dangers of plutonium.

The resolution was sponsored by the international group Plutonium Free Future, which was founded by the well-known Buddhist artist Mayumi Oda. By adopting the resolution, Berkeley acknowledged that plutonium and other long-lived radioactive materials cannot be shielded from the environment forever.

The Mayor of Berkeley, Loni Hancock, said, "I am proud that Berkeley has become the first city to take a stand for a plutonium free world. The end of the Cold War does not mean the end of nuclear danger. We need to continue to guard against nuclear proliferation. I hope that other cities will join us in this important effort."

One clause in the initiative asks that K-12 schools institute units at all levels concerning plutonium and its uses and dangers. The resolution also invites the cities of Chicago (where the first sustained chain reaction was achieved), Alamogordo (where the first nuclear explosion was detonated), Hiroshima and Nagasaki (the only cities in the world that have suffered nuclear attack), and Chernobyl (which experienced a major nuclear accident) to join in this resolution. Other concerned communities are also invited to join in or begin similar initiatives of their own. The City Council hopes that eventually national governments and the U.N. will pass resolutions banning plutonium altogether.

Plutonium Free Future hopes that this resolution, the first of its kind, will present a vision of how a local community can inspire global change by taking action within the community and reaching out to the rest of the world.

For more information contact Kaz Tanahashi: Phone: 510/649-8844. Fax: 510/486-8188.

Recommended reading: *Plutonium, Deadly Gold of the Nuclear Age* is a book which clarifies the issues and suggests appropriate actions. It can be ordered for \$15 from International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, at 617/868-5050.

Speaking of Plutonium

From the Editor:

I'd like to correct a mistake in the last *Turning Wheel*, and to suggest some actions you can take to help control nuclear contamination.

The Winter '93 *Turning Wheel* included a short article called "Plutonium Speaks," with Joanna Macy's name as the author. The article was in error in two ways. It was wrongly attributed to Joanna as the author, and it contained factual errors and a lack of information.

I myself put the article together from notes I took in the course of a conversation I had with Joanna. She didn't realize that the article would appear under her name, as I thought she did. When we went into final production, Joanna was out of the country. Because I was moved by what she had said, and eager to get the word out, I made the mistake of deciding to go ahead and print it.

The gist of the article was that careless disposal or commercial use of plutonium from nuclear warheads risks uncontrollable contamination, and that a policy of careful guardianship is required. Citizen action now can help keep the plutonium, the most toxic substance known, out of the biosphere and out of the hands of future bomb makers. To promote this crucial effort, we want not only to correct errors in the article, but also to suggest some timely and concrete actions you can take.

For the sake of accuracy, readers should know: 1) The weapons facility in Texas where warheads are now being dismantled is Pantex (not Pentax, which is the name of a camera). 2) Unfortunately, neither the U.S. nor other governments have promised not to use the plutonium again in weapons. 3) The commercial uses of plutonium currently being touted involve much more than fast breeder reactors and include, for example, "mixed oxide" fuel in existing nuclear power plants.

Action Alert!

We encourage you to:

1) Write/phone your congressperson to support the legislation soon to be introduced by Rep. Pete Stark, of Hayward, California: The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Policy Act of 1993 calls on the President to pursue international non-proliferation agreements and to establish a cut-off date for plutonium production.

2) Write Hazel O'Leary (Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20585), our new Secretary of Energy, to ask for public debate on the disposition of separated plutonium from dismantled nuclear warheads. The DOE regulations now in effect are obsolete, as they predate the end of the Cold War.

3) Write President Bill Clinton (White House, Washington, DC 20500) and ask him to take the lead in developing international agreements to cut off all plutonium production worldwide. — Susan Moon

Bimal Bhikkhu Addresses General Assembly of the United Nations

Venerable Bimal Tishya is a Buddhist monk from the embattled Chittagong region of Bangladesh and a spokesman for the plight of his people under repressive Bangladeshi rule. [See Spring and Summer 1992 "Readings."] Last year BPF sponsored Ven. Bimal on a speaking tour of the U.S., and partly as a result of contacts he made on that trip, he was invited to open the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples by addressing the General Assembly of the U.N. on December 10, 1992. What follows is excerpted from his speech on that occasion.

Mr. Chairman, Sisters and Brothers,

Please allow me to speak a few words in my own language: *Jou Bandhulak. Mui Bangladeshar Parbatya Chattagramma Ekjon Chakma Bouddha Bhikkhu. Jon.*

My mother tongue is really the only thing which has been left to me. I have already lost my land, my traditional way of life, my family and my friends.

Today is finally a day which marks a *resurrection of hope* for millions of indigenous and tribal people.

Let me present the situation as I have seen it. Throughout Asia, the lives of indigenous peoples have become a daily nightmare, an ocean of suffering. It is only the intensity which varies from one country to another, from one moment to another.

The problems have the same roots: *non-respect for human beings and their rights*. There is no respect for our culture, religions or traditions. The present situation of the indigenous and tribal peoples of Asia is not just a "problem": *it is a drama which dishonors the human condition, and changes must be made.*

There is increasing violence, provoking even more misery. But I have not come to complain nor to seek out the guilty. I have come to propose four *actions* to lessen suffering and to build peace:

A. The Right to Truth

It is only by having the true situation known that we will be able to transform it. I therefore ask that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations be made a permanent part of the human rights bodies of the United Nations.

The members of the Working Group should be able to travel freely to see the reality in our areas and to make their findings public to the world's media as well as to the United Nations.

Our only force is truthful information. Our lives are menaced because our situation is often unknown.

B. The Right to Land

Precise territory must be set out for indigenous and tribal people. We do not want to be a "museum for

anthropologists," but we wish to be able to choose our style and speed of development.

Thus the Working Group should encourage parliaments in Asia to *guarantee through laws our right to land.*

C. The Right to Life and to Justice

We must put an end to massacres and prevent armed conflicts. When there is killing or rape, the law must be respected and the accused brought to justice.

In order to avoid armed conflicts, there should be *training in active nonviolence* as taught and practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. We therefore ask that the Working Group organize such training, drawing upon such people as the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa and Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, and such specialized organizations as the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

D. The Rights of the Child

For indigenous people, our children are our only hope. I therefore ask that UNICEF help to implement the rights of the children of indigenous and tribal people – especially the right to education.

Most of our children are currently deprived of this right, through lack of schools, teachers and equipment. I therefore ask UNESCO to mark 1993 by giving scholarships to indigenous and tribal youth. If their potential is fully developed, these young people will help the whole of world society.

I also ask UNESCO to help preserve and enrich our culture and religions – our identity and way of life. We have to realize that we *inter-are* (from the Buddhist term *Interbeing*, which affirms that there are no separate selves; everything *inter-is*): what you do has an impact on us, what we do has an impact on you.

Conclusions

We, indigenous and tribal people, must also recognize our past mistakes. For instance, we have not fully respected the dignity and rights of the women in our communities. Through education, UNESCO must help to promote the rights of women in our societies.

We must also learn to renounce violence. We share a planet with other societies and we must learn to live together in harmony. We are different, but not enemies. Rather, we have common enemies to fight together: ignorance, fear, hatred and violence.

We can be mutually enriched by our differences. In fact, it is the diversity which creates our richness.

Thank you for your efforts to know us, to recognize us and understand us.

This cry of distress, by your help, becomes today a cry of hope from my heart.

Sabbe satta sukhita hontu — May all beings be happy. ♦



Venerable Bimal Tishya

READING FESTIVAL

The Problem, The Piglet, and Polly Malone

by Patrick McMahon

Silent reading just doesn't seem a workable concept in my third grade classroom at times. In the last month I've all but given up on our "sustained silent reading" period – a holy half hour after lunch, in which I imagine students everywhere in the public education universe are sitting quietly, each with her and his own book. Not my students. Mine want to read aloud, with all the color of voice, face, and body. They need to gasp at the photographs of the scars on the Australian surfer attacked by a Great White Shark. They ache to groan and shiver at Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark. Most of all, they're hot to perform.

And so I've converted Sustained Silent Reading into Reading Festival. For twenty minutes they read what they want, how they want, silently and alone or – more typically – aloud and in groups. Afterwards they may perform for the whole class. With some uneasiness at violating the sanctity of SSR I close the classroom door, and the festival commences. Students scatter about the room, huddled under tables, perched on ledges. I hear intermixed into the reading abundant chatter, tenuously connected (to my adult ear) to the

book in hand. For the last several weeks I've been listening in with nervous fascination to one particular group. Exploiting the promise of Reading Festival to the fullest extent, they've broken the mold of reading itself: they'd rather sing and dance. Every day they select the same book, *The Problem, The Piglet, and Polly Malone*. It's not a particularly interesting story as far as I can make out, except that the protagonist, Mr. Pink (a pig) is an inveterate mess-maker. They've been working with one paragraph for days, like jazz musicians improvising on a single melody line. Most recently it's been rap, the language of choice for this classroom of African Americans, Hispanics, Filipinos, Pacific Islanders, and European Americans.

Two black girls stand before the open page, nearly as big as they are, wiggling their heads and limbs, rapping the words into life: "Mr. Pink uh-huh he turned the yaa . . . hhd into MUD"

The chorus (hiding behind the book) comes in on MUD, getting down and dirty. Later, during performance time, in the heady mix of sharks and Marvel comics and scary stories, Mr. Pink trots off with the Grammy.

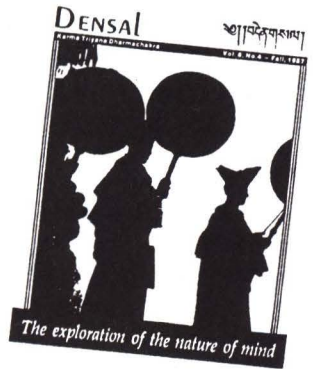
I come away from these performances with a pang. How to share in a wider circle this blazing talent, how give a larger stage to these children and their urge to show their stuff?

Recently I attended a performance of an after-school children's theater program in an affluent community. We watched as Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, Androcles and the Lion, Pyramus and Thisbe, and Anne Frank came to life. There were glitches – forgotten and muffled lines, missed cues, a wall that wiggled – but the faces on stage and in the audience were rapt. Together we were caught up in the re-enactment of a culture – European American culture, I reflected, as I walked out of the auditorium into the sunny afternoon, and looked about at the predominantly white faces.

Returning to my classroom, I feel the contradiction between being a member of the culture of dominance – the culture which still sets the standards of education – and being a teacher of children from theatrically rich but economically poor cultures. Our Black History Months, Cinco de Mayos, multi-cultural performances brought in from the outside community, just begin to address the inequity. Let's put on center stage in our schools the irrepressible talents our students bring with them. Otherwise we exile them to MTV, to the street corner, to the video arcade. What a loss of color for us all!

Meanwhile I'm hooked on the mystery of *The Problem, The Piglet, and Polly Malone*, and can't wait to hear what's going to happen next. ♦

Patrick McMahon edits Teaching Circle: A Journal of the Larger Educator's Sangha. For more information, contact him at: 2311 Woolsey St. Apt. C, Berkeley, CA 94705.



H.H. Gyalwa Karmapa, head of the Karma Kagyu lineage named this magazine *Densal* which means 'the clear truth.' *Densal* is a quarterly magazine featuring teachings, news and events of the Karma Kagyu lineage of Tibetan Buddhism.

To receive a subscription or a complimentary copy, fill out the form below and send to: **DENSAL**, 352 Meads Mt.Rd., Woodstock, NY 12498

4 issues - \$12. 8 issues - \$18. (U.S.)
 4 issues - \$14. 8 issues - \$20. (Canada)

Subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

TW

DENSAL

PILGRIMAGE TO THE BIG TREES

by Stephanie Kaza

When the Buddha arrived at Bodhgaya, he had been on a long journey in search of the truth. Though he had disciplined his body to the point of starvation and challenged his mind to the edge of its limits, he still had not found the deepest truth of existence. His determination burned in him like a steady flame; with all his heart he wanted to penetrate the way to true understanding.

In his passion and yearning, he was called by a large fig tree to sit at its feet. He vowed not to move from the tree until he found the Great Truth. For seven days and seven nights he sat in meditation, supported by the tree. During the seventh night he was tormented by every possible distraction of the mind. Mara, the voice of delusion, challenged him ferociously, asking what right he had to sit by the fig tree seeking the truth. To counter the force of ignorance, he touched his right hand to the earth. With the earth and tree as witnesses, the powerful realization of interdependence was revealed.

The Buddha's awakening was born out of his tremendous effort and preparation. One undertakes a pilgrimage such as his to seek the deeper meaning behind the ordinary. Because the details of everyday life can be all-encompassing, one must make an unusual effort to go beyond the familiar. A journey for truth prepares the pilgrim to receive the gift of insight.

Of all the trees in North America, the giant sequoia receives the most pilgrims each year. Everyone has heard of the Big Trees, the largest living beings; people come to the famous groves at Yosemite, Calaveras, and Kings Canyon from all over the world. They come as tourists, botanists, environmental devotees, and curiosity seekers. Simply by arriving, a pilgrim enters the realm of the extraordinary.

I am one of those pilgrims, awestruck in the North Grove at Calaveras State Park. I stare at the mammoth trees, guidebook in hand, unable to grasp the words on the page. The largest tree in the grove, known as the Empire State, is nearly 100 feet around at the base. It would take 20 people, arms outstretched, to encircle this enormous pillar. It may weigh 2600 tons, the equivalent of a small ocean-going freighter or about 18 great blue whales. I can hardly believe what I see.

I feel myself shrinking to insignificance next to these giants of time. My less-than-half-century lifetime is nothing compared with their several millennia; my five-and-a-half-foot frame a mere two percent of their height. The scale of these trees is too big to grasp with any ordinary mental process. Yet this is the task of the

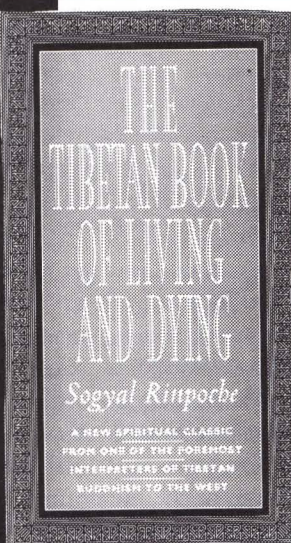
pilgrim – to go beyond the limits, to jump off boldly into the unknown and then return to the known world, enlivened by the encounter with the Awesome.

In many religious traditions the way to spiritual development includes a pilgrimage. This journey is a time to be tested by the unexpected, to search for meaning, and to gain strength and merit. Islamic pilgrims walk the long route to Mecca, Catholic pilgrims go to Rome. Jews travel to Jerusalem, Buddhists to Bodhgaya, India.

Fortunately the giant redwoods have not been claimed by any single spiritual tradition as a sacred site. These temples are accessible to visitors from all religious and nonreligious backgrounds; anyone may come and experience awe and humility in these groves. One could compare them to the ancient temples of Athens, or Machu Picchu, or Stonehenge. But the redwood trees are not ruins, they are still alive. Each grove is part of an unbroken gene flow originating millions of years ago. Each mature tree is a living history over 2000 years old.

A pilgrimage to the Big Trees is a chance to remember this magnificent history. To align one's journey with the power of trees is to reach beyond the ordinary to the temples of truth. ♦

[Excerpted by permission from Stephanie Kaza's forthcoming book, *The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees*, Ballantine, July 1993.]



Audio Tapes

Living Up to Death

A comprehensive view of spiritual care for living and dying, touching upon impermanence, the nature of mind, meditation and care for the dying.
(1 tape: \$11.50 pp.)

Spiritual Care for Living and Dying

An extraordinary weekend seminar providing an in-depth exploration of the most important themes of the *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*.
(7 tapes: \$59 pp.)

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying
(423 pgs; \$22 pp.)

Call 510 644-3922 for Credit Card Orders, or mail your check to: RIGPA, PO Box 7866, Berkeley, CA 94707
California residents add 8.25% sales tax.

Spring Retreat with Sogyal Rinpoche
April 19-23, 1993 • East Coast • 202 332-2371

ECO-JUSTICE: Talking with Carl Anthony

Carl Anthony is president of Earth Island Institute, co-founder and director of Urban Habitat, co-founder and editor of Race, Poverty and the Environment Newsletter, and faculty member of the College of Natural Resources at University of California Berkeley. This interview was conducted by Veronica Froelich of BPF in her dining room in Oakland on February 6, 1993.

TW: For those not familiar with the eco-justice movement, how would you explain what it is?

CA: At the simplest level, it's the coming together of the environmental movement and the social justice movements. It emerged in the United States in the early 1980's when a group of African Americans got arrested protesting the siting of a PCB storage facility in their community in Warren County, North Carolina.

But it actually has very deep roots. This most recent manifestation of it really comes from a resurfacing of the linkage between the Civil Rights movement and the environmental movement. The environmental movement has learned a great deal about its own strategies from the Civil Rights movement.

In connection with Earth Day 1990, a group of Civil Rights organizations wrote a letter to the Big Ten environmental organizations [Friends of the Earth, Izaak Walton League, Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, National Resources Defense Council, Friends of the Earth, Renew America, Oceanic Society], accusing them of racism. Their memberships were made up almost entirely of descendants of Europeans, the staffs had no people of color, the boards had no people of color, and quite frequently these environmental organizations took positions which were at odds with the interests of people of color. Some of the environmental organizations, including the National Wildlife Federation, had multi-national corporations serving on their boards.

This letter stirred up a lot of interest, and in October of 1991, there was a meeting of people who had been working on issues of environmental justice in communities of color around the country. The first national People of Color Environmental Leadership Conference brought together about 500 people, including Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and Latinos, to talk about environmental issues, and they adopted a set of principles of environmental justice.

TW: What makes the environmental justice movement so important?

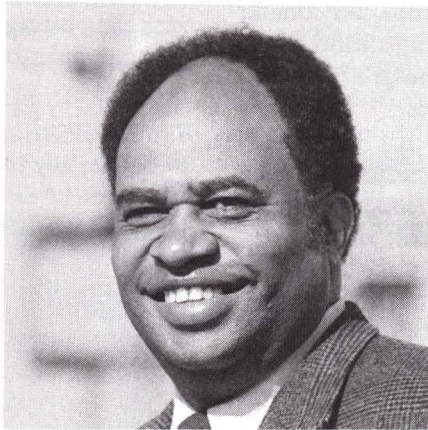
CA: The concept of justice is a really deep concept. It relates not only to living communities, but to unborn generations and to our ancestors, and also to ecosystems that are not dominated by human beings. Eco-justice provides a context in which we can struggle against racism as a way of asserting the wholeness of our humanity, without being pigeon-holed in a marginal struggle.

Racism as we know it today actually emerged with the European expansion about five hundred years ago. As the Europeans traveled around the world and encountered unfamiliar plants, animals and people, they named them and categorized them. And the categories hardened. It was a way for Europeans to dominate the land and to reduce the people to subservience. As we look for a new relationship to the natural environment, with greater respect for ecological diversity, we have a metaphor that encourages us to respect cultural diversity as well.

The environmental movement is vulnerable on both the left and the right. Major corporations have been attacking the environmental movement, saying it's too expensive to have clean air, and "we need to worry about jobs." On the left, social justice activists claim that environmental groups have been too narrow in their focus, that while it's important to protect the habitat of the spotted owl, we need to recognize the damage that's being done to human communities. There's a connection between the crack baby in East Oakland and the rain forest in the Pacific Northwest. They're both victims of the same commitment to profit and short-term thinking.

TW: How did you become interested in this work?

CA: I'm 54 years old, and when I think about my own childhood, I'm really amazed at how much of my life was foreshadowed by the kind of upbringing I had. My father was an orphan. He ran away from the orphanage, and he worked his way through college as a paper hanger and a house painter. During the 1930's, in the middle of the Depression, he organized one of the largest and most successful African American cooperatives in the country, and they purchased a farm in New Jersey where they raised fruits and vegetables to feed hundreds of families in Philadelphia. He used to talk about it, and I used to



say, "Do we have to talk about the co-op again?" A couple of years ago I realized that now I'm actually doing the same thing!

I had a wonderful third grade teacher who used to make us go around the neighborhood and pick up leaves, and there would be huge applause if anyone found a new kind of leaf. So we had catalpa leaves and ginkgo leaves in addition to the more standard oak and maple, and we got to the point where we could name all of the trees growing in Philadelphia. And she taught us about the stars, and we had to know the constellations. As it turned out, this all had an enormous influence on me. And my father started his own contracting company, and I worked with him, and that got me interested in architecture.

I spent nine years at Columbia University in architecture, and the whole time I was there, no one ever mentioned that black people ever lived anywhere or ever built anything. So when I graduated, I was very uncomfortable. On the one hand I was proud of myself, and on the other hand I felt like a phony. So I burned my diploma.

I got a traveling fellowship from Columbia, and

*There's a connection between the crack
baby in East Oakland and the rain forest
in the Pacific Northwest.*

instead of going to Greece or Rome, I went to Africa. I bought a Volkswagen bus, and I drove across the desert to places like Timbuktu, and other ancient civilizations in the Sahara. I visited traditional communities that were off the grid, so to speak, where there had been very little European influence. I was amazed and moved by what I saw. I learned that people could shape their dwellings out of materials that came from no more than 50 or 75 feet away. The buildings reflected deep spirituality and good common sense. I wondered what had happened to all that ingenuity when millions of people were brought here from Africa to domesticate the North American continent, so I started looking at old plantations in the South, and I found a lot of influence from Africa.

I was teaching at UC Berkeley School of Architecture, and I was telling my students, especially my black students, "Let's study these plantations - big houses and slave quarters, fields and factories - and see what we can learn about who we are." They dug it, but the school was really about teaching people how to build monumental corporate headquarters and two million dollar houses.

So I left and started my own firm. One time we got a contract to do a plan for the Berkeley waterfront, where the Santa Fe Land Development company owned land and wanted to build a whole new downtown area on the waterfront. The developers promised some 1200 jobs. My job was to conduct public hearings, and peo-

ple came from South Berkeley, which is the African American neighborhood, saying, "If we have this development, we'll have jobs." The environmentalists actually booed them; I felt like I was in the middle of Mississippi dealing with the Ku Klux Klan. There was all this arrogant hostility toward the people of South Berkeley, who obviously needed jobs so they wouldn't have to rely on drugs and crime for income. But despite their arrogance the environmentalists were really right: building a whole new downtown on the Berkeley waterfront was a devastatingly bad idea.

Seeing the communication problems between the black people who had a legitimate need for jobs, and the environmentalists, I realized that we needed to find ways to work on these things where a concern for fairness and justice was integrated with respect for nature.

Out of this concern, we formed a program at Earth Island Institute called the Urban Habitat Program. We all need to learn how to work together. We need to develop multi-cultural urban environmental leadership. We need to change the way we live in cities. My friends down in Los Angeles tell me that the air quality management district has recently published a report saying that one percent of the emissions causing global warming come from Los Angeles, where 60,000 deaths a year are attributable to air quality.

TW: Do you feel your primary job is to speak to white people in the power structures, or to help organize among communities of color?

CA: First of all, I have big problems with the word "white." Not enough attention has been paid to the ideological burden of that word. When people from Europe first came to the American colonies, they called themselves "Christians," and the indigenous people were called "pagans." Later, as people came from different European countries, the English people started to refer to themselves as "English" rather than "Christian," to distinguish themselves from these other Europeans. Then there was a big rebellion of indentured servants and Africans. It actually was a precursor of the whole American Revolution. Aristocrats from England called themselves "white" in order to create more solidarity between the Europeans. This term would not have made any sense in Europe. And every time we use the word "white," we reinforce that sense of cohesion among people who came together around the exploitation of other people.

Anyway, when I first started out working with the Urban Habitat program, I did feel that my emphasis should be on working with people of color. But my phone was ringing off the hook from people of European descent who were interested in the work we were doing, and there was no way to ignore that outpouring of energy. So I had to go through a big psychological change.

We need to develop multi-cultural leadership, where

people from different backgrounds together create the organizational structures for the transformation of our society. The so-called "dominant culture" is dysfunctional, ecologically destructive, and based on exploitation, but communities of color also have dysfunction. There's a difference between being a victim and thinking of oneself as a victim. People of color have a long habit of internalized racism. And we are alienated from the natural environment. We've been systematically separated from the land and from the resources for so long that we don't consider where our food comes from, where our water comes from. As I say, I used to try to focus my attention just on African American people, which proved to be impossible, then I tried to focus it on people of color, and now I'm just trying to focus it on anyone who'll listen to me.

My feeling is that people of color really need to provide leadership for the whole society, that we can't just organize our own neighborhoods and our own communities. Some people involved in eco-justice work feel we really shouldn't be talking to the Sierra Club and the Natural Resource Defense Council and all those groups, because even if they're not the enemy, they're at least incorrigible. But my feeling is that we really can't afford not to talk to everybody.

TW: What sorts of work would you say European American activists need to do to bridge the race and class divides?

CA: You could probably answer that better than me. My feeling is that each person can make a difference. We live in a society that is stratified by race and class and gender and nobody is untouched by that. Anybody who lives in this society carries the stains of racism and class bias and gender bias – that's just the way the culture works. People want to think that they aren't racist, they're different, that other people are the racists. But racism is built into the culture. Instead of going around saying, "You're a racist, you shouldn't have said that," we need to realize that everybody in the culture carries this kind of pain, and we need to somehow create the room to grow into healthier patterns.

People need to acknowledge their strengths. I was talking to a European American woman who has been working for racial justice for about ten years, and I asked her how she got involved. She said, "I came from a comfortable family; we lived in Alexandria, and there were always ambassadors and diplomats from all over the world coming in and out of our house. They missed their children, so they ended up adopting us as their children, and I got kind of used to having Chinese and Indian people, for example, as part of my family."

People have strengths that they may not even know

People want to think that other people are the racists.

about; they have all kinds of tools that are useful in the struggle. Their strength may come from their experience of race or ethnicity, or it might be around something like music or sports – who knows. But it's important for people to know themselves, because it's not a good idea to try to co-opt somebody else's struggle in order to make yourself feel good.

It's also really important for people to learn history.

The struggle for justice didn't start yesterday, it didn't start last week. But there's a value in innocence, too. I remember during the sixties when a lot of my friends were involved in the first

sit-ins. They said, "To hell with separate lunch counters and separate drinking fountains," and their elders said, "Oh, you can't do anything about that – we tried and it didn't work." But my friends said, "We don't care what you tried – we're going to do it anyway." So the other side of understanding the past is the freshness that comes from one's own experience of here and now.

Here's a piece of history that relates to why the environmentalists didn't have more people of color until recently. In 1964, civil rights leaders in Mississippi organized what they called "Freedom Summer," and they invited white college kids from all over the country to Mississippi to register people to vote. Two years later, when Stokely Carmichael was the head of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, they changed the slogan from "Freedom Now" to "Black Power," and they asked the white people to leave. The black leaders felt that the white people were taking over the movement, and so they said, "Go back to your own communities and organize around your own issues." And people did. That was one of the really important sources of the environmental movement. Twenty years later people are wondering why the environmental movement isn't integrated. So the environmental justice movement is actually a reconnecting, like a stream that separates around an island and then comes back together again.

We have some urgent practical issues to deal with – things like the struggle around lead poisoning, the pesticides being used in the Central Valley, the disproportionate siting of hazardous waste materials in communities of color everywhere. In the Urban Habitat office, we have a list of groups we work with that are dealing with environmental issues, and they need people to do research for them, to write funding proposals, to do outreach. There are ways in which European Americans can support existing organizations.

There are also things you can do without going out of your house that may have an effect. I used to write letters. I went into Shambhala Bookstore one day – I was in a particularly cantankerous mood – and I looked around and I saw no books about anyone from Africa.

nothing about Martin Luther King. So I went home and I wrote them a letter, saying, "Hey, I was shocked. One of the most important advocates of nonviolence in this country was Martin Luther King and you've got this huge section on nonviolence and you've got nothing about him." I also mentioned some African religious traditions. I went back in there a week later and there were all these books on Martin Luther King and Africa.

TW: What do you think of the new administration?

CA: Gore's book, *Earth in the Balance*, definitely shows an awareness of these issues, and it's nice to have somebody in the White House who's not totally illiterate around this. I have to say, though, that this is the first time there's been a President who's younger than me. There's a part of me that sees them as children. I see a big kid, and then I realize — hey! — that's the President of the United States!

But we would be naive if we thought that just having them in office would do much. We need to come to terms with the realities of the new world, and it's up to each and every citizen to do that.

Like populist John Hightower, we should be organizing for the year 2000, building a base of activists within our communities.

TW: I've been reading in your magazine, *Race, Poverty and the Environment*, about how the Environmental Protection Agency's enforcement has been discriminatory. Can you tell us anything about that?

CA: First of all, the level of discrimination is more horrible than anybody ever dreamed of. A recent report by the *National Law Journal* found that companies polluting in white communities were fined five times as much as violators in black communities, and it took four or five times as long to enforce standards in black communities. It's at least heartening that the EPA has taken these charges seriously.

TW: In the Fall '92 *Race, Poverty and the Environment*, there's an article by a Native American woman, Winona LaDuke, in which she says that when New Age and women's groups co-opt Native American cultures, it's as if German people during the Holocaust had suddenly taken a morbid interest in Jewish culture and religion. Do you see examples of the same sort of co-opting of African American culture?

CA: I think that in order to deal with the emotional burden of their own imperialist history, European Americans have systematically attempted to co-opt whatever they touch. During the sixties, there were a lot of white people trying to pretend they were black, adopting black language and posture. But by the end

of the sixties, the black nationalist movement confronted the white people who were mimicking black culture.

We have a tendency to worship the victim. There's an unhealthy feeling that a poor person, a black person, a Native American, or a person who's physically disabled is in an ethically superior position. But there are Native American crooks, there are black crooks, there are women on welfare who cheat. Maybe the most optimistic front I can put on that kind of cultural exploitation is that at least it's a way to learn something about people that you don't know much about.

Somebody said you really have to scratch your head about a culture that destroys people and then names their cars after them, like the "Pontiac" and the "Cherokee." Even the best of our culture isn't free of this. I went to see "Dances With Wolves," which some of my Native American friends said was a very good movie, I think largely because their friends were in it. But I had to do a double take when Kevin Costner goes out

there with the Native Americans and they don't know where the buffalo is, and after he's been there for about 15 minutes, he shows them where the buffalo is. Winona LaDuke is saying that studying Native American traditions in order to tell exotic stories around the coffee table is not really appropriate.

TW: Yes, she's saying, "If you're interested in us, this is not the way to be helpful." It's as if white people are saying, "Well, they're almost extinct now, so we might as well grab these kernels of wisdom while we can."

CA: Exactly! And it requires a kind of maturity to break through this, because this kind of attention is very damaging. I know I felt a lot of pressure during the sixties to behave in certain ways, to show that we could dance and do all of these strange and exotic things that people expected of us. There's a trap there.

TW: When I talk to people about environmental justice, a question that comes up a lot is, "When people are worrying about their daily survival and whether their kids are going to get gunned down, how can we expect them to be concerned about the ozone and recycling? Isn't worrying about environmental issues a luxury?"

CA: That's a very reasonable question. Navaho teenagers are facing reproductive cancer 17 times the national average as a result of exposure to uranium tailings. These communities are facing today the environmental hazards that most white environmentalists are trying to avoid having fall on their grandchildren. The vulnerable human populations are the spotted owl of our cities. They're telling us the system's not working.

We do need that Seventh Generation kind of view,

Studying Native American traditions in order to tell exotic stories around the coffee table is not really appropriate.

but there's also a need for a little more humility on the part of environmentalists.

TW: Do you have some sort of a spiritual context that you use as a guiding force in your life or your work?

CA: I struggle with this a lot. I think I'm probably getting more spiritual as I get older. When I was younger I tended to be a lot more mechanistic in my way of thinking about things: "You do these things and then you get this result." I was more focused on changing the immediate social framework.

I was touched by Gloria Steinem's recent book. She talked a lot about the lack of self-esteem from her own childhood, and I was touched by that because she seemed like a person who had so much outer success.

TW: You said that sometimes the lack of self-esteem is a motivating force to go out and do extraordinary things.

CA: Yes, that's true. Gloria Steinem said that there was only one week in the last twenty years in which she had not taken a plane trip. This got me, because I had gotten into a pattern of going back and forth like that. I'd wake up in a motel and say, "Where the hell am I?" and I'd panic. I'd have to show up someplace and give a talk and I didn't even have time to think about what I was going to say. I had to ask myself, "Why am I doing this?" On the one hand there's the need to accomplish something, but on the other hand there's the sense of being driven by something that you're really trying to escape.

I've had some losses that were really disorienting. I had a brother commit suicide, and at about the same time, I lost my mother. It was a frightening time. I was walking around with a long mouth feeling like an orphan when my mother died, and saying, "I'm 39 years old and I don't have any parents." I understood more about my father who had grown up as an orphan, and how he was driven by that. So I think a part of our spiritual discipline, if you will, is to find a way to turn one's experiences to good use. James Baldwin used to say that you can't separate the things that help you from the things that hurt you because they're the same things. For me, the challenge is how to take what I've learned as an African American and make it something that's useful to everybody.

TW: Though you're not a Buddhist yourself, do you think Buddhism has relevance to the struggle for justice?

CA: Actually, for a long time I had a lot of resentment toward people who gravitated to Eastern religions. I felt that there was some kind of an avoidance of what's happening here and now. But in the last ten years or so, I've changed my view. First of all, I feel a lot more charitable towards anyone who's really struggling – in an age that's dominated by materialism – to find a discipline that's not rooted in getting and spending and one-upsmanship.

I also have had an opportunity to reflect on my own sense of anger and loss, this feeling of having been aban-

doned, especially toward the end of the sixties. During the sixties, black people were on center stage in terms of the national consciousness, so when people put their interest in other things, there was a sense of abandonment. Looking back, I think I've learned something from that. It's important to be able to function with grace and integrity when you're in the center, but it's also important to be able to learn from other people's struggles.

In Buddhism you have the idea of interconnectedness, and I can definitely relate to that. I'd like to learn more about it. The black experience in the United States may be singular in terms of its suffering, but it's not discon-

*The vulnerable human populations are
the spotted owl of our cities.*

ected from the struggles of other beings. One of the things that was great about King was that he embodied the struggle of the moment – the Montgomery bus boycott, for example – but he was also connected to every other struggle against oppression. And Malcolm was too, toward the end of his life.

TW: Is there a place for anger in this sort of work?

CA: I was giving a talk once about the struggle for environmental justice, and it was pretty optimistic, and somebody asked me at the end, "I don't understand how you can be putting out all this good energy. Don't you see what's happening to our people in the streets? They're dying! Why aren't you more cynical?" And the thing that flashed in my mind was: Who really gets hurt from this cynicism? I recalled my brother having committed suicide. He was a brilliant man, far ahead of his time, and the people around him didn't understand him. It made him angry, and the anger poisoned him. He hurt the people he was most connected to.

So I think there's an important distinction between anger and outrage, between carrying around an anger which is poisoning your whole being, and responding with legitimate outrage to things like multi-national corporations dumping toxins on poor communities. We need to acknowledge and to embrace our anger, but also to let it go. One of the things about being an oppressed person is that you tend to carry that anger around, and it's very destructive. I know certain people in my generation who had to carry thirty or forty years of anger around with them, and it results in hypertension, in heart disease, in all kinds of stresses and physiological symptoms.

We need to build communities where people can have healthy emotional and spiritual and social lives, so they have the strength to struggle for change. We need to build a movement based on positive vision. ♦

Veronica Froelich is leaving the staff of BPF – alas for us – to take her skills and concerns about eco-justice to Washington, DC.

UNLEARNING RACISM

12 Working Assumptions

By Ricky Sherover Marcuse

Because racism is both institutional and attitudinal, effective strategies against it must recognize this dual character. The elimination of institutionalized racism requires a conscious project of attitudinal transformation. The deliberate attempt to transform racist patterns of thought and action must be accompanied by political and social change. The following assumptions offer a perspective for beginning the work.

1. The systematic mistreatment of any group of people isolates and divides human beings from each other. This practice is a hurt to all people. The division and isolation produced by racism is a hurt to people from all ethnic groups.
2. Racism is not a genetic disease. No human being is born with racist attitudes and beliefs. Physical and cultural differences between people are not the cause of racism; these differences are used as the excuse to justify racism. (Analogy with sexism: anatomical differences between human males and females are not the cause of sexism; these differences are used to justify the mistreatment of females of all ages.)
3. No young person acquires misinformation by their own free choice. Racist attitudes and beliefs are a mixture of misinformation and ignorance which is imposed upon young people through a painful process of social conditioning. "You have to be taught to hate and fear."
4. Misinformation is harmful to all human beings. Misinformation about peoples of color is harmful to all people. Having racist attitudes and beliefs is like having a clamp on one's mind. It distorts one's perceptions of reality. Two examples: the notion that "flesh color" is several shades of pinkish beige; the use of the term "minorities" to describe the majority of the world's people.
5. No one holds onto misinformation voluntarily. People hold onto racist beliefs and attitudes because this misinformation represents the best thinking they have been able to do at this time, and because no one has been able to assist them to change their perspective.
6. People will change their minds and let go of ingrained attitudes under the following conditions: 1) the new position is presented in a way that makes sense to them; 2) they trust the person who is presenting the new position; 3) they are not blamed for having had misinformation.
7. People hurt others because they themselves have been hurt. In this society we have all experienced systematic

mistreatment as young people – often through physical violence, but also through the invalidation of our intelligence, the disregard of our feelings, the discounting of our abilities. As a result of these experiences, we tend both to internalize this mistreatment by accepting it as "the way things are," and to externalize it by mistreating others. Part of the process of undoing racism involves becoming aware of and interrupting this cycle of mistreatment in day-to-day encounters and interactions.

8. As young people we have often witnessed despair and cynicism in the adults around us, and we have often been made to feel powerless in the face of injustice. Racism continues in part because we feel powerless to do anything about it.
9. There are times when we have failed to act, times when we did not achieve as much as we wanted to in the struggle against racism. Eliminating racism also involves understanding the difficulties we have had and learning to overcome them, without blaming ourselves for having had those difficulties.
10. The situation is not hopeless; people can grow and change; we are not condemned to repeat the past. Racist conditioning can be examined, analyzed and dismantled. Because this misinformation is glued together and held in place with painful emotion, the process of dismantling it must take place on the experiential as well as on the theoretical level.
11. We live in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic world; everyone is "ethnic." Misinformation about other people's ethnicity is often the flip side of misinformation about one's own ethnicity. For example, the notion that some ethnic groups are "exotic" and "different" is the flip side of the notion that one's own group is just "regular" or "plain." Reclaiming one's own ethnicity and cultural heritage will show us that we all come from traditions in which we can take justified pride.
12. All people come from traditions which have a history of resistance to injustice, and every person has their own individual history of resistance to oppressive social conditioning. This history deserves to be recalled and celebrated. Reclaiming one's own history of resistance is central to the project of acquiring an accurate account of one's own heritage. When people act from a sense of informed pride in themselves and their traditions, they will be more effective in all struggles for justice. ♦

If you are interested in attending Unlearning Racism workshops grounded in these assumptions, please contact: Yeshi Sherover Neumann, 6538 Dana St., Oakland, CA 94609.

THE DEATH OF IAN FREEDMAN

by Melody Ermachild

Ironically, I was struggling with the Buddhist vow not to kill at the time of the murder.

On Sundays I often drive from my home in Southwest Berkeley to the Green Gulch Farm Zen Center in Marin County. Most of the people attending the Buddhist services there don't live in neighborhoods where there are crack houses, as I do. Otherwise, I fit in with the crowd: most of us are white, middle-aged, middle-class meditators, undertaking the inner journey after raising kids and establishing careers.

The Sunday before the murder, the Abbot of the Zen Center lectured on the Buddhist precept against killing living beings. He said that taking the vow not to kill did not mean that we would never kill another being. We might kill a garden snail, for example. The vow meant to be more aware of the creatures we do kill.

At the time, our big old Victorian house was being overrun by mice. They were becoming very bold in the kitchen, and I imagined them in there at night, making toast and spreading butter and honey on it. There was an unmistakable clue that they had even come into my bedroom: my meditation cushion sits in the bay window and the mice had eaten a little bowl of rice I kept there. The rice served to hold incense sticks, but one morning the sticks were all lying on the rug and there was nothing in the bowl but mouse droppings. I figured if they left enough droppings I could just use those to hold up the incense sticks. While I thought about trying not to kill, the mice multiplied.

Meanwhile our house guest Lynn arrived. We always feel sort of defensive about our neighborhood when people come from out of town, because it seems so dangerous to them. We explain that we've been here twelve years, and we love our home and our neighbors. This was a good, quiet interracial community before crack was invented, I always say. It is only in the last five years that the lookouts appeared on the corner, young guys started squealing the tires on their flashy rental cars, and desperate looking people began to file in and out of crack houses that shift from one nearby apartment building to another.

Lynn, a pretty blond cowgirl, was visiting from Santa Fe where she works with horses. She even wore cowboy boots. She was dubious about the neighborhood, I could tell, not used to being someplace where she can't walk outside at night, but she was polite about it. Noticing the mouse problem, Lynn got to

work and dispatched those mice on the last day of her visit, cheerfully setting and emptying traps over and over until she killed about a dozen. She joked about how if she skinned them they would make great little gray leather hacky-sacks. I knew it was a cop-out to have someone else kill the mice, but I was also glad to be rid of them. I kept my thoughts about Buddhist precepts to myself, still thinking a lot about what my life would be like if I seriously tried not to kill.

An aspect of city life is that people from different cultures live in close proximity, our lives touching unexpectedly. And our deaths.

Sunday night my husband sat up late, working at his desk, but I went to bed early. I was asleep at 1:00 a.m. when the first shot woke me instantly. As has become my habit during the crack epidemic, I began to count the shots with the first one. There was a pause after the first three . . . then four, five, six, seven.

Next I heard a man's voice and footsteps. He was walking, haltingly, as if staggering, coming up the sidewalk, getting closer to my window. He was talking. Over and over he said, "Oh, baby, oh, baby," regretfully, deep sorrow in his voice. He was shot, I knew, many times, and somehow the feeling in his voice told me he was dying and knew he was dying.

I could hear my husband in the other room, talking to 911 on the phone, telling them to send an ambulance.

The man fell right under my window, just a few feet away. At the foot of the bed is my meditation cushion, with the incense. Then the window glass, covered with lace, then the hedge, and then the sidewalk. And on the sidewalk, someone was dying.

My husband, our housemate and I, each in separate rooms along the side of the house, could hear his moans. The moans had meaning: regret and complete unwillingness. If his moans had been words they would have said, "Oh, no, now I'm dying. No, I don't want it. No."

I switched off my reading light and stood up, moving to the window. I was afraid to pull the curtain aside to look out. I stood with my palms together in front of me, in a posture of prayer, and listened to him. The thought came to me: "A human being is dying now." For a brief instant I had the feeling of knowing exactly what to do: just be there, just be there with him.

I stood still, staying with the man as he moaned. His moans turned to harsh loud breathing, then congested breathing. The breaths rattled in his throat, and the phrase "death rattle" came to my mind. Then his breathing stopped. I knew he had died.

All of this transpired in only one or two minutes.

Over and over he said, "Oh, baby, oh, baby," regretfully, deep sorrow in his voice.

My husband wanted to go to the man, and he started to unlock the door, but we realized the killer might be outside.

We looked out then and saw a police officer peering around the corner of the house across the street. The officer was frozen in place, holding a shotgun and looking terrified. A half-minute later more police cars arrived, and one shone a light down the sidewalk from the corner, lighting the body. The police approached the body cautiously, and we stepped out onto our porch.

When I looked down at the young man, my first thought was, "He has a mother." I began to cry, seeing his hand outstretched, palm up, helpless and lifeless.

The ambulance was there very quickly, but everyone knew he was dead already. I stood on the second floor porch looking down, and I thought about some people I'd seen on TV who told about near death experiences. They'd all said they had looked down on their own bodies. I realized that the young man's spirit might have been in almost the same position I was in, standing on my second floor porch. He might be hovering over the scene below, watching the police and paramedics working over his body.

After the ambulance left, the police stayed for a couple of hours, searching for bullets, for blood spots. We heard an officer call out, "Here's a rock of crack."

We all cried for the young man that night. I remember one thing I said, while I cried, was that the bedroom would never be the same again. That's probably true. We slept in the living room that night.

I woke up at dawn after only a couple of hours of sleep and immediately I went outside. A chalk outline of the young man's body was on the sidewalk, and a large amount of blood had coagulated where his head had been. Three pairs of blood-covered rubber gloves, left by the police technicians, I supposed, were also scattered around. I got out my garden hose and began to clean up.

I'm known in the neighborhood, I think, as the lady who sweeps the sidewalk. Sweeping has actually been an important part of my approach to surviving here. We've gone to meetings at city hall, we've met with our watch committee, we've talked to judges and police, we've sued some of the slumlords. Many times I feel exhausted and hopeless about the effects of crack on us and our neighbors. When I feel that way, the one thing I can always do to make things a little bit better right away is to go out and sweep.

I do it in various moods. On bad days I'm angry, inwardly scolding the kids who throw down candy wrappers from the corner store. Litter around here is a complete culture clash; half the people recycle bottles and the other half smash them in the street.

On good mornings I sweep more calmly, with compassion for the suffering around me. If I'm feeling fearless, I sweep right near the feet of whoever is looking out for the cops. That seems to be a lonely boring job, with very long hours, given to someone low on the drug dealing totem pole, who is addicted and doing it just for some crack.

One cold morning, I remember, a woman had that miserable job. She was as thin as a famine victim, and she looked sick. She leaned on the mailbox weakly, watching me work. We said "Hi" to each other. As mad as I get about the loss of my peace and quiet, I know that all this is so much worse for her than it is for me. Now the lady who sweeps becomes the lady who hoses the blood. I sensed my own state of shock as I did it. I jumped when the blood coursed into the gutter and stained a long distance down the street. Suddenly I turned off the water, not sure if I should be doing this. Maybe the

police want to work here some more, I thought. Maybe, I thought, this isn't my job, and I'm doing myself some kind of harm. Still, I picked up the bloody gloves with my fingertips and put them into the gutter. I couldn't stand to leave them where people walking by would have to step over them.

I went into the house and stood at my bedroom window as children gathered at the school bus stop, most of them accompanied by their mothers or fathers. Growing hysterical, I thought about them growing up only to be gunned down in the street. I panicked at the idea that they might see the blood, but none of the children seemed to notice.

That was my worst moment, watching the children, thinking about them growing up in a place where people die from gunshots in the night, and where there is so little any of the grownups can do. Surely they will have lasting psychological damage, like children raised in Northern Ireland and Beirut.

Being a former schoolteacher, I still keep big rolls of paper around. I went to the closet and chose a bright blue roll. I cut a long piece and wrote:

This morning, at about 1 a.m., a young man was shot here and died. Seven shots were fired. A rock of crack was found. Neighbors, write your prayers and comments here if you wish.

I put it outside next to the chalk outline and the bloodstain, with a jar of pens, incense, and pots of flowers from my garden.

I wrote: "I will think about his mother, whoever she is. I know she is hurting, and I pray for her. Once more, I will ask our mayor and city council member for a crack treatment center."

People gathered, and started to write on the blue

*If I'm feeling fearless, I sweep
right near the feet of whoever is
looking out for the cops.*

paper. The first clue to the victim's identity was when a man wrote, "We love you Ian." Later someone wrote, "Some way some how it have to stop. Look at ourself. We are dying. Let's stop the war. Love to Ian Freedman. God be with you."

It emerged that his name was Ian Freedman, that he was 27, that his mother had lived for years a few blocks away, that he had gone to our high school and had been in jail or prison. Many people in the neighborhood knew him or his mother or sisters or brothers. He was the father of an eight year old son. His last name, Freedman, kept coming into my thoughts. I wondered if Ian had an ancestor who took that surname after slavery was abolished, 125 years ago. The image of his bloodied body brought more images of endless violence done to African American people.

I thought of sociology Professor Harry Edward's declaration that "crack is the greatest challenge to our community since slavery," which was painted on a ban-

*"It is time to stop all this madness.
We're all in the same gang!"*

ner hung up at the last block party held on our street.

In the late morning, I decided to call the mayor's office. She had been campaigning on this block a few days before. I had talked to her then about the crack houses, the need for treatment, and also more police to disarm the dealers.

I got the mayor's aide on the phone, and I mentioned the bloodstain and the rubber gloves. Half an hour later a fire truck arrived. A firewoman picked up the gloves and hosed the spot. As they drove off she said, "Next time try using hydrogen peroxide, it's good for bloodstains." "What?" I thought, "Next time? Does she live in the suburbs? Does she think we're in the habit of killing each other and need street cleaning tips for blood?"

I had lots of heartfelt conversations that day with my neighbors. This murder is exactly what we have feared these last few years. Many wept as we talked, others seemed stunned. No one was callous. Several times tough looking guys walked up in groups from the crack house down the street. They said little, and did not write on the blue paper shrine. Some of them looked sobered, all looked grim.

Usually those guys and I don't talk to each other much. I drive by, and they look at me. I look back. We live in different worlds on the same street. Some know me because they grew up around here. I'm neither a customer nor a cop, so I'm irrelevant. But today, through the opening caused by Ian's death, we talked a little. I told them all about how he died, his words, his moans. His blood was there for them to see. I told

them I hoped they would not go out and kill someone else because Ian had died.

At one point, I was giving one of these little speeches for peace while my daughter's boyfriend was there with me. He looked at me in disbelief, obviously thinking, "What are you doing, lecturing these scary guys?" But later, he told me what I'd said was fine, because I just let them know I didn't want them to kill or be killed.

That same message was the theme of the writings on the blue paper:

I hope things will change. We black people need to be more together than this. I feel for your parents because I lost my son last year.

Let the violence stop and the healing of this neighborhood begin.

It is time to stop all this madness. We're all in the same gang!

Many people used the paper to write directly to Ian, to speak to him one last time.

Although we all have to go, it hurts to see you go like this. God rest your soul comrade.

Rest in Peace, young man, for this world has little to offer. Bless you and your beloved grieving loved ones. Please God give them strength!

In the afternoon, his mother and sisters came. When I thought of his mother at 1 a.m., I never imagined I would see her later that day, but when the family arrived, I realized that of course if your child died, you would go to the place where it happened. I was inside when they came, and their grief was so painful, I did not go out while they were there.

Someone, his sister or girlfriend, broke down completely and wailed, a keening, inconsolable cry that is the expression of primal grief all over the world. I felt the whole neighborhood stop breathing while we listened to the sound of loss.

Ian's mother wrote that she will think of him each and every day. As a mother, I know that is the truth.

I could not go to work the day of Ian's death, but to keep busy and comfort myself, I worked in our garden with the help of Sammy, my 15 year old neighbor. Sammy and I would dig and clip, and then go back out to the sidewalk shrine for awhile.

Sammy's grandmother has lived in the neighborhood for years, and his mother grew up here. I've known Sammy since he was five years old, when he got big enough to come down the block to visit my dogs. The last couple of years he's done yard work for me in return for an hourly wage and instruction in how to care for plants. This year he really needs work because he's dropped out of school. He is thoughtful, smart and hardworking, but, as my friends who teach in the Berkeley schools say, he is "at risk" – at risk of dying

young, at risk of spending time in jail, at risk of drug addiction, not to speak of his risks of unemployment, or depression, or anxiety.

Sammy said he's used to drug-related murder in a way because it's everywhere he goes – in Los Angeles where his uncle lives, in Oakland where he has friends. But in another way, he says, "I'm not used to it. It scares me, and I hate it. . . I could have gotten into it," he tells me, meaning the crack trade, "but I decided not to, because of that," pointing to the blood.

All day Sammy and I have a running discussion about the killing, drugs, money and work. Sammy says a lot of people he knows say they won't work for \$5 an hour, when they can make \$200 selling crack, but he doesn't want to get killed selling drugs. I philosophize about how some rich people make money legally, some illegally, like stealing from S.& L.'s, but that almost nobody is satisfied with what they have. Both the crack dealers and the crooked bankers want more. Sammy replied, "I think it's better to be like you and me." "What do you mean?" I ask. "It's better to be satisfied with things like plants and birds," said Sammy. At that moment he seems wise beyond his years. But what's to become of him? He said he's afraid to go out at night.

All day people came to the blue paper shrine. A man who lives down the street came and talked about feeling like crying because drugs hurt people so much. He is an alcoholic himself, he said, in A.A. And then he did cry, right there. And he wrote, "I cried for the person who got shot, and for his family, I pray that God touches their heart in a special way. This doesn't have to continue."

My daughter and I brought out another piece of paper in the late afternoon; the first one was filled. People kept writing:

One love, Rasta Jah.

Crack kills, brothers and sisters, stop the violence.

Some of the writing was in the childish script of the young girls on the block and they signed their pretty names, Somika, LaKeisha and Aisha. They wrote, "I do not know you, but I love you."

Watch Committee mainstays came over to talk about our next moves. One of our newer neighbors came too, a thirty-something man who with his wife moved here from San Francisco. The number of young white families is slowly increasing, in spite of the crime problems. When they bought their house I went over to meet them and he said they had wanted to "get into the market." I thought, "Farmer's Market? Flea Market? Oh, the housing market!" Well, I thought, it's not that easy around here. Owning a home here means commitment to neighborhood activism. I remembered seeing him outside last night in his bathrobe, watching the police work, and I wondered how he was feeling today.

Of course, I had my own idealistic assumptions

when we bought our house. The former owner was an elderly black man who owned three homes and was retiring and selling two of them. I wanted a home for my family, and I wanted my kids to grow up in a multi-cultural environment. Just as we believe in the public schools and served in PTA in Berkeley, we believe in living along side people of other races. We moved into what had long been an essentially middle class black neighborhood where most people owned their homes. We have been part of what is called "gentrification." Now the neighborhood is about half white, half black. The older black people are mostly home owners, but their upwardly mobile children don't want to stay here – they buy homes in Hercules or the Oakland Hills. When they inherit their parent's homes they put them

*"I could have gotten into it," Sammy
tells me, meaning the crack trade,
"but I decided not to, because of that,"
pointing to the blood.*

on the market, and young white families buy. The apartment dwellers are mostly black, seeking the historically low rents the Black Property Owners Association would like to raise.

In the twelve years of Reaganomics since we bought our house, the cities and the counties were drained of monies and flooded with drugs. And Ian Freedman grew from 15 years old to 27.

I went inside to sit for a few minutes in my kitchen window, on the other side of the house from the bloody sidewalk. Looking out on my yard, I see other realities to our neighborhood besides crime. My apricot tree casts its yellow leaves onto the grass. Up the middle of the block beautiful old trees in the backyards attract hummingbirds and mockingbirds. I think back to two winters ago, when an accidental house fire killed a little boy on our block and injured his father and sister. Many neighbors helped that family, and visited them in the hospital. It's a neighborhood full of good people.

Just before dark, the mayor, her aide, and the chief of police all came to the blue paper shrine. They didn't give us glib promises. They all grieved with us, searching for answers, ideas. The guns, the drugs, are international, national, and very local.

In the week that followed, there were rumors about why the murder happened. Different people said different things: he wasn't a dealer, he was a dealer, he was selling bad dope, it was a personal thing. But to me, and, in fact, under the law, nothing he might have been doing was a death penalty offense. So far neither the state of California nor the federal government executes people for dealing drugs, although there is talk of

it in Washington. But on the streets, the penalty for getting involved in the drug trade is often death, by bullet or by needle.

And just like the death penalty for homicide, the death penalty for drugs does not seem to deter many people.

Not too many years ago, a few of my white acquaintances got addicted to cocaine. After awhile, they found that it ruined their law practice or restaurant business or whatever and that it broke up their marriages and robbed them of their health, and it stopped being fashionable. They went to Cokenders and got off it.

Recovery from crack addiction is medically complex to manage, and needless to say, we have nothing like Cokenders in our community. We have next to nothing for someone who is on crack but doesn't want to be. And there are those people, like my neighbor Ray, every time he gets out of jail. He is no stranger to the neighborhood, but a man deeply related to many people here. His wife has lived here all her life. He comes to see me when he gets out, and tells me he is deter-

Just before dark, the mayor, her aide, and the chief of police all came to the blue paper shrine.

mined not to use crack again. But will power is not enough against the craving for crack, especially when home is a neighborhood where it's sold openly.

This is another way Berkeley is divided as a community. There is a strong mostly white "recovery" community of people healing the painful personal problems caused by having grown up in alcoholic families or having been abused as children. Many white people I know are in support groups while they do this recovery work.

I myself have tried to change, with only partial success, my "dysfunctional" behavior patterns. Retraining a habit I'd rather not have feels something like trying to turn an ocean liner 180 degrees around while it is going full steam ahead. It's hard to change, but worth trying, and I admire everyone I know who is "working on" themselves.

Yet the insights gained in the recovery movement have not yet illuminated attitudes towards drug addicts. Many people are ready to pass harsh judgments on them, especially black drug addicts, as if they should just shape up, right now, on their own.

After the murder, our housemate, a Ph.D. student at the University of California, sought solace from his fellow graduate students. But almost unanimously they withheld sympathy, asking our friend why he lived in the neighborhood in the first place, as if he could solve the problem by moving away and forgetting it. He said that no one expressed any sorrow for the young man who died.

My black neighbors are unwilling, however, to lose their neighborhood to violence without resisting.

Howard, a bearded longshoreman who sent a daughter to Harvard, came by to pick up the blue paper on his way to the city council meeting a week after the shooting. There he spread it on the floor of the council chamber and told them to do what they can: more cops, more street lights. What more important agenda item can the city council have than the citizens being murdered in the streets?

In the weeks that followed the murder I was never once able to wake up without feeling that I had been awakened by Ian Freedman. For me, that is how it had happened. I was asleep, and I was awakened by his death. At least once every night, and again in the morning, I opened my eyes and thought of him instantly.

Buddhists believe that when people die suddenly, with no time to prepare, their spirits have a hard time leaving their bodies. I imagined that some part of Ian was still hovering near my meditation cushion.

I hadn't been able to meditate. I decided to sit down and try to talk to Ian, since he seemed so present in my room. At first, I had no idea what to say. Then I just told him that I had heard him: "I know you weren't ready to die. I heard that you didn't want to go. It's OK. It's OK to go now."

I did this meditation several times. I imagined the neighborhood without houses or apartment buildings, as the sun-browned open meadow which it was before white people or black people came to live here. I imagined myself sitting there, on the grass, and another person, a young man, who was wounded somehow, walking a long way over the meadow to lie down in front of me to die. It would have been natural for him to come close to me to die, to be comforted.

If I subtract the houses, the asphalt, the cars and guns and sirens, I can stop being afraid. There is only him, leaving this life, and me, with him for one minute at the end. In that vision is the essence of what happened. Knowing that, I am glad I was there.

It was easy for other people in town to understand how we in our neighborhood felt after the murder of Ian Freedman because we feel just like they felt after the earthquake: most of my neighbors told me they can't sleep, have nightmares, don't want to go out or drive their cars, can't stop thinking about the shooting.

Of course it will fade, but it hasn't yet. When I took out the garbage this morning, two girls were walking to Malcolm X School, carrying their books, one toting a violin case. When they got to my driveway, they swerved out into the middle of the street and didn't get back on the sidewalk until they were well past the spot where Ian Freedman died. ♦

The preceding article is reprinted from *New Letters*. It was awarded the 1992 *New Letters* First Place Essay Award.

Melody Ermachild is a private investigator and a freelance writer in Berkeley, California.

BUDDHISM AND EQUALITY

A Dialogue with African American members of Soka Gakkai International

Facilitated by Anne Hudson, Fletcher Dalton, and Rob Eppsteiner

Dialogue is the enduring tradition of the Soka Gakkai. From the time of its inception as a small lay Buddhist society for teachers in Japan to its present status as a peace, education, and cultural organization with 15 million members worldwide, dialogue has been the cornerstone of its development. Based on the Buddhist concept that all people are equally capable of enlightenment, the Soka Gakkai strives to uphold the dignity of human life. The Soka Gakkai believes that through dialogue, divisions in society based on racial and other differences can be bridged, and lasting bonds of understanding can be forged.

The Soka Gakkai (Value-Creation Society) was founded in 1930 by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi

and Josei Toda, principal and teacher respectively, at a primary school in Tokyo. Their aim was the pursuit of human values through education, utilizing the principles of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

After the Japanese government adopted Shintoism as the state religion during World War II, the military authorities arrested Makiguchi, Toda, and about twenty other senior leaders of the Soka Gakkai in 1943 because of their refusal to compromise their faith. Harsh prison conditions led to Makiguchi's death at the age of 74. Toda survived and was released in July 1945, just before the end of the war.

Amid the smoldering ruins of a devastated Japan, Toda reconstructed the organization, and its membership grew to 800,000 households. After Toda's death, Daisaku Ikeda became the third president of the Soka Gakkai, and under his leadership, the Soka Gakkai established itself in the field of education, founding a school system to foster humanistic education.

President Ikeda visited the United States in October 1960 to establish the first overseas lay society, launching the spread of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism beyond the island of Japan for the first time. Since that time, the membership has grown to encompass members in 115 countries worldwide, and in 1975, Soka Gakkai International (SGI) was formed.

The current American membership numbers in the hundreds of thousands and reflects the diversity of American society. Among American Buddhist organizations, the participation of people of color in the SGI is significantly high.

SGI's roots reach back to thirteenth century Japan, where Nichiren Daishonin, reaffirming the validity of the Lotus Sutra, declared that Buddhahood could be attained through the chanting of *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*. His teachings express profound Buddhist doctrines in a

form that all people can practice and apply in their daily lives.

To find out what the experience of African American members of the SGI can teach us about Buddhism and equality, we asked seven African American members of the SGI to meet in Boston, Massachusetts, on February 17, 1993, for a dialogue. The dialogue



Sheila Chapman, John Smith, Adil Pantan

explored questions about their experience with Buddhist practice, the influence of their sense of identity as African Americans, and what the SGI uniquely has to offer them.

DIALOGUE

Moderator: How does your experience as a person of color influence your Buddhist practice, and how does your Buddhist practice influence your experience as a person of color?

Gail Bowman, computer systems analyst; 18 years of practice: I was raised as a Catholic, but I knew when I was fifteen that I didn't want to be Catholic any longer. When I graduated from high school, I just started looking at other religions . . . One of the main things I didn't care for was that they were either all white or all black.

I was very open to this practice from the very first meeting. What really excited me was that when I walked into the room there were so many different types of people there, and I felt very comfortable immediately . . .

Marilyn Busby, Personnel Recruiter, Massachusetts General Hospital; 7 years of practice: I went to my

first meeting of the SGI with my defenses up, prepared to deal with some very negative people . . . and it was just the opposite. I have never felt like that in a group of people in my life.

I was raised in a neighborhood that was predominantly black, but I went to a Catholic school that was all white, and when I would be with my friends who were black or kids in the neighborhood, they would say, "Why do you talk that way?" That's how I talked! But when I'd go to school, it'd be a whole different culture with all white kids. It was like living in two different worlds.

As I got older, I became very skeptical. I was always disappointed and frustrated and had a lot of mistrust in humanity. In the SGI I met a group of people that didn't fit my expectations at all; they were just the warmest group of people.

I wasn't seeking Buddhism per se. I liked the philosophy, but chanting was strange. I was raised in a very strict Catholic household, but I decided that this was something that I should do. I heard people's experiences, and how they were changing their lives. Cause and effect: that really got to me; I could buy into the cause and effect thing immediately. The other thing was taking responsibility for your life and not blaming somebody else. As a black woman, raised in a society where racism was so prevalent, I grew up hating white people and blaming them for my misery, but this Buddhism said, "You can change this yourself." It went beyond the color of my skin. So I didn't have to have hatred towards white people, you know, and I didn't have to hate myself either.

Sheila Chapman, M.D., Boston City Hospital; 15 years of practice: In the first few years of my practice, I wasn't really active in the organization. I was chanting, and I had my personal practice. You were talking about the split between your worlds, where you went to school in one world and lived in another world. For me too, home was always black; work and school were always white. So when I got off from work, I wanted to be around some black people. I didn't want to be going to some meeting at seven o'clock with a bunch of happy white people! That wasn't my idea of "time off."

After I had practiced about six or seven years, I developed a deep sense of appreciation because I felt my life had grown tremendously and my dreams really were coming true. I really felt that it was due to my practice, and I started . . . wanting to give something back. That's when I started struggling with this issue about

joining the group here in Boston, which at the time was all white. But one member in particular who was helping me to practice ended up impressing me with her sincerity. I developed a real sense of trust with her because she was *respecting* where I was coming from.

I went through a period where I was thinking, "I need to find the folks in Roxbury [a black neighborhood in Boston]. Nice people here, but I need to be in Roxbury." But I knew by then, you have to change yourself. It won't work just to move locations. And then little by little we started getting more and more blacks in our organization.



Gail Bowman, Jim Hill, Marionette Fennell

Adil Pantan, holistic health practitioner; 8 years of practice: Being black, it's great to practice this Buddhism, because now I feel empowered to do something about my situation. So for me it was great to find this Buddhism because it answered what I had in my heart, wanting to know how can I overcome this situation. I used to identify with the militant struggle for racial justice, but it was not pro-

ductive for me. Before I found the SGI, I had reached such an extreme in identifying with the struggle that I had become willing to sacrifice my life. But when I found the SGI, I realized I didn't have to die. I remember going up and hugging one of my friends when I realized that I didn't have to be a martyr after all. If I didn't practice this Buddhism, I'd be in jail or I'd be dead, so it's really my salvation.

John Smith, college student; 5 years of practice: I didn't know being black was a problem until I came to America. Trinidad was a totally different world. In Trinidad, ninety-nine percent of the people are black or people of color . . .

The first time I really felt that being black was a problem, I was in Boston – I'll never forget this – crossing Tremont Street on a light that happened to turn red while I was crossing, and a guy in a car started blowing his horn and swearing at me and calling me a nigger. And I stopped. He's screaming "nigger," and people are walking around, and I'm in the middle of the street thinking, "Jeez. This is kind of unusual." Nobody had ever called me a nigger in my whole life. It was a shock. I told my mother, "This guy called me a nigger," and she said, "Well, you're in America now."

I found out that black people were invisible in this culture. So I started to read about the civil rights struggle for the first time. I had never thought about racism

growing up. It wasn't my experience. One person told me, "If you want to fight against racism, you should practice Buddhism. If you practice Buddhism, then you can have a greater effect on this society." That kept me practicing. I always got that kind of encouragement. So for me the value of the SGI was the relationships I formed. I think it's important for people of color to form relationships with people of other colors and white people, and to understand that it's not such a big deal if the person's white, it's the humanism that counts. That's the greatness of Buddhism.

Moderator: Here's another related question. What can other American Buddhist communities learn from the SGI about race relations?

Jim Hill, Xerox Corp. employee; 16 years of practice: Back in '72, '73, when they started school busing, and all this violence was going on, I'm saying, "Wow, what can I do?" Even though I was feeling good about myself, there was still nothing I could do

If Buddhist organizations go out and try to attract black people, then I think they've already failed.

about racism. But Buddhism gave me a sense of power that I could make a difference, and I *know* that in jobs and other situations where I felt people were doing things to me because I was black, if I chanted enough *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*, I had the power to change things. The practice itself gives me confidence that I can make a difference in race relations in this country.

This organization itself does not try to attract black folks or Spanish folks or any special kind of folks. It's just that it's based on humanism, and because of its humanism, it attracts everybody. . . . If other Buddhist organizations go out and try to attract black people, then I think they've already failed.

Moderator: The SGI has a long history of persecution, particularly directed at President Makiguchi and President Toda during World War II. As African-Americans, does that history of persecution have special significance for you?

Marionette Fennell, elementary school teacher; 18 years of practice: Most people of color in the United States have gone through persecution, and [for them] to find something that sounds like a solution, this is very attractive. . . . The fact that we chant, that we're able to elevate our life condition, and we're able to

change ourselves, that's what keeps people in the organization. It's not the organization itself. It's the fact that people are always telling you, "Chant about it. Go back and challenge yourself."

Even though you can't really see how this chanting is going to make world peace happen, actual proof keeps happening in your life – some relationship with a relative or a boss improves, for example, or you see the effect that the practice is having on your circumstances.

For instance, when I first started chanting, I lived on a street in a very depressed neighborhood. I started having Buddhist meetings in my house, and there was a lot of chanting being done in those meetings. After we started the meetings, the drug dealers moved off the block and a really dilapidated house was renovated.

So just like Buddhism teaches, when the life condition of the people changes, the environment changes.

Sheila Chapman: The answer to almost all these questions has to do with my experience with the L.A. riots. Actually, I hate to use the word 'riots', because for me the issue was not the *riots*, but the conditions that *led* to the riots. Anyway, I can remember at the time I was in D.C. at a medical meeting that was mostly white and I was just praying that no one would mention the riots, because I, as an intelligent, Harvard-educated professional, had *rage*. . . . I was sharing the hotel room with one of my colleagues who was also a physician, a black

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA

THROUGH INDIA AND NEPAL, LUMBINI, KAPILAVASTU, BODH GAYA, SARNATH, VARANASI, RAJGIR, NALANDA, SRAVASTI, KUSHINAGAR.

DECEMBER 18TH '93-JANUARY 2ND '94

ENJOY THE BEAUTY AND SERENITY OF THE PLACES WHERE THE BUDDHA LIVED. YOUR GUIDE IS SHANTUM SETH.

"WITH EACH STEP AND BREATH THE BUDDHA COMES ALIVE. SHANTUM'S BALANCE OF KNOWLEDGE, INSIGHT AND HUMOUR BRINGS JOY TO THOSE JOURNEYING WITH HIM IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA".

— ZEN MASTER, THICH NHAT HANH

PRICE: US \$ 2800 (EXCLUDES INTERNATIONAL AIRFARE TO DELHI)

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND FREE BROCHURE:

IN INDIA: SHANTUM SETH, 309-B SECTOR 15 A, NOIDA 201301.

TEL: 011-8921520, 011-8921500 FAX: 011-8921520

IN U.S.A.: AURA WRIGHT, HOLISTIC RESOURCES FOUNDATION,

2507 N.E. 27TH AVENUE, PORTLAND, OREGON, 97212.

TEL: (503) 335-0794 FAX: (503) 288-1558



BLIND DONKEY

THE JOURNAL OF THE DIAMOND SANGHA



Four issues for \$24.00, \$32.00 outside of U.S.A.
2119 Kaloa Way, Honolulu HI 96822

sister, and she knew I practiced because I had already been chanting in the room. We happened to be sitting in the room when the verdict came down. We were watching the news, and there was just such tremendous sadness, and I had to look at her and I had to look at myself and say, "Now what's going to be the difference as we look at this on TV together?" And the difference is that I am a practicing Buddhist, so how am I going to explain this? And *Buddhism could explain it to me*. Nothing else could. Although many people sadly asked, "Why is this happening?" I saw the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict in terms of the law of cause and effect. American society, particularly white American society, has never faced its responsibility for its history of slavery and oppression. That's the cause and it was evidenced by the verdict. So what other effect can we expect? The riots showed us the depth of the race problem in this country.

I look at what happened in L.A. in a positive way. Maybe for the first time, Americans saw the tragedy of racism and said, "We should be ashamed." As Buddhism teaches, obstacles benefit us because when the negativity becomes so clear, what we have to change becomes very clear also. If we look at the L.A. riots in terms of our karma as African Americans and the responsibility we have as African Americans who practice this Buddhism, it is our mission to change this, and we have the tool to change this. During that weekend I was able to introduce this woman to Buddhism. We talked and talked, back and forth, back and forth – you can imagine what that weekend was like. I left the conference still very much heartsick *but with hope* because of this practice.

Gail Bowman: Referring to the question about us relating to the persecution that Josei Toda and President Makiguchi went through, I read *The Human Revolution* [by Ikeda, about the history of SGI in Japan] early in my practice. That encouraged me to continue practicing. I have a tendency to give up easily, but I saw what Josei Toda overcame, and I thought that if one person can make this much change and affect so many people, then the least I can do is change myself. My tendency was always to want everyone else to change, but through study and practice, I really felt that I could make a difference, just me, one individual, even if it's just a small difference.

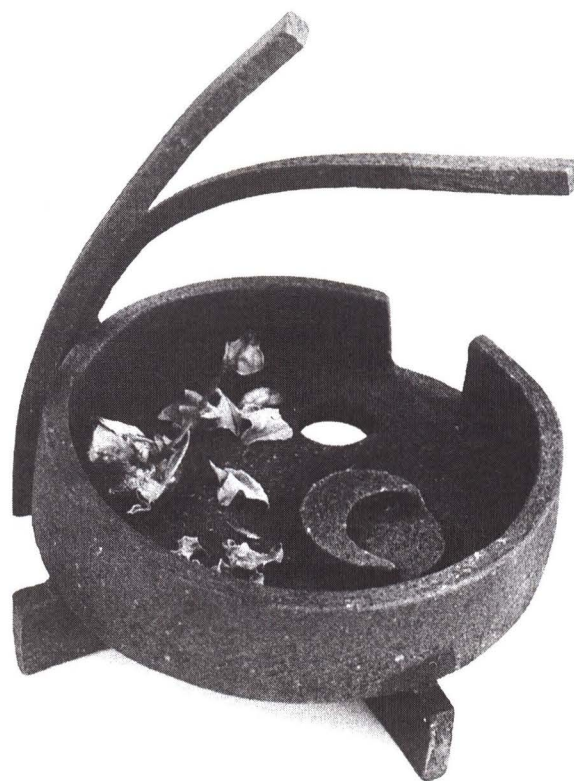
Moderator: Does the SGI have something special to offer you as a person of color?

John Smith: Nichiren Daishonin says, "All believers should chant *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*, transcending all differences to be as inseparable as fish and the water in which they swim," but I always used to wonder how you do that. I think how you do it is that you win over yourself, and you learn to respect other people. . . . I'm

sure African Americans are not taught to overcome our weakness, to win over ourselves. If we're taught to win, it's against other people or against the oppressors. We're not taught to win over our negativity.

Why does the SGI attract people of color? I think race is still the most polarizing issue in this society. People hear "race," they jump on both sides of the issue right away; but we in the SGI don't focus on the problems, because we're always offering solutions. I think it's appealing to people of color because it gives them a sense of hope.

Marilyn Busby: Going out in society and dealing with issues like racism and sexism, you see a lot of things out there that are just very horrible. But I can come back to the organization and feel supported by the other members. Learning about President Ikeda's activities for peace and human rights is very encouraging. So are these discussion meetings with other members on how to develop our practice to challenge our sufferings. I can go back out armed to deal with what's out there in society, not armed with a sword to fight people but armed with *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*, which is a different sword. I can deal with the problems in society in such an effective way because my inner condition is so much stronger and happier. I see that I can effect change in a way that is very, very long-lasting, not just for the moment but for a long time, and on my deathbed I will know that I made that change. ♦



Robert Kostka, *Omphalos/No. 2*, stoneware

BECOMING HUMBLE

by Thubten Chodron

Letters in previous editions of *Turning Wheel* about the lack of ethnic and racial diversity in American Buddhist centers have led me to reflect on my experiences living in Buddhist centers around the world. I'm a Caucasian woman from America; in India I lived in the Tibetan exile community; in France an international monastery was home; in Singapore I was the resident teacher in a Chinese center following the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Currently I teach Buddhism in Seattle to a group which is mostly Caucasian. Although several factors contribute to the lack of racial and ethnic mixture in Buddhist groups, I'll focus on one – unrecognized cultural presuppositions – and share my experience of it.

While living in Asia, I felt and thought like an American: the indirect communication designed to save face in Asia drove me nuts; the lack of appreciation for free speech in Singapore was appalling; the inefficiency in India horrified me; people's clinging to oppressive traditions was aggravating. I was American: I knew democracy was best, I knew straightforward communication was where it was at, I knew how to be efficient and how to improve society. In essence, I knew a lot of things . . . except how to be humble.

However, when I came back to America after spending the majority of my adult life in Asia, I suddenly felt Asian. One afternoon I turned on the TV. Several people in various stages of sex-change operations were discussing their experiences. Although I had grown up in California and considered myself liberal, I was shocked. How different this was from Asia, where people would never discuss such personal topics in public, let alone on TV. As time went on, I heard many Americans say they felt out of touch with their feelings. Yet more than any other place I had lived, here people talked openly about their emotions. Whenever I stayed with Asians during my five-month teaching tour in America I felt at home; people were polite, reasonable and sensitive.

As time went on it became more apparent to me how we see the world through the veil of our preconceptions and then believe that what we perceive is objective reality. I still don't feel completely American or totally Asian, but as I've continued to travel between Asia and the United States, I've come to appreciate different values from various cultures. Two things have become apparent to me: all living beings want happiness and don't want suffering; and people have been incredibly kind in all the places I've lived. In America and in Asia, strangers have reached out to help. I'm beginning to understand His Holiness the Dalai Lama's comment that that wherever he goes, he feels at home with his sisters and brothers.

When the question arose in *Turning Wheel* about the lack of racial diversity in Buddhist groups, I couldn't help but recall my own cultural pride – a pride that was unrecognized because I thought I was right. This pride is very sneaky; it permeates so many of the values that we take for granted. I feel fortunate to have lived in other cultures for many years and to have participated in activities at Asian temples of different traditions here in Seattle. These experiences have made me question many of my own cultural presuppositions. For example, why is democracy best? Why do we always need to voice our opinions? (Why do we have so many opinions to start with?) Are there disadvantages to individualism? Why shouldn't we give in to others' wishes and ways of doing things even if they aren't our ways? Why is the lack of racial diversity something that needs to be willfully "fixed?" What attitude really lies behind our need to continually fix things?

For some people, living in other cultures inspires recognition of their cultural presuppositions. For others, one of life's upsets – illness, job loss, divorce – triggers it. But the external situation alone isn't always enough to show us our pride. Some people, upon experiencing any of those situations, become more entrenched in their beliefs about how things should be. A certain mental agility – some willingness to examine how our ways of thinking create our experiences of the world – is necessary.

Sometimes when we begin to question the values of American culture, we get into "America-bashing." We start to hate American hypocrisy and to feel personally responsible for all the problems in the world. But it seems to me that these feelings are laced with guilt, and guilt makes us feel personally more important than we in fact are. How can we open our hearts to participate in other cultures if we hate our own? It would be more beneficial if we could appreciate those elements in both American and other cultures that are worthwhile and to mentally extricate ourselves from whatever elements are unkind.

We needn't indiscriminately throw out Western values or try to become Asian, but we could question some firmly held assumptions, to bring spaciousness into our minds, and appreciation for others' values. Diversity won't come about through willfully bringing others into our groups, but through reaching out to join in others' activities. A willingness to learn, to visit and participate in the activities of ethnic Buddhist groups and other traditions is important. In essence, a sense of humility, that open quality which lets us learn and enables us to appreciate and be harmonious with others, benefits ourselves and others. ♦

Thubten Chodron, an American Buddhist nun and teacher based in Seattle, is the author of Open Heart, Clear Mind (Snow Lion).

STARTING POINTS

by Andrew Cooper

March 3, 1993 – This morning, someone on the radio said that today is the second anniversary of the beating of Rodney King. The news got me thinking about that event and those that followed, and as I sipped tea and stared at the paper, my mind wandered through its recollections. I found myself coming back over and over again to a single incident that, for all its relative insignificance, gave me a way into one corner of the meaning of what happened in L.A.

Several days after the verdict was announced, after the flames had mostly died down, I watched Ted Koppel interviewing some young black men, members of gangs in South Central. Koppel's questions were focusing on the day-to-day violence in their neighborhoods, referring particularly to drive-by shootings, a symbol to many of the cruel randomness of gang violence. One of the men eventually interrupted Koppel in mid-sentence, asking, "What about George Bush's fly-by shooting in Iraq?" Koppel deftly sidestepped the issue.

In *The Second Sin*, psychiatrist Thomas Szasz observes that, in the human realm, the law of survival is not kill or be killed; it is define or be defined. The language, assumptions, emotions, and values that define the starting point of a discussion shape whatever course it may take. The news media worked hard to frame the unrest in L.A. as criminal activities with little, if any, political content. The explosion of rage was portrayed as a riot of looters and gang members, not a civil uprising, a rebellion of a disenfranchised citizenry. The question the man put to Ted Koppel cut to the heart of the matter in a way that endless professional analysis did not, because it spoke from a reality in which violence on the streets and violence by the state cannot be cleanly separated. For a moment the media's carefully constructed frame broke down. But it was just a moment. The camera, after all, belongs to ABC.

The question about fly-by shootings was also a question about power and the representation of reality, about the power to define the framework in which people make sense of their lives. Oppressive ideologies like racism grow out of that place where power and perception intersect. They extend themselves not only through articulated doctrine but also through unconscious processes, codes and images, and through conceptual categories that are so deeply ingrained in convention that they appear self-evident and natural. Until

the framework is unpacked and restructured, one is stuck within it. That's what that gang member was doing – unpacking and restructuring.

The idea of race is a good example of an ideological category. As Ashley Montagu argued years ago in *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*, the very way we understand race – as a biological designation – is a "modern discovery," a historical construct that developed in the eighteenth century as a way of justifying the slave trade. The notion of race comes to us laden with the history of white supremacism. When we take up the term, accepting its validity and forgetful of its historical production, that history exerts its power to shape our very perceptions. The starting point is already poisoned. We might have to use the term, but we don't have to take it for granted.

The understanding that conceptual designations shape perception is, of course, a familiar one to students of Buddhism. But Buddhist analysis tends to focus on the ultimate emptiness of all concepts, and remains naive about the ideological forces that lead to the production of particular ones. But to forget that historical dimension is to be shaped by it.

I wonder what conditions make it possible for those

Buddhist communities that are overwhelmingly white and middle class – like the ones I've been and am a part of – to not take more seriously the issues of race and racism. The whiteness of a community may or may not be an indicator of racism, but the denial that that whiteness is significant is a sure sign of it. It's a matter of the starting point. The question is not whether such and such community is racist. Given that racism is a pervasive social and ideological force in the West, the question is about *how* it operates in our personal and collective lives. How does the life of a particular community reflect and reproduce the broader social pattern? Recognizing that no one is immune, we are less likely to step into the cycle of blame and defensiveness that undermines serious and open discussion.

Like any deeply held delusion, racism abides in what is unsaid as much as in what is said, in what is unthought as well as what is thought. It is both inside and outside the realm of conscious intent. It chooses us as much as we choose it. But choices are constant, inevitable, and they matter. That's a starting point. ♦

Andrew Cooper lives in Berkeley, California, and is a former BPF Board member.

The whiteness of a community may or may not be an indicator of racism, but the denial that that whiteness is significant is a sure sign of it.

FREEING OURSELVES FROM THE OPPRESSION WITHIN

by Joeritta de Almeida

When I was a little girl, I had a profound experience which marked the beginning of one phase of my life and the end of another. Before the age of five my relationship to the world around me was one of unity. I remember looking at trees, people, things, and feeling that I was everything, and that I knew everything. It was as if my eyes were not mine. Some higher force within me was showing me the world. This all seemed very natural to me. For awhile I thought everyone saw all that I saw, felt all that I felt, knew all that I knew.

Then suddenly one day, walking past a mirror in my grandmother's house, I saw myself for the first time. In that instant I realized that I was a separate person with a separate will, detached from all other things around me. I lifted my arm in amazement as I realized I could do whatever I willed. At that time I thought I was experiencing a religious awakening. I felt a tremendous amount of love.

This moment of self-realization, however, also marked the birth of my personality, my small self. It was the beginning of my life as Joeritta, a small black girl living in Florence, South Carolina. The memory of that moment has always been alive in me as the instant in which I was separated from the vast mind of oneness. From that moment on, my life has been a journey to reconnect my small self to the vast mind I so vividly recall.

My spiritual path led me to Brazil where I lived for 12 years, and there I found a spiritual teacher who introduced me to the work I do today. I practice a system of self development called "Rio Abierto" (Open River). Encompassing meditation, movement, massage, voice work, relaxation, and corrective physical exercises, it uses the body as a tool to re-educate the mind as to who we really are.

The class begins with "emptying" – the deliberate release and discharge of the tensions we have accumulated in our mind/bodies. We then move through a variety of postures, steps, and sounds which reflect particular feeling states and express particular traits. Eventually, the class transforms itself from a collection of fragmented personalities into a unified body, moving and breathing as one.

An important tenet of Rio Abierto is that we learn not only from intellectual pursuit, but from experience.

Movement is the instrument used to create this experience. Each class is a microcosm of our daily lives. The characteristics of our small selves are acted out through gesture and sound and, somewhere along the line, our definitions and judgments of ourselves begin to fall away.

One student recently described to me how, at the beginning of the work, she saw herself as shy, sad, and delicate. At first it was difficult for her to make certain movements that were contrary to this image – for example, bold, joyful, and deliberate ones. After participating in this work for several years, she feels that she does, in fact, embody the full spectrum of characteristics, as does each of her classmates. She has transcended her images of herself and others as limited "types"; she has transcended her small self.

On the societal level, all "isms" are, similarly, a result of such labeling of our small selves. We impose limits on ourselves and others. The purpose of living, as I see it, is to free ourselves from these limits, so that we may center around our authentic Self. Once we recognize this as our center, it can guide and direct our lives.

Anything that prevents us from becoming fully human is a form of oppression. But the ideology which oppresses black people and all non-white peoples cannot be eliminated simply by changing the hands of those in political power. This system of oppression has been with us for so long that on many levels it has been internalized.

In my own life, for example, there have been times when I have believed that others of my race were showing some of the very faults and shortcomings that I've so often heard attributed to us by whites. I've found myself feeling intolerant of fellow African Americans when they have chosen to exhibit signs of cultural difference, such as speaking in black dialect or acting in ways that might call attention to themselves. Perhaps worst of all, I have sometimes attributed my own mistakes not to mere human error, but to some inherent racial incompetence.

Thus, we need to seek racial equality and freedom from oppression from within as well as from without. Internal work does not contradict political and social activism. In fact, effective action arises from a sense of self-worth. To this end, we must turn our energies inward to heal ourselves. As the late Bob Marley tells us: "Emancipate yourself from mental slavery / None but ourselves can free our minds." ♦

Joeritta de Almeida holds B.A. and Master of Education degrees in addition to her Rio Abierto certification. She is a counselor and massage therapist, and lives with her daughter in Brookline, Massachusetts.



The following interviews with three Buddhist teachers – an African American, a Japanese American, and an Hispanic Native American (pages 36–40) – were done by radio programmer Sue Supriano as part of a radio documentary series on Buddhism in the United States.

CLOSER THAN OUR NOSE

Rev. John Nirada Dharma (John Hall) is an African American who has been a Jodo priest for 16 years at the Laupahoehoe Jodo Mission, a 19th century temple on the island of Hawaii. His work as a priest includes directing a program for the mentally retarded, coaching basketball, and teaching Zen meditation, among other things. He's married to a Japanese woman. Rev. Dharma was raised as a Catholic and has also been ordained as a priest in both the Zen and Nichiren Shoshu traditions.

Following is an excerpt from an interview conducted by Sue Supriano and Pam Michael, at Rev. Dharma's temple ("the most idyllic place I've ever been" according to one of the interviewers), in August of 1992.

Sue: How did you get into Buddhism?

JH: I made my first appointment to learn meditation so that I could get power to overthrow the U.S. government. I was a Maoist activist at the time.

During the Vietnam War I had protested too vigorously; I was too extreme, and I was fired from my job as a diesel driver. I wasn't able to get another job.

The night before my meditation instruction I was sitting in my room, feeling bad because my girlfriend and I had just broken off. I was an atheist at that time, but I said, "If there's a God, prove it. Talk to me through this book. I've lost this girl – what should I do?" I just opened to a page in this book of Emerson's, and it said, "If you lose a loved one, don't look back." At first I thought maybe that was just a coincidence. But then I jumped straight up off the bed, and I started walking around the floor crying and laughing at the same time. I was crying because I had been taking our Lord's name in vain, and I was laughing because I had found out that God was real. And I noticed a stillness I had never experienced.

The next day I went to a Zen center and meditated from six in the morning to six in the evening. During the last sitting period, I asked inside, "God, if you were real last night, let me see you." But nothing happened. And then when I gave up, all of a sudden – while my eyes were closed – there was a bright light that was so intense I couldn't bear it. I couldn't shut my eyes because they were already shut. Then I was taken up through a cone, and I saw this *face*. And I said, "Buddha – you're a black man. You're a Negro." And when I said that, he turned into every nationality at once, and he also became a woman. And then when I said, "You're a woman," he was a man; and when I said he was a man,

he would become a woman. And then he asked if he could come to me, and I was scared to say yes and I was scared to say no, so I just said, "I guess so." Then he just engulfed me. It was total darkness, and I saw all my ancestors and friends who had passed away they were all there, with a lot of love. And then I blended with the Buddha; it was like darkness within darkness. He had blue-black hair, and he wore big earrings. It was Shakyamuni Buddha. I never could have imagined until I saw him that somebody could love me so much. I could feel the love he had for me, as well as see it in his eyes. But he didn't look at me as a person; he was looking through me at something else. And then the Zen

*Only you yourself can pick you up,
not some white people.*

teacher rang the bell, because the sitting was over. . . . Afterwards I went and looked in the bathroom mirror, but I didn't see anything but my same face.

And I noticed something leaving the temple to go back to my apartment: the stillness. Even in the midst of L.A. with all its noise, I could still feel silence. I can't describe it, but I wanted everybody to feel the same as I did. I had never had so much compassion for human beings as I did then.

The next week I went back for another weekend meditation. I didn't have the same experience, but I asked to move in. I wanted to become enlightened. So I left everything. I told my girlfriend she could have everything – I was moving into the monastery. I stayed five years and became a Zen priest.

Sue: We were talking earlier about the riots in Los Angeles. As an African American and an activist, do you want to say something about that?

JH: I feel in one sense I don't belong to any race, and yet and still, I'm black. I don't think I can blame white people, or anybody, for my conditions. I believe in karma, in cause and effect. I see it in L.A. I see black racism and I see white racism. And those black racists and white racists are stirring up the rest of the people who are not racists. I believe it's wrong to take sides, black or white. If I take one side, that means I'm against human beings on the other side. To create harmony is what I feel is the right thing to do, not to get

caught up in "we" and "them." In other words, nobody is holding anybody down. I don't deny that there's racism. There's plenty of racism, and it can be an obstacle if you permit it to be. But as far as I'm concerned, I can do anything I set my mind to do, if I go through the process like everybody else. As long as blacks believe that whites are holding them down, they're going to stay down, because nobody else is going to pick you up. Only you yourself can pick you up, not some white people.

Everybody has Buddha nature, and so if I hate any human being I hate the Buddha. To get caught up in hatred only hurts us. I'm not going to harm myself by hating somebody, I don't care what they do to me. If they harm me that's because it's my karma to be harmed. They wouldn't harm me if I hadn't harmed somebody else. Sometimes our enemy benefits us more than our friend.

Sue: A lot of people might think that what you're saying is an excuse not to take any action.

JH: Well, if we get caught up into revenging, it will never end. I get even with you and then next you're going to get back even with me. In the ancient teachings of Buddhism, hate is never overcome by hate. Only by love alone is it quelled. We'll achieve more by love and respect than we can by revenge and criticizing.

Sue: Can you say something about your experience as a black man in the Buddhist tradition?

JH: Sometimes other priests here in Hawaii ask me, "Are you from India?" And I tell them, "No, I'm a black man. I'm from Tennessee." That surprises them.

It's as if they think no black man can be into spiritual things. But if you stop and look, the Buddha was a black man. Even though he was Indian, he had a black face and black features. Gandhi was black, Martin Luther King was black, Jesus was black – the Catholics taught me that. Most of your spiritual leaders that have come through this world were black.

But I don't think that color has anything to do with it. I mention it only because black people are always put down. When a person is cleansed inside, it doesn't make any difference what color they are. I've seen some spiritual people in all colors and I've seen some very evil people in all colors. I do run into a little bit of racism among the Japanese. But for every Japanese I run into who's negative, I'll come into five who are positive, and that just makes me feel happy. I don't expect everybody to accept me. They don't have to. I just keep on doing what's got to be done. I learned to respect myself, and when we respect ourselves, other people can see it. Our thoughts and deeds show on us.

If we despair, we're far from the Buddha. The Buddha is with us all the time, closer than our nose. It doesn't say anything. It doesn't make a move. Yet and still, it gets everything done in the universe. And when we empty our mind and concentrate on our breathing we can have true happiness. The more love we pour out, the more love comes back. ♦

Sue Supriano is a radio producer with regular programs on KPFA/Pacifica and Radio for Peace International. She's a Buddhist practitioner active with the Interracial Buddhist Council.



A/P

P. Sugden

Philip Sugden, *The Fabric of Our Society*

from the series, *Visions from the Fields of Merit*, a portfolio of 8 prints based on the artist's journeys in Tibet and the Himalayas

HONORING THE SOURCE

By Ryo Imamura

The following article is based on a conversation with Sue Supriano which took place in the summer of 1991.

Buddhism is like tofu. It's hard to put your finger on exactly what it is, but there are a million uses for it, and if you put tofu in any dish it blends with that dish and doesn't violate its integrity. But it's still tofu, and you know it's there. In the same way, Buddhism has a definite teaching that's timeless, and remains true no matter where it goes, even beyond this universe. It goes to various countries and cultures and seems to make huge changes in its face. The rituals change, the dress changes, the chanting changes, but the teaching will always be true and remain the same.

Some American practitioners wear Japanese garb, and use Japanese incense. Others have gone so far as to renounce all Asian symbols; Vipassana, for example, has become more of a philosophy, devoid of ritual.

What about trying to find replacement symbols? In

What we enjoy today as American Buddhists came as the result of a lot of sacrifice on the part of pioneers from Asia.

Japan before the service a rice offering is put on the altar, because rice is the food of Japan. In America maybe we could put bread in front of the Buddha, as an offering of our most staple food. Symbols keep the tradition alive. I feel very empty when I go to a practice place where they've thrown out the incense and the lotus flower and all the things that are on an Asian altar, and there's nothing in their place. I feel there hasn't been a full transformation yet.

I represent the eighteenth straight generation of Buddhist priests in my family. I have two sons, and I would be quite excited if one of them chose to be a priest, but I would never push it. They're young kids now, into sports and video games, and they don't have the slightest interest in anything spiritual. I might be worried if they did.

I married a woman also from a long Jodo Shin background. We have our home altar and we go to the nearby temple in Tacoma so that the children as well as ourselves can remain in close contact with our tradition. My grandparents were born in Japan; my parents were born in the United States, but educated for the most part in Japan. My generation is the first to feel that this is our permanent home, and my kids of course are really American – they can live on pizza.

Immigrant Buddhist populations from Asia rely very much upon the Buddhist priest and the temple to be the glue for the community. But the teenagers want to become assimilated into American society, and many of them are giving up their language, their customs and their faith. Japanese Americans marry out at the rate of about 70 percent now. That's neither good nor bad, but it has an effect on ethnic institutions such as the Buddhist temple, an effect which some people see as devastating. Maybe it's cause for celebration; maybe Buddhism becomes American not only by the mixture of beliefs but the mixture of blood.

What we enjoy today as American Buddhists came as the result of a lot of blood, sweat and tears, a lot of sacrifice on the part of pioneers from Asia who brought their faith to America at a time when the American public was quite threatened by anything foreign, especially from Japan. Now there's a lot of acceptance of Buddhism by many Americans, but at the same time I think the attitude is less honest. Americans look at Buddhism with a colonial perspective. America sees Asia, Africa, and the rest of the world as our colonies to be invaded, explored and conquered. And "discovered." Celebrating Columbus's so-called "discovery" of America is quite a joke to people of color.

In the 50's there was a certain innocence on the part of Euro-Americans. They really didn't know or understand Buddhism. So-called beatnik artists and also ex-G.I.'s who had been in Japan asked a lot of questions of Asian Buddhists here. My father's temple in Berkeley was a primary meeting place for Westerners who were just getting interested in Buddhism and for Asian Buddhists. And the Westerners listened very intently. But now Euro-Americans understand Buddhism on their own terms, and they seem to have no use for Asian teachers.

Now there are all these publications in English, like *Turning Wheel*, full of wonderfully explicit and artistic writings by Euro-Americans; there's no need for the bumbling English of Asian teachers anymore. And so the dialogue has essentially stopped. There's very little interaction between the two groups. The Euro-American Buddhists look at the Asian Buddhists as ethnic conclaves who are not real Buddhists: they go to the temple not because they're practicing Buddhism, but for funerals and rituals and superstition. But there's a certain uneasiness about this gap. Euro-Americans ask: "How can we get more Asians involved in our practice, so we don't look so white?"

Somehow it's all happened much too quickly. It's only been twenty years or so since all the Zen and Tibetan centers have come into being. But we know

from history that it takes hundreds of years for a faith to go from one culture to another. We're rushing, and suffering the growing pains.

There's great division between Euro-American Buddhists and Asian Buddhists. There's a certain arrogance on the part of Euro-Americans who think that you can learn the traditions and customs of other lands in a summer workshop. But if you learn to make sushi in one month, it's not the same sushi that's made in Japan. There's a lack of the depth and patience that's necessary to make the transition. Simply replacing the rice on the altar with bread is a very logical thing to do. But it requires thinking through the custom and what it means.

This tolerance is lacking from the Asian side too. Asian American Buddhists see all these very young Americans who were brought up mostly in the Judeo-Christian tradition transforming themselves overnight, calling themselves Buddhists and taking on Asian names. This seems strange and even humorous from the Asians' point of view, whose reasons for being Buddhists are rooted in their culture, their family. I don't know how this gap will ever be closed, or even if it should. There are obviously two distinct forms of Buddhism existing now.

Zen is an example of the sort of Buddhism that fits in with the individualistic orientation of Euro-Americans. It requires a certain amount of personal stamina to get up at four in the morning, to sit for long

periods of time, to tackle koans on one's zafu; whereas Jodo Shin Buddhism seems to have no practice at all. You go to a temple and you see families, three or four generations getting together. Of course there's a service, chanting and singing, and a talk by the priest. But it's not attractive to Euro-Americans because they're looking for a quick way to get some place.

The real pioneers of Euro-American Buddhism were not following a fad. They went against the norms of American society to explore Buddhism for themselves. This was in the forties and fifties. Even earlier than that there were important Euro-American Buddhists. But their contributions are forgotten. Any tradition without a history is sterile; it lacks roots and lacks direction.

I think it's necessary to go back to some of these elders and remember the passion and the commitment they felt back then. Maybe this is where we'll find an identity that will join Euro-American Buddhists and Asian Buddhists in a truly American form of Buddhism, one that's not going to promote separation or racism, but will be a model to the whole country of how multiculturalism can be put into practice. ♦

Ryo Imamura is a Jodo Shin priest and a professor of psychology at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. His annual program, "Buddhism and Psychotherapy," is one of the most popular summer offerings at the college. He was one of the founders of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and was president of the BPF Board in 1983-1984.

"Dark to the mind,
Radiant to the Heart."

Live Words

The traditional monastic training at Zen Mountain Monastery includes frequent Dharma Discourses (formal talks on Zen koans or other aspects of the teaching) by abbot John Daido Looi or talks by one of his senior students. This is a powerful way to receive the teachings, reaching a place beyond the intellect. For a full year you can receive these talks each month on cassette. Build yourself a library of "Live Words".

Energize your practice!

Subscribe to *Live Words*

In addition to one cassette a month, you will get the Buddhist quarterly *Mountain Record* and a home practice tape. All this for only \$100. (USA). Tapes also available separately. Send for our free catalog.

Dharma Communications
PO Box 156-BPF
Mt. Tremper NY 12457
(914) 688-7299

SNOW LION
PUBLICATIONS



Established in 1981 to preserve and disseminate Tibetan culture, Snow Lion offers a FREE newsletter and catalog containing news, event calendar as well as hundreds of books, visuals, tapes and many other items from Tibet. Call or write us for a free copy:

Snow Lion Publications

P.O. Box 6483, Ithaca, NY 14851

Tel: 800-950-0313 or 607-273-8519.

AN OPEN DOOR IS NOT ENOUGH

Extending the Dharma to People of Color

Carlos is a teacher of Tibetan Buddhism who wishes to remain anonymous here. Sue Supriano interviewed him in February, 1993, and portions of the interview follow.

Sue: How do you want to identify yourself ethnically?

Carlos: I'm of Hispanic and Native American descent.

Sue: I know you to be a very serious Tibetan Buddhist practitioner. How did that come about?

Carlos: There are a lot of similarities between Mexican Indian culture and Tibetan Buddhism – the way we try to keep in harmony with the life around us.

Sue: Do you see racism in your dharma community?

Carlos: Yes, I do, but it's subtle. Next time you go into your dharma group, look around and see how many people of color are there. Maybe they're not being kept out intentionally, but dharma teachers are not going out to the communities of our Third World brothers and sisters and saying, "Look, here's something that might help you." Besides, American society keeps Third World people so busy just trying to survive that studying the dharma is a luxury.

The temple is closed. People say, "We're not closing the door on anybody," and that's true – the door is open. But people of color are not showing up. I know from my background it's not for lack of spiritual interest; there's a lack of information in our communities of color. And if people from the barrios or a Native American reservation come into a white dharma group and elitist attitudes are still present, they're going to pick up on it. They're not going to feel welcome.

I believe that most dharma people aren't racist, but in a subtle way these attitudes arise. And the only way to change it is to look honestly at ourselves and our activities, and really really be open about what we see. Dharma's a way to do that.

Sue: Do you think it's a good idea to confront people when you feel that something racist is going on?

Carlos: Yes, if you see racism arising it should be confronted. You should never run away from it. We're Americans, we live in America, we don't have to be quiet about this.

I've had people tell me it's not the karma of people of color to be involved in Buddhism.

Sue: Of course there are plenty of Asian Buddhists who are people of color! We're just talking about the white Buddhist movement – Zen, Tibetan, Vipassana. But do people really say it's not your karma?

Carlos: Yes, and that's hogwash. Just like when people say blacks and Hispanics don't want education.

Sue: I don't know about anybody else's karma. It's enough for me just to deal with my own karma, and perpetrating racism would be creating bad karma for myself.

Carlos: Yes, you have to take care of your own karma. In America that means we should be involved in peace and justice work. If there's no injustice in the community and the activists have nothing to harp about, they'll disappear. But if you look around the dharma center and you don't see any people of color, the activists have a valid concern. We have to struggle against racism in order for the dharma to take its real birth in America. If the dharma excludes anybody because of class or race, then we're definitely taking the Buddhist movement in America down the wrong path.

The bottom line is compassion. If we base our practice in compassion we can bring racial harmony into the dharma. But if things continue the way they're going, that's not going to happen. I don't see dharma groups going to the Mission District to give seminars in Spanish. Or going to Hunters Point or East Oakland. We need to be like real warriors. We don't want to be missionaries, but we need to be open and to reach out to these Third World communities. Besides, we're American, and Third World people are part of America. The dharma could never flourish here except for this. Tibetans should be happy that we have a society where they can come and open up centers, and where dharma groups flourish. It works both ways: they have an opportunity; we have an opportunity. But the dharma should be freely given to everybody. We have to tell our Tibetan leaders that we want things to change, otherwise we'll have a tragic future. Our dharma centers will be like fraternities and country clubs.

If it wasn't for my own persistence I probably wouldn't be involved in Buddhist practice. It's not because of my karma that I'm a Buddhist; it's just that I cut through the bullshit and I speak out from my own point of view. Dharma people meet me and they say, "Wow! He's multi-lingual: he not only knows dharma but he knows his own culture." We need a multi-cultural perspective. We also need to be meek in the sense of the Christian beatitudes, to step back and create the opportunity for things to change. Compassion is the name of the game. Then racism won't be found at dharma centers, and the peace and justice groups will vanish. And maybe something else will arise that will be helpful to the dharma. ♦

BCA: THE LOTUS THAT BLOOMED BEHIND BARBED WIRE

By Ken Tanaka

The Buddhist Churches of America – the “BCA” – is one of the largest and best-organized Buddhist denominations in North America. It has historically been composed mostly of Japanese Americans, and BCA churches have often done double duty both as Buddhist temples and as cultural centers for Americans of Japanese ancestry.

This dual role inevitably gave rise to a certain tension during recent years, as people of different ancestry and national origin have discovered Buddhism and become involved as members of BCA temples and even, in some cases, as ordained ministers. To understand the BCA and the situation in which it now finds itself, it is critical to know a bit about its history.

* * *

“May the injustices and humiliation suffered here as a result of hysteria, racism and economic exploitation never emerge again.”

These grieved and hopeful words are etched on a plaque at Manzanar, California, one of the ten concentration camps set up by the United States Government during World War II. The camps were both home and prison to 110,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry and their immigrant parents, who were forcibly removed from their own homes in the coastal Western states. Without due process of law, American citizens and lawful residents were incarcerated primarily to appease the prevailing forces of wartime hysteria, racial hatred and economic greed. It took almost half a century for the Government finally to issue a formal apology to the internees, and to acknowledge the internment as one of the most shameful chapters in American history.

Among the first to be rounded up in the early days of the war were Buddhist priests of the Jodo Shinshu (Pure Land) denomination. Shinobu Matsuura, whose husband Rev. Issei Matsuura was the minister of a Jodo Shinshu temple in Guadalupe – a small farming community in central California – later recalled those terrifying events, in her book, *Higan* [“Compassionate Vow”]:

February 18, 1942, early morning, still in our night-clothes and huddled by the heater, we listened grimly to the news over the radio. There was a loud rapping on the back door. Three men stood there. They were the FBI.

“We came to arrest Rev. Matsuura,” said one, as they came through the door. I had a foreboding that something like this would happen. But when the time actually came, I felt crushed. I was instructed to pack a change of clothing for my husband. Hurriedly, I put his underwear and toiletries in a bag. Separately, I wrapped his koromo (priest robes) and kesa (a miniature version of the original monastic robes,

worn around the neck), seiten (book of sacred writings) and Kanmuryojukyo sutra (the Pure Land Contemplation Sutra).

“Only bare necessities,” they said, but he being a minister, the extra religious articles were allowed. My husband walked the long corridor to the hondo (Buddha hall), lit the candle and incense and quietly read the “Tanbutsuge” [sutra]. Our youngest daughter, Kiyō, and I bowed in gassho, realizing that this may be our last parting. The FBI stood at attention through the sutra reading.

In April, 1942, Mrs. Matsuura was evacuated to the camps, along with the entire Japanese-American community. She later wrote:

Whatever land and property were acquired in the almost fifty years of immigrant history leading up to that day were to be sold at any price, or just abandoned. We were told to leave with only what we could carry. Bearing numbered tags identifying us as “enemy aliens,” and steeped in uncertainty, we tearfully left our home.

The camps had been hastily built in desolate areas across the Western states; once there, the internees found themselves surrounded by barbed wire fences and armed guards. The Buddhists, who made up about 60% of the internees and who were mostly of the Jodo Shinshu school, continued their religious activities. Sunday morning services were well attended. For many, the services provided solace and comfort in dealing with their profound sense of betrayal and the uncertainties regarding their own well-being.

Ironically, what was perhaps the most critical step in the Americanization of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism took place in one of the concentration camps: Topaz, Utah. Up to that time, Jodo Shinshu in America had been organized as the North American Buddhist Mission, founded in 1899. That organization had been dominated by priests who were virtually all missionaries from Japan, and the lay leaders were also first generation immigrants. Japanese was the primary language used in all organizational affairs.

During the internment, the American-born second generation began to assert its power.

The great change began with a series of preparatory meetings at the Topaz camp in early 1944, and culminated in a conference held in Salt Lake City (east of the quarantined zone) in July of that year. A new constitution was adopted; it provided for a shift to English as the primary language, and a new name: The Buddhist Churches of America. The conference and its product also marked another important change – the growing power of the lay members in relation to the priests, whose authority and influence had been enormous in

(Continued on next page)

THE HELPERS

by Jill Schireson

I want to know how you can make a difference to a child who has been beaten and abandoned, in an hour and a half session, once a week, in a crummy old office with a shaggy old rug and no furniture. What do you say when you invite them to come to your group counseling session? You can't tell them there's hope; you're a liar. You know the statistics: how many of them will never finish high school, will go to jail, will live below the poverty line (just as their families always have). Half of them may be dead in ten years, before they're 21; most of them will be ravaged by drugs sooner than that. Do the numbers lie? It's not easy to accept those numbers when you've seen the faces that they claim.

I want to tell them to keep trying. But they've already been doing that. They've been trying to stay alive, on their own. They tried to keep quiet when their stepfather came in, so he wouldn't beat them again. They tried not to scream when Social Services took them to a new foster home in the middle of the night, while their foster mother, the only one who ever loved them, died quietly in the next room. They've been trying to stop their mother's boyfriend from beating her. They've been trying to stop their mother from taking drugs, their sister from running away, their brother from getting a gun. But they've been too small to matter, too small to make a difference. So, I don't tell them to try; sometimes in parting I say, "Hang in there," and I mean it. If they grunt or look up, then I, too, can keep trying - I can hang in there.

I want to say somebody cares, that I care, but that hurts them too much. How could somebody who cares let this happen? How could I let their mother die? How could I have let that drug dealer's car hit-and-run their brother, leaving him unconscious and bloody in the middle of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way? How can I let kids who taunt and beat them every day get away with it? Why didn't I stop that guy from shooting their father? What if I go away and leave them, like everyone else? So, I don't say I care, but I show up every week to hear their stories, to witness their pain. Once in a while one calls to me across the parking lot, "See ya next week!" There is caring. They care.

I want to tell them that they matter, but I imagine a bitter response. How can they matter? All of their worrying about Mom didn't matter, she still lives with the drunken guy who beats her anyway. If they mattered, wouldn't they have a yard to play in that was safe from the stray bullets of the drug dealers? If they mattered, wouldn't the grandmother they live with have enough welfare money to buy their birthday cake? If they mat-

tered, wouldn't their school be clean and safe? I don't say they matter, but I often invite them to participate in a group decision. I nod and listen when they give an opinion. When they say, "I think we should . . ." I smile at how tenaciously they hang on to a sense of meaning.

I want to tell them there is such a thing as love. But I can't always find it in their lives. If there was love, why did they try to hang themselves with the hairdryer cord? Why did they sit crying alone in the school yard? Why did they get thrown against the wall when they were only a month old? Or why did they get thrown down the stairs, get raped, go hungry, get burned? Why did they lose their mom to asthma, and then their dad, in his grief, to prison? Where was love when somebody wrote "kill niggers" on the fence? Sometimes I don't know where love is, until they remind me and ask, "Will you sit over here by me today?"

So when I think about what there is for me to teach them, I find nothing. When I try to venture for a brief 90 minutes into their world, where they stand in their pain, I am stunned, the wind is knocked out of me. How can we continue to live with this immeasurable suffering? I can't believe there is strength to survive it. When I hear their stories, I can't find any hope in the world. There is no end to their ache, no light at the end of an endless tunnel. But I watch while they continue to endure their hurt, and even begin to struggle free from it, and I am awed in the presence of a miracle. But who gets helped? ♦

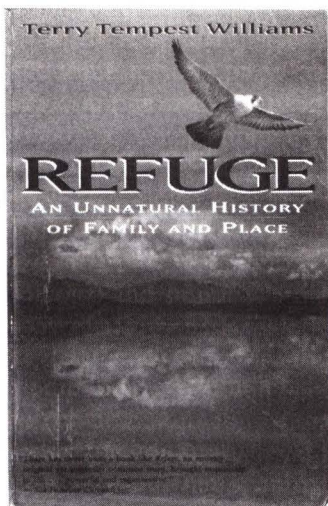
Jill Schireson is a psychologist in private practice, and is clinical director of Berkeley Youth Alternatives, a neighborhood agency serving economically disadvantaged youth. She is a member of the Berkeley Zen Center.

(continued from preceding page)

the pre-war years.

Another generational change has brought new questions and new challenges. As BCA prepares for the celebration of 100 years of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism on American soil, it must struggle with the legitimate needs of some newer members, who at times grow frustrated with an organization that is often accused of being an "ethnic fortress," and of some older members, who remember all too well the nightmare of internment, and have their own concerns about their temples shifting away from a strong ethnic emphasis. In a real sense, the entire dialectic reflects both the indelible impact of the war-time experience on the American Jodo Shinshu legacy, and BCA's aspiration to turn that experience into a positive contribution to Buddhism, and to the world. ♦

Ken Tanaka is an Associate Professor at the Institute for Buddhist Studies and Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, and is an ordained Jodo Shinshu priest. He is also a member of the executive committee of the Buddhist Council of Northern California, and a BPF Board member.



REFUGE:
*An Unnatural
History of
Family and
Place*

by Terry Tempest
Williams

Vintage Books, 1992.
\$11.00

Reviewed by Thelma Bryant

As Terry Tempest Williams' mother was dying of cancer, birds were also dying not many miles away, their bird refuge flooded by an incredible rising of the water in Great Salt Lake. Williams, a naturalist and writer in Salt Lake City, Utah, saw a parallel between these experiences. And she was deeply involved in both: her mother's struggle to survive the ravages of disease, as well as the birds' predicament in trying to survive in an environment quickly dissolving.

The agony of mother and nature becomes a counterpoint that disappears in the identification of mother with nature: "The pulse of Great Salt Lake, surging along Antelope Island's shores, becomes the force wearing against my mother's body . . . Antelope Island is no longer accessible to me. It is my mother's body floating in uncertainty."

What is a refuge? Where is a refuge? Shelter, protection, sanctuary, Williams' mother has been a refuge for her, her first home in the womb. Now Williams becomes the mother of her mother, helping give birth to her mother's death: "I began breathing with her . . . Mother and I became one. One breathing organism. Everything we had ever shared manifested itself in this moment, in each breath."

Nature was another refuge. A refuge exquisite and sacred. "I am desert. I am mountains. I am Great Salt Lake. There are other languages being spoken by wind, water, and wings." Birds in particular had become a special interest and focus of her work as a naturalist. As a child she had gone on bird-watching expeditions with her grandmother, where she learned to observe and record the behavior of birds. She became fascinated, developed a special relationship with birds, discovered her life's work.

What Williams does not learn until over a year after her mother's death is a piece of information that entirely changes how she perceives her mother's fate. Eating dinner with her father, she relates a recurrent dream she

has had for as long as she can remember: she sees a "flash of light in the night in the desert." Her father informs her this is not a dream, this really happened.

In September 1957 when she was two years old, Williams and her parents were driving back to Utah from Riverside, California. They were just past Las Vegas when there was a tremendous explosion. Her father thought an oil tanker had blown up ahead of them: "We pulled over and suddenly, rising from the desert floor, we saw it, clearly, this golden-stemmed cloud, the mushroom. The sky seemed to vibrate with an eerie pink glow. Within a few minutes, a light ash was raining on the car." They had witnessed one of the many above ground atomic bomb tests that took place between January 1951 and July 1962 in Nevada. Winds blew north to Utah.

At age thirty-four, with most of the women in her family dead of cancer, Williams became the matriarch of her family. Although she says she cannot prove that her mother, grandmothers, and several aunts developed cancer as a result of nuclear fallout in Utah, she believes there is a significant connection between these events.

Unfortunately, in my opinion, this information on the exposure of Williams' mother to radiation from atomic bomb testing is contained at the end in an epilogue entitled "The Clan of the One-Breasted Women." I think the book would have been much more powerful had she revealed this information at the beginning. Then the whole book would have been informed with this knowledge. As it is, after reading the epilogue, one feels compelled to rethink the entire book. What appeared to be a personal tragedy coinciding with a catastrophe in the natural world takes on another dimension as one contemplates the implications of the atomic bomb testing.

What has become tragically clear is how these tests themselves have contaminated individuals, frequently slowly, insidiously, with diseases developing years later, and these individuals are not of course potential enemies, but citizens of the very government that conducted the tests supposedly to protect them (another question though: should such weapons be perpetrated even on one's enemies?). And tests continue underground in Nevada. Finally Williams, in an act of civil disobedience, crosses the line at the Nevada Test Site with nine other people from Utah; they are arrested for trespassing on military land, then released in the desert.

Williams explores the conjunction of personal/public, inner/outer, subjective/objective: each affects the other, boundaries are indeed permeable. Where then is there refuge? Ultimately she realizes "my refuge is not found in my mother, my grandmother, or even the birds of Bear River. My refuge exists in my capacity to love." ♦

Thelma Bryant is a psychotherapist, teacher and writer in Berkeley, California.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Sixteen hours in the air takes me from one world to another, from the sweat and fumes of Bangkok to the fog over San Francisco Bay. Home at last after nearly four weeks in Thailand (with one night over the border in Free Burma and a two-day stop in Tokyo), jet lag still rules my sleep and I'm not quite sure which way to look to see the traffic coming.

In late February, BPF president Margaret Howe and I left home to attend the fifth International Network of Engaged Buddhists conference at Wat Lahouk in Damnoen Saduak, a rich and kaleidoscopic gathering of monks and laypeople from all across Asia and the West. Following that we both traveled north – first to Mae Hong Son, then to Mae Sai in the Golden Triangle – on a witness delegation to the Burmese border led by our old friends Paula Green of Karuna Center and Sam Kalayane and Faith Doherty of the new Southeast Asian Information Network. BPF was also represented on the INEB witness delegation to Cambodia by Noni Welch of the San Francisco chapter. I returned to Bangkok later in March to meet with Sulak Sivaraksa and celebrate his sixtieth birthday and nomination for next year's Nobel Peace Prize. It was a busy time of joy and sorrow, vivid experiences of suffering, resistance, and meditation.

Here are some images that stay with me. Sitting in the woods at Wat Lahouk, tormented by mosquitoes, with Phra Prachak Kuttajitto guiding a meditation on the interdependence of all life. . . Burmese Karenni children with swollen bellies at Camp 3 near Mae Hong Son in the north of Thailand – no food, no running water, no hope of return to their homes in Burma. . . Fourteen-year-old Shan girls in a Mae Sai brothel, the most awkward and painful encounter of our trip to the Golden Triangle. In the shadow of AIDS, few of them will live to see thirty. . . A mile down Mae Sai's main street, the shining faces of girls at Daughters' Education Project, rescued from being sold into prostitution. With education, self-awareness, and

vocational training, they face a brighter future. . . Newspaper photos of former Generals Suchinda, Issarapong and their military "classmates" playing golf, with no words of responsibility or remorse for the carnage they led in Thailand last May. . . Sulak Sivaraksa home from exile at last, poring over legal papers, meeting a steady stream of friends and visitors. . . A last evening in Asia at INEB's Wangsanit Ashram, drifting slowly along the canal under storm clouds at sunset.

The core teaching of Buddhism, dependent origination or *paticca samupadda*, reveals our world as an intricate web of life and action. Environmentalist monks like Phra Prachak face jail as rural officials line their pockets and despoil the forest. Children are bought and sold, sicken and die because a rapacious SLORC regime plunders natural resources, wages war on its own peoples, and imprisons a nation. Bloodied Thai generals frolic on the links while social philosophers like Sulak must go to court for telling the truth.

Shakyamuni Buddha explained, "Because this is, that is; because this is not, that is not." But I find it hard to read these words as justification for the status quo. There is the possibility of saving all beings. If "this" changes, "that" changes too. In Thailand, Burma, the United States, in our own neighborhoods and practice centers, BPF tries to encourage enlightened leadership that cherishes the environment, saves the children, honors prophets, and puts away weapons. Our successes are small at best. Often I feel discouraged by the overwhelming tide of violence, nationalism, racism, and all painful divisions we create between and among us. But the work of kind words, nonviolence, mindful breaths and quiet sitting has its own core of steel. And this is the abiding lesson of journeys like the one I made last month.

Veronica Froelich has been on the BPF staff for the last year, taking care of BPF membership, coordinating volunteers, and generously giving her ideas and energy to the organization. As you read this, she has just gone to work in Washington, DC, closer to the center of interfaith and international work that she has mapped out for the future. We will miss Ronni's competence and enthusiasm around this crowded office. All of us offer our deep thanks for her work and the best of luck in the East. ♦

– Alan Senauke

UNDERSTANDING
MONEY

INCOME TAXES

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY FINANCES
SMALL BUSINESS CONSULTATIONS

PEGGY DENIAL, EA

9175 POPLAR AVE COTATI, CA 94931
(707) 664-1064

ANNUAL BPF MEMBERSHIP MEETING

October 22-24, 1993, in the Bay Area
We'll join in Thich Nhat Hanh's Day of Mindfulness
at Spirit Rock during our weekend meeting.

All members invited!

Call the office for further information:
510/525-8596

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLASSIFIEDS

Announcements

GOING TO THAILAND? You can take desperately needed medical supplies — including such basics as clean syringes — to be passed on to Burmese refugees. The Int'l Lesbian & Gay Human Rights Commission has purchased many such items that need to be hand-carried to Bangkok. Please call Alan at the BPF National Office if you can help: 510/525-8596.

NEEDS OF HOMELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

The Women's Daytime Drop-In Center in Berkeley needs donations of the following items for homeless women and children: blankets, sheets, towels, coats, hats, gloves, socks, baby formula. For more information, please contact the center at 510/548-6933, or call Thelma Bryant at 510/524-2468.

Coming Events

DHAMMAYATRA II. The 2nd international Walk for Peace & Reconciliation is scheduled for May in

Southeast Asia. For more info, or to help support the walk, contact Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation, P.O. Box 1, Sanampao, Bangkok 10406 Thailand, tel/fax 66-37-269-073.

DZOGCHEN MEDITATION retreat with Khenpo Sonam Rinpoche, a Kagyu & Nyingma master from Toronto. June 3-7. Sponsored by Yellow Springs Ohio BPF. Anticipated cost: \$168. For information, contact Jim Pettry, 513/382-6440.

APPLIED DEEP ECOLOGY, a 2-week program including Joanna Macy, Bill Devall, and Stephanie Kaza, at Shenoa Ctr. in Philo, CA: August 1-14, 1993. Call or fax the Institute for Deep Ecology Education at 303/939-8398, or write Box 2290, Boulder, CO 80306.

Classifieds

COLD MOUNTAIN meditation lap quilts — about 4' x 4', wool, various mantras embroidered on back. \$100-\$150. Sandy Berrigan, P.O. Box 607, Albion, CA 95410.

BUDDHIST WORK STUDY

PROGRAM. We are a group of practicing Buddhists under the spiritual guidance of Ven. Samu Sunim, involved in practice and study and building a temple in Chicago. This is a valuable and enriching experience for anyone interested in pursuing Buddhist teachings and right livelihood. Applications are welcome from those with experience in construction, office work or other work skills, or anyone who is willing to do manual work and Buddhist training. Contact: Zen Buddhist Temple Chicago, 1710 W. Cornelia, Chicago, IL 60657-1219, USA. 312/528-8685.

BUDDHISM IN THERAPY:

Are you tired of being continually tossed away by conflicts, judgments, emotions, desires? Learn to use Buddhist principles and the practice of meditation and lovingkindness to help find the meaning lying with suffering. Robert Epstein, PhD, MFCC (#MFC22172). 510/548-1058. Sliding Scale.

tricycle

THE BUDDHIST REVIEW

The Summer Issue features the first serialized excerpt of *Wake Up!*, a life of the Buddha by **Jack Kerouac**, an interview with **Philip Kapleau Roshi**, **Karma Lekshe Tsomo** on organ donation, **Stephen Batchelor's** letter from South Africa, and **Helen Tworikov** on the set of Bertolucci's *Little Buddha*.

SUBSCRIBE NOW—ONLY \$20 (US) A YEAR, FOR 4 ISSUES.

YES! Please enter my one year subscription to *Tricycle: THE BUDDHIST REVIEW* today.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 PAYMENT ENCLOSED BILL ME

Make check payable to— *Tricycle: THE BUDDHIST REVIEW*
 Subscription Dept. TRI
 P.O. Box 3000
 Denville, NJ 07834

633TW



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES in the Rockies! Unique degree program combines Ecology, Horticulture, Anthropology and Native American studies with Effective Action and Contemplative Training. The Naropa Institute, Dept. W, 2130 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, CO 80302. 303/444-0202.

THE INFLATABLE ZAFU is actually an inflatable beachball inside a fine-quality zafu cover. Lightweight-Convenient-Guaranteed. Colors: Plum, Burgundy, Navy, Royal, Green, Black. Cost: \$21 postpaid. *Meditation supplies*. Free brochure. Carolina Morning Designs, Dept. BPFN, P.O. Box 2832, Asheville, NC 28802. 704/683-1843.

ARE YOU TIRED of rushing around? *Kokopelli Notes* is about developing lifestyle changes that support your spiritual values. Walk, bike and bus for a greener planet. *Free Brochure* about the quarterly magazine devoted to the self-propelled life. Sample \$3. *Kokopelli Notes*, Dept. BPF, P.O. Box 8186, Asheville, NC 28814. 704/683-4844.

THE CONCHUS TIMES is the newsletter of the Dead Buddhists of America, for those appreciating both Grateful Dead and Buddhist cultures. \$8/year (\$10 outside U.S.), payable to: Ken Sun-Downer, Box 769, Idyllwild, CA 92549.

TEACHING CIRCLE is a bi-annual journal by and for educators with a meditation practice. For more information contact Patrick McMahon, 2311 C Woolsey St., Berkeley, CA 94705.

GRATITUDE

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship Board gratefully acknowledges generous contributions above and beyond membership between January 1 and March 15, 1993:

Joan Alpert ♦ Bruce & Pat Von Alten
 ♦ Bill & Diane Ames ♦ Isabel Anderson
 ♦ Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne ♦ Sara Armstrong
 ♦ Patsy Asch ♦ Stephen Greg Ascue
 ♦ Bahujan Hitay/Mahavihar ♦ Andris Baltins
 ♦ James and Jane Baraz ♦ Billy Barrios
 ♦ Gai Longmuir ♦ Subhana Barzaghi
 ♦ Kallon Basquin ♦ Leonard Berkowitz
 ♦ Angie Boissevain

♦ Thomas Bolling ♦ Allan Bomhard ♦ Hugh Patrick Boone
 ♦ Abigail Booraem ♦ Daniel Boutemy ♦ Richard Brandon
 ♦ David Brus ♦ Joanna Bull ♦ Valerie Butler
 ♦ William Calkins ♦ Pat Cannan ♦ Stephen Canner
 ♦ Craig Carver ♦ Douglas Cole ♦ Margaret Coulter
 ♦ Donna Denman ♦ Allan Durrant
 ♦ Stephen Evans ♦ Patricia Hayes & Sam Fain
 ♦ Eileen Feifenberg ♦ Laurel Rust Fisher
 ♦ Jonathan Green ♦ Anne Greenwater
 ♦ Linda Haller ♦ Marcia Hansen
 ♦ Annette Herskovits ♦ Bruce Holtan
 ♦ Leland Hoover ♦ Thea Howard
 ♦ Jamie & Maki Hubbard ♦ Alexandra Hunter
 ♦ James Ives ♦ Leavenworth Jackson
 ♦ Jackson-Carius ♦ Yorke Jacobson
 ♦ Jill Jameson ♦ Gary Janka
 ♦ Patrick Joyce ♦ Lok-Yee Kalin
 ♦ Dennis Keegan ♦ Terry Kinzel
 ♦ Sheridan Adams & Jeff Kitzes
 ♦ Meg Kiuchi ♦ Linda Koehler
 ♦ Betty Kuhn ♦ George Lane
 ♦ W. E. Lee ♦ Eric Lehrman
 ♦ Marc Lieberman ♦ Barry Magid
 ♦ Eda Marcus Malenky ♦ Charlotte Mansfield
 ♦ Diana March ♦ Dr. Alan Margolis
 ♦ Rose & Rafe Martin ♦ Jeff Matsuoka
 ♦ Beth Maurer ♦ Constance McIntosh
 ♦ Mary Jo Meadow ♦ Kathleen Meagher
 ♦ Hope Milholland ♦ Minnesota Zen Meditation Center
 ♦ Gary Morgret ♦ Susan Musicant
 ♦ Nancy Napier ♦ Bo Nilsson
 ♦ Maureen O'Malley ♦ Nora Olgay
 ♦ Alan Oliver ♦ Mary Orr ♦ Peter Ott
 ♦ Irene Padgett ♦ Russ Palmeri
 ♦ L. Papier ♦ Karen Porters ♦ Patrick Propst
 ♦ Brian Quennell ♦ Margaret Rader
 ♦ Ron Rattner ♦ Elizabeth Reid
 ♦ Jean Reyes ♦ Steve Roach
 ♦ Sharon Rogers ♦ Barry Samuel
 ♦ Margaret Schonfield ♦ Maylie Scott
 ♦ Charlotte Selver ♦ Francie Shaw
 ♦ Robert Shea ♦ Lester Shen
 ♦ Sally Sheridan ♦ John Sillers
 ♦ Cyndi Smith ♦ Leon Smith
 ♦ Judith Ann Smith ♦ Johanna Stephenson
 ♦ Sheila Stone ♦ Paul & Anne Strong
 ♦ Steve Studola ♦ Phyllis Sturges
 ♦ Ken Tanaka ♦ David Tapper
 ♦ Eloise Van Tassel ♦ Yvonne Taylor
 ♦ Mary Thompson ♦ Michael Tigar
 ♦ Christopher Titmuss ♦ Penelope Townsend-Quill
 ♦ Taitetsu Unno ♦ Teresa Vast
 ♦ Louise Venetucci ♦ Thein Wab
 ♦ Sura Wallace ♦ Tanis Walters
 ♦ Joanne and Charlotte Walton
 ♦ Charles Ware ♦ Dennis Warren
 ♦ Jill

Washburn ♦ Allan & Deborah Wilkinson
 ♦ Wendy and William Witt ♦ Scott Wren
 ♦ Denoya Wyatt ♦ Anne Yeomans
 ♦ Susan Zakin ♦

For donations above and beyond the call of fundraising:

Hathaway Barry ♦ Denver/Boulder BPF
 ♦ Gere Foundation ♦ Sandra Hodson
 ♦ Bruce Krawisz ♦ George Lane
 ♦ Jack Lawlor ♦ Toinette Lippe
 ♦ Anna Moore ♦ Paul Norton ♦ Sandra Oriel
 ♦ Felix Rogers ♦ San Francisco Zen Center
 ♦ Robert Shea ♦ David Tapper
 ♦ Robert Wilber ♦ David Williams
 ♦ Ellie & Phil Wood
 ♦ Jonathan Woodbridge ♦

♦ Thank you! ♦

FOR SALE FROM BPF:

⊗ Tapes from the 1992 BPF Institute for the Practice of Engaged Buddhism: \$125 for complete set in binder. \$10-\$18 for individual tapes: contact BPF for details.

⊗ T-shirts (blue or white) with black BPF logo: \$12. Specify S, M, L, or XL and desired color. (Supply variable.)

⊗ BPF buttons, with our logo: \$1.

⊗ Thich Nhat Hanh tapes: "The Practice of Peace" talk in Berkeley, April 1991. 2-tape set \$14.

⊗ Sulak Sivaraksa talk: "Buddhism with a small 'b,'" Spring 1992: \$14.

⊗ Tapes from the 1991 BPF Institute for the Practice of Engaged Buddhism: \$90 for complete set. \$12 for individual tapes: contact BPF office for order form.

⊗ Thich Nhat Hanh letterpress broadside, beautifully designed, 6" x 12"; text taken from *Peace Is Every Step*. Suitable for framing. \$3 for first one; \$1 for each additional.



Postage included in all prices.

BPF CHAPTERS & AFFILIATES

BPF National Office
 P.O. Box 4650
 Berkeley, CA 94704
 tel. 510/525-8596
 fax 510/525-7973

CHAPTERS

Cambridge/Boston BPF
 Jim Austin
 43 Richfield Road
 Arlington, MA 02174
 617/643-2343

Durham BPF
 Jackie Wilson
 1004 N. Buchanan
 Durham, NC 27701
 919/286-2005

East Bay BPF
 Margo Tyndall
 88 Clarewood Lane
 Oakland, CA 94611
 510/654-8677

Eugene, Oregon BPF
 Marie Pace
 2137 W. 16th Way
 Eugene, OR 97402
 503/342-2911

Los Angeles BPF
 Christopher Reed
 247 Horizon Avenue
 Venice, CA 90291
 310/396-5054

Marin County BPF
 Wendy Johnson
 Green Gulch Farm
 Sausalito, CA 94965
 415/383-3709

Mendocino County BPF
 Gail Deutsch
 P.O. Box 1490
 Mendocino, CA 95460
 707/937-3638

Minnesota BPF
 Paul Norr
 2832 Coolidge St. NE
 St. Anthony, MN 55418
 612/788-7159

New York BPF
 Amy Krantz
 115 W. 86th St.
 New York, NY 10024
 212/873-3142

NW Washington BPF
 Matthew Jacobson
 1742 S. Nugent
 Lummi Island, WA 98262
 206/758-2824

Oahu BPF
 Carl Varady
 2119 Kaloa Way
 Honolulu, HI 96822
 808/946-0666

Pennsylvania BPF
 John Sellers
 1808 Perkiomen Ave.
 Reading, PA 19606
 215/376-9581

Portland, Oregon BPF
 Kathy Whitwer
 P.O. Box 14241
 Portland, OR 97214
 503/288-3641

Prairie Buddha BPF
 Richard Quinney
 345 Rolfe Road
 DeKalb, IL 60115
 815/758-4310

Rochester BPF
 Bill Anderson
 92 Croydon Rd.
 Rochester, NY 14610-1432
 716/654-6172

Sacramento BPF
 Steve Walker
 7211 Brookridge Ct.
 Citrus Heights, CA 95610
 916/725-3547

San Francisco BPF
 Noni Welch
 150 Downy St. Apt. 4
 San Francisco, CA 94117
 415/664-3729

Santa Cruz BPF
 Tom Misciagna
 610 Hanover St.
 Santa Cruz, CA 95062
 408/423-6769

Seattle BPF
 Susan Baldwin
 2223 NE 137th St.
 Seattle, WA 98125
 206/367-7377

Sonoma County BPF
 Tom Collins
 111 Fiesta Lane
 Rohnert Park, CA 94928
 707/795-0692

Tallahassee BPF
 Ellen Gwynn
 2028 Chuli Nene
 Tallahassee, FL 32301-5872
 904/878-5796

Tumamoc BPF
 Moss Stone
 707 East 1st Street
 Tucson, AZ 87519
 602/622-2955

Vermont BPF
 Alison Gardner
 119 Buell St.
 Burlington, VT 05401
 802/658-2531

Cherry Blossom, D.C. Area BPF
 Mitchell Ratner
 6814 Westmoreland Ave.
 Takoma Park, MD 20912
 301/270-3009

Yellow Springs BPF
 Arida Emrys
 115 W. Center College St.
 Yellow Springs, OH 45387
 513/767-2191

Yuma BPF
 Sally Sheridan
 1423 Pebble Beach Lane
 Yuma, AZ 85365
 602/726-9168

AFFILIATES

Australia BPF
 Gillian Coote
 31 Bonnefin St., Hunters Hill
 Sydney, NSW, Australia

Int'l Network of Engaged Buddhists
 303/7 Soi Santipap, Nares Road
 Bangkok 10500, Siam

Interracial Buddhist Council
 P.O. Box 909
 Woodacre, CA 97973

Karuna Center
 Paula Green
 49 Richardson Rd.
 Leverett, MA 01054
 413/367-9520

Network of Engaged Buddhists
 Ken Jones
 Plas Plwca, Cwmrheidol
 Aberystwyth, Wales, U.K. SY23 3NB
 097/084-603

BPF NATIONAL BOARD

Melody Ermachild, Berkeley, CA
 Margaret Howe, Salinas, CA
 Sandy Hunter, Berkeley, CA
 Stephanie Kaza, Burlington, VT
 Kenneth Kraft, Haverford, PA
 Albert Kutchins, Berkeley, CA
 Jack Lawlor, Evanston, IL
 Jeff Scannell, Freestone, CA
 Caroline Sinavaiana, Pago Pago, AS
 Ken Tanaka, Berkeley, CA
 Gordon Tyndall, Oakland, CA
 Joan Ward, San Anselmo, CA

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- ❖ To make clear public witness to Buddhist practice as a way of peace and protection of all beings;
- ❖ To raise peace, environmental, feminist, and social justice concerns among Western Buddhists;
- ❖ To bring a Buddhist perspective to contemporary peace, environmental, and social action movements;
- ❖ To encourage the practice of nonviolence based on the rich resources of traditional Buddhist teachings;
- ❖ To offer avenues for dialogue and exchange among the diverse American and world sanghas.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

BPF membership requires only a commitment to the general spirit of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. Please see Statement of Purpose, at left. A year's membership & subscription to *Turning Wheel* (four issues) is \$35 for U.S. residents, \$40 elsewhere. Subscriptions help to support the work of BPF. (A low-income rate of \$20 is also available.) Please make checks payable to "Buddhist Peace Fellowship." Contributions are tax deductible.

For contributions of \$75 or more, we will also send you a copy of *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism*.

I am enclosing \$ _____ for a year's subscription to *Turning Wheel* and membership in BPF.

Please send me _____ BPF brochures.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State, ZIP _____

Phone _____

BPF encourages members to join the BPF chapter in their area (or start one!), and to join the Fellowship of Reconciliation in their home country.

Buddhist Peace Fellowship
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704 USA

Address Correction Requested
Forwarding & Return Postage Guaranteed

Non-Profit Organization U.S. Postage Paid Permit No. 413 Berkeley, CA
--