

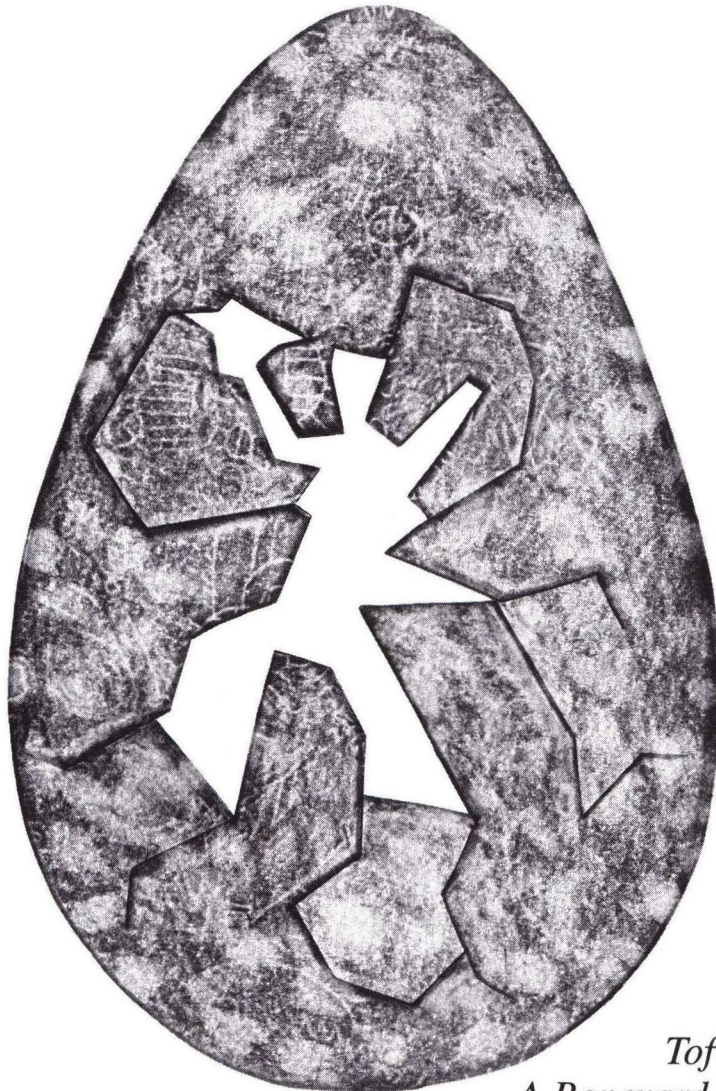


TURNING WHEEL

Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship Spring 1996 \$4.00

Sexual Misconduct *Who's Hurting Whom?*

**Suing the Buddha • Sexual Addiction or Sexual Harassment?
Buddhist Self Defense • How You Can Prevent Sexual Misconduct**



BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
P.O. BOX 3470
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Woman with Bird
by William Clark



Plus:
Tofu Roshi on Celibacy
A Boneyard Visit in San Quentin

FROM THE EDITOR

The third Buddhist precept is variously translated. At our center we say, "I vow not to misuse sexuality." That sexuality can be misused implies that there is some presumably wholesome use of sexuality. But the idea of using sexuality sounds a little suspicious to me. What would you be using it *for*?

Furthermore, the difference between "using" and "misusing" is pretty subjective. In certain situations—on a honeymoon in Kaua'i or a conjugal visit in San Quentin Prison (see p. 30)—even celibacy would be a misuse of sexuality. And behaviors that we tend to see as sexual misconduct can, in certain situations, be appropriate. A teacher having sex with a student, for example. What if a grown up woman says she is in a sexual relationship with her teacher by her own choice, that she initiated it, that they are in love? Does it make a difference whether he is her Zen teacher or her guitar teacher? What if he is younger than she is? Or what if they know each other from high school? What do we take for informed consent?

What's considered sexual misconduct varies with time and culture. Consider the changing attitudes toward homosexuality, prostitution, pornography, birth control, adultery. It's hard to make a rule that's good for everybody. We probably can all agree that child pornography is a misuse of sexuality, but how do we feel about a mother who ends up in jail for taking a snapshot of her four-year-old son playing naked on the beach? Here's my working hypothesis: If what you're doing makes you or other people suffer, then it's misconduct.

Scanning over my own life for experiences of sexual misconduct, the following incident comes to mind. I was about ten, and I went into an overgrown, vacant lot in my neighborhood known as "the woods." I carried a precious hand-made bow and I was looking for arrows. I pushed through an arch of bushes, and there was the neighborhood bully, sitting on a stump. "Give me that bow or pull down your pants," he demanded. He was probably just about my age, and he was kind of fat. I'm sure now that I could have outrun him. But girl that I was, trained to obedience, it never occurred to me that there were any other choices than the two he offered me. So I handed him the bow.

This boy had more power than I did because I believed he did. And the reason I believed this was that he was a boy, and I was a "just" a girl. And the reason his boyness made me believe he had more power than I did was that I live in a culture that taught me so: men are more powerful than women—this was the backdrop, the ground, the air. It wasn't an idea I thought up. The idea is changing, but it needs to change some more. We're all contending with it all the time, like it or not.

It may be more exciting to read about a teacher who sleeps with his students than one who endangers his students' health by demanding that they work too hard, or another who asks his students to give up their relationships with their families. But these behaviors all come from the same root: abuse of power. To speak out about abuse is one way to stop it. To hold it up to the light, to join with others in dialogue about it. And that's what we're doing here.

Putting this issue together has been a challenge for all of us working on it. Emotions run high. People feel very vulnerable speaking out on this subject. It takes courage. Everyone who's contributed to this issue of *Turning Wheel* has taken a risk, been willing to go out on a limb. One thing missing here, however, is a survivor's story, and it's not because we didn't try. It must be because this is the hardest story to tell. But this isn't the last word. Readers are invited to continue the exchange, to write to our letters column. ♦ —Susan Moon



TURNING WHEEL

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Summer '96: International Issue — Deadline: April 8, '96.

Buddhist activism around the world.

Fall '96: Home and Homelessness — Deadline: July 8, '96.

Submissions should be typed and double-spaced. Include SASE for return of ms.

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LETTERS

Shunning & Sexual Misconduct

☉ In “Shunning and Intervention” (*Turning Wheel*, Summer '95) Aitken Roshi suggests that teachers with a record of seduction reflect an addiction to sex. But he does not explain such strong terms by identifying the records or explaining what he means by addiction (is he speaking clinically here?). “[I]t is sexual addiction, when ruthless exploitation stands in for love, that creates particularly sordid, seemingly intractable problems.”

Addiction. Intractable. Ruthless. Sordid. One does not talk to a cancer patient or to a diabetic in such language. If a person is truly ill, one does not blame or punish them for their illness, but seeks to ameliorate the suffering. I have considerable experience with diseases of addiction. I recognize that sometimes “tough love” is an appropriate response, but an attitude such as Aitken Roshi expresses supports retribution as a cure. It does little for the healing of all those affected by the disease. It is very difficult to understand how someone who has given so much to the Buddhist community can move so far from the efficacy of the middle way. I cannot pretend to match Aitken Roshi’s scholarship, but perhaps he will recall this story and compare it to the one he uses as a base for his argument: The Buddha was once asked by a disciple, “Would it be true to say that a part of our training is for the development of love and compassion?” The Buddha replied, “No, it would not be true to say this. It would be true to say that the whole of our training is for the development of love and compassion.”

—Rev. Saigyo Terry Keenan, Syracuse, New York

Response from Aitken Roshi...

☉ The betrayal of women in a Buddhist setting is not confined to any particular locale, and it is surely high time for someone to speak out. As the Governor of Ying-chou remarked to Feng-hsueh, “When called upon to make a judgment one must judge. Otherwise one invites disorder.”

As to addiction, see my response to Ms. Vadas (on page 29). As to compassion for people who are ill, our justice system is crowded with sick people who are also dangerous to our society. Something must be done about them. I am glad that Mr. Keenan agrees that “tough love” might be an appropriate remedy. Tough love is not retribution. It is love.

A large measure of Mr. Keenan’s contention is a specious, ad hominem attack upon me rather than upon my argument — specifically that I myself lack compassion for the abuser. Let the words in my essay speak in my defense. For example: “Saving, by whatever name, is our first vow. The purpose of the intervention would be the same as the Buddha’s dealing with Channa: to

encourage the liberation of the troublemaker, as well as those for whom he has caused trouble.”

—Robert Aitken Roshi, Honolulu, Hawai’i

Fundamentalism & Abortion

☉ There seems to be a tentative, walking-on-eggshells subtext in the responses to the “Fundamentalism” issue—a kind of self-congratulatory supra-liberalism that allows and even calls for the inclusion of anti-choice sentiment. Of course, justification for such responses can be found in Buddhist ideals, but I think it is misplaced. Broad acceptance of all things is well and good at the level of essential Buddha-nature, but in the phenomenal world, where pain exists, I have zero tolerance for the fascistic imposition of one person’s will on another that is the rallying cry of the anti-choice proponent. I like the pro-choice bumper sticker that says “Don’t want an abortion? Don’t have one.” Freedom of choice whether in regards to religion, belief system, or attitude towards a specific issue is a human ethical value that, in its broad application, allows room for all, while at the same time protecting that very value from abrogation.

—Tracy McCallum, Taos, New Mexico

☉ This letter is a response to Elaine O’Brien’s letter in the Winter '96 issue, in which she objected to the inclusion of the Seamless Garment Network’s ad in *Turning Wheel*. Ms. O’Brien suggests that the ad should not have been accepted, because it included abortion in the list of threats from which we should protect life.

Good people with caring, sensitive consciences stand on both sides of the abortion issue. Some oppose abortion out of a commitment to protect all living beings from violence. Others support abortion out of a concern for the dignity and freedom of women. Both positions can be defended as ethical, caring positions.

When I asked *Turning Wheel* to publish our ad, I did so in the belief that the Seamless Garment position is harmonious with the precepts of Buddhism. I appreciated *Turning Wheel*’s acceptance of the ad, which I felt raised issues of great interest to the Buddhist peace community. I was also aware that some would disagree with part of the ad, but I felt sure that they would recognize its sincerity and peaceful intent.

I would ask everyone in the peace community to dialogue on this issue openly, courteously, and gently, without censorship. As editor of the Seamless Garment Network journal, *Harmony*, I practice what I preach. While the Seamless Garment Network supports animal rights, disabled rights, lesbian and gay rights, peace and justice, and opposes war, the death penalty, and abortion, whenever I have received a letter advocating a pro-choice position, I have printed it in full.

—Rose Evans, the Seamless Garment Network
San Francisco, California

Family Issue Evokes Ire, Raises Questions

☉ I was much disappointed with your Winter issue. Couldn't you have stepped out of your own biases to seek articles about families that weren't nuclear, didn't include children, weren't (with one exception) heterosexual, middle class, and mostly white? If Buddhism is indeed the path of liberation, why should we be bound to western ideals of relationships? The fact that the Net of Indra includes an infinite array of intimacies should be cause for rejoicing.

Additionally, some people consider Thanksgiving a racist holiday celebrating genocide or a day of food gluttony and kitchen torture. Leave me out of that!

I also take issue with Sandy Eastoak's contention that Buddhism will die out if we don't indoctrinate children. One, it's been kept alive quite nicely for hundreds of years by many celibate people, and, two, raising children in a faith is no guarantee that they will follow it as adults.

The Seamless Garment ad in the Fall '95 issue brought up another topic I would like to see addressed—what about Buddhist women who have had abortions and don't regret it or feel the need for memorial ceremonies? I think those of us who feel this way have been discouraged from initiating dialogue, due more to societal pressures than dharma disagreements. Let's talk!

—Christine Homitsu White, Tigaro Oregon

☉ I was very moved, impressed, and edified by your issue on the family and the Dharma. I have certainly heard this subject taken up frequently but rarely with such a variety of vantage points: children of parents, parents of children, older children with older parents, older parents with older children, dharma teachers as parents and family, nature as family, “the distended family,” gay families, the wonderful BASE program as family!!!! Very, very rich indeed. I also want to express my welcome of Diane Ames' new column on Buddhist activists in history. I for one need to know much more about this lineage.

I found the piece “Bad Dog” difficult to read because of the first two brutal episodes. I continued on because the writing was very compelling, and I had faith that the Dharma would bring me to a happier conclusion, as it did. Nonetheless, I was shocked and upset by the story of Laddie, not to mention what the boy went through. I could hardly believe that what I was reading could actually have happened, that someone could even imagine such a horrifying lesson. At the end I felt some relief as Lin frees the dog and bathes him, yet I am left with the impression that the dog's soul was somehow destroyed, that it neither wagged its tail nor re-entered the family or Lin's friendship. I would very much like to know what happened to the dog and the friendship.

—Judith Stronach, Berkeley, California

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Fundamentalism: a Personal Response

☉ I read with interest the Fall '95 issue of *Turning Wheel*. I found the report on fundamentalism enlightening, as I have gone through similar experiences. I would like to share some of the experiences of my years with my former Buddhist teacher and how this particular issue of the *Turning Wheel* has helped me see what I went through more clearly.

It all started off when I was in my late teens and filled with energy and enthusiasm to change the world. That was when I met my teacher who represented, at the time, a fabulous vision of Buddhism and how he and I could change the world. I studied under him for some years and later decided to commit myself to full-time Buddhist work, devoting my life to Buddhism. I served him loyally for more than five years. He was very strict and issued stern admonitions and harsh punishment when his pupils did not do things his way. He often stressed the importance of total devotion to him as guru, which meant breaking the ego and paved the way to spiritual development. As time went by, I began to think like him—that we were crusaders for Buddhism. I virtually surrendered my whole life to him as he began to take charge of even my family life. Whatever right or wrong I did was determined by my teacher and I just followed. One moment I was scolded harshly for doing something wrong, but the very next moment, given a lot affection and attention. Although I was still loyal to him, I experienced tremendous turmoil and frustration. My life felt like a roller-coaster ride and I suffered terribly.

As time passed, I began to notice some of my teacher's faults and weaknesses, but went into a state of denial. I could not accept that my teacher, who was a then a Theravadin monk, was tainted with the lowest kind of lust. At one point, I managed to gather enough courage to ask him about my concerns, but my questions were summarily shot down as he rationalized his actions. Although I was still filled with many questions and objections, nothing more came out of my mouth. I was afraid that if I spoke out I would be defying my teacher and thereby hindering my own spiritual realization.

Eventually his actions and affairs led to his being ousted from his temple. Even then, my lack of self-confidence and fear of failing him kept me loyal to him. Despite my spiritual and emotional turmoil, he remained an authority figure whom I obeyed and whose approval I sought for everything I did. Only when he left the country for a couple of months did I have the space and opportunity to really think and be myself. His absence gave me fresh air to breathe and enabled me to recover my belief in myself. Gradually I began to gather the strength to face him without fear.

The confrontation sparked off a period of deep conflict and heated argument. I decided to leave him, but

he did not want that to happen. He still wanted to control me. I was shocked to see this ugly side of someone whom I had considered my spiritual teacher, to see him reveal so much insecurity and fear of being alone. Our split did not occur overnight. I had to endure another few months with him as he tried many ways to hold me back. But this time I knew what I wanted. Leaving him was the biggest and most powerful decision I ever made and I am glad I made it.

With the help of close friends, I eventually came to terms with my past and started on a slow and difficult journey of rebuilding my life. For a long time I blamed myself for all my suffering. It took me a long time to come to the point where I could live with what had happened. Reading through the *Turning Wheel*, I could see the answers in the experiences of Sandy Eastoak, Joe Rookard, Mary Douglas, Tenzin Sherab and Lewis Woods. They have helped me to understand myself and my behavior more clearly. This was the only issue I read from cover to cover several times in one day, and it really hit me. It helped me realize that I am not alone. Being able to share one's thoughts and to hear other's experiences is very healing.

—Vidya, Malaysia ❖

BPF INTERNET DISCUSSION GROUP

With the help of our friends at Peacenet/IGC, BPF has set up a discussion list open to anyone with Internet access. Each subscriber to the list receives all the e-mail addressed to the list. It's a little different from a public conference, because the discussion is not directly moderated—although BPF does act as administrator for the list. Anyone can subscribe and contribute; there is no fee for joining or belonging.

We can use this forum for discussion, questions, announcements, and urgent alerts. You can, of course, still send private mail to BPF at bpf@bpf.com or to any other individual on the list.

To subscribe, just send a simple message to the following address: majordomo@igc.apc.org.

The message must be formatted precisely as shown here:

subscribe bpf-ineb@igc.apc.org

You should receive a short message confirming your subscription, a brief summary of what the list is about, and some simple instructions for sending messages, un-subscribing, etc.

If you have any further questions or problems, please write to us directly at bpf@bpf.com. Please note that we have a new Internet address and our own domain. The old address, bpf@igc.apc.org, still works fine. We set up our own domain (bpf.com) in preparation for a BPF Web page, which we expect to put up in early April.

We look forward to a lively and useful exchange.

READINGS

Tibet—Panchen Lama Still Missing

Tibet New Digest reports that the whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 6-year-old Tibetan boy whom the Dalai Lama confirmed in May as the new incarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama, remain unknown. Chadrel Rinpoche, the abbot who found the boy, has also been missing since May.

The Chinese government had rejected Nyima and installed another child, Gyaltzen Norbu, as the 11th Panchen Lama. According to Xinhua news agency, the Chinese government has stated that “Any religion must invariably make patriotism the primary requirement for believers....If his [the Dalai Lama’s] words are followed, Tibetan Buddhism will be...endangering its due position and future in Chinese society.”

More than 50 other monks and laypeople remain in detention in connection with the disputed choice of the new Panchen Lama. The Dalai Lama has called for a referendum on the Tibet question among Tibetans in exile and in Tibet itself. The time is fast approaching when the Tibetan people must decide what their future position in relation to China will be.—*Tibet News Digest*

Letters of Support are Helping Vietnamese Monks

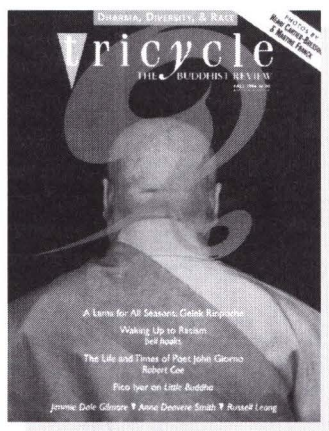
The Vietnamese government announced recently that it will not prosecute Ven. Thich Huyen Quang, Executive Director of the United Buddhist Church (UBC), for public dissent. This change of policy is probably the result of pressure from international organizations, in the form of tens of thousands of letters from around the world. The letter-writing campaign continues on behalf of the monks who are still detained.

Ven. Thich Quang Do, a Buddhist monk who in 1964 worked to convince the Buddhist Church to join the movement against foreign intervention in Vietnam, was sentenced to five years imprisonment last August. He was accused of “undermining the policy of unity” between religion and state by carrying out religious and social work in the name of the UBC. He has recently been forcibly relocated to the north and his present whereabouts are unknown.

At the time of his trial, government authorities indicated that Ven. Thich Huyen Quang and Ven. Thich Tri Luc, head abbot of the Linh Mu Pagoda in Hue, would also be tried.

If you would like to help keep the pressure on the Vietnamese government, join the letter-writing campaign. Contact the Community of Mindful Living at POB 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707. Tel 510/527-3751.

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Japan's Monju Reactor Still Not Operational

Ten years and 590 billion yen after its inception, Japan's first prototype nuclear fast-breeder reactor, Monju, still is not fully operational. Because of technical difficulties in controlling liquid sodium used in the cooling system, full power generation tests were postponed from last December to spring or later of 1996. Germany, France and other countries were forced to abandon fast-breeder reactor development because of similar difficulties, but Japan seems confident that it can overcome these obstacles, despite the potential for nuclear disaster inherent in the use of plutonium.

To join the international letter-writing campaign urging the Director of Japan's Atomic Energy Commission to shut down Monju, contact the Rainbow Serpent International (the Plutonium Free Future Women's Network), P.O. Box 2589, Berkeley, CA 94702. Tel 510/540-5917. Fax 510/540-6159.

Economic Sanctions Urged Against Burma

Aung San Suu Kyi's political party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), withdrew from Burma's National Convention in November, stating that the Convention did not represent the people's will. The Convention, which is supposed to draft a new constitution, has been internationally condemned as

undemocratic, as it is dominated by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

In the US, the movement to boycott investments, trade, and tourism in Burma continues. Legislation calling for economic sanctions against Burma is being debated in both houses of Congress (S1511 and HR 2842). In Massachusetts, a selective purchasing law for Burma is close to a final vote in the state senate. The California cities of Oakland and Alameda will consider similar measures in the near future. Resolutions seeking to pressure companies (such as Unocal, Texaco and Pepsi) not to invest in Burma have already passed in the cities of Berkeley and Santa Monica, California, and Madison, Wisconsin.

Readers are encouraged to write to their congressional representatives to support passage of the federal Burma Freedom and Democracy Act.

For more information, contact Simon Billenness, Nat'l Coalition for Corporate Withdrawal from Burma, at 617/423-6655x225, or e-mail simon_billenness@cybercom.net.

Cambodian Monk Nominated for Nobel Prize

Maha Ghosananda, the Supreme Patriarch of Cambodian Buddhism, has been nominated for the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize by the American Friends

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Service Committee (AFSC). Widely known as the "Gandhi of Cambodia," Maha Ghosananda has worked tirelessly for peace in Cambodia for more than 35 years. Since the expulsion of the Khmer Rouge in 1979, he has taken an active role in reconciliation efforts, sponsoring training programs for human rights advocacy and nonviolent conflict resolution. In support of peace negotiations and a constitutional government, he has organized annual walks for peace across war-ravaged Cambodia. Internationally, he has supported peace negotiations in Sri Lanka, organized world-wide days of prayer for peace, and met with world religious leaders to gain support for peace and human rights initiatives. He has taken a leading role in the effort to eliminate the use of land mines internationally.

"As a deeply committed Buddhist, Maha Ghosananda embodies the spirit of nonviolence and compassion, and has spent most of his life in untiring, dedicated effort to nurture peacefulness by example, by word and by deed," said AFSC Executive Director Kara Newell, in her nomination letter to the Norwegian Nobel Committee in Oslo.

As a co-recipient of the 1947 Nobel Peace award, AFSC is entitled to make a nomination each year. AFSC is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace and humanitarian service.

Albanian and Bosnian Refugees Need Vitamins


Serbia is now swamped with refugees from the fighting last summer in the Krajina and Bosnia. Kosovo is continuing to suffer deep unemployment and political repression. People who work in those regions have asked for donations of vitamins. During winter, malnutrition worsens and vitamins can help sustain health where there is not much fresh food. Children's vitamins are especially needed.

Please remove the vitamins from bottles and put them into a resealable plastic bag, with descriptive information clearly visible from the outside. For instance, "Vitamin C, 500 MG." Send vitamins to: N. Jaicks, 2909 Regent Street #3, Berkeley, CA 94705.

If you know of young people's groups or schools that would like to work on the Youth Vitamin Project, we will be happy to put you in touch with the coordinators.

Please keep your heart especially open for Albanians in Kosovo and the Serbs there who are committing serious human-rights violations. Albanians, who compose about 90 percent of Kosovo's population, are now one of the few non-Serbian groups in the area. Kosovo was formerly a semi-autonomous region, but now it is feared that Serbs might decide to "cleanse" the area of Albanians, many of whom are Moslem. We will take funds, vitamins, and other resources there in early May.

—Fran Peavey and Tova Green, for *Crabgrass*, an organization working for social change. Tel. 510/428-0240. ♦



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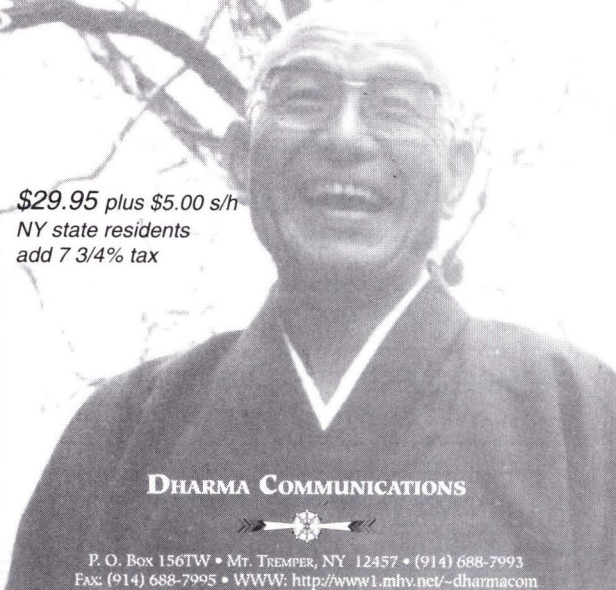
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FAMILY SECRETS

by Patrick McMahan

Shakyamuni Buddha came from a dysfunctional family. That his biographers fail to note this only confirms the dysfunction. As they have it, he left his wife, child, parents, and clan in search of truth. A fresh look at the evidence, however, yields the conclusion that Buddha broke away, not from his family *per se*, or from family life in general, but from his family's *delusion*.

The delusion is familiar to many of us: willfully ignoring the disagreeable aspects of existence. Buddha's father, King Suddhodana, knew from a seer that his son, Prince Siddhartha, would become either a great political leader or a spiritual teacher. Wishing to extend his kingdom through an heir, King Suddhodana brought his son up in a world calculated to educate him in power and privilege, rather than compassion. Suddhodana allowed only happy, charming, and beautiful people into Siddhartha's world. Every form of misery was banished from the palace.

We all know the story of how the real world filtered into the prince's padded prison. In a field being plowed, the boy observed with pain the severed worms and the suddenly homeless moles. Out of the cloudless sky, an arrow-pierced swan fell at Siddhartha's feet. Sensing there was more to life than feasts, lotus blossoms and concubines, the young man jumped the palace wall, and the rest is history.

Like all histories, this one has its slant. Prince Siddhartha's home-leaving for the spiritual quest, when understood as the forsaking of family life—with all its blood-bound loyalties and mortal aspirations—encourages Buddha's followers likewise to evade the family ties that bind. Following on this understanding, the Buddhasangha divides into those followers who succeed in this evasion—the monks—and those who fail—the householders. In present-day Western sanghas, enamored as they sometimes are of the monastic ideal,

families may find themselves excluded from the heart of the community's life, and left to pursue their practice at home as best they can.

But if Siddhartha's home-leaving is understood as liberation from family *delusion* rather than from family itself, the legend becomes one that unites sangha, rather than divides. For monks and householders alike, whether they find themselves in monasteries or homes, it holds true that to deny misery is the road to misery itself, and that to meet misery is to turn toward truth and compassion. This path threads its way without break from monastery to home and back again.

The legend of Buddha's home-leaving, then, shapes Sangha for better and for worse. But cultural and religious legends, interpreted ever so wholesomely, go only so far in guiding us on our particular paths. Recently I was instructed in my personal family legend, in the form of a dream:

I'm staying the night with a troubled family, in their gloomy home. Somewhere—in the attic or the cellar—their child of shame is hidden away. I have only hints of her: she has reptilian skin, is autistic, her nose drips copiously. I find her tracks in trails of phlegm. Even though I feel uneasy about it, I collude with the family secret, avoiding contact with her. I'll stay only this night, I tell myself, and when day breaks I'll move on to my favorite family. I think with anticipation of their child and her round brown face, energetic abled body, and winning personality. But during the night my closed door creaks open, and in slips the secret child herself! She's as grotesque as I had imagined: armless, scaled, voiceless. As I hide under the covers, she wanders about the dark room, then skips out, playfully. Contrary to all my expectations, I find myself following after her, charmed. . .

I woke from the dream refreshed, a little more open than when I went to sleep. The delusion from which I'm trying to free myself, in my spiritual life and in my relational life, is that somewhere there's a partner, or family, or sangha, or political party, or society, or enlightened understanding...which by itself can make me happy. If I can just hold out long enough, get through this miserable night in the dark house, with the gloomy family and their secret shame, I'll move on the next day to all that's upbeat.

But if the family delusion depends on secrecy, then revealing the secret ends the delusion. Prince Siddhartha jumped the palace wall, confronted the secret his father had attempted to keep from him, and showed the way of Truth to all beings in Heaven and Earth. The monster child opens my door at night and I follow, ready for what comes. ❖



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INTIMACY BEGINS RIGHT HERE

by Stephanie Kaza

For the 20th anniversary of Earth Day, I wanted to hold a Buddhist service at my home temple, Green Gulch Zen Center in Marin County, California. Wendy Johnson and I collaborated with Tenshin Anderson to plan a precepts ceremony that would suit the occasion. Inspired by the bold example of Thai forest monks, we decided to include the oak tree by the office as a central participant. I struggled with the phrasing of the precepts, trying to find words that would apply to relations with humans as well as nonhumans.

The third precept was particularly challenging: "Do not misuse sexuality"—how could that apply to a tree? Now, I admit madrone trees have appealed to me with their sensuous, smooth skin and firm trunks. But I thought surely the precept must go beyond the temptations of kinky mind and "boorish sex," as Aitken Roshi translates (in *The Mind of Clover*). It seemed to me that the heart of this admonition is to not be abusive to others, i.e., to not abuse or misuse the original intimacy of relationship between self and other.

In a winter sesshin focusing on the precepts, my ordination teacher Kobun Chino Roshi spoke at great length on this precept. But he never mentioned sexuality! He told one story of betraying his mother's trust by going for a long walk on the mountains and coming home in the dark, and another about letting his teacher down. He extended the precept to relations with grandparents and friends, lifting each type of relationship up as special, intimate in its own way, and therefore vulnerable to abuse. He wanted us to see the world as *nothing but* relationships, each a precious jewel of intimacy requiring our utmost attention. This precept, like all the others, was one facet of the undivided, original truth of reality. To limit its interpretation to sexuality would miss the many other expressions of intimacy.

In his essay on "Body-Mind Study of the Way," Zen teacher Eihei Dogen lays out a foundation for practice which supports this broader view of the third precept: "To study the way with the body means to study the way with your own body . . . using this lump of red flesh." Intimacy begins right here in this body. So does abuse. But what *is* this human body? "The entire world of the ten directions is nothing but the true human body." The possibilities for intimacy and abuse are limitless. To take the third precept is to vow to restrain one's self from careless or indulgent abuse and betrayal of the original intimacy. This, in my mind, quite easily includes abuse of trees, of animals, of streams and living soil. Seeing the true human body of the entire uni-

verse, one vows to not abuse one's self or any other aspect of the world of ten directions:

*Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine,
we vow to not engage in abusive relationships.*

Five and a half years ago, we chanted this refrain in the presence of the coast live oak at the center of Green Gulch. Our efforts were more important than we knew at the time. During the fierce, high winds of last December, the oak tree crashed to its knees. To honor the richness of this relationship, the Green Gulch community prepared an altar by the fallen tree and offered incense. For two months the tree lay in state, its thick branches a playground for children.

On Arbor Day we planted many new coast live oak seedlings on the hillside; a few days later on Buddha's Paranirvana Day, the tree was taken apart, leaving a shadow of love in its place. I like to think the tree still carries the power of the precepts, even in its disassembled state.

How does any of us know when our time will come? In the rustling of branches, I hear the echoes of the ordination ceremony—a celebration of intimate relationship. ❖

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THANG-TONG GYALPO

by Diane Patenaude Ames

It was hard to get around in 15th-century Tibet. Driving yaks to a winter pasture could involve crossing 15,000-foot passes, braving vertiginous cliffs on paths a yard wide, and fording tempestuous rivers. You had to expect that a few yaks—and in bad years a few family members—would drown each time. If you were a merchant, a refugee from feudal wars, or a religious practitioner determined to study with some faraway teacher, you probably wished that the Land of Snows had a few more bridges.

One day a wandering yogi called Thang-tong Gyalpo (1385-1464) was refused ferry passage across the Kyi-chu River because the ferryman thought him insane. The yogi had a series of visions in which celestial bodhisattvas assigned him a unique task: he was to combine the roles of tantric teacher and engineer, and have his students build “firm iron bridges” over all of Tibet’s principal rivers. To everybody’s amazement, he did it. By organizing his disciples into road crews and using his religious prestige to solicit donations of money and labor, he managed to construct at least 58 bridges all over the country. Many are still in use.

Like all Tibetan Buddhist teachers, Thang-tong Gyalpo assigned his students a variety of religious prac-

tices to help them develop insight and compassion. But he also taught that in “post-meditation practice,” where one applies religious insights to ordinary life, it was vital to show active compassion for fellow beings.

Some disciples had trouble grasping the unconventional idea that bridge construction (or famine relief, another of Thang-tong Gyalpo’s activities) could be part of one’s spiritual path. During one exceptionally difficult building project, students actually threw down their hammers and walked off the job. But when their master recited the following poem (quoted from a translation by Janet Gyaltsso), the students finished the bridge:

*If you don't know how to practice Dharma
Whatever you do will be a cause for bondage.
You can travel the whole kingdom, but you're
just a beggar. . . .*

*Knowing your primordial nature . . . [is] important.
Now that you have achieved freedom,
If you don't aspire to perform meritorious actions,
You'll be born in the lower realms,
And though you may be sorry, there's nothing
you can do. . . . ❖*

Diane Ames has been a member of the Buddhist Churches of America, a Shin Buddhist organization, for 16 years. She's an active BPF member.

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Preventing and Healing Sexual Misconduct

BPF LAUNCHES ETHICS PROJECT

by Alan Senauke

The Buddhist Ethics Project is a new BPF program that we have been thinking about for several years. We have undertaken it with advice and close collaboration from teachers and friends in the Western Buddhist Teachers' Conference, the American Zen Teachers Association, and many others.

As the articles in this issue attest, great suffering arises with sexual misconduct. Faith, trust, and true dharma practice are almost always harmed when sexual relations are framed as "crazy wisdom" or "enlightened activity." Betrayal of intimacy injures all those involved and breaks the circle of dharma.

In talking with dharma friends around the world, we find that such problems are not unique to the West. Twenty-five hundred years ago, Shakyamuni Buddha created precepts that specifically addressed monks' and nuns' sexual behavior. Today, we must take responsibility for our own actions and communities.

Our first priority is to encourage dharma centers to establish their own ethical guidelines and procedures for reconciliation. Each tradition carries the fundamental Buddhist precepts, but often these precepts must be clarified and tested in everyday life. When communities discuss ethical questions openly and find their own principled ways of addressing problems before they arise, they can meet real problems with confidence and compassion.

BPF is presently offering a packet of guidelines and procedures to anyone who asks. We continue to add to these materials, so please send us any guidelines your community has. In the coming months, as we refine this packet, we plan to send a wider mailing to Buddhist communities, with suggestions about how they might begin the process of establishing guidelines.

When teachers or others have broken their students' trust, or when questions arise about misconduct and ethical behavior, people should first try to speak their concerns within the community. But often enough, people in pain and doubt must look outside their sangha to be heard. BPF is helping to assemble a network of dharma teachers who can simply listen, offer support, and maintain confidentiality. We are not attempting to set up an adjudicating body. It is possible, though, that these teachers might be invited to act as facilitators or mediators when conflicts can't be resolved within a community.

We are also hoping to create a list of legal and psychological resources to help those who have experienced abuse. Dharma teachers, counselors, and psychologists are encouraged to participate or to ask further questions. (Zen teachers interested in taking part

in this kind of registry are invited to contact the Secretary, San Francisco Zen Center, 300 Page Street, SF, CA 94102.)

When no comfort or reconciliation can be found in wounded communities, people may need more direct help to find their own way back to a stable life and back to the Dharma. Jan and Lauren Bays, Yvonne Rand and other friends are developing a workshop to promote personal healing, based on work by Marie Fortune in numerous Christian communities. (See below.) We plan to help organize other such workshops, as well as training sessions for Buddhist teachers who want to develop them in their own locales.

Finally, we want to keep records of cases of misconduct. Private concerns will be handled by me personally, with the care and confidentiality that go with my vows as a Zen priest. Public matters will be documented. Our mission here is not to publicize or titillate. We simply want to understand the dimensions of ethical misconduct, hoping that understanding and action can create healthy relations and safe practice communities.

This is just an outline of our project, a beginning. We invite your thoughts and suggestions. And we particularly encourage you to raise these issues within your own sangha. Feel free to call or write for help. ❖

Retreat Planned for Survivors

A retreat for women survivors of sexual abuse by Buddhist clergy will be held near Portland, Oregon from October 19-21, 1996. It will take place at a Buddhist center in the forests above the Columbia River Gorge, and cost will be kept to a minimum.

The event is designed to allow survivors to understand their experience better, to evaluate their present circumstances, and to consider options for achieving justice and healing. An important part of the weekend will focus on reclaiming spiritual practice.

The retreat will be led by Rev. Marie Fortune, a Protestant minister who has been working with survivors of clergy abuse within Christian and Jewish congregations for almost 20 years. She is executive director of Seattle's Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence and the author of two books: *Is Nothing Sacred? When Sex Pervades the Pastoral Relationship* and *Love Does No Harm*. Co-leaders are Jan Chozen Bays and Yvonne Rand, teachers in two Zen lineages who have additional experience in the Vajrayana tradition.

This will be Rev. Fortune's first retreat for Buddhist women. For more information, please call Jan Bays at (503) 695-2103 or Yvonne Rand at (415) 388-5572.

CAN THIS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE BE SAVED?

by Jan Chozen Bays

A Parable

After ten years of hard study, Mojo begins work as a spiritual teacher with only a dozen students. The students have a lot of access to him, both in group gatherings and in private interviews. They spend time with their teacher in his home and work shoulder-to-shoulder in the gardens. Each student feels Mojo knows him intimately.

Gradually Mojo's reputation grows and within five years there are more than a hundred students living at the spiritual center and several satellite groups around the country and overseas. Mojo is busy traveling, attending meetings with people who administer the organization, and meeting with public figures to raise money and oil the political machinery necessary to keep his organization going. Students get to see him once a month in public talks if he is in town. Often they must watch videotaped lectures from the early years.

Students long for a personal connection with the teacher. If he makes eye contact with them or says an individual word in passing, they treasure it for days. People insert "Mojo says..." into conversation to imply they have talked with the teacher. People begin to vie for any tiny bit of personal contact by rushing to be the first to bring Mojo hot tea at a meeting, or remove his shoes and secretly polish them, weed his garden, or tend his children. His wife at first is happy to have a bevy of students cleaning house, cooking, helping entertain guests, and babysitting. She secretly enjoys being Queen of the Way, loved and waited on by all her husband's students.

But soon a small unease develops. If her husband sneezes, students rush up with Kleenex, herbal tea, Vitamin C, and offers of therapeutic massage. When will they begin to wipe her husband's bottom for him?

She has no one to go to for advice. Everyone she knows is her husband's student and more loyal to him than to her. She is the only one who sees Mojo at his most ordinary, sneaking a forbidden cigarette, upset when the toilet paper runs out or the children spill their juice. All the other students see his anger as crazy wisdom and try to learn from it. She suspects that some students feel that she and the children are an impediment to Mojo's true mission in life, diverting energy from his ability to teach.

Mojo is surprised at how quickly his popularity has risen. At first he was pleased to have so many students; it confirmed the truth of his understanding and his

teaching skill. With legions of students eager to do The Work of the Way, the community was able to get a lot accomplished: building meditation and dormitory halls, maintaining gardens, and doing community outreach projects with the poor.

He has little time to practice himself. He is in such demand that he can't find time to practice or read to find a source of inspiration. He begins to repeat old talks, and gets tired of hearing himself tell the same spiritual anecdotes.

He enjoyed long retreats, when everyone put aside their trivial concerns and strove for the same goal, enlightenment. It was then that he experienced true, deep intimacy with students in private interview. Their hearts were so pure, so open. He felt himself a true teacher, committed wholly to the Way, gently guiding students toward realization.

At the end of retreats when everyone left, he felt lonely. What occurred in the interview room was secret, so there was no one he could talk to about his own insights, dilemmas, doubts, and triumphs. One student showed exceptional promise, and he found himself beginning to confide in her, telling himself it would help her to know these things when she became a teacher one day. When he was tired he found himself wanting to rest just for a moment in her arms.

His student was flattered by the attention she received, and awed by Mojo's statements that she had unusual potential for realization. She might even be a teacher someday herself! She treasured each moment with him, and would have been glad to be his daily attendant, doing anything he asked, just to be able to hear a few scraps of his conversations. She learned so much from his every word and gesture! She liked Mojo's wife, but felt she should be more generous about sharing her extraordinary husband with his students.

Lately she had been feeling that she and Mojo shared a spiritual bond that was much deeper than ordinary marriage. He had even said that worldly marriage was only for one lifetime, but a true, pure, spiritual marriage of minds and understanding would last forever. She wondered what kind of child would be the result of a physical union between two clear beings. In certain traditions when a great teacher died, he could reappear in the form of an infant. Perhaps she would be the vessel to bear such a child!

In the words of *Good Housekeeping* magazine, can this marriage (and these spiritual practices) be saved?

The student was awed by her teacher's statements that she had unusual potential for realization. She might even be a teacher someday herself!

Snags to catch our toes

Since I have begun teaching I've become aware of the subtle yet powerful forces that play upon a teacher. These forces can cause difficulties in spiritual communities, from mild upsets to disastrous eruptions. I've stumbled my way through some of these problems. Unable to pack every variety of misadventure into 20 years of being a student and ten years of teaching, I've read books and talked to a number of students from the several Buddhist traditions about problems they encountered. In this article, I have organized these problems by cause so we can begin to discuss them and diagnose others that may come to light. The parables in this article are composites. The fact that students and teachers from many different practice centers have recognized these accounts speaks to the commonality of the forces and themes.

Misuse of power

When intensive meditation practice is being undertaken, as in long silent retreats, the whole world narrows to that of the meditation hall and interview room. The student becomes intensely bonded to the teacher, the only person s/he talks to in hours or days of silent meditation. When bewildering or unusual phenomena occur, the student is completely dependent upon the teacher for reassurance and guidance. Intense emotions arise during such times, from terror to spontaneous outpourings of love and gratitude. There is tremendous intimacy in the interview room. Even if the student and teacher are so fortunate as to have no difficulties with intimacy under ordinary circumstances, the intensity of the bond in the *daisan* room is intoxicating.

The teacher must not allow a student to attribute the phenomena that occur naturally with intense spiritual practice to the personal abilities or charisma of the teacher. This is an ever present danger.

In its subtlest form, the danger may appear when a teacher thinks, "Well, maybe I was just a bit clever in seeing where that person was stuck. None of her former teachers saw it." Or in not persistently deflecting the gratitude that comes with a spiritual insight back where it belongs: to the Buddha Dharma.

In its grossest form, the teacher may believe that s/he has such clear understanding that anything s/he does with a student is enlightened activity. This has included insulting students publicly, physically injuring or having a sexual relationship with them, exploiting students for free labor, subtly extorting money (for the sake of the Dharma), or insinuating him/herself between members of a couple and bringing about the end of a marriage.

Idealization and isolation of the teacher

Being a teacher is a lonely business. Alone in the midst of clamoring, adoring students, the teacher is seen as the ultimate embodiment of accomplished

practice. Personality quirks and flaws may be mistaken for manifestations of enlightenment. The teacher cannot admit doubt or failure lest the spiritual path be questioned. There is a misunderstanding, encouraged by the hopes of many students and perpetuated by the silence of many teachers, that anyone who is sanctioned to teach Buddhism must be completely enlightened. Even if this were true, actualization takes decades of dedicated practice after realization(s).

It is the teacher's responsibility to inform students that s/he is not a fully enlightened, actualized being, but just another human being who will make mistakes. The teacher should also be a living example of the willingness to learn from anyone or any circumstance. The Buddha was clearly aware of the problem of spiritual pride. The gravest lie cited in the *Vinaya* is to boast about (directly or even imply) having reached some higher stage of spiritual development.

Failure to recognize archetypal energies

As more women become spiritual teachers, we will face the problem of abuse of power by women. Can we predict what this will look like in advance, perhaps to recognize and interrupt it early? What are typical feminine archetypal energies that could be distorted and misused? There is the nurturing mother archetype, which in its distorted form is the smothering mother, involved in every aspect of her children's life, unable to let them mature and leave home. There is the mother-in-law energy that cannot let a favorite son be happy with a female who competes for his affection and attention. Or a young woman who diverts a male student's attention from pure practice may be characterized by the religious community as the evil seductress.

The next parable is a subtle example of what misuse of power by a woman teacher might look like.

A second parable

Sumaya is a teacher at a large spiritual center. Traditionally the teacher picks a single promising student to be her personal attendant. This is a position of honor and an unequalled opportunity to train, since the attendant has intimate contact with the teacher many hours a day. Sumaya picks Jon, a bright, energetic young man, and trains him rigorously. As several years go by she comes to depend upon him absolutely.

Jon is available to her any hour she may need him, and carries out her requests more efficiently than anyone else she has trained. She has tested his loyalty during several difficult times at the center. There was a minor but unpleasant episode involving students who were discontent, and who had stirred up unrest in the community. They eventually left. She was more shaken by this than anyone except her attendant knew. When she had Jon transfer funds secretly to cover a blunder by the treasurer, he mentioned it to no one. He was com-

pletely discreet about the few times she had slipped, doing and saying things she was not proud of. He is the only one she feels safe in confiding to about her occasional doubts that she is not suited for this work.

Jon has had several significant spiritual "openings" and she is beginning to hope he will someday be her successor. She has hinted this to him, but not told him outright lest he become "puffed up."

Jon was delighted to be chosen as Sumaya's personal attendant. It is hard work, but more than balanced by what he can learn by watching how Sumaya puts realization into action. He is happy to carry out her wishes, and gains particular pleasure by anticipating her needs a moment before even she is aware of them. Sumaya says he is the best attendant she has ever had, and has hinted that he is making such progress he might be head of the center when she retires.

Jon was upset when a small group of students complained about Sumaya in a community meeting. How could students with so little experience of practice and so little clarity in the Way criticize what the teacher perceives as best for them all? He knew she was not the dictator they portrayed her as, and that she carefully considered what was best before taking action. It did bother him that she had asked him to put pressure on them in various ways, until they felt it necessary to leave the community. He had tried to translate her exact words, uttered when she was understandably upset, into a more moderate and less hurtful message. It had had the desired effect: the troublemakers were gone, and peace was restored to the community as Sumaya had wished.

Cultural differences

There is a myth in spiritual communities that cultural differences can excuse inappropriate behavior. If an Asian teacher gets drunk or is sexual with students, it is attributed to cultural misunderstanding. But in fact, when we consult our elders in the Buddhist tribe, whether the Buddha, Dogen Zenji, Aa Chan or the Dalai Lama, we find that sexual abuse of students and drunkenness have always been recognized as harmful.

To excuse abuse of students by saying that it is a cultural misunderstanding is like excusing child abuse by saying that the perpetrator was him/herself abused. It may help to raise a more compassionate response to the abuse, but it does not excuse it. The perpetrator is still responsible for exploiting children and the teacher for exploiting students, no matter what his or her background. The majority of men and women who were themselves abused do not go on to become abusers. Many teachers raised in different cultural settings do not go on to abuse students. To use the cultural excuse is a subtle insult to the many teachers from other cultures who do not abuse.

Child sexual abuse is harmful because it disrupts, often permanently, the stages in a child's development necessary for healthy sexuality as an adult. Spiritual abuse of students is similarly disruptive, with the result that some students never mature in spiritual practice and others are turned away from the Dharma forever. Is this the outcome we want as teachers?

Some child molesters love the innocence of children, a purity they feel they lack. They try to take this energy unto themselves by sexual union with the child. Similarly, when a Dharma teacher becomes harried and jaded, with no time for practice and renewal, the innocent love of a new student for the Dharma is a balm. A young student's openings awaken memories of the teacher's own enthusiasm and awakening experiences. The aging teacher may try to replenish depleted spiritual energy vicariously through the student, sometimes in the form of sexual union.

We teachers are vulnerable to our own greed, anger, and ignorance, as well as to our capacity to rationalize what we want to do. But it is our duty to ask, "Am I doing this for the student's benefit or for my own?" Who is being served if a student is French kissed by a teacher in interview? One good test is whether the teacher would apply the behavior to most or all students. Do the old women, fat women, and male students get French kissed too?

Another good test is whether our acts are consistent with what the Buddha taught. Could our behavior be exposed, as it was in the time of the Buddha, to the scrutiny of the sangha? Our misbehavior is no secret from ourselves. And as Buddhist teachers, we must also know that, in the One Mind, there are no secrets at all. ❖

Jan Chozen Bays is a wife, mother, pediatrician, and teacher for the Zen Community of Oregon and Larch Mountain Zen Center.

Keeping the Bowl Empty

Some gifts cannot be saved,
must be given away
the moment you receive them.

"May your bowl be empty"
we say in our village.

Begin again
with each breath;
it is not yours to keep.
But the bowl,
the bowl is.

—Cassandra Sagan Bell

Roshi Recommends Novel Practice for Lovers

Dear Tofu Roshi:

My wife and I belong to a vipassana meditation group. Our community and our marriage have both been shaken by a new concept, ever since one of our most respected members brought a book to our center called *Celibacy Within Marriage*. Our teacher, who is not married, and is unlikely ever to be asked, in my opinion, seems to think it's a very enlightened idea, and my wife is all for giving it a try, but I think it's just a crazy fad cooked up by some poor woman who didn't dare tell her husband he needed a bath. What really burns me up is that I grew up in a very strict

I think it's just a crazy fad cooked up by some poor woman who didn't dare tell her husband he needed a bath.

Catholic family, and I was probably the last man in America to remain a virgin until my wedding night. How could I have been so dumb? I told my wife I never would have "saved myself" for marriage if I'd known we were getting married for the purpose of legalizing our celibacy.

The reason I'm writing to you about this is that my wife says it's a matter of her spiritual development. She says she wants to try celibacy only because our sexual relationship has been so satisfying to her, but I think she's just trying to butter me up. I don't think a person can get any more out of celibacy than they put into it, and that isn't much. Excuse the question, Tofu Roshi, but are you celibate? If so, do you like it? I want to develop myself spiritually, too, and that's why I practice insight meditation. Is it really possible that "celibacy within marriage" could make me more potent spiritually? If so, I'd like to know just exactly how.

—Faithful Husband

Dear Husband:

One reason celibacy is not more popular is that it is viewed as a negative thing, simply as the absence of sexual activity. But with Buddha mind we move away from such dualistic thinking. Celibacy is an activity in itself. At the deepest level, celibacy and sexual activity are one and the same, except that most people can be celibate more often, and keep it up for longer each time they do it.

Your last question—how?—goes to the heart of the matter. There are many helpful how-to books about sex, but what we need now are some how-to books on

celibacy, which avoid moralizing and outline the nuts and bolts of specific techniques and exercises for husband and wife, or lovers, to follow. But I leave the technology to the psychologists to develop.

As for celibacy within marriage, remember that like sex, celibacy is more meaningful when you do it with someone else. If you begin to feel rejected, remind yourself that your wife wants to be celibate with *you*.

Yes, I am celibate, and I get a great deal of pleasure out of it. But I could give it up any time, and so I would if I felt I was becoming too attached to it. I have never had the opportunity, as you do, to try celibacy within marriage. Rather, I have always been celibate with a number of different people at once.

I think you will find celibacy spiritually rewarding—a good way to explore the boundaries of the self, to keep awake to your life instead of getting stuck in unmindful habit. I would encourage you to try it for a day or two and then reevaluate it. ❖

[From *The Life and Letters of Tofu Roshi*, by Susan Ichi Su Moon, Shambhala, 1988. This humble volume of spiritual guidance can be ordered from the BPF office for \$10, postpaid.]

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--Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh

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BUDDHIST WOMEN'S STRUGGLE: *As Old as Buddhism Itself*

by Tova Green

Many of us may think that sexual misconduct within the Buddhist tradition is unique to the West, and that it doesn't exist in Buddhist countries in Asia. Or maybe if it does exist in Buddhist countries now, it is a twentieth century development. However, there is evidence that sexual misconduct in Buddhist communities goes all the way back to the time of Shakyamuni Buddha.

In a recent book about the first Buddhist nuns (*The First Buddhist Women*, by Susan Murcott), we get a picture of society in which men had more power than women, a society that saw women's sexuality and beauty as threatening because it awakened men's desire, and one in which women—even nuns—were abused sexually.

From the time that Buddha's Aunt Pajapati and her followers were ordained—the first women to take vows and become nuns—women were required to accept Eight Special Rules that relegated them to subordinate status. The first rule, for example, states that “a nun, even of a hundred years' standing, shall respectfully greet, rise up in the presence of, bow down before, and perform all proper duties towards a monk ordained even a day.”

Perhaps it is inevitable that sexual abuse of women, including rape, occurs in a society in which women are subordinate.

In Shakyamuni Buddha's era, when men attacked women, women were punished as well as the men. Women's freedom of movement was restricted and they were unable to lead a solitary life. One example is the story of Uppalavanna, who was gifted with magical powers. Because she was renowned for her beauty and had many suitors, her father, who wished to offend none of the suitors by choosing one, suggested that she leave the world and become a nun. However, her cousin Ananda, who desired her, didn't wish her to leave the world.

Uppalavanna did become a nun, and Ananda searched for her, and learned that she was living alone in a hut. He hid himself under her bed one day when she was out, and when she returned he suddenly jumped out and raped her. Susan Murcott says, “though his punishment was to be eaten by the fires of Avici, the most frightful of the many Buddhist hells, the punishment that Buddhist nuns incurred was more enduring. Because of this incident, Buddhist nuns from

that time to the present have been forbidden to go out alone or to live as hermits in the woods. This was a great penalty indeed, considering that the solitary renunciant is an esteemed vocation and role.”

Another story tells of a nun who was raped while bathing alone. After that, a rule was made that nuns could bathe only at public bathing places.

In both these incidents the women were punished by restrictions on their ability to be alone, even though the men were at fault. Although the Buddha may have made these rules to protect the nuns, out of concern and compassion, the nuns may have experienced the ruling as a punishment. To our Western eyes, the rules look like “blaming the victim.”

One of the worst consequences of blaming the victim is that it may lead the victim to blame herself. When I worked as a psychotherapist, I spoke with many rape survivors who were deeply ashamed, feeling that they had done something wrong. It was often difficult for them to contact their feelings of anger at having been violated, and to regain their self-esteem. They had internalized the message that a woman brings about her own rape.

There are still parts of the world in which a woman who accuses a man of rape must prove that her rapist is guilty or go to prison herself. Who would press charges in such a society?

To avoid rape or sexual harassment, women restrict their own movements. Most women I know do not walk alone at night, and take care even in crowded streets to be aware of who is walking behind them. Fear of rape is common to most women. Yet restricting women's movement does not address the core of the problem. Only in a society in which women and men are truly equal can we hope to see the end of rape.

We can be grateful to the first Buddhist nuns and to Susan Murcott for making their stories available to us. As we work for better conditions for women in Buddhism, we can remember the long road on which we are walking.

I am indebted to Linda Ruth Cutts, tanto (head of practice) at Green Gulch Farm, for her teaching on Women and Buddhism, for introducing me to the stories of the first Buddhist women, and for reading several drafts of this article and adding her thoughts. ❖

Tova Green is president of the Board of BPF. She is learning about the role of women in Buddhism, Judaism, and other religions.



Synopsis—

“SHUNNING AND INTERVENTION”

by Robert Aitken Roshi

In the Summer '95 issue of *Turning Wheel*, Robert Aitken Roshi (head teacher of the Diamond Sangha in Honolulu, Hawai'i) wrote what he termed a “think piece” about sexual exploitation of women students by their (male) Buddhist teachers. The article, “Shunning and Intervention” (4 pages), generated much heated response from *Turning Wheel* readers, both positive and negative. Partly because of the controversy sparked by Aitken Roshi's piece, as well as the ongoing concern in Buddhist circles about this painful subject, we decided to devote this issue of *Turning Wheel* to the subject of sexual misconduct.

Following is a brief synopsis of Aitken's article. To read some responses to Aitken Roshi, (as well as other articles about sexual exploitation,) see pages 20-29. — Editors

Aitken Roshi opens his article with these words:

“For the past 30 years I have been musing and occasionally speaking out on the subject of sexual exploitation of students by Buddhist teachers. That's how long it's been since our resident monk departed under a cloud from the Koko An Zendo, leaving two women students in the mental health ward....”

“Occasionally, a woman comes to the interview room wearing a particularly low-cut dress, so that when she bows before me, she might partially expose her breasts. In the early days, I would shut my eyes for the crucial moment, then open them again before she made eye-contact. A fellow teacher said, “Why don't you keep your eyes open? Are you so susceptible?”

“No,” I thought, “surely I'm immune by now.” So I tried keeping my eyes open and found that I was indeed vulnerable after all. I noticed that the sexual charge I got from that glimpse of pretty breasts would color my attitude and give the interaction an undesirable personal tug. So I returned to my old custom of closing my eyes.”

Aitken goes on to say that while sexual feelings between teacher and student are normal, they shouldn't be expressed in a sexual relationship. The problem, he says, is “not with the fire itself, but with the container, the character.” In fact, the fire of sexuality, “those hot encapsulations of vitality...nurture and enrich my body, speech, and thought.” But instead of acting on the feelings, he suggests that the practice must be to “let it glow in peace, transmuting into bows, smiles, and words that encourage and inspire. Otherwise, the attraction becomes a grotesque mirror of courtship, leading step by step to tragedy.”

Roshi contrasts the teacher who falls in love with a student and has a one-time love affair with the teacher who has a “record of seductions that reflects an addiction

to sex.” He suggests that *brahmadanda* (literally “noble staff”) might be an option for dealing with such sexually addicted teachers. *Brahmadanda*—which in practice amounts to shunning—was used by the Buddha to deal with a monk, Channa, as a way to temporarily punish him for his arrogance. It was very effective; Channa eventually repented and was readmitted to the order of monks. In modern terms, shunning would mean that fellow teachers, colleagues, and students would not invite an abusive teacher to important events, nor would they associate with or support him in other ways.

Roshi recognizes that for *brahmadanda* to work, the wider Buddhist community would have to unite and stick with the process in an unprecedented way. He acknowledges that the effort may fail. “The teacher might simply become more careful, or he might take a position of denial, split off with devoted followers, and set up another center.”

Aitken suggests that shunning “be initiated with open communication” and with an attitude of compassion. Concerned members of the Buddhist community might engage the teacher in an “intervention,” a technique often used with substance abusers, in which the abuser is made to squarely face what he has done. “The purpose would be to encourage the liberation of the troublemaker, as well as those for whom he has caused trouble.” If the teacher is unable to repent, however, “maybe the best solution would be to make it possible for him to retire.”

Despite Aitken's compassion for the abuser, he holds the teacher, never the student, ultimately responsible. “I am always surprised and disappointed when I hear people blame the victim. ‘She shouldn't have put herself in such a vulnerable position,’ they say. Come on! If one is not vulnerable, no teaching or learning is possible.” He adds that “the sexually addicted teacher is not just acting out his lust. Like the rapist he is seeking power.”

Aitken Roshi points out the failure to acknowledge or deal with sexuality in most Asian Buddhist traditions, and notes that even in the US, women have only just begun to take leadership roles in many sanghas. “I've heard people try to excuse Far Eastern teachers by suggesting that their monastic training didn't permit much interaction with women, so they weren't prepared to work with them as students...[but] what happened to the basic experience of the “other” as no other than myself? Without at least a glimpse of the Buddha Shakyamuni's realization that all beings are the Tathagata—without continuing practice to clarify that glimpse and make it personal, a teacher cannot lead others on the path of wisdom and compassion.” ❖

SEXUAL “ADDICTION” OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

A Reply to Robert Aitken

by Melinda Vadas

In “Shunning and Intervention” Robert Aitken has addressed the problem of male Buddhist teachers who have repeated affairs with their women students, teachers who, to use Aitken’s phrase, engage in a series of “ruthless seductions.” As a possible solution to this sexual use of women, Aitken suggests that the Buddhist community intervene by shunning such men, and he discusses some ways in which this shunning might be carried out.

While I have no objection to the Buddhist community shunning the men Aitken describes—in fact, I think it is a good idea—I do have objections to Aitken’s portrayal of male teachers who sexually use female students as “sexual addicts”; to his restriction of the truly problematic behavior to serial seductions; and to his failure to understand the relationship between sexual objectification and sexual harassment. I will outline these objections below.

What is Sexual Harassment?

While the behavior Aitken focuses upon—“ruthless seductions” by male teachers of female students—clearly constitutes sexual harassment, so does a teacher’s having sex with one woman student, as well as other, less overt behavior by which men subordinate women. Whether or not they succeed in getting what they want, men who actively seek sexual contact with individuals who are subordinate to them because of institu-

tional or other structural inequality (in schools, universities, churches, temples, prisons, the workplace, and so on) are guilty of sexual harassment. The equal standing between sexual partners that is a *prerequisite* for meaningful consent is necessarily absent under such conditions. Under conditions of structural inequality, lewd comments, displays of pornography, and sexual gestures are also forms of sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Objectification

Aitken focuses on only the extreme of sexually harassing behavior, and refers to a teacher’s having sex with one woman student as a “love affair.” He names as different *sorts* of behavior what are in fact only different degrees of the *same* behavior. I believe he makes this mistake because he doesn’t see what underlies both: the sexual objectification of women by men.

Trying to understand sexual harassment without understanding sexual objectification is like trying to understand racial segregation without understanding racism.

Sexual Objectification: A Political Construct

Aitken takes a mistakenly naturalistic view of sexual objectification. He begins with an account of his own acts of sexually objectifying women students, acts that he clearly considers normal, natural, and (at least as long as his eyes are open) inevitable. Aitken creates a sexual charge out of glimpsing a woman student’s breasts, and this is an act of sexual objectification



because the focus of his desire is not the person as such—he doesn't know her well enough to desire her as the person she is—but a universalizable characteristic, "pretty breasts."

I will say that Aitken shows considerably more awareness of his act of sexual objectification than do most men. He is aware that his sexualization of women students is damaging to them, and so he shuts his eyes to avoid the more extreme effects of such sexualization. However, as a strategy for change, closing one's eyes to the effects of one's own actions is not particularly effective. He speaks of his acts of sexual objectification as being produced by a natural and valuable "vitality" or "fire." Aitken quickly adds that a man's natural acts of sexual objectification must of course be kept in line (he must not "let the fire get away from him") by this same man's sterling character.

But in fact, the act of sexually objectifying women is not natural and inevitable. As John Stoltenberg has said, "Sexual objectification is not rooted in the natural order of things...rather, sexual objectification is a habit that develops because it has an important function in creating, maintaining, and expressing male supremacy." (*Refusing to be a Man*, p. 51.) Stoltenberg says of such acts of sexual objectification that "it is fashionable to call such acts 'reactions,' as if the agent really responsible for the act were someone or something else. So it is that in matters of men's sexual behavior there is talk of 'feelings,' 'emotional reactions,' 'expression,' and 'fantasies,' in situations where it would be more accurate to speak of actions that are *actions*—that is, susceptible to ethical interpretation and evaluation: Who is doing exactly what to whom? Is the act fair or unfair? What is the consequence of the act for the person to whom it is done?" In the act of sexual objectification, women's bodies or body parts are unfairly imbued by men with a sexual desirability, the effect of which is to render women rapable.

If sexual objectification is seen as a natural fact of life, then it might seem appropriate to speak, with Aitken, of those who "react" too strongly to sexual objects (that is, women) as "sexual addicts." If, however, sexual objectification is understood to be a politically constructed act that creates and maintains male supremacy, then men who sexually objectify women *act*, and they are responsible for that act. Men who sexually harass women *act*, and they are responsible for that act, as well.

To call sexual objectification natural is fraudulent. "Men force women to become sexual objects, 'the

thing which causes erection, then hold themselves helpless and powerless when aroused by her'." (Catharine MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of State*, p. 141, quoting Andrea Dworkin.)

Why Do Buddhist Men Harass?

According to Aitken, a possible explanation for why Buddhist teachers sexually harass women is that they have had unhappy childhoods. (They suffer from a "failure to form emotional bonds during childhood.") If an unhappy, loveless childhood is the cause of sexual harassment, it is odd that women, whose childhoods are more often scarred by outright sexual abuse than are the childhoods of men—abuse being surely an extreme form of lovelessness—do not typically harass others.

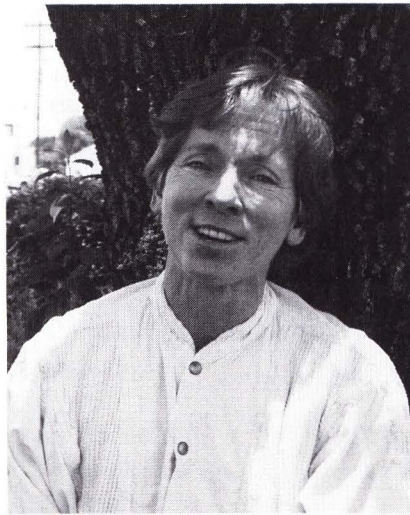
I would suggest that men sexually harass women for the same reason that men rape women: "because they want to and enjoy it. The act, including the dominance, is sexually arousing, sexually affirming, and supportive of the perpetrator's masculinity. Many unreported rapists report an increase in self-esteem as a result of the rape. Indications are that reported rapists perceive that getting caught accounts for most of the unpleasant effects of raping." (MacKinnon, p. 145.)

Once men have collectively created women's objectified sexuality, all sorts of sexual uses of women become enjoyable, including sexual harassment.

Aitken creates a de-politicized notion of "sexual addiction" to explain the behavior of teachers who sexually harass women. But if such men are "addicts," they are addicts of a very peculiar sort: they are addicts who can consistently and carefully judge when and where to indulge their "addiction." Far from being addicts compelled to engage in sex regardless of the consequences, sexual harassers seem to me to be very much in control of what they are doing. How else to explain their careful choice of structurally powerless women as sexual prey? Sexual harassers do not typically prey on, for example, women judges or women law officers or even women peers. If these men are really addicted to sex, how is such restraint possible?

How Should Women Students Respond?

The correct response to the sexual harassment of women students by male Buddhist teachers is appropriately to be found through the individual and collective



Melinda Vadas

Continued on page 29

WHO IS HURTING WHOM?

A Response to Robert Aitken and Melinda Vadas

by Shannon Hickey

When Robert Aitken-Roshi ruminated in *Turning Wheel* about male Buddhist teachers who sexually abuse female students, he hoped to launch a dialogue on this painful problem. Feminist Melinda Vadas accepted the invitation and offered a lengthy critique of Aitken's analysis. Her response sparked me, Denise Caignon, and AJ Kutchins to respond, so we have the discussion you find in these pages.

As a feminist (white, middle-class, lesbian), I think Vadas made some important points. For example, sexual harassment includes a much broader range of behavior than intercourse or "serial seductions." But mostly—as a Buddhist, as a person involved in the legal system, as an erotic being—I disagree with her.

According to Vadas, the basic problem is that men sexually objectify women. This mental habit is a political act that creates, expresses and maintains male supremacy, she argues: "In the act of sexual objectification, women's bodies are *unfairly imbued* with a sexual desirability, the nature and effect of which is *to render women rapable*." (Emphasis mine.)

The act of objectifying

Indeed, thinking is an act, objectifying someone is an act, but Vadas goes too far. She seems to say that desire for sex equals—or inevitably leads to—desire for domination. Although sex and domination may go hand-in-hand for many people, male and female, they are not identical.

Obviously, a heterosexual man will find (some) women sexually desirable. This is not "unfair"; this is what "heterosexual" means. It is part of a natural biological imperative to reproduce, as well as the source of much poetry and art. Sexual desire is not something men "do to," or "impose on" women. It's an internal experience men have, in response to a mental projection, a whiff of pheromones, a hormone rush. It is natural, and it doesn't necessarily lead to harassment or abuse.

And sexual objectification is hardly the sole province of sexist men. Human beings objectify other beings. The most fundamental act of the mind is to divide the world into "self" and "other," and then dance the dance of aversion and craving with that perceived

"other." Men and women objectify men and women—and animals, and the environment, and material goods. And sometimes we attach to those objects, because they strike us as desirable.

If Vadas never fantasized about torrid eroticism with another member of our species, never felt her knees go weak when someone walked into the room, she has my sympathy. But I doubt that is the case.

The erotic fire

We all carry a natural erotic "fire." Erotic energy is life energy, whether we call it *kundalini*, *chi*, *shakti*, *ki* or something else. This fire is very powerful, so of course it can be abused by irresponsible people, who manipulate it to dominate others.

But the inner fire can also be a wonderful source of creativity, personal strength, intimate connection, and deep teaching. Tantric practitioners learn to channel this energy as a spiritual discipline. Jelaluddin Rumi, the 13th-century Sufi master, used erotic energy and imagery in ecstatic dance and poetry, describing God as Beloved, immanent everywhere. As Aitken said, "the problem is not with the fire itself, but with the fireplace, the container, the character."

*A friend of mine told me
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adult—students, male
and female, during their
classroom presentations.*

Zen literature is almost mute on the subject of sexuality, as Aitken observes. And most of us grow up in (sexist) cultures, religious traditions, and families that plaster our erotic nature with taboos. This leads to repression, obsession, all kinds of weirdness—witness advertising and Jesse Helms. It's not surprising that some Buddhist teachers (and their students) deal poorly with psychosexual problems.

But I can't fault Aitken for noticing pretty breasts—I notice pretty breasts. And I respect him for acknowledging his reaction, reflecting on it, and closing his eyes during bows in the interview room. Thinking about someone in sexual terms is a mental act of objectification; and we can choose how far to take such thoughts; and they can have terrible karmic and ethical consequences if we act them out inappropriately. But sexual reactions and fantasies are not, by themselves, tantamount to sexual abuse.

A former (academic) teacher of mine, who became a personal friend, told me that she mentally undresses some of her—adult—students, male and female, during

their classroom presentations. "It's gotten me through some pretty boring presentations," she laughed. But her outward *behavior* is absolutely respectful, impeccably professional. She is not a sexual harasser, by any stretch of the term; her mental "act" is harmless.

In meditation, we begin to unravel our habits of mind, our endless objectifying and projecting—and begin to see that all phenomena, mental and physical, are "empty," because they are utterly interdependent and ever-changing. We practice to see through our ideas of self and object and loosen their grip on us. Sexual abuses arise from delusions about separateness, from craving for control and self-affirmation.

When a Buddhist teacher loses sight of the teaching and harms a student, s/he must take responsibility for the harm. If the teacher doesn't assume responsibility, the students and the wider sangha must hold that person accountable. As Aitken said, "Without at least a glimpse of the Buddha Shakyamuni's realization that all beings are the Tathagata—without continuing practice to clarify that glimpse and make it personal, a teacher cannot lead others on the path of wisdom and compassion. He is not grounded—not a teacher in the first place."

Intervention and shunning

Vadas advocates legal action against men who harass women. America is a culture of laws, and when a person breaks the law, s/he is subject to legal penalties. But exacting penalties through litigation can be very costly for all parties, both emotionally and financially. I've been involved in civil litigation several times (and I observed other cases as a legal journalist). While legal action is sometimes necessary, it's better to avoid it if at all possible. Our legal system is based on an adversarial relationship: blame is its method and winning is its goal. The process rarely allows the parties to communicate in any open-hearted way, and the result is seldom justice or a constructive solution.

Aitken suggests other forms of intervention, progressively more forceful if the abuser is really intransigent. If such measures prove ineffective, then litigation might be the only recourse. But don't let anyone tell you it's anything but ugly. Even victories can feel bitter, because the battle creates and fuels so much hostility that relationships get reduced to ash.

Clearly, we have an individual and collective responsibility to stop harassment; we cannot enable it to continue by ignoring or dismissing it. We must not blame people who are subjected to sexual abuse; we must support them emotionally and provide whatever treatment they may need. (We must also verify allegations before we start destroying reputations.) We can require abusers to make reparations to the people they have harmed. Above all, as Aitken says, Buddhist communities must encourage openness, clarity, dialogue, and personal responsibility.

How do we have compassion?

Aitken also reminds us that as disciples of Buddha, our vow is to help beings end suffering and liberate themselves from self-centered viewpoints. Perpetrators handled with skillful means might have a change of view, and deserve an opportunity to repent and rectify the situation if possible.

Having compassion for a perpetrator does not mean condoning or excusing the person's behavior. While it is often true that abusers have themselves been victimized, this is no justification. We all have choices about our own conduct; not every abused child goes on to abuse. But our ability to recover from abuses, and to choose different behavior for ourselves, depends very much on what kind of support and help we get as we develop. As Thich Nhat Hanh reminds us in his remarkable poem, "Call Me By My True Names," he might have turned out to be a rapist and pirate himself, if the circumstances of his life had been different.

Vadas seems to overlook the fact that *victims* can get caught in deluded, self-centered viewpoints, too. She says people become victims as the result of *other people's actions* or patterns of action. We can determine who is a victim, and who is not, by analyzing "who is doing what to whom." Who *is* doing what to whom? That's a good question, a central question of Buddhism.

One answer is that "I" and "other," "victim" and "perpetrator," are dualistic ideas, and dualism *itself* is the root cause of suffering. As soon as the thought "I" arises, "other" appears simultaneously; they are inseparable. From that first split, the mind can spin a huge, elaborate story about what "you" are doing to "me." But "what we do and what happens to us is exactly the same," as Zen master John Daido Looi says.

Because we operate in the phenomenal world *and* all phenomena are empty, I would argue that victimhood *is* a state of mind, as well as a consequence of others' behavior. In the relative world, some people do hurt other people. But Buddhism also calls us to look beyond dualism, to see beneath it, and to experience liberation from our ideas about "I/mine" and "you/yours."

Blame never helps. It is a tactic victims use to solidify their own egos and perpetuate their victimhood. It's an abdication of personal power, whether it's men blaming women or women blaming men. I know this strategy all too well, because I've used it more often than I like to admit. The payoff for blame is that one doesn't have to take any responsibility for one's own wellbeing and happiness: "It's *your* fault I'm miserable; *you* did this to me." Another payoff is that victims get to feel morally superior and self-righteous.

I was sexually harassed by a male employer while I was in college—he pawed me and called me "bubbe";

Continued on page 28

In Praise of Common Sense—

BUDDHA MIND, NOT VICTIM MIND

by Denise Caignon

Nearly 20 years ago, I worked for an organization that served rape survivors and battered women. When I was on call in the middle of the night, the phone would sometimes ring. Dread would fill me: at 3 AM, this could only be an emergency. Another scared stranger's voice crashing into my sleep-hazed mind, telling me of her living nightmare.

Sometimes the voice was full of panic; at others, resigned and bitter. Whatever the timbre, so many of the women who called blamed themselves. "I didn't do enough." "I should have fought back." Most surprising, even when these women *had* done something to defend their bodies and integrity, they simply didn't see it. "I screamed and ran to a neighbor's house, but he hit me first." It was as if they'd been blind-sided by their low self esteem. They seemed to believe—consciously or not—that they deserved the abuse they'd received.

The abuse was occasionally meted out by a stranger, an unknown attacker. But more often than not, it had been delivered by someone they loved and trusted: husband, lover, erstwhile friend. And though I had no experience with Buddhism at the time, I'd now add to the list: beloved teacher.

At some point, it began to dawn on me that, despite the hole where their sense of self worth should have been, most of these women did have some deeper feeling that they wanted to live without abuse. And out of that feeling they did act, often unconsciously. They surprised not only their attackers, but themselves. Sometimes their actions came from a hunch, a strange feeling preceding the attack. They said things, did things, and didn't know how. "He said he was going to rape me, and I said, 'oh no, you're not'—and he turned around and ran away!" "I'd been painting the house, so I grabbed the paintbrush and slashed a big swath of white paint across his chest. I didn't think, I just *did* it."

As I listened to these stories, I began to feel that as a counselor of abused women, I mistakenly acted as a *victim's* advocate, instead of as the champion of a brave survivor. I listened carefully; I nodded sympathetically; I felt compassion for the women and intense rage at the men who abused them. But I didn't pay enough attention to the reality that women could and did defend themselves. That they *must*. The world needed to know this fact, needed to bring it to awareness. Most of all, I

thought, women needed to know how strong they were already, and how they could draw on that strength.

So along with other women who felt as I did, I became an apprentice self-defense teacher, then taught classes myself, continued my own studies in judo and self-defense techniques, and co-edited a book of "women's self-defense success stories." I saw a good self-defense training program as a partial answer to women's chronic position as victim.

Today, I still say *survivor*, not *victim*. I still believe every woman should learn to defend herself. But a few years of meditation practice have added a new angle to my analysis.

When people think of self defense, they often think of violence: kicks and punches, battles against lethal weapons. But that's only one side of it, maybe the least important. It's the subtle sense of worth, of being worth defending, that is the wellspring of any action, word, or thought. It's all about trust in one's intuitive hunches, about being aware. Some of the hall-

marks, it turns out, of a strong meditation practice.

Concentrated meditation practice builds self esteem, and a sense of responsibility for one's life. As I became a more serious practitioner of Zen Buddhism, I began to wake up to who I was as a unique human being. There's sometimes a focus in Buddhist circles on waking up to the oneness of all things. The other side—the deep appreciation and recognition of *each* leaf, *each* pebble, *each* cough, *each* person—gets less attention.

There's also a focus on the realization experience, the wide-open, childlike mind. People become more vulnerable, more porous. And that openness does make it easier to be taken advantage of by unscrupulous teachers.

But why does that have to be so? After a deep experience of oneness with all things, it doesn't follow that we must give up our good old common sense. Too often, dropping defenses goes hand-in-hand with dropping responsibility for our own lives. Turning over our will and reasoning power to a teacher or group is really the opposite of waking up. Practice empowers; it shouldn't turn us into helpless children.

Often, people feel intensely grateful to the teacher they've worked with. The intimacy of the interview room is like no other close human relationship. Particularly at the peak of a powerful experience, that very particular bond between teacher and student can

We think our teachers are non-attached in every way and at all times and that we should be, too. But we're not, and they're not.

seem somehow beyond the other intimacies in life.

Well, it isn't. It's a different type of attachment, but it's a tie between two human beings, with all their idiosyncracies, strengths, and weaknesses. And that means sexual feeling can and often does develop on one or both sides of the equation.

I use the word "attachment" deliberately here. Despite the fact that Buddhist practice is all about being true to one's own experience, it's easy to get caught in the words others have used over the centuries to describe *their* experience. *Non-attachment* is one of those words; it is axiomatic in Buddhism. We sometimes think our teachers are non-attached *in every way and at all times* and that we should be, too. But we're not, and they're not. One of my teachers told me, as I struggled with this seeming contradiction, "Of course you're attached! If you weren't attached, you'd be dead." (Leave it to a Zen teacher to apply the everyday astringent to high-falutin mind trips about Buddhist doctrine.) Non-attachment doesn't mean the eradication of all human foibles. It means being aware of them, and thus less inclined to be controlled by them every minute of every day. But I don't think non-attachment means severing the umbilicus that draws us close to our earth and its inhabitants. Quite the contrary.

Awake doesn't mean naïve, not for adults—and that includes adult women, to put a finer point on it. Just as I make choices about who I will and will not be sexual with outside the interview room, I *must* make the same choices at my practice center. Yes, the feelings between teacher and student can be powerful. Yes, it is ultimately the teacher's responsibility to keep his hands off his students, to be aware of the power imbalance between them, to realize the vulnerability of his students. Yes, it is an abuse of power when he doesn't do these things. But what of our responsibility for our own lives, we women practitioners? What of our most precious, most vital, common sense?

I'm going to stick my neck out a bit further here. When necessary, I must be prepared to say no and mean it, and back it up with further action if it comes to that. If I can't do that yet, I need to get some self defense training, or find another way to bolster my sense of self. There's another Buddhist myth: That once we've practiced long enough, we completely lose any sense of a separate identity. We sort of mush out into The Absolute. I don't think so. Practice enhances a sense of unique self. That self just loses a bit of its all-consuming, take-myself-seriously quality. After some practice, maybe I can laugh more good-naturedly at that self, have more compassion for it, pull back from its machinations. But I don't and can't excise it. I can only learn to live more gracefully as that limited self, knowing that, paradoxically, it is one, perfect expression of the universe that knows no bounds.

Until a woman has that sense of self, she is more open to being a victim. I don't mean to say that a woman ever deserves to be attacked, or that there aren't brutal assaults that even good self defense won't stop. I also don't mean to absolve a teacher, or any man, of responsibility for his actions. But when it comes to seduction and non-coercive sex, it isn't just up to abusive teachers to reckon with themselves and their sangha, though that is crucial. If I consent to a sexual relationship with my teacher, I have a role, too. My practice is flawed, just as his is. Why do I have a need to relinquish everything to this person? Why have I, as well as he, transgressed the sacred boundary between teacher and student? Why did I have so little respect for that boundary? Is he married or involved with someone (as many teachers are)? What is my ethical position regarding sex with a married person? Is this sort of relationship what I want from spiritual practice? *Shouldn't I know better?*

I know it's easier said than done, but if the guy's a jerk, get out of there.

People sometimes compare abuse of power by teachers, psychiatrists, and other powerful figures to abuse of children. But we aren't children. We're grownups. When we choose a teacher, we should choose carefully. And if that teacher betrays our trust, we should be prepared to see it and take appropriate steps. That's what being awake means. You don't get to ignore the stuff you don't like. You don't get to nurse your illusions that this guy has transcended sexuality. Or that sex with him will make you enlightened. I know it's easier said than done, but if the guy's a jerk, get out of there. Talk to other sangha members. If you develop feelings for him, examine them. Bring them into the light of your concentration. Acknowledge them, appreciate their beauty and power. Then realize, as the adult you are, that it's probably not going to be helpful to either one of you if you act on them.

One of the most powerful symbols of Buddhism is the sword of Manjushri, the sword that cuts through delusion. In some zendos, Manjushri sits on the altar, wearing a fierce expression, sword at the ready. It's the sword of discernment: the ability to see clearly. If we are to cultivate that razor-edged wisdom on the meditation cushion, shouldn't we also cultivate it in the interview room, as well as on the street and in our own homes?

If we can't muster this kind of clear-mindedness, if we can't begin to look at our actions with an unflinching gaze—what's practice for? ♦

Denise Caignon practices Zen Buddhism. She is associate editor of Turning Wheel, and the co-editor (with Gail Groves) of Her Wits About Her: Self Defense Success Stories by Women (HarperCollins, 1987).

SUING THE BUDDHA:

Is Legal Action the Best Response to Misconduct?

By AJ Kutchins

One of the few really interesting things I heard in law school was that—back when this country was still in its scruffy childhood—de Tocqueville observed that Americans turn all their social problems into legal ones. So I shouldn't be as surprised as I am when contemporary North Americans who view themselves as Buddhists nonetheless turn to the dualistic approach and punitive resolutions of the legal system as a first, rather than a last, resort in dealing with problems that arise in our communities.

Sexual misconduct, particularly by teachers, is perhaps the defining problem for “new” North American Buddhist communities. (Here I am referring to sanghas composed primarily of converts to Buddhism, usually devoted to meditation and like practices; in contrast, what are often referred to as “ethnic” or “traditional” Buddhist groups seem to be more pressed by other problems—such as the loss of membership through acculturation). The problem of sexual misconduct keeps coming up in a very wide range of groups and situations, and it seems to have a uniquely powerful ability to make us forget either everything we've learned about Buddhism, or everything we've learned about life in the dusty world.

I usually think of two polar examples in response to accusations of sexual misconduct on the part of teachers and other Buddhist leaders. One is best illustrated by an anecdote: In the mid-1980s, I traveled around Europe, stopping in at Zen centers in various cities. At a particularly charming living room/zendo in Venice, we meditated, chanted the Heart Sutra (*very* slowly, in Japanese), and then I was invited to tea. My Italian Zen comrades appeared to be scandalized when I told them that, at home, we usually chanted the text in English—they seemed to find it a little blasphemous that we actually knew what the words meant. This deviation made sense to them, however, when they discovered that I was from San Francisco: “Oh, *you're* the ones who kicked out your Roshi!” my host exclaimed, adding: “Only Americans would do something like that.”

They had clearly heard that the (hitherto) revered abbot of our Zen Center had recently left the sangha in

the wake of accusations that he had abused power by, among other things, sleeping with his students. My Venetian host appeared to ascribe this to a sort of naive puritanism on our part. She proceeded to describe to me how their Zen Master was carrying on a fairly open affair with his assistant—even though he was already married. But what problem could there be with that? she asked, rhetorically. He is, after all, *enlightened*. And an enlightened person can't do anything wrong. Besides, it had clearly been good for the assistant: She now asked to be hit with the *kyosaku* 10 times a day—a sure indication of her fervent devotion to practice.

I was clearly not the only person in the room who was taken aback by this chain of reasoning. One or two sangha members warily but firmly expressed their disagreement with the status quo. The discussion quickly reverted into furious Italian that was much too fast for me to follow, but I left with the sense that there was just no place in the group for those who disagreed with the teacher's conduct. It was either go with the program or be the “other.”

The same impulse to divide the community (and humanity) into enemy camps is more overtly manifested in the extreme opposite response to accusations of sexual misconduct. Under this view, a teacher who has affairs with students (or perhaps even a single affair) forfeits not only the right to lead but even the right to remain a respected member of the community. He (the approach inevitably shifts a bit if the miscreant is a woman) becomes “the other,” the enemy, an evil to be punished, a disease to be rooted out if the community is to survive. This view is amply represented by Melinda Vadas' article, published in this issue. Such dualism inevitably leads to legalistic models for resolving problems of sexual misconduct, because our legal system is predicated on exactly such dualistic assumptions about the realities of human life.

But one need not hold an extreme perspective to be drawn to a legalistic model. Many individuals and communities are sincerely grappling with the question of how we can and should deal with sexual misconduct, abuse of power, and other forms of harmful action. As Robert Aitken Roshi's recent article demonstrates, it can be very difficult even to identify—much less implement—effective and appropriate methods of response.

She now asked to be hit with the kyosaku 10 times a day—a sure indication of her fervent devotion to practice.

It is little wonder that we are drawn to legalistic models and the legal system itself for solutions; it is ready-made, and we are already bathed in it. We have been Buddhists for 5 years, or 10, or maybe 30, but most of us have been North Americans all of our lives.

Perhaps the grossest expression of legalistic response is the idea that the first and best way to deal with sexual misconduct in Buddhist communities is to file a lawsuit against the perpetrator. This belief appears to derive from a series of (generally silent) assumptions: that it is effective, and perhaps morally imperative, to punish wrongdoers; that the legal system is a good place to vindicate important principles; and that success in the legal process will heal our wounds.

Regarding the first assumption, it is my experience that punishing people rarely changes them for the better and does little good for others—it's mostly just bad karma. More important, maybe, is the fact that the beastly process of civil litigation generally punishes *everyone* involved; if the person most punished turns out to be the one who was most deserving of punishment, that's pretty much a coincidence. What is virtually certain is that the entire process will be expensive, draining, and hurtful for everyone involved, and will generally increase the level of greed, hate and delusion.

The second assumption—that a courtroom is the right place to establish what is true and good—is touching, but really unfounded. When I was

starting out as a lawyer, I worked as a law clerk for a wonderful federal judge. As a lawyer, he had devoted much of his practice to fighting for the powerless. He had battled for civil and constitutional rights in rural backwaters of California, and had worked tirelessly (and for free) on behalf of draft resisters and people on Death Row. As a judge, he has made a lot of good law (as we say), but he has always been equally proud of his enormous talent for convincing people to settle their cases instead of going to trial. Much of his success has been due to the fact that he understands so well the common misconception that the legal system is essentially about justice. So, at the beginning of a settlement conference in a civil suit, he routinely brings in the litigants and explains: "At the end of a trial, I do not hand out a white feather to the one who was right, or a black feather to the one who was wrong. I do not decide who is good or bad. I just decide whether or not to make someone pay someone else money."

All of this, finally, should make plain that courtrooms are not great places to heal; rather, lawsuits tend to deepen existing wounds and leave permanent scars. If you doubt this, talk to anyone who has been

through a contested divorce—preferably one involving children.

Let me be clear: The legal system can be used as a powerful device for making change, and particularly for ending certain sorts of oppressive behaviors. It can be incredibly helpful in situations where the only way to get the attention of those in power is to make them pay a lot of money. The paradigmatic situation is one involving a large, publicly owned corporation which, by definition and legal obligation, has no mission except to make money. Thus I have had the happy opportunity to participate in a few important civil rights cases. And I have watched my partner (in life) and her partners (in law) change the ways that whole industries (insurance companies, grocery stores, restaurant chains) behave by making industry leaders (State Farm, Lucky Stores, Denny's) pay big bucks for mistreating older people, women, and people of color. In each of those cases, the corporate wrongdoer had been asked in advance to admit its mistake and change its ways; its refusal to do so ended up costing the shareholders tens or hundreds of millions.

I really don't think the same strategy makes sense for dealing with Buddhist teachers who have engaged in misconduct. To begin with, almost all the teachers I know have little or nothing in the way of personal financial resources; in lawyer's parlance, they are "judgment proof." So the institution—meaning the

meditation center, temple, or other expression of the community as a whole—becomes the only viable target. Of course, as Aitken Roshi emphasizes, the community as a whole *should* take responsibility for helping a victimized person get therapy and whatever assistance she or he needs; this responsibility arises out of being a community, regardless of what the law dictates. But beyond that, it is hard to see what is sensible or just about depriving a community of its practice place in order to provide money as "vindication" for the individual who has been (or may have been) injured.

The more critical distinction is that Buddhist centers generally do not need to be bludgeoned to get them to pay attention to these sorts of problems. In that respect, my own sangha's painful experience is a case in point. By all accounts, the abbot had been the unquestioned authority in the institution for a dozen years before the accusations came fully to the surface. When they did, the response of the community was not fundamentally punitive; rather it was to ask that the teacher admit error and take responsibility for his conduct. When he could not or would not do so to the satisfaction of the community as a whole, he had to leave.

The entire process will be expensive, draining, and hurtful for everyone involved, and will generally increase the level of greed, hate and delusion.

The lessons I derive from this history (and that is what it is to me; I arrived at the practice place a few weeks after the abbot left) do not commend litigation as a constructive means for dealing with this type of situation. Rather, what is needed is room in our sanghas for individuals to speak up and be heard, and we need to foster structures within our institutions that can and will stand up to the teacher if he or she is doing wrong. Only if a community as a whole insists on shutting out the voices of those who feel injured; only if a community as a whole insists that its teacher is an enlightened being who is somehow beyond the precepts; only then does it make sense to resort to the functional equivalent of a baseball bat to the head in order to get the attention of that teacher and that community.

As our ancestor Stone Head taught: "All things have their function. It is a matter of use in the appropriate situation." Another great ancestor found it appropriate and useful to cut a cat in half—but it's pretty hard for me to imagine a time or place where I would do that and be aligned with the teachings of the Buddha. Similarly, I am sure that there are circumstances in which a lawsuit is the appropriate means for dealing with the sexual misconduct of a Buddhist teacher. It seems deeply mistaken, however, to tout litigation as a generally sensible or appropriate or "Buddhist" response to such situations in our communities.

The fundamental question is not which means we use, but rather from which principle we proceed. Yesterday, I attended what we call a Mountain Seat ceremony—the installation of the first woman abbot (or abbess, if you prefer) in our lineage: Shunbo Blanche Hartman. Blanche has been as staunch a critic of sexual misbehavior by priests and teachers as anyone in our community. Sitting at her side, as her specially honored guest, was that former abbot—her ordination teacher—who left years ago amidst so many accusations and so much acrimony. His presence there did not mean that he had returned to the embrace of our sangha (much healing would be needed for that ever to happen), but neither was he an enemy, a disease—the "other." During the dharma interrogation that is part of the ceremony, someone asked our new abbot which principle she would apply in taking care of our Zen Center. She replied: "There is no separation between self and other."

I want to suggest, as humbly as I can, that we be relentless in rooting out modes of behavior that harm people in our communities; that sexual misconduct and abuse of power by those with teaching authority are particularly harmful forms of behavior; and that in confronting these problems we must always keep our eyes on the living, breathing, non-dual Buddha Dharma. ❖

AJ Kutchins is an attorney and a member of the San Francisco Zen Center.

Who's Hurting? (continued from page 23)

he told me I couldn't take a joke. Around the same time, I had (consensual) sexual relationships with two (male) teachers—after I had passed their courses. Years later, I was harassed at work for organizing a gay employee network and advocating domestic partner benefits. (That problem was resolved without litigation, by the way, and the internal and external pressure it generated led to some very positive changes at the company.) I was also intimate for many years with a survivor of horrific abuses; that relationship was both abusive and sublime, neither black nor white. I felt both emotionally battered and deeply beloved; it was very difficult to leave. These experiences taught me a lot about my own tendencies toward victimhood, my desire for affirmation—and forced me to learn some different strategies. Along the way, I wasted a lot of energy wallowing in my suffering, obsessing on ways I'd been "screwed" or "ripped off." Meditation and good friends are what help me unlearn these destructive mental habits, stop abdicating power, stand up to abusers and walk away from hurtful situations.

Not blaming is very difficult—it requires careful thought and even more careful use of language—but the payoffs are infinitely more satisfying, I'm finding.

I'm sure Vadas is correct that harassment won't stop until it costs harassers more than it's worth. And I'm sure she's right that men are talking more about the problem because women are speaking out and fighting back. And some men—I would include Aitken Roshi—seem to be listening and responding, not merely out of self-interest, but out of genuine empathy and desire for justice.

Men do benefit collectively from a culture of sexism, and they have a collective responsibility to dismantle that injustice. Together, men and women must hold harassers and rapists accountable. But since not all men are rapists and harassers, it's not fair to tar them all with the same brush. We end up attacking our allies, which doesn't help solve the problem.

Vadas says, "To the extent that Buddhism is about ending oppression, it must also be about standing in solidarity with the oppressed." She is right: the Buddhist vow to help all sentient beings sometimes means providing support, shelter and counsel to those who are injured by greed, hate and delusion. But Buddhism is ultimately about ending *suffering*, and the root of suffering is the very idea of "self" as separate from "other." Suffering arises from seeing the world in terms of victims and perpetrators, whichever side of the equation one happens to be on at the moment. Don't get me wrong: sexual abuse and the pain it causes are very real. But they also arise from delusions, tricks of the mind. That insight is what Shakyamuni Buddha urged us to investigate. ❖

Shannon Hickey is a student of Zen Buddhism and a founder of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association.

Harassment (continued from page 21)

considerations of such women. I know that some women who have been sexually harassed by male Buddhist teachers have brought civil suits against them; I support their decision and applaud their courage in acting so decisively against injustice.

In the act of sexual objectification, women's bodies or body parts are unfairly imbued by men with a sexual desirability, the effect of which is to render women rapable.

The sexual harassment of women students by male Buddhist teachers will end when it costs Buddhist men collectively more than it's worth to Buddhist men collectively. It will end when Buddhist men perceive that their "natural" sexual objectification of women is in fact a political act, that this political act typically leads to other sexual uses of women, and that at least some of these sexual uses of women harm men's interests as well. I think civil suits brought by women students against Buddhist sex harassers can begin to effect that cost and that perception. Certainly, to date, nothing else has.

If a Buddhist man emerges from his local organic foods market, laden down with a week's worth of groceries, only to find that his car has been stolen by a slickly organized band of car thieves while he was quietly rummaging in the kohlrabi, what is likely to be his response? Would he recommend shunning the car thief until the thief repents of his thieving ways? Or would he call the cops to report a stolen vehicle?

Family Matters

Some might say that, while wrongdoing directed at Buddhists by non-Buddhists is an appropriate cause for legal action, wrongdoing within the Buddhist community or "family" should be treated differently. After all, a brother who steals his sister's bicycle is properly treated differently than a stranger's child who steals the same bike. A parent might be justified in calling the police in the latter case, but surely not in the former.

Unfortunately, it is just such an appeal to the special role of "family"—however widely or narrowly "family" is construed—that has historically served to hide and to justify the continuing sexual use and abuse of women by men. All sorts of communities insist that "their" women not appeal to outside authority in cases involving sexual abuse or sexual discrimination.

But virtually all of the abuses of women—incest, marital rape, sexual objectification, sexual harassment,

and so on—take place within a context identified as being either that of the woman's own family or her own community. Appealing to women not to "go somewhere else" for help is asking women to allow these abuses to continue, as they have for centuries. Calling women's use of outside help "disloyal" only makes room for more victims.

The world, men, women, and all that we think is real may be, in some ultimate sense, unreal. But men who are real enough to objectify and harass women—who are real enough to suffer from these acts—are also real enough to accept responsibility for their actions, both individually and collectively. To the degree that Buddhism is about ending oppression it must also be about standing in solidarity with the oppressed. To stand in solidarity with the oppressed requires seeing the injustice of sexual harassment as its women victims see it, and dealing with sexual harassment as women choose to deal with it. In many cases, this will be by way of sex-harassment suits against male perpetrators.

Speaking of sexual acts unjust to women as "addictions" is an act of mystification and itself contributes to injustice. And, though peace may be everyone's goal, the oldest story remains a true one: there is no peace without justice—and there is no justice without justice for women. ❖

Melinda Vadas is a disabled feminist philosopher who lives in Oak Ridge, North Carolina.

Robert Aitken Roshi replies:

I subtitled my essay on sexually abusive Buddhist teachers "A Think Piece," for I felt tentative about my understanding of the subject. In the final paragraph, I invited responses that would establish a conversation, and Melinda Vadas has accepted with a carefully written essay of her own. I am glad that she and I share outrage at the sexual abuse of Buddhist students by their teachers, and I appreciate her support for the "shunning" remedy. I have incorporated some of her suggestions in a revision of my piece for publication in a collection called *Original Dwelling Place*, to be published in the spring of 1996 by Counterpoint.

In particular, I reframed the issue in terms of sexual abuse rather than addiction. However, I left intact and enlarged at some length upon my basic premise: that one must maintain an appropriate container for one's energy. The problem is not, as Ms. Vadas seems to suggest, the arousal itself, but rather it is the notion that a person is powerless to control it.

Still, Ms. Vadas and I disagree only at the level of analysis. She says that the abusive teacher is harmfully indulging in sexual objectification, and I say that he is harmfully indulging his sexual energy. The upshot is abuse, and that's what stinks. — Robert Aitken

THE BONEYARD VISIT

Excited families often gather at prison gates: wives, parents, and children loaded down with clothes, diapers and food, waiting to be searched and signed in for a rare overnight visit.

In California, only a privileged group of inmates can have family visits—at most, three or four times per year, for 48 hours. The purpose of these visits is not to meet inmates' sexual needs, although lovemaking may happen—the purpose is to maintain family ties.

Department of Corrections studies show that inmates who lose their spouses to divorce, or lose touch with their children, are much more likely to return to prison.

To qualify, an inmate must be free of disciplinary violations and other risks, and enrolled full-time in a work or education program. (Jobs and classes are quite scarce.)

Typically, inmates see their families in small trailers or apartments within a fenced area, inside the secured prison perimeter. Guards are not in the apartments at all times, but the prisoners are counted day and night. When visits are over, inmates must pass a drug test before returning to their cells. If drugs are found, future visits are of course terminated. Inmates who have abused children or spouses are not eligible for family visits. People convicted of murder are sometimes allowed them, but Death Row inmates are not.

—Melody Ermachild Chavis works with men on Death Row and is a member of BPF's Board.

by Jarvis Masters

Herbert's cell had been empty for three days when he finally returned. "Man, how did it go?" I asked, hearing his cell door slam shut behind him.

"Hey, Bro," said Herbert. "It was cool. Man! It couldn't have been better. But some crazy shit happen though, on that first night. I'll tell you about it, but just give me a few ticks so I can put my stuff up and tighten up my cell a bit."

I was eager to hear about my neighbor's three-day conjugal visit. He had been corresponding with his wife Joyce for eight years, and wed her in prison just one year ago. She was the first woman Herbert had been with in more than 13 years.

"OK, Jay," Herbert called over to me. "Man, these boneyard visits is really cool."

"So you liked it?" I smiled to myself. "Was you nervous? Man, I just know you had to be nervous."

"Nervous!" said Herb. "I was freaked. Man, I was so damn nervous walking over to the trailer that I was

just hoping somebody would tell me my visit was canceled. That's how nervous I was, man!"

I laughed, and my excitement moved me to the front of my cell. "What happened when you got there? Was Joyce already there?"

"Man! It was a total trip. I walk inside and there's Joyce. She said, 'Hi Sugar, are you glad to see me, Daddy?'"

"And what did you say?" I laughed.

I just smiled and told her I was. Then the guard who escorted me left us by ourselves, and we hugged each other.

"Is that right...Is that right? Then what happen, Herb?"

"Well, Joyce had this pamphlet in her hand. She said the guards wanted us to read it. It was just rules, though, you know, all the *dos* and *don'ts*."

"What rules?"

"Shit! Man, I forget. You know me—I ain't never been good at remembering rules. I just tells Joyce, 'Say, Baby, let's sit down and read these rules—so we'll know what's happening.' You know, as a way of trying to get this woman to chill out. Because right away she was just a-nibbling all over a guy's neck and wanting to make love. She wasn't wasting no time, man. No time!"

"Is that right?" I said, still smiling at the front of my cell bars. "So you wasn't ready for anything?"

"Let me tell you something," Herbert got excited, moving to the front of his cell. "Just being alone like that with a woman and no guards around was scary enough."

"Ah, man!" I joked. "I thought you was going to make some serious love for three days and three nights—isn't that what you was telling me before you left? I just knew your ol' ass was going to freeze up. So what happen next?"

"Well," said Herbert, "After about a hour or so of reading those damn rules..."

"Hold on," I said. "You mean to tell me you spent a whole hour reading those God damn rules, Herb? Man, what's wrong with you? You haven't read no rules since you been in San Quentin—and here you go on your honeymoon, of all places—reading rules. Man, are you crazy?"

Herbert laughed. "Jay," he said. "You just don't know how it was being in that big-ass trailer. That trailer had to be five times the size of my cell. What would you do in a room that big after 13 years?"

"Hey, man," Herbert went on, "I really did think I was going to go in there and make passionate love to Joyce just like I was telling y'all—but man, man! That first day was totally strange. When Joyce got to nib-

bling all over on a guy's neck and sweet talking me, and wanting to live it up—the fear I had of being with a woman, after all these years of just beating off, well,” Herbert laughed. “The honest-to-God truth is my swipe wouldn't even get hard. Can you believe that? And man, I damn sure wasn't going to take off my clothes, no way! And let Joyce get a bird's eye view of my twitty bird.”

“Is that right?” I fell to my knees laughing, and I could hear the laughter of all the other prisoners down the tier who had been listening in.

“No way!” said Herbert, “And here I been bragging to Joyce for years on how big a stud I am, about how I was going to rock her world, make some serious love to her if we ever got our chance. After all that I couldn't let her see me take off my clothes, not having it up—man, don't you realize how damn embarrassing that would've been?”

“I hear you, Herb.” I was trying not to laugh. “So what happen next?”

“You mean on that first day?”

“Yeah, on that first day.”

“Well, not too much of anything!” Herbert admitted, to chuckling from down the tier. “Y'all is laughing,” he said to the tier, “but y'all haven't heard the real funny part yet. Wait 'til I get to the part when me and Baby finally got in the bed—ah, ah, ah, man!” Herbert laughed, joining in with everyone else.

“When was that, Herb?” I asked.

“Man, all of that shit happen on the first day. I had no problems after that. It only got better once that first day passed. You know?”

“OK,” I said. “Now I gotcha! So what happen next?”

“OK, after Baby and me puts away all the food and stuff that she brings for the three-day stay, we just talk and cuddle up to each other for about a hour or two, you know. I'm starting to get pretty loose, and we ends up kissing and rolling around on this huge-ass bed. Man, nothing like these prison bunks.”

“So now you're ready, huh, big Herb?”

“Oh, yeah, I was.” Herbert's voice became boastful. “Man, my swipe got harder than this here penitentiary steel. Just like these cell bars, by the time I gets on top of Joyce. And man, just as I closed my eyes, getting a nice stroke going—man, something inside that woman grabbed my swipe and squeezed it like it had teeth—scaring the holy living shit out of me. It scared me half to death. I screamed and jumped clean off this woman, trying to get my rabbit-ass out of that damn bed. And them beds is wide too! It seemed like I had to swim a mile to get off that bed. I just went into straight panic, holding onto my swipe, trying to get my damn feet on that floor.”

“You bullshitting me, Herb?” I said, laughing till I cried.

“I bullshit you not!” said Herbert. “This is the god's truth! And then Joyce looks at me, laying over there on the other side of the bed. She says, ‘Daddy, what's wrong?’ in that sweet voice of hers.

“What's wrong?” I said, standing at the bedroom door, butt naked. “Girl, what in the world do you have up inside you??”

“Joyce says, ‘What got you to jumpidy-jump like you just did? Damn, Baby, I thought it was maybe your heart or something.’

“I said, ‘It's my heart now! But a second ago it was you! Girl, what was that?’

“She says, trying not to giggle, ‘I guess you mean my muscles. Daddy—you just a-raining in the face. Are you all right?’

“Oh, no,” I said. “Those ain't no muscles, Baby. That was

something else. I know muscles. That *had* to be something else. Because, Baby, I ain't never in my life felt no muscles like them.”

“Joyce says, ‘That's because you ain't never in your life had a woman like me.’

“OK, then I wanna see 'em! Because Baby, we ain't doing nothing until I make sure. So let me see 'em.’ And I went back to where Joyce was laying on the bed, and tried to look between her legs. Like a complete fool.” Herbert started to laugh.

By now the whole tier was choking with laughter. Even some prison guards could be heard laughing.

“You wanna know something?” said Herbert, waiting for all the laughter to die down. “It was totally embarrassing for me to have lost the real feeling of what a woman's love was like. That's what this prison can do to you. I'm just glad as hell that Joyce took it all in stride, and found it even more funnier than all of you.”

Herbert wrapped up his story. “The next morning when Joyce and me gets up and makes us some breakfast, she gets to eyeballing me from across the table. She's trying to drink her cup of coffee, but every time, every time this woman brings the cup to her lips, she looks at me and gets to giggling. For two whole days,” said Herb, “that's all that woman did was giggle. She laughed so hard that by the end of the visit she'd just look at me and break into tears.” ❖

Jarvis Masters is a frequent contributor to Turning Wheel. He is an African American on Death Row in San Quentin Prison, where he writes and practices Tibetan Buddhism. He can be contacted at: C-35169, Tamal, CA 9497.

*I screamed and jumped
clean off this woman,
trying to get my rabbit-ass
out of that damn bed.*

***Instructions to the Cook:
A Zen Master's Lessons
in Living a Life That Matters***
by Bernard Glassman and Rick Fields
Bell Tower Books, 1996, \$20

Reviewed by Alan Senauke

Thinking of Zen, we may conjure up images of dark robes and stern faces, spotless zendos and strenuous meditation designed to strip away self-serving ego. And though we may know better than these stereotypes, the images linger. Change the scene to a "street retreat" in the Bowery.

"One night we slept in boxes we found on the street. It was cold, the pavement was hard, the street-lights were shining, and there was noise all night. The street stripped us bare."

This is a different kind of zendo, not appropriate for all people, but a way of living the Bodhisattva's compassionate practice of identity action. This is the stuff of Bernie Glassman's vision and lifework. His new book, *Instructions to the Cook*, is a manifesto of socially engaged Buddhism, true to the traditional Zen of Roshi Glassman's late teacher, Taizan Maezumi Roshi, but turning the teaching subtly and continuously so that hungry ghosts are always in view. These hungry ghosts include homeless families on the streets of Yonkers, where Glassman's Greyston Mandala is located; frightened children left alone in welfare motels; ourselves craving love, fame, or enlightenment.

The Zen cook's vow is to offer "the supreme meal to all of us hungry ghosts in the ten directions." How we make the menu, prepare the food, and eat this "supreme" meal is the matter of this book.

Glassman notes, "the supreme meal is very different

for each of us. But according to the principles of the Zen cook, it always consists of five main 'courses' or aspects of life. The first course involves spirituality; the second course is composed of study and learning; the third course deals with livelihood; the fourth course is made out of social action or change; and the last course consists of relationship and community."

These courses represent the five elements or "Buddha Families," Glassman's vision for the Greyston Mandala. Each course is complete in itself, and yet incomplete if not integrated into a whole meal, a whole life. So each course contains a challenge to take up a particular practice—mindfulness and meditation, studying the self, baking brownies, housing the homeless, creating networks of inclusion rather than separation—while keeping the others always in play. This is how a chef, juggler, or Zen master expresses skill. Glassman is urging us to settle for no less.

Most Zen books these days seem to be collections of edited dharma talks. I'm thankful that *Instructions to the Cook* is written whole, in plain English, by Glassman and co-author Rick Fields. Glassman's voice slides by with deceptive ease, and I found myself re-reading sections to catch the essence of his comments and their implications for my own life and work.

Beneath the deceptive simplicity is the deep challenge of Glassman's vow. He has no embarrassment about setting the highest goals: ending homelessness, feeding all hungry people. Each "course" of the meal pushes beyond Zen conventions, right into the middle of the "whole catastrophe"—without attachment to the outcome, but with dogged intention, nonetheless.

These Instructions show us a way to cook our lives in complete engagement with ourselves and society, drawing out the full flavor of spirituality. This is the kind of Zen we need more of, for everyone's sake. Read this book and consider what's cooking on your own stove. ❖

Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it.

Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations.

Do not believe in anything because it is spoken and rumored by many.

Do not believe in anything simply because it is found in your religious books.

Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders.

But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason, and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.

—Shakyamuni Buddha

The Eros of Everyday Life: Essays on Ecology, Gender and Society

by Susan Griffin

Doubleday, 1996, \$24.95 (cloth)

Reviewed by Barbara Hirshkowitz

If you are seeking a profound understanding of our times, you will want to read Susan Griffin's work. In her latest offering, *The Eros of Everyday Life*, she builds upon a foundation of knowledge both wide and deep. Yet, there is nothing amorphous about the edifice or the terrain. Every facet in her thinking is illuminated and delineated. Elsewhere she has written of women and nature, pornography and silence, history and war. Here the theme is Eros, that son of Aphrodite whose arrows excite erotic love in gods and men [and women?], according to Webster's. There, eros is further defined as: "love directed toward self-realization."

It's a big territory covered by this slim volume, but you'll have an excellent guide. Susan Griffin is not only a writer of some renown but also a poet, lecturer, teacher, playwright and filmmaker. And it shows. She can dazzle your intellect with the brightness of her thinking and in the next paragraph confide the secrets of her childhood. Her presence is palpable; she makes the flat pages breathe; she makes reading an erotic experience.

Doubleday has assembled a lovely book: the cover photo by Edward Weston, and text that is easy on the eye (if not the brain), contribute to make an unusually sensuous package.

The book includes two sections: the first, a series of essays leading up to the title essay; the second, a collection of pieces written between 1980 and 1990 that have been published previously. Though I expected to be disappointed by section two—incidental pieces, I thought—I was wrong. Each essay is a gem and none seems out of place.

While this book contains little that is explicitly Buddhist, it is clear that the underpinnings of Griffin's thinking are akin to many teachings of Buddhism. Every once in awhile the language of the dharma comes peeking through, as here: "The wheel of suffering sweeps up every human experience in its course." Explaining hungry ghosts, she says, "Aspects of the self that have been relinquished become monstrous in the imagination."

It's easier to quote the work than to summarize or define it—the ideas and stories blend together into a rich and seamless whole—and no words I can conjure can contain the book. Yet, here's my attempt. Western civilization, up to and including we late-20th-century readers of *Turning Wheel* and our fellow citizens, has

lost the eros of everyday life by vanquishing nature and by holding duality instead of connectedness at the center of our religions, philosophies and lifestyles. Though we have seemed to change, replacing the warrior with the technician, colonialism with development, the marketplace with the information superhighway, we have not replaced the systematic grip of ideas and ideologies that date back to the Greeks and Romans. By placing ourselves outside nature, we lose the means of locating ourselves, and therefore each other.

Yet our situation is far from hopeless. While this book is filled with painful ideas, demonstrating very clearly the suffering caused by both the ideologies of communism and capitalism, no fantastic technological breakthrough, no astonishing scientific theory is needed. The remedy is not easy, but it is close at hand. As I read it: through a combination of awareness and compassion, we can learn to locate ourselves, one another, and the eros of everyday life.

"Because to know is an erotic act," Griffin says, "one is made vulnerable to what has been before unknown; all knowledge enters the self as the force of change." And Susan Griffin shows us again and again how she puts eros into practice. As here:

If I rise from my desk, leave my pen and paper behind, walk to the door, the play of life before me and inside is suddenly dazzling in its intensity. Is it because I am thinking about consciousness that suddenly my experience sharpens? And when I return to write will I be able to reshape the form so that more of this world falls on the page? One can spend a whole life writing, I think to myself, and still hardly begin.

I'm grateful to Susan Griffin for this shaping, for her play with inward and outward, for the direction of eros taken up, and for the promise of much to come. ❖

How does a part of the world leave the world?
How can wetness leave water? — Rumi



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COORDINATOR'S REPORT

As I finish this page, my bags are packed to spend several weeks in Asia. This will be my fifth annual trip to Thailand to meet with friends and fellow conspirators—all breathing mindfully, of course—from the International Network of Engaged Buddhists. This year there is no INEB conference as such, but the INEB executive board will have three or four days together in Mae Hong Song, near the Thai/Burma border, to share our visions and mark out some clear direction for INEB's next few years of work. Meeting so close to the border, we will also have an opportunity to witness again the current situation for displaced ethnic peoples of Burma, and to consider anew BPF's commitment to their wellbeing.

After the INEB meeting, some of us will join the second Engaged Sangha workshop at our friend Ven. Sutape's "forest" temple in Thailand's mostly deforested, rural Northeast—the poorest part of the country. I particularly look forward to this week with monks, nuns, and priests from a variety of cultures and Buddhist traditions, sharing our practices, enjoying the different expressions of Buddhadharma. Even more,

the point of these gatherings is to explore how our ordination vows and precepts lead us back into engagement with the world: protecting the forest, sheltering the homeless, tending the sick. And beyond that, we will look for ways to transform structures of corporate greed, patriarchy, national chauvinism. I'll say more about it on my return.

As we enter this leap year, I'd like to report briefly on what BPF is doing. We just received a second grant from the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation: \$7,000 for mobile medical teams serving displaced Burmese in border areas. This money has a huge impact on malaria, intestinal infections, and other dangerous but easily treated ailments, as the average cost per treatment is \$1.25. Our Tibetan Revolving Loan Fund continues to underwrite labor-intensive right livelihood for Tibetan refugees in Nepal and India. Most recently, the Fund helped Tibetans build a bread bakery in one of their settlements.

Two new BASE programs are underway: one in Arcata, California, another here in the Bay Area. In the coming year we hope to work with people interested in starting BASE groups in other areas of the country. We now have a draft manual for BASE, a rudimentary instruction book for creating a local group. Please let us hear from you if you would like to know more about how to do it.

By early April, we hope to have a BPF home page on the World Wide Web. This "page" will include basic information about *Turning Wheel* and about BPF's programs, history, and membership options. It will also offer news and urgent action items for engaged Buddhists, and provide links to other relevant sites on the Internet.

We have also received a grant to begin a Buddhist Ethics Project, offering resources and a compassionate ear to people confronting issues of sexual misconduct and related suffering within the Buddhist circle. You can read more about the program on page 13.

Because our growth was so strong last year, we have been able to hire Diana Winston, who some of you know from the BASE program, to work as Chapter Coordinator. For years we have wanted to put more attention and energy into BPF chapters, offering them more of the information and resources available in the national office. Now we have a chance to do just that. For more information, please see the Chapter News on pages 35 and 36, and the inside back cover.

We will continue our program of "institutes," workshops, and retreats this year; events are planned in Seattle, Chicago, Boston, and the San Francisco Bay Area. The board and staff are committed to recognizing the truly national character of BPF membership by organizing events around the country. We don't quite know how to pull this off, but with your help, we'll learn. ❖

—Alan Senauke

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HOW YOU CAN PREVENT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

As a *Turning Wheel* reader, you are part of a worldwide sangha that shares an interest in meditation and action. As a way to bring cohesion to this far-flung community, beginning with this issue, we offer suggestions for study and action based on themes from the journal. The theme in this case is "sexual misconduct."

You can take up these suggestions individually, with friends or a small group, or as a BPF chapter. We'll try to offer activities that fall into several related realms: study and inquiry; actions that can be undertaken in one's personal sphere; community-based actions; and work on national and international levels.

We hope that individuals, groups and chapters will engage in at least one realm. We are eager to hear what you do, and will share that news in coming issues of TW. Our engaged Buddhist sangha, seeded around the country and world, may have greater effects when we act from a shared focus.

1. Study and Inquiry: A wealth of materials is available on the issue of sexual misconduct and the psychological and physical effects of abuse on women and children. We recommend three books:

- *Sex in the Forbidden Zone: When Men in Power—Therapists, Doctors, Clergy, Teachers, and Others—Betray Women's Trust*, by Peter Rutter, from Fawcett Crest Books.
- *The Mind of Clover: Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics*, by Robert Aitken Roshi, from North Point Press.
- *For A Future to Be Possible: Commentaries on the Five Wonderful Precepts*, by Thich Nhat Hanh, with additional essays by others, from Parallax Press.

Rutter's book is essential reading from a Western psychological perspective. Aitken Roshi and Thich Nhat Hanh's works explicate Buddhist precepts in a way that help us understand there is no gap between our meditation practice and an ethical way of life.

2. Personal Practice: The personal practice of right sexual conduct is often hard to talk about. We suggest using the study materials above, to examine how we conduct our own relationships, how sexual attraction and desire arise, and what we do with those feelings. We can also give support to those who have suffered abuse, or who are working with family members and friends who have endured abuse. Listen carefully; help where you can.

3. Community-Based Action: BPF has assembled a collection of ethical guidelines and procedures from various Dharma communities. Although precepts provide root guidance, Western communities often need more explicit guidance, particularly in the realms of sexuality and power. Please write to us for a copy of this packet, study it along with the books above, and

discuss the readings with your friends, teachers, and communities. Like the Buddha's Vinaya, these guidelines grow out of real issues. Feel free to call the BPF office for further advice and resources.

4. National and International Work

In our wider communities, there is always a need for volunteer support at "safety zones"—sheltered housing for women and children, and rape crisis hotlines and counselors. Often this work must be done by women, but everyone can help with the fundraising and resource-collecting that make these safe places possible. Following are national organizations that either provide information or work legally to end sexual violence:

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence: (800)537-2238

National Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence: (206)634-19003

Battered Women's Justice Center: (800)903-0111

BPF suggests several places (among many) where your support now can make a difference internationally.

The Daughter's Education Project rescues and educates young girls at risk from the international prostitution trade in Thailand (P.O. Box 10, Mae Sai, Chiang Rai 57130, Thailand). Some of us have visited DEP and seen their wonderful work first-hand.

Many of us are concerned about rape victims in Bosnia. Contact the *International Women's Human Rights Clinic* for information on their War Crimes Project at CUNY Law School, Main St, Flushing, NY 11367 or call the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at (215)846-2022. — Alan Senauke

REGIONAL & LOCAL CONTACTS WANTED

We are trying to expand our network in a practical way, looking for members who would like to serve as local BPF contacts. These local contacts, whose addresses and phone numbers are listed here in *Turning Wheel*, can be two-way conduits for BPF information. They can help distribute brochures and other materials, and make contacts with dharma centers. They can also offer general Buddhist resources to interested people. They send us news from their own communities. And where the circumstances are right, they can help put people in touch with others who might want to form local chapters, although this is not a requirement of the job.

We're looking for people who would like to be this kind of jewel in Indra's Net for a year or two. Write, call, or e-mail Diana Winston, our new Chapter Coordinator, at the BPF office for more information.

CHAPTER & ACTIVIST NEWS

BPF is pleased to let you know that we now have a Chapter Coordinator on staff, Diana Winston. This new position fits naturally with Diana's other responsibilities as BASE Coordinator. For several years, we have wanted to foster a more active exchange with BPF chapters and affiliates, but it takes staff time we could never quite find. Now, with Diana as Chapter Coordinator, we can stay in closer touch with chapters and other contacts, learn what you're doing locally and share that info with members at large. We can also let you know more effectively what we are doing in the national office, and where you can help.

At its last meeting, the **East Bay Chapter** held a discussion on the second precept, "Generosity," using Thich Nhat Hanh's new book, *For a Future to Be Possible*. There was much spirited dialogue, especially about the passage "I will prevent others from profiting from human suffering or the suffering of other species on Earth." A speaker from the Berkeley Religious Coalition for the Homeless will be at the next meeting.

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On March 10, the **Institute of Spirituality and Aging** sponsored a day of mindfulness at the Berkeley Zen Center called "Snow on the Mountain Top." The program focused on the aging process and caregiving for older parents, within a Buddhist context. Zen priest Maylie Scott, who lives with her 93-year-old mother, gave a wonderful Dharma talk.

Lots of activity in **North Carolina**: folks want to start a chapter in the **Charlotte** area and are looking for members (see contact list). In the **Triangle Area**, 12 people attended a first meeting, which involved a brainstorming session to clarify interests and concerns. Ex-BPF Board President Margaret Howe will be working with the chapter (when she has some free time from being a mom). Their next meeting will formulate a plan of action.

Contrary to popular opinion, the **Sacramento Chapter** is alive and well, and involved in a number of activities: they are holding a letter-writing campaign for imprisoned Tibetan nationals, and have been collecting and sending dharma books to prisons. One of their more creative events has been to meditate in parks next to a sign saying "Join us for Meditation." Guerrilla theater, political action, or spreading the dharma?

For more than a year, the **San Diego Chapter** has been taking dinner once a month to formerly homeless people in a transitional housing situation. This has been a wonderful sangha-building activity for both communities. The chapter is also planning an event for the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

The **Seattle Chapter** is continuing its non-violence training; and a separate support group is meeting monthly and reading *Insight and Action*. They'll be hosting Fran Peavey and Tova Green for a weekend workshop on Strategic Questioning, April 27-28.

In March the **Sonoma County Chapter** held an early-morning silent vigil at the Courthouse Square in Santa Rosa, to observe a Day of Non-Violence. This yearly event focuses specifically on youth and violence.

Chapter Briefs:

A new chapter is starting up in **Eugene, Oregon!**... The **Los Angeles Chapter** will soon be back on its feet. LA-area BPF members should look for a mailing in April or May describing upcoming activities...**Prairie Buddha** in Illinois still meets twice a month for sittings and discussions...Sally Sheridan of the **Yuma Chapter** is interested in developing prison education programs. She is researching this project through the Internet... Write us with more updates! ❖

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLASSIFIEDS

SUMMER WORK STUDY PROGRAM—integrate practice into daily life at Vajrapani Institute, Tibetan Buddhist retreat center in Santa Cruz mountains. Daily meditations and classes with resident teacher in conjunction with 20 hours of work per week. June 16-Aug. 4. Total cost: \$250. For application, contact Kate Savannah at 408/338-6654.

PROPERTY CARETAKING JOBS AVAILABLE. Enjoy rent-free living! Worldwide! The Caretaker Gazette, 2380 NE Ellis, Suite C-16TW, Pullman, WA 99163. 509/332-0806, \$24/year.

"KARMA HAPPENS" Bumper stickers. It's both noble and true! SASE and \$2 payable to: R. Lovitt, 5226 Puget Rd., NE Olympia, WA 98516.

THE CONCH-US TIMES, the Journal of the Dead Buddhists of America, for those appreciating both Grateful Dead and Buddhist Cultures: \$8/yr. Payable to: Ken Sun-Downer, Box 769, Idyllwild, CA 92549.

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: \$22 postpaid. Meditation supplies. Free brochure. Carolina Morning Designs, Dept. BPFN, Rt. 67, Box 61, Cullouhee, NC 28723. 704/293-5906.

MANZANITA VILLAGE Retreat Center in Southern California has been given a half-acre of land in the mountains of Costa Rica. They plan to raffle 1008 tickets to raise much-needed funds for the center. The land is in the unique Cloud Forest area near Monteverde. The winner will be free to build a dwelling, sell, or donate the land. Call 619/782-9223 for info.

VITAMINS NEEDED: Serbia is now swamped with refugees from the fighting this summer in the Krajina and Bosnia. Kosovo is continuing to suffer deep unemployment and political repression. The people who work with us in those regions have asked for vitamins to help people get through the winter. Please take the vitamins out of the bottles and put the pills into a re-sealable plastic bag, with a description of the contents clearly visible from the outside. Send to: N. Jaicks, 2909 Regent St. #3, Berkeley, CA 94705.

GAY MEN'S RETREAT: "Sustaining Heart & Spirit." Sharing spiritual practices, personal histories, present moments, solar passages, the great outdoors. Sonoma County. June 19-23 & Sept. 18-22. David Carr, P.O. Box 366, Willits, CA 95490. 707/459-3036.

BPF's affiliate, the **GAY BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP**, has sittings, speakers, and discussions every Thursday evening and every other Sunday morning in San Francisco. In addition to classes, workshops, and weekend retreats, they hold monthly potluck dinners. They also participate in Buddhist AIDS Projects. The newsletter, with information and articles on topics of concern to gay Buddhists, is available for \$15/8 issues. (See inside back cover for address.)

THE PRISON DHARMA NETWORK is alive and well and in need of funds so that it can distribute the materials it has received. Please send your tax-deductible donations to: PDN, P.O. Box 912, Astor Station, Boston, MA 02123.

THE BUDDHIST AIDS PROJECT (BAP) is compiling an anthology with the working title: *On Meditation and AIDS: Buddhist Practice and Living With HIV*, scheduled for publication by Parallax Press in late '96/early '97. Contributors include Thich Nhat Hanh, Eric Kolvig, and Joan Halifax. Articles range from contemplations on death and change to essays on mindful care of the living and dying, as well as practices for those who have died. We are seeking articles that investigate issues of life & death, grief, life-threatening illness, and, in particular, AIDS in light of Buddhist practice. Submissions will be accepted through Summer 1996. BAP is also exploring the possibility of offering an 8-week Buddhist support group for people with HIV in cooperation with California Pacific Medical Center. BAP: 555 John Muir Dr. #803, San Francisco, CA 94132. 415/522-7473.

HELPING HOMELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN: You can help by donating personal care items that are greatly needed—toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, hair brushes, combs, and hand lotion—to the Women's Daytime Drop-in Center in Berkeley. Volunteers are also needed to work with the women and children. For more info: 510/548-6933.

VOLUNTEER M.D.'S AND NURSES are needed to provide health care to Tibetans in India. Former volunteer will provide information on how to help. Barry Samuel, M.D., 18324 Newell Rd., Shaker Heights, OH 44122-5052.

SUPPORT INMATES with literary materials. Please send to: Prison Library Project, 976 W. Foothills Blvd. #128, Claremont, CA 91711.

CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED to feed Sunday dinner to homeless women. Please send to Padmasambhava Buddhist Center, 151 Lexington Ave., Apt. 8A, New York, NY 10016. For further info contact Marie Friquegnon at 201/595-2173.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES in a Buddhist community. We invite you to participate in a work/study program offering classes, room, board, and a small stipend. The work schedule is demanding but rewarding. Work for a leading Buddhist publisher in the areas of shipping, warehousing, book-binding, and sacred text preservation. Part-time internships also available. Dharma Publishing, 2910 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702. 510/548-5407.

BISEXUAL BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION—affirming unity, positive self-image, and bisexual identity for those committed to meditation and mindfulness practice. P.O. Box 858, Amherst, MA 01004-0858.

INDIANA STATE PRISON ZEN group seeks donations: materials for tea ceremony—especially green tea—study materials, incense, robes, beads, etc. Please send them to: Indiana State Prison Chapel, Zen Buddhist Group, P.O. Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46361.

THE M.S.C. BUDDHIST GROUP is in need of zafus and/or zabutons and any other dharma related materials to help their 30-member strong, multi-tradition sangha. Donations may be sent to: M.S.C. Buddhist Group, c/o Chaplain William Peck, Washington State Penitentiary, P.O. Box 520, Walla Walla, WA 99362. Donations need to be sent from organizations or centers only, and marked to indicate that they are from a *Buddhist* organization. Donors should also request an acknowledgment of receipt.

GRATITUDES

BPF gratefully acknowledges contributions above membership received between December 1, 1995 & January 31, 1996.

Catherine Abbe ♦ Zomala Abell ♦ William Abrams ♦ Bruce Alicandri ♦ Michael Altshuler ♦ Stephen Anderson ♦ Frank Arcangelo ♦ Rita Archibald ♦ Brenda Armstrong-Champ ♦ Nancy Arthur ♦ Stephen Ascue ♦ Timothy Atkinson ♦ Linda Aubry ♦ David Aus ♦ Fairley Babnes ♦ James Lee Bagby ♦ Paul Bail ♦ Mrs. Elsa Bailey ♦ Josh Baran ♦ James & Jane Baraz ♦ Bruce Barclay ♦ David Barnhill ♦ Martha & Lee De Barros ♦ Dan King & Nina Benedetto ♦ Frank Benson ♦ Samuel Bercholz ♦ Michelle Bernard ♦ Antonia & Anthony Bernhard ♦ Hope Millholland Bernstein ♦ Dr. & Mrs. Robert Berry ♦ G. William Berry ♦ Bob Blair ♦ Nyla Blair ♦ Barbara Blouin ♦ Mary Anne Bodecker ♦ Creatura Books ♦ Martin & Theresa Booth ♦ David Bordinat ♦ David Brandau ♦ Brookrod ♦ Randi Brox ♦ Daniel Buckley ♦ Robert Bump ♦ Frank Cadwell ♦ Gilie Campbell ♦ Pat Cannan ♦ Chris Caruso ♦ Joan Casey ♦ Robert Chinery ♦ Sandra Christensen ♦ David Chura ♦ Michele Clark ♦ Susan Clements ♦ D. 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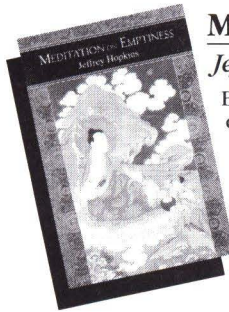
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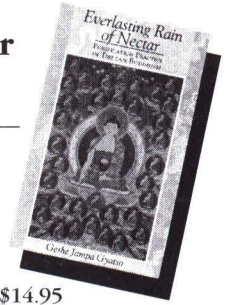
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