The Witness

Volume 76 • Number 6 • June 1993

In defense of creation

Caesar and the orphans

YOUR APRIL NUMBER IS A KNOCK-OUT! You are doing a noble work for the good old Episcopal Church. Your color scheme, your art enhancement, your department heads — all great.

Edna Ruth Johnson
The Human Quest
St. Petersburg, FL

THE WITNESS HELPS SUSTAIN ME as I and a group of women struggle to provide health services to women and children amidst increasing hunger, violence and poverty in rural Nicaragua.

Dorothy Granada
Managua, Nicaragua

I SERVE AS A VOLUNTEER for Mission of the Episcopal Church in Panama.

Your magazine is shared with Episcopalians in Colon, Panama — a real inner-city environment with 60-percent unemployment, high teenage pregnancy rate, etc.

Your articles have given me ideas for both empowerment and outreach, as well as connecting me in meaningful ways to my own country. There are seemingly more similarities than differences between Colon and south-central Los Angeles. The concept of God's kingdom trying to be here and now is a truth we all struggle to embrace.

Margaret Janse
Colon, Panama

ALTHOUGH I HAVE ONLY BEEN a *Witness* subscriber for less than a year, I think you folks put out a great journal/magazine. I eagerly await the arrival of each issue.

The interviews with the Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris and Dr. Verna Dozier, the poetry, the personal reflections (e.g. Susan Pierce's letter to her mother) are often the articles I enjoy most.

I should also state that your conference with Trinity Seminary was in my opinion one of the most courageous acts by Christians in the Anglican Communion I have witnessed. I believe this because it is critical to meet and freely discuss issues of faith with those who disagree with ourselves and recognize that we will not come to an agreement, but we still love each other and can join together at the altar of our Lord for communion.

Of course, there are people on both sides of all of these "hot-button" issues who only want to be in communion with those who are like-minded, but God seems to challenge us to something deeper and much more difficult.

Walter Brownridge
Ellicott City, MD

FIRST, I WANT TO SAY how much I enjoy your magazine. I've been a subscriber to *The Witness* for three years and with each issue I'm even happier. I know it's been over a year since the editorial and format changes were made, but I really like the new format! I enjoy reading several articles related to one topic — I feel that I get a more complete picture of an issue. I also like the new layout. The magazine is easy to pick up and read. It's one of the few magazines of which I make a habit to read cover to cover.

Lyman Farnham
Baltimore, MD

I HAD HOPED THAT IN *THE WITNESS,* I would find a journal which is in the forefront of sound Christian thought and action. However, I have been disappointed in the time and space you give to the homosexual agenda. At the present time, I have not been persuaded that homosexuality is a normal lifestyle and that the church should ordain homosexuals to the ministry.

I have not found any evidence yet, that homosexuality is wholly genetic in character.

As Christians, when we become aware of our moral weaknesses, we believe that with God's help we are able to overcome such weaknesses in order that we may live in harmony with others.

I was interested in reading the article "Born Gay?" in the October 19, 1992 issue of *The Nation*, which takes a dim view of the so-called scientific studies of recent years which claim a genetic basis for homosexuality.

Clyde Everton
Bend, OR

MY DEAR FRIEND Frances Schwab [at Boston's Church of the Advent] recently gave me a batch of current copies of *The Witness.* My own subscription had expired a number of years ago. As a pacifist and social activist, I found myself more and more radicalized by the abortion issue — but to an opposite vision of justice than that of most of my partners in protest including *The Witness.*

It was refreshing to see your courage in these recent issues in even raising a few questions about the abortionist position. When I noticed that some of your readers were canceling subscriptions, I knew it was time to renew mine in order to support your humility, grace and fidelity to the way of non-violence.

Jürgen W. Liias
Boston, MA

I Accuse

MOST OF WHAT KATIE SHERROD wrote in her open letter to the leadership of the Episcopal Church entitled "I Accuse" (4/93) is (from my perspective) true. The church has been a willing participant in the repression of women to the shame of us all. As a white male priest, there is no way I can experience how such repression feels. I do know it exists and I work at identifying those ways in which it is present within me.

I disagree with Sherrod's assertion, however, that the so-called conscience clause (adopted by the bishops in 1977) "simply cannot be the will of a loving God." Lifted out of its context and detached from the *two* pressing issues before the bishops at the time, the conscience clause is still widely misunderstood. It says: "... we affirm that no Bishop, Priest, Deacon or Lay Person should be coerced or penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disabilities as a result of his or her conscientious objection to the 65th General Convention's action with regard to the ordination of women to the priesthood or episcopate."

For me this statement reaffirms the Anglican commitment to respect conscience, even in those situations (and especially in those situations) where the exercise of such conscientious belief is viewed as misguided or wrong. I wish the conscience clause had never been adopted, not because it introduced a new variable into our ecclesiastical self-understanding, but rather because it was and is

redundant. For even if this statement were to be repealed, dioceses like Fort Worth would still have the time-honored right to elect a man holding Jack Iker's views to be their bishop and the wider church would still be free to endorse or negate such an election.

The Episcopal Church's modern-day commitment to respect the role of conscience has its roots, I believe, in the brief episcopate of Paul Jones. The church's bishops elected him bishop of what was then the Missionary Diocese of Utah in 1914 and then forced him to resign four years later. His offense? In the midst of World War One he dared to say: "War is unchristian."

In this way our bishops at that time imposed a uniformity on the wider church — a pacifist bishop could not be tolerated. The church's leadership supported "the war to end all wars" and conscientious dissent was not permissible.

In our own day we could emulate this earlier practice of our bishops, as Sherrod seems to suggest. But I believe that the Spirit accomplishes more when we are challenged to live through our differences, however tragically painful.

As I said at the outset, there were two issues before that House of Bishops meeting 16 years ago: concern for those opposed to the ordination of women *and* concern for those who supported such ordinations.

On Jan. 10, 1977, with the approval of his diocesan standing committee, Paul Moore, Jr., the bishop of New York, ordained Ellen Marie Barrett to the priesthood "in full knowledge of her professed homosexual orientation, believing that she was fully qualified in every way for holy orders." Much of the Episcopal Church was (and still is) horrified at such an action.

In response, a resolution submitted to that 1977 meeting of bishops stated "strong disapproval" of this ordination. But the motion was tabled. Next, when C. Kilmer Myers, then the bishop of California, asked the bishops for guidance on the issue of *licensing* an ordained lesbian (Barrett had now moved to California), a motion to disapprove of such action failed by a vote of 69 to 49.

Thus, the conscience clause, which affirmed the historic prerogative of bishops to have the final say on matters pertaining to ordination and licensing clergy, cut both ways at that Port St. Lucie meeting. Those opposed to the ordination of women felt reassured, while the courageous witness of Moore and Myers in accepting a lesbian for the ordained ministry was affirmed.

It seems to me that we cannot have one without the other.

Nathaniel W. Pierce
Cambridge, Md.

(Pierce is rector of Great Choptank Parish in Cambridge, Md. and co-author of **The Voice of Conscience: A Loud and Unusual Noise?** published by Charles River Press in 1989.)

MARGE CHRISTIE'S COMMENTARY in the May issue in reference to Bishop Iker's election, ratification, and consecration is a valid and impassioned perspective. But it is only one perspective on a very complicated issue. As a member of the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Chicago, my own perspective differs. We, too, agonized over our responsibility. We, too, were inundated with materials from every quarter. But I disagree with Marge in her assertion that our ultimate, but hardly unanimous, decision to ratify Jack Iker's election was a matter of "being nice." Indeed, I thought we were being just and exercising our responsibility to consider the fullness of this Episcopal Church. Our divided vote is itself representative of where the church stands. But the ratification of a bishop-elect opposed to the ordination of women, repugnant as it may be to many of us, is hardly an act of injustice.

Jack Iker was duly elected by canonical process. If the Diocese of Fort Worth desired to nullify, contest, or otherwise protest the election, they made no such motion. I can only assume that Jack Iker was thus called by that diocese to be their bishop. He was forthright in his opinions prior to his election and showed considerable integrity in remaining steadfast throughout the ratification process. He graciously granted my request for a personal conversation and in our time on the telephone, while we came to no agreement on our considerable differences, he was patient and thoughtful in answering my questions.

There is clearly no canonical impediment to the ordination of a bishop who opposes the ordination of women. If there were, I am confident that we or some of our many colleagues on Standing Committees around the country who studied those canons assiduously in the process would have found one. Neither have we succumbed in this church to posing canonical political tests for elective office. Not yet, anyway. While canon directs that all provisions for ordination to all orders of ministry shall be equally applicable to men and women, I don't think we've yet instituted any canon that guarantees ordination to anyone. No canon forces the bishop to ordain. The right to abstain, even to refuse, ordination is inviolate. Just as no priest can be forced to bless a marriage, so can no bishop be coerced into laying hands on. Had the bishops better understood the canons themselves, they would never have needed Port St. Lucie to clarify what was already abundantly clear.

I am confident that despite his present convictions in the matter, Jack Iker cannot promise to remain faithful to any program on this issue. I remind Marge that many bishops currently seated were once opposed to the ordination of women in principle and some in practice. The power of the Spirit working through the offices of experience changed them and may yet change Jack Iker.

Sam Portaro
Chicago, IL

(Portaro is Episcopal chaplain at the University of Chicago.)

Charlie

(This illustration accompanied Shari Young's subscription renewal.)

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Editor/publisher	Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann
Assistant Editors	Marianne Arbogast
	Julie A. Wortman
Promotion Manager	Marietta Jaeger
Magazine Production	Maria Catalfio
Book Review Editor	Bill Wylie-Kellermann
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Office: 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, Mich., 48226-1868. Telephone: (313) 962-2650. Fax number: (313) 962-1012.

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In defense of creation

All you have heard about Old Narnia is true. It is not the land of people. It is the country of Aslan, the country of the Walking Trees and visible Naiads, of Fauns and Satyrs, of Dwarfs and Giants, of the gods and the Centaurs, of Talking Beasts. It was against these that the first Caspian fought. It is you Telmarines who silenced the beasts and the trees and the fountains, and who killed and drove away the dwarfs and fauns, and are now trying to cover up even the memory of them.

— Dr. Cornelius to Caspian
Prince Caspian *by C.S. Lewis*

What I find exciting about this issue is that in a variety of voices we are being told that to defend creation, we must gain a deep knowledge of the land within 100 miles of us.

It is the stories of the people, the wildlife and the vegetation that may save us. It is an integral knowledge of the seasons and the tides, a relationship with specific land which will allow us to find the voice needed to call for its preservation.

Knowing a river and its plants, acknowledging the birds and their migration, eating the produce of your region — become radical acts of stewardship.

Recent science reports indicate the Milky Way is composed of diamonds and our planet, and even our own bodies, are made of stardust.

Creation is our ally.

Within a 100-mile radius of Detroit there is a petroglyph. The carvings are presumed to be a few hundred years old. Animals, spirals, people with bows and arrows are joined with the initials of loggers who cut down the hardwoods in the 1880s. One of these etched 1492 into the stone, even then launching a land claim. Mixed in are figures experts believe to be mythic.

Detroit's peregrine falcon Judith Yerkey

A mythic bear is said to have helped the Menominee Indians hide the copper mines from white men. In this case, we don't know what the subterranean cats depicted on the stone did for the Ottawa or Ojibwe, but they are worthy allies.

Detroit suburbanites recently claimed to have seen a wild coyote walking the streets.

When I worked for the local newspaper in Menominee, Mich., a high school friend reported seeing three large black panthers cross a remote rural road. He returned night after night with camera equipment, but never saw them again. When asked, the Department of Natural Resources' representative sounded sheepish and would only say that some DNR staff had also claimed to see, from a helicopter, large cats loping through a field.

And I start to hope that maybe the old Michigan survives, hidden.

There aren't many ways the earth in urban areas can still speak. Concrete largely covers her. And the air and water are assaulted. And the noise can seem relentless.

But there are wild pheasants here which are so hardy the DNR sometimes transplants them to rural areas for growth.

And yards, including ours, produce tomatoes, corn, beans, apples. The seeds are probably not local or indigenous, but the food is rising from the earth.

Surely there is strength in finding the constellations.

I am continually grateful to the eco-warriors. At the same time, I wonder if our primary resistance needs to be close to home as we attempt to reclaim our own region — its history and contours. In the search for allies, I know of none better than the peregrine falcons that for two Springs have nested one floor above our office. Last year they raised two babies, teaching them to hunt by dropping food for them to catch in mid-air. This year they nurture four eggs. Their cries call us out of our preoccupations and we watch them drop from the ledge above. They are wild and incongruous, but they are making Detroit their home. Nature, like children, is resilient and given half a chance will survive.

JeanieWylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher

The white man does not understand the Indian for the reason that he does not understand America. He is too far removed from its formative processes. The roots of the tree of his life have not yet grasped the rock and soil. But in the Indian the spirit of the land is still vested; it will be until other men are able to divine and meet its rhythm. Men must be born and reborn to belong. Their bodies must be formed of the dust of their forefather's bones.

— Chief Luther Standing Bear, 1933

editor's note

The crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina has divided the Left. Readers of *The Witness* are sending in urgent appeals for U.S. intervention and for restraint. At a recent meeting of the contributing editors, Carter Heyward said that, despite a long history with the peace movement, she'd written the president to say "we must do *something*." Tony Ramos suggested that the U.S. has not intervened, which he feels it should, because of racist attitudes toward Muslims. Jim Lewis, Manning Marable and I felt that U.S. interventionism is dangerous, nearly always self-serving and likely to involve the nation in a prolonged war unless it opts for massive air strikes which take out civilians, hospitals and schools. —*J.W-K.*

From our readers:

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship of St. Peter's, Chelsea, in N.Y.C.: As peace fellows, we have of course hoped for nonviolent solutions, but we have learned of so much continuing brutalization of the Bosnia Muslim people that we have come to the painful conclusion that armed intervention under United Nations auspices or arming of the Bosnian forces may be the only way to save these people. We are told in news accounts that the campaign of ethnic cleansing seems to be achieving its goals — in a process reminiscent of the Nazi Holocaust of scarcely more than half a century ago. We have been shocked at reports of torture, rape and murder and the taking of homes, farms and [trades] from people who have lived peacefully among their neighbors for generations. The world must not just talk but should act now.

Robert Burger, a priest in Colorado: The churches, most certainly our own, have been deafeningly silent on this whole issue. There seems to be a perfect dread on the religious front that U.S. military forces should *ever* be used again overseas for *any* reason.

We have arrived at a smug and comfortable isolationism, covering it nicely with the banner of pacifism. The judgement of God will fall severely on Church and State if an America which has the power and the resources to lead in the re-making of this part of the world holds back and does nothing.

Statement from the Sarajevo Peace Centre

We, Serbs, Yugoslavs of Serbian ethnic origin, Bosnians of Serbian ethnic origin, as well as other citizens of Serbian ethnic origin who live in Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina declare that:

The Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) does not represent the interests of the majority of the Serbian people; equally, we are convinced that the interests of Croats and Muslims are not represented by national parties. We do not agree with the statement that it is ethnic conflict that Bosnia and Herzegovina is faced with. The disastrous conditions we experience today resulted from the insatiable nationalistic policies of the governing parties. We do not accept the solution of our faiths and our future by arms and killings. Our interest is in indivisible common life with Muslims, Croats and other nations.

Pax Christi

Pax Christi USA is alarmed by calls for military intervention in the former Yugoslavia. We urge sanctions, assistance for refugees and that the Clinton administration support those groups in the former Yugoslavia who are actively engaged, at great risk to themselves, in nonviolent resistance to the war, and take proactive steps. Long-term U.N. monitoring missions will prevent the further escalation and spread of the war.

— excerpted from a 4/30/93 news release

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship's national executive committee has not (as we go to press) issued a position statement, but its Executive Secretary, Mary Miller, has provided The Witness *with notes from a recent committee conversation which are summarized here:*

•We have questioned what it means to be committed to nonviolence on the eve of the 21st century, in light of the world we live in and the faith we profess. We admit that we tend not to recognize and deal with the principalities which are always present. We must remain aware and respond.

•We are an organization which works and prays for peace. We traditionally oppose any kind of warfare or military intervention as morally wrong. We know we cannot solve economic and political problems through military means. We believe there are alternatives to military intervention and that we must not wait to take some action.

•We can be physically present. Many of us in EPF have experienced being physically present with others who are victimized and oppressed, as they confront their oppressors. We understand these experiences in terms of the Incarnation.

•We can promote the teaching and learning of peacemaking skills. We know that it is possible to be effective in nonviolent education of whole communities.

•We can request "non-military" U.S. intervention.

•We can confess and repent. We are aware of our country's readiness to use violence to solve problems. We acknowledge our own history of mass killing, genocide and invasion. We mistakenly view ourselves as the only superleader in the world, able and willing to right the wrongs in other nations.

•We can pray.

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning

Edmond L. Browning, writing about the position recently reached by the National Council of Churches:

We have called for the United States to provide ground forces to assist the humanitarian United Nations forces now on the ground in Bosnia. We also have recommended that the UN mandate be expanded to include protection of civilians and policing of borders to prevent a spread of the conflict.

We have also not ruled out lifting the arms embargo against Bosnian Muslims if we are not able to provide them adequate protection. And the issue of air strikes must be considered only in the context of a U.S. commitment to ground forces and assurances of protecting civilian populations and cultural sites.

These are hard issues with which we are grappling, but I am grateful we are moving towards a stronger commitment to see this evil war ended. In the Balkans, the UN/US seeks to end a war. This war has been raging out of control for over a year and remains an affront to human decency every day that it continues.

—May 14, 1993

Fern Hill

by Dylan Thomas

Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs
About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green,
The night above the dingle starry,
Time let me hail and climb
Golden in the heydays of his eyes,
And honoured among wagons I was prince of the apple towns
And once below a time I lordly had the trees and leaves
Trail with daisies and barley
Down the rivers of the windfall light.

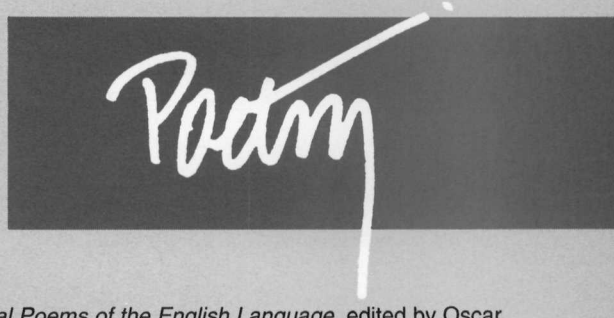
And as I was green and carefree, famous among the barns
About the happy yard and singing as the farm was home,
In the sun that is young once only,
Time let me play and be
Golden in the mercy of his means,
And green and golden I was huntsman and herdsman, the calves
Sang to my horn, the foxes on the hills barked clear and cold,
And the sabbath rang slowly
In the pebbles of the holy streams.

All the sun long it was running, it was lovely, the hay-
Fields high as the house, the tunes from the chimneys, it was air
And playing, lovely and watery
And fire green as grass.
And nightly under the simple stars
As I rode to sleep the owls were bearing the farm away,
All the moon long I had heard, blessed among stables, the nightjars
Flying with the ricks, and the horses
Flashing into the dark.

And then to awake, and the farm, like a wanderer white
With the dew, come back, the cock on his shoulder: it was all
Shining, it was Adam and maiden,
The sky gathered again
And the sun grew round that very day.
So it must have been after the birth of the simple light
In the first, spinning place, the spellbound horses walking warm
Out of the whinnying green stable
On to the fields of praise.

And honoured among foxes and pheasants by the gay house
Under the new made clouds and happy as the heat was long,
In the sun born over and over,
I ran my heedless ways,
My wishes raced through the house-high hay
And nothing I cared, at my sky blue trades, that time allows
In all his toneful tuning so few and such morning songs
Before the children green and golden
Follow him out of grace,

Nothing I cared, in the lamb white days, that time would take me
Up to the swallow thronged loft by the shadow of my hand,
In the moon that is always rising,
Nor that riding to sleep
I should hear him fly with the high fields
And wake to the farm forever fled from the childless land.
Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means,
Time held me green and dying
Though I sang in my chains like the sea.



— from *Immortal Poems of the English Language*, edited by Oscar Williams, Washington Square Press, N.Y. 1974.

Emergence of the eco-warriors

by Jan Nunley

Remember Earth Day 1970? Remember the little green-and white striped flags with the "E" for ecology that sprouted from the bumpers of Volkswagen Beetles across the land? Well, times have changed. Get ready for the Green Fist. It's the 1990s, it's not nice to mess with Mother Nature, and her kids have become Eco-warriors. The movement that started with conservation has moved to confrontation, tree-huggers have become tree-spikers — while across the Grand Canyon of environmental politics, property-rights advocates mutter darkly about pagan rites in the old-growth forests. The state of the environment may not yet be "the central organizing principle of world civilization," as Vice President Al Gore preached in *Earth in the Balance,* but it's sure the central organizing principle of a lot of political apocalypticism, both Left and Right.

For some activists, being in harm's way wasn't enough — they wanted someone else to suffer for environmental sins.

The President, the pragmatist and the prophet

It's hard to pinpoint the moment when the environmental movement got underway. Degradation of the land isn't unique to modern times; wildlife and plant species have been disappearing from human habitat since the first settlements. But it wasn't until the last half of the nineteenth century, when the American frontier began to shrink and the devastation wrought by the Industrial Revolution became apparent, that eco-philosophers like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau appeared on the scene. And as the century came to a close, three powerful men emerged to challenge the deep-seated notion that America's bounty was inexhaustible: Republican President Theodore Roosevelt, his chief forester Gifford Pinchot, and naturalist and gadfly John Muir.

Roosevelt stood between the two, pulled to one side and then the other. Pinchot, the self-described "Father of Conservation," was a pragmatic politician who believed that natural resources should be managed for maximum profit — "wise use" was the term he coined — rather than used up indiscriminately. Muir, son of a Presbyterian minister, put more stock in the preservation of wild nature for its own sake. He founded the Sierra Club, the world's first environmental activist group, in 1892, during the campaign to preserve California's Yosemite Valley. Roosevelt came down on Muir's side in that fight, creating the first national park at Yosemite.

Sabotage — or ecotage — is part of the repertoire of Earth First! Founded in 1980, "No compromise in defense of Mother Earth" is the watchword.

But Pinchot and Muir collided over the damming of a river that would flood the Hetch Hetchy Valley in the high Sierras and divert the water to the city of San Francisco. Pinchot argued for the usefulness of the dam, Muir for the pure beauty of the valley: "Dam Hetch Hetchy!" he cried. "As well dam for water tanks the people's cathedrals and churches, for no holier temple has ever been consecrated by the heart of man." Muir lost that battle; some say it broke his heart. He died a year after the Hetch Hetchy dam bill passed Congress and was signed into law by Roosevelt.

Muir's successors at the Sierra Club were fairly tame, until the arrival of David Brower, the man described by some as the reincarnation of Muir. Brower, who took over Sierra in the 1960s, led the group in legal battles to block dams and preserve wilderness from logging. But Brower's confrontational tactics and poor managerial skills put him afoul of the Sierra board, and they ousted him in 1969. Brower fought back by founding the more militant Friends of the Earth and, when they too gave him the boot, the Earth Island Institute. It was Brower who first harnessed the media machine and the tactics of 1960s activism to environmental causes.

The same year that the Sierra Club bid David Brower goodbye, a small group of Canadian Sierrans decided it was time to protest U.S. underground nuclear testing in the Aleutian Islands by sailing into the testing zone. Linking the peace and environmental movements, they dubbed their vessel Greenpeace. The protest was halted

Jan Nunley is a newscaster for National Public Radio's environmental program, "Living on Earth." She is also a frequent contributor to Episcopal Church publications.

by the Coast Guard, but the testing was stopped too; and with a series of boats the members of the newly-organized Greenpeace Foundation set out to stop French atmospheric nuclear testing and the whaling fleets of the world. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Greenpeace protests made headlines: the near-harpooning of a Greenpeace inflatable by a Soviet whaler, the images of bloody baby harp seals in Newfoundland, the blocking of Dow Chemical's toxic discharges into the Great Lakes, the ramming of a Greenpeace ship by a U.S. Navy vessel and the French Navy's bombing of the Rainbow Warrior. Now the world's largest environmental organization, with affiliates in 23 countries, Greenpeace retains its posture of non-violent direct action in campaigns against nuclear weapons, toxic waste, the destruction of rainforests — just about every environmental issue you can name, Greenpeace has been there.

But for some activists, putting themselves in harm's way wasn't enough — they wanted someone else to suffer for environmental sins. Greenpeace co-founder Paul Watson had almost been on the receiving end of that Soviet harpoon in 1975; he'd also defied Canadian sealers. But when Watson's activities became too aggressive for Greenpeace, he was forced out. Like David Brower, Watson didn't quit, but went on to found the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, a vigilante on the high seas, ramming and sinking pirate whalers and trawlers that use illegal driftnets. While the Sea Shepherd's crew pledges not to carry weapons or explosives, or to endanger human lives, sabotage is clearly not out of the question.

"No compromise!"

Back on dry land, sabotage — or "ecotage" — is part of the repertoire of another direct action group, Earth First!. Founded in 1980 by Dave Foreman, a disgruntled former staffer of the Wilderness Society, Earth First! is less an organization than a movement. "No compromise in defense of Mother Earth!" is the watchword. Mostly, it's stunts and guerrilla theatre. One of Foreman's first direct actions was to drop a long piece of black plastic over the front of the Glen Canyon Dam to simulate a crack; later, another Earth First! group zapped Hetch Hetchy Dam with a painted crack and a quote from John Muir.

Sit-ins conducted while chained high in the trees and small-scale vandalism are standard fare, but the really threatening stuff is what the Earth First!ers picked up from reading Edward Abbey's novel of environmental hijinks, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, and from Foreman's own text, *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Like Sea Shepherd's ramming tactics, monkey-wrenching isn't intended to be violent to human beings, but doesn't spare the equipment: loggers have found sugar, sand and salt water in the fuel tanks and hydraulic lines of their heavy equipment, road graders and bulldozers have been set afire, and metal spikes have been driven into trees to damage saw blades. So far only one sawmill worker has been injured, but several bandsaws have bit the dust. After a $2 million FBI sting operation, Foreman and three other Earth First!ers were arrested in 1989 and charged with a conspiracy to damage power lines carrying electricity to the Central Arizona Project, a Federal irrigation program.

Bulldozer driver jumps from machine as Earth First! protesters approach in Siskiyou National Forest in Oregon. (Driver had been ordered to avoid confrontation.) David Cross, Impact Visuals

Foreman has backed off from his brainchild since then, turning over the controversy-filled *Earth First! Journal* to a Montana collective and founding his own journal, *Wild Earth*. The *Journal,* though, retains its counterculture energy: each issue is dated according to the Pagan calendar, the Letters to the Editor column is titled "Dear Shit fer Brains," and the correspondents sign themselves "Feral Youth" and "A Tree Lover." To raise money, the Journal offers stickers featuring such slogans as ""Developers Go Build in Hell," "Visualize Industrial Collapse," and "Nature Bats Last."

As with many un-organizations, growth and popularity threatens what-

ever cohesiveness Earth First! has enjoyed. Former *Journal* editor John Davis says the fault lines run along three aspects of the group. The direct-action movement splits on the issue of tactics . "No violence?" writes "Swamp Woman." "Stand by peacefully in protest while your own mother is raped?" The "tribal" nature of the original group is diluted by the flood of newcomers who don't share the group's initial assumptions about anything — from hunting to feminism. And the group's embrace of "Deep Ecology" — really a theology — has developed fissures around just how deep some are willing to go.

A word about Deep Ecology as the spiritual basis of the radical environmentalists is in order here, for it's the key to understanding their willingness to lay their freedom, even their lives, on the line for the sake of the planet. Deep Ecology is the brainchild of Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, developed in concert with an American disciple, George Sessions. Basically, it's a "biocentric" as opposed to a humanistic, "anthropocentric" world view, postulating that all life has intrinsic rights equal to those of human beings. Saving the Amazon rainforest because it might yield new substances to fight cancer is "shallow ecology"; saving the rainforest for its own sake is deep ecology. Some deep ecologists among the radicals go even farther, characterizing humans as a weed species, a cancerous growth on the body of the Earth. Journal articles have declared that "AIDS is a welcome development in the inevitable reduction of human population," and a bumper sticker reads "Pregnancy: Just Another Deadly Sexually Transmitted Disease."

> *"Preservationists get uptight because they don't believe in the hereafter, because that means that what's here is all there is."*
>
> *— William Dannemeyer (R-CA)*

If humanism is taboo, Christianity is even worse, a virtual Anti-Gaia. Since a 1967 article by historian Lynn White Jr. in *Science* castigating the Judeo-Christian tradition for spiritually underwriting Western science and technology in exploiting the environment, Christians have been put on the defensive in some Deep Ecology circles. At an Earth First! gathering in Montana, participants in a Pagan ceremony told a Smithsonian freelancer, "If you're going to talk about Christianity, please leave." Mainstream environmentalists fear this may get the Green movement into more trouble than spiking trees. Michael Brown, writing in the Natural Resources Defense Council's *Amicus Journal* (Winter 1993), warns that "eco-occultism" could alienate Jews, Christians, Muslims and scientific ecologists "who feel it is all hokum to start with," as well as split the environmental movement into two spiritual camps.

The Wise-Use guys

Some of the radicals' spirituality has proven grist for the mill of their most bitter opponents, in what's called the "Wise Use Movement." Taking their name from Gifford Pinchot's philosophy, the Wise Users are as loosely organized as the Earth First!ers, incorporating

N.E.'s Bubbleman

© 1992 CBS Inc.

Northern Exposure's Bubble Man, the guy who lived in an hermetically sealed home because he'd developed an oversensitivity to pollutants, left the mythical Cecily, Ala., this Spring to become an Eco-warrior, to dedicate his legal skills to the work of Greenpeace.

The Witness has learned that the character Mike Munroe won't be returning to CBS's show about life in a small Alaskan town because, as Melissa Harold who handles publicity for the show, says "he was too preachy."

Preachy he was and his farewell speech to the varied residents of Cecily was hopelessly and ineffectively idealistic — he promised to be there whenever a toxic dump was exposed, whenever freon leaked from a home refrigerator.

But what the Bubble Man leaves behind is the memory of his arm breaking out in a rash when a store-bought tomato (complete with pesticides) was rubbed on it and a certainty that if you could graph the toxic accidents around the world, you would feel your body's immune system struggle to fight off the death within them. He mirrored our worst fears.

Munroe claimed to be a canary in a cave. Dr. Joel Fleischmann believed he was a hypochondriac. The show's producers allowed him to be the vehicle that reminded us that our perfumes, soaps, detergents and appliances are an assault.

— based on a report from Sheila Karabees, a freelance writer living in Huntington Woods, Mich.

ranchers, loggers, off-road vehicle enthusiasts, timber, mining and oil lobbyists — and an assortment of far-right fringe groups. While papering communities with flyers that compare environmentalists to "eco-terrorists . . . a PAGAN RELIGION" that worships "trees, animals and even swamps . . . while they sacrifice people," some Wise Users take money from such groups as the American Freedom Coalition, funded by Reverend Moon's Unification Church and a major contributor to the Nicaraguan Contras.

Wise Users frequently link private-property issues such as timberland, wetlands and beach development controls with doctrinaire free-market economics and fundamentalist Christianity; at a Wise Use Leadership Conference in Reno, former Congressman William Dannemeyer (R-CA) told the gathering, "Preservationists get uptight because they don't believe in the hereafter, because that means that what's here is all there is." It echoed President Reagan's former Interior Secretary, James Watt, who told a House committee he was pushing development rather than conservation of resources because "I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns."

In the end, the radicals hope their cutting-edge stance serves the mainstream and some acknowledge the importance of work done there as well. In a 1989 interview with *E Magazine*, Dave Foreman said, "We've made it easier for mainstream groups to take a stronger stand and still appear moderate. Earth First! has opened up more issues and redefined the parameters of the debate, but it's so easy for radicals to get this 'holier than thou' attitude and to not appreciate the hard work that the more mainstream groups do."

Maybe, in the end, environmental politics really is an ecosystem of its own, interacting and balancing itself. TW

Wilderness Preservation Society

Clear-cutting

According to The Wilderness Society, the ancient forests of the pacific northwest are the last relatively intact "old-growth" ecosystems in the United States. The forests contain the world's most diverse assemblage of giant evergreen trees. Some of the oldest were seedlings at the time of the Magna Carta in 1215.

Gregory Aplet, a forest ecologist, provided some insight into how clear-cutting has been justified. "If your goal is to harvest as much fiber off the land as possible — to grow trees the way we grow crops — you want to get the old growth out of the way, and start fast-growing species in full sunlight, then cut them as soon as their growth starts to taper off. Clear-cutting is not only effective in reaching that goal, it's also very inexpensive to perform and makes hauling the logs much more cost-effective. Weeding — taking only every fourth or fifth tree — is not only more expensive, it also takes more time and skill, and is more dangerous for the loggers."

Clear-cutting has been condemned because it looks ugly; it exposes the soil to increased temperature and light, which increases loss of nutrients; it exposes the site to erosion; and it destroys important wildlife habitats. It fragments forest land, creating open edges with different environments and habitats. This affects vulnerable inhabitants of the interior through increased predation, chiefly raccoons, opossums and deer. Thus the spotted owl, for example, becomes prey to other owls — like the great horned owl — which tend to occupy these fragmented, open areas.

There's a groundswell of change coming, however, Aplet says. "The Society of American Foresters [the professional society of industrial forestry companies] recently issued a preliminary report on sustaining long-term forest health and productivity. It talks about ecosystem management, and looks to natural ecosystem dynamics as a guide to forest management. The forestry profession is doing a lot of internal searching that is very encouraging, and the National Forest Service is openly stating that they're changing, and have adopted ecosystem management policies."

— Craig Smith, of Silver Spring, Md., is a freelance writer.

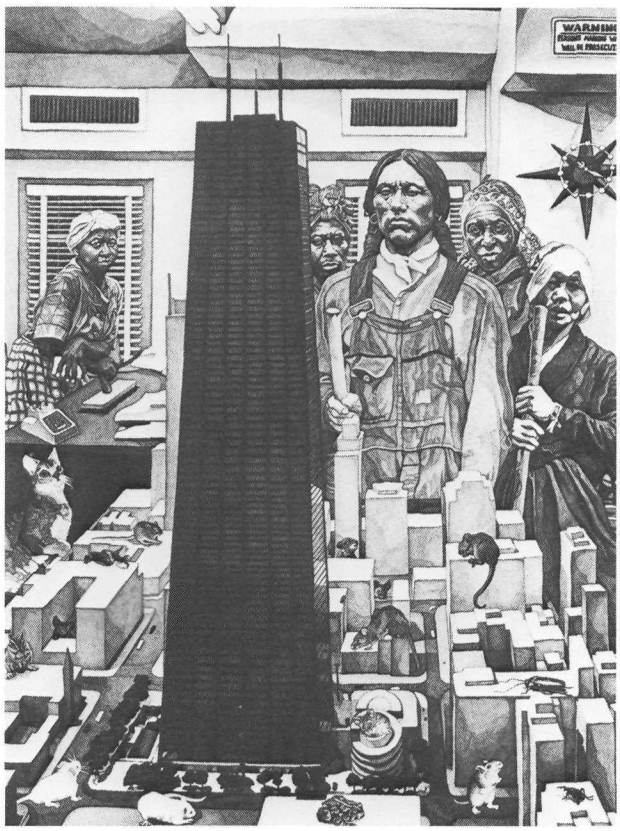
People of color and environmental defense

by Kathryn Savoie

There is a strong perception among traditional environmentalists that people of color are not interested in environmental issues, or environmental protection. This is a gross misperception, based on a narrow definition of environmental issues, and it reinforces the mainstream environmental organizations in their continued lack of attention to issues concerning people of color. People of color's struggle for environmental justice has taken place in local communities, rather than through the national groups which have characterized the predominantly white environmental movement.

People of color have been fighting environmental degradation in their communities for a long time, but have received little attention. People of color are more likely to live in a community with hazardous waste sites, and to be exposed to hazardous conditions in the workplace. Benjamin Chavis has labelled this "environmental racism." Others have called it environmental *genocide*. The white community of Love Canal's fight against toxic dumping in their neighborhood was a national story, but how about the poisoning of the mostly African-American communities of Warren County, N.C., or Emelle, Ala.?

The struggle of the people of Warren County, N.C., is important because this local struggle led to the development of the national environmental justice movement. The decision to target this poor, rural, predominantly African-American community as the site for a polychlorinated biphenol (PCB) disposal landfill sparked heated debate. Men, women and children stood and lay in front of trucks to prevent them from transporting PCB-laden soil to the dump. National civil rights leaders supported massive non-violent demonstrations in which over 500 persons were arrested. Citizens saw in the efforts to target their poor, seemingly powerless community an extension of the institutional racism that they had experienced in other forms — discrimination in jobs, housing, education, services, and law enforcement.



Cleaners Dierdre Luzwick

Native Americans are also threatened by environmental racism. Post-World War II development and testing of nuclear weapons has led to extreme degradation of indigenous peoples' lands, threatening the health and cultural survival of native communities. Since 1974, all U.S. nuclear testing has taken place on Western Shosone lands at the Nevada Test Site. As hazardous waste disposal regulations become more stringent, waste disposal companies have targeted Native American reservations which are not covered by tougher state regulations. In 1991, at the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota, a Connecticut-based company called RSW proposed building a 6,000-acre municipal landfill on Sioux lands. Local residents founded the Good Road Coalition to block the landfill. The Coalition enlisted the support of two native American groups, the Indigenous Environmental Network and the Natural Resource Coalition, along with Greenpeace activists. They were able to persuade the Tribal Council (the government of the sovereign Sioux nation) to cancel the agreement to build the facility. When the same proposal was brought before the Tribal Council in 1992, the plan was again rejected.

People of color have also organized against toxic assaults is Kettleman City, Calif., the site of a hazardous waste land-

Kathryn Savoie, Executive Director of the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, was an observer at the 1991 People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit sponsored by the United Church of Christ and has a Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of Michigan. Artist **Dierdre Luzwick** lives in Cambridge, Wis.

fill owned by Chemical Waste Management. When the company proposed building a new incinerator, the small, Latino farmworker community organized *El Pueblo para el Aire y Agua Limpio* (People for Clean Air and Water). The group brought suit to stop the incinerator. While part of the lawsuit is still pending, People for Clean Air and Water has won a victory in delaying construction.

In October 1991, over 650 persons gathered in Washington, D.C., for the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit — African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos from all 50 states of the U.S., Puerto Rico, Mexico and the Marshall Islands giving birth to a multicultural, grassroots environmental justice movement in which people of color provide leadership.

This new movement differs from classic environmentalism (i.e., The Sierra Club) in that it does not separate oppression and exploitation of human beings from the exploitation of the earth and its resources. It operates with a broader definition of "environment" than has typically been used in our society, including not only the air we breathe and the water we drink, trees and rivers and wildlife, but also the abandoned house on the corner, lead poisoning from paint, and the gas station in the neighborhood. It breaks down the artificial distinction between "occupational health and safety issues" and "environmental" issues.

Because this new environmental movement examines the relationships between class, race, political power, and exposure to hazardous substances, it goes beyond demanding Not In *My* Backyard (known as the NIMBY approach) to demand not in *anyone's* backyard. It goes beyond rejecting toxic or hazardous substances in one's own community, to recognize that *no* person or community should have to live with poison. TW

The Toxic Avengers

by Robert Hirschfield

The Virgin Mary, amidst her convoy of angels, looks down from her dome on the young Hispanics of *El Puente*. Once one of Williamsburg's Catholic churches, the place has been transformed into a community center. In the huge space hang pictures of Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, Jr. A sign reads "Young Latins for Peace." Bright plastic baskets are choked with paper, cans and bottles to be recycled.

El Puente, where the Toxic Avengers meet, stands in the Brooklyn shadows of the Williamsburg Bridge, where street corners are dotted with drug dealers and where Radiac, a temporary storage site for medical and industrial waste, emits low levels of radiation. None here have done more to oppose Radiac than the Avengers.

The Toxic Avengers, whose name was taken from a movie, were formed in 1988 by three Hispanic teenagers attending a science class at *El Puente*.

"We learned that a company called Van Man was dumping glue and chemicals in our neighborhood," said Rosa Rivera, 18, one of the group's founding members. "We went out and got samples that helped get Van Man closed down."

Rivera is tiny, but her brown eyes are huge. Before learning of Van Man and Radiac and the threat they posed to Williamsburg, she, like most people in her community, gave little thought to environmental problems. There was already enough to deal with: drugs, street crimes, poor housing and social tensions between Hispanics and Hasidic Jews.

The Toxic Avengers dialogue with their peers in schools, churches and on street corners.

"When you ask guys to come to a meeting," said Juan Rodriguez, a neatly mustached 18-year-old Avenger from the Dominican Republic, "they say, 'I want to hang out with my friends.'" But when the word goes out that help is needed making banners for anti-Radiac rallies, teenagers flock to *El Puente* to help.

Contact with the adult world of the environmental movement has been at once troubling and exciting.

"We met with rich white folks" during an Earth Day celebration in Vermont, said 16-year-old Avenger Marta Chavez, who claims that poor neighborhoods are chosen for toxic waste storage facilities because they are poor. "There were no young people, no Latinos. We didn't know where we belonged."

But they are learning fast.

"I've learned leadership skills," said Kathy Rivera,16, a student at Brooklyn Tech. "I am shy, but I speak at rallies. It's really opened me up."

The Avengers talked with New York mayor David Dinkins about environmental hazards. They orchestrated a town meeting on the nearby Greenpoint incinerator. And the recycling program they started several years ago is going strong.

"We're trying to heal the people in our neighborhood by getting rid of the toxic pollution that's harming them," Avenger Benny Vasquez, 16, said of the group's activist agenda.

That activism has also got community people talking to each other, Rosa Rivera points out.

"The fight against Radiac and the incinerator has brought together Hasidic Jews and blacks and Hispanics and that's very hard to do."

Robert Hirschfield is a freelance writer in New York City.

Living water of the Eno

by Marianne Arbogast

"We didn't do church when I was a kid; we did Eno," says Anne Cox, now rector of Nativity Church in Bloomfield Township, Mich.

Cox grew up near the banks of the Eno River in North Carolina, in a family passionately engaged in a battle to defend it. Her early memories revolve around clean-up days and wildflower hikes, potlucks and picnics with the people who made up the Association for the Preservation of the Eno River Valley. She drank her first champagne at a party celebrating the river's reprieve from the city of Durham's proposal to dam it for a reservoir.

The river's flow — and the fight to preserve it unhindered — set a pace for her own life, Cox says.

"The Eno experience has really formed the way I view life. The classic divisions — natural and human, us and them — are not so real in my mind. There was a tight-knit community involved in the struggle, and I was rubbing shoulders with people of deep faith, deep spirituality, who would have nothing to do with church."

In 1966, the Cox family moved back to the Durham area, where Don Cox, Anne's father, had been raised. Around the same time, the city of Durham announced a plan to dam the river and flood a five- or six- mile area to create a reservoir.

Real estate developers were aggressively backing the proposal, laying plans for exclusive residential housing on the reservoir's borders.

But the river had friends as well, among them a small group of hikers who gathered to walk there each spring as the wildflowers bloomed. When they began to organize against the dam, Don Cox was quick to join them.

Blue-dogbane

"I grew up in Raleigh, not far from a natural stream similar in size," Cox says. "It was beautiful to visit, to swim and fish and look at critters in the stream. It had a clear gravel bottom and sandy banks. But a lot of housing development was going on upstream, with no concern for sedimentation. Soon the stream filled up with debris, and became choked with willows and growth. It made me very angry."

An electronics engineer, Cox had lived and worked in cities across the nation.

"In every place I heard the same refrain: 'We used to have some beautiful places here, but they went so fast, we didn't realize we were losing them till it was too late.' When I began to hear of the growing struggle to protect the river, it resonated strongly within me."

"In every place I heard the same refrain: 'We used to have some beautiful places here, but they went so fast, we didn't realize we were losing them till it was too late.'" — *Don Cox*

Their earliest strategy was a simple one — to introduce the river to its human neighbors. They organized hikes and canoe trips, and developed educational materials for schools and community groups.

"We had to bring people into personal contact with the river and its environment," Don Cox says. "Only by doing that could we generate enough enthusiasm and interest that it became unthinkable that anyone would put a dam on the river and lose all that."

As the campaign gathered steam, it called forth an extensive array of talents from its supporters. Margaret Nygaard, an early leader in the struggle, compiled a history of the Eno and its inhabitants, from the Occoneechee Indian tribe through later English and African-American settlements. Naturalists identified its abundant variety of plant and animal life. Jenny Nygaard, an artist and Margaret Nygaard's daughter, did a series of drawings of local wildflowers. Duncan Heron, now head of the geology department at Duke University, created a multi-media slideshow. Don Cox led countless hikes and clean-up days, and became an expert on soil and water conservation.

"We tried to tell the stories of the river, both human and animal," Cox says. "In every community there are stories about the place: the families, the things that have happened, accidents and joyous occurrences. If you know the stories of the community you can belong to that community, instead of feeling isolated. With all the migration today, one of the saddest things is that people don't have time to learn the stories of their place."

A long-term goal emerged — to establish state parklands along 20 miles of the

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*. Illustrations are by **Jenny Nygaard**.

river in Orange and Durham counties.

The Association began to acquire land along the river, working with the nature conservancy and the state park commission. Some was donated; more was purchased with donated funds.

"We were able to gain control over enough land that Durham realized they had to step back and rethink whether they wanted to go ahead with what would have been quite a battle," Cox says. Moreover, "there were technically better, less expensive and less environmentally damaging options for a new water supply."

The city eventually agreed and, in 1973, abandoned its plan for a dam. That year, North Carolina's governor announced plans for the Eno River State Park.

Twenty years later, the park is three-quarters complete, and the Association for the Preservation of the Eno River Valley is still at work.

Since 1980, a three-day festival has been held each July, to benefit the river and celebrate the local heritage. This year's festival will include a juried craft exhibition and musical performances by Emmylou Harris, Solstice Assembly, the Apple Chill Cloggers and the Gospel Soul Seekers.

Very rare Isopyrumbiternatum

With help from the Association, the city of Durham established a park bordering the state parklands, which boasts a restored, working grist-mill.

Cabelands hike **Bill Newton**

Ongoing hikes draw thousands to the riverside, and an annual Eno River Calendar helps raise funds and raise consciousness of the river's beauty and worth.

Land purchases for parkland continue, though slowed by rising costs and pressure for development.

The struggle led some participants into further environmental advocacy. Becky Heron, an early Association member, has worked as a county commissioner for the past ten years. Don Cox is now soil and water conservation supervisor for the county, and chairs the state's Standing Committee on the Natural Environment.

"I have to go to the river occasionally and just sit under a tree, or sit on a rock," Cox says. "I might be wondering why I'm killing myself doing some of the things I'm doing. But when I sit there awhile, something speaks to me, says, 'It's right. We need you to do this.' "

As the area grows, he says the demand for water resources will rise again.

"The only long-term protection we can assure the river is to make it part of the lives of enough people so when new threats come up, there will be voices to speak for the river."

His daughter's voice is already among them. "I think the Body of Christ includes the natural world," Anne Cox says. "Just as I would respond to a brother or sister in need, I'm responding to the Body when I respond to the environment." TW

Walking fern

Make a home. Help to make a community. Be loyal to what you have made. Put the interest of your community first. Love your neighbors—not the neighbors you pick out, but the ones you have.

— Wendell Berry
"The Futility of Global Thinking"

The earth and the Great Economy: a regional theology

by Ched Myers

Jesus is sitting in a boat, pushed back a few yards off the shore of the Sea of Galilee (Mk 4:1f). He is gently rocking, his eyes closed, his face warmed by the sun glancing off the water. He has come out here to get a little distance from the political heat of his Capernaum "campaign." The contours and consequences of his mission have become clear. He has tried arguing Torah with the stewards of the Story, Sabbath economics with the administrators of Debt, social boundaries with the adjudicators of Purity. But he has concluded that the literate cannot read (Mk. 2:25), that the authorities cannot lead (Mk. 3:4) and that the *House* cannot stand (Mk. 3:25). Political polarization has begun—perhaps quicker than Jesus was prepared for. He needs to think things over, to consolidate his gains and cut his losses, to reflect with his followers upon what this all means.

Jesus has made it clear to all concerned that he is struggling *against* the dominant system. But what is he struggling *for*? The poor who are attracted to him, the outcast who flock around him, the skeptical onlookers who carefully measure his words, even his own disciples — they all want to know what alternative Jesus intends to offer. Jesus stares out on the empty sea, smooth as glass, blinking back the glare, anguishing over what to say and how to say it. How can he speak intelligibly to these people about human possibilities so discontinuous with the arrangements of power and privilege they all know so well? What metaphor, what symbol can he employ to *revise* the ancient Yahwist vision of the kingdom of God, what Wendell Berry calls the Great Economy? What discourse can he use that has not already been co-opted by the dominant media? "What parable shall we use for the Great Economy?" The question burns within him; he decides it is best simply to share it with them (Mk. 4:30).

The Nutgatherers **The Detroit Institute of Arts**

Jesus turns back, watching the crowd muster at the water's edge. They are setting up a "camp meeting" in a lakeside field; most are already seated on the ground, waiting to hear from him, the patience of those who have seen hope come and go too many times. They are peasants and plain folk, uneducated and "illiterate"; this is not the place for elaborate scriptural arguments and legal debates. Popular pedagogy, the villager from Nazareth reminds himself as he studies the crowd, begins where the people are, starts with what they know. What we must stand *for*, he realizes, is what they already stand *on*. Reconstruction must build upon the most *radical* foundation; renewal must take up the *oldest* story. The land itself.

"Listen!" he begins. "A sower went out to sow ..." (Mk. 4:3).

Where does reclamative theology begin? We may be instructed by Isaiah, a prophet of repentance who loved his people. Predicating his vocational call to speak truth to power, with its hard words about blindness and deafness (Is. 6:1ff), was Isaiah's love song for a vineyard (Is. 5:1ff).

"Let me sing to my friend the song of his love for his vineyard" (Is. 5:1). The oracle recalls the farmer's hard labor of clearing, his patience in cultivation and his investment in the tools of harvest (Is. 5:2). The reminder apparently means to mitigate his despair over a ruined crop (Is. 5:4) and his bitterness at

Ched Myers works for the American Friends Service Committee and is author of *Binding the Strong Man,* Orbis, 1988. An expanded version of this article will appear in his next book, *Who Will Roll Away the Stone?,* Orbis, 1994.

having to abandon land that will not yield (Is. 5:5f). Isaiah soon makes it clear that the "vineyard" is a metaphor:

The vineyard of Yahweh Sabaoth is the house of Israel

and the people of Judah God's chosen planting;

God expected justice, but found bloodshed,

integrity, but heard only a cry of distress (Is. 5:7).

But it is not *merely* a metaphor, for it reflects the *lived* experience of the people to whom it is addressed. Palestinian farmers struggled to cultivate the land's rocky soil, and lost the battle for subsistence with the elements. More often however, according to Isaiah, people were driven off their land not by natural forces but economic ones, specifically the concentration of agricultural holdings in the hands of a few; so does a lovesong turn into an angry indictment of rich landowners who justify their vast latifundia by an ideology of entitlement that presumes "everywhere belongs to them" (Is. 5:8).

Mark's Jesus reappropriates this very lovesong, *revising* and repoliticizing it in his "parable of the vineyard" in order to renew the prophetic attack upon the Judean absentee landlord class (Mk. 12:1ff). This parable, moreover, is narratively and ideologically related to the earlier parable of the sower (Mk. 4:3ff)—both reverse the relations of power in order to criticize them.

The parable of the vineyard, told to and about the Jerusalem authorities, challenges actual landowners to imagine life from the perspective of rebellious tenants.

The sower story, conversely, told to and about peasant farmers, invites sharecroppers to imagine a situation in which they could control the surplus they extract through their labor. There is a further connection: the sower parable alludes to Isaiah's later, more apocalyptic version of his lovesong, which speaks of Yahweh's "declaration of war on the thorns" (Is. 27:4 = Mk 4:18f?).

Both Isaiah's lovesongs and Jesus' parables affirm the people's identification with the land while at the same time using the vineyard as metaphor for an oppressive agrarian political economy. The Great Economy is envisioned not as some otherworldly place and time, but as the reclamation of the very soil upon which Palestinian peasants toil. The liberation of the people depends utterly upon the liberation of the land itself.

Both Isaiah's lovesongs and Jesus' parables, then, affirm the people's identification with the land while at the same time using the vineyard as metaphor for an oppressive agrarian political economy. The Great Economy is envisioned not as some otherworldly place and time, but as the reclamation of the very soil upon which Palestinian peasants toil. The liberation of the people depends utterly upon the liberation of the land itself.

The surviving remnant ... will again take root downward and bear fruit upward (Is. 37:31).

This worldview seems remote to the dominant culture of urban modernity,

Regrounding the church

How can "regrounding" the church help us overcome the alienation resulting from our geographical and cultural displacement, and restore a sense of identity and place from which we can struggle for reconstruction?

Those who would call for repentance must do so out of love for the people and the place to which their challenge is directed. It is not enough to concede that *we* are part of the problem. We must also imagine how we can be part of the resolution, the healing and the reconstruction. This is the task of *reclamation*: redeeming or preserving the great good among one's people. This task is all the more crucial for theology in the Palace Courtyard *because* of our legacy of genocide and empire.

We, too, have a "subversive memory" of liberty and justice that can be recovered from our myths and institutions, however flawed. Reclamation will concentrate upon unearthing the liberative fragments of our dismembered story. Indeed, every stratum of U.S. history and culture contains the footprints of plain folk who believed in the virtues of the American vision and who refused to internalize its darkest illusions.

Reclamation will listen again for the "minor keys" which have competed dissonantly against the imperial symphony: tunes carried by Abolitionists and Anarchists, Populists and dissidents of all stripes, Quakers and Methodist reformers, communitarians and labor leaders—and countless others, distinguished and indistinguishable from our common life, including those to be discovered in our *own* family histories. —*C.M.*

characterized as it is by displacement and alienation. It has often been pointed out how non-indigenous North Americans are people for whom mobility has been more important than rootedness. Novelist Wallace Stegner for example writes:

"The initial act of emigration from Europe, an act of extreme, deliberate disaffiliation, was the beginning of a national habit. But the rootlessness that expresses energy and a thirst for the new and an aspiration toward freedom and personal fulfillment has just as often been a curse. Migrants deprive themselves of the physical and spiritual bonds that develop within a place and a society... American individualism, much celebrated and cherished, has developed without its essential corrective, which is belonging."

Maori sovereignty advocate Donna Awatera is considerably less charitable in her assessment of European migration:

"This wrench from the land did not come easy, but once done, spirituality in white culture died. From the rural-urban shift, and the intra-urban shifts demanded by industrialization, the ... urban-colony step was easy. Separated from the land, separated from tribal and clan loin bonds, the now individual person or family is free to disperse to the colonies. Rooted now in mechanical materialism and convinced now of its superiority over land-based living, the settler is ready to destroy 'barbaric' savages to give them the benefit of the 'civilization' he now has ... that has disrupted their own spiritual immersion in their homeland. White culture is thus critical for colonialism because it is nomadic."

In short, Awatera contends, the "original trauma" of European displacement led inexorably to the dispossession of other people from their land. The cost of this historical repetition-compulsion has been truly staggering — for ourselves, for those we displaced and for the land itself.

Only love for specific land — what Hawaiians call Aloha 'aina *— can motivate us to struggle on its behalf.*

In our time, as the ecological and social consequences of our displaced way of life in the First World become increasingly impossible to suppress, we are as a culture being forced to come to terms with this cost. Our denial of these issues is being challenged at a political level by the environmental movement and at a more philosophical level by advocates of so-called "new cosmologies."

The questions raised by these contemporary movements are in many ways the right ones, and must be addressed. I am not persuaded however that it is accurate nor even particularly helpful to blame the Judeo-Christian tradition for this crisis, as has become so fashionable. Obviously modern Christianity reflects the alienation and displacement of the culture as a whole, having long ago departed from its own roots in the land- and place-based culture of the Bible. Consequently the new cosmologists find it an easy (and not illegitimate) target in their analyses of our present dilemmas. But it seems to me that Christianity is as much a victim as a culprit, and that the true and far more formidable enemy is global capitalism. It is capitalism that demands the objectification and commodification of nature, not Christianity.

Kentucky farmer and poet Wendell Berry is a true prophet both in his trenchant critique of the mercenary character of modern capitalism and his call to a return to a culture based upon love for the land. In an essay entitled "Higher Education and Home Defense" he warns:

"A powerful class of itinerant professional vandals is now pillaging the country and laying it waste. Their vandalism is not called by that name because of its enormous profitability (to some) and the grandeur of its scale. If one wrecks a private home, that is vandalism, but if, to build a nuclear power plant, one destroys good farmland, disrupts local community, and jeopardizes lives, home and properties within an area of several thousand square miles, *that* is industrial

"Goat Walking"

Quaker theologian Jim Corbett takes a more practice-oriented approach. We will only break the power of the pathology of technocracy over us, he argues, when we relearn our dependence upon the land. The best way to relearn this, he contends, is to rediscover the Exodus wilderness experience through disciplines of "sabbatical *cimarron*" (an old Spanish term for a domesticated animal or human going feral). For him this is "goatwalking" in the Sonora desert—living for days off whatever the land offers, supplemented only by the milk of a few goats :

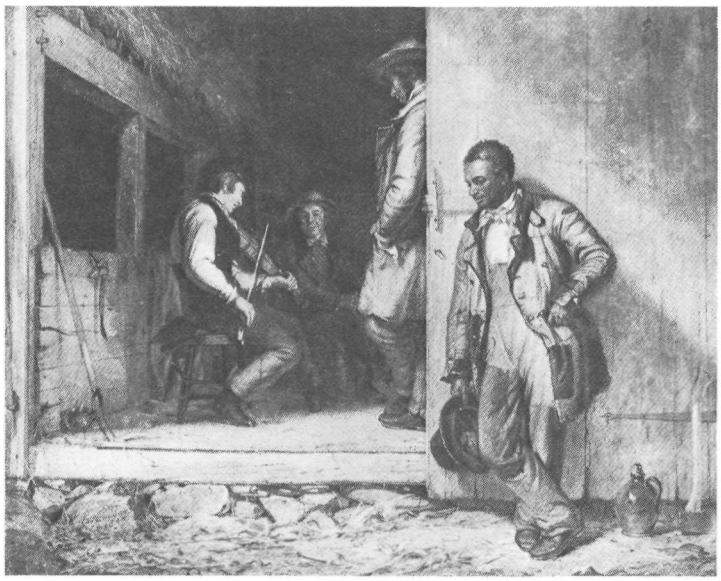
"Genuine communion is inseparable from right livelihood. How, then, can members of technocratic civilization enter into communion? ...Goatwalking works as an emergency survival system, but only because it goes the other way from survivalism, toward communion... To live peacefully as members of wildland communities, human beings who have been domesticated to live by possession must become untamed. This is the heart of errantry... Learning to go cimarron opens an exodus. Learning to live by fitting into an ecological niche rather than by fitting into a dominance-submission hierarchy opens human awareness to another kind of society based on equal rights of creative agency for all." — *C.M.*

progress. The members of this prestigious class of rampaging professionals are the purest sort of careerists—"upwardly mobile" transients who will permit no stay or place to interrupt their personal advance. They must have no local allegiances; they must not have a local point of view. In order to be able to desecrate, endanger, or destroy a *place*, after all, one must be able to leave it and to forget it. One must never think of any place as one's home; one must never think of any place as anyone else's home."

This is the politics of robbery in which the "smaller economies" pillage the Great Economy. Berry also points out that abstract global loyalties will be finally impotent to stem the tide of global forces that are destroying our connection to the land.

Only love for specific land—what Hawaiians call *Aloha 'aina*—can motivate us to struggle on its behalf. In reconstructing this kind of consciousness the biblical song of the vineyard and reclamation of the Great Economy *can* be enormously helpful.

Admittedly, the notion of place-based politics has barely been broached by liberation theologies of First or Third Worlds, because we are still captive to the alienated ideological and conceptual frameworks of industrial modernity. But there are signs that many who are trying to reconstruct theological discourse are beginning to listen to traditions which never gave up their rootedness in place. The Quincentenary newsletter published by the Latin American Council of Churches for example reflects a new priority given to issues of land distribution and respect for indigenous cultures: "Today, as in ancient Israel, the land is an essential element of *campesinos*' and native peoples' present and future." First World activists working in solidarity with peasant and Indian movements in the Americas are learning a great deal about long-term fortitude, whether it is from Innuit resistance to economic and military displacement in Canada or the repatriation struggle of Salvadoran *campesinos* in the refugee camps of southern Mexico.



The power of music **by William Sydney Mount** Century Association, N.Y.

Internationally one of the significant precursors to the U.N. Earth Summit was the 1991 "Morelia Declaration" issued by a gathering of native peoples' representatives, scientists and environmentalists from 20 countries in Mexico City. It asserted that "traditional societies are generally the best managers of biodiversity ... We deplore the cultural pollution and loss of tradition which have led to global rootlessness, leaving humans, through the intensity of mass-marketing, vulnerable to the pressures of economic and political totalitarianism and habits of mass-consumption and waste which imperil the earth."

Thierry Vehelst, in *No Life Without Roots,* points out that indigenous cultures, though devastated by the historical march of industrial capitalism, have nevertheless shown a tremendous capacity to survive this onslaught against great odds — often through non-western styles of resistance such as ritual, non-cooperation and even laughter. The power of such land-based cultures to endure can be seen from Guatemala to Lappland and from Philippine jungles to Canadian tundra.

Wes Granberg-Michaelson, of the World Council of Churches, notes that Protestant theology has begun to move from the notion of domination over the earth to stewardship of it. But, he says, we need to go beyond the latter to a theology of interrelationship, which stresses the inherent value of creation over its utility value.

"Our places are asking us questions and we do not have the answers," Berry says. "The answers, if they are to come and if they are to work, must be developed in the presence of the user and the land." TW

A reminder!

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company board recently sent fundraising letters to all *Witness* subscribers. This is our one-time annual appeal. If you can respond, it will help us greatly. Postal rates alone have increased 17 percent in the last two years!

Also, if you have a favorite theologian — whether an academic, revolutionary or poet — let us know for an upcoming roundup on who's hot in theology.

People of the land

by Iron Thunderhorse

The First Nations of aboriginal America possessed an ethos and pathos which engendered a unique respect for the natural order of life.

When a shaman uses the *Canuppa Wakan* (sacred pipe) to pray, it is first offered to Mother Earth, Father Sky, and all our relations. The Iroquois never conduct any form of council unless they first recite their thanksgiving address which honors the earth, sky, trees, water, wind, plants, and all the different creatures.

Native people have understood that the balance of Mother Earth and Father Sky is not something to be taken lightly. Indigenous traditions still regard themselves as caretakers of the natural order.

To regard the earth as Mother and the sky as Father and all living things as our relatives is not so far-fetched. We humans absorb into our bodies the life-giving substance of plants, animals, minerals, sun, water and air every day of our lives. The environment is a vital part of our being and existence.

The tribal nations of North America measured time by way of the lunar cycles. Months were called moons and reflected each tribe's relationship to the world around them (e.g. the Moon of Ripe Berries, the Long Snow's Moon).

The Algonquian Nations held six major celebrations a year called *pau-waus*. The new year began with the Maple Sugar Festival and ended with the Green Corn Festival. Tribal dances are still performed today honoring the relationship of the people with the sun, moon, earth, sky and all relations.

Walking in balance on Mother Earth is an inter-tribal concept which all First Nations respected. One did not slaughter one's brothers and sisters of the forests and rivers. When food was needed the hunters and gatherers first asked permission of the guardian spirit. Everything was used, from the bones to the hides. The essence of each relation was thus made an integral part of the tribe.

The leaders of each tribal nation have from time to time left outspoken testimonials reflecting the indigenous respect for the environment. Ta-shunka Witko (Crazy Horse) and Chief Sealth (Seattle) are probably the best known orators on this subject. One does not sell one's own Mother. Who has the right to sell the water or the trees? Surely no mortal person. Walk softly on Mother Earth because it is the bones and ashes of our ancestors and all our relations.

Tribal nations are known today mostly by names given to them by early settlers. A lot of confusion, separation and division resulted. Most of the tribes called themselves simply "the people" in their own dialect. The people were a part of their particular natural environment and this was reflected in their identity. For instance, the Seneca is translated as the People of the Stone, the Papago called themselves the Bean People, and the Cherokee can be translated as the Cave People. The people belonged to the land, to Mother Earth. The land did not belong to the people as the Europeans claimed.

The original inhabitants of North America each held their homelands as sacred space, a place of power where everything was endowed with spiritual significance. The Algonquians prayed to the *manitous* (spirits) of every living thing, from the spirit of the grasses (*Yo-he-wah*) to the spirit of all culture (*Wisa-ka*). *Ki'tche Manitou* is the Great Spirit, whose essence is omnipresent.

Aboriginal title to their sacred places and homelands can be observed all over America. The pictographs, petroglyphs, cave paintings, artifacts and ancestral remains at sacred burial grounds are physical proof of who originally cared for the sacred place each tribe once respected as their kin.

Tribal totems as well as clan lineages demonstrate yet another connection to the natural world: the Wolf Clan, Bear Clan, Turtle Clan, Sweet Potato Clan, Thunder Clan, etc.

European culture turned the aboriginal world upside down. The values, traditions, and sacred relationships to Mother Earth, Father Sky and all our relations were almost completely wiped out.

Yet, miraculously, after 500 years of genocide, ethnocide and cultural assimilation the basic ethos of Native America never died.

The spirit of the aboriginal tribes of this country has undergone a vast metamorphosis. The spirituality, languages, customs and the ancient ways of protecting the laws of nature are growing stronger each year.

Ancient American Indian prophesy told of the coming of the European influence and its wanton destruction. The indigenous prophecies also spoke of a time when the great grandchildren of the destroyers would seek out the tribes for answers to restore balance once more to our world.

We stand together now at the Crossroads of the Great Purification. We each hold the secret, each has a choice. The survival of all life on Mother Earth depends upon the people of this generation, and the choices we make concerning our environment.

Walk softly on Mother Earth! TW

Iron Thunderhorse is coauthor of *Return of the Thunderbirds,* Bear & Co., 1990. He is an inmate in Tennessee Colony prison, Texas.

Making environmental law

by Marianne Arbogast

"Environmental law is too important to leave to the lawyers," says Zygmunt Plater, professor of environmental law at Boston College Law School.

Plater, who served as director of legal resources for the State of Alaska's Oil Spill Commission after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, regards the differing tactics of environmental activists as a manifestation of healthy "bio-diversity."

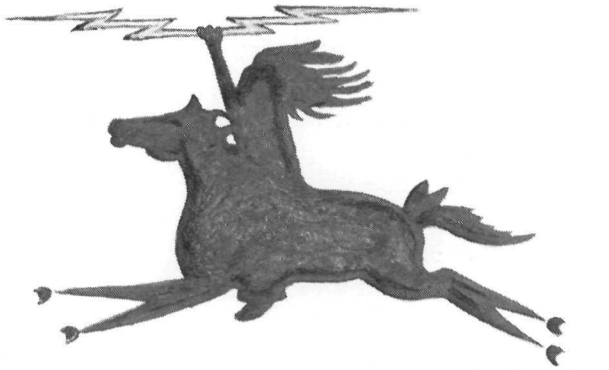
"It seems to me that the law and legal mechanisms consolidate the gains made by the eco-warriors. You do what has to be done, then concretize it."

Plater adds that he's encouraged by the current status of environmental law, particularly because more and more citizens are bringing suits in defense of creation. "We are light-years ahead of where we were in 1960.

"Environmental law is not made by the legislature or the executive, but by citizens going to court or to the barricades," Plater says.

"It's quite wonderful how the Anglo-American legal system has been able to give people very powerful remedies, before the legislature ever got the word."

The resurrection of common-law litigation by environmental activists in the 1960s empowered grass-roots citizens. For many years, Plater says, the ancient common-law form — which allows citizens to bring lawsuits even in the absence of statutory violations — had been all but forgotten. But in that decade's "upwelling of intellect and spirit," people reclaimed their right to go to court with arguments based on concepts like "public nuisance" and "public trust."



Iron Thunderhorse

Plater points to the aftermath of the Exxon Valdez oil-spill disaster as an example of the improved public climate.

"More than 180 law suits were filed in Alaska" after the spill, he says. "Some were filed by commercial fishermen, some by boaters and some were filed on behalf of the fish and the otters and the birds. Most were filed by private citizens.

"It was a tragedy, and I still wake up screaming ..."

— Zygmunt Plater

"The media has continued to treat it as a very important story, and has not bought corporate attempts to say, 'Everything is fine,'" he says. "And the law continues to grind retrospective and future justice out of the industries" that were at fault.

Previously in Alaska local residents were "systematically excluded" from participation in decisions regulating the oil industry. Now, citizen oversight councils — funded by the Alyeska oil pipeline corporation — have been established and written into state and federal law. This ensures that "citizens with the power of subpoena are now built into the regulatory system for legal transport" of oil. The negotiation that created the first such council was possible because "Alyeska knew the citizens had the power of the court behind them," Plater says.

In 1978, Plater successfully argued a Supreme Court case based on the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. The Court issued an injunction preventing the Tennessee Valley Authority from completing and operating a dam which would threaten the survival of the snail darter, a small minnow inhabiting the Little Tennessee River.

"Like most endangered species, the snail darter was a vivid natural indicator of human conditions as well," Plater says.

The dam site was considered sacred by the Cherokee Indians. Furthermore, a congressional committee empowered to grant an exemption to the ESA refused to do so on the grounds that the project was "ill-conceived and uneconomic in the first place."

Sadly, the victory was reversed a year later by a rider slipped onto a House Appropriations bill. Though then-President Carter threatened to veto it, he signed the bill, phoning an apology to Plater.

"It was a tragedy, and I still wake up screaming in nightmares, asking what I could have done," Plater says. "We lost a river that had been flowing for 200 million years, and within a year, the two Cherokee medicine men died."

Still, Plater says he is hopeful.

"Citizens have the right to enforce the law, the courts are listening, the media often gets the job done and we have a debate on the national level." TW

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*. **Iron Thunderhorse** is an artist serving time in Tennessee Colony, TX.

Confronting New York's trash

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

The creativity of human beings — as expressed in works of visual art, music, dance, theater and literature, the soaring architecture of cathedrals and skyscrapers, and the intrigue of scientific and mathematical theories — can at times give us fleeting glimpses into the mind of the Divine Creator. But there are times when human and divine creation are at odds: the fine arts in the Soviet Union and the architecture of the Third Reich were used to close minds rather than enlighten them; Einstein's formulas and theories were used to make the atomic bomb. And the technological revolution as a whole — with its mineral exploitation, industrial production, forced agriculture, megagrowth of cities — has wreaked havoc upon our natural environment.

A growing number of visual artists are addressing the relationship between humanity's problematic "creativity" and natural creation. Some were featured in a recent exhibition, "Fragile Ecologies: Contemporary Artists' Interpretations and Solutions," at the Queens Museum in New York City; and a similar show, "Creative Solutions to Ecological Issues," is now touring the cities of Dallas, St. Louis and Philadelphia. Included are artists like Newton and Helen Harrison [see 4/92] who make poetic proposals for cleaning up the world's waterways; Alan Sonfist, whose sculptures are actually replantings of disappearing forest flora; and Mel Chin, who has fashioned installations that use plants to clean up toxic waste dumps.

Pioneering environmental artist Agnes Denes and Mierle Laderman Ukeles have addressed ecological issues by focusing on one of the most problematic of all human creations — the modern metropolis. Using New York City as their model, but through very different approaches, they have highlighted the environmental complexity, contrasts of beauty and banality, and ecological trauma that arise from the growth and everyday function of a human entity on this scale.

One spring, Agnes Denes planted a wheatfield on the Battery Park Landfill — huge piles of rocks and dirt beside the Hudson River excavated for the construction of the World Trade Center. She describes the artwork, titled *Wheatfield—A Confrontation*:

"Early in the morning on the first of

Wheatfield — A Confrontation, two acres of wheat planted and harvested by the artist at the Battery Park Landfill, downtown Manhattan, summer 1982.

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*

May 1982, we began to plant a two-acre wheatfield in lower Manhattan. The planting consisted of digging 285 furrows by hand, clearing off rocks and garbage, then placing the seed by hand and covering the furrows with soil. Each furrow took two to three hours.

"Since March over 200 truckloads of dirty landfill had been dumped on the site, consisting of rubble, dirt, rusty pipes and other garbage. Tractors flattened the area and eight more truckloads of dirt were dumped and spread to constitute one inch of topsoil needed for planting.

"We maintained the field for four months, set up an irrigation system, weeded, cleared out wheat smut (a disease that had affected the entire country). We put down fertilizers, cleared off rocks, boulders and wires by hand, and sprayed against mildew fungus.

"'We' refers to my two faithful assistants and a varying number of volunteers, ranging from one or two to six or seven on a good day.

"We harvested the crop on August 16 on a hot, muggy Sunday. The air was stifling and the city stood still. All those Manhattanites who had been watching the field grow from green to golden amber and gotten attached to it, the stockbrokers and the economists, office workers, tourists and others attracted by the media coverage, stood around in sad silence. Many cried. TV crews were everywhere, but they, too, spoke little and then in a hushed voice.

"We harvested almost 1,000 pounds of healthy, golden wheat." (© 1982 Agnes Denes)

The simple juxtaposition of wheat stalks swaying in the gentle Hudson River breezes against a backdrop of Wall Street skyscrapers raised myriad issues — ranging from the artificiality of New York City's coastline (extended by the Dutch and English, as well as by contemporary urban planners) to broader ones concerning food production, commodities markets, international commerce, economics, the mismanagement of natural resources and world hunger.

The social mirror **by Mierle Laderman Ukeles**
courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts and the City of N.Y. Department of Sanitation

About the same time that Denes was conceiving her wheatfield, artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles was addressing another aspect of both natural and artificial creation: the issue of maintenance, that is, the work needed to care for and preserve both. Beginning with small symbolic performances in the late 1970s (like washing the streets of SoHo), she moved into more ambitious projects (like shaking the hand of every sanitation worker in New York City) and eventually became artist-in-residence for the city's Department of Sanitation. Her *Social Mirror*, a garbage truck completely covered in mirrors, is intended to remind passersby that the urban waste being hauled away is a reflection of their own activities. *Flow City* is a walk-through sculpture and video installation that shows the workings of a waste disposal facility, reminding viewers of the consequences of their urban lifestyle. By making art out of, and about, the stuff that most people consider trash, Ukeles hopes to pose the philosophical consideration that waste is merely a cultural construct. If traditional thinking about garbage could be changed, she maintains, perhaps everything would be viewed as having an intrinsic value, and we would live our lives differently. "Within the natural world, everything is reused and recycled," the catalogue to "Fragile Ecologies" points out, "only human beings have neglected this fundamental principle of nature." TW

art and society

Does the Episcopal Synod of America welcome you?

"[The Episcopal Church] welcomes pluralism and diversity only when it comes from the left, or the innovative side. If it's traditional or from the right, there's no tolerance."

— Jack Iker, bishop coadjutor of Fort Worth, quoted in The Christian Challenge, *March, 1993*

by Dick Snyder

There are only five dioceses in the Episcopal Church where the Episcopal Synod of America's (ESA) "traditionalist," anti-women's ordination agenda dominates church life — San Joaquin (Calif.), Fort Worth (Texas), Eau Claire (Wis.), Fond du Lac (Wis.) and Quincy (Ill.). With only a scattered membership everywhere else, ESA members in non-ESA dioceses complain about the intolerance to which they are subjected by the non-ESA majority.

"The primary issue is, let love be genuine," says David Bauman, the rector of a parish in the Diocese of Los Angeles and president of the local ESA chapter there. "That is done [here] more in word than in deed."

Bauman cites Los Angeles' standing committee's vote against ratification of the election of ESA-member Jack Iker as bishop coadjutor of Fort Worth, an action many Episcopal Church standing committees took when they learned Iker does not recognize the ministry of ordained women. Iker's election, however, ultimately received enough votes from both standing committees and bishops to be ratified.

"The near rejection of Father Iker is an extremely important occurrence," Bauman said, because it indicates intolerance of the ESA and its positions.

"We are told, 'You are certainly welcome here [in the church]. There is no food, no clothing and your room is on fire, but you are welcome.'"

But some Episcopalians believe they fare no better in dioceses where the ESA's views — and apparent sensitivity to intolerance — are held by the majority.

"In most places we'd be considered completely normal church members," said deacon Sylvia Singer-Hedlund referring to Good Order in the Church, a group of non-ESA Episcopalians in the Diocese of San Joaquin. "But here, we're liberals. The word liberal is spoken here like it is synonymous with sin."

The only other ESA diocese with an organized non-ESA minority is Fort Worth. There a group called the Council of the Laity mounted the aggressive, but unsuccessful, campaign against ratification of ESA-member Iker's election as coadjutor bishop last fall. (Clarence Pope, Fort Worth's current diocesan bishop, was until recently the ESA's national president.)

"In Fort Worth, the Synod has three parties," said Phil Cooke, rector of St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in Mansfield, Texas. "Those are the biblical fundamentalists, who concentrate on moral issues; those who oppose the ordination of women; and the 1928 Prayer Book sympathizers."

Non-ESA supporters find themselves excluded from the diocese's policy-making bodies, Cooke said.

"[ESA members] want to be included in the Episcopal Church, but then on the local level, they cannot allow both sides to be expressed. It's really an issue of control."

Brenda Seaver, the Council of the Laity's president, charges ESA members with a clerical elitism that says, "Father knows best."

"I promise you that priests have told women: 'You stay in the kitchen and do what you're supposed to do, and I will take care of things.' I find that very damaging."

Women's ordination is the "main issue," Seaver said. "But they also use the homosexual issue as a smokescreen."

When priest Terry Cairo moved to the Diocese of Fort Worth a couple of years ago because her husband's job was transferred there, Bishop Pope refused to license her to serve in the diocese except as a deacon.

"He doesn't believe that I'm a priest," said Cairo, who was ordained to the priesthood eight years ago by Bishop William Black in the Diocese of Southern Ohio. "Bishop Pope is telling Bishop Black that he did not really ordain me; and that's phenomenal."

The conscience clause, Cairo argues, should be separated from the recognizing of valid orders.

"I don't think we've faced that as a church. If our theology of ordination is, 'a bishop says some people are ordained and some people not,' then I'm going to have a real tough time being an Episcopalian."

Maryly Adair, a past president of San Joaquin's Episcopal Women's Caucus, says, "Women are not encouraged to take leadership roles."

"I feel a lot of sadness about it because a lot of women are hurt, not just by [Bishop John-David Schofield's] attitude about ordination, but his attitude toward women in general."

While president of the Caucus, Adair twice asked Schofield for permission to allow women priests visiting from outside the diocese to celebrate at Caucus functions. She was turned down.

"People here are actively suffering because of the kind of religious discrimination that's being practiced," Adair said. "It's difficult for people who don't live here to know how difficult it is."

A co-convener of Good Order, Bob Kittredge, said he personally likes Bishop Schofield. "He has many fine attributes which I admire. But I am diametrically opposed to his style of leadership and his ideology, which leads to divisiveness and squelches meaningful dialogue."

According to Floyd McKneeley, founder of Fort Worth's Council of the Laity, compromise is not something ESA members welcome.

"You can feel the coldness at [diocesan] convention," he said. "You could hang meat in there."

— Dick Snyder is a freelance religion writer living in Hemet, Calif.

A call for 'conscience clause' stories ...

The Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) is collecting statements describing Episcopal women's experience of (1) the so-called "conscience clause," passed by the House of Bishops in 1977 at its Port St. Lucie, Fla., meeting but never ratified by the House of Deputies; and (2) the establishment of the Episcopal Synod of America in 1989.

These cases, or statements, must be concise, factual, specific and as brief as possible. Clarify whether your statement is to be anonymous. However, every statement must include the name, address, and phone number of the author; written permission of the person named to use the story and how this person can be reached; and the name of at least one witness so the Caucus can verify the story. Statements should be submitted by July 1 to: EWC, Laurel, Md., 20726-5172.

... and a call to solidarity

This fall's annual gathering of the Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) in Stockton, Calif., will be a "Call to Solidarity" with the "outcasts" in Episcopal Synod of America dioceses. According to EWC president Sally M. Bucklee, the October gathering is to be "a ministry of presence," a witness to the repression and isolation that women and men experience in so-called traditionalist dioceses because "the gifts and aspirations of lay and ordained women are not recognized or utilized" or "because one resists sexual oppression or disagrees with the 'conscience' of the hierarchy," or connections with the mainstream of the Episcopal Church are very restricted.

For information write the EWC, Laurel, Md. 20726-5172.

Foremothers' videos

Often overlooked in the midst of today's debate over the bishops' 1977 "conscience clause" are the 11 women who put their vocations on the line in an "irregular" ordination to the priesthood in Philadelphia in 1974. (Four other women followed their lead in a similar ordination service held in Washington, D.C. in 1975. It was not until 1976 that the General Convention changed the canons governing the ordination of priests and deacons to specify the inclusion of women.) In March, 1992, four of the Philadelphia ordinands — Carter Heyward, Suzanne Hiatt, Alison Cheek and Nancy Wittig — gathered in Vermont to reflect on their historic act of conscience and defiance with a small audience of interested church people. The meeting was videotaped and can now be rented from the Episcopal Women's History Project (EWHP). Also available is a less professional video of a similar 1987 conversation between Heyward, Hiatt and Cheek. (One showing of both tapes costs $10, including postage.)

Contact the EWHP c/o Peg Aldrich, 91 Rumford St., Concord, N.H., 03301 (603-224-7835) to make rental arrangements.

No to Colorado?

Episcopalians are questioning whether Denver should remain in the running as a possible site for the church's 1997 General Convention because of last year's passage of Amendment 2, the controversial constitutional amendment passed by Colorado voters that overturned so-called gay rights ordinances in a number of Colorado cities. The measure contradicts the General Convention's own statements upholding the civil rights of homosexuals.

But the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements, the national church group charged with selecting General Convention sites, will wait on ruling Denver out of the running until a lawsuit filed by a group of Colorado residents and the cities of Denver, Aspen and Boulder has been resolved. In the interim, a Denver district judge has placed an injunction on Amendment 2, which prevents state officials from enacting it into law until after a full legal review — expected by the end of 1993. Other attempts to repeal the amendment are also underway.

Integrity, the Episcopal Church's organization of lesbian and gay Episcopalians, has called on the national church "to refrain from scheduling General Convention, other meetings or official activities in the State of Colorado until such time as Amendment 2 is repealed or overturned."

Looking for a few good men

Given the predominantly male leadership of this society's religious institutions and the fact that the vast majority of cases of sexual and domestic violence involve male perpetrators, it seems ironic that only about 35 out of the 300 people who gathered in Chicago May 2-5 for the "Called to Make Justice" conference for "religious communities working against sexual and domestic violence" were men.

According to conference speaker John Stoltenberg, author of *Refusing To Be A Man,* most males in this culture love "manhood" — a way of being that is primarily about domination — more than justice. But without the participation of men, domestic and sexual violence will continue to be labelled — and trivialized — as a "women's issue."

"Where do we find men with whom to be in solidarity?" asked Marie Fortune, founder of Seattle's Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, the host of the conference.

"Where do we find men who can accept women's leadership, who can accept women's experience, and who can be trusted to be in solidarity when women aren't there?"

That, conference participants agreed, is a good question.

— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman

Helen Siegl

The politics of farming

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

"There is nothing clean about our food. It's really a crisis that people are unaware of," says Tom Jones, a United Methodist minister turned organic farmer.

"It's like smoking. When I was growing up in smoke-filled rooms, people said 'Oh, there's no problem.' In 25 years, it's going to be conclusive that we've poisoned ourselves with chemicals and there will be programs to clean up the earth and our bodies."

Jones bought farmland in northern Michigan, near Mount Pleasant, to open a retreat center, but was thwarted by zoning changes.

At that point he and his brother decided to learn how to raise beef cattle. In three years, they have never had a sick cow. They don't use antibiotics, steroids or pesticide-treated grain. The cattle are lean. The meat is healthy. The Jones brothers are making a living. And now Tom Jones' daughter, Sarah, has come home from the University of Ohio to raise organic fruit and vegetables.

"We are fortunate because we weren't in debt to start with so we could do it organically from the start. Also the two farms we bought had been dormant for a long time so chemicals hadn't been used recently on the land."

For farmers who depend on credit, which is to say nearly all, banks require that the product (whether beef or produce) be "guaranteed."

"Guaranteeing the product means showing the bank receipts for pesticides and chemical fertilizer," Jones said.

"The same is true of government programs. There's a soil preservation program in which we were told they would pay for fertilizer, plant your field for you or pay 80 percent of expense.

"Since we have higly erodable land here, we planted alfalfa and clover and got a beautiful field. I took the bills in and they said, 'Where's your roundup bill (for pesticides)?' I said we did it organically. 'What about nitrogen?' I said we did it organically. I had a beautiful field that I could show them, but they refused to pay the bills.

"The next year I told them I was going to plant it organically. I offered to pay all the bills but asked to use their [planting] machine and they said no. Farmers are trapped."

Jones said he gets support during Michigan State University's "Farmers' Week," a program offered by all land-based universities. Thousands come and hundreds attend the programs dedicated to organic farming and sustainable agriculture.

Most intriguing, Jones said, are the farmers who explain their experiments.

For instance, if you raise potatoes, "you can put a dog house in the field for three chickens and by moving it around, the chickens will take care of all your weeds and all your bugs."

For corn and fruit trees, integrated farming can help control pests, especially planting garlic and marigolds.

"A lot of this is not new. All we're doing is rediscovering what farmers knew 100 years ago, before chemical pesticides."

Jones now plans to buy a goat. At Farmers' Week he learned that goats will eat burdock and Canadian thistle, making it unnecessary to use weed-killers in cattle pastures.

"Our cattle live in rotating pastures, eating grass and hay. They birth their own calves.

"In contrast, in agribusiness, they feed-lot them. They put 100 head of cattle in an acre, feed them primarily grain that is treated with antibiotics, and it has to be treated because they live in such an unhealthy environment. The antibiotics get in the animal — we eat the animal.

"They give them steroids to make them grow fast which accelerates production. It takes them nine months to raise cattle; it takes us two years.

"A big problem they have are flies and intestinal worms. They pour a liquid on the cow's back that gets rid of the flies but also gets rid of the worms — and we eat the meat.

"Pastured cows have fewer flies and disease because they are not in feed-lots."

Jones added that the environmental concerns about cows belching methane are corrected with pasture-grazed cattle. The belching is caused by over-consumption of grain, he said.

In addition, it requires less acreage to raise a pastured cow, because they don't depend on acres and acres of grain for sustenance.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness.*

"Wendell Berry has said farming is one of the most political acts you can do today. I believe that's true because the system is set up for agribusiness. A corporation owns a huge plot of land and grows a single crop — they do it very cheaply with migrant or subsistence workers. They mine the land — taking out as much as they can and put nothing back in."

A broader political issue, Jones says, is that "this country depends on cheap labor, exploited labor. You can only exploit the labor if you have cheap food. The cheapest way to produce food is through agribusiness — but it's also the most unhealthy way.

"If we want healthy food we're going to have to pay more money for food. This will also keep the family farm in business."

Jones, who has been arrested for anti-nuclear protests, says this form of organic politics feels great.

Becoming an organic farmer has "sort of been an accident. But I really love it. I love everything about it." TW

Nonviolence is our strength

Helen Chavez is asking that people wishing to honor Cesar Chavez' life and work send donations to the Cesar Chavez Nonviolent Action Fund, c/o United Farm Workers, P.O. Box 62, Keene, CA 93531.

Since Chavez' burial April 29, others have assumed leadership of the United Farm Workers. The spirit of the work, Helen Chavez says, continues.

Christianity and Crisis

Christianity and Crisis, which for 52 years has put forth cutting-edge theology and political analysis, closed its doors this Spring.

We will miss its faithful voice.

Leon Howell, long-time editor of *C&C*, had been forced to spend an enormous amount of time fundraising during recent years. His efforts were heroic and brought in more than $300,000 annually, but the *C&C* board decided it could not continue without an infusion of capital that would enable it to convert to a magazine format with visual appeal to include younger readers.

In his farewell editorial, Howell writes: "*C&C* affirmed, often without using the words, that while the struggle for justice and peace seems to have no end, often no obvious positive consequences, a just and loving God stands beyond our history, giving meaning when we see none.

"I rejoice in what *C&C* did do and mean."

Amen. Amen.

"Tough nut to swallow"

Though ready to welcome into the Catholic fold all Anglicans distressed by the Nov. 11 synod vote in favor of the ordination of women, Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, at an April 23 press conference appeared to draw back from his previous desire to make things "easy" for them.

Perhaps the harshest thing Hume had to say concerned Anglican clergy who believe themselves validly ordained. Those among them who "seek ordination after their reception will undergo a process of discernment and selection determined by the local Catholic bishop."

In other words, the 1896 bull *Apostolicae Curae*, which declared Anglican orders to be "absolutely null, and utterly void," is still in force.

Because [the exiting priests'] entire position depends on the view that they are true priests, while the women to be ordained will not be, this is a tough nut to swallow. A further limitation is that "Rome" has decreed that there shall be no more than three married priests per diocese. That would give a total of about 60 married priests in all — well short of the 400 to 500 that have been talked about.

***National Catholic Reporter*, 5/7/93**

The New Party

New Party [Dec. 92] chapter organizing projects are underway in 12 states.

The New Party Interim Executive Council meeting, attended by two representatives from each chapter, is held this month.

Jim Benn writes: "Today we have to build a collective vision that relies upon this basic insight: We can't demand a fair share of the pie; we have to demand access to the kitchen."

***New Party News*, Spring 93**

Cuban delegation

Thirteen Cuban religious leaders, including Episcopal Bishop Emilio Hernandez, are scheduled to visit the U.S. this month. Cuba's economy has declined by 50 percent in the last two years. They lost millions of dollars in storm damage in a March storm and continue to suffer under the U.S. embargo. Dramatic decline in trade with the former European eastern bloc has also taken a toll. For more information contact Pastors for Peace, 612-378-0062.

Coalfield Justice

The Witness has joined 600 endorsers of the Religious Leaders for Coalfield Justice. An April statement urged the coal operators of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association to bargain in good faith with the United Mine Workers of America.

Gaia and the powers

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

***Gaia and God* by Rosemary Radford Ruether. HarperSanFrancisco, 1992, 310pp.**

Almost twenty years ago Rosemary Radford Ruether wrote *New Woman/New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation* naming and exposing the structures of Western patriarchal culture. Susan Brooks Thistlewaite recently commented that, by virtue of its breadth and clarity, that book has become an enduring classic which ought not only be re-read but memorized.

Gaia and God will enjoy a similar fate of abiding import. We hold in our hands a timely new classic.

Hardly unrelated to the earlier project, this recent book is stunning in the readable encyclopedic confidence with which it surveys history, be it of the planet (beginning with the "big bang") or Christian theology (beginning with the death of Tiamat in the Babylonian creation myth) - and in particular how the latter has adversely affected the former. And it is stunning in its deep hope: to recognize and thereby transform the way Western culture, aided and abetted by Christianity, has sanctioned not only the domination of men over women, but humans over the earth. *Gaia and God* utters the hope of Christian ecofeminism.

Rubriked under a four-fold scheme of Creation, Destruction, Domination, and Healing the book begins with a critical examination of creation traditions which have influenced biblical Christianity, namely: the Babylonian *Enuma Elish,* the Hebrew account of Genesis 1, and the ancient Greek *Timaeus* of Plato. Ruether reads the synthetic upshot of these as projecting onto nature the fallenness of human sin and yet simultaneously functioning to diminish human responsibility for the rest of creation (p. 30).

Next to these she sets the new science creation story wherein the distinction between matter and energy is being discovered utterly false; where humans are found, one with the planet, to be made literally of "stardust" billions of years old; we are at home, beginning to end, micro to macro, by organic systems and planetary cycles, in an intricate web of life; we are the universe becoming conscious of itself. The chapter's sweeping and concise thumbnail sketch is almost mystical in effect, suggesting the Gaia of her title.

A name for the Greek Earth Goddess, Gaia has been employed by a group of planetary biologists to refer to their insight that earth operates as a unified organism - a gigantic living system. The term has subsequently been taken up by those seeking a new ecologically-grounded spirituality. The leading question of the book is this: "Are Gaia, the living and sacred earth, and God, the monotheistic deity of the biblical traditions, on speaking terms with each other?" Given the crisis of the moment, it's past time they were.

Ruether recounts, in section two, the biblical and subsequent traditions of apocalyptic destruction which have unfortunately projected absolute evil onto others while at the same time proffering escape from the chaotic world of sin. And again in parallel fashion she sets beside that the truly apocalyptic crises we face with respect to population, poverty, food production, energy and pollution, extinction, and above all militarism. It's a properly frightening picture (from which there is no escape - only the need for transformation).

Under "Domination and Deceit" she turns her critical eye once again on the three classical traditions with respect to evil. There is no doubt, for example, that the purity and pollution code has generated consequent dualisms which we can see played out in all sorts of apartheids or ethnic cleansings, past and present, near and far. A key insight for me in this section is the observation that Christian theology has blamed humans for their own mortality and turned their guilt and anxiety about that toward a potentially earth-fleeing promise of immortality.

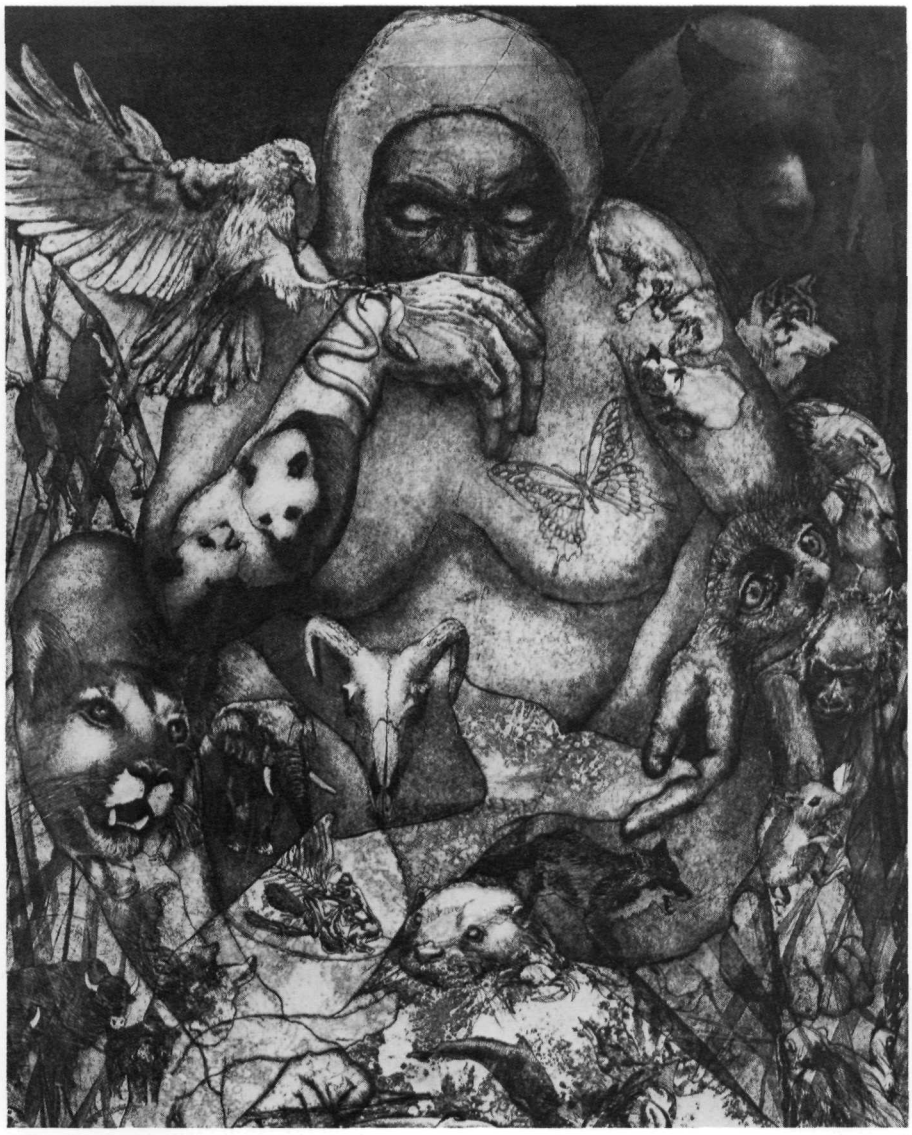
Ruether's criticism also falls on the facile historical mythology, prominent in some feminist and creation spiritualities of radical culture, which purports to date a fall into patriarchy from the paradise of matriarchal society. Ruether is clearly sympathetic, but she urges a more careful appraisal of the data and foreswears an over-eager confusion of history and myth.

What makes this book so valuable is that Rosemary Ruether doesn't in the end throw out or entirely abandon (as some feminist or environmental thinkers have) the biblical tradition.

Gaia and God asks us to move beyond a theory of evil which projects disorder onto creation into another which perceives the disorder in the workings of domination.

My own interest in a biblical theology of the powers prompts a single criticism at this point, one which promises to provide a biblical underpinning for the logic Ruether already offers. If the fallen "world" is understood in the sense of social systems and structures, then the systems of domination may be clearly

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is book review editor, a United Methodist pastor andteacher at the Whitaker School of Theology.



Missa Gaia: This is my body **Judith Anderson**

Earth mass, mass for the earth, mass of the earth. It is the Great Mother's celebration: the earth, the grasses, the seas and the infinite variety of creatures are **her body, incarnations of her Being and creativity. And all return home to her womb in death, dismemberment, extinction. In the undisturbed rhythm of earth, life and death are intertwined and balanced in a vast exchange of lives.**

But in this etching, the figure of the Great Mother is intended to echo the brooding mother of Kathe Kollwitz' Pieta, **knees wide in the birthing posture, her hand gently holding in pity, love and anguish a glorious lifeless body, flesh of her flesh. The Great Mother of the print, surrounded by and filled with animals, embodies at once both celebration and profound grief and anger. Like many women, I am restructuring my own religious perceptions and analyzing my earlier religious background in the Episcopal Church. I want to express a sacramental vision of creation, to honor the great web of connectedness among created things. Walk in balance.**

Heya , Heya, Heya

Judith Anderson is an etchings artist in East Lansing, MI.

understood from *within* the biblical tradition -- even if its own texts have abetted their construction.

Ruether's account of the scientific creation myth does *not* name the evolution of social structures of human life as "creatures" with a life and integrity of their own.

This has importance, among other things, in conversation with the biblical creation stories. For example, Gerhard Von Rad once noted that creation wasn't complete until the nations were created in Genesis 9. And I would contend that the Genesis 1 liturgy itself functions not only to imply a set of social relations, but that it is substantially "about" those social realities (*The Witness* 9/92). Likewise, when the sun is darkened or the stars fall from heaven - we are being told less about the natural order in biblical narrative, than about the political order.

Walter Wink has underscored the importance of this point by translating *cosmos*, in the Gospel of John say, not as "world" but as "world-system" (*The Witness* 3/92).

In the end, Ruether sets about to reconstruct the conversation between Gaia and

book review

God via the covenantal tradition which included obligations to the land and its creatures. She makes much, for example, of the Jubilee/ Sabbatical tradition as a social and economic image. And she reclaims the New Testament sacramental tradition, radically incarnational and immanent with respect to creation, "beckoning us to communion." In the nurture of such communion a good common act would be to sit down together with *Gaia and God* and enter the conversation. TW

A rubber-stamp contemplative

by Julie A. Wortman

Vivian Day

Stamping, she points out, is a contemplative, "alpha-inducing" activity "which allows non-artistic people an instant method of becoming artistic."

Like a modern-day anchoress, rubber-stamp artist Vivian Day lives a solitary existence in the New Hampshire woods with only a parrot for company. But the 44-year-old California native is a restless, increasingly angry, ascetic.

"I view the human race as cancer on earth," she states flatly in the course of itemizing today's demons of environmental degradation — pesticide-ridden crops, clear-cut rainforest habitats, and inky oil slicks. "I can't justify the destruction we do. We've put ourselves on a pedestal."

Her rubber-stamp nature images are both weapon and spiritual touchstone in her fight to bring humanity down to earth.

In the past four years Day has manufactured more than 200,000 stamps as part of educational rubber-stamp sets focusing on whales, African wildlife, hummingbirds, rain forests and coral reefs. The rubber is virgin latex, a renewable resource, and the native maple mounts are made from wood culled from lumber-industry trash piles slated for burning. Each 10-stamp set — over 8,500 have been sold through the National Wildlife Federation's catalogs — comes with an intricately illustrated fact sheet aimed at sensitizing readers to the causes of environmental degradation.

"The water is relatively poor in nutrients," reads the text on coral reefs. "The richness of the reef community is due to an incredibly complex system of species interdependence. The slightest upset can affect the entire ecosystem ... Every breaking wave is taking air from the atmosphere back into the ocean. A gas leak from an outboard motor can and does affect life in the ocean miles away."

But Day knows it is the delicately stippled, lifelike detail of her rubber-stamp images themselves — the beaked leatherjacket, moray eel and anemone crab — that make the most persuasive case for respecting the fragile ecosystems she treasures.

Day's three pet iguanas — Leo, Agnes and Isadora — introduced her to the environment-saving possibilities of rubber stamps.

"I want these portraits to cause a person to have as close to genuine eye contact as they could ever have [with one of these creatures]." Stamping, she points out, is a contemplative, "alpha-inducing" activity "which allows non-artistic people an instant method of becoming artistic," whether they are rabid mail-art enthusiasts or confine their stamping to lunch bags and birthday cards.

Stamping is also a creative way for urbanites and suburbanites, especially, to become acquainted with global flora and fauna they may never have a chance to see in person.

But the fundamental disconnection Day battles through rubber-stamp art is not, she believes, only a physical phenomenon.

"None of today's western organized religions seems to feel we are connected to nature," she says, reflecting on time spent as a child and adult searching for theological answers in a variety of church settings. "They always give me this idea of separateness. But I definitely believe God is everything, absolutely ev-

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Julie A. Wortman is assistant editor of *The Witness.*

erything. I'm like a molecule running around in God's body."

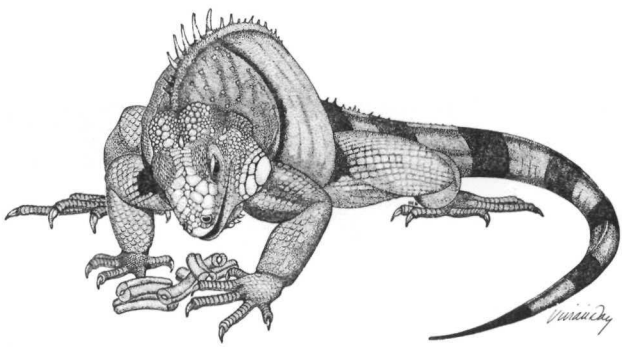
That spiritual insight has always made her feel the earth was "very precious." Time spent diving and snorkeling has only intensified the feeling.

"I've ridden on dolphins and twice I've come eye-to-eye with a whale. It is as if that is another human being, and you know it."

Maybe not so ironically, it was Day's three pet iguanas — Leo, Agnes and Isadora — who in 1980 introduced her to the environment-saving possibilities of rubber stamps. She had just placed the trio in the care of the San Diego Zoo, partly because it seemed they might be willing and able to raise offspring in captivity and partly because Day feared New Hampshire's winters (she made a "temporary" move to the state in 1976) were too much of a hardship for them.

"I ordered a couple of custom rubber stamps of them [from Rubber Stamps of America in Saxton's River, Vt.] based on illustrations I had done," she said. "I missed them so badly I wanted to stamp their images everywhere."

Captivated by the superb detail of Day's drawings — the artist's technical skill had been honed by time spent as an industrial designer/illustrator — the folks at Rubber Stamps of America (RSA) judged that the growing number of rubber-stamp enthusiasts buying their exclusive line of art stamps would want to stamp iguanas everywhere, too.



Leo, Day's first stamp Vivian Day

Leo was the first of Day's designs RSA bought. Since then they have purchased more than 200 others. According to RSA's Laurie Indenbaum, the company sold over 10,000 of Day's howling wolf stamp [see cover] in 1992 alone, while more than half of Day's other RSA designs annually account for up to about 200 sales each.

"Her stamps do incredibly well," Indenbaum says, noting that one or another of Day's designs has been an RSA best-seller for the past five or six years.

Grateful for the chance to earn most of a living encouraging people to, as she says, "learn about our earth through creative play," Day admits she is more interested in animals than people.

"There are enough people concerned with people," she argues. "There are not enough people concerned with animals and nature. The earth is going to die."

Besides, she adds, "I've got an offensive personality. The rubber stamps are the only way I can do my soapbox routine. In person, I'm not diplomatic or tactful. If you're wearing a fur coat you'll probably be offended by what I'd have to say." TW

Protesters at the Nevada test site

Dana Schuerholz, Impact Visuals

July/August issue:
Youth in crisis

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