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Imbert Matthee  
*Western Washington University*

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# Klipsun

January 1985









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# Klipsun

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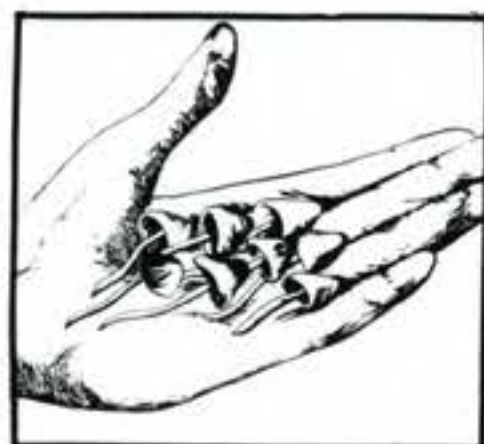
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meaning "beautiful sunset."

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# PCBs:

## Everson Struggles with Toxic Uncertainty

by Diane Dietz



Shelley McKedy

*In 1978, when the Birds first moved into a house across from the site, their kids (then 11 and 8 years old) played in the transformer yard. They brought home apples from these trees and said "these apples don't taste very good." Ray Bird, their father, tasted them and called the health department.*



**E**arly this spring, Environmental Protection agency officials predict a Whatcom County community will earn the dubious distinction of qualifying for EPA Superfund clean-up money.

The candidate in question is a site nine miles northeast of Bellingham. It lies on a parcel near Everson, a town with some 1,000 people. For 27 years, Northwest Transformer has drained oil from old electrical transformers at the site—oil often laced with polychlorinated byphenyls (PCBs).

The oil was somehow spilled on the soil and is "getting metered into the ground water at the solubility rate," said Neil Thompson, EPA environmental engineer.

Ray and Connie Bird live across the street from the toxic waste site with their two children, a boy, 17, and a girl, 14. Most

of their lot is given to a barbwire bound pasture, where their son keeps his 4-H project: two rust-colored cows.

Ray, who didn't mind being interrupted from a televised Husky game on a Saturday afternoon, said he first became concerned about the site shortly after his family moved there in 1978.

His kids brought home apples they picked from trees that grow up amongst the transformers. Ray, stiffening, said he tasted the apples, and said to his wife: "Geez, these things taste funny."

They called the county health department, he said.

Since then, there has been frequent testing in the neighborhood.

He said the county told him "there is apparently nothing to worry about," in his water supply.

"The county put our minds at ease, for better or worse, when they say there's nothing to worry about.

"If there's nothing to worry about, why are they taking samples (from the well) every month?"

Connie said the neighbors tried complaining but "nobody would listen, so they just stopped.

"It was just some farmers raising heck," she said.

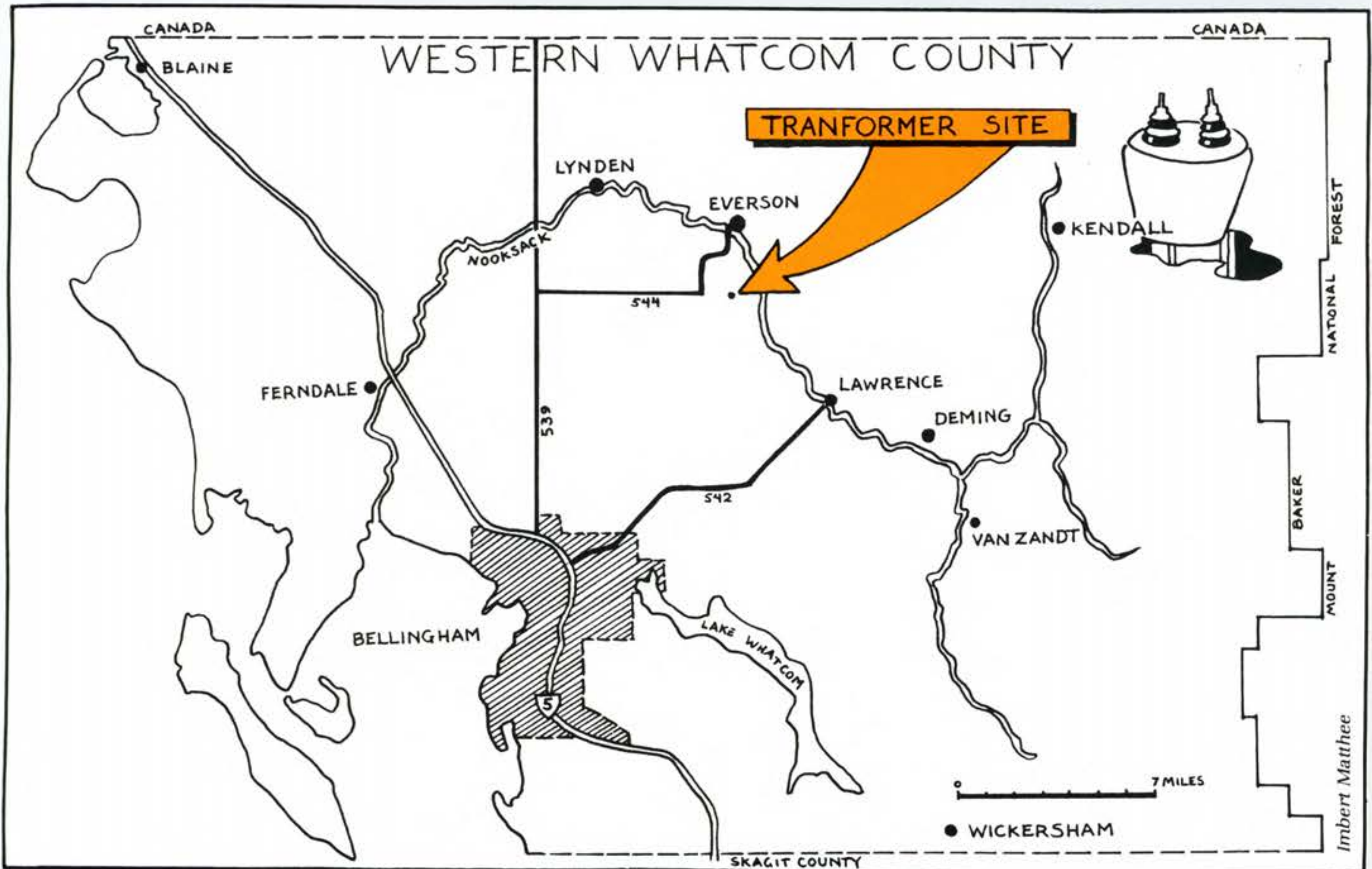
Her husband said the EPA should shut down the transformer operation immediately, or at the very least fence the area and put up signs. And finally, he said "I guess it's just something we have to live with."

Les and Norma Sturgeon live three lots north of the site.

Norma said she doesn't think too much about the PCB contamination "simply because I don't know too much about these things."

A lot of other things worry her. "Look at your can goods and all that stuff in there," she said.

Her husband Les, who was raised in the neighborhood, said: "It's like having a neighbor who raises hogs and the wind blows in your direction; you can't get away from it."







*"I don't think anyone in this area, at least, would purchase property around there," Strout Realty agent Jack Connor said.*

Diane Dietz



*"It's just some farmers raising heck," Conny Bird, who lives across the street, said.*

Diane Dietz

He said he received a letter from Whatcom County and the Department of Social and Health Services saying his well was part of a survey and had been tested on Oct. 2, 1984.

The result, the letter said, was that his water contained "less than the minimum reportable level" of PCBs. What makes Sturgeon uneasy, he said, is that "they don't tell you what the minimum reportable level is."

He said he isn't confident that any action will be taken to clean up the site. "All Northwest Transformer is interested in is their pocketbook and the EPA isn't far behind them."

Federal agencies have "the slows" he said. "You can tell them you've got an atomic bomb in your back yard and they'll check into it in a year or two; that is, they say, when they get the funds.

"You have to trust them until you curl up and die."

Sturgeon said he is worried about his property values with the attention the site is getting. "Because of something somebody's done, my whole life's work is down the tubes."

Marti Johnson, 21, grew up immediately across the street from the transformer site. Although she wasn't supposed to, she said, she played around the transformers as a

child.

She said her family "doesn't really hear too much about it (the contamination), so we don't worry too much about it."

Her uncle, Rex Reid, 62, lives next door in a small, white house that Johnson's grandparents used to live in. Marti said her grandpa died of lung cancer in 1981, and her grandma died of pelvic cancer one year earlier. She said, however, "cancer runs in the family."

Her uncle said the PCB contamination didn't worry him. "Not until I heard the oil from it gave you cancer. I always wondered why they had such an interest in my water. They check it every year."

The Harriman's have farmed at the first spread south of the waste site for 53 years. Ina, 87, said: "I don't know anything about the stuff, but I just as soon it wasn't there."

Ronald, 88, who said he had surgery for bladder cancer last year, said: "The WPA tested the water in 1931. It was 99 percent pure then, and I'd like to keep it that way."

Jordan Silves, who has lived northeast of the site for 40 years, said he's not worried about the PCBs, but objects to the way the site looks.

"You have to remember that 40 years ago all these roads were dust, and they oiled them. There's PCBs all over the county."

A woman in her mid-30s refused to be identified because she is mad at the press.

In 1978, when she first became concerned about the site, and called the health department, she also called all the region's newspapers. None of the papers responded, she said.

"I dealt with it on my own," she said.

"We just live in podunk Everson, and who cares about podunk Everson," she said.

Now that the EPA is giving the site some attention, reporters have appeared, and now she doesn't want to talk to them because, she said, they will blow it way out of proportion.

"By 1982, after being on the phone for two years, we feel like somebody cares now."

She doesn't think, however, the company should be forced to close down.

"It doesn't bother me that it's there if they use it properly.

"I think our environment is dangerous—not just here—I mean, what do we use on our lawns?"

Many of the neighbors who said they weren't too concerned said the reason was their property is opposite the flow of the contaminated ground water. Each, however, said the ground water flows in a different direction. One said the water flows northwest to southeast; another said



south; still another said north; the woman who refused to be identified said northeast. Wilford Sturgeon said he dug several wells in the area and the water definitely flows to the north.

**D**ennis Braddock, state representative for the district that includes Everson, said the people there aren't too excited about the PCBs, and shouldn't be.

"I've been in Everson several times in the last few weeks and no one has said anything.

"It's a constant problem, and you don't get excited about it, you just have to work on it. Excitement frizzles away your energy," he said.

Kenneth Spady, who is Everson's only doctor and has practiced there since 1957, said he's not aware of any new or changing patterns in the community's health. One of the symptoms of PCB poisoning is apathy.

"We have a lot of tired people, but not any more than we usually do."

Spady said he is concerned about possible health hazards, but so little is known he feels frustrated.

"It's sort of like being afraid of the dark. You don't know which way to jump," he said.

Nationally, physicians and scientists say they are as confused about the hazards associated with PCBs. Their clearest understanding of the effects came from a 1968 accident in Japan, Ming-Ho Yu, a nutritional biochemist at Western, said.

That year, 1,000 persons in Yusho became ill after eating rice oil contaminated with high levels of PCBs. The most common symptoms included acne-like skin lesions, disorders of the peripheral nervous system, eye discharges and hyperpigmentation of the skin, nails and mucous membranes.

Also, "the fact that PCBs can cause liver damage is fairly well established," Yu said.

Studies conducted on rats suggest that PCBs may be carcinogenic.

Environmental scientists, however, say it's hard to prove cause and effect, and little is known about long-term exposure to small amounts.

John Miles, an environmental scientist at Huxley, said, "It's like smoking; while the overwhelming evidence is that it's hazardous, we still can't determine cause and effect, and we've been studying it for (80) years."

PCBs are relatively new compounds in the science literature, but "we know it's a highly toxic substance and know the probability is high enough" that it is hazardous to human health.

The toxic substance is widespread. EPA estimates that 150 million pounds of PCBs are dispersed throughout the United States—in air and water supplies, for

example. An additional 290 million pounds are located in landfills. An estimated 750 million pounds still are in use in various pieces of equipment ranging from voltage regulators to electromagnets.

"Nowadays everything is contaminated," Yu said.

The PCBs are what's referred to as "biomagnifiers." They occur in lower levels in the food chain, and accumulate in the bodies of organisms more as each level of organism is consumed. Yu said most humans have one part per million (ppm) accumulated in the fatty tissues of their bodies.

The amount, however, has been reduced since PCBs are no longer manufactured in the United States, Yu said. In 1970, the fish in this country had 1.07 ppm in their body; in 1976, .87 ppm; in 1984, it's

estimated they had .5 ppm, Yu said.

**H**ow much PCBs are in the water in Everson is unclear, and Yu said he would "urge the EPA to conduct a test right away and go from there."

Neil Thompson, environmental engineer for the EPA, refused to say what concentration of the contaminate was found. "Because we are in a public comment period, I can't give information to you that others don't have. It's our turn to listen," he said.

But, he said, the Northwest Transformer site is expected to be added to the EPA National Priorities List to qualify it for superfund money.

According to the federal register: "The purpose of the National Priorities List, (therefore), is primarily to serve as an informational tool for use by EPA in identi-

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*WPA tested the Harriman's well in 1931. "It was 99 percent pure then, and I'd like to keep it that way," Ronald Harriman, who has farmed just south of the site for 53 years, said.*



Diane Dietz



fying sites that appear to present a significant risk to public health or the environment."

Everson is in line for the superfund money "according to the model of the worst sites in need of national attention," Thompson said.

He said he is certain the site will be added to the National Priorities list this spring, but that doesn't mean the EPA will soon take action. Once on the list, the site will be in competition with other sites in EPA Region 10, which includes Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska.

"All resources are committed for 1985," Thompson said.

Even then, test results may take a year. "We have to take a long-term calendar for these sorts of studies."

It may be years before the EPA takes possible action—like "do nothing, haul it away, or cover the site so rain can't push the PCBs into the ground water," Thompson said.

"This is where you see the effect of a reduced budget" on the EPA, Miles said. In the last four years the EPA's budget has been cut by 40 percent, he said.

He faults the Reagan administration for the EPA's "reduced ability to respond to anything."

The EPA has suffered not only from budget cuts but questionable leadership, he said.

"What this administration is most concerned about is the impact of any regulation on business. The EPA consults, some would say, excessively with business.

"Unless there is a very dramatic case, they (the EPA) are slow to act."

Whether the "farmers raising heck" in "podunk" Everson convince the EPA to move in their behalf (or whether a majority even wants them to) remains a question for the second half of the 1980s. ●



The transformer site is bounded by corn fields on two sides. Neighbors say the corn is used for fodder.

Doug Milnor

# What's in a PCB?

PCBs, oily or waxy substances used as coolant in electrical transformers and capacitors, were manufactured in the United States from 1929 to 1977.

In 1976, Congress passed the Toxic Substance Control Act to allow the EPA to regulate toxic wastes. In the act, congress provided a special section that prohibited future manufacture, processing, distribution and use of PCBs, unless totally enclosed, because in animal studies they were shown to be carcinogenic.

In 1982, the EPA went further, prohibiting, after Oct. 1, 1985, the use of PCB-containing transformers "that pose an

exposure risk to food or feed," but authorizing the use of all other PCB-containing transformers for the remainder of their useful lives (the average lifetime being 30 to 40 years).

According to a *Bellingham Herald* report, Ron Wallace, manager of Northwest Transformer, said his company still handles 1,000 to 2,000 gallons of transformer oil each year.

The company handles the oil at the site about one-quarter mile south of Everson. The yard is littered with transformers, ranging from 9-foot, 1140-gallon finned hulks, to the dixie-cup shaped, 3-foot tall,

63-gallon tanks.

Although oil leaked from the spigots at the base of many of the transformers and stained the mud puddles in rainbow colors, the ground was surprisingly firm for a wet November. How well the ground perks is a major concern of the EPA, and the people who live around the site, because of the ground water contamination. But how much contamination and how dangerous that contamination is, remains unclear to the site's neighbors, to the EPA and to the national scientists who study PCBs. ●

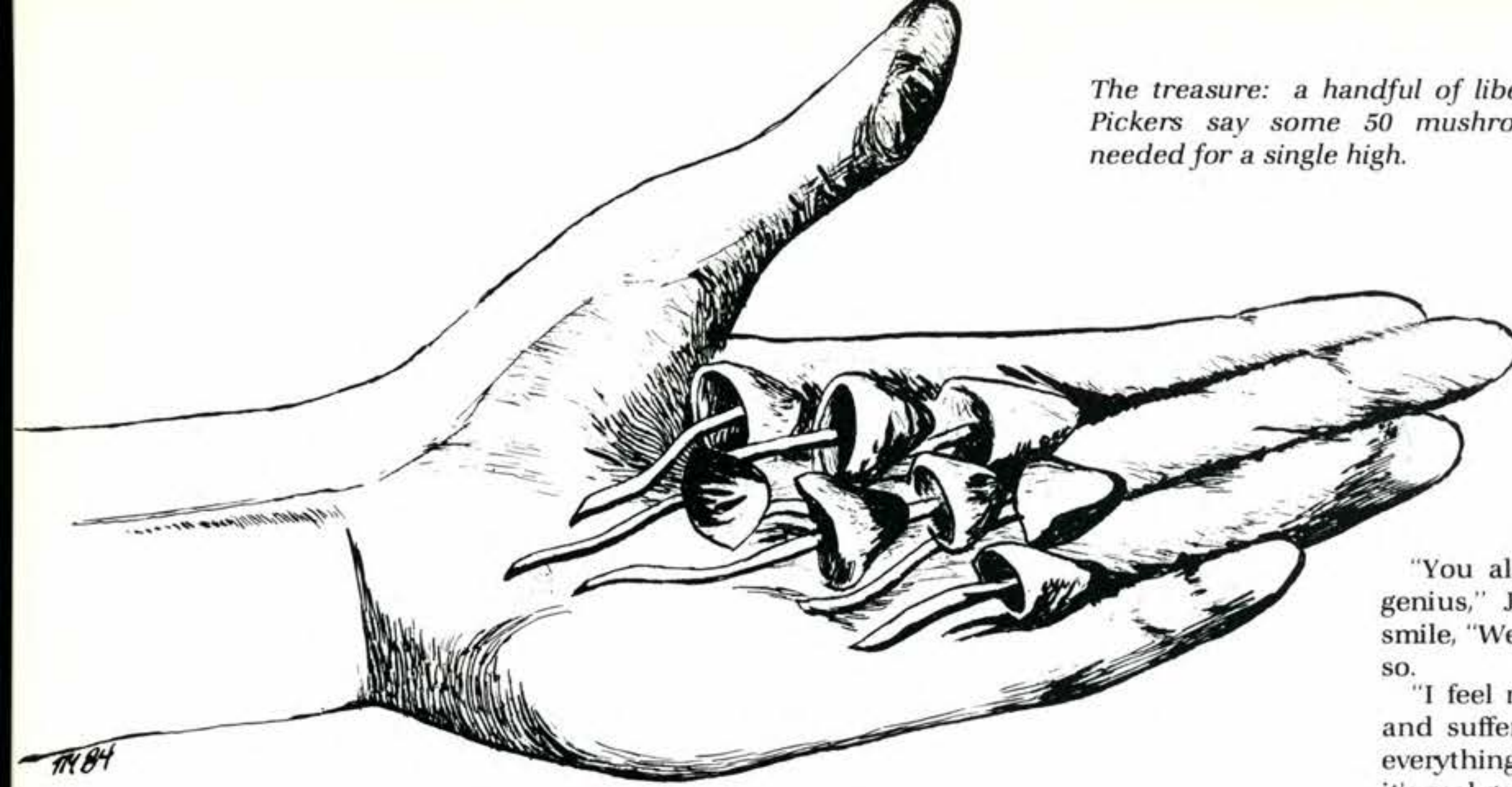
Opposite page: The search for mushrooms is popular in Washington State. To get to a field of 'shrooms pickers sometimes trespass on farm lands or private property. This sign was found near Port Angeles on the Olympic Peninsula.



TRESPASSERS,  
HIPPIES AND  
MUSHROOM PICKERS  
WILL BE SHOT  
ON SIGHT



The treasure: a handful of liberty caps. Pickers say some 50 mushrooms are needed for a single high.



by Jim White

**“Y**ou crawl around on your hands and knees, and get slimy,” Dave said, seated in front of a wall covered with J.R.R. Tolkien posters. “Finding the mushrooms is hard at first, but after a while you stop finding them and they start finding you.”

“You have to be in the right frame of mind for picking,” John advised, stretched out on his couch with an open textbook resting on his chest. “You can’t be too aggressive.”

A casual picker can get two or three highs an outing, according to Dave and John.

“Picking isn’t much fun, but that’s how you get them,” John commented.

“When it starts to get cold and rainy, it’s torture,” Dave said, raising his voice over the Jon and Vangelis tape. “You get high just picking the ‘shrooms. It’s the best part to be in tune with the ‘shrooms.”

“Now you know why he doesn’t eat them anymore,” John smiled. Dave had recently decided to stop picking and eating mushrooms.

Both Dave and John, Western students who share a house overlooking the Bellingham Bay, learned the process of picking by going out with experienced people, who were able to steer them away from “deathcaps.” Consuming the wrong kind of mushrooms can leave pickers very ill and even cause death. “A beginner should always go out with someone who knows what he’s doing,” Dave stressed.

John recently conducted a hunt with a novice, who spent three hours picking the wrong kind of mushroom and had to dump his whole bag.

Another problem with picking is trouble with the local authorities. Pickers can be charged with trespassing if they decide to obtain mushrooms from private property.

“I’d rather contend with the police than angry farmers,” Dave said, recounting the

time he was chased by a land owner in a Jeep on the Olympic Peninsula. A friend, picking on a different part of the field, was marched off the property at gunpoint.

Once they’re picked, Dave’s favorite method of drying mushrooms is to place them in a shoebox lid on top of a furnace. John puts them in a paper bag and inserts a hair dryer on low for about an hour. The ‘shrooms, once dry, can be kept fresh by storing them in a freezer.

“Every time I think about the smell or taste of ‘shrooms, I want to puke,” Dave declared. “They taste like moldy dirt.” To avoid the unpleasant flavor, he cooks them into a vegetable omelette.

“The bad taste is part of the whole ritual,” John countered. Even so, he stuffs the fungus inside a pastry to block out the bad taste.

To John eating ‘shrooms is pretty spontaneous. “I rarely eat them during the school year. I save them to waste days during the summer.”

Dave said his purpose was to achieve a higher state of awareness, of himself and his environment.

“Right after you eat them you can start to feel something, but it takes about an hour to feel the full effect.” He said an initial discomfort sets in. “Your stomach tightens and your mouth becomes dry, but this doesn’t last long.

“Everything comes alive and fits into a pattern. It also makes you aware of the kind of person you are. It reveals yourself to yourself.”

“I hope we don’t sound like a couple of Timothy Learys,” John added. “I eat them more for recreation. You get what you want to get out of the high.”

Confusion and indecisiveness can set in. John recalled a time when he sat on a rock all day with his sunglasses on, just staring at the mountains. Another time John and his friends downed some ‘shrooms while hiking in the Olympics. One of his friends spent four hours talking down a marmot hole.

“You also can receive brief flashes of genius,” John said, then added with a smile, “Well, at least at the time you think so.”

“I feel real wishy-washy the next day, and suffer a case of the blahs. Because everything was so intense while I was high it’s real grey.”

“I feel the twinges of the high for few days afterward, as if a residue lingers on,” Dave commented.

Both John and Dave said mushrooms are not addictive for them. “I have no urges to do it often, and no reason to do them more than a few times a year,” John said.

“As with other drugs, it depends on the personality of the user,” Dave said.

Compared to LSD, Dave believes mushrooms are more a body high and do not last as long. “Mushrooms are so easy to get and more organic; they just grow out there. I’ve never bought them from anybody.”

**S**ince mushrooms do grow wild in Whatcom County, the Drug Information Center recently sponsored a legal information meeting on the subject.

The panel included Dean Sadell, a Whatcom County deputy sheriff; Mark Stansfield, a deputy prosecutor; and William Johnston, a Bellingham attorney.

Sadell said the sheriff’s department does not go out and look for “magic” mushroom pickers, but usually catches them when a citizen complains about trespassers. If the department cites a picker for trespassing, it is a \$100 fine for the first offense. The second time someone is cited, it is a \$200 fine plus the possibility of a few days in jail.

“A person is guilty of trespass when he knowingly enters and remains on private land,” according to a Whatcom County ordinance. According to Stansfield, the property does not have to be posted. If it has a fence or other signs of upkeep, it is private land.

Farmers in Whatcom County have had problems with trespassers, Sadell said. Damaged fences, litter and diseases spread from field to field cause them to complain to the authorities.

Adult trespass arrests during the mushroom season (September through November) decreased from 233 in 1981 to only 29 in September and October of 1984. Sadell said he does not know the exact reason for the decline, but suggested people may be getting wiser, or that it could be



the poor weather.

The Whatcom County Sheriff's Department has not yet addressed possessing psilocyben mushrooms as a criminal charge, but it is examining the possibility, Sadell said.

Stansfield said his department is not pursuing it as a felony, but this may change. Possession of psilocyben is a Class C felony with a 5-year maximum prison sentence. The sale or delivery of psilocyben is a Class B felony with a 10-year maximum sentence or a \$25,000 fine.

Even though the county prosecutor's office may not be bringing felony charges, Stansfield said, a person, especially a college student who will soon be seeking a job, does not want a felony arrest on his or her record.

A case currently going through the Washington court systems may decide whether or not the law specifies that possession of psilocyben, a chemical, is a felony, and possession of the mushroom that contains it is not, Johnston said.

Western's Drug Information Center will analyze any mushrooms a person is wil-


ling to bring in. The mushrooms brought in are assigned a number and are destroyed after being analyzed by a professional. The results are posted by number on the center's door. The center usually receives about 40 samples a week, but due probably to the weather, it has had only about 10 to 15 samples last year.

"We're not soliciting anything," center Coordinator Don Rose said, but "it is real easy to make a mistake picking mushrooms." The center has many books on the subject. People should know mushrooms or go with somebody who does, Rose said. The Drug Information Center is located in Viking Union 213.

It is essential that if people pick and consume any kind of mushroom, they must know exactly what they are doing, he stressed.

Dave and John know what they are doing. Dave has been eating mushrooms since he was nine and picking them since he was eleven.

"Mushrooms are easy to get and organic; they just grow out there. I never bought them from anybody," Dave said. ●



*Crawling on hands and knees is still the only way to pick for the magic high. Liberty caps are small, dark and hard to see.*

*Imbert Mathee*



# Women Working for Women

by Julie Steele

This is a closer look at the lives and thoughts of four Bellingham women. Four women who lead community programs, help other women with crucial personal decisions and speak on issues that affect all women.

This is a glance at their trail blazing and everyday life. As one of Bellingham's leading women said, "We have our own Geraldine Ferraros."

Calling herself a "late bloomer," Marie Hammer is known as an active organizer in Bellingham. She has helped bring together 13 organizations that make up the Whatcom County Coalition for Women and is involved in more than four women's groups.

"As I look back, I got support from women who took the time to talk to me," Hammer said. "I would like to give the support back."

She said she encourages women to look at their salary status and check if they're being paid adequately. She thinks women should vote, study the legislature and consider running for office themselves.

"The Reagan administration is making tremendous budget cuts affecting women and children," she said. "Feeding programs for pregnant women and school meals funds have been cut. Cuts in job training programs have specifically hurt single mothers trying to improve their income level," she noted.

"The women Reagan has put in office are not truly reflecting women's concerns," Hammer said. "They are not listening to the public women's view."

A woman who knows how to channel her energies and takes advantage of her rights will help herself considerably, she said. ●



Playing at a park near grandmother's, Marie Hammer and her granddaughter, Noelle Norman, try the slide.

Julie Steele



Sharon Wood Mixer sits at the end of her long living room couch. She often counsels from her home for the Western Association of Concerned Adoptive Parents (WACAP) or visits her clients. The Fairhaven graduate is also a member of the National Abortion Rights Action League.

Last fall, Sharon Wood Mixer was nine months pregnant but was troubled by strange responses. During debates over a woman's right to choose an abortion, opponents were surprised someone could support abortion rights, yet be pro-motherhood.

"What are we supposed to look like?" she asked. Protecting a woman's right to an abortion doesn't mean she and other pro-choice people hate children or hate being mothers, she said. Rather, they believe a woman's choice over her own body is a vital right.

Besides debating at meetings, Wood Mixer has

spoken on KVO5-TV and at two local radio stations. Last fall, she spoke frequently against the initiative to stop state funding of abortions.

Counseling pregnant women is Wood Mixer's regular job. She listens and explains the options for pregnancy.

She said the organization doesn't counsel only women choosing adoption. Women considering abortion also are welcome. Often, the women have already made a decision and only want someone to listen to them. If the woman chooses to have a baby, another project is to collect maternity clothes.

Wood Mixer has been involved with reproductive health issues and abortion rights since 1969. Since she helped include packaging literature in contraceptive pills, women have become more informed. She also advises women to be "assertive with their doctors." ●



Julie Steele

*Two-month-old Shaina lies against her mother, Sharon Wood Mixer. Wood Mixer also has a 15-year-old son, Noel.*



DeAnn Pullar, a single mother of three sons, studies business and political science at Western. She's also coordinator of the Women's Center at Western and state chairperson of the Libertarian Party. Taking time for herself, the healthy-faced woman regularly swims laps at Western's pool.

Abortion is a woman's choice, she said, not the government's. "After all, your body is your property." But, "the government shouldn't fund abortion." Instead, contributions and fund-raising could leave the responsibility with the public.

"I don't think the government should pay for social services," she said. People who don't believe in abortion shouldn't have to pay for it. Although she said, a lot of people pay for issues with which they don't agree.

"Politically, it doesn't look too good for women right now," Pullar said. "The Republican platform in general is not focused on women's and individual rights."

Standing up in a society that's not the best for women is what women must do, she advised. "Learn about the issues and be involved." ●



Julie Steele

*During the afternoon, DeAnn Pullar regularly swims laps at Western's Carver Gym. Pullar also teaches an intramural swimming class at the same pool.*



A former French teacher, Dorothy Culjat is now Bellingham's YWCA director and a member of the city council.

The YWCA offers low-cost housing and a safe home to women, Culjat said, while sitting in the spacious lounge. Most of the women residents are in "transition." Other women may be traveling, from a different country, new to town, just out of the military or recovering from a divorce. With the supportive surroundings, "a woman can direct her energies to obtaining counseling, studying or getting a job."

Developing leadership by women and special events are two other YWCA goals besides housing. The YWCA recently organized a women's run and, during the fall elections, invited the gubernatorial candidates to speak at a luncheon.

Having an interest and some experience in civic responsibility, Culjat ran and was elected to Bellingham's City Council. "I wanted my actions to speak as loud as my words," she said. "It made sense to me to be active in a way the YWCA was striving to do." ●



*Dorothy Culjat sits in a YWCA bedroom. Bedrooms are usually rented to women who stay for a month or longer. Alcoves on the top floor may be used by a woman for a week or single night.*





# Fade To Black

*Joe Wickersham's sight is confined to colorless shapes in his peripheral vision.  
Imbert Matthee*

## By John Song

**J**oe Wickersham's favorite color always has been red. He recalled owning a bright red 1974 Firebird that was "very fast and fun to drive."

But now, he can't drive or see colors—he is nearly blind.

Wickersham, a transfer Western student from Green River Community College, is a recent victim of Leber's Optic Atrophy, a hereditary disease that attacks the optic nerves.

No one else in his family has the disease; therefore, Wickersham speculated that his family genes carried the disease, which predominately attacks males.

"If I was born a girl," he laughed, "I wouldn't probably be blind."

In some instances, victims have recovered to about 20/400 vision after temporary blindness. Wickersham, however, still is in the deteriorating stage and can't see except with limited peripheral vision.

It was nearly a year ago that he first noticed he was losing the sight in his left eye. He was in his Green River English class when his sight became blurry. Wickersham immediately went to an optometrist, and was told he had optic neurosis, which usually blinds one eye.

When the left eye went completely blind, he saw another optometrist,

who gave him the same diagnosis and told him to see a neurologist.

The neurologist also diagnosed Wickersham's problems as optic neurosis. But in two weeks, his right eye also started deteriorating.

"By then, my mom and I started getting really emotionally upset and frustrated," he said.

Wickersham then went to one of the two optic neurologists in the state. This specialist concluded Wickersham suffered from Leber's Optic Atrophy.

Soon, his deteriorating vision forced him to quit the Green River basketball team and eventually drop out of spring quarter.

"I couldn't even read my chemistry book," he explained.

Wickersham, 21, is handsome with short, brown hair. His clear baby face sports a thin mustache. Wickersham's smile unveils a pair of dimples; his muscular six-foot build vouches for his Auburn High School football letters.

One of his female sociology classmates described him as a "doll."

Wickersham's big, clear blue eyes are very distinctive. It would be hard to guess he is blind when he looks straight at a person. He has a tendency, however, to give a person his profile when talking. This is so he can get a glimpse of the person with his peripheral vision.

In an interview, Wickersham sat comfortably slouched in his sofa and talked candidly about his ordeal. When he talks, his words speak alone without help from his arms and hands. He talks smoothly with the confidence of a salesman.

"Going blind was like looking through perfectly focused binoculars, then turning the focus every day to make it more and more blurry until you can't see.

"Now, I can't even see you if you're in front of me. If I look at you from the corner of my eye, I can barely make out an object, but I wouldn't know if you were my mom or not."

Wickersham said when he realized he would have to live the rest of his life with a visual disability, he began to focus more clearly on his future goals than he had before. He began taking life very seriously, he said.

"Since he lost his sight, he has changed—he has a different outlook on life," said Wickersham's girlfriend, Patti Bogel. "He enjoys things about life more than he did before. I wish he could see, but I'm glad he has changed."

Wickersham reassured her, "I would have said the same thing if I were you.

"I give a lot more respect to Patti than I used to give to other girlfriends. Now, I'm seeing life differently. I used to chase girls—chase, chase, chase."



Patti, an attractive, 23-year-old woman with blond hair and blue eyes, moved to Bellingham with Wickersham. She does not attend school. She takes care of Wickersham's domestic chores and occasionally helps with his homework.

Wickersham now also takes education more seriously than before. Inspired by a blind lawyer friend, Wickersham said he knew he had to go back to college after dropping out during spring quarter. He is interested in becoming a lawyer.

"I just told myself, 'Listen, Joe, your eyes are gone. It's time to buckle down. You got to get to school. It's time you start studying more and obtaining better grades.'

"I have an uphill battle. For me to succeed in this world, I must go to school and obtain an upper-level degree."

**W**ickersham ignored the usual process of rehabilitation, which would have given him counseling and trained him to use a cane. He said he didn't have time; he wanted to get back in school as soon as possible.

"I was already behind everyone (because of the disability). I couldn't waste any time with rehabilitation," he said, with his eyes wandering in various directions.

Wickersham decided to transfer to Western in summer quarter instead

of finishing at Green River. He figured at a university, he would live closer to school, and it would have more facilities to assist him.

Wickersham favored Western over other state universities because of its location. He is a ticket scalper, so Bellingham's location between Seattle and Vancouver is attractive.

During the summer quarter, Wickersham took a sociology introductory course from John Richardson and was so impressed, he declared the subject his major.

Wickersham studies by using taped materials in the library for the blind. He also has used Western's Reader Service, though he gives it poor marks. He records all lectures, and then transfers the main notes onto one tape to study for tests.

"My notes probably are a helluva lot better than your notes," he said, laughing.

Tammy Forman, who is Wickersham's biology lab partner, said he has a great memory. If you cite a point from a lecture, he remembers almost everything about it, she added.

Wickersham credits his memory to dedicated studying of his tapes.

"I catch a lot of things that people taking notes miss," he said.

Although Wickersham has adjusted well to Western's academics, he still is having problems adjusting to his new disability.

"Just a couple of months ago, I had 20/400 vision," he said. "I couldn't drive or read with that, but I could see somewhat. Now, I have problems like running into bushes, fences and benches. I run into other people, and I step off of three-foot ledges without knowing about it. Yeah, it's getting frustrating."

Forman said people will run into him, thinking he would go around them. People can't tell he is blind right away, she added.

If the bruises from falls and bumps continue to get worse, Wickersham said, he eventually will learn to use a cane. But he still is hoping he will recover to 20/400 vision sometime in the future. He wouldn't be able to read a newspaper even then, but it's something he won't take for granted if it comes, he said.

"If I can have one thing in the world, I'd want my eyes back," he said. His eyes didn't move. "If I had to give everything I had—every cent of money, every stitching of clothing—I would, to have my eyes back. Even if I had to work ten years for nothing, I would. Anything, whatever it is, I would give it. Material things aren't worth my eyes, not even a billion or trillion dollars."

Wickersham's voice softened as he looked out of the corner of his eyes. "One thing I am really scared of—is that maybe everything will go completely black. That's scary to me."●

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*Wickersham takes a close look at girlfriend Patti Bogel, who has helped him adjust to his still-advancing blindness.*





# The Canadian Dollar:

## The Buck Shops Here

by Vaughn Cocke

**A** recent visitor to Whatcom County asked, "What sort of industry makes Bellingham run?" As she paid for her meal in a local restaurant, she was unaware she represented the answer to her own question.

Whatcom County relies heavily on tourism. According to the Bellingham and Whatcom County Visitor and Convention Bureau, the retail purchases by visitors to the county in 1983 amounted to \$107 million. That total equals about 31 percent of all retail sales. In addition, almost 18 percent of the county's work force is employed in businesses serving visitors.

By far, the county's largest source of visitors is British Columbia, Canada. The visitor bureau estimates 80 percent of the tourism market comes from B.C. In 1983, 6.57 million people crossed the border from Canada into Whatcom County. Obviously, if Canadians stopped spending their money in Whatcom, the impact would be severe.

Consider the plight of the Canadian dollar. In the last three years, its value has slipped from 84 to 76 cents American. The most rapid decline occurred between January and July, 1984. It plunged from 81 cents to 74 and Canadians wondered when and if it would end.

Some local businesses have tried to compensate for the drop in the Canadian dollar by offering incentives. Fred Meyer currently gives an exchange rate of 19 percent on Canadian money, versus 25 or 26 percent charged by other stores.

K Mart, a competitor of Fred Meyer, has seen its Canadian market decrease because of the dollar's skid. Spokesperson Doug Schoonover said that when the two dollars were even (in 1976), Canadians accounted for 25 to 30 percent of K Mart's business. Today, that figure is between 20 and 25 percent. Schoonover said Canadians are more careful with their money now, and very conscious of the exchange rate.

Joe Pollard, a Coquitlam, B.C., resident, supports this belief. Pollard said he has been visiting Bellingham "at least once a week" for the last 10 years. He said he did more shopping when the Canadian dollar was healthier, but he still manages to find bargains. "If you know your prices, then you're all right."

Bellingham hotels and restaurants are very dependent on Canadian tourists and are even more inclined to create incentive plans than retailers.

The Holiday Inn responded to the weakening dollar by placing advertisements in Canadian newspapers and offering half-price rooms to Canadians.

"We try to encourage a lot of Canadian





trade," spokesperson Carol Cone said.

Probably the biggest incentive is the Good Neighbor Promotion, sponsored by the *Bellingham Herald*. Periodically, for about three weeks at a time, a group of retail merchants accepts Canadian money at par.

Restaurant owner Louis Kovacs participates in the promotion and said it's very effective. He said Canadians currently represent 60 percent of his business, down 10 percent from three years ago. But he confidently predicted the Canadian dollar

will make a comeback soon.

That may just be wishful thinking, but the director of Canadian-American Studies at Western agrees with Kovacs. Robert Monahan said the Canadian dollar is already beginning its recovery. He said the policies of Canada's new Conservative Party government should boost the dollar, but probably only a few cents.

At any rate, that could allow the visitor bureau to increase its projected 10-percent-a-year growth rate for Whatcom County tourist industries. ●



Imbert Mathee

*Carloads of Canadians stream through the Blaine border crossing, enroute to spending their money in Washington state. Canadians account for about 20 percent (in some places much more) of the retail business in Whatcom County, estimate area retailers.*



# THE PSYCHIC CONNECTION

## Reach Out And Touch Someone

by Bruce Moon

**R**emember the last time it happened? You had that problem making a decision, and then something, perhaps a voice, came into your mind and told you what to do. Or when you looked deep into a friend's eyes as you asked him or her to be extra careful—knowing something would happen to them?

Some Bellingham psychics say to always follow up on such hunches because those little voices are guardian angels, or "spirit guides," from the metaphysical afterlife, the "other side," who come to help us achieve an ultimate knowledge.

Those hunches are what psychics call "lessons," afforded us through reincarnation, and transmitted through parapsychologists, or "psychics," who act as spokespersons for the unseen.

Many of those involved in such belief find their extrasensory perceptions most accommodated by religious-based study.

"A person who is a channel for God, and works through him, will definitely give the person being read a more purified spiritual message," a woman, who uses the mediumship name "Tassy," said. She is a Bellingham Psychic, who bases her spiritual counseling partly on her experiences in

the Spiritualist Church, and partly on the "Pathway of the Immortal" teachings of Elizabeth Burrows.

Tassy said the main reason most people seek her counsel is to learn more about their personal relationships in past lives.

Each person comes back to this life with former experiences influencing this lifetime, she said. A married couple, for instance, may have been acquainted or even married in a previous life.

She likened the Earth to a big classroom, in which all this life's important lessons must be learned before graduating to the next "plane of existence:" the spiritual world, where time and material aspirations have no measure.

Her goal is to achieve "cosmic enlightenment" in this lifetime, so that she won't have to return to Earth to learn any more lessons.

Tassy said most psychics can't serve mankind properly because they place too much emphasis on their own egos, and most psychics are jealous of one another because they haven't relinquished this ego.

The best psychics have no need to be so competitive, and would not use gimmicky tools, such as palm reading, card reading or pendulum swinging if they were prop-

erly tapped into the god-energy, she said.

A 15-year student of parapsychology, Tassy teaches classes on how to unlock the potential for heightened spiritual awareness, which she said is in everyone. The classes cost \$7 apiece, and meet weekly for three months.

Individual readings can be pro-rated, because the timing of the message from the spirit guides is unpredictable. This is why attempts at one-shot readings yield only fragmented information.

She said anyone wanting to get involved in parapsychology should first observe the basics of open-mindedness, as practiced in the Unity Church. Then, to lift their spirits higher, people ought to explore the Spiritualist faith, and then more specialized, personal instruction—as she had via author Burrows.

Tassy said she didn't believe much in "trance work," in which voices of spirits of the dead supposedly speak through mediums' lips. She'd known a phony psychic who used trance work as an excuse for not being responsible for her own actions. These people will only work through lower astral planes, Tassy said.

"You attract only the level of the other side (corresponding) to where you're at," she said.



**A** trance speaker did show up, however, at a recent service in the First Spiritualist Church of Bellingham.

Her working name was "Char." She and her husband, the Reverend George Russell, travel as free-lance psychics, based in the Unity Church.

After her husband gave a lecture about the importance of faith, Char performed some quick, informal readings for the congregations. For these readings, members quietly sat with upturned hands, while she paced the floor.

Char spoke openly, joking about some of her encounters with other customers. She asked some members to keep their arms and legs unfolded to enable her to reach their souls.

She said she could feel psychic vibrations in her foot and in her "gut." She then cut from her general audience to one woman in the front row.

"May I come to you?"

"Yes," the woman whispered, smiling.

"You are in a process of change," Char told her. "Dec. 8 is an important day for you. Don't worry about what you haven't got, declare what you *have* got," she said as the group nodded and hummed in approval.

After the service, Char went into a light trance during an informal reading (formal readings cost \$25 for a 90-minute session). During this, she slipped into a deeper, murkier voice and mumbled about not knowing exactly what took place in her mind as she did her readings.

Reverend Russell later explained this was her spirit guide, a dead man talking through her. He said she tapes her readings to help her confirm what she tells customers after the fact, because she doesn't always know what she's said.



*During an aural healing, a woman awaits rejuvenation as a healer helps her channel her powers.*

John Klicker



**A**ndy Anderson is a member of the First Spiritualist Church, once known as the Church of Psychic Research.

Anderson, along with an average of about 25 people (most in their 50s, but including a few children and teenagers) attend Spiritualist services each Sunday morning at the Odd Fellows Temple.

This is a temporary base: Their old Girard Street building was destroyed by arson one year ago. A new church is underway.

An advantage to having guest lecturers is that if some members don't agree on one philosophy, they don't have to worry because a slightly different point of view is always forthcoming.

Anderson is one of three regular "healers," who provide a chance for members to have abundant energy channeled into their bodies.

After the prayer book recitals, but before the guest lecture, the healers stand over any member who feels a need for this "aural healing."

In this, healers help members gain medicinal benefits of increased energy by closing their eyes and concentrating, as they run their hands along the subject's

shoulders, chest and back. They sometimes hold one point, such as the forehead, to focus the energy on vital points.

This way of diagnosing the person's problems can combine with predictive visualizations to make use of energies previously untapped, Anderson said.

Anderson warned of the classic sign of sham: When psychics predict trouble for a person, they often go on to claim that the only way to be rid of the problem is to continue the sessions.

Another signal to be aware of is the psychic who continually needles patients with questions in an attempt to put them off guard, and gather enough information to tell them what they probably already know.

Instead, a good psychic should be able to see people's positive potentials just by talking casually with them and watching body signs.

Reverend Dollie Sanders is another religion-based parapsychologist in Bellingham. She is a state-certified minister of the Church of the Master—the master being Jesus, she said.

A specialist in ESP, Sanders helps people, not by any magic potions, but by giving them clues to their own salvations. She

does this through a form of predictive visualization called clairvoyance.

Most people seek her because they want help with their present social lives, as in deciding when to marry. The solution to these people's problems, she says, is to tell more to give them a chance to grow up. She has a master's degree in counseling psychology and is working toward a doctorate.

Sanders maintains her own personal code of ethics on two points: First, psychics must be honest. "If you can't help someone that day, tell them. Don't lie." Second, psychics must "keep their mouths shut about other people's business." She said she doesn't even take names when people reserve a time with her, in order to maintain the highest confidentiality.

Sanders' philosophy about reincarnation parallels that of the Spiritualists. She considers death a natural part of life, a "graduation" from the school Tassy mentioned. She tries to help people reach those in the afterlife.

She recalled holding a ruby ring given to one of her customers by a late husband. This method, called psychometry, led her to "see" an image of the woman's British, red-headed, blue-eyed mechanic spouse

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*A member of the First Spiritualist Church of Bellingham points to the ultimate source of psychic energy, while at right, healer Andy Anderson relaxes to let the sermon sink in.*



John Klicker



and she began to say the message word the couple had agreed on while he lived: 'Gorblimmey,' she said again and again, not realizing she was swearing in British jargon.

She also worked on more practical problems, such as helping businesspeople decide on risky ventures. In one case, a man brought her an envelope with information about a real-estate deal. She held the envelope above her forehead, saw a cloud over the title to the land, and told the man not to invest. This was wise, because the title proved unobtainable.

Sanders first noticed her psychic tendencies as a young girl. She began counseling at age 15 with the approval of her mother, who also was psychic. Sanders' own children, and two grandchildren, also show psychic abilities.

Yet she sees the key to such abilities not as inheritance, but instead the early encouragement of any psychic tendencies.

Most young people today are "too smart" to accept much of the traditional Christian church dogma, she said, which stressed the threat of punishment rather than the reward of a full, purposeful life. Many preachers were on "ego trips," which made happiness in this life a hard

lesson.

Critics of psychics such as Sanders, Tassy and Char direct arguments at the central tenets of their faith: that communication with the "dead" can be proved through the scientific examination of their psychic predictions.

A particularly determined group is the Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. In its official journal, *The Skeptical Inquirer*, the committee claims "To encourage and commission research by objective and impartial inquiries in areas where it is needed," regarding psychic phenomena.

Sometimes the scientists and philosophers, who write articles for the journal, take their attack to the point of ridicule, claiming "victories" in many fraud-revealing stories.

With story titles such as "Psychics Failed 1983 Predictions," "Psychic Arms Race? Give Me a Break!" and "Parapsychologist's Past Eight Years: A Lack-of-Progress Report," all stemming from one issue (Summer 1984), the committee's claim to impartiality may be only a claim.

Western psychology professor Laurence Miller said he was more open-minded

to claims made by psychics, primarily because more sophisticated scientific techniques are developing for the testing of such claims as healing and predictive powers of not just practicing psychics, but anyone.

Still, he said, given a choice, he'd take the skeptic's side because, as the scientist investigating scientific claims, he'd need to see evidence that could be repeated time and again to be convinced.

He did, however, invite Sanders to give a demonstration of her psychic powers to his Altered States of Consciousness class. While some of his students were highly impressed with Sanders' ability to tell them about themselves, Miller still considered the power of suggestion the likeliest cause for the excitement.

"All of the different (psychic) organizations don't make that much difference as long as we're honest and understand what we're all about," Sanders said. "What right do they have to say which religion is right or wrong? If God didn't intend them to be there, they wouldn't exist."

As Tassy said, "nothing happens by pure coincidence." Even reading about psychics probably is part of a life lesson in the making. ●

*Before the sermon, Spiritualist Church members receive aural healings to help get the most out of the spiritual atmosphere.*



John Klicker



# Galen Biery's Magic Lantern Shines on Old Whatcom

by Tobi Kestenberg

**S**eventy-four-year-old Galen Biery says he "backed into history." Whatcom County's historian extraordinaire, keeper of the dying art of glass slide shows, lived it first, and continues to share and preserve it for future generations.

"I was born December 23, 1910. This put me back into the horse and buggy days, with very few automobiles around, and I can look at the city streets today—and remember when I was growing up as a very small child, I played in the streets, which today are very busy thoroughfares. I was born down in the south end of Fairhaven. The corner of 14th and Donovan today is a very, very busy place and you surely would take your life in your hands to walk across it today—but in those days I played in the streets down there and was never ever bothered by anything coming along. Nearby was a watering trough where the horses could take a drink of water, and once in a while you'd see a car come lumbering up across the street, with big ruts in the roadway."

Biery chronicled the changes in Fairhaven, and eventually all of Whatcom County, through his interest in photography, and through the magic lantern slide shows. He first saw the magic lantern as a small boy.

"In those days the magic lantern was a toy—the pictures were on a transparent medium, usually glass, about, maybe, an inch-and-a-half and six or eight inches long, and a series of highly colored pictures. He (a neighbor kid) put this program on, and that was my introduction to the optical projection of pictures. I became very fascinated by this particular device."

A tinkerer, Biery built his own photographic equipment, and by age 15 or 16 had produced his first optical transparencies.

As he grew, Biery collected the sights and the stories of boomtown Fairhaven.

"One of the first things I attempted was copying that picture on the living room wall of Fairhaven. It was in the window in a store down in Fairhaven. It was really beaten up and not as nice as this one. I finally had the nerve to go in and ask the man if I could take it out of the window and set it on the counter and take a picture of it. That was one of the first historical views that I had taken.

"I might say that I grew up with a bunch of pioneers in Fairhaven and they were always telling stories. Especially one of the men that had worked with Nelson Bennett, who was the first president of Fairhaven. Bennett had a contract to put the tunnel through for the railroad of the Northern Pacific, known as the Stampede Tunnel.

"This was about some seven miles long, and this man that I knew was a 'powder man'—in other words, you used the powder to blast the hole out. He knew Bennett real well and he spun a lotta stories. I'd never heard of Nelson Bennett, and it wasn't 'til later that I started doing some digging, and I realized who Bennett was from this powder man.

"Bennett was the principle owner of Fairhaven. He sold his interest in Fairhaven to Charles X. Larrabee, who was another pioneer, for some \$490,000 in 1891. That was a lot of money in those days. That's when the dollar was worth one hundred pennies. If you'd saved a dollar from the 1900s, by 1930 it would have reduced by half so it would be worth fifty cents. Then in 1983 it was down to nine cents. If the current inflation rate of four percent were to continue to the end of the century, the dollar that was worth one hundred cents in the 1900s would then be worth four cents. That's what you call inflation—or eroded money!"

When he was 48, Biery was asked to share what he had collected. He began his job as Whatcom County's historian in earnest.

"In 1958 one of the local service clubs, (Fairhaven Lions Club), wanted me to put

on a presentation of my pictures. At that time I told them I had no way of doing it. I wasn't overly anxious to exposing myself to a crowd of people and talk about photography or about the history of the pictures, but I finally reflected back on the fact that I did know how to make lantern slides, so I proceeded to get some material and started doing that....

"As time went on I become good enough at it to produce a real good slide. The matting, or border on the slide could no longer be purchased, so I went into the business of making the mats myself and this then gave, more or less, a professional look to the glass lantern slides. The slide has to carry some information on it, printed, and it also has to carry the familiar 'thumb mark' which enables you to project slides without putting any in upside down.

"I was quite timid when I first started on what was going to be a long career of putting on these magic lantern slide shows. As I started my first show with about fifty slides, I run today several hundreds—possibly over a thousand slides which are primarily of just local history."

Biery's collection of historical images expanded as his reputation grew.

"One of the pupils of Mme. Engberg (famed Bellingham violinist and orchestra conductor of the 1900s) was Katherine Wade-Smith, who later became Mrs. R. Jones. When she got much older, she called me one day—she had lived on the hillside just above where I worked down below, on the waterfront. So I had time to run up and have a bowl of pea soup with her, and at that time she gave me this pack of pictures."

Not only has Biery preserved a bit of the past, he has carried forth the art of the glass-slide magic lantern show.

"There are some magic lantern societies that usually get together and talk about the equipment and some of the slides they've acquired, but there's not too many that I know of. In fact, there's nobody that I know of that's actually taking two pieces of glass, making plates and binding them and putting the plates in shape."



Now Biery travels, making some "wild runs, like to Tacoma and back," showing the slides at nursing homes and to civic organizations. They retain their original "magic."

"Well, I think that when you come down to it, basically, the magic lantern was a lantern...and to take it and put a lens on it and a transparent medium in the form of a slide, all of a sudden you have a HUGE PICTURE on the screen, and I think that's where the 'magic' came in. After all, this was invented maybe a couple of hundred years ago, and it must have been that the people watching this thought it was a piece of magic to see such big pictures. In fact, that's what got me...was the fascination of seeing such a big picture on a bed-sheet from such a small, little slide...that's where they got the name 'magic.' I've never had it explained to me."

Similar to the change from thoroughfare for horse-drawn carts to freeway tributary of his childhood streets, Biery's slide shows detail the birth and growth of industry in the Northwest, and beyond.

"In my lifetime, I've seen the start and rise of the airplane, astronauts go to the moon; grocery stores grow into supermarkets... muddy roads change to super highways and the rise of the motorcar, electronics, radio, television...silents to super 70MM film and the IMAX process...and radio to TV to video...photography changed from glass plates to flexible film. Tape recording started in 1893. It was invented by a Danish man named Paulson. We saw that develop into video taping using magnetic tape-recording equipment."

In his slides he's detailed the northwest's fishing industry....

"We've made a fabulous collection of pictures pertaining to the canned salmon industry. I've worked in that for a number of years and did know about it, and so we give a good presentation about that particular subject.

"For instance, here's a plate I just made yesterday. It's a very unique picture of a pile driver crew, and it shows the faces so clearly. This is going to be included in either one of my two programs—one on salmon where pile drivers were used, or in a maritime show we'll be putting on soon at one of our Whatcom County parks. The man with the apron is the cook. This could have taken place at any time from about 1900 to about 1930. This photo came out of a collection of old negatives which I had gone through. Many of these pictures were taken by other photographers."

Coal as an industry here has come and

*"I've had a few disasters. One day my necktie got caught in the fan. It sucked it right in, that brought the program to a halt!" said Biery, who spins his special brand of magic programs such as the one on Theaters he did recently at the Senior Center in Bellingham.*



Tobi Kestenber



gone, but Biery has chronicled its heyday.

"Another segment of the magic lantern slides is the coal mining, beginning with the Paddel Coal Mine at Unionville, which is now part of Fairhaven, leading into the discovery of coal at Sehome by Mr. Brown, who later built the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, Colorado...same man. We then move to Lake Whatcom and look at some of the coal mines, which had a very, very high grade of coal, but in mountainous country with the veins pretty well broken up.

"The big Bellingham Coal Mine, we have a good program on that. It was one of the deepest mines in the country, running some 1100 feet deep below the tide level, going through eleven layers of coal with each one of the layers of coal running about eight or ten feet. Taking out a thou-

sand tons a day in just a couple of years, the production was way high.

"These coal mines weren't exhausted, they were simply put out of business because of the price of oil—oil being just a few cents a barrel and the coal operators couldn't compete against that kind of a price and so the public buildings, hospitals, mills and other places where they used coal slowly went over to oil and the coal mines were deserted. One of the big producers of coking coal was Cokedale, down by Sedro, and later the towns of Sedro and Woolley combined to make it one town...at that time they were two towns there. This mine was closed up, but there was a small village there known as Cokedale, where they produced in the ovens coking coal. This is used in the

manufacture of steel, it's a very essential part of it, and this was a very fine coal for that."

A thorough historian, Biery doesn't ignore what the people did for entertainment.

"Here's one that dates back to the 1890s. It's an old theatrical group called the LIGHTHOUSE THEATRE, which was down in New Whatcom and operated for many years. Incidentally, this was about the time when Mark Twain made his appearance and he put on a program at this theatre. That was 1895....

"The theater's program starts from the days of little showplaces. Every town had at least one opera house which possibly was a very small stage, maybe a couple of lights on stage—surely nothing like we know of today.

"This program carries us on through the early beginnings to the vaudeville days, motion pictures—and by 1909 a lot of the vaudeville had folded up because it simply became too expensive to put on those shows. The theaters couldn't afford to hire the stage people, the housing, meals—all the various expenses that went with vaudeville compared against film. Film only required an operator who put the film in the projector, and the same lady that sold the opera house or vaudeville tickets, now gives out movie tickets.

"It was just a good way to make money—and they sure did! The admission being 5 or 10 cents to go to the pictures, so the theater managers and owners made more money on motion pictures. Gradually from the silent picture came the sound picture and we show all this and how films continued to expand, so we have just about a forty-five minute program on just the evolution of opera houses, vaudeville and the movies.

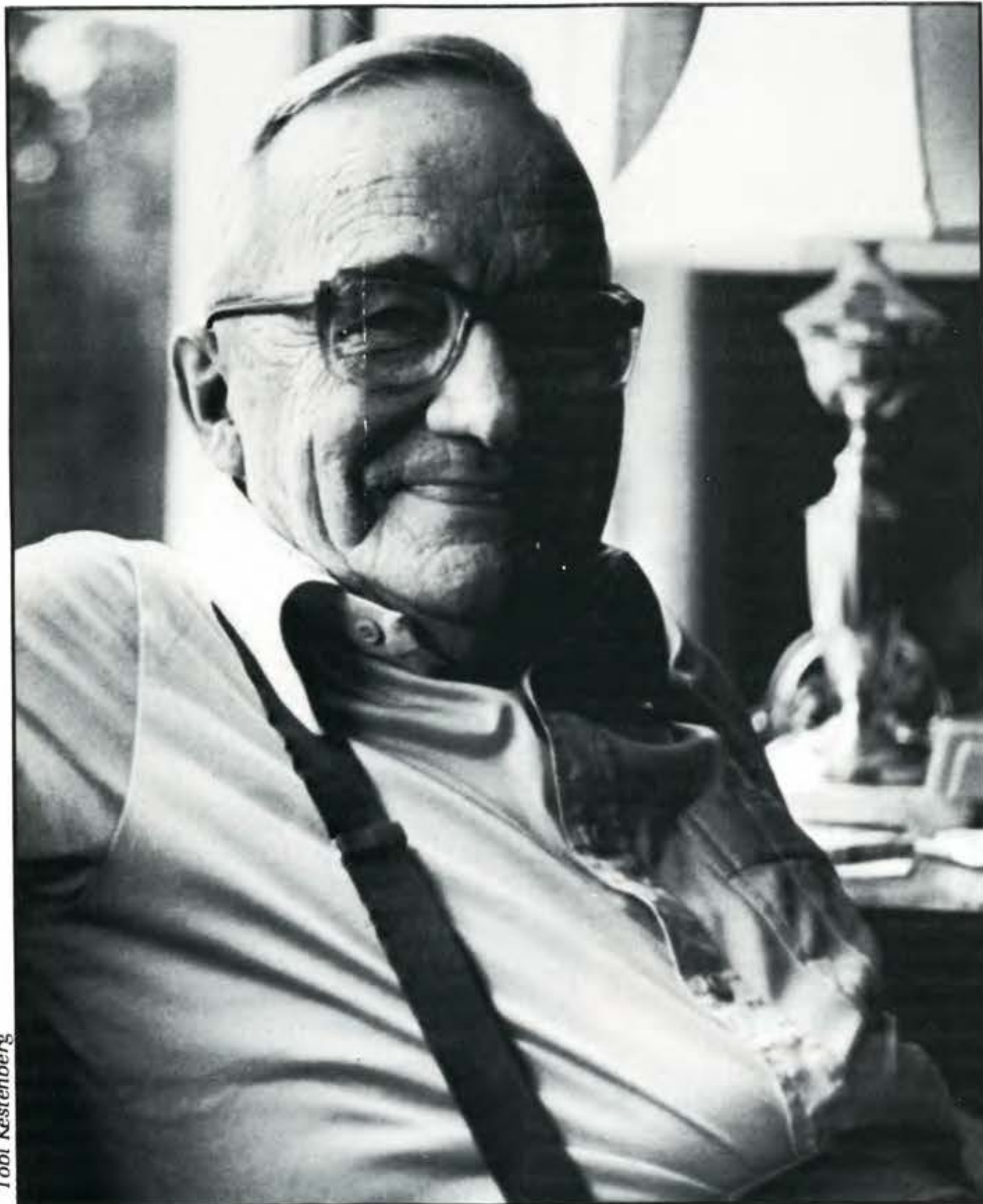
"Recently I've added the final touch on that, with the coming of TV and show the number of channels we can get via cable and/or the reflecting dishes that many people have in their backyards that are looking at the heavens...and some of the twenty-two satellites up there. It makes a pretty good program from the early movies, which first appeared about 1893, with the coming of video taping later—what a complete turn-around we've had in the entertainment field."

Biery's own art, that of preserving images, has also changed radically.

"As time has gone on the cost has slowly risen. When I first started making lantern slides you could buy Eastwood plates packaged in units of twelve. You could get either slow or regular plates. The regular plate gave you a medium contrast, and the slow plate was more contrasty. So you had two plates to choose from. Most drugstores sold these plates. Believe it or not...the drugstores. They had them in the camera department and they cost fifty-five cents for a dozen plates.

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*"In my lifetime, I've seen the start and rise of the airplane, astronauts go to the moon, grocery stores grow into super markets...streets change from muddy roads to super highways...silent films grow into talkies, crystal sets into radio, television and the like," Biery muses as he scans Fairhaven and Bellingham Bay through his living room window.*



Tobi Kestenber



"As time went on these plates moved out of the drugstores. Eastman had a slogan: 'You push the button and we'll do the rest.' Sure enough, that's exactly what they did. They sold cameras that had 100 pictures in the camera itself. When you had taken the 100 pictures, you sent the camera and all in for processing. In due time you got the camera and all back, with 100 more pictures in it. The pictures came out round.

"That's the way Eastman started originally, and by jingle, you know, we're back to that again today because with the video camera you press the button and it's just about automatic that the pictures are right there waiting for you—and the sound too. So we've gone full circle on that, and all this expensive picture film and complicated color processing—it's all over the falls now with the new video cameras which will take pictures in living color and with no processing."

Although Biery spends a lot of his time working with images of the past, he's excited about the images of the future; He says he looks forward to the "refinement in the processing of entertainment viewing conditions, and satellite transmission of signals."

If he has any regrets about the technological changes, it is, he said, in the dampening of curiosity in children; the same curiosity that led him, as a child to learn photography and how to make the magic lantern slides.

"There's a tendency nowadays not to learn anything, but to buy a package that you can assemble with a little bit of glue. Model airplanes is just one example. In the olden days you used your pocket knife to whittle boats and planes. They didn't have kits. Then finally, on an airplane, you'd get a string of rubber bands and use that for your engine for your airplane, then take it out in the backyard and see if you could make it fly—with a homemade propeller and all. Today, it's completely different.

"When I was in high school our science teacher talked about making a telescope. These were basics, and we started with a piece of glass and ground the lens. How many kids today would stop to do that? They would buy a kit with the lens ground, put that in the tube, and pretty soon say, 'see the telescope I built.'

"When we built 'em we actually spent time in the basement grinding the lens, because the basement was cool and so the glass wouldn't expand while you were grinding it. It would stay perfect. We actually ground the lens and tested them, put silver on the surface so we could have a good reflecting surface...and this was done with chemistry. We used silver nitrate, and a reducing compound that reduced the silver nitrate down to silver, built the tubes, and in some cases they became quite elaborate. Mahogany with brass. We spent hours filing and shaping and finally taking it out and viewing the heavens and the

moon. Kids don't do this anymore. We built radios, crystal sets with an oatmeal box—the whole thing was homemade. That's how I learned how to do things when I was a kid.

"Let's say a boy gets to be fourteen years old...what does he want to do? He says 'what about a radio?' Well, today you can buy a radio for six dollars that will transmit to Timbuktu.

"I just don't have any advice for parents today, except maybe if their kid has an interest in astronomy and wants a really big glass, but doesn't have enough money for it..then he would be a candidate for grinding his own, because he could get a

couple of big slabs of glass and do what I did...grind out a reflecting mirror...they could do the whole thing...if they wanted to do it..."

Biery makes a special effort to interest kids. All his children helped in the dark-room, and every year he does a local history program for third graders in Bellingham schools.

Still, "Right now we're in the doldrums. My kids have all been through the dark-room...they're into football, baseball, married...but my wife Dorothy and I have a three-year-old granddaughter who has already been in the darkroom, has to stand on a box, but she gets in there and helps."

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*Galen Biery with homemade telescope, 1929. His early interest in people, and passion for saving records, led him to the hobby. He keeps alive local history showing Magic Lantern "entertainments" (as he calls them), at clubs, churches, schools and civic groups.*





# FAIRHAVEN:

## Still Thriving After All These Sneers



Doug Milnor

by Mark Connolly

**S**tudents were altering their consciousnesses with Eastern meditation and drugs. Generations-old sexual taboos melted into free love. Flower power bloomed while the Vietnam War drained the lifeblood of young Americans.

A generation was changing the way it looked at life—and death.

Student rebellions raged over even the staidest, most button-down campuses. Civil rights activists, an early rainbow coalition, marched on ancient racial barriers.

Everywhere, old restrictions were discarded for new freedoms.

The air was fresh and invigorating in the fall of 1967 when the first 13 students entered Fairhaven College. "They were right out of high school," original faculty

member Connie Faulkner reflected.

They had come to this experimental college to design their own educations and to participate in governing their college. Those freshmen worked intensely with faculty that year to outline and refine the Fairhaven College curriculum. Students sat on every Fairhaven committee, including faculty hiring and promotion.

Fairhaven College originated through the vision of Paul Woodring, former professor of education and psychology at what was then Western Washington State College (WWSC). In May 1966, Woodring proposed Fairhaven as the first of several "cluster colleges" on the Western campus. Cluster colleges were to provide the advantages of a small college, but with a distinct mini-campus, faculty and curriculum, while still conveniently attached to major university resources.

According to Woodring's introductory pamphlet, "A Plan For Fairhaven College," Fairhaven was to "provide a superior quality liberal education" at state college cost, "create an atmosphere conducive to experimentation with curricula, teaching procedures, staffing arrangements, independent study, enable students to make a greater contribution to educational planning, and give them a greater sense of participation," and to "provide a model which...will suggest basic changes in the entire college (WWSC)."

The second year, Fairhaven took up temporary residence in Edens Hall with an enrollment of almost 200. David Mason, another of the original Fairhaven faculty, spoke in quick phrases of the spirit of those times. "There was a feeling of 'This is our new turf. We can be thoroughly outrageous.'"

Mason said that "exceptionally heated" Fairhaven College constitution meetings took place in Edens. "They'd draw everybody out of their rooms. Political leaders would emerge among the students: two parties, one roughly conservative, one liberal. It was very exciting.

"There was a lot of drug problems." He recalled an incident when he was called from home by students at Edens to comfort another who was having a bad drug trip. Mason said that through exposure to serious drug distress, Fairhaven students came to see the real problems with drugs.

There were "revolutions," Mason said. "A lot of very radical plotting and planning." Students wanted to free Fairhaven from institutional restrictions. He said they thought they should bomb the university president's office.

Most of the faculty at Fairhaven thought "anarchy was coming, that the United States had four or five years left as it was," Mason said. He described a meeting with students on San Juan Island where they discussed what to try and save after the nation fell. "There was a feeling that we were determining the last rites of civilization."

Fairhaven was established as a residential college where students would live and learn together. Enrollment was limited to 600 to ensure intimacy. During the 1969-70 school year, 350 Fairhaven students moved into the living and learning compound designed and constructed for them on the south end of campus.

The residential requirement was the first of the Fairhaven ideals to fall victim to practical reality. Poor sound insulation between dorm rooms at a time when sex-



ual freedom was being thoroughly explored lead students to move off campus, Mason said. "If Fairhaven was to continue, we had to drop the residential requirement."

Kenneth Freeman came to Fairhaven as dean in 1971. "One of the reasons I was attracted to Fairhaven was the student involvement." At that time, the Fairhaven College Council was composed of half students and half faculty.

"That was the power structure of the college. I think the faculty deep down believed they held the power. But the students didn't (believe it). Sometimes the students would take the ball and run with it."

"Fairhaven students were very aware that they were different from Western students. There was an intolerance of sorts," Mason said. In the early '70s "as protesting became more respectable on campus, Fairhaven became more respected. We became leaders because we had lead the way."

Mason said that as the Vietnam War ended and some of the changes they had expected in society didn't materialize, student radical energy dissipated. Freeman cited a similar general decline in student activism. "One exception," he noted, "is whenever Fairhaven is threatened. Then students come forth. Students, not faculty, not the dean, not staff—students have saved the college every time. That's very clear," Freeman said.

In the last decade Fairhaven's existence has been threatened a number of times but has always, in the end, been defended and saved.

The necessity of Fairhaven was questioned, and the college threatened with clo-

sure, in 1977. Dean Joe Bettis had received a Fairhaven faculty vote of no-confidence in 1976 for incompetency in budgeting, planning and recruiting. Fairhaven enrollment had dropped dramatically to 395. The university appointed a Fairhaven College Evaluation Committee.

Fairhaven began working to raise its image from "hippie college" to a small liberal arts college. Faculty and staff began meeting more often with main campus representatives. Western student enrollment in Fairhaven courses was increased. A new curriculum involving three stages was developed.

The Fairhaven College Evaluation Committee took written statements and opened two public hearings, attended mostly by Fairhaven students strenuously supporting their college. In January 1978, the committee proposed that Fairhaven remain open on probation and meet certain recommendations.

In March, Phil Ager was appointed dean. His report to the Western Board of Trustees that year stated the college was beginning to meet the recommendations. Fairhaven students were taking classes with Western students, independent study guidelines were approved, admission/registration/freshman orientation procedures were revised, and a 45-credit core curriculum was instituted.

In January 1979, Fairhaven was challenged again. The House Education Appropriation Subcommittee claimed that Fairhaven was too expensive to maintain because of low teacher/student ratios, and was duplicated in purpose by The Evergreen State College in Olympia. Western President Paul Olscamp defended Fairhaven, stating that it was meeting the



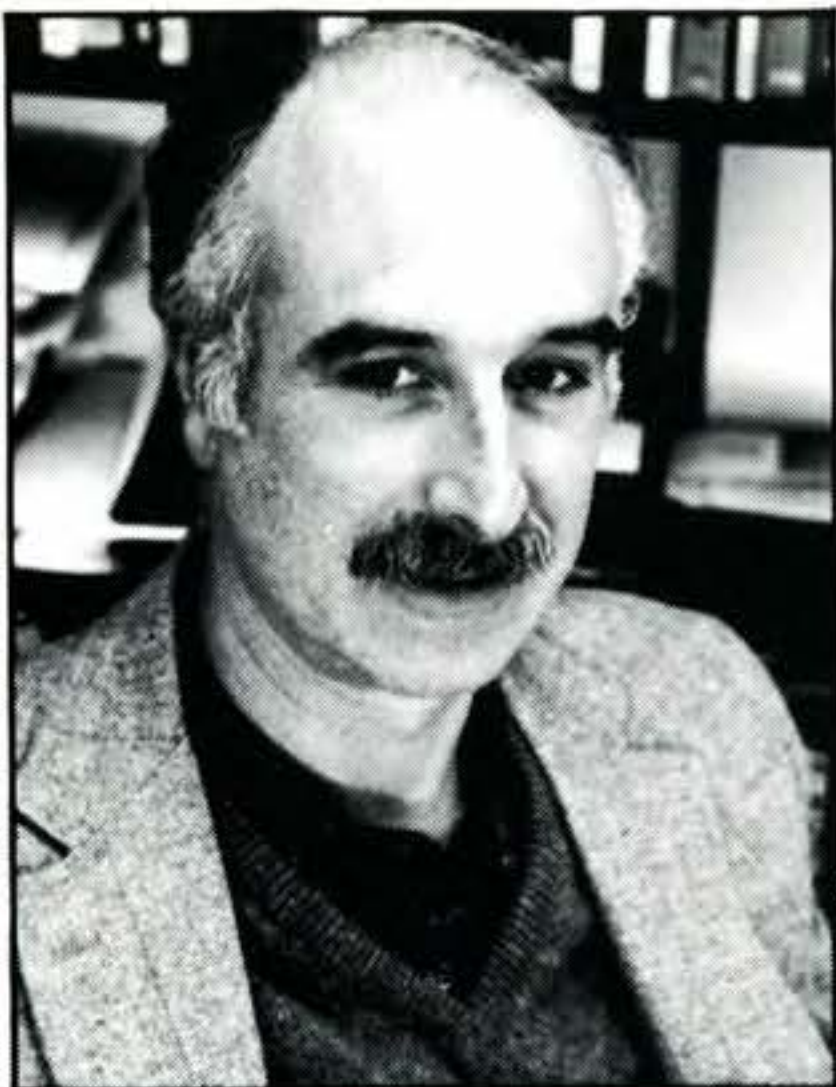
Doug Milnor

Dave Mason: "We've been blessed with an administration which has said, 'Even though you're unusual, we see the virtue in it.'"



Fairhaven has made its rite of passage from '60s "hippie" college to experimental liberal arts college in the '80s.





Doug Milnor

Dean Daniel Lerner: "Fairhaven must continue to experiment with liberal arts education."

evaluation committee recommendations and that there was an important place in education at Western for Fairhaven. The move to close Fairhaven was voted down.

Later in '79, Fairhaven revised its Retention, Tenure and Promotion, and its Academic Standards and Student Review policies. The college also updated information it was sending out to high schools and guidance counselors.

In 1982, Western's Instructional Program Review Committee recommended program cuts across campus. It suggested Fairhaven be dismantled because of high costs of operation and declining enrollment. An emotional public hearing drew students from all over campus, along with respected members of the Western, Fairhaven and Bellingham communities to speak in support of Fairhaven.

In February 1983, Western's President G. Robert Ross and Vice President for Academic Affairs Paul Ford recommended Fairhaven College not be eliminated or subject to any cuts. They cited the diversity Fairhaven affords Western as a plus for the university and its students.

Fairhaven professors Freeman and Mason said they were grateful to have a good relationship with the Western administration. "We've been blessed with an administration which has said, 'Even though you're unusual, we see the virtue in it,'" Mason said.

Current Fairhaven Dean Lerner said, "We have a great many friends on campus that help our efforts to stabilize the atmosphere; people in every department, in every administrative office who respect what we do."

Mason added, "An enlightened administration will recognize the most precious thing in a culture is not the middle, but the margins. And that part of a university's job is to protect and make those margins active. Fairhaven has chosen to support those margins and has taken its criticism."

The most recent threat is a university contingency plan stating that if the Western loses the equivalent of 20 full-time faculty, Fairhaven loses six faculty and is reduced from a college to an interdisciplinary program. David Mason dismissed any threat: "contingency plans come and go."

President G. Robert Ross, along with Dean Lerner and other Fairhaven faculty, confirmed that they see no threat to Fairhaven.

A recently published report prepared by a Reagan administration panel for Education Secretary T.H. Bell suggested requiring two years of liberal arts study even if that forces business and technology students to stay in college longer than four years. The report criticized the popularity of majoring in "narrow specialties."

Dean Lerner said, "Fairhaven must continue to experiment with liberal arts education."

Mason added, "Diversity in higher education must be, should be, ought to be

supported. We need to avoid specialization at the college level as long as possible. The nation must be made aware of the value of liberal arts."

**P**roviding people with a sense of who they are, giving a picture of the overall direction of the human race, and the development of communication and analytic talents in a world where job skills change rapidly are some of the benefits Mason cited of a liberal arts education.

Connie Faulkner teaches social theory and economics at Fairhaven. "As an economist, I can see how job markets change. So many more businesses and graduate business schools are looking for liberal arts graduates. It's what we need in regards to jobs in the future, to learn to be flexible. Liberal arts is still the most important."

Faulkner said, "The fact that Fairhaven is interdisciplinary is going to be more valuable in the future, to recognize the connections, for example, between politics and economics, which I wish more people understood today. Also because the nature of a Fairhaven education forces students to develop certain kinds of skills. The self-designed concentration is a good example of that."

A Fairhaven education still contrasts with the rest of Western. Classes are small and take the form of discussion seminars. Personal contact with professors is the rule rather than the exception. Instead of grades, student and faculty both write an evaluation of the student's class performance, which becomes part of a student's permanent record. Independent study for credit is encouraged.

The core curriculum proceeds in three stages. First is "exploratory studies" to develop basic abilities with analysis and communication, along with broad perspectives in six academic fields of study.

The second is "concentrated studies," where a student chooses either a Western major or a Fairhaven individually designed major, an interdisciplinary concentration. The individually designed major is organized by the student with a faculty advisor.

When the course work is completed, a student moves into stage three, "advanced studies." A senior project exemplifies the knowledge gained, and an advanced seminar integrates the studies and explores ways in which the knowledge can be made useful in the world.

Dean Lerner said Fairhaven graduates are showing excellent results in finding jobs, creating jobs, and gaining entrance to graduate schools. "Fairhaven has and should continue to be a place where students come and take responsibility for their educations; where individuals are treated with patience and respect, where individual styles and tastes and modes in learning are respected," Lerner said.

Just what the students in the '60s asked for. ●



# PARATROOP ATTACK

Psychology's Battle with Human Behavior

by Leanna Bradshaw

**P**psych 322: "Motivational Psychology." What drives people to do the things they do? Psychologists want to know.

*Hmm, so my psychology instructor needs subjects for a video game experiment. I've always wondered what it would be like to be a human guinea pig. And he awards bonus points to volunteers. After that last quiz, a couple of extra points wouldn't hurt at all.*

*Of course, I hate video games and they despise me. My self-esteem will surely suffer while I'm viciously zapped, but if it can make a difference in my grade, what's to lose? Maybe a bit of ego.*

I descended to my instructor's office, deep in the sinking dungeons under Miller Hall. I wanted to know more about the experiment. A little note taped to his door read: "Custodians: Please do not clean this room. There are toxic chemicals in use." Now feeling uneasy, I knocked on the door and was relieved when no one answered.

*They wouldn't really allow toxic chemicals to be used in a video game experiment, would they? I began to imagine emaciated students chained to video games, observed by bespectacled, lab-coated researchers,*

and all behind doors marked, "Quiet please, scientific experiment in progress."

In class the next day, after spending the night convincing myself Western's psychology department must be purely ethical, I signed up for the experiment, and even began to look forward to it.

After days of optimistic preparation, I returned to my instructor's office for the experiment, my mind clear and my fingers nimble. He asked me to sit at a counter and handed over an anxiety-scale test. It represented a series of questions asking how comfortable or uneasy the subject felt in given circumstances.

I didn't know what it was for. It made me anxious.

While filling in the answers, Strauss poured out of a portable stereo on the counter. Was this going to be a test about the effects of classical music on the ability to learn and play video games?

Assured of defeat, I smiled and imagined rushing home to warn my parents, "Turn down that classical music! It rots your mind!"

I was led down the counter to another chair, and found myself confronting a computer screen. Even though it was blank and gray-green, it seemed to glare malevolently and indiscriminately, daring me to test my abilities.

The music was turned off. *My excuse for failure got zapped even before I did, I thought, crestfallen.*

The screen lit up. My name glared out at

me in half-inch block letters. My foe was identified as "Paratroop Attack." I was handed the controls, a dial to aim a gun and a button to fire it.

A computer print-out would record my dialing and pressing during the five-game test period. It would also keep score: five points for each paratrooper eradicated and 10 for each helicopter obliterated.

My instructor retired from the field of battle. I wasn't even to be allowed military advisement.

The contest began. My gun turret was a green pyramid with a line sticking up. The line arced left or right to aim. Little green paratroopers floated down at random. A crude yellow helicopter zipped over the scene. A red "X" jumped about the blue sky to show where the gun was aimed.

The "X" bounced around spastically as I fumbled with the knob. The marker never appeared where I thought I had sent it. A paratrooper landed on my gun. The scene disappeared and was replaced by computer gibberish, including my score and the legend "Game Over."

My score was zero. I hadn't hit a single target—even worse than my video nightmares.

*Is aim uncontrollable? Is my instructor trying to find out how long people will attempt to exert control without result?*

In the second game, my strategy was to try and ignore the dial and shoot only when a target came into the line of fire.

But the irresistible impulse to turn the dial prevailed, and I found that aim could be controlled. My second excuse for failure was now shot down. *If the game was "Excuse Attack," I'd be doing just fine.*

Though aim could be controlled, my





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ability to do so was still horrible. Plenty of paratroopers were slipping through. They formed a pyramid, and the top man jumped onto my turret, ending the action.

Now I understood the theory, but the paratroopers had been playing this game longer than I had. I was unable even to double my score during the final three battles.

When I admitted to my instructor I was through, his only words of consolation were that another group of subjects would be tested under the influence of alcohol. But I, unfortunately, couldn't even use massive intoxication as an excuse for my lack of hand-eye coordination.

**P** sychology instructor Lowell Crow has studied the effects of alcohol on learning for 20 years. The video game experiment tests humans for memory, learning and skill behaviors, which he has found in animals.

Crow would not reveal the exact purpose of his research. The information could bias the responses of future subjects, he explained. He did mention, however, that the experiment involves differences in the effects of alcohol between the sexes.

"I want to see if I can find the same alcohol effects in people as I did in rats," Crow said. "It looks very promising at this point.

"Rats do not learn as well as people. But, like people, they also don't learn as well under the influence of alcohol."

Crow's experiments have revealed that tasks learned under the influence of alcohol are not remembered as well when the subject is sober. And conversely, things learned while sober are not remembered as well when intoxicated.

As a physiological psychologist, studying how mind and body interact, Crow says he is interested in the effects of drugs on behavior. "The effects of alcohol on societal problems is still an important issue.

"The more you study the effects of alcohol, the more you realize how little we know about its effects on learning," he said.

Although a broader understanding of alcohol and learning is the primary reason for Crow's experimentation, he says it also allows his student assistants to get some practical experience. Several students have helped Crow conduct his experiments and write reports for psychophysiology journals.

"It's a learning experience for the students and me, too. And hopefully, it's a contribution to literature and not just a stale exercise," he said. "I always try to publish results, if they're worthy of it."

Western graduate Kathy Hirdler helped Crow conduct his video game experiment during fall quarter, as an independent stu-

dies student. Participating in the design and development of Crow's experiment provided experience beyond the student project level, she said. Crow's background and expertise provided a valuable resource, she explained.

Psychology majors are required to conduct an original research project for a methods course. "So much of psychology is based on experimental data that a background in statistics is valid and valuable," Hirdler said. "It gives people the opportunity to explore their interests further on their own."

Psychology instructors gain promotion and tenure at Western by conducting research, Department Chairman Richard Thompson said. "Most people get hired in this department because of an interest in scholarship (research). They're the type of people we wanted.

"I suppose many of us would do research even if we didn't get promotions or tenure, just for the joy of doing it." Several instructors have their research printed in journals; some use their findings as discussion topics at conventions; and sometimes the information is used for class lectures.

With 24.8 full-time equivalent instructors, the psychology department is the second largest at Western. The educational curriculum and instruction department leads in FTE instructors by one.

Western is traditionally a university for education majors, and psychology is a big part of their training, Thompson said. "At one time, almost 50 percent of the students here were education majors."

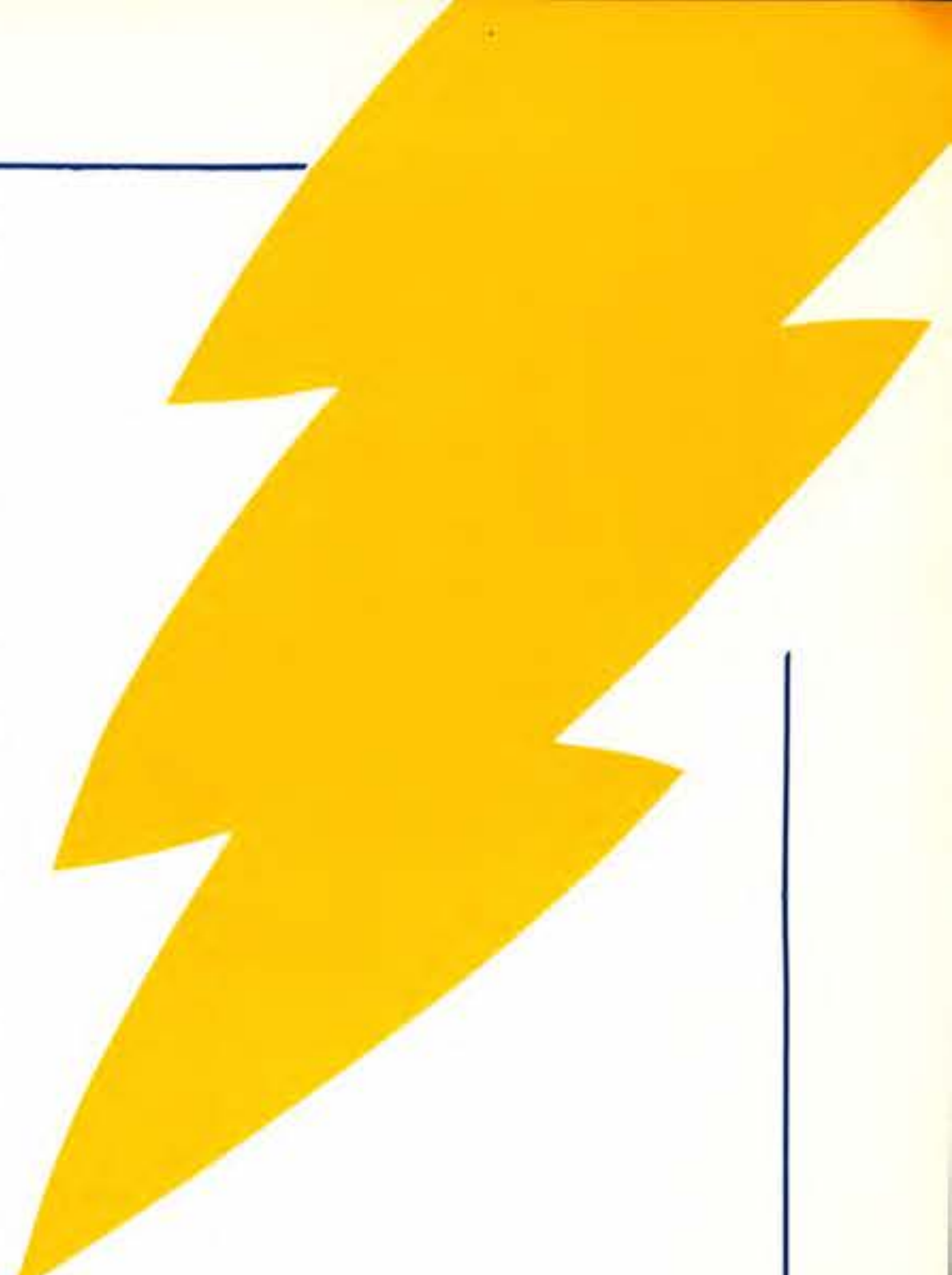
The psychology department grew during the 1960s and '70s, when the social sciences were in high demand, he explained.

The department has a \$26,800 instructional programs budget this year. "Only a small part of the budget goes toward research. The first priority for the budget is instruction (classroom supplies, guest speakers and field trips)," Thompson said. "Very little of the budget is used for research without an instructional impact."

Instructors who want department funding for an experiment must request it from Thompson. He checks to see if enough money is available and weighs the instructional impact of the experiment. Occasionally, instructors get grants for their research.

Crow said his experiment has been inexpensive, and that he has paid for the wine he uses.

Thompson said money usually is unavailable for purchasing research equipment. The psychology department recently bought some computers, video supplies and other materials with its portion of an equipment budget granted by the state.



Although it is a rare occurrence, money has been used as an incentive to get experimental subjects at Western, he said. But usually not enough funds are available to pay all of the subjects an experiment requires.

The department requests students, in introductory psychology courses, to volunteer as experimental subjects. But students are given alternative ways to earn points if they cannot, because of work, or will not, because of personal beliefs, participate in an experiment.

Some instructors offer two or three bonus points for volunteers, which could make a slight difference in students' grades, Thompson said.

All experiments involving humans need approval from Western's review committee, which is charged to make sure nothing harmful happens to the subjects.

"We're very careful about the ethics and morality of research involving human subjects," Thompson assured. "All subjects can walk out of an experiment or choose not to be involved at all."

Crow's experiment involved giving subjects .4 grams of alcohol per kilogram of body weight. The committee required that the subjects be at least 21 years old, and that each get home safely, without driving, when they were finished.

**O** ne hour after my turn at the console, my instructor announced in class that he needed more subjects. This time, they would be dosed with wine to judge the effects of alcohol on the ability to play video games.

*Oh man, I should have held out a while longer. I could have gotten a complimentary drink as well as a few extra points. And I would have had an excuse to get zapped.●*



# Greens Take Root in Bellingham

by Imbert Matthee

It was an odd procession. On March 22, 1983, 27 newly elected representatives filed into the *Bundestag*, the West German parliament. They were dressed in jeans and hand-knit sweaters. Some had long hair and untrimmed beards, much in contrast to the neatly groomed politicians of the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats.

They carried a huge rubber globe and tree branch from the Black Forest, which they say is dying from pollution. They insisted on having their seats between the conservatives and the liberal-left representatives. They called themselves *die Grunen*, the Greens.

Since their first appearance in the *Bundestag*, the Greens have boosted their following in the fight to bring global concerns to the attention of public and politicians. Green parties have sprouted up in Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Sweden and Great Britain.

Although depicted by the American press as "counterculturalists," "unabashed believers in the power of negative thinking," "romantics," "quixotics" and "radicals," the Greens have won ground in local and national German elections.

In 1984, their concerns about a deteriorating environment, an escalating arms race, minority discrimination and an exploitative economy also attracted Americans to their growing movement.

But since U.S. politics do not accommodate proportional representation as they do in West Germany, some critics of the movement have raised questions about its chances for survival here.

The Greens themselves said an American footing for the movement has been ready since the 1960s.

"All the four pillars of the Green movement—ecological wisdom, non-violence, grass-roots democracy and social responsibility—are well represented in the United States," said Catherine Burton, member of the movement's newly and nationally formed Committee of Correspondence. "Groups that have traditionally treated single issues are now going into coalition."

Ecological wisdom has long been supported by the bio-regional movement, Burton said. It grew out of the ecology movement of the 1960s and the alternative technology movement of the 1970s. As with

the Greens, the bio-regionalists divide the world according to climate, natural history and geography, rather than nation-states.

North America, for instance, could be divided into macro-regions, such as the Northeastern woodlands, the Appalachian highlands and the Piedmont, the Southeastern coastal plain, the Florida and Louisiana coastal areas, the Great Lakes region, the prairies, the Ozark highlands, the Great Plains, the Rocky Mountain range, the Great Basin along the Mexican-American border and the Northern Pacific area (*A Green Party—It Can Happen Here*, by Charlene Spretnak, *The Nation*, April 21, 1984).

Non-violence, the second pillar of the Greens' platform, finds backing in the peace, beyond war and citizen diplomacy movements, Burton said.

In the Northwest, Seattle led the 1983 peace mission to the Soviet Union. Thirty-one delegates from the American peace movement carried a petition to stop the arms race. Some 20,000 to 30,000 Americans signed in support, she said.

The Greens advocate bilateral disarmament and adhere to a strict policy of Gandhian civil disobedience on their path to establish world peace.

"We should try to get away from competition," Bellingham Green member Roger Taylor said. "Bring in tolerance for cultural and political diversity instead. In the end, aggression will prove to be counterproductive."

Former Bunderwehr General Gert Bastian, now a West-German Green parliamentarian, points out traditional defense prevents the enemy from invading by demanding a high price of entry at the border. Social defense, such as civil disobedience and strikes, set a high price for occupation (*Green Politics*, by Fritjof Capra and Charlene Spretnak, Dutton, 1984).

The American populist movement represents the Greens' pillar of grass-roots democracy. This third pillar is a good example of how Greens thinking transcends the traditional political division between left and right, Burton said.

Members and thinkers at both ends of the spectrum want to retrieve the constitution and tone down centralized government, she said.

"The Greens want neither big business nor big government," Burton said.

The last pillar of social responsibility is represented in the U.S. by human and civil rights movements, she continued. West

European Green parties defend women's rights, racial and ethnic minorities, and argue for political and cultural tolerance.

Striving to distribute food, housing, health care, education and job security equally, the Greens want to move away from an automated industrial economy, which, they say, is under corporate and state ownership (*Green Politics in New England*, New England Committees of Correspondence, September 1984).

With members of all ages and from every walk of life, the Greens may begin to attract people who hadn't found a voice in traditional politics.

"A lot of people stopped voting in the 1960s," said Bernd Ogrodnik, naturopathic student from Cologne, Germany. "They had it up to here with politics. The Greens may have found a way to get them back."

Taylor likened the change to a flock of sparrows at the turn of the season. "They all know to change direction," he said. "It's instinct that makes them all change at once."

"In Germany they are not just hippies and freaks," Ogrodnik said. "More and more people are waking up, for the most part because of the Greens. Some people moved away from the SPD (left), but they really come from all directions."

Even the seed of the Northwest Green movement attracts more than mere romantics.

"To think the movement is premised on saving trees is naive and unqualified," Taylor said. "It is concerned with the welfare of human beings and it's an enlightened concern. Mankind is what we really value."

After only three meetings in its history, Bellingham's Northwest Green Network was already feeling growing pains. The 20 participants at a late fall meeting set up a steering committee to organize the branch and prepare for a flood of new supporters.

"Our movement is now a fertilized egg yet to be hatched," said David Clarke, political science professor at Western and activist with the network. "Half the members are townspeople and they will be the core. If the movement is to take hold, however, it can't be done without being world-wide. The idea is to think globally and act locally. We have to speak with the same voice everywhere." ●



# Opinion

## 1985: The American Experiment in Dire Need

A wave is crashing on the shores of society. While government and industry sluggishly turn over in a slumber of stagnant tradition, the country raises Old Glory to the tune of a new conservatism.

After a decade of concern for the survival of an open-ended economy, the American electorate is commanding the return of a societal "survival of the fittest."

Clinging desperately to an individual freedom patterned after a pioneer society, Republicans and Democrats alike chase illusions of the industrial miracle.

But if new generations believe they can claim the American dream while the earth is dying beneath their feet, they may be disappointed to find that their votes only rush society to its grave.

The two political parties of the United States campaign for a healthier economy. Whether speaking for corporate or labor interests, the perpetual platform is a sound, infinite-growth economy.

The industrial system no longer shows the growth potential to provide for extravagant luxuries, and the traditional cycle of recession and recovery has been broken, leaving economists baffled.

To believe in a system that is speeding into a dead-end street casts the Republican and Democratic parties as voices from the past. Without fundamental changes in the two major political groups, American politics may prove to be embarrassingly out-dated.

The Republicans and Democrats no longer accommodate eligible voters who are concerned with the future of American society. With anguish they look around and see an industrial civilization characterized by leadership without foresight. Government and corporate institutions ignore the long-term consequences of efforts to secure yearly profits, suppress inflation and unemployment, or fix their next term in office.

While the environment is afflicted with incurable pollution, disharmony and exhaustion, the new conservatives advocate turning back the clock and reinstating exploitation on a blank check.

The liberals, on the other hand, seek to perpetuate the powerful hand of government and weigh the freedom of society down with inflated and uncontrollable bureaucracy.

But neither political faction has found answers that will satisfy the needs of people who face the threat of a nuclear showdown, the dawn of an industrial age and the cries of societal minorities and countries in the Third World.

Sustaining a dead-end industrial economy like an intensive-care cancer patient may only answer questions for a few years, but if society wishes to maintain its security and integrity for the future, something has to be changed.

Searching among philosophies that have fundamentally changed other societies doesn't brighten the picture.

Revolutions that have shaped the Soviet Union, Cuba, China, Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique and North Korea simply exchanged one elite for another, to the limited betterment of their people.

Communist centralized economies help little to preserve the environment, slow down the arms race or liberate minorities.

Even though nationalism enhances sharp distinctions between cultures and chokes the flow of international cooperation, one has to look inside the rotors of one's own society to shift gears.

The machinery of Western civilization is greased by hierarchy. The system works because the peon at the bottom

struggles for the illusory flow to the top. The top, which seems intimidating, is merely heavy with unbearable responsibilities on the shoulders of a few "supermen."

However, minorities who have been muffled by the raw strength of a dominating elite are stirring the foundations of a competitive, male-controlled society. The realization is taking root that competence is not based on ethnic origin, sex or an Ivy League education. Competence will show when contemporary leaders delegate their functions to control by a true democracy, step down among the hearts and souls of their constituency, shake off the corporate groupies who whisper in their ear and give up toughness for a sincere concern with the abominable state of world affairs.

Instead of reviewing profit statistics at the end of year, the managers of free industry should look for ways to divert dependence on pollutive and destructive manufacture. They should shed reliance on finite resources and invest the remaining fossil energy to develop lasting energy conversion from sun, wind and waves.

Elected officials would do better retrieving spies, troops and missiles from foreign soil and concentrate powerful tax dollars on the Third World's release from corporate appetite and the wave of dictatorial, communist "liberation."

If trade and stable relations are to continue between the United States and the developing countries, multinationals would be better off allowing healthy markets for their products to flourish, rather than ravage the human and natural resources that are the key to their development.

The American media could be more sincere in their biased, uneducated treatment of the trans-European peace movement. The demonstrators who joined hands in a human chain between East and West Germany weren't incognito Russian infiltrators, but worried mothers and desperate fathers who want their children to grow up in a nuclear-free world.

The American peace mission that brought some 30,000 signatures in request of nuclear sanity to the Soviet Union has more to do with democracy than the piles of atomic missiles on East and West European soil.

Why do diplomats speak of "arms reduction talks," if each time before the powers meet they beef up their nuclear arsenal?

If any action is to improve the well-being of society, it can only be one of enlightened non-violence. Apathy can be countered only by radiating a selfless desire for change.

The real shift in attitude comes with the wish to replenish for consumption, to recycle the valuable resources that generate life and to rehumanize relations between males and females, races, religions, cultures and countries.

Once seemingly isolated, the lives of Americans, Chinese and Nicaraguans alike are intertwined by the fine cloth that binds us to this world. The people's voice in government should no longer be regarded as an obligation to vote for the producers of a multi-million dollar election show.

If the electorate wants peace, a better environment, social equality and a future for its offspring, its voice has to be heard. It has to walk through the streets for government and media to see that a "constituency" is an enormous gathering of sound minds and bodies.

It has to trade indolent wishful thinking for active participation in government, ecology, social harmony and peace.

A wave is crashing on the shores of society.

But most may be too remote to hear the tide flooding the land of the free.

— *Imbert Matthee*



