

GREEN TREES

After living in California for nearly ten years, I too had succumbed to thinking in terms of infinite human congestion and brown tinged skies and a veritable Death Valley of freeways and Taco Bells. Somewhat the worse

for wear, we are met at Boston's Logan Airport by my brother and his wife and are ushered through Boston north to Portland, Maine via U.S. Rt. 95. Barbara gazed in wonder as mile

upon mile of green, green pine and fir sped off on either side of the Maine Turnpike. "but what's just beyond the trees," she sputtered in disbelief. "More trees," I said -- equally amazed, yet not so much at the trees as in the realization that California, in my hedonistic quest, had brought credibility to the old adage about the tree falling in the forest if no one is there.

THE LITERARY BOOKSTORE

It's not as redundant as it sounds. Barbara Cartland will never find a niche on one of its hand hewn shelves and you know it has literary books by the plants it keeps and the classical music it plays and when you bring your Marxist primer or your copy of Kilgore Trout's Venus on the Half Shell to the front counter, and the owner looks up from his copy of Jogger's Guide to Creative Mushroom Smoking and you try to impress him with your esoteric literary tastes by querying, nose to incensed air, "could you please direct me to your copy of The Intelligent Gentleman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism by Bernard Shaw?" hoping all the while that he won't have heard of it and you'll have won a victory of sorts but he smiles knowingly instead and says, "oh, that. It's pretty good. Haven't you read it yet?"

-- Leo Mailman

Long Beach CA