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THE PUZZLE OF HUMAN NATURE

IN *Tomorrow Is Our Permanent Address,* the book that John and Nancy Todd produced a few years ago, John began his contribution by saying: "One of the ironies of human history is that most civilizations from the ancient hydraulic ones of the great river valleys through colonial cultures to modern industrial societies have based their support on practices antithetic to the course of nature." Why, one wonders, should this be? Aren't humans a part of nature? If we are, why do we ignore or defy natural laws? If we are not, what are we a part of? Is it even possible that there should be forms of life, like ourselves, able, at least for a time, to develop patterns of existence contrary to "the course of nature"? John Todd continues:

> All of them have violated principles that, although not yet fully understood, have proved extraordinarily successful for all other forms of life. Civilization has not yet considered devising a culture that emulates the processes of nature.

He writes here to propose that human beings ought to attempt to emulate nature, an endeavor through which our culture may be transformed. What then, he asks, is "the structure of the complex systems upon which societies depend"?

> We are learning that the structure of a system and not its coefficients determines its ultimate behavior. By structure we mean the fundamental mode of organization of a system structure is the morphology or basic design that creates the patterns of operation. Just as the skeleton shapes the morphology of the human, modern industrial societies have structural components around which they are organized. Roadways and their transport vehicles represent a major structural element.
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> By coefficients we mean that which is not itself structural per se but which unites with a structural element to produce an effect. Coefficients are parameters or constants for given elements under a set of circumstances. In the above example, the roadways, vehicles, and the petroleum-energy dependency of the system are structural, whereas the size or efficiency of the internal-combustion engines and the amount of petroleum required to run them represent coefficients. Put in another way, the first set of underlying elements is intrinsic, whereas the second set affects the timetable of events. . . . The discovery that structure determines the behavior of a system, if true, will have an enormous impact on all levels of design. It implies that the behavior and fate of a system are determined by its organization and structure, and not by its rate of expression or its coefficients. . . .
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> The structure of the contemporary world assumes a foundation of limitless supplies of cheap petroleum. This assumption underlies fossil-fuel-fired generating plants attached to central power networks, and industrial agriculture which uses between five and twenty calories of petroleum-derived energy to put one calorie of food on the American table. . . . Structure determines fate. Coefficients vary rates and relative dominances within a system. The physicist Amory Lovins has suggested that if structure and not system coefficients determines behavior, as he believes, our present civilization is fated and will prove unsustainable.

How long will it take for the modern world to agree with John Todd and Amory Lovins? We know from experience how shaky such an agreement can be. After the first great increase in the price of oil back in the early seventies, the price went down again and as a result the effort to find alternative sources of energy lost its momentum. Today attention is almost exclusively given to the development of coefficients, with little recognition of the stark fact that, sooner or later, the intrinsic structure of industrial society must change. As Todd puts it:

> Unfortunately, at the same time that structure is beginning to be seen as pivotal, science and technology are addressing themselves almost exclusively to coefficients. For example, in the transport sector, automobile engines are being designed for greater efficiency. The goal is to double gas mileage over that of a few years ago. This is a coefficient-related activity on the part of technologists. At no point is the transport structure itself, including the highway system and the fuel base, being seriously questioned. Because we have built a society to which this structure is essential, and because, as we know, it will collapse without the automobile, the

> larger question of transport remains taboo for scientists and designers. . .

All this tells us is that we are creatures of habit and that scientists and technologists submit to habit along with the rest of us because, if they want to practice their profession they have no choice. They have the intelligence to see the need for changes, but no one will hire them to design the changes and put them into effect. So they remain mere technicians, not becoming real inventors.

John Todd goes on:

> Architecture addresses itself to coefficients; structure is left intact. Combining the various functions through integrative design, which could lead to a vision of buildings as "ecologies," is not being considered. This is true in agriculture and in many other key areas of human endeavor. By focusing on the coefficients, science and technology are buying time for society. The ability of contemporary science to improve technology but not alter the fundamental structural society helps explain the drive to develop nuclear power so that there will be enough power within this century to sustain a system that is unsustainable with its highly centralized, interconnected energy grids and its massive use of energy. Genuine alternatives are not readily conceivable. An alternative, which would require a radical restructuring, could lead to more humanly based techniques and environmentally restorative methods of providing for the needs of people. At the present we are trapped in an intellectual cage, created by our own science.

This being the case, what are we to do? Todd suggests:

> If it is assumed that coefficients are only buying time, the vital support elements of our society must be totally redesigned. For a transition to take place, the new processes being created must be allowed to coexist within the present structure. . . . It is perhaps the first time in human history that people are being asked to create the landscape of the future. . . . New kinds of structure imply unprecedented levels of synthesis, for part of the necessary reintegration of the human experience must be a heightened awareness of the natural order upon which we depend. People and process must become one.

Since John Todd wrote this clear and necessary analysis, the bioregionalists have begun to show the way. Within the fortunately loose matrix of the existing society, the bioregionalists are trying to live in accord with nature, insofar as they can. In a pamphlet published by the Planet Drum in San Francisco, Peter Berg has said:

> The rough shape of a post-industrial society is already somewhat visible in the activities and movements that have sprung up within the last few decades to slow down or undo some of the negative effects of the Late Industrial period. Development of renewable energy, using sustainable methods to grow nutritious food, preserving and restoring endangered species and ecosystems, cooperating in networks to distribute locally produced food and goods, opposing further encroachment on natural areas by strip-mining or water diversion projects, and regaining local control over development and land use decisions are hopeful signs that human needs are being reconsidered in terms of the requirements of other life on this planet. Even though these activities relate to a wide range of society's functions, they aren't all going on in the same place. They provide only a vague outline, as vague as the term "post-industrial" itself. Despite the urgent need to reformulate what society as a whole and individuals in it should reasonably aim to attain, and the methods through which those things should be sought, proposals for a sustainable society are still treated as though they belong in the fantasizing world of utopian science fiction.
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> One of the major reasons for this dilemma is the money-dominated sense of reality that prevails in Late Industrial society, the productivism that relentlessly favors short-term economic gain over long-term sustainability.

Another activist, a Canadian, has said:

> Our strategy is to carry on what many are doing already. Quietly get together with relatives and friends, work out a blueprint and try to implement it, one little step at a time This is effective, not because it accomplishes much, but because what it does accomplish is immediately in place and visible for others to see. Even while still building you are already a community, a community of builders. You are already the end-product. Also, you reach other people. Few people read. Most people do not respond well to words, but all respond to deeds. From the moment you roll up your sleeves to start working on the blueprint, from that day on you will be reaching others. Not, perhaps, the way you had anticipated. You may lose some friends, but that means they noticed. It gives them something to think about.

It seems time to return to the basic question we began with—why we behave as we do. To consider this question, we may find two quotations helpful in setting the problem. One of them is from W. MacNeile Dixon's remarkable

book, *The Human Situation* (1937). As more or less of a Platonist, he said:

> The astonishing thing about the human being is not so much his intellect and bodily structure, profoundly mysterious as they are. The astonishing and least comprehensible thing about him is his range of vision; his gaze into the infinite distance; his lonely passion for ideas and ideals, far removed from his material surroundings and animal activities, and in no way suggested by them, yet for which, such is his affection, he is willing to endure toils and privations, to sacrifice pleasures, to disdain griefs and frustrations, for which, rating them in value above his own life, he will stand till he dies, the profound conviction he entertains that if nothing be worth dying for nothing is worth living for.
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> The inner truth is that every man is himself a creator, by birth and nature an artist, an architect and fashioner of worlds. If this be madness—and if the universe be the machine some think it is—none the less it is the lunacy in which consists the romance of life, in which lies our chief glory and our only hope.

The other quotation is from John Schaar, who nearly twenty years ago published in *New American Review* (January, 1970) a paper titled "Reflections on Authority," in which he said:

> Our familiar ways of thinking prepare us to imagine that a society must have "someone" in charge, that there must be somewhere a center of power and authority. Things just would not work unless someone, somewhere, knew how they worked and was responsible for their working right. That image and experience of authority has almost no meaning today—as the people in power are the first to say. Modern societies have become increasingly like self-regulating machines, whose human tenders are needed only to make minor adjustments demanded by the machine itself. As the whole system grows more and more complex, each individual is able to understand and control less and less of it.
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> This is what I mean to suggest by the autonomy of process. The system works not because recognizable human authority is in charge, but because its basic ends and its procedural assumptions are taken for granted and programmed into men and machines. Given the basic assumption of growth as the main goal and efficiency as the criterion of performance, human intervention is largely limited to making incremental adjustments, fundamentally of an equilibrating kind. The system is glacially resistant to genuine innovation, for it proceeds by its own momentum, imposes its own demands, and systematically screens out information of all kinds but one.

It would be hard to imagine a greater contrast than the one between these two accounts of human beings, and their capacities and behavior, yet both are so accurate or "true" that no one would waste time arguing about them. Yet there is one radical difference between them. Dixon's account relates entirely to individuals while Schaar's description applies to human beings in the mass. But the distinction is not merely quantitative. The splendors of individual decision and achievement are accomplished by independence of mass behavior while the monotony of group conformity described by Schaar results from imitation—"glacially resistant to genuine innovation." And there is no explanation of the difference in terms of external causation. In terms of "scientific" theory, we simply don't know why the difference exists. To call it the "X factor," as a perceptive historian did, amounts to a clarifying admission of our ignorance, but it adds little in the way of understanding of the mystery.

In thinking about this question we find ourselves confronted by the old problem of heredity and environment, neither of which or both together provide a sufficient explanation of the great differences among human beings.

Now the fact is that if we review the literature on the subject of human intelligence, we soon find that it has developed mainly in connection with qualifying people for employment. Intelligence, according to Arthur R. Jensen (of the University of California, Berkeley), is what qualifies people for jobs. And jobs, he maintains, are of two kinds: one requires memory training, the other involves conceptual ability and the manipulation of symbols. Prof. Jensen maintained that our capacities are largely hereditary (a contention which made him very unpopular with theorists who hold that environment, which can be modified, is the main factor). He proposed: "The techniques for raising intelligence per se, . . . probably lie more in the biological sciences than in psychology and education."

It seems clear enough that *something* is transmitted by heredity from generation to generation, which plays *some* part in their quality, and that environment has a similar role, but the prevailing reality *is* almost certainly the "X factor" we spoke of, noted by the historian Philip Ainsworth Means, in his *Ancient Civilizations of the Andes.* He identified it as an "unknown quantity, apparently psychological in kind." He said:

> If *x* be not the most conspicuous factor in the matter, it is certainly the most important, the most fate-laden. When, through a tardily completed understanding of the significance of life, we achieve mastery over *x*, then, and not till then, shall we cease to be a race of biped ants and, consummating our age-old desire, join the immortal gods.

As to intelligence tests, Jensen quotes O. D. Duncan:

> When psychologists came to propose operational counterparts to the action of intelligence, or to devise measures thereof, they wittingly or unwittingly looked for indicators of capability to function in the system of key roles in the society. . . . Our argument tends to imply that a correlation between IQ and occupational achievement was more or less built into IQ tests, by virtue of the psychologists' implicit acceptance of the social standards of the general populace. Had the first IQ tests been devised on a hunting culture, "general intelligence" might well have turned out to involve visual acuity and running speed, rather than vocabulary and symbol manipulation. As it was, the concept of intelligence arose in a society where high status accrued to occupations involving the latter in large measure, so that what we now *mean* by intelligence is something like the probability of acceptable performance (given the opportunity) in occupations varying in social status.

We recall what Moholy-Nagy wrote in *Vision in Motion:*

> With growing industrial opportunities the entire educational system attained a vocational aspect. Schools lost sight of their best potential quality: universality. . . . A wholesale literacy seemed at first to open new and happy visions for everyone. But, paradoxically, the mass distribution of schooling accomplished a negative miracle. The speedy dispensation of education for *immediate use* ... provided the masses with a quick training but threw overboard its purpose, namely, that "not knowledge but the power to *acquire* knowledge is the goal of education." (Pestalozzi.) Exactly this was circumvented. The masses received a training by verbalization, emphasizing the process of receiving instead of producing. The goal was not to express oneself, to think independently, and be alert, but to "apply" education for running machines according to instruction.

One notable weakness in Jensen's paper is that the evidence that "behavioral characteristics . . . can be manipulated by genetic selection" (heredity) is taken from experiments with rats.

It is fair to say, then, that *x* is still *x*—an unknown. Both heredity and environment play their part in making human beings what they are, but a third factor, call it the ego or soul, is the major cause of human character. This element contributes the moral quality of the human being, along with other subtle attributes, some good, some not so good. How else can you understand what John Burroughs wrote years ago in *Pepacton:*

> I have said on a former occasion that "the true poet knows more about Nature than the naturalist, because he carries her open secrets in his heart. Eckermann could instruct Goethe in ornithology, but could not Goethe instruct Eckermann in the meaning and mystery of the bird?". . . It is the soul the poet interprets, not nature. There is nothing in nature but what the beholder supplies. Does the sculptor interpret the marble or his own ideal? Is the music in the instrument, or in the soul of the performer? Nature is a dead clod until you have breathed upon it with your genius. You commune with your own soul, not with woods or waters; they furnish the conditions, and are what you make of them. Did Shelley interpret the song of the skylark, or Keats that of the nightingale? They interpreted their own wild, yearning hearts. The trick of the poet is always to idealize nature—to see it subjectively. You cannot find what the poet finds in the woods until you take the poet's heart to the woods.

Burroughs speaks of the soul—the incarnating soul, with its long and varied past.

REVIEW
BACK TO DREAMS AND MYTHS

THE quest for meaning in our lives, a few writers believe, is largely a matter of recovery. We move from age to age, our opinions and our certainties changing; then the time comes when confidence in our present beliefs begins to waver, and in adventurous spirits to dissolve, and seeds of confusion take root and grow. Excitement and wonder are born in the few, fear and uncertainty in the many, and in a small number of excellent books exceptional writers begin to consider possibilities that have not occurred to the great majority.

One such book is *The Savage and Beautiful Country*, first published in 1967, and now expanded and revised by the author, Alan McGlashan, an English psychiatrist. The new edition has a Swiss publisher, Daimon Verlag, available in English in paperback. Dr. McGlashan says in his Foreword:

> The earliest myths and legends, which express man's first magnificent leap towards meaning, are all alight with this quality of translucency. Now alas, we know better. But although the archaic vision of life has been driven out of contemporary consciousness into the shadows, into a cobwebbed corner of the human mind, it lives on there with spiderish tenacity. For the archaic vision embodies, despite all its limitations and absurdities, a valid aspect of life's meaning which may be devalued or simply forgotten, but can never be completely cancelled.

How can mythic awareness be restored? This book is a demonstration of one approach. Dr. McGlashan says:

> It would be more than foolish to fly to the opposite extreme and start deriding and belittling the staggering triumphs of the objective-scientific attitude. But it may be permissible to suggest that man has been for some centuries now sufficiently self-impressed by the public image of himself as scientist-explorer—standing as it were like a fatuous ig-game hunter with one foot planted on the conquered body of Nature—and that it is time some attention were paid to his less premeditated postures. This book is an attempt to perform such a service. It portrays contemporary man not in any of his well-defined attitudes, scientific, religious or philosophic, but in his spontaneity, in his vagrant fantasies, nostalgic memories, idle and unvalued daydreams; in the unnoticed motivations of his inventions and discoveries; and perhaps most revealingly in the fantastic images which throng around him in the hours of sleep.

We should add that Dr. McGlashan is a splendid writer and a man of uninhibited imagination which permits him to explore possibilities in a number of directions, helping to free the mind of the reader from conventional habits of thought. This means that the reader is more or less on his own, in a time when very nearly all conventional certainties are dying away. In short, *The Savage and Beautiful Country* is a liberating book.

The doctor is also astonishingly well-read and well informed, and he uses this rich background for the benefit of the reader, as the following passage illustrates:

> Since man must remember if he is not to become meaningless, and must forget if he is not to go mad, what shall he do? The dilemma, not logically resolvable, has been subtly resolved. Within man the past is perfectly contained—but he is allowed to live as if it were lost. He is tolerantly permitted to taste a naive pride of discovery, a childish delight in new toys; as when William Harvey staggered the seventeenth-century world by his discovery of the circulation of the blood—in which he had been anticipated by Hwang Ti, Emperor of China in 2650 B.C., who quietly noted that "all the blood in the body is under the control of the heart . . . the blood current flows continuously in a circle and never stops." Or, to come nearer to our own time, when the recent discovery that the inner structure of the atom mirrors the structure of the universe is found to be but one more illustration of the fact long known to mystical thought, that the microcosm mirrors the macrocosm, "as above, so below"; each succeeding illustration of which will doubtless be celebrated by peal upon peal of contemporary trumpets.

Many pages of this book are given to man's contest with time. We try to escape from or arrest the flow of time, but without success. Our author says:

The quality in Time which most deeply of all offends man's impatient spirit is not its swiftness but the maddening *uniformity* of its progress, moment following moment, tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, while man looks helplessly on, unable to hasten or hinder. No other single fact in all existence is so crushing to human ambition, so openly contemptuous of human values.

This aspect of man's subjection to Time is perhaps most clearly evident in the quiet processes of gestation. The seed in the earth, the embryo in the womb pursues its own unhurried rhythm. Man has learned how to start these processes at will, but for their fruition he must wait with what patience he can muster. And he has never been good at mustering patience.

Gestation was for the primitive a profound symbol. He saw the whole world—or rather that corner of it of which he was aware and which he mistook for the whole world—as the Great Mother, a living, maternal power gradually perfecting the dark primordial materials in her womb by an immensely protracted process of gestation. As the centuries passed and men began to dig up more and more undreamed of treasures from their mother earth, gold and silver and precious shining stones, the idea became widespread, as Mircea Eliade has shown, that metals "grow" in the belly of the earth, and that, for instance, "as the peasants of Tonkin still hold today, bronze if left long enough in the earth will turn to gold." And not only Oriental peasants clinging to an ancient legend; for the same idea lay at the basis of the alchemist's transmuting art; and even the sophisticated John Donne could write,

As men of China, after an age's stay,
Do dig up Porcelane where they buried clay.

. . . Man was simply not prepared to wait through patient centuries while the earth's slow pregnancies matured, while the humble embryonic ores were gradually changed, as he believed, into glittering jewels and bright gold. He wanted now, not to arrest the flow of Time, *but to accelerate it.*

Thus the Promethean figure, the alchemist, became the metallurgist, the Smith. While thieves and charlatans copied him, "the true alchemist always embodied the principle that the spiritual quality of the operator was as vital as his skill in the task of transmuting base metals into gold."

The reason for this, as Carl Jung brilliantly demonstrated, was that the hidden aspect of alchemical work was in fact, the symbolic transmutation of the "base metal" of diurnal experience into the "gold" of spiritual insight.

But in time all this was changed.

Gradually the sacredness of the metallurgist's activities and the spiritual quality of the operator became less important. Finally they became irrelevant. The smith's calling was secularized and, many centuries later, the alchemist's also. Metallurgy turned into engineering, Alchemy into chemistry and physics. The suggestion that a test should be made of man's spiritual fitness to be a nuclear physicist would sound extremely peculiar to a modern ear. Only in relation to medical men (the engineers, chemists and physicists of the human body), with their still-operative Hippocratic Oath, is there left any trace of the archaic feeling that spiritual quality is as basic as skill. For the severance between head and heart is complete, and the Faustian bargain with the devil has been struck. . . . Like a new Golden Horde the wheeling armies of research workers are sweeping across the face of the world, reckless of race or creed or color; and where they pass nothing can ever be the same again. Their fantastic and exuberant discoveries tear in shreds the fabric of the old familiar world, and make a mockery of time.

Yet in another sense we have become more than ever the slaves of Time.

In the world of today man lives by stop-watch. His prosperity, even his life, depends on split-second timing and ever more precise chronometers. In large organizations he docks in and out like an automaton—which in any case is rapidly replacing him—and in factories his movements are watched by experts to see if a few seconds can be lopped off his rate of work. . . .

This is the paradox of the contemporary world, to be at once the masters and the slaves of Time. And there seems to be no way out. It is clearly impossible for man to turn his back on the thrilling discoveries of his own ingenious brain. We are impelled to increase our mastery, and by doing so our slavery.

Yet achieving freedom from slavery is the reason for this book. As Dr. McGlashan says:

Child and artist and mystic all escape from the lunatic dilemma. And something hidden but valued in the heart of man applauds this solution, since buried within every human being are traces of these three. Privately, we incline to agree that here is the

> only true and perfect answer. But having honored it, we reject it. Ruefully admitting we can neither remain children nor all become artists, still less saint and mystics, we turn back, regretfully but massively, to the time ridden world.

While making no pretense at offering a solution, our author is nonetheless sure that one exists and that by using the imagination humans can find it. Perhaps the most encouraging passage in this book is the one that says:

> It is, in fact, the never-ending treasure hunt which under many lovely names—the Plant of Immortality, the Golden Fleece, Aladdin's Cave, the Pearl of Great Price, the Rhinegold—has been the quest of legendary heroes in all times from the beginning. And it continues still, because every man must attempt it for himself anew. For to seek this treasure is to try to find the central point within oneself; the secret threshold where the world of the senses and the world of the psyche meet in mutual recognition. Man has always intuitively known of its existence, and sought for it. It is his Center, tantalizingly close yet immensely hard to find, guarded by magic so that mere shrewdness will never find the way.

COMMENTARY
INVISIBLE REALITIES

WITH the decline in mechanistic reasoning and explanation, we have become less resistant to the presence of mysteries and more willing to accept the fact that there is much in our lives that is still without explanation. Take for example the "X factor" proposed by Professor Means to be added to the influence of both heredity and environment if we are to have any hope of understanding the differences among human beings. As he put it:

> If *x* be not the most conspicuous factor in the matter, it is certainly the most important, the most fate-laden. Then, through a tardily completed understanding of the significance of life, we achieve mastery over *x*, then, and not till then, shall we cease to be a race of biped ants and, consummating our age-old desire, join the immortal gods.

The writer of our lead article, calling his discussion "The Puzzle of Human Nature," proposes that the third factor, or "*x*," be identified as the "ego or soul" as "the major cause of human character."

But whoever captured the "soul" in order to subject it to experimentation? Even to consider this proposition, we are obliged to admit the existence of non-material reality. But why should this be threatening or difficult?

Actually, we do it all the time. Whenever we see it, we respond with strong emotion to injustice. It is wrong, we say, and often make an effort to set things right. But justice is a completely non-physical reality. What in us demands justice and insists upon it?

It is fair to say that the soul wants and labors for justice. And it is the soul which seeks for truth. Philosophers and logicians may argue about it, but we know what we mean by truth and rise up to object when it is suppressed.

Consider for example this week's Frontiers article. The *WorldWatch* writer, Jodi Jacobson, makes it clear that a vast number of women in the Third World are seriously neglected in the aid programs provided by the Western World. Women not only do more work than men, but the transition to a cash economy works extreme hardship against them. Apparently, it has not even occurred to westerners that the cultural arrangements in African countries are such that women suffer in many ways from the programs of aid.

Only now, and in a few cases, are women organizing in order to obtain their rights in terms of obtaining small-scale loans and fair land tenure laws. Meanwhile "Women of sub-Saharan Africa grow 80 per cent of the food destined for their kitchen tables, compared to 60 per cent in Asia and 46 per cent in the Caribbean."

It will probably take years to change the customs in the Third World which have led to these many and extreme injustices. This makes occasion for special appreciation of the work of Jodi Jacobson and for publication of *WorldWatch.* Such articles may be expected to stir women in the Western world (men, too) to help the women of the Third World to organize in behalf of their own benefit and that of their families. Presently, as Jodi Jacobson says, the women work from ten to sixteen hours a day, while the men work only six to eight hours. Opportunities for subsistence agriculture need to be restored, since feeding their families is felt to be the prime obligation of women. In the few experiments that have been made, women have proved to be good credit risks and effective entrepreneurs.

The address of *WorldWatch* is the WorldWatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20016.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
ORGANIC FARMING

NOT much cash but a very rich life. That seems the best way to describe the organic farm run by Ken and Cathy King, which they call the Frog Holler Farm, in Jackson County, Michigan. As Judy Rose puts it in an article in the *Detroit Free Press,* July 3, practically everything they need and use is homemade. They have three children, all boys. "They grow their own vegetables; they swap for much of the food they don't grow; they create their own entertainment with music; they educate their children at home."

Their house, near Brooklyn, Mich., was built before the Civil War.

> If they can't create something they need, they try to recycle a previously used item. That's part of not supporting the consumer economy, Cathy King says. And it would be hard to do otherwise because their lifestyle choices leave them a very small budget.
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> The small amount of cash that keeps the farm going and pays for electricity, a phone, books and occasional classes for the grown-ups is produced by their work pressing cider and raising organically grown vegetables, which they sell at the Ann Arbor farmers' market.
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> For many people, this dependence on the work of their own hands would be a drudgery to be escaped. For the Kings it is part of their path to personal independence.
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> "Freedom is a funny thing," says Ken King. "You talk about the Fourth of July, and you talk about being free to make all these choices, to choose between this option and that option." But he says, that is "a very insidious kind of bondage."
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> "What I call freedom is being able to create the choices, not just to pick among existing choices."

The choices that the Kings have originated for themselves are not choices that were available to them as they grew up. Ken King lived as a boy in Traverse City. He earned an engineering degree at the University of Michigan and attended Harvard Divinity School. Cathy King grew up in Grosse Pointe Park, was a cheer leader at Grosse Pointe South High School, went to Northwestern University and graduated from the University of Michigan.

The two met in 1971 in Ann Arbor, where Ken operated an organic food restaurant called "Indian Summer," from 1971 to 1976. With some friends who felt as they did they bought a farm to raise their own food—a logical extension of the restaurant and their interest in a simpler life.

> "None of us knew how to farm," says Ken King. "We got a beautiful piece of land, but it's not agriculturally great."
>
> "We did it in a sort of idealistic way," he says. "We were thinking about a lot of people working and living somewhat together. But farming is a kind of funny thing. It's pretty difficult. It sort of put a strain on the partnership."
>
> The group split, but Ken and Cathy stayed together. Now they are the parents of Billy, 11; Kenny, 7; and Edwin, 3, precocious and articulate kids who have never set foot inside a school. Cathy and Ken educate them at home, with some input from Clonlara, an Ann Arbor school that assists parents who wish to school their own children.
>
> Their life is not as isolated as it may sound. They work and socialize with like-minded friends, often from the Ann Arbor area.

"Our children," Cathy says, "don't seem to be subjected to peer pressure. They seem very free to express what they believe. They don't just mouth what we believe."

The tasks on the farm shape their daily lives. They raise crops and prepare healthful food. Ken does most of the field work and Cathy looks after the cooking, but their tasks often overlap.

> "I take meals quite seriously," she says. "I plan it out every morning, so I feel we're always getting balanced food, looking at what's available, what's fresh and nutritious. We'll map how the cooking is going. I'll get breakfast, lunch, and dinner started, then I'll go out in the fields. The kids may come out with us. The three-year-old, he's sort of the wild card right now.

Early in the year (in February) Cathy begins to set out plants in the greenhouse they have built. Then, later, when the crops mature, it becomes

time to harvest. Picking day is Friday, the day before the farmer's market. The Kings' stall at the farmer's market is known for its fresh greens and herbs, and these items all need to be properly bunched for display.

Judy Rose concludes her article:

> "We can see how our work helps people in an immediate way," she says about the vegetables and the cider they produce. "And we can also see that it is not hurting other people.
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> "It sounds corny, but we examine our choices all the time, to see how they help make a more economical, more peaceful, more just world."

Judy Rose also says toward the end:

> An old fragment of Buddhist philosophy is called "right livelihood." It's a principle that guides much of their work—the belief that one's work should be helpful and should not hurt others.

* * *

The *Community Service Newsletter* for July-August presents a brief history of Community Service by Jane Morgan which should be of general interest. She says:

> Community Service was started in 1940 by Arthur E. Morgan to help people become aware of the importance of the two universals of human societies, the family and the small community, and their role in maintaining the best qualities of our culture, and the most hopeful prospect for humanity. Through his studies Arthur Morgan had come to see that the family and the small community in interrelationship had always been the basic human structures and the source of our transmitting culture for good or ill.
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> Being a very small organization, Community Service is able to do little more than try to be useful where called upon. . . .
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> Community Service seeks to help small communities regain confidence in themselves and become better places to raise families so that almost all the promising young people will not go off to the large cities where their families will die out.
>
> It has always been a small nonprofit organization with at the most the equivalent of one or two paid staff and volunteers, including volunteer director and board of directors. While now and then there are occasions for special services . . . the day-to-day work of Community Service is of another sort. Requests come for advice or information about intentional communities in specific areas of the United States, or asking how people can revive their dying town or start a land trust. Individuals and organizations ask for literature in many fields related to community. People from different parts of America and from overseas drop in to see what Community Service is about. There are book orders to take care of, and mail to answer. A large part of our daily work also involves planning for our fall conference and editing our bimonthly newsletter.

The address of Community Service, Inc. and the newsletter is P.O. Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

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Readers interested in Gandhian literature would do well to write to Greenleaf Books, operated by Arthur Harvey, Canton, Maine, and ask for a list of offerings. The list begins with this announcement:

> We try to offer all of Gandhi's writings, and some of the books about him. We list two types of books: (1) currently available; (2) second-hand and out-of-print books (in small quantities identified by date and city of publication). Rare books are not listed but some are in stock. A price can sometimes be quoted if you request a specific title.
>
> Orders which total $20 or more are postpaid. Less than $20, add $1.50 shipping fee. Payment must accompany every order. Foreign, add 8%.
>
> Discounts are available: on orders of $100 or more, deduct 10%, $200 or more, deduct 15%, $350 or more, deduct 20%.

We have always found the prices fair.

FRONTIERS

The Plight of Women

IN *WorldWatch* for May-June, Jodi Jacobson writes about the massive neglect of women in recent attempts to bring aid to the world's poor. She says:

> Of the nearly one billion people in the Third World who have remained untouched by global economic progress, the vast majority are women. Worse, their proportion among those living in poverty has actually been growing.
>
> On the whole, traditional development strategies have not benefited men and women equally. In fact, the status of women and their access to resources have in several cases been adversely affected by assistance programs. Part of the problem lies with the choice of strategies by the donor countries and institutions, which often have failed to take into account gender differences in third world economies. The other part lies with the recipient countries themselves, whose cultures and the legal systems significantly limit women's economic rights and, thus, their ability to benefit from development.

Women, Jodi Jacobson points out, are the foundation of the third world economies. They provide half the agricultural labor and more than 70% of the work force in industries such as clothing. They represent over two-thirds of the "informal" economic sector in developing countries, which includes street vendors, artisans and domestic servants who have little income and walk the line between subsistence and starvation. Women in the developing world have few legal rights regarding land tenure, marital relations, or social security.

> Because many women are outside the cash economy and usually lack control of money and land, the value of their work is either completely unrecognized or severely underestimated. As a result, strategies aimed at raising productivity and income often bypass women.
>
> Indeed, development programs have been built on the premise that what is good for men is good for the family, an erroneous assumption in societies where women provide the largest share of the family's basic needs and men hold their income in separate accounts. Custom dictates that only a small share of men's income goes to family support, meaning that women's contribution to household income often exceeds fifty per cent. And this share is increasing with the rise in the number of female-headed households due to divorce, desertion, widowhood and migration of men to cities in search of work.
>
> . . .women in most of the Third World are more disadvantaged than even the most downtrodden residents of industrial countries. The majority of women work the land, but few have property rights Nor do they have legal access to their husbands' income, though their labor contributes heavily to it.

Conditions in Africa provide many illustrations.

> Women of sub-Saharan Africa grow 80 per cent of the food destined for their kitchen tables, compared with 60 per cent in Asia and 46 per cent in the Caribbean. Collecting the water and fuel needed to cook takes several more hours out of their day. Women also tend animals, market farm products, and, of course, raise the children. Rural men, on the other hand, have few family responsibilities.

Women do the planting and weeding and harvesting for both the family plot and their husband's crops as well. They work from ten to sixteen hours a day, the men six to eight. Meanwhile, it is taboo for men to do "women's work."

> When the world-market prices for Africa's commodities declined in the late seventies, African governments were faced with a foreign-exchange crisis that turned development dreams into budgetary nightmares. Countries found themselves without the currency needed to pay their debts and continue on the path of rapid industrialization. A continent-wide food crisis caused by drought and years of agricultural neglect compounded the problem. . . .
>
> To say that African governments and international-development agencies have given short shrift to subsistence agriculture over the past three decades, then, is to say that they have ignored women, for it is women who grow their families' food. . . .
>
> Balghis Badri, a sociologist studying agricultural patterns in northern Sudan, has documented the effects of irrigation projects on women in that country. Eighty-seven per cent of the farmers in the region are women, but they own less than 12 per cent of the land "Because pump irrigation

> requires start-up capital and because credit facilities are closed to women," she says, "their participation (in such large-scale projects) is limited." In fact, the ratio of female farmers to land cultivated by them in this region has declined considerably since irrigation programs began in the thirties. . . .
>
> In the transition from a subsistence to a cash-crop economy, women are also disadvantaged because they lack access to improved agricultural technologies. The spread of high-yielding seeds, for example, has nearly doubled maize yields in Africa since 1950. But cultivating hybrid maize, a cash crop, is expensive. New seeds must be bought each year, and crops demand repeated applications of fertilizer, neither of which women can afford because lack of collateral—land—deprives them of credit.

The things that have made life easier for men hayve often worked against women.

> Scattered introduction of tractors and improved animal-powered equipment in Africa has reduced men's workload and enabled them to expand cultivation of their cash crops. But this trend has further imbalanced the relation between male and female farmers by raising labor demands on women, who must spend more time doing the "women's work" on their husband's larger fields. As a result, domestic food production suffers.

Through the years of giving aid to African countries, development agencies have done little to relieve the conditions from which women suffer. Women are the victims of unfair land tenure laws, poor access to credit and farm supplies and training programs. In consequence, "women's positions have worsened as a result of development programs."

> Assistance agencies, staffed mostly by men with a decidedly Western view of the world, have only incorporated one set of priorities—those that, deliberately or not, have tended to ignore or misunderstand the role of female labor. Thus development strategists have not integrated women into projects nor created projects that truly address women's economic needs. Perhaps most important, international agencies tend to evaluate the success or failure of their programs on the basis of narrow project objectives, such as an overall increase in employment or the establishment of a cash crop plantation, rather than broader socio-economic goals that would presumably include sexual parity. . . .

Agricultural credit projects run by AID have also failed to address the needs of women. Access to credit, especially small loans, is critical to the needs of farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs in developing countries. Credit availability from development agencies is especially important to women because they face formidable barriers to getting loans and other resources within their own societies.