

Hello World,

I have graduated from the University of Colorado with a B.A. in Psychology and I will be setting up my practice in Central Park by Strawberry Fields. All comers are welcome. Until then, and as always, you will find me as:

Eric Kaminetzky
8470 N. Sheridan Blvd. C-316
(303) 650-5502

- or -
26 Yarmouth
Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076.

P.S. - Hi Mara, Austin, Beth, Jenai, Hill, Javies, and all of you.

To anyone who cares--

I'm still alive, well, and living at UMass. If you have this inexplicable urge to write or call, here's my address:

Chip Olson
406 McNamara
UMass, Amherst, MA 02173
(413) 546-4323

WRITE, DAMMIT!

lust-o-ful Vikkers,
yer bootiful, trooley.
me-who

Scott Korb,
Are you still alive? Drop
me a line soon! I miss you.
Love,
Elena

P. S. You still owe me a
fuzzy or two or three . . .

Coleen -
Please write/call soon (if
you haven't already).
Love,
John Watson

Dear Laila, It's been entirely
too long! I'll call soon & I
hope to be in Palo Alto. I'm
not a great correspondent!
Love, Ben

Sparkle Sparkle--

How was Christmas?
Stephan? By the way, do you
people ever get snow?

Signed forever yours,
The slightly deranged
snow woman in
Wash., IL.
Love.

Hey Tippicanoers (Julie, Amy,
John, Todd & Chris),

We miss u guys and wish
we were back there.
Remember the mud, the rain,
and the night at the lake? Have
your feet healed from "wink"?
C-ya at Spring Conference.
Write us!

Fluff Chics in W.V.

Dear Leigh, Ashley, Paul,
Debbie, Zeb, Fadey, Ginnie,
Regan, Ariel, Alisa, Dylan,
and everyone in my touch
group:

I'm sorry I can't give you
all the love and caring you
deserve. You are beautiful
people. I love you.

Adam

To the Teen SWIM'ers of '86:

Hail and Warm fuzzies!
For those of you I haven't
written--and anyone else out
there who wants to write--my
OTHER address and telephone
number are below:

98 Constitution St.
Bristol, RI 02809
(901) 253-6881
(week days)

Love & Peace,
John Watson

P. S. - Ashlynn--if you want a
copy of Working Man's Dead
write and I'll send you one.

Many thanks to all who helped
me survive my summer's
journey. I couldn't have made
it without you.

Love, Scott Keeler

Dith,
What a great two weeks!
Whatever happens, I
remember them forever.

Love you bunches, babe...
D.G.

To the following GA goers:
Connie, Patti, Lisa, David M.,
David G., Kerry-Beth, Dan,
Neil, Tony, Kirsten, Jodi and
her warm fuzzies, and Karen
(had any clams lately) and all
the rest of you that were
fortunate enough to stay in
Gilbert Hall.

Come to GA '87.

Especially you New England
people. It won't be the same if
you don't come!!!

Hey all you peoples out
there I don't know--

Looking for an interesting
pen-pal? Interested in
astronomy, fantasy/science
fiction, writing (poetry and
prose), music (almost any
kind), and/or most things
bizarre and esoteric?

Then I may be the person
for you! Write me:

Katherine Bryant
5190 Ingersoll Pl.
Boulder, CO 80303

Peace and friendship,
Katherine

Edmonton Youth Group-types:
say a prayer to the Pizza God
for me; inhale some jello and
give a salute to our reverend
spiritual leader.

Love, Scott

Steve,

Hey good looking, should
I throw in the towel? Whoa!
You make brushing teeth fun.
I just wanted to tell you *again*
that I think you are a real
sweetie and I miss you when
we can't be together. Thank
for everything you've given
me.

I love you,
The one stuck in the mud

To all those I owe letters to!

I'm really sorry I haven't
wrote in such a long time.
And to those who sent
Christmas cards--Thanx--they're
great! I haven't forgot you,
Crispy, Scott, Nathan A.,
Paul, Charles, Nora, Donna,
Marty, Leah, Regan, Anne S.,
Mark, Eric, Elizabeth C.,
Laurie, Jen J., and yes, you too
Dingy Dorothy. Please forgive
me. I still luv ya all!

Tina Adkinson

To all the 1986 Con-Coners:

I want to let you know
that you're all absolutely
marvelous and I love and miss
you all so much. I can't wait
until Con-Con '87 to see you
again. Oh I have a change in
address: you can reach me at:
Donna Worrall, 90 Poirier
Place, Burlington, VT 05401,
phone (802) 862-4571 until
June. Then after that you can
reach me at: P. O. Box 203,
Ascutney, VT 05030, phone
(802) 674-5252.

Make the distance
Bearable. Write or call.

Love & Peace,
Donna
xxxxxxx
0000000

Ruthie Moo--Do you get this
travesty? I hope so . . . our
encounter in Buffalobster sticks
like glue up my nose. "It is
our sincere hope that more
people will get laid more
often." (JM) Ring a bell?
Hey--what's the big deal with
the Youth Office anyways?
(Smirk)

Groovy fun wow,
Your Psychedelicat,
Juicy John

Juicy John--
What's with us? What's
with you?
Scott & Meg

To the YRUU:

We're not dead yet--not
even close. LRY staggers on
thru the abyss of the 80's--and
our voice shall not be silenced.
You can blow out a candle, but
you can't blow out a fire.

Remember Joe Taco!
--A man with a heavy
Boston guilt trip on
his shoulders . . .

P.S. Hey Phried!

PERSONALS

!!! ANNOUNCEMENT !!!

To the entire world:
My daughter
Rachel Elizabeth Boone
was born on Nov. 20th, 1986.
She is perfection personified
and
I love her!

- Judy Boone

J.W.Y.,

holding, touching,
your face,
I cry remembering.
I'm away,
and I can't hold you
now,

or feel your smile.
Why-o-why,
do I have to live 1000
miles from you,
A dove cries. It's too
cold here.

-T.L.S. (i luv u)

To my favourite J's - Johanne
on the East Coast and Joanne
out West - you're both
wonderful and I love you
muchly. ConCon wouldn't
have been the same without
you.

Love, Denise.

Givingtree Bear--

I love you. The Cape was
great!

Love,
eagleBear

WANTED AT-LARGE DELEGATES FOR YOUTH COUNCIL

The following positions are available for the
1987 Youth Council:

- **Adult at large**—four positions available, two
year term.
- **Jr-high at large**—one position available, one
year term.
- **Post-high at large**—one position available, one
year term.
- **Sr-high at large**—one position available, one
year term.

At large representatives may be from any district, and are
appointed to represent the members of their age group.
During the Spring and Summer of 1987 they will be
responsible for soliciting concerns from YRUU
members of their age group. They will attend Youth
Council 1987 (travel expenses paid) and during the
following year will be in communication with the Youth
Office regarding age-specific issues.

To apply, submit a letter of application and three letters
of recommendation. In your application letter you
should list your experience, qualifications, and
strengths.

OPUS II COOK CAMP, NJ, AUG. 17-21 1987

For all Young Adults ages 18-35. No one under 18 can be
admitted.

Opus 87, the annual gathering of the continental Unitarian
Universalist Young Adult Network, will be held at L. G. Cook
4H Camp in Branchville, NJ. Arrival: 12 noon August 17.
Departure: 2 p.m. August 21. **PREREGISTRATION ONLY.** If
you pre-pay by mail, the cost is \$90.00. If you pre-register
and pay at the door, the cost is \$120.00. If you walk in at the
door the cost is \$175.00. If you plan to come on a day by day
basis the cost is \$20.00 per calendar day, but you must pre-
register to do this. All registrations must be accompanied by
a \$25 deposit. Deadlines:

Registration: July 1

Refund of \$25 deposit: July 30

Submission of travel information: July 15

Make checks payable to Opus 87 and send to Sherry
Feldstein, 325 E 106th St. New York, NY 10029.

Name _____

Address _____

I am planning to come for:

Whole conf. Mon Tues Wed Thurs Friday

Mountain Desert District Reorganizes

by Rachel Ozer

There has been a lot happening out here in Mountain Desert and we thought you would like to hear about it. The second week of October we held a conference in Albuquerque.

Before the conference it had already been decided that this would be a major kickoff point for a new YAC. Each church was asked to bring some ideas for YAC representatives. At the conference we split into mountain and desert groups, since it seemed easier to have two YAC's that worked together.

In the mountain meeting we decided to use the delegate system; each church or fellowship that cared to be involved could send up to two youths and one adult.

We set our first meeting for 12-13-86, and decided that Lark Matis, DRE, Steering Committee member, and our own personal wonder woman, would plan the agenda and help us get going.

Before the meeting, Lark discussed the agenda with the YAC members at her church, the Jefferson Unitarian Church. They also put together a packet with a lot of other items in it as well. This was mailed to all the YAC members, who were asked to read it thoroughly.

On the agenda, four goals for the day had been set. These were things that were felt to be of vital importance before anything else. They were:

- to write all bylaws for the YAC
- to elect any officers in the bylaws
- to create a conference registration form
- to set up all conferences for the year.

At the initial meeting there were six adults and twelve youths participating. They were randomly sorted into groups of two adults and four youth. For two hours, the groups were asked to try to accomplish these goals within themselves. After lunch, we regrouped to gather the results.

In the packet had been included what the Jefferson Unitarian Church group felt to be a very impressive model of youth-adult organization, that of the

Pacific Central district. When we gathered this information, we found that most of the groups had used this as a basic model. We went through the really sticky points, and basically copied a lot of the rest.

One of our most noteworthy decisions was on the topic of age. We decided that the activities in our district are geared toward youth in grades 9-12.

However, we recognized that there are junior highers, ages 12 up to ninth grade, who feel ready to participate. We agreed that if they want to come and their parents agree, then they are welcome.

We also decided that people who have graduated, up to age 22, should not be excluded, but that they were a special group.

We named this group "Young Adult Participants." These people, in addition of agreeing to abide by the general rules, would also be asked to sign on their registration form that they would abide by the UUA's new "Code

of Ethics." Although they abide by this like adults, YAP's are participants like youth.

It seemed like there had to be a break somewhere between youth and adult, so youth advisors must be at least 25 years of age. These people will sign the same slip as YAP's, agreeing to abide by the general conference rules, and also the "Code of Ethics."

On the subject of drugs and alcohol, white paper bags really offended a lot of the members. They felt that to return these bags was legally supplying drugs or alcohol, and they didn't like that idea. We agreed that people are signing a form agreeing not to bring these substances, and it is fair of the community to expect them not to.

The penalty for breaking this rule is to be sent home immediately and asked not to come to the next conference.

Single sex sleeping was another subject of large debate. Single sex as well as coed

sleeping areas will be provided, with a responsible adult assigned to each area.

After we finished our bylaws and the general rules of behavior that we wanted to write, we elected officers. In our new bylaws there are 13 positions. These are to be filled as needed.

For right now, we have elected an adult chairperson advisor, a secretary, a youth treasurer, an adult treasurer, a conference coordinator, and a newsletter editor.

We already have two conferences being planned, one for spring and one for fall, and possibly another next winter.

We are also hoping to be able to create a new position on the district board for a member of YAC. This is still in the planning stage.

We really feel like we have accomplished an incredible amount. One of the nicest things about it is that we reached all these decisions by consensus, as opposed to a majority vote.

Censorship

by Brian Parrish

The fundamentalists banned the "7-11" stores for selling *Playboy*. We read Attorney General Meese's report on pornography and chuckled.

One girl in Toledo decided to open her mouth about her views on abortion and got an expulsion shoved down her throat by the Catholic school she was attending.

There's little doubt, the critics say, that Marion G. Robertson, the noted televangelist, will run for President in 1988. He with his direct link to God (proclaiming that he saved Virginia from Hurricane Gloria), will bring His Word to the White House. Robertson finished second last month after Vice President Bush in a selection process in Michigan.

But the book banners in Tennessee have really done it this time.

The "Don't You Dare Read" list includes: *Catcher in the Rye* (of course), a fairy tale by Hans Christian Anderson, Sci-Fi by Ray Bradbury, and . . . *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

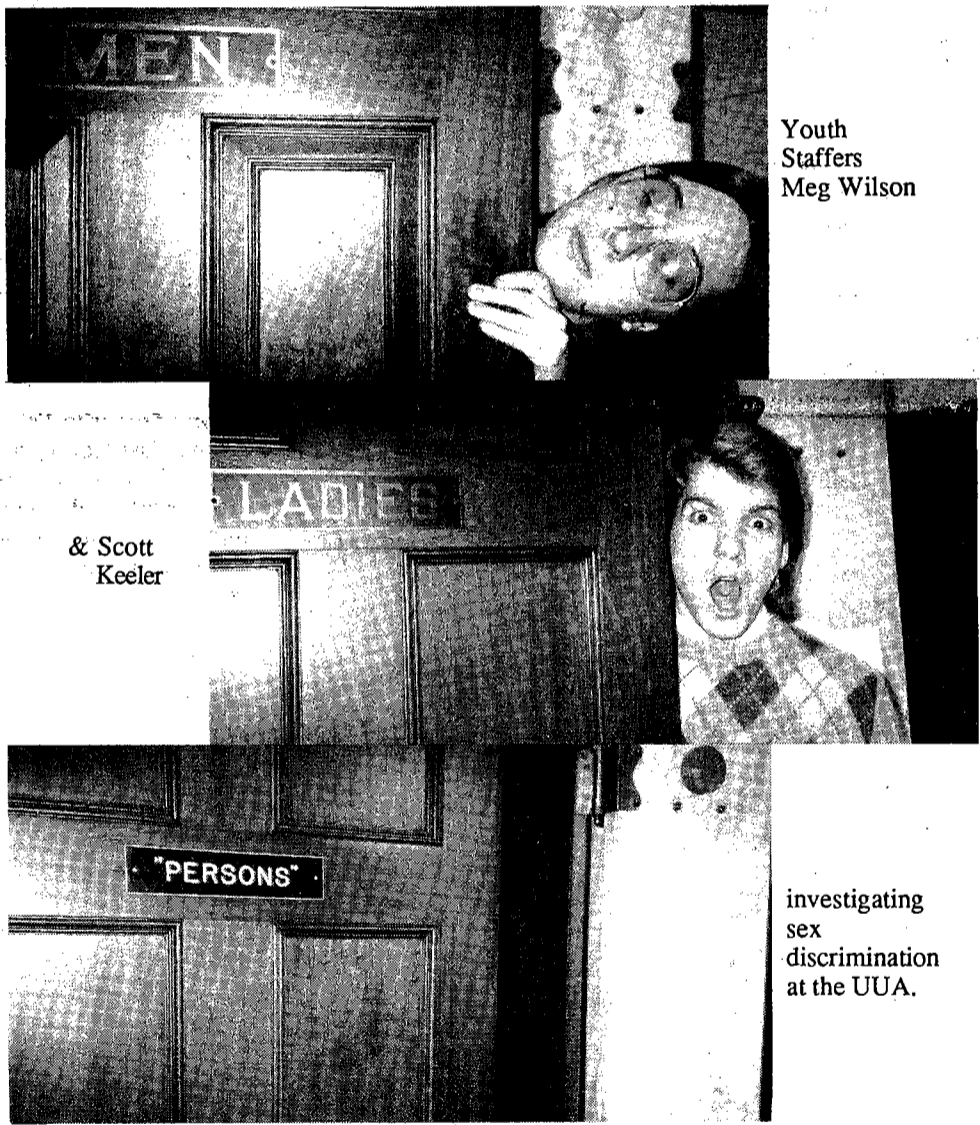
D. L. Stewart, a columnist for the *Toledo Blade*, found the actions of religious fundamentalists "amusing" until he saw *The Diary of Anne Frank* on the list.

The Diary of Anne Frank is the story of a 13-year-old girl's family hiding in a single room from the Nazis for two years. Stewart printed a passage from the book the fundamentalists cited as a "threat to their religion":

"Oh, I don't mean that you have to be Orthodox," she says, "I just mean some religion. . . . it doesn't matter what. Just believe in something." -*The Diary of Anne Frank*.

That's pretty threatening, I agree. Kids might read that and end up thinking on their own.

All of this seems silly, but history has a way of getting bored and repeating itself. The Scopes



Youth Staffers
Meg Wilson

& Scott Keeler

investigating sex discrimination at the UUA.

The Great Peace March Part IV: Aftermath

by Dan Gibson

Well here I am back in Boston. As I walk the sidewalks of my college campus, I keep looking for a familiar face - someone who shared the same incredible nine month experience that I did. Why do I keep looking? I'm the only person from Boston University who participated in the March. What am I doing? Sometimes I wonder if the March really happened at all. There is nothing on my immediate presence to prove that it existed. I'm not a big souvenir collector. But as I look down at my weathered worn down workboots (which had to be resoled in Pennsylvania) some

memories pop into my head.

- * A bunch of marchers and I singing really bad pop songs from the 70's to keep our minds off the desert heat and six more miles to walk.
- * Getting a warm reception in West Chicago, one of the poorest areas of the country.
- * Seeing a small plains town ahead, and realizing that we won't pass through it until the 7 mile mark tomorrow.
- * The supermarket owner in Keystone, Colorado who gave us free Pepsi Colas after walking up a steep mountain all day.
- * Dancing through the streets of Harlem!!
- * All the school children who poured out of their classrooms to

see us. Their inspiration would put miles on our feet.

- * Listening to "Don't Give Up" by Peter Gabriel for the first time while crossing Vail Pass (with a Walkman).
- * Bringing 21 marchers home to

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4 Sex, Drugs, and AIDS: A Video for Teens

by Ellen Brandenburg

Nobody really knows how many people have AIDS, or will get AIDS in the coming years, but we *do* know that it is a problem of frightening proportions - one that will have a growing impact on teenagers before too long. We owe it to ourselves to learn all we can about this deadly disease.

One resource which I have found particularly helpful in addressing the issue of AIDS is the highly acclaimed videotape from ODN Productions, "Sex, Drugs and AIDS." It is now

available for rental from the UUA Audio-Visual Loan Library for \$7.50. This powerful, 18-minute presentation, intended primarily for teenage audiences, is informative and moving.

"Sex, Drugs and AIDS" succeeds for a number of different reasons. The narrator of the presentation is an attractive and articulate young woman who appears to be about 17 years old. She speaks frankly about "regular" intercourse and anal intercourse and the role sex plays in the transmission of AIDS, yet she communicates an under-

standing of how difficult it may be to talk openly with family, friends and lovers about the risk of AIDS. Her words seem more immediate, more personal than those of, say, a grey-haired man in a white lab coat sitting behind a big desk.

In addition, one of the segments captures what seems to be an unrehearsed discussion among three female friends about the importance, and the difficulties, of using condoms during sex.

"Sex, Drugs and AIDS" also features the experiences, the

words, and the poignantly expressive faces of people suffering from AIDS.

In spite of the fact there is too much emphasis on female responsibility for safe sex, the technique of having young people speak to young people about this issue, which is of vital importance to their lives and health, makes perfect sense.

Although it is pointed out clearly and graphically that all of us are potentially at risk, the tape begins with the message that *AIDS is hard to get*. It dispels the myth that the disease can be transmitted through casual contact which does not involve the introduction of the virus into the bloodstream.

Finally, "Sex, Drugs and AIDS" arouses compassion for those who suffer from AIDS. Blame is placed on the deadly virus, not on those who are unfortunate enough to be its victims.

I trust you will find this presentation to be informative, engaging and *humane*, with enough material to stimulate discussion on many levels of concern. It would be excellent as the focus of a youth group meeting, or a special program for both youth and adults.

For more ideas about how you and your group can learn about AIDS, contact the UUA Youth Office.

Memories of the Great Peace March

continued from p. 3

my folks house for a night in N.J. Six of us took a plunge into a late October Atlantic to celebrate our coast to coast achievement.

* The Pro-choice activists from Toledo who took seven of us home for a barbeque (with veggies for me, of course).

* Etcetera, etcetera, ecetera.

November 15. D.C. We had made it. We always knew we would, and now it was over. Oh no, it was *really* over. In a way I was glad to be returning to "normal life" (well, in comparison anyway), and was eager to apply what I had learned and experienced to my college environment, even though I wasn't sure exactly what I had learned. But I also knew that a chapter of my life was over. Admittedly the tens of thousands of people who came to walk the last few miles with us (including

many people I had met along the way, which was great), I felt kind of empty inside. So did many of the other marchers, I'm sure. How does one express oneself after something like this?

By the time we had reached New York City we were 1000 strong and we doubled in the last three weeks. Yes, a Peace City population explosion. Not an easy thing to handle when the temperature is dropping. During the last week of the March we averaged about 15°F. The forces above were not going to make it easy for us, even after all we had been through. Kind of a reminder that working towards nuclear disarmament will never be easy. There is still a long road ahead of us.

Looking back, I feel that the task was easy in comparison to the complex issue we carried

upon our shoulders. I walked past shut down farms and closing factories, saw America's poverty in the flesh, and yet the U.S. government spends over half of its money on the military-industrial complex. As one congressman put it during the D.C. rally, the cost of "Star Wars" could set up a new education system, jobs, farms, food, clothing, transportation systems and hospitals for the entire population of six midwestern states. Put another way, if you purchased every inch of land in the U.S., for all its varied retail values, you still wouldn't have enough to cover the cost of SDI. Carl Sagan says that even the scientists working on SDI claim that it can only be 90% effective. Great, now only 10% of the Soviets weapons can annihilate us. But why does it even have to get to that stage at all? Isn't it time to start working towards Peace in the *other*, safer, less costly direction?

If anything, the Great Peace March was the rebirth of the Peace Movement in this country. At least 2,000 people are dispersing throughout the country and the world, bringing their positive energies to work on peace related issues (such as the 150 or so who marched through Florida in January to protest the Trident III being tested there). And those are just the Marchers. Who knows how many folks we've affected along the way. Frustrating as it is, the full effects of this march may not be realized for ten to twenty years.

At the rate the arms race is going now, I hope we have twenty years. But events like the Great Peace March give me hope that we can stop it. It's going to take millions of us, but we can stop it.

Peace,
Daniel Gibson
January 29, 1987

P.S. Actually, I do have "souvenirs" of the March; about 400+ slides. Currently I am putting together a slide show for the public (about 75 slides). If anyone would like more information about this (cost is as yet undetermined) with a voiced tape or fact sheet, please contact me at 7 Ashford St. #2
Allston, MA 02134
(617) 254-6258
(anytime until May 10th)

Censorship

continued from p. 3

trial, held in the summer of 1925, is very similar to today's book banning. A teacher was actually on trial for discussing "Evolution" in class--as if humans came from the apes instead of Adam and Eve.

And the Fundamentalists won the case; the teacher was fined.

Once these fellows succeed at something, you can be sure that it will be easier for them the next time.

These Fundamentalists do not want their religious views, especially their children's, to be questioned by anyone. Their children's weak minds must be protected from sinful books like *The Diary of Anne Frank* at all costs.

What happens to those children when they grow up? Will they blindly follow their parents' beliefs and join Book Banning Clubs? Or might they have the floor pulled out from under them when they begin to question their views?

Kahlil Gibran, in *The Prophet*, speaks to a concerned mother: "Your children are not your children. . . . You may give them your love, but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts.

"You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

"For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday."

I'd like to give Gibran's advice to those book banners in Tennessee, but they'd probably just thank me and add him to their list.

R.E.A.C.H. PACKET

(Religious Education Action Clearing House)

A collection of program and worship aids for children, youth, and adults. One R.E.A.C.H. Packet is sent free, three times a year, to every UU church and fellowship.

Do you see it?

Read it?

Use it?

If not, you are missing:

- Announcements of YRUU resources and events
- Youth Advisory newsletters
- the latest news of curriculum and resources for R.E.
- reflective articles on the philosophy of R.E.
- songs, stories and worship materials for all ages
- Announcements of new audio-visual acquisitions

Has your youth group or district Y.A.C. considered subscribing to R.E.A.C.H.? Individuals and organizations can subscribe for \$12.00 (U.S.) per year. A subscription is a valuable investment for any local or district youth organization that wants to have its own copies on hand, for easy reference and use.

SUBSCRIPTION for one year's packets (Jan. Apr. and Sept.) will begin whenever we receive your check. We do not bill. Please enclose check to "U.U.A." for \$12.00

Name _____

Address _____

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No. of subscriptions ordered _____ Amount enclosed _____

Return to R.E.A.C.H., UUA, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

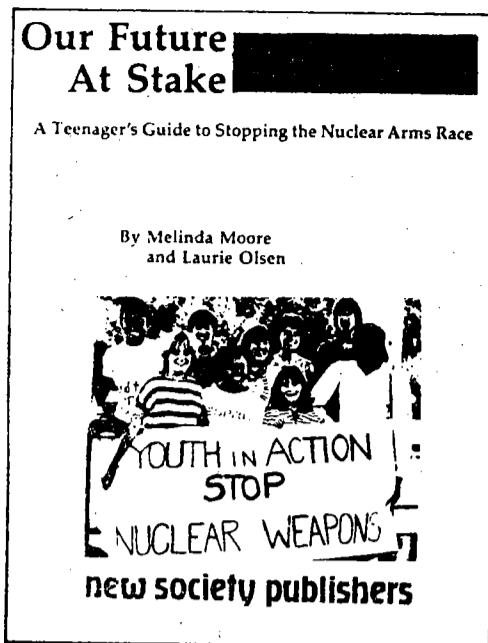
Our Future At Stake A Practical, Inspiring Guide

by Meg Wilson

Our Future At Stake by Melinda Moore and Laurie Olsen, 1985, New Society Publishers, 4722 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143. \$19.95 plus \$1.50 for shipping.

Our Future At Stake is a sensible, readable guide to social action on the issue of nuclear war, design specifically for teen-agers. The book is divided into two sections: "The Problem," and "What Can I Do?"

In the first section, the facts about the nuclear arms race are laid out in a clear and straightforward manner. The section is short enough that the reader does not bog down in a mire of depressing and horrifying facts, yet still manages to convey the great urgency of the issue. Informative statistics and



comparisons are presented with the use of diagrams, charts, and maps, and are accompanied by a variety of quotations, political cartoons, and photographs of

teenagers involved with peace activities.

The second section covers step by step a variety of options for becoming involved in preventing nuclear war. These include options that will appeal to a wide range of personalities, from the use of art (such as theater skits and hand-painted T-shirts) to exerting influence on the government (such as letter-writing, lobbying, and phone-calling) to public action (such as demonstrations and civil disobedience.) This section too is accompanied by quotations, photographs and diagrams, which illustrate the points covered in the text and make the book eye-catching and readable.

In addition, scattered throughout both sections of the book are one-page personal statements by nine youth between the ages of 13 and 17, all of

whom are active in trying to prevent nuclear war. These young people talk about their experiences selling buttons, participating in conferences, teaching younger children about peace, and even getting arrested at demonstrations. They talk about their fears of nuclear destruction, and their strong belief that youth can and should become involved in trying to change the world.

Our Future At Stake is an excellent resource, and will provide a practical and inspiring guide to any individual, local group, or district which wants to become more involved in peace issues.



A Report on Northeast Summer Conferences

by Cass Kahn

Well, I realize this article might seem a little late for talking about last summer's conferences, but on the other hand it's early for talking about this coming summer's conferences. Many of you will remember Kathryn Deal's article in the last issue, asking us to share our summer experiences.

In the Northeast during the summer of '86, I participated in two very fun filled conferences. These were Youth Week on Star Island and Summer's End in Massachusetts. Both of these conferences were sponsored by NERO (North East Regional Organization), an independent, youth-run organization made up of UU's and non-UU's. While loosely affiliated with YRUU, NERO plans, finances, and runs its own conferences, independently of the Youth Office at 25 Beacon St.

Star Island is ten miles off the coast of Portsmouth, NH and is run as a conference center in the summer by the Star Island Corporation, whose board members are from both the UUA and the United Church of Christ.

Last summer's UU youth conference at Star Island ran from June 21-28 with the theme of "Awareness." The week long conference was organized by Cathy Reed and Sherry Feldstein, assisted by Austin Smith as registrar.

Between the three of them and their able staff, they ran a fantastically magical conference, introducing over 60 first-time conferees to the wonders of Star Island.

For the summer of '87 the theme will be "Challenging Borderlines," to be held June 20-27. For more information, contact conference chair Leon Dunkley at 52 Greenleaf Ave., Medford, MA 02155, phone (617) 396-9475, or registrar Lisa Fitzpatrick at 70 Market St., Northampton, MA 01060, phone (413) 584-3806.

Summer's End is almost an anachronism in this day of Youth Office directed conferences. An entirely autonomous conference, with all aspects controlled and run by youth (although adult advisors are present at the conference), this conference serves as a valuable training ground for youth leaders in the Northeast.

... time slipped around the clock in a most unusual manner.

The conference last summer, held at the Clara Barton Camp in North Oxford, MA, was run by John Mallet and Chris Wise. In a daring try at new conference themes, this dynamic duo tried the unusual trick of changing a 24-hour, 7-day conference into a 28-hour, 6-day extravaganza.

In a strange experience of long days and long sleep periods (a conference rarity!), time slipped around the clock in a most unusual manner. While dinner the first day was at 6:00 p.m., the next day it was at midnight, and by "cycle D" (the fourth 28-hour day), it was being served at 7:00 a.m.!!

Needless to say, this was quite a bizarre experience for all involved. Amazingly, the conference held together, and by the end of the week, our body clocks were back to normal.

This coming summer, the site, in a desire to freshen the conference, has been moved to Camp Kingsmont, in West Stockbridge, MA, the site of Con-Con '82. The chairs for this year's conference are two the Northeast's most promising young leaders--Marshal "Hawk" Hawkins and Rachel Gibson (the youngest of the Gibson clan).

The conference will be held August 24-30. For more information, contact Hawk at 98 Constitution Ave., Bristol, RI 02809, phone (401) 253-6881.

Well, there you have it. A rather exhaustive account of what happened in the Northeast last summer and what to look forward to for this coming summer.

If you're looking for a fresh alternative to spending a week visiting Aunt Erma in East Jaboo, try one of these week-long conferences, bringing together youth from all over the Northeast and beyond. See you there!!!!

Editor's note: The annual youth conference at Star Island is entitled YRUU Week, and although it was sponsored by

NERO in earlier years it is now independently run.

In addition, we would like to dispute the claim that this is the era of Youth Office directed conferences. The only non-business YRUU conferences which the Office plans are Con-Con and the U.N. Youth Conference on Disarmament. We heartily applaud the independent efforts of districts and other groups such as NERO in bringing the experience of YRUU conferences to youth across the continent.

← What Direction For YRUU? →

Help us decide by contributing to the Youth Council agenda!!!

Five years ago it was the dream of Common ground to build a strong youth organization, independent in spirit while working in a good marriage with the UU denomination. That organization is YRUU, and we do do work, like at our Youth Council. Youth Council is the governing body of continental YRUU, and through its annual meeting and the meetings of its Steering Committee it leads the youth movement forward. The work that makes a marriage good needs to come from all sides. The Steering Committee urges everyone, youth ministers, RE directors, adult advisors, and any other interested parties to send their concerns, desires, proposals, ideas and criticisms to:

Steering Committee
c/o Youth Office
25 Beacon St.
Boston MA 02108

The Steering Committee will collect, sort, compile, prioritize, and process all they receive, and use it to build the agenda for Youth Council '87. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact your district's own Youth Council Representative, or the Youth Office.

ANIMA/ANIMUS

The Woman in every Man, and the Man in Every Woman

Surprise, Gay People Are No Different

by Andy Hommel

Turning 23 in a few months, I am quickly nearing the end of my time as a YRUU person. This saddens me to some degree, but the years I've had at conferences and things will not quickly be forgotten. Indeed, I hope to show up at Summer's End for the day every now and then. However, as this month's issue of Synapse is on gender, I thought I'd write a few things I've encountered along those lines.

First of all I'm gay. Many of you, male and female, have probably thought about homosexuality in yourselves, and I'm sure some of you have had a homosexual experience at one point or another.

One thing I learned when I first came out four years ago that surprised me is that homosexuals are no different than heterosexuals. We are all human, we all fall in love, we all make mistakes, we all have to go to the bathroom.

The only difference is that gay people have to be more quiet about their homosexuality because of the way society looks down on them.

I first started coming out four years ago when I was a freshman in college. My family and friends were very supportive and soon I had no troubles dealing with it. I am happy, well adjusted and, as some people say, fun to be around. Let me talk about a few myths about homosexuals.

Homosexual men are effeminate queens: Well, it's true that a few gay men are queens; however, certainly not all gay men are queenie and you certainly don't have to be a queen to be gay. It's just that these queens are more noticeable than other gay men.

Homosexual men are transvestites: This is untrue. Some gay men wear dresses, but not all men who wear dresses are gay, in fact most, I believe, consider themselves straight.

All homosexuals think about sex: This is not true, gay people fall in love just like everyone else. In my case, I would just as soon hug someone as sleep with them.

Homosexuals are child molesters: This is the biggest lie of them all. Any psychologist will tell you that the majority of the sex offenders are straight men. If you don't understand this, don't worry because I certainly can't understand it either.

Homosexuals are sinners: A common enough statement, though perhaps not so common in YRUU. I've even heard people say that AIDS is God's punishment to homosexual men. They say this completely ignorant of the fact that many straight people have contracted AIDS. In general, if sexually transmitted diseases are God's punishment for people who have sex, then lesbians must be His chosen people because they have almost no sexually transmitted diseases.

This next myth, I think, is the most important!

I don't know any gay people: This could be true, but probably isn't. Your best friend could be gay and you might never know. I say this from experience. My best friend who I've known since sixth grade is gay and I never knew. I didn't know, and I'm gay myself!

What's more, in high school, he was always dating the best looking women in the school. No one would have thought him gay, certainly not me! If I, who am a gay person, can't tell if my BEST FRIEND is a gay person, then it's not likely that anyone else can tell either. I finally found out he was gay this summer when I met him at a gay beach with his lover.

It saddens me to say, but I've found quite a bit of homophobia in YRUU. At conferences, I commonly hear careless remarks

or jokes putting down homosexuality and homosexuals. It is these jokes that make homosexuality seem so fearful for people who aren't sure of themselves. How could anyone want to be the crux of all those old jokes and misconceptions?

If someone, your friend perhaps, is thinking of coming out, and she or he hears you saying these jokes, she or he will most certainly get scared and clam up and not say anything for fear of being rejected by you.

Now, suppose that you have a friend who tells you he or she is gay. What should you do now? The answer: nothing! You should just accept your friend for what he or she is, and don't read in between the lines anywhere.

Don't assume that because your friend is gay, that they want to sleep with you. This just isn't true most of the time. If you have some friends that are of the opposite sex, then why can't you have friends that are of the same sex?

What do you do if your gay friends want to sleep with you? If you like them and are interested to see what it is like, then there is no reason not to try it. Just because you are straight doesn't mean you can't sleep with someone of the same sex. If you are interested in trying it, then go for it. If you aren't interested in it, then a simple "No thank you," will be enough.

What do you do if you are gay and you want to tell your friends? This is not an easy question to answer. All I can say is do what feels right. You might try getting them alone in a non-threatening situation, like in a place where no one else is listening but there are other people around. You could tell them all at once or one at a time. I honestly can't say which is better.

If anyone has any questions, comments or arguments for or against what I'm saying, then feel free to ask them. I live in Massachusetts and I can sometimes be found going to conferences, or you could write or call me at the following address:

Andy Hommel
322 River Dr
Hadley MA 01035
(413) 549-4425

Editor's note: Thank you, Andy, for helping to dispel some outdated myths and fears. We would like to add a word of caution about deciding to sleep with someone of the same sex. With homosexuality just as with heterosexuality, if one is mature enough to engage in sex one must be mature enough to make sure it is "safe sex." If anyone has questions about what "safe sex" is, between lesbians, gay men, or heterosexuals, we urge you to contact your local chapter of Planned Parenthood.

Female Lead

by Meg Wilson

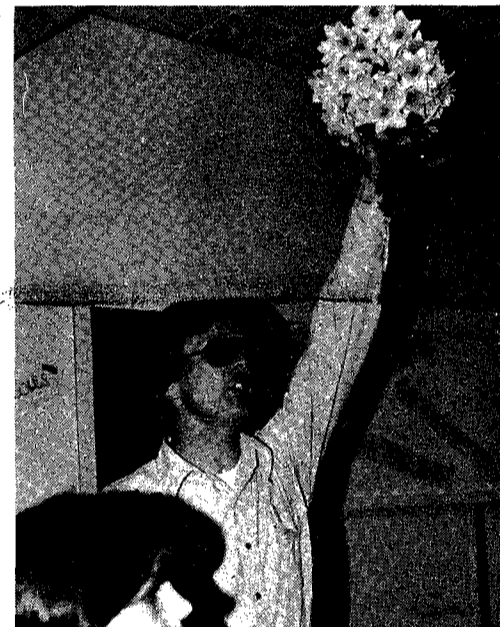
The idea of a Synapse issue with a gender theme originated last August, at Youth Council. The rationale behind it was that there is more female leadership in YRUU than male leadership, and that we ought to address this problem by spending some time focusing on the experience of being male in YRUU.

Then somebody pointed out that we could equally benefit from focusing on the experience of being female in YRUU, and the idea of a female/male theme for Synapse was born.

As part of this same conversation, the idea was raised of finding some way to make it easier for men to achieve leadership positions, something analogous to affirmative action.

For me, a participant in the discussion, a number of difficult issues were raised. I will present to you the issues that occurred to me, and my thoughts on them, and leave them for you to ponder.

To begin with, what steps should we be taking to correct an imbalance of the type we have in YRUU? The most obvious line of reasoning runs like this: Oppression of any group



As Much

by Jessica (Fadey) Kehl

My mother is a lesbian. Five simple words, only eight syllables, eighteen letters, but that sentence sometimes takes all my strength to say. How did I first find out? The books and tapes lying about the house began to embarrass me, my mom's friend Peg began spending weekends at our house, and finally my mom sat me down for a talk.

For about six months of my life I was horribly ashamed of my mom, the woman I had always loved and looked up to. I know that in my childish homophobia I wounded my mother very deeply.

When her lover Vivienne moved in I stopped having friends over; I also stopped laughing at the gay jokes my peers are notorious for making.

I held my secret deep inside for many months, until one night after drinking too much wine, I told my best friend. I didn't tell her because I was ready to confide my secret, I told her because I was drunk and upset and wanted pity.

My beautiful friend didn't fail

Synapse—A Newspaper Written by its Readers

Please send us what you want to see in Synapse—that's the best way we know of to give you a newspaper you want to read. We welcome articles on the activities of local groups and districts, on personal philosophies of life, on your favorite political issue, on problems faced by young people . . . actually on anything that interests you. In addition, we are always in need of original artwork. Please send us some of yours. Better yet, take a dare, draw a cover for us!

The next issue of Synapse will address UUism as the faith of the free. The title of this year's General Assembly is "Faith of the Free." Do you think this is a good description of UUism? Of YRUU? Why or why not? How do you see freedom relating to religion? What does freedom mean to you? What does faith mean to you? How do faith and freedom relate to youth? We welcome essays on these and related topics, to include in our theme page next issue.

ership In YRUU: A Case of Reverse Discrimination?

wrong, black or white, female or male, so we should fight against over-representation of females in the same way that we would fight against over-representation of males.

But this line of reasoning strikes me wrong somehow, strikes me as missing something. After a great deal of struggling with the issue I came to the conclusion that "too many females" is not an analogous problem to "too many males."

In our culture, the overabundance of male leadership is due to the *disempowerment* of women. This disempowerment can be very direct, with women being explicitly told that they are not welcome, or very subtle, with women receiving unspoken messages that undermine their self-confidence.

I find it difficult to believe that males are being made to feel disempowered within YRUU. Rather, I believe that the imbalance arises from young women finding opportunities in YRUU that they have not found elsewhere, and thus coming to YRUU in great numbers.

For instance, when I was in high school I was a leader of the math club, but recieved a very

clear message from the men in the club that this made me unattractive as a female. In contrast, I was also a leader of my LRY group but I found no accompanying disadvantage to being a leader there. I dropped out of the math club. I am still in YRUU.

In a culture which is for the most part still anti-woman, it is not surprising that women with

leadership skills tend to congregate in groups that welcome them, such as YRUU and the UU denomination in general.

I believe that we should encourage and foster every male leader who comes through YRUU, but I do not believe that we should institute any kind of affirmative action. I do not

believe that we should choose a male over a female simply because "we need more guys." I firmly believe that YRUU is wide open to every young man who is seeking a leadership role. To narrow the gateway for women even a little, in an organization that has traditionally been so welcoming of women, would be a tragedy.

Jr. High & Women: Then and Now

by Ellen Brandenburg

Last Saturday night the Junior High YRUU Group at the church where I belong, First Parish in Lexington, MA, had a 50's and 60's sock hop to raise money for a ski trip. "BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!" the flyer demanded, and since our daughter is in the group, my husband, George, and I decided to BE THERE. For what better reason had George saved his high school letter sweater?

I could tell that most of the other adults at the hop, mostly in their late 30's and early 40's, had, like us, rummaged through bottom drawers and the backs of closets trying to find articles of clothing reminiscent of their teenage years.

What I wanted really badly was a white blouse with a Peter Pan collar. No luck. What I did find was my gold circle pin! This was an essential part of any girl's wardrobe back around 1960. Worn on the left it meant you were a virgin, on the right, you weren't. I never saw anyone wear it on the right.

Anyway, with my circle pin I settled for wearing a black blouse (beatnik influence,) a plaid skirt, George's letter sweater and, of course, white socks. I tried to tease my hair but I just made a mess of it in a decidedly un-50's fashion. I didn't really look too groovy.

In my rummaging, however, I had found my 1959 junior high school yearbook - a prop which I figured would make up for any shortcomings in my costume.

Leafing through that yearbook brought back bittersweet memories: required ballroom dancing classes, an intense relationship with my diary, and a mad, passionate love affair (I wore my circle pin on the *left!*) with Steve Lazzara, who I communicated with primarily under a blanket on church youth group hayrides. The Congregationalists had a huge youth group because of those hayrides!

Anyway . . . there was a section in my yearbook called "Ambitions" which caught my attention. It went beyond trivia and nostalgia, standing out as a striking record of how much our world has changed in one short generation.

There it was in black and white; my female friends and I aspired to be: (in order of descending popularity) teachers, stewardesses, nurses, housewives, veterinarians, secretaries, actresses, interior decorators, the wives of rich men, commercial artists, models, and lab technicians.

I know for a fact that many of us have become ministers,

lawyers, corporation executives, scientists, doctors, writers and engineers, as well as what we "aspired" to be. But back then we had practically no role models to even suggest to us that we might choose to have the kind of career



Ellen Brandenburg (Youth Programs Director) in 8th grade looks to the future

that was taken for granted by our male counterparts.

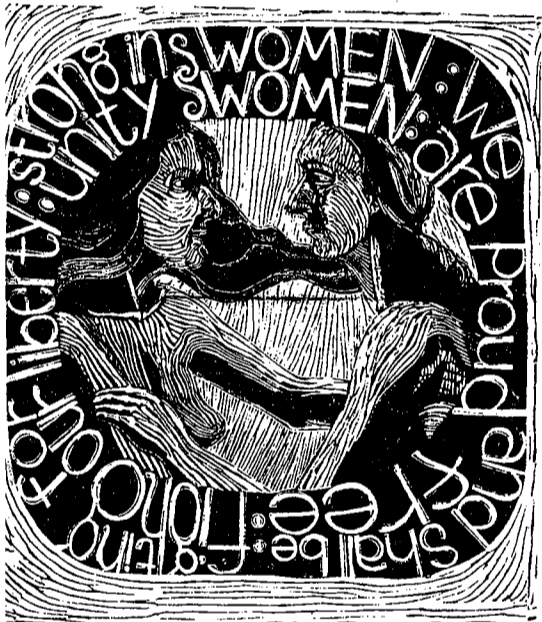
When I was a teenager, sex role stereotyping was so pervasive that it never entered my mind that I would have a "career." In fact, if the truth be known, my

name wasn't even on the "Ambitions" list.

I am so pleased and proud that my eighth grade daughter is growing up in a culture where she has choices. It makes life more complicated but infinitely richer and ultimately more secure.

She will have to work hard to develop her own talents and interests so she can feel her life fulfilled and can, at the same time, compete in the economic marketplace. She will have the ability to support herself without relying on a man (if I have anything to do with it.) Maybe she will even support a man!

The sock hop was a success. Most everybody had a good time and they raised a lot of money for the ski trip. They also raised my consciousness about something I tend to forget: the world is changing so damned fast! And there are all sorts of wonderful surprises out there waiting for us!



f a Woman

me, she held me and told me that it didn't change who I was. Most importantly, she reminded me that it wasn't "wrong" to be a lesbian.

That was two years ago. Vivienne is still living with us, and she is as much my parent as my mother, and more than my father has ever been. I love my mother, her strength and spirit are astounding. Through her involvement in the lesbian community I've met some amazing women that I've grown through knowing.

I've also met the woman I am. I cherish my womanhood, and am constantly warmed and supported by the womanhood of the two strong women, my mom and Viv, who have raised me.

Many of my friends still do not know that my mother is a lesbian, but that's because I know that their perception of reality and even "normality" can't accept it.

But in accepting it, not only have I extended my reality, I have one less restriction on my life, on my spirit. My mom has had a very beautiful influence on my life, and I hope one day to be as much of a woman as she is.



Le Chanson D'Esprit (Spirit Song) Aug. 16-22

Con-Con is the continental conference of the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU). This year is only the 5th Con-Con since the founding of YRUU but it is one of the traditions that we have carried on from the time of LRY, the organization from which the YRUU was born. The conference moves around from location to location each year, and this is the first time it has been in Canada in over two decades. It's organized by the Steering Committee of the Youth Council (the governing body of the YRUU) and the Youth Office at the Unitarian Universalist's Association in Boston.

This year's conference will be at Pine Valley Camp which is nestled in the heart of the beautiful Laurentian Mountains, 55 miles (85 km) north of Montreal (a center of Canadian culture). The cost is \$230(CAN) or \$170(US) and the conference runs from August 16th to the 22nd.

"Le Chanson D'Esprit" (Spirit Song) is the theme for this year's Con-Con. This theme was given to us by the 1986 Youth Council and Steering Committee 86-87 to kick off YRUU's "Year of the Spirit" which runs from Con-Con 87 to Youth Council 88. This theme year was instigated to remind us that a part of the pupose of YRUU is "fostering spiritual depth" (YRUU Bylaws Article II, Section 1).

Con-Con is a conference full of fun, love, and UU community. It is part of the heart and soul of YRUU. I hope you'll join us in our "Spirit song".

If you are interested in going please contact your District Youth Council Representative, your churches RE director (after April 1), or the Youth Office for more information or to request a registration form.

8 What's Going on in Continental YRUU

by Meg Wilson

What direction is YRUU heading? While locals and districts make their own decisions and run their own business, together they make up the organization that is continental YRUU. Knowing what is going on in continental YRUU can be useful to your local and district, and can help you to feel tied in with other YRUUers around the continent. Here are some of the decisions that have been made recently by Youth Council and Steering Committee.

At Youth Council '86, last August, some decisions were made regarding "theme years" for

YRUU. (A theme year starts during Continental Conference, and runs until the beginning of the next year's Con-Con. Con-Con '86 started off the Year of Intergenerational Celebration.) Youth Council decided that '88-'89 should be the YRUU Year of Interracial Understanding. They also proposed that '87-'88 be the Year of the Spirit, but didn't have time to come to a decision.

Steering Committee, at their October meeting, approved the idea of the Year of the Spirit. They named Con-Con '87 *Chanson d'Esprit*, which means SpiritSong in French, and since

then have been busy planning the conference, which will be held near Montréal.

A theme year is traditionally accompanied by an issue of *Synapse* using the same theme. Hence, the Spirituality issue of *Synapse* will be coming out next fall.

Another important issue addressed by Youth Council was how the Youth Council process ought to be altered to make it more effective. At any one meeting half of the Youth Council members are brand new, and need to be introduced to the process and the issues as quickly as possible. Youth Council made some suggestions for changes, and since then the Steering Committee has been working on a new process which will be used at Youth Council '87. This process will include such features as: spending more time teaching the rules of committee decision-

making; setting much of the agenda beforehand, using input from people on the district and local levels (that means you!); and giving more background information on the issues being discussed.

Another issue that the Steering Committee has addressed is the need for support and leadership training for advisors. Plans for investigating this problem are already underway including adding it to the Youth Council '87 Agenda.

When Youth Council or Steering Committee make decisions that are intended to help the districts, the people in the districts need to know about it. Your Youth Council Representative is responsible for spreading the word in your district. If you want to know more about the goings-on of continental YRUU, just contact your rep.

Maine Success Story

by Tirrell Kimball

Maybe you like to hear success stories. . . . Here in Portland Maine we have a wonderful group of young people—active, concerned, caring. We have both a youth enrichment program (Sunday mornings) and youth group (Sunday evenings) and most of the youth (up to 16) come to both every Sunday.

The enrichment is short "courses" or discussions. We just finished the peace unit from "Peace Experiments." The whole church will be involved in Peace Experiments in January. Nine of the youth will be working in the church school helping to teach the units to the younger children. We are supposed to field test the *Spirituality and Religious Identity*

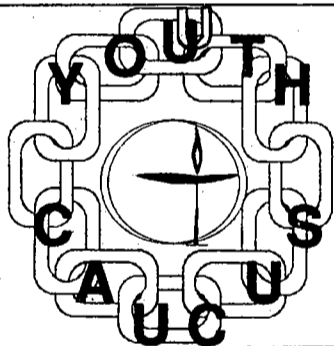
curriculum when it's available and that will fit into the enrichment program.

Youth group combines all the usual elements of fun, learning, service, worship. We have two terrific advisors. Ten of our youth have become members of the church and two more have mentioned to me that they would like to.

The youth add so much to our church, enriching it greatly. They have made an effort to reach out and there are good feelings between the generations. As R.E. Director, I find they have added so much to our program and church. All this has happened since Sept. '85 (prior to that we had no youth programming), so it has been an exciting, rewarding time.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY '87

FAITH OF THE FREE



LITTLE ROCK JUN 22-27

Have you ever felt that you had no say in the bigger picture? Have you ever felt that the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) was beyond you? Well, no longer, because right now you have the opportunity to go to General Assembly where you, the individual, do have a say in the democratic process that the UUA invokes. At GA you'll have six fun-filled days of workshops, resolutions, and UUism. But wait folks, that's not all you get! You also get to be a part of this incredible Youth Caucus (this offer open to people between the ages of 12-22). It meets, it works, it worships. It's the most amazing thing since sliced bread. You're probably asking yourself "How do I get in on this?" Simply pick up a registration form from your local church and fill it out. But wait, if you order right now you can get the new and improved Youth Caucus Housing at the Camelot Hotel. All for only a \$25(US) deposit (nonrefundable after May 26) and an \$18(US) per night rate. Send in the following registration to the Youth Office (25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108 USA). Come be a part of it.

Registration for Youth Caucus Housing

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Zip/Postal Code: _____
 Birthdate: (year) _____, (month) _____, (day) _____
 Gender: Male _____ or Female _____
 Phone Number: () _____
 Do you think you're going to be a delegate?
 Yes _____ or No _____
 Arriving time? _____ (day and date)

"I WISH THAT I BELIEVED IN SOMETHING!"

That's what we hear lots of UU's saying. Sure we know what we don't believe in. But what about the positive stuff?

Well, there may just be more to being a UU than you think. For instance, did you know that thousands of UU's are Christians? Or that most great UU's you've heard about, like Channing and Emerson and Parker, considered themselves followers of Jesus? UU's everywhere are finding in Liberal Christianity a faith that makes sense. A faith devoted to justice, equality, peace and preservation of the earth.

We hope you'll write to find out more about what we believe!

_____ YES, I want to find out more about the UU Christians. Send me some information.

_____ I WANT TO JOIN! Enclosed is five bucks for a one-year student introductory membership. I understand that I'll get the newsletter, and be invited to meetings.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ Zip _____



UU Christian Fellowship • 110 Arlington Street • Boston, MA • 02116

SYNAPSE Volume V, Issue I
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Editorial Policy
 Articles appearing in SYNAPSE are chosen for their social, spiritual, intellectual, practical, or aesthetic value. They may express opinions and/or values that are not necessarily those of the editors or of some of our readers, and dissenting opinions will be

given fair exposure in subsequent issues. We recognize the need to keep from offending the sensibilities of the wide variety of our readers and also the need to respect the integrity of our contributors. Where these values conflict we will err on the side of accurate representation.

There is a limit of two personals per person per issue. All personals should be accompanied with a return address in case for any reason the editors find it impossible to run the personal.

Advertising rates for UUA related groups are:

	\$4.00 per column inch
Quarter page	\$60.00
Half page	\$110.00
Full page	\$200.00

For groups other than UUA related organizations, these rates are double.

A Creed To Stretch The Mind

This is something that means a lot to me, and I think, has a lot of meaning for other people, who sometimes feel as lost in this crazy world as I do. It was written by Leo Rosten and printed in the weekly newsletter that is put out by the Lincoln (NE) Unitarian Church (Jan. 16, 1987 issue).—Erica D. Birky

There is a creed to which, in my judgement, all free men and women must forever hold fast ...

We must learn that those we like are not always right and those we don't like are not always wrong.

We must learn to seek change without violence -- not even in words, much less in deeds.

We must meet fanaticism with courage and idealism with caution.

We must be strong enough to be gentle.

We must know that life will always have unbearable stretches of loneliness and that we can never truly be understood, not even by those who love us; that we cannot completely understand someone else, no matter how much we want to.

We must have the courage to live without absolutes, without dogmas, the courage to seek imaginative escapes from the straight jackets of conformity.

We must learn to meet life with a series of tentative and impermanent approximations, knowing that the final goals may never be reached, that the last truths may be forever unknowable, but that life holds nothing more precious than the process by which, to the fullest stretches of which humans are capable, we stretch the mind and heart.



"There is only one sex . . . A man and a woman are so entirely the same thing that one can scarcely understand the subtle reasons for sex distinction with which our minds are filled."

—George Sand, (1804-1876)

"As far as I'm concerned, being any gender is a drag."

—Patti Smith (b. 1943)

Children Teach What Schools Can't

by Tina Adkinson

Recently, as in an hour ago recently, I babysat five children for four and a half hours. It was the most exhausting, but exhilarating, four and a half hours I have had in a long time. One of the children had cerebral palsy. But before I tell you about her, I want to tell you about the rest of the children. There was a four month old baby, a six year old brat with a seven year old brat for a brother. Then there was Tiffany, who is eight years old. She is Shelley's sister. Shelley is

six years old and has cerebral palsy.

I was extremely hesitant when Judy called me and asked me to babysit her three children plus two more. But you see, I want to be an occupational therapist and work with handicapped kids, so I thought, "what the hell." I'm glad I did. I learned so much from Tif and Shelley. I have never felt so good to ache and be exhausted. I cannot even begin to explain how much joy and happiness I felt as I walked out of the house that evening.

I have been debating with myself if I am cut out to be an occupational therapist or not. Well, after working with Shelley, I decided that that is what I am going to do if it kills me.

But why? It definitely wasn't because I would come home from work with a backache. Was it because I was finding out that they were human just like the rest of us? Yea, like you and me,

who take it for granted that we can get up and walk whenever we damn well feel like it. I can't even make a close estimation of how many times she asked me to give her a drink of water.

One of the problems I found with myself was saying, "Here, do you want me to help with that?" or "I'll do it." Then she would say something to the extent that she isn't a bump on a log, that she's capable. She washed her face as I held her above the sink. OK, OK, OK! I had to wash it after she finished, but she tried.

I guess what I am trying to say is, the next time you get the chance to be around a handicapped person, stick around and give them a chance. I guarantee you they will teach you things that schools don't even teach you to put into words. Helping her and making her a part of me like that somehow made me feel like a true Unitarian Universalist.

Giving & Receiving Luck

by Brian Parrish

I took the time yesterday to walk along a stream: it felt like Spring. When I was a schoolboy, I would throw a twig or two in the water and follow them downstream.

That old habit caught me again, and I stooped to collect some sticks. I kept an eye on them, watching their progress. Then I came to a bridge, and I went to meet them on the other side.

I waited for what seemed like ten minutes, and they hadn't made it. Giving them up for lost, I turned to leave.

I wasn't surprised somehow when one appeared and headed downstream.

When my wooden protégé hit the rapids, some moss greedily reached out and snared it. I thought, "What the heck? So it's caught. Who cares?" Fortunately

for the twig, the schoolboy from my past, reached out, fetched a stray branch, and released the captive from its trap.

I did not realize until I had gotten home that it had only taken five minutes for the whole thing to happen.

Is luck like that? It's said that things you do for others come back to you: I think there is some other person watching over me when I go through the rough periods.

Sometimes when things get out of hand, it seems that one thing will make up for it. Maybe I'll get a letter from some person I've never heard of, or dishes I drop stubbornly refuse to break.

I realize that you can't always be helped through the rapids. But once in a while, if I see a struggling twig, I'll give it a push.



♪♪♪

♪ Would you like to see your favorite song ♪
 ♪ being sung in UUA churches and fellowships ♪
 ♪ all across the United States and Canada? ♪

♪ ♪ The UUA ♪ ♪
 ♪ ♪ Hymnbook Resources ♪ ♪
 ♪ ♪ Commission ♪ ♪

♪ is searching for songs to include in a new ♪
 ♪ hymnbook that will be "expressive of our ♪
 ♪ pluralism, inclusive in language and ♪
 ♪ liturgy, that sings and speaks to our time, ♪
 ♪ celebrating the tie that binds." They are ♪
 ♪ soliciting contributions from YRUU. If ♪
 ♪ you or your youth group have a song that is ♪
 ♪ especially meaningful and important to ♪
 ♪ you, send it to the Youth Office and we ♪
 ♪ will pass it on to the Commission. Be sure ♪
 ♪ to include words, music, author or origin, ♪
 ♪ and date of composition, if known. ♪

♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪

A • L • T • E • R • S • E • L • F

by Tony Donatelli

"I am all alone," I thought as I rested on a rock that must once have been a part of the stone wall that stretched out across the pasture, winding and twisting like a snake, to disappear over a hill.

I had come to this pasture many times before. It was a favorite spot of mine, away from the rest of the world. I am one of those malcontents who people so fondly ridicule. I don't enjoy playing those games of dress, music, and drugs that almost everybody else sees as the only possible way of life. I gave up being fashionable long ago. No matter how hard I tried, I was always behind the times. The problem was, I was a follower. Who was I following? I don't know, I was too busy trying to be accepted. All I wanted was to be liked by someone . . . anyone!

So I gave it up. I figured, if I didn't like myself, why should anyone else like me? If they didn't like themselves, why should they like me? I was just like them.

Today, I live the way that most pleases me. I am the town freak. Everyone has heard of me. For some reason, when someone bucks society, s/he gains instant notoriety. Those who have never met me speak of me with distaste. Yet, some who know me, like, and yes, even love me. Interesting.

I cannot understand how people can decide whether a person is nice, bad, good, or evil. How can one person be totally evil or good? Doesn't each of us contain the same potential for both good and evil?

People have come up to me and said to my face that they hate me. Not knowing how to take such a critique, I arbitrarily asked, "Why?"

Their response is always the same, "Because you're so queer!"

Great, a useless emotion brought to the open by a useless gesture, backed by a useless reason. At least they're consistent.

It was one such comment that brought me out to the pasture this day. I found myself sitting on a boulder which stuck out into a little brook which wound its way through a small corner of the pasture.

"I must have a thing for rocks today." I wonder what Freud would have to say about that.

With the babble of the brook for music, I allowed myself to go over the short, yet not so sweet conversation that took place earlier today. But why was this one upsetting me more than usual?

"Because you're thinking about it this time, Dummy!" I responded to my own question.

OK, I've been asking for that one for a long time now, I guess. But it still doesn't answer my question!

No response this time.

Why did this one bother me? I've had the same discussion time and time again, and always with a different person. Maybe I'm just getting tired of it.

Now, to figure out why I was tired of it. Was it being called queer? No, don't think so. I've been called worse with no ill effects. Was it the person who called me queer? No, this is one of the people who have called me worse. Was it my reaction to being called queer? Silence. I shifted uneasily on my perch. "Could it be that I am my own problem?"

The brook gave me no other reply than my own incessant laughter.

Lying back in perplexity, I searched the sky for clouds. There were a few tenuous cirrostratus flying several miles over head and a few puffy cumulus scattered about the low sky. And buzzing about, in and out around them like some kind of man-made mosquito, was a white and gold biplane. It danced through the sky with a graceful freedom which I couldn't help but envy. It flew aerobatics so effortlessly that I envisioned it doing so for eternity.

I laughed at my own naiveté. Like everything else, it will eventually run low on fuel, and have to land. Even if it could be refueled in mid-air, it will sooner or later wear down and need rest and repair.

Freedom, it seemed, is limited to our ability to cope with it. On that note, I left my perch.

My problem would require the assistance of a more advanced being. I followed the stone wall as it made its way across the pasture. The path was well worn and easy to follow. This wasn't the first time I had come this way, nor would it be the last.

At the top of the hill, I spotted myself leaning against a beat-up, sky blue, '67 Mustang convertible. I was dressed in my usual faded blue jeans and flannel shirt.

"Hi."

"Hello."

"I see you've got a couple of new dents in the car."

"You see right." Needless to say I was a typical New Englander.

"How'd you get 'em?"

"I was careless. How else do you get dents?"

I didn't answer him. I just leaned against the car and joined him in staring at the sky.

"You got a problem again?"

"You know better than to ask that," I replied. "Do I ever come here for any other reason?"

"Nope."

We laughed.

"How many times does it make it now?"

"Thirteen times in the past four years."

"Jesus Christ! If you ain't the most pathetic person I ever met!"

"Now wait a minute! I don't come out here to be ridiculed, even lightheartedly! I get enough of that from everybody else. I come to you for . . . for . . ."

"For what?"

"I don't know." He just smiled at me. "Maybe that's part of my problem?"

"Maybe."

We were quiet for a time. We watched as a couple of seagulls played in the wind.

"Wait a minute. I'm the only person you've ever met." His smile broadened.

"You baited me."

"Yup."

"Why you dirty. . ."

"Hey, you got what you were looking for, right? he laughed.

"Not really, but it wasn't bad."

"Oh," was all he said.

More silence. Our conversations seem to be made up mostly of extended silences broken up by intermittent words.

"Why are people always so rotten to other people simply because they're different?"

"Go to hell."

"Sorry." I had to be careful. He knows me too well. If I don't phrase the question just right, he refuses to answer. I had to make sure that what I was saying was what I was feeling. Honesty was the only thing he responded to. "How can people hate?"

"That's better. Their hate is real. Hate is not an act of lying to cover up one's true feelings. At least not always."

"Do you mean that those people actually hate me? Am I that repulsive?"

"I didn't say that, did I?"

"What are you getting at then?"

"When those people said that they hated you, they weren't talking about you."

"I'm lost."

"They don't hate you Tony. Think about it, why do people hate?"

I looked at him hoping to find an answer in his expression. It wasn't there. He wanted me to tell him. I had to come up with it on my own. Wait a minute, he gave me the answer! I just had to look for it and interpret it. Think. "They hate someone because they see something in them that they are afraid of."

"Or?"

"They hate because they see something in someone else that reminds them of something in themselves that they are afraid of."

"You're getting better."

"Then the motivating force behind hate is not repulsion, but fear."

"Very good."

"But I don't want to scare people, I just want. . ."

"What do you want?"

"I don't know."

"That's the second thing that you don't know. I do wish that from now on you would come fully prepared with all relevant information."

"Cut the crap, will you? This is serious!"

"Sorry."

I looked at his sheepish grin. Maybe he was right. Maybe I was blowing this whole thing out of proportion. "You know, I just realized something."

"What's that?"

"I don't know what was bothering me."

"Give that man a cigar!"

"I must have looked kind of foolish there for a while?"

"Yah, you did at that."

"Then all I have to do is figure out what was bothering me and I'll have my answer."

"Not a bad theory. I'll give you a hint, it's got something to do with your reaction to being called queer."

My god, he's right. How did he know? Oh yeah, that's right, I keep forgetting.

What was my reaction. Did I react? That's silly, of course I did! Newton's principle works with psychology just as well as with physics. For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. What resulted from that comment? Well, for one thing I got rather depressed. My god, that's it!

"Got something?"

"You know damn well I do!"

"Well, let's hear it."

"I got depressed!"

"Uh-huh."

"I should have done something."

"Like what?"

"Like laugh."

"Uh-huh."

"Or kiss her." We both started laughing for the uncontrollable sense of warmth and joy that started flowing out of us.

"Or given her a flower," he joined in.

"Or gone streaking!"

"Just go plain crazy!"

"Whatever the hell felt appropriate!"

"By George, I think he's got it."

"You think so?"

"You tell me. How do you feel?"

"Now?"

"Of course now, you ass."

"I feel fantastic."

"And your problem?"

"Huh? What problem?"

He stopped laughing, "You said something about our freedom being limited just before you came to me. That has me a little worried Tony."

"No," I came back, "Let me handle this one on our own."

"OK"

"Our freedom may be limited by our ability to cope with it. But there's no reason why we can't, to use that biplane analogy, take a rest now and then, refuel and mend our wings, and then just jump back into the sky again. We all need a rest now and then. Am I right?"

"You seem to be."

"Can I ask you something?"

"Shoot."

"You wouldn't have asked me that if it wasn't directly related to what we were talking about before?"

He eyed me silently.

"Well, was it?"

More silence.

I turned away to look at the forest, "Damn it, why don't you ever just come out and tell me anything without all this Zen bullshit?"

Nothing.

"Well?" I turned around to find him gone. "Aw—no, why do you always do this to me?!!!"

EXPRESSIONS

STUDENT

... And she tends to be a dreamer
in a white dress when
the words stop making sense
and when
the variables look like
soggy noodles swimming
in a bowl of alphabet soup
that comes from a can:
"What happens when the letters
lose their color and
the words become extinct and
you forget to talk?"

by Kerry-Beth Garvey

ROWE SPIRIT

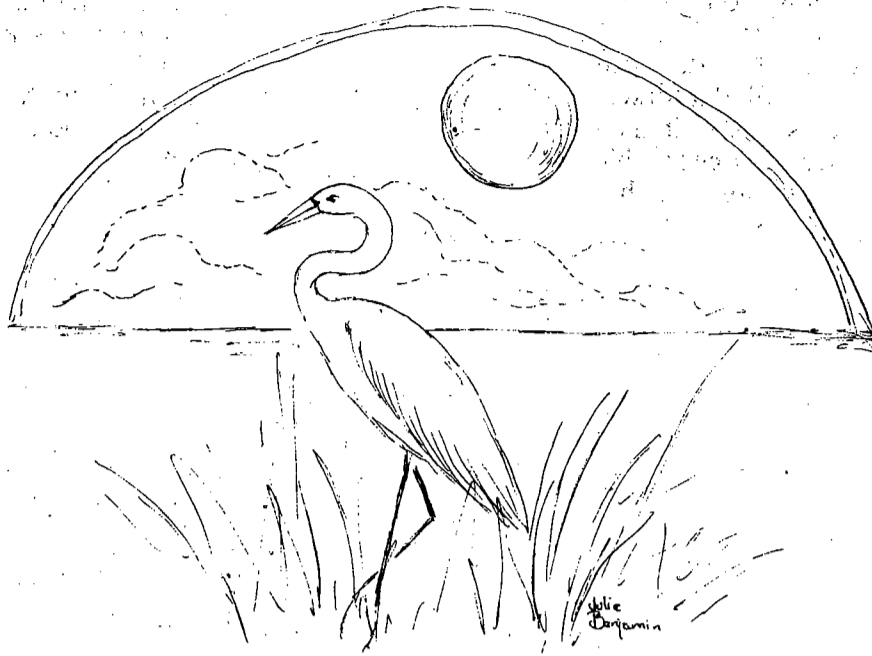
the spirits afire in my soul
a love for these people,
my home
the energy soars
laughter and tears live
as one
in this magic place
fears are shown
friendships are sown
to grow and prosper
within this space
of love
in among the sighing trees,
the mountains green
the flowers and streams,
burns a flame
that never dies
songs that we share
we show we care
by hugs, by talks,
by little walks
to a small chapel
arm in arm in silence
we mourn the deaths
of those who were bombed,
we celebrate the earth
and our love for one another
this fire in my soul
will never die
for the spirit of Rowe
lives on and on.

by Wendy L. Bolton

ODE TO A YOUTH ADVISOR

I love you
for being understanding and giving and patient when
I am sad
or when we youth groupers grind potato chips into your
livingroom rug
or listen to VU all the way across the district in your car
or make you run out for last-minute orange juice and crunchberries.
Or you host yet another coffeehouse and play yet another game of fruit--
Still smiling,
or another Mickey D's breakfast
or a bummed dollar
or a much-needed hug.
I don't mean to be insensitive or abuse your caring.
I love you and care
and I thank you for what you are:
a friend.

by Jennie Phillips



I walked into the forest green one day

Along the trail under the trees I saw
The bright cloth petals of flowers in bloom.
I looked closer, and lo, one had not bloomed.
Twigs crackled as I kneeled down to the plant;
I longed to see the beauty hid inside.
Upon the flower I pondered and sat--
Force the delicate silken color out?
Obey my yearning, a child's 'must have's?
Groped, but a jay chattered in his dismay.
Surprised, I stopped, and in the grass I laid
And watched it grow, nature's slow path of life.
Tired now are flowers that had bloomed once,
My friend, in cool fall, still summer in heart.

by Brian Parrish

BEACON STREET PRAYER

Silly candle flickers
under the deluge
of fluorescent
oscillations--the steady
hum of relentless
indiscriminatory
glowing tubes
of wire and science.

But still
you burn
with light
needed if not
wanted,
willing to die
light giving.

Silly candle,
irrelevant
illumination.

by Gilbert Bouchard

This man came to see me today.
He came down from the clouds
on his golden horse,
and he came to see *me*.
He had sea grass for hair
and wind for breath,
and he spoke in a roar,
but I had to strain to hear him.
And he asked me to go with him
to join him
to become him.

But I was afraid.
And I dropped my razor.

by Cathie Domiano

MY FAMILY

You
are my family
when my parents split up
everyone got up at 9:00 a.m. sharp
to be there
to be a part
of me

I told you my story
and as I cried
you held me

you talked to me
without saying a word
I knew
you understood

I love you,
my friends,
for you are my family.

*This poem is dedicated to a very
special youth group in Illinois. I
love you all very much. - T.S.*

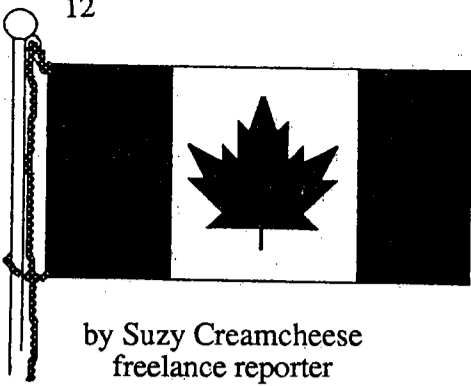
BLACK SUN

Today a black sun
rose in the white sky
Its un-light seemed bright to you
Its un-warmth felt just the same
You'll never change
You were born cold
You were born "too old"
You'll always be alone
the eternal no one
in the dark
the dark
of your
Black Sun.

by July Siebecker

Pages, well-thumbed recall
Running, sneakers clasped in hurried hands
To keep up with gusty Augusts
Demanding rhythm
Liquid emotions
Gained form
As foreign tales tripped
Out of bubble-gummed mouths
Words fall fumbling
Into the eddies of the mind
Striking images
In the depths
Digging our toes
Deep in the summery pulsations
Grappling all the while
To imitate
Jennifer's seemingly
Surefooted steps
10-year-old imaginations
ignited cigarettes
Grasped in artless fingers
While we traded lies
Tried to inhale
Drained beers
And mouthwash
Among the ancient animal smells
And warm hay
And in Jennifer's exalted presence
We would flock
With keen ears
Innocent shaky smiles
To hide in the beat
And break the natural harmony
Of life
We had known

by Karin Smith



by Suzy Creamcheese
freelance reporter

According to Ellen Brandenburg, Youth Programs Director, a Canadian has taken the position of Youth Staffer, working at the Youth Office located at the UUA's headquarters in Boston at the beginning of this new year. This new Youth Staff's name is Scott M. Keeler. The question we have to ask ourselves is what is he doing there? Is this some sort of Canadian plot to take over YRUU? Let us look at the facts of the case.

1. Less than one in 2,800 Unitarian Universalists is Canadian and the numbers for youth are even smaller.

2. This is the second case of a Canadian being a Youth Staffer in YRUU's short history. The first was Colin Bird, one of the two original YRUU Youth Staffers. This means that of the ten youth who have held the position so far, 20% have been Canadian.

3. The first Consultant on Youth Programming, Wayne Arnason, was a Canadian.

4. The Steering Committee of Youth Council (the governing body of YRUU), the ones who

Canadian Infiltration Discovered

select new Youth Staff, has had in the last three years, six out of a possible fifteen (five per year) youth positions on their panel filled by Canadians.

This amazing number of Canadians is too statistically unlikely to be chalked up to mere coincidence.

In addition, the Continental Conference of YRUU being held in Canada (Montreal, Quebec to be more specific) for the first time in YRUU history. This seems to indicate a deepening of the trend of Canadian infiltration and control in YRUU.

This reporter decided to confront the problem head on by interviewing the aforementioned Scott M. Keeler.

Suzy: I am interested in understanding what kind of role Canadians are taking on in our organization. Could you begin by describing for us the position of Youth Staff?

Scott: Well, the Youth Staff along with the other Youth Staff and the Consultant on Youth Programs run the Youth Office. We're kept very busy going to meetings and doing all sorts of work for the youth movement. I guess the best description to be found is that one which is layed out in the Youth Staff position ad (*which you should find elsewhere in this issue*). Of course each individual brings his or her own



*Oho! What's Scott doing here?
... and the plot thickens ...*

special qualities to the job and so does different things according to his or her talent and interests.

Suzy: What are your intentions and plans for the year that you are a Youth Staffer?

Scott: I think that YRUU is still a very young organization and it still has a lot of learning and growing up to do. It being still in its formative years I feel YRUU members have a responsibility to

the organization like parents have a responsibility to their child. Responsibilities to keep it healthy and safe yet at the same time teaching it the life skills it needs such as cooperation and independence. I think that the youth of YRUU, have been guilty of either coddling or ignoring it. If I could do one thing during my year it would be to get the youth putting energy back into their organization; energy like we saw at Common Ground I & II.

Suzy: I'm sure we'd all like to see that Scott, but what is really behind you're coming to the Youth Office?

Scott: A sense of love and duty to the dream of YRUU.

Suzy: Then you deny having a role of any kind in a "Canadian Conspiracy"?

Scott: No Comment.

Well rumor or no, this reporter is going to keep a close eye on what's happening above the 49th parallel and now what's happening at our very own "25" (UUA headquarters).

Letters to Lucy Buuth

Dear Luucy,

In your last advice column, you responded to someone's question about long-distance relationships. Your advice was that the feelings would soon go away as the time got longer. Well, what if after a long time (I'm talking two years here) you still have feelings for a person who you only write to or occasionally talk on the phone with, then what should you do? —Forever Feelings

Dear FF,

Luucy is wondering if what you are having is a problem. Are you suffering? Do you not like having feelings forever? If Luucy were you, she'd hang in there with those feelings.

If you are suffering because your relationship doesn't have a

chance, Luucy suggests you go cold turkey and eliminate all calls and letters. They only serve to fan the flames of your love... or lust, whatever.—Luucy



Dear Luucy,

I love the conferences in my district and I usually have a good time, but the problem is that there is a lot of sex and I feel expected to be involved with it. I don't mean to be a priss, but I really don't feel ready for it. What do you suggest? —Not Ready

Dear Not Ready,

Assuming that you are a girl, (oh, why *does* Luucy assume you are a girl? It must be the pink paper upon which your inquiry arrived...) Luucy suggests you simply avoid situations where you feel you will be unmercifully social-pressured by members of either gender.

Don't be afraid to say how you feel! Ancient wisdom suggests that young men are vastly more impressed by young women who know their own mind than they are by those who follow the herd.

On the other hand, it could be that you are being a priss and that simply won't do. Unless, of course, you like being a priss. If you can't answer this one for yourself, ask a friend you trust.

Confidential to "Sick of Sandy:" Chances are if you don't give her the attention she craves, she will get sick of you, too. L.B.

Local Group Activities

Here are some thought-provoking questions addressing issues of gender and gender roles, which your local group might want to use as the basis of a group discussion:

1) What do you like about being female or being male?

2) What would be different for you if you were a member of the opposite sex? What would be the advantages? The disadvantages?

4) What things do you do just because "that's what girls do" or "that's what boys do?" Do you enjoy doing them? What would happen if you stopped?

5) Have you ever done something that your sex is "not supposed to do?" How did it feel? What kind of a reaction did you get from other people?

A perhaps apocryphal story tells of a tribe which pokes gentle fun at gender roles by playing the following version of tug-o-war. The women form one team and the men form the other, and the tug-o-war begins.

When one team starts to lose, someone from the winning team runs over to the other side, pretends to be the opposite sex, and joins the opposing team. Again, one team or the other will start to lose, and the same thing happens.

After a while the teams, and the sexes, will be hopelessly mixed. The game usually ends when you are all laughing too hard to tug, especially if people have been hamming up the gender roles.

T-Shirts and Buttons Available!!

Striking 2 1/2" turquoise and indigo YRUU buttons may be purchased for only 50¢ each from the YRUU office! Beautiful 100% cotton T-shirts, emblazoned with the YRUU logo and "Young Religious Unitarian Universalists" are available for only \$7.00 each! Colors are lilac and black on white, white and black on red, or yellow and white on black. Available in medium, large and extra-large. Mail orders to YRUU Enterprises, Unitarian Universalist Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108.

