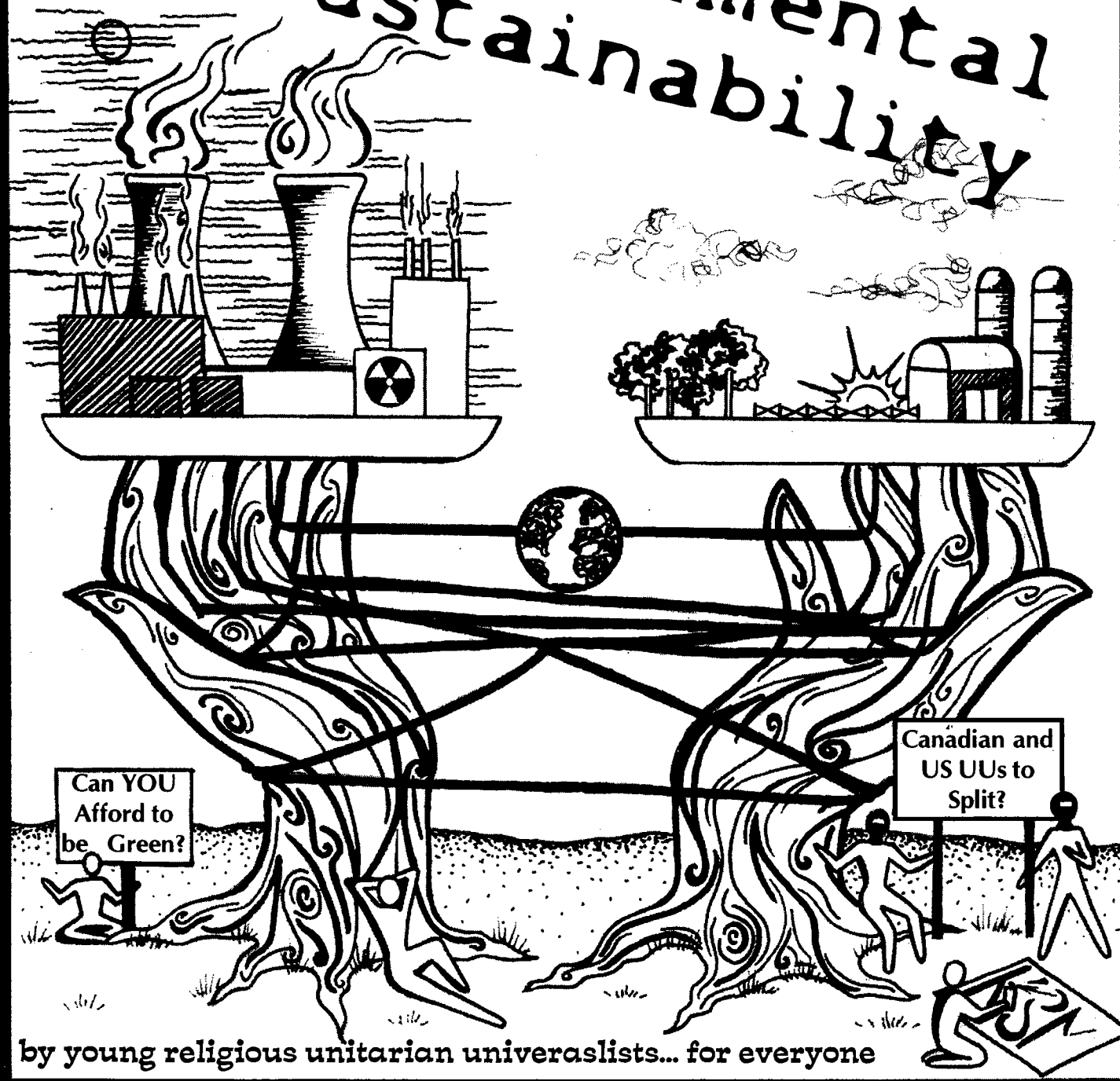


# Synapse

A point of  
contact where  
information and  
energy are  
exchanged...

Spring 2001  
Volume XIX  
Issue 1

## Environmental Sustainability



# Continental Calendar

SPRING 01 - FALL 01

## MAY 3-6

CONTINENTAL SPIRITUALITY  
DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE  
TRAINING

## MAY 1

EARLY DEADLINE FOR YOUTH  
HOUSING AT GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY (\$190 US)

## MAY 10

FINAL DEADLINE FOR YOUTH  
HOUSING AT GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY (\$210 US)

## MAY 18-20

YRUU LONG-RANGE  
PLANNING MEETING

## JUNE 15

CONCON FORMS DUE

## JUNE 21-26

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## JULY 20-26

CONCON

## JULY 27-30

CONCENTRIC (SEE CUUYAN.ORG FOR  
DETAILS)

## JULY 28-AUGUST 3

YOUTH COUNCIL

## AUGUST 1-5

OPUS (SEE CUUYAN.ORG FOR DETAILS)

FOR A COMPLETE UP TO  
DATE CALENDAR, SEE OUR

WEBSITE AT:

<http://uua.org/YRUU>

OR CHECK OUT:

<http://uua.org/calendar>

## WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?

howdy, i'm graham baas. noticed my name is in lower case? good. i'm just not an upper case kind of guy. you probably want to know a little about me, seeing as how i'm a yps and all. i grew up in iowa, then moved to illinois, then moved to minneapolis, then decided that living in one area for any length of time is kind of bogus, so i then proceeded to move around a whole lot. now i live in jamaica plain, ma. so what do i do in the youth office? well... i'm the resident "computer geek", i handle all of the website stuff and manage the listservs. that's in addition to all of the other yps duties i fulfill. as a not so side note, i hate fax machines. when i hear the words, "i'm going to fax it to you" i break out in a cold sweat. so when ever you're thinking, "oh gosh my 'insert random thing that could be late' is late, i'd better fax it right now to the youth office." take a deep breath, now take another one. call the youth office, explain to us what it is that you're faxing, and we'll figure out some other way of getting it to us. also, this is just my opinion, not that of the youth office as a whole. just remember:

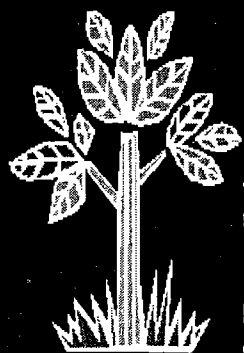
"graham hates fax machines."



Hey there! I'm Elka (formerly Liz) your Intern! Info about me: I'm a drama freak and damn proud of it. One day you'll see me somewhere, whether it be on the stage on movies or tv, I don't care, but you'll be seeing me again. I like

to sing and dance (ballet, tap, jazz, club, etc.) because I love to perform. I also love the play goal on my school soccer team. I guess I enjoy diving at balls flying at my head, jamming fingers, mutilating knees and getting kicked at. It's all about me, Me, ME! I, unfortunately to my wallet, am a shopaholic. And admitting it is not the first step to recovery. I'm doomed. My other major passion is being a hard-core YRUUer (note the rawkin' painful chalice tattooed on my lower back). Worship (bringing the R back in YRUU!) and Social Action (Prison Reform, Animal Rights, the War on Drugs) are the most important parts of YRUUness to me. I'm a senior at the Commonwealth School in the Back Bay of Boston and I'm going to Hampshire College next year. So look for me in your quest for entertainment and call me at the youth office if your bored, you might save me from some long hours in front of a computer!





# Wink

from the editors

Our culture teaches us to always want more, More, MORE. It's the founding principle of capitalism and is, I believe, the main reason our world is in such bad shape. When a society is based around unchecked growth and expansion, resources become depleted, not replenished, and the environment suffers permanently.

This is where the concept of environmental sustainability comes in. Sustainability means taking out less than we put in. It means there is a balance; that growth somewhere means decline somewhere else; that the world moves in cycles and waves, not in one upward-slanting line.

Our society also grants us with a huge amount of freedom, freedom that is regularly abused in the name of profit. The thing we have forgotten is that with freedom comes responsibility. In order to truly be responsible with our freedom, we need to view the world holistically. We must acknowledge that everything we do has an effect on everything else, and we therefore have a responsibility to do good. We must fully accept responsibility for the damage each of us causes, directly or indirectly, to the environment. As a resolution from General Assembly puts it "Responsible Consumption is a Moral Imperative."

Responsible consumption, and living life sustainably means giving some things up. It means driving less, buying less, using less, taking shorter showers, eating less meat ALL THE TIME. Every time we eat beef we are contributing to massive erosion, water pollution, and poisoning of the land with pesticides, not to mention ingesting 54% more pesticide residues than if you ate a bowl of cereal. In fact, if everyone in the world became vegetarian all at once, the world's oil reserves would last 260 years

instead of 40-80 years.

Environmental change can not be made only by passing laws or by protesting World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings or by riding your bike to school. The work towards an environment that is healthy and will stay healthy must infiltrate everything we do; we must pass legislation, we must protest horrible organizations, we must eat food grown locally and organically, we must print schoolwork on double-sided paper, and we must carpool when we can. Change must be made on all levels simultaneously. The big environmental disasters get news coverage and movie star sponsorship, but it is the little things that cause the most damage; the '89 Exxon Valdez oil spill (the worst spill ever in US waters) was a horrible tragedy, but Americans improperly dispose of 20 times that much oil every year by changing their own car's oil. Dumping small amounts of oil over the entire land is a lot harder to contain and clean up than an oil tanker spill.

Widespread environmental destruction is coming sooner than we might think. Our oil reserves are predicted to run out in 40-80 years. A possible rise in global temperature of 2.5 degrees C (4.5 degrees F) before 2100, causing disaster for the global ecosystem (and therefore human economic and social systems) is predicted.

This Synapse has a number of articles related to environmentalism; some related to specific issues like genetic engineering, some relate to widespread epidemics, like environmental racism. Environmentalism is linked to all movements for social change, and we must act against all forms of oppression while we work towards a more sustainable world. We must educate ourselves and others, make responsible decisions, and work for positive change in the world!

-Abbey Tennis

## About Synapse...

Synapse is a publication of Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU), the youth organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Subscription is free. Two issues per annum. For more information on subscriptions, see the back cover. All contributions are considered based on quality and whether they fit into our Principles and Purposes.

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## Advertising:

Rates vary depending on size and type of organization. UUA affiliate and associate organizations are given preference by the editors. Also, non-camera-ready or odd-sized ads have special rates. Advertisements should not be construed as endorsements by the Youth Office, YRUU, or the UUA. The editors reserve the right to refuse any advertisement. Contact the Youth Office for specific rates for your organization.



## Letters to the Editor



### Response to a Friend, and Hope for All

*To better understand this letter, refer to the commentary in the Fall 2000 issue of Synapse entitled "Polite Rage of one Canadian" (Fall 2000 Synapse, page 17).*

As for many of you, YRUU has been a life changer for me. My district involvement, beginning in 1997, and my continental involvement, beginning about a year and a half ago, has seen the Amir of yesterday disappear into oblivion and the Amir of tomorrow emerge in full fashion. Most recently, actually for almost a year, my continental participation has been fulfilled as one of the youth observers to the UUA Board of Trustees. My colleague is Jacob Larsen, the writer of the previously mentioned essay.

I consider myself ethnically diverse, possessing many identities, American often being the last of which I boast. My father was Egyptian and my mother is Swiss, and I take a great pride in my multicultural heritage. As a member of YRUU, my struggles to be accepting, tolerant, and compliant are incessantly ongoing—I believe in this faith's principles with all my heart—and I, like Jacob, am pained to see that discrimination exists in some aspects of YRUU. I certainly learned this year that I have to examine myself.

I have actually done some of the things that Jacob expressed contempt toward. I have actually asked him to say the word *about*. Perhaps the worst part of it all was that I didn't even realize what I was doing. I obviously wasn't relating to him because any comment to me about America will be met with indifference. However, Jacob never asked me how Egypt was, or how Switzerland was, or to speak in

an Idaho accent for goodness sake, as ridiculous as that sounds. But that's exactly what I was doing to him.

I deserved a slap in the face, but fortunately Jacob is just too nice for that. The most critical part of all this, especially our personal conversations on the subject, is the fact that he is my colleague and friend. Elected by you to serve the Board, we became friends, developed trust, and optimized the future. But there I was—inadvertently offending my new friend while I thought I was living out my UU Principle of acceptance. I don't have anything against Canada. I was disturbed to see that my apathy (and I hate to call it that) led to the pain of my friend's feelings.

We are lucky to have Jacob. We are lucky to have such a large number of Canadians committed to our faith. Unitarian Universalism, above all, should not be bound by the American borders. Perhaps that is what is happening in YRUU and it is time to stop. Let ConCon (held in Ontario this year), Jacob's words, this response, and your belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person be stepping stones toward our progressiveness.

I have a hope for all of YRUU. Never again should one of my friends be driven to the point of sleeplessness because those he loves have been unconsciously causing misery for him. I have opened my eyes. My beloved colleague, you are not Jacob the Canadian. You are Jacob my friend. You are Jacob our friend.

Amir Fouad  
Pocatello, Idaho, USA

### Raise a Ruckus

I just want to send a shout out to all the YRUU kids out there. It is really inspiring and wonderful to see that YRUU is still the best thing since sliced bread.

I saw a bunch of stuff around whether Synapse should be free to print whatever it wanted to print. I felt very sad. If this sort of thing happens again, write letters to the UUA World in protest. Raise a ruckus. Be a prophetic voice that says "this is wrong!" Take action. You are the future of the UU movement. If people fail to listen to the voice of youth, then our movement will die.

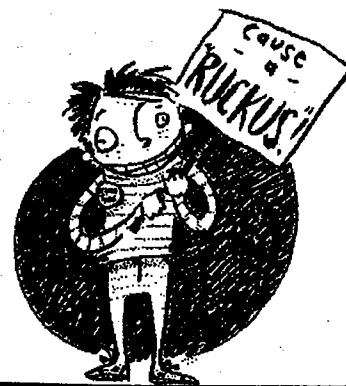
Youth in this denomination have a long history of %#@&\*@\$^!# up. It was the leadership of youth that eventually brought Unitarians and Universalists together into one denomination. It was the with the help of the leadership of youth eight years later (1969) that caused significant protest over race at GA. It was partially the leadership of youth who brought in new voices about earth centered spirituality into the UUA in the late 70s. Youth have made so many contributions to this religious movement that they deserve to speak in their own voice even if it pisses people off.

Don't be passive. The adult leadership in this denomination have walked over youth before. Don't let them do it again. Youth have made great contributions to our religious movement simply by repeatedly refusing to be silenced. This religious movement needs the vitality and spiritual force of youth almost more than the youth need the movement.

Remember these two words: Youth autonomy. Remember that YRUU is a vehicle to empower youth, that is, put youth in positions of power over their own lives. Take that power and live it. If anyone tries to take it away from you, don't even think about giving in without a fight. Read up on the history of the youth movement within the UUA. There are many oppressive, authoritarian, and anti-youth institutions in the world—it is your duty as youth to ensure that the UUA is not one of them.

love and phuufs,

Dan Kappus,  
former youth  
Atlanta, Georgia, USA



## Anti-Racist or Anti-Racism?

I feel that we as a society are an anti-racist society. Not only is this against our [UU] principles, it is hypocritical. It bothered me in the latest issue of synapse when I read "Anti-racist." I am not against the people that hold a belief (a racist), but rather the belief itself (racism). Through my interpretation, the true UU version of the term would have been "anti-racism." This is hard very hard though. That when someone wishes or even inflicts harm on others due to a belief. I find it hard to affirm that someone's inherent worth and dignity. For me that is where faith enters UUism. If one chose to not see that someone's inherent worth and

dignity, that one, you, is a hypocrite. I say this because you hate a person for hating another person. Blatant hypocrisy. I have felt this way, strongly, since I "came of age" and was forced to think about it. I hope whomever this finds is forced to think about it as well.

Chris Weber  
Centerville, Ohio, USA

## What's Shakin' in JPD?

Greetings from the Joseph Priestly District (JPD.) Including all of Delaware, Maryland, and Washington

**graham's gripes** environmentalists annoy the hell out of me. don't get me wrong, I **don't** want to stymie the work that people have been doing to stop the destruction of the environment... no, I just don't like most environmentalists. they focus so much on the details that they lose sight of anything resembling the big picture. abbey and I argue over this point a lot. just which big picture is more important? the rest of synapse shows a different point of view, so this is my little soapbox. every single environmental problem facing us today has to deal with one root cause; over-population. nothing else. there's approximately 4,000,000,000 too many people currently on earth. these people eat, breathe, consume, travel, destroy, etc. so when I see an environmentalist with kids, all I can think about is their hypocrisy. maybe I'm wrong, and they adopted that kid. but I'm sure that I'm right more often than I'm wrong. so personally, I believe that they way to saving the earth is through not procreating. not through recycling, not through saving the spotted owls, not through eating organic, not through saving the whales. just don't make any more screaming little diaper wearing eaters of resources.

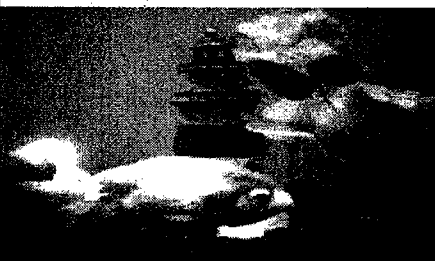
D.C., and parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and New Jersey, it's quite possibly the dancin'est district in the entire UUA. Well, I was sorry to hear about your recent budget cuts, which took the district reports section out of Synapse. You may have noticed that the JPD spot is usually blank. I'm writing to give all that live with a constant burning desire to know what goes on in that crazy Joseph Priestly District what you want. Despite problem with DYSC (District Youth Steering Committee, which sounds cooler than YAC) members absences, we have had a very productive year. Our theme this year was "positively aware," with focus on Social Action. Our wintercon this year was deemed social action con, and included many fun and successful hands-on social action workshops. DYSC also put into action a new program thought up mostly by last year's awesome co-chair, Jana Mickenly.

The Youth Empowering and Supportive congregations program (a.k.a. YES) awards churches in the JPD that take an active role in youth empowerment with official recognition as a youth empowering and supportive congregation, as well as a spiffy banner and certificate. Four churches are set to receive the award this year. We have also seen a dramatic increase in con-going this year, with successful outreach to those youth groups that had not yet seen the greatness of youth conferences. We also saw an increase in the number of non DYSC-run cons, with a grand total of six in the

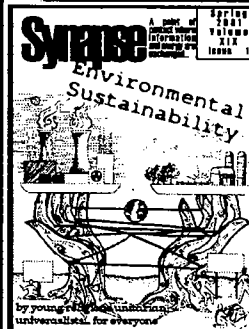
2000-2001 con season. Our voice on the JPD board is also increasing, with our board representative missing only one meeting this year, and we have plans to send a voting member to the board next year.

I hope that quenches your never-ending thirst for information regarding the JPDYSC, but if not, I encourage you to visit our new awesome website at [jpdysc.org](http://jpdysc.org). Thanks a bunch, keep up the good work Synapse.

Pete Johnson-Joseph Priestly District  
Youth Steering Committee  
Youth Council Representative  
and Energy Co-Ordinator.



## WRITE TO SYNAPSE!



Would you like to have your letter printed in Synapse? Did you see something that you really liked? Did you see something that made you want to start a fire with a pile of Synapses? Well

this is your chance to speak up so you better use it. If you send us something that you would like to go in this section we will most likely use it so please send use your letters to tell us what you think.

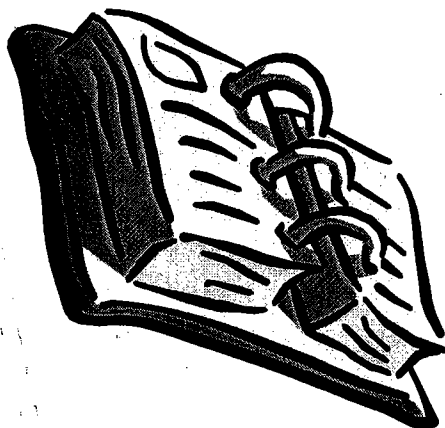
**YRUU YOUTH OFFICE**  
**SYNAPSE: Letter to the Editor**  
25 Beacon St  
BOSTON, MA 02108 USA  
[yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org)

The views expressed in these letters does not necessarily reflect those of the Editors, and shouldn't be interpreted as such. We reserve the right to edit letters for content and length.



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# Steering Committee Speaks!

By Kate Kidder, 2000-2001 YRUU Steering Committee

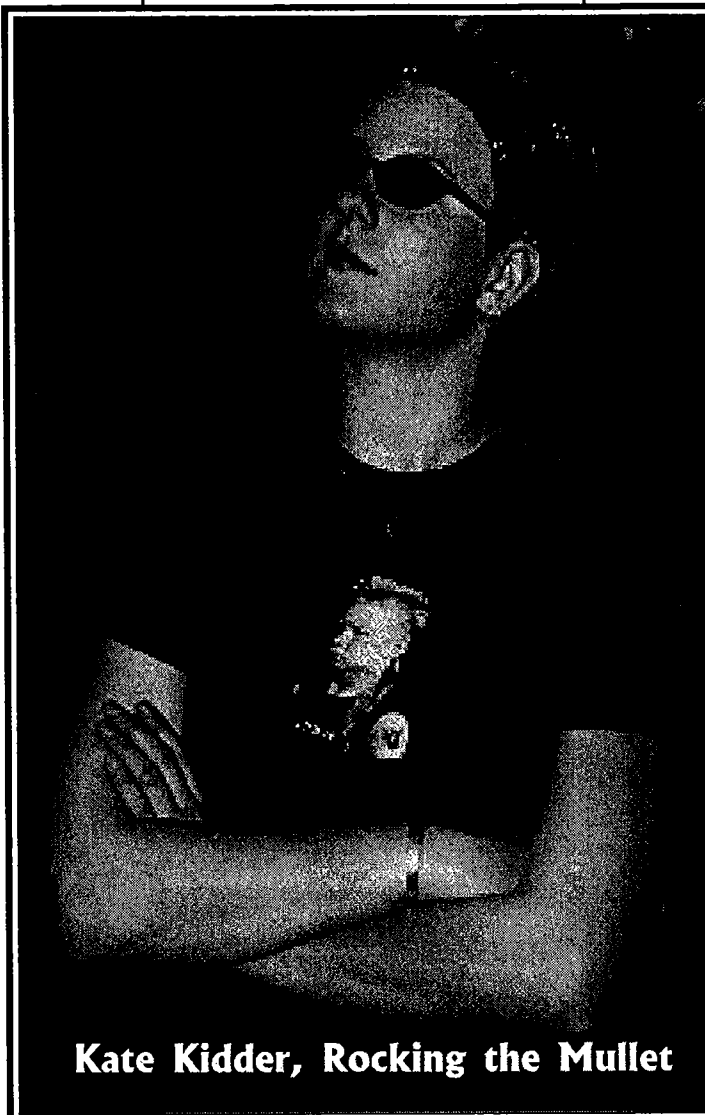
Hi! I'm Kate Kidder, a member of the 2000-2001 YRUU Steering Committee. Steering Committee, which is elected by Youth Council each year, is the executive body of YRUU. Essentially, this means that we implement the priorities and programs set by Youth Council, the governing body of YRUU.

We recently had our third meeting of the year. We made a lot of exciting decisions, came up with some great ideas, and had a little fun. You can check out the minutes from our meeting at [www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU) under the "Governance" section.

This year at General Assembly (GA), a new president and moderator of the UUA will be elected. As Denny Davidoff, the current moderator and chairperson of the UUA Board of Trustees, said, "Youth have the potential this year, for the first time ever, to swing the elections." This is exciting!

In order to swing the election, however, we need you, the youth, to be delegates and make your vote heard. At GA 1999, the bylaws were changed to allow congregations to send more delegates to GA. For many congregations, this means that they have more slots than they know

what to do with. Y'all should talk to your congregation's board or minister and let them know you are interested in being a delegate at GA. In many cases, your congregation will help you



**Kate Kidder, Rocking the Mullet**

(financially) get to GA if you are a delegate.

If you cannot be a delegate, you should still come to GA and be a part of Youth Caucus. You can find more information about Youth Caucus

and registration forms later in this Synapse (p. 22). Having a strong youth presence at GA and letting adults know about issues that are important to us will not only "swing" the elections but all other decisions of the assembly as well.

So that we can learn about and evaluate our denomination's future leaders, Steering Committee has asked all of the candidates for moderator and president to answer questions relating to youth concerns. These questions and the candidates' responses appear later on in this issue of Synapse (pgs. 20 & 21).

Also, the Youth Council/Steering Committee Restructuring Task Force will be meeting at GA. This task force is charged with making systemic changes so that Youth Council and Steering Committee are less elitist, hierarchical, racist, and classist and so that they are more inclusive and representational of all YRUUers, including you! At GA, there will be opportunities for you to give input. This could mean huge and exciting changes in the way YRUU is governed and structured.

See you in Cleveland for GA 2001!

*Kate Kidder is the Jr. High Transitional Age Range Representative to Youth Council, she is also a member of the YRUU Steering Committee.*







# Hey Look! It's the **YOUTH COUNCIL PEOPLE OF COLOUR CAUCUS APPLICATION!!!!**

**Yippee!!**

## **What is Youth Council?**

Youth Council is the governing body of YRUU. The members of Youth Council (22 district youth, 4 at-large youth, 7 at-large adults, 1 UUA Board Representative, 1 Position on Appraisal, and the Youth Office (ex-officio)) meet once a year. This year the meeting will be held in Waterloo, ON! At these meetings, Youth Council members give and listen to reports, discuss what should be happening in YRUU and create policies to make it happen, do anti-racism work, worship together, and have a ton of fun! Throughout the year, members of Youth Council work on the resolutions that they passed, publicize the decisions that come out of Youth Council, and create agenda items for the next Youth Council. Youth Council makes decisions through a formal consensus process.

## **What is the People of Color Caucus?**

The People of Color Caucus (PoCC) will be made up of youth and adults of color who are interested and invested in becoming the leaders of YRUU and helping to govern the organization. At Youth Council, the caucus will participate as a regular member of Youth Council. The PoCC was created last year as a step toward making YRUU an anti-racist organization. It involves youth of color in the leadership and decision making of YRUU. Because the PoCC is new, it is ever-changing and evolving.

## **Applications should include the following:**

- **Vital Information:** Name, address, phone number, email (if applicable), date of birth, home church or fellowship, district, and a list of people from whom you are expecting letters of recommendation.
- **A Letter of Intent:** Why you want to be on Youth Council, what you feel you can offer to the position, what you feel you can offer to the group, experience you have to bring to the group, what YRUU issues concern you, and your dreams and goals for YRUU.
- **Anti-Racism, Multi-Culturalism, and Diversity:** How do you define racism? What sort of education have you had on issues of racism, anti-racism, and/ or multiculturalism (describe these experiences)?
- **Two Letters of Recommendation:** These can be from ministers, YRUU youth, RE directors, YRUU advisors, teachers, or others with whom you have worked (at least one letter from a youth and one from an adult).

**Due  
May 25th,  
2001!**

Send Applications to:  
Steering Committee  
c/o The Youth Office  
25 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
yruu@uua.org  
fax: (617) 742-0321



I am Chris Weber, an Eagle Scout. I am also an active Unitarian Universalist. There are multiple sides to the issues of intolerance and the Boy Scouts' non-acceptance of members who are homosexual and/or atheists. Ben Dewey's shirt (the one on which two Boy Scouts are shown, one holding a gay pride flag and the other holding an atheist flag, with the slogan "prepared to stand against intolerance") represents one way to deal with the issue. Attacking members of the boys scouts as though they too are intolerant is another. I would like to say that it is important to remember that an organization is made of human beings. As our Unitarian Universalist Principle says, we need to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

There are those UUs who believe that boycotting is the right and true way to protest; they boycott Starbucks and other organizations that have "evil" politics. I feel that Boy Scouts has an excel-

## Bridging the Rift

By Chris Weber

lent program, which when executed properly, has produced some of the US's finest individuals. Should an adult or teenager chose to boycott this organization, it would cheat the young man of an opportunity to do so many things. The program is not all bad. Yes, there are a lot of bad politics that are plain immoral, but what an individual can come out of the program with is substantial. Try to consider this when the time comes that a loved one is old enough to join Boy Scouts. Do not forbid the experience merely because some of the Boy Scouts' national bigwigs decided not to be accepting. That is unfair to your child.

Furthermore, in some areas, like mine, the local leadership is accepting. It does not approve of how people at the national level are behaving, another reason not to dismiss the opportunity as bad politics. I am not trying to justify the BSA's

dissolute politics, but I am trying to offer some food for thought.

Personally, I feel weird being caught in this controversy between my church and my organization. As a confused teenager, having a fellow teenager get in my face because I am involved in Boy Scouts hurts. It makes me feel that I am not a valid UU. I know that not a Unitarian Universalist out there, deep down, would want to inflict that on someone. So please, think about this the next time you can bash a Boy Scout for being a Boy Scout. Thanx!

*Chris Weber is a Boy Scout and a Spirituality Development Conference Trainer. He hails from Heartland District. He can be reached at: christopher.weber@excite.com*



## HEY YOU!! YEAH, YOU!!

Do you want to  
**design the next YRUU t-shirt?**

It'll gain you the adoration of millions and make you the coolest kid on your block. Not to mention the joy of seeing trillions of people walking around wearing a T-shirt that you designed. You'll even get some money out of it! If you design the T-Shirt that we pick, you'll get \$100 and a free t-shirt!!

Send all T-shirt designs to:  
Design the best T-Shirt ever!!!  
c/o Youth Office  
25 Beacon St.  
Boston, MA 02108 USA



ARE YOU A WRITER, POET, ARTIST, YOUTH?  
DO YOU WANT YOUR WORK TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO  
NEARLY 15,000 PEOPLE?

# SUBMIT TO SYNAPSE!

We accept Articles, Poetry, Lyrics, Pictures, Paintings and Drawings, year round for Synapse. And, we guarantee, you have an excellent chance of actually getting published. (Nearly ALL submissions get published)

**You say:** My stuff isn't good, though, why would they want me to submit?

**We say:** What are you talking about? Your stuff is excellent! You are the most talented YRUUer that has ever lived! You should submit today.

**You say:** Well, maybe my stuff is ok, but it doesn't have anything to do with YRUU or the next Synapse theme or anything. I just won't send it in.

**We say:** You're killing us! Your submissions don't have to have anything to do with YRUU! They don't have to have anything to do with the theme! Even if, for some <insert guiding spiritual force here>-forsaken reason, we don't publish your submission in the next issue, we do keep a running file and your stuff might be used in a future issue.

**You say:** Well, I wrote a haiku once for English class... It went like this:

Five Seven Five Haiku  
Five Seven Five Haiku Haiku  
Five Seven Five Haiku

But it sucked. Who would publish that?

**We say:** We will! We just did! And you know what, we think that was the best haiku ever. Thank you for submitting.

**You say:** Well, I kind of wanted to write an article for the last issue, but I didn't know how long it should be or what font to use or how to submit it or anything, so I just didn't write it.

**We say:** Font doesn't matter! Length doesn't (usually) matter (although 700-800 words is about a one-page article in Synapse. 1-2 page articles are best...) And submitting is easy!

## To Submit

Either: email [yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org) with your work as text or an attachment to the email with "Synapse submission" in the subject line (send us a picture that we can publish with your article as well, if you can!)

Or: mail your submission to:

Next Synapse Theme: **Synapse Submissions**  
**NO MORE PRISONS!!** C/o Youth Office  
25 Beacon St.  
Boston, MA 02108 USA

Fall Synapse submission  
deadline: October 15, 2001

Spring Synapse submission  
deadline: January 15, 2002



Never can the YRUU community become colorblind. Never will the world become colorblind. Even a colorblind person will never be colorblind because color will still be there. A red rose will always be red and the grass will always be green. That is the way it always has been and the way it always will be, but colorblindness is not the point.

To be colorblind would be to deny our individuality. I'm black, you're white, I'm short, you're tall, I sing, you dance. Anti-racism is not colorblindness, but acceptance that my hair is nappier than yours and that your skin is lighter than mine. YRUU staff is beginning to do an outstanding job of being just that, anti-racist, but YRUU & most YRUUers still need a lot of work.

Maybe they just don't see it, and I know that the staff doesn't see it either because if they did, it wouldn't happen. Unitarian Universalism is a predominantly white upper-class community, which is part of the problem. White UUs are often not exposed to the people, the culture, or the issues of People of Colour. White UU's naive views of "diversity" are the main problem. Would they say anything about my clothes if they knew why I wore them? No, I don't think so. Do they ask? No, I don't just wear brand-name clothes because they are brand-name; FUBU (For Us By Us) in particular I wear as a political statement, *not* just to be "cool". I don't just wear MUDD jeans because they have an embroidered handprint on the back pocket; I wear them because they fit my body type best. Do I deserve to have the music I listen to grotesquely imitated and stereotyped? Do I imitate and stereotype other peoples' music? No, I don't; I even put up with

# Practice What You Preach

By Manige Blackburn

listening to it at church and cons, but do they allow me to play the music I enjoy or consider what I might want to hear? No.

I personally know UU youth of color from across the country who refuse to attend cons for these very same reasons—we don't feel fully accepted. The infamous "invisible wall" keeps us from participating. Could a short one- or two-hour anti-racism training at of every con be a possible problem solver? I don't know. Or maybe reminding everyone of the Unitarian Universalist As-

**"...to be color-blind would be to deny our individuality..."**

sociation Principles?

I don't feel that it is my job to fix the problem, only to bring it up. I'm not speaking for all youth of color, but the ones I either know or have spoke to that feel the same way I do.

⊕ **The inherent worth and dignity of every person;**

⊕ **Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;**

⊕ **Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;**

⊕ **A free and responsible for truth and meaning;**

⊕ **The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.**

⊕ **The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;**

Aren't these the Principles that UUs believe in? Why don't we practice what we preach?

We are at the beginning of a Journey Toward Wholeness, but we still have a long way to go.

*Manige Blackburn is from Mountain Desert District and a member of the Boulder, CO, UU church*

**Are you a Person of Color? Has this article made you want to make changes in the way YRUU works? Well,**



**SEE PG. 7 FOR DETAILS**



WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ANTI-RACISM? DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START? CHECK OUT THESE GREAT

# Anti-Racism Resources

THAT YOU CAN DO ALONE, WITH FRIENDS, WITH YOUR YOUTH GROUP, OR AT A CON (/RALLY)!

From the UUA:

## Films for the Journey Towards Wholeness: an anti-oppression guide to popular films

\* Check out this group of discussion guides to great, not-hard-to-find movies (like American History X) that you can use with your youth group or at a conference/rally! - call/email Pam Bachman, (617) 948-4642, pbachman@uua.org to get a copy.

## Youth Group Anti-Racism Movie Guide Series

\* This guide has some of the same movies as the Journey Towards Wholeness guide, but the guide has been written specifically by youth for youth. Check out our resources webpage at <http://www.uua.org/YRUU/resources.html> or email [yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org) to get a copy.

## Books for the Journey Towards Wholeness: anti-oppression discussion guides to popular literature

\* Cool discussion guides for books that deal with racism and other oppressions written by authors like Toni Morrison and Barbara Kingsolver. Start a discussion group in your congregation or have a one-time conversation after church about a great, thought-provoking book! Find guides in every REACH packet that is given to your church's Religious Educator, or check them out online at <http://www.uua.org/re/reach/index.html>. New discussion guides each issue!

## Recommended Racial Justice Action Projects

\* A resource of some projects a Youth/Youth Group/District can do to work for Racial Justice. Check it out online at <http://www.uua.org/YRUU/resources>

## From the Outside World (all books available at Amazon.com)

- ♦ **Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice** by Paul Kivel - A great book for white people (especially American white people) about personal, cultural, and institutional racism. We met Paul Kivel too, and he's a really cool guy. You can get/order this book at any Barnes and Noble, Amazon.com or at a library.
- ♦ **Dismantling Racism: The Continuing Challenge to White America** by Joe Barndt

## Youth Group Movie Guide, Movie #1

# SLAM

available at your local Blockbuster or other video store!

## Overview/Description:

"SLAM" portrays the experience of a young African American man caught in the Washington, DC correctional system. Set in a real prison, using real inmates as supporting cast, "SLAM" explores the institutional, cultural and internalized aspects of racism in a current urban African American community. "SLAM" also explores the use of poetry as a way towards liberation through consciousness and community building.

## Things to think about:

Think about the way the prisoners are treated, and the way they treat each other. Why do you think this is? (Keep in mind that most of the actors in the prison are actual inmates)

Also think about the power that words and poetry have.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What are some examples of institutional racism in this movie? What are some examples of cultural racism in this movie? What are some examples of internalized racism in this movie? How do these examples impact Ray, Lauren, and the communities that they live in?
2. In the Civil Rights Movement, white people and African Americans often worked together on systemic issues such as segregation and voting rights. In the Black Power Movement, however, African Americans often asked for a separate space, so that they could work on issues that dealt with internalized racism and rebuilding their communities. How do you feel about the need for people of color to have a separate space to work on internalized issues? How can white people support people of color in their community building? Do white people need to get together and talk about their own issues around racism?
3. What implications does this movie have for white anti-racists? Where are the places in this film in which white people who want to make change have the most power to do so? What things could your congregation do to support Ray, Lauren and their community? How would you go about doing this?
4. What power did poetry have in the movie, and how did it help Ray through the experience he lived through? How has art helped you survive through difficult times? Can you relate Ray's use of poetry to other situations you've been involved in or know about?

- ♦ **A Race Is a Nice Thing to Have : A Guide to Being a White Person or Understanding the White Persons in Your Life** by Janet E. Helms
- ♦ **Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And other conversations about race** by Beverly Daniel Tatum
- ♦ **Last Steps to Freedom: The Evolution of Canadian Racism** by John Boyko
- ♦ **Racism** by Albert Memmi, translated by Steve Martinot
- ♦ **All Our Relations** by Winona Laduke
- ♦ **The Colonizer's Model of the World** by JM Blaut
- ♦ **A Place at the Table - free video from the Southern Poverty Law Center - great for starting discussion!**



# Continental Leadership Development Conference

November 9-11th, 2001

## What's the Continental Leadership Development Conference Training?

The Continental Leadership Development Conference Training (CLDCT) is a training that will bring together 15 youth (14-20 years old) and 15 adults (25 years-old and up) to be trained to lead district Leadership Development Conferences (LDCs.) An LDC is a district conference with the purpose of teaching leadership skills and facilitating techniques to youth, led by two trainers, an adult and a youth, from outside of the district.

## What kind of people are you looking for?

We're looking for youth and adults (like you!) who are great facilitators, charismatic presenters and are committed to inspiring and training future (and present) YRUU leadership. Each participant should have experience facilitating and leading different sized groups and presenting to a varied audience. Willingness to lead goofy energy breaks required.



## What commitment would I have to make?

Participants must be able to attend the CLDCT this November, as well as be available to lead at least one district LDC over the next two years.

## How much does it cost?

It's free! All of your expenses are paid to the CLDCT, as well as to any future LDCs that you lead. In addition, leaders will receive a stipend for each LDC they lead!

**To Apply:**

Send a letter of intent, including the application questions and a list of three references (name and phone number with at least one youth and one adult) to:

CLDCT Application  
c/o Youth Office  
25 Beacon St.  
Boston, MA 02108 USA  
[yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org)

by  
**September  
25th, 2001**



**How do I  
Apply?**

## Application Questions:

\*Vital Information: (Name/Address/Phone/Email/Date of Birth/UU

\*Congregation (if any)/UUA District):

\*LDCs, SDCs, Advisor Trainings, etc. that you have attended:

1) Describe your YRUU Experience:

2) Leadership Experience and Positions Held (public speaking in YRUU or otherwise, leadership in other organizations, etc.):

3) Other relevant experience:

5) What do you feel is a youth's responsibility in YRUU leadership?

6) What do you feel is an adult's responsibility in YRUU leadership?

7) What is youth empowerment to you? Example?

8) Why would you be especially good at **LEADING** LDCs?

9) What does anti-racism mean to you? What experience do you have with multi-culturalism/racism?



# My name is Kate... Kate McFry

By Rochelle Swanson

A black and white police car pulls into the hospital parking lot. Now that the driver is in the sunlight I see that he is a young-looking male with spiked hair that says *I-look-good-and-I-know-it*. I can't see his eyes because he is wearing dark sunglasses. His uniform is nicely pressed with all his gadgets hanging off his belt as police gadgets do. "I hope he's nice. But what if he's not? What if he lectures me all the time? What am I going to do? What's going to happen to me? What if I go to Whitenburg? I've never been in trouble before in my life! Let alone in trouble with the law," I think.

I sit on my perfectly made hospital bed with the *too-small-for-anyone-to-actually-use-pink-blanket* writing. I keep myself busy until that moment when I walk.

Dear Diary-

I'm so afraid. I'm so afraid of the consequences I may face.

Life has been over now for about a year. I mean the pain has over-ridden my human life. My body lives, but inside I committed suicide long ago. I have given up on myself along with the rest of civilization. Why didn't those pills work? Why didn't it work to slit my wrists and throat? Why?!!?!?!?!?!?!?.

... I'm taken into a room they call the dayroom. I'm told to take a seat in a rickety-looking chair. I take a seat, and Officer Hospos brings over a chair and has a seat across from me. He tells me that

people are pressing charges against me and that he's been assigned as my probation officer. He tells me he'll be calling me to let me know what is going on. I'm sitting here, expecting him to stay with me until I'm settled, but he starts to get up after he has told me the bad news. I cry out of fear. I have nothing that is familiar to me because they haven't checked in my stuff yet. I'm scared. I wish I hadn't done what I did.

I'm given a gown and they take

...my body  
lives, but inside  
I committed  
suicide long  
ago...

me into a small, dark room and unlock a door that leads to a small bathroom. I'm told to take off all my clothes and put on the gown. I do so, and they come in and search my clothes. They take all of my safety pins, candy, pills, everything! I'm given a urine test. I'm then told to do jumping jacks, lean forward, bend down, take a breath.

... You are my only friend. You're the only one who still listens to me. All my other friends left me when I started talking about death and started doing drugs. Diary, sometimes I think even my parents have given up on me.

Oooogh. That pain is back. Diary, you know what pain I'm talking about. That pain that causes me to lose consciousness. The pain that takes over my existence. That

pain. Oh, that pain. The mother of all pains. It's the pain that makes everything go black—black, bleak, and later blue. You know the pain. You know what comes next. Unfortunately they have all my knives and stuff, so I'll have to be more creative.

Later Diary.

"Hmmm..." I think, "what have they left in this room that's sharp? Hmmm. . . I wonder about using a pen? Would it hurt? Hmmm. . . Well, I might as well try. Yes!!! It works perfectly to stab myself with this pen!"

"Kate, put down the pen," says Ann.

"No! I won't!" I say as I run into the bathroom and lock the door.

"Kate! Open the door or we're going to have to force it open! Open the door, Kate! I'm going to give you a five count."

My voice quivering, body shaking, I answer, "Okay, just, just give me a second."

"No. Open the door now."

I hear a voice shout, "Mike, you get the front, I'll come to the right, Matt go to the left! One . . . Two . . . Three!!"

Before I know anything different, I'm on the floor with my face in the carpet.

"Okay! Let me go! I won't cut any more! Just let me go!"

I'm escorted to a room no bigger than a prisoner's cell. The walls shift inward, making the room only that much smaller, that much more irritating.

*This is an excerpt from a novel that Rochelle Swanson is writing. Rochelle is a youth from the Mountain Desert District. Feel free to write her at [leaswanson@juno.com](mailto:leaswanson@juno.com)*



# The Body of Woman, the Body of Earth: Abortion, Planned Parenting, Population and Patriarchy

by Julie Slater

"Life and death are both beautiful expressions of the Earth. One is not better than the other, nor is human life more important than any other life. All beings are essential to balanced existence. Death and dying are essential to life and living, and vice versa. We are all interdependent upon one another." – Uni M. Tiamat, *Herbal Abortion Handbook*

Once upon a time, long before Plato, Napoleon, and Machiavelli, there existed civilizations that lived in deep relation to the Earth and its changing cycles. As citizens of the Earth, we too go through continual change and re-growth. The Earth is made up of intricate co-dependent organisms that bend and sway and change in relation to the supply of food and other resources available for growth.

Human civilization as well was once adept at responding to its resources and potential, or lack thereof, for growth. Women had the knowledge to control how many children they had by way of herbs, visualization, and, I believe, other components of self-knowledge and self-control that we are too far from to imagine.

Every woman knew when it was right or not for her to have a child. The same is true today—every woman knows when it is right for her to become a mother (if she chooses to at all). In *Shakti Woman*, Vicki Noble writes, "Trees growing naturally will choose, if need be, not to fruit, knowing

they need to nurture their own growth at this moment in time. Women are like trees, we know the same sense of balance with the earth and our own energies."

The witch trials and the Inquisition, in which 9 million women were tortured and killed, sought to deplete the world of female knowledge. "Witches" were often



shamanic healers and midwives—women who knew how to provide herbal abortion, natural contraceptives, sexual rites of passage, and other remedies for general female well-being.<sup>1</sup>

The act of giving birth, once an all female sacred procedure, has been replaced by the tradition of the woman laying on her back while a male doctor 'delivers' her baby. Our current legal abortion practice follows the same model, in which a (usually male) doctor uses vacuum-like machines to extract the aborted fetus.

In the nineteenth century in

the U.S., midwives, who regularly attended births and performed abortions, were considered a threat to the social and economic power of the emerging medical profession of male doctors. "The medical establishment actively took up the anti-abortion cause in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as part of its effort to eliminate midwives," says the Boston Women's Health Collective in *Our Bodies, Ourselves for the New Century*. "The State [U.S. Government] didn't prohibit abortion until the 19<sup>th</sup> century . . . By 1880, most abortions were illegal in the U.S . . . but the tradition of women's right to early abortion was rooted in U.S. society then; abortionists continued to practice openly with public support, and juries refused to convict them."

Humankind has known much better methods for these practices, such as herbal abortion, but these methods demand that a woman possess a deep understanding of her own body. This knowledge is very empowering for women and directly threatens patriarchy. This knowledge has been burned at the stake, ignored, and has never been funded for further research.

The idea of a woman being in tune with her body and individual life has been demonized—the male-centered church and the governmental structures that have complemented it have done their best to convince the world that there are higher powers that should control the population. The concept of the woman as a vessel, giving birth to as many children as possible as her duty to society and her job, has a stronghold on our worldview. This is the dangerous perspective that has limited all humankind. Whether it is enforced by the government





or the church, we see that it has been the law of the land that woman should not be allowed control of her own body.

All over the world, women have been psychologically pigeonholed into a role demanding they learn next-to-nothing about their own bodies. This is exemplified in cultures in which the clitoris is removed from the girl during her teenage years (clitoridectomies). The mandate that women should be virgins before marriage conveys the message that women's own sexuality is unimportant because her real role is to bear children.

This narrow role has brought us an extremely overpopulated planet, one with which we have little natural connection. Uni M. Tiamat writes:

"Only with the imbalanced control of women and their fertility through patriarchal laws and religion, did the population swell to imbalanced proportions. Although this imbalance fueled patriarchal religious wars and crusades with bodies of young soldiers, patriarchal systems never benefited women, or the mother earth, who were both regularly raped for their resources. Women's intuitive fertility control with herbs is the most naturally occurring form of population control available."

According to common psychology, every person develops a need to nurture in his/her early adult life. This need doesn't necessarily need to be fulfilled by having one's own 2.5 children. To nurture is to encourage growth of life. We must realign nurturing values along different principles. All life must be celebrated, not only human life. Our energy can be spent nurturing the current society we

have.

Population is an extremely hard issue to grasp and relate to your own life, but the answer to the problem has always been with us. Population growth will become a non-issue when every woman is able to truly live her life by choice. This will be accomplished when she explores her sexuality and her own body, knowing herself through her own intuitive desires for her life, when she is able to make choices based on herself rather than in relation to the male-centered expectations of her role.

**"We live in a male-centered world in which woman are supposed to be virgins but are assumed to be whores, in which women are appreciated only in their relation to men..."**

To paraphrase Gloria Steinem, 'I've never heard anyone ask a man how he plans to manage both a family and a career.' Right now, feminism has been allowed to adopt masculine traits—women have taken on successful careers, they wear power suits and carry briefcases. But women are still only considered women if they manage to satisfy their old roles of mother, housekeeper, PTA member, etc.

We live in a male-centered world in which woman are supposed to be virgins but are assumed to be whores, in which women are appreciated only in their relation to men—how they make men feel, etc. Men must change. We have been standing still at a pivotal point; women are doing more and more, but men aren't. There are exceptions of course, but as a whole, men are not

budging, not giving up their primary position.

We cannot go back to the ancient days of pseudo-matriarchal culture, but we can do our damndest to seek out wise-woman knowledge, to support one another in creating a world in which femininity is valued fully, where women make choices according to their desires and intuition.

The new US president is signing documents every week that decrease the US's support of women's control of their own bodies across the world while increasing the violent threat the US poses to the world. Don't turn away from it and let him, and others like him, do it. We must all rebel against the rules of patriarchy. What have you (male or female) been taught about what your gender role should be? How has it limited you? Gender is arbitrary. Treat the idea as such, and listen to yourself.

#### Resources:

Boston Women's Health Collective. *Our Bodies, Ourselves for the New Century*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.  
Feminist Women's Health Center on Abortion, Birth Control and Feminism, [www.fwch.org](http://www.fwch.org).  
Noble, Vicki. *Shakti Woman: Feeling Our Fire, Healing Our World: The New Female Shamanism*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991.  
Planned Parenthood, [www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org).  
Tiamat, Uni M. *Herbal Abortion Handbook: The Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge*. Peoria, IL: Sage-femmel, 1994.

<sup>1</sup> Vicki Noble, *Shakti Woman: feeling our fire, healing our world: the new female shamanism*. (Harper San Francisco, 1991)

*Julie Slater is a Young Adult from Mountain Desert District. Julie also serves as the Position on Appraisal for the YRUV Steering Committee.*



# YRUU Social Justice Conference (YSJC) 2001 Report

This March 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, as a member of staff, I was lucky enough to be among 62 UU youth (along with some of our adult and young adult allies) gathered in Washington D.C. We were there for the fifth annual Youth Social Justice Conference, sponsored by YRUU and the UUA's Faith in Action Washington Office. The Washington Office acts as a UU voice in the U.S. capital by lobbying and supporting coalitions which promote UU values (as expressed by Resolutions and Actions of Immediate Witness from General Assembly.) Their staff helped the youth staff to coordinate logistics and speakers and their general cool brains - M e g , R o b s , Teresa, Ali, and Emily love to hear from youth!

We had a rockin' time doing all sorts of cool stuff, like hosting Sell-A-Cell at All Souls Unitarian Church. Sell-A-Cell is a Boston-based group who assisted us in performing and interactive game show education piece about the prison industrial complex. At our adopted home, Grace Lutheran Church, we attended workshops with speakers like Coleman McCarthy (who promotes peace curriculums in schools), participated in racial identity groups (along with discussing why we felt they were important), and had a captivating showcase of our crazy talents at the Performance Slam. We also ventured out to visit a D.C. prison, lobby our representatives on Capitol Hill, and attend Sunday service at All Souls. For more information on what the YSJC is like, check the YRUU website for information and people to contact who can tell you more. Next March, you could be there.

Wait! I have a better idea—you should apply for YSJC staff next year. You would be such a rocker! You can totally do it—even if you've NEVER been to the YSJC. I am so excited—I can't wait for you to be on staff next year!

**You heard  
what the woman  
said, Apply for YSJC  
Staff 2002!!!!!!**

Actually, ha ha, you can't quite do it yet. The YSJC 2002 Staff structure hasn't been completely determined yet, so you're going to have to wait until it goes up online to apply. It's cool, you have lots of time. The next YSJC isn't until March of 2002! Check our website out for an application coming up before the summer is over! Yeah, it seems like a lot of time, but it's not. So camp out at your computer now and be the first one to apply for the YSJC 2002!!!!!!!!!!

**Yes, YOU TOO can  
ride an escalator  
as staff of the  
YSJC 2002!**

**What  
kind of  
staff posi-  
tions might I  
see?**

Well, there could be anything; Dean, Worship Coordinator, White and Person of Color Identity Group Coordinators, Gopher... who knows? The important thing is that there WILL be a staff application, and you WILL apply. I guarantee it's not as hard as it might seem. Fewer people apply for stuff that you might think. Thousands? Nah. Hundreds? Nah. Dozens? Nah!

**APPLY!!!!!!!!!!**

# General Assembly Leadership Positions

## Working Action Manager:

The WAM works with the Super Working Action Team (SWAT) on the Working Action Issue (WAI) for YRUU for two years. The WAM's main job is to make sure the WAI is written into a Study-Action Issue (SAI) for General Assembly.

Don't have any clue what I'm talking about? Brain swimming with Acronyms? It's really not as complicated as it seems... I promise. Check out our website ([www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU)) for more information and **COME TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY!!!!**

**WAM requirements:** Youth aged 14-20 at time of election with passion for Social Justice, networking skills, and writing skills.

**WAM Commitments:** 2 General Assemblies (not including the election General Assembly), 2 YRUU Social Justice Conferences, 2 Youth Councils; with all-expenses-paid for each event.

## How do I run for these positions?

Elections are held at General Assembly based on a short application (see right ->), a short speech, and whatever campaigning candidates want to do (within youth caucus campaigning limits; see [www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU)) Candidates do not need to attend General Assembly to run.

Applications may be sent in to the Youth Office (WAM-Board Observer/Youth Office/ 25 Beacon St./Boston, MA 02108/ [yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org)/fax: (617) 742-0321) before June 10<sup>th</sup> or may be brought to General Assembly and submitted there before noon on June 23<sup>rd</sup> at the business office on the sixth floor of the Sheraton City Centre Hotel. To find out more, check out our website at [www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU) or call/email the current Working Action Manager and Youth Observers to the Board:

Are you big into Social Justice? Want to head up a team of youth working on a specific Social Justice issue that will come before the **ENTIRE** General Assembly decision-making body next year?

**Then you should run for the Working Action Manager (WAM)!!!!!!**

Do you like working with adults? Do meetings **ENTRALL** you? Do you think that youth should be present at all tables of governance? Do you want to have a say in **ALL UU** business, not just youth business?

**Then you should run for the Youth Observer to the UUA Board of Trustees!!!!!!**

## Youth Observer to the UUA Board of Trustees:

Until there is a slot for a youth full voting member of the UUA Board of Trustees, there are 2 Youth "observers" to the board who are full participants but are without vote. These youth have alternating two-year positions and **YOU COULD BE THE NEXT ONE!** Youth Observers are expected to be full members of the board, while representing a youth perspective, (aka his/her own perspective.)

## Youth Board Observer

**requirements:** Youth aged 14-20 at time of election, ability to work well in collegial relationship with adults, good networking and speaking skills.

## Youth Board Observer

**Commitments:** eight board meetings (including 2 at General Assembly) plus one or two Board anti-racism trainings, with a possible invitation to Youth Council; all expenses paid for each meeting/event.

## Application:

\* **Vital Information** (Name, Address, Phone Email, Date of Birth, Congregation and District.

\* **Why do you want to be the Working Action Manager/ Youth Observer to the UUA Board?**

\* **Why would you be good for the position (skills, experience, etc.)?**

\* **What does anti-racism mean to you? What work have you done with anti-racism?**

## WAM

Shea Schachameyer,  
1415 E. Henry Clay St  
Whitefish Bay, WI 53217  
Phone: (414) 332-6934  
Email: [WFBskier@aol.com](mailto:WFBskier@aol.com)

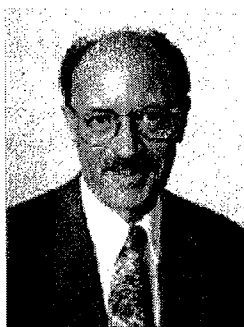
## Jacob Larsen, Youth Observer

83 Elmer Ave  
Toronto, Ontario M4L3R6 CANADA  
Phone: (416) 690-3675  
Email: [yak\\_o\\_mak@hotmail.com](mailto:yak_o_mak@hotmail.com)

Amir Fouad, Youth Observer  
53 Duke St  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
Phone: 208-234-2044  
Email: [swigypian@mail.com](mailto:swigypian@mail.com)

# Questions to the Candidates:

Elections for President and Moderator (Chairperson of the Board) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), will be held this year at General Assembly. An Election like this only happens once every 3 years, so we thought we'd ask the President and Moderator candidates some questions about how they will support youth if they are elected.



Rev. Bill Sinkford

Even to approach a definition of "youth empowerment" requires two vantage points. The first is the process of youth claiming a larger role in determining what our ministry to youth looks like. Images of youth volunteering for congregational boards, being selected as delegates to the GA, serving on continental committees, etc. come readily to mind.

Youth need to come to the table so that your voice is heard. This requires youth to "show up" for the larger family of faith. You have been doing this very effectively. Witness the number of youth delegates to the General Assembly, the expanding role for youth in continental leadership, and the voice you have been willing to bring to both congregational life and the life of the Association. You are doing your part.

The second vantage point is from that of the "older than youth" community. We need to welcome your voice and presence. We need to remember to include youth in our important processes of discernment. And we need to hear, accept and welcome the reality that you will mold this faith that we love, just as we have. This is beginning to happen at the continental level. Much remains to be done in our congregations. Youth empowerment is ultimately about accountability and relationship. For myself, I yearn for a Unitarian Universalism that is more truly intergenerational. I welcome your initiatives and promise to be a faithful partner in relationship as youth empowerment becomes increasingly real in our faith.

Among the 19 requests for additional staff positions at the UUA sitting on Kay Montgomery's desk is a request for an additional Youth Program Specialist (YPS). If I am elected President, your request will be near the top of the pile. More importantly, your voice will be heard in the decision-making process. That does not mean that you will get everything you wish for. It does mean that you will be at the table.

In addition, the new UUA Capital Campaign will raise significant money for both youth and young adult ministry. Most of these monies will not be available for several years. I do promise, however, that decisions about how these funds are spent will include a significant youth voice.

We asked all Candidates to define "Youth Empowerment"

## Presidential Candidates:

\* We understand that money is power. We have large goals and program ideas that we do not have the power to accomplish without money and staff. With this in mind, how will you, as president, empower us with monetary resources to fulfill our goals and complete our programs?



Rev. Diane Miller

Youth are at a critical time in life, grappling with questions of identity, sexuality, life's purpose, and more. "Empowerment" is about transcending arbitrary cultural limitations to become the fully functioning person you dream of being. Empowerment is being free to dream, and to do.

"Youth empowerment" is about beginning to fulfill the longing to be of use, to be needed. To

love and be loved, and to celebrate this in religious community. Its about becoming more aware of which roots hold us close, and which need cutting; about which wings set us free, and which cause us to crash and burn. But most of all, youth empowerment happens when youth trust themselves to the challenge of service. Think about it. Youth can go a million places to "be served." But where can youth go to "be of service?"

YRUU has goals & program ideas that need money and staff. As president, I will help bring more resources to the Youth Office. How? In brief, by reorganizing department structures, raising funds, and connecting money to effective programs. The Youth office has already substantially increased its programming without waiting for increases in funding. I'll put youth at the head of the line. Money is empowering.

With the depth & breadth of my UU experience, and as a former UU young person myself, I know youth groups are crucial in faith development. We need vital youth programs in strong congregations, and we need the web of connections woven by YRUU programs and events in district and continental gatherings. We need service projects that make a real difference.

In the 1890s, ten thousand Universalist youth pledged two cents a week, and built a church and hired a minister in Harriman, Tennessee. By themselves! Can we imagine UU Youth doing that today? Their focus was also on missionary activity. Can we imagine UU Youth doing that today?

Talk about Youth Empowerment! If elected president of the UUA, I look forward to exploring the power and possibilities of youth empowerment— both with money and more importantly— with a creative vision which seeks to make something new— something only our UU Youth can make happen.

For those of you who will be delegates at GA this

year, I ask for your vote. From all of you, I ask for your support. Thank-you.

**Don't have a congregation? Check out the Church of the Larger Fellowship ([www.uua.org/clf](http://www.uua.org/clf)), a church based in Boston with members all around the world.**



We asked all Candidates to define "Youth Empowerment"

## Moderator Candidates:

\* Recently, the UUA has made a number of steps forward to include authentic youth involvement, input and representation at the tables of governance and programming, including bringing a bylaw change to General Assembly to add a Youth Trustee to the UUA board. How will you, as moderator, further these efforts to get authentic youth involvement at all levels of the UUA?



Patsy Sherrill Madden

No one of us is anxious to be a member of a congregation or religious denomination which has no future. It doesn't call for a deep knowledge of theology to reach the conclusion that the future of this religious body is in the hands of those behind us in the line of time. We have no choice but to prepare ourselves to hand on those batons. We have to be sure, however, we have the church of the open mind,

the fellowship of the future truth, ready for its new members, and they need to be ready to take over.

Our religious education philosophy, in its simplest terms, teaches that our responsibility is to facilitate an environment in which our growing young people are encouraged to think for themselves. How best may we do that when it comes to governing ourselves? As a first step, we do it by opening the door and setting up additional chairs around the table – and I am for taking that step.

But let's not confuse empty chairs at the table with power. As anxious as those in the older generations may be to include the younger ones, we're not growing tropical plants in a separate hothouse. Those who fill the now empty chairs must participate at each stage of the governance process. They must work to get nominated and work again to be elected. Their first meeting will bring an experience of discovery – it will become apparent soon enough that some of their fellow members are able to influence the process and some are not. Ideas, articulation, and the ability to influence are power. The rest is just a seat in the stands.

So, youth empowerment, then, is just like all other empowerment – except for the age of the players.

My message for youth has been the same in all my UU connections – including my own two grown, active UU children. I urge involvement at that level of governance at which they are known and about which they know. So equipped, they will be competitive even against adult candidates, and the committee or board they seek to join will benefit from their participation – they will have instant credibility and early influence.

It is tempting to say – I do favor authentic youth involvement, I do favor a Youth Trustee on the UUA Board – but I am more tempted to state my commitment to process. I want to build on what has already taken place, I want to hear current and past Board members, I want to talk with youth leaders. I hope to be working (key word "working") on this with many SYNAPSE readers.

## Vote at GA!!!!

Do you want to have a say in who the next group of leadership in the UUA will be? To vote at General Assembly, you must be a delegate from your congregation. To find out more about being a delegate, see page GA 4, or talk to your minister or board.



Diane Olson

I define youth empowerment as the end result I want to see. I want to see youth sitting at the table being treated as equals by all other members of the Unitarian Universalist community.

I have been active in promoting the General Assembly Planning Committee's efforts to assist youth in my current eight years as a committee member, and particularly so during the four years I chaired the Committee.

I supported the following: \* The theme of the 1996 Indianapolis General Assembly, "The Future Is Now", directing our attention to our youth. \* Approving the youth and young adult Bridging Ceremony as an annual worship service at GA. \* Granting scholarships to youth so they could attend GA. \* Providing funding for more youth staff at GA and free space for youth to meet.

I'm proud that youth attendance has quadrupled at General Assembly from this assistance over the last five years. I'm sharing this detail with you because it's a record of my advocacy of support for our youth.

As Moderator I would continue to actively support our youth, as they become an ever-increasing vibrant presence in our midst. Growing as a denomination and increasing our numbers of youth is one of my priorities as a candidate.

We can do this by providing funding and staffing for training at the district and Association levels for our youth. We can train the staff and volunteers from their congregations who wish to work with them. We can assist youth in attending their district and continental gatherings as well as our annual General Assemblies. We can provide lower-cost housing and meals at General Assembly as well as in district gatherings.

We can increase the opportunities for connections among youth through electronic media so they can be in touch at the district and Association levels. We can strongly urge our congregations to create and sustain youth and young adult groups. We can create new opportunities for youth to gather and learn, such as youth work camps that are now being considered as part of our social justice work.

At the Rochester, NY General Assembly in 1998, several people were given taped interviews asking about their experience of our religious community. These interviews were later sent to all congregations in a video about GA. I can vividly remember one shy fourteen-year old girl looking gravely into the camera and saying that things would be much better for youth if only the adults in the congregation would talk to them and treat them like people.

That's the challenge before all of us. I'm strongly committed to meeting that challenge.



# UUA General Assembly Registration 2001 • June 21 – 25, Cleveland, Ohio

On-line registration available at <http://www.uua.org/ga>

Please print all information clearly

Congregation Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day) \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation City/State \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate (if youth 14-22) \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Rev? \_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Family Member**

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Rev? \_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

State/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

(continue) ↗

Birthdate (if youth 14-22) \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

☐ I plan to stay in Youth Caucus housing (ages 14 – 20). Deadline for request is due at the UUA Youth Office May 10.

☐ Please forward my name to the Young Adult (ages 18 – 35) GA coordinator for the mailing list.

Registration Type Lower fees also apply if postmarked by April 25	Full Time (Thurs. - Mon.)		Weekend (Fri. eve - Sun.)		One-Day (check) <input type="checkbox"/> Fri <input type="checkbox"/> Sat <input type="checkbox"/> Sun <input type="checkbox"/> Mon.		First Person	Add'l Person
	Rec. by May 1	After May 1	Rec. by May 1	After May 1	Rec. by May 1	After May 1		
Circle appropriate Fee							Amount Due	Amount Due
Adult	\$230	\$275	\$160	\$190	\$80	\$100	\$	\$
Youth (14 - 22)	\$120	\$145	\$80	\$100	\$45	\$55	\$	\$
Other (please check)	\$120	\$145	\$80	\$100	\$45	\$55	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Retired Minister	<input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Spouse of Min		<input type="checkbox"/> Theological Student					
<input type="checkbox"/> Retired Min. Spouse	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired Certified DRE		(full time, registered with UUA)					
Volunteer (delegate)	\$10	\$55	Separate volunteer applications must be received by March 31, and approved.				\$	\$
Volunteer (not delegate)	\$0	\$45					\$	\$
Awards Breakfast	(Sunday morning; breakfast ticket purchase optional)					\$15	\$	\$
Youth Scholarship (optional tax-deductible contribution)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____						\$	\$
Sub-Total (each column)							\$	\$
Total Amount Due for both columns:							\$	

Method of Payment: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard Expiration Date (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check (pay to UUA General Assembly) If paying by check in Canadian funds, please add 30%.

- **Advance programs** will be mailed if registration is received by May 1.
- **Cancellation Fee:** By May 1: \$25; after May 1: \$50. After June 8, refunds by written request only.
- **Accessibility Services:** Please attach a written description of the particular accommodations you require (including wheelchair rental, mobility or hearing assistance and large print program). Please indicate if you will bring your own wheelchair or service dog.
- **Youth Caucus (14 – 20):** Visit [www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU) or call 617-948-4350 for information and **required forms**
- **For detailed information on the following, housing and on-line hotel reservations,** visit <http://www.uua.org/ga>, or contact the GA Office direct at 617-948-4209 or [gaoffice@uua.org](mailto:gaoffice@uua.org)
  - Children** (infant - 14 years): separate registration for programs for different age groups
  - Financial Aid:** available to delegates by application (mid-April deadline)
  - Tours:** Day trips before GA officially opens, offered by the Volunteer Committee

Send to: UUA GA Office, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108. Fax 617-725-4979 *only* if using Credit Card. If faxing, do not mail original. *Do not mail after June 8.* Register at GA.

GA | GA | GA | GA | GA | GA | GA | GA | GA | GA |

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY YOUTH CAUCUS

JUNE 21ST-25TH, 2001, CLEVELAND, OH, USA

## Frequently asked questions:

(for a full list of frequently asked questions, see our webpage at [www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU))

### What is General Assembly?

General Assembly is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Its programming includes open business meetings in which delegates speak and vote, (this is called Plenary); Workshops that any registered attendee may attend; Worship services scattered throughout the days and nights; a large exhibit hall with displays from congregations, departments of the UUA, and other UU or UU-related organizations; and tons of other great events, meetings and fun programs! Around 4,000 UU children, youth and adults gather at GA and take the city over for a week. While GA has a contingent of youth, it is not a youth con.

### What is Youth Caucus at General Assembly?

Youth Caucus is the blanket term for all youth programming that happens at General Assembly. Youth Caucus is a group of UU youth, ages 14-20, which participates in regular General Assembly programming and holds programming specifically for youth, including daily meetings to discuss and take part in GA business. All youth are welcome to participate in Youth Caucus.

### What About Housing? And Roommates?

Youth Caucus Housing is provided with a group of rooms at a downtown hotel at GA. This year, youth housing is in the Sheraton Cleveland City Centre Hotel. Youth are housed in rooms of 4, same gender, in the hotel. Youth may request roommates specifically, or they may opt for randomly selected roommates (we try to room 1<sup>st</sup>-time GA attendees together). Youth may also stay with parents or sponsors and still participate in all Youth Caucus activities. Only youth registered for Youth Housing may stay in Youth Housing rooms.

### How much does General Assembly cost?

There are a number of costs associated with General Assembly. Youth Registration is \$120 US (if received before May 1<sup>st</sup>), Youth Housing is \$190 US. Travel and Food are up to each individual participant, although food can usually be found for under \$15 US a day (although we budget \$32 US a day for staff members.) Scholarships and Financial Aid are available, see p. 3 for details.

### Who supervises the Youth?

Each youth under 18 who attends GA must have an adult sponsor also present at GA who is ultimately responsible for supervision and ensuring the well-being of the youth. People age 18 and over may sponsor up to three youth, with whom they are responsible for checking-in frequently

and providing support. We encourage youth sponsors to stay in the same hotel as the youth they are sponsoring. Youth Caucus staff is responsible for youth programming and support at GA, but not supervision. However, Youth Caucus staff does take action about violations of the Code of Ethics (see **Code of Ethics**, p. 4), which may result in the youth being asked to leave Youth Housing, Youth Caucus, or General Assembly at his/her own expense. In such an event, the sponsor is responsible for finding the youth alternate housing, or getting the youth home safely.

### What is a Youth Sponsor? For What are Sponsors Responsible?

A youth's sponsor serves as his/her legal guardian for the duration of General Assembly. S/he may be a parent, relative, minister, youth advisor, religious educator, or another person trusted by the youth's full legal guardian(s). Youth are responsible for finding their own sponsors. Sponsors may sponsor up to three youth at General Assembly.

The role of a sponsor at General Assembly is the following:

- 1.) Provide supervision for the youth s/he is sponsoring at General Assembly.
- 2.) Meet daily (minimum) with the youth for whom s/he is responsible.
- 3.) Attend Youth Caucus Orientation and required sponsor training.
- 4.) Be available in case of medical emergency as legal guardian.
- 5.) Be available to provide housing for youth in case the youth for whom s/he is responsible is asked to leave youth housing.
- 6.) Ideally stay in the same hotel (the Sheraton) as the youth for whom s/he is responsible.
- 7.) Be supportive and encouraging of full youth participation in the greater General Assembly community.

### What if I have more questions? Where can I get more information?

For answers to all of our Frequently Asked Questions, check out our website at [www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU) and/or the General Assembly Office website at [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga). If you still have questions, email the Youth Office at [yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org) or the GA Office at [gaoffice@uua.org](mailto:gaoffice@uua.org). All GA Youth Registrants receive a confirmation letter and a Youth Caucus Prepocket upon receipt of all the forms (after May 1st). The Prepocket explains Youth Caucus further, outlines the events and activities that are happening there, and details travel info., what to bring, etc.

**SEE YOU AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY!!!**

GA 2 GA 2 GA 2 GA 2 GA 2 GA 2 GA 2 GA 2 GA 2



## Instructions on Filling out these forms:

If you've been to General Assembly before, you'll notice our new system for forms this year. Yes, instead of having 17 different forms for you to fill out, half of which you can't find, then we lose and you have to fill out again, there's just the registration form and one handy dandy Youth Caucus double-sided form this year. Over the next few pages, you'll read a number of things, including information on scholarships and how to apply for one, information on youth housing and how to stay there, information on being a youth sponsor, having a youth sponsor, and the Code of Ethics that all youth going to General Assembly must sign. Following all that information, you'll find a double-sided form (or two forms, if you're reading this online) with a bunch of blanks to write in information, boxes to check off, and places for you, your parent/guardian, and your sponsor to sign (in numbered sections). All Youth Attending General Assembly, regardless of housing situation, must fill out the Youth Form completely. I'm going to walk you through each numbered section, and explain how to fill them all out. First step, take out your magnifying glass.

*Notes: all deadlines listed are postmark/fax deadlines. As long as your forms are postmarked or faxed by the deadline, they are not considered late.*

Before we begin however, turn back to page GA 1. This is the GA registration form. **Fill this out and send it to the General Assembly Office (address at the bottom), NOT THE YOUTH OFFICE!** The Youth Office and the General Assembly Office keep separate records and accounts for you, so you must send the GA Office \$120 US (if you are registering before May 1<sup>st</sup>), and then send the Youth Office a separate check for \$190 US if you are planning on staying in Youth Housing. **Do not send a lump sum check for \$310 for youth registration and housing to either of our offices.** The registration form is also available online at [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga). All persons who plan to attend GA must fill out this form. You can also register at General Assembly if you're not planning to stay in Youth Housing, but we don't recommend it.

### ***Now onto the youth form.***

**Section 1.) Vital Information.** Fairly self-explanatory. Fill it out as best you can (if you're not affiliated with a congregation, for example, leave that one blank.)

**Section 2.) Miscellaneous check boxes.** These boxes tell us about extra information we should send you, how you should be placed in housing (if you're planning on staying in youth housing), etc. Some of this information may appear in other places, however, it's much easier for us if it's also all together in one section. Please check all the boxes that apply to you.

**Section 3.) Youth Housing Registration.** This section is for all youth that plan on staying in Youth Housing. If you are not planning on staying in Youth Housing, skip it. Even if you have already submitted the separate GA Youth Housing form from the World Magazine or the GA registration packet,

please fill this section out. The first piece of the section is the roommate request section. You may request up to 3 roommates at General Assembly, although we cannot guarantee that you will be roomed together. We will not room youth together unless all parties request that they be roomed together. Even if you are requesting roommates, please fill out the check boxes that follow. The checkboxes help us in rooming youth, although we cannot guarantee that roommates will be compatible. Following the checkboxes are statements for youth and parent/guardians (if youth is under 18) to sign, signifying that all parties have read and agree to the housing contract. The Housing Contract is located on page GA 4, please read it carefully and thoroughly. We accept payment up until General Assembly for Youth Housing, although you must reserve a spot by May 1<sup>st</sup> (early) or May 10<sup>th</sup> (with added Late Penalty of \$20 US.)

**Section 4.) Code of Ethics/Rules.** All youth attending GA, regardless of whether they are staying in Youth Housing, must sign the statement signifying agreement to the behavioral guidelines of the Code of Ethics. The text of the Code of Ethics is located on page GA 4; again, please read the Code of Ethics thoroughly and carefully, and understand what you are signing. We encourage parents/guardians, youth, and sponsors to discuss this Code with each other.

**Section 5.) Youth Caucus Scholarships.** This section is for youth who are applying for Youth Caucus Scholarships. If you are not, skip it. If you are applying for a Youth Caucus scholarship, please check off the box signifying that you are applying and include a letter of need with your form. The letter must state why you want to go to General Assembly and describe your financial situation, including describing possible other sources of funding to get you to General Assembly. If you are applying to be a volunteer at General Assembly or are applying for a delegate scholarship, please check the appropriate boxes. We work with the volunteer coordinator and GA office to try to ensure that the most youth with the highest need get financial aid to General Assembly. If you are awarded a scholarship, we do not credit your account with your award. We send you a check for the amount you are awarded, and expect that you send us a check for the full balance of \$190 US for Youth Housing if you plan on staying in Youth Housing.

**Section 6.) Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release form.** All youth attending General Assembly must fill out this section, regardless of whether they are staying in Youth Housing. Youth under 18 must fill in all blank lines/checkboxes, Youth 18 and over must fill in all lines/checkboxes with asterisks (\*) in front of them.

**Section 7.) Sponsor section.** Each youth under 18 must have a sponsor, and must therefore fill out (or have his/her sponsor fill out) this section completely. Youth 18 and over may skip it. The Sponsor Contract that is referred to is located on page GA 4.



## Scholarship Information:

There are three main types of financial aid to General Assembly for youth. The scholarship that we (the Youth Office) offer is the Youth Caucus Scholarship, which has an average award of \$100-300 US. GA attendees may also apply to be volunteers which waves the registration fee (Application deadline March 31st), or, if they are delegates, may apply for delegate scholarships which offer up to \$500 plus a waved registration fee (Application deadline April 25th). Those wishing more information about being a volunteer or applying for a delegate scholarship should contact the GA Office through their Website ([www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga)), email ([gaoffice@uua.org](mailto:gaoffice@uua.org)) or by phone (617-948-4209.) Those interested in Youth Caucus Scholarships should read further.

Youth Caucus Scholarship Recipients must A.) be youth (14-20 year olds) and B.) have a financial need that would otherwise prohibit them from attending General Assembly. Priority is given to applicants who are seeking partial funding from a variety of sources (asking their congregations, holding youth group fundraisers, etc.), first-time General Assembly attendees, congregational delegates, and those willing to volunteer to help out at youth caucus events (worship planning, prom setup, etc.)

Scholarship money can be used for GA Registration, Youth Housing, travel, or food at General Assembly. Scholarship money is awarded in the form of a check sent to the home of the recipient. **We will not credit your account with your scholarship money if you are registering for Youth Housing.** Scholarships are given out on a rolling basis; applicants will be notified of their award within two weeks of application receipt.

If you are applying for a Youth Caucus Scholarship, please check off the box in Section 2 entitled "Applying for a Youth Caucus Scholarship" and fill out Section 5.

## Adult Sponsor Contract:

(all Youth Sponsors must read this contract and sign Section 7 on GA Form 2.)

I am attending the 2001 General Assembly in Cleveland, Ohio, USA and will sponsor this youth. Sponsorship means that I take responsibility for the well-being, safety, and best interests of this youth at GA. I understand that the UUA Youth Office does not provide adult supervision for the week (although there will be several adults working with the Youth Caucus and available for support and assistance). **I agree to attend a training for sponsors to take place during General Assembly.** I understand that Youth Caucus is not a youth conference, but rather an opportunity for UU Youth who want to participate in the General

## What's a delegate, you ask?

A delegate is someone designated from their congregation to take part in the business of the Unitarian Universalist Association at General Assembly. S/he attends the Business Meetings (Plenaries) every day and speaks and votes on resolutions, bylaw amendments, Social Justice Issues, etc.

## Want to be a Delegate at General Assembly?

**OF COURSE YOU DO!!!!** Youth generally make up around 10% of all delegates at General Assembly, and have the ability, clout, and power to sway the decisions during business meetings, or Plenary. **Special Bonus:** this year is a big election year for the UUA, where a president, moderator, financial advisor, and a bunch of other positions will be elected. To quote the current moderator of the UUA: **"This year, for the first time, youth have the ability to sway the (presidential and moderator) election(s)."** This is big! To become delegates, youth must be members of their congregations and go through regular delegate election/selection processes (these vary from congregation to congregation.) The good news is that this year, the number of delegates per congregation has greatly increased, and they are expecting congregations to have trouble filling all of their slots. This is a great chance for congregations to send youth as delegates to General Assembly!



Youth Delegates Speaking at General Assembly

Assembly to be able to gather and address specific youth concerns. I will work out a system of communication with this youth during the week of GA which is mutually satisfying. I recognize that this youth has agreed to abide by all state and local laws while attending General Assembly, and has signed a Code of Ethics that s/he is responsible for his/her own behavior. If the youth does not act accordingly, I understand there will be consequences for his/her actions, which may include him/her being restricted from Youth Caucus events, being asked to leave Youth Housing, or being asked to leave General Assembly. The youth I am sponsoring and I will be responsible for organizing new housing and travel arrangements if necessary. I am not sponsoring more than three youth total at GA.

GA 4 GA 4 GA 4 GA 4 GA 4 GA 4 GA 4 GA 4 GA 4

## Code of Ethics:

(All Youth must read and sign Section 4 on Form 1.)

I am attending the 2001 General Assembly in Cleveland, Ohio, USA. I understand my behavior will affect the Youth Caucus community. While attending GA I will:

- act in ways that encourage the well-being, safety, and best interests of the youth and all those attending GA.
- follow the YRUU Policy on Sexuality and Community.
- respect my roommates, the larger GA community, and those in the hotel and the city who are not part of the GA community.
- follow all city, state, and federal laws.
- understand that the UUA Youth Office does not provide adult supervision for the week (*for those under 18*) and therefore I will work out a system of communication with my sponsor during the week of GA that is mutually satisfying.
- understand that General Assembly is not a youth conference, which means that
  - youth are responsible for managing their own time.
  - youth are not required to stay on site.
  - sponsors act as legal guardians for youth under 18.
- if I am staying in Youth Housing, I will work out and sign a contract with my roommates at the start of GA, outlining our expectations for respect/courtesy towards each other for the duration of General Assembly.
- if I am a youth in a leadership position (delegate, staff, youth council member, etc.) I have read, understood, and will abide by the code of ethics for Youth in Leadership Positions.

If I do not act accordingly, I understand there will be consequences for my actions, which may include being restricted from Youth Caucus events, being asked to leave Youth Housing, or being asked to leave General Assembly. (My sponsor and) I will be responsible for organizing new housing and travel arrangements if necessary.

## Youth Housing Contract:

(All youth staying in Youth Housing and their parent/guardian (if under 18) must read the following and sign Section 3, Form 1.)

### Youth:

I understand that, to stay in youth housing at GA, I must:

- Register for GA full-time with the GA Office
- Have a parent or adult sponsor who will also be at GA and who is responsible for ensuring my safety and well-being (if I am under the age of 18)
- Sign and submit a code of ethics/medical release form/sponsor form

I understand that if I do not fulfill these obligations, I will not be allowed to stay in youth housing nor participate in GA.

## YRUU Policy on Sexuality and Community:

Our goal is to uphold healthy communities, healthy relationships and to discourage sexual activity and harassment in the conference community.

Healthy relationships are based on responsibility, respect, love, and commitment. Healthy sexual relationships are respectful, consensual, pleasurable, safe, caring, developmentally appropriate, and based on mutual expectations. Sexuality is an important part of young people's lives.

In the conference community, youth are encouraged to express themselves in healthy ways and respect each other's boundaries. However, behavior that breaks down the community, including sexual activity and sexual harassment, is inappropriate and therefore not permitted in a conference setting.

It is the job of the Energy Committee to, by these standards, deem any such behavior inappropriate and to determine consequences. Parents, Guardians, and youth are encouraged to discuss this policy with each other.

## What is the Energy Committee?

The **Energy Committee** deals with serious problems and rule infractions. Its members are one of the Chaplains, Mr. HUUPER, the Youth Programs Director, a YRUU Programs Specialist, the Sponsor Coordinator, and an at-large staff member. The Energy Committee reserves the right to define behavior as inappropriate. The Energy Committee only meets when serious concerns are brought forth by members of the GA Community.

## Code of Ethics for Youth in Leadership Positions:

Youth in leadership positions are uniquely visible and influential in any conference community. They should recognize that power imbalances exist in their interactions with other conferees. Inappropriate sexual behavior is never acceptable; additionally, youth leaders should remain aware of the impact of their actions and behave accordingly. Youth who abuse their roles as leaders, consciously or not, can damage individuals and the community. Youth leaders are expected to use their influence in a positive manner.

### Parent/Guardian (if Youth is under 18):

I understand that my daughter/son/ward will stay with other UU Youth at GA. In order to do this, I understand:

- S/he must register full-time **with the GA Office**
- I must attend GA or authorize an adult sponsor of my choosing to serve as his/her guardian at GA
- I must fill out, sign, and submit a medical release form and sponsor form for my son/daughter/ward and s/he must sign and submit a code of ethics form.

I understand that if these obligations are not fulfilled, my son/daughter/ward will not be allowed to stay in youth housing nor participate in GA.

GA 5 GA 5 GA 5 GA 5 GA 5 GA 5 GA 5 GA 5 GA 5

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY YOUTH CAUCUS

OFFICIAL YOUTH CAUCUS FORM 1 JUNE 21ST-25TH, 2001, CLEVELAND, OH

1.

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

UUA District: \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

2.

## I am (check all that apply):

☐ Registering for Youth Housing (see below)

☐ A First time GA Attendee

☐ A delegate from my congregation

☐ A Youth of Color

☐ 18 years old or older

☐ Applying for a Youth Scholarship

☐ A Youth in Leadership Position (Delegate, Youth Council Member, Staff)

3.

## Youth Housing Registration:

Roommate request: (Up to 3 Names)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### I prefer a room that is:

☐ A Quiet Room ☐ For delegates

☐ A Loud Room ☐ A Smoking Room

### Youth:

I have read and understood the Youth Housing contract (p. GA 5.) I understand that if I do not fulfill these obligations, I will not be allowed to stay in Youth Housing nor participate in GA.

X \_\_\_\_\_

### Parent/Guardian (if youth is under 18)

I have read and understood the Youth Housing Contract (p. GA 5.) I understand that if these obligations are not fulfilled, my son/daughter/ward will not be allowed to stay in youth housing nor participate in GA.

X \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I have included a check/money order for \$190 US - before May 1st, or \$210 - before May 10th (payable to UUA) for Youth Housing. (You may also pay at General Assembly.)

4.

## Code of Ethics:

I have read and understood the Code of Ethics (p. GA 5.) I agree to abide by these guidelines for the duration of General Assembly 2001. I understand that if I break this agreement, the Energy Committee reserves the right to take appropriate action which may include removing me from Youth Housing or General Assembly at my own expense and prohibiting me from attending future continental YRUU events.

Youth X \_\_\_\_\_

5.

## Youth Caucus Scholarships:

☐ Due to Financial Need, I am requesting a Youth Caucus Scholarship. I have attached a separate sheet with the following information:

- 1) Why I want to go to General Assembly
- 2) A Description of my financial situation, including other sources of funding to get me to General Assembly.

☐ I am applying to volunteer at General Assembly.

☐ I am applying for a delegate scholarship to General Assembly

Turn Over for form 2 

GA 6 GA 6 GA 6 GA 6 GA 6 GA 6 GA 6 GA 6 GA 6

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY YOUTH CAUCUS

OFFICIAL YOUTH CAUCUS FORM 2 JUNE 21ST-25TH, 2001, CLEVELAND, OH

Youth's Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_

6.

## ALL YOUTH MUST FILL OUT AND SIGN THIS FORM! Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release Form

(if participant is over 18, only fill out blanks with asterisks \*)

I, (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ am the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ . I give my consent for him/her to attend General Assembly in Cleveland, OH, USA from June 21-25th, 2001. I understand that my child/ward is attending General Assembly as a participant and will not be enrolled in a structured supervised program such as Young Fun. I give my consent and authority for the General Assembly staff or designated adult to take action to help insure the safety, health and welfare of my son/daughter/ward. I understand that if s/he breaks any state or local laws, s/he may be asked to leave the General Assembly and I will be informed. I also give my consent for any medical treatment, including emergency surgical care if necessary, and for transport in the event of an emergency.

\*Parent/Guardian/youth over 18's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\*Name of parent/person with insurance policy (print) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Health Insurance Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Policy # /Group #: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Medications currently taking: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Allergies/Medical conditions: (add separate sheet as necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Date of last Tetanus shot: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend GA and will act as my child/ward's sponsor.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not attend GA. \_\_\_\_\_ will act as my child/ward's sponsor.

(sponsor's name)

\*Emergency Contact Information:

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

7.

## Sponsor Section

(Youth over 18 may skip this section)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, will act as \_\_\_\_\_'s sponsor for General Assembly, June 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 2001. I have read and understood the sponsor contract (p. GA 4) and agree to the responsibilities therein.

Sponsor's Name (Print): Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor's residence during GA: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to youth: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/beeper number to be used at GA: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

GA 7 GA 7 GA 7 GA 7 GA 7 GA 7 GA 7 GA 7 GA 7

LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

### ConCon Registration Form:

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

(ZIP/Postal Code) & Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

UU Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

UUA District: \_\_\_\_\_

#### I am: (check all that apply)

- \_\_\_\_\_ female                      \_\_\_\_\_ male  
\_\_\_\_\_ transgender              \_\_\_\_\_ an adult advisor  
\_\_\_\_\_ on Con Con staff  
\_\_\_\_\_ a week-long workshop leader

I have attended Con Con \_\_\_\_\_ time(s).

#### Dietary Options:

- \_\_\_\_\_ VEGETARIAN (no meat, yes dairy, yes eggs)  
\_\_\_\_\_ VEGAN (no animal products)  
\_\_\_\_\_ LACTOSE INTOLERANT (no dairy)  
\_\_\_\_\_ OMNIVOROUS (yes meat)

Specify any other food needs, including allergies:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Choose three workshops in order of preference;  
(1) for first choice, (2) for second, etc.:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Buddha and the Beast  
\_\_\_\_\_ Clouds on the Horizon  
\_\_\_\_\_ GLBT Issues  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mugbook Workshop  
\_\_\_\_\_ Prison Reform  
\_\_\_\_\_ Radical Cheerleading  
\_\_\_\_\_ Spirituality Through Dance  
\_\_\_\_\_ Your Politiks Are Dumb as %\*\$\$

## I am also including:

#### Required:

- ☐ My consent and medical info form  
☐ My rules agreement form  
☐ My July '01 Mailing Address (if different)  
☐ My \$75 deposit or;  
☐ My letter requesting a scholarship

#### Optional:

- ☐ A letter explaining why I would like to be a touch group leader  
☐ A description of my one-shot workshop idea

#### Special Categories:

- ☐ I am a youth of color (optional)  
☐ I am a ConCon staff member and am including my signed Code of Ethics  
☐ I am a week-long workshop leader and am including my signed Code of Ethics  
☐ I am a attending Youth Council and am including my signed Code of Ethics  
☐ I am an adult advisor and am including a letter of intent to be an adult advisor at ConCon and two reference contacts (one youth, one adult) and my signed code of ethics

Please make checks payable to:

"Unitarian Universalist Association"  
for: **\$75 USD Non-Refundable Deposit**  
or **\$375 USD Full Registration Fee**

A strict **\$35 USD** late fee will be charged on registrations postmarked after **June 15, 2001.**

Please send all registration forms and a check to:

YRUU ConCon Registration  
c/o UUA Youth Office  
25 Beacon St.  
Boston, MA 02108

**concon 1 concon 1 concon 1 concon 1 concon 1 concon**

LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU MUST FILL OUT THIS PAGE!!!**

## Consent and Medical Release

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (please print), am the parent or legal guardian of

\_\_\_\_\_, who will be attending the 2001 Continental Conference of the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists at Wilfred Laurier University. I hereby give my consent and authority for the conference staff to take any reasonable action to help ensure the safety, health, and welfare of my son/daughter/ward. I also give consent for any necessary medical treatment, including emergency surgical care, if needed. I further understand that my child/ward will be required to follow the rules of the site and the conference, and that any breach of these rules may result in my child/ward being disallowed to participate in the remainder of the conference. Should this happen, I understand that my child/ward may be sent home at his/her own expense and may be prohibited from participating in future continental YRUU conferences or events.

**Signature of Parent or Guardian:**

*(Participants age 18 or older may sign for themselves)*

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ or (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical Treatment Info:**

\*Name of person with insurance policy (print) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Health Insurance Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Policy # /Group #: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Medications currently taking: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Allergies/Medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Date of your last tetanus shot: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\*Do you have any special health needs?(attach seperate sheets as necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

## Youth Code of Ethics

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (participant), have read and understood the Con Con Guidelines, and the Policy on Sexuality and Community. I agree to abide by these guidelines for the duration of Con Con 2001. I understand that if I break this agreement, the Energy Committee reserves the right to take appropriate action which may include requiring me to leave the conference at my own expense and prohibiting me from attending future continental YRUU events. In addition, I certify that all of the information stated on my registration form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

**Signature of Participant:**

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Adults & Youth in Leadership Roles Code of Ethics

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (staff or adult), have read and understood the Code of Ethics for Adults and Youth in Leadership Positions. I agree to abide by these guidelines for the duration of Con Con 2001. I understand that if I break this agreement, the Energy Committee reserves the right to take appropriate action which may include requiring me to leave the conference at my own expense and prohibiting me from attending future continental YRUU events.

**Signature of Staff or Adult:**

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# CONCON 2001:

## YRUU WORLD DOMINATION

THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL YOUNG RELIGIOUS UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE

JULY 20 - 26, 2001

WILFRED LAURIER UNIVERSITY  
WATERLOO, ONTARIO, CANADA



*ConCon is open to youth aged 14-20 and to adult advisors aged 25 and above. If you wish to attend ConCon and don't fit into these categories, please contact the Youth Office.*

### Frequently Asked ConCon Questions

#### What is ConCon?

ConCon is the annual Continental Conference of YRUU. Every year 100-300 youth gather somewhere on the North American Continent to worship, go to workshops, hang out and have fun for 5 days. This year, ConCon is in Waterloo, Ontario, CA.

#### What's a touch group/how can I lead one?

A touch group is a small youth-led group within the larger conference community. Each conferee is assigned to a touch group, which meets daily throughout the conference. Through games, activities and sharing, touch groups create a comfortable, trusting atmosphere which helps incorporate the individual into the community. Are you interested in leading a touch group? **Write why you're interested in leading a touch group** and mail it in with your registration. Lauren Reed the ID/Touch Group Coordinator will get in contact with you.

#### Why do you ask about "youth of color"?

YRUU is attempting to become an anti-racist, multicultural, organization. Part of this effort is to encourage youth of color to take on leadership roles and to apply for scholarship funding when appropriate.

#### What if I want to attend ConCon as an adult advisor?

Adults wishing to attend ConCon must include a brief **letter of intent** stating why you are interested in being an advisor for Con Con with your registration, and provide **two reference names (one youth and one adult)** and their phone numbers. Adult registrants for ConCon will be screened in order to better ensure a safe conference community. Also, non-staff adult participants are required to pay the full ConCon registration fee. For info on how to offset the costs of ConCon as an adult, contact (insert adult coordinator here)

#### How does this registration thing work?

You send us the registration forms along with either the deposit or a scholarship application, then we send you a letter either confirming your application or a letter telling you that you have been put on the waiting list. If you have been put on the waiting list you will be notified by June 15<sup>th</sup> about whether or not you have been accepted.

**Make travel plans only after receiving a letter confirming your registration!!**

#### How much does ConCon cost?

ConCon this year costs \$375. Yes we know that it's a lot of money, and if we could reduce the fee, we would. The deposit is \$75. If you have trouble raising the money we recommend that you apply for a scholarship, or contact us for creative ways of getting the money.

#### How can I get a scholarship to attend?

There are a limited number of financial need-based scholarships to ConCon. To apply send a **letter** to the Youth Office with your registration form stating your **specific financial need situation**. Include a letter from your minister, advisor, or an involved UU youth describing your circumstances. Scholarship applications must be postmarked by **May 15**, recipients will be informed by **June 1st**. If you are not awarded a scholarship, we must receive your deposit by June 15th to continue to hold a space for you. This year there are also special scholarships available for Canadian Youth. For more information on these, contact Jacob Larsen at 416.690.3675 or email him at: [yak\\_o\\_mak@hotmail.com](mailto:yak_o_mak@hotmail.com)

#### What if I have more questions?

#### How do I contact the Youth Office?

First you should look at the faq at <http://uua.org/YRUU/continental/conconfaq.html>, this that doesn't answer your questions email us at: [yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org). A pre-packet with more detailed information regarding Con Con will be mailed to conferees in June.

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## Buddha and the Beast

Workshop Leaders:

**Katie Horowitz & Jane Hereth**

We will discuss Eastern religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Shintoism, and Falun Gong. Discussions will include worship practices, practical applications in daily life, meditation techniques, and how these religions can be tied into Unitarian Universalism. We will also do art projects such as sand mandalas and strings of prayer beads.

## Clouds on the Horizon

Workshop Leaders:

**Nato Hollister & Robin Kukiel**

In the workshop we will discuss and learn together about the rise of a new global movement. We will talk about the events at the WTO, IMF, WB, and FTAA protests. These topics include police tactics, media attention, what these institutions are, and what people don't like about them. We will also talk about what corporations are, what kind of power they have, and how they got it throughout history. We will explore the role of government in all of this, the implications of that role, and talk of some resistance to it such as the Zapatistas.

## Prison Reform

Workshop Leaders:

**Ann Lapidus & Helen Harris**

1980's- 2001. It's an in depth look at America's penal system. An analysis of race and class, and how they intersect with the prison industrial complex. We'll move from legislature and militarized police tactics to corporate participation in the PIC, prisoners human rights, prisoner activist movements, captivity of political prisoners and most importantly HOW YOU CAN GET ACTIVE.

# Week-long Workshops

meet for two hours

on four mornings during Con Con. Sign up for a workshop on page 4 of the registration form! Mark your first three choices in order of preference - (1) for first choice, (2) for second, etc.

## GLBT Issues

Workshop Leader:

**Jason Lydon**

This workshop is going to focus on GLBT issues confronting the average YRUUer out in the world today. It will teach how to start a gay/straight alliance at your school, a history of the GLBT rights movement, and discussion of what it's like to be queer and to be an ally.

## The Worship Workshop

Coordinator:

**Leane Todd**

Come help create and plan the evening worships at ConCon! This workshop will focus on important elements and themes of strong, community building worship. We will weave together the ideas of the group to produce the most awesome workshops ever witnessed!

## Radical Cheerleading

Workshop Leaders:

**Maura McGill & Molly Taylor**

Pom-poms made of police tape, ponytails, choreographed moves, cheers of REVOLUTION plus lots of and lots of RED SPANDEX! YES! THAT'S RIGHT! It's the Radical Cheerleaders coming at ya cheering for a more just world! Radical Cheerleaders are an organization of people doing their part in protesting crappy stuff in the world. These cheerleaders, cheer about responsible consumption, how fat is FABULOUS, closing the School of the Americas and oh so much more. Anyone who wants to can become a radical cheerleader!!!

## The Mugbook Workshop

Editor:

**Shannon Betker**

This is the workshop that will assist the mugbook editor to create, edit, and do layout for the spectacular ConCon Mugbook.

## Spirituality Through Dance

Workshop Leaders:

**Sadie Kahn-Green & Betsy Tholen**

We will be dancing our way through ConCon this year. Through improv, mimicry, choreographing, folk dancing, body sculpture, dancing in silence, we will "dance as if no one is watching" and then dance some more. We will take time to evaluate how we feel about the concept of spirituality through dance and if that possible and how that works. Come see if it works for you. We will be dancing/discussing everyday. Come ready to have fun no need to be an expert we just want your enthusiasm. And please bring your favorite dancing tunes to share.

## Your Politik's are Boring As %\*\$\$

Workshop Leaders:

**Megan Springer & Daniel Halal**

In this workshop we will explore, demonstrate and talk about the needed fusion of art and activism. We will climb trees, silk screen, wheat paste, paper mache, dance, laugh, and most of all HAVE FUN. We will also talk about following your dreams, no matter what, the fact that absolutely nothing is impossible, the difference between life and survival and why Americans feel disenfranchised from the political system. Be prepared to get dirty, read poetry, have adventures and most of all, have enormous amounts of fun.

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# Rules, Consequences, and Conference Community

## Guidelines

- No drugs, weapons or alcohol.
- No pets.
- No leaving the conference site.
- No violating the policy on sexual behavior.
- Adults must remain in the role of advisor at all times.
- All participants must have a signed medical release.
- Participants must follow the ConCon site rules.
- ConCon Staff, Adults, Youth Council Member and Steering Committee will review and sign the Code of Ethics.

## The Policy on Sexuality and Community

Our goal is to uphold healthy communities, healthy relationships and to discourage sexual activity and harassment in the conference community.

Healthy relationships are based on responsibility, respect, love, and commitment. Healthy sexual relationships are respectful, consensual, pleasurable, safe, caring, developmentally appropriate, and based on mutual expectations. Sexuality is an important part of young people's lives.

In the conference community, youth are encouraged to express themselves in healthy ways and respect each other's boundaries. However, behavior that breaks down the community, including sexual activity and sexual harassment, is inappropriate and therefore not permitted in a conference setting.

It is the job of the Energy Committee to, by these standards, deem any such behavior inappropriate and to determine consequences. Parents, Guardians, and youth are encouraged to discuss this policy with each other.

## Spirit Committee & Energy Committee

The **Spirit Committee** consists of representatives from each touch group. It will be attentive to conference problems and moods, acting as the "eyes and ears" of the conference and will share any concerns with the Energy Coordinators, who chair the Spirit Committee. This bunch of bright-eyed early birds is also responsible for waking up the conference.

The **Energy Committee** deals with serious problems and rule infractions. Its members are one of the Energy Coordinators, one ConCon Dean, the Youth Programs Director, three elected Spirit Committee members, the Touch Group Coordinator, and a Chaplain. The Energy Committee reserves the right to define behavior as inappropriate. The Energy Committee only meets when serious concerns are brought forth by the Spirit Committee.

If you are a:

- ConCon staff member
- Adult Advisor
- Youth Council member
- YRUU Steering Committee member

You must review and sign this additional Code of Ethics in order to attend ConCon.

## Code of Ethics

### Adults

Adults are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering the spiritual development of both individuals and the community. It is, therefore, especially important that adults be qualified to nurture and provide the special care and support that will enable youth to develop a positive sense of self and responsibility. The relationship between young people and adults must be one of mutual respect if the positive potential of their relationship is to be realized.

There are no more important areas of growth than those of self-worth and the development of a healthy identity as a sexual being. Adults play a key role in assisting youth in these areas of growth. Wisdom dictates that youth and adults suffer damaging effects when leaders become sexually involved with a person in their care; therefore, adults will refrain from engaging in sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior with youth. Neither shall they sexually harass or engage in behavior with youth which constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse. Adults shall be informed of the Code of Ethics and agree to it before assuming their roles. In cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

### Youth in Leadership Positions

Youth in leadership positions are uniquely visible and influential in any conference community. They should recognize that power imbalances exist in their interactions with other conferees. Inappropriate sexual behavior is never acceptable; additionally, youth leaders should remain aware of the impact of their actions and behave accordingly. Youth who abuse their roles as leaders, consciously or not, can damage individuals and the community. Youth leaders are expected to use their influence in a positive manner.

Please go to page 5 of the ConCon registration form and sign all of the appropriate places.

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# Environmental Sustainability



So, maybe environmental sustainability doesn't sound that exciting. Perhaps it doesn't sound very "punk rock". Maybe when you think about raising your fist in the air, and shouting "1, 2, 3, 4, Let's make the environment sustainable...", it just doesn't seem to work. Too often when we think about environmentalists, an image comes to mind of tree hugging (see above), of people named Butterfly who live in giant redwoods. But environmentalism is much more than this, it's about creating a global community that isn't plowing its way towards self destruction. It's also about showing respect for the fact that as humans, we are indeed merely a part of the web of life, not omnipotent gods ruling over our conquered lands.

Apparently somewhere along the line, humans decided that evolution was done with, that we were the ruling class, and had the right to do with the earth's resources as we saw fit. And we have, we've trampled through rainforests, wetlands, coral reefs, rarely with consideration for the animals and plants in these habitats. Certainly some of the driving force behind environmental activism lies in the love that people have for these beautiful areas. Think

## What is Environmental Sustainability anyway, and Why do I care?

by Logan Harris

about a beautiful natural place that is sacred to you, for whatever reason. Environmentalism is about protecting natural places that may be sacred to other people, and about preserving them for future generations.

However, there are also some very selfish reasons behind the push for environmental sustainability as well. We often forget in day to day life how much we depend on the earth and the sun. *Everything that supports your life comes from the sun and the earth.* All of our fancy machines and computers can not support the human race, and cannot give us what we need without the earth. But we are furiously depleting the resources that we are so lucky to have. The movement for sustainability is about putting this to an end. We need to start conserving the resources that we do have, but also find new, renewable resources, and better ways of producing the things that we need and use. There are so many things that our society can do to make

this shift to a sustainable future, to a world that can support human beings and still be in tune with the rest of the planet. We need to look at the fuels we are using, at the way we are growing our food, and what we are eating. We need to think about how much we use, and about how much we waste. If we are going to succeed and change the world, first many people are going to have to shift their way of thinking, especially in the U.S. and other wealthy countries. This huge movement will not be easy. But think about what is at stake if we neglect what is happening to the world, especially with a population that is multiplying like bunnies every day. The issue may not be whether to maintain the beauty of the natural world for future generations, but whether there are going to be future generations at all.

*Logan Harris is a youth from Arlington, MA. Logan has served as Chair of the Mass Bay Steering Committee and was Dean of the YSJC 2001.*



# Using All of Our Spiritual Resources

By Rev. Joan Van Becelaere

*Wisdom demands a cosmology, a relating to the whole, a healing of the whole when it is broken, a passion for the whole.*—Matthew Fox

As president of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalists (CUUPS), I am constantly asked to explain my spirituality, to put a label on the elements that make up my own spiritual path. I'm not fond of labels, but there are times when they are useful. When pushed, I find that I have to call myself a Panentheistic, Neo-Transcendentalist, Deep Ecologist, Taoist, Unitarian Universalist. That's quite a string of adjectives. It certainly doesn't easily fit on a T-shirt. Therefore, to save ink and space in this article, I will simply call myself an Earth-centered UU for now and leave it at that. This list of descriptors is not the result of any naïve eclecticism. Rather, it expresses the deep harmony I find at the roots of the philosophies and spiritual traditions that have influenced my path. All of these spiritual traditions/philosophies acknowledge that there is a value in Nature that is over and above its utility for human beings. They teach, each in their own way, the integral sacredness found at the core of Creation.

Beginning with the nineteenth-century Transcendentalists—Emerson, Fuller, Parker, and others—the Earth-centered perspective, with its emphasis on the interdependence of Creation, has been one of the many streams that have come together to create the living river that is modern Unitarian Universalism. Today, this perspective is articulated in the seventh Principle and the sixth Source of UUism. Both in our history and in our current religious life, this Earth-centered point of view continues to have an important influence on who we are as a religious movement. If for no other reason than to better understand some of our fellow UUs, we should look at the theological, moral, and social action

concerns of the Earth-centered point of view. But I believe there are additional reasons to explore Earth-centered spirituality, reasons that are directly connected to the continued flourishing of life on Earth.

A few years ago, with a group of faculty from the Iliff School of Theology, I visited several United Methodist mission sites in Guatemala. We saw sites of horrible devastation where entire villages had been wiped out in the civil war between the government and the Maya of the Highlands. We heard stories of ecological disaster caused by the indiscriminate practices of colonial plantation agriculture and modern U.S.-style agribusiness. And yet we were in awe of the remarkable hope we found among the Maya, a transforming hope that was supported by a surprising interfaith cooperation among the people. Maya priests and priestesses, those who followed the indigenous religious ways of their ancestors, worked in very close relationships with Methodist missionaries, Presbyterian human rights workers, and local Catholic priests. The relationships were so close that clergy from the different traditions would often help out in the services and rituals of the other traditions. There was no enmity, no counting of converts or dismissal of the validity of the other religious paths. Instead, we found a cooperative attitude among religious leaders that far surpassed any of our North American notions of religious tolerance.

We asked a Maya priestess why she thought it possible for all of these religious leaders from all of these different traditions to cooperate so well with one another. She said, "The Earth has been so wounded, we know we need to call on all of our spiritual resources if we are to set things right."

That statement really struck home for me. I believe the Maya priestess is right; we do need to call on all of our spiritual resources, all of our different religious traditions, for the creative

strengths they bring to our common goal of trying to "set things right" on our planet. No positive force for human wholeness should be lightly dismissed. No source of real, transformational growth can be easily disregarded. Not if we want to work toward healing our broken and wounded Earth and bring shalom, wholeness, and peace to all Her children. We should welcome the opportunity to look at a diversity of spiritual traditions, including the Earth-centered ones, to learn what they have to teach us.

The Earth-centered perspective within Unitarian Universalism takes many different forms. You can see this in the diversity found in the many CUUPS chapters in UU churches. Within any CUUPS group you may find people who are exploring a variety of spiritual traditions: Wicca, Taoism, Neo-Transcendentalism, Druidism, Asatru, Yoruban and other African traditions, Creation Spirituality, among many others. But the heart and soul of the UU Earth-centered perspective can be found in our UU Principles that honor the worth and dignity of all beings while recognizing our deep interconnections in the web of existence.

We need to learn how to share the Earth. A concern for the health of the Earth would also mean a concern for the welfare of all that reside on this planet. It would take at least a book, or maybe three books, to explore what it would really mean to society and our lives if we were to live as if the principles listed here really mattered. The results would be personal and social transformation like we've never experienced before. The transformation would not be quick or easy. A lot of long-term habits of thought and action would have to change. But I believe a first step is to take to heart the words of the Maya priestess: "The Earth has been so wounded, we know we need to call on all of our spiritual resources if we are to set things right."

*Rev. Joan Van Becelaere is the current president of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, she can be reached at CUUPS@aol.com*



*"Leonardo DiCaprio can have pretty much anything he wants: three-picture deals, private jets, Gisele Bundchen. But what DiCaprio wants is the new Toyota Prius hybrid, a remarkably stylish \$19,995 [USD] full-size sedan that combines a gasoline-fueled internal combustion engine with a clean, quiet electric motor for minimum environmental impact. . . 'We told them he wanted one as soon as they were available,' says DiCaprio's publicist Ken Sunshine, who notes that his client has recently gotten his Prius. . . ."*

—Talk magazine, October, 2000

Do you have to be rich in order to afford environmentally friendly products? Recently it has begun to look that way as various companies tout environmentally friendly products at a premium price. Although Leonardo DiCaprio's Toyota Prius is competitively priced for a full-size car, it's nearly twice the price of a new low-end, subcompact Hyundai—and four or five times as expensive as a seven-year-old used car. A new Prius may be out of reach for most lower middle-class consumers.

Consumers pay a premium for other environmentally friendly products as well. Take organic food, which is good for the environment but typically more expensive than conventional food. In a recent shopping trip at a nearby grocery store, I found organic carrots cost .69 USD a pound, compared to .49 USD a pound for conventionally grown carrots. Jelly made from organically raised fruits was three times the price of the store-brand jelly. Organic eggs sold for nearly \$4.00 US a dozen, compared to \$.99 US for a dozen conventionally raised eggs.

# Can You Afford To Be Green?

By Dan Harper

But while some environmentally friendly products cost more, that doesn't mean that rich people necessarily lead low-impact lives. In DiCaprio's case, his Toyota Prius gets great gas mileage, but the fuel burned in one flight to Brazil in his private jet could more than offset any gain over the lifespan of the car, depending on the jet. He'd be better off driving a gas-guzzling SUV and getting rid of the jet.

*Dan planning an Environmental Party on his Banana-phone*



I asked my girlfriend, Carol Steinfeld, about this issue. She's the director of a small non-profit organization called the Center for Ecological Pollution Prevention. Carol said, "A lower middle-class person living in the city probably leads a lower-impact life than a rich person in the suburbs who buys all the latest eco-products. They buy less. They can take public transportation."

Rich people like DiCaprio may be able to buy all the latest expensive environmentally friendly products. But in the end, buying lots of any kind of product is more destructive to the environment than simply

buying less. But the issue is more complex than just buying fewer things. Food, for example—maybe most of us eat too much, and too much processed food, but at a certain point, you just can't reduce your consumption of food any more. Does that mean that you should always get the more expensive organic produce at your local grocery store?

Bruce Bickford, one of the farmers at Hutchins Farm, the largest organic farm here in Massachusetts, says no. According to Bruce, here in Massachusetts, when it comes to fruits and vegetables the real problem is transportation. Many of the fresh fruits and vegetables we buy here come from California. On Average, the food you eat travels 1,000 miles to get to your plate. That means they have to be trucked across the continent, using fuel and creating pollution. Even though he's a strong supporter of organic farming, Bruce says that if he had to choose between organic produce grown in California and conventionally grown produce raised here in Massachusetts, he'd choose the local fruits and vegetables. And in the summer, the local produce will actually be cheaper than organic California produce!

While we're on the topic of food, there's another way that you can save money while making your eating habits more environmentally friendly. Back in 1971, Frances Moore Lappe wrote a book called "Diet for a Small Planet," which is still in print today and available through online bookstores. Lappe was interested



in the issue of world hunger. She showed how to get all your protein from grains, beans, milk products, and seeds. Then she showed that sixteen pounds of grain have to be fed to cattle to provide one pound of edible beef. Those sixteen pounds of grain could go directly for human consumption. Cutting meat out of your diet is also a way to reduce your overall consumption of natural resources. When you eat a pound of beef, it's like throwing away fifteen pounds of edible food. Eating beef actually increases your overall consumption of natural resources!

Starting when I was in college, and for about ten years after that, I followed Lappe's totally vegetarian diet (for various reasons, I now eat limited amounts of chicken and fish). I found that Lappe's diet was much cheaper than eating meat. Which was a good thing, because I needed to save money—I was (and still am) in the lower middle-class income bracket. This is yet another case in which doing the right thing for the environment saved me money.

In the end, you don't have to be rich to be environmentally friendly. Instead of buying lots of "eco-friendly" products, you're better off just buying as little as possible. As the bumper sticker says, "Reduce, reuse, recycle." And that means you can save money and save the environment at the same time.

*Dan Harper is a divinity student at Andover Newton Theological School. He is also the DRE & Youth Advisor at 1<sup>st</sup> Parish of Lexington, MA. Dan is also Abbey Tennis's personal hero.*

## Top Ten Affordable Environmental Actions

1. Don't feel bad if your family can't afford a high mileage hybrid car. Instead, try walking, bicycling, and taking the bus or other public transportation when you can. It's cheaper and more environmentally friendly.

2. Try taking a shorter shower. You'll save two resources—the energy it takes to heat up all that hot water—and all that fresh water that's just going down the drain.

3. See if you can get your family to eat only foods that were grown near you for one whole day (if you live in the north, this is much easier in the summer). If food is grown locally, it means less fuel used in transportation (and less pollution from burning that fuel). Plus by supporting local farms, you're helping to keep the local landscape green and open.

4. If you're not a vegetarian, try going for a whole day without eating meat. Not only does it take sixteen pounds of grains and soy to create one pound of beef but most cattle farming fouls water supplies and causes serious erosion.

5. Try washing clothing only when it's really needed. I'm not trying to be disgusting here—if your clothes need to be washed, for gosh sakes, wash them. But if you only wear an outfit for a couple of hours, maybe you can hang it back up in the closet to wear again instead of automatically throwing it in the laundry.

6. When you go to a store, try to

remember to bring your own bags. You could use a cloth bag or a backpack or re-use a paper bag for as long as you can.

7. Next time something breaks, try getting it fixed or fix it yourself. Maybe it wouldn't be much more expensive to get a new one, but you would add to our already overflowing landfills.

8. This one is a little more difficult to do. Try going for a whole day without using any electricity. This includes no batteries—batteries must be disposed of as toxic waste.

9. Try going for a week without going to the mall. Shopping malls cover once-green landscape with acres of pavement, and the only way you can get there is by driving. Depending on where you live, you could take public transportation into the city to shop with your friends instead. Or don't shop at all—get all your friends together and write letters to government officials in support of environmental action on Saturday afternoons.

10. Try doing nothing! Sometimes no action is the best action of all. If you're trying to decide which thing to buy, take no action—just don't buy anything. You'll save money. You won't have to throw out all the packaging that most products are wrapped in. You won't have to throw it out (and add to our overflowing landfills) when it breaks.





Our society is becoming oversimplified with banks and corporations merging. Business mergers leave us with less and less to choose from as consumers. But it's not just businesses that are merging lately. Food is also merging, such as strawberries and flounder. I am severely concerned about the food industry for this reason.

When a species breeds, infinite variations and slight differences can appear since genes are being selected from a large gene pool. Cross-breeding two different colored roses can result in any number of combinations of colors. However a rose will never naturally crossbreed with a mouse. Only a species from a similar derivation can naturally crossbreed. If two species from different derivations crossbreed, like a horse and a donkey, the end product (if there is one at all) will be like a sterile mule, unable to reproduce itself. Nature has created these crucial boundaries so that species will evolve and adapt to better survive in their environments, not to suit a specific need that another species sees.

Genetic modification of food is a new technique scientists have been toying with to make plants artificially better adapted to human sale, use and consumption. Genetic engineering is a means of isolating desired genes and dissecting strains of DNA to inject these strains into other organisms. Flounder are born with an anti-freezing gene as a defense mechanism to keep them from freezing and dying in cold water. Scientists have taken this gene and injected it into strawberries and tomatoes to make them frost-resistant. They also use foreign genes to make strawberries and tomatoes larger, rounder, and redder and help them to resist pesticides and withstand natural disasters. Scientists can do this with bacteria, plants, animals, and humans!

One may argue that we have been modifying plant genes for thousands of years and that genetic engineering is just an extension of that. However, genetic engineering goes beyond natural crossbreeding/pollination and it is not an extension of our natural breeding practices. This new technology is nothing like the way wild plants, or even most farm plants, originated.

Some people see great benefits in genetically modifying food with

# Genetic Engineering

By Maura McGill

biotechnology. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) can make food have a longer shelf life. GMOs can tolerate more pesticides and colder temperatures. Genetic Modification can increase the nutritional value of plants and can make mass production much easier (picking and packing is much easier with plants that are all the same size and shape), allowing more food to be grown and distributed cheaper.

Others do not see the benefits of biotechnology for food. Natural apples rot

**...genetically engineered foods on the market include but are not limited to corn, soybeans, potatoes, tomatoes, milk, and beef from cows treated with engineered growth hormones...**

in a week or so, making them unfit for most human consumption, and are therefore thrown away (or composted, hopefully) and replaced with fresh apples. Genetically modified apples can stay ripe two to three weeks longer than a natural apple. Apples on the shelf for three weeks, ripe or not, will lose most of their nutritional value. It is quite deceiving to a consumer to see an apple that appears ripe and fresh but may have less nutritional value than most processed foods. Although Genetic Engineering makes mass-production of food much easier, the American Government is already paying farmers to let their crops rot in order to keep prices from diving further due to over-supply. Mass-production of food also takes business away from small farmers and more and more nutrients away from the soil, requiring more and more artificial fertilizers, etc. Often, Genetic Engineering is done to protect plants from higher pesticide use.

While GMOs can tolerate more pesticides, often the other plants and organisms in the soil cannot. This threatens the bio-diversity needed to create healthy crops. We do not know the long-term effects of GMOs on soil since they are still relatively new.

The possibility of widespread crop failure is also a huge factor. If a huge field is planted with seeds that are basically clones of one another and a predator or disease comes along that happens to like eating the cloned plants, the entire harvest is lost. In fields with seeds created the old-fashioned way, the genetic diversity of the field can keep the entire crop from being lost, because the disease or predator might only like eating 25% of the plants.

Many are worried that we won't have choices in our food anymore, because most Genetically Modified Foods are not labeled as such. Most large companies that grow crops are now using GMOs. Genetically engineered foods on the market include but are not limited to corn, soybeans, potatoes, tomatoes, milk, and beef from cows treated with engineered growth hormones.

Now it is your turn. Go! Educate yourself! Help save the world! What GMO protesters are asking for is for GMO food to be labeled. If food is labeled, it is easier to make a choice to avoid consumption of genetically modified food and avoid support of the factory farming industry. Also, by the GMOs being labeled we will have a better chance to trace back problems like new allergies that may come from the GMOs. Support local small farmers who most likely do not use GMOs and often farm organically. The higher initial cost of local or organic produce is much lower than the long-term cost to the environment that large-scale factory farming is/will cause.

*Maura McGill is currently the Social Action Coordinator for Ballou Channing District.*



## **WANT MONEY? APPLY FOR A Y\*FUUD GRANT!**

Y\*FUUD stands for Youth Funding for Unitarian Universalist Development. It is a grant fund for new and developing YRUU programs. Any youth (and this means you!) who is doing new and creative programming in their local youth group, district body, or continentally can apply!

New and creative programming that Y\*FUUD loves to fund may include (but is not limited to): creating a conference to address a specific need, developing a resource on a topic currently unaddressed, making a cool new publication, setting up travel for a youth group, or any other crazy new project idea that you super-creative YRUUers can come up with. The average Y\*FUUD grant is between \$400-\$1,000.

Y\*FUUD will review all applications received. Because of the difficulty of obtaining funding, Y\*FUUD will distribute funds with priority to local, district, and continental programs, in that order. Y\*FUUD grants are allocated by the YRUU Youth Council. Funding must be used within the same fiscal year. For multi-year projects, Y\*FUUD must receive another application and progress report. Your application should be typed and is due by July 15<sup>th</sup>.

For more information or to obtain an application check the YRUU website at [www.uua.org/YRUU/](http://www.uua.org/YRUU/) or contact the Youth Office at (617) 948-4350 or at [yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org).

**GET MONEY  
FOR YOUR  
YOUTH GROUP  
TODAY!**

**CHANGE THE  
DIRECTION  
OF YRUU  
TODAY!!!**

## **WANNNA INFLUENCE YRUU POLICY? WANT A VOICE IN YRUU'S YOUTH COUNCIL? WRITE AN AGENDA ITEM!**

Agenda items are anything that is brought to the floor at Youth Council (the governing body of YRUU). Any youth can write one! They fall into four categories:

**Resolution:** This sets out a guiding course of action for YRUU. This will include a comprehensive plan with short and long term goals. For a great example, see It's Time We Did Something About Racism in YRUU! from Youth Council 1999 on the YRUU website ([www.uua.org/YRUU/governance/ycresolutionarchive/yc99.htm#antiracism](http://www.uua.org/YRUU/governance/ycresolutionarchive/yc99.htm#antiracism))

**Project Proposal:** This proposes a specific action or project that Youth Council must assign specific people to carry through on (like the creation of a new resource or conference).

**Bylaw Change:** This makes a change to the YRUU bylaws. The bylaws can be viewed on the YRUU website or a copy can be obtained from the Youth Office.

**Statement of Belief:** This can be a position on global, governmental, religious, denominational issues, or any other area where UU youth have a concern. They may be directed at any appropriate body.

For more information on how to write each agenda item (i.e. a template with all the information you need) and how to get it to Youth Council check the YRUU website at [www.uua.org/YRUU/](http://www.uua.org/YRUU/)



**WE WANT YOU TO BE A  
YRUU PROGRAM SPECIALIST!**

**DO YOU HAVE  
WHAT IT TAKES  
TO BE A YPS?!**

**ARE** you 16-22, energetic, organized and love YRUU? Do you want to give back to YRUU to in a profound way? Well, this is the best way to do it!

**APPLY TO BE YPS!**

**Come live in beautiful Boston for a year. Work with the best and brightest Continental YRUU has to offer. Put your faith in to Action. Make a long lasting effect on YRUU and be remembered for your greatness. Learn skills and gain experience for the real-world!**

**FILL OUT THE APPLICATION ON THE NEXT PAGE AND SEND IT INTO THE YOUTH OFFICE. IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG TO APPLY BUT IT COULD PROFOUNDLY AFFECT YOUR LIFE. APPLY TODAY!**





# YPS Application

The YRUU Programs Specialist position is a one-year staff program position at the UUA headquarters in Boston for youth. The 3 YRUU Programs Specialist work with the Youth Programs director to manage day-to-day business of Young Religious Unitarian Universalists. General responsibilities for every YPS include: managing the continental YRUU office, planning and administering conferences and other youth gatherings, participating in meetings, implementing decisions of the YRUU Youth Council and Steering Committee, traveling to plan continental youth events, editing and laying out the YRUU Magazine *Synapse* and doing consulting calls and emails regarding youth programming in the field.

There are 3 YPS terms beginning January 1, June 1, and September 1. The year's salary is \$25,000 (before taxes). Moving expenses to and from Boston are also paid.

Each YPS has a specific skill set needed for their term, in addition to the regular skills required of YPS's.

Term	Skill Set	Continental Event
January	Web Design and layout guru	Youth Council and ConCon
June	Resource development and writing guru	Continental Trainings and the YRUU Social Justice Conference
September	UUA Networker and Anti-Racism Guru	General Assembly

**The successful applicant will** have an amiable personality with great leadership qualities, good written and verbal communication skills, the maturity and creativity to handle an often hectic but rewarding full time job, have the freedom to live in the Boston area as well as travel and will be between the ages of 16 and 22 at the time of application.

## How to Apply

To apply, send a cover letter, the enclosed application form, and at least three letters of recommendation addressed to the YRUU Steering Committee c/o the Youth Office, 25 Beacon St. Boston, MA 02108. Please feel free to complete the application form on your own paper. The completed cover letter, application, and recommendations must be postmarked by

Start Date For Position	Application Deadline
January 1	September 15
June 1	December 15
September 1	March 15

The cover letter should briefly but thoroughly address:

- 1) What is in it for us? Include your visions for YRUU, your special areas of interest, your experience with leadership development and problem solving, and experiences working with different age groups.
- 2) What is in it for you? Include how the job will fit into your life plan, and your personal goals.
- 3) What is your relationship to YRUU? What does the "religious" in YRUU mean to you? What influence has YRUU had on your life, and what would you like it to have?
- 4) What are your strengths, and where do you feel you need improvement?



Letters of recommendation should be from people who know you well. It is good to get letters from a variety of people, such as ministers, Directors of Religious Education, youth active in YRUU, advisors, and other adults with whom you've worked. Please make sure each recommendation includes the person's phone number at which they may be reached during the day.

### **Application Questions (all applicant must answer these questions typed on their own paper)**

\* Name, Address, Phone, email, Date of Birth, UU Society, UUA District:

- 1.) Educational History
- 2.) Youth and Other UU Experience (participation and positions held).
  - A) Local UU Society/Youth Group.
  - B) YRUU district experience (conferences, district youth committees, etc.).
  - C) Continental YRUU Experience (Youth Council, Con Con, or other annual or one-time continental events or committees).
- 3.) What does anti-racism mean to you, and what experiences have you had with anti-racism? How do you think YRUU should deal with racism?
- 4.) Other Related Experience (neighborhood, local, school-related, state/provincial, national).
- 5.) What skills do you have? (experience and positions held)
- 6.) Leadership (motivating others, delegation, public speaking)
- 7.) Working with Other People (as part of a team, in an office or business environment, with other youth and with adults)
- 8.) Communication (assertiveness, cooperation, representing adult needs to youth and youth needs to adults):
- 9.) Office (being organized, meeting deadlines, typing, computer, writing) How are you at juggling multiple tasks in a busy work environment?
- 10.) Working with Publications/Newspapers (editing, layout writing and production):
- 11.) Other Skills (second languages, juggling, or any other cool skill you haven't mentioned):
- 12.) Employment Experience and History:

### **Questions for the specific YPS Terms**

Answer only the questions that are for the term for which you are applying.

#### **January term:**

- 1.) Please describe your computer-related skills and send any examples of your work with web pages.
- 2.) Please describe your layout skills and experience and send any examples of your work with publication layout.
- 3.) Describe your knowledge of Youth Council and Con Con or your experience organizing district conferences or events.

#### **June term:**

- 1.) Describe or send samples of your writing and any resources or publications you've worked on/created.
- 2.) What social justice issues are important to you and how have you put your faith into action?
- 3.) Describe your experience coordinating any youth events or conferences. Specifically any training or workshop leading experience you've had.
- 4.) What resources do you think YRUU needs? What resources would you like to develop as YPS?

#### **September term:**

- 1.) Describe your experience coordinating any large youth events, meetings, or conferences and how those skills might apply to coordinating General Assembly Youth Caucus.
- 2.) What role should youth play at General Assembly and in the Association?
- 3.) Describe your ability to network and work with adults. What UU organizations are you currently involved with? Give examples of your ability to schmooze..
- 4.) What experience do you have working in/with anti-racist organizations/classes/trainings, etc.? What next step would you like YRUU to take to become more anti-racist?

If you have any questions please do not hesitate calling one of the current YRUU Programs Specialists in the Youth Office at 617.948.4350



Ever taken out ten pounds of steaming compost? Recycled a pick-up truck full of tin cans the size of your head? Here in the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association, a system of co-ops run by kids at Oberlin College, environmentalism in large quantities is the norm.

The Oberlin College co-op system is one of the largest student cooperatives in the country. Run by approximately 600 enterprising college students, OSCA (Oberlin Student Cooperative Association) provides breakfast, lunch, and dinner for all of its members. Eating in co-ops means doing all of the work it takes to run a dining hall – organizing, cooking, and cleaning – with the help of only your fellow students. OSCA oversees 8 cooperatives, each of which feeds anywhere from 30 to 100 people from its industrial-sized kitchen. And as you can imagine, when you're cooking and cleaning for 100, everything has to happen in enormous amounts.

Which is where environmental awareness comes into play. Environmentalism and cooperative living makes sense – when you're ordering food for 100, or taking out the trash for that many, you begin to realize what a large impact a co-op can have on its surroundings! Which is why Oberlin's co-ops go to great lengths to stay green. One big step is working in partnership with the Oberlin Sustainable Agriculture Project, a sustainable farm, to buy local and completely organic produce to feed ur hungry students. Another step is refusing to buy mass-produced rice or ba-

## Sustainable Living, the CO-OPerative way by Katie Shilton

nanas, and some co-ops take the extra step of choosing to limit their intake of refined sugar and white flour. Inside each co-op, local foods representatives post signs and run campaigns to remind us of the importance of buying local, organic foods – ranging from reducing shipping costs (and the pollution involved in cross-country shipping) to reducing pesticide use.

We try to remain environmentally conscious on the other end

weekly by Oberlin City recycling services. Mason jars, left over from locally canned fruits and vegetables, often find themselves reincarnated as drinking glasses.

Food wastes, too, are carefully monitored. We compost as much food as possible – OSCA generates enough compost daily to fill the bed of a pick-up truck. These huge amounts of organic waste are then delivered to Oberlin's sustainable farm. The

job of composter – the brave souls who shovel piles of potato peels and half-eaten lentil soup from co-op buckets to the truck and then to the gigantic compost pile – is perhaps the dirtiest, and most sought-after, job in the co-op system.

The model of the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association is "We Own It". And while this applies to our kitchens, our op-

erations, and our organizational structure, it also applies to the food we eat and the waste we produce. Which is why the co-ops take steps – great big industrial-sized ones – to ensure that our food and our trash are dealt with in the most responsible manner possible – locally and greenly.



*Keep Co-op at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio*

of things, too. It takes a lot to clean up after a co-op, and there is no denying that 100 students can produce a lot of waste. We research and test out environmentally friendly cleaners, to stay away from harsh chemicals. And as much trash as possible is recycled. We reuse yogurt containers (as cups, bowls, leftovers containers, you name it) until they bust, and then drive them, along with soymilk cartons and cardboard boxes, to recycling centers. Glass bottles and tin cans are picked up

*Katie Shilton is a UU from Virginia. She is currently a student at Oberlin College and a member of the UU group there. Katie lives in Keep Co-op.*



When many Americans think of environmentalism, they think of Greenpeace battling to save the whales, of committed young people living in redwood trees, or of unique species in dire need of protection.

For some Americans, however, environmental issues look vastly different. These problems look like hazardous waste. They smell like hog farms. They feel like aching bones, seared lungs, and swollen thyroids. They taste like vegetables contaminated by heavy metals. They sound like what anybody would call racism.

Racism is thriving in America in a form just as deadly as those perpetrated against people of color in the earlier half of this century, and its perpetrators are acting with as much impunity as ever.

This form of racism is a virulent expression of prejudice that forces African Americans to drink from wells polluted by industrial waste and PCBs. It targets Latino communities for polluting highways and toxic industries. It exploits Native American tribes, contaminating the little land they still possess. It's an environmental threat that most mainstream environmentalists of the world are not addressing.

#### A Daily Reality

Environmental racism is a daily reality lived by millions of people of color in the United States and around the world. It means, as environmental justice leader Dr. Robert Bullard has stated, that some people simply don't have the "complexion for protection" from the worst environmental crimes in our nation.

Reverend Ben Chavis, then director of the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice, first used the term environmental racism to bring attention to the undeniable fact that people of color, as well as low-income communities, suffer disproportionately from environmental irresponsibility and degradation.

In 1987, the Commission for Racial Justice issued Toxic Wastes and

# Environmental Racism

By Anna Brower

Race in the United States, a groundbreaking study that proved what grassroots environmental justice groups already knew: The locations of toxic waste sites are disproportionately linked to communities of color around the nation. While the study showed that income could also be correlated to exposure to hazardous sites, race was the overwhelming factor in determining how much pollution and environmental risk a community was forced to endure. An update of this report in 1994, Toxic Waste and Race Revisited, showed that very little had changed:

✧ In 1993, people of color were 47 percent more likely than whites to

**"...though African-Americans comprised only 20% of the population of the region, their communities were host to 80% of the area's hazardous waste facilities..."**

live near a hazardous waste facility.

- ✧ The population of people of color is three times higher in highly contaminated areas than in areas with little or no contamination.
- ✧ Three out of five African Americans and Latino Americans live in communities buttressed by at least one toxic waste facility.

#### Contradicting the Critics

Critics of the environmental justice movement, uncomfortable with the notion of environmental racism—or racism itself, for that matter—have myriad justification for these statistics. "Those" people chose to live on the cheap land near hazardous sites. "Those" people don't care about environmental issues; it's their own fault that they are not in-

formed. "Those" people invite industry and waste into their communities and benefit from resulting jobs. Nothing could be further from the truth.

"Environmental racism is fact, not fiction," wrote Edward Rush of the Center for Health, Environment and Justice. "As long as the attitude persists that one can foul or poison a small part of the planet where 'other' people live without negative consequences to themselves, then the problem of environmental inequity will exist. As long as people of color are less empowered, then they will be the 'other.'"

Residents of Warren County, North Carolina, understand what it means to be the 'other.' Their fight against the siting of a PCB-contaminated soil in their community in 1982 turned the national spotlight on environmental racism. Warren County was one of several predominantly African-American areas in North Carolina targeted for such sitings. Though African-Americans comprised only 20% of the population of the region, their communities were host to 80% of the area's hazardous waste facilities.

Social justice and environmental activists laid down together with passionately concerned citizens in the path of trucks carting the contaminated soil into Warren County. Though they did not stop the siting of the soil at that time, they lit a fire under the environmental justice movement and put people of color's environmental issues on the national agenda. Warren County activists never gave up, either. The dump started leaking almost immediately after the initial dumping, and just this year, the state legislature in North Carolina approved funds to clean up the mess.

#### Feeling the Force of Environmental Racism

Environmental racism has many expressions. The neighborhoods



in the 80216 zip code of Colorado have experienced most of them. Residents of Elyria, Swansea and Globeville, neighborhoods in Northeast Denver, have struggled with lead and arsenic contamination from metals smelters, nauseating odors from a meat rendering plant, violations of clean air regulations by oil refineries, the siting of a major interstate through their communities, and nearly 5,000 diesel trucks wandering down their residential streets.

Community leaders in 80216 say this is the most egregious example of disproportionate impact in Denver, even in Colorado – one small area, with a population of around 9,000 people, forced to bear the environmental burdens of a metro population of over 2.5 million. To combat this blatant inequity, activists in the neighborhood created COPEEN, the Colorado People's Environmental Network.

COPEEN was formed by residents of Northeast Denver in 1994, as a proactive, grassroots response to grave environmental injustices perpetrated against their communities. The spark that ignited the formation of COPEEN leapt from the work of Neighbors for a Toxic-Free Community, an ad-hoc group of residents who took on the ASARCO Globe metals-smelting plant in a class-action lawsuit and won. The ASARCO plant had been identified as the focal point of lead and arsenic contamination in the neighborhood, but the industry representatives and government agencies involved in the clean-up were less than willing to work with residents on an acceptable solution to ASARCO's environmental irresponsibility.

Most environmental justice groups around North America are formed like COPEEN – out of a grassroots response to pressing environmental and health concerns in a disenfranchised low-income communities and communities of color. The challenges faced by such communities are not in line with the issues championed by most mainstream environmental groups, so residents are

left to fend for themselves against a tide of unjust, racist practices.

These grassroots community groups have to struggle to put themselves at the decision-making tables where they have every right to be. As they fight to clean up their neighborhoods, they also take on the monumental task of educating business, industry and government representatives about their own prejudicial and unfair practices.

As such groups rally around one inciting incident, as in the case of Neighbors for a Toxic-Free Community, they begin to notice a pattern in how their communities are treated. They see how their neighborhoods are targeted for the most unsavory, dangerous industrial uses. They discern government and industry strategies for excluding them from

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**“...in 1993, people of color were 47 percent more likely than whites to live near a hazardous waste facility...”**

---

important processes that impact their own communities. They understand how race, economics and the environment are intertwined, that the environmental dangers inflicted on their communities would never be considered in a white, affluent community.

COPEEN and its communities are hardly rare in their experience of environmental racism. In the past two decades, groups have sprung up all over to combat the environmental racism that places factories, dumps, highways and incinerators in their backyards. The Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (SNEEJ) provides support to grassroots groups from Colorado to Tijuana. The Esperanza Environmental Justice Project works to protect neighborhoods in Martinez, Texas. The Chinese Progressive Association offers Toxic Tours through San Francisco's Chinatown to create awareness of the urban environmental

issues confronting Asian-Americans in California's cities. Even more groups that champion environmental justice in their neighborhoods are without names, just concerned citizens coming together over the reality of the environmental racism being perpetrated against them.

### Getting Involved

The simplest way to get involved in the environmental justice movement is to become aware of the reality of environmental racism. Take a long hard look at the city in which you live. Note where the industrialized areas are, and who lives in those areas. Do you pay attention to environmental news that occurs outside your own neighborhood? You can check out the environmental pollution in your area, and compare your community to others at Environmental Defense's Scorecard site, [www.scorecard.org](http://www.scorecard.org). If you want to understand the demographics of communities in your city where a majority of hazardous industry operates, look up those communities at the Piton Foundation's website, [www.piton.org](http://www.piton.org).

The best action on environmental justice issues is at the grassroots. Very few mainstream environmental organizations have cohesive programs that work on specific cases of environmental justice. If you live in a neighborhood that experiences no environmental injustices, you must acknowledge that you and your neighbors are benefiting from ill being done to your fellow citizens elsewhere.

Our environment is an intricate web – not simply of trees and animals and air, but of different races, backgrounds, ethnicities, genders and classes. We have complicated historical, social and political relationships. These relationships play a large role in determining the environment in which each of us lives, but they should not infringe on our equal rights to a clean and healthy environment.

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*Anna Brower works for the Colorado People's Environmental and Economic Network. She can be contacted at: [copeen@aol.com](mailto:copeen@aol.com).*



# Cosmo-inspired Natural Beauty Tips

by Kate Kidder and Micaela Christopher

(without step-by-step instructions on how to make sex more pleasureable "for him" or stories about the most embarrassing moments ever...Sorry!)

**Every year each of us spends hundreds of dollars (if not more!) on shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste, soap, makeup, hair styling gel and spray, razors, shaving cream, lotion, perfume, and other beauty products. When I think of this, a couple of questions come to mind:**

**Q:** Do I actually need this stuff?

**A:** No! It is possible to get by without most of these things, but we (your authors) still want them, wish for them, crave them. So, instead of spending oodles of our well-merited money to pay for packaging destined for the landfill and advertising designed to make us feel that we are not quite attractive enough, we can whip up our own beauty concoctions... and you can too! This can prove to be fun, cheap, and cruelty-free and allows us to know exactly what's in our products and customize them to fit our ever-changing and diverse needs. So, let the beautification begin! Try out these recipes that leave your luscious locks full of luster, your faces fresh, your skin supple and soft, and your teeth twinkling!

**Q:** How could I make better use of all the money that I'm now saving?

**A:** Buy everyone you know a subscription to Synapse! Oh wait, that's free. Um... you could save up and start a grassroots environmental sustainability organization.

*Yeah, that'd be great. But until then, have fun and get messy!*



*Kate Kidder has tons of fun washing Clay Dewey's hair.*

## Simple Shampoo

1/2 cup water  
1/2 cup castile soap or other mild liquid soap  
1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil  
Mix together all ingredients.

## Luscious Lavender Shampoo

1 cup water  
1 cup fresh lavender  
4 tablespoons glycerin  
1 cup Simple Shampoo  
Drops of lavender essential oil (optional)

Mix water and lavender together in pot and boil. Boil for at least 20 minutes. Cool somewhat and add Simple Shampoo and glycerin slowly to mixture. Mix well and pour shampoo into container. Let sit for a few days to thicken.

## Perfect Pumpkin Pie Shampoo

Because—come on and admit it—everyone wants his/her hair to smell like Thanksgiving year-round.

1 cup Simple Shampoo  
1 pumpkin pie slice  
4 tablespoons glycerin  
1 cup water

Mash pie slice and mix with water. Bring to a boil. Boil gently for at least 20 minutes. After cooling a little, add Simple Shampoo and glycerin. Mix well. Follow with Sweet Potato perfume—see pg. 53 for recipe.

## Amazing Avocado-Jasmine Shampoo

Apparently avocado and jasmine are considered to be aphrodisiacs in some cultures. Go figure.

1 cup Simple Shampoo  
1 cup aloe vera gel  
1 and 1/2 teaspoons avocado oil  
1 and 1/2 teaspoons jasmine essential oil

Mix together all ingredients. Place into container and let mixture thicken for a few hours.



*Morgan Fanning thinks that the "Lovely Lemon Hairspray" is tops!*

## Lovely Lemon Hairspray

1 lemon, chopped  
1 cup water  
Place chopped lemon and water in pot. Boil until only half remains. Cool and strain. Pour into spray bottle. If too sticky, add more water. Store in refrigerator.



### **Astounding Apple Hair Rinse**

1 large apple, peeled and cut into small pieces

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

2 cups water

Mix together all ingredients in a blender or food processor. Strain, discarding all solids. After shampooing, massage through hair and rinse thoroughly with cool water.



*Amir Fouad excitedly scrubs his teeth with "Mega-Mint Toothpaste."*

### **Mega-mint Toothpaste**

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Dash (very small) of salt

1 or 2 drops peppermint oil or extract (to flavor)

Mix into paste. Use paste to brush teeth and gums. After brushing, rinse mouth out with water.

### **Marvelous Multi-purpose Scrub**

2 parts baking soda

1 part water

Mix together to form a paste. Massage gently on face, hands, feet (anywhere you want to exfoliate) and rinse thoroughly with water. NOTE: This mixture can also be used to polish silver and to clean grout!

### **Off-the-wall Oatmeal Facial Scrub**

1 teaspoon plain oatmeal

1 teaspoon coarse ground cornmeal (or polenta)

1 teaspoon water

Coarsely grind oatmeal and cornmeal. Mix with water to form a paste. Gently scrub face (avoiding eye areas) and rinse with water.

### **Smoothing Skin Lotion**

1 teaspoon honey

1 teaspoon vegetable oil

1/4 teaspoon lemon juice

Rub into skin, leave on 10 minutes, and then rinse off with water.



*Micaela Christopher and Amir Fouad make each other's feet mucho supple using "Terrific Tootsie Treatment"*

### **Terrific Tootsie Treatment**

2 tablespoons avocado oil (Almond oil or canola oil will also work..)

2 tablespoons sea salt or table salt

Mix ingredients. Work into skin. Wash off.

### **For Your Information:**

Did you know that tampons, which are typically the most costly type of period protection, are usually manufactured from rayon, which is one of the worst pollutants in North America? Over 7 billion tampons and their packaging are dumped into our landfills annually. Flushed plastic applicators damage water treatment plants, get washed onto beaches, and sometimes choke wildlife. Have you ever thought about alternative forms of protection?

The Keeper, a natural gum rubber cup, is one option. It is worn internally (for up to 12 hours) and comes in different sizes. The Keeper has been manufactured since the 80s and has been approved by the FDA and Canada's Health and Welfare. Unlike tampons, it has not been linked to Toxic Shock Syndrome.

Another alternative is Washable Cloth Menstrual Pads. They come in multiple colors and patterns and have wings that snap around your underwear to hold them in place. They can be worn with or without inserts (which come with them) depending on your flow.

To find more information or order these products, check out [www.thekeeperstore.com](http://www.thekeeperstore.com).

*Kate Kidder and Micaela Christopher currently serve on the Continental YRUVU Steering Committee. They perfected these recipes at a recent Mountain Desert District Conference. All recipes are guaranteed, or your next issue of Synapse free!*





CALLING ALL HIGH  
SCHOOLERS, COL-  
LEGE STUDENTS,  
AND UN-SCHOOLERS!

# YOUTH OFFICE INTERN



The UUA currently employs two YRUU Program Specialists who work in the Continental Youth Office.

But we have way too much to do! That is where you come in, friends. Because YRUU is growing at such an amazing pace we are looking for an intern and, yes, this intern could be YOU!

## Qualities Desired:

Youth Group experience, leadership experience (in YRUU or other venues), office experience and ideally, PC computer know-how (web-design abilities are very desirable!). A good sense of humor and the ability to work with people who work too much.

## Requirements:

The youth office interns take on tasks of their own choosing, such as a resource or personal project for YRUU. Interns also help out with basic office work such as typing, making phone calls, and sending out mailings, as the need arises.

## HEY! What's in it for me!?:

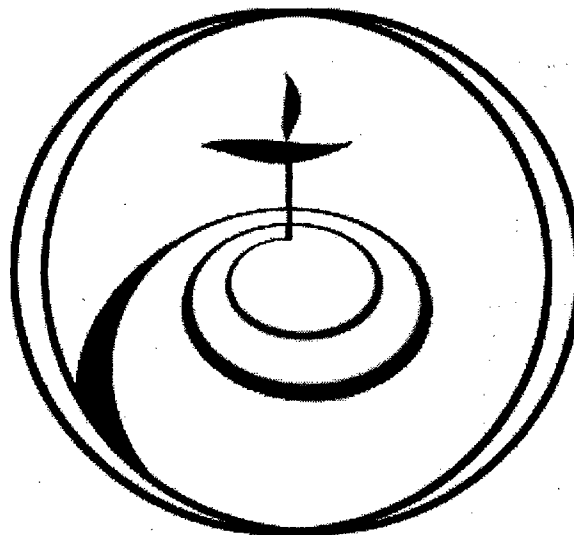


- \*A chance to work for the organization you love.
- \*A chance to work with some real cool Kats.
- \*A great chance to learn useful of fice skills.
- \*A chance to have a large, lasting effect on YRUU.
- \*Many Colleges/High Schools will give credit for working in the Youth Office.

There are three Internships a year; one from February 1st-April 31st (application deadline January 1st), one from June 1st-August 31st (application deadline May 1st) and one from October 1st-December 31st (application deadline September 1st). Interns work approximately 12 hours a week. Also included is a stipend of **\$1000!** The Intern must also find living arrangements in the Boston Area. Send a Resume, 2 references (w/phone numbers) and a letter of intent to:

INTERNSHIP/YOUTH OFFICE \* 25 BEACON ST.  
\* BOSTON, MA \* 02108 \* YRUU@UUA.ORG  
NEXT APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 1ST!!!

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<b>14 - 20</b>	<b>Youth</b>
<b>18 - 35</b>	<b>Young Adults</b>
<b>35 - 100+</b>	<b>Adults</b>

*Youth & Young Adult Sunday: Connecting Youth and Young Adults to the Power of Unitarian Universalism*



# TRANSITIONAL AGE RANGE TASK FORCE APPLICATION

The creation of the Transitional Age Range Task Force has come about from the ratification of the Youth Council Resolution entitled: Resolution to Foster Life-Long UU Involvement: Networking, Empowerment, and Transitions. The purpose of this task force is to discuss ways in which Unitarian Universalists between the ages of 18 through 25 will be a part of Unitarian Universalism while transitioning from YRUU to the Continental UU Young Adult Network (C\*UUYAN.) The task force will work on finding ways to strengthen the bond between YRUU and C\*UUYAN and create programming that will make the transition between the two a much easier process for bridging youth and young adults, ages 18-25.

The Transitional Age Range Task Force shall consist of ten people: five from YRUU, and five from C\*UUYAN, who will serve two year rotating terms. Two of the youth from YRUU shall be people of color.

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- 1) Vital Information (Name/Address/Phone/Email/Date of Birth/Congregation):
- 2) What do you feel can be done to strengthen the transition between youth and young adult programming?
- 3) What special skills do you feel you would bring to this task force?

Send applications by

July 01, 2001 to:

Ann Lapidus

6236 Diana Drive

Poland, OH 44514

Anna024@aol.com

Of all the occupations in America, farming is facing one of the greatest declines. Large corporate farms are monopolizing the agricultural industry, leaving small family farmers struggling to survive. Why is this bad for the environment? Small farmers usually use more sustainable organic methods of farming than large corporate farms. They use less pesticides and artificial fertilizers, less genetically engineered seeds, less fossil fuels, and tend to sell their produce locally, reducing travel distance and further fossil fuel use. While researching this topic, I came across some very alarming facts about corporate farming:

- Four meatpacking companies control an estimated 79 percent of cattle slaughter.
- Four companies control 89 percent of the cereal market.

Since 1986 the number of hog operations has declined by 72 percent—a loss of over 247,500 operations. Of the remaining hog operations, 2 percent control nearly half of all hog inventory. With the agricultural industry dominated by corporate powers, there has been a major decrease in income for farming families. The farmer's share of each food dollar has dropped steadily over the last forty years, from \$.41 in 1950 to only \$.20 in 1999. Since 1985, farm prices have

## small Farmers in BIG Trouble

By Ann Lapidus



dropped steadily for commodities such as corn, wheat, and soybeans. Currently, these prices are 35 percent to 50 percent lower than they were fifteen years ago. In 1998 farmers earned an average of only \$7,000 per year from their farming operations. Most family farmers must work at jobs other than farming just to make ends meet. Eighty-eight percent of the average farm operator's household income comes from off-the-farm sources.

The number of minority farmers has diminished as well: In 1920, the United States had over 925,000 African American-operated farms. Today there are less than 18,500. The current rate of agricultural loss by African American farmers is over two times that of other American farmers.

Through this significant decline, the reputation of a once dignified and well respected occupation has been depleted. Farmers are unable to live off of their inadequate wages.

There are things you can do that will help. Support your local farmer and buy direct, not from the big corporations. Write to your elected officials and tell them that you want the government to give more support to small farms rather than the larger or corporate farms, this trend being detrimental, not only to the individual farmers, but also to the environment!

*Ann Lapidus is the Youth Council Representative from Ohio-Meadville, she is also a member of the YRUU Steering Committee.*



# BAD ENVIRONMENTAL JOKEs

I love trees so much  
That when I hug them, they laugh  
and giggle with me.

## AND HAIKUS

Q: Why did the tree go  
to the dentist?  
A: To get a root canal.

Genetically  
Modified Organisms  
In my soup.... mmmm...Corn....

Great Captain Planet  
Earth, Air, Wind, Fire and Heart  
Taught us to love earth.

So, a baby seal walks into a club... OH!!!

Graham is a hippy  
works so much on the computer  
No time to wash hair.

Sustainable World...  
Not so Sustainable world...  
Let's go eat some beef.

The vagina wants  
Environmental Health too...  
Buy it a Keeper

The Orca said.... "I've really got to go on a diet. I'm  
at the beach the other day and three guys from  
Green Peace tried to push me back into the ocean!

How many Loggers does it take  
to screw in a lightbulb?  
None. The light would bother  
the spotted owls.

Trees make pollution  
"Let's cut them all down" says Reagan  
Stupid Presidents.

Q: What's a tree's  
favorite drink?  
A: Root beer

The smog was so bad in Los Angeles that  
I felt the sights and went back home!

**YRUU Bylaw Changes** - This year at Youth Council the following changes to the YRUU Bylaws will be voted on. They have already been passed by Youth Council 2000, but in order to take effect, they must pass at Youth Council again this year. If you have any questions or comments about these changes, please contact your Youth Council Representative (contact information on page 8.) If you would like a copy of the bylaws, check out the YRUU Website at [www.yua.org/YRUU/governance/bylaw.html](http://www.yua.org/YRUU/governance/bylaw.html).

- Delete lines seven through thirteen of Article V; Section 2 and replace with the wording of: "Every effort possible will be made to assure that there is an even balance of first year and second year YCR's at Youth Council."
- Delete Article V; Section 5 and replace with the following: "The process of selection of the moderator will be at the discretion of the YRUU Steering Committee. Necessary changes can be made to the YRUU Policies and Procedures in years that the current Steering Committee feels that a change in this process is necessary. Each Year Steering Committee will make a recommendation to the new Steering Committee on this issue."
- Delete Article VI; Section 4; Part B and replace with: "Monitoring the progress of resolutions and project proposals passed at Youth Council."
- Delete Article VI; Section 4; Part E.
- Delete Article VI; Section 4; Part F and replace with: "implementing a process for selecting the Moderator for Youth Council and recommending a process for the same to the following years Steering Committee."
- In Article VII; Section 2, delete the word "Two" in line one, and delete the terms of office that are stated in line four and five.
- In Article VI, Section 3, delete the words "three or four times a year, with one of those meetings to be held at the Annual Conference" and replace with "at least four times a year, with one of those meetings to be held at General Assembly"
- In Article V Section 2, insert the words "or two year" after the words "shall serve one year"
- In Article V Section 2, insert the words "as determined by Youth Council" after the words "shall serve one year terms"
- In Article 5, Section 2, Group B, replace "Michigan, Ohio Valley," with "Heartland,"



# SOAPBOX

★SOCIETY GIVES US A BOX TO LIVE IN, AND YRUU HELPS US THINK AND LIVE OUTSIDE THAT BOX. BUT YRUU BECOMES A BOX TOO, UNLESS WE KEEP THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE INSTITUTION, AND KEEP REFORMING THAT INSTITUTION TO BE TRUER TO OUR IDEALS ★★

Discussions between the Unitarian-Universalist Association (UUA) and the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) have come a long way since the CUC decided at its Annual General Meeting for an "evolutionary change" in the CUC's relationship to the UUA. Delegates of the CUC Annual Meeting wanted to look at a new relationship, where Canadian congregations would have more autonomy from the UUA. After meeting with the UUA negotiating team, the CUC was left with a choice from the UUA: in or out. "Evolutionary" change wouldn't work, so the CUC would have to decide whether or not to take control of all services provided by the UUA, except for youth, young adults and ministerial placement services. This proposal was tentatively agreed on by both negotiating teams and needs ratification by the UUA Board of Trustees and the next CUC Annual Meeting, in May.

This proposal frustrates me; it makes me feel like we (youth) are an animal in a zoo, being fed by a zookeeper. We receive funding, we use it, we receive more. If this is true, then it doesn't matter who feeds us. But we don't live in a zoo. The relationship between YRUU and the UUA is one of mutual benefit, one of partners who share their unique gifts with one another. Both organizations are the stronger for the other's existence. YRUU receives funding, a supporting organizational structure, and strength from people with wisdom from experience. The UUA receives possibly the greatest gift of all: a future. It empowers and excites youth to be the future congregants, leaders, and ministers of our faith.

So how, exactly, will a split between the UUA and the CUC affect youth programming in Canada? The UUA is an association of congregations; congregations are the "doorway" to power of the UUA. When Canadian congregations close that "door" they send a very mixed message to youth and the UUA. Canadian youth are encouraged to participate in youth activi-

ties but do so without the support of a congregation, their vehicle for a voice in the UUA. So how will this play out? I believe it will negatively affect Canadian youth at every level of YRUU's structure. Canadian congregations, who might someday hope to fill their pews with the youth of today, might also want to reconsider.

What will happen at the continental level is the most tangible. General Assembly, home to YRUU's Youth Caucus, a group that makes decisions for all of YRUU, will suddenly become a foreign place for Canadian youth. Since delegate status is only given to member congregations, Canadian youth won't be allowed to participate in the business of the Youth Caucus where it intersects UUA

**Canadian youth will remain a "UUA responsibility" while not actually being represented by the UUA or its districts.**

business. Also, the new Youth Observers to the UUA Board Trustee position would not be open to Canadian youth, since Canadian youth wouldn't be coming from member congregations of the UUA. Thus, Canadian YRUUs would not be able to take part in the UUA's governing structure, which apparently represents them as youth, but not as Canadians. I am frightened to think what message this gives to Canadian youth.

At the local and district level, YRUU in Canada will be hurt, both in cross-border and all-Canadian districts. Youth leadership structures often rely on adults to maintain continuity and institutional memory in an age range in which youth pass in and out of pretty quickly. Advisors, DREs, and ministers play a key role by bringing their experiences from the adult community to youth conferences. Currently these experiences have the same range of sources as YRUU's: from across the continent. Should the 'split' occur, Canadian adults would be limited to UU experiences from within Canada. Considering the integral role played by advisors in our youth movement, I don't think this bodes well at all for YRUU maintaining its "continental nature".

There are specific examples of how youth will be hurt in the St. Lawrence district and Pacific NW district as well. Currently, the SLD Board is in the process of creating a Youth Trustee position, similar to the UUA Board's. This would be open only to youth from this district, naturally. If the 'split' occurs, Canadian congregations will cease to be part of UUA districts, including SLD. In the PNWD, a large YAC election conference happens annually at the Annual General Meeting of PNWD. The same problems are faced: how can you be a delegate from your congregation in a district in which your congregation is not a part? How would you get Canadians to run for the YAC if they have no reason to attend the annual meeting?

This proposed split means a sense of limbo, not just for YRUU in Canada, but for the U.S. also. In Canada it's obvious: Canadian youth will remain a "UUA responsibility" while not actually being represented by the UUA or its districts. Meanwhile, the CUC will likewise have wiped its hands of any sense of responsibility, claiming youth are the UUA's job. So contact your UUA Trustee and share your thoughts. Find their info at: <http://uua.org/TRUS/trusmain.html>

As for YRUU continentally, we need to be asking ourselves, do the people who made this proposal really think they own a zoo? Is the responsibility for our care a commodity to bargain with against rival zoos? And finally, do we somehow play into this trap by eating the food passed through the bars and stomping and whining when we want more?

*Jacob Larsen is a youth from Toronto, ON. He is a Youth Observer to the UUA Board of Trustees as well as the Canadian at Large to the YRUU Youth Council.*

## Write for SOAPBOX!

If you want to rant about something, Soapbox is the way to do it, if you are interested send it (like everthing else) to the Youth Office!!!



## Get Synapse!

Synapse is free for all YRUUers!  
Why not sign up a friend? Please  
have them fill out this form and  
mail it back to:

The UUA Youth Office  
25 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 948-4350  
Fax (617) 742-0321  
Email: [yruu@uua.org](mailto:yruu@uua.org)  
Fill it out on-line at  
[www.uua.org/YRUU](http://www.uua.org/YRUU)

While you're at it, please check your address  
below and fill out the adjacent info. We are  
continually updating our database to better  
serve you.

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Positions in YRUU? (YAC member, con dean...): \_\_\_\_\_

My friend's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Positions in YRUU? (Youth group pres, advisor...): \_\_\_\_\_

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