



Why You Should Not Be A Unitarian Universalist

Rev. Dr. Tony Larsen

Somebody I met recently described the Unitarian Church as a place that welcomes Christians, Jews, Agnostics, and even a German Shepherd or two. He was trying to be funny, and I laughed. But behind his remarks was an unwarranted assumption - that anybody can get in here. And behind that myth is another one: that we don't stand for anything.

My friends, not everyone can be a Unitarian Universalist. Not everyone should be a Unitarian Universalist. Because the first criterion for getting into this church is: you've got to know how to sin. That's very important to us; and not everyone knows how to do it. We don't want people here who never do wicked things. We don't want people here who are holier than thee or thou. We don't want people who have made it in the salvation department and are just waiting around to get picked up. Because people with too much heaven in them are hell to live with.

Now don't get me wrong. If there were any perfect human beings around, we might let them in. But since there aren't any, anyone who claims he/she doesn't do wicked things is either trying to fool others, or trying to fool themselves. It is the nature of the human to be evil as well as good. And you should not be a Unitarian if you're not willing to admit that about yourself.

As a matter of fact, recognition of your evil has great power for mobilizing compassion. I say that from my experience in counseling. Some of the best therapists are the ones who know how to sin a little - maybe a lot. They're more tolerant of the human condition. They react with compassion rather than self-righteousness, with understanding instead of judgement.

I notice this phenomenon in myself when I'm driving. If someone in another car does something really jerky - like dart in front of me or make a left turn out of a right lane - I get mad at first - but then I remember all the dumb things I've done, especially in my first few years of driving - and I can't be mad anymore.

Not long ago, I was driving up Main St.

and I saw a pedestrian crossing the street right in front of me, and I thought, why don't these people obey the stop-and-go lights? Pedestrians are always jay-walking. And this guy crossing the street even had the nerve to look at me funny, as if I were in the wrong. The arrogance of that guy.

And then about 20 seconds later I see red flashing lights behind me and I pull over. The policeman asks me if I know what he's stopping me for. I didn't know. Turns out I had just moseyed on right through a red light.

Believe me, that incident has infinitely raised my compassion for jerky drivers. A little sin'll do that for you. That's why I think it should be a criterion for membership.

No, if you think you're too good - you won't like it here. But with a little bit of hypocrisy and selfishness and deceit, you'll do fine. We're not asking you to try to develop those qualities, because you don't need to. Each and everyone of you already has them. We're just asking you to recognize them in yourself. It'll do wonders for your tolerance of others' foibles.

The second criterion or reason for not being a Unitarian Universalist has to do with our intolerance of intolerance. You should not be a Unitarian if you support the Nazis or the KKK or any other group that believes in oppressing people. We may be open in this church - but we're not that open. We are closed to things like closure. That is, we are closed to movements or groups that close people off. And when we say our church has freedom of belief, we mean that in a limited way. You are free to believe whatever you want here - but only as long as it helps you live a caring and humane life - or at least doesn't prevent you from living a caring life. That's a very real limitation on freedom of belief. So when someone says, "What do Unitarians believe?" and you answer, "Oh we believe whatever we want to." - that's not quite true. There are a lot of things we do not believe in. We don't believe in limiting

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PERSONALS!

PEOPLE SOUP Volume IX Issue **11**
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Thanks to Robin and Douggy

Nicky! Hey, I never meant to lose complete touch. You did get the spaced-out letter I mailed this summer. didn't you? We need to get together some time, Mt. Vernon isn't as far away as all that. How is it going in (cringe) school this year? Write and let me know how you're faring. You write a terrific letter. Love. **WILLPUNK** from Goffstower

Cathy Reed - I am not a dead head and creamcheese is still outrageous. Love, Prince

To Carol: Hey, angel of my dreams where are you? Nobody else can even come close. I miss you, I want you, and love you very, very much. Phil Taco

Kneith, where are you? little sis Kris

Eric, where are you...too? (perplexed) Kristan

Nan, Paul, Louise, Barbara, Alice, Tish, John, Jim, Dawn, Cattie and all other spastic 14's - **KITSAP!** Love Kelli



To anyone: I know you keep wonderine who this crazy person is. Meaning me of course. Well, you must realize most people from Woodland Hills, Ca. are crazy! C'est la vie. Doesn't anyone live in Calif? Valerie B. Harb

P.S. May there be weird and wild visions in your head.

Eric, the moon is high over Olympia

Mingling Marin! You're somebody! You're in the Personals! I'll never forget to keep mingling. Love you, Sue

To all the people or Star '80! I really enjoyed that week with all of you. I wish I could have been there in 1981, but life did not let me go. I wish I could have enjoyed that week Eric was chairperson. I hope to be there in 1982. If not, to all the people I know and all the people yet to meet, I love you! Laraine

Quiche

Katie with the rose - I didn't tell you in the dark, but I love you for your openness. I'm usually more cheerful but my tension overran my happy circuits. I will remember your smile and hopefully we will all come together in better times. (no pun intended) Guard that rose, my lovely. Love, Rebecca

Kneith-Always remember buddy, get off the bank and jump in that river! White light always -Prince

How Personal! You know you are with all your names, but do you know your own brother? Why don't you write him sometime? L.S.D.



Dear Kate, you don't know how glad I was to meet you! I hope in the year(s) to come we can build this to something better and more fulfilling. Love, Paul

Hey Erin- 'I can't even take it!' I love you!! - Prince

To all of you who took me into your hearts and minds at con-con '81, the journey to Ft. Dix thus begins. Thanx and see ya' The Doctor of the 51st Airborne

Okay everyone! Listen up! missing from the so-called Summer's End Conf. ARE: my cooler, red thermos 33 qt; my puppet, orange, sunkist my father's tent, green, in blue canvas bag with tent pole, bag and stake bag all vital! several tapes, including **Freakout** by Frank Zappa my paint set, in blue and gold box.

CALL ME (collect if need be) IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE ITEMS!! Failure to do so will result in expungement from the 51st and we'll make it tough on you! Curtly, "Colonel" Brian Over in charge of IT ALL. (201) 783-6253

I am the Lizard Queen (not King in drag) I can do anything!!!

For all of you anywhere, through you I have become a secure, semi-responsible person. And for you I send a silent hug to keep you warm on cold winter nights. P.V.

Sarah, Hola Hermosa! Como estas? So how is life in Worcester? I hope all is well - I still think you are too far away. I want to hear the vegetable song! Keep up the flute playing! I MISS YOU!! Love always. Pablo

Dave Williams - Two years later I'm back in this office again. Where are you and how come I haven't heard from you? Please let me know when you return to the EAST. Rainbows, John

I AM, THEREFORE I AM

WHY IS MATE T. SO GREAT? BECAUSE SHE'S AN LRY OF STEEMED WINDOWS OVERLOOKING MANCHESTER

I lost a white jacket at Summers End. It was tie-dye all over and had the 81 Star Island logo on the back. I left it in somebody's blue Beetle. I'm sure I can arrange a suitable reward for whom ever returns my jacket. I'll even pay for postage if you mail it to me.

Austin Smith
 18 Keith Ave
 Brockton, MA 02401
 617-584-7423

Letters are also generously rewarded.

To Katie - didn't: I would like to get together with you and have a good rap. Please? Phil

Prince, if your problems make you unhappy, your problems are not your problem, your unhappiness is Love always, Cassandra Faye

I love you Cassie! Prince

Carl - 29 hours of corn?! What's your room number? your 'little sis' Keli

Dear Dawn, How I wish your mother would really try to understand me Oh well, someday she might, until then, let's not let it come between us. Love you forever. Paul

Dear Tammy, I am so glad I met you at our Island, you have filled my life with so much love I don't know what I would have done without you these past three years. Just keep in mind I love you so much. I love you, Laraine

Mary C. - no more Burger King! Kelli

Liz - Tacos need visits by normal people too! So, when are you coming? Phil

Who's cute, sweet, and some one I've really missed? The answer could be a "Major Problem" Love, Prince

Some things from Keith Gates, Hank (the Hunk) Pierce, and Prince Davis at the Bear Swamp expedition:

- 1) Jay and Rosina- Is this milk past your eyes?
- 2)Get that dog out of here before I shoot it!
- 3)Get your boots out of my face.
- 4)We're going uphill
- 5)hey guys, there's a dip in the road, dooey
- 6)What do you get when you cross Hank and Prince?...Prank Love, Hank

Craig - it's official! I'll be home for Christmas! If you aren't there I'll die, I'll just die. I'm working on a letter to you. It's hard writing you lately for some reason, but it's always great seeing and talking to you (which I look forward to doing in great detail at X-mas) 'til then... Hey (hey) You (you) Get off of my cloud!! Love and RAMONES, Mary

!+I 00 504H



To My True Love, You have given me your confidence, your frustration, your kindness, comfort and love. In turn I give you all that I can. All that I am is yours. I cannot tell you enough with words: do you know how deeply I love? As always Your One Lady

Unicamp and Unirondack people! I hope you all come to the Syracuse conference in October. It's about time we met. Janet xoxo

To Jeff Workman: Hey Jeff, out of 4,000 people at Yorktown I though I might see you even once. Oo moe gabee zee Oo moe gaboo ZUIZ! Drummer Hank Pierce. Royal Art

To my cute, adorable, sweet, sexy, wonderful, one-dimpled wife. Hey dimple-face! You know what? IT'S NOT FAIR!! So when are you going to move back to Monmouth? I MISS YOU!! Love always. Paul

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 The Evergreen State College
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 Olympia, Wa. 98505
 (206) 866-5101



Andrew's Limbs

Last but not least for all of you in Chicago "Hometurf" Be patient. Life works in strange ways. Don't try to figure it out because then you won't like it. L.S.D. - P.N.V.

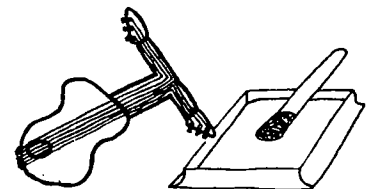
To everyone at OPIK and con-con. I wish I could have seen y'all again but I couln't handle it. Sorry. Here's my address just in case someone feels sorry for a hungry mailbox. Love and Peace, Lydia
 137 Larkin St.
 Mad. City, WI 53705
 P.S. to the tall one in Minn., life is great! have a good one! yer wonderful and I love you and yer new look! Granola, yer yummy dummy hobbit

As of the 1st week in March, I become a New Yorker again! Anyone who wants to share this experience (or cares for other reasons) let me know c/o 25 Beacon Lisa Taco

Cybele Piywaski: I'm going to beat up your mother! That makes two (count 'em, 2) letters and none back. Phil

Claire-bear in Colorado: the same for you! I think I'll beat up your mother also. Phil

Oh SEENA! I miss you! - guess who



UU/UN Conference



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Rachel Bunker
&
Keith Patterson

The week of the 25th to the 31st of October, 1981 was International Disarmament Week, and fittingly, on October 29th to November 1st, twenty-five Unitarian Universalist youth from California to Maine met in New York City for a conference on disarmament. We came to the conference to share ideas and feelings, to learn about the arms race, and most importantly to learn ways in which to educate our communities about disarmament.

At the Church Center across from the United Nations Secretariat building, we heard lectures from a varied group of people, all of whom are working toward the ultimate goal of disarming the world. The first to speak was Jim Olsen, Director of the UU/UN Office and coordinator of the conference, lecturing on the history, present, and projected future of the arms race. In his speech he pointed out the fact that a constant balance was not always kept and because of the one-upmanship policies and mentalities of the two feuding superpowers, U.S. and U.S.S.R., the race would keep escalating with no visible end in sight.

Following Mr. Olsen's lecture, we were taken on a tour of the United Nations building, and then, returning to the Church Center, we heard a lecture by Nikita Smedovitch, a delegate from the Soviet Mission to the UN. The general feeling of the group of Mr. Smedovitch was that he was somewhat reserved and not as open as would be liked, but we felt that his lecture and answers helped illustrate the point of secrecy and reservedness in the Soviet Union. One of Mr. Smedovitch's points was the fact that the Soviets feel the U.S. is the major problem in disarming and said the Soviets were willing to disarm, but felt threatened by the United States.

The next lecture was from Pat Simon, an organizing member of the Council for Nuclear Weapons Freeze in Massachusetts, and founder of Feminist Women for Peace. She gave the feminist perspective on disarmament. She pointed out that today's society is defined by men, and that male values have come to the fore in all the militant acts in history and now with our nuclear capabilities to destroy the world, arming must come to an end. To do this, she says, we must implement the opposite, or feminist, qualities into everyday life and into our dealings with other peoples around the world, qualities such as nurturing and caring.

After Pat Simon's lecture, we went back to the UN to hear speeches from various diplomats from around the world. The last speaker was from the U.S., and in his speech he accused the Soviets as being the major force in blocking disarmament work; so we were treated to the same rhetoric from our own diplomats as we were from those of the Soviets, and we were given a first hand look at the biggest problem in trying to disarm the world.

That night at the Community Church, we talked with Jeff Wilkinson, a peace activist from Connecticut. He spoke to us about passive resistance, and his efforts against the arms race. The whole group enjoyed his visit; songs were sung and a group discussion on the effects of the arms race and general feelings on today's world followed.

Saturday morning we were spoken to by Bob DeGrasse, a member of the Council on Economic Priorities. He lectured on the economic impact of the arms race. He countered the belief that military spending is good for the economy. He said that in the short run it may boost the economy, but in the long run, it cannot help. Also, he pointed out that military spending is capital intensive, not labor intensive. In other words, a billion dollars spent on the military would create 75,710 jobs as opposed to 187,299 jobs if it were spent on education. Today, about 50% of the federal budget goes into making more bombs to kill people halfway around the world, instead of channelling it into the public sector where we desperately need it right here at home.

The final person to speak was Beth Cohen, a Peace activist formerly with the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. She gave the group a wealth of information on how to inform others and work in our communities to use the knowledge accumulated at the conference. The whole group was helped immensely by her, and also felt the responsibility that they had acquired in the four short days at the conference.

What did we learn at this conference in terms of factual information? We learned that the US and USSR are at a nuclear arms parity. Therefore, now is the time to freeze the arms race. Nuclear war can be neither limited nor winnable. There is no adequate defense or deterrent; therefore, it is ridiculous to claim that a larger arsenal will make us secure. In fact, our security rests in economic and diplomatic strength rather than military might. Out having such expensive, destructive weapons around means that in order not to lose one's weapons, everything is kept on a hairtrigger alert so as to strike first and not lose one's entire arsenal. Furthermore mistakes can be made. More weapons only increases the likelihood of the annihilation of life due to a mistake. We refute the "better dead than red" doctrine and believe that the impasse in negotiations is due to false, misleading propaganda which does everything but promote peace.

To conclude our conference we endorsed a statement written a number of months ago at another youth conference which reads:

Throughout history, mankind has imagined and developed weapons for one purpose- to be used. There is no reason to believe that nuclear weapons would be an exception. In an age when our world can be destroyed many times over, war has taken a new dimension threatening all life. Our decision makers, however, continue to maintain that we cannot only survive a nuclear war but will win one as well. This is particularly alarming when one considers the ongoing medical consequences of the Hiroshima coming which was minute compared to our present day nuclear capabilities. Ours is a male structured society which condones violence and aggression and suppresses cooperative, nurturing qualities inherent in both sexes although traditionally assigned to women. What is needed is a profound change in thinking. We need a definition of strength and security that does not depend on an arms race. In the event of nuclear war, the youth of the world have the most to lose. Having no legal power in decision needed to halt the arms race we cry out for the right to live out our



lives in peace without the fear of nuclear annihilation.

Now it is up to the youth who participated in this conference to go home and work for arms control. It is a tremendous responsibility; there is no denying that, but the reward, an end to the arms race and eventual disarmament is the light, very much worth the trouble, at the end.



An LRY Sampler

This is a market survey, and the printing of more tapes depends wholly on how this tape is received and on the answers to the survey below. I am not rich and I can not afford to lose money, or time, on providing these tapes. Seriously folks, I don't need them, I've got them allready, and I sure don't need cassettes! A full coffeehouse like Ridgewood takes 3 c-50's and costs \$620.00 to print a 100 sets, or \$460.00 for 50 sets, I can't risk that kind of money without guaranteed sales. I'm making the tapes affordable, and if I can sell 100 tapes an issue, the price is significantly less. I think its a good deal and a fair price, the rest is up to you.

Cost of "An LRY Sampler"
Mastering 45.00
Printing 185.00
Mailing 55.00
Ad in Soup 25.00
Miscellaneous 20.00
Labor (mine) 172.00
Total 500.00
or \$5.00 per tape

To Order: Send \$5.00 per tape (check or money order) to:

LRY Tapes
c/o Brian Clausen
1213 Shenandoah Rd.
Alexandria, Va 22308
This limited edition will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

I welcome any and

Exerpts of LRY on a 60 minute cassette
(This issue limited to 100 tapes)

SURVEY: What tapes would you like further issues?

- Princeton Coffeehouse (est. \$10)
- Princeton May 81 Coffeehouse (est. \$10)
- Princeton Worship/Rainstorm (est \$5)
- Germantown Coffeehouse (est \$10 - 15)
- Germantown Singalong (est \$5 - 10)
- Ridgewood Coffeehouse (est \$15)
- Con-Con Coffeehouse (est \$10-15)
- Personals, non performance recordings of music and conversations (est \$5-10)

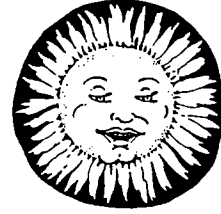
Due to my lack of \$ we may have to do it on a pre-order basis, but I'm hoping to get a job soon and avoid that necessity. If you are interested in more tapes please send a stamped, self addressed envelope with your order, or with your survey if you don't want a copy of "An LRY Sampler".

Love Brian

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COMMON GROUND

By Anne Gardiner



Common Ground was full of very emotional decision making for those who attended. It is hard to explain the sense of community and feeling of love and warmth that was present at the assembly, but there are many things that can be shared on paper. Here are just a few things that I can express in words.

First of all, I am hoping that everyone has heard about the decisions that came out of Common Ground. I must say that at the time this article was written all decisions were still recommendations to the UUA Board of Trustees.

Everyone should be excited about the new youth program, (yes, there is one.) which will service youth ages twelve to twenty-two with three separate but connected programs for junior high, senior high, and post high school aged people. We have all heard about the recommendation for youth programming at 25 Beacon St., staffed by both youth and adults. There are hopes of having a three to one ratio of youth to adults. This ratio would insure that the program will still be run by those whom it serves. The staff will concentrate on meeting the needs of districts and their locals.

But wait, I must tell you about the peachy keen purposes and goals statements that are going to help to define the tasks of the organization. They are as follows: (not prioritized)

- 1) Establish a continental community of youth
- 2) Provide for worship, celebration, and rites of passage
- 3) Build the UUA movement: Its traditions, memberships and heritage.
- 4) Develop personal growth and leadership skills.
- 5) Develop individual social consciousness; be group agents of social change and encourage its members to be peaceful citizens of the world.
- 6) Develop a communications network
- 7) Develop educational resources
- 8) Develop program continuity between program levels, from younger to older.
- 9) Foster tolerance, understanding and acceptance of diversity.
- 10) Provide resources for identifying and training program advisors.
- 11) Develop skills in group interaction and relationship building.
- 12) Build greater understanding between youth and adults.

There were many recommendations like having a youth representative on the Board of Trustees and having all of this in operation by October 1983. The big news for all you die hard LRVers is that LRY as a corporation is going to phase out. Now, for all of you who are pulling your hair out, here is some added information. First, the assembly strongly felt that LRY should be a part of the birth of the Common Ground Baby so LRY, the continental YAC and the consultant on youth programs are responsible for the smooth delivery of the baby. Secondly, to quote a resolution that was submitted by Amy Shapiro and unanimously approved by the assembly.

"Be it further resolved - the recommended dissolution be viewed by all concerned as a transition and not an ending, but a re-birth and a beginning."

If you are still jumping, take a breath, think about what you are going to be getting and write to your congressman or Wayne Arnason. Then you can give it the chance it deserves.

Are you wondering how we created what we did? LRY supporters, antagonists, and middle of the roaders all came with their personal wishes for Common Ground's outcome. Luckily, we all realized that we all wanted the same thing, but had different ideas on how it should be done. In small groups we bent and gave, and reached a consensus we could all live with. Then the

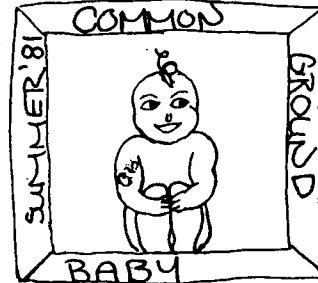
twenty-plus circle groups submitted their consensus statements to a fair witness who then came up with a consensus statement that reflected the entire assembly's beliefs. In a large body we went to our own interpretation. In other words, we voted on what the fair witness proposed, using Robert's Rules to approve or disapprove a motion. I would just like to say that the General Assembly should adopt this system. I really believe that it accomplished a task that would never have been completed if we had used any other system.

Life at Common Ground was an experience. The very basics of life - food and sleep - are a story in themselves. The food was tolerable, if a) you like salad, Tab and starchy desserts b) you were not a vegetarian and c) you had not eaten for the last two weeks. I'm not saying the food at Carleton College is bad; I'm saying it is awful! Then there was sleep.

I went to Common Ground fully aware that I was going to get little sleep. I even went into training. However, an average of

four hours sleep a night for five consecutive days is pretty bad. I am under the impression that everyone who went home hung a "do not disturb" sign on their door and slept for the next twenty hours.

Worship was another part of Common Ground first service was on Monday evening. It was to commemorate our arrival and leave behind the past. The theme was water. The delegates were asked to bring water from where they were. The water was mixed together in a large bowl. It was an interesting service. There were many other meaningful and interesting services during the week, such as the one to commemorate the bombing of Hiroshima and the late night service commemorating the past and future of LRY. Every morning Matins was attended. I am told that as the week went on attendance declined. There was no one service that stood out from the others. They were all touching experiences in their own way.



The last day of Common Ground was much like the last day of camp. Packing up the in the morning, saying good-bye...The last worship was a combination of a pep-rally, a son, and a release of our personal hopes and dreams for the Common Ground Baby. Of course, there was lots of hugging, kissing and tears.

I believe we all learned something at Common Ground, about ourselves, others, and UUISM in general. I also believe that we came up with a pretty damn good program and that its success is in our hands. The Common Ground Baby is giving us the elements of a fantastic organization. Whether or not it grows or suffers the ultimate fate of LRY is up to us. If you would like to find out more about Common Ground contact one of your district representatives, members of a YAC, Wayne Arnason or even a person at LRY headquarters. They should be knowledgeable or should be able to put you in contact with someone who is.

Con-Con 1981

By Arnie Arnold

Besides my subscription to People Soup, Con-Con this year was my first exposure to LRY outside of my relatively secluded federation.

I had heard so many rumors and stories about what Continental Conference is and has been, that I decided to put all of my expectations aside, go to the conference with an open mind, and try not to let anything shock me. What I found was people...lots of them compared to any conference I'd ever been to. For the most part, they seemed fairly open minded, friendly and strange...typical LRVers.

The theme for the week was "Regeneration" I have to say that most of the workshops did not seem to have a whole lot to do with the theme. I did, however, find enjoyment and fulfillment in the workshops I attended. There was quite a variety, including: Improvisational Theatre, massage, and Freedom and Responsibility, a week long discussion session. There were some workshops that focused on art, such as silk screening, tie-dye and batik, and mask making. Other workshops ex-

plored Earth Religions and alternative ways of living.

Of course, there were also the purely fun and rowdy activities, like the two coffee houses, the auction, night swimming, and the ever fateful Mr. Ugly Contest! The winner this year was Chris Howard. What a lucky guy!

The issue of drugs and other illegal substances was brought up at a meeting during the week. This was the first and only time that everybody at the conference was in the same room. There were alot of really heavy feelings being let loose. There were also alot of ideas being held back. For some people, that meeting spoiled the conference, but for some it brought it closer together. I'm not going to express my opinion beyond pointing out that it affected all of us at the conference in some way, and that's something we may want to keep in mind as we're packing for next year's Con-Con.

All in all, I enjoyed the conference and it convinced me to come back next year. I made new friends, strengthened old friendships and learned things about myself. What more could I possibly ask?! (Don't answer that)



BIOFEEDBACK MONITOR SYSTEM

Since LRY and the UUA are going through a period of self examination in relation to each other, I would like to throw in my two bits.

I was impressed by the Unitarians in high school, around 15 years ago, when I joined Rev. John Mac Kinnon's church in Indianapolls. I welcomed the concepts of religious freedom, tolerance and open inquiry espoused by the Unitarian Church. Here was a people unafraid to seek meaningful answers to the profoundest of mystical and religious questions, no matter where the search led.

At that time, circumstances prevented me from joining LRY. But within a couple of years, when I went to the university, I was able to join the Student Religious Liberals (SRL) group in my college area. (These were the years of the Vietnam War and the counter-culture.) I made deep and important friendships in SRL that helped define my value-system and provide a sense of spiritual community.

During the whole of my tenure, there was an obvious schism between SRL and the Unitarian Church. Outside of two interested advisors, there was no formal connection. Furthermore, other than providing a meeting place and "church" status for SRL, the Unitarians neither had nor wished to assert any authority over SRL. Such an assertion of authority would be contrary to the creed of the Unitarian Church. I was profoundly moved by this philosophical commitment and remain very attached to it today.

Several years later, through completely external circumstances, I was asked by the youth of an LRY local to be their advisor, which I accepted. Note that I was asked by the youth of the LRY chapter. I was not approached by the sponsoring Unitarian Fellowship nor was there any process or requirement that I be approved by the Fellowship. This was thoroughly consonant with the then current policy of self-determination for LRY. It was working--these youth felt they should have an advisor and they themselves sought out someone whom they felt they could respect, trust and feel comfortable with. I stayed on as advisor until I moved to Oregon.

The concepts of human freedom and dignity underlying the establishment of an autonomous, self-governing youth group are dear to my heart. I was ever impressed by the insight, maturity, daring, and commitment shown by the sponsoring Unitarian Fellowship. Their absence and their laissez-faire attitude was exactly right, but so rare to find in a world overrun by authoritarian institutions and families.

We Unitarians now and again receive scathing criticism of our sponsorship of LRY. This is to be expected. Naturally the congregation is concerned about what is going on in their name and about the morals and ethical behavior occurring within the auspices of LRY. Such concern and concomitant curiosity are not wrong of themselves. But the congregation and its representatives should have a care about how they approach the problem with LRY.

LRY is not the Unitarian Church and Lryers are not necessarily Unitarians. LRY is not a miniature Unitarian Church, nor a youth group of the Unitarian Church, nor should it be. LRY is a completely different organization than the sponsoring Unitarian Church. This is not bad. It is a response that is appropriate to the problem.

From the outside it may seem inappropriate that the Unitarian Church should support LRY, but it is not so. We are a church, and we are not so much concerned with the outside of things than with the inside. It is the spiritual values that we nourish. The Unitarian Church is an ancient and respected institution revitalized continuously by individuals dedicated to freedom of religious inquiry. We have established ourselves as an intellectual and spiritual oasis in a world full of bigoted and self-serving religions who disguise prejudice as holy writ and give only lip service to the teachings of enlightened beings.

High school, on the other hand, is an epitome of authoritarianism outclassed only by prison. The microcosm of a totally free and self-determined society that is LRY is the only model of a free democracy I can think of available to these emerging adults. The value of this experience of freedom to these human spirits is incalculable.

The general relationship between LRY and the Unitarian Church is that the Church controls the purse-strings, the meeting place, and the legal church status of LRY. This puts the Unitarian Church and LRY in a very sensitive position vis-a-vis each other. The delicate bird of liberty that is LRY exists within a gilded cage. The Unitarian Church can shrink that cage, install walls, or crush this free spirit out of existence. LRY knows this and is very sensitive to manifestations of the iron hand or crushing boot of the "parent" organization.

It is important that we teach by actions as well as by words: Our sponsorship of LRY has been a beacon to some of the best minds preparing to enter the greater society. The experience of freedom in LRY is not just religious freedom; it is total freedom of the spirit, of the whole being. It is a demonstration of the deepest values of the Unitarians. Our sponsorship of LRY is truly selfless devotion to a noble cause. LRY is not Unitarian; it transcends Unitarianism. There may be Unitarian youth participating in LRY, but my experience has shown that many of the youth are from other religious upbringings or mostly from no religion at all, in a formal or defined sense.

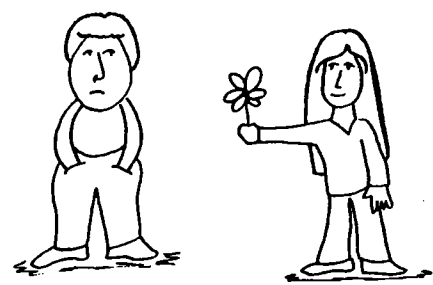
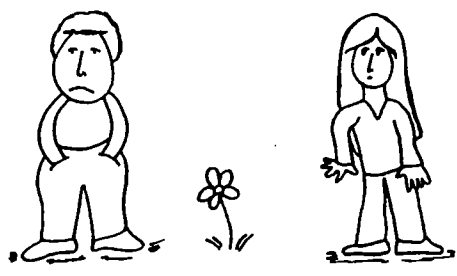
Now we are asking ourselves, since we are paying for and supporting LRY, shouldn't we have more to say about what LRY is, how it works and what it does? Shouldn't we control LRY more? I would say, no. The deepest spiritual message is given to the youth of LRY when we leave them alone. Many LRYers, when trying to articulate the value and meaning of the "LRY experience", will talk to us about friendships, free-wheeling discussions about significant problems and issues, social activism and conferences.

But remember the many gross and petty restrictions of high school. Remember the frequent repressions found in many families of teenagers. Remember the feelings of being caged an unfree. We should remember these each time we consider a course of action that results in restriction, repression, "guidance" or anything done "for their own good."

To paraphrase The Little Prince, "the thing that is most important is the thing that is not said." It is not the fact that discussions are about topics significant to the youth that is important--it is the fact that the group is free to say and think whatever it wants to. Naturally a topic that is meaningful will arise. It is not the expression of love and friendship that are important, it is the overall expression of love that allows these humans to feel free to bloom each in his or her own most personal, natural way. It is not the conference itself that is important, but the freedom and ability to create a conference under the auspices of a benign and enlightened church.

The world of a high-school-aged person is not the world of the adult. An organization suited to this constituency will be different from an organization that is made for adults. It is right and proper that we examine ourselves and our actions. It is appropriate that we be concerned about our support of LRY. But keeping our ideals in mind, and respecting the autonomy of one of our children, LRY, we should not come down from above and order the younger organization about. We should go to them as friends and equals, with our own expressions of concern and fear, and remember that this too is a growth experience for us both.

Sincerely,
Bryce Walden



Letter To The Editor

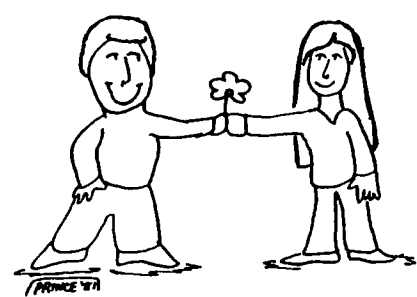
Dear Friends,
This summer at the IARF I had many conversations with our fellow religionists from Northern Ireland. These battered liberals have lost family members, church members and friends to the murders of the IRA.

I am saddened to see the article by Richard Terrass in People Soup which follows the IRA party line.
Yes, there are injustices on both sides in Northern Ireland. But please share two facts with your readers:

- 1) Two thirds of the population of Northern Ireland is Protestant in culture and heritage, and wishes to remain part of the British Isles.
- 2) Unlike M. Gandhi and M.L. King Jr. who practiced non-violent civil disobedience, most of the hunger strikers in Northern Ireland boast of their murders and bombings.

I hope the bloody anguish of Belfast does come to an end. But IRA propaganda pieces like that of Richard Terrass do not help real understanding.

In love and peace,
The Rev. Dick Boeke



6

One WASP's Opinion Is Not Necessarily That Of The Episcopalian Management

By Donny Rickert

I am a Christian. I am also a Buddhist.
(Zen maybe)

I grew up Christian, as per my parents wishes.

At the age of personal decision (thirteen or so) I turned my back on religion of any kind, except drugs and rock 'n roll.

Whilst I grew up Christian, singing in the choir and kneeling when everyone else did, my mind raced with questions.

"If the Jews are against Jesus, why doesn't he kill them?"

"Why is it okay to kill and burn in a 'Holy War' (like the bible says it is) when killing is called a major sin in the ten commandments?" (another page in the same book)

"If Jesus was so powerful, why didn't he escape from the soldiers?"

And of course:

"Where's God?" and

"Where did He come from?"

The answers I got to these questions were vague and at times ridiculous.

"Where's God?" "Everywhere"

Where's Everywhere? Is it here? Is God

in my dresser drawer next to my underwear and socks? Is He in my bathroom?

"He sees you all the time!"

You mean even when I'm in the bathroom sitting on the toilet making a you-know-what?

-Yechh!

Screw this scene.

I don't need someone I can't see looking over my shoulder while I steal my brother's pocket knife.

And you say he loves me all the time, but he never gave me that train set I wanted, no matter how many times I prayed.

I must have logged twenty hours easy praying for that train set.

It was a nice one too. It had a little light on the front and it made smoke when you put a drop of oil in the smokestack.

One thing church taught me, or maybe it was the minister, or my parents...was Guilt.

Pure unadulterated, I-saw-my-sister-naked-and-I-didn't-close-my-eyes, Guilt.

I learned early how to feel guilty.

Going to sleep was a chore because I always felt bad about something. My homework was a big one.

Well, suddenly I didn't go to church anymore and I didn't feel guilty.

I played around with my life and botched it up pretty good.

I'm twenty with no high school diploma.

But one thing I do have is religion, which is what I was talking about anyway. (I also have a decent job.)

After quite a bit of time, thinking till my brain turned blue, I realized.

God is the name the Christians and Jews and everyone gave to this gigantic light being.

And Jesus was a man who had something to say and was willing to let himself be murdered rather than conform.

And Buddha really did pierce the center of the universe, so on the cosmic scale, dropping my hot-dog into Niagra Falls was really nothing to cry about.

My religion is in my head, not in a book or a candle.

But now it's in People Soup.

I think I'll buy myself a train set for Christmas.

YOUTH DAY

Remember the Youth Sunday last April in your church? You didn't have one?! Well, here's your chance! The last Sunday of April is "official" Youth Day. In many churches, this is the only chance for the youth to show the adults that they care about the services and can do a good job. Only you can make it a success, but LRY can help. There is a packet available (free of course) full of ideas, worships, and themes.

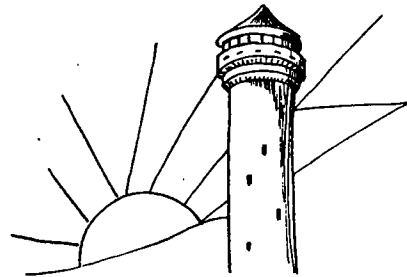
Now is the time to start planning with your advisor and group. If you need any information, packets or just somebody period, write us a letter at:

Youth Day
c/o LRY
25 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02108



Do You Remember
Being Here & Now?
Can You Bring it out?
Can You Make it shine?

by Prince →



Can You Feel It?

"Shehamforashi!" This word, when used with a series of other words creates the vocal portion of the satanic ritual. The words "Hail Satan!" then immediately follows. Supposed use of rituals can do many things. You can use one to bring about destruction of another human being who has made you angry. You can use one to surround you in a protective field of negative energy. The Lord's Prayer backwards; this you can use as the first step in mastering the art of black witchcraft. You can then get revenge on someone who has angered you, protect yourself, or cause someone to fall in love with you - and yes - this is but a start. A lot of people call these things superstition or things not to be believed. It is my strong opinion that these things should be given more attention, as I have tapped into these power forces myself. My largest concern at this point is to change the path I have chosen. It is not that easy, as these forces have a tendency to get mad when you try to break free of them.

Good and evil have been contradictory forces in this world since the beginning of time. Good has always been the positive, so to speak, "white", the constructive, unifying force. Evil has been the separating, destructive, so to speak, "black" force.

A point should be made here that the world consists of energy. Energy is everywhere - from the movement of electrons around the atom to a hurricane. Energy is Energy. How one chooses to flow with this energy is entirely up to them. But, negative energy does accomplish very little. When was the last time getting angry ever solved a problem? When was the last time hateful feelings stopped a war? It makes sense to send out positive energy, such as that gentle touch a lover gives you late at night, or the giving and relieving of a backrub. The compliment that someone pays you today or the laughter of a group of people. Positive energy unifies brings people to a slighter sense of oneness. Negative energy separates and makes people feel alone. Would you feel more joy over be-

ing alone all your life or interacting with others? Think of it - everyone wants to be happy. Does trying to manipulate people make you happy or does being with people and experiencing them sound a bit more peaceful and alot less tiring?

It's up to us, each and every one to change the flood of negative energy that flows so incredibly much in this world. After all, how do you think it got to the point it is now? One old quote that I find extremely useful is: "It is better to light a candle, than to curse the darkness."

