
SPECIAL STANDING ROCK ISSUE

THE
WAYFARER

VOL. 6 ISSUE I

Reimagining the Possible • Charting the Way for Change





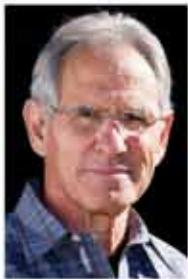


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THE WAYFARER™

Reimagining the Possible • Charting the Way for Change

Vol. 6 Issue 1

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LETTER FROM *The Editor*

Let's start by addressing the elephant in the room: since publishing our autumn 2016 issue on September 21st, a great deal has taken place in the world.

The Wayfarer's mission is to chart the way for change by building and empowering a community of contemplative voices. In my mind, that mission means more now than it ever has.

In light of the ill shift society has suffered, we too have made changes. While going around the editorial table trying to choose who our "wayfarer" of the issue should be, we knew we couldn't simply choose a bestselling author or well-known artist. Too much had happened for such a choice to be appropriate. Instead, for the first time in our publications' history, we chose to feature a movement as our wayfarer: The Water Protectors of Standing Rock. We also chose to place Theodore Richards' column addressing the election as the first feature because, quite frankly, the topic can't and shouldn't be avoided.

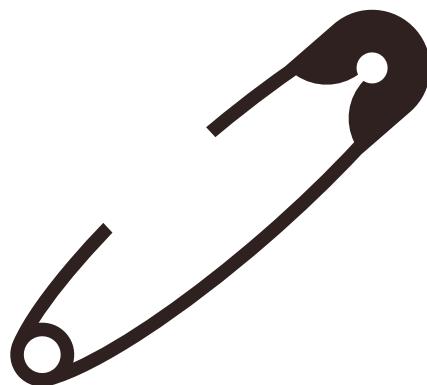
We consider this issue of *The Wayfarer* a landmark edition for us, not only because of the quality of writing that appears but because of the passion with which the entire staff stands behind our mission. This is the first issue of 2017 and we are using it to declare where we stand. I speak for the entire staff when I say that this publication is a safe space. We will use this publication to give voice to the change-makers while at the same time providing you with a space in which to replenish yourself with hopeful, inspiring stories.



Leslie M. Browning
FOUNDER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *THE WAYFARER*



L.M. BROWNING is an award-winning author of nine books. Balancing her passion for writing with her love of learning, Browning sits on the Board of Directors for the Independent Book Publishers' Association, she is a graduate of the University of London, and a Fellow with the International League of Conservation Writers. She divides her time between her home along Connecticut's shore and Boston.



Community

Wayfarers Featured in this Issue



Scott Edward Anderson is the author of *Fallow Field* and *Walks in Nature's Empire*.

He has been a Concordia Fellow at the Millay Colony for the Arts and received the Nebraska Review Award. His work has appeared in the *American Poetry Review*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Anon*, *Clear Poetry*, *Cimarron Review*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *Nebraska Review*, *Terrain*, *Yellow Chair Review*, and *The Incredible Sestina Anthology*.



Kyce Bello's poetry recently appeared in *Sonora Review*, *Taproot*, *Written River Journal of Ecopoetics*, *Dark Matter: Women Witnessing*, and elsewhere. She lives with her husband and two daughters in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she is an MFA candidate at the Institute of American Indian Arts.



Julianne Berokoff is a poet and aspiring painter living in Southern California, where she studied English and creative writing at CSUF. Her work appears in *Black Fox Literary Magazine*, *Buck Off Magazine*, and on the pages beneath her cat's sleeping body.



James Crews' work has appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Crab Orchard Review* and *The New Republic*, among other journals, and he is a regular contributor to *The (London) Times Literary Supplement*. His first collection of poetry, *The Book of What Stays*, won the 2010 Prairie Schooner Book Prize and a *Foreword Magazine* Book of the Year Award. His second collection, *Telling My Father*, won the Vern Cowles Prize. He lives with his partner on an organic farm in Shaftsbury, Vermont and is an editor with Green Writers Press.



Elizabeth Foulke is a second year PhD student at the University of Rhode Island. She is studying English with a concentration in creative writing. Prior to this, she taught English in urban public schools for twelve years where she shared her love of poetry and prose with a diverse group of students.



Monique Gagnon German's poems have appeared in over 25 journals/anthologies including: *Rosebud*, *California Quarterly*, *The Ledge*, *The Sierra Nevada Review*, *Ragazine*, *Xenith*, *Atticus Review*, *Tampa Review*, *Off the Coast*, and *Gingerbread House*. Her manuscript, *Despite the Bars*, was selected as a finalist for the 2015 *Quercus Review* Book Prize. She currently volunteers in elementary school classes, helping foster a love of reading and writing whenever she can. Her first short story, "The Gambit Game," is in the Winter, 2017 issue of *The MacGuffin*.

Community

Wayfarers Featured in this Issue



Chad Hanson serves as Chair of the Department of Social & Cultural Studies at Casper College. His nonfiction titles include, *Swimming with Trout* (University of New Mexico Press, 2007) and *Trout Streams of the Heart*. He is also the author of two collections of poems: *Patches of Light* and *This Human Shape*. His recent awards include the Meadowhawk Prize and a Creative Writing Fellowship from the Wyoming Arts Council. Visit: www.chadhanson.org.



Katherine Hauswirth's writing, focused on connection and contemplation inspired by the natural world, arises largely from long walks in Connecticut. She has been published in *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Orion online*, and many others. Katherine's writing has been awarded with residencies at Trail Wood and Acadia National Park in Maine. A native New Yorker, she is increasingly enamored of her adopted hometown, Deep River, Connecticut, where she lives with her husband and son.



Kelly Kancyr is a singer songwriter, teacher, and photographer. She has performed throughout the United States. Her music has been featured on television stations such as ABC-WTNH, and radio stations such as WNHU and WPKN. In her vintage folk rhythms and emotionally raw lyrics, you can hear both the wide open spaces of Santa Fe, and the rocky beaches of the east coast. She is currently working on her first album, which she anticipates releasing in late 2017. Visit www.kellykancyr.com



Jason Kirkey is an author, poet, and the founder of Hiraeth Press. He grew up in the Ipswich River-North Atlantic Coast watershed of Massachusetts. Inspired by the landscapes in which he has lived—the temperate forests and old mountains of New England, the red rocks and high desert of Colorado, Irish hills and sea. His work is permeated with an ecological sensibility. He has written four volumes of poetry and a nonfiction book, *The Salmon in the Spring*. Jason is now working on his second nonfiction book, a New and Selected collection of poems, and a novel.



Jody Larson is an emerging poet who grew up in Salt Lake City and who now lives near Clearwater, Florida. Jody enjoys the challenge of traditional poetic forms, but has been known to cut loose with other forms and styles. This is Jody's first appearance in *The Wayfarer*.



Joseph Little is an associate professor of English at Niagara University, where he directs the first-year writing program and teaches courses in science writing, travel writing, and writing and well-being. He lives in Western New York with his wife, Samantha, and their 11-year-old puppy, Sister.

Community

Wayfarers Featured in this Issue



Amy Nawrocki earned a Bachelor's degree from Sarah Lawrence College and a Masters of Fine Arts from the University of Arkansas. She has received numerous honors for her poetry, including awards from the Litchfield Review Poetry Contest, the Codhill Chapbook Competition, The Loft Anthology, Phi Kappa Phi, New Millennium Writings, and the Connecticut Poetry Society. She is the author of five poetry collections. She teaches English and Creative Writing at the University of Bridgeport and is mother to two cats, Maple and Django.



Frank LaRue Owen Jr. is an American-born poet, writer, and lay Zen-Pure Land Buddhist practitioner. Inspired by the ancient tradition of the *injin-shijin* (hermit-poets), he is working on his first novel about the inner life of renegade Zen master Ikkyū Sōjun. In his daytime hours, he is VP of strategy and research at a creative firm, helping organizations achieve their goals. By night, he divides his time between writing, wandering the Natchez Trace, zazen, and ensuring the local saké supply is safe for human consumption. His website is: www.thedreamspiral.com



Laura Sobbott Ross teaches English to ESOL students at Lake Technical College in Central Florida, and has worked as a Writing Coach for Lake County Schools. Her writing appears in *Blackbird*, *Meridian*, *The Florida Review*, *Calyx*, *Natural Bridge*, and many others. She was named as a finalist for the Art & Letters Poetry Prize 2016. Her poetry chapbooks are *A Tiny Hunger* from YellowJacket Press, and *My Mississippi* from Anchor & Plume Press. She has been nominated four times for a Pushcart Prize.



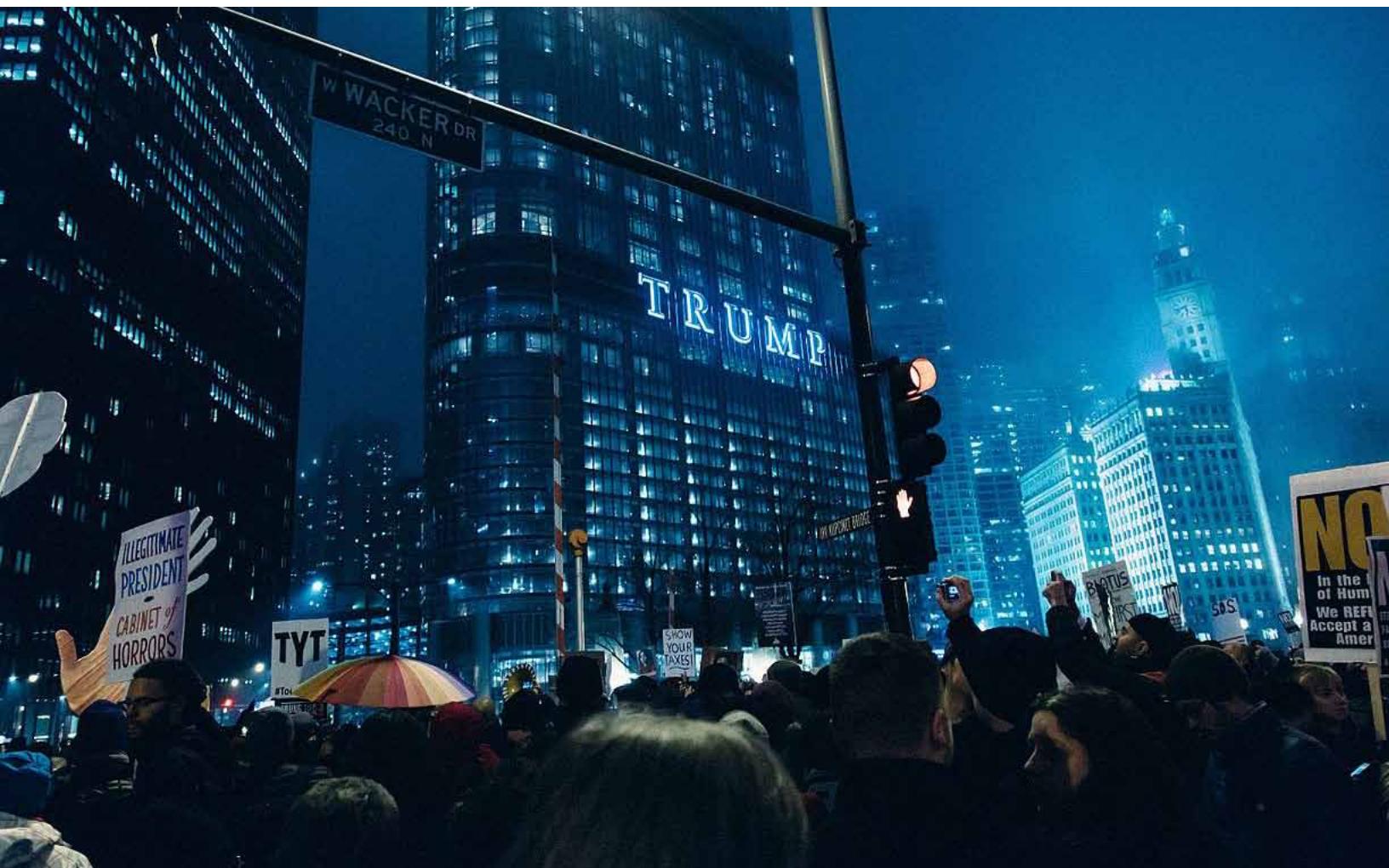
David Anthony Sam has written poetry for over 40 years. He lives in Virginia with his wife and life partner, Linda. Sam has three collections and was the featured poet in the Spring 2016 issue of *The Hurricane Review* and the inaugural issue of *Light: A Journal of Photography & Poetry*. His poetry has appeared in over 60 journals and publications. His chapbook *Finite to Fail: Poems after Dickinson* was the 2016 Grand Prize winner of GFT Press Chapbook Contest and his collection *All Night over Bones* received an Honorable Mention for the 2016 Homebound Poetry Prize.



Leslie Schultz is the author of a collection of poetry, *Still Life with Poppies: Elegies* (Kelsay Books, 2016). Her poetry, fiction, and essays have appeared in a number of journals and anthologies, including *Able Muse*, *Mezzo Cammin*, *Swamp Lily Review*, *Poetic Strokes Anthology*, *Third Wednesday*, *The Madison Review*, and *The Wayfarer*; in the sidewalks of Northfield, MN; and in a chapbook, *Living Room*. She has twice had winning poems in the Maria W. Faust sonnet contest (2013, 2016). Schultz posts poems, photographs, and essays on her website: www.winonamedia.net.

THE ELECTION

BY THEODORE RICHARDS



I awake to the peaceful babbling of my one-year-old daughter. I am surprisingly well rested, considering the fact that I finished off a whole bottle of wine the night before. I never sleep well when I've been drinking. But this is odd. I awake without remembering—either my dreams or the night before.

Like a man who has done some regrettable things but remains blissfully unaware.

The three-year-old comes in next, bouncing as she does. Then the 8-year-old. I am fully awake now. All my girls are here with us in the bed. I start to remember. I did not say anything inappropriate or throw up on the couch. My wife

checks her phone quickly. I know she hopes she will find some miracle there, but she doesn't. "I have some bad news," she says to my eight-year-old daughter. And we begin to describe the world as it is.

We awake to streets on fire. Chicago is burning; Oakland is burning; New York is burning. On college campuses and in rural places white men scream racial slurs at black people; white children chant "build a wall" at crying Mexican children. Muslims stay home. I am getting texts from kids who've been abused at school.

We have elected a fascist president.

It is a warm and sunny day for a Chicago November. It will probably be the warmest on record. Protests rage over the Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock. Forest fires burn Appalachia. We have elected a president who says climate change is a hoax, who promises to extract everything he can for profit. The Earth is on fire.

We have elected a reality TV star as president.

We are so tired. But my daughters need their breakfast.

Scene 1: Mt Greenwood, Chicago

Kofi Ademola Xola is one of the leaders of Black Lives Matter Chicago. He spends many of his days in the streets protesting. The protests, in Chicago at least, have largely been met with a combination indifference, annoyance, and solidarity.

I worked with Kofi for two years. He ran our community garden project first, and later became one of our teachers. If you were to ask me to describe him, I would say that he is a calm and thoughtful person, able to skillfully navigate the challenges of community work.

All of the Black Lives Matter protests and actions are peaceful. A few days before the election they responded to a black man being killed in the Mt Greenwood neighborhood of Chicago. This was no protest; it was merely an effort to be present for the family of the slain and to bring attention to the fact that he was killed. They came to assert that this death is not a trivial thing.

In part due to the success of the movement, the phrase "black lives matter" has become so common we no longer think about what it means. It is a profoundly mundane and uncontroversial statement, suggesting that a black life is worth as much as any other life. The common retort "all lives matter" is nonsensical. Of course they do. No one ever suggested they didn't. Why, however, is it so controversial to suggest that a black life matters?

For those who don't know, Mt Greenwood is a notorious place in Chicago. It is an Irish neighborhood known as the home of many cops and famous for its enduring racism. I've never been there, but my wife grew up not far from there and spent much of her childhood running from white kids calling her nigger.

As for myself, I confess to living in a bubble. I am always surprised at the awfulness of people to one another. A few years ago we attempted to start a program for Chicago teens in a small town in Michigan called Baroda. Things were going great. We brought young people to learn about agriculture, to camp. But then the emails started. The harassment. The town of Baroda got together, got organized. They weren't going to tolerate this intrusion on their space. Our kids were criminals, they said. And worse.

I didn't know then that I was witnessing something more than the last cries of a dying America. I didn't know then that I had a special insight into the White Rage that would eventually elect Trump.

So on this day, on the eve of the election, when Kofi and his people arrived to comfort the dead, to ask questions of those who were there, they were met with flag waving residents chanting CPD and telling them to go home. As if Chicago weren't their home. They were waving American flags. As if African Americans aren't American.

Something was in the air.

* * *

People in Chicago know that this episode was nothing new. And at the same time, it bubbled up at a particular moment, a moment that appears to be significant in American history.

This is Chicago. Trump was chased away from this city months before—many of the same people who came to Mt Greenwood chased him away. He's spoken about Chicago regularly. "The blacks" of Chicago have nothing to lose since their lives are so miserable, he said. Why not vote for him? Of course, Trump knew he'd never get their votes. The common perception was that he was trying to get the white "moderate" vote by easing their fears about his racism. But those who understand White America know better. He was sending a different message to White America: Be Afraid.

One thing that is clear from the perspective of the South Side of Chicago is this: To ignore the White Rage and to pretend that only economic issues led to Trump's election is a profoundly ahistorical approach. American populism has always appealed to the scapegoating of Black America. To ignore this fact would be to act as many Germans did in the twenties and thirties in suggesting that the Nazis really weren't so bad, that once Hitler fixed the economy the anti-Semitism would go away.

As if European anti-Semitism were only a passing fad.

It would be akin to what the moderates did during 60s when they said that the Freedom Movement was moving too fast in asking for education and voting rights. It would be akin to those who suggested that white southerners had suffered enough during the civil war, losing their slaves and all, and shouldn't be expected to lose white supremacy, too.

History teaches us that we are all, always, within a hair's breadth of complicity in genocide. It's not that there are evil people; it's that evil things can happen if they aren't named and confronted.

And so it would also require us to ignore history to not see what happened in Mt Greenwood as the harbinger to

Trump. When Black people try to get free in America, white America turns to fascism.

There is a strong sentiment that the left must learn to listen to the Trump voter. We've ignored his legitimate economic concerns; we've projected onto him a simplistic caricature of ignorance and racism. I, for one, struggle with being compassionate to the Trump voter. The hate isn't imagined. But, at the same time, their struggles are legitimate. And certainly the working class person who is duped into Trumpism isn't the real enemy. But how exactly does one practice compassion to someone who wants to uphold white supremacy? In today's feel-good world we don't want to do the hard work. Easier to take a pill than deal with what troubles us. Easier to say "let's all get along" than confront injustice. Neither King nor Gandhi ignored the very real hatred of those who opposed them. Loving someone doesn't mean you can't tell them they are wrong. Perhaps it requires it.

Scene 2: Election Night

My phone is buzzing. Texts are coming in. These are young people, college and high school students.

"I am afraid he's gonna win"

It's early, I say. They are still counting votes.

"I'm so scared."

It isn't over yet.

"There is someone shouting 'make America great' outside my window. He raped my friend last month."

...

"What are we gonna do? I am so scared."

We'll make it through this.

...

"There is a truck with a confederate flag parked outside."

They are shouting at us."

Call the police.

"How could this happen?"

* * *

Why?

I thought I had to say something, explain this to my daughters, my students, my readers. My self.

Even though we would later find out that he received over two million fewer votes than Hillary Clinton, even though



it was only the fraud of the electoral college that gave him the White House, it still boggles the mind: Over 60 million people voted for an incompetent, mono-syllabic, crooked, openly-racist, reality-TV star for president.

Why?

The two narratives that compete really ought to not be in competition. Both are true. The first is that America has a lot of ignorant and racist people. We've failed to educate people. We've failed to counter the narrative that placates and accommodates the entitlement of white supremacy. And most of us get our information through social media.

The second narrative requires a little more thought, however. This is the narrative in which the Democrats are as much to blame as the Republicans. It begins with Reagan. It begins with the shrinking middle class in America. And it picks up steam with the 90s Democrats, chiefly Bill Clinton.

The planet is finite and the possibilities for growth—and growth at all costs is a requirement of Capitalism—are shrinking.

So the conventional wisdom of our politicians has been to turn toward Globalization and neo-liberalism—an economic philosophy that allows for continued growth and wealth for those who can get in on it, but also creates growing gaps between rich and poor. The factory jobs of the post-war era are leaving; the coalmines are closing.

The Democratic candidate had no real answers for this.

The Republican candidate had answers, facile and duplicitous as they may have been: it's the Blacks, the Muslims, the Mexicans. We might as well throw in gay marriage while we're on a roll. And, of course, we've even gone back to blaming the Jews.

We'll take care of them for you and bring the jobs back.

It's easy, of course, to criticize such demagoguery, just as it's easy to criticize the racism of the Trump voter. The criticism is true and valid and must be heard. But it's harder to figure out how to create an economy that works for everyone and doesn't destroy the biosphere.

When we put the election in terms of the stark political and economic realities for the people, I feel like I need to re-ask who really won the election. I don't mean who got more electoral votes, or actual votes. The great irony is that for all the talk of Trump as an outsider, it is clear that his victory ensures the continuation of the global economic system that renders all life on the planet—certainly this includes the working class people who voted Republican—losers.

Of course, to pretend that the only issue was the economy is to engage in the dubious fiction of ignoring black and brown people. That is, the narrative that Trump's election is one in which the poor masses rise up against the "coastal elites" only makes sense if one only includes white people.

This is the sort of populist narrative from which genocides are brought forth: to eradicate a people, one must first pretend they were never really there.

Scene III: Wellesley

There is a pickup truck parked in front of Harambe House, and the young women inside are scared. Wellesley is all the things from which the country is going to be "taken back": intellectual, progressive, LBGTQ friendly. It's a women's college. And this is the black student center. A perfect storm of Trump's list of why-america-isn't-great-anymore. Fascism requires enemies; this is its gift.

Serenity Hughes is one of these young women inside. She is the first person in her family to go away to college. She isn't part of those elites we hear about all time. I have known her pretty much since the day she was born; I can recall biting the skin off of apples and feeding them to her as I carried her in my arms. She is a black girl from the south side of Chicago who was bright, ambitious and hardworking enough to get her self into an elite school. But that doesn't matter to the two young men—boys—who show up to harass the black women of Harambe house.

They shout some things, then depart "peacefully" when security asks them to leave. Blissfully unaware that their whiteness is probably the reason they weren't arrested in the first place, they return, spit on some girls, shout more slurs, then leave.

We know who they are because they bragged about their escapades on social media. But there were no consequences.

They are taking back our country.

They are making America great again.

Never has it been clearer from whom it is being taken back or to what past greatness it is returning.

* * *

As my daughters get ready for school, I realize I have nothing to say. What explanation is there for such things? For the awfulness that humanity, at times, displays? We think, somehow, that because people do it, there is an explanation that makes sense to other people. Is there really an explanation for the interahamwe or the Nazis—for Trump—that makes more sense than, say, an earthquake or a tsunami? This is not to take away the significance of human agency and responsibility. Such events are chosen and preventable; this makes them different from natural disasters. But that doesn't mean they make any more sense.

My wife drives the two older girls to school. First she drops off the three-year-old at her Jewish pre-school. I am not Jewish, so maybe I am naïve about such things, but it seems

to me that it must be astonishing to American Jews that there are Nazi-sympathizers in the White House in 2016. Then she takes the older one, who goes to a progressive, multi-cultural school. Montessori. It had been so easy, in such spaces, to think that things had changed.

Is it possible that all the fear and anxiety over Trump's presidency is because it forces us to deal with things as they really are? We can no longer pretend that we don't have to deal with climate change or that technology will save us. We can no longer pretend we live in a post-racial society. We can no longer pretend that we haven't dumbed-down our society to such an extent that celebrity is more valued than substance.

We've got work to do.

At home, I play the drums with my one-year-old. There is, of course, nothing to explain to her. She's one. I feel a certain sense of relief; for I have no explanation anyway. This seems like the time to make music and listen. And as soon as she finds the words, *she will explain things to me*.

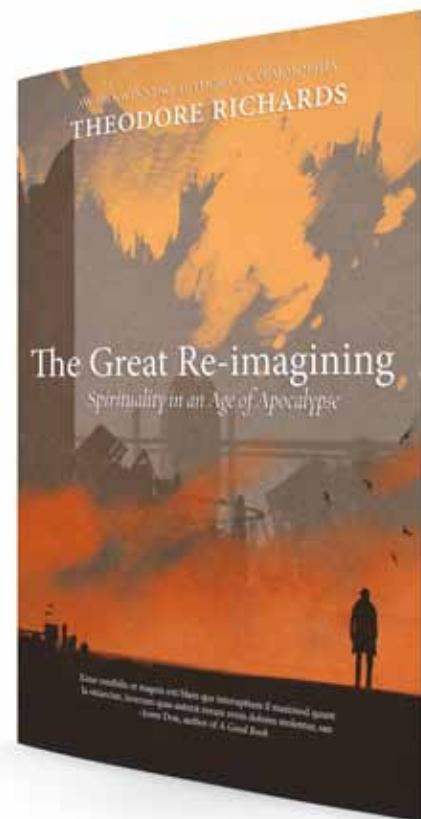
This isn't the time for the father to tell the little girls how things are.

In the meantime, it also isn't the time to keep quiet. There is music to make. There are poems to recite. Books to write. Communities to build. These things—not the Democratic Party—are the opposite of fascism.

We've got work to do.



THEODORE RICHARDS is a philosopher, poet and novelist. As the founder of The Chicago Wisdom Project, editor of the online magazine *Reimagining: Education, Culture, World*, and a board member of Homebound Publications and the Fox Institute, his work is dedicated to re-imagining education and creating new narratives about our place in the world. He is the author of five books and numerous literary awards, including two, Independent Publisher Awards and a Nautilus Book Award. His next book, *The Great Reimagining: Spirituality in an Age of Apocalypse*, is scheduled for release in 2017. He lives in Chicago with his wife and daughters. | Photos: Burning of Make America Great Again campaign hat after sunset January 19, outside the NPB. Photograph of Lorie Shaull; Trump Protest Chicago Photography Unknown



"These are the end-times."

We hear this sentiment in one way or another from various sources, from the fundamentalist preacher to the scientist warning us of climate change. This is a time of economic uncertainty, political oppression and cultural unraveling.

Apocalypse, in the ancient world and today, is the experience of disconnection, of unraveling. It is when old gods are dying and the old stories no longer have meaning.

Drawing from sources ranging from the ancient apocalyptic traditions to contemporary science, *The Great Re-Imagining* explores the deep narratives that have brought us the brink of apocalypse and invites us to re-imagine our place in the world.

FORTHCOMING JUNE 2017



REIMAGINING THE POSSIBLE

WITH ILLUSTRATOR JACKIE MORRIS

INTERVIEW BY L.M. BROWNING • ILLUSTRATIONS BY JACKIE MORRIS

LESLIE

You grew up in Birmingham, England and lived there until at the age of four when your parents moved away to Evesham. After attending Prince Henry's High School, you attended college in Exeter where they told you that you would never make it as an illustrator and from there you moved to the Bath Academy. Did that initial rejection effect your confidence? Did you feel the need to prove yourself as an artist or were you certain in your path from the beginning?

JACKIE

The rejection from Exeter came as quite a shock. Even then I have a real passion for what I do, but confidence? No. And to be told that I wouldn't make it as an illustrator, by people in positions of authority, well, it doesn't help. But I have always had determination. As for proving myself as an artist, I still feel that. When people ask me what I do for a living these days I just say "coloring in." Sometimes I admit to being a writer.

LESLIE

The Ice Bear, The Cat and the Fiddle, Tell Me A Dragon, The Barefoot Book of Classic Poems, How the Whale Became . . . I count over 30 illustrated books in your body of work. Many of your offerings have a spiritual slant to them, harkening to Abrahamic traditions as well as Celtic Mythology and Pagan and Shamanic traditions. Is this confluence of philosophies a reflection of your own spiritual journey?

JACKIE

No. It's to do with being an illustrator and being paid to do a job when you have a mortgage and two children. My own spiritual path twines around watching the wild world and finding first nation mythology when I was a child. I could never understand the "stewardship" of Christianity, nor the hierarchy of species and it was only when I learned that there was a people who believed in the equality of *all* life that the world made some sense. The arrogance of humanity continues to astonish me.

LESLIE

Your usage of gold-leaf echoes the style of illuminated manuscripts such as the *Book of Kells* and the *Book of Hours*. Do you take inspiration from such works or is your style your own?

JACKIE

More from Japanese screens I think than Celtic art. I love the use of squares of gold in some Japanese art. I love the way the light reflects off the gold and I love making icons of wild life.

LESLIE

What are your preferred mediums? Do you do digital work or all by hand or is there a mix of the two?

JACKIE

I work in watercolor, pencil, gouache, on paper, usually Arches hot pressed which gives a smoother surface for detail. I use mostly a series 7 no 4 Winsor and newton sable brush which gives a beautiful wash but also comes to an exquisite point. I love the way colored water stroked on paper can build paintings. I never use digital enhancement. But I do also love to draw, with a pencil, on paper.

LESLIE

The French artist, Edgar Degas said, "Art is not what you see, but what you make others see." The body of your work brings your readers, both adult and children alike, on an adventure of the soul and imagination. When you compose your works, do you wish to transport your reader to a different world or transcend the present world in which they live?

JACKIE

When I make books I try to catch stories that play through my head. I want to make books that help people escape from the every day, but also, as with books like *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*, I want to try to understand something of a story.

For me books are a harbour, at least the ones I read are. The ones I make are hard work, deceptively hard. The book I am working on at the moment is utterly consuming in a way no other book has been. It's a challenge, with words so divine to work with.

LESLIE

What do you hope to achieve through your work? If you could have your young readers walk away with one thing after reading your books, what would it be?

JACKIE

Something of what I hope to achieve is to bring to children an awareness and a love of the wild world, the world outside the human, the world that for me is so important. I would like to

help to foster a respect for the natural world in which we live that has been lacking in Western culture for far too long.

LESLIE

What would you say to all those struggling artists trying to make a living with their art?

JACKIE

So many things. Don't expect to make a living. The world owes you nothing, but if you work hard you may find that you speak to some or many who love what you do. Be prepared to do other jobs to supplement your income, but also be aware that it is more than possible to make a decent living as an artist. Most of all, say what your soul sings, for then what you say is true and you can never lose.





LESLIE

What are you working on now?

JACKIE

At present I have 6 books out this year: *The Seal Children*, *One Cheetah, One Cherry: A Book of Beautiful Numbers*, *The Newborn Child*, *The White Fox*, *Tell Me a Dragon with Added Dragons* and *The Quiet Music of Gently Falling Snow*.

And I am also working on an exquisite book called the *Lost Words*, written by Robert MacFarlane, illustrated by me. The catalyst for the book lay in a letter. Laurence Rose asked me to sign a letter to the Oxford University Press. You see in 2007 they had dropped certain words from their junior dictionary.

Words like *Acorn*, *adder*, *wren*, *heron*, *otter*, *conker*, all words to do with nature. The dropping of these words was highlighted in Mr. MacFarlane's wonderful book *Landmarks*. I wrote to Robert and asked if I were to do a book of dictionary definitions of these words and images on gold leaf might he write a forward. The result is so much more and he is writing exquisite words that celebrate these wild words and spell them back into being. And I have used the exquisite word twice, but it's hard to know what other word to use. *Wild words*, *spells*, *gold leaf* and *wild places* . . . *bramble*, *raven*, *wren*, *adder*, *kingfisher*. It's a joy to work on with a punishing deadline and it's stretching my work and I can feel myself growing as an artist and learning about words from a master wordsmith.

Follow Jackie on Twitter at @JackieMorrisArt or on Facebook under 'The House of Golden Dreams' visit jackiemorris.co.uk to see her full library and tour schedule.

THE SOULS OF WILD FOLK

BY CHAD HANSON

As a kid I rode a pony with a painted coat. My family called her, "Daisy." She could run faster than any of the horses within five miles of our house. She beat thoroughbreds. Arabians. Once, she outran a quarter horse. I loved that pony. I loved her right up until the point when I discovered motocross. After that, my attention to horses waned. I developed a crush on metal and plastic. I still live in a world of machines and technology, but I replaced the motorcycle with a mountain bike. It's quieter. Until last spring, it had been three decades since I'd known a horse.

My wife and I had planned a weekend trip to the Hole-in-the-Wall region of Wyoming. It's a landscape of red cliffs and mesas. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid used to hide in the area, among the bluffs along the Middle Fork of the Powder River. In the time of Butch and Sundance, Wyoming enjoyed a shortage of lawmen. Plus, as far as hideouts go, this one is scenic.

* * * *

On the highway west of Casper we run into rain. Then the rain turns into a full-throated storm. We find ourselves pressing into wind driven hail. I see a patch of blue sky on my left, so I ask, "Would you like to see the Red Desert?" I met Lynn in Tucson. She likes deserts. She says, "Sure. Go left. Look. There's a road." It doesn't take long to escape the weather. Soon, we're headed south with the sun beating through the windshield. As the dirt and vegetation dry, I begin to see horses. I assume that we're on public land. I ask, "Who's horses?" Then I point out that we are probably on public property. Lynn says, "I don't know." Then she looks at a map. After a moment she says, "We're on a herd area, run by the Bureau of Land Management." She says, "Those are wild horses."

Wild Horses. Wild? Wild is one of my favorite adjectives. I didn't know Lynn when she was young, but she grew up with horses, too. "Why don't we stop?" she asks.



We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals.

—HENRY BESTON, *The Outermost House*

I dig my camera out of the backseat. Then I unfold a tripod, clean the surface of my most powerful lens, and we start to trek through the sagebrush. When we saw the horses from the car they were grazing, but when we start to hike they show signs of alertness. They don't stop eating but they lift their heads to check our location. We push onward, closer to them. We shorten the distance until thirty feet stand between us. After that, they begin walking.

Through my telephoto lens I see their coats. Scrapes and scars mark the terrain between their shoulders and haunches. Manes jut in between their ears to cover up their eyes. In one case, a forehead sports a cluster of burrs. They form a gnarled hat of hair and dehydrated plants. In another instance, a dreadlock hangs from one of their necks. These are nobody's horses. They're scrappy. They are unkempt—and they're beautiful.

* * * *

In 1868, a man by the name of Peres stumbled onto the mouth of a cavern in the hills of northern Spain. He described the spot to an archeologist, Marcelino Sautuola, who returned with his daughter and a pair of oil lamps. Once they were inside, she noticed familiar shapes on the ceiling and walls, "Look. Animals." They discovered the Altamira site. The cave hosts one of the oldest and most elaborate collections of rock art ever found. The images include examples of deer and bison, but the stars of the exhibit are horses. Altamira represents an early effort to capture the majesty of the world with a two dimensional image: one of the first attempts at art. When human groups began to explore aesthetics, they did their best to mirror the form and essence of the horse.

As human beings, we're inconsistent when it comes to our tastes. For example, historically, we saw mountains as landscapes to avoid. We thought of them as harsh. We assumed that they were barren and dangerous. We preferred the safety



and order of gardens and neighborhoods. Today, we cherish mountain peaks. We paint them. We sing songs about them, and when we have to leave them, we begin to look for a way back. On another note, in our past, women used to wear the bodies of flamingos on their heads. I'm glad to say, today, we find that kind of fashion excessive. Desires change. That said, I have searched, and I cannot find a time when we did not see beauty in horses.

* * * *

Lynn and I spend the morning trying to move in closer to the herd. I'm hoping to make a photo of their faces. We know better than to march up to them, however. We move ten feet toward them every few minutes. We talk in hushed tones, so they know that we are not two-legged cats trying to stalk up on them in silence. We do not walk in straight lines. We tack left and right to convince them that we're just two friendly bipeds, out meandering on the prairie. It does not work. Each time we step closer the horses look up from the ground. They spot us. Then they readjust their position. After a long pursuit-in-slow-motion we are a half a mile from our car. I'm starting to get hungry, and it's been too long since we drank any water. We decide to head back to the road. I untie the flannel shirt that I've been wearing on my waist, but before I put my arms into the sleeves I flap it to shake off the dust. I flick it down and then back up. When I do that, it makes a loud crack of a sound.

Stampede.

One moment the horses are grazing and the next they're flying through the sage. No transition. When the sound of my shirt reaches their ears—the landscape shifts. The calm swells and troughs of the prairie roil into a storm of motion. The horses run away from us in the beginning. Then a band of four breaks to the right. They make a wide turn. We watch as they bend their route. They circle around until it appears that they are running back toward us.

Then it becomes clear that they are running toward us. I hear Lynn say, "Oh." It's not a word, however. It's more like a sound. I'm speechless, too. I mutter, "Uuugh?" Then I grab my wife and pull her beside me. We stand together behind the camera, which is perched on top of a tripod. It's not a bunker, but it's all we have.

We've spent long parts of our lives in rugged places. We are educated when it comes to safety in the wilderness. We know what to do if we're attacked by a black bear, or a grizzly, or a mountain lion. We've taken time to practice, so we can act without having to think about what to do in the case of emergency. None of our training prepared us to protect ourselves from a stampede of wild horses, so we stand together, making sounds from behind an aluminum tripod. It is sad, but in a way, a little romantic.

We can't take our eyes off of the mustangs. Their legs churn the dry grasses. They kick up a storm of dust. Then they come to a halt. Ten feet away, the hooves of the lead horse dig in the dirt and they all stop. Dust clouds our view, but when it clears, the horses emerge: chests heaving, nostrils flared, and ears in fighting position.

The two of us turn into sculptures of ourselves. At first I look ahead but even blinking feels like an act of aggression. I turn my eyes toward the ground. Then I realize that I am no longer breathing, so I remind myself to inhale. I hear Lynn trying to keep herself from crying. We stay this way for fifteen minutes. Maybe more. We're stuck in a standoff, with fear and curiosity as glue, binding us to the horses.

I whisper, "I'm going to make a picture."

Lynn says, "Yeah. Slowly. Don't make any noises."

The camera makes a subtle beep as it brings the lens into focus. The sound attracts the horses' attention. Their ears lock onto the black box at the top of the tripod. They look bothered, but then after a moment, they start to relax. The quiet clicks and chirps actually seem to put them at ease. I suspect the sounds make us seem safe—a pair of birds—more like chubby cranes than grizzlies.

After I've made enough pictures, I look up from my viewfinder. I stand for several minutes, staring eye-to-eye at the "other." The Sioux and the Cheyenne called them, "The Horse People." This band's leader is a male that we've seen often in the time since our first encounter. We guess that he's an old stallion, spending his golden years roaming with a group of bachelors. His body is charcoal. A dark coat covers his back and shoulders but it breaks up along his neck. Under his throat, the color changes to a marbled spread of black and white. On his face, he wears a set of marks that give him luminosity. As I look into his eyes I am struck by the sense that I'm looking through time. It feels like I am looking into the eye of the Earth.

* * * *

Horses evolved on the North American continent. They evolved here, and nowhere else. They grazed alongside woolly mammoths. They ran from the threat of dire wolves and saber-toothed cats. Paleontologists suggest that horses went extinct in this hemisphere during the last ice age. At least, that's one story. The fossil record demonstrates that horses outlasted other species in the Pleistocene, and some evidence suggests that small bands may have even survived into the era of European conquest. Even so, it's safe to assume that most of them migrated over the Bering land bridge into Asia.

Mongolians were the first to climb onto a horse's back. From the steppes of the Himalayas, the animals travelled to Africa and Europe. Some took on stripes and turned into zebras. The herdsmen of the Mediterranean used others to launch

war parties into Spain. Not to be outdone, the Spaniards also began to keep horses. Riding became an art. Finally, in the days of Christopher Columbus, horses were loaded on ships and returned to the homeland of their ancestors. The native people of the West have a saying, "The grass remembers the horses." The tribes of the plains found spiritual partners in these animals, whose teeth and hooves evolved on American soil.

In spite of their role on farms and in militaries, anyone who has witnessed a band of wild mustangs running can see that their bodies were carved by the elements of western states: prairie wind and wide open spaces. Compared to the other animals that we turned into pets or commodities, horses wear their domestication lightly. After a single generation born in freedom, they return to the patterns of behavior that served them since the Cenozoic. Like the offspring of hatchery raised salmon, born into rivers, they only know one state. The wild.

In a well-known passage, Henry David Thoreau suggested, "In wildness is the preservation of the world." It is one of the most enigmatic sentences in American letters. Speculations about what he meant abound in different directions, but most scholars agree that the hermit of Walden used these words to remind us that societies can take a toll on our better nature. In towns and cities our culture goes to work on us. We become domesticated. Our thoughts turn into reflections of popular, but often dubious beliefs.

Our culture limits our vision. Societies ask us to wear a set of blinders, much like those that we would place onto the eyes of a draft horse. Blinders curb what you see. They make it possible for us to look at human beings as if they are one dimensional. We tend to see ourselves as workers. In the past, our culture drove us to view others as slaves. When we look at the dry grasses of our prairies and deserts, too often, we dwindle what we see to that of a forage factory, a pasture for sheep and cattle or an economic entity, thought of in terms of animal-units-per-month. Thoreau would not have pictured the prairie that way. He saw a rich pallet of both humanity and nature, stretching from his feet toward the West.

At times, we rise above the tendency to shrink our thoughts on land, people, and animals down to the level of economics. For example, when we crafted legislation to protect wild horses, we stood up for aesthetic values and the moral case for conserving their habitat. Richard Nixon signed the Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act in 1971. Today, I hear the American mustang discussed as a nuisance. People describe them as pests or misfits. I do not take issue with the notion that they are misfits. They belong to another age—a time when the grasslands of this continent were still untamed. For that reason alone, we ought to appreciate wild horses. During a speech on civil rights, Martin Luther King junior joined Thoreau by placing faith in wildness. King said, "Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively malad-

usted." Misfits. Those who don't wear blinders. People who refuse to follow.

On some level, we understand what the wisest among us have tried to teach. In some ways we acknowledge the value of wildness. We admire those with a will strong enough to overcome the pressure to conform. The mustang serves as a mascot for one of the high schools in our hometown: Casper, Wyoming. Since we lack a professional football team, most of us cheer for the Denver Broncos, and every vehicle registered in the state bears a license plate emblazoned with an image of a bucking horse. In some sense we know the value and appeal of a rebel. We identify with the spirit of the mustang. We made the wild horse into a symbol of unbrokeness.

We also decreased the number of mustangs in the West from over two million to less than 56,000 in two generations. The state of Wyoming recently sued the Bureau of Land Management. If the state wins the lawsuit, the ruling will force the BLM to further cut the number of wild horses within our borders. In addition, state representatives have proposed legislation that would lift our current ban on horse slaughter. John Fire Lame Deer, a member of the Lakota Sioux tribe, once told an interviewer, "When a people start killing off their own symbols they are in a bad way."

* * * *

After an hour, the horses in front of us turn their attention to one another. They start to nuzzle each other's faces and necks. One of them looks like he is sleeping. Over time, in a landscape without any shelter, horses learned to lean on members of their families.

I fold the tripod and we begin to make our way toward the car. We haven't even taken time to pick a place to camp. Our original plans would have put us on a creek a hundred miles to the north. After we walk several paces, I cannot help myself, I turn around. The horses have begun to follow us. They do not walk us all the way back to the road, but they follow us for fifty yards, and then they watch us leave.

Back home, Monday morning, I throw a leg over my mountain bike and start the usual commute to work. I begin on a well-worn path: two lefts and then on a right on the paved grid of our neighborhood. Before I reach the office I notice I am running early, so I jump the curb. Then I take off into the empty grassland at the edge of town.

Photo Wild Horses and Burros in Wyoming © Bureau of Land Management



SEASONAL. MINDFUL. DELICIOUS.

Introducing a new section to *The Wayfarer: The Mindful Kitchen*,
featuring seasonal recipes to offer on your home table.

SEASONAL FARMER'S MARKET PLOUGHMAN'S LUNCH

Many times the simplest foods are the most delectable. The first recipe we will feature in "Mindful Kitchen" has no recipe. (Very minimalist of us if you think about it.) The ploughman's lunch is a dish with a recipe dictated by season and availability. It is an English meal traditionally composed of farm cheese, a pickled item, apples, boiled eggs, ham, and even a pint of beer is often found in the mix.

In a modern return to the simplicity of ingredients, the ploughman's lunch is the dish that allows you to indulge in seasonal delights. Celebrate the freshest fruits and vegetables alongside a couple of pickled items from last year's harvest and some organic, free range charcuterie. Serve it on large plates—family style—with coffee, a pot of aromatic tea, a bottle of wine, or a few pints of beer and there you have it!

A SPRING PLATE

A Dozen Halved Fresh Figs
English Cheddar Cheese
Halved Hardboiled Eggs
*10-12 mins so yoke is slightly soft
Blanched Asparagus Drizzled with Olive Oil
and a pinch of Kosher Salt
Spring Onions
Sliced Raw Fennel with Olive Oil Drizzle
Sliced French Baguette
Serve with a Dry White Wine

SUMMER PLATE

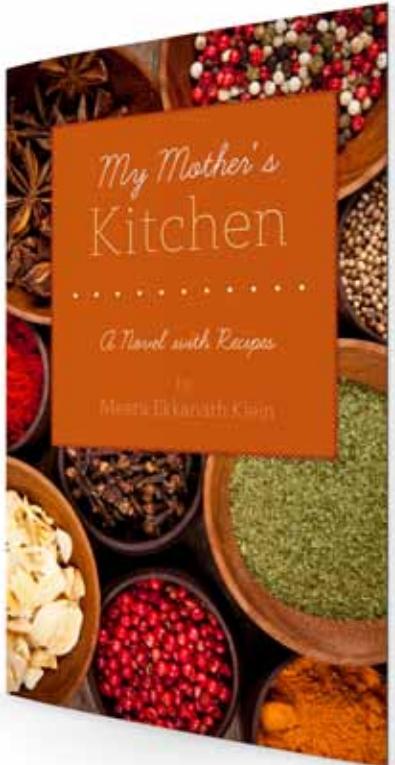
Prosciutto
Cantaloupe Melon
Goat Cheese
Grapes
Pita Chips
Edamame
Serve with Crisp, Fruity White Wine

AUTUMN PLATE

Fig Preserve
Milk Crackers
Gruyere
Sliced Genoa
Halved Hardboiled Eggs
Oil Cured Olive of your Choice
Apples
Pears
Serve with Mulled Apple Cider
or Pitcher of Pale Ale

WINTER PLATE

Wedge of Maytag Blue Cheese
Dried Fruits (dates, cranberries, cherries, apricots)
Sliced French Baguette
Oil Cured Olive of your Choice
Spiced Nuts
Gingerbread
Serve with a Bold Red Wine
or spiced, hot chocolate



My Mother's Kitchen

A Novel with Recipes

by
Meera Ekkānath Klein

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—PADMA VENKATRAMAN,
award-winning author of *Climbing the Stairs*



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WEEDS

BY ERIC D. LEHMAN

"We have to pull that," my mother said, pointing to the wall of vegetation sprouting from the dark earth of my garden. I peered through the glass doors at the legion of green and purple giants. They didn't look so bad. "Why?" I asked. "Those are weeds," she assured me. I shrugged, neither consenting nor rejecting her proposal. Of course, one must pull weeds, especially those in our carefully-tended gardens. I didn't care what my neighbors thought, but being a first-time homeowner and gardener, I did want my meager patch to look agreeable and to produce something delicious I could use in the kitchen. Still, those weeds didn't look like weeds to me, amateur though I was.

I spent the next month fixing indoor areas of the new realm, but finally had time to investigate these four-foot tall monsters, which leaned heavily out from the circular garden, straining into the sunlight, away from my tall pine hedge. What were these mighty plants, with leaves shaped like enormous arrowheads and greenish-white flowers? I dug out my field guides and found numerous plants that matched this description. Then, on a whim, I found a book on edible plants and paged through. And as I compared the pictures with the backyard weeds, I found an undeniable match: poke.

Far from being a weed, poke or poke salad was apparently a potherb used by country people all over the United States. Moreover, it had been taken back to southern Europe and to this day remains a staple in many gardens there. The young shoots in the spring could be picked and cooked like asparagus, fried in oil or fat, or preserved. The book had a variety of mouth-watering recipes and I could feel my belly rumbling. Then I found out that the root was used in very small quantities by many native peoples as a medicinal herb. The mature plants in my backyard could not be eaten, having some of the root's narcotic in the giant celery-like stems. Nevertheless, I licked my lips and began to look forward to sampling the tender, fresh poke when April came. The best part was that I didn't have to do anything—it was growing in my garden already. Almost like a weed.

In October, the stems blushed violet and the flowers blossomed into clusters of lovely black berries. They outshone the fading day lilies that framed them, beautiful in the autumn

sunlight. They had advanced to five and six feet by now and looked like strong, healthy young trees rather than plants, seeming to dominate my entire backyard. I began to wonder why these were considered undesirable by my well-meaning mother, and indeed everyone else who stopped by my house and observed them.

As winter came, my mother stopped by again and pulled the poke along with all the other unidentified plants. I said nothing, but secretly churned with conflict. I suppose a bed of roses would look nicer. And I did need space in my limited backyard to plant onions and potatoes for my summer dinners. Still, the decision gnawed at me, as if I had allowed something awful to happen. It wasn't my mother's fault—she had her traditions and they did not include poke. Weeds were weeds and neither useful nor beautiful.

Now, as spring peeks around the corner, I must consider what sort of garden I want to plant. Should it be acceptable to look at, full of gorgeous flowerbeds? Should I plant traditional fare for my dining room table? I suppose I should compromise and sow more day lilies to frame a handful of tomatoes and green peppers. But a secret thought has begun to grow wild in my brain. I might plant a healthy sampling of plants that others consider weeds: wild mustard, milkweed, wild gobo, whatever I can forage in local meadows and by roadsides. And when my first crop appears, I will invite my mother for a healthy meal. I bet she'll enjoy fried poke.

A Note: Be sure to eat only the young plants, without any purple coloring, which indicates poison. Be careful with any wild edibles. | Image from 8.ate@eight



ERIC D. LEHMAN is a travel and history writer, with reviews, essays, and stories in dozens of magazines and journals. He is also an award-winning author of many books, including *Afoot in Connecticut, Insiders' Guide to Connecticut, A History of Connecticut Food, Becoming Tom Thumb: Charles Stratton, P.T. Barnum, and the Dawn of American Celebrity*. He lives in Hamden with his wife, poet Amy Nawrocki, and his two cats.

SPRUNG

BY KATHERINE HAUSWIRTH

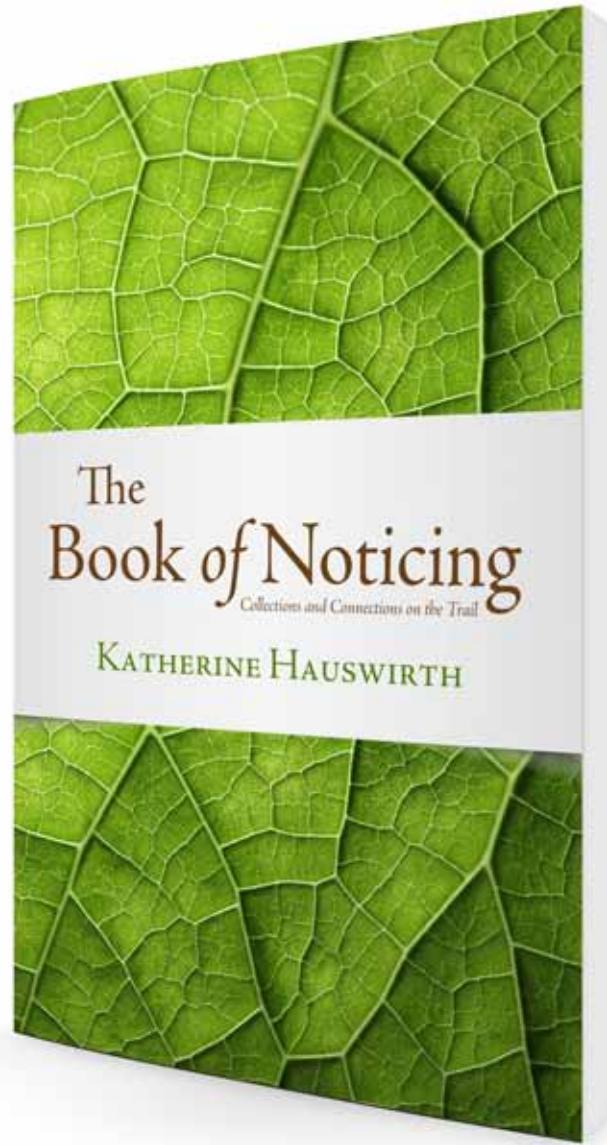
Abridged excerpt from *The Book of Noticing: Collections and Connections on the Trail*

My mother dusted off a favorite phrase with the start of every March: “spring has sprung.” I like the cheeriness of this pithy pronouncement, and the suddenness, the burst open floodgates of the new season that it celebrates. If any season seems simultaneously long in arriving and quite sudden, it is spring. We want it, we want it more, we agonize over its elusiveness and then it seems one day it is just here. Whether or not our calendars back us up, we feel it, hear it, can practically taste the pollen, and our hearts are often warmed long before we are officially in the new season.

The light brings a palpable sense of new possibility, even on frigid mornings. It’s as if the stage lights are gradually warming in anticipation of a gala performance. The “stage lights” are our sun, and as the Northern hemisphere turns toward it the hibernators are yawning, stretching, and suddenly very hungry. The plants are channeling their energy into born-again experiences everywhere. The performers are warming up, setting the stage for a show-stopping finale rife with cascades of chlorophyll and varied progeny. In some cases, though, it’s like the performer just couldn’t wait and ran pell mell into the spotlight while the orchestra was tuning up.

Take mushrooms. You walk the dog one moist, breezy morning and the lawn is free of them. The next morning, they are covering the front yard. (Of course, mushrooms aren’t only a springtime occurrence. But we notice them more as the weather warms and our time outside expands). According to the *Handy Biology Answer Book*, mushroom’s fruiting bodies (just one fraction of the fungi—the most visible part, above ground) are encouraged by warm, damp weather, and initially tiny round caps indeed expand voluminously overnight. The book cites an extreme example: the stinkhorn *Dictyophora indusiata* or *Phallus indusiatus* (it does indeed look like a phallus, with a fishnet skirt on)—which pushes out of the ground at about 0.2 inches per minute. If you happen to be there when this happens (so, someplace tropical), you might actually hear a crackling sound as the fungus expands outward and upward.

With all of this pop-up life inhabiting my synapses, the meandering trail of my mind had me recalling a class I took on the Old Testament in college. The professor shared a theory that the manna from heaven that appeared suddenly one morning to the exiled Israelites in the desert could actually



have been bird droppings. I have long since forgotten which type of bird was supposed to have such palatable droppings, and my attempt to flesh out that story has not been fruitful. But I did find one treatise about how manna could have been mushrooms, and the author makes a convincing argument about how the fungi match up with highly specific Biblical descriptions. Another theory published by *Smithsonian Magazine* likens manna to a sweet-tasting secretion of a variety of

plant lice that infects certain shrubs in the Sinai Desert, and this theory seems to have legs (so to speak) since Bedouins continue to harvest and eat the stuff.

I can imagine the Israelites' surprise the first time they awoke to find the mysterious manna, whatever its origins. For me, the Biblical description is a metaphor for the suddenly-seeming new life that visits every spring with such abundance, heralded by melting snow and April showers: "The manna came down on the camp with the dew during the night." (Numbers 11:9, NLT).

Miraculous as it was, the Israelites didn't stay amazed about the manna. They craved meat, and the Bible story describes them as whining about it: "But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!" (Numbers 11:5-7 [NIV]).

This part of the story jibes with something I have been noticing in myself. I am so happy and grateful for my chances to wander and muse outside. But sometimes I am just itchy for a sighting, one of those photo-op moments when a creature crosses my path or an exotic-looking bloom shouts out at me in full color. Manna, though miraculous, isn't good enough. Bring on the meaty moments!

In the woods and pools of April, life is less obvious than I might choose. I end up looking skyward, towards the bird-song, because the forest and the water seem largely a brown, orange, and green mosaic that keeps mostly mum about the life it nurtures. On a recent walk through a cedar swamp at Bushy Hill in Ivoryton, I was thrilled to see just a small cluster of new frog eggs after tramping about for quite some time. Doubtless there were plenty of other hidden eggs, as well as creature mothers, fathers, siblings, predators, and predatees, but spotting them would require tons of time and patience. I never seem to have both in stock at once, and wonder whether the instant gratifications of the world beyond the woods have primed me to expect an on-demand delivery of whatever is on my wish list that day.

Again my mind veers from trail to words, thinking about Susan Lovejoy's book *A Blessing of Toads*. Her title brings a strong and immediate sense memory of what has felt like a blessing on many occasions: holding a cool, pulsing, soft-bellied, warty American Toad between two hands, where it has sat at my mercy, completely noiseless. I know from my studies that the American Toad has an impressively lengthy, high-pitched, vibrating trill, like a bird. I know that I should get my hands dirty and hold him by the hips next time, so he doesn't have to absorb my chemicals or get injured when he tries to launch away. And I know that he will sing when he is ready, and not a moment sooner. Like spring and its myriad revelations, it will be worth my wait.

Look for *The Book of Noticing: Collections and Connections on the Trail* May 16, 2017 wherever books are sold.



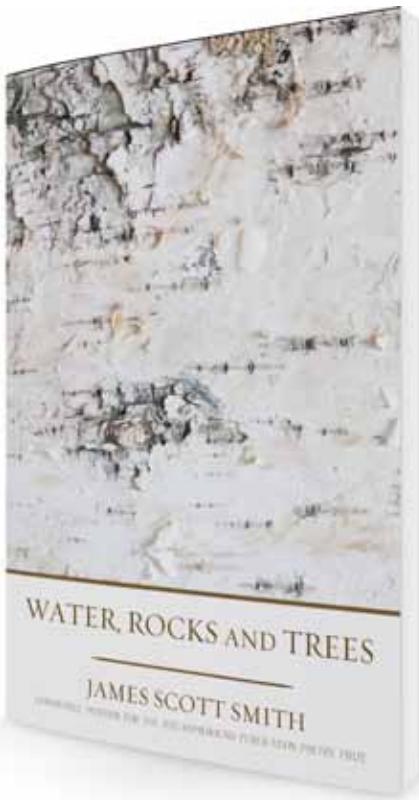
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WATER, ROCKS AND TREES

JAMES SCOTT SMITH

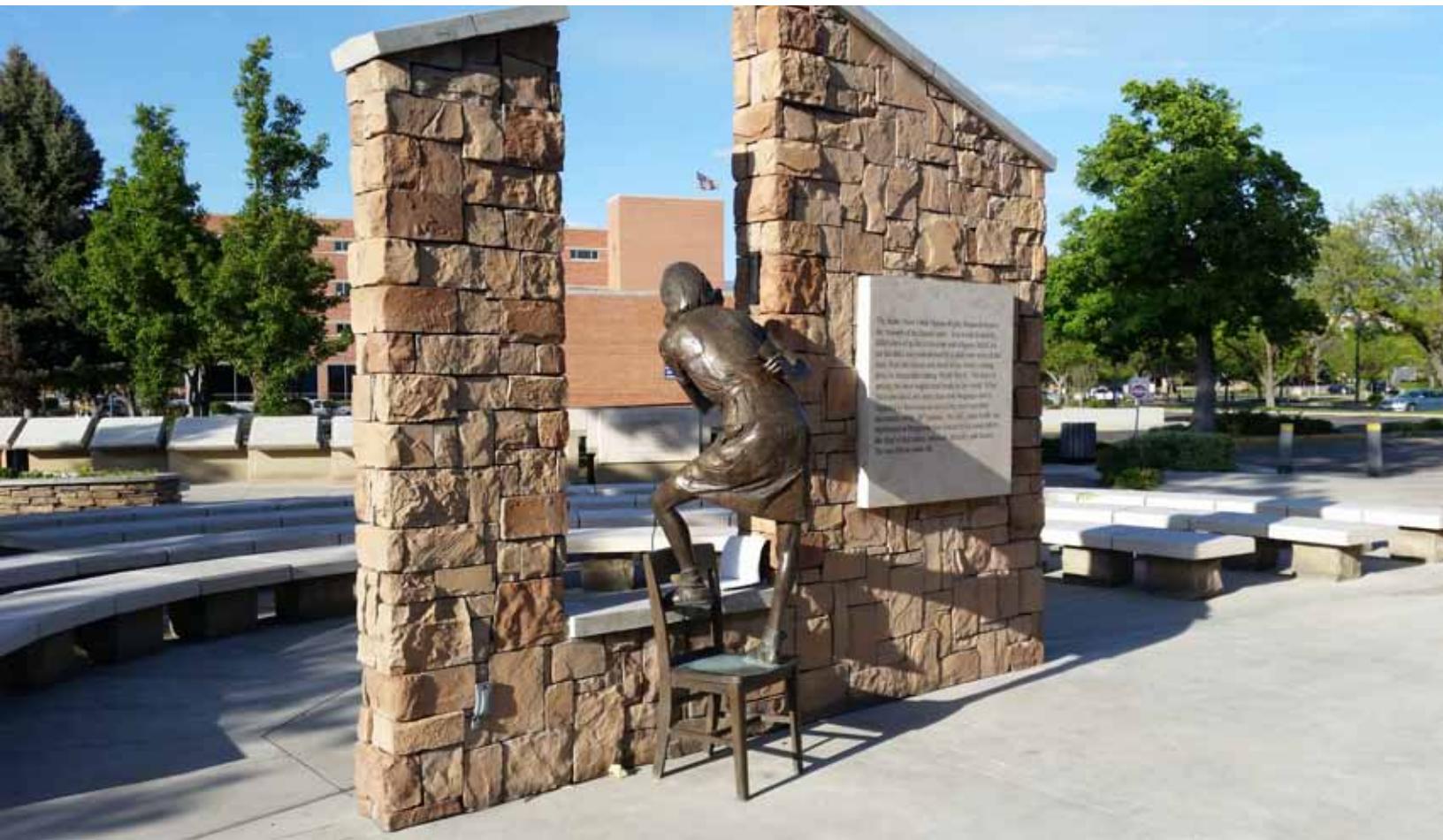
In his debut poetry collection, *Water, Rocks and Trees*, James Scott Smith explores our relationship to the natural world with a shamanistic sensibility. Smith's yearning for connection, for a sense of belonging to the earth, the universe, permeates every poem. Whether describing the "death drop love dance / of the hummingbird" or the coyote with a "fresh kill of rabbit hanging / soft and surrendered in her mouth," Smith revels in the intelligence and vibrancy of the more than human world. Here, man doesn't conquer nature—he converses with it. It is a conversation I didn't want to end.

—MARY REYNOLDS THOMPSON, author of *Reclaiming the Wild Soul*

HONORABLE MENTION FOR THE 2015
HOMEBOUND PUBLICATIONS POETRY PRIZE

ANNE FRANK'S MANDATE

BY GAIL COLLINS-RANADIVE



“An Anne Frank Memorial . . . in Boise, Idaho!?”

Perhaps I hadn't heard quite right in the Saturday night din of the crowded restaurant. My partner and I were sitting across the table from his high school classmate whose wife was naming points of interest that shouldn't be missed in their home city. “Really! But why?”

“I'm not sure,” she answered. “I think it had something to do with countering the pockets of white supremacists that give our state a bad name.”

A Google search in our motel room revealed that a traveling exhibit on Anne Frank in 1995 had drawn tens of thousands of visitors from around Idaho, and sparked the idea for a more permanent tribute. Over the next several years, community leaders and citizens from all over the state worked together to create the only Anne Frank Memorial in the country.

So we set out to find it on Sunday morning. Leaving the car in an otherwise deserted library parking lot, we headed on foot towards the river

that ran through the city of the same name, a French word for trees: apparently, the sight of lush woods after endless stretches of sun-scorched earth had brought forth a gasp of "boise!" (woods) from early fur trappers.

Indeed, the walking trail beside the Boise River was lined with huge trees, though I could swear I detected a faint paper mill stench in my nostrils. Don't go there, I told myself, struggling to not envision the scenario: how wonderful, trees! Let's cut them down and turn them into a commodity.

We didn't get very far, for right behind the charming Writers' Barn we came across stone steps leading up through a passageway between stone walls. At the base of the steps was a stone slab inscribed with a block of words that began, "Dear Kitty." We had found the Anne Frank Memorial. "Kitty" was the name she'd given to her diary.

We climbed the steps as if finding our way into the infamous Annex, though this space was open to an intense blue sky, with the line of mountains defining the east, and a ribbon of water running beneath a cathedral of trees to the west. Yet coming into the semi-circular enclosure felt oddly confining.

Directly across from this back entrance was a life-size bronze figure of a young girl at a far "window." She was standing on a chair, parting an invisible curtain with one hand, and, with the other, holding her diary behind her, while peering down on an imaginary Amsterdam street.

My heart stopped in my chest. My breath came in a silent sob. I stood there, transfixed and trembling, as if tapping into a strange premonition from the past as a warning to the present.

Second-hand scenes of the Holocaust began to wash over me, images that had first penetrated my awareness back when I read this teenager's journal as a teen myself.

I have since learned that Anne Frank intended for that reaction to happen. In fact, although she began her diary as a private record of thoughts and feelings that no one else was ever supposed to read, in March 1944 (while in hiding in the Annex), she heard a radio broadcast by a member of the Dutch government in exile. Promising that when the war ended he would create a public record of what had happened

under German occupation, he urged the creation and preservation of letters and diaries.

Anne vowed to submit her own work when the time came. Thus she began editing her diary, deleting and revising and creating pseudonyms, all in preparation for publication.

In short, she wrote to be read, for as she noted in her diary on Wednesday, 5 April 1944:

"I finally realized that I must do my schoolwork to keep from being ignorant, to get on in life, to become a journalist, because that's what I want! I know I can write . . . , but it remains to be seen whether I really have talent....

"And if I don't have the talent to write books or newspaper articles, I can always write for myself.

"When I write I can shake off all my cares. My sorrow disappears, my spirits are revived!

"But, and that's a big question, will I ever be able to write something great, will I ever become a journalist or a writer?"

She continued writing regularly until her last entry, on April 11, 1944:

"Dear Kitty...Footsteps in the house, the private office, the kitchen, then...on the staircase. All sounds of breathing stopped, eight hearts pounded. Footsteps on the stairs, then a rattling at the bookcase. This moment is indescribable. "Now we're done for," I said, and I had visions of all fifteen of us being dragged away by the Gestapo that very night."

The spectra of the Holocaust loomed large, looking out through this window with Anne, from where she observed and recorded things that no young person should be exposed to.

But this wasn't Amsterdam; this was Boise, Idaho, and this was the Human Rights Memorial! Across the plaza in front of the window were six slabs of stone on which was carved the entire Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948, three years after Anne's death in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. It was meant to be a worldwide commitment that "Never Again" would such horror be allowed to happen!

Yet just to the left was a semi-circular wall bearing witness to the endless struggle against 'man's inhumanity to man' before and since. The etched words were those of the well known and the unknown: Eleanor Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Jr, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandala, of course, but, equally as powerful, a poet from Rwanda, a child from Sarajevo.

I found myself choking on irony, for here were Chief Joseph's words taking their rightful place on the engraved wall: we were reading them in his very homeland, from where his Nez Perce tribe had been removed and confined/consigned to a fraction of the area across which they had once lived freely, an area that included large swaths of present day ID, OR, and WA.

"It is cold, and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are—perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children, and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead.

"Hear me, my chiefs! I am tired. My heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever."

In his last years, Joseph spoke eloquently against the injustice of United States policy toward his people and held out the hope that America's promise of freedom and equality might one day be fulfilled for Native Americans as well. He died still in exile from his homeland...."of a broken heart."

Today, more than a century later, his story is being replayed by the Sioux people at Standing Rock, North Dakota, whose territory has been "shrinking" for years as they've been moved back and forth across their land whenever the discovery of exploitable resources (gold, lumber, minerals) has justified reservation trespass and broken treaties. Now a corporation is committed to building an oil-sands carrying pipeline across their reservation and beneath the source of their drinking water.

For many months these 'water protectors' have blocked construction of the final leg of this Black Snake. This standoff turns out to be utterly timely, when, in our era, the relentless extracting, transporting, and burning of greenhouse gas emitting fos-

sil fuels is threatening yet another 'holocaust,' one sanctioned and supported by political powers that profit from it.

Like the Holocaust, today's unfolding human-created climate catastrophe "depends on a complex structure of aggressors, victims, and bystanders," Roger Gottlieb tells us in *A Spirituality of Resistance*. A philosophy professor and Holocaust scholar concerned with crimes by and threats against humanity, Gottlieb lifts up the parallels between genocide and ecocide, the prospect of mass death for entire communities, species, and ecosystems.

Yet he goes on to assure us, "In both settings, people facing overwhelming odds have fought back. In the reality of resistance, we may find hope for both past and future..."

With climate change fast becoming the next human rights challenge for humanity, who will resist? Who will bear witness?

Whose names may one day be etched on yet another wall here at the Anne Frank Memorial in Boise, ID? Mine? Yours?

The Nazis were determined that none would survive to bear witness, thus no one would believe that the Holocaust ever happened. They didn't count on a young girl's diary being found among scattered papers in a trashed attic in Amsterdam.



GAIL COLLINS-RANADIVE, MA, MFA, MDiv, is the author of seven books that include two Homebound titles, *Chewing Sand: An Eco-Spiritual Taste of the Mohave Desert*, and *Nature's Calling: The Grace of Place*.

www.gailcollinsranadive.com.

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THE WATER PROTECTORS OF STANDING ROCK

A Mosaic of Voices from the Movement

BY L.M. BROWNING • PHOTOGRAPHY BY ELIZABETH HOOVER

Our definition of a “wayfarer” is a wanderer whose ability to re-imagine the possible provides the compass bearings for those on their way. A wayfarer can be a writer, artist, musician, activist, volunteer—anyone who is charting the way for change. Each issue we feature a profile of a wayfarer and highlight what they are doing to be an agent of change in the world. For the first time in the history of our publication, we have chosen to feature a *movement* as our wayfarer.





Sadie Red Wing (Spirit Lake Nation)

AGE: 26

OCCUPATION
Graphic Designer

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

I first went to Standing Rock August 11th, 2016. I have made over 15 trips to the camps in Standing Rock. My latest trip ended on December 8th, 2016.

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?

On August 10th, 2016, there was a call to action for people to head to Cannon Ball, North Dakota to block the entry points of the Dakota Access Pipeline equipment. Without a question, I headed up to Cannon Ball with donations and participated in the prayers along Highway 1806. The motivation of me going to Cannon Ball came from my heart and home. My family and I live along the Missouri River. Any tampering to the water effects my home. I felt it was my duty to join the fight in protecting water for the sake of my families' lives, my life, and the future generation's life. Water is important to me and my culture—I would feel guilty NOT protecting our water.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?

In the earlier times of action, my first impressions were very mixed. I was determined to be on site, but I was also shocked to see what the Dakota Access Pipeline construction was doing to our lands. It was a beautiful feeling to be around prayer along Highway 1806. I was impressed that majority of the action was being done by my generation (20-30 of age). My personal friends did a great job leading women and children to safe areas and conducting prayer. I could not be any happier to be involved in the situation, but I also was very upset of the forceful confrontation brought onto the protectors. Nobody likes to see their peers harmed in anyway. I know I did not like seeing my friends beat, bloodied, maced, and jailed by the DAPL security just for standing in prayer. It was an extremely emotional time.

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF THE PROTECTORS?

I cannot speak for all water protectors, but I believe the mindset of those fighting against the pipeline is protection. We want clean water for our future generations. We want our treaties honored. We are fighting to protect ourselves as Native Americans. The fight against the pipeline has been a great time to revive cultural traditions that have not been practiced frequently in the past—I found that very beautiful. On the downside, the fight has shown how subordinate we (Native Americans) are in the world. It has shown how lifeless we are in the media, how little our human rights are taken into consideration, and how our culture is still mocked by others who do not care to understand our way of life.

WHAT IS A POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

I have multiple positive memories from the experience. I think what makes me smile the most is the brotherhood shown amongst my peers at camp. I enjoyed sitting in a tipi, or around a fire, listening to stories that made us all laugh. During the days of celebration, people in the camps commemorated in their traditional ways. It was amazing to hear on one side of camp playing hand games, while the other side of camp was singing round dance and ceremonial songs. People war hooped and trilled until the early hours in the morning under the bright stars. The positive energy was something I'll never forget. I even developed a closer relationship with a friend I met a few years back. All these memories make me want to continue to go back to Standing Rock.



Glenna (Eagle) Yellow Fat

*(I am a Hunkapa Lakota from Standing Rock.
I was born and raised in Fort Yates North Dakota.)*

AGE: I hit my 42nd summer July 2016.

OCCUPATION

I am the wife of Standing Rock Tribal Councilman Dana Yellow Fat. Together we have 6 children, 3 daughters and 3 sons. We, as a family, have been fighting against the Dakota Access Pipe Line since before the movement went nationwide.

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

On April 1, 2016 a prayer ride took place. The ride started in front of the Standing Rock Tribal Administration building in Fort Yates and ended in Cannonball, ND. That day was when Sacred Stone Camp was started. There were less than 75 people that took part in that ride. Even fewer that set up a tent or tipi at the first camp. We continued to try to get the word out there about this pipeline and what would happen. While there was a Bismarck news station that documented the movement that day. It was like no one really paid attention. I am proud to say my husband and 3 of our children participated, 1 of our sons led the ride for the first 15 miles, carrying the family eagle feather staff.

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?

The proposed crossing is right in our backyard. We became more aware of it after my husband was voted onto the council in October 2015. That is when I first started posting on Facebook against DAPL.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?

I am amazed by how big this 'movement' has grown since we did the ride. Beyond thankful for those that answered to call for help and pushed this national. Back in August when this first blew up and we got the call that we were needed at the frontline, none of us knew what to expect. We were running around gathering things that we might need out there. We knew there were police, but we didn't know how they were going treat everyone. So, one of the main things we grabbed were scarves to cover our noses and mouths, who has respirators or masks on hand on a daily basis if you don't need them? We were already worried back then about them using tear gas and mace against us. Thankfully that didn't take place back then. Our 3 oldest children were going to go with us and they were kind of freaking out because they immediately thought back to the fight against the KXL Pipeline. They knew how things got back then by watching news and posts from friends that were there. To say they were scared is an understatement. We started posting on Facebook for people to meet us out there. There wasn't much we could say as we weren't given much information ourselves.

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF THE PROTECTORS?

Since then so much has taken place, thousands have physically shown up to show support, and things have escalated numerous times. One thing the Pro-DAPL people can't seem to understand: This isn't just about us, Standing Rock, it's about the millions that depend on this body of water for life. This isn't about any one race, it's about the Human Race and its future. That is why we are all fighting so hard against this. I want my children and grandchildren to have a future. When the pipeline breaks, there goes the future of agriculture, wild game, fish, all fauna, cattle, etc... How are we supposed to continue to live without all of that? And that is why, we will continue to fight against the corporations and government if that is what we have to do.

WHAT IS A POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

One of the biggest positives of this whole movement has been the coming together of all the Native Nations. Historical enemies have gathered under One Purpose to fight against a common enemy! In addition to that the Seven Council Fires was convened, that hasn't been done since 1876! To be able to bear witness to that is indescribable. To be a part of history in the making every single day has been amazing. All the indigenous nations that have banded together has brought about so many feelings I have no words to describe them.



"One thing the Pro-DAPL people can't seem to understand: This isn't just about us, Standing Rock, it's about the millions that depend on this body of water for life. This isn't about any one race, it's about the Human Race and its future. That is why we are all fighting so hard against this. I want my children and grandchildren to have a future. When the pipeline breaks, there goes the future of agriculture, wild game, fish, all fauna, cattle, etc... How are we supposed to continue to live without all of that?"

– GLENNA (EAGLE) YELLOW FAT OF THE HUNKAPA LAKOTA, STANDING ROCK





Inaki Estivaliz

AGE: 42

OCCUPATION

Independent journalist

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

December 3 - 18, 2016

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?

The main reason to go to Standing Rock was that I realized that the information being disseminated about what was going on there was in English. I decided to travel there with the mission to report in Spanish. My reports have been published in magazines and newspapers of Puerto Rico and Nicaragua, and in the main alternative news website in Spanish: rebelion.org.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?

Immediately I realized that this is much more than a simple protest against a pipeline. On the one hand, it involves the awakening of the indigenous tribes of the continent, who for the first time in hundreds of years have been empowered to peacefully face a system, capitalist, centralized in Washington, that has massacred, exploited, marginalized and ignored them. On the other hand, it is the universal claim that we can stop depending on the fossil energies that the planet needs for its survival that humans change towards clean energies.

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF THE PROTECTORS?

They are *water protectors* and not “protesters.” Because water is life, and dependence on oil endangers life on the planet. Another thing that caught my attention is the conviction of water protectors in the power of prayer, which, with mutual help and solidarity, are their only weapons.

WHAT POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

My experience on the ground was not at all traumatic. The greatest difficulty was working under extreme temperatures in uncomfortable conditions. There was also the constant threat that the authorities could re-assault those who were there, physically or with arrest and prosecution. But far from being a traumatic experience, it was one of the most enriching experiences of my life. The realization of the solidarity of human beings in adverse situations, knowing indigenous traditions, sharing and collaborating with strangers in extreme conditions, has been wonderful. Best of all, check that a better world is possible.





Eli Wright

AGE: 35

OCCUPATION

Retired US Army Medic, Artist

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

I was there from Nov. 23, 2016 to Dec. 8, 2016

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?:

I “deployed” to Standing Rock with a contingent of Iraq Veterans Against The War. As a former combat medic, I wanted to answer the call in support of the water protectors struggle when I saw the videos surface online of dogs attacking unarmed people. They asked for more medics, and I wanted to offer my skills to provide aid for people who were being injured at the hands of the heavily militarized police who were targeting water protectors with chemical agents, rubber bullets, and water cannons in sub-freezing temperatures. As an organization, IVAW has been working to organize resistance and educate people about the military industrial complex and its role in the militarization of domestic law enforcement. I’ve seen the war come home in many ways, and was deeply disturbed to witness how the police have become equipped with military grade weapons back home in our own communities.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?:

It was inspiring to see the massive response organized around this struggle. Standing Rock has become an important historical event not just because of the Dakota Access Pipeline, but also because of the unprecedented gathering of 300+ indigenous nations and the solidarity between native peoples and non-natives alike. While I was there, up to 4000 veterans also arrived to support the movement, just before the Army Corps of Engineers announced the denial of the easement under the Missouri River/Lake Oahe. It was at least a temporary victory in the fight against DAPL, and I think it was a testament to the efficacy of grassroots organizing and the power of nonviolent direct action.

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF PROTECTORS?

What I witnessed was a deep dedication to indigenous culture among the entire community, among both native and non-native people. There was a strong commitment to approaching every action through prayer, ceremony, and non-violence. I cannot claim to answer on behalf of “the mindset of the water protectors” because the struggle at Standing Rock is composed of an extremely diverse range of people. Every individual heeded a call to go there for many different reasons, but what matters most is that nearly everyone is committed to a common principle of stopping the pipeline while remaining peaceful despite the violence being committed upon them and their ancestral lands. Within that framework, there remains a consistent and committed effort towards decolonization. Indigenous people from all over the world are reclaiming their identity and culture, and Standing Rock seems to be a proving ground for how they are putting those efforts into action in a very effective and historically significant way.

WHAT IS A POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

As an Iraq veteran, I finally felt a sense of pride in service to my country and its people that I never felt while serving in the military. The camaraderie and solidarity were so present, and it gave me a sense of what all of our communities could look like when we self-organize around shared principles like that. Witnessing this indigenous-led struggle was a profoundly transformative experience. As a non-native person, Standing Rock gave me a chance to see our shared history through a completely new lens. This fight has been going on for generations, and it's certainly not over yet.



“...Every individual heeded a call to go there for many different reasons, but what matters most is that nearly everyone is committed to a common principle of stopping the pipeline while remaining peaceful despite the violence being committed upon them and their ancestral lands.”

-ELI WRIGHT, RETIRED US ARMY MEDIC





Irene Skyriver

AGE

I celebrated my 62nd birthday at Standing Rock.

OCCUPATION

I am a farmer and an organizer for Passage Rites for teens.

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

I was gone for nine days, returning on September 29th.

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?

I wrote this poem en route to Standing Rock. It best tells my reason for going:

Standoff at Standing Rock

Heading down the powwow highway
The Indian Nations are gathering
Their drums pound in resolute harmony
I ride a battered bus through the night
On worn-out seats I curl up fetal
And try to sleep

Eyes shut I toss and imagine
I'm in a trundling boxcar packed with others
On our way to smoking ovens
Or am I chained in the hold of a ship
Pitching in seawaters I would never have dreamed
to sail across?

The displaced. The damned.
Moved, traded, slaughtered like cattle

The American Indian too
Hherded, corralled, culled

But their trail of tears may be evaporating
Transforming into thunderous clouds
And thundering drums

I follow their call to action
Knowing a great transformation
A rebirth of power and pride
Is blooming across a bruised and battered land
Through the voice of a bruised and battered people

Indigenous wisdom re-found, re-affirmed, re-formed
Here at Standing Rock
There in the Lummi lands
And where the dams came down on the Elwa River
Unification of First Nations
In the truly sacred struggle to keep our waters wild and clean

I say A-HO! To them wherever they stand, dance, sing or pray
I'm on my way to join
The only holy battle worth the fight
For our EARTH MOTHER!

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?

I cried often while at Standing Rock. A grandparent on either side of my family was of half NW Coastal ancestry. I have always related strongly to those origins. Every person I shook hands with, was a native brother or sister, at last being seen and acknowledged.

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF THE PROTECTORS?

Pride and dignity beamed from the Water Protectors. They knew they were on the right side of history with this struggle; no longer invisible, tucked away nicely on reservations. Pouring in from far flung places worldwide, Indigenous Peoples kept arriving; all cried with tears of joy at having found solidarity and sanity among a people fighting the same age-old struggle for the right to live in balance with the natural world. I as well!

WHAT IS A POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

I stood upon the "Black Snake", with others, fists raised while drums beat and prayers flew in the four directions and a "wall" of willows were planted in front of the pipeline. Empowered by my Water Protector activism, I've returned to my community, energized to stand up to threatening issues here: Navy Growler jets training over our homes with ear-splitting decibels, increased coal and oil tankers coming through our Salish Sea and Arctic oil-drilling. Meanwhile I continue to hold ceremony with drum and song to carry prayers and keep my heart in health and love through it all.



LaToya Crazy Bull

AGE: 25

OCCUPATION

College Student, substitute teacher at
The Head Start program.

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

August 15th, 2016- Present

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?:

I answered the call put out by the elders to come to Standing Rock to help protect the *Mni Wiconi*.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?

When I first arrived in Standing Rock my impression was that this pipeline needs to stop. DAPL was working at a very fast pace, digging up burial sites, not respecting the prayers or the elders. That made me very sad to see, but I also knew there was a lot of us willing to put our lives on the line to protect the water and the earth.

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF THE PROTECTORS?

I can only speak for myself on this question, but My mindset is that I am willing to put my life on the line to protect our *Unci Maka* (Mother Earth) and our *Mni Wiconi*.

WHAT IS A POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

The positive memory I will keep with me is how all walks of life from every corner of the world came to stand with us. Within all the chaos, no matter if we was maced, shot, or had tear gas thrown at us, people that didn't even know each other stepped in to take care of one another. Everyone helped each other out and many of us made lasting friendships out there on the frontlines. I am forever grateful.



"I was there in the aftermath of several traumatic actions, had friends up close, pepper-sprayed, arrested and charged with felonies. A traveling partner worked in the mental wellness tipi, where a steady stream of people sought help to defuse the anxiety and trauma left by what the police unleashed. There is no discounting the impact of the militarized response by the police and the state."

—KAI SANBURN, NURSE







Cole Howard

AGE: 32

OCCUPATION

Freelance photographer/videographer.

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

December 1 - 8, 2016

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?

Being a documentarian, I had an urge to better understand what was actually occurring on the grounds at Standing Rock as well as to witness the movement with my own eyes. The mass media took a slow route to paying attention to the native struggle against DAPL. After the issue became more prominent on social media and the news I began to understand that the movement was an extremely important moment in human history. It was a David and Goliath story, a united stand of a historically exploited community against one of the most powerful entities in the world—Oil and Gas Corporations—and the struggle still seemed to be underrepresented in the news.

I did not decide to actually go to Standing Rock, however until I had received an invitation to travel alongside a group of veterans. Before that I feared being underprepared to navigate the weather and that I could be a nuisance on the community. Once I received the invitation, I immediately began to pack.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?

Standing Rock was kind of overwhelming to initially integrate into. It is like a small city of differing groups of people aligned with the same goal—to protect the water and defeat DAPL—yet the different groups definitely had different ideas on how

to accomplish those goals. The community was beautiful. The differing attempts to unify the camp were beyond impressive like the mandatory orientation that all new campers were required to attend, which taught the populace how to be of aid to the community and respectful to the native customs, or the activism trainings that taught water protectors how to peacefully protest with organized resistance. But despite all of that there was an undertone of political dissonance between some of the groups, and understandably so. As one water protector once told me, “Decolonization of this magnitude has never really been attempted. Of course many of us are still figuring out the road map to it!”

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF THE PROTECTORS?

Overall the mindset of the water protectors was generally positive and filled with hope. There were definitely some that were filled with worry and stress was a very common theme amongst a majority of the water protectors that I saw, but despite the worries, there always seemed to be a back context of genuine hope.

WHAT IS A POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

It's funny how the simple things are sometimes the most meaningful. I remember multiple sunsets that stood out and one very starry night where I stood outside with a group of the vets and chatted about our lives. But the one positive experience that really stands out is when I volunteered in a community kitchen. Because I was there to document the experience, I did not get a lot of time to participate in camp life, however one night when I was stressed out and hungry, one of the vets who I was camping with offered to have me join him at a community kitchen to volunteer and then eat. I was resistant because I wanted to focus on my work, but I knew I needed to eat and was tired of eating MREs (military instant food) and I agreed to accompany him.

As soon as I began working in the kitchen, helping melt snow for dishwater, washing dishes, helping move around flats of food, etc. all of my worries disappeared and I truly felt like I was partaking in the community experience. It was simple moment refuge from the bitter cold weather and the fear of a police raid; it was a moment to help out with a smile and eat with friendly faces. Although this moment probably seems inconsequential in the scheme of things, it felt warming to my heart.



Kai Sanburn

AGE: 62

OCCUPATION

Nurse at a remote rural clinic.

WHEN WERE YOU AT STANDING ROCK?

September 21-26, 2016 & November 1-13, 2016

WHAT MADE YOU GO TO STANDING ROCK?

Of all the calls to action, all the slogans of the various efforts to protect and defend our air, water, and our children's future, "Water is Life" struck me with its clarity. It's a simple statement that defies argument and challenges polarization. For me it conjured pure water in a glass, faith in the waters of a rushing river, the clarity of a pristine lake and our utter dependence on all of these. I began to pay attention to the growing resistance to the pipeline in North Dakota through the summer but, as a white woman, was unsure about my place in the standoff initiated by the Standing Rock Sioux and joined by a historic gathering of tribes. Over time, it became clear that this was a message and a fight that I wanted to add my voice and support to, so when the call came for allies, I got on a Greyhound bus and headed east.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF WHAT'S TAKING PLACE ON THE GROUND?

There were more people in camp, fewer elders around the fire, more non-natives and it was getting cold. Morning in the still dark, a voice would call out, "Good Morning, Relatives! It's time to get up. *Mni Wiconi!* Water is Life! Brothers, sisters, find your coffee. Come pray for Mother Earth. Hurry,

the sun is coming to greet you!" Soon, drumming and sung prayer would wash over the camp as the sun rose across pink and frosted hills. The magic remained but unity of purpose bumped into differing opinions about tactics. Ceremony and prayer were and are the guiding principles but interpretations of what resistance means in practice created division in the warrior communities. As one young warrior said to me, "I'm here to kill the black snake. You don't do that by falling back each time you're told to."

WHAT IS THE MINDSET OF THE PROTECTORS?

I was there in the aftermath of several traumatic actions, had friends up close, pepper-sprayed, arrested and charged with felonies. A traveling partner worked in the mental wellness tipi, where a steady stream of people sought help to defuse the anxiety and trauma left by what the police unleashed. There is no discounting the impact of the militarized response by the police and the state. As I stood in a line, facing off heavily armored and faceless cops, the last illusions I had about police in our country fell away. There they stood, protecting the big earth-eating machinery of DAPL, defending it against the water protectors, unarmed men and women, some camo-clad, others in bright skirts, holding nothing more than bright banners and raised fists. I witnessed the cops target a young man, Native American as was the pattern, shove him to the ground and bend him backward, the weight of all 4 of them grinding his face into the dirt. As I watched, they ordered me to move away, batons and guns waving about. I backed away but later, I wished I'd held my ground, wondered what it would have taken to stand against their order to abandon that young man to their aggression. Post-election, this seems an even more relevant question to explore.

WHAT IS A POSITIVE MEMORY YOU WILL KEEP FROM WITHIN THE CHAOS OF THE EXPERIENCE?

Whether on the volatile front lines or in a support role around the camp, most of the people I met were changed by Standing Rock. They reference a profound sense of welcome, the beauty and power of prayer, a feeling of kinship and being part of something much bigger than the pipeline fight itself. For those that stepped up and pitched in, there was an uncommon sense of community, first with all its bright hopes and in time, with all the flaws and worthy challenges that come when diverse people live together.

Standing Rock may well stop this pipeline, (reports of financial woes circulate these days), but the real success of this historic encampment will be the sowing of its seeds far and wide. It will show up at front lines everywhere, will be there in advocacy for the rights of indigenous people. It will, perhaps, guide a shift in our relationship to Mother Earth, to our water, and to each other.



"I stood upon the "Black Snake", with others, fists raised while drums beat and prayers flew in the four directions and a "wall" of willows were planted in front of the pipeline. Empowered by my Water Protector activism, I've returned to my community, energized to stand up to threatening issues here: Navy Growler jets training over our homes with ear-splitting decibels, increased coal and oil tankers coming through our Salish Sea and Arctic oil-drilling. Meanwhile I continue to hold ceremony with drum and song to carry prayers and keep my heart in health and love through it all."

– **IRENE SKYRIVER, FARMER**







CLOSING NOTE

I gathered the profiles of the protectors in the early winter of 2016. Since then, many changes have taken place On December 4, 2016, I was at Lyric Hall—a historic theater in New Haven, Connecticut—helping at a benefit to raise money for the Water Protectors at Standing Rock. The room was buzzing. Bands were playing, artisans were selling their goods to raise money, people were manning the phones calling the White House, our Representatives—anyone and everyone—and I was tucked away capturing it all with a pen and a pad. It was the very evening President Obama ordered that the pipeline be halted. I remember someone grabbing the mike during the concert to read aloud President Obama's statement. A ruckus of joy erupted in the hall as an even louder victory cry echoed out from the Standing Rock Camps.

As we all know, the victory was short-lived. On January 24th, after just 4 days in office, Donald Trump issued two executive orders to further the construction of the Dakota Pipeline as well as the Keystone Pipeline. (It should be noted, both Trump and his Secretary of Energy, Rick Perry, have

a monetary stake in the construction of 3.8 billion dollar project.) On February 2nd, the camps at Standing Rock were raided and some 70+ people were arrested (bringing the total arrests since August 2016 to an estimated 625.)

After these events, some asked me what the point was to still going ahead with this profile, (given that things have changed so much since December). My response was to explain that it was never about writing a piece that chronicled every shift in policy. The decision to make the Water Protectors our "wayfarer" of the issue, was made with the intention of gathering a mosaic of profiles to tell the stories of those ground because, no matter what happens—whether the pipeline is built or not—these people, their stories, and their actions will endure. No executive order cannot suppress what sparked on those grounds in North Dakota.

At the moment, the future of the pipeline is in question. While Trump issued his executive order, it is now in the hands of the Acting Secretary of the Army to approve the pipeline proposal and allow the developers (Sunoco Logistics, Energy Transfer Partners, and Energy Transfer Equity) to complete the line. Such approval is probably a forgone conclu-







sion; nevertheless, the movement that was sparked cannot be plowed over. Ideas, truth, conviction—these things are immortal and beyond the reach of even the most powerful of tyrants. Some Protectors are disheartened by the impending construction, and rightfully so; however, as Glenna “Eagle” Yellow Fat reflected, battle for Standing Rock goes beyond this action. It is a battle for all water—for the land and for life—on behalf of humanity, both present and future generations.

The fight of the water protectors is still going and will continue. Even if you can't come to the camps, you too can become a Protector by taking action to defend the earth's watersheds from corporate threats. Call your representatives—be vocal; divest from banks that support corporate polluters, and use your talents in the fight! Everyone is needed . . . everyone has a place in the battles that lie ahead.

ELIZABETH HOOVER is Manning Assistant Professor of American Studies at Brown University where she teaches courses on environmental health and justice in Native communities, Indigenous food movements, and community engaged research. Elizabeth is also a member of the leadership committees of the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA), and the newly formed Slow Food Turtle Island regional association, and is a board member of the Environmental Justice League of RI (EJLRI).

Elizabeth has published about environmental reproductive justice in Native American communities, the cultural impact of fish advisories on Native communities, tribal citizen science, food sovereignty, and health social movements. You can learn more about her work at gardenwarriorgoodseeds.com. She traveled to Standing Rock on November 17-28, 2016 and January 9-19, 2017 to cook, hear stories, and provide support for water protectors.

L.M. BROWNING is the author of nine books. In 2010, she debuted with a three-title contemplative poetry series. These three books went on to garner several accolades including a total of three pushcart-prize nominations, the Nautilus Gold Medal for Poetry and *Forward Reviews'* Book of the Year Award. Balancing her passion for writing with her love of learning, Browning sits on the Board of Directors for the Independent Book Publishers' Association, she is a graduate of the University of London, and a Fellow with the International League of Conservation Writers. She is partner at Hiraeth Press as well as Founder and Editor-in-Chief of *The Wayfarer*. She is currently working to complete a degree at Harvard University's Extension School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Visit [Imbrowning.com](http://imbrowning.com)





A SOMETHING LESS THAN NOTHING

BY JOSEPH LITTLE

AN EXCERPT FROM *LETTERS FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF SILENCE*

Here's the truth: Something happened on that volcano in Guatemala. I'm just not sure what.

Steve was in the lead, talking with two teachers from Canada. I was trailing behind, nursing a bad knee. Yes, Steve was in the lead and I was trailing behind and then it happened.

A word about Steve. He's the kind of guy who's as comfortable in a Navajo sweat lodge as he is playing euchre. He hikes, he skis, he ice climbs, he reads. He speaks fluent Spanish and passable French. He paddles. He drums. On this particular day on the volcano, he complimented a guy on the Native pattern of his vest, swapped jokes with the guide in Spanish, and bandaged a woman's ankle—yes, bandaged a woman's ankle—in the time it took me to eat a power bar. Yes, Steve was in the lead.

The volcano in question was Pacaya, that black monster of the western highlands known for its dramatic displays of lava, which surge against prediction and against a landscape so austere it rivals the moon. We found Pacaya in Steve's guidebook one Easter weekend. Something about punishing switchbacks and menacing rivers of lava over which folks could roast marshmallows (and they did), and we were in. It all seemed so sensible from the sturdy haven of our friend's cottage, Merlot in hand.

Somewhere around 8,000 feet, that all changed. The lush trees that lined our path gave way to shards of basalt, then rock, then long slopes of rubble that climbed into the sky. It was as if God had swept the moon and deposited the results here in long, gesticulative pours. What few trees remained were arthritic and bent, their charred branches as hapless as they were calligraphic against the bright Mayan sky. Soon there was no path, only a windswept ascent that stratified everyone by ability. We would turn a corner, and strange new vistas would appear: jagged fissures in the earth two yards long, coils of braided rock, and waves, waves of lava having long been cooled, blackened, their motion frozen in time. "Pahoehoees," they call them, these cases of rock becoming liquid becoming solid again. Stray dogs in need of warmth sought the company of the fissures, natural manhole covers that vented sulphur and steam from beneath the earth's crust.

After our final turn, I felt the heat of the lava a few seconds before I saw it. After an hour's hike, it was more than a little disappointing--a small vein of red oozing from a titanic wall of black rock (punishing switchbacks, yes, but a river of hellfire this was not)--until I witnessed the wall itself swell and glow, breathing in ways my Midwestern eyes couldn't reckon. At first, I thought it was just the heat shimmering off the wall, the way a paved road can make the summer horizon dance, but then it cracked. Cracked, I tell you, after centuries, maybe millennia of indifference to the world. The wall cracked and began to crumble, spewing impermanence everywhere as it dismantled itself boulder by fiery boulder until nothing remained but a sea of orange suede.

It was too much for me, all that cracking and dismantling. Nearby noises, Steve's banter with the Canadians, the guide's "vamos! vamos!": It all retreated into the distance. And then, with no warning, it happened: My syntax simply departed, leaving my words to float in the atmosphere like dust. My rationality, drifting out there among the birds. Soon enough, the words themselves scattered and dissolved, leaving me to



experience the world without categories, without reference. Ever tried to take a math test while falling into a lake while sleeping? Well, it was just like that.

If only I had met Yuri before climbing Pacaya. Yuri, the middle-aged Russian mystic I would meet in Nepal the following year. Yuri, who after 45 days of meditation would invite me over to his mountain shack for incense and a fire. "There is no I and you, there is only we," he said in all seriousness before turning a watery gaze to the Himalayas. "See that man plowing the mustard field? We are plowing the mustard field," he said. Yuri was a man of wide intelligence (think John Malkovich), a professional back in Moscow, but one of no particular standing since he was accustomed to saying things like "A man who wants is a man at war with himself" and "Are we not all One, the humans, the birds, the sky unending?" And of course there was the small impracticality of his silent sitting for months on end, his just being.

Even Party Al would have helped me understand Pacaya. Party Al, Steve's college roommate, who would sit in silence for hours during the blaze of day. Steve would come home between classes to find Al sitting in the living room, upright and motionless.

"What are you doing?" Steve would ask, to which Al would offer a slow "Sitting."

"Yeah, I can see that. But sitting and reading? Sitting and thinking? Sitting and what?"

"Just sitting," Al would reply.

As you might have guessed, Al was something of a partier, but what you wouldn't have known, what no one knew from the looks of him, was that he was also a renowned bagpipe player. Among the students, Al was celebrated for his ability to muscle out a performance with terrific prowess before a crowd of thousands while throbbing in pain from the booze-fueled antics of the night before, and that libertine reputation led to less than charitable interpretations of what he was actually doing during all that living room sitting. But I can't

help but think there was something going on behind that blank stare of his, that there was something more to Party Al, or less, a something less than nothing that moved him beyond language to the other side of silence. Yes, that there was something less to Party Al than bagpipes and cottonmouth, to which Yuri would have offered a knowing nod. What I would give to see him up on that mountain with Yuri. Yuri would surely be impressed by his bagpipes, but would their silences be two parts of a greater whole?

I know what you're thinking. No, I wasn't high up there on Pacaya. I wasn't low. I wasn't looking for an experience to transform my life into something special. Stripped of language, I simply slipped beneath it all--and by it all, I suppose I mean my mind—to a place where even fundamental distinctions were no longer clear, like the difference between you and me, right from left, now and not-now. And though mighty and positive, it was also a place of purgation, an evisceration of the psyche, you might say. Truth be told, I want to use the word cosmic here because cosmic it was: an encounter with a God mysterious, though not the God of Michelangelo's making, not the Zeus-like figure of my childhood.

I don't remember the hike down or much of the flight home, but when I got there, I threw out 30 books I knew I'd never read. Then I threw out 30 more. I took art off my walls. I cut my hair. I trimmed my fingernails, and cleaned my car. I stopped believing in circles: Since the fifth grade, I'd been sure the circle was the perfect form, but after Pacaya, I could no longer enjoy a circle unless I imagined it collapsing on itself, realizing its ultimate point form. Otherwise, it was just another lazy abstraction taking up space. I focused more on people and less on my perception of their perception of me. I stopped drinking martinis. Let me say that again: I stopped drinking martinis. And ladies and gentlemen, I even cancelled Netflix.

Where, I ask you, where will this profound sense of economy lead? All I can come up with is "my vanishing, my vanishing." That's what I'd say if I were a betting man.





FEATURED Poets

Scott Edward Anderson
Kyce Bello
Julianne Berokoff
James Crews
Elizabeth Foulke
Monique Gagnon German
Kelly Kancyr
Jason Kirkey
Jody Larson
Amy Nawrocki
Frank LaRue Owen Jr
Laura Sobbott Ross
David Sam
Leslie Schultz

The Botanical Guide to Select Poets of New England and New York

by Leslie Schultz

An Answer in Passage

by David Sam

"I dream of lost vocabularies that might express some of what we no longer can." – JACK GILBERT

He dreams his lost vocabulary,
as the face of what he cannot be
shows itself before his parents
were ever given to be born.

He sleeps beside the imprint
of a lover he never knew beyond
the hungry fire his flesh felt
when he drifted through her perfume.

The failure of every word is inked
in the blood he will now sacrifice
in a war he will not fight but must
lose when the sky descends again.

All of what he is returns to earth
and washes his absence in dust as
a flight of swallows flies its faith
in the fleeting season of a home.

There are mountains within him
and in the clouds above where
complete understanding rolls
in what always hides itself away.

This resolution is incomplete
because all ceremonies end where
liturgies melt their last wax from
the self-consuming of the wick.

I. Robert Lowell

A bird-of-paradise fluttering
in a cranberry bog.

II. Emily Dickinson

Moss, lifting tiny, winged blooms
on the north side of an etched tomb.

III. Robert Francis

One purple clover is opening still
as a stone on the stony hill.

IV. Robert Frost

Maple boughs cast runic shadows
over the frozen, claw-colored earth.

V. Elizabeth Bishop

Bougainvillea tumbles brilliantly
above the rusty gas pumps.

VI. Anne Sexton

Blood-red roses, climbing,
almost escaping their thorns.

VII. Amy Lowell

The green frog leaps,
skirts the alabaster lotus.

VIII. Wallace Stevens

Against the granite façade, a singular blue
iris focuses the eye.

IX. Marianne Moore

Yellow birch catkins, pendant,
tickle the cages of the wild things.

X. Edna St. Vincent Millay

Magnolia, edged with cream,
arches, branching like candelabra.

XI. Sylvia Plath

Tulips leaning, red and yellow,
toward a slash of white stucco.

XII. Maxine Kumin

Ox-eye daisies reclaim the pasture,
marry sun with insight.

Transplant

by Elizabeth Foulke

1.

Day of all winter leafless
gray branches and sky
granite outcrops and towers

the Gates billowed orange
we ambled sun pierced
through those saffron drapes

goldfish fins tissue thin
and shadows of skeleton oaks
park walkways on fire.

Life now sparse, flameless
sightless, my mind
rests on these Gates
on days when my lids still closed.

2.

Used to feel pity for young girls
with port wine birthmarks
marring their beauty

for the hare-lipped children
on billboards
vets with prostheses.

The burns that never left
yet left me this farcical face
cellophane skin and tectonic bones
still settling underneath.

Masterful surgeon will lift
a stranger's epidermal shroud
to veil me.

Stich the dying man's capillaries
to mine, nerves intertwined
to relearn: grimace smirk pucker shine.

Earth waited breathlessly
when those first images
developed in a NASA darkroom
revealed what Galileo only guessed at.

Who perished so gracefully
leaving his unmarred skin
reflected while I shave?

Agitated Mind

by Jody Larson

Agitated mind
Tells itself scary stories
Around a campfire in the dark.
Sun rises, shadows drift away,
But fear lingers at the edges.
No reassurances can end it.

With patience, kindness,
Bring mind back. Look—
All is changing but all is well,
And changing never ceases.
Hopes and fears, without substance,
Ripple the pond's surface and disappear.

You are the pond and the wind,
The sun and the shadows,
The dark and the campfire.
You are dancing. All is well.

Choices

by Jody Larson

Gentleness, stillness,
While the flood swirls and rages.
Those sticks you held were swept away
And your hands are empty.
Let the torrent wash over them.
Don't jump in.

Or jump.
Your choice. Where will that take you?
Destination unknown
But the same either way. Know that
Here you have nothing to stand on.
You never did.

How To Spell Molokan

by Julianne Berokoff

*You didn't date a 22-year-old man
when you were sixteen? You didn't drink in a parking lot
when you were a child? The women have to cover
their heads in church. The women can't go to church
bleeding. The men can fuck and go to church
and pray. The women fuck and erase and tell
no one. They go to church and pray. Women and men
say women cannot be touched and men
touch women they'll hate. Everyone wants
to be married, even the children; they watch
us all, the marble statues, and take us to be real.*

*Smile and kiss your father hello. Bare your
teeth and pretend you aren't sick, pretend
there are no fingerprints on your
skin, understand that you are fine.*

My mother made me wear shorts under my dresses
but what good did that do.

God's Voice and Other Reflections

by Monique Gagnon German

I'm sure you've imagined it at some point,
booming earthquake but maybe it is more whisper
more swirling wind and maybe God is not angry
and is not just in the living but in all inanimate objects.
Why not the lamppost, the washing machine,
the airplane wing? Why not the clothes on your back,
cell phone, shaving cream? How pervasive
and invasive does this suddenly seem? Surrounded
from every angle, every molecule, every atom,
you definitely have to stop and think,
What the hell am I doing? and Why am I doing it?
At the very least, you might chew your lip in amazement.
How pristine everything looks in this moment.
You, staring at the kitchen table
and it staring back at you wide awake.
You - part oak, table - part skin,
God in this moment as you breathe together in unison
in this divine space. But you still have to blink again
and get back to regular business: errands, conversations,
promises and commitments. Oh how each will talk
to you about you if you let them.

Grief

by Monique Gagnon German

You know you're not
the one who's dead
yet you're stuck in waves
tumbling broken, numb, deaf.
You have no grip anymore
or sense of direction. Yet you are calm
not panicked, not even
wondering how to scale
and scramble out of the shell
that's forming in spikes around
your back, your body, your head.
Instead, you hunker
down, patient mollusk
with your thickening edges,
stoic, fathoming
how long it will take
to disappear completely
into the darkest depths,
to burrow unrecognizable
into the utter silence
of I no longer exist.
Maybe that is when
you will finally stop listing:
lips, eyes, arms, hands;
all the islands you have
staked shelter on and lived
scrubbed by sunlight, fog,
wind, salt, and mist.
In that then, will you still dredge
every grain you've been given
grinding facets of rules and logic
into gems of guesses and estimates?
Or, when you are finally
completely encased,
heart shucked empty barnacle
by time's tidal purposes,
will you be blank slate
as if you'd never been,
even as the hands of others
arrive and pick you up,
hold you to their heads
trying to reach you
inside the echoes of waves?
Maybe even as you white-noise
shush them, you will sense
there is only a day or two left
before their reasons circle
the sky above your head, high gulls,
piercing your quiet island, demanding
your return to this blood ocean
pulsing muscle tsunami life again.

Coyotes

by Laura Sobbott Ross

Boys at the Beach

by Laura Sobbott Ross

They pretend not to burn,
these boys at the beach,
in the same skin of their childhood—
its language culled
in the deeper pitch of their voices,
their elongating marrows, their pores
sown in sweat and body hair.

They elbow each other across
the hissing edge, into the current—
its onrush and shiny clamor. Nothing
anchored in the soft geography,
not even footsteps, not even hesitation.
It swallows them quickly, knees to ribs,
then shoulders. No lullaby in this
moon-gland rocking, the sparkle breaking
in their wake. Already, the peopled
shore seems to have forgotten them. It lies
splat and smattered, consuming its own
hard dose of sun. Shadows of arrows
trail seagulls across umbrellas and oiled flesh,
while the horizon chides—an unspoken dare.
That's all it has taken to draw these boys in,
to pit them against a deeper, farther tide.
In boots of wet sand, the mothers pace, pretend
not to search for them, to discern their whooping
bodies between the bunkers of tumbled waves,
out to where the surfers balance on shark
grazed boards, out to where the ocean floor
drops suddenly into a cool and tribal blue.

Lying in bed next to me,
you say you didn't hear them
last night. How could you

not? Through our open window,
their hunger, bristled & pining.
It was a mournful oath taken
for what burrows wall-eyed
and unaware in its own
blood & marrow. The moon,

rolling off those feral tongues
was a distant fugue
sent spinning over rooftops,
knocking through thickets,
widening across highways
bent into sighs. Didn't you feel

it? My veins scored open
on a howled point of gravity.
It's like this: when a woman
leans though darkness,
lips pursed & ready

at the candle's liquid rim,
it's the same sound the flame
would make before it goes out,
if it could, if it had more than
a wisp thin throat, or its own
singular craven heat. Solitude,

she would whisper back
to the smoke, into the sulky,
wanton dissipation, as if
there was solidarity still
warm there in the longing.

Don't

by James Crews

It can be a kind of in-the-moment prayer
you say under your breath as you
watch the tired mother raise her hand,
about to hit her crying toddler
gripping a Snickers bar in the checkout.

Or when you pass a handsome man
on the street as he stops to fumble
with the pack in his pocket, lifting out
a cigarette, which he lets hang
from full lips as he digs for a lighter—

Don't, you whisper. But it can be said
without speaking, like the time
I tried to cross Broadway against the light,
and an elderly woman on the other side
widened her eyes, a hand flying up

to her stricken mouth. I stopped just as
a Camaro barreled by out of nowhere—
her face telling me, *Don't move*,
and we both stood stock-still, breathless
with gratitude for what I didn't do.

Kindness

by James Crews

It circulates like blood in us,
like rivers flowing into the ocean,
or can move through a room
like air coaxed to blow cooler
by the blades of an oscillating fan.
It is the sweating glass of water
on the nightstand your lover brought
you before bed, and it's the hand
of the mother I once watched
on a plane, smoothing her daughter's
hair back from her forehead
over and over, running her fingers
through the curls until the girl
slipped into a deep sleep, leaning
against her mother's shoulder.
It is the held door, the pause
that lets another go first, and you
feel the heat of it pulsing in you
whenever the bus driver stops
and lowers the bus so an old woman
can more easily step up onto it,
when a father waits patiently while
his son chooses a single ripe fig
from a pile at the grocery store
and holds it gingerly in his palm
as they shop as if its skin were
made of blown glass and might
break open at any moment.

At Back Bay Station

by James Crews

It Never Hurts To Be Alert, the signs
posted all over the train station remind us,
but it does tax us to look up from
the blue-lit faces of our tiny phones
and really see the strained faces
of other people on their way elsewhere.
It's hard to hear the voices pouring out
of earbuds, to watch the harried woman
with a stroller and twin daughters
whose matching red ribbons hang loose
in their tousled hair as they sprint
from one end of the station to the other,
as the mother stops to wipe what seems
like tears from the corner of her eye.
It takes patience to walk downstairs
when it's time, the breathless train already
rumbling into the tunnel—to take one
step at a time and feel the ridges
in the rubber runners bolted down so we
won't slip, to notice the worn edges
where countless passengers have passed
before, lost in thought, each of us
running an absent hand along the smooth
oak banister as we plan our days.

Old Russian Recipe for When it Starts to Snow

by Kyce Bello

There was no God in your house,
and bread was always baked before dawn.

Now the table is laid with bowls
of meat dressed with sumac & salt.

Or is it milk you take in your dark tea,
the cup warming your hands

as rain turns to goose down over the garden.
Across the oaken table, you spread

a linen embroidered in the red initials
of a relation whose name has been forgotten.

Reports of other losses come in their turn,
breaking in on the day

like hot broth tipped across the palm.
Watch how those palms rise to the falling sky,

how they fill like dark branches with snow.
Across the thick planks of the table,

wheatberries scatter like so many
loaves of unground bread.

I've been calling and calling you to eat
and I wish you would listen

because life did not open its door
from your mother's belly so you would be hungry.

In the Old Orchard I Remember the Recipe

by Kyce Bello

We found this stray grove as wild
as any hundred-year-old thing.

Tangle of trunks, the unintended
ground littered in apples

as if a wild Kazakh fruit forest
had covered the mountainside

with our origins. As we picked
those rosy reds, those golden reds,

those green-yellow-black-blush reds,
I remembered the time in Rinconada

when we gathered fruit along
the willowed banks of the Rio Grande,

the rim of the black rock gorge
a slip of shadow against the sky

and every fruit tree in the valley bending
with the weight of its fertility.

Our children still had round cheeks,
wisps of hair that caught

in the September light.
Somewhere in my recipe box

is the one that returns me
to my bearings. I can't find it,

but just remembered
that to make the best applesauce,

all you need are the best apples.
When was the last time

you left something to cook
in its own ravening juice?

Letter to a Friend in the Place I Once Lived

by Kyce Bello

Autumn must be full upon you
up in Sunshine, the valley cold, frost come and gone,
the aspens bright in those seams of the mountain
where aspens grow. Here in the city I lift my gaze
and take in the purple daisies which are already fading
and the chamisa which grows brighter still.

There are rumors of gold leaves in our mountains
but I have yet to confirm them. I'm going for apples

this weekend, and hope to fill a box or three
because that is what I do and who I am:

the woman who gathers fruit. But the truth is

I don't care so much about those things as I once did.

I'm writing poems again, and can't be bothered
to hang laundry and peel roasted chile
or make apple sauce, though sooner or later

I get up and do those things anyways

because when you have done some good thing
enough times it is in you and I am glad.

And what is a poem if not a clean swept floor,
a pot of apples simmering on a fall day?

I might not be noticing the leaves changing yet,
but in the lessening light I feel the fall reckoning
come roaring out of me. All the ridiculous things I've said,
everything I've held sacred or made much of,
everything I thought I was, or strived to be,
all the ideas that feel so good and become a banner
to carry me through the seasons, but are no more
true than anything I or anyone has ever believed.

All those hanging threads and thin places get held up
to the light and if not discarded, at least exposed.

It takes days to get through the pile.

In the end there is some scrap of cloth that is intact
and that is enough to go forward with
into the darkening days. After the apples get picked,
we'll make our way to the mountains to see for ourselves
the rain of gold, and sooner or later I'll make it
to your place, back home, whatever that means,
wherever that is.

Aster Place

by Amy Nawrocki

A pen has just fallen to the ground,
its owner too lazy or mesmerized
by blinding clouds to move and catch it.
An aster blinks.
Say purple and you don't really get it.

The petals have dipped into disks of yellow
and bled away all amethyst origins,
leeching the denseness of darkness
in favor of something between damask
and dirty sky pale.

Like multiplying fingers on a celestial clock,
each petal surrenders to place,
pin-wheeling in perfect patience
three hundred and sixty degrees
around a buttery sundae center
barely purple, barely lilac, barely.

A god too lazy to pick up a pen
fallen from the paper's open palette
waters down the permanent ink of night
leaving the purple aster to yellow away
from other royal shades.

Secrets of the Ornithologist

by Amy Nawrocki

Before he could capture wings
that flutter at angel speeds,
before nine hundred forty feathers
would halt their fluttering
in the stasis of oil,
John James Audubon
made three small hummingbirds
drunk on nectar concocted of
approximate fuchsia
served in tincture tubes
clear as glass flutes.

So kinesthetic this kiss of sugar.
So sweet the slow paralysis of flight.

Evolving

by Kelly Kancyr

Walking, keep walking
one foot in front of the other.
The beating drum keeps time.
Marching, marching, we all must rise.
Keeping your head up, looking towards the sun,
for the truth will one day come to light.
Standing on the shoulders of our ancestors for this moment,
 to learn and reflect
 to include and defend
 to nourish and educate
 to help and vote
 to be human.
Awakened, eyes wide open
each beat, each second,
each step . . . evolving

Measures of Devotion

by L.M. Browning

The fruits of the years
are not shown
in the certainties gathered
but in the lengths we have gone
in our search for understanding.

When all faith has gone
and the lines of the self blur into gray
the journey is our testament.

The Boat-Rocker

by L.M. Browning

I overturned
the boat once
and nearly drowned.

Coughing up
the heavy waters
I choked upon,
I lay limp.

Rescued,
part of me died
in the storm.

Gasping, the defiant self
 was the victim
and the pragmatist
 the survivor.

A boat-rocker once,
I am left to fear
the open waters,

Stranded on
the barren island
to which my trauma
confines me.

I stand quietly screaming,
yearning for cause
to revive the wild ways,
to take a stand as I once did—
 fearless and fierce amidst churning swells.

The School of Soft Attention Is Now Taking Students

by Frank LaRue Owen Jr

Here we are again, fellow traveler.

Here.

Again.

You.

Me.

Have the memories started for you yet?

Here we are again, fellow traveler,
in yet another troubled time.
Another troubled time.

Hearts are burdened.

Families are being broken.

Bonds of trust have been dissolved
all with the quick-flick
of jet-black ink
on rough-feeling paper
that has never known empathy.

Here we are again, fellow traveler.

The curriculum is now set.

The School of Soft Attention is now taking students.

Grandmothers of the Buffalo Nation
are out there crying and bleeding in the snow again.
The latest 'Great White Father' doesn't remember,
and hasn't really
let the full history
settle into his bones.

Here we are again, fellow traveler.

Mothers of the Desert
are out there fighting
to protect their young
along some unknown fence line.

And you and me...
students of the School of Soft Attention...

...we're the witnesses
that have to see
because our hearts can't not,
and our minds
are of The Way,
and this is our way
not to turn away
from what's *really* happening.

Weather Report

by Frank LaRue Owen Jr

When you are part of the caravan of *crazy clouds*
you start to become a little less domesticated
and a little more like wild mountain weather.

Allegiances shift from the outer to the inner,
and when the rains come
you drop everything
to worship the silence around it.

When you get too much of the world on you
that which is natural in you starts to struggle.
This is when rivers freeze and land turns barren.
This is when thirsts develop that can never be quenched.
This is when life-force stagnates
and the sparkle in your eyes
that others have come to rely on
can fade.

They don't teach this in churches and synagogues, mosques and temples.
The best of them want to soothe you from the aches of the world.
Some want to lull you back to sleep.
Others want to hammer you into a shape of their choosing
so you will behave and keep your mouth shut.

But the old mystery schools
and rustic enclaves
of dervishes and Zen women, know:
There's a form of nourishment
that only you can give to yourself
and if you don't learn the language of how that's done
even on your last day here
you will have remained a stranger to yourself
and those with whom you kept company.

A Traveler's Past Life Poem

by Frank LaRue Owen Jr

I was sitting on a rough-hewn bench
eating a meager meal in a small roadside saké shop.
A large jar of saké sat in front of me, of course.

I sat eating, sipping, watching...
...an ant walking across the table
...rain drip-drip-dripping down a rain chain
...the shuffle-shuffle-swish of a fine lady
in late Spring kimono.

Two women at a nearby table
—maybe sisters, maybe aunt and niece—
were gossiping.

A piece of disturbing news
was rippling through the village.
Sen no Rikyu had committed *seppuku*.

I awoke from the dream, crying
openly,
in this life,
having comprehended
the profound teaching
lost on tyrant Hideyoshi.

The Taste of Fire

by Jason Kirkey

The night is dark so gather close and
build a circle of stones. Gather wood,
whatever you can carry,
and get a fire going.

The wind whips hard and the
people are cold and huddled against it.

Yes, there is darkness—but that is not this.

This is your body, broken on the forest floor
looking to an altar through a tangle of leaves.
These are your hands reaching for roots,
and stones, and the wind to pull you forward.

This is the wing-flap of ravens roosting
in the branches of your ribs.
They have stolen the light of the sun
to plant it as a flame in your chest.
You will know it by the taste of fire on your tongue
and the way that shadows recede when you speak.

This is the splintering of a pine struck by lightning,
and the embers that still glow hot in its heartwood by morning.
Yes, there is darkness, and you are weary
but there is lightning in your veins
and the taste of fire on your tongue.

This is the taste of blood in your mouth;
it is your tongue severed and offered
on an altar of story.

Take it;
it has heard enough of what the cedars say
and the speech of the shadow-cold stones.

You will need it, because
yes, there is darkness
and stories are the only tinder that burn.

Sometimes, you must let your whole body burn
so that you can be a light in the dark for others.
Though you have been broken in every way,
your bones scattered to the winds
then cast again from clay,
you have gathered the softness of moss—
this is what it takes to bear the dark.

And the night is dark, so gather close and
build a circle of stones. Gather wood,
whatever you can carry,
and get a fire going. Here,
stories are the only tinder that burn,
and the wind whips hard—so speak up.

Surfacing

by Scott Edward Anderson

"If this were the beginning of a poem, he would have called the thing he felt inside him the silence of snow."

—ORHAN PAMUK

The sound of the stream as it fills and flows
—under a full moon and stars--with melting snow.

The sound of your breathing as it fills and furls
in early winter air beneath the pines.

Say that the flow of a stream is surfacing a *langscape*,
surfacing the stream: shushing shushing susurus

within you responding—

The way a crow responds to another,
as it dreams of road kill over the ridge.

The way deer browse for succulent shoots
or a dream of deer, hooving under surface.

Say that air flows around objects as a stream around rock, surfacing the stream; leaves plastering color to surface

of a half-submerged stone—

Savoring

by Scott Edward Anderson

“Sometimes I think this, our life on earth,
is an egg to break out of.” —SUSAN MITCHELL

Watch the birds grow full with bursting
spring. Rapacious bees come from nowhere

covering themselves in pollen, until they are loaded with murky pastel—

humid, torpid, full with desire only
to be laden, to be laid in humid dust.

Take the pollen on your fingers, rub two fingers together, make an oil-pastel

of pollen and rub it over your eyelids.

Now go to your lover, your “bee’s knees,”
and close your eyes.

Sun-drenched, the garden grows fecund
in the naming earth—in a few days

the peonies will be two-feet tall and laden with black ants, sucking the swelling buds—

sap runs and the garden grows green,
then pink, blue, white, yellow, purple.

Ochre pollen covers the porch deck and rail—pollen does not discriminate.

Embracing

by Scott Edward Anderson

Longing for home is the desire for love,
as desire for love is longing for security.

If this is so, our need for love
is as compelling as our need for food—

Can dwelling fulfill this need by sustaining
our need for love, for security?

Our attraction conjures energy,
holding matter together.

Energy between two people is
frisson, bodies of energy and mass

colluding and colliding and sparking—
desiring, longing, dwelling.

Atoms coalescing, mass tugging and pulling,
coming together even as it moves apart—

Electrical charges pulling and pulsing
drawing together or being repulsed.

Trees and plants may hold the vestiges
of love, Erasmus asserts,

the “vine embraces the elm, other plants
cling to the vine,” desiring union.

We hold fast in embrace, “the attraction of cohesion,”
embracing all nature in nature’s embrace.

Embracing enacts the law of love;
love of nature is embracing our dwelling on earth.

Wondering

by Scott Edward Anderson

Enough of longing, spent desires
come quickly to the new spring—

Busy anthills, first bees,
nests being built by furtive

mothers or mothers-to-be – they grow larger
with the coming spring, full to bursting,

as busy bodies from within—
 (“the fecundity factor”)

tensile skin of the flower bed,
flap-down-drawn doodle of pollen,

warblers have yet to return,
but their song explodes all around

leaving us to wonder,
to wander in our own way.



SAY IT WITH PENCILS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HENRY DAVID THOREAU!

BY DAVID K. LEFF

These eager pencils
come to a stop
... only ... when the stars high over
come to a stop.
—Carl Sandburg, Pencils

Happy 200th birthday Henry David Thoreau! As the author of two books featuring the Concord naturalist born on July 12, 1817, I intend to celebrate. But I won't be baking a cake or lighting candles, gestures unlikely to be appreciated by the sometimes prickly Thoreau. Instead, I intend to go out and buy a pack of my favorite pencils, sharpen them, and write a couple poems. A good pencil was something the birthday boy would no doubt rejoice in and relish.

Famous as a writer, social critic, apostle of wildness, and for the hut he built and lived in on Walden Pond, few know Thoreau as a pencil maker. Yet to one degree or another he was involved in his father's small pencil factory behind the family's Concord home for most of his adult life. As a result of Thoreau's efforts, by the 1840s the company's pencils were the best America had to offer and rivaled those from Germany and elsewhere.

Considered a technophobe or even a Luddite by many, Thoreau actually had an inventive engineering mind, was comfortable with mechanics, and enjoyed puzzling over technical innovations. A good researcher, he investigated European methods of making superior pencils with less than ideal graphite and devised a formula for using just the right amount of clay as a binder. By trial and error he found that by adjusting the amount of clay he could make pencils that varied in their hardness and the blackness of their mark.

Thoreau invented and built a mill for grinding graphite exceedingly fine. His invention would grow in importance when later the company would focus on the more lucrative business of supplying graphite for the newly discovered electrotyping process. Thoreau also developed a machine for drilling holes into pieces of wood so as to insert the graphite and create a seamless pencil. This idea never took hold and the time-honored method of placing graphite in a grooved piece of wood and gluing another grooved piece on top to make a sandwich is still standard.

Of course, it's logical for a writer to want a superior writing tool, so maybe pencil-making was the perfect way for Thoreau to express his practical talents. Composed of natural materials, something about a pencil feels right in the hand. Like life itself, it is paradoxically created to be destroyed, eventually ground down to a worthless nub with use. A worn pencil is a visible measure of the effort its owner has committed to paper, since on average they write roughly 45,000 words or draw a line 35 miles long. While pens generally work in a definitive black or blue, writing pencils mark in the soft flannel gray of a stratus clouded sky. They have a hushed, throaty sound as they move across the page.

Pencils are the perfect implement for ruminations, doodling, and the idle ideas and designs that are the wellspring of spontaneous creativity. A pen is an indelible commitment, but an erasable pencil mark allows for ephemeral and moody thoughts that grow and change as they swirl about the mind. Though every home has pencils, most often they are found blunt and tossed in drawers, fallen behind furniture, or stuffed in out-of-the-way holders made by children in art classes. Most people associate pencils with grammar school and seldom use them. Nevertheless, many of the most creative among us are enthralled with pencils including architects, engineers, artists, carpenters, writers, and children.

Thoreau used his own pencils to take notes, draw plans, and make property surveys. When deep in the woods he would pluck one out of his pocket or pack, often recording his thoughts on the back of company stationary whose front had been used and was no longer needed for business. Even today, many backcountry travelers prefer pencils because they do not freeze, you can readily see how much is left, and they are easily sharpened with a knife.

Pencils are my favorite among the simple and useful tools of daily life. In this age of word processing and an astounding array of pens from cheap plastic models to those costing hundreds of dollars, there remains no substitute for the wooden pencil. Unlike other modern writing tools, pencils would seem remarkably familiar to Thoreau. But he'd be surprised at how prized those of his own manufacture have become, cherished by collectors and museums and admired as talismans rather than writing tools.

Like Thoreau, I have a favorite pencil. Manufactured by a company that made pencils back when the Thoreaus did, I

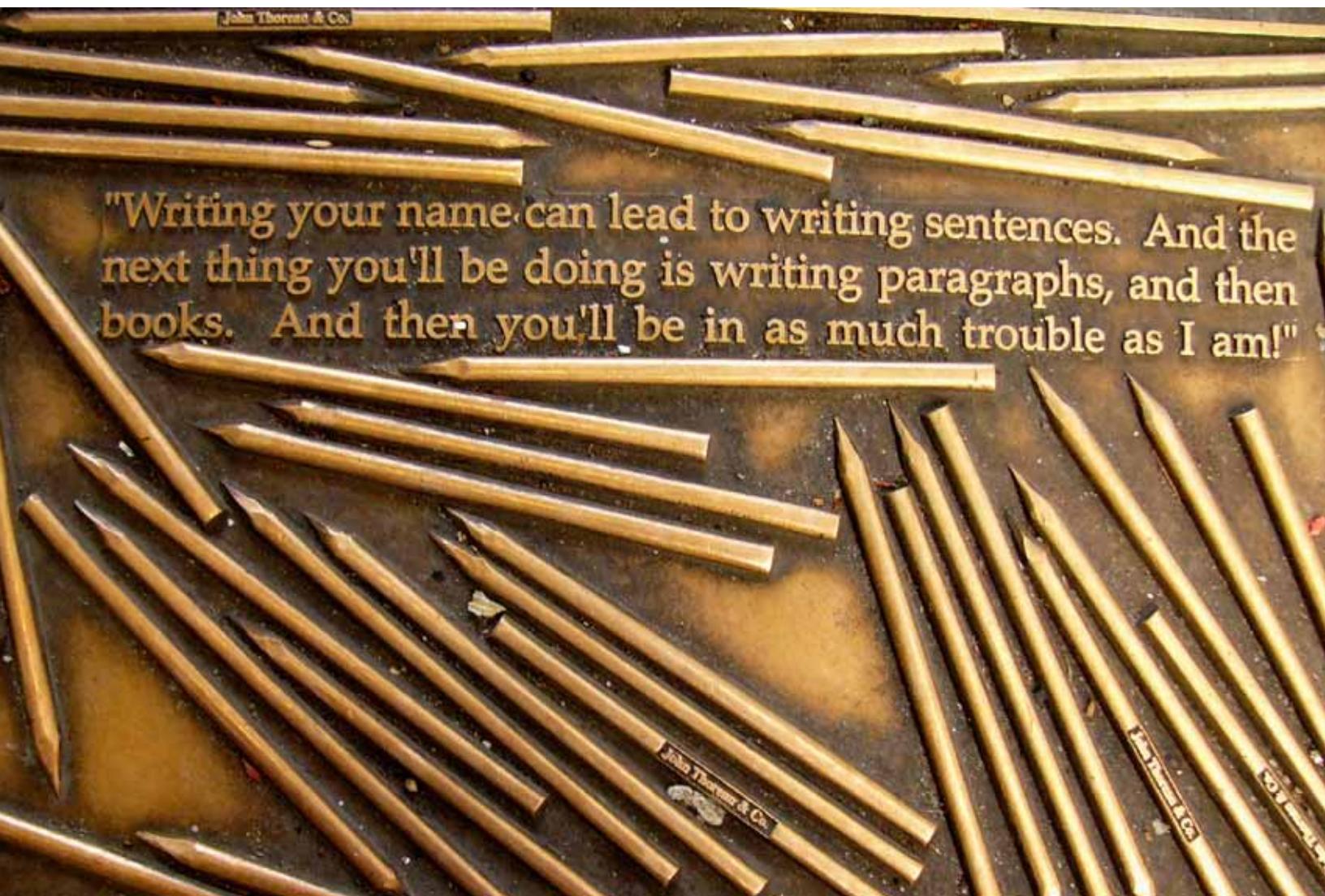
delight in the Dixon Tri-Conderoga . The barrel is slightly larger than typical pencils and has a matte finish which makes it less likely to slip out of my arthritic hands. Its distinctive triangular shape keeps it from rolling off my writing table as easily as most. The black barrel and eraser with a green and yellow ferrule has a classic look.

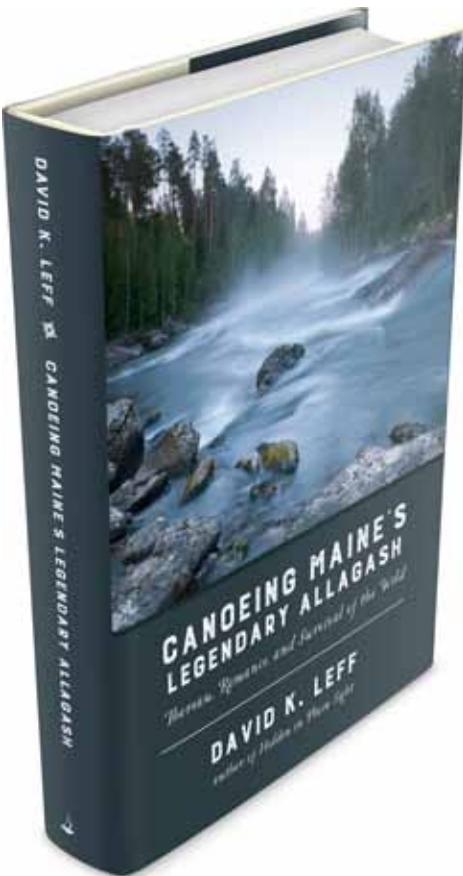
So, happy birthday Henry David Thoreau! The product you worked so hard to perfect is still in use much as you remember despite radical changes in other forms of recording words from pens to computers to printing presses. Pencils remain an important means of creative expression, as vibrant as many of the words you wrote with them so long ago.



DAVID K. LEFF is the author of nine books including *Deep Travel: In Thoreau's Wake on the Concord and Merrimack* and *Canoeing Maine's Legendary Allagash: Thoreau, Romance and Survival of the Wild*. He is currently the poet-in-residence for the New England National Scenic Trail. www.davidkleff.com

"Writing your name can lead to writing sentences. And the next thing you'll be doing is writing paragraphs, and then books. And then you'll be in as much trouble as I am!"





CANOEING MAINE'S LEGENDARY ALLAGASH

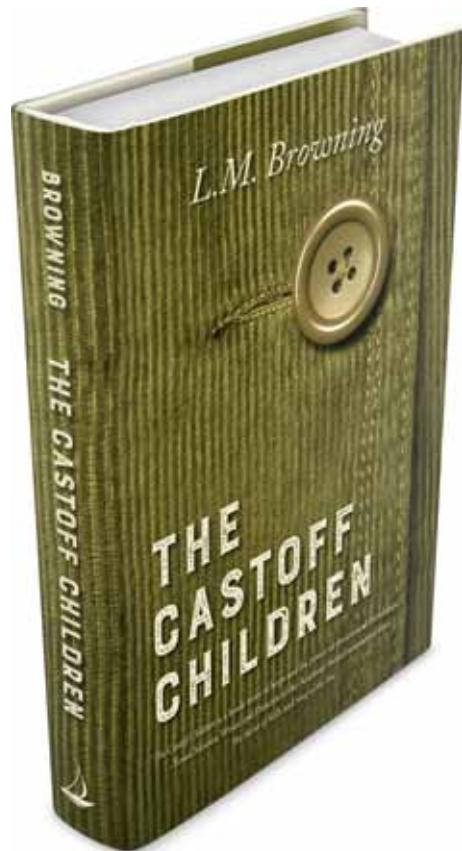
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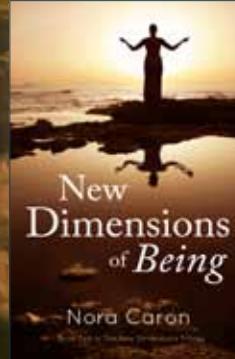
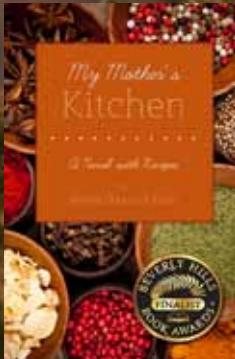
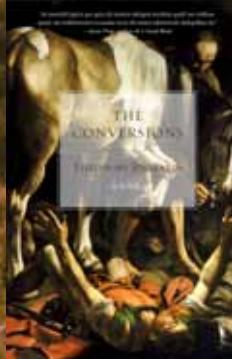
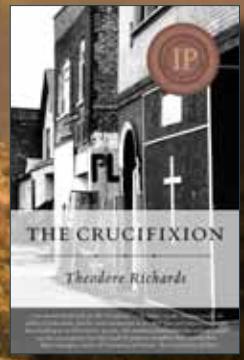
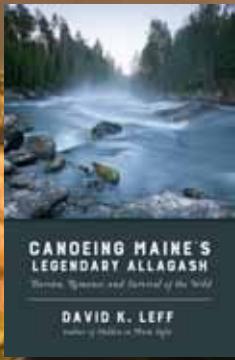
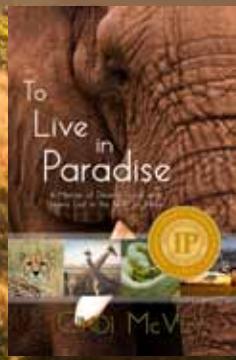
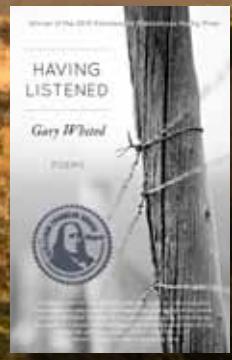
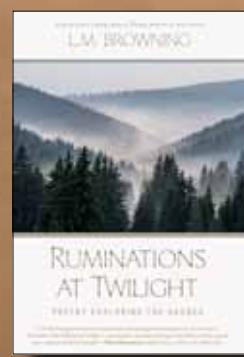
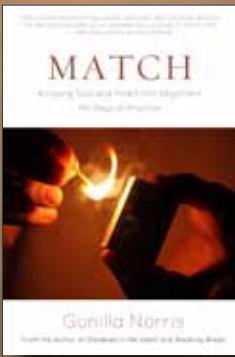
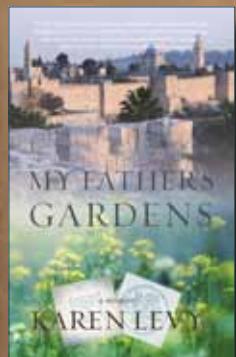
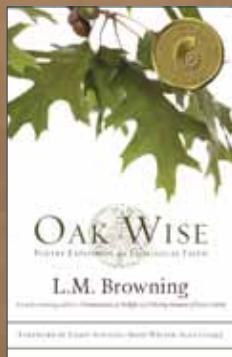
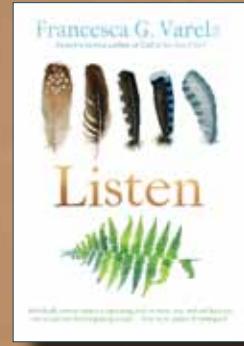
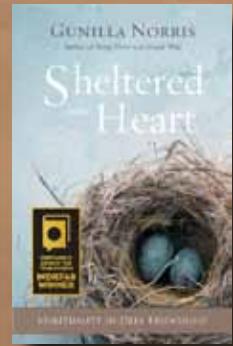
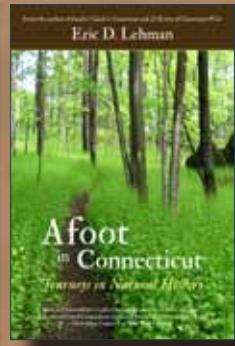
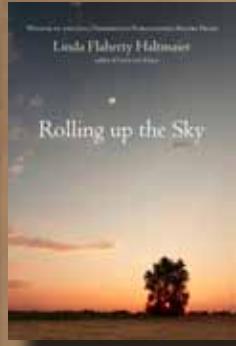
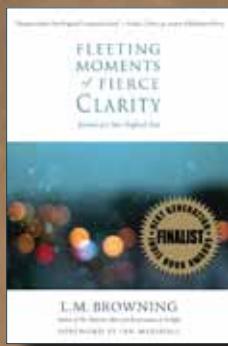
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