THE Round Table
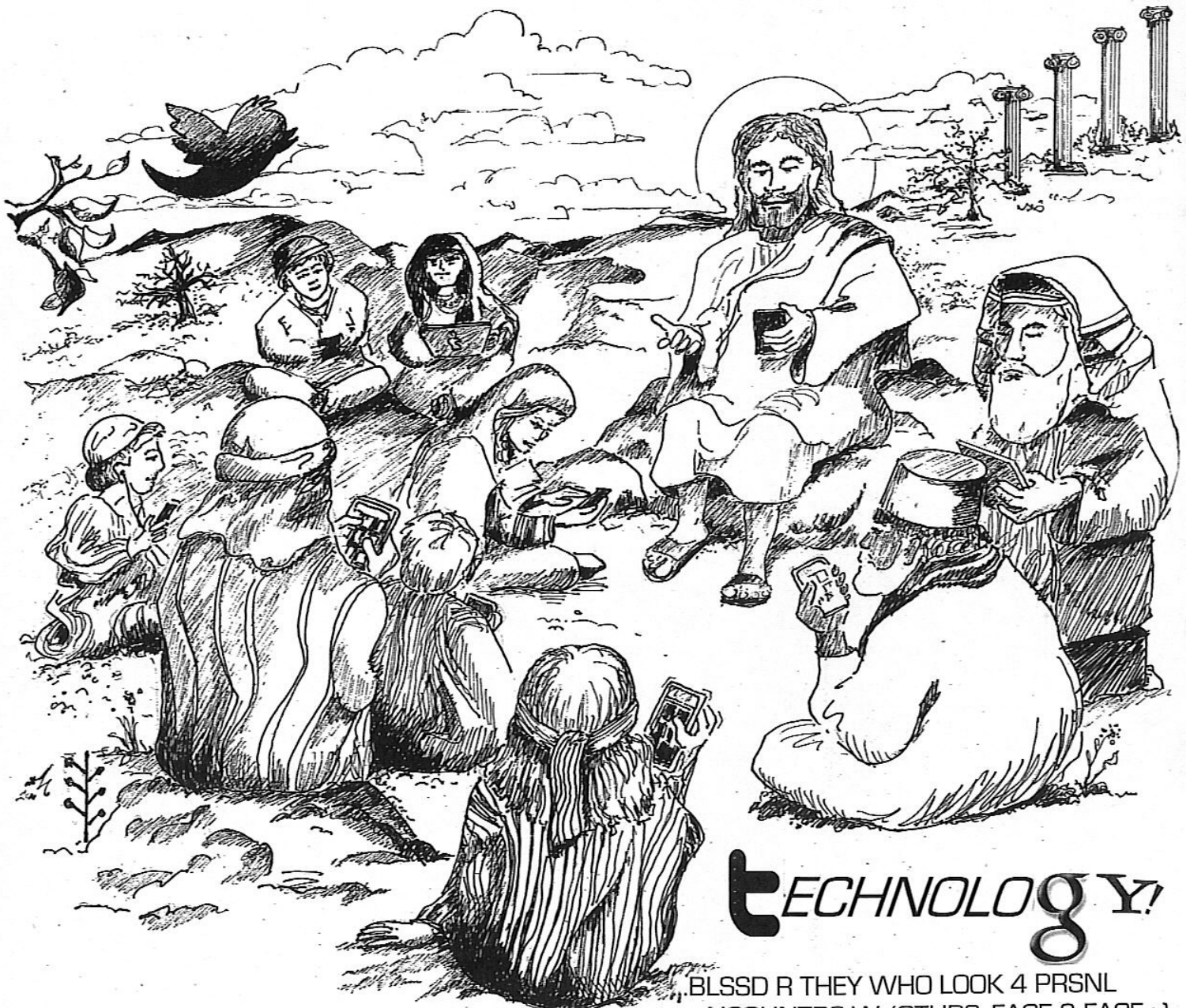
"...a path from where we are to where we should be." --Peter Maurin

tECHNOLOgY!

.BLSSD R THEY WHO LOOK 4 PRSNL
NCOUNTRS W/OTHRS–FACE 2 FACE :-)

Why This Issue?

As I sit here on my laptop, listening to digital recordings of music, surfing the internet, checking my email, and writing this article, I feel a bit silly. I mean why did we choose to dedicate this issue to technology? I love all of this stuff! It makes my life so much easier, right? I get to keep in contact with my sister and her kids in Minnesota. I can find the answer to ANY question in mere seconds. I save so much money all the time with all of these internet "coupon" offers. I can look at pictures from that hike my former co-worker went on last month… oh wait… oops.

Wow, technology can make me feel really good, I mean really give me that feeling of fulfillment… for a little while. In her article, Ellen Rehg shows us that when broken down "technology" essentially comes to mean the study of art, skill, or craft. But wait, what about posting hilarious videos of a kitten stuck in a tissue box? The "technology" that I use in my life seems to bring me away from art, skills and crafts. I can watch shows on the internet with people using their skills, commenting on art, or purchasing things that were once highly valued crafts, but for the most part I feel pretty disconnected. It's almost like constantly living on a vicarious level. Ellen's article then goes on to give us a glimpse into an almost 2,400 year old (!) debate regarding appropriate technology.

Another idea that occurs to me is that I have access to multiple computers at any given point in my day. But when a guest at Karen House, or a friend from the neighborhood needs to find work, they are directed to fill out applications online, a resource that they don't have abundant access to. This concept is not in line with my values. In his article Ethan Hughes points out many other ways in which various forms of technology usage may not be congruent with our vision of the world and invites us to take some deep breaths, and engage in some analytical thought with him. Also, Brenna Cussen Anglada gives us insight on what computer usage means for an Anarchist Christian functioning within an unjust system. Similarly Eric Anglada illustrates the historical connections between anarchism, the Catholic Worker, scripture and the earth.

You may be thinking "all of these ideas are wonderful to think about, reach towards, and discuss but I can't really make any commitments like these in my life. I live in the city, I have a family to support, just not enough time or energy. Sometimes I just need a minute to tune-out and relax!" Luckily Carolyn Griffeth has inspiring stories and compelling information for anyone attempting to raise a family in this over-technologized world.

And finally, for our regular features, Mary teaches us about the St. Louis Catholic Worker's changing relationship with Monsanto and Gateway Greening. Teka introduces us to her family (extended and immediate) and her lovely home, and Braden (in his first RT article!) gives us a beautiful lesson on inclusivity.

We look forward to continuing to challenge ourselves to live within the realm of truth and to be conscious of exactly what impact our decisions have on our earth, our community, and ourselves. We invite you to radically consider the implications of our growing dependence on ever-newer technologies, and how this affects our ability to grow and learn and share and love.

✦

- Sarah Latham

Editors Note: Ethan Hughes hand-wrote his article and mailed it to us. He had serious ambivalence about providing it to be published by use of the very computers that he has chosen to no longer use. In the end he decided to send it in order to fulfill his commitment to share his thought with the The Round Table readers and to leave it to us to decide what to do with his piece. (Our penance for using the computer was having to decipher and type up what Ethan had written!) Seriously, for our own part, even prior to Ethan's expressed concerns, we discussed what to do with this issue and whether it made sense to try and publish it without the use of computers. We investigated alternatives and knew, that at this time, and given our current realities, we would most likely not get the issue out without use of the computer. But this issue is not resolved for us and it opens the very questions for us that Ethan raises in his article as well as those raised by others throughout the issue.

Cover: Jeff Finnegan

Centerfold : Jenny Truax, James Meinert

*Just kidding!! :)

Love is the Highest Technology

by Ethan Hughes

In 1999, when I declared to my family that I was going to live a car-free life, some of the strongest resistance to my new lifestyle came from my grandmother. Her main argument was that the choice would create disconnection in our relationship from spending less time together.

My first car-free visit to her home required a half-day of bike and train travel instead of a 1 ½ hour drive. The lack of an evening train made it necessary for me to spend the night after our dinner together. Normally, I would have driven home afterward. We had a wonderful meal together, played some cards, and we stayed up late as she told me stories about my dad (her son), who passed away when I was 13. In the morning, we sat on the second story back porch eating breakfast while the birds sang their spring tunes. She reached across the table with tears in her eyes, put her hand on mine and said, "I am so happy you do not drive anymore."

I was the first adult grandchild to ever spend the night at her house. I began to learn that often love is most easily nurtured when we slow down and remove everything that can get in the way of two human beings interacting. Movie screens, computer screens, T.V. screens, cell phones and other modern technologies seem to create a larger distance between the human to human encounters that awaken us to love.

In this article, I want to evaluate the impacts of modern technology on Creation, society, and our hearts. I also invite you to consider that the costs of such technology outweigh the benefits, and that another way of living is available to us; a life where we are steadily moving towards harmony with Creation, justice and equality among people, and healing within ourselves.

I am proposing a movement away from the Age of Information into an Age of Transformation. An age where we act on what we have learned and on the calling in our hearts; where we leap into the unknown while trusting in God and Love. This can be a great leap and the thought of it may awaken overwhelming discomfort and turmoil in us.

In moving toward an Age of Transformation, let us first question how the wreckage of the natural world and the oppression of many of its inhabitants have come to seem essential to the beautiful aspects of culture and the meeting of our basic needs.

We may begin answering this question by defining a few key words. In his book, The Ascent of Humanity, Charles Eisenstein defines technology as "the power to manipulate the environment." Eisenstein goes on to define the accumulation of technology as progress. The history of human progress has resulted in our modern industrial society, which Eisenstein states can "remake or destroy our physical environment, control nature's processes, and transcend nature's limitations."

I believe that this kind of progress, passed to us through culture, is risking our physical, spiritual, mental and emotional death. The industrial global economic military complex now in power has become the empire with the most powerfully destructive technological innovations in history. We are actively participating in that empire when we choose to use, embrace or purchase "high technology" like computers, iPhones, or cars. We live in a challenging moment in history, because these technologies that negatively impact the earth and its cultures are the same devices that can sometimes help us do meaningful work in the world. We use them to stay connected, organize, keep informed, and to inspire and impact our culture positively. This is the great paradox we were born into: these useful items cannot exist without empire. More than ever we need a way to measure the costs and benefits of technology so we can be mindful when making choices.

Jerry Mander, in his book, In the Absence of the Sacred, presents the idea of a holistic analysis of technology. "The first step in this analysis is to include all possible dimensions of the technology's impact—political, social, economic, biological, perceptual, informational, epistemological, spiritual; its effects upon children, upon nature, upon power, upon health." . . .I would like to offer a holistic analysis of the computer, keeping his "recommended attitudes" in awareness. I have chosen the computer because it seems to be the most cherished of high-tech inventions.

As I analyze the computer I invite you to remember three things: 1. Read slowly, breathe and attempt to fully take in the information. Let it impact you. 2. Be aware of two mental traps, the first being the guilt trap. Guilt will just be

another layer of disconnect and overwhelm. God loves you beyond your imagination just as you are, using the computer or not. The goal of the holistic analysis is to provide you with information so you can make a mindful choice. Guilt interrupts this process of discernment. The second trap is judgment. You may begin to judge me, the author, as a mechanism to avoid the holistic analysis. You do have full invitation to grieve and emote, for that helps the process of analysis. 3. Remember that cars, computers, and other technology have meaning and value. Beautiful and real experiences come about with their use-road trips, adventures, finding old friends, quick access to loved ones, insights, networking—the list is long.

Now let us begin our holistic analysis of the computer:

• "Who is the single greatest financial source for computer science research in the world?" The U.S. military is #1 on the list with global corporations running a close second.

• It takes 500lbs of fossil fuels, 47lbs of chemicals and 1.5 tons of water to manufacture one computer.

• The manufacture of one computer chip contaminates 2,800 gallons of water.

• 70% of the heavy metals in landfills come from e-waste. This includes lead, phosphorus, barium, cadmium, beryllium, etc. Santa Clara County, the birthplace of the semi-conductor, has more toxic waste sites than anywhere else in the country. The highest number of super-fund sites in the U.S. are in Silicon Valley. The water contamination alone causes damage to the central nervous system and endocrine system, interferes with brain development, and can cause organ damage and permanent brain damage in children. 70% of all the inhabitants downstream from these sites are poor and marginalized.

• We export up to 80% of our e-waste to China, India, Pakistan, and South East Asia. It is a lot cheaper to send it abroad than to recycle or dispose of it domestically. The U.S. is the only industrial country that has not ratified the Basal Convention, which is an international ban on the export of toxic waste. People in these other countries, predominantly the poor and marginalized, open the computers that are exported to them as trash with hammers and chisels to salvage valuable metals. In the process they are exposed to toxic lead, toners that damage the lungs, and inhale chlorine and sulfur dioxide and other known carcinogens. The remaining toxic parts are often left in open piles or dumped into rivers, contaminating the aquifers and the soil.

• Sometimes what we do not ship overseas ends up being incinerated, releasing dioxins and furans—two of the most deadly and persistent organic pollutants—into the air.

• It takes 700 different materials and chemicals to make a computer. One half of these are known to be hazardous to ecological and human health. These materials come from between 26 and 50 countries depending on the computer. The entire process from raw materials to the computer in your hands require up to 200,000 miles of transportation (which is equal to almost one hundred trips around the earth).

• Contrary to popular belief, paper waste has increased 40% with the spread of the personal computer. Easy access to printers accounts for a lot of this.

• The average teenager spends 36 hours a week on the computer and television combined. The introduction of the personal computer has been one of the significant factors in the increase of obesity rates in children and adults.

• Human health is also impacted during computer use. Screens cause fatigue, eye strain, migraines, cataracts, miscarriage, birth defects and other health issues due to the x-ray, ultraviolet, infrared, low frequency, VLF and ELF wavelengths that are emitted. Individuals that build our computers have up to 3000x the rate of certain cancers. These workers also have a much higher rate of respiratory diseases, kidney and liver damage, miscarriages and birth defects like spinal bifida, blindness, and missing or deformed limbs.

• The computer will shortly overtake the automobile in terms of their volume in landfills. This is because computers can become obsolete within a few years.

Please feel free to take a breath. This is a lot of challenging information.

• 40% of all computers on the planet are owned and operated in the United States.

• 93% of global population does not own a computer and of the poorest 1 billion, only 1% have access to one.

• The teacher-to-student ratio is dropping as a direct result of computers and computer programs. It is now illegal not to teach computer literacy in schools.

• Today's headline in the *Daily Telegraph*: "Conditions in an 'electronic sweatshop' run by world's largest firms push Chinese workers to commit suicide."

• The computer is given freely to schools so that children get hooked on this product that must be purchased and is expensive. Many two, three, and four year-olds now have

Hey! Guys! Remember the loaves & fishes? How about that paralytic? And Lazarus! Remember Lazarus? Guys???

The Apostles discover the Internet

by Chuck Trapkus

Facebook accounts.

• Computers have caused job losses in most professions nation-wide.

• Computer-run systems are cheaper than hiring people for corporations so more money is concentrated in the rich, which in turn increases the poverty gap.

• Computers are efficient. They accelerate consumption, economics, development, etc. The ease of consumption is at its highest point in history and climbing. You do not even have to leave your home and go to the market—just press a button and what you want to buy is delivered to your door.

• A computer must be plugged in, so it is constantly dependent on energy. The main Google server, somewhere in the Columbia River Gorge on the West Coast, uses more electricity in one day than the whole city of San Francisco.

• Corporations know what we buy and target us with advertisements based on our preferences. Corporations also control what comes up on search engines.

• Computers make it easier for government to keep track of everyone's activities and dialogues.

• Only the largest corporations and institutions have the resources to fund high speed computation. It is so costly that these global corporations and institutions have the edge over small businesses and citizen groups.

• It would take an individual hundreds of life times to build a computer.

• Simply by the process of its production, a computer is opposed to decentralization and bio-regionalism.

• The earth does not have enough resources to provide seven billion people with a computer. The hard question is then, why should we have one?

• There is conclusive evidence that computers are rearranging our brain chemistry, in addition to creating psychological patterns of addiction.

• We use computers to distract ourselves from difficult feelings and reality.

• 90% of human communication is non-verbal. The computer only allows for use of 10% of the person's capacity to communicate.

• Virtual activism alone will not free the prisoners, liberate the oppressed or heal the earth.

• I disbelieve and therefore strongly resent the assertion that one could write better on a computer than with a pencil. Wendell Berry wrote, "When somebody has used a computer to write a work that is … better than Dante's, and when it is demonstrably attributable to the use of a computer , then I will speak of computers with a more respectful tone of voice,

though I still will not buy one."

• Much of our industrial experience is passive. . . When we play music, create with our own hands. . . we become creators again.

This is less than 10% of the information on the negative impact of computers that I have collected in the last decade. As Jerry Mander urged us, I am focusing on the negatives in our holistic analysis. We all are familiar with the benefits—they are why many choose to use the computer. What alarms me is there is very little resistance to computer use. We need to question, on a deep level, the trend of our human experience being lived out in a virtual world that is one of the most toxic and resource-intensive technologies on earth. . .

We must realize that the computer is not a need and that we can live without it. The computer industry places over $100 billion in advertisement yearly to convince us otherwise. Corporations are making $100s of billions in profits from their sales.

Some of us, in fact, may be waiting for technology to save us, thinking technology will evolve and become "green." This promise of techno-topia has been fed to us since the onset of the Industrial Revolution. I think resisting the industrial paradigm and its myths is essential.

But will we really be making a difference by giving up computers and other technology? The answer, yes, because it will be a great step toward living a life in which we have removed violence from all aspects of ourselves and our culture in order to achieve true peace.

Lanza Delvasto wrote,

"Much more than going into the street, speaking to crowds, leading walks and campaigns, invading bomb factories, undertaking public fasts, braving the police, being beaten and jailed [all of which is good on occasion and which we gladly do], the most efficient action and the most significant testimony in favor of nonviolence and truth is living: living a life that is one, where everything goes in the same sense from prayer and meditation to laboring for our daily bread, from the teaching of the doctrine, to the making of manure [compost], from cooking to singing and dancing around the fire, living a life where there is no violence or unfairness, neither hidden violence nor brutal violence.

What matters is to show that such a life is possible and not even more difficult than a life of gain, no more unpleasant than a life of pleasure. What matters is to find the nonviolent answer to all the questions humans are faced with today, to formulate the answer clearly and do our utmost

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Wendell Berry's Standards for Appropriate Technology

To make myself as plain as I can, I should give my standards for technological innovation in my own work. They are as follows:

• The new tool should be cheaper than the one it replaces.
• It should be at least as small in scale as the one it replaces.
• It should do work that is clearly and demonstrably better than the one it replaces.
• It should use less energy than the one it replaces.
• If possible, it should use some form of solar energy, such as that of the body.

• It should be repairable by a person of ordinary intelligence, provided that he or she has the necessary tools.
• It should be purchasable and repairable as near to home as possible.
• It should come from a small, privately owned shop or store that will take it back for maintenance and repair.
• It should not replace or disrupt anything good that already exists, and this includes family and community relationships.

to carry it into effect. What matters is to discover whether there is such a thing as a nonviolent economy; justice without punishment, authority independent of force, nonviolent farming, medicine, diet. . . What matters is to make sure that all violence, even speech, even thought, even hidden and disguised, has been weeded out of our lives."

The next big question is, then, how to move from behind the computer screen? At the Possibility Alliance we have formed a community who have chosen to live petroleum and electricity-free. We are constantly learning how to embody our collective vision. We have observed that computer users must have time and space to transition and integrate a new way of being. New residents find that a two-step transition has helped in regards to computer use. They begin by getting rid of their personal computer and using one at the public library. This is a wonderful step because in this scenario hundreds of people share one computer. In addition some "transitionees" reflected that they are much more likely to use a public computer only for the essential things and don't get lost in the lure of the virtual world where they really don't want to spend so much time.

Wendell Berry wrote, "What could be a more radical or effective opposition to a power plant than to live abundantly with no need of electricity?" At the Possibility Alliance we burn hand-dipped, beeswax candles as our only light source at night. Not only do we create a way to illuminate using resources within a 10 mile radius, boycotting nuclear, coal or any other industrial power source, mining and for-profit corporations, but we slow down at dark, both in movement and activity. We are necessarily more mindful as we use an open flame. We reap beauty, calmness, human connection and connection to nature. What began as an environmental choice became a spiritual one. Living this way brings us closer to God.

As I continue to simplify and align my life with creation, I am discovering true wealth: having nothing, being happy with nothing. Remembering that "joy is not in things, it is in us."No thing is needed for the human experience of love, justice, equality, joy, aliveness and meaning. This change in my own life has taken twenty years of transition and integration. . . step by step I am moving toward the goal of living and creating in a way that takes care of and honors everyone and every living thing.

My experience with life is increasingly more direct. Walking to the orchard composting toilet in a snow storm, connecting with our horse Solomon as we pull timber for building, sitting by candle light, face to face with friends and strangers night after night. Slowing down. Listening to the silence. In the age of technology it has become a radical act to be completely with the person you are with. So many others at the Possibility Alliance report this amazing shift. They feel more present and in the moment.

Peter Maurin has been calling us toward this reality for almost one hundred years: A land and craft-based society where, as Isaiah wrote, everyone "'neath the vine and fig tree shall live in peace and unafraid." Let us transform ourselves in order to, as Peter Maurin said, "build a new society in the shell of the old." I believe it is time to make manifest this third and final tier of the Catholic Worker movement. We must remember that we can build this new society without industrial technology. . .The Early Christian movements, the works of the saints, the American Civil Rights movement, the struggle to free India from British rule: all thrived without industrial technology.

The technology that all humans have been using to achieve peace and equality for thousands of years is community. The simpler we live the more we need community.

So this article is an invitation for whoever feels the calling to begin to unplug. We, at the Possibility Alliance, want to support any who would walk this path, by sharing any resources we have. There is another world waiting for us. Gandhi promised that "Full effort is full victory." If you want to take radical steps toward creating a new culture, you can with the help of determination, community and faith. The Gospel of Matthew reads, "With God, all things are possible." Let us access more fully the oldest and ultimate technology: Nonviolence, God, Love, Spirit. It may just blow our minds and hearts wide open. ✦
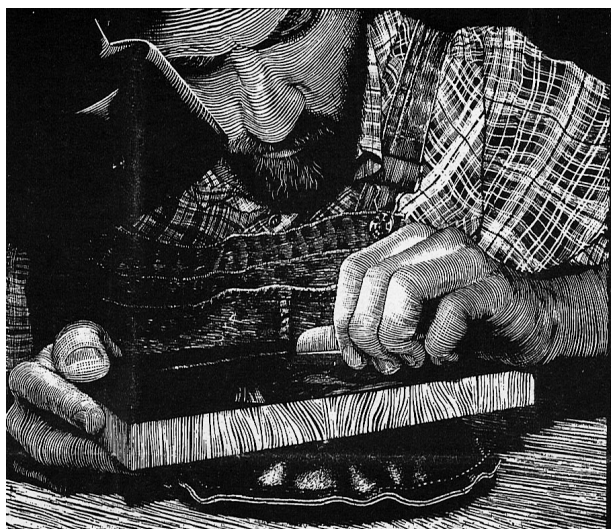
In Rememberance: Chuck Trapkus (1959-2000)

We recall the prophetic voice of Chuck, who called us all to greater simplicity and creativity. Developing skills in woodworking, art, gardening, spinning, and so much more, Chuck sought to minimize dependence on Empire, and maximize healthy practices for himself, the rest of the human community and the planet.

Chuck believed, in the words of his close friend Brian Terrell, "...that everyone can and should have meaningful and creative work, that there was no need for sweatshops, prisons, Silicon Valley, agribusiness or army, and that each person can contribute something useful or beautiful to the world through his or her labor, if only we would realize it." We are grateful for Chuck's inspiring words, his powerful witness, and his humble example.

Engaging Technology

by Ellen Rehg

Well, here I am writing about technology, and using technology to convey my thoughts to you. Yes, I am using a computer to type this article, and it will be delivered via the internet to the editors. However, I am using a technology even more basic than computers: the alphabet. Writing itself is a technology.
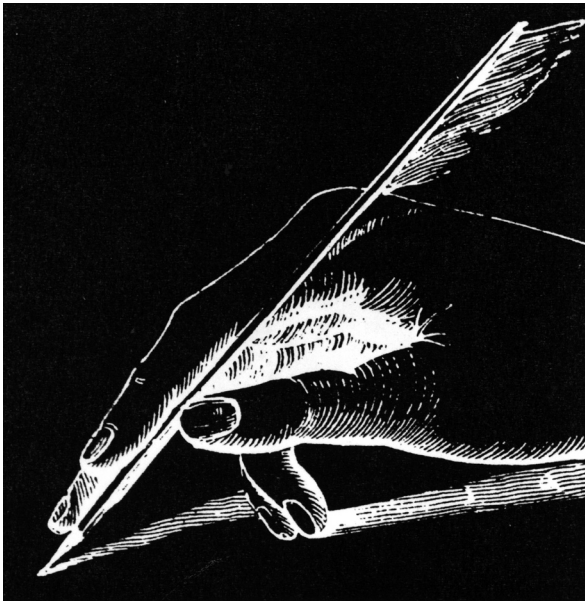
In fact, the Greek philosopher Plato decried the relatively new technology of writing, around the year 370 B.C.E., in a dialogue called the *Phaedrus*, which he, ironically, wrote down. So we Round Table writers are at least in good company when we use the very technology we are critiquing, to deliver our critique.

Plato was concerned about the impersonal nature of writing. In a face to face encounter, one addresses a specific person or audience. Speakers interact with each other; they can question each other, and come to an understanding. Speech is dynamic, responsive, warm and immediate.

The written word, in contrast, remains frozen in place, static and unyielding. It can't respond to questions. (This is of course, before Facebook and status updates!) Anyone can read it, whether or not it is appropriate for them or addressed to them. Therefore, Plato thought that writing was vastly inferior to speech; it can only remind a person about what she already knows, but can't properly teach new knowledge or wisdom. Only a personal interaction can accomplish that.

Which is why, rather than simply issuing textbooks to students and having them read them on their own, typically, classrooms contain real people called teachers who use the immediacy and responsiveness of interactive speech to help their students learn.

Plato worried, furthermore, that the use of the written word would result in people losing their ability to memorize. He was right about this. Think of the people who composed and handed down the epic poems that pre-date the alphabet, like *The Illiad*. The ten books of this poem were committed to memory, since there was no way to write them down before the alphabet was invented.

Wisdom can only be gained from personal experience and human interaction, Plato claimed. Technology only makes us *feel* like we know a lot.

In this very early criticism of technological innovation, Plato voiced a contemporary concern—technology's promotion of impersonal interactions over personal ones,

> Wisdom can only be gained from personal experience and human interaction, Plato claimed. Technology only makes us *feel* like we know a lot.

and the way that it can de-skill people. How many of us know how to shear a sheep, spin our thread and weave our clothes anymore, for example? For that matter, how many of us can use a sewing machine?

This shows us too, that concerns about the effects of technology are as ancient as technology itself. But how is the alphabet a technology? What is the definition of technology? The word is from two Greek words, techne,

Ellen Rehg has a new puppy Bella who is bringing a lot of happiness to her family.

meaning skill or craft, and logos, meaning knowledge or reason (or speech). The word "technology" most broadly refers to human inventions created through the practical application of knowledge. Such as an alphabet. Or a computer.

Of course, when we talk about technology today, succinct expression of this consciousness. To possess scientific knowledge, he asserted, is to have power over nature. We acquire knowledge of the inner workings of nature in order to bend it to our needs. What once was a reminder of human finitude became the fodder for human manipulation and control.

we probably have in mind modern technologies, rather than ancient ones. Specifically, we mean technologies that came into being due to the application of knowledge developed during and after the scientific revolution in Europe starting in the 16th century. What is it that distinguishes modern scientific knowledge from other, earlier kinds?

The Greeks made a distinction between technical knowledge and theoretical (scientific) knowledge. The latter was pursued for its own sake, not in order to produce anything. They wanted to uncover the workings of nature as a way to contemplate the hand of the divine within it. It was enough for them to understand the movements of the stars so they could gaze at them in awe and wonder. They had no need to use that knowledge for anything. Technical knowledge was not considered to be knowledge of nature, but of crafts. It served human ends—it was what enabled craftsmen and women to create the products needed for their lives. Potters, stone masons, weavers, cooks, etc. all were technicians.

The Hebrew and Arab cultures also drew a connection between nature and the spiritual. Nature was created and sustained by the mysterious and holy Source of all being. The natural world reminded mere humans that they were not in control, but depend upon the divine. "We are but a moment's sunrise fading in the grass," the Youngbloods sang, echoing Ecclesiastes. Nature is gift, nurturance, surprise; terrible and wonderful, awe-ful.

 Modern science created a new kind of consciousness when it came into the world. Francis Bacon, an English philosopher and all-around worldly guy who worked for the English government, is credited with the most

This way of looking at nature from a purely functional stand point is what the 20th century philosopher Martin Heidegger called the essence of modern technology. The problem with modern technology, he thought, was the way that it framed reality. Nature is seen primarily as "standing reserve"—raw material for our use. What is the technological vision of a forest, but that of acres of lumber, paper, etc.? What is a river but a highway for barges, or a source of hydroelectric power? Why is a tract of land which has no buildings on it called a 'vacant lot'? These are examples of how we frame reality through a technological lens. Nature is emptied of its divinity, of its intrinsic worth.

Even human bodies can be seen as purely 'raw material'. This is a problem with embryonic stem cell research, for example. Theological debates tend to center on the question of whether an embryo has a soul. The broader question is whether anything natural is soulless—are either human beings or rice plants merely a totality of their parts? Is any natural thing merely a complex mechanism? Is any part of nature simply and exclusively raw material for us to shape as we please? (Golden rice, anyone?)

Albert Borgmann, a philosopher who developed Heidegger's views on technology, called the technological paradigm the "rule of the device". The "device" makes efficiency the primary value for securing the goods of life. Rather than splitting logs for fuel, we turn on a thermostat. Rather than drawing water from a well, we turn on a faucet. Devices "dis-emburden" us. The end of any given commodity is made available while the means that produce it are concealed.

Many people would say to this, well yeah! That's ex-

actly what I want to happen, thank you very much! But Borgmann points out that if our daily life is structured too much around the device paradigm, not only are we dis-emburdened, we can also become dis-engaged from the world and from each other. De-skilled, as Plato pointed out; our relationships with the world disrupted, our interactions with each other depersonalized.

A wood stove provides more than mere warmth. It is a gathering place, the hearth; a focal point for a family's work and leisure during the winter season. "Its coldness marked the morning and the spreading of its warmth the beginning of the day...It provided for the entire family a regular and bodily engagement with the rhythm of the seasons that was woven together of the threat of cold and the solace of warmth, the smell of wood smoke, the exertion of sawing and of carrying, the teaching of skills and the fidelity to daily tasks."(41-42), Borgmann wrote in his work, Technology and the Character of Contempory LIfe.

The wood stove, unlike the thermostat, is inseparable from the world of the family and of nature. It organizes the space of the home and some of the tasks of the day. It engages us. No one that I know settles down to do their homework by the thermostat, next to the sleeping dog cuddled there for warmth, and the other family members hanging around reading or playing music, for example.

At this point I can hear the chorus of objections. Modern technology has provided many great things: enhanced health, a higher standard of living, a life less filled with toil, etc. All true. Additionally, one can object that my example of a wood stove is bogus, for it is itself a technological product, manufactured thanks to the benefits of the industrial revolution. Also true. Plus, we can't all have wood stoves—we'd destroy too many of our forests and pollute the air.

Where does this leave our critique of technology? I am reminded of the standard that the American Bishops used in their letter on the economy back in 1983. They asked, "What does the economy do *to* people, what does it do *for* people, and how are people able to *participate* in it?" This personalist standard is very familiar to Catholic Workers; why shouldn't we ask the same thing about our technologies?

We could add, how does technology serve to separate us from each other and from nature, how does it help us to engage each other and nature, and how does it foster greater meaning and depth in our lives?

Perhaps we can gain a bit of wisdom using these questions, through the warmth and immediacy of our personal encounters and shared experiences over this issue. ✦

Some Prescriptions for Fighting a Technology Addiction
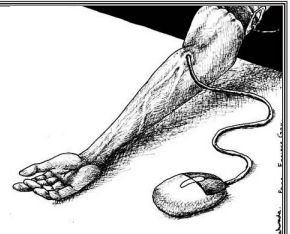
- Resist jumping on the bandwagon of the latest techno-thing
- Fast from communicating by text and email
- Wash dishes by hand as a family
- In one area of your technology consumption, simplify (shed, repair, or don't replace a cell phone, mp3 player, or video game system)
- Hang laundry to dry (you can buy a family size laundry rack from Lehman's catalog)
- Nourish practices and traditions that don't depend on technology
- Create a radical pre-Google world for yourself; use the phone book, read real books, and ask real people the questions you have
- With a group of friends, hold a media-free day once a week
- Make a habit of playing card games or board games as a family
- Enjoy good old fashioned dinners with family and friends, media-free (maybe by candlelight!)
- Play games like tag or kick ball, with kids, just for the fun of it.
- Make one small change at a time until it becomes habit, then add another
- Consider the consequences of each of your purchases, including the the embedded energy used to produce it, the impacts it will have on you, and the footprint it will leave on the planet when you discard it
- Bike for transportation and for fun
- Write a letter to a dear friend and mail it
- Create positive alternatives as you remove negative ones

Looking Backwards:

The Green Revolution and Green Anarchism

by Eric Anglada

I.   From Red To Green

In Dorothy Day's reminisces of her Catholic Worker co-founder Peter Maurin, she recalled his attraction to the grass that stubbornly grew up between the cobblestones of New York City, and how he knew that the concrete of the metropolis could not entirely eliminate the teeming green world underneath it. Peter, a village peasant by birth (and at heart), believed that the source of the problems of modern society lay in the sterile life of indus-trialism. He used the metaphor of a "blind alley" to describe our contemporary pre-dicament. "We can-not move forward to get out. We can only go back," he quipped. Peter believed that we could get out of the alley through embracing what he called a "Green Revolution" which was imbued with the culture of the middle ages, where villagers and monks lived a leisurely existence close to the earth, practiced subsistence farming on communally owned land, extended hospitality, and participated in a local guild and crafts-based society. [i]

> "The Catholic Worker is a revolutionary movement," wrote early Catholic Worker farmer Catherine Reser, adding provocatively, "It intends the destruction of the present industrial society."

Peter originally envisaged the Catholic Worker as a movement rooted in the land, one that would send people out to be apostles to the cities' victims. And though they primarily flocked to the city houses, many of the early Catholic Workers saw their simple, communal, low-tech lifestyle not only as a way to create a society where it is easier to be good, but also as a resistance to the social order centered around the insidious machine. "The Catholic Worker is a revolutionary movement," wrote early Catholic Worker farmer Catherine Reser, adding provocatively, "It intends the destruction of the present industrial society."

Given the radicalism of the movement, it is not surprising that many Catholic Workers have turned towards anarchism – defined as the attempt to eradicate all domination – as the political philosophy and way of life to channel their revolution-ary impulses. Notably, however, Peter largely eschewed the label "anarchist," his aversion to the term perhaps stemming from his dissatisfaction with the insufficient depth of analysis of the anarchists of his day, who, with few exceptions, desired the re-ordering of industrial society, rather than its dissolution. [ii]

In the early days of the Worker, anarchists were largely "red," seeking a communist order from below, circumventing the State in their creation of such a society. Focused princi-pally on the abolition of capitalism and the nation-state, such anarchists left unchallenged the urban, techno-industrial foundation of the social order. In the last decade, however, a different flavor of anarchism has emerged, one that has a certain harmony with at least some of those early Catholic Worker aims: green anarchism. [iii]

In his essay, "Twilight of the Machines," John Zerzan, undoubtedly the most outspoken and un-compromising green anarchist in North America today, nicely summarizes several of the new empha-ses within anarchism. "Until now," Zerzan writes, "every modern anti-capitalist move-ment had at its core an acceptance of the expansion of the means of production and the continuing development of technology. Now there is an explicit refusal of this productionist orientation." One might gripe that Zerzan is here ignoring the witness, imperfect as it is, of the Catholic Worker movement. After all, when asked about the use of machines, Peter Maurin tersely responded, "let them rust." Or Dorothy Day, frequently miscast as a union-urbanist, often noted the ugliness of indus-trialism. In a remarkable reflection on work in the fall of 1946, Day wrote, "At one time the fathers of the desert led men out by the fifty thousand. There were mass movements from the cities...Now is the call [away] from the cities." One otherwise admiring historian of the movement fumes about what he calls Day's "loom-and-hoe luddism," wondering why she won't just get with the technological program. [iv] Other less-known writers filled the pages of *The Catholic Worker* in the early days with diatribes against specialization, the denigration of the whole person through factory life, and the mechanization of agriculture.

Those early Catholic Workers, radical as they were, primarily had access to, and were therefore influenced by, Euro-American history. Thus, they saw in the European Middle Ages a kind of pre-industrial and pre-capitalist Golden Age, in which a sacramental view of the material world pervaded all aspects of life and society. While green anarchists also "look back" in order to find the way forward, they broaden the scope far beyond the Middle Ages in their search for a more

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sane way of life. Green anarchists have engaged deeply the recent developments within archeological and anthropological circles that have upended the long-held assumption that pre-civilized life was, as Thomas Hobbes famously wrote, "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." The evidence shows that the hunter-gatherer way of life—that is, the way of life for 99% of human existence on this earth—was, and still is, much more leisurely and peaceable than our own modern culture. Living without police, laws, taxes, slavery, environmental ruin, cities, kings, or money, hunter-gatherers were, one might say, the first anarchists. With this insight into pre-history, green anarchists thus see industrialism, capitalism, globalization, and the nation-state as merely the most pernicious symptoms of what they understand to be the fundamental problem—the 10,000 year-old malady we call civilization.

Defined as the 'culture of cities,' civilization denotes the historical transition from a nomadic, hunter-gatherer way of life ('paleolithic') to a sedentary, agricultural one ('neolithic'). Agriculture led to the development of surplus, which initiated, inexorably, a variety of hierarchies that created a wealthy, hoarding elite. From there, increased concentration of resources led to social stratification, the institution of kingship, and perhaps most significantly, the birth of the city.

Tragically, few hunter-gatherers still exist, although some tribes have managed to resist the global tidal wave of civilization. One particularly fascinating community that has received much attention in recent years is the Piraha, an Amazonian tribe indigenous to central Brazil, about whose non-civilized lives Daniel Everett, a linguist and once missionary, has written extensively. Everett sees the Piraha's "immediacy of experience" as crucial to understanding this unusual people. They live almost entirely without symbolic culture and abstraction. Fascinatingly, they have no words for colors, only descriptions from their daily lives (e.g. red is a certain shade of blood or a flower in the forest.) Like other primitive peoples, they don't feel anxiety about the future or the past. They have no concept of time. For instance, they could be hunting at 3am or 3pm. What food is foraged, grown, or hunted is immediately shared. When asked about surplus, the Piraha say that they store food "in their brother's belly." In contrast to western civilization's frequent equation of work with drudgery, they imbue all of their labor with joy and playfulness. And, as Everett observed, any tasks that modern society could label as "work," spans no more than 20 hours a week. Without idealizing them, we can see in the Piraha many illustrations of what a more balanced culture looks like.

Inspired by such tribal societies, green anarchists yearn to break free from the human illusion of control that arose with the advent of agriculture and civilization. Much like Catholic Workers, who seek to create a new society within the shell of the old, green anarchists instead wish to live in a world abounding with mutual aid, undomesticated spontaneity, oneness, and presence.

II. Blowing the Dynamite

Peter Maurin referred to the Green Revolution as both an intellectual synthesis and a technique of action. The current cross-pollination between green anarchism and radical Christianity, and in particular the Catholic Worker movement, is a unique and potentially fruitful opportunity for broadening this synthesis and sharpening our technique through mutual learning, a deepening analysis, skill-sharing, and overall collaboration. If Catholic Workers, whose steady witness of community, practice of hospitality, work on the land, and familiarity with resistance work, could partner with green anarchists, who put forward an astute assessment of our society's predicament, the potential is limitless. The remainder of this essay suggests some specific areas—though certainly not a comprehensive list—for such cooperation.

Re-inhabitation of the land. Green anarchism helps to remind the Catholic Worker of Peter Maurin's original vision, for as important as it was to him to practice the works of mercy, he knew that, ultimately, we could only create a new society by going to the roots – 'back to the land, back to Christ!', he would proclaim. Unfortunately, since Peter's death, many Catholic Workers, like the broader culture around them, too frequently have tended to be unstable, migratory, and urban; namely, rootless. As a step toward integrating all three points of Peter's "three-point program," Catholic Workers would do well to enact the green anarchist proposal to truly inhabit, intimately and over the long haul, the bioregions in which we dwell.

Gary Snyder,[v] a green anarchist who was a key developer of a bioregional consciousness, sought to re-articulate a politics centered around watersheds, or shared eco-systems in general, rather than around artificial boundaries such as cities, states, or nations. He argues that it is in everybody's interest to practice good stewardship of the land, regardless of political affiliation. The land, Snyder observes, "will welcome whoever chooses to observe the etiquette, express the gratitude, grasp the tools, and learn the songs that it takes to live there."

One of the first ingredients in re-inhabitation of the land is, of course, the knowledge of how to produce one's own food. As much as the hunter-gatherer way of living was viable for so much of humanity's existence, most people, including green anarchists, would admit that it is nearly impossible for our entire population to return to that state. But neither can

The Technology
The Journey of your Cell Phone

1. Excited, you order an updated new cell phone!

2.

Meanwhile, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 10 year old Alexandre mines coltan for your new phone. In a stream bed he scrapes off the surface mud and allows the valuable ore to settle to the bottom. Regarded as a modern-day blood diamond, 80% of the world's supply of coltan is found in the DRC. There, the extraction and export of coltan funds regional wars, causes massive environmental damage, employs child labor and has decimated the local population of endangered gorillas. Coltan is currently used in all of today's electronics, including your new cell phone, as well as DVD players, computers, and game consoles.

3.

Your phone order contributes to brisk business for electronics manufacturing firms throughout Asia. In China, the Guangdong province is a major manufacturing center where cell phones, iPads, Xbox's and mp3 players are assembled. Employee suicides due to poor working conditions have become rampant there; in 2010 alone, 13 people jumped to their deaths. The company's response was to install anti-suicide nets around the factory.

5. You give your friends and acquaintances regular updates on Facebook, chat with far away relatives regularly, and enjoy texting with college friends. The phone provides convenience, but some questions remain about it's affect on human health. Cell phone use has joined the World Health Organization's category of "possibly carcinogenic for humans" which includes 266 other radiation sources and chemicals.

6. After almost two years, your phone starts to seem slow and antiquated, another victim of producer "planned obsolescence". (Consumers use cell phones for 18 months on average.) You sign up for a new contract, pick out a new phone and toss the old one into the E-cycle box in the grocery store.

Return
to step
1.

Trip

7. Unfortunately, the grocery store E-Cycler was not certified by E-steward. Your old phone joins a huge container of similarly slow electronics and sails for China. There, in Guiyu, the world's largest electronic waste site, your phone is dismantled for its core minerals and the rest burned. This process has led to an environmental disaster – 80% of the children like Mei, pictured here, have dangerously high levels of lead and residents there have the highest levels of dioxin that have ever been found in people.

4. Your phone arrives. You spend evening hours after work downloading new apps and learning about your new phone. You can now play "Angry Birds" at will, store thousands of phone numbers, and take pictures of any and all of your daily activities.

American Exceptionalism: The theory that U.S. citizens are qualitatively different and more deserving; our conveniences is a higher value than other people's access to basic necessities.

society afford to rely on increasingly industrialized, distant, and genetically altered "food" (even if it does happen to be found in a dumpster.) Even many organic farms fall prey to the logic of industrialist agriculture, becoming more and more reliant on oil-consuming machines. [vi] Fortunately, alternatives that take into account the inherent problems of agriculture (concentration, social stratification, cities), but which also take seriously the need to feed people, are slowly gaining traction within Catholic Worker circles – Masanobu Fukuoka's natural farming, Wes Jackson's no-till perennial polyculture, Wendell Berry's pre-industrial agriculture, and Bill Mollison's permanent agriculture. All four of these philosopher-practitioners have been making significant contributions to a budding counter-paradigm in food production.

Green Anarchism Meets Scripture. Following in the footsteps of Jacques Ellul, a biblical scholar who engaged anarchism as the main political option for Christians, Ched Myers is a current theologian utilizing a green anarchist lens to re-read Scripture.[vii] Myers has persuasively argued that the Bible "represents the world's first systematic ideology of resistance to the project of civilization."

As the Judeo-Christian narrative of origins goes, Eden was a locus of natural abundance, a place where God and creation, including humans, enjoyed full harmony with one another. But after Adam and Eve were expelled from paradise, humanity was doomed to a life of agricultural toil. Their son Cain was the world's first murderer and founder of the first city, "Enoch." Humanity's Fall continued, arriving finally at that ultimate symbol of standardization, the Tower of Babel. Their "ascent" was, in fact, a descent into civilization. In ten chapters of the book of Genesis we have a sharp juxtaposition: leisurely abundance and harmony with God in paradise against the doomed project of centralization, standardization, and civilization. God, however, sought a new people, a wilderness people who would witness against the hubris of the Tower. He called Abram out of civilization into the wilderness to create a people distinct from the reigning city-states.

Deserts, rocks, mountain tops, burning bushes, caves, forests, hills, rivers, and oak trees are all places where the central characters of Scripture encounter divinity. Jesus himself began his subversive ministry with a vision quest in the wilderness. Jesus' anti-civilization stance is clear when, for instance, he says that "Solomon in all his glory" (an allusion, Myers tells us, to the "zenith of Israel's civilization") does not even compare in beauty to a single wild flower. The early Christians knew that they had on earth, as the writers of Hebrews put it, "no lasting city" (Heb. 13:14). Instead, they awaited an eschatological city unlike any humanly established city, with rivers flowing through the middle of streets with the Tree of Life on either side (Rev. 22:1f.).

This lens of scripture offers Christians a way to embrace a green anarchist reading of history without having to adopt a new-age spirituality or a cafeteria cosmology. Instead, we can welcome the green anarchist challenge to broaden, not abandon, our Christianity.

The Technological Question. Technology is the propulsive force for what the Chilean poet and green anarchist Jesus Sepulveda considers the defining feature of civilization: standardization, which he defines as a mode of domination that attempts to subsume everything under its singular image. In contrast to this artificial uniformity there is the way of nature and community, which is made up of what he calls "constellations of peculiarities." Standardization demands a complex division of labor in its desire for efficiency, which creates a society of specialists who focus exclusively on their individual task, unable to see the whole. What gets masked in the process is the vast waste and inefficiency—from the mining, fuel and pollution, to the advertising, transportation, and repairs—that the technological process creates.

The Piraha's emphasis on community rather than on technology rings true for both green anarchists and Catholic Workers, who stress the value of face-to-face relationships, free of the dominance of the mediating machine. Technology, green anarchists assert, disconnects and isolates, even as it purports to bring together. As the dominance of technology becomes more and more pervasive, liberation from the technological matrix will hopefully become another central task of the 21st century Catholic Worker.

A significant form of our resistance needs to include a radically intentional discernment of the appropriate use of technology. What makes for appropriate technology is a contested debate within green anarchism. Some, such as John Zerzan and the primitivist element, contend that only technologies that don't require division of labor are legitimate (such as levers or inclines.) Sepulveda, on the other hand, calls for "[e]ngineering based on the human heart, like bicycles or wind or solar energy…[as] concrete alternatives to industrial pollution." It would be worthwhile for Catholic Workers to return to some of our own latter-day luddites, like the early Catholic Workers quoted above, and more recent skeptics of technological "progress" like Kassie Temple and Chuck Trapkus (the latter of whom wrote, only half in jest, that Peter Maurin's Easy Essays are all about "envisioning a computer-free society.") Perhaps, as Trapkus suggested, the very act of making such decisions, whichever form of appropriate technology a community decides upon, is itself an act of resistance to the idolatry of technology.

It is impossible for any culture to be sound and healthy without a proper respect and regard for the soil, no matter how many urban dwellers think that their food comes from grocery stores and delicatessens or their milk from tins. This ignorance does not release them from a final dependence on the farm.

Peter Maurin

Rita Corbin

Resistance and Creation. A central concern for green anarchists is the practice of resistance against industrial civilization. John Zerzan makes note of a CIA report, "Global Trends 2015," predicting "that the biggest obstacle to globalization in the new millennium would be a possible joining together of the 'First World' protest movements with the struggles of indigenous people to maintain their integrity against encroaching capital and technology." Many green anarchists, for instance, have literally taken to the trees to stop the destruction of old-growth forests. [vii] Furthermore, many green anarchists advocate property destruction against such places as greenhouse laboratories for the development of genetically modified organisms. This is an important challenge for the Catholic Worker, a movement that is always experimenting with active nonviolence. Do those who support Berrigan-style resistance also support property destruction as a means to stop the all-encroaching institutions of civilization? [ix]

However, as green anarchist Terra Greenbrier admits in her essay "Against Civilization, For Reconnection to Life!" direct action is merely one aspect of resistance to civilization. She takes into account the likelihood that civilization won't disappear overnight. If civilization is 10,000 years in the making, she reasons, maybe it will take longer than that to undo its full affects. And so "we are creating," she writes, "examples of possibilities outside of, and in opposition to, the institutions that control us." She cites a few examples of "scattering seeds," such as unschooling and ecologically based home-schooling, edible landscaping, wild-food foraging, earthen building, subsistence
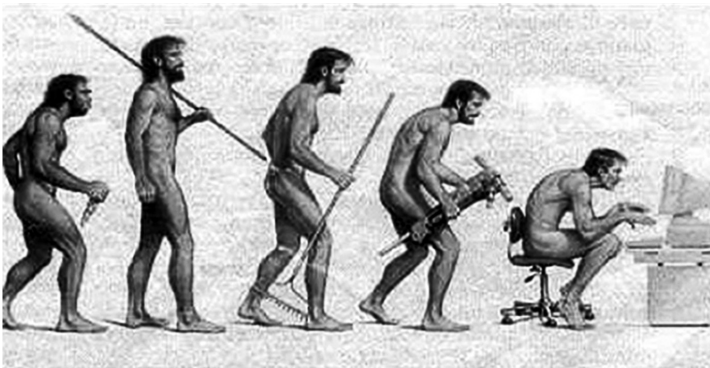
hunting, and the practice of radical honesty in our land-based communities. Greenbrier provides a solid start in brainstorming strategies for what she calls "the infinity of possible futures."

Other beautiful actions come to mind for on-going cross-pollination between green anarchism and the Catholic Worker, a few of which are already being adopted in Catholic Worker communities: alternatives to industrial medicine such as mid-wifery, herbal medicine, diet, prayer, meditation, hospice care, and long-term living with the aging and mentally ill; alternatives to retribution and prisons through restorative justice (a practice drawn explicitly from indigenous traditions); meeting our own needs through gift and barter, craft, natural building, horticulture and permaculture; celebrations through liturgies, feast days, sharing food, song, and dance; and alternative ways of 'being family' via attachment and communal parenting. All of these practices can enhance what Catholic Workers already

do well, like living in community and extending hospitality to the marginalized.

In the end, the crisis that we now face—soil erosion, species extinction, loneliness and isolation, permanent war, meaningless jobs, the increasing dominance of mediation and technology, a widening chasm between rich and poor—demands a new intellectual analysis, an analysis that has been developing in the Catholic Worker for nearly eighty years. Peter Maurin insightfully noted that we need to update our thought every twenty years. With the accelerating speed by which society is changing, it is likely that we will need to update it even more frequently than that. The synthesis of the "Green Revolution" of the Catholic Worker with green anarchism provides some of that important updating. To find our way forward—and Peter would be proud—we are continuing to look backwards. ✦

Suggested Reading:

Ched Myers, "Cultural/Linguistic Diversity and
    Deep Social Ecology"
    "Anarcho-Primitivism and the Bible"
    "Surely this is the gate of heaven!
    The Bible and Earth Spirituality"
    "Who Will Roll Away the Stone?"
Jesus Sepulveda, Garden of Peculiarities
John Zerzan, Twilight of the Machines
Terra Greenbrier "Against Civilization, For Reconnection to Life!"
    (from Igniting the Revolution)
Daniel Everett, Don't Sleep, There Are Snakes: Life and Language
    in the Amazonian Jungle
Wes Jackson, New Roots for Agriculture
Wendell Berry, The Unsettling of America
Masanobu Fukuoka, The One-Straw Revolution

i. Eileen Egan pointed out that those living in the medieval era honored more than 180 feast days a year—that's almost half the year!
ii. When pressed, however, Maurin did admit that he was an anarchist. Just don't call me a socialist, he protested.
iii. There are, I would argue, three "waves" of modern anarchism. The first, "red," ended largely with the collapse of the Spanish revolution in the 1930's. Green anarchism would be a third wave. There isn't enough space to discuss the second-wave, which I would identify as "anarcho-leftism" of the Murray Bookchin variety.
iv. The terms "luddism" and "luddite" derive from the quasi-mythical "Ned Ludd" who, it was said, smashed a knitting machine in England in the early 19th century. The term luddite today is used broadly, generally meaning someone who is skeptical of the "advances" of technology.
v. aka, "Japhy Ryder" from Kerouac's Dharma Bums.
vi. The organic food company Cascadian Farms now sells an organic TV dinner.
vii. It is obviously impossible to fully engage in this essay the analysis of Myers. For a few sample recommendations of his work, see the Reading section.
viii. Christian Peacemaker Teams, a group that frequently collaborates with Catholic Workers, is currently doing solidarity work with First Nations peoples in northern Ontario, utilizing non-violent direct action to blockade corporate loggers.
ix. Here I'm thinking particularly of his napalming of draft files.

Children and Technology

by Carolyn Griffeth

Not long after I had courageously sent my son, Finn Mateo, off to his first day of kindergarten at a St. Louis charter school came the task of planning his birthday party. Just weeks before, my husband, Tery, had taken Finn to his classmate's birthday party at Chuck-E-Cheese. Tery came home exasperated and educated me on the reality of Chuck-E-Cheese, a place where kids are given tokens to play in a very loud room filled with video-game machines—all of which prevents both the children and parents from interacting much at all. "Why did you want him to go to that party?" he asked. My answer was simply that I wanted Finn to fit in and make friends.

In planning Finn's own birthday party these same desires came to mind. Finn drew up a list of all the kids he hoped to invite and asked, "Where can we go, Mom?" Tery proposed a great idea: to have the party in the gym of the high-school where he teaches. In preparation for the party, we sent out hand made invitations that explicitly stated, "Please no Gifts," and planned games like musical chairs to be played to live music. I wondered self-consciously how Finn's new friends and their parents would react to such simplicity.

Finn's sixth birthday party was a hit. For hours kids chased each other around and played basketball and made-up games, while parents got to know each other on the sidelines. Some parents even joined-in during games like cooperative musical chairs and duck, duck, goose. As the party drew to a much later-than-planned close, I felt a sense of budding friendship between myself and the other parents, who enthusiastically told me how much they enjoyed the party. One father said to me, "This party was really something different. You know, when kids go to Chuck-E-Cheese they don't really play with each other. Today everyone played together!" This of course was just what I had hoped for.

In my opinion, children are not given enough opportunity to play together in a direct unmediated way, without technological distraction. At my son's school the first graders are given 15 minutes of recess a day, presumably because they can't spare a minute more away from academic subjects! When my son has a play-date, often his friend will not turn off their video game or television to play with him, unless mandated to do so. Yet adults are just as likely to do the opposite. Often adults offer a way to "plug the kids in" as if the children wouldn't enjoy any form of human interaction! How do children get their needs for affection, attention, and human connection met, when they are habitually directed toward their own separate world of entertainment?

A friend of mine in his mid-twenties spoke movingly to me about how he feels his childhood was stolen from him. "What happened?" I asked expecting a sad tale of parental neglect. "I just played video games and watched television," he replied.

According to a comprehensive study on media use among American youth by the Kaiser Family Foundation released in 2010, this scenario is becoming increasingly common. The study tracked the recreational use of media of a nationally representative sample of 2,002 3rd to 12th grade students. The study found that on average these 8-18 year olds devoted seven hours and 38 minutes of their day to using entertainment media. "And because so much of that time was spent 'media multitasking' (using more than one form of media at a time), they actually managed to pack a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes (10:45) worth of media into those 7 ½ hours." This increase from 6 hours and 38 minutes of entertainment media consumed in 2004, is driven largely by the use of mobile devices like cell phones and iPods. TV still remains the most common form of media consumed (an average of 4:29 a day), though increasingly it is watched on hand-held devices. The study also uncovered substantial differences in children's media consumption based on race, which included $4^{1/2}$ hours more media daily for black and Hispanic children. The largest difference being in the

Carolyn is really excited about her vibrant communities presentation! Go ahead and call her (314-588-8351) and ask to hear about it!

amount of television consumed: 6 hours daily for black children, $5^{1/2}$ for Hispanics, and $3^{1/2}$ for white youth (1).

Why is this concerning? In 2007, the scientific journal, *Biologist*, published a study by Dr. Sigman that reconfirmed the links between TV viewing and obesity, autism, diabetes, earlier puberty, Alzheimer's, and attention deficit disorder, just to name a few. (2) Obesity, an issue that disproportionately affects minority youth, is alone a cause for great concern: Over the past 30 years, childhood obesity has more than doubled for adolescents and more than tripled for children aged 6-11 (Institute of Medicine). The study published in *Biologist*, also documented how long periods of TV exposure affected the "neuronal mechanisms" behind attention and impulse control and decreased a person's ability to concentrate on the non-TV world. This may explain the observation of the Kaiser Foundation study that "heavy media users" had substantially poorer grades than the "light media users."

One of the reasons that so much screen-time has such affect on kids is that it deprives them of experience in the real world. For example, kids that don't get enough nature–time seem more prone to anxiety, depression and attention-deficit problems. A study by the University of Illinois demonstrated that interaction with nature has proven to reduce symptoms of ADD in children (3). Yet when kids do get out in nature, they not only feel better, they also develop a sense of wonder and connection with creation and an increased respect for the natural world. Kids also play more cooperatively and inclusively outdoors than they do inside—where they are often competing over toys.

The effects of television on childhood play are just the opposite. The average American child will witness 200,000 violent acts on television by age 18, much of which is perpetrated by the "good guys" who kids seek to emulate. It is no surprise that kids who view such violence on television are more likely to show aggressive behavior and to fear something bad is going to happen to them (4). It is also no wonder so many adults continue to see the world as divided into "good guys" and "bad guys." But regardless of the program's content, too much technological entertainment has major social consequences since it replaces time spent playing with other children. And play is where lessons in cooperation and empathy are first learned, as well as self-regulation of aggressive impulses. Not to mention that play is where deep, abiding friendships are formed.

Though I have raised my children without television, we have often watched TV while waiting in a doctor's office or other public settings. On one occasion, while waiting in the emergency room with my son, Sponge Bob was on. In this episode, the characters that represented authorities were threatening to torture another character if he wouldn't answer their questions. They chased him around saying with scary voices, "Now we are going to torture you!" as if it would be fun for them. My son, who was

four at the time, turned to me and asked, "What's torture mom?" Other shows I've watched include child-actors playing out grossly exaggerated gender roles. The girls are often portrayed as princesses, annoying know-it-alls, or hair-obsessed bimbos. When exposed to such programs, I feel that my child's mind is under attack. These are not the values that I want instilled into my child.

Though many parents feel equally at odds with the values being promoted by the media, very few feel able to turn the TV or video games off. In the book, The Plug in Drug mothers describe manipulating their young children to like TV so they can have a much deserved break or nap. (Though the vast need of a young child for attention and engagement are completely reasonable, it is completely unreasonable that one or two adults would alone attempt to meet them! Sadly, this is the reality that many parents are faced with). Other parents describe movingly feelings of powerlessness around their child's TV or video game habit. Their lives feel out-of-control in a way that is analogous to the feelings of a spouse of an alcoholic (5).

Increasingly, the addictive nature of TV and "gaming" is becoming recognized. In a 2009 study published in the journal *Psychological Science* found that 8.5 percent of American youths age 8-18 who play video games show multiple signs of behavioral addiction. "Symptoms include spending increasing amounts of time and money on video games to feel the same level of excitement; irritability or restlessness when play is scaled back; escaping problems through play; skipping chores or homework to spend more time at the controller; lying about the length of playing time; and stealing games or money to play more. "(6) The study found that children considered "pathological gamers" did worse in school, had trouble paying attention in class, and reported feeling "addicted."

Though some will argue that video games can be interactive and educational, many of the most poplar games emphasize negative themes such as the killing of people and animals, abuse of drugs, criminal behavior, sexual exploitation and violence to women, and racial, sexual, and gender stereotyping (7). In a study published recently by the American Psychological Association, researchers from the US and Japan concluded after studying 130 research reports on 130,000 subjects worldwide, "that exposure to violent video games makes more aggressive, less caring kids—regardless of their age, sex, or culture." More specifically, kids who played violent video games had more aggressive thoughts and behavior, and decreased empathy and incidents of helpful behavior both in the short-term and in long-term contexts as revealed by longitudinal data. Dr. Craig Anderson of the above study writes concerning violent video games:

"From a public policy standpoint, it's time to get off the question of, 'Are there real and serious effects?' That's been answered and answered repeatedly...It's now time to move on to a more constructive question like, 'How do we make it easier for parents...to provide a healthier

childhood for their kids?" (8)

For me this is the ultimate question. I imagine that most parents want the same things for their children as I do for mine: Not only that they would fit in and make friends; but also, that they would have every chance to develop their bodies and minds and grow to be compassionate and caring rather than aloof and aggressive. It seems then, that most parents wouldn't choose for their children to consume so much media—and the violence and negative messages that come with it—if they understood the consequences and had the support to pursue better alternatives. Support might include more accessible and safe outdoor places for children to play, parents working fewer hours, and many adults investing in the life of every child.

Because of the resources we have as a family, it has been comparatively easy to raise my kids without television or video games. For example, we are able to pay for Finn to be involved in extra-curricular activities such as circus-tumbling. We also have a large yard to play in and a car to drive to parks and to take on long summer vacations. I am very aware that many inner-city parents have none of these advantages.

An even rarer resource that Tery and I enjoy as parents is the support of the Catholic Worker community. A big piece of this support is our communal dinners that take place on weekday nights. Since I don't have to cook every night, I have more time to spend with my sons. Our communal meals also provide entertainment for everyone. It is common for Finn to spend much of the dinner-hour playing on the swing-set with a visiting child or doing tricks for those still eating nearby. Our older son, Ghana, who often eschews community meals, benefits from community in other ways. For one thing, there is the weekly Dungeons and Dragons game, in which the men of our community gather to spend time with Ghana. In D&D, as it is affectionately called, players create an imaginative adventure together, which gets everyone talking and laughing. Ghana also benefits from having friends in the community willing to include him in activities such as a recent bow making class at the Possibility Alliance. I am overwhelmed with gratitude for these and other ways that the men of Kabat House have reached out to Ghana. It is just what a teenage boy needs.

Even with all these factors in our favor, raising my kids in this place and time, in which the use of hyper-stimulating entertainment systems by children is largely unquestioned, is a challenging act of resistance. In almost every social setting with other families, even on a camping trip, I find myself in the awkward position of having to negotiate the children's use of entertainment devices. Often in these conversations I feel like I am an alien visiting from another world. On occasions such as visiting family, I feel like I can't even ask for the TV to be turned off without ruining the gathering for others and ostracizing myself. Because of these struggles, we tend to visit others less and have kids over to our house to play more.

But even at home, I must negotiate with my kids the use of our computer for entertainment. Finn and I have come to a workable compromise: Every Saturday he is allowed to watch something of his choice, usually Pokeman, and on Sunday he is allowed to watch something educational like National Geographic. The consistency of this arrangement keeps him from asking, "Can I watch

Photo - Peter Morgan

something, Mom?" at other times. It has also prevented Finn from feeling left-out amongst his peers for lack of pop-cultural fluency. Best off all, since only a couple of hours a week are spent before the screen, Finn can spend the rest of his time at home doing creative things like crafts, reading, and playing outdoors.

Recently, a child who was playing at our home with my son exclaimed, "You all can't afford a TV set?!" To this Finn replied, "We don't need one." "Why not?" said his friend. "Because we know how to have more fun," said Finn. I am proud of his answer and I believe it is true.

✝

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Going Offline

Brenna Cussen Anglada

"There are almost seven billion people in the world. Since it is not ecologically sustainable for each one of those people to use a computer, why you?"

This question, posed by Ethan Hughes to a small group of us visiting the Possibility Alliance, an intentional community in Northeast Missouri living without the use of fossil fuel, has made a lasting impression on me. Ethan's challenge, pointed at the privilege that I take for granted, and backed by the weight of sobering statistics about the destructive effects computers have on God's creation, has triggered my decision to give up the personal use of computers by the end of 2011.

My decision did not come in a vacuum. Already, I live in a Catholic Worker farm community that is trying in multiple ways to simplify and care for its own basic needs. We, eight adults and five children, use one washer (no dryer), share three cars, heat our homes with wood, compost our human waste, and raise the bulk of our food. While we still use refrigeration, cook with propane, and depend on electricity (with some solar) for lights and appliances, we hope to implement alternatives for these conveniences in the near future. Part of the reason I live this way is because, in recognizing the immense privilege I inherited as an educated white American, I no longer want to assume that somebody poorer (or browner) than me will perform the daily tasks that keep me alive so that I can pursue more "intellectual" or "spiritual" interests. And though I don't own a computer, the fact that I still borrow friends' laptops or use the library desktop – the very cre-

ation of which wreaks havoc on the environment and the lives of the poor – is a way that I capitalize on another's misery.

Admittedly, for some, including myself, computers are amazingly helpful tools. Personally, computers have served as a convenient way for me to stay in touch with family and friends across large geographical distances. I have used computers to edit and publish my ideas on issues of justice and faith (like this article), about which I am passionate. More generally, computers assist communities of people from across the world to exchange ideas, and have served as a means through which activists can promote awareness about important causes. The recent nonviolent revolution in Egypt owes much to the computer for its efficient means of communication. Computers can be used in modern medicine to prevent death and promote healing. Often, computers can help us save lives.

According to Jacques Ellul, a Christian anarchist, biblical scholar, and social critic of the twentieth century, such advantages of technology are usually concrete and obvious to the common person. My readers can probably come up with an even longer list than I have already presented on the benefits of computers. However, as Ellul posits in his book The Technological Bluff, the disadvantages of technology are very real, though generally more abstract than the advantages, and often only come to light after long arguments. Ellul offers as an example the invention of artificial light, the benefits of which are plain to see. A major disadvantage, however, though it is less obvious than the advantages, as he points out, is the fact that artificial light has enabled human beings to work and live as much at night as during the day, "breaking one of life's most basic rhythms,"
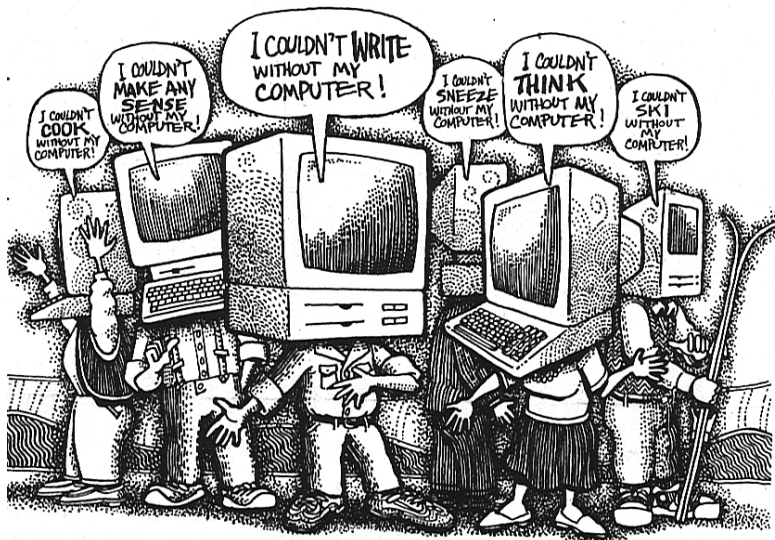
By: Chuck Trapkus

Brenna Cussen Anglada is getting ready for the next craft retreat at New Hope Catholic Worker farm--candle dipping, soap making, and more!

and leading to the expectation of industrialized society that people work as machines work. Ellul asserts that, contrary to common assumption, and unlike many other inanimate objects that are morally neutral (i.e. a knife being used either to slice bread or to kill a neighbor), technology is not neutral. He says, rather, that no matter how it is used, technology carries with it a number of both positive and negative consequences.

If this is true, then it would behoove our society – and particularly the Catholic Worker as a movement – to begin a more serious argument over the effects of the computer, weighing the positive against the negative. Below I have listed a sampling, by no means an exhaustive list, of its negative environmental impacts alone. I hope for this short essay to add to a larger, much more comprehensive, discussion of how, or whether, computer use would contribute to our vision of a "new society within the shell of the old." (I am suggesting the replacement of the word, "could" for "would" b/c I understood you were asking if it would contribute rather than seeking ways it could.)

• The manufacturing of a typical desktop and monitor takes 500 pounds of fossil fuels, 47 pounds of chemicals, and 1.5 tons of water (in a world where one third of the human population does not have access to clean drinking water.)

• Each year, between five and seven million tons of e-waste (trashed toxic components of computers that are impossible to recycle) is created. The majority of this is sent to China, India, South Asia, and Pakistan, as it is cheaper to send trash abroad than it is to deal with it domestically.

• An investigation by the Basel Action Network and Greenpeace China in December 2001 found that most computers in Guiyu, an e-waste processing center in China, are from North America and, to a lesser degree, Japan, South Korea, and Europe. The study found that computers in these "recycling" facilities are dismantled using hammers, chisels, screwdrivers, and even bare hands. Workers crack CRT monitors to remove the copper yoke, while the rest of the CRT is dumped on open land or pushed into rivers. Local residents say the water now tastes foul from lead and other contaminants.

• A single 320-megabyte microchip requires at least 72 grams of chemicals, 700 grams of elemental gasses, 32,000 grams of water, and 1,200 grams of fossil fuels. Another 440 grams of fossil fuels are used to operate the chip during its typical life span – four years of operation for three hours a day.

• More than two thousand materials are used in the production of just one microchip (smaller than a pinky fingernail), a single component of one machine: given this, it is next to impossible for human rights watchdog groups to track the origin

of all the materials that go into making an entire computer. It can be safely assumed, though, that all of the same problematic mining practices of environmental contamination, health problems, and human rights violations (for the gold, tantalum, copper, aluminum, lead, zinc, nickel, tin, silver, iron, mercury, cobalt, arsenic, cadmium, and chromium that are used in computer manufacturing) are involved.

Knowing all of this, if we neither want to mine the parts for, nor build, a computer ourselves, nor want any member of our families to do so, then why would we ask somebody else to do it for us?

There exist other persuasive arguments – social, psychological, physical, and spiritual – against the use of the computer. I'm sure you are familiar with many of them, so I will only touch on a few: the average American child spends 30 hours a week in front of a screen, no doubt contributing to the worrying rise in obesity, dia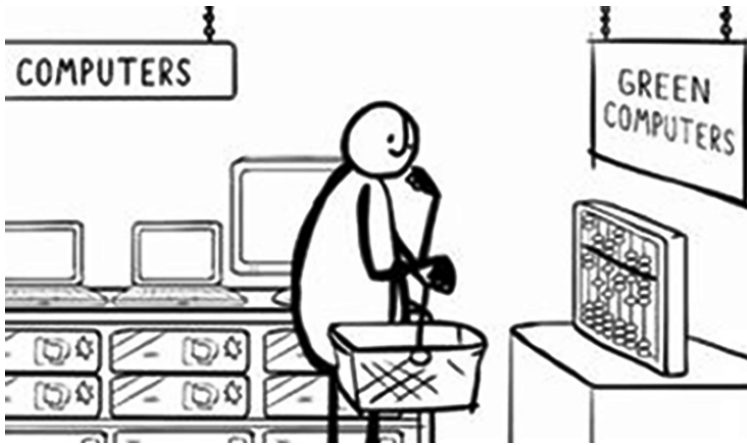betes, and other related diseases of the young. Computers expose children to more violence and pornography than with which they would otherwise come into contact. Also, since 90% of human communication is nonverbal, the pervasiveness of email, Facebook, iPhones, and other forms of electronic interaction have led to the loss of much authentic communication in relationships. And as both spiritual and physical beings, created by God to be in the material world, such mediated access to our environment disrupts a more direct access to the divine.

As a Christian and an anarchist trying to live an authentic life, perhaps the most compelling reason for me to give up computer use is that computers make me reliant on an unjust system I claim to resist. Both the manufacturing and the running of computers require strip mining and the extraction of fossil fuels. Most of the funding for computer science research comes from the military. Worse, it is due to the military's occupation of foreign lands that we have easy access to resources like oil and other materials we need to run our high-tech lifestyles. If I believe in a world where military and corporate domination do not exist, then I need to start practicing for that world. And, as far as I can see, such a world cannot have computers. The farmer-writer Wendell Berry, in his well-known essay "Why I Am Not Going to Buy a Computer," says, "I would hate to think that my work as a writer could not be done without a direct dependence on strip-mined coal. How could I write conscientiously against the rape of nature if I were, in the act of writing, implicated in the rape?"

Again, the computer is not the only culprit here. My refrigerator, the gas I put in the car I drive, the stove on which I cook meals for my family – all of these were likely manufac-

> ...in recognizing the immense privilege I inherited as an educated white American, I no longer want to assume that somebody poorer (or browner) than me will perform the daily tasks that keep me alive so that I can pursue more 'intellectual' or 'spiritual' interests.

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tured or obtained in unethical ways. Thankfully, there exist alternatives to the gas or electric stove, to electric refrigeration, and to petroleum-powered transportation. I encourage us all to seek out such alternatives and begin to experiment with them, as our community is currently doing. But the computer has no such alternative. As Ellul says, "There is no choice. The computer brings a whole system with it…offices, means of distribution, personnel, and production all have to be adapted to it."

As a community of people who try to take personal responsibility for our brothers and sisters, we need to take seriously the fact that if we cannot find ways to transform society that don't depend on oppression, then our "revolution" will continue to bolster, lend credence to, and finance the very injustice we seek to eliminate. If we want to begin to unfetter ourselves from the disastrous consequences of a technological society, the abandonment of personal computer use is one basic, simple step in that direction. ✝

Footnotes
1. I say I will give up the personal use of computers, because I realize it is currently beyond my ability and imagination right now to stop using the computers that are involved in my daily activities like using public transportation, banks, or telephones, or purchase anything. One exception I may make to the personal computer ban is if I travel to Occupied Palestine or another area where extreme oppression is taking place. Then I may use a computer as a means to communicate such injustices. However, I have not yet made this decision.

2. Though the actual extent of its valued role has been debated – see "In Your Facebook," by Carmen Trotta in the May issue of The New York Catholic Worker.

3. Jacques Ellul, The Technological Bluff, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdman, 1990), 43.

4. Ellul, 35.

5. Please take into account that since the computer industry is such a rapidly changing field, it is difficult to get the most up-to-date statistics.

6. Worldwatch Institute, "Behind the Scenes: Computers," State of the World (New York: Worldwatch Institute, 2004), 44, http://www.rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/ dunnweb/ StateofWorld2004.dat.pdf,)

7. Annie Leonard, The Story of Stuff, 2010, p. 58

8. Worldwatch Institute, 45.

9. Worldwatch Institute, 44.

10. Leonard, 58.

11. Wendell Berry, "Why I Am Not Going to Buy a Computer," published in New England Review and Bread Loaf Quarterly in 1987 and reprinted in Harper's. http://www.jesusradicals.com/ wp-content/uploads/computer.pdf.

12. Ellul, 9.

Get Your Kids Outdoors!
It will help them be happier and healthier:

1. Stronger bones and lower cancer risk: Today's "indoor kids" don't get enough sun and are becoming Vitamin D deficient.
2. Trimmer and healthier kids: An hour of play a day is a basic tool in the effort to ward off childhood obesity and diabetes.
3. Improved eyesight: Recent studies find that kids who get outdoor time have less need for eye glasses.
4. Less depression and hyperactivity: Outdoor time in natural setting (even tree-lined streets) soothes kids and lowers their need for medications.
5. Longer attention spans: Children who stare at TV and video games all day have less patience and shorter attention spans.
6. Better at making friends: Children playing together outdoors relate directly with one another, create games together, and improve their "people" skills.
7. More creative: Outdoor kids are more likely to use their own imaginations, inventions and creativity while playing.
8. Less "acting out" at home and school: Getting kids away from TV violence and video games helps them see that violent behavior does not always solve problems.
9. Measurably better grades in school: The healthy bodies and minds that come with outdoor play are better able to do well in school.
10. A longer lifespan and healthier adult life: Doctors estimate that sedentary and obese children lose three to five years from their life expectancy.

-The National Wildlife Federation's "Be Out There" Campaign
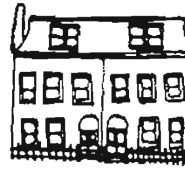
From Karen House

by Braden Tobin

As cool air begins to fill the rooms of Karen House, Autumn breathes new life into all of us who live here. The stifling heat of summer is gone along with the mania that tends to characterize it. There is hope in the city as well. We are experiencing a lot of transition with the changing of the seasons. At the beginning of the summer, we had four community members move out of the house, all still having an impactful presence in our lives. We have invited three new community members to move in this fall and winter.

Inclusivity is a concept foreign to capitalism. As such, it becomes more and more important to the way that we offer hospitality, both to the homeless and our fellow volunteers. Prior to moving in, I never considered the plausibility of radical hospitality, to bring home the homeless. We are lucky at Karen House to inherit the legacy of inviting the most marginalized into our center, our home. We are equally lucky to have the support of fellow community in what sometimes feels impossible. The concept of home for me has transformed itself since moving here. I hope the same for our future community members.

My favorite times in the house revolve around meals; sometimes those are the most chaotic, too. Having a child ask me to sit with her or him is the biggest lesson in inclusivity. The complete lack of fear in the shameless begging is so refreshing. With the prospect of new community, I remember times like these and feel relieved of the fear which causes insecurity. Everything is better when we are all welcome, and I am so thankful to have found home in Karen House.

I have found it a wonderful thing that people are welcome here and encourage others to share in the joys of offering hospitality. ✦

Braden Tobin has been answering the phone saying either Karen's House or Carol House (The Furniture Store) and confusing those calling us. Sorry.

From Little House

by Teka Childress

I thought my husband, Mike Baldwin, would write this article, From Little House, but he simply pointed out to me that it was my turn. For those of you who did not read Mary Ann McGivern's years of From Little House RT articles, I will explain that the house is a four-family-1870's built apartment that sits on the land that once was the edge of the "common fields" once farmed by people in the early days of the City's history. The house now provides a home to members of basically three families, several of whom were part of Karen House or the Dorothy Day Co-housing Community. We are three blocks from Karen House and are "little" only in comparison to it.

Right now, Shameka Adams, her partner James and her two boys, Najee and Adain live across from us, her brothers Walter Quinton, and Mercedes and Mercedes' partner, Olie live below us and Ms. Yvonne and often her grandchildren stay across from Quinton and Mercedes. Our most communal times occur over meals cooked in the backyard, especially when Whitney Baldwin (Mike's daughter), her partner, DaJuan Adams (yes, brother to Shameka, Quinton, and Mercedes) and their son Cayden, Mike's and my perfect grandson, come to visit.

In addition to inheriting a building to house people, Mary Ann also left us a garden she had lovingly tended for over twenty years, renewing the vision of living close to the land, a vision "so old it looked like new" as Peter Maurin would say. Last year, after meeting with people from the Possibility Alliance I was inspired to step up my own efforts to grow food and planted a sizable garden in the orchard. Recently some of our north-side friends sponsored a workshop on permaculture, a set of ethics and design principles that allow us to live a more sustainable life. Mike and I were lucky enough to have some of the participants of the class come to look at the Little House to see how we might be able to use more permaculture principles in the design of our back yard, garden and home. Mike and I plan to incorporate as many of these ideas as possible.

I am grateful for the opportunity to continue growing and changing. The longer I am part of the Catholic Worker movement the more I understand of the vision of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. I see it in ever expanding ways and am awed at how comprehensive, if not perfect, are its elements. I give thanks for all of the people who have taught me to see what Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin saw. I have lived with and met amazing people over the years while being part of the movement-- the Catholic Worker communities (especially the ones I've come to know well in St. Louis and in the Midwest), friends at the Possibility Alliance, and all those who have been homeless. They have shared their need and their abundance and they continue to inspire me to follow God's will with more courage, generosity and compassion. ✦

Teka Childress has really enjoyed the challenge of working cooperatively on publishing this Round Table.

by Mary Densmore

As I find myself living out my third year with the Catholic Working in St. Louis, I continue to explore and deepen my understanding of the call we share to live our lives in a new way. These past few months I have spent a lot of time gardening, and recently a couple of us from Kabat House took a class on Permaculture from our friends at the Possibility Alliance. It's incredible how this work has changed me and given birth to new dreams. Working with the earth, I daily experience the miracle that is creation: watching bees work, compost break down, seeds germinate and grow into food! More and more I am in touch with the connection that exists between my body, the earth, and my heart. I'm increasingly more curious how the people who came before us lived with no access to technology but only complete and direct reliance on the earth and all she so gracefully provides for us. Peter Maurin knew this all so well and encouraged and inspired the idea of the green revolution—the idea of a life of balance with prayer, meaningful work, sustainable living, and community.

But amidst the beauty of the ways I've seen many Catholic Workers here in St. Louis strive to live out the green revolution this summer, we were also very aware of the destructive and harmful presence the Monsanto Corporation brings to our local gardeners and farmers throughout the world.

Leaving the house we are bombarded by Monsanto's new advertisements reminding us "We're so proud to be St. Louis Grown." The billboards display images of a happy-looking family working in a garden or a group of volunteers at a food pantry and say messages like "We dream here" or "Working together here." These advertisements were so unsettling to me because they were a glaring reminder that Monsanto lives here in this town where we also live! I've witnessed the ways they possess power and control in the city, specifically through the ways they donate large amounts of money to local charities and events. Also, I found the advertisements ironic because they are playing off the marketing of the green movement, encouraging us to grow organic, eat locally and care for the earth, but behind the doors of their offices they create chemicals, genetically alter crops, and make decisions to benefit the growth of the corporation and leave behind the peasant workers often overlooked in the poorer areas of the world.

This summer, some of us at New Roots Urban farm committed to study and learn more about Monsanto: their history, involvement in St. Louis, how they deemed it possible to patent creation, some of their different technologies and their harmful affects on humans (seed terminator technology, GMOs, round up, PCBs, rBGH). In my research some of the most haunting information I found was the disturbance Monsanto causes in small towns like Anniston, AL or Sauget, IL, which is just across the river from St. Louis. They establish a large plant in the town, hire workers, and then within a couple of years the town is contaminated and the workers and residents have an increased chance of cancer and experience other affects of the chemical contamination.

It seemed like the deeper we went into the study, the darker and more disturbing the information we encountered, but fortunately for us the work that the garden needed continually called us back to creation, back into a relationship where we knew truth (despite all the confusion in our world) and were given the opportunity to use our bodies and minds to cooperate with God. Our garden collective began brainstorming what next steps we needed to take to create or become part of movement against Monsanto. We especially recognized how we were so connected with the corporation because of our location in St. Louis and felt like now was the time to begin working in a new way.

Maybe Peter Maurin's vision of the Green Revolution was just the answer we needed: Through prayer, work and community, a natural shift occurred from pointing an anger finger at Monsanto, to opening our own hearts to the fullness of life, to witnessing in creation a full spectrum of creative ways a new movement can exist, and to the reminder that "we are not alone anymore." In response to the evil we see corporations creating, we are now committed at New Roots to learn and put in the labor to save seeds to share with other community gardens and to build community and friendships with local farmers to find ways we can resist Monsanto together. While we still have the end goal of eliminating the existence of Monsanto entirely, we recognize that our approach is rooted in love, and we have complete confidence that through community and looking inward and staying committed to a life of nonviolence that anything we put our minds to can be accomplished. Now when I see their billboards throughout the city, I think of the new friends I have made or the book I am reading on seed saving and realize I have hope. ✦

Mary Densmore is doing the Spiritual Excercises of St. Ignatius with the Bridges program and really enjoying it.

The Round Table

Karen Catholic Worker House
1840 Hogan ■ St. Louis, MO. 63106

Karen House Needs

- Cold weather gear: blankets, hats, gloves, and scarves.
- Coffee (fair trade preferred), creamer and sugar.

- Christmas is coming! In order to better enact our values of personalism and simplicity, we're doing things a little differently this year. Please check our website or call us for details on how you can get involved!

Kabat House Needs

- A working weed-eater! Call 314-621-7099.

Resources (for those with and without a computer!)

- e-stewards.org - a searchable map of certified companies that recycle or refurbish electronics in a responsible manner
- Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other - Sherry Turkle
- Center for Environmental Health - green electronics resources for work, school, and home
- Technology and Values - Craig Hanks
- transitionus.org - grassroots movement seeking to build local, self-reliant communities in the face of challenges of peak oil, climate change, and the economic crisis.
- The Flickering Mind: The False Promise of Technology in the Classroom and How Learning Can Be Saved - Todd Oppenheimer
- Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder - Richard Louv
- storyofstuff.com - incredible, concise, and informative picture of our consumption

Check **www.KarenHouseCW.org** for updates on Karen House, information on the Catholic Worker, an archive of past Round Tables, and more!