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Lammas, 1984

# Children of the Earth

Vol. 4, No.12

*Rowan Tree Church Periodicals Collection*

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## **Recommended Citation:**

Children of the Earth. no.12 (Lammas, 1984). Rowan Tree Church Periodicals Collection, New Age Movements, Occultism, and Spiritualism Research Library. Archives and Special Collections. Valdosta State University. Valdosta, GA. <https://hdl.handle.net/10428/5094>

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See - we're still around! y

# CHILDREN OF THE EARTH

Book Review: The Continuum Concept by Jean Liedloff, Harper Books, New York, NY, 1977.  
P.O. Box 417  
Keyser, WV 26726  
(304) 788-0470

Number 12  
c. CotE 1984  
Lanmas

## HELLO AGAIN

WELL IT'S ABOUT TIME. The Computer broke down, there's a funding crisis at work, I've gone through some interesting personal changes this spring, and we were not exactly overwhelmed by the amount of articles etc. sent. Sorry it took so long. Anyway, we did not move away and give up, but it is true that not only has there been no CotE for a long time, but also my personal correspondance has been nonexistent. Even my Senators and Representatives haven't been hearing much from me, and THAT'S bad. My apologies to all - I promise to try to be more together.

-Hestia

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

MATRIARCHAL MOTHERS will be a magazine addressing the interests of lesbians choosing to have children and all women seeking to raise children in woman-centered ways, to reclaim mothering as the powerful, joyous experience that will enrich our culture and lead to profound social changes. \$5/4 issues. Ocala Nighthawk, P.O. Box 5728, Chula Vista, CA 92012.

Aquarian Tabernacle has a newsletter: PANEGYRIA, \$8/8 issues, stewardship of the sacred Earth. Aquarian Tabernacle Church, Inc., PO Box 73, Index, WA 98256.

SILVER WEB'S newsletter has revived, and they are planning a gathering for August 9 - 12. Information PO Box 5628, Baltimore MD 21210.

THE WISE WOMAN newsletter has moved. New address is 2441 Cordova Street, Oakland, CA 94602.

CHILDREN OF THE EARTH

**Book Review: The Continuum Concept  
by Jean Liedloff, Warner Books, New  
York, NY, 1977. Reviewed by Ertha**

For those of us who seek to live in harmony with the ways of Mother Nature, Ms. Liedloff's book is both a confirmation and a revelation. Her main theme, supported both by research and by personal experiences with primitive peoples, is that a newborn infant begins life outside the womb equipped with an incredibly complex and delicate set of "expectations". These expectations are endowed by the child's genetic heritage.

An overly simplified example would be the following. A human baby is born with two eyes, capable of seeing light of certain frequencies (4,000 - 7,000 Angstrom units) and within certain limits of brightness. This is obvious to all us humans, but when one thinks about it, one realizes that not all creatures see the world our way. Bees, for example, have vision that includes some ultraviolet frequencies. A human baby can be said to be born "expecting" to see light of certain colors and brightnesses.

To deny the experience of light, or even of color, is to run against the expectations endowed by Nature. Damage could result, both physically and psychologically from such deprivation. Evolution has prepared the child for life as a human. It is not only safe, but necessary to expose a child to the normal human range of color and brightness.

How do you judge how bright? Use your own eyes. What hurts you or your baby will cause you both to look away. Trust yourself and trust your baby to communicate what Nature demands. This simple principle is already familiar to many a parent who has studied the ways of Mother Nature.

Ms. Liedloff challenges many current childrearing practices and goes on to raise questions about their consequences as the babies involved grow to adulthood. She applies her thesis to current problems such as drug addiction. Her conclusions in this area are rather surprising.

Human evolutionary expectations were slowly developed and honed over countless generations of the human species. They form what Ms. Liedloff calls the "continuum" of human experience. To go against their innate wisdom is to defy Mother Nature. But what are the expectations of a human baby and what are the consequences of neglecting to fulfill the continuum needs of a human child or adult? These and other pertinent questions are the subject of this intriguing book. We who are concerned with Nature and Her Laws would do well to add this book to our list of "Craft but not Craft" books. Without a hint of Wicca, Ms. Liedloff has clearly spoken for Mother Nature.

## CHILDREN IN PAGAN COMMUNITIES #2 by Morag na Bienne

As a somewhat arbitrary point in the Great Cycle of things, I'll start off with Conception, then backtrack (that's typical of me in mundane persona, too, and occasionally sends George up the wall), then proceed some more.

In the small Pagan communities described in the last article (Samhain issue), several factors combined to make sexual contact, and especially sexual contact for the purpose of procreation, intensely sacred.

1) An abundance of taboos on sexual contact. For instance, no sex prior to or during hunting, no sex prior to or during several religious ceremonies, no sex during pregnancy or menstrual periods, no sex after the birth of a child for a set period (This ranged from a minimum of 40 days in one tribe to 2 or 3 years in most.).

2) Frequent or chronic underweight conditions. Low body-fat to total weight ratios were extremely common, particularly in desert climates, and tend to lower fertility.

3) Low birth-rates. One estimate is of an average of 3 or 4 children per woman in tribal situations, as compared to an average of 10 to 12 for women in non-Tribal situations.

Consequently, great effort was put forth to have the conception go as well as possible, in terms of creating a situation attractive to a strong, healthy, sane child-to-be spirit. (In our own case, were in contact with our daughter starting about 3 months before her "conception".)

In addition, most groups had a set of restrictions involving pregnant women. These varied widely from one group to another, but all were intended to improve the chances of a safe parturition of a healthy child to a healthy mother.

Some examples: Not looking at anything horrifying (so as to not mark the baby), not handling edged weapons (to avoid cutting the cord), eating some kinds of foods to have a boy and others to have a girl, and so forth.

For much more detailed information on this and other aspects of tribal living, read "Indian Women of the Western Morning" by John Upton Terrell and Donna M. Terrell, available in paperback @ \$2.95 from Anchor Books, copyright 1974.

\*\*\*\*\*

By way of contrast, in current American culture, there exists the following:

- 1) General viewpoint of the World as overpopulated.
- 2) Very few limitations on sexual activity.
- 3) Widespread access to, and use of,

contraceptive means.

4) Very little community support of, or for, children. Indeed, parents are expected to be the sole support of their children.

5) Expectation that pregnant women will behave exactly like fat non-pregnant women. Not only no taboos or protections, but rejection of any such.

Within such a context, the majority of sexual contact will be recreational and casual (except where prohibited, when it will be decidedly non-casual -- but still recreational), and the connection with children will usually be one of avoidance. (Though fear of infertility is rapidly becoming a major news item.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Now, for us as Pagan parents in a non-Pagan world:

One approach would be to explain to our children, when they reach an age of inquiry about it, that sex is sacred and powerful, much like liquor or hallucinogens, to be avoided until they have the strength necessary to keep from being overwhelmed by it.

Moreover, one of the grand advantages of being Pagan is free access to the Tarot and other divinatory means. My daughter (who is now 3-1/2 years old) should be quite capable of reading the cards for herself long before she needs to check out young men as suitors.

As for the people around who engage in indiscriminate sex, they are usually Materialists who do not recognize the Goddess and God within us.

Note: The "Paganism as an excuse for orgies" theories (generally based on historical anecdotes about Saturnalia and hospitality to strangers) are founded on misconceptions about the role of Saturnalia-type celebrations, which existed within a framework of restraint and continence as the norm. In other words, Saturnalia-type festivals were holidays in which all the normal rules were turned on their heads. Masters served slaves, donkeys were dressed as priests, normally chaste people went to orgies, and so forth.

As a rule, Saturnalia are found only in rigidly structured, rather puritanical groups (what Ruth Benedict called "Apollonian" in her classic "Patterns of Culture").

Finally, the approach suggested is based on an assumption of similar traditions about sex and conception. In this, as in practically everything else, for every generalization there is at least one exception somewhere. Analyze your own tradition, summarize its teachings on the topic, contrast those to the ideas and actions prevailing in the community, and make clear that while thoughts can be somewhat private, actions (particularly with outsiders) are almost always public.

## LETTERS

**Miscellany**

The WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION showed dramatic drops in infant mortality when people were persuaded to return to breastfeeding.

Ernest Thompson Seton wrote a number of excellent children's books about animals (1880s - 1930s). He was questioned as to why they all had such tragic endings and replied that, essentially, all animals die, and quietly in bed of old age, the only reasonably happy ending, was also far and away the rarest. He portrayed animals as they were, rather than as some might wish for them to be. (You don't have to be an 8-year-old to find his stories fascinating.)

-Linda

**KITCHEN WITCHERY****Sabbat Cakes:**

mix: 1 Tablespoon honey  
1/3 Cup butter  
1/2 Cup brown sugar  
1 Tablespoon white wine

add: 1 1/2 Cups flour  
1/4 Teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 Teaspoon salt  
1 1/4 Cup oatmeal

combine well, adding water if needed to make a rollable dough. Cut into crescent shapes and stars. Bake 15 minutes at 350 degrees until cakes are golden brown.

**Nest Eggs:**

6 slices of bread  
6 eggs  
salt, pepper, bits of butter  
milk to cover.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut circles from the slices of bread. Place in a shallow baking pan, lightly greased. Break an egg and place in the center hole of each bread slice. Add salt and pepper, bits of butter, and milk to cover. Bake until brown, about 30 - 45 minutes.

-Windsinger

## LETTERS

Greetings

Now that my daughter has reached the age of verbalization, it's time to teach her nursery rhymes, songs, games, and little stories. One of my pet projects is writing Pagan oriented children's literature. So many of the nursery rhymes are awful (A woman, a dog, a walnut tree/ the more you beat them, the better they be.), and I don't want my daughter learning them. Aradia's Song, and the Yule carols you printed in the last issue are definitely a part of my growing collection. I will gladly share my growing collection with anyone interested (I'm slow to respond sometimes) and will just as gladly add to it. If anyone is interested in sharing/exchanging/reading Pagan Children's Literature, please have them contact me.

Also, for people who are not willing to reveal themselves as Pagans (The reasons are too numerous to list), or want to have an answer for non-Pagan relatives/friends/coworkers when they ask your church affiliation - the Unitarian Church is excellent. Depending on the minister, the church will worship or study religions from Kahuna to Odinism to Buddhism and everything in between.

And finally, a small tip - to keep candle wax out of your rugs, altar cloth, etc., freezing the candles prevents them from dripping, and placing small circles of waxed paper under the candles makes clean-up much easier.

-Starsight

EDITOR'S NOTE: I'M INTERESTED - WE ALL ARE. STARSIGHT, SEND COPY! This newsletter doesn't get published until I get enough contributions, and stuff from your collection sounds like the stuff we want.

Starsight is not the only Pagan I know of with connections to the Unitarians. NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH UNITY OR UNIFICATION CHURCHES, PLEASE. Nor are Wiccans and other Neo-Pagans the only Pagans around. (Pagan: not Christian, Moslem, or Jewish. -Webster's Unabridged.) Unitarians unite in love to support each other in their search for individual truth, and their religious education program is geared to helping the kids think for themselves. Some Unitarians are Christians, probably most are not. The author of the following letter excerpt is a Unitarian.

-Hestia

(on explaining her theology to a group of Baptists she must work with):

I am trying to be patient - I do want to finish this unit, as I hope to go on and become qualified as a hospital chaplain, but I sure come home with a sore tongue from biting it! They have asked me over and over again about my theology - they know I am not a christian, that I do not have a personal god with whom I chat a few minutes each hour, on whom I rely to save my

soul or any other part of me. I talk about being in tune with the universe, celebrating (oh yes, they asked how I would celebrate Christmas and my answer shocked them..... I told them that we were celebrating christmas a long time before Jesus was ever thought of and that I can celebrate the whole solstice festival, all the things like holly, candles, yule logs, evergreen, mistletoe, gifts, etc. that have always been in fashion... and how can they celebrate using all these pagan symbols???!?!?) life and being a caretaker as well as being taken care of... they just don't get it. They have now decided that I am empty inside, not filled with the LOVE OF MY LORD and that will help me be filled. How do I tell them that I don't need filling, that I have it all - the sunset and the sunrise, the new bud poking through the snow, the snow crystals themselves, the warmth of the sun, the chill of the Maine ocean, the touch of another human hand, the warmth of love stretching around the world and the closeness of a new baby I am fortunate to hold in the maternity ward (the problem maternity ward at that which is my present assignment at the hospital), even the inner feeling I have for the 15-year-old whose mother came to be with her through the delivery. Well, I have the druggies, the alcoholics, the poor and the lonely - a sad group of humans. But I know the loved and the close, the caring and the loving, the hurting and the holding..... I'm not sure this bunch of christians can even know what I'm talking about..... their loss!

-Meredith

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HEALING

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## SOAP CRAYONS

Materials: Ivory Flakes, food coloring, water.  
Tools: spoon, measuring cup, ice cube tray

Recipe: Pour water into a cup-size measuring cup until it reaches the 1/8 mark. fill the rest of the measuring cup to the top with Ivory Flakes. With a spoon, mix the water and soap flakes together. It may seem as if there is not enough water, but keep mixing and blending until you have a thick soapy paste without big lumps. Add about 30-40 drops of food coloring to this mixture and stir very well until all the white is gone and the soap has color. With the same spoon, scoop out some of the mixture and put it in one of the cube spaces of an ice cube tray. A one-piece plastic tray works best. Press the soap paste down into the cube until you have filled the cube to the top. Do one or two more cubes with the remaining soap mixture. You might want to make a few more batches of soap mixture in different colors before putting the cubes aside to dry. Find a warm, dry place to put the cubes for one or two days until the soap paste gets hard. Pop them out and they are ready to use. Don't worry about making a mess with them. Whatever you draw with them on bathtubs, sinks, windows, and hands and faces, they will wipe clean.

-Windsinger

## HEALING

My wonderful son and I just concocted this healing chant and thought you might want to use it in the newsletter...

finger finger,  
    heal tonight!  
finger finger,  
    do it right!  
finger finger,  
    we love you!  
finger finger  
    just like new!

Bright Blessings!  
Morgan & Janel

# THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE LION

by Morag na Bienne

Once upon a time, a long time ago, and a long ways from here, in Africa, there lived a grasshopper. Now, one day, this grasshopper was just flitting along the way grasshoppers do, jumping and flying and making noise, when he noticed a lion. Now the lion was pretty big, but pretty young, and new to the area, cause he'd never seen or heard grasshoppers before. So that young lion just JUMPED into the air when he heard that b-r-r-r-t noise the grasshopper was making. Well, the grasshopper thought that was tremendously funny -- a lion being afraid of a grasshopper. So the grasshopper went on over to tease the lion. First he flew over and landed on the lion's back. The lion jumped and twitched all over, and the grasshopper thought THAT was hilarious. Then the grasshopper landed on the lion's head, between the lion's ears. The lion shook his head and shook the grasshopper off. Then the grasshopper landed on one of the lion's ears. The lion twitched his ear and jumped again. Then the grasshopper landed on the lion's nose! And the lion went snatch! like that! and ate the grasshopper!

The moral of the story is to be VERY careful about who you annoy.

## PEN PALS

My 7 year old daughter would like a pagan pen-pal. Despite evidence to the contrary, she sometimes feels like the only pagan child around. She is interested in paganism, Star Wars, soccer, violin, and cats. She is:

Robin Robins, 5361 Elsinore Way, Fair Oaks, CA 95628.

-Robin's Mom.

THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE LION  
by Horace B. Stenn

Once upon a time, a long time ago, and a long  
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PEN PALS



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