

Rita

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Sent: Wednesday, April 02, 2008 7:57 AM
Subject: Picking Up The Tempo, number 13, April 01, 2008

~~A TEXAN RANGER.~~

A gentleman, just from Richmond, gave the following account of these redoubtable warriors:

Ben M'Cullough's Texan Rangers are described as a desperate set of fellows. They number one thousand half savages, each of whom is mounted upon a mustang horse. Each is armed with a pair of Colt's navy revolvers, a rifle, a tomahawk, a Texan bowie-knife, and a lasso. They are described as being very dexterous in the use of the latter.

HARPER'S WEEKLY – July 6, 1861

**Picking
up
The Tempo
a country
western
journal**

**a DEXTEROUS NEW
VOICE in Country
from the ~ Music
HALF ~ SAVAGE
Southwest**

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PICKING UP THE TEMPO, a country western journal
April 01, 2008, number 13

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Introduction: The title of this journal comes from Willie Nelson's song, "Pick up the Tempo." Since I am relocated in Garland, Texas, will attempt to publish this journal on a regular basis first day of each month to seek out new writers and bring back some existing ones.

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Edited and Produced by Judy Gordon

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ROXY WRITES APRIL 1, 2008

"Stars"

by Roxy Gordon – © 2008, "Stars"

[Edited by Judy Gordon]

"STARS"

I study faces. I buy books of old photographs and new photographs and study faces.

Take for instance these books. Look at the faces in a book called Matthew Brady, Historian with a Camera; look at Edmund Ruffin, the Southerner who claimed to have fired the first shot against Fort Sumter. His eyes are like hawk's eyes—a scheming hawk—and they are bright and crazy. His mouth is wide and stubborn; his jaw protrudes slightly. His hair hangs to his shoulders. Then look at General Grant in the same book. His eyes are gentle and his brow is concerned. His mouth thinks. His face is of the future; it doesn't matter what politics he had in context of his time, he's a liberal; the grandfather of Jimmy Carter as well as Richard Nixon. Then take a book called Faulkner's County: Yoknapatawpha—(If you want transition first, look at Walker Evans' photos in Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.)—no hawk eyed Edmund Ruffins here, but scared faces; threatened mouths; captured eyes. U. S. Grant won and rules in Washington as well as Atlanta, Chicago and Sacramento. Look at Jerry Brown and see Grant; but look at the taxpayer, the veteran of World War II, and see the trapped eyes of the southern redneck—the man with the shotgun in Easy Rider may be from Illinois as well as Mississippi—he knows now the liberal truth that all men are equal and he lives with the fear that if all men are as good as him, then any day he may fall and disappear.

L. A. Huffman was a photographer at Miles City on the Montana frontier. A book of his photos, The Frontier Years has pictures of many old time Indians. Their eyes are hawk's eyes, too, but a hawk of a different breed—a wild hawk to Ruffin's crazy stubborn, calculating one. Their mouths are set, posed either with ferocity or often a kind of cynical mirth. But most of all, there's arrogance; an arrogant set of the head on the shoulders; arrogant eyes and mouth. Laura Gilpin's The Enduring Navaho covers a period from not long after the end of Huffman's until almost the present, and her Navaho have the same faces. Along Grassdance Creek, Bill Cloud, Gid Shell, Frazier Snakestrack—all my neighbors—looked that way.

You know what's happened to the Indian in the past two or three hundred years; you might well wonder why they look so arrogant.

Because they're The People. If they happen to be Sioux, then they're not Crow, Blackfeet, Flathead—or white. They are The People. And this leads to an interesting point of view; they can hold the most un-liberal position that their enemies are not quite human. Check out the scene in Black Elk Speaks where the women get hold of the white soldiers' bodies after the Custer fight. I sent that book to my good friends, Joe and Mildred Birdwing at Grassdance. Mildred wrote back, "Joe and I think a real Indian wrote that book."

But that doesn't mean my neighbors on Grassdance Creek had much in common with a teenage soldier at Mylai. Before an old time Indian killed a deer, he had a prayer, "I kill myself." I've seen white hunters kill deer with high powered, scoped rifles from heated, aluminum "deer blinds" mounted on towers beside specially seeded deer feeding areas. And then have their "guide" go get the deer, dress it out, and have the meat frozen for them—if indeed they didn't think it too "wild" tasting to eat. When Joe and Mildred came back to Montana from California and a trial at city living ten years ago, they were broke. They lived in a little cabin up in the mountains and Joe got whatever work he could. For meat, they had to depend on his hunting skill. Whenever he'd come in late in the afternoon with a fresh killed deer over his saddle, he'd throw it onto the ground and their daughter Marsha, who was not yet old enough to talk, would run to it and pound on it like Indian drums; she would make up Indian songs to sing with no words; and she would

drink fresh blood from the wound.

And that's not to say something else.

I found myself at a house in Los Angeles one night where a tall effeminate young white man, impressed that I'd been living with Indians, said to me seriously (and profoundly), "The thing I like about Indians is, they're so mystical."

I told him these stories.

The first time I went to an Indian dance, I expected buckskin and feathers; there were buckskin and feathers, but there were also headdresses of feathers stuck in plastic bleach bottles; sueded cotton instead of leather and an abundance of safety pins holding the whole thing together. I thought, "They don't make their outfits any different from the way my cub scout pack made them."

Memorial Day, once, I went to a ceremony with Joe and Mildred. We got to their cemetery before the rest of the family, Judy and I following their pickup in our jeep, driving out across rolling prairie land up toward the mountains. The cemetery was on a bare hill-top, a net wire fence around it. Judy helped Mildred and her older girls start cleaning the graves while Joe and I stood back, leaned up against his pickup. Mildred told us all the graves there but one were of her family. She said that belonged to an old woman who'd died dancing at a dance hall that used to be on the next hill-top over toward the mountains.

The old woman was from Canada and had no relatives nearby, so they decided to bury her in the closest cemetery. It was winter time then, Mildred said, and the ground was frozen, so they couldn't dig the grave very deep. Every year after that, part of the old woman used to protude from the ground—until finally none of her was left. After Mildred's relatives came to the cemetery, their cars in single file winding across the prairie like a parade, the ladies prepared a paper plate and paper sack for each grave. On the plates, they put cookies, saltine crackers, sticks of wrapped chewing gum, candy bars, fruit, packaged fried-pies, and canned soft drinks. They placed a sack and a plate on each grave. Alan Cone, who would die sundancing at another reservation before the summer was out—and who was a grandson of the chief who stopped his people at Grassdance and took up the white man's road—prayed in Indian. He said, "Today is the only day we are all together, the living and the dead." Two eagles swept up from the mountains and hovered above us; the people saw them and pointed and told one another. They were happy, for the eagle is a very good sign. The ladies lifted each plate up a few inches and set it back down, giving thanks Indian style. Then they called people in the crowd and these people came forward to get one of the plates or sacks and eat. The dead had first chance, but they didn't eat much.

While we ate, rain threatened. When we finished, we went to the real feed on the prairie a few miles away. Food was stacked in cardboard boxes and cooking pans and we circled around it. An American flag flew in the center of the circle. Had it not been rainy, we would have sat on the ground in a circle, but as it was, we pulled up our cars, hoods pointing toward the flag. Alan Cone prayed again, this time in English, and the food was passed around. We brought our own eating dishes and we were served by people carrying the food around the circle. We were offered more than we could eat—it was expected we would take food home. We had boiled beef,

boiled in plain water and underseasoned by my Southwestern tastes, but with a unique flavor all its own; soup; Indian fried bread; crackers and cookies; watermelon; Kool-Aid and coffee. There's always coffee where there are Indians. The man carrying the dog around passed Judy and me by since we were white; he didn't think we'd want to eat dog. But we did and Joe, thinking it was funny, sent him back to us.

As we finished the feed, rain came, first big isolated drops on car hoods and windshields and then a driving thunder storm that sent the food-servers running. We went back to Joe and Mildred's house in Grassdance, and after the rain stopped, we sat out in front of Joe's tack house—where he repairs saddles—and watched the clouds still raining in the mountains. The clouds spoke to the mountains and the mountains answered.

Clouds talking to mountains and eagles, the young man in L.A. thought pretty cool. Headdresses made from bleach bottles and packaged fried pies were something else; he said he thought that was corruption of Indian culture. He was wrong. In the old days, Indians had bone and leather laying around to make costumes with; today they have plastic bleach bottles—in either case, they've used what was at hand. If they eat packaged fried pies today and chew chewing gum, why not offer it to the dead. It is an everyday magic the white man with his European heritage of mysterious and high church cannot understand.

Magic which is not stylized, but is style.

The Indians along Grassdance Creek are into style on many levels. Nicknames are common; they range from Indian names to something reminiscent of 1930's movies about college boys. Way of dress is important; in Northern Montana (as in most of the west), the proper clothes are Levis—the button kind, sometimes with top button left loose, so they'll fit lower—western shirts; boots; and a properly high crowned, narrow brimmed cowboy hat. A few months ago, I overheard a conversation between Joe and Mildred about somebody's hat. Joe had just come home from town and he was telling Mildred about a big hat somebody had on—much too big. He told the story partly in fun, more than a little in contempt. Joe said, "He claimed he had skin trouble; had to wear it that way." We were in Denver before we first went to Grassdance and an Indian there told us he thought Grassdance was the toughest reservation town in the country. Two young white men had been driven from town by gunfire; kids had shot into their trailer house and had shot at one especially—an eastern kid with shoulder length blond hair and an Australian hat. "I guess they liked the way he jumped," the Indian in Denver told us. I wore Levis and boots because that's what I wear. I wore a sheath knife then. My hair was a little long, but not shoulder length; it was not blond. I was from Texas, not the east. We were never even threatened, must less shot at. Little kids would ask us what tribe we belonged to and think we were teasing them when we said we were white. This is not bigotry or intolerance. A man's style is his truest mark—it is how he sees himself and how he sees himself in his environment; it tells true which side he's on.

It's the base and frame on which his power is built. Power is medicine; it is what a man has to use.

Indians do not take medicine power lightly. Joe and Mildred, like most Indians, are interested in horses. Joe used to ride the rodeo and they keep horses. They talk about

people with horse medicine; these people can always win races—and they can control horses in other ways. Last summer Joe and Mildred went to a rodeo down on another reservation; they knew the producer, a white man. They were with him in his trailer house beside the corrals where he had his horses and Joe noticed young Crow and Cheyenne men up on the corral fence, talking to the horses and touching them. He said to the white producer, "You better keep those kids away from the horses; them horses won't be able to throw 'em." Joe meant they were working medicine on the horses. The producer laughed. No Crow or Cheyenne young were pitched that day. The same thing happened the second day and Joe told the producer again to keep the kids away; when they came the third day, the producer ran out of his trailer, threatening them and yelling for them to leave. Joe said, "You should have just posted somebody to keep them away; you shouldn't have yelled at them." That day the rodeo was a carnage of horse flesh; Mildred said they watched the horses kill themselves; they cut themselves on the fence and broke their necks coming out of the chutes.

But power is usually not that magical; usually it is in the faces and postures of the people—the way they wear their clothes. It is the sound of their voices, the old men's accents like Chief Dan George in Little Big Man. It is in their language; in their stories; in their life. It was said Old Tony Beaver had medicine. "Must be true," Joe said. "He never has worked a day in his life and he always gets by."

They are The People.
They are Stars.

I discovered by looking at many photos of the last great Comanche war chief; half-white Quanah Parker, that his medicine had something to do with a star. In Indian clothes, he always wears a star on his necklace; in white man's clothes he wears a star tie pin. His house in Oklahoma had giant stars on the roof.

Sometimes stars are beaded onto moccasin toes and beaded into necklaces and earrings; it's a good symbol.

This is a question: Was Paul Newman in Hud the Star, or was Hud? I saw Hud when I was in highschool senior in West Texas; I was amazed to find my friends and I were living a movie. When I saw Little Big Man, I was moved by Chief Dan George dancing on the point of a hill with Montana's landscape beyond him; then I thought; Jesus, there's a crew of probably not less than fifty people and all kinds of complicated equipment not twenty feet away from him.

When I first went to live on Grassdance Creek, it was a movie. I was living in a one room log cabin in Northern Montana; I was living on an Indian reservation; nighttime, I was hiding in the brush along the creekbank, wrapped in an army blanket poncho, waiting to run off kids who would come to steal; I was eating dog meat and seeing eagles. I wore a sheath knife. But then as months passed, as I settled into the place and the rhythm of the days, without television or old friends; with past scenes grown dim, I lost the feeling of a movie. I was just living on Grassdance Creek.

A Star not only dances by himself on a mountain point—without cameras or other men—he doesn't even have knowledge of a camera. He is a pure clear light, burning with fire which is only his.

Mildred wrote in the spring that Bill Cloud was dead. He'd got some money somewhere—lease money or something—and gone off to Hardy drinking. After he'd been drunk a week or so, he fell under a moving train. About the same time, his daughter Apache had her collar bone broken in a car wreck. The day she got out of the hospital, she was celebrating and suffered a concussion in another car wreck. Early in the summer, we were staying with Joe and Mildred and Mildred said she'd heard more about Bill's death. When he first got the money, he went off to Canada where he was drinking around with some Canadian Indians. They beat him up and he came back to Hardy. When his body was found in Hardy, all his money was gone, the story was some of the Canadian Indians killed him for it.

Judy asked Mildred how Ethyl was taking it all. "Okay, I guess," Mildred said. "She's drunk as usual."

Bill and Ethyl Cloud were our closest neighbors at Grassdance. They lived in a little log and fiberboard cabin across the creek and down in the brush. Bill was a leathery, wiry old guy; despite years of incredible dissipation, he looked a full ten years younger than he was. He asked me to guess his age; when I guessed ten years young, he laughed in the short, choppy way of old time Indians and said, "That pleases me." He had been a cowboy as a young man; he'd worked for a big Texas ranch that had leased the reservation; he still rode with all the grace Indians are supposed to, relaxed, straight up and easy in the saddle. When he found I was from Texas he said, "Bet you're a good roper; never seen a Texan wasn't a good roper." He wouldn't believe I could hardly rope at all; he kept saying he would bring a rope by to watch me rope.

Ethyl must have been twenty years younger than Bill, but it hardly showed. The kind of life they lived tells more on a woman than on a man. She was overweight and her eyes were dull; but even so, sometimes I thought I could see a kind of beauty that might have existed once. Apache, their daughter, was nineteen. She was beautiful. I never knew anyone like her before and I think I won't again.

I saw her first in the tribal hall; she'd just come home from BIA boarding school. She was friendly and chattered away like an ordinary American highschool girl; I was a little surprised that Bill and Ethyl had such an innocent and middle class daughter. After that, she'd wave at me when she'd ride by on horseback or when she was walking and I'd pass her in my jeep.

But after a while, I noticed a change in the way she acted toward me; I saw a change in her eyes. Instead of talking to me, she would stare at me; and her eyes—deep black Indian eyes—would burn.

A couple of times, she came late at night, drunk, to ask me to take her and her mother somewhere. I took them and she wouldn't talk to me during the ride. I found I'd been a little hasty in thinking her Bill and Ethyl's innocent and middle class daughter; she could not have lived in that house and been either. They partied down there almost every night; we'd hear Indian singing drifting up from the creekbed. Tearful wives would knock on our door at three in the morning, hoping by some miracle their husbands were at our house. "He's always down there with those Cloud girls," they'd wail. Apache's eyes were often swollen and

bruised; there would be red patches and cuts on her cheeks. Whenever her face was marked, she would be more sullen than usual. A forty-five year old man she stayed with sometimes was supposed to be doing it to her. One Sunday morning after a long loud night before, Bill came to our house at sunup and asked if I could take Apache to the hospital? I went back down to their cabin with him and found her curled up on a bed, her eyes closed tightly, her mouth a firm line. Her face and arms were battered and swollen.

Once she sent her cousin up to the door one night to ask me to come around to the side of the cabin. Apache was there, drunk. She giggled and tried to tell me something I couldn't understand.

Finally she sent her cousin one night to tell me to come see her in the hall. She was waiting to fight. Even her cousin, who had herself stabbed Barry Ringing the winter before, was amazed at her fury. Her cousin said, "Don't mind her; she's just mean." I talked to her, and white man I was, we ended up laughing. She asked me after a while if I could take her up near the mountains; she said she had to babysit for someone. I took her, and when I let her out of the jeep, she went to a man I knew. He was drinking beer with other men in front of a log cabin. I saw her last at a softball game in Hardy. Judy had played and we were waiting for two other girls we were going to take home. The car Apache was in passed slowly by us leaving. She was on the side next to me and she passed not five feet away. She looked at me in her old way, arrogant, full-mouthed and hateful. I realized then in a flash: She was looking at me exactly the way I looked at her! I always look at people that way—especially women I want.

My God, I thought, awed at the thing she offered—a journey to dark places where Stars burned bright; a mapless trip which will most likely have no return.

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(Coming next issue Roxy Gordon's "*A Taste of Indian Culture.*")
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RANGER RITA WRITES

Movies You Never Saw

by Rita Webb

Two-Lane Blacktop

The Criterion Collection DVD

Starring James Taylor, Dennis Wilson, Warren Oates, Laurie Bird, and a 1955 Chevy

Directed by Monte Hellman, 1971

Two-Lane Blacktop has long been unavailable, commanding exorbitant prices on Amazon.com. It was reissued in February 2008. The package includes two DVDs, plus a full copy of the screen-play in book form. The first disc contains the movie plus audio commentaries that can be played while you watch the movie. The second disc has some cut scenes, as well as interviews with people connected with the film, thirty-seven years later.

It is 1971. Dennis Wilson and James Taylor own a customized 1955 Chevrolet,

known as the Car. Taylor is the Driver; Wilson is the Mechanic. (No one ever says anyone's name in the film.) Whenever they need money, they race the Car for a few hundred dollars and they usually win.

They begin a journey along Route 66. The Girl (Laurie Bird) crawls into the Car while the Driver and the Mechanic are having lunch at a diner in Flagstaff, Arizona. The guys come out of the restaurant and don't even notice her, although she's sitting in back with the tools. Finally, exasperated, the Girl asks, "Don't you ever talk about anything but cars?" but the Driver and the Mechanic ignore her as they discuss the carburetor. In Texas, a man in a 1970 Pontiac GTO (Warren Oates) challenges them to a cross-country race, with Washington, D.C., as the destination. First one there will collect the pink slip (title) to the other car. They agree to stick to the two-lane blacktop highways, in order to avoid the police.

"GTO," the name that the Driver gives to Warren Oates' character, is a middle-aged man. It isn't clear whether GTO is trying to recapture something that is no more, or running from something, picking up hitchhikers along the way. He builds a wall around himself with lies about his past, making up a new story for each hitchhiker, offering the fables despite the fact that no one asked him. Most of the hitchhikers listen to his lies without comment. However, when he picks up a nihilist who deflects all the B.S. with, "Sure I believe you. It's easier than not believing you," GTO freaks out, and the hitchhiker demands to be let out of the car immediately.

The Driver and the Mechanic expend more emotion and love on the Car than they do on people. They are so alienated from real life that they stammer self-consciously whenever the conversation strays from cars. All three men like the Girl, but they are so inept in expressing their feelings that she becomes bored with them, despite the fact that a rivalry for her affection seems to be building among them.

Meaningful communication with any of these men is fruitless, as the Girl finally learns. At an Arkansas diner, she leaves with a young man on a motorcycle, abandoning the Driver, the Mechanic, and GTO. By this time, they all seem to have lost interest in the race to Washington, D.C. GTO picks up two hitchhikers who want to go to New York, and he tells them that they're in luck because that's where he's heading, "straight through." The Car is last seen running a race in Memphis for cash. The owners of the Chevy definitely do not want the Pontiac. The Mechanic refers to it as "the Howard Johnson's of the freeway." The Driver responds, "When we get that pink, we'll unload it."

It is helpful to read the screenplay in conjunction with viewing the movie. Much original footage has wound up on the cutting room floor, including a clumsy romance between the Driver and the Girl. If you don't read the screenplay, the end of the film doesn't make much sense.

There is no background music in this film. The only music occurs naturally, from jukeboxes or car radios. Nevertheless, audial surprises are in store with Terry Allen singing "Truckload of Art," and Kris Kristofferson singing "Me and Bobbie McGee," on tape cassettes.

And a bit of trivia, the 1955 Chevy is the same one that was used in *American Graffiti*.

An existential treat. (****½)

Rita Webb © 2007.

Rita Webb's new book, ***Cruisin Central*** © 2006, Tonopah Press,
Richardson, Texas.

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or buy ***Cruisin Central*** at

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CAROL GERHAUSER WRITES

"What's Love Got To Do With It?"

by Carol Gerhauser, © April 01, 2008, Dallas, Texas

"What's Love Got To Do With It?"

The battle between natural and man-made law rages in the center of the dramatic arena, but the desire of its major characters or representatives is, according to René Girard, a triangular one that does not come about spontaneously, but is according to another; in Creon's case a collective error with the outcome an interplay between actors within a defined social, pre-existing situation; desire is an intermediate cause, a potential instability in the community, an insoluble conflict. Antigone's desire is both according to another and to herself, thus fulfilling the concept of the tragic hero, the tragic flaw if you will, that focuses the nobility of action on her who cannot function within the limitations of a man-made order. "In order for the state to function, the superiority of legal institutions is proffered over the mercurial divine order . . ." and "it is through the recognition of the inferiority of the mythic order to the law that the myth that grounds the law is seemingly repudiated . . .," and "accordingly, in order for the legal codes to operate they must mystify their violent connection to myth/religion". The eternal quest for divine law to be the basis for man's is a bedeviled one at best. The distinction between good and evil becomes a superficial one being mystified, and the practical good is "only conceivable and adequate in the limited universe of human laws".

Desire can always be portrayed by a simple straight line which joins subject and object. The mediator, or other, though, is always there (community or divine order) expressing a triple relationship, the triangle. But the object that changes with each adventure (Polynices' burial) does not affect this triple relationship; the spatial metaphor of the triangle that remains is no Gestalt. The real structures are inter-subjective, and the triangle has no reality whatever. This alludes to the mystery of human relations. Human reality can be systematized up to a point and degrades itself into an incipient logic, however irrational or chaotic it may appear. Thus Frederick Nietzsche's statement that "primordial desire cannot be resolved into a logos that demands purity . . ." can be refuted along these lines, and the performance of duty, an effort which originates in desire and is in and of itself irrational, show the two contenders here no more or less corrupted by desire than the other, and the observation that Antigone's choice catapults her motives into "a 'bad infinite' that could not be made true by resolution . . ." does not end the notion that her actions cannot be justified by divine law. It is not true that if the decision to act in the name of divine

law stems "from desire at all, resolution would break down, and ethical purities would be choked". Though passion contains neither purity nor reason, and though Antigone confuses her passionate defiance with an acceptable reverence of the gods, her act can be seen as neither asocial nor particular, nor part of a non-human force. Antigone's subjective feeling plus duty lead to an ecstatic reconciliation. In her motivation and justification can be seen a "shadowy knowledge from a dialectic that weaves particularity and universality". The tragic hero is "responsible through action and intransigence for the tragic consequences." This action makes greatness possible but brings about a fall which is both defeat and glory. She shares the perspective of the isolated scapegoat, and the ethics of desire are not an abstract principle but a shadowy phenomena. Antigone counts on divine justice when she says in line 118 "once I suffer I will know I was wrong." The Chorus says she is "a law unto herself." The uniqueness of this defiance is the only source of the heroic will, but the alternative for her is intolerable.

"Juridical definitions consign to human action unavoidable consequences, and desire manifests itself in its purest expression as something that is projected beyond human law". Aristotle in his Poetics I states "[H]e that is incapable of society makes no part of a city as a beast or god." Moreover, he says, "[W]hosoever is naturally and not accidentally unfit for society must be either inferior or superior to man." The theory of heroic will figures in the delineation of the antisocial spirit. But there is in tragic *pathos* the painful recognition that the opposing ethical law, that of the state, is also her own. "The hero must choose to act in accordance with one of two conflicting principles". Tragic reconciliation depends on the advance of specific ethical powers out of their opposition to their true harmony, and the dialectic goes on until it incorporates every interruption into the service of the spirit, for the opposing laws are equally valid. This play is not, therefore, simply about tragic heroine who lets personal desire warp her pure, godlike intentions to honor her family or the gods, nor is there simply a conflict between human versus natural law in the context of what is just. The inner action of the play goes much "[b]eyond these literary dimensions". Antigone can no longer remain in the world of common good and harbors little concern for life among the living. According to Mohammad Kowsar, she goes beyond human limits, defying time and its imperative of change and must play her fate not against '*dike*', the law ordained by gods, but against the chthonic dictum of '*ate*', another order quite distinct from terrestrial laws and the separate justice of gods. '*Ate*' can be defined as "[a] primordial signifier that preexists in an articulated form like an arc of nothingness over the parenthetical moment of life". It is perhaps better described as an aberration of the mind as related to darkness, the spirit of error which leads to defilement, punishment, and death, and criminal waywardness, a zone where life and death encroach on each other's domains. Her vision is one of supremely tragic ethical lucidity, and she operates in a borderline dimension "[f]ree of all material and worldly attachments. She has structured a relationship between this side and beyond and sets herself in relationship to that which aspires to a point beyond '*ate*'. She is at 'the limit', at the very place where the "other finds legitimacy, at the site of primordial metaphoric ordinances". >From this position one can tell the difference between the laws of the state and those associated with the gods. In this relationship of hero and the beyond, exists the painful truth which fascinates and promotes a pure desire for death and nothingness. She is justified in the supernatural sense and stands in for the rest of humanity representing the will of the unknown senses. The course of time and life, including man-made laws, stands in contrast to this realm. Antigone has transgressed

the cosmic limits of earthly propriety and stands on the precipice of immortality and timelessness meeting a typically tragic end.

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end

(Coming next issue Carol Gerhauser's "Washateria Days.")

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Carol Gerhauser provided a collection of her poems entitled "Her Clean Up Days," in *Picking Up The Tempo*, journal – number 3, September 06, 2001. She can be contacted at e-mail Clgerhauser@aol.com.
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OBSERVATIONS OF WILD LIFE, WITH JENNIFER KIDNEY
"The Good Neighbor" Collection Entitled CHANNELLING EMILY DICKINSON
© 2007 by Jennifer Kidney, Norman, Oklahoma

THE GOOD NEIGHBOR

1.
"It's time to start gardening"
were her first words to me
called across our yards
as we each stooped to retrieve
our morning papers.
We hadn't yet met,
but I took this as command
and have been sowing seeds
and digging in the dirt
ever since, a constant source
of anticipation and joy.

I'd bake her pies
and she'd fry the okra
I brought from the farmer's market.
On the fourth of July
we'd watch the fireworks from her deck.
But we were mostly over-the-fence
neighbors, greeting each other
every morning, stopping to chat
about the drought or rain,
the transgressions of the lawn guys,
or the antics of our dogs.
She was a banana every morning
and a glass of wine at 5 p.m.
She taught me never to refrigerate
a tomato and so much more
I can never express.

2.
The cemetery where her body lies

is not as lovely as her yard
 once was, although it does afford
 a view of distant hills and is filled
 with meadowlark song. Her azaleas, her joy
 and pride, pink stacked against red,
 fully bloomed that last April afternoon
 so that she could enjoy them
 from the bedroom where she waited
 to die. Now those azaleas too have died,
 due to an indifferent gardener,
 and the redwood fence that she designed
 is caving in. A poet once said
 "Good fences make good neighbors,"
 but my good neighbor is gone.

====

end

=====
 (Coming next issue Jennifer Kidney's "*Channelling Emily*.")
 =====

Jennifer Kidney was nominated for Oklahoma Poet Laureate,
 along with twelve other poets, including N. Scott Momaday
 and Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Dr. Kidney's recent book,
Women Who Sleep With The Dogs, published by Village
 Books, 2004, is \$10.00, plus in the United States add \$4.00;
 for each item shipped to an address outside the United States,
 add \$10.00, shipping and handling. Also available limited
 quantity of her ***Animal Magnetism***, published by Wowapi
 Press, 1985, \$3.50, inquiry.

Available **NEW** book of poetry order from author—***Life List***—
\$15.00 each, or from her publisher villagebookspress@yahoo.com,

To order each book, contact:

Jennifer Kidney

1232 Windsor Way

Norman, Oklahoma 73069

Phone: 405/329-3395 or E-mail: jen1kidney@hotmail.com

=====
ART COELHO WRITES
 =====

Art Coelho,

P.O. Box 249,

Big Timber, Montana 59011

=====
"One of My Marriages"

One of my marriages
 got erased like
 a club-footed geek
 getting his neck
 too close to the hedge
 in a steeplechase.

It was the Pope's henchman
 and no it ain't like
 filing for a civil divorce.
 It's morally cleaner than that
 in an ugly-bloated-belly way.

The Ex simply pays for it
 in cold hard cash and in
 the severing of old vows
 she gets a shiny new arcade glory
 to fasten on her rosary when she prays;
 the paperwork starts in some
 little insignificant rural town
 straight for the heart of Rome.

The Vatican there has so much
 power they can take the diamonds
 out of the Devil's eyes
 and throw a prodigal son
 the bone of being dethroned.
 They're human pride strippers,
 and if they find you alone at home
 you'll curse they day you were born.

Course I took out some rambling insurance
 a very long time ago, heading across
 the Montana prairie to live with Crows—
 my dancing in the Sun Dance blew them away.
 Sometimes your trail dust can cancel
 out all the hidden blows,
 make your armor out of truth
 and your biggest fans that are foes
 will cringe at the light in your soul.

One of my friends said
 it improved my battling average
 'cause one less matrimony toll
 showed less of a percentage
 on my life-with-women record.
 It's good to know the slate can be
 by some slight of pompous hand
 and by the magic of the Papal State
 wash out everything with
nothing ever happened
 in any form of flesh and bone.

For me though there will
 always be a fitful undertow,
 a farce of weapons that darken the glow
 'cause nothing once true ever

completely vanishes into thin air:
 not the hair on your chest
 or the nipples pressed hard
 like a thousand wet kisses
 in the backseat of the '55 Merc;
 an afternoon picnic with milk cows
 coming through the underbrush
 to watch us and hear our laughter
 ring at such a rustic audience
 where we only brought to the meadow
 our naked bodies and of course our youth.

I could never smooth
 over failure by holy guile
 and look at myself in the mirror;
 besides it wasn't all bad
 'cause you taught me how to fly
 away from every controlling fear.

– Art Coelho

end

(Coming next issue Art Coelho's "Spring's Curse.")

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artcoelho@cablemt.net

Coelho's canvases featured:

www.palcus.org

For Sale: Art's paintings

KAREN X WRITES

PUTT no. 13, 2008 © April

"What Would Gertrude Stein Say?"

To Alberto when he said he liked my email poems but that's not why I write them.
 Why do I why do I why when there is no...

Why then I do
Do I?
I do when.
When I do
I do then.
Do no when.
Do, why, no.
NO. Why?
When do,
Then no.
Do!
Then when?
Is there no?
There is when
There is do.
When is why?
Why is there.
There is why.
I do why.
I do.
Why there then.
There is there then.
No is there.
No is when.
Do, when there is no.
There is no?
There is.
Why?
No is there.
Then?
No is do.
No I.
Do why, do I?
When there, why no?
Do there.
No why.
I do I.
Do is then.
Do is there.
Do is why.
Do is I.
No is why.
Do no then.
There is then.
There is why.

===

end

KAREN X
Registered Yoga Teacher

and Writer at Large
KXatlarge@aol.com
<http://hometown.aol.com/kxatlarge/>
 WOWAPI PRESS, 1993, published
TENDER BLUE FLICKERS,
 by Karen X.
 See other connections: [www.priyayoga.net and
Karen X presents: www.wordspace.texas.org],

TAMMY MELODY GOMEZ WRITES

Poem 1

Title: "Unbroken Ceiling"

By: Tammy Melody Gomez

when the storms threaten like this
 you begin to thank the well-placed
 woodplank floors for remaining
 planed and smooth,
 solid and strong
 for you
 tonight.

something so unseeming
 as a hundred-year old house
 can give comfort
 and keep you from
 needless fretting.

this sound house
 fortifies and protects,
 like a castle in the
 mist.

you never
 felt so thankful
 as you feel
 when nothing sways
 and shutters stay shut
 keeping maelstrom away.

there is an unbroken
 ceiling above my bed,
 and i find this remarkable.

there is an unbroken
 ceiling above the bed,
 and this is remarkable.

the cracks and unsteady
rooms exist in our mind,
the mourning cooing howls
portray uncertain weather.

as long as my house is solid,
i can be broken within it,
and still believe that i am safe
and sound.

after "Shipping News" (based on a novel by E. Annie
Proulx)

Poem 2

Title: "This Tornado"

By: Tammy Melody Gomez

this tornado is a foul-mouthed
old-western-era cowboy
moving down our driveways
with a torqued strut,
it's either the skinny legs
in too-tight jeans
or the effort required to keep
the jangling spurs from getting
tangled that makes his knees
bend and heels point out.

this tornado is a 50-foot clack
of bones in a skeleton frame,
the felted cowboy hat
snug on the skull,
his holsters are empty,
but he packs a mean gnarly fury
kicking up dust with his
saloon-kicked-me-out tumbling.

if we turn away,
and avert our eyes from this threat,
he may pass in peace,
and forget to scatter us like
texas tumbleweeds, rolling to our graves.

(after midnight, march 3, 2008)

=====
end

=====
**TAMMY MELODY GOMEZ is a Fort Worth, Texas, author, can be
contacted for readings and performances: tammygomexican@yahoo.com**
=====

RICK SIKES WRITES

MEN LIKE ME

By: Rick Sikes © April 01, 2008

The hours and flowers
Are not often gone
Until the seasons of youth
Have so swiftly flown
Battles raged throughout the years
Against fate's ill decree
Scarred, torn and weary-worn
I wonder if this world
Has a place, for men like me?
People coldly shun
Turn without care
Deaf to cries of suffering
Seeking fantasy to hear
Life, played in varied parts
By gentle and fierce hearts
Doles out its casted roles
Even to the realist-misfit souls
Eyes of the people are not blind
They just refuse to see
Denying we even exist
The realists.....the fools
Men like me

=====
end
=====

RHYTHM REBEL**Rick Sikes**

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Rick Sikes' CD's For Sale© *Etchings In Stone***RIJAN Music**www.myspace.com/ricksikes and www.ricksikes.com (Main Web-page)*Rhythm Rebel*, © by Rick Sikes' chapbook,published by **Wowapi Press, 1996, 2001**, inquiry.**RICK SIKES & THE RHYTHM REBELS Recordings From The 60'S****RIJAN Music – \$10.00 plus handling and postage.**www.myspace.com/ricksikes and www.ricksikes.com (Main Web-page)**PETER O'BRIEN WRITES****"Surrouned Bytheenemy"**

by Peter O'Brien © April 01, 2008, Surrey, England

Here's something for April 1st which was inspired by an article in:

The Guardian Newspaper here in England back in July 2005. It is called:**"SURROUNDED BYTHEENEMY"**

A Lakota Sioux from South Dakota
 lies in an unmarked grave
 in the northwest of England
 in Salford, city of the brave.
 I read in yesterday's newspaper
 Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show
 came here in 1877
 with 97 Sioux and 18 buffalo.
 There were 180 horses,
 plus mules, elk and deer,
 along with a hundred cowboys
 for those English crowds to cheer.
 One of the Lakota warriors
 was six feet seven tall.
 Just 22 years of age,
 he seemed indestructible.
Surrouned Bytheenemy
 was his Lakota name.
 Everyone looked up to him.
 He had everything to gain
 but a winter lung infection
 brought this giant down.
 Black Elk, the medicine man
 couldn't bring him round.
 Far from his native Black Hills,
 the Lakota sacred ground,
 they dug a pauper's grave

and lowered his body down.
 There he lay forgotten
 till I read it yesterday.
 I hope his spirit made it home.
 That's all I have to say about
 a Lakota Sioux from South Dakota
 who lies in an unmarked grave
 in the northwest of England
 in Salford, city of the brave.

"I like to think Roxy would have appreciated this one." – Peter

=====
end
 =====

Peter O'Brien is an author and publisher, *Omaha Rainbow*, and under his
Sun Storm Records, launched Roxy L. Gordon's music.
 =====

ROY HAMRIC WRITES

Circling the Big Bend

Insect dialogue clearly has escaped
 The net of rhetoric

Yet, the natural world
 Does speak to something

Epic dramas do appear
 in flickering shadows

Birds do sing
 Pure sound

I now know why
 The Great Rivers Way is fixed
 Down

It's all a sacred search

Thus written, I
 formally nominate
 For President
 The empty space
 above the green basin
 Formed by the Chisos Mountains

But the spell
 Can't be held

Or, as Heidegger quips

Living life
Is somewhat unfamiliar
to us all

====
end

(Coming next issue *Roy Hamric's "The Stick."*)

Roy Hamric was the editor of the former weekly newspaper, *The Desert-Mountain Times*, in Alpine, Texas. He edited a collection of newspaper columns, *Archer Fullingim: A Country Editor's View of Life*, which won the Texas Institute of Letters best work of journalism award in 1976, and he took the photographs for *The Big Thicket*. For many years, he took photographs which regularly appeared in Wowapi publications.

WES MCGHEE WRITES

Blue Blue Night

"Blue Blue Night"

by Wes McGhee – © April 01, 2008, England, Great Britain

"Blue Blue Night"

When that feelin' fades again
A broken arrow that won't mend ...
Empty echoes down the hall
Faded spaces on the wall ...
And it all seems so sad – but then
I remember when we used to drive through the night
Cross the desert watch the sun become neon light
I remember Mexico, it's a long long way to go
Into the blue blue night – the blue blue night.

If there's a right time, I don't think it's now.
I guess there's not a right time anyhow.
On your word I could depend
But broken dreams can never mend
And it all hurts so bad – but then
I remember every turn our journey would take
Every mile every smile and every mistake
I remember Mexico, it's a long long way to go
Into the blue blue night – the blue blue night.

When my guitar gets the blues
And all it plays is "Born to Lose"
I remember Mexico, it's a long long time ago
And it all – felt so right
Yes it all – felt so right
Then it all turned into a blue blue night
A blue blue night.

====
end

=====

WES MCGHEE produced *Blue Blue Night*, recorded and mixed at Glebe Studio, Great Hillingbury, Bishops Stortford, Herts—CM227TY, England, Great Britain, [contact: wes.mcgee@hotmail.co.uk]—[www.myspace.com/wesmcgee]

=====

JUDY GORDON PAINTS

#1600

NDN, 1999, Media: scanned copy is red, green, brown, and gray tones, Date: 1999, Dimensions: 8½" x 11"

Current whereabouts of original: Private Collection, Garland, Texas.

Ranger Rita Webb's comments:

"Judy has scanned this with an arrowhead and a leather shoelace. The original is quite red, as can be seen here. Below is a digital modified copy, showing the details more clearly, in accommodation of low-resolution internet graphics. Judy told me that there is a reason for the face being green, but didn't explain."

Judy's comments:

"Green color was used to paint shadows, then use of red lighting on painting makes Indian's face realistic – shadows become brownish, when red light is shining. This digital modified copy may be viewed on Roxy Gordon's website: www.roxygordon.com online art, Wowapi Studio Two."

All prints 8½" x 11," archival matte paper available. You may check Roxy Gordon's Website for Judy Gordon's art, *Wowapi Studio Two*, www.roxygordon.com.

====
end

(Next issue will have Judy Gordon's "*Freighter 1969*.")

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end

FOLLOWING CD REVIEWS:

BILLY JOE SHAVER: FREEDOM'S CHILD

by Judy Gordon*

1. "Hold On To Yours (And I'll Hold On To Mine)," *Billy Joe is very old-fashioned throughout this one*, 2. "Freedom's Child," *Billy Ray Reynolds backs Shaver fine*, 3. "That's Why The Man In Black Sings The Blues," *all TRIBES are recognized*, 4. "Honey Chile," *full band carries Billy*, 5. "Good Ol' U.S.A.," *we're as lucky as can be along with STEVE CONN, listen to that piano*, 6. "Day By Day," *WILL KIMBROUGH takes you full tilt with his acoustic 12-string guitar*, 7. "Corsicana Daily Sun," *musical history totally covered*, 8. "That's What She Said Last Night," *fun song co-written with EDDY, his son, there goes that piano again, Hey Steve*, 9. "Drinkin' Back," *memories not forgotten*, 10. "We," *Billy really tries to give all he can*, 11. "Wild Cow Gravy," *this one makes us live forever*, 12. "Déja Blues," *We do get way down along with Billy AND TODD SNIDER*, 13. "Magnolia Mother's Love," *Full of family and we come together WITH THE BAND, and JAMIE HARTFORD'S mandolin*, 14. "Merry Christmas To You," *Full backup JAMIE HARTFORD--KEITH CHRISTOPHER--PACO SHIPP.*

Don't forget JIMMY LESTER on drums THROUGHOUT.

[Contact: www.compadrerecords.com or www.billyjoeshaver.com]

BRENDA DeLASANTA: SONGS FROM THE SOUL

by Carol Gerhauser+

The music is arranged, played and even sung by Roger Boykin, and the show tunes are immaculate (I want to see the musical on or off). I am talking about "Afraid to fall in Love" with its old school-charming guitar, "Roll With the Punches (or "Big Fun on a Saturday Night", a later and better version on the disc), and "If It Were Not So" (a big ditto). RB turns them phrases, Brenda sings well, and the horns are cute on "Roll With the Punches" though it gets sit-com themish for a bit (is that new?). The after-hours on Forest Ave. guitar is good, and that Boy kin sing.

I like "There's a Land"—like all things psychedelic, love-wrought (kind of a "Love Train" deal). But songs 3 and 4 (Brenda's) show Shagg's virtuosity as a supportive complement to her likable singing; the guitar slips in and out carrying the meaning and her. I have only one complaint (about 2, 3 & 4) being a fan of understatement.

"Wings" is a joyous love ballad, and worship from afar is okay, I guess, if not perpetrated (I prefer musing on eidólons). I sort of enjoyed "Missing You", though the lyric is confusin', and if it weren't for the sentiment (Yes, you'll be all right!), Andrew, and the later version sans Sean, I would discount "Love Yourself". The second "If It Were not So" is better, too. God, he's melodically gifted and as always leaves 'em wanting more.

Contact: sultex@aolcom

end

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8. **WOWAPI: ANYTHING WRITTEN IN ANY FORM**, by Judy Gordon, poems, drawings, and photographs, now available Wowapi Press Chapbook, 2007, \$10.00.

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- 11. **PICKING UP THE TEMPO**, a country western journal, current or back-issues. Go to Roxy Gordon's Website to find **ARCHIVES** – www.roxygordon.com.
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- 14. **JULY 4TH, 2007—SPECIAL AVAILABLE—**Wowapi Press, 5A, brings us **MINERVA ALLEN'S INDIAN COOKBOOK, from Ft. Belknap Reservation, Dodson, Montana. 1988**, chapbook, \$10.00, plus postage and handling.
- 15. **LIKE SPIRITS of the PAST TRYING to BREAK OUT and WALK to the WEST** by **MINERVA ALLEN, 1974**, Wowapi Press, 6A, chapbook, includes *Judy Gordon's Illustrations*, \$30.00, plus postage and handling.

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