



THE NEXT Whole Earth Catalog

ACCESS TO TOOLS

EDITED BY STEWART BRAND

\$12.50

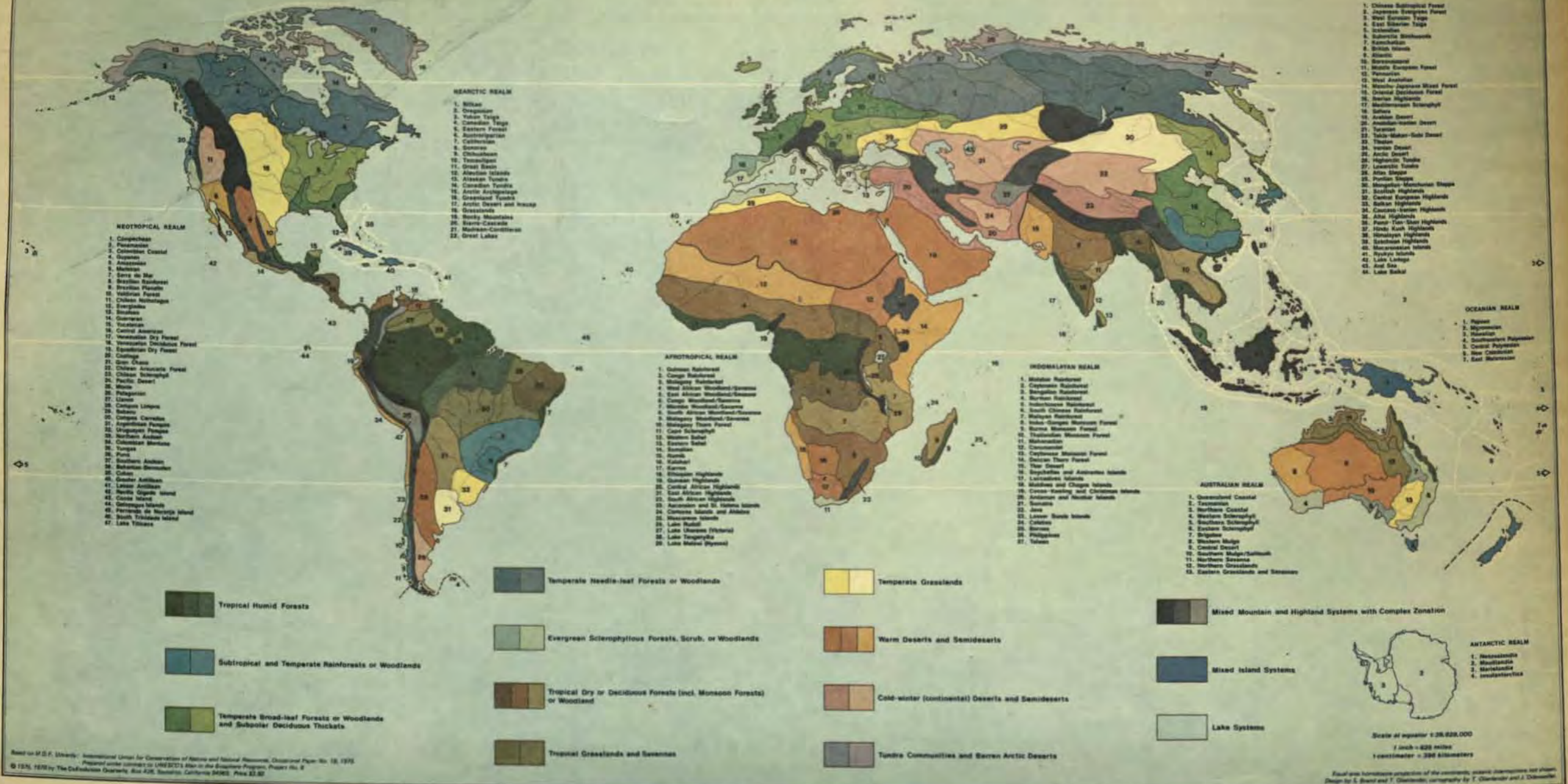
Editor of CoEVOLUTION QUARTERLY, WHOLE EARTH EPILOG,
and THE LAST WHOLE EARTH CATALOG (National Book Award)

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WORLD BIOGEOGRAPHICAL PROVINCES

by Miklos D.F. Udvardy, 1975



Biogeographical Provinces — Earth's Deeper Politics

by Raymond F. Dasmann

Classification of the world's fauna and flora, vegetation and land forms into biogeographic units of distribution has a history dating back at least as far as the travels and writings of Alexander von Humboldt in Napoleonic times.

When I worked with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in Switzerland in the early seventies, I began work on a planetary-scale mapping of biotic provinces within which similar ecological conditions prevailed and between which there were marked

differences of plant and animal species and "vegetation" (plant structure — savanna, rainforest, etc.). We believed that we needed a better means for evaluating progress or loss in conserving wild areas and species. For example, much international attention and money had been expended toward conservation of East African wild life, but virtually none had been directed toward North Africa. Failure to provide at least one large nature reserve in each province would mean not just the loss of a few species, but the loss of an entirely unique ecosystem with its

array of distinctive plants and animals. Our initial efforts were picked up by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere program as a basis for their conservation action. The obvious need for further improvement led to the involvement of Miklos Udvardy and his colleagues, resulting in the map presented here.

Biogeographic maps should not just be considered as a guide for those interested in wildlife conservation, but also as an aid to examining human occupancy of the planet. The need to become place-

centered, to develop a sense of belonging to a particular part of the planet has not been obvious among Americans during the past decades of high mobility. Now there is a new sense of "bioregionalism," in Peter Berg's term — learning to "live in place." Spiritual identification with a particular kind of country and its wild nature is a basis for the kind of land care which the world so badly needs today.

Udvardy's map can be a guide to locating the kind of country in which you feel at home. Within each of the provinces

there are land forms and climate, plants and animals with which one can learn to identify. One can learn the conditions of life determined by wild nature and from these guide our human activities to assure long-term ecological sustainability for whatever we do. Californians must learn about drought in ways not relevant to Eastern Forest people. Oregonian province people learn to respect high humidity, just as Sonorans must adapt, sooner or later, to desert ways.

Regard the map presented here as a

beginning. Many boundaries are uncertain. Much finer subdivisions are needed. How do watersheds fit into the scheme? Agricultural crop distribution? Indigenous life styles? Anyone should feel free to join the game of bioregional definition. I can only guarantee that in the process you will learn much more about where you live.

The full size World Biogeographical Provinces Map (39" x 22") is available for \$3.50 postpaid from the CoEvolution Quarterly, Box 428, Sausalito, CA 94966.

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DEDICATION

To Gregory Bateson
1904 - 1980

A pioneer in anthropology,
psychology, cybernetics,
and epistemology, he
always called himself
a biologist.

If I could count on
Gregory's company in
heaven, and I could get
to heaven by being good,
I'd be good.

- Stewart Brand



COVERS



"Got the Earth upside down, eh?" said astronaut Rusty Schweickart when he saw the front cover. "Worse than that," we replied. "Check the back cover. The Earth is sideways." Indeed, two conventions collide on the back cover. North is always supposed to be up, but the horizon is always supposed to be, aha, horizontal. Can't do both.

We inverted the front cover image so the titles would be more readable against the white dazzle of Antarctica, so a too-familiar image could be seen afresh, and so the viewer might be reminded that the Earth is not a map. Adrift in orbit, most of the time you would see Earth any old which way. This particular snapshot was taken by the Apollo 17 crew in December 1972 on their way back from the Moon.

The Moon photo on the back cover was taken earlier, July 1969, during Apollo 11, the original Moon landing mission. Nowhere in the solar system is the contrast between a living and a dead planet so conspicuous as on the Moon at Earthrise.

-SB



PURPOSE

WE ARE AS GODS and might as well get good at it. So far remotely done power and glory — as via government, big business, formal education, church — has succeeded to the point where gross defects obscure actual gains. In response to this dilemma and to these gains a realm of intimate, personal power is developing — the power of individuals to conduct their own education, find their own inspiration, shape their own environment, and share the adventure with whoever is interested. Tools that aid this process are sought and promoted by **The Next Whole Earth Catalog**.

FUNCTION

THE Next Whole Earth Catalog is an evaluation and access device. With it, the user should know better what is worth getting and where and how to do the getting.

An item is listed in the Catalog if it is deemed:

1. Useful as a tool,
2. Relevant to independent education,
3. High quality or low cost,
4. Easily available by mail.

The listings are continually revised according to the experience and suggestions of Catalog users and staff.

PROCEDURE

WE'RE HERE TO POINT, not to sell. We have no financial or other obligation to any of the suppliers listed. (No one's ever even tried to buy us, come to think of it.) We only review stuff we think is great. Why waste your time with anything less?

To the extent this is a book of things, you can buy them, get them mail order from anywhere in the world. To the extent this is a book of ideas, they come right off the page, yours as soon as you use them.

The Next Whole Earth Catalog completely replaces **The Last Whole Earth Catalog (1971)** and the **Whole Earth Epilog (1974)**, which are no longer in print.



Left to Right,
Top to Bottom:

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Dianna
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Land Use Evaluations
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Craft Evaluations
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Jason Epstein
Anthony Schulte
Peter Mollman
Marilyn Doof
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Carolyn Reidy

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San Francisco

Printing and Binding
Rand McNally,
Hammond, Indiana

1st Printing — Sept. 1980
140,000 — Rand McNally

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POSTMASTER: Please send form 3547 or 3579.

MAIL ORDER

How to Order Items in This Catalog

Consider these points of mail-order etiquette essential. They'll make shopping by mail more pleasant for you, and they make work much lighter at the companies you're dealing with. This advice is distilled from the requests of hundreds of small firms we're listing, plus our own experience doing mail order for the past 12 years.

1. **Send payment.** Most of the companies we list can't handle billing you later. Cash or stamps are no good. Checks or money orders made out to the company's name are best. If you're buying expensive products like music synthesizers or solar collectors, they usually come with catalogs which describe credit terms if there are any.
2. **Say what you want on the outside of the envelope.** Write "mail order" or "catalog request" or "subscription order" under the address. Why should several people have to look at a letter which only one person needs to see? That's how things get lost.
3. **Expect prices to go up.** The prices given in this first edition of the *Next Whole Earth Catalog* for summer 1980, and will doubtless climb in step with inflation. Most publishers and firms will write you back if you've sent too little money. Some will bill for the extra amount.
4. **Expect prices to be higher if you live outside the U.S.** A fair rule of thumb is to add a dollar or two if you live in Canada or Mexico, and add two or three dollars if you live outside North America. If you live overseas it's often best to write for the price. Enclose International Reply Coupons and a self-addressed envelope if you do.
5. **Don't send U.S. checks or money overseas.** It costs, for instance, a British firm \$4 to cash a \$2 U.S. check. Send International Reply Coupons, which you can buy at any post office. Since foreign exchange rates fluctuate, we've listed foreign prices in the foreign currencies, with an approximate U.S. equivalent for 1980.

6. **Pay sales tax.** It's only needed if you live in the same state as the firm you're ordering from. You should know what it is in your state. If you leave it out, some companies will fill the order anyway; others won't.

7. **Use order numbers where we've listed them.** For the Government Printing Office and the National Technical Information Service, for example, they're essential.

8. **Be patient!** It *always* takes at least a week or two for your goods to arrive; a month's wait is normal. You shouldn't worry unless it's taken more than two months. Keep a record of the date of purchase and a xerox or record of your check, so that if your order is lost, you can inquire with polite and detailed specifics. Include your full address and zip code every time you write.

9. **Be gentle!** Don't write to keep your mailbox full. Some businesses listed in the *Last Whole Earth Catalog* got swamped by curiosity mail and had to shut down. Write for information on the tools you think you'll use. If you write for free information, send a stamped self-addressed envelope or stamps to cover the return postage. When complaining about poor service, be aware that the person handling your complaint is almost never the same person who loused up your order, so wrath doesn't help.

10. **Don't order from excerpts from catalogs that we review.** When we are reviewing a catalog we often print excerpts from it. The prices in those excerpts are frequently out of date even as we print them. Unreasonable behavior around such orders has led several large firms we reviewed in the *Last Whole Earth Catalog* to refuse to participate in this one. Request a current catalog from suppliers before ordering.

Information Currency

This first edition of *The Next Whole Earth Catalog* was put together April - September, 1980. All price and access information was exhaustively checked. It will decay at the usual rate until next edition. The same goes for item evaluations.

WHOLE EARTH HOUSEHOLD STORE

Founded along with the original *Whole Earth Catalog* in 1968, in Menlo Park, California, it was then "The Whole Earth Truck Store." Now taken over and run by the San Francisco Zen Center, it has the new name and a splendid new location in the "arts park" of Fort Mason in San Francisco (see map, p. 594).

Wherever you see the phrase

or Whole Earth Household Store

under an item, that means you can mail order it from

Whole Earth Household Store
Fort Mason Center, Bldg. D
San Francisco, CA 94123

probably at the price indicated (allow for inflation). With each whole order add \$2 for shipping and handling - same \$2 whether you're getting 1 book or 20 (except for foreign orders).

The service is here strictly as a convenience. You can always get items from the original suppliers. With the Household Store you can group your orders, and you may well get faster and better service (we'll see). Almost certainly the Household Store will have books your local bookstore never stocks. The *Next Whole Earth Catalog* has no more financial relation with the Household Store than with any other supplier - though Bookstore Charlie does keep us supplied with pastries from the Zen Center bakery, and we probably will share mailing list information. (Neither of us sells our lists.)

An order form and envelope insert (blue) for the Whole Earth Household Store may be found in the back of the *Catalog*. There is also more ordering information on p. 594.

COEVOLUTION

"A regular periodical with *Whole Earth Catalog* type information by the same people? Great! How often does *CoEvolution Quarterly* come out? Oh. Heh heh."

Right, every three months, "quarterly," we do another 144-page issue, devoid of ads, full of review-and-access, articles, cartoons (R. Crumb and Dan O'Neill), and whatever else we find remarkable. Is there a unifying theme? No. I guess that's the unifying theme.

Over one third of what you see in this *Next Whole Earth Catalog* first appeared in some form in *CoEvolution*. Circulation at present is about 40,000. If you want to make it about 40,001, here's how.

CoEvolution Quarterly
Stewart Brand, Editor
\$14 /year (4 issues) from:
CoEvolution Quarterly
Box 428
Sausalito, CA 94966



There is an order form (ivory) for *CoEvolution Quarterly* and *CQ* maps, books, and products in the back of the *Catalog*.

CONTRIBUTING TO COEVOLUTION AND LATER CATALOG EDITIONS

We pay for everything we print, including complaint letters. You get \$15 apiece for any letter, review, or first suggestion of an item that is published. Cartoons and photographs get \$25 and up. Articles get \$150 to \$300, depending on importance, illustrations, clarity, and ease of handling (length doesn't count particularly).

We're told by our famous contributors that they often prefer writing for *CoEvolution* because their material is handled with more respect by us than other magazines. The un-famous contributors say that it's easier for an unknown to get into print with *CQ* than elsewhere. It may be that our lack of advertising or of foundation backing makes us more attentive to our contributors, on whom our existence depends.

The evaluations in this *Catalog* are in some cases no doubt inadequate. In any case they will date at the usual rate. When you're sure that something you know is better than what we've run, have at us, so that the next *Next Catalog* may be more comprehensively accurate in pointing at excellence.

Our standard advice for writing a review goes like this. Give the information you would like to get. This should include what the item is good

for, how it compares with others, and some clue of how competent you are to judge. Avoid comments like "This is a good book." Prove it.

Do not rave about an item which is merely good or the best of a bad lot. Also don't waste time picking nits with the author unless the matter is something the reader has to know about. Write as you would in a letter to some specific person you respect and like. Be succinct. Your function is to introduce item and rudder to each other and get out of the way. Savvy readers will make most of their judgments on samples from the item - quotes, illustrations, etc. Select good ones - bits you didn't know before, bits that contain the item's essence, bits that pass on a whole useable idea. Study some reviews and excerpts in this *Catalog*. Do better.

Suppliers are invited to suggest their own goods. Samples or review copies are welcomed; response not predictable. We accept no payment for a listing and offer none. We owe accurate information exchange to suppliers, period.

Write to

CoEvolution Quarterly
Box 428
Sausalito, CA 94966



T

HE INEVITABLE first question is always, "How much stuff from *The Last Whole Earth Catalog* is repeated in this *Next Whole Earth Catalog*?"

The answer is 11%. Of the approximately 2700 items in the *Next Catalog*, 300 are carryovers from the *Last Catalog* (1971).^{*} That surprised us. We had expected there would be 30% repetition. The other surprise was how much is reviewed for the first time in the *Next Catalog* — not 10%, as we had predicted, but 36%, about 975 brand new items. From the *Whole Earth Epilog* (1974), 17% (450 items) are repeats. The remaining 36% (another 975) of items are updated from various issues of *CoEvolution Quarterly* since 1974. We do not regard "new" as necessarily "good," but it turned out to be better than we thought.

The inevitable second question is, "What's different?" (Why does anyone care? I guess because 1,600,000 copies of the *Last Whole Earth Catalog* sold, and "Whole Earth" became a generic name for a frame of mind and somewhat for a generation and historic time. Historic time now past. The hidden question is, "Is *Whole Earth* now a quaint anachronism, or is it once again a detailed sign of the times?")

Leaving the interpretation to you, here are some things that are different. In 1971 we listed (and could only list) 2 items on solar energy — the *Solar Energy Society* and *Farrington Daniels' 1964 classic Direct Use of the Sun's Energy*. In 1980 we're reviewing 63 solar items (pp. 182 - 195) — the cream of the cream of hundreds of solar goodies we've seen. [Good old *Farrington Daniels* (on p. 187) is still among the 63.]

The *Last Catalog* had 2 pages about computers. The *Next Catalog* has 12 pages (pp. 528 - 539) — calculators, home computers, computer networks, computer games, robotics, and computer futurism, all operable directly from the household. Computers and solar are only two of the domains that have taken off recently, with us flapping hard to fly in front of them. Others prominent in the *Next Catalog* include: space colonies (pp. 16 - 18), trees-as-solution-to-everything (pp. 77 - 89), wood heat (pp. 203 - 210) (there were half a dozen woodstove manufacturers in 1971; now there are over 400), underground architecture (pp. 240 - 241), old building preservation (pp. 235 - 236), urban homesteading (pp. 294 - 295), medical self-care and fitness (pp. 318 - 319, 321 - 324), care of the dying (pp. 330 - 332), hand gliding and wind-surfing (pp. 455 and 457), video (pp. 492 - 493), and the junior obsessive *Role Playing Games* such as "Dungeons & Dragons" (pp. 549 - 550).

There are even a couple of subjects where we got honest-to-God scoops — hot news not even we have printed before. One is our coverage of coppicing, a practice which is traditional all over Europe and completely unheard-of in America. It may be the most efficient producer of biomass alive. By taking advantage of certain species of trees that constantly re-sprout from the stump, says our author, a family of four can generate all the firewood it needs forever from a space 64 feet by 64 feet (p. 84). Then there's "amateur insemination," the rapidly growing practice among

^{*}I hasten to footnote that the repeated items are thoroughly reworked to reflect recent editions or issues and any change in our evaluation of their standing amid the competition. As a result almost no review or set of excerpts is identical to what was in the *Last Catalog*.

lesbians to make themselves pregnant without benefit of intercourse or M.D.s. As usual, we give the technical details of how to do it (p. 345).

Some subjects have diminished. Domes have practically disappeared. Though ingenious and efficient with materials, they proved quite difficult for amateur builders, and their notorious leaking taught a generation about redundancy. Any pin-hole in the single skin of domes lets in rain, whereas the quadruple redundancy of shingles doesn't. As Steve Baer of *Zomeworks* (pp. 190 - 191) remarked about his much-photographed dome home in Albuquerque, New Mexico, "It came down to a question of blowing up our house or our marriage, or shingling." They shingled.

Free schools are mostly gone, replaced by more interest in home teaching and by conservatism generally. Neil Postman's *Teaching As a Subversive Activity* in the *Last Catalog* has been replaced by the same author's 1979 book *Teaching As a Conserving Activity* (p. 567). China, which had a whole 8-page section in the *Whole Earth Epilog*, is absent this time around, except as a goal for travel. After discussion with our Young China Hand Orville Schell (*Working in China*), we concluded that roles have reversed since Deng Xiaoping supplanted Mao. Six years ago China was the model for radical America; now America is the model for technical and economic China. Another cultural survey that wasn't updated was our *Epilog* 4-page coverage of "Black Interest." For decades the tireless leader of the nation in civil rights and the arts, black culture seems to be getting a deserved rest these days.

The most conspicuous change to us in this *Catalog* is its very fabric. It is better designed and tighter in every respect, obviously in the layout of the pages, less obviously in the thoroughness of the research. Since I'm the same editor as before, all of that is clearly due to the skill and diligence of the people I'm privileged to work with (cliche but true). And though it's been more arduous, to put it mildly — five months for many of us without a day off — this has also been far the happiest of our productions. Another element, I realize, is the sheer accumulation of experience. The *Last Whole Earth Catalog* summarized three years. The *Whole Earth Epilog* was made in only nine months. This *Next Catalog* is the culmination of all twelve years of our evaluating and publishing.

Some of that span is visible even in conversation around the office. The *Next Catalog* project got going to a large degree because young (26) journalism graduate Art Kleiner wanted to work with *CoEvolution* and the only job I could think of was compiler of a new *Catalog*. One day early in production he approached typesetter Evelyn Eldridge-Diaz with some urgent advice on typing access. As Evelyn gazed at him patiently, Production Editor Anne Herbert observed drily, "Art, Evelyn was typesetting the *Whole Earth Catalog* when you were in tenth grade." Another typical exchange: Evelyn — "... She also advocates painting designs on your face with your menstrual blood and dancing around on moonlight nights with your friends. Hi, Art." Art — "I think I like it better on nights without a moon."

The *Last Whole Earth Catalog* was aimed at one audience, the menstrual blood painters of the late '60s and early '70s, though a lot of other people tuned in. This *Next Catalog* hopes it might be useful to three audiences. 1) Our contemporaries, who have aged into positions of responsibility

The Last Whole Earth Catalog

access to books



95

1971

(one of us governs California) with most of our generation's premises surprisingly intact and most of us still interested in acquiring more skills.

2) The new college age population, with its unusual ability (its artists, for example, routinely outclass the show-offs of the '60s) and its apparent lack of confidence to entrepreneur its own road. 3) The vast citizenry that has had it with inflation, people who are rapidly finding that when you fix or build your own house (car, education, body, community), you deal in uninflated coin, your time, and don't get taxed for the transaction.

Some among us foresee deep economic hardship soon. (I don't. Random House Editor-in-Chief Jason Epstein does; our tool and financial reviewer Paul Hawken says credit collapse in 1983 but we'll get over it.) I'm editing the *Next Catalog* because I think people have the affluence and time to use the book to refine their lives. Jason is distributing it because he thinks people will need it to save their lives. What's your excuse?

Put another way, "What's going on?" I like this note I got recently from our local Zen abbot, Richard Baker-roshi. "Japan is a 'thought' that provides for one hundred million people. The Victorian Age is a thought — reflected and reinforced in the first abundance of industrial goods. What is the thought of our age? Could an unthinkable age be a virtue?"

One thing that seems clear about our age is that the do-it-yourself approach to everything is still steadily increasing. Hardware stores and how-to book publishing are booming. In view of that growing market, there are some disturbing dysfunctions on the supply side. Excellent carpentry and gardening tools exist, for example, but it is nearly impossible for the amateur to get them. The reason apparently is this. There are so many sales steps between the manufacturer and the consumer that there is no evaluative feedback. Local keep-the-stock-turning hardware chains carry only cheap tools. If you ask for, say, an outstanding (though more expensive) Blue Grass hammer, the clerk has never heard of it and doesn't want to, and the question has no way to get through the clerk, manager, jobber, etc. to worry the manufacturer. Only professional carpenters can get Blue Grass hammers, usually only through wholesale dealers (p. 135). Though some beginnings are under way, mail order suppliers have yet to meet this market opportunity.

Something similar has gone wrong in book publishing. Every day of working on this *Catalog* we were maddened to learn that several invaluable books had been let go out of print. Many we dropped; many we ran anyway with the plea "Get this book back in print!" (Hm. A small publisher might do worse than republish just



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those fifty or so books.) Again it's the fast-buck, quantity-kills-quality syndrome. Small publishing houses make their living by keeping slow-but-steady selling books on the market. The big houses make their killing by dropping a book as soon as its sales fall below a certain point. As a publicity lady at Crown put it, "Why are you reviewing our old books? Didn't you get the new ones we sent you?" Yes, lady, we did. They were inferior. Please keep the good ones in print, and revised, and promoted, and appreciated for the reputation they've made for your house.

It's an idle sermon. Staff turnover is so rapid in big time publishing, continuity doesn't have a chance. In 1977 we made an elaborate contract for co-publishing with Penguin and put out two books with them (*Space Colonies* and *Soft Tech*). Two years later they had had so many new generations of a senior people that no one even knew we had a contract. When shown the thing, they had zero interest in honoring it. (Apart from the decision-level discontinuity, our relationship with Penguin was an excellent one.)

Large scale boom and bust. Small scale adaptability. From tool distribution to publishing to farming to neighborhood preservation, there is no doubt this is the major theme of the *Whole Earth Catalog*. It's in our own history. Though we are now distributed through New York, there's no way in hell we could have started in New York. Our first *Catalogs* (1968 - 1970) were made by three hippies in a garage and distributed by a local long-hair wholesaler (*Bookpeople*, Berkeley). We still are self-published. And New York tells us *The Last Whole Earth Catalog* invented the trade paperback. Interesting.

The Last Catalog enjoyed uniformly favorable notices, but, um (open wide, please, Gift Horse), their frequent superficiality is worth a look. We were touted as the voice of Back-to-the-Land and linked commonly with (the to us rather odious) *Mother Earth News*. Back-to-Basics certainly is a major point we make, but so is Onward-and-Upward (space, computers, electronic music), and Outward-in-All-Directions-So-Long-As-It-Doesn't-Hurt-Anybody-Probably.

What I'm trying to get at is, the American reviewing apparatus is not good at reference books, which tend to be treated (as we were and probably will be) as news items, if at all. The sensational first two volumes (*Northwest and California*) of the *Smithsonian's Handbook of North American Indians* (p. 45) have been out since 1978 and reviewed nowhere. In the course of researching opinion on our favorite dictionary, *The American Heritage Dictionary* (p. 498), I had to rely on technical library publications from R.R. Bowker to find any insightful critique.

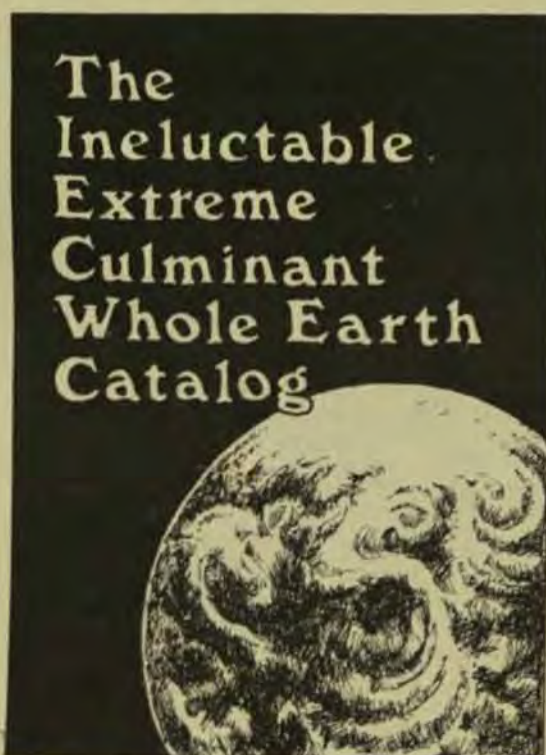
I expect that many reviewers of *The Next Catalog* will, as I probably would, settle for reviewing this preface, making a few observations about the passing and coming of decades, and letting it go at that. That's fine, and thank you, but it leaves unaddressed the question of whether the *Next Catalog* is any use as a tool. Actually that can be accomplished by two quick probes. Look up a subject area you know something about and see whether our reviewers know as much or more than you do or anyway enough. And look up a subject area unknown to you. And see whether we can get you interested in it.

I probably shouldn't knock American reviewing practice too much, because its failings are our stock in trade, but does anyone else think it odd that mail order suppliers are almost never critiqued in print? Or that magazines are noticed by other magazines only when they die? Or that the truly classic books in most fields don't have primary reviews to urge them on?

Consider the various experiences of three classic classics. Wolfgang Langewiesche's 1944 introduction to flying, *Stick and Rudder* (p. 459), is so graceful and imaginative and fundamental that it has needed no revision to remain the leading text in its field. Because it lives robustly on unreviewed, people at large have no way of knowing it. Or the wisdom of the book, like *Zen and the Art of Archery*, reaches far outside its specialty.

For contrast there's John Muir's *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive*. An intelligent, entertaining, amateur and self-published work, it got the *Whole Earth Catalog* treatment when it came out in 1969 — full page review in *Life*, etc. As a result the book is in its 21st printing (p. 406), with sales over 1.3 million, and it has inspired a whole literature by now of imaginative how-to books.

But then there's *A Pattern Language*, 1977, by Christopher Alexander (p. 217). It enjoys such biblical status among architects and designers that they refer to its rules by number. "15" means "Encourage the formation of a boundary around each neighborhood." "160" means "Treat the edge of a building as a 'thing,' a 'place,' a zone with volume to it." It's a book that should be in the hands of every citizen, city dweller, home builder, office worker. It's the only book in the *Next Catalog* that has a whole page all to itself. But since hardly anyone else is reviewing it to the general public, its best use (by amateurs) scarcely exists.



This may not seem like much right now . . . But wait 15 or 20 years, it might come in handy. —Tom Parker

Reviewing is not a particularly honored activity, for good reason, but it surely has its rewards, the most conspicuous of which is the gratitude you encounter when someone is glad you alerted them to something that made a big difference. Doug Roomian is one we read about in the newspapers. On the front page of the June 15, 1980 *San Francisco Examiner* the "great guitar maker" told his origin story. Around 1970, while living with a group of anti-draft Americans in Canada, he "was reading the *Whole Earth Catalog*, the magazine of the craft generation, and it had a way of making everything seem so integral — celestializing mundane jobs. Cherry picking was karmic." Our description of a book on guitar making got to him. After he returned to San Francisco he started a business where, for over \$1000 an instrument, you can buy some of the best-sounding guitars anywhere. Research Editor Art Kleiner, with customary thoroughness, got in touch with the guy. You will find Doug Roomian's survey of instrument makers on pp. 474 - 475, come full circle. (Curious footnote — how come the common word for instrument maker, "luthier," is not in any dictionary?)

We had two reporters visit at length during the assembling of the *Next Catalog*, and I watched with interest how they would be received by the overworked, overcrowded staff. Calvin Fentress, from *Esquire* and whom we liked a lot, always seemed to be asking each of us, "What does it all mean?" Linda Xiques, from the local weekly *The Pacific Sun*, also had only one question, which she addressed in due course to each staff member — "What are you doing right now?" We felt that she got the better information.

But then that's our style. We're generalists hopelessly in love with details. Fortunately for us it's also the national style, as American as cherry pie (how to cook it really well, where to find organically grown cherries, how to grow cherry trees, when to prune and pick . . .). It is karmic, isn't it?
—Stewart Brand (SB)

Rising Sun Neighborhood Newsletter

You will note that at the lower right hand corner of every spread (pair of facing pages) in this *Catalog* there is something consistently peculiar going on. It is a gossip column. The items you see have been excerpted from two years or so of such *Newsletters*, which are mustering toward a book. Most of the items are factual, really happened. Those in the whole latter part of the *Catalog* took place during the very making of the *Catalog* and star the makers, backstage. All part of our arch-mission to make all processes transparent.

The author is Anne Herbert, Production Editor on this *Catalog* and Assistant Editor of *CoEvolution* for several years. We got her by mail order. She wrote from Ohio, sent some writing, said we'd be glad if we hired her, so we did and we are.
—SB

THE RISING SUN NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

I was thinking that TV cameras are making us see only things kind of far away, and I was thinking that magazines are making us hear things only if they've been written down by someone we don't know, and I was thinking that newspapers are making us value only people we haven't met, so I started thinking we should start writing, drawing, painting, singing, shouting what we notice about the neighborhood right here to each other every day and maybe it will help us start to learn to treasure what we can also touch.



Gaia



The Gaia Hypothesis, as proposed by the British scientist James Lovelock, suggests that the Earth's atmosphere and oceans are maintained as highly sophisticated buffering devices by the totality of life on the planet (see p. 7). The whole Earth, in other words, may function as a single self-regulating organism.

"Gaia" was the goddess of the Earth for the ancient Greeks. They said it first. Poet Kenneth Patchen wrote it a few years ago. Scientist Lovelock is risking his reputation on it now. "We live one life."

—SB