

Certainly not Native Americans if you look at any kind of statistic that measures quality of life. I, for one, do not think my family has benefited historically from the cultural acclimatization they underwent, for the sake of survival, from the 17th century onwards.

Cultural appropriation is a two-way street, sure. But individuals and institutions coming from the point of view of the dominate culture do it selectively and for fashion and for fun. Families indigenous to the country had those same fashions, and the traditions that supported them, declared a crime. The ramifications of that injustice play out in the lives of all who feel connected to the Native cultures, be they fashion-forward and politically ignorant and Euro-American, or absolutely legitimate, disenfranchised and misnamed, in a pair of Levi's.

Anne Gregory
Eugene

DOGMA VS. REALITY

Molly Templeton's review of *Samsara* [9/27] reveals a cardinal tenet of liberal

Eugene Weekly philosophy. "I left the theater thinking, yes, consume less, stop making garbage, all our time is spent on silly things, yes, I *know*."

The arriving eco-catastrophe, however, is *not* mainly about one's private consumption choices. To ignore every social institution, from domestication and civilization to industrialism, capitalism and the nature of technological mass society, conforms to liberal dogma but not to reality.

Disaster is guaranteed as long as the merely personal is seen as the whole picture. So much more urgently needs to be challenged.

John Zerzan
Eugene

LUCKY TO PAY TAXES

I work with a "percent" of the "47 percent." I work with the elderly who can no longer afford their health care, their rent, their utilities and their groceries. These same people helped mold and

frame this nation through their hard work of waitressing, teaching, plumbing and doctoring. I work with the disabled who, through no fault of their own, were born and unable to join the work force. I work with the disabled that through accidents and illnesses have rendered them unable to work. I work with people who daily strive to maintain their health and abilities. I work with people who strive to recover and return to their work. I work with people who have served this nation as hard-working, honest members of this society.

In fact, I have been truly lucky to not be a part of that 47 percent. I have had the opportunity of education. I have had the opportunity of a good family. I have had the phenomenal good luck of not having an injury or life-threatening disease. Not everyone is so lucky.

I pay taxes, and I'm lucky to do so. Not lucky in that I have to pay, but in that I have the ability to do so.

Do not quickly judge the 47 percent

until you know who some of them are. Yes, I do believe that there are many free-loaders in this world. I do believe that there are people who are not working who could. I do believe that laziness still exists. But I also believe that by and large, there is a community of Americans out there that would willingly paying taxes, but simply can't.

In short, it's easy to judge by the numbers. It's harder to judge when you have the facts. It's even harder to judge when you meet someone up close and personal who still wants to contribute, but can't.

Melissa Quinn
Eugene social worker

GET SMART

The new school year brings a wonderful volunteer opportunity, reading to young children. The SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) program is a program that provides volunteer readers for the communities' schools. Depending on each

Hole Lotta Love

Carcinomas for tan-crazed Caucasians

Wifey biked home from work at her usual time, in the heat of a late summer afternoon. The screen door creaked. "Hi Honey, I'm homo!"

"Hullo, mine dahlink," I finished washing dishes and grabbed a towel.

"How ya doin' Shweetie Pie?" Keys jingled into their basket, her daypack plopped into a chair.

She sure looked cute all sweaty and flushed, hair bent into yet another creative rendition of helmet head.

She stepped in for a hug and I pulled her close, forgetting, for a sec, about my back full of fresh wounds.

The local anesthetic had worn off, our embrace reminded me. I was instantly aware of my four newly bandaged and very tender holes where just that morning the dermatologist had removed four suspicious growths.

"Ow!"

My spirits were sore, too, having gone through this skin cancer thing only one year ago. I'd noticed a little dot on the top of my ear, small as a freckle, and sure enough, it turned out to be what I guess you'd call The Little C. Removable, but I needed a special surgical procedure, the details of which I'll spare you.

I emerged from the surgeon's office with a big honking gauze-and-tape bandage holding my left ear out at a jaunty angle.

Wifey, sitting vigil in the waiting room like the loyal — if still not legal — spouse she is, greeted me. Her pity frown told me that after a couple of hours under the knife I didn't look so good. I tried to make a joke. "Do I look like van Gogh?" "No," my ever-truthful Domestic Partner replied, "more like Dumbo." I was dubbed "Van Gumbo" for the rest of that summer.

I'd been looking forward to my year-later check up, confident of an all-

clear verdict. I mean, come on! Hadn't I just spent a year avoiding the sun? Worn a sun hat and long sleeves? Worked out in an indoor pool? I certainly never exposed my back to the sun. Well, not recently.

Yeah, I came of age in the white-people-trying-to-be-brown crowd. We lived to "lay out." Slathered in baby oil, my skin all but sizzled. As far as I knew, sunscreen hadn't even been invented. For years, I prided myself on an all-over tan, cultivated at Southern California's nude beaches and the privacy of friends' poolside yards. One summer I met some other tan-crazed Caucasians who were into doing nude Yoga. Upside-down you can tan a lot of otherwise unexposed areas. I had a great tan!

Eventually I, unlike a certain political party, came to believe science. Over-exposure to UV rays can kill you. My skin's early-catch carcinomas are testament to that inconvenient truth. And yet tanners and the tanning industry are still at it, despite scientific proof that tanning beds are even more carcinogenic than the sun (and you can fact check that!). Some people don't want to believe it. Just like they don't want to believe we're pumping too much carbon into the atmosphere and too many chemicals into our food. We can't go on ignoring the damage. I can't. Especially not with my holey too-sore-for-hugging back.

"Oh, right. Sorry, Sweetie." Wifey lowered her grasp where there's plenty of huggable real estate. "Let's put up the umbrella and sit in the shade."

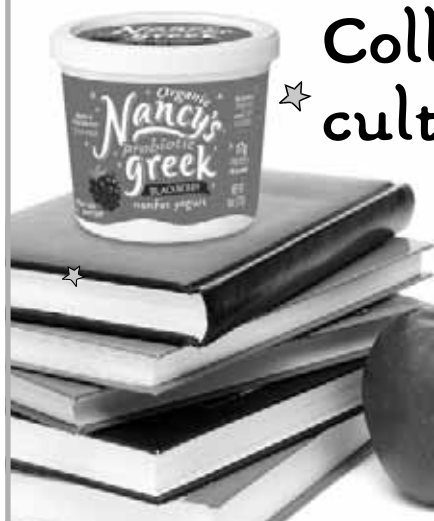
Award-winning writer Sally Sheklow has been alerting EW readers to life's perils and joys since 1999.



LIVING OUT

BY SALLY SHEKLOW

★ WELCOME BACK STUDENTS!



College can be a
cultural experience
with Nancy's



★ www.nancysyogurt.com

SITE DESIGN UNVEILING: Oct. 7
3-5pm
River Rd. → Oakleigh Ln. → end of road

SEE the site, LEARN about cohousing, BE a part of this developing neighborhood
Cider Pressing - Mock-up Village - Kids Welcome - Please Drive Slowly or Bike

