

ENCOUNTERING THE EARTHFOLK MOVEMENT

While my personal journey in no way reflects the fullness of the Earthfolk vision and imagination, I will reference my experiences to demonstrate how one individual came to seek to practice living peacefully at-home on the Living Earth. Please do not confuse a messenger with the message. If you look to my life experiences to assess the worthiness of your engaging Earthfolk practices and rituals, then you are doing yourself a disservice. I am a deeply flawed individual who, like most, has a handful of redeeming characteristics.

I am writing in the early winter of my life. (Born August 6, 1944) I've come to realize that the Earthfolk vision of living peacefully at-home on the Living Earth is a seed I've carried all my life, deep within my heart and imagination, though only recently have I sensed its stirring presence.

My relationship with the Other—you—is what living peacefully at-home on the Living Earth is all about. In the most succinct of images, my decision *not* to murder you is the seed which has been deeply planted within my heart and imagination. As strange as that might sound, consider that my life is defined by a search to understand why society has dutifully called me forth and given me reasons to see you as my intimate enemy. The society about us—the global human community—has been endlessly at war since time immemorial. I, like most males in my country, was called in my youth to “step forward” and become the next-generation soldier in this endless war. I was told that my slaying of you as intimate enemy would be an act of faithfulness to my State and my Church. I was told that killing you would be evidence and proof of my manliness. There was, in my youth, no vision or imagination which pressed me with insights and reasons not to slay you.

Can I ask you to reflect for a moment upon the fact that although there are philosophies, religions and spiritualities which value compassion, gentleness, mindfulness, self-sacrifice, and like virtues, they are aberrations in a world dominated for millennia by endless warring? I admit that I once thought that I could find a way within one of these more pacifistic spiritual streams to claim that you are not my intimate enemy. But I have to sincerely admit that I tried and found them all

wanting. I will talk more about my attempt to practice a pacifistic spirituality, but I truly must state that, despite my best efforts, none led me to value you as precious and Beloved.

The course of my spiritual journey has been determined by my effort to claim you as other than my intimate enemy. It is a course which wends through several years in a Roman Catholic seminary and monastery, decades studying and teaching as a lay theologian, years as an anti-war activist promoting nonviolent Resistance against the government, a sentence of five years in prison for refusing the Call to hunt you down, and years in the darkness of my mind and soul as I wandered, broken but seeking wholeness.

Only my encounter with the Earthfolk rituals and vision provided me with an imagination and practical ways with which to approach you as other than intimate enemy. While I want to invite you to encounter the Earthfolk on your own terms, I'd like to expand upon their vision and rituals with some references to how they changed my life.

The first insight that the Earthfolk vision presents is that you—the Other—are precious. What is of paramount importance is that you as the Other are not an intimate enemy to be feared. Rather, you are someone whose embrace makes present a coupled sense of preciousness. More, Earthfolk hold that “you” cannot be you unless and until you are embraced. One simple conclusion from this approach is that if I slay you then I slay myself. Another is that if I am to understand myself then it is imperative and necessary that I preserve your life. If either of us dies, then each of us dies. As we grow together, so is our self-insight deepened.

In my early forties, I shifted from seeking “spiritual fulfillment” to focusing on human and personal fulfillment—on healing, becoming whole and expressing preciousness. I used “precious” as my fullness word—I strove to express myself in non-theological, non-spiritual terminology. What I found as I listened to those who were unveiling themselves as Earthfolk (though none of us had the name at the time) is that we were seeking to become complete, full, robust humans. What we sought was to live peacefully together, to be comfortable with the Earth, to be at-home with all living creatures.

All we had, so we knew, was this moment now and you! You, the Other. More, that to be fully myself, to be whole, I had to find a way to couple

my masculine and feminine selves. Right from the start of my conscious journey—post-prison—I realized that I was not the male I could be, in due partly to the fact that I did not know my feminine self. I realized that I had to couple to become full and whole. This was not just a sexual word but one of human communication. I came to use the phrase “respectful intimacy.” In moments of respectful intimacy I sensed my own and your preciousness. Just know that this sometimes happened in very dark and difficult places, even for fleeting moments in a federal prison.

This coupled sense of preciousness often transforms the couple and manifests a new presence of each as Beloved. Earthfolk words and images serve to alert you to the special value Earthfolk place on *you*. As common as these Earthfolk terms and images appear, namely, preciousness and Beloved, Earthfolk’s understanding of preciousness is anything but commonplace. At its core is the definition of preciousness as a coupled experience. This alone stands 180 degrees from the dominate notion of spirituality/holiness which the main spiritual traditions/worldviews hold is an individual journey of the hero—the Warrior’s Quest.

The formation of Earthfolk practices and rituals caused a profound and radical shift in how I came to understand my and your body, senses, mind, and what is made present when we share respectfully intimacy and couple as Beloveds. I cannot stress how totally unnerving and exhilarating is the state of being present to your own preciousness and that of another in an embrace of Beloveds.

My experience of living peacefully at-home on the Living Earth challenged everything I had ever been taught about the relationship between sensuality, sexuality, intimacy and wholeness. To understand my own upbringing, I spent decades try to grasp the character of the collective/communal vision which molded my life. A great part of Pathway B— Seer reflects my intellectual and academic search for understanding. In a very, very abbreviated statement, I found that in the Abrahamic *Genesis* there is no intimacy. The rather bizarre story of Eve being formed from Adam’s rib led me to grasp that the Biblical tradition’s message is that “the male body is the birthing body.” *Wow!*

For some men this was a spectacularly positive message because it meant that they did not have to pay any attention to women,

goddesses or feminine ways. They heard that the feminine is NOT a way to spiritual fulfillment. They heard that there was no such thing as a sacred sexuality (since there was no sexual mating in *Genesis* either by gods and goddesses or men and women). Moreover, as I lived out this spiritual tradition in my youth, especially during my years in the seminary and monastery, the message was clear that the “body”—meaning sensuality, was only a way to sin and spiritual death, not to spiritual or personal fulfillment. So, how could anyone who lived by Biblical values ever behold another person as precious and as a Beloved? They simply could not. In fact, *Genesis* is the original story whose message is that there is a War between the Sexes, because when the angry god asked the male how he got to know his sexuality (and we can infer his sensuality) he said, “The woman made me do it!” (Stone cold coward this Adam guy.) Eve was the first Intimate Enemy.

Anyway, while walking the Yard inside prison, I often reflected on, “Why is the government (and the Church) afraid of me?” So afraid that they indicted me as a saboteur and gave me the maximum sentence of five years? I had destroyed draft files— pieces of paper. And this was my first offense? Something was going on that I wasn’t aware of. (The local archbishop also forbade pastors from inviting me to preach since I was a “criminal.”) See, <http://www.minnesota8.net>

Briefly, my nonviolent activism and Resistance (to the Vietnam War) was saying on the symbolic and metaphorical level that “I am trying not to be a violent man!” At least that I was seeking to be nonviolent and would not affirm through honoring the Draft that I would kill for the State or the Church. I was also saying, “I will not call anyone my Intimate Enemy.” And, possibly even more threateningly, I was saying, “I want to Mother. I want to embrace the Other. I want to honor the preciousness of all people.” Such motherly, feminine, and Goddess ways—being spoken by a six-foot three, two-twenty-five, athletic guy. Ha. They wanted me to be a wimp, or gay (“fag” was the word back then)...so lock him up!

The phrase “sensual preciousness” emerged to express this counter-Biblical, non-sensual, non-preciousness of *Genesis*. It is a phrase that honors the Mother and feminine ways, that finds the feminine as a pathway to wholeness and preciousness. It does so by talking about the “nurturing embrace” and “respectful intimacy.” And radically unlike *Genesis*, once Earth Mother was sensed—after seeing the photo,

Earthrise, taken by the Apollo 8 astronauts back in 1968—so was Earth Father. It is an integral part of the Earthfolk vision that we were awakened to the parenting presence of the Living Earth. We are nurtured by the Living Earth Mother and Father as a Forever Family. (Everyone is a child. Everyone can and usually does parent, even if not biologically. The family endures through time as we individuals pass. The family is forever.)

All this began to slowly dawn upon me as I listened to the deep stories (what some call "sad stories") inside prison. It was the late Eighties and movements were stirring in quiet ways. I was dressed daily in a three piece suit with wingtip shoes while all this was happening to me! Ha. I learned that even corporate dress and all the weirdness of suburban life hides many an Earthfolk seedling.

You can now begin to grasp why I state that for living peacefully at-home on the Living Earth to blossom, I need your answer to, "Are you my Beloved?" I need your answer because I have come to learn that I am only whole when you behold me. Against the popular vision which fosters an extreme notion of rugged individualism and a "go it alone" mentality, Earthfolk state that "I" am only whole when you cherish me. I am not fully me if I am not your Beloved. You are not fully you unless you are my Beloved. Living peacefully at-home on the Living Earth is an invitation for you to examine your own journey and determine how you will answer this question.

I fully grasp how difficult and treacherous this invitation is. I realize that harsh fact because I am a survivor. A survivor of a millennial old war whose vision and imagination are grounded in simple stories but ones which have such deep roots in my, your and Society's mind and imagination such that for me to ask you to interpret them as Earthfolk do is to ask you to put your body, mind and soul in harm's way.

I have asked, "Are you my Beloved?" at various junctures of my life, and have suffered for simply asking the question. In this light in 1972, I was sent "Inside," into society's House of Terror, into a world of darkness, of pain and suffering, into a caged world. They told me that I was no longer Francis X. Kroncke, rather, I was (and remain) 8867-147.

I have to be brutally honest and tell you that just asking this question can have dire consequences. You will inevitably confront the darker

side of your own mind and soul, as you will that of society's and your spiritual tradition(s). As I did, you might even wake up one morning and realize that you are an outlaw or a heretic, someone no longer acceptable to everyday society. Yet, you also might realize, as I did, your own sensual preciousness as you hear that you are Beloved.

In most spiritual traditions there is a discussion of the "positive way" (via positiva) and the "negative way" (via negativa). The former is known to most. It is the celebratory aspect of spiritual insight, e.g., when one is moved to ecstasy by a sunrise or at the baptism of an infant innocent. The latter is not as well known. The "negative way" is often called "The Dark Night of the Soul." I first found traces of Earthfolk realities during my stay in prison.

The Earthfolk call is often heard in moments of soulful darkness. While I refer to prison as my Dark Night, you might be called to explore other soulful places and experiences. When I was released from prison and first spoke in public, I was almost always approached by someone who confirmed the character of my Dark Night by referring to a stay in a mental institution or through recalling a battleground experience or discussing the descent into a liquid or purple haze hell of booze and addiction. The lesson I want to share with you from all this is that if you don't "own your Shadow" or your Dark Night, then it will own you. One of the early insights the Earthfolk vision provided was that the dominant warring spirituality (Abrahamic) is one which denies its Dark Side. This is a critical insight.

Why is this question, "Are you my Beloved?" so dangerous? You are probably saying to yourself, "This guy had to do something other than ask this simple question to get thrown in jail. What did he really do?" The historical answer is that I raided Selective Service draft boards with seven other men. This is a group the press called, the "Minnesota 8." Although I considered it an act of nonviolence, that is, one form of civil disobedience, I was convicted of a crime of violence. This is significant because it underscores that to ask, "Are you my Beloved?" will be taken as an act of violence. See,

<http://www.minnesota8.net>

“But what did you think you were doing in that draft board?” I always anticipate this question. And here is where you have to be patient with me as I guide you through my journey. I ask for your patience because almost everything I am going to say as I explain myself will seem wrong-headed, counter to how you’ve been educated, and fraught with consequences and challenges you might prefer not to face.

So, the simple answer to the draft raid question is that I was performing a healing and wholing ritual (at that time I felt it as a holiness ritual). Yes, I know that it was an act of “breaking and entering.” That was exactly how the prosecutor presented “the facts.” Nevertheless, I hold that the draft raid was my first living peacefully at-home on the Living Earth, sensual holiness ritual of Belovedness—although, again, I did not have those terms back then. In short, to understand why it was, for me, a healing, wholing and holiness ritual will give you a sense of how I think and interpret matters.

I participated in several quite successful draft board raids from February to July of 1970. As it is today, American society was steeped in a Warrior tradition—Earthfolk’s “Warrior’s Quest”—whose most popular icon, then, was John Wayne. The Catholic Church was likewise steeped in this Warrior’s Quest tradition whose most popular religious icon was, and remains, the “milites Christi” or Soldier of Christ. Protestant “Onward Christian Soldiers!” and all that. When it came to forwarding reasons for me to kill you, each Warrior tradition provided plenty of intellectual, moral and spiritual ammo. You were my target either as an Enemy of the State or an Enemy of Christ. Personally, I first opposed the Call to kill you by getting the State to recognize my claim for Conscientious Objector status. This was an argument that the Christian tradition was, at its core, a religion of peace not war. I claimed that Jesus was a pacifistic leader who made a compelling distinction about what needed to be “rendered unto Caesar.” I claimed that the Christian tradition required that I “render unto God” what was His right and only His right, that is, to take a life. Eventually, I was granted my CO status. It is somewhat ironic that I completed my military obligation through two years of Alternative Service. I did not resist the Draft—I am not a “draft resister” nor a “draft evader.” I am a draft raider. (See trial documents, including appellate briefs of prosecution and defense on <http://www.minnesota8.net>)

Although I had avoided combat, I realized that I was still killing you. I was doing so through the actions of others, of those still being drafted and those waging war. (As explained in more detail in an unpublished memoir on the *Minnesota 8* website, a returning in-country, Search and Destroy, *burn 'em, kill 'em* Marine brought the battlefield into my office ... and challenged me to do more than sit on the sidelines.) Somehow I had failed. How?

I realized that I had been, in a term of the day, “pacified” by the government. Somehow, instead of having an impact, I had been neutralized. I was perplexed. I had waged my nonviolent war against the violent war by a holy act of moral resistance. Or had I? Here is where I began to understand a term and reality which plays a significant role in the interpretations made on the Earthfolk site. I grasped that I had swallowed—hook, line and sinker—a story of misdirection.

A story of misdirection is one which appears, on the surface, to be saying “this” but actually conveys, below the surface or subliminally, a quite contrary “that.” The story of misdirection, in my case, was the Catholic Church’s claim that its Tradition contained the rituals which made the holiness of God present. In its own language, the Catholic Church calls these rituals “sacraments.” There are seven sacraments which “make holy” and “make God present” at distinct phases in one’s personal growth. These include sacraments for birth and dying, for atonement and reconciliation, at the moment of marrying, and for expressing a common bond with other believers. During my trial, the federal prosecutor mocked me by stating to the jury that, “Mr. Kroncke is trying to create the eighth sacrament!” More than either he or I knew at the time, he was right.

As draft age men came and went through my office at the Catholic student center at the University of Minnesota, called a Newman Center, I realized the depth of my failure. What had I achieved by obtaining a Conscientious Objector status other than protecting myself? Nothing I had done could protect these young men from going forth and hunting you down. When I told them about my CO status and my Alternative Service they expressed admiration and congratulated me on getting out of having to go to Vietnam, but it didn’t speak to their particular dilemma. Most would step back and say something to the effect that they wished that they were as educated and articulate as I was,

but that they couldn't do what I did. Somehow what I was doing as a Conscientious Objector was not morally or spiritually contagious!

In light of my religious background, I prayed, preached at endless Peace Masses, sang rousing anti-war hymns, and wrote letters to the editor. However, the war increasingly escalated and the body bags swelled and multiplied. Worse, despite statements against the war by the Catholic Bishops and other religious authorities, no one who exercised spiritual authority or power was effective or listened to by the government.

Here is how my thinking, but more notably my holiness experience, began to change. At this time I began to doubt that I had ever been in a holy place, despite my several years in the monastery and in numerous churches at Daily Mass. Here is when I began to see the breadth and depth of the story of spiritual misdirection which had fooled me.

In simple terms, the Church's "seven sacraments" were empty. They were ceremonial performances but they were not truly sacramental, that is, they did not make present "God" or any healing, making whole or holy power. They misdirected me away from where the holy power which binds and makes whole (makes One) a society and a people actually resides. Consider that I could have stood on a street corner and desecrated the Bible (or any holy books of other spiritual traditions) and what would have happened? People might shout that I was a hate monger. Or that I was racist. Someone might come up and try to smack me. But what would the police do? Nothing.

Now, consider that I had taken out my draft card and burned it. That I had called to the crowd to do the same, and shouted for them to *Resist!* the draft. If I did that, the police and FBI would rush from the crowd with handcuffs and chains, twist my arms around my back, possibly throw me to the ground, even pull out their guns, and speedily whisk me off to sit in an iron cage. Which act, then, would have told you that I had made present the power which gives and takes life? Which act was truly holy and wholing, in that it expressed the deep beliefs and moral values of a people, here, a people at War? Beliefs and values which once challenged— "Resist!"—put the protester's life in harm's way?

You deepen your understanding of the ritual character of the military draft when you realize that its Registration is the only universal act which every male, at 18 years of age, must do under penalty of

imprisonment or exile. Certain individuals will receive deferments, such as paraplegics, the mentally impaired and seminary students (yes, "Divinity" students!). What an 18 year old cannot do, however, is *not* register. The act of registering is, then, a "sacramental" ritual act which binds all males and makes each present to the other as a Warrior (and a potential intimate enemy). As you explore the Earthfolk vision, you will be asked to examine the many rituals of your current way of living (called worldviews). At present, I anticipate that your immediate response is more than likely, "I don't have any rituals." I accept that challenge, but just walk down the Earthfolk Pathways with an open mind.

Now you can begin to understand how the Earthfolk vision was seeded in my personal life. During the draft raid, I was conducting a ritual which sought to make present you as "not my intimate enemy." I was attempting to make present your and my preciousness. I took your draft card and your 1-A files, which held your letter of "Greetings" from Uncle Sam, and destroyed them. By doing so I proclaimed and made present to you yourself as Beloved. I called you to step forward and refuse induction into the military, and by so doing proclaim that you accepted yourself as Beloved, and that you ceased to see other people as intimate enemy.

This is what I was doing back then, but I did not have the Earthfolk vision or its language to share with you. Back then, I could only speak through my Roman Catholic voice, and I talked about "allegiance to a higher power" and that, "It was necessary to break the law of the State to be faithful to the higher law of the Church." I tried to speak with an American voice which spoke of a tradition of non-violent resistance to social evils, such as slavery. But, in the end, the Church leaders ignored me, issued orders to prevent me from preaching, and condemned me through their collective silence. In like manner, the Judge, in his Instructions to the Jury, stated, "Everything which Mr. Kroncke has said here for the last eight days you must consider to be irrelevant and immaterial." I entered prison, vision-less and voiceless. I had hit The Bottom.

You can see why I began to realize that the world wasn't exactly operating the way I thought it should be! I had naively anticipated that the Church would support my theological defense. After all I had been a faithful son and dedicated theologian. More, I had expected some

response from political leaders who, so I believed, would awaken to the truths Resisters were proclaiming, namely, that the Vietnam war was illegal since it had never been declared, and that the Selective Service System was unconstitutional. But since neither had taken hold, I had to ponder, How does the world work? Why is Democracy always at war? Where is God?

I sat in prison and had to accept the fact that I was a criminal, one who was living outside the law, an outlaw. I had to accept the fact that the Church was never going to be my home, ever again. I was, obviously, very depressed, somewhat paralyzed. It is simply ironic and darkly humorous to relate that I watched America's top cop, President Richard Nixon's Attorney General John N. Mitchell, get indicted as I sat in the prison TV room. My felonious ears also heard Nixon say what everyone knew was his own indictment, "I am not a crook!" You might think that I felt some joy at all of this. Or that I laughed heartily. I did not. I simply went out and played lots and lots of basketball.

When I left prison in July of 1973 everyone was saying that the war was ending. There were no more significant anti-war rallies. Students and other activists were returning to other issues and pursuits. I, too, went elsewhere. Eventually my path took a turn into marriage and parenthood. I spent three decades in the corporate sector as a salesman and manager. Yet I was still lost and dwelling at The Bottom. I drank to excess. I lusted after Mammon. I tried to live a "normal" life as a youth league basketball coach, a Good Dad, a breadwinner, and, to a degree, I did. But a thought nagged me. "Why hadn't I killed *myself* when in prison?" Why, when in the pit of darkness where I had no words or imagination with which to explain myself any longer, where I was deeply disturbed in mind and heart, why, then, had I not taken "Exit, stage right"?

What now was I living for? Certainly, my sons and my family. But I had stopped going to church, and the world was still endlessly warring. Moreover, I worked in early Cable TV sales management and not only saw but passively assisted the ominous seeding of telecommunication's pornographic worldwide growth. What happened is something I can only explain as the Earthfolk explain themselves. *I awakened*. This happened when I first heard the call, "Mother." Now here is where the story of sensual preciousness truly begins for me. I had just one word, "Mother," but it made me feel, what I came to be,

that is, sensually precious.

"Mother" came to me in 1983. I wrote an article, "Prison, Bottoming Out, The Mother," which ended, "At The Bottom, angels come to minister. The task ahead: to carve with a tongue unused to these alien categories, my sacrilegious words. God The Mother embracing God The Father made present through Child: each and everyone one of us ... each and all present, here at The Bottom, my family: Holy." (See, <http://www.minnesota8.net> and click on "Writings" on the bottom navigation bar.)

I had written this article in an effort to get a perspective on the question of why I had not killed myself while in prison. After all, I had lost everything, at least I had felt that I had lost everything. What remains, I pondered, when one Judge thunders, "You gentlemen are worse than the average criminal who strikes at the taxpayer's pocketbook. You strike at the foundation of government, itself," and the other, "I direct you that everything which Mr. Kroncke has said here for the last eight days is irrelevant and immaterial." *Worse than the average criminal. Irrelevant and immaterial.* Where to go from here?

As I thought about my life, 1945 and 1968 came to be special years in my awakening. These were the years when two iconic images arose within human consciousness—the Atomic Bomb's Mushroom Cloud and the astronauts' snapshot of Earth from outer space, what is called, Earthrise or the Blue Marble or Starship Earth. These were images which no human had ever imagined or seen. The Mushroom Cloud actually awoke me—terrified!—on my first birthday (August 6, 1945) and deeply stirred the ancient Call that lots of people began to more clearly hear in 1968 while gazing upon Mother Earth, namely, that the Earth is alive—the *Living* Earth!

Here is where the Earthfolk come in. I realized when I had resisted the war that I had done so not as an American nor as a Catholic but as a member of something called "The Movement." No one took time to strictly define what The Movement was. There were no membership ID cards. No entry fees. But in all the papers and through the TV reports the reference was to The Movement. Indeed, I was in prison because I was a member of this elusive, subversive, counter-cultural "something" which the government—and the Church—feared, this "Movement."

When I heard “Mother,” I also sensed that I was part of something, but it was, again, as elusive as was The Movement. In the beginning, it didn’t make much difference to me what it was called. I became more aware as I awoke and then continued my awakening. I realized that what this “something” was called or named was irrelevant. What made us present, each to the other, was the insight and sensibility given through the core practice of “living as if I am no one’s Enemy”—which is what those in the Resistance were seeking to do. This is how people began to perceive that they were among others who were awakening. Somewhere, in a discussion or while dancing, at table sharing bread of mind and soul, sometimes in a moment of simply beholding the other, I’d feel the other make me present as “not an intimate enemy.”

This sense of not being an intimate enemy was especially strong among men who gathered in early “men’s groups.” There we talked about masculinity, sexuality, violence, etc. We lacked rich and robust images and languages but we felt differently—we actually respected one another! We were part of the Men’s Movement—whatever that actually was and is, but it helped us awaken to the type of hyper-military masculinity, to the Warrior’s Quest, that we rejected, at great peril to our lives.

As I continued to search, I saw that more and more people were parts of some Movement or Movements. The anti-war, the men’s, the feminist, the Green, the Native American, the gay, the Chicano, the animal liberation, the organic...movements. A pattern began to appear. These movements all valued the Earth. They were Earth-centered. Some even honored the Earth as Mother and as holy and precious. Everyone could hum John Lennon’s “Imagine”!

As I reflected I saw certain common themes emerging from these movements. 1) They were anti-patriarchal and sought to discover or discern the presence of the Mother and the feminine. 2) They rejected the dominant world feeling of living in dread. *Aaaggghhh!* The Mushroom Cloud still sent chills through everyone, but folks just didn’t want to give in to being bummed out all the time. Even more than the breathless accounts of “Hippies on LSD!” the dominant culture was deep into numbing itself through stimulants and antidepressants of all sorts. 3) We didn’t want to see one another as enemies. We rejected the Original Sin and woman as temptress idiocy of the Biblical tradition. 4) We didn’t believe that the world was

going to be or had to be annihilated for any reason. In fact, and maybe this is a tad nutty but it appeared that Mother Earth could take care of Herself, and that if the Warriors do start dropping atomic bombs then She will retaliate in Her own way. The Earth is everlasting, precious and holy. (For many, the then nascent Gaia theory was warmly welcomed.)

Over time, it seemed that increasing numbers of people began to agree that how we imagine life on the Living Earth is how life will eventually be. Ironically, for the militarize-the-Earth movement, these same iconic images that inspired the Earthfolk awakening also heralded the triumph of the Warrior's Quest vision and imagination.

All said, I am going to say to you that you will never meet an Earthfolk, other than as you might have met someone in the Movement. That is, that it is through a ritual action that the Earthfolk are present to you and one another. Just as it was through the ritual action of protesting that you "became" and "met" Movement people, so you make yourself present as an Earthfolk when you couple in respectful intimacy. The action and experience is like my favorite image of two candle flames merging to form one, then passing apart to be singular again. It is the merged moment of Oneness that describes the Earthfolk awakening.

You can also look at being an Earthfolk as like what you experience when you are "online" while surfing the Internet. There you are in cyberspace—whatever that means! You are in your room, at your computer ("offline") while simultaneously online, linked to millions of others, but then you can go offline, again. You could say that being an Earthfolk is being online while living in an offline world.

As stated, more info about the Minnesota 8, our trials, my writings, etc., can be found at <http://www.minnesota8.net>

Peace,

Frank Kroncke

2009