

## MY AMERICA. IN BLACK AND WHITE

*by Gabriela Laslău*



(Korean War Veterans Monument, Washington DC)

*We become part of what we see, hear, smell and feel and leave something that is uniquely ours in everything that sees, hears, smells and feels us.*

In 2008, I was honored and privileged to be the only secondary school Romanian teacher selected by the Fulbright Commission to participate in a summer programme (June 20-August 7), together with 28 other teachers from 27 different countries. Our hosts were ITD (The Institute of Training and Development) and Amherst College, Massachusetts. The course was focused on important topics of the American history and involved cultural trips to Historic Deerfield Village, Lowell textile Museum, Plimoth Plantation, Plymouth MA, Boston, Yellowstone National Park, the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, Salt Lake City, Washington DC, New York City, Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the U.S. State Department, which so generously sponsored the entire 2008 SUSI programme and to the American Embassy in Bucharest, which allowed, through a Federal Assistance Award, my participation in the 1998-2008 ITD alumni reunion.

This volume is both a guide and a diary and can be used as class material support, to provide information on America's culture and civilization.

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## I. WHY AMHERST?

1

1. If you were to travel in the USA, which cities would you go to first? Why?
2. Tourist alphabet
3. If you were a student, would you choose a large city or a small, quiet town?
4. Would you prefer the West Coast or the East Coast?



Located at the heart of Pioneer Valley and set among scenic farmlands and tree-covered hills, Amherst is 80 miles from Boston, MA and 40 miles from Hartford, Connecticut.

The earliest known document of the lands now comprising Amherst is the deed of purchase dated December 1658 between John Pynchon and three native inhabitants. The first permanent English settlers arrived in 1727, when this land and the surrounding area belonged to the town of Hadley. It gained township in 1759 and it was named Amherst after Jeffrey Amherst, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron of Amherst, who was a hero of the French and Indian War. (1754–1763). According to local legends, he banished France from North America and won Canada for the British. However, he is quite unpopular in New England for considering using smallpox-covered blankets against the Indian Natives.

<http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/1088/did-whites-ever-give-native-americans-blankets-infected-with-smallpox> That is why there have been attempts at renaming the town (Emily, for instance, after Emily Dickinson)

The tradition of this small, elegant New England town has now incorporated the vitality of a major cultural center of higher education (Amherst College, The University of Massachusetts, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College and Smith College). It is the perfect location for an international summer camp, being within driving distance of major cities such as Boston, Washington DC, New York .



*I remember the feeling of shame at Bradley Airport in Hartford, Connecticut, seeing my small black suitcase (I had decided against taking too much luggage) tied with white rope. I don't know who did it, all I know was that the first step was made by the customs officer at Otopeni Airport in Bucharest, who managed to take the handle off my suitcase with just one (too hard) pull. Probably the others did the rest. I also remember the nice, luggage covered in cling film my colleagues had and myself trying to explain that this is not how I left home, like a poor emigrant.*

*The trip to Amherst took about an hour. Allie (sweet Allie) was driving the van packed with about ten of us, and in the meantime I was overhearing the conversation between Anita (Norway) and Francesca (Italy) about the many cultural opportunities Bologna (Francesca's city) has to offer. I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of the language heard and the richness of information offered. I said to myself: "This is a nice bunch of people."*

*The Newport dormitory was the place where I was going to stay for the next seven weeks of my life. It looked like a mansion built in colonial style, three floors and only 4 restrooms for 29 people (3 at first, the fourth one was going to be built in the following days, but it took almost 2 weeks- American workers are nice, relaxed, loud guys, who did their best to finish the job but couldn't because they were so relaxed; they didn't care too much we were after a very long plane journey and listened to loud music while they were doing overtime at 11 pm). I found a pile of books on the desk in my room (the "Norton Anthology", two volumes of "For the Record" and the "Western Reader", plus a collection of documents), on top of which was a nice, red, juicy apple. And a Dove bar of soap.*

*William (Ecuador) was the first smiling face I saw. He had arrived earlier and already knew the surroundings, had explored the town and was an invaluable guide to our first dining night in Amherst. We went to Judie's, a restaurant Julie Hooks Davies recommended, I ordered something vegetarian (it was Friday, I declare myself vegetarian on Wednesdays and Fridays, not knowing how to explain fasting to people), but didn't get much to eat, just a huge plate of absolutely tasteless green stuff (different types of lettuces) and some boiled thing I found out later was couscous; the two things came together; I was lucky with the white wine, which wasn't too bad.*

*I slept like a log that night- like a rolling one. I woke up several times without knowing where I was. The town was absolutely peaceful and quiet. A lot of green space around the house- I could hear the crickets at night if I opened the window, which was not at all what I had expected America to be. Amherst is, as they say, a bubble of civilization, but I didn't know that at that time. A small, elegant town, situated in the scenic Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts, where the college campus occupies most of the land and is, anyway, the focus of attention. It's one of the most expensive colleges in the States, and the tuition fees can get higher than \$ 40,000. It's within driving distance from Boston (2 hrs) and New York (4 hrs).*

*The first Sunday I spent in Amherst was dedicated to spiritual matters (I went to church- a Catholic church- the only Orthodox one was 20 miles away) and very earthly ones (we got ITD money, to put it bluntly- about \$ 1,700, ). I didn't expect it because I hadn't read the orientation manual attentively- with the end of school and all that- so I was pleasantly surprised to receive a very generous sum (about three times my Romanian salary), and this was the first installment. I also got to know my colleagues- 29 people from 27*

*countries- we introduced ourselves during this ceremony, who we were and what our positions were in the system- , Frank Couvares (the academic director) and Julie Hooks Davies (the executive director of the program). The first two ones (Victor from Cameroun and Dorothee from Congo) spoke extensively. I also remember Suhad's strong reaction to the Israelian flag:"I am Israeli Arab. I'm not Jewish. " At which, Frank offered to find a Palestinian flag to replace the Israelian one. I still feel that specific warmth and glow inside when I think of them all- it's what you have when you are with someone you respect very much. I still have that.*

*July 5*

*We went to Boston, but we visited Mayflower and Plimoth Plantation. These people turn everything into a monument. The rock the Mayflower hit upon, which made the Pilgrim Fathers settle in Massachusetts and not elsewhere, is now exhibited in a sort of Greek temple-like huge construction, all pillars. The small town is a living (commercial) tribute to the first European settlers.*

*The Plymouth Plantation is part of the same story, an attempt at recreating time and space. We walked through the village of Wampanoag, the Indians who helped the Pilgrims accommodate- hence Thanksgiving. The Indians were trained actors who adopted a certain position of noble resignation, were offended if called Indians and scolded you if you trespassed their territory.*

*The Pilgrim village (a replica of the one settled in 1627) is even more interesting , because the other actors try to speak old English, which is so fun! Friendly as both the Indians and the Pilgrims may have been with each other, the special wooden house sheltering canons (of English production, 1601) proves otherwise. I liked the crowd of cheering children, mediievally dressed, playing with a ball of string and the nice voice of a man singing hymns in the garden, seated on a bench, next to his "wife".*

*Boston is huge, great! It's my favourite! It's such a nice, posh, expensive city! I don't remember the name of the hotel where I slept or where I ate that night, or if I did. All I remember was the exhausting march that day and the fact that the moment we arrived in the city, we went on another march, to the highest building in Boston (it was the 31<sup>st</sup> floor) and marveled at the beauty of the panorama. After we came down, I crossed the central park-it was beautiful at 11 pm, so quite, I wasn't afraid at all. Unlike New York and Salt Lake City, that are structured in such a way that you can't get lost, no matter how hard you try (SL City is like a beehive, for instance, with perfectly symmetrical streets), Boston is an architectural whim-maybe that's why I prefer it.*

*In the morning we went on a duck tour of the city, down the Charles River. By the way, the river was full of real ducks, standing proof that the water was clean. This is one impressive thing about the way in which the Americans enforce laws and really care about their environment; as the guide told us, several years before, one couldn't even walk along it because of the stench. Now the river hosted swimming competitions every year. We passed luxurious neighbourhoods, old buildings and landmarks (astonishing! The House of the Representatives had a dome covered in two layers of gold). After we visited the Harvard University campus (we didn't have access inside) we went back home to Amherst.*

## II. AMERICAN DEMOCRACY. FREE SPEECH AND CIVIL DISCOURSE IN AMERICA TODAY.

June 23<sup>rd</sup>

*Frank began his first lecture about “American Democracy” with a memorable sentence I will never forget: “America is a big elephant.” By this he meant that the other countries, being smaller and more fragile and delicate, should watch out their steps, moves, ideas and attitudes, because, you know, the elephant sometimes –being so big- doesn’t pay too much attention to where he’s stepping, so collateral damage is excusable but also avoidable. I thought he would go on like that throughout the entire lecturing program, but no, he was too good to do that. Anyway, all this series of lectures on history was ‘just scratching the surface’, give a general idea of what American history is, but in a very critical way, ‘warts and all’.*

*The lecture was focused on the elements that define the American conscience: the awareness of their individual rights and obligations; the pursuit of life, liberty, property (John Locke) and happiness- added by Thomas Jefferson; and let’s not forget luck (Frank insisted on that) which can be translated as SPACE. Space indeed shaped their psyche, because the first Protestants that left England in search of religious freedom found here vast, unoccupied, fertile fields, grasslands and valleys. And savages whom they didn’t consider people, because they didn’t have a soul, because they were savages. So they slaughtered them (they had guns, while the Indians didn’t). Scientific studies estimate the number of Amerindians inhabiting the North American continent in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as ranging from 10 to 20 million. Massive killings and the immunitary diseases (smallpox) reduced this number with 90%. In the meantime, the freedom seekers established colonies that became prosperous communities, built churches, but the old conflicts reappeared, so there was always a nucleus of Puritans on the move, looking for perfection. Space was never a problem. Thomas Jefferson, their inspirer, wrote his own version of the Bible (a ‘perfect’ version), taking out all the miracles performed by Jesus, for instance, because he lived in the age of Reason, and the miracles were so unreasonable.....*

*Then we met our two other tutors (for the projects we had to submit at the end of our stay there), Barbara Madeloni and Susan Edwards (an advisor at Frost Library). Barbara teaches methodology at UMass and reminded me so much of things I did every day- which being a teacher involves. In time, I discovered that she was the nicest and warmest human being of all. That she wasn’t afraid to say painful truths to her students, or to me. Like, for instance, America wasn’t the solution to my search for religious tolerance, as I very naively thought.*

*Frost Library, impressive as it is in terms of architecture, space, good taste, money invested, well-trained personnel, IT, computer access to the database etc- is a total failure when it comes to practical things like finding a book on the shelf. Because it’s never there, and I tried it several times. The good thing is that you can find many similar books, directed at the same subject. But not the book you’re looking for. They know that, of course, but they’re so proud of their computerized access that they don’t really care.*

*The same night we went to Iron Horse, in Northampton, a neighboring town, to see a charity concert given by the local music school to raise funds and help a similar school in South Africa buy new instruments (their old ones had been stolen while on a tour).*



*They had been doing that for a while, and were going to do it the whole summer. There was a wide selection of music styles-jazz, rock and roll, rhythm and blues, and the quality of the voices and instrument players was excellent with very few exceptions.*

## **The Virginia Act For Establishing Religious Freedom**

Thomas Jefferson, 1786

Well aware that Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the Holy Author of our religion, who being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his Almighty power to do; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporal rewards, which proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labors for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, more than our opinions in physics or geometry; that, therefore, the proscribing any citizen as unworthy the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to the offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow citizens he has a natural right; that it tends also to corrupt the principles of that very religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing, with a monopoly of worldly honors and emoluments, those who will externally profess and conform to it; that though indeed these are criminal who do not withstand such temptation, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles, on the supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he being of course judge of that tendency, will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government, for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself, that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate, errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in nowise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

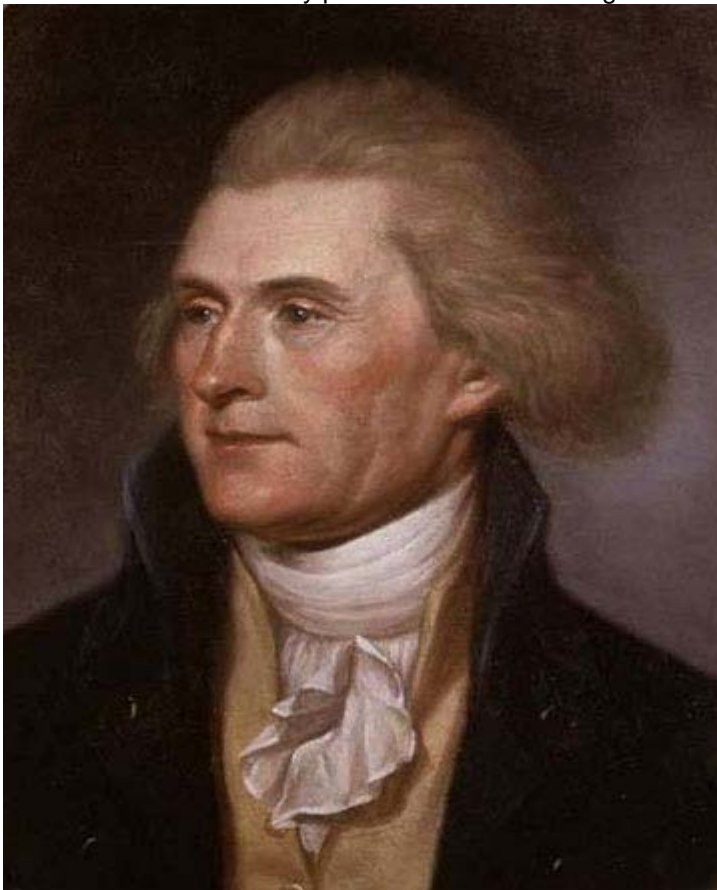
And though we well know this Assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no powers equal to our own and that therefore to declare this act irrevocable would be of no effect in law, yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights

hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural right.

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**Comment:**

Thomas Jefferson drafted *The Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom* in 1779 three years after he wrote the *Declaration of Independence*. The act was not passed by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia until 1786. Jefferson was by then in Paris as the U.S. Ambassador to France. The Act was resisted by a group headed by Patrick Henry who sought to pass a bill that would have assessed all the citizens of Virginia to support a plural establishment. James Madison's *Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments* was, and remains, a powerful argument against state supported religion. It was written in 1785, just a few months before the General Assembly passed Jefferson's religious freedom bill.



June 30

*After Christopher Pyle finished speaking, I said to myself "Oh, my God, this guy would be long dead in my country or in any other Eastern European, African or Asian country." Dr Pyle was, on the contrary, very alive, lively and feeling good about his own person. He's a living legend for anyone who searches the internet. He was trained as a lawyer, an infantry officer and a counterintelligence agent. He taught at the Army intelligence*

*School and worked for two Senate committees investigating intelligence abuses by the FBI and the CIA. He is one of the initiators of the Watergate affair because he exposed military surveillance of anti-war activists in 1970. He wrote about the unlawful interrogations at the Guantanamo Bay prison. He is going to publish a book called "Disgracing America: The War crimes of the Bush Administration". But his main theme that day was education, because we were all teachers, education that should encourage freedom of speech and civil discourse, that deals with ideas that really matter, that move the discussion in a constructive and moral direction. Those who engage in this should be polite and civil-minded, although being too polite or 'letting off too much steam' can be an enemy of the civil discourse. He went on to tell us about how he taught his son to stand up for his rights while in school and admonished for wearing a T-shirt with an antisocial/sexist logo. His T-shirt was bought by the child's mother, and the admonishing teacher was lesbian. The Pyle family sued the school, and after 3 years of trials, bravely endured by the boy (who skipped classes in the meantime but got ready to learn how to fight for his civil liberties), the school had to pay \$ 80,000 to the Pyles as legal damages. He warned us against the greatest threat of all, which does not come from terrorism or the Bush administration, but from the computer technologies of surveillance (there are 16 federal intelligence agencies nowadays). Which is more serious, the government granted the torturers immunity from prosecution, and the President can issue a blank pardon to anyone. There have been 900,000 names investigated by the FBI on terrorism, because national security is a big problem, and the more the American people expect to be protected, the greater the danger is.*

### III. SELECTED AMERICAN POETS. EMILY DICKINSON.

*June 25*

*That was something I had been looking for weeks (it caught my eye when I read the description of the program), a discussion about Longfellow, Whitman, Frost and, of course, Emily Dickinson. Joanne Dobson is the professor who "discovered" or rediscovered Emily Dickinson, as she had been a curator at The Homestead Museum, Emily's house, before she started teaching; she published a mystery novel (among several other novels), in which the key to the mystery is held by important biographical elements in Emily's life, something like **The Name of the Rose**, by Eco, I guess. That is why I expected a very serious and profound analysis of her work, things I hadn't known before, subtleties, but it didn't happen.... I have always felt at home in poetry. Of course, she presented some biographical data and the main coordinates of her work. In the afternoon, we visited the Dickinson homestead, not very far from the college, and that added more flavor to the subject. We read her poems in her own garden, which is splendid, by the way, full of dozens of varieties of flowers, all appearing in her poetry. I lay down in the grass to enjoy the sunshine, looking at the neighboring Evergreens, Emily's brother's house, uninhabited for years, which people say was haunted. The curtains at one of the windows upstairs moved a little. Oups!*

A life-long resident of Amherst, Massachusetts, Emily Dickinson left her hometown for only one year, when she attended Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary. She was raised in an intellectual and socially prominent family and at the age of eighteen had received a better formal education than most of her American contemporaries, both male and female. Yet

Dickinson led a largely sequestered existence, and she devoted much of her time to writing poetry, producing close to eighteen hundred poems, which were characterized by terse lines, "slant" rhymes, and keen observation. Although most of Dickinson's work was not published in her lifetime, she did see three small collections of poems printed (1890, 1891, and 1896). A half-century later, the three volumes of *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1955) and two volumes of *The Letters of Emily Dickinson* (1958) appeared.

Read as a group, Dickinson's poems seem to resist the masculinist poetics laid down by Emerson earlier in the nineteenth century--the idea that the "bard" must achieve dominion over experience and offer vast, coherent, overarching themes. Dickinson's experience of the world, through her poetry, seems more open-ended: dark moments commingle with hopeful ones, and poems that celebrate the small ordinary experience share space with poems that are mystical or overtly adventurous and speculative.

1. Read carefully poems that convey high excitement, even ecstasy: for example, poem 207 [214], and 411 [528]. What perceptions, hopes, or intuitions seem to underlie these celebrations? What is the effect of reading them alongside some of Dickinson's darker verses: for example, poems 112 [67], 448 [449], and 760 [650]?

2. A number of these poems engage the natural world immediately around the Dickinson house: for example, poems 122 [130], 256 [285], 359 [328], and 796 [824]. Describe Dickinson as a nature poet. Is she in the American Transcendental tradition? Is she a Romantic? What variations do you see in the tone and theme of these poems?

3. Dickinson's poems often engage, directly or subtly, with her own solitude and anonymity as an artist. Describe the variety of ways and moods in which this situation is addressed.

4. The Dickinson legend has loomed large in the reading of her poems. There is dramatic appeal in the tale of this brilliant artist living and dying out of the limelight and in the story of the discovery and gradual publication of the poems, their impact on the Moderns, and the eventual establishment of accurate and available texts. To what extent do you think we should bear in mind the Emily Dickinson biography, and the Emily Dickinson legend, in rereading the poems now?

Among the ranks of other such acclaimed poets as Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson is considered one of the most original 19th Century American poets. She is noted for her unconventional broken rhyming meter and use of dashes and random capitalisation as well as her creative use of metaphor and overall innovative style. She was a deeply sensitive woman who questioned the puritanical background of her Calvinist family and soulfully explored her own spirituality, often in poignant, deeply personal poetry. She admired the works of John Keats and Elizabeth Barrett Browning but avoided the florid and romantic style of her time, creating poems of pure and concise imagery, at times witty and sardonic, often boldly frank and illuminating the keen insight she had into the

human condition. At times characterised as a semi-invalid, a hermit, a heartbroken introvert, or a neurotic agoraphobic, her poetry is sometimes brooding and sometimes joyous and celebratory. Her sophistication and profound intellect has been lauded by laymen and scholars alike and influenced many other authors and poets into the 21st Century. There has been much speculation and controversy over details of Dickinson's life including her sexual orientation, romantic attachments, her later reclusive years, and the editing and publication of various volumes of her poems. This biography serves only as an overview of her life and poetry and leaves the in-depth analysis to the many scholars who have devoted years to the study of Emily Dickinson, the woman and her works.

Emily Dickinson was born into one of Amherst, Massachusetts' most prominent families on 10 December 1830. She was the second child born to Emily Norcross (1804-1882) and Edward Dickinson (1803-1874), a Yale graduate, successful lawyer, Treasurer for Amherst College and a United States Congressman. Her grandfather Samuel Fowler Dickinson (1775-1838) was a Dartmouth graduate, accomplished lawyer and one of the founders of Amherst College. He also built one of the first brick homes in the New England town on Main Street, which is now a National Historic Landmark 'The Homestead' and one of the now preserved Dickinson homes in the Emily Dickinson Historic District.

Emily had an older brother named William Austin Dickinson (1829-1895) (known as Austin) who would marry her most intimate friend Susan Gilbert in 1856. Her younger sister's name was Lavinia 'Vinnie' Norcross Dickinson (1833-1899). The Dickinsons were strong advocates for education and Emily too benefited from an early education in classic literature, studying the writings of Virgil and Latin, mathematics, history, and botany. Until she was ten years old, she and her family lived with her grandfather Samuel and his family on Main Street. In 1840 they moved to North Pleasant Street, Emily's window overlooking the West Street Cemetery where daily burials occurred. The same year, Emily entered Amherst Academy under the tutelage of scientist and theologian, Edward Hitchcock.

Dickinson proved to be a dazzling student and in 1847, though she was already somewhat of a 'homebody', at the age of seventeen Emily left for South Hadley, Massachusetts to attend the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. She stayed there less than a year and some of the theories as to why she left are homesickness and poor health. Another reason some speculate is that when she refused to sign an oath publicly professing her faith in Christ, her ensuing chastisement from Mary Lyon proved to be too much humiliation. Back home in the patriarchal household of aspiring politicians, Emily started to write her first poems. She was in the midst of the college town's society and bustle although she started to spend more time alone, reading and maintaining lively correspondences with friends and relatives.

In 1855 Emily and her sister spent time in the cities of Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the same year her father bought the Main Street home where she was born. He built an addition to The Homestead, replete with gardens and

conservatory. Thereafter he held a yearly reception for Amherst College's commencement, to which Emily made an appearance as the gracious hostess. In 1856 Emily's brother, now himself a successful Harvard graduate and Amherst lawyer, married her best friend Susan Gilbert. They moved into their home nearby 'The Evergreens', a wedding gift from his father. They frequently entertained such guests as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Samuel Bowles, editor of the *Springfield Republican*, who would publish a few of Emily's poems and become a great friend to her and possible object of affection in some of her poems. In 1862 Dickinson answered a call for poetry submissions in the *Atlantic Monthly*. She struck up a correspondence with its editor, Thomas Wentworth Higginson. He had tried to correct her work, but she refused to alter it, though they soon became friends and it is speculated that Emily also had romantic feelings for him.

Dark times were soon to fall on Emily. In 1864 and 1865 she went to stay with her Norcross cousins in Boston to see an eye doctor whereupon she was forbidden to read or write. It would be the last time she ventured from Amherst. By the early 1870's Emily's ailing mother was confined to her bed and Emily and her sister cared for her. Around the time her father Edward died suddenly in 1874 she stopped going out in public though she still kept up her social contacts via correspondence, writing at her desk in her austere bedroom, and seemed to have enjoyed her solitude. She regularly tended the homestead's gardens and loved to bake, and the neighborhood children sometimes visited her with their rambunctious games. In 1878 her friend Samuel Bowles died and another of her esteemed friends Charles Wadsworth died in 1882, the same year her mother succumbed to her lengthy illness. A year later her brother Austin's son Gilbert died. Dickinson herself had been afflicted for some time with her own illness affecting the kidneys, Bright's Disease, symptoms of which include chronic pain and edema, which may have contributed to her seclusion from the outside world.

'Called Back': Emily Dickinson died on 15 May 1886, at the age of fifty-six. She now rests in the West Cemetery of Amherst, Hampshire County, Massachusetts. Not wishing a church service, a gathering was held at The Homestead. She was buried in one of the white dresses she had taken to wearing in her later years, violets pinned to her collar by Lavinia.

Although many friends had encouraged Dickinson to publish her poetry, only a handful of them appeared publicly during her lifetime. Upon her death her sister Lavinia found hundreds of them tied into 'fascicles' stitched together by Emily's own hand. Some were written in pencil, only a few titled, many unfinished. Lavinia enlisted the aid of Higginson and Mabel Loomis Todd to edit them and roughly arrange them chronologically into collections: *Poems, Series 1* in 1890, *Poems, Series 2* in 1891, and *Poems, Series 3* in 1896. The edits were aggressive to standardise punctuation and capitalisation and some poems re-worded, but by and large it was a labour of love. From Thomas Wentworth Higginson's Preface to *Poems, Series 1*;

--flashes of wholly original and profound insight into nature and life; words and phrases exhibiting an extraordinary vividness of descriptive and imaginative power, yet often set

in a seemingly whimsical or even rugged frame....the main quality of these poems is that of extraordinary grasp and insight.

In 1914 Emily's niece Martha Dickinson Bianchi published another of the many collections to follow. Even with the first few volumes her work attracted much attention, though not without its critics. In 1892, [Thomas Bailey Aldrich](#) published a scathing review in the *Atlantic Monthly*; *She was deeply tinged by the mysticism of Blake, and strongly influenced by the mannerism of Emerson....but the incoherence and formlessness of her—versicles are fatal.* In 1955, Thomas H. Johnson published the first comprehensive collection of her poems in three volumes titled *The Poems of Emily Dickinson, Including Variant Readings Critically Compared With all Known Manuscripts*. Johnson's *The Letters of Emily Dickinson* appeared in 1958.

Biography written by C.D. Merriman for Jalic Inc.

### **This Is My Letter To The World**

*This is my letter to the world,  
That never wrote to me,--  
The simple news that Nature told,  
With tender majesty.  
Her message is committed  
To hands I cannot see;  
For love of her, sweet countrymen,  
Judge tenderly of me!*

Wild Nights! Wild Nights!  
Were I with thee,  
Wild Nights should be  
Our luxury!

Futile the winds  
To a heart in port, --  
Done with the compass,  
Done with the chart!

Rowing in Eden!  
Ah! the sea!  
Might I but moor  
To-night in Thee!

Because I could not stop for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me;  
The carriage held but just ourselves  
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,  
And I had put away  
My labour, and my leisure too,  
For his civility.

We passed the school where children played,  
Their lessons scarcely done;  
We passed the fields of gazing grain,  
We passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed  
A swelling of the ground;  
The roof was scarcely visible,  
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries; but each  
Feels shorter than the day  
I first surmised the horses' heads  
Were toward eternity.

I'm nobody! Who are you?  
Are you nobody, too?  
Then there's a pair of us -don't tell!  
They'd banish us, you know.

How dreary to be somebody!  
How public, like a frog  
To tell your name the livelong day  
To an admiring bog!

#### IV. MORMONISM

June 24th

*In the morning, we continued our discussion about how much of a religious melting pot America was in the XVIIIth-XIXth centuries, with all the newly-appeared churches fighting each other. Joseph Smith, with his new vision and a new sacred gospel ("The Book of Mormons") is to be mentioned here, because Mormonism is one of the strongest religious movements of the last centuries in America, which can be possibly explained by*



*the promise of attaining the status of a god or by the very tempting prospect of having more wives (though this is apparently forbidden by law). Speaking of polygamy, it was a reality at first, because it came in the form of revelation to Joseph Smith: there are more gods than one (having Elohim as their head) and they each had several wives, who were goddesses; it was no longer accepted towards the end of his life (1843) due to another revelation he had. Historians suggest that polygamy was denied and taken out of the community of Latter Day Saints because otherwise the polygamist Mormons couldn't vote or run in the elections.*

*Saturday, July 12*

*We had to wake up at 4.30 am, because we were flying again! We departed to Bradley Airport at 8.15, arrived in Midway Airport at 9.35 am, took a Southwest flight, departing 11:15 and arrived in Salt Lake City, Utah, at 1:35 pm., accompanied by both Frank and Julie.*

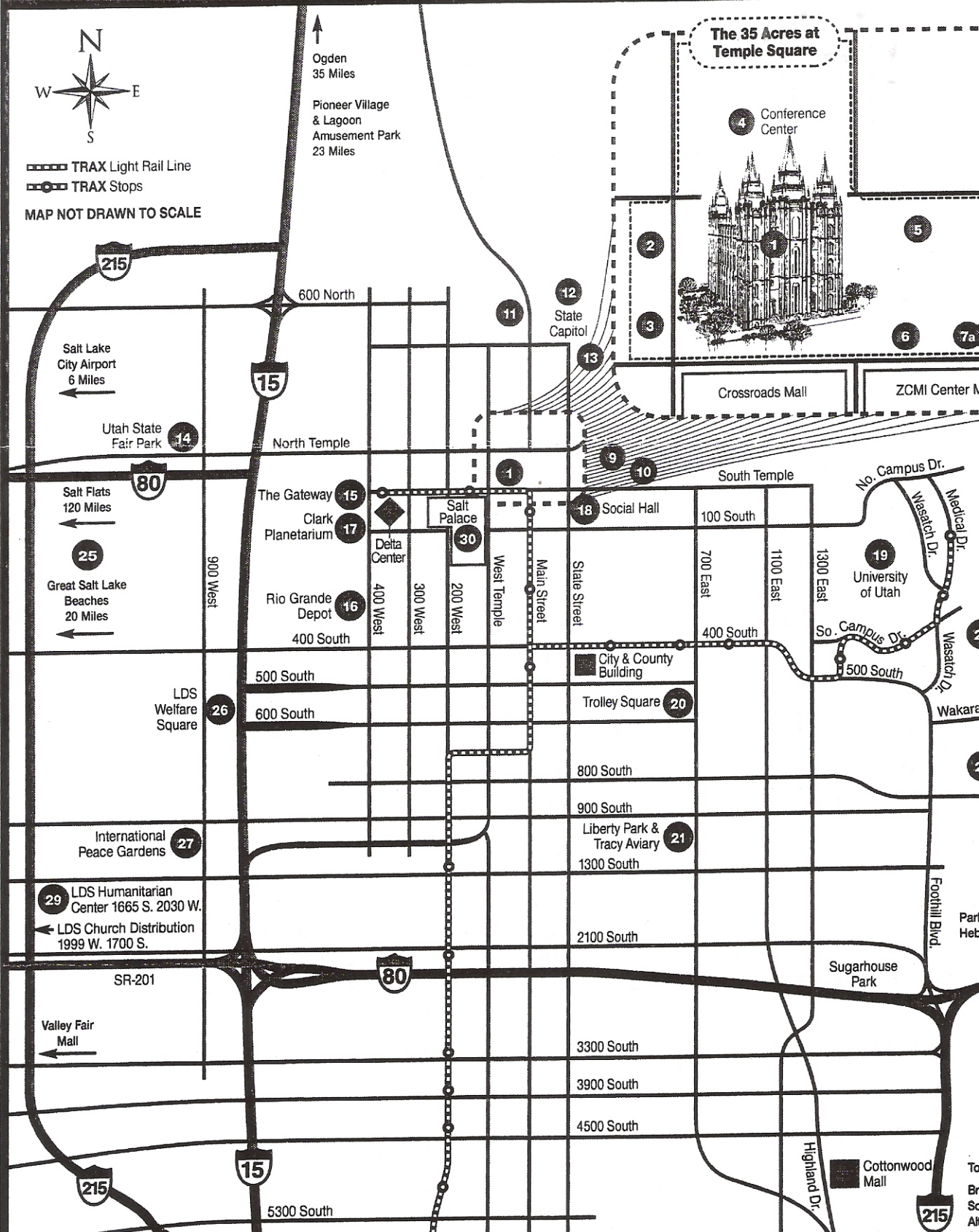
*Utah is the second driest state in the US after Nevada. What a difference the dry, desert-like Salt Lake City made to **our** green, lush and dear little town in the Connecticut Valley. How fast people get attached to new places and faces! I already missed **my** mansion in Amherst and called it home. We become part of what we see, hear, smell and feel and leave something that is uniquely ours in everything that sees, hears, smells and feels us.*

# SALT LAKE CITY VISITORS MAP



TRAX Light Rail Line  
 TRAX Stops

MAP NOT DRAWN TO SCALE



Many villages and towns were formed over the years by chance. An exception to this and a miracle of faith is Salt Lake City, whose plan, truly visionary, was designed in 1833 by the Mormon Church founder, Joseph Smith. The Plat of Zion, as the plan is called, "is similar to the "grid system" of the federal land survey, which has been the basis for the plans of many Western communities"(Wikipedia). Such an arrangement reminding of a bee-hive had both a practical and a spiritual meaning. On the one hand, as Joseph Smith wrote, "**The farmer and his family will enjoy all the advantages of schools, public lectures and other meetings. His home will no longer be isolated, and his family denied the benefits of society, which has been, and will always be, the great educator of the human race; but they will enjoy the same privileges of society, and can surround their homes with the same intellectual life, the same social refinement as will be found in the home of the merchant or banker or professional man.**" On the other hand, the symmetrical structure of the hive speaks of a tightly knit community, working together towards their spiritual salvation.

There were no people in the streets apart from us because of the sweltering heat (it was 41 C at midday). Despite the heat, Julie insisted that we continue our visiting program. We visited the Gilgal Gardens, a strange sculpture garden created by Thomas Child Jr. "to give physical form to his deep-felt beliefs"(The Guide to Gilgal Gardens). It is a monument dedicated to Mormonism, made up of 13 different sculptures, named the Altar, the Sphinx, the Monument to Peace or Elijah's Cave. It didn't move me in any way. What impressed me, though, was the Sunday ceremony at the Mormon Tabernacle in Temple Square, the most grandiose construction ever seen, meant to bewilder the senses not only through its size, but also through the luxurious interior and the very high quality of the broadcast. ("It looks like the People's House in Bucharest, built by Ceausescu, right, Gabriela?", Frank asked. He seemed to know everything about everything.) It was the best choir I had ever listened to, composed of about 200 people, all of them volunteers, many of them traveling long distances to attend the rehearsals and the ceremonies. I was also impressed by the simplicity and beauty of the sermon, whose title was CULTIVATE AN ATTITUDE OF UNDERSTANDING. In the evening, we visited Antelope Island, one of the saltiest places on earth and we had picnic dinner at Fielding Garr Ranch, under the only trees on the island.

We stayed at Salt Lake Plaza Hotel, the cleanest and nicest in all our American tour. If the streets were empty at day due to excessive heat, the reason why the city was deserted at night was beyond my power of understanding.

We had difficulty finding a place to eat, because most restaurants were clubs for which you needed a permit. We finally found a restaurant, had a large plate of cheeses, fruit and wine and went to bed around midnight.

## V. LITERATURE OF THE AMERICAN WEST. ENVIRONMENT AND WATER. YELLOWSTONE

July 15

We traveled by coach to Yellowstone National Park and David Stanley, a retired (and brilliant) Professor at Westminster College, Utah, gave us lectures en route. It was indeed a unique learning experience: to see the West out of the window, listen to the rich

*information provided on the microphone by one of the most distinguished scholars I had ever seen and finally watch classic western movies on the monitor. It was as if I was in the middle of a fairy-tale, because the West seemed to be an unspoiled wilderness, sparsely settled. My attitude towards nature turned from Edenic into Satanic when we reached the park, checked in at Frontier Cabins and completely lost my way in the dark (pitch dark). We had been so much warned against the bison and the grizzly bears and remembered the Winnetou stuff in such detail that the only expectation I had was to be eaten alive. Finally, my guardian angel came, in the shape of a ranger, and took me and my cabin mate on the right path to the right cabin.*

*Yellowstone, one of the 391 national parks in the US is a place of unique beauty. You have to go there and see the colors of the rocks, the fallen fir-trees that nobody touches- it would be against the very strict federal laws-, the hot spots (steam bubbling in the mud- there are similar places in Romania, much to Frank's disbelief) and everybody's favorite, Old Faithful, the geyser that erupts every hour and 10 minutes. I am really blessed. I have talked to hundreds of Americans since then and few of them have been to Yellowstone.*

#### Facts about National Parks

The United States comprises about 2.3 billion acres (a little less than 1 billion hectares), of which 635 million acres, about 28% of the total is owned by the federal government. Another 9% is owned by the states and 2% by the Indian tribes. Thus, only about 3/5 of the US is privately owned. In the 13 states of the American West, almost 54% of the land is federally owned, led by Nevada at 83%. Even Hawai'i is 15% federal.

What does it mean?

- Federal land policies affect all aspects of American life, from recreation to agriculture to petroleum
- Land policies create some of the most divisive arguments in the US, and this has been true since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- American citizens carry with them deeply held ideas about the proper relationship to nature, ideas that are very hard to change. Some notable exceptions include the widespread adoption of recycling, the moderate success of air and water cleanup, the relatively small amount of litter, the enormous popularity of outdoor recreation, and the enthusiasm for "green ideas" in architecture, landscaping and new technologies. (*The American Environment, Wilderness and National Lands*, by David Stanley, Professor of English Emeritus)

## VI. CONTEMPORARY EXPERIENCES OF NATIVE AMERICANS. THE MONTANA CHEYENNE RESERVATION

*July 17*

*We traveled by coach to Billings, Montana and stayed at Wingate Hotel, Billings. What a difference to the sumptuous and posh Salt Lake City!*

*We departed to Northern Cheyenne Reservation early in the morning. I was looking forward to experiencing what I thought would be, by far, the most interesting part of the entire program. It took about two hours by coach, but the closer we got, the drier and*

*emptier everything was. There were some scattered farmhouses, miles away from each other. I had always associated Amerindians with deep forests, wildlife and lush vegetation, but there was nothing like that. I learned about their history later and how they moved from place to place, changed their way of life, fought the federal troops, saw their leaders in prison, their children and women dying of cholera or simply starving and finally settled here, in Montana, after long negotiations with the government representatives. Still, they are one of the very few Indian tribes who managed to preserve their language and cultural identity, and the most serious proof for that was Dull Knife College, where the Cheyenne language was taught. According to their official site, they have approximately 9,194 enrolled tribal members with about 4,135 residing on the reservation.*

*On the entrance door, a big poster: "Wanted for murder! Methamphetamine! It kills" We were welcomed by some representatives of the community (dressed casually, like all the people on the reservation, in shirts and jeans) and invited in the conference hall. On the white board, another shocking message: "National Suicide Prevention Line. Talk" The tribal president gave the first speech about the community, how it is organized and what problems the young people are facing. I asked her about the suicide notice on the board. She didn't give a straight answer, but it became clear in time, listening to them, that they had to fight unemployment, alcoholism, drug addiction, obesity and suicidal drives (the last element being part of their tradition). They had lost their roots and didn't know where they were going. They wanted autonomy, but were very poor and could hardly support themselves. What was worse, the young students I talked to during the lunch break in the courtyard took no pride in their language and traditions, which became even more visible during the Pow Wow ceremony in the evening (involving a drum group, dancers and gift giving). There was such a discrepancy between the tribal rhythm of the music, the traditional costumes with feathers and animal skins and the whole place, with modern equipment, people's modern dress and the indifference on their faces.*

*In the afternoon, we were given a tour of the Cheyenne sacred places which, surprise!, were not on the reservation, but in the property of a white man who was our guide for the rest of the day. The grave sites were quite far and we had to cross three or four gates – the white man had the key to all of them – say a prayer and perform a purification ceremonial which involved spreading some smoke all over our bodies. The huge stones had carved images of birds and animals telling the spiritual story of the tribe. The white old man was very knowledgeable about everything because his grandmother was a teacher of the tribe and he was literally adopted by the Cheyenne. On our way back, he invited us to his place, full of Indian objects amulets and he showed us the deed of purchase which entitled him to the ownership of the land. We came back to the college, exhausted and saddened somehow by the whole story of race and inheritance.*

*There was someone, however, that wiped off the overall impression. His name was Linwood Tall Bull, he was a healer and college teacher and I felt that everything made sense, Indian healing and all, you just have to be honest with yourself and respect Mother Nature. After the lecture was over, he invited us to his museum, showed us his plants and how he talked to them, because a big part of healing lies in knowing what your problem is and addressing the spirit of the plant directly. He took my hand and told me about my problems in a way that nobody had done before, telling me about what I*

*was like and about taking over my father's problems, which was the main source of my pain . I left the place filled with a new energy and promised myself I would talk to that man again. Late at night we returned to Billings.*

## Understanding Indian Healing

A Medicine Man named Edger Monetathchi, Jr., taught Traditional Indian Medicine at a conference which I attended many years ago. It is a way of looking at the entire person and doctoring them before unhealthy lifestyles create a situation within your body. We do not have problems with our health, we have situations, a problem is a mathematical equation we do not have any problems in life, because if you have a problem you have to find a right answer. But if we have a situation in life we can continue to change it until we can find a situation we can live with, and that's our reality. Dis-ease is a learning process, and with a situation you need to look for the root cause. The number four is very sacred in our Indian cultures, and everything in our lives is a circle. The circle is divided into (4) parts the top left is your Spirit, the next is Mind, then Body and last is your Environment. All of the parts are connected and we can not separate them, traditional medicine works with the whole. We all talk about health, we all have a definition of what health is, some have went to school for years to learn what good health is. We are going to give it to you in one word "**BALANCE**" when any one of these triangles is out of sync we are out of balance and our bodies are at **DIS-EASE**. To go a bit further your body is divided in half with the left side being your woman side and the right side your man side. When you have a situation focus on the location and then you can look at the male or female aspect of your concern. First, you will need to understand that medical professionals are viewed in the same light as traditional healers; because of this, you will need to be very careful with your body language and with the words you may say to your patient. Never test or argue with a Medicine Person, after all you came to them and if you don't believe what is told to you thank them and walk away. Indian Healers are gifted with the ability to prepare a person for their healing journey by focusing on the area of concern. When a person makes the effort to visit a Medical Professional or an Indian Healer you will need to ask for help with your head and your heart. Medical People and Indian Healers are only facilitators of healing, the healing happens within the patient. The medicines, surgeries, herbs, incense are also facilitators of healing.

Indian Healing works from the inside out, Western Medicine works from the outside in. Western medicine is mechanical in nature and it repairs what is wrong but does not address the root cause. Indian Healing addresses the cause of the situation and eliminates the root cause before the body manifests disease or disabling conditions. We believe everything is alive, the plants, rocks, medicines, water and everything in your house or in your life, and since it has life we must talk with it. And if we believe it has life then it will help us. Individuals internalize their stress, which causes the body to react, in the form of headaches, heart problems, ulcers, hives and other maladies. Medicine Persons sit and watch the daily activities of a camp noticing the ones with anger, guilt, shame and the happy and quiet ones. When a person went to seek the healing services of a Medicine Person, the healers would always say; I have been expecting for you. How could they possibly know we would be coming? Remember they have been watching how you have lived.

In each camp, we knew everyone by sight, smell, sound and history. We became very adept at studying animals, birds, elements and each other. Indian People are very good with body language, we can tell when you are happy to see us and when you don't have time for us. Very much of Indian medicine came from the birds and animals, either by their body language or by visions. We will begin looking at the entire person and the healing from the inside. When a person limps when they walk notice which side the pain is on, the woman side or the man side. Men that have pain on their left side have a situation with their wife or with woman figure in their lives. The same is true for the woman with pain on their man side, they may have a very domineering male figure in their lives, such as a father, brother or husband. There are four parts that need to be considered for good health, Our Spiritual, Physical or Body, Mental or Emotional and Family Environment. Each person is born with four spirits one for each of our four parts; they will leave us from time to time when we fail our responsibilities to ourselves. If one of the four parts is giving us trouble our bodies become at dis-ease and susceptible to illness or disease.

**What our minds cannot deal with our bodies will manifest.** Some people may say what about a baby, can they create their own reality? This question is a dodge, because some people don't want to accept the fact that they do create their own reality. The babies also create their own reality; they have a divine plan just like each of us.

**Feet- The foundation/Principles:** A person's role or status in their family or community can determine the condition of their feet. This is established at a very early age, you may notice one of your children limping and as you show your concern and give this little one your attention, this limp will go away. You have made them important and part of your family. When a man limps on his left side, you may need to put your hand on his shoulder and give it a squeeze, because his wife has just chewed him out. To limp is a good way of getting attention and allowed back into the good graces of your family. If you wish to work with a persons feet wash them and put lotion on them, once you have made them comfortable they will hear everything you say to them. If you are familiar with the Bible you know that Jesus washed the feet of the disciples during the last supper. Why did he choose this time to do this? I believe that he did this so they would remember him and his teachings. To help a person with foot problems you will need to look at their role in their family. If the family members do not show respect or take time to listen to the stories or things family members have to say, you have taken away their importance or role in their family. If the disrespect of the individual continues more complications may occur and their importance diminished in the family and with their feet. When Chief Sitting Bull was asked why he preferred moccasins and not white mans shoes he answered; I wear moccasins because they allow me to feel the heart beat of Mother Earth. We need to learn how to walk again, and feel the grasses under our feet and when we do this we enjoy nature at her finest. Our lives are going so fast now and we have forgotten the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and above all we do not experience the memories of our past. The importance of a person's role in their family is the key to good healthy feet.

**Legs (Calves)** Our calves is our understanding, if we are at dis-ease about understanding some aspect of ourselves our legs are going to hurt. This is a very important part of a person, as you will be able to know the emotions that they are carrying by watching their body language. You will recognize the angry people, the sad ones, those that are happy and those that harbor guilt. The unhealthy emotions are expressed by body language, such as head bowed, is the start of

Indian Healing Practices. It is time to take away the unhealthy emotions before they turn into disease. The Apache people do this by putting their unhealthy feelings in a rock; they call it a worry rock. We believe rocks live forever, so we talk to them or leave our prayers with them, then our prayers also live forever. The people that have situations with their understanding and have so much anger or bitterness in their lives may develop crippling Arthritis. The quiet angry people are mainly the ones that are not able to forgive can develop crippling situation with the joints. Notice people that have cold hands, these people are already judging you. Men can easily forgive and almost always have warm hands, but woman can hold a grudge or anger forever. It is the belief of this writer that cold hands do not necessarily mean warm heart. Touch everything as you would touch the Creator, so many people think they have to show how tough you are by almost crushing your fingers. The Creator knows how tough you are for he has been watching how you live.

**Knees-Humility:** People that have a difficult time being humble can have painful situations in this area. (Example) If my left knee is hurting; I would be dealing with my humility which relates to my female aspect. It could be many things maybe I didn't like my wife ordering me around. What our minds don't want to deal with our bodies is going to manifest. The quiet ones are usually the people who get the most terrible diseases such as cancer, renal failure, blindness and amputations. These diseases do not affect loud or noisy people. The medicine people say that when you keep all your emotions inside you they will come out as a bad disease. To correct this we need to let our unhealthy emotions go, by dealing with them for they are like an old friend that has been with us for a long time. We need to deal with them and tell them good bye. They are just emotions of past events that hurt us in some way, let them go.

**Hips-Life:** This is the area where life begins for the male and female. This is the place that causes the most problems for the persons that have been sexually abused or molested as a child with many marital companions or sexual partners. To go into a marriage with a child from another relationship can cause many problems for the new father. The mother will always watch how the new father treats the child and the child in turn will have to compete for the mother's attention. Many times the child will have to come up with a serious health condition just to get the needed attention. People that have been molested as a child will need to deal with this trauma before it can turn into a disease. The majority of urethral cancer happens to quiet woman married more than once or divorced. Prostate cancer happens to quiet men that have been married more than once or divorced.

**Stomach-Emotions:** This is where all your emotions are stored some are good and some are bad. We know the problems that worry and stress can cause (ulcers, stomach ache, etc.) remember that all the unhealthy emotions such as guilt, anger can be discarded any time you want, why should you keep them. To treat alcoholism, diabetes, you will need to deal with the emotions of that person before they can control the disease. Indian healers removed the unhealthy emotions before they became these diseases. The quiet angry people will manifest situations with their joints and have what is known as Arthritis. When we are mean or say things to hurt others, we know we have done wrong and if we do not make amends or apologize our bodies will give us a reason to be angry and filled with pain. Many people say Arthritis is hereditary and they blame their grandmother or other relatives. The only thing that is hereditary is our lifestyles, and we can change our lifestyles. Happy and kind people do not have the joint situations of the quiet angry ones.



**Lungs-Freedom:** The lungs are your freedom this is where you get your good life. If there is an unsolved problem in the above listed areas of your body how are you breathing? How do you breath when you are angry? How do you breath with you feel guilty? You breathe different then you would if you're happy with yourself. They say your body builds new cells every seven years. When you focus on a part of your body that you have a problem with you are making weak cells by not breathing properly this is where the disease grows. When a person comes to you with cancer what do you say, some may say to enjoy it for you have taken a long time to make it. One of the first diseases that the Indian people had when they were put on reservation was TB, because they perceived that their freedom was taken away from them. Look at people that have problems in this area, Remember to visit your grand parents and family members because they can manifest serious health situations just so their family members will come to visit. Breast cancer happens to quiet woman who have a very domineering male figure in their lives or their female obligations restrict their freedom. Look what side is effected, is it the male or is it the female side? We need to laugh we need to shout or cry, we have to let the painful emotions go.

**Heart-Love:** The majority of the heart problems happen to people that perceive they are not loved, or have lost love. Look into the lifestyles of those people that have heart disease, support those that are having marital problems. Divorced people should be watched closely, and supported as you see fit. People need to be comfortable or happy with their relationships. When you have pain on your left side that is your woman side you will need to identify the problems you have in that part of you. People need to address those issues that pertain to their man side or the woman side. Notice the people that publicly shame or put down each other, then notice which side they get their pain. The loss of loved ones can cause situations with the heart; we call it a broken heart. One day each of us will travel the path alone also, so remember the good memories for they will be with us forever.

**Shoulders - Burden:** This is where people have pain because they are carrying the whole world and they are quick to tell you about it. A person allowing stress to become a problem will experience much pain. Remember pain is a great way of getting immediate attention. When your body hurts it only is telling us pay attention to it, and when you focus on the pain and show it attention the pain has no reason to stay. People with problems in this part are quick to let you know all the things they are doing, paying the electricity, putting a child through collage, paying bills and in many cases, you may feel that great burdens rest on those shoulders. Many people will have back pain so they can have time for themselves. When someone has back problems look at all the situations they are carrying on their back. Always take time for yourself after each day and think of all the good and bad things you may have experienced. Say a prayer for those who have hurt you, this is how you get rid of the guilt and hurt. Your body needs this special time for self healing.

**Neck - Guilt:** People that have guilty feelings will have problems in this part of themselves. These people need to be forgiven, so they will not go through life with their head down. We see many people that get whiplash from car accidents, was there really an injury or is there just an opportunity to get big money. When people see the possibility of attaining financial gain through an injury, how can they heal? Within my tribal customs when a person falls it is funny and we laugh. This may sound cruel especially when they may have hurt themselves, but what better way will a person heal when the accident is funny to them or others. Let us look at it a different way,

suppose you fell and hurt yourself, you most likely would be angry, ashamed and bitter. You may even blame the elements for bringing the ice you fell on. How are you going to heal with so much anger? We are now in such a hurry with our lives we do not consider walking slow and seeing where we step. So when you slip and land on your rump sit there and laugh this starts the healing process. Notice the people that have neck problems, look at their lives look at their life styles. They have said or done something that they are ashamed of. Some people get situations that make the neck muscles twitch again look at their lives. We are taught to be humble, and if some one criticizes you thank them or shake their hand and walk away.

**Head:** This is the control; this is where you use your smell, sight, hearing, taste and memories. These all are needed for our healing, and we need to take time to smell things, see the beauty of things, feel mother earth as you walk on her back. Memories are very important when they are of good things. Today we are too busy being too busy that we no longer pay attention to the signs that our bodies constantly give us. This is why our bodies have pain or sickness; they only want attention from either us or friends and family. There will never be a cure for the common cold, because it is a manifestation of your spiritual growth, this is why there is no cure. Many people get a pain or experience a headache it is so easy to just take a pill, for we now have pills for everything and we are ignoring the healing processes of our own bodies. Why did you get the headache? Did you buy it at Wal-Mart? Take a little credit because you made it all by yourself. Notice the people that use hearing aids, what temperament or nature do they all have in common? They never listened anyway. **Always remember that you create your own reality.** Life is so short that we need to take time to experience our gifts of smell, touch, hearing, taste, sight and treasure the memories you have and those you will continue to save.

I hope that each of you will take time for yourselves, watch other people, and make the quiet ones laugh and take away the unhealthy emotions before they become a situation that will bring you pain.

Linwood Tall Bull  
Headsman of the Dog Soldier Society  
(406)477-8759 Hm. 477-6215 XI49 Wk

### **Traditional Beliefs of the Plains Indian People**

There are many taboos that Indian families live with on a daily basis, some are handed down from past generations and some are received when a person completes a sacred ceremony. Many of the things listed below should be taken very seriously and respected. The Indian children were taught at a very early age to understand and respect these values. Many of these beliefs are shared by other native tribes.

1. You never run in a lodge or house
2. You never bounce a ball in a house
3. You never drag any object on the floor that is used on a horse, i.e.: saddle, rope, bridle, etc.
4. You never whistle in a house

5. You do not stick knives in a house or in the ground
6. You never use a knife to stir a cook pot or cut anything on the stove
7. You never use a knife to point at another person
8. Never walk in front of or behind an Elder that is seated in a lodge
9. Never point at people with your finger
10. When you break a animal bone to eat the marrow you must use a stick, never use metal
11. When you break a bone to eat never put the pieces back together again
12. When a woman has their monthly they cannot be involved with any ceremony
13. Never point at the Sun or Moon with your finger
14. An owl is a bad omen and they shouldn't be allowed near your house
15. A dog crying brings bad luck
16. Always cover your windows when the sun goes down
17. Never go out at night eating or having grease on your mouth
18. Always cover your mirrors during a Thunder Storm
19. Chase the dogs out of the house during a Thunder Storm
20. Kill dogs that cry or are scared of lightning
21. When you get water always dip the bucket up stream for daily use, down stream when recounting the past
22. Never step across a stream coming from a spring
23. Never use your mouth to drink from a spring, always drink from your cupped hand
24. Every spring has a serpent living with it, never camp near one.
25. Never throw water at a Sun Dancer
26. Never throw water out at a Ceremony"
27. Never shake a blanket at a Ceremony
28. Never run at a Ceremony
29. Always call your children (4) times each when you take them to the hills and are ready to go home.
30. Never camp near Sand Rocks, this is where the little people live.
31. Never let your children play at Sand Rocks alone
32. Never throw food or medicine this is very disrespectful.
33. Never step over some ones legs, or food, or anything you work with.
34. Never walk in back of or touch a Ceremonial Person's back
35. Never wear a Ceremonial Person's hat, or shoes.
36. Never rope dogs or have a dog drag rope
37. Never play with crutches, wheel chairs or bandages or mimic injury
38. Women should not touch a snake, as it is believed that the Bull Snake can turn into a young man.
39. Cheyenne Women can not touch a coyote.
40. Men should be cautious while deer hunting, it is believed that a Doe can witch you and turn into a Beautiful Woman
41. Buck Deer can shoot you with stones that are under their eyes.
42. Buck deer have been known to bring sickness to you by using the scent glands on their back legs
43. Pregnant Women should not walk along cliffs or banks this is where the twins live.
44. A woman should not bother the round iron deposits on sand rocks.
45. A person should not chew their fingernails, as it is believed that they will collect in the liver.
46. A ceremonial man should never go to bed with his shoes at the head of the bed.
47. A female should always take loose hair off combs or brushes when she uses them.
48. Never leave a handprint in the dirt or snow.
49. Never spit outside after dark.

50. Run from or throw a stick at Whirlwinds that come near you.
51. Never leave a baby unattended; always place a stick by them or over their crib.
52. Always call in the children as the sun is going down.
53. Never cry for a dog, or feel sorry for one.
54. Never lead a horse to the doorway of a house and go inside holding the lead rope.
55. Cheyenne Women should never touch a speckled eagle feather.
56. Never climb through a window
57. Never leave your clothes hanging out at night.
58. Never dry fire a rifle in a house.
59. Do not talk about the Sun dance Ceremony with mixed company.
60. Take down guns from the walls when it is thundering.
61. Do not use a knife to stir a fire.
63. Do not run during a thunderstorm.
64. Take all cooking pots off the stove during a thunderstorm.
65. Do not hit a dog
66. Do not follow wolf tracks
67. Never criticize or make fun of another person, because everything comes back to you.
68. Women on their moon cannot enter a home of a medicine person, but should talk at the door.
69. Don't hang socks or diapers in a house when a medicine person is going to smoke.
70. Never cut your hair when the sun goes down.
71. Never allow a bird to fly into your house.

Many of the Indian People live by rules similar to these I have listed, so be kind with the words that you say to us. Many of the Taboos cannot be explained; we follow and respect them and never ask why. Each of us are born with four spirits, they are given to us for our protection. If any of the Taboos is violated our spirits let us know, we feel it inside and happiness cannot be attained until the act has been corrected. The Indian People have a very close relationship with The elements, Water Spirits, Plants, Animals, Mother Earth and the Heavens. We do not seek scientific explanations for the things we believe. We are in balance, and we are happy.

Linwood Tall Bull Box 1314

Lame Deer, Montana 59043 (406) 477-6215 x 149 Wk. (406) 592-8759 Hm.

Donald Hollow Breast Respected Tribal Elder passed away 2001

## VII. AMERICA AND THE WORLD. NEW YORK CITY. ELLIS ISLAND, THE STATUE OF LIBERTY AND THE IMMIGRATION MUSEUM. TOUR OF HARLEM AND LOWER MANHATTAN. UNITED NATIONS.

*July 19*

*It was 4 am and I had to wake up. We had a flight to take back to Salt Lake City and then another one to Washington DC. We arrived at the National Airport at 4 pm, checked in at Jurys Hotel, and had the entire evening to see the monuments. It's the second American city I fell in love with (after Boston) due to its wide spaces, its beautiful parks and the way it breathes. We visited Lincoln Memorial, sheltering Abraham Lincoln's huge statue, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, the round monument with the Declaration of Independence written on the marble walls, The Vietnam Wall, made of black marble with all those thousands of names carved in it (there are still families leaving toys and flowers to their deceased), the US Capitol, housing the Congress since 1800, the famous Washington Monument, the tallest structure in the city, erecting out of the water. My personal favorite was the entire architectural complex dedicated to Roosevelt, the shaper of a new destiny for the American nation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The next day was entirely dedicated to the Smithsonian museum, a huge museum complex highly inspired by the president's personality and thinking. It was also my younger son's birthday, he turned four, which reminded me how much I missed home.*

*On the 21<sup>st</sup> we went to Refugees International, an a peace-maintaining force run by Kenneth Bacon, an ex-spokesman for the Department of Defense under the Presidency of Bill Clinton. On an official visit to Kosovo during the war in the Balkans, he visited a refugees camp sheltering 1,000,000 people and he realized the tremendous difficulty of having to give medical assistance and food to all those people. The discussion focused on the US foreign policy and its role in maintaining peace and security in the world.*

*In the afternoon, we went to the United States Department of State, where we had a briefing with our Program Officer from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and also the opportunity to thank them for the great program.*

## ***The Monroe Doctrine***

***James Monroe, 1823***

*The Monroe Doctrine was expressed during President Monroe's seventh annual message to Congress, December 2, 1823:*

*. . . At the proposal of the Russian Imperial Government, made through the minister of the Emperor residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the minister of the United States at St. Petersburg to arrange by amicable negotiation the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the northwest coast of this continent. A similar proposal has been made by His Imperial Majesty to the Government of Great Britain, which has likewise been acceded to. The Government of the United States has been desirous by this friendly proceeding of manifesting the great value which they have invariably attached to the friendship of the Emperor and their solicitude to cultivate the*

best understanding with his Government. In the discussions to which this interest has given rise and in the arrangements by which they may terminate the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. . .

It was stated at the commencement of the last session that a great effort was then making in Spain and Portugal to improve the condition of the people of those countries, and that it appeared to be conducted with extraordinary moderation. It need scarcely be remarked that the results have been so far very different from what was then anticipated. Of events in that quarter of the globe, with which we have so much intercourse and from which we derive our origin, we have always been anxious and interested spectators. The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellow-men on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense. With the movements in this hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments; and to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. In the war between those new Governments and Spain we declared our neutrality at the time of their recognition, and to this we have adhered, and shall continue to adhere, provided no change shall occur which, in the judgement of the competent authorities of this Government, shall make a corresponding change on the part of the United States indispensable to their security.

The late events in Spain and Portugal shew that Europe is still unsettled. Of this important fact no stronger proof can be adduced than that the allied powers should have thought it proper, on any principle satisfactory to themselves, to have interposed by force in the internal concerns of Spain. To what extent such interposition may be carried, on the same principle, is a question in which all independent powers whose governments differ from theirs are interested, even those most remote, and surely none of them more

so than the United States. Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the government de facto as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none. But in regard to those continents circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can anyone believe that our southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition in any form with indifference. If we look to the comparative strength and resources of Spain and those new Governments, and their distance from each other, it must be obvious that she can never subdue them. It is still the true policy of the United States to leave the parties to themselves, in hope that other powers will pursue the same course. . . .

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By Courtesy of Gerard Murphy and the National Public Telecomputing Network (NPTN).

**"THE ROOSEVELT COROLLARY  
TO THE MONROE DOCTRINE"  
1904**

It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere save such as are for their welfare. All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may lead the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.

If every country washed by the Caribbean Sea would show the progress in stable and just civilization which with the aid of the Platt amendment Cuba has shown since our troops left the island, and which so many of the republics in both Americas are constantly and brilliantly showing, all question of interference by this Nation with their affairs would be at an end. Our interests and those of our southern neighbors are in reality identical. They have great natural riches, and if within their borders the reign of law and

justice obtains, prosperity is sure to come to them. While they thus obey the primary laws of civilized society they may rest assured that they will be treated by us in a spirit of cordial and helpful sympathy.

We would interfere with them only in the last resort, and then only if it became evident that their inability or unwillingness to do justice at home and abroad had violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations. It is a mere truism to say that every nation, whether in America or anywhere else, which desires to maintain its freedom, its independence, must ultimately realize that the right of such independence can not be separated from the responsibility of making good use of it.

In asserting the Monroe Doctrine, in taking such steps as we have taken in regard to Cuba, Venezuela, and Panama, and in endeavoring to circumscribe the theater of war in the Far East, and to secure the open door in China, we have acted in our own interest as well as in the interest of humanity at large. There are, however, cases in which, while our own interests are not greatly involved, strong appeal is made to our sympathies.... In extreme cases action may be justifiable and proper. What form the action shall take must depend upon the circumstances of the case; that is, upon the degree of the atrocity and upon our power to remedy it.

*July 22*

*In the morning we visited the Capitol Building and rubbed shoulders with congressmen and VIPs. Some of us were caught in a downpour and had to wait for an hour until we could go and find the coach. I was lucky to have my umbrella with me and some new and dry clothes I shared with my colleagues soaked to the skin.*

*If for other people (some of my colleagues, for instance), New York is the center of the world, the symbol of modern urban civilization, I felt suffocated by the jungle of buildings and squeezed by the narrow streets, although I must admit that the air is cleaner than the one in my own hometown (one of the most polluted in the country, by the way), due to the high quality of the fuel used by cars and the large number of hybrid cars. Because of the torrential rain, we couldn't visit Ellis Island that day. Instead, we split in two, some of us went to a Broadway show, for which they had booked tickets long before, while Frank, Francesca and I went to Blue Note, one of the most distinguished jazz clubs in New York City, (Frank had made the reservations). It was the most gripping recital I had ever attended, after the one given by Dana Leong at the UMass concert in the first week we arrived, an amazing improvisation on themes in the history of music.*

*July 23 was dedicated to Harlem. We visited the district, originally a Dutch village, associated with the black residents in the last century. The difference between the rest of Manhattan and Harlem was obvious, although flats were very expensive all over New York City. We attended a magnificent gospel concert at a church packed with French and*



*Italian tourists and us, of course. Brilliant, moving music, although I had the feeling that some members of the choir were shouting instead of singing. The focus was not so much on the harmony, but on the intensity of the message.*

*Then I had the best meal on my entire American tour: lunch at **Sylvia's**, one of the most famous restaurants in NYC (Bill Clinton is a regular customer). The food served is called **soul food** and I bet there are secret recipes we're talking about, because the taste is unique. Maybe they put a lot of soul in it when they cook it.*

*July 24*

*All my colleagues (with very few exceptions- and I was one of them) went on a walking tour of Lower Manhattan- Brooklyn Bridge, Ground Zero, Little Italy, Chinatown. I joined Frank, Francesca and two or three more people, who were going to MoMa (the Museum of Modern Art), because Brancusi was exhibited there, and I had never seen his works. MoMa is huge, you have to queue for hours (after you have booked your tickets in advance, and then you might have a hard time finding what you're looking for. I asked a curator about Brancusi, pronounced in Romanian (I am so naïve, nobody knew he was Romanian) and he said: "Oh, the Italian sculptor". Why Italian I never understood. There were four or five pieces exhibited: two Birds, an Endless Column and a Madame Pogany. I had expected much more.*

*We took The Freedom- that was the name of the boat to get to Ellis Island and visit the huge Immigration Museum and the famous Green Lady, the symbol of the new world. It is impressive in both size and significance. We listened to its very vivid story on the headphones while looking at the piles of trucks and woven baskets, the pictures of the first immigrants, larger than life (there was a Romanian peasant as well), the traditional costumes all over the world, the musical instruments and the thousands of trifles collected in a century of immigration. The place still smelt of fear...and hope.*

*The Statue of Liberty was conspicuous through its size and color, a strange shade of green-blue given by the chemical reactions between the copper the statue is made of and the constant exposure to the sea water. It was a very long and tiring day, I remember I lay on the grass under one of the trees next to the Lady and fell asleep immediately. Knowing America is also a physically demanding process.*

*The day was not over. We came back to the City to visit the UNO Headquarters. I liked everything about it, especially the quality of the gifts received from different nations. We even attended (for several meetings) a UN session presided over by Mr. Ko....*

*That night we came back to Amherst. Home, sweet home. Our adventure was not over, though. It was only the beginning...*