

John Van Damm

COMMUNITY DREAM SHARING IN SAUSALITO, CALIFORNIA

Sausalito, California, is the home of a picturesque houseboat community that has grown on a 2-mile stretch of waterfront north of San Francisco. The area inhabited by the houseboat community was first used by the U.S. Navy to build ships during World War II. When the war ended, many small ships were abandoned by the Navy and various shipping companies used the area to park old ferries and other antiquated vessels. Adventurous people slowly began to claim the old vessels and built fanciful homes on the old hulls, creating a waterborne life-style that continues to catch many people's imaginations. Living on the houseboats of Sausalito became an artistic statement and many famous and dedicated artists took up residence. They created an ongoing community united by the joys and struggles of living on the water, exposed to tides, wave motion, wind, and the overwhelming beauty of the sea and landscapes.

A form of organized dream sharing entered the life of the Sausalito waterfront community in 1976 with the publication of **Gates, A Sausalito Waterfront Community Dream Journal**. The journal is a collection of night time, sleep dreams about the Sausalito waterfront. People take their dreams to a community "Dream Drop" where they are picked up, then typed, mimeographed, and later distributed. **Gates** appears in homemade distribution stands at the entranceway of every dock. Everyone is welcome to take one and read into the collective psyche of the waterfront community.

When **Gates** began publication, the Sausalito waterfront was in turmoil. A large investment development had succeeded in polarizing the community. The County of Marin, of which Sausalito is a part, had waged and lost a sea battle with houseboaters some ten years earlier when it had first attempted to control the houseboat community's anarchistic growth. Legal manoeuvrings by the County forced development of a marine by codes more oriented to costly land construction. A team of investment developers leased the harbor area that is the most densely populated and is considered the heart of the waterfront community. They initiated dramatic changes that continue to reverberate throughout the entire waterfront.

Before the investment development occurred, the houseboat community was characterized by low income people who desired an alternative lifestyle. Ironically, the success of these people in creating their lifestyle on water drew the attention of the developers who intended to eradicate the original community in order to make way for the development. Investment development represented a lifestyle different than the one that existed earlier. Archetypal tensions grew into confrontations accompanied by police riots and brutal physical violence. In 1977, 1978, and 1979 land and sea battles were waged, people from all sides of the struggle were injured, hospitalized, and jailed. It was in this atmosphere that **Gates** became an important part of the community's life. **Gates** was the only vehicle for people to speak their hearts across the gulfs created by the alienations and community divisions. Since 1976, the marina development has moved toward completion. Many new and expensive concrete-hulled homes have moved into the new berths. The community has nearly tripled in size.

In each issue of **Gates**, grown-ups and children share dreams they remember about life in the houseboat community. Often the dreams in **Gates** tell charming tales and incidents involving the beautiful natural surroundings that encompass the community. In the dreams the community often takes on a floating village atmosphere; talking fish appear walking on their tails on top of the water, houseboats speak to their owners, sailboats travel out-of-body with their captains, ghosts manifest themselves in the ships they haunt, huge sums of floating money are found, and the entire community meets and voyages to distant places and planets for celebrations. Frequently there are intense inter-relations among neighbors in the dreams. The children's dreams often bring insight to the adults. Dream entries that contain violent imagery may well release and transform destructive community energies.

Everyone shares their dreams in **Gates** by placing a title on the dream, telling the date of the dream, the name of their houseboat, their boat's location, their own full name, and, because of pressures from the kids in the community, their age. Many dream entries are accompanied by graphic illustrations of the dreams and these often add to the power of the entries. Sometimes the dreams are entered as poems and many times people write personal interpretative statements as part of their entries.

Every issue of **Gates** tells the story of the ongoing progress of the marina development and the survival of the community. A major theme in the dreams is the "community ship" which takes the forms

of submarines, cruise ships, ferryboats, barges, and spaceships. Sometimes important meetings are taking place aboard the community ship to decide the fate of the community, at other times there are murders that go unsolved, sometimes all the doors to all the rooms are removed and everyone lives in harmony. Terrible storms are weathered, celebrations are enjoyed. Vanishings and rebirths are frequent and always exciting.

Every issue of **Gates** focuses on the dreams that are submitted by the residents. Since there is a natural theme of "dreams about the water front", this is generally adhered to. However, all dreams that are submitted are published and many times there are dreams of universal significance that are entered because the dreamer feels that it is important they be published. **Gates** has become an important outlet for dreams and is a focus of many people's dreamwork. Everytime **Gates** is published the importance of remembering and working with dreams is reinforced, and the appearance of **Gates** often sparks renewed interest in dreams. Many people who were once dedicated non-recallers have become dream contributors to **Gates** and keep their own personal dream journals.

Jeremy Taylor

DREAM WORK AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

As the only child of a passionately pacifistic single parent, I came to the search for social responsibility and the struggle for social justice quite early in life. By the time I entered university in 1961, not only was I a committed non-violent social activist, I was also fairly experienced in pacific action and "propaganda of the deed". As I continued my community organizing and consciousness-raising work as an undergraduate, and later in graduate school, I came to understand with increasing clarity that my own motivations were ultimately mysterious to me - and so were everyone else's. That is to say, I became aware in retrospect that my deepest motivations, and those of other people, were ultimately irrational, and for the most part not-conscious - particularly at the all-important moment of decisive action. I came to see that the vital question of human motivation for both individual and collective action was deeply "psychological".