

WRITING SAMPLES: NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

CULTURAL SURVIVAL ARTICLES

(Scroll down for wildlife conservation, arts, and miscellaneous news/features)

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



SALT OF THE EARTH AND STARS

It has been said that when a stranger sets out into the Sahara, it is like plunging into a sea without knowing how to swim, yet even blind Tuareg nomads have been known to guide caravans across the desert. To them, a dune, a rock, or a few tufts of grass at the feet, or the position of the sun on one's cheek are infallible signposts. The crooked hands of thorn trees may catch at the stranger, but those who know and see, with or without eyes, move freely in the Bright Country. . . .

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



DESERT WORSHIP Cool sanctuary in the ancient, earthen mosques of Mali

Sun penetrates the sand streets and mud buildings of ancient cities situated at the southern edge of the Sahara--so much so that places like Timbuktu, Gao, Mopti, and Djenne feel like open-air ovens. A person loses three liters of body water an hour just walking in this region. In such ponderous heat, stepping into the cool corridors of a mosque is as much physical relief as spiritual sanctuary. . . .

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



THE ART OF SURVIVAL In Mali, drought turns Tamachek to craftmaking

Recurring droughts of the past two decades have sorely disrupted the lifeways of nomadic peoples in Mali, West Africa. Many have been forced to flee from the "bush" to the city to survive. Among those on the run is Moussa, a Tamachek herder who quit his nomadic life on the edge of the desert and ventured to the bedraggled city of Gao, on the Niger River. "Prior to the drought my life was with many animals," Moussa said. "Then our animals died, so we made gardens. But now there is no water for gardens. We have nothing but our crafts. . . ."

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



LAPLAND

A remote people struggles to preserve its culture

The Lapps, a stalwart people inhabiting the northern reaches of Scandinavia for nearly 9,000 years, are battling cultural extinction. Well into this century their culture remained safely intact by virtue of the fact that outsiders reckoned their habitat as bleak and forbidding. Conceptions transformed in the 1960s and 1970s, when a surge of hydroelectric projects brought sleek, black roads to the area. The roads sliced through the untamed region, luring young Lapps out and nature-loving tourists in. Language, traditions, and long-accepted yet unofficial land rights essential to Lapp livelihoods, began to dwindle. And Lapps, known as *Sami* among themselves, suddenly found their culture in jeopardy. . . .

WORLD MONITOR

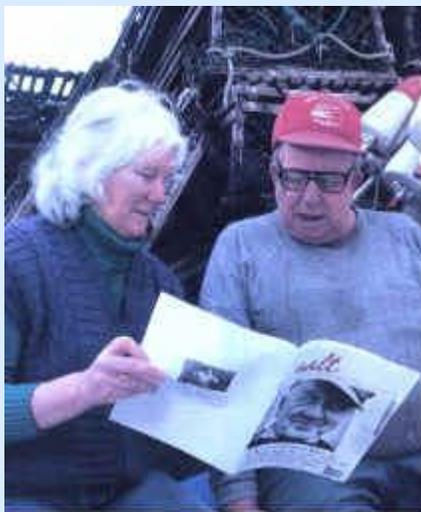


DISCOVERING EUROPE, 1493

A year after Columbus sailed west, Native Americans sailed east – as envoys and sightseers as well as captives

"In the year 1153 . . . it is written, that there came to Lubec, a cite of Germanie, one canoa with certain Indians, like unto a long barge: which seemed to have come from the coast of Baccaloas [Newfoundland]." This intriguing historical snippet comes via geographer Richard Hakluyt (1522-1616), an Oxford lecturer who translated many early accounts of the Americas. Although evidence supporting this very early chronicle of Native Americans in Europe remains elusive, the report hints at things to come. Later, substantiated records show that during the Age of Exploration, launched by Columbus's 1492 voyage across the Atlantic, hundreds of American Indians did travel in the other direction--to Portugal, Spain, France, or England. In fact, records from 55 transatlantic journeys show that no fewer than 1,600 Indians had landed in Europe by the time Pilgrims sailing on the *Mayflower* landed on Massachusetts shores in 1620. . . .

DOWN EAST MAGAZINE



Getting a Grip on the Past

Pam Wood and her staff of eager students
salt away bits of the real Maine

THE LINE BETWEEN MAINE NATIVES and "newcomers" is sometimes boldly drawn. But in Cape Porpoise lives a woman whose life has erased that line. Just ask natives about Pam Wood. "Sure, she moved here less than twenty years ago," says seventy-year-old Monty Washburn, whose own ancestors were Mainers as far back as he knows, "but far as I'm concerned she's always been here. She understands the place as much as us lifers."

Wood has come to know Maine through founding a quarterly magazine named *Salt*, which for fifteen years has zealously chronicled the ways and wiles of traditional Mainers. . . .

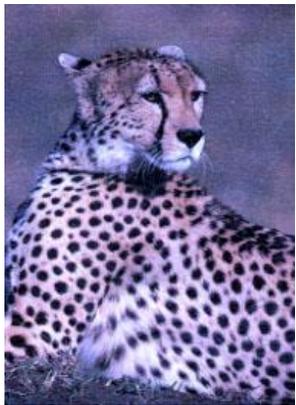


WHERE SANTA'S STILL A SAINT

Sleigh bells and flying reindeer mean nothing to children in the Netherlands. That's because Sinterklaas, the Dutch counterpart to America's Santa Claus, flies above rooftops on a milk-white horse. He hails from Spain, not the North Pole. And he is no *ho ho ho* sort of fellow. In fact, he is far too dignified to sport a tasseled stocking cap. Instead, he wears a bishop's miter worthy of his saintly heritage. But the greatest contrast is that he does not show up on Christmas Eve at all. In fact, he has a day of his own. It occurs several weeks before Dec. 25, and it has nothing to do with the birth of Jesus. . . .

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ARTICLES

SIERRA



"If people be killing killing . . ." Plagued by poachers, drought, and economic instability, Tanzania remains committed to the conservation ethic.

To drive across Tanzania's Serengeti Plain is to swallow infinity in one enormous gulp. Photographer Todd Hoffman and I journeyed there in the care of Dr. Herbert Prins, a Dutch biologist who has lived in the middle of Tanzania's Lake Manyara National Park for several years, studying the ways and wiles of the local buffalo. The three of us approached the endless Serengeti's grasslands by way of a tented camp called Ndutu. Beyond the camp's scrubby woodland, the acacia trees thin out until they stand wide apart and singular, like the occasional whisker on a Masai warrior's chin. . . .

INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE



Outward Bound for Chimps

At their rehabilitation center in Gambia, Eddie and Stella Brewer are giving a boost to a few tenderfoot primates

By midmorning, when the sun has slid halfway up the tall tallow trees, park rangers Karafa and Abdoulai and the eight chimpanzees that inhabit the Abuko Nature Reserve in Gambia, West Africa, are ready for time out from the daily constitutional. Away from trails frequented by visitors, the rangers seek the shade of a locust bean tree while the chimps forage and romp. One chimp, her cheeks bulging with plums, swaggers over to Karafa. Plucking a fruit from her mouth, she offers it to the ranger. Karafa swings his arms excitedly, grunts with gusto and pretends to pop the mauled plum between his own lips. Delighted, the chimp plants a juicy kiss on his cheek, while ranger Abdoulai sways and hoots to beat the band. For Karafa and Abdoulai, such antics are all in a day's work at the Gambia Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Project, where greenhorn chimps are taught the ins and outs of life in the wild. . . .



Worth Saving

Madagascar's Leaping Lemurs

IN 1986, WHEN PRIMATOLOGIST Dr. Patricia Wright sighted the previously unknown golden bamboo lemur in Madagascar's lush Ranomafana rain forest, she couldn't believe her luck. Wright already knew this forest was home to several rare lemur species. But as she spotted the golden, she heard the sound of trees being cut – a logging road in the making. It was a pivotal point for Wright. She joined the ranks of conservation biologists struggling to save the dwindling habitats of the animals they study. . . .



RESEARCH & RESCUE:

Dorothy Spero didn't intend it that way when she founded a research station at West Quoddy Head, but over the years her staff has saved hundreds of marine creatures, from shore birds to whales

SEPTEMBER 3, 1987. The sun was sinking, the moon was rising, and Dr. Dorothy Spero finally sat down for dinner after a long day of work at the West Quoddy Biological Research Station in Lubec Maine. Then the phone rang. . . .



LAST TRUMP OF THE ELEPHANT?

My cabin stood beside a water pool, and each morning I awoke to the sound of an elephant family snorting and spraying and splashing. During my several-week stay, Tanzania's Lake Manyara National Park was fairly replete with elephants: some on the move, others standing on their hind legs feeding on high acacia branches, others camouflaged by tree shadows.

One night a young bull faced off with our Land Rover in the middle of the road. We stopped and turned off the engine and lights. The huge gray specter walked toward us, knocking his tusks against the vehicle as he glided the tip of his snout over the hood and windshield and toward my open window. The sound of his heavy, hollow breathing filled the air. Then, abruptly, he turned and pounded down the road in front of us.

That was in 1983. On a return trip to Manyara in March, I expected similar close encounters. There were none. In fact, I saw but a handful of elephants, always in the distance. The population had dropped from 485 to 181 - in just two years. . . .

TRAVEL ARTICLES

BOSTON GLOBE SUNDAY MAGAZINE



DUTCH TREATS

THE WONDERS of Holland's less-traveled roads

Windmills on knolls, tulips in fields, wooden shoes in klompen factories, Rembrandt's paintings in the Rijksmuseum, and van Gogh's works in a museum all his own: These cultural icons lure thousands of Americans to the Netherlands every year. But there are untouted sites that most tourists never see. In fact, it took a native Dutchman, my husband, to lead me to them. . . .



THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



Timbuktu is not a myth- it's alive and well in Mali

Mali. Few tourists have heard of this West African nation. It is one of the economically poorest countries in the world, yet it offers one of the richest traveling experiences imaginable. It is remote, incomparable, African to the core. It hangs beneath Algeria and is sliced in half by the sleepy Niger River. The northern half is desert, the southern half, bush.

There are three sites that are considered national monuments in Mali: Timbuktu (the "mysterious" city on the edge of the Sahara), Sanga (a remarkable community of Dogon cliff dwellers), and Djenne (an ancient and exquisite city renowned for its magnificent mud mosque. . . .

TRAVEL-HOLIDAY



GAME WATCHING IN TANZANIA

More Than a Spectator Sport

I'm wide-eyed. It is late and I am sitting in bed at Ndala Research Camp in the middle of Tanzania's Lake Manyara National Park. *Ndala* means python, which is one reason it is not a bad idea to swing the oil lamp under the bed for a nightly snake check before climbing between the sheets. . . .



JUST OFF THE SAFARI CIRCUIT

SINCE IT WAS FOUNDED IN 1905, Tanzania's Selous Game Reserve, the largest in Africa, has been all but ignored as a wildlife-viewing safari destination because of its vast, trackless wilderness, its remoteness from Tanzania's popular northern circuit, and its reputation as a haunt for intrepid sport hunters. But if you'd rather take photos than trophies, you finally have access to a corner of this little-traveled hinterland. The Mbuyu and Rufigi River camps in northeastern Selous, where hunting is now banned, were recently refurbished as part of a government plan to steer tourists southward from the relatively crowded Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater. Along with greater isolation, Selous offers fewer restrictions than the parks: Visitors can explore on foot . . . and they can fish for their dinner in the sunstruck waterways of the Rufigi River delta. . . .

TRAVEL-HOLIDAY



gentle giants

A visit with Rwanda's Endangered Mountain Gorillas

For Rob Campbell and his five companions, the rewards of the tortuous climb up the slippery slopes of Mount Visoke in Rwanda's Parc des Volcans far outweighed their exhaustion and the layers of mud that clung to their trousers. After two and a half hours of bushwhacking through a tangled, misty jungle, they found themselves within yards of a family of 13 wild mountain gorillas. . . .

DOWN EAST MAGAZINE



ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

PUTS ITS BEST SEASONS FORWARD

Visiting Maine's Premier Park

Some places are just too beautiful for their own good. Consider Acadia National Park on Maine's Mount Desert Island. So beautiful is this 40,000-acre park of forested granite mountains overlooking tranquil ponds, dancing streams and churning ocean, that 4.3 million tourists came here last year. That's four times the population of the entire state. And according to park figures, that makes Acadia the nation's second most visited national park (after Great Smoky Mountain National Park). Despite stunning scenery and invigorating air, the atmosphere of the park and its surrounding areas sometimes seems more like a carnival than a trip back to nature, with tourists wreaking havoc on the natural environment and each other. The overload happens each July and August. . . . But what about the other 10 months of the year? Ah, this is when nature lovers and refuge seekers can take heart. . . .

TRAVEL-HOLIDAY



FISH TALES FROM THE ZUIDER ZEE

Something's fishy here. This is Urk, an enchanting coastal village where old narrow houses with green gables and red-tile roofs cluster on a hill above a harbor jammed with fishing vessels. On the quay, at a place called the *leugenbank* (liars' bench), a group of old men sit gabbing. They are telling tales, fish tales, of course. But one of those tales is true--the one about how the town used to be an island. . . .

THE ARTS

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



DEGAS' DANCE Jewel of an exhibition at the National Gallery crystallizes Degas' search for essence in the world of dance

Edgar Degas would love Washington, D.C., right now, for the place is dancing. The Joffrey Ballet has just come and gone. The American Ballet Theatre is in town until Jan. 6, and the Dance Theatre of Harlem is due in February. These are the kinds of performances that Degas went to religiously. They are the kind of art of which art was made. Although dance is linked with the name of Degas in the popular imagination, few people realize that half of this Impressionist's mature work dealt with dance subjects – some 1,500 known pieces.

Degas is a graceful partner in Washington's current dance fest, for the National Gallery of Art is host, through March 6, of an exhibition entitled, "Degas: The Dancers." . . .

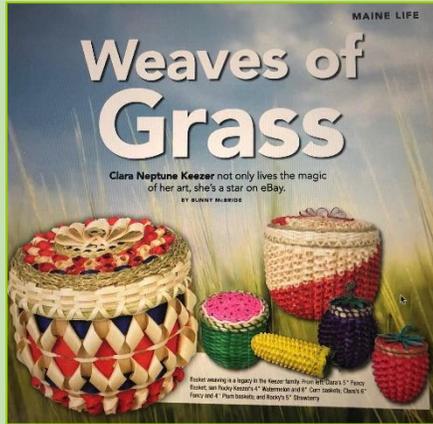
THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



HE PAINTED LAPLAND Andreas Alariesto recorded a little known culture

When you ask Lapp painter Andreas Alariesto about his art, he responds with his entire body. The azure eyes dart about alertly and his powerful hands start to twitch and turn, searching for words to illustrate. Then the stout shoulders come forward, bringing the answer very close to you.

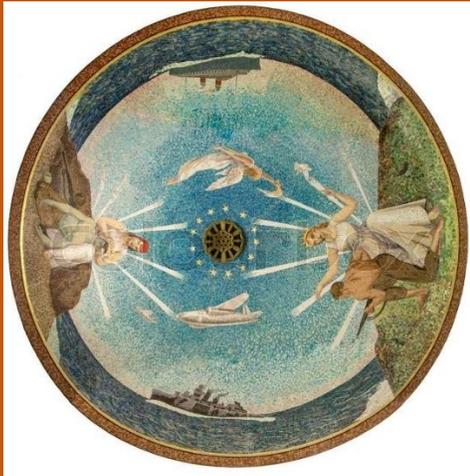
"When I was a child," he quips in his fervent friendly voice, "my favorite place was under the table. It was an excellent spot for eavesdropping on grownups." Between the knees and toes of Lapp elders, young Andreas could overhear stories and myths of ancient times in the northern region of Finland--of reindeer-herding customs, wild animals, and shamans. . . .



Weaves of Grass Clara Neptune Keezer not only lives the magic of her art, she's a star on eBay

It's rare to sell one's first piece of art, especially if you're just 8 years old. But Passamaquoddy artist Clara Neptune Keezer did just that. It was a small candy basket woven with ash splints. The buyer paid her 25 cents, and, fittingly, little Clara spent her earnings on candy. Eight decades later, she's still making baskets, but today her finely crafted pieces can garner hundreds of dollars. They've been featured in many exhibitions (including a one-woman show at the Farnsworth Museum in Rockland, Maine) and are in museums and private collections across the United States. . . .

FRANCE AMERIQUE



D-Day – the Allegory of Leon Kroll

Standing among thousands of white marble crosses on a bluff above Omaha Beach in Normandy is a round limestone chapel. Inside, a mosaic covers its 500-square-foot domed ceiling. This is the heart of the vast American Cemetery and Memorial created just outside Colleville-sur-Mer to honor those who died fighting on and beyond this shore to free France from Germany's clutches during WWII. They were part of the massive Allied invasion that began at dawn on 6 June 1944, now famously known as "D-Day," the largest amphibious assault in recorded history.

. . . . In the words of Leon Kroll (1884-1974), the artist who created it, this is a full round story "of war and peace."

MISC. NEWS/FEATURES

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



SENEGAL'S DOOR OF NO RETURN *The serenity of sunny Goree Island belies its haunting history*

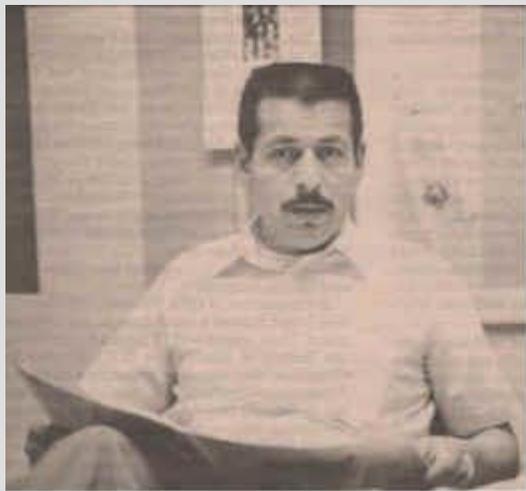
At the end of a dark stone corridor in Goree Island's House of Slaves lurks a rectangular hole filled with the blazing light of sun reflected from the Atlantic. It is known as the "Door of No Return." Through this portal, millions of blacks were wrenched from their homeland to build the civilizations of strangers in faraway worlds. Nearly 20 percent died before they could be delivered to markets in the Americas. . . .



CHANGE OF TUNE Shanghai

I met Kao Chih-lan at the 50-year-old Shanghai Music Conservatory--an institution whose fate and curriculum have been thrown around by China's political factions for the past 30 years. The conservatory is still emerging from 10 years of confusion and repression experienced during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. It was an era when the arts were totally restricted to 'promoting the revolution'; the Shanghai Philharmonic was allowed to play only one piece of music -- "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy" -- and Chinese opera consisted of a mere ten party-line productions.

"There was, for a time, no teaching at all in our conservatory--from 1966-1972. Followers of the 'gang of four' were overseeing us. No new students were enrolled, and the old students were told to carry banners that said music teaching should serve the proletariat. They were to slander professors as 'capitalist roaders,' and 'counter-revolutionary academic authorities.' They composed songs insulting some of our best professors. We couldn't teach. Each day we came to our offices to study Mao thought; actually a lot of that time was used to gossip, tell stories, and knit." Kao Chih-lan, professor, Shanghai Music Conservatory



PROMISES TO KEEP *Federal recognition and \$900,000 have brought self-help programs, but the Maliseets still have trouble shaking their "loser" image.*

Decades ago, the Temple Cinema on Main Street in Houlton showed cowboy and Indian movies every Saturday. Gene Kilpatrick was only a boy at the time, yet he noticed something strange at these showings: "Week after week the Indian people were sitting in the audience cheering like hell for the cowboys." Years later, after becoming head of the sociology department at Ricker College, he asked a local Maliseet Indian named Maynard Polchies why that was. Polchies' answer? "We're just like you or anyone else -- we get tired of cheering for losers."

Today, finally, the 458 members of the Houlton Band of Maliseets can cheer for themselves. . . .



KING COAL

Today William Stewart Blackburn is King Coal, champion of the New England Regional Barbecue Competition and creator of grill sauces that make mouths water so much they almost douse the fire. He runs a catering business in cozy, seaside Bremen, Maine, and he also sells his own line of eight sauces, including Death by Chocolate.

But the cheffy beginnings of this gourmet griller were humble at best: cooking over a campfire for fellow biology students. . . .