

Luddite Worker-Dec. 2009

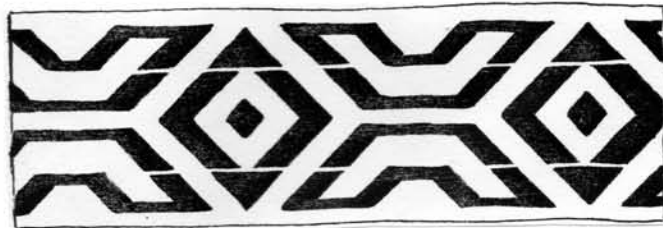
Luddite Cafés form in Pilsen & Rogers Park, Chicago

Luddite Cafés are happenings, not places. They are gatherings of people practicing pre-Industrial skills, and sharing them with those willing to learn, or enjoy the camaraderie of a craft circle. For more information on future events or to teach a workshop, please contact *the Luddite Worker!*

Upcoming Events:

Luddite Cafés:

Urban Wood Carving
Tuesday Dec. 15, 7PM
Biblioteca Popular
1921 S. Blue Island



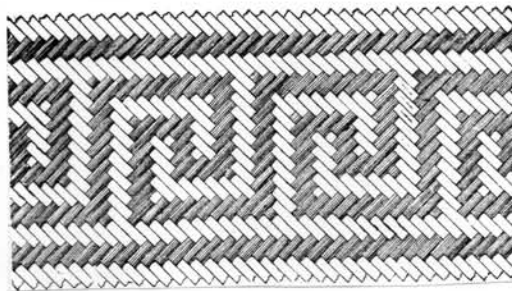
There is a remarkable variety of wood being thrown away all around you. You may have never thought about it and possibly have no idea of its potential. Now you can be introduced to woodcarving as a path of knowledge and door of perception. It's not "whittling", it's not cute, it's not folksy, it's not about kitschy little figurines, it's not about a way for Grandpa to kill time.

Card Weaving
Tuesday Jan. 5, 6:30PM
Mess Hall
6932 N. Glenwood Ave.
(West side of the El tracks)



Card Weaving is an Iron Age form of technology still practiced all over the world by running yarn through cards or tablets with holes punched in them, to create a work area to weave with. Some materials will be provided, but if you have yarn and/or dead decks of cards we can punch holes in to weave through, please bring them!

Urban Wood Carving
Tuesday Feb. 2, 6:30PM
Also at Mess Hall



Craft Sale Fund Raiser:

(Not explicitly Luddite)
Sunday Dec. 13, noon-4PM
St. Francis Catholic Worker
4652 N. Kenmore Ave.
Craft fair followed by Card Weaving or crafting of your choice, then Reading Amoeba at 7:30.

Really Really Free Market

Fri. Dec. 18, 4pm – 9pm
Locked Out
3951 W. Fullerton Ave.

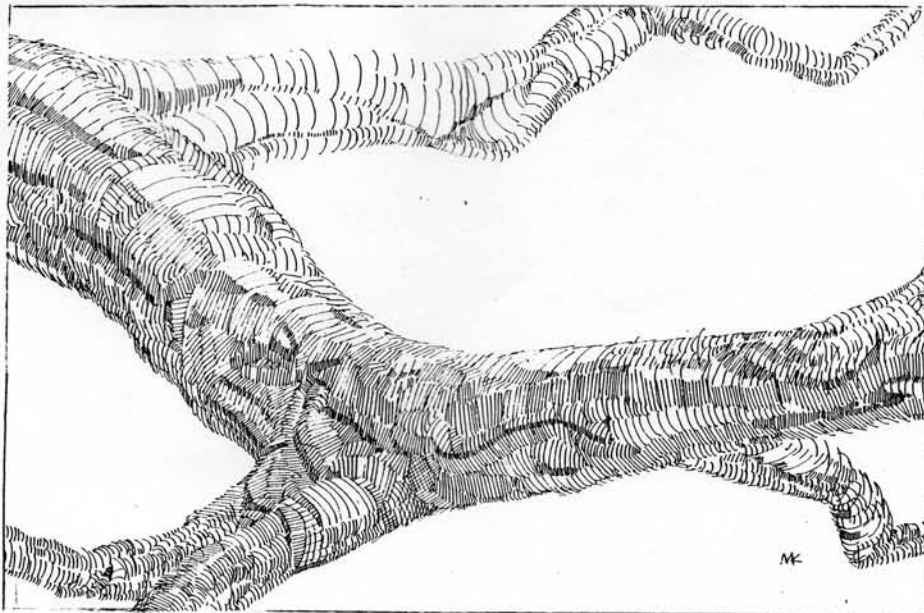


A Really Really Free Market is a space where goods, crafts, ideas, skills, and community can be shared without the restraints of money or commodification! So encourage friends and family bring clothes, books, food, skills, music, crafts, and generally anything they would like to share, trade or give away to our space.

A Luddite Manifesto by David Stein

What's a Luddite? Historically, the Luddites were English workers who rose up in armed rebellion against the factory system in the early 1800's. When they are remembered at all, they are mainly remembered as misguided people who opposed progress because they feared change. Today the word Luddite is most often used as a cuss word, an epithet to ridicule people who hold unconventional views about any or all modern technologies. If you have doubts about any new technology you risk being labeled a Luddite, which is understood to be a bad thing. Few people know much about the Luddites, but most know it's something they must furiously insist that they are not.

What might it mean to be a proud Luddite in our time? It doesn't mean being "against technology", since there is no such thing as a person who is against technology, any more than there is a person against speech or locomotion. You may be a Luddite if you insist on the right to choose among technologies and feel no need to discard an older and simpler technology just because a new one is being hyped. You may be a Luddite if you don't believe every problem can be solved with a gadget, especially if the problem was itself created by the previous generation of gadgets. You may be a Luddite if you agree with Gandhi that there is more to life than increasing its speed, or if you've noticed that the way to have more time is to have fewer time-saving devices. You may be a Luddite if you don't believe that being up on all the latest gadgets is the one thing on which there must be absolute conformity, if you don't believe that owning or being proficient with any one technology should be a requirement for membership in society, if you believe that the human diversity that ought to be celebrated goes beyond race, religion and sexual preference to include diverse approaches to technology. You may be a Luddite if you think human beings exist for a purpose other than "competing in the global economy", or if you look beyond the utopian claims of high-tech hype to see the profit motive behind them, or if you find it hard to believe that while paper comes from trees, computers magically spring into existence out of nothing and vanish into nothing when they are thrown away. You may be a Luddite if you believe ancient crafts and skills can be valid economic options, as well as a way of life, a path of knowledge and a way of declaring peace on nature and other humans.



Interview with Henry Rollins



I've been a huge fan of the music and writings of Henry Rollins for years. A strong sense of alienation from industrial society permeates his work; not only in the ways it effects him, but also in the ways it destroys others. I've read and re-read some of his books at different stages of my life, and they only become truer to me.

Recently I picked up a used copy of his 1987 book, "One From None" which I had previously read in a collection of his first five books, but couldn't remember that well. Nearly a third of the book was an interview with him done by Robert Fischer, and I was as impressed by his answers as I was the rest of the book itself, if not more.

By his second answer he was saying "For me, discipline is a survival mode," and such things that make his work some of my favorite. But he took it all much further when he went on to say, "the more independent and the less you have your hand in the machine, the better." The interview turns into a full scale slam on consumer culture, and how if you let it, it will consume you. I had written Rollins before, thanking him for the positive influence his work has had on my life. After reading "One From None" I wrote him again to see if I could interview him for this journal. He was On The Road and couldn't write at length, but he was able to answer a few questions for me here:

Alex Iwasa: *I've read before you were able to spend sometime on a Quaker camp, what was it like?*

Henry Rollins: *That was almost 40 years ago. It was a small camp in North Carolina. Family run. It was very good. We learned to take care of animals, take care of crops, etc. It was great for a city boy like me to have to deal with chickens, cows, snapping turtles, etc.*

AI: *In your interview with Fischer, you said, "The less you possess, the less possesses you," that's something Thoreau could have said. Do you still feel that way?*

Rollins: *It's Nietzsche. It is very true for me. For me, it works on all levels, from stuff to people, etc.*

AI: *Something else you said in the interview I think is extremely relevant right now with the economic crisis and climate change was "The problem in America is that people make big messes around them and they don't clean them up." I agree, do you maintain that?*

Rollins: *Sure, look at at everything from our foreign policy to the way we waste gasoline, water, food, plastic, etc. It's one of America's many ills.*

A Card-Weavers' Union?

If you would be interested in helping form a card weavers' organization committed to helping other weavers through training, sharing supplies, and finding outlets for products to be sold as fund raisers for groups of the organization's choice and the artists themselves, please get in touch via *the Luddite Worker!*

Whether the organization is a union, guild, cooperative or something else can be decided later. My personal preference would be a Socialist Industrial Union such as the newly re-organized Workers' International Industrial Union (WIIU), which you can look into further at www.wiiu.org.

The Luddite Worker
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-or-

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Special thanks:
the Lichen Lending
Library / Biblioteca
Popular, Mess Hall,
Sunday Soup for
help funding the Lud
dite Café, the Beehive
Collective for anti-©
art, Henry Rollins for
the e-mails & every
one else who has
helped with this!

