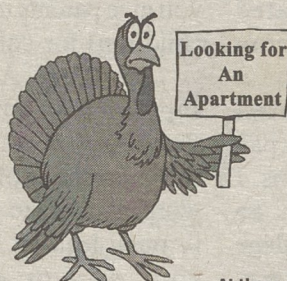


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## Central PA Author, Activist Egolf Bares Self in Fiction, Field

### Kriscinda Meadows

Tristan Egolf's first novel, *Lord of the Barnyard: Killing the Fatted Calf and Arming the Aware in the Cornbelt*, reminded many critics of such authors as William Faulkner, Thomas Pynchon and John Kennedy Toole. Whether or not they are right doesn't seem so important, once you sit down and read it. Egolf is not just an amalgamation of these author.

This debut made me excited about a new author. It is detail oriented and densely written, with characters painted colorfully with old, dirty brushes.

Its story follows the reluctant adventures of one John Kaltenbrunner, from his beginnings as a farmhand child prodigy to his endings as the mastermind behind the complete and utter social breakdown of an entire town...and, sadly, every pathetic and unfair thing that happens to him in between.

This book, though relatively unknown to popular audiences in America, is far reaching enough to have inspired an album called *Monument for John Kaltenbrunner* (*Barnyard's* foreign title) by an

obscure German band made up of two Bavarian social workers, *Buddy and the Huddle*.

After reading this book, I was surprised, and not surprised at all, to find that Egolf hailed from our very own backyard – Lancaster, PA. Or at least, that's where he makes his home now. He went on to write *Skirt and the Fiddle*, a tiny feather of a book in comparison to *Barnyard*. 186 pages shorter and actually using written dialogue, this story recounts the tale of Charlie Evans, violin virtuoso turned flophouse dweller. His unlikely team-up with fellow flop-houser Tinsel Greetz eventually leads them to the sewers, as highly profitable rat killers. Enter Louise, and we've got ourselves a love story.

Currently, Egolf is busy penning his third novel (*Korn Wolf*), about a young reporter who happens upon an Amish scare story known as "the Korn Wolf."

Egolf made headlines in the last few months as a member of "The Smoketown Six," a group of people arrested in June for staging a protest as President Bush's motorcade drove by. The protest involved Egolf and several others stripping down to thongs and reenacting the infamous Abu Ghraib naked Human Pyramid photo. Hilarious, harmless, yet poignant. Fortunately, charges were dropped on October 15<sup>th</sup>, the courts citing that the group's actions that day were protected under the Constitution's first amendment right to free speech.

To keep abreast of Egolf's writings and other undertakings, head over to Windmills Online: A Multi-Media Library Publication and Radio Station. (<http://www.windmillsonline.us/index.php>). Here, you can also read an excerpt from *Korn Wolf*. So much talent, and so close.

## Speaker Awes Audience with Harsh Truths about Hate Groups in Rural Pennsylvania

### Corey White

On Oct. 6, anti-Hate activist Floyd Cochran spoke to Mont Alto students about the prevalence of active hate groups in Pennsylvania and his experience as a former recruiter and spokesman for the Aryan Nation, a racist hate gang.

In his presentation, he began by informing the audience of the extraordinarily large number of racist coalitions that are active in Pennsylvania. The loud and doubtful responses from the group showed obvious shock to Cochran's claim that this state is fourth largest in the nation for active hate groups.

He showed a map of Pennsylvania littered with black dots, each representing the existence of an active hate group in that area. The groups he mentioned were the Aryan Nation, Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Confederates, Black Separatists and Christian Identity. It was surprising to see a greater number of hate groups near the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh where there are large minority populations. Even to see that there are four

active groups in Franklin County was a shock to some people who are now living in this area.

Cochran spoke about how he became involved with the Aryan Nation as a student. He said that while he was growing up in rural Pennsylvania, he was approached by Aryan Nation recruiters at his school who expressed interest in him. He said that he never had people show concern for his best interests the way the Aryan Nation did. Through his teen years, he became involved in the white supremacist activities that his new family had shown him. He eventually became associated with other white supremacist denominations such as the Ku Klux Klan and Christian Identity.

Cochran spoke on his tactics of recruitment of mostly white teens in high school and college for his organization. He used the Bible and God to get them interested. He said that he rallied through fear and hatred and captivated young people with stereotypes to join his organization.

In 1992, Cochran was at an Idaho compound for the white supremacist Hitler Youth Festival. At the festival, guards told him that his four-year old son had to be killed for having a cleft palate and thus being a "defect." Cochran began having doubts about what he was doing and realized that he didn't believe his thought process and teachings were right. He decided not to kill his son and end his involvement with the white supremacist coalition; he was given minutes to leave the compound.

Cochran told the audience that he went through a very long and difficult process to leave behind all of his negativity. He decided that he should do something positive to help himself and others, and counter the message of hate.

Students asked whether or not he had been threatened by white supremacists for deserting them. He gave personal accounts of being threatened via the internet, at his speeches, and at a garage sale. He said that it was scary to go through but it obviously didn't stop him.

August Kreis is the Aryan Nation's leader of Pennsylvania and was responsible for most of the threats to Cochran. He showed a news clip from a Harrisburg televised news station showing Kreis and his hateful perspective. On the news clip, Kreis revealed his plans for building an Aryan compound in Pennsylvania's Potter County. The news clip also shows Cochran speaking against white supremacy at colleges and high schools across Pennsylvania.

Near the end, Cochran suggested that we should all stand against hatred. He apologized to anyone whom his racism may have affected and he seemed very sincere as he was doing so.

There weren't many questions from the audience at the end of his presentation. I think that most people were in a slight bit of awe over the shocking information they received. I was. The few questions that were asked during the speech were thoroughly explained. It ran longer than most people expected but I think everyone was satisfied.