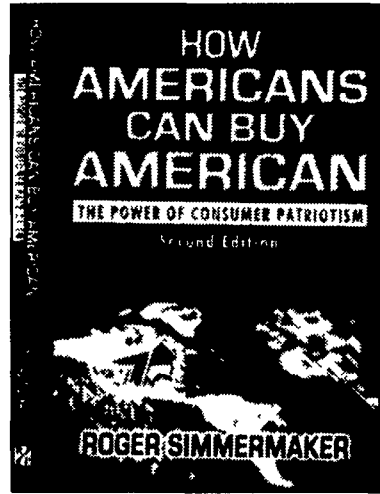




Books and magazines of interest to Lancaster Farming readers



ANDY ANDREWS  
Editor

**HOW AMERICANS CAN BUY AMERICAN: The Power of Consumer Patriotism, Second Edition, by Roger Simmermaker. Rivercross Publishing, 2002, 352 pp., \$24.95. ISBN 158141080-8**

In an ideal world, according to Roger Simmermaker's *HOW AMERICANS CAN BUY AMERICAN*, open trade policies should work: provided that other governments keep their agreements. Provided they open their own doors to our products. Provided they don't adopt protectionist attitudes themselves and close the doors to what America can ultimately produce better.

But what is fair about a foreign government that sets up shop in this country, reaps the rewards from our work-obsessed culture, but pays no taxes and doesn't contribute much of anything toward our own government?

That's the central focus of *HOW AMERICANS CAN BUY AMERICAN*.

Author Simmermaker casts doubt on some of the ideology embraced by politicians regarding "free trade." He quotes extensively from leaders of the past that, through their own experiences, reveal that trade works only one way: to benefit the other guy. Rarely can we benefit, since so many countries simply do not want to come to the trade table in a sincere way.

He criticizes China, which is reticent, to say the least, about providing a free trade alliance with the West. While initial reports show China could really use U.S. grain imports, in actuality, they have plenty of stockpiled grain. They can truly produce enough grain to feed their population (see page 298).

But China's leaders will readily welcome any company that is willing to provide labor for their people and produce benefits that simply remain one-sided, according to Simmermaker.

Again and again, Simmermaker points out the benefits that have accrued in the past from adopting a protectionist U.S. policy. He notes the strengths of buying American-made products from companies that are truly American (though most foreign carmakers have plants in this country, unfortunately the resulting profits stay comfortably away from the U.S.) The tax incentives for the car companies are appalling, noted Simmermaker — truly, the past was a better place, before foreign manufacturers entered. Wages were high and prosperity was everywhere.

Simmermaker noted that foreign-owned companies pay fewer

taxes to the U.S. government than comparable American-owned companies. The more we support American-owned companies, he writes, the stronger they will be financially and the less likely they will be to merge with or be taken over by foreign companies (page 302).

"When foreigners assume ownership of U.S. land and factories, they become our landlords and holders of the mortgage on our national treasury," writes Simmermaker. "They dissipate wealth instead of creating it since their profits return to foreign lands and the taxes are paid to foreign governments."

I was amazed at the many

phase in America where we will both live by the stock market and die by the stock market."

He makes the blunt statement: "Both our successful past of trade protection and our current system of an open U.S. market for foreign producers has demonstrated that, at least for the United States, protectionism equals prosperity and free trade equals failure."

On page 304, Simmermaker notes: "Foreign investors are already reaping more gains from their U.S. investments than Americans take home from foreign investments overseas. In the first nine months of 1999, foreign companies announced U.S. purchases of more than double the value of 1998's volume to \$256 billion, which is four times the volume for all of 1997. According to the latest data from the U.S. Commerce Department, of the \$282 billion of foreign investment in 1999, only 3 percent was used to establish new operations, while 97 percent was used to acquire existing U.S. businesses." (page 304)

It's hard not to dispute Simmermaker. He certainly makes you think.

**“Consumer optimism and consumption are being stimulated by the performance of the stock market, which also stimulates economic growth. It seems apparent we have reached a phase in America where we will both live by the stock market and die by the stock market.”**

— Roger Simmermaker  
**HOW AMERICANS CAN BUY AMERICAN**

solid examples provided by Simmermaker in the book. He even addresses farming. On page 297:

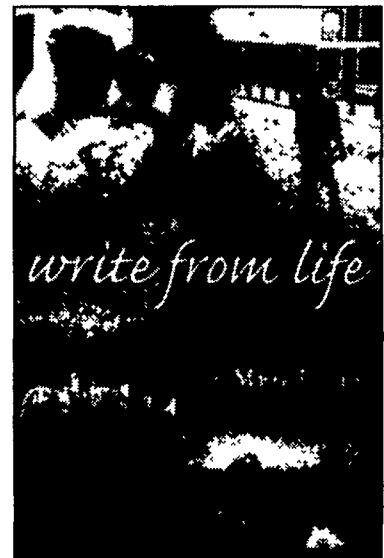
"Perhaps we could look at the plight of the U.S. farmer. At the heart of the uneasiness many Americans feel about the global economy is the farm crisis. Earlier I discussed the disconnect between rising productivity and rising wages, and the agriculture industry is no different. Although American farmers are continually more productive, higher living standards have not materialized. Each year it seems the government devises yet another bailout scheme to keep American's farmers farming. Still, foreclosures have skyrocketed. Financial lenders in North Dakota more than doubled the number of farms they foreclosed on for 1999 alone. Mediation services, which oversee disputes between farmers and their financial lenders, saw their cases more than double as well. The consequences are far-reaching."

Simmermaker points to the "Go Texan" commercials featuring Tommy Lee Jones as consumers are given the choice of Canadian beef from more than one million cattle that slaughterhouses buy in the U.S. each year. Brazil, he claims, is always "on the very of prying open the U.S. market. Yet U.S. ranchers are barred from selling their beef to Europe, as that continent exercises its sovereign right to refuse agriculture imports that are not free of growth hormones."

Is the growth hormone requirement merely an excuse to keep Europe's own protectionist policies in place?

America continues to depend heavily on foreign investment to keep the economy going, according to Simmermaker. Yet despite consumer confidence, which remains high, "consumer optimism and consumption are being stimulated by the performance of the stock market, which also stimulates economic growth. It seems apparent we have reached a

In addition, he provides many lists of products that note whether the company making the product is American or foreign-owned.



**WRITE FROM LIFE: Turning Your Personal Experiences Into Compelling Stories, by Meg Files. Writer's Digest Books, 2002, 244 pp., \$16.99. ISBN 1-58297-154-4**

Everyone has experiences to share. The writer's gift is the ability to use words to articulate those experiences.

But how does a writer articulate those experiences best? Ultimately, how does he or she go about converting experiences through the "slant" called fiction, according to Meg Files in *WRITE FROM LIFE*, or through a simple accounting that captures the atmosphere — a compelling one, if possible — in nonfiction, sometimes used by many columnists, even those in this newspaper?

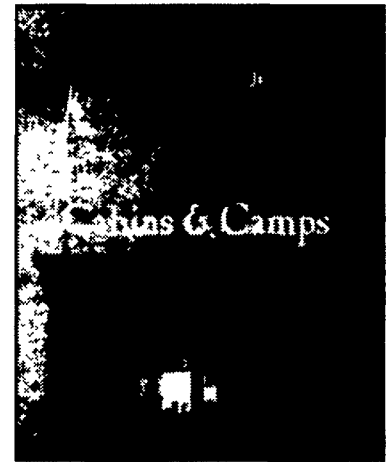
Files provides the basics of developing the writer's "voice," something that often takes years to develop. Though some people are helped by books (like this one) or workshops (though they can steal a writer's precious time away from the typewriter or com-

puter), everyone can learn from *WRITE FROM LIFE*.

Files, who has authored a novel called *MERIDIAN 144* and a collection of stories, *HOME IS THE HUNTER*, is also a published poet. Her articles have appeared in a variety of magazines. She has taught creative writing for more than 25 years at Colorado Mountain College, University of Maryland, and elsewhere. She teaches at Pima College in Tucson and directs the Pima Writers' Workshop.

Files provides a handyperson's view of how to overcome fears and to start writing. Importantly, she provides basic viewpoints: write from the heart. Dig into your inner beliefs about your experiences. Tell the story with control and authority. Look at your finished work carefully and don't ever be afraid to edit.

This is a book that columnists and correspondents can use to improve their work. This book reminds us to take a more critical look at what we write and learn to grow as a result.



**CABINS AND CAMPS, written and photographed by Ralph Kylloe. Gibbs Smith, 2002, 255 pp., \$60. ISBN 1-58685-135-7**

This is a big, beautiful book. Now, what does it tell us?

Well, if you had plenty of money, you can make your home look similar to the wonderful Roddy Lodge on page 132. I'd like to afford the intricate, rustic, handcrafted staircase with the railings, newel posts, and spindles created from bark-off cedar on page 56. Who wouldn't want the fun dining room of the 1930-style Adirondack lakeside home (page 29)?

The bookcase built by Brian Kelly for a 1920s lodge in the Adirondacks on page 8 certainly caught my eye.

What's so appealing is the wonderful, experienced eye to the photos brought by author Kylloe, who is trained as a professional photographer and an expert on rustic design. The preface sets the tone for an astonishing work of art in itself, and speaks about the sincerity Kylloe brings to the book.

"I bought my first serious piece of rustic furniture in 1978 while I was a doctoral student at Boston University," he writes. "My roommate at the time, Jon Ames, was in the antiques business. He brought home a gorgeous six-foot oval dining room table with massive log legs. It was signed Old Hickory Chair Company. I bought it from him for \$280, which was about my life savings at the time. A month later, he bought it back from me for \$400. At that moment, I knew there was something to the antiques business. It was the quickest \$120 I have ever made!"

This is a colorful, big, coffee-table book that decorates and enlightens in itself. Now, if I could come up with a way to afford to make my home look something like those homes featured...

## Farmer/Author David Kline To Speak At Sustainable Farming Conference

GENEVA, N.Y. — David and Elsie Kline operate a modestly-sized farm in Fredericksburg, Ohio.

There are few farms in the U.S. that attract more birds per square foot than the Klines'. This is intentional.

This 35-cow Jersey farm attracts birds and other forms of wildlife for a variety of reasons. One is that wildlife is never viewed as a threat on this farm. Another is Kline's insatiable appetite for observing the gifts of life that abound around him. As a result, David has honed a keen appreciation and understanding of nature.

Kline has shared his astute observations through countless articles, two books (*Great Possessions* and *Scratching the Woodchuck*), and numerous talks. Entwined among these various stories are rays of perception that reveal the rewards of a slower-paced life. This lifestyle supports not only families and caring communities, but a people comfortable with themselves.

Economically, this farm serves as a model that blends older traditional methods with newer technologies in a manner that is environmentally friendly and adequately profitable. Indeed, it would be a safe statement that many more modern farms would envy the margin of net return afforded by this model.

The average farm in Holmes County, Kline's home, is 122 acres and horse powered. According to Steven Stoll of Yale University, the mean household income from these farms exceeds the mean household income for the county by 26 percent. A typical observation by a visitor to Holmes County is "a sense of wellbeing".

David Kline will be the keynote speaker at the Low Input Sustainable Farming Conference on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2003 in Jordan Hall at Cornell's Geneva Experiment Station. Come share ideas about your farm with David and sixteen other successful small-scale farmers.

For a conference registration packet, call Bill Henning at (315) 536-5123. Deadline for registration is December 20. Cost is \$20 per person and \$10 for each additional family member. Space is limited.

The Low Input Sustainable Farming Conference is supported by a CCE Grant for Innovative Small Farm Education from Cornell's Small Farms Program.

Bill Henning is Small Farm Specialist with Cornell Cooperative Extension's NWN Team and ProDairy. For more information on Cornell's Small Farms Program, visit our web site at [HYPERLINK "http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu"](http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu)

