

Obit: On the Passing of my Good Friend Nick Consoletti

By E. H. Campbell

Amherst, MA, Oct. 9, 2013—I am deeply saddened to learn of the passing of my good friend Nick Consoletti, and I most sincerely apologize for not remarking on his death in June of 2012 until now.

Unfortunately I have been outside the loop for the past several years and did not know he had died until recently performing an internet search on his name. I sent him an e-mail sometime before his passing, but did not get a reply. But I feel it is my duty as a historian and a journalist to set the record straight about him from what I know about him.



Although he did eventually obtain a Ph.D., Nick was a profound autodidact whom, in his own words, “Bucky-ed” the system. And was ubiquitous around college campuses all over the United States including here in Amherst, but also in Portland, Eugene, Olympia, and Seattle—where I met him more than 27 years ago through our mutual, but separate, association with the R. Buckminster Institute, where I worked, when it was in Los Angeles in the mid-1980s.

He was a student of Dr. David Bohm, R. Buckminster Fuller, Rupert Sheldrake, John Hamaker and Don Weaver, Linus Pauling; spiritually of J. Krishnamurti—and was well known in Ojai, California. He was a musician, who played dulcimer, and guitar like a dulcimer—a street performer. He was a hitchhiker, but not a tramp. I hope it will not hurt his

feelings if I refer to him as chronically homeless, as I am.

He was an independent thinker, apolitical, a vegetarian who did not smoke or drink; a certain kind of health nut who avoided fluoride and uncooked

rice, who wanted to save the world and believed that technology was to provide all the answers to the dilemmas facing modern man.

He was a pacifist. He was a self-sacrificer who endured rain, wind and weather to meet the movers and shakers of the decidedly liberal-left-wing-save-the-planet-greener-grad movement—asking nothing from them except a free pass for the conference, and sometimes a ticket to see a rock band.

The last time I saw him in Seattle, some few years ago, he said he was impressed by Dweezil Zappa's "Zappa Does Zappa" Tour. He wasn't a hermit, was up on things, and generally pretty hip.

Most importantly, he was a completely honest man who took Buckminster Fuller's example of living a transparent life of integrity to heart and practiced what he preached.

He once chastised me for quoting Buckminster Fuller and not annotating to him, and for wearing my poverty "on my sleeve." He went into early retirement, but tried to get jobs—convinced that he was a victim of age discrimination.

I, having left the Buckminster Fuller movement behind for the philosophy of the Greeks and Romans many years ago, did not agree with him politically or philosophically—we were friends, and always kept a lively dialogue going.

65, in my opinion, is far too young to die, and it is truly a shame to have seen a man who dedicated every inch of his being to learning, knowing, and understanding—to philosophy—to effectively live and die on the streets while the big shot talking heads he perpetually followed, ignoring him, raked in the dough.

But as the immortal Socrates taught us: "A good man cannot be harmed." But more pertinently, Nick learned another Socratic truth: "Wisdom is nothing worth." His homelessness proved it.

Although I had not seen Nick for about three years, the news of his death left a hole in my life, and I cried.

I hope what the soothsayers say is correct, Nick, and you spend eternity conversing with the wisest of the Ancients—an honor you truly deserve. God bless you.

EHC / EHC
