MARCH 09 - SUMMARY – TAKE ME WITH YOU
BY BRAD NEWSHAM

The wonderful Phylliss did it again; she not only selected a captivating book, but also came armed with maps and post-book research to share with the group.

Four new people, Sue, Susan, Linda and Anna, joined us and they each added a lot to the discussion. We hope to see you at future meetings.

Even in the preface, Mr. Newsham (Brad) showed us that he was doing more than traveling around the world. While his selection of countries was based on places he had never been, staying within his budget ($25/day), non-western cultures and non-English speaking, he wonders if he was playing God by deciding to invite someone home for a visit. Our group wondered if this type of individual generosity leads to jealousy within the community where the lucky "winner" was from.

As Brad went from place to place, we began to understand how he picked his candidates and some of the dilemma's he faced. When he queried his final candidates, some blatantly asked for "goodies" while Tony, the eventual winner didn't ask for anything. (He had asked for some assistance to buy land, however when Brad was with him.)

General impressions – For those that had read and finished the book, it was well liked and appreciated. The book made us think, but it was not a trudge. The group commented that while the trip happened in 88-89, it still held up 20 years later. Many of us said he sounded like a great travel buddy, but most of us would have required more luxury than Brad. His descriptions of some areas (India in general and Calcutta and Mother Teresa's hospital in particular) where so accurate and evocative, that he turned many of the group off from ever wanted to go there.

Most readers really enjoyed his outlook and you felt you were there with him in many instances. The group listed words they felt described Brad and his travel style - adventurer, generous, wide-open (hippy tendencies), an interviewer, simple needs, a go-along, gregarious, a participant in life and humanitarian. At times we were amazed at his capacity to just sit in a park and strike up conversations with people. He wanted to really know them and he seemed to go about it in a way where he succeeded. With thought provoking questions such as "What is the best thing that has happened to you" and "What is the worst", he really got to know them on a deeper level. You may remember Tony's answers; the birth of his son and loosing his eye.

Our group was amazed at the openness of other cultures that shortly after meeting a traveler, they invite them to dine or stay at their homes. We discussed that this does not seem a common practice for most Americans. Most of the women in the group did not feel that they would ever be able to do this type of trip as single women. Even in groups, it did not appear that women were safe in certain countries such as Egypt. Not all of us agreed with his assessment of who was the good guy during the turmoil in Southern Africa. At times we could not believe his risky behavior with the van rides and eating street food. Through his stories and adventures, many of us who had been to some of the countries were able to relive our own trips which is always fun.

At the end of the meeting, and more amazing handouts, Phylliss gave us a map of the month long trip in a borrowed taxi cab that Tony and Brad took across the US in 2001. A second handout detailed the sites they saw from SFO across the country into NY and then down to DC. During Tony's month-long visit, extensive support from Brad (and his friends) provided Tony with a new prosthesis eye, thousands of dollars of dental work, and numerous other items including a new vehicle and a chain saw. After Tony's visit, Brad gave continuing assistance including money for a new guest house. Brad saw first-hand the results of this support when he visited Tony in 2004.

Every time the group asked for more details about Tony's trip or what has happened to Tony since he returned to the Philippines, it was said, perhaps that will be in Brad's next book.

FUTURE MEETINGS

	BOOK	**BY**	**LEAD BY**
Apr 13	*Jungle Child*	Kuegler	Keith
May 11	My Path Leads to Tibet	Tenberken	Willie
Jun 8	Arabian Sands	Thesinger	David
Jul 13	A River's Tale	Gargan	Helen **

A little bird told me that Helen might not be available to lead this book. If that is the case, we will be choosing books from July – December at our May meeting.

UPCOMING TRAVEL RELATED EVENTS

There is a new Travel Book Club starting in Lafayette – Next meeting is Wed, Mar 18. They will be discussing volunteer travel with Jane Stanfield. For more information, contact Bonnie Booth at hiker8051@comcast.net.

BREAKING NEWS - There will be a book event at the Tattered Cover – Colfax location, in the evening of Monday, May 18, 2009. Jane Stanfield will be reading from and discussing her book, *Mapping Your Volunteer Vacation.* Ask Jane for details.

Other than the Budget Treasurers Travel Club on Thursday, March 26 and the Changes in Latitude lectures every Tuesday, I don't have any other news.

If you come across any travel related events that will happen between now and the next meeting, please let me know and I will forward them to the group.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND INTEREST.

I look forward to seeing each of you at our next meeting.

Until then, Travel in Safety!

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