

A

The Life and Times of David "Hawkeye" Brown
By: Cathy Venn

I have known David "Haukeye" Brown for several years, and I thought I knew him pretty well. I thought he was a happy go lucky person without many cares in the world. I was wrong. He cares very deeply about a lot of things.

Before we started the interview I went over my list of questions with him. There were several questions that he refused to answer. The reason he gave for refusing really disturbed me. But as it turned out he answered the questions, and for the most part justified his reasons.

One of the questions he had refused to answer was how he felt about the Civil Rights Movement of the 60's. He said that he didn't want to talk about it because it was biased, and it appeared to make him angry to even think about it. I found out why when I asked him to tell me what it was like for his growing up in the 60's.

As a young person in the 60's Haukeye lived through his own hell because of racism and discrimination. He is half Native American (Cherokee), and half German. He feels let down by the system, and I think he feels let down by his own people. He talked about regulations and discipline, and he always talked about them in terms of children. He

has a five year old son named Axele, and he is determined to make Axele the best and the brightest. It's almost like Axele is his last hope, or chance to make a difference.

He told me a story that his Grandfather had told him when he was a child. When I listened to the story while we were doing the interview, it made me angry. When I listened to the tape later I could hear the sadness in Haukey's voice, and I was sad for him. The story was about a group of white settlers who were almost dead from a fever. The Indians found them and nursed them back to health. When the settlers were well, they killed most of the Indians because they had been taught that they were savages, and their fear was stronger than their gratitude. It's sad because things like that did happen.

Haukey doesn't believe the Indians are here to cross the Bering Strait. He believes that they are here forever. He also believes that the Indians were the first white men were coming because of all the Indians about the "Great Father" who showed in a vision that they had the white men who would come and that he would be the one. He believes that the white men should call the Indians from now on the Indian's perspective. I agree with

that. I don't agree with his opinion about the Indians not crossing the Berlin Strait, but to argue the point would be about as futile as trying to convince the Baptists that the world has been here longer than five thousand years. The bottom line is who am I to say he is wrong? He is proud of his heritage, and he wants to do something to improve the plight of the Native Americans. He just doesn't know what or how. Who knows, maybe one day he will be the Susan B. Anthony of the Martin Luther King of the Indian Movement. If not, I know Sue's will be well prepared to do it.

Another question that he refused to answer was how he felt about the Women's Movement. He refused on the grounds that it was ridiculous. I considered throwing him out of my house, but I decided to slip the question in on him and hear him out. He thinks it's ridiculous because it shouldn't be an issue. He said that for the most part women work harder than men, and do a better job. The only exception being when brute strength is required where their mental strength. He said he would like to have women fight for upper level positions, and pay them better than men. I told him this is true because he worked for two case companies for several years and he did do that.

Hankove told me about growing up in an orphanage where

the adults case first. He was a former addict and a
researcher. You had the doctor and were waiting on the
adults to finish eating, and the kids got what was left. I
will never forget the look on his face while he was telling
me about it. I could tell he had gone to bed hungry many
times. He told me how important it was to him to be able to
provide for his family. He said "it's shameful for a man
not to be able to provide for his family." He stressed the
importance of being able to buy a loaf of bread. I've never
lived that kind of life, but it was like I was there with
him when he was talking about it.

He talked about teaching kids what's real and what's
not real. He believes they should know what to expect from
the real world because they are going to have to live in
it. He said thinking, seeing, and having a free will are
important. He is teaching Axel to do those things. He
wants to do things for his children that nobody ever did
for him.

He told me about growing up in a clan environment. His
family still lives by the code of the "Hatfields and
McCoy's." Right now it is his responsibility to settle
family dispute. His word is the last word, and he says that
it's an awesome responsibility, and you have to make the

right decision even if you hurt people you love. You have to let people learn a lesson even if it doesn't seem to them to be the right thing to do. He said that clans always choose people ^{who} that have lived in the streets to make the decisions because they know what's going on. He said "it's an awesome responsibility and I kind of don't like it." He told me that his Aunt took over from his Grandfather, and now she has pushed it on to him. He does not want Axele to live that sort of life. He wants his son to have an education and do better for himself.

When I first started interviewing Haukeye I thought it was going to be a disaster. It didn't appear that we were discussing anything historical, but we were. He grew up, and still lives in a South that most people would like to think no longer exists. I believe it would do us all a lot of good to talk to people like Haukeye, and find out what's going on in our world.

Haukeye says that all of his feelings come from things that have happened in his life. He said that he has "seen some honest people, and it has helped him keep his faith"

I am glad I interviewed Haukeye. He told me about

things that I didn't know about, and I feel like I am a better person for having done this interview.

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*Add some historical context
- was he involved w/ Am. Indian Mt.?
etc*

David Brown
Born: 4/15/55
Etowah County, Alabama
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