

Unrealized expectations songwriter's inspiration

Joan Haines
Bozeman Chronicle

January 06, 1985

BOZEMAN (AP) — The contrast between expectations and reality in Montana fuels the songs of Bozeman's Greg Keeler.

"The most realistic-looking cowboys are in Montana to ski," Keeler observed. "The real cowboys in the state are the Native Americans."

Keeler writes and plays songs on his guitar to entertain — and sometimes instruct — his audience. He recently tape-recorded 13 of his songs for sale to benefit Earth First, an environmental organization.

One of his most requested songs is, "There Ain't No Such Thing as a Montana Cowboy," which includes these lyrics:

"I couldn't be cooler, I come from Missoula.

"And I rope and I chew and I ride.

"But I'm a heroin dealer and I drive a four-wheeler,

"With stereo speakers inside."

Another favorite is "Fossil-Fuel Cowboy." The first stanza goes:

"I'm proud to be a fossil-fuel cowboy,

"A diesel-burning, meat-consuming man.

"I ain't gotta have no brains, I'm at the top of the food chain,

"And the way I see it now, there ain't bound to be no change."

Keeler said sometimes people ask him why he puts Montana down.

"I say if I didn't love it, I wouldn't put it down," he said. "Sometimes you can either feel frustrated or make satirical fun of something."

Montana is not the target of all of his tunes, though. The title of one song is "Make Bucks, Get Rich, Be Better Than Everybody, Get Fat and Have a Heart Attack."

Keeler often entertains at fundraisers for environmental, arts, anti-nuclear and Democratic groups.

Keeler said Earth First decided to distribute the tape at the urging of poet Gary Snyder. Snyder has been called the "poet laureate" of Earth First.

"I met Snyder in 1977, and he recorded some of the songs I played for him," Keeler said.

Keeler said Snyder kept telling him he should "do something" with the tapes.

"I didn't want to get involved in the music business," Keeler said. "Everyone I know who has, has devoted their lives to it."

Keeler is able to devote only part of his life to writing and playing music. He teaches poetry, creative writing, introduction to literature and English composition full-time in the English department at Montana State University.

Unrealized expectations songwriter's inspiration

By JOAN HAINES
Bozeman Chronicle

BOZEMAN (AP) — The contrast between expectations and reality in Montana fuels the songs of Bozeman's Greg Keeler.

"The most realistic-looking cowboys are in Montana to ski," Keeler observed. "The real cowboys in the state are the Native Americans."

Keeler writes and plays songs on his guitar to entertain — and sometimes instruct — his audience. He recently tape-recorded 13 of his songs for sale to benefit Earth First, an environmental organization.

One of his most requested songs is, "There Ain't No Such Thing as a Montana Cowboy," which includes these lyrics:

"I couldn't be cooler, I come from Missoula,
"And I rope and I chew and I ride.

"But I'm a heroin dealer and I drive a four-wheeler,

"With stereo speakers inside."

Another favorite is "Fossil-Fuel Cowboy." The first stanza goes:

"I'm proud to be a fossil-fuel cowboy,

"A diesel-burning, meat-consuming man.

"I ain't gotta have no brains, I'm at the top of the food chain,

"And the way I see it now, there ain't bound to be no change."

Keeler said sometimes people ask him why he puts Montana down.

"I say if I didn't love it, I wouldn't put it down," he said. "Sometimes you can either feel frustrated or make satirical fun of something."

Montana is not the target of all of his tunes, though. The title of one song is "Make Bucks, Get Rich, Be Better Than Everybody, Get Fat and Have a Heart Attack."

Keeler often entertains at fundraisers for environmental, arts, anti-nuclear and Democratic groups.

Keeler said Earth First decided to distribute the tape at the urging of poet Gary Snyder. Snyder has been called the "poet laureate" of Earth First.

"I met Snyder in 1977, and he recorded some of the songs I played for him," Keeler said.

Keeler said Snyder kept telling him he should "do something" with the tapes.

"I didn't want to get involved in the music business," Keeler said. "Everyone I know who has, has devoted their lives to it."

Keeler is able to devote only part of his life to writing and playing music. He teaches poetry, creative writing, introduction to literature and English composition full-time in the English department at Montana State University.

Sour Gra

Presented to



The Ted K Archive

Joan Haines
Bozeman Chronicle
Unrealized expectations songwriter's inspiration
January 06, 1985

The Independent-Record (Helena, Montana), January 06, 1985, Page 22.
<www.newspapers.com/article/the-independent-record/189101648>

www.thetedkarchive.com