

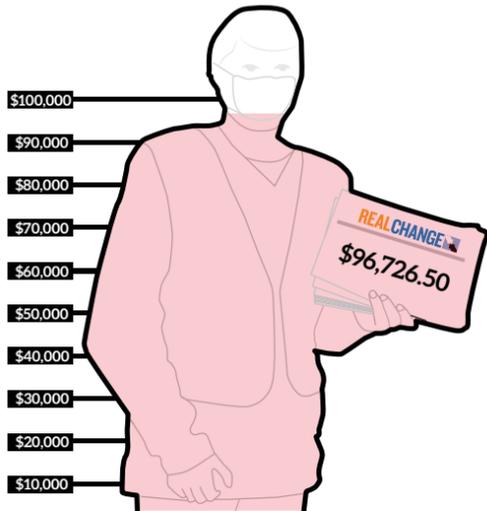
**\$2 CASH or VENMO**



# REAL CHANGE

JULY 1 - 7, 2020 ■ VOLUME 27 NUMBER 27 ■ REALCHANGENEWS.ORG

YOUR VENDOR BUYS THIS PAPER FOR 60¢ AND KEEPS ALL THE PROCEEDS. PLEASE PURCHASE FROM VENDORS WITH LAVENDER 2020 BADGES.



## SPRING FUND DRIVE

See page 10.

## A SUPREME COURT WIN FOR LGBTQ

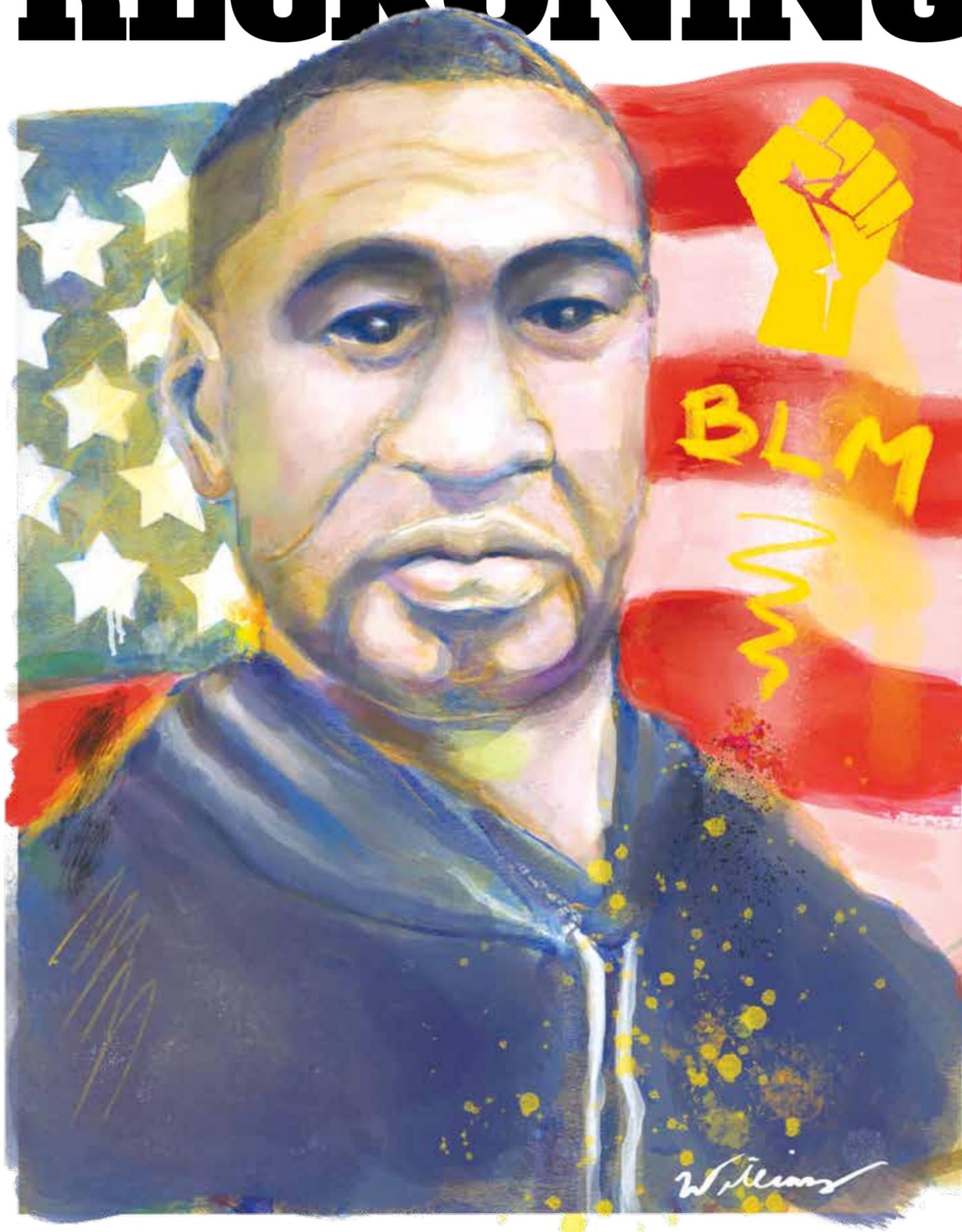
Justice Neil Gorsuch falls in line with his liberal colleagues for LGBTQ victory, **p.3**



## THEIR REBELLION SINGS

Stephanie Anne Johnson's music speaks to faith and protest, **p.4**

# AMERICAN RECKONING



As many in our country celebrate Independence Day, a groundswell of Americans are considering systemic racism, reparations and the killing of George Floyd, **p.5**

Real Change exists to provide opportunity and a voice for low-income and homeless people while taking action for economic, social and racial justice.

Real Change offices  
219 First Ave. S., Suite 220  
Seattle, WA 98104  
206.441.3247, www.realchangenews.org

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Yolanda Altamirano (President), Malou Chávez, Shelly Cohen, Matthew Hayashi, Hannah Hunthausen, Pamela Kliment, Jim Lauinger, Maria Elena Ramirez, Mary Riski

**EDITORIAL STAFF**

Staff Reporter Ashley Archibald  
Editor Lee Nacozy  
Features Reporter Kamna Shastri  
Art Director Jon Williams

**REAL CHANGE STAFF**

Circulation Specialist Wes Browning  
Organizer Evelyn Chow  
Volunteer Manager Katie Comboy  
Managing Director Shelley Dooley  
Communications and Development Associate Alexis Estrada  
Founding Director Timothy Harris  
Field Organizer Neal Lampi  
Vendor Program Manager Rebecca Marriott  
Lead Organizer Tiffani McCoy  
Vendor Case Manager Ainsley Meyer  
Office Manager Ari Shirazi  
Development Director Camilla Walter

**VOLUNTEERS**

Editorial Committee Susan Storer Clark, Laura Ditsch, Willie Jones, James Jenkins, Dagmar Matheny, Paige Owens, Tiron Rowe

Contributing Writers Rabbi Olivier BenHaim, Hanna Brooks Olsen, Wes Browning, John Helmiere, Michelle Galluzzo, Dave Gamrath, Kelly Knickerbocker, Joe Martin, Patrick “Mac” McIntyre, Jill Mullins, Oscar Rosales Castaneda, Susan Storer Clark, Megan Wildhood, Mike Wold

Photographers and Artists Matthew S. Browning, Sam Day, Jeffrey Few, Valerie Franc, Susan Fried, Seth Goodkind, Derek Gundy, Lisa Hagen Glynn, Lara Kaminoff, Ted Mase, Dave Parish, Wes Sauer, Katie Wheeler, Mark White

Copy Editors Pamela Bradburn, Mason Duke, Merry Nye, Morgan Wegner

Real Change Volunteers Yolanda Altamirano, Cathie Andersen, Carla Blaschka, Maridee Bonadea, Pamela Bradburn, Chris Burnside, Cathy Clemens, Jim Freier, Candace Gallerani, Michelle Galluzzo, Anne Jaworski, Carlo Jones, Kevin Jones, Ron Kaplan, Jesse Kleinman, Pamela Kliment, Daniel Kramer, Joe Martin, Dagmar Matheny, John Maynard, Patrick McIntyre, Juan Montes, Carl Nakajima, Eileen Nicol, Deb Otto, Maria Elena Ramirez, Merril Jo Seil, Lawrence Soriano, Susan Storer Clark, Jeremy Tarpey, Moriah Vazquez, Jed Walsh, Mike Wold

The Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Real Change is a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers.

**REAL CHANGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA**



@RealChangeNews



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Have something to say? Real Change accepts letters to the editor. Send them to editor@realchangenews.org or visit realchangenews.org and click “Write the Editor.”



**ON THE COVER**

Surrounding U.S. Independence Day in the shadow of the killing of George Floyd, Americans must reckon with our history of systemic, racist injustices. Truth commissions and reparations programs have brought peace to conflicts throughout the world. Do you hear this, America? See the story on page 5. Illustration by Jon Williams.

**The problem with saying ‘All Lives Matter’**

The racist events of the past few weeks, days or months have highlighted to the whole world the day-to-day life difficulties we fear as Black people in America. We also know this is a very difficult time to be a police officer, as not all officers are racists or accomplices of racism. While I am not the type of person to engage in such conversation easily, I decided that I cannot afford to be silent.

We know that there have been attacks towards police officers as a response to the unrest. While we are protesting police systems that let corrupt and racist cops continue to work without accountability or prosecution, we all know that behind the badge are other humans, just like us, who also don’t deserve to have their lives put in harm’s way.

Nevertheless, the anger and rioting are a direct response to centuries of racial abuse that our people have had to endure — and continue to be subjected to, much

of which has been by the police. As Dr. King said:

“[A] riot is the language of the unheard. And what is it America has failed to hear? ... It has failed to hear that the promises of freedom and justice have not been met. And it has failed to hear that large segments of white society are more concerned about tranquility and the status quo than about justice and humanity.”

I am not condoning violence or saying that we should go out and burn our cities. Such acts are predictable results of built-in frustration when peaceful protests, over many years, have brought little or no results.

This movement is not about trying to hurt police officers; it is about trying to get our message heard to make real change. While we know that all lives matter, it hurts deeply to see that when we are at the doorstep of making change toward respect and dignity for Black people, “All

Lives” and “Blue Lives” matter statements take air out of the movement. We must all believe in, and work for, mutual respect of all races. In this context, “Black Lives Matter” is a way of saying that Black lives matter as much as any others. The reality of Black lives is quite different with white and blue lives. If you truly support the movement, please stand with us to acknowledge that Black Lives Matter.

I know there will be people who disagree with me and I am willing to accept that. I just ask that you reach out to me or others in my community and have an open and respectful conversation. There is a lot we all can learn from each other. ■

— *Moussa K. Gloyd*

*I am a lifelong Seattleite and currently a structural engineer with a local engineering firm.*

**The never-ending resilience that is required to be Black in America**

By **NAKEESA FRAZIER-JENNINGS**  
*South Seattle Emerald*



Early on the morning of Monday, May 25, my husband and I got out of bed while the sky was still dark and drove to the beach. We are both fans of a good day trip, but due to the recent recommendations for the people in our state to stay in and stay safe from the coronavirus, we had not taken one in quite a while. My favorite form of exercise is walking, and I prefer to do it outside while enjoying fresh air and the many beautiful sights to see and experience throughout the area that I call home: the Pacific Northwest. I have countless pictures of the beautiful scenery and look at them repeatedly because they bring me so much joy. However, with so many parks and trails being closed as of late, exercising for the most part has had to be done inside of my house. So, sensing that I needed an outing of some kind, my husband asked: “Do you want to get up at 2 a.m. one day during the Memorial Day weekend and drive to the beach to watch the sunrise?” He was not even finished with his sentence before I yelled out a resounding “Yes!”

My husband and I are two of the extremely fortunate people who still have our jobs during the unprecedented rate of unemployment in this country and for this we are grateful. A few weeks before our drive to the beach, I’d suggested that we take vacation time from our jobs to just have some time to relax and recharge because the stress of this very unsettling time in our country and in the rest of the world was definitely taking its toll on us. The Memorial Day weekend seemed like the perfect opportunity to get some extended time away from our regular routine so we both requested the day after Memorial Day as vacation time away from work. My plan was for us to nap a lot, watch movies and eat some of our favorite meals since we still had to stay home however, my husband’s idea of watching the sun come up while at the beach sounded like a perfect plan.

So, after just a couple of hours in the car we arrived at the Pacific Ocean. As the sun rose and the waves showed their always amazing power and beauty, tears of happi-

ness instantly sprung to my eyes. What was even better was that there were no other people on the beach that we could see other than one person who was far off in the distance who looked to be walking their dog. For several moments, I stood near our car and just breathed in and out deeply, savoring this very precious time. After months of worrying and being on heightened alert trying to navigate what and how a global pandemic could affect my husband, myself and our loved ones, those moments on the beach were like ones I’d had many times before but I can’t ever remember feeling like I needed them as much as I did on that day, at that time.

What I imagine that we, all humans, had been experiencing since the novel coronavirus began to spread across the world was the stress of not knowing what to expect next as things continued to progress at such a rapid rate. In my community, the Black community, there were many reports about how a disproportionate amount of deaths from coronavirus were taking its toll on us. This did not surprise me as I am used to all manner of health disparities affecting the Black community disproportionately, however, this time scared me much more than ever before. My heart and my mind were both filled with love for and thoughts of all the Black elders, all the Black people who have underlying health conditions and all of the Black people who did not have access to adequate healthcare or even worse, those who would undoubtedly receive less than adequate healthcare due to the color of their skin which could lead to disastrous results. To say that my levels of fear and anxiety were at an all-time high would be an understatement. Besides all the Black people outside of my household that I worried about, I was concerned about how or worse yet when this pandemic would affect myself, my husband or both of us. Having had these thoughts for months was all the more reason why our short beach excursion was such a welcome break for me.

My husband and I spent a very short time in our car at the beach that day and just moments standing outside near the water before we took the drive back home. We both felt refreshed, but we still crashed on the couch shortly after we got home while it was still morning. The rest of the day was pretty uneventful, but little did we know that in the days and weeks to come, our lives as Black people in America would be impacted in ways that I could personally never have imagined.

Quickly, the news media shifted its focus from all-day reporting about the coronavirus to reports about the death of another unarmed Black man, George Floyd, who had died in police custody, and it was as if our viewing of the sunrise at the beach was nothing more than just a dream because we were instantly back to our reality, which is like a living nightmare. For my part, I was still silently grieving the recent deaths of other unarmed Black people whose stories had been shared between the news segments that were primarily dedicated to the coronavirus pandemic. Honestly, I had been carrying in my heart and in my mind the deaths of all of the unarmed Black women, men and children I’d heard about on national news platforms for the better part of a decade. So, though the recent deaths were not new news, they were each just as tragic, heart-wrenching and fear-inducing as the ones that came before them. In fact, my life, to a large extent, has had the killings of unarmed Black people as a constant part of it for several decades. Miraculously, I have not lost someone close to me in this way, but that does not mean that this normal part of Black life in America has not impacted me greatly.

One of my earliest memories of becoming aware and then instantly shaken to my core about how easily an unarmed Black person’s life could be taken without there being any consequences for their murder was when I was still in school. I think I was in the eighth grade, and my teacher showed us a film about Emmet Till. The sight of his severely mangled and bloated face and body while he lay in his open casket spoke undeniably

See **EMERALD** Continued on Page 11



Wikimedia photo

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote the majority opinion in a case that granted long-awaited firing protections for LGBTQ people.

**Win for LGBTQ people, thanks to the Civil Rights Act and three champions**

By **ASHLEY ARCHIBALD**  
*Staff Reporter*

“Held: An employer who fires an individual merely for being gay or transgender violates Title VII.”

The words, written by conservative Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, sent shockwaves throughout the LGBTQ+ community in mid-June.

The line, followed by Gorsuch’s opinion and his conservative colleagues’ dissents, meant that after years of court battles, LGBTQ people throughout the nation could not be fired for being themselves.

In the following weeks, the court would partially save a program that protects young people brought to the U.S. as small children from deportation. It would deny arguments that were in favor of allowing asylum seekers to request a hearing before a judge if their claim is rejected. It was called on by the Trump administration to eviscerate the Affordable Care Act in the middle of a pandemic.

But, on June 15, advocates would find a nearly complete victory, with six of the nine justices ruling in favor of nationwide LGBTQ workplace protections.

Elayne Wylie, co-director of the Gender Justice League, was relieved.

“Not having to be scared,” Wylie said. “That is the most notable thing.”

The opinion hooks on Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which makes it illegal “to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.”

It is a far-reaching law that courts have said forbids “sex stereotyping” as a basis for discrimination in the workplace and makes sexual harassment a form of discrimination, as well. But the three cases that the opinion covers were different — they claimed that being fired for one’s sexual orientation or gender identity was also a form of sex discrimination.

The cases at question involved three people: Gerald Bostock, an award-winning child welfare advocate in Georgia; Donald Zarda, a skydiving instructor in New York; and Aimee Stephens, who worked at a funeral home in Michigan.

Bostock was fired from his role at the county after joining a gay recreational softball league. Zarda lost his job after assuring a female student that he was gay. Stephens’ job as a funeral director was terminated when she disclosed she would “live and work full-time as a woman” after working and presenting herself at the funeral home as a man.

“What this litigation is about is, ‘What does “sex” mean?’” said Joshua Treybig, president of the QLaw Association of Washington, the state’s LGBT bar association.

Many statutes include the word “sex” but do not define the term, leaving the door open to interpretation. In modern times, “sex” has been defined as a biological term, whereas “gender” refers to a social construct that one can choose to express in any number of ways.

It was evident that each of these people were only fired for their sexual orientation and gender identity, the justices decided, which are protected under Title VII, regardless of its drafters intent for the word “sex.”

“[T]he limits of the drafters’ imagination supply no reason to ignore the law’s demands,” the opinion reads. “When the express terms of a statute give us one answer and extratextual considerations suggest another, it’s no contest. Only the written word is the law, and all persons are entitled to its benefit.”

Justices Brett Kavanaugh, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito disagreed.

In Kavanaugh’s dissent, he argued that Congress passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and only Congress can change it. He pointed to a handful of legislative efforts to expand protections around sexual orientation that ultimately failed. Judges are meant to interpret the law, not rewrite it, Kavanaugh wrote.

Alito and Thomas, in the leading dissent, disputed that the court’s majority was merely enforcing the statute, saying that was “preposterous” because it would have been “hard to find” someone who thought “sex” included “sexual orientation” — much less “gender identity,” which the justices assert was “essentially unknown at the time.”

The majority decision confers new protections for LGBTQ people in roughly half of the United States that did not have existing protections. Washington state already provides protections based on sexual identity.

One tragedy associated with the case is that two of the plaintiffs — Stephens and Zarda — died before they could hear the verdict in the cases that they spent years fighting in courts, Treybig said.

Their sacrifice led to a civil rights victory, Wylie said.

“The language they wrote has an impact across the LGBTQ spectrum,” she said. ■



**COVID bites back**

Cases of the coronavirus have soared as some states relax stay-at-home rules, and the federal health officials say that known infections may only be the tip of the iceberg.

Positive tests hit a new high in the last week of June, reaching nearly 40,000 in a single day. The increases were concentrated in states in the south and west of the country. Although new cases are being reported, the death rate has fallen.

In King County, a persistent decline in cases beginning the week of the official “stay home, stay healthy” order from the governor seemed to level out and even increase slightly as it enters “phase 2.”

Phase 2 of Washington’s reopening plan allows more businesses open, some at limited capacity. It also allows indoor religious services, as long as they are at 25 percent capacity or 200 people, whichever is less. Choirs will not be able to perform, and everyone must wear masks.

Some of the largest individual outbreaks in the nation have occurred in churches.

Gov. Jay Inslee signed an order requiring that as of Friday, June 26, Washingtonians must wear masks in public.

New reports in recent weeks have shown masks can be very effective in reducing the spread of the coronavirus, despite early advice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that masks were unnecessary.

The CDC has since recommended that people use masks.

Inslee’s order received pushback. At least two sheriffs objected to the ban in conversations with local media, and Inslee was met by protesters on a trip to Spokane.

State and local governments set their own coronavirus policies and have been doing so in the absence of clear messaging from the federal government and the White House.

At a rally, President Donald Trump told attendees that he’d ordered a reduction in coronavirus testing because the rising numbers make the U.S. look bad.

He doubled down with reporters peppering him with questions as he crossed the White House lawn. Then, in a town hall interview with Sean Hannity, Trump reversed course and said he was being sarcastic.

Federal health officials say that estimates around the number of coronavirus cases in the country may be far too low.

According to the Washington Post, CDC Director Robert Redfield told reporters that as many as 24 million people in the U.S. may have been infected with coronavirus.

That figure is 10 times the current number of confirmed positive cases. ■

— *Ashley Archibald*

# 'MY REBELLION IS IN SONG'

Stephanie Anne Johnson reflects on music, faith and protest

By **KAMNA SHASTRI**  
Staff Reporter

Looking around the stage and into the audience at the Neptune Theatre in 2018, Stephanie Anne Johnson was nervous. This performance was in honor of the prolific musician Aretha Franklin who had recently passed away. Johnson was about to perform "The Weight" in Franklin's signature style. They had spent months training to bring the style and capacity of Franklin's voice into their own singing. Johnson had not eaten all day, maybe had one drink and had planned a costume change, arranging to throw off their coat much the same way Franklin was known to do.

As soon as Johnson began to sing, they blacked out. Watching the video now, Johnson's full, passionate and effortless rendering can send pinpricks up your arms. But for Johnson, it was an out-of-body experience.

"I remember coming back to myself when the song was over and looking out into the crowd and seeing the little flecks of particle dust in the air coming in and out of the shafts of light from the spotlight. And I could see the atoms splitting in the air and I could feel the energy." It was a spiritual moment, one Johnson assumed only they had been privy to. But when a review of the performance was published — the writer had said the same. That is when Johnson knew there was something in their music that allowed for a sacred bond with the audience.

## A vessel for music

Born and raised in Tacoma, Johnson started vocal lessons and playing guitar at age 14. They were a choral singer through high school and college, and then worked on a cruise ship singing four hours a day in front of an audience. This is where Johnson honed their finesse for connecting with audiences and listeners. From there, Johnson went to the lounge scene, continuing to perform regularly, and finally emerged in the top 20 on the 2013 season of "The Voice."

Though they saw the full breadth of the music world, the sensational performances of Hollywood and California did not quite appeal to them. After The Voice, Johnson came back to the Pacific Northwest and has been continuing to immerse themselves in the soulful music scene of the Puget Sound, crediting the Seattle music scene with being a huge support to getting established in the area.

Johnson has an amazing range, being able to render soft, guitar laden love songs as well as strong, effortless bluesy vocals. Johnson's childhood was filled with an amalgamation of influences, from early Aerosmith, to the music of the '70s and her grandmother's favorite gospels sung by Mahalia Jackson on Sundays.

Love — of family, of a lover, of friends and of community — is central to Johnson's songwriting and grounding. Johnson not only pens lyrics about the experiences of being in a relationship, but conjures a spiritual energy of connection to the past and to the present when they sing.

"I have been loved by so many people and some of those people have passed on, you know, for better or for worse," John-



Photo courtesy of Stephanie Anne Johnson

**Stephanie Anne Johnson views herself as a vessel for music. Singing and sharing songs on the internet has been Johnson's solace and strength during both a global pandemic and intense nationwide protests against police brutality.**

son said. "I imagined that when I sing, I commune with them and we're able to have time together, even though our physical time together has passed."

When Johnson sang in church, they would look up to the ceiling and think of loved ones who had passed to help keep focus. Soon however, Johnson started to do the same thing outside of church as well and it made a difference. This is exactly what led to the atom-splitting performance of "The Weight."

In these moments of musical experience, Johnson becomes a kind of vessel for an already present energy. "I am a thing that energy can float through. If I'm aware and notice I'll be able to tell when the energy flowing through is divine and then I can be grateful for it. And so many times I was in a space for music and the spirit was also there."

It is a deeply personal experience for Johnson, and writing cannot do justice to something so ethereal. When Johnson shares the stage with other musicians, co-creation continues to channel that musical — sometimes divine — energy. Recently, Johnson and their band — the Hidogs — were rehearsing a new song called "don't stop calling my name," which gives music to the feeling of having one's name called by someone who loves them. As Johnson sang, the emotion overtook and by the third verse, they were crying. "I turned around and all three of these grown men were crying too. We had all reached an emotional threshold and we had done it together," Johnson said.

One lesson Johnson has gathered through life — and through musical process — is to find joy in sadness and grief as well. The experience of loss, Johnson said, begins in childhood and can rob one of safety, warmth and connection. "I think defining human things is this general feeling of loss. Honestly, I wish we were more honest about it," Johnson said. "There are places where we could be with each other and talk about loss. Some loss is great, and some loss is small. But all loss is loss."

Johnson has poured these sentiments into the music they write. For example,

when the pandemic derailed rehearsals, in-person gigs, international trips, and sources of income, Johnson took out their frustration and sadness in a song called "Flying Cars."

"I was led to believe in the early '90s that when we got to the future, which is now, we would have better ...". Instead, Johnson said the future has been hijacked by a fascist regime and a national insurrection. "I'm mad and I'm shaking my fist at the sky. And instead of demanding peace and justice, like a normal person, like a regular American consumer, I'm demanding my flying car!"

The song itself allows for a chuckle or a laugh even as it commemorates the pain and mourning of what the COVID-19 pandemic has wrought upon the working class. In this way, Johnson is clear that the artist's role is to respond to what is happening around the world and offer a shift. "We're artists, we're supposed to take the paradigm, flip it and make something else beautiful," they said.

## Equity in music

Johnson's musical education stems from public schools, where they could access quality teachers in the '90s. That is unheard of now, as education and arts program budgets are slashed year after year. Johnson ties this lack of access to music in schools back to the current uprising against police brutality and the police system at large.

"The money started leaving education and going to police unions and going to funding for instruments of terror," Johnson said. But what if instead of instruments of terror out on the streets, instruments of music were out on the sidewalk? "I guarantee maybe we would all feel a little bit, a little bit weirder if — in the neighborhood were trying to figure out trombones in the middle of the street. I would rather see that than have to deal with police that have riot gear."

Though they do not have children of their own, Johnson is passionate about working with young people through musical empowerment, a drive inspired by

their own access to music education in public school. "I personally feel a responsibility to the children of my city because I'm part of their village. And it takes this village to raise these children."

Johnson worked with the School of Arts in Tacoma, and later with Rain City Rock Camp with femme-presenting youth to write songs and create music. "It's really wonderful to be in a community of like-minded femmes, gender nonconforming people, who really love music and love young people and love themselves." Johnson has done everything from teaching stage presence and performing technique to serving up lunch to the youth.

While many people grapple with systemic inequities and difficult conversations around dismantling white supremacy and racism ingrained in their organizations, Johnson says they are glad to see that Rain City Rock Camp and other organizations are open and willing to do the self-reflection that would allow for more communities of color to be involved in all levels of the organization. It is a lot of "old fashioned racism" as Johnson says, but also the way personality, ego and pride get tangled up in the arts world.

"If we remain teachable and coachable, no matter at what level we are, I think that we're on better footing to deal with each other," Johnson said. Organizations that are majority white, they said, need to actively seek out and "court" artists of color with the respect and value that is unconsciously granted to white artists.

Johnson, and many others in both the arts and nonprofit worlds, have said the Pacific Northwest has a culture of subdued, covert racism that gets perpetuated through a passive aggressive professional and regional culture. Moving past that means reaching beyond the comfortable into new territory and honest conversation. That means people are going to be uncomfortable.

But Johnson offers an alternative paradigm: "you personally are more important to me than my discomfort. So I'm willing to sit here with this discomfort because it means I get to be with you." Valuing the relationship is integral to empowering and connecting artists and it can be hard for institutional leadership, but Johnson believes it's possible to reach beyond that.

## Singing protest

As protesters have taken to the streets to call for demands that demilitarize and defund the police, invest in communities and truly protect Black lives, Johnson wants to emphasize that there are so many ways to protest. They point to their network, to friends who are teaching, offering free therapy services, gathering clothes and other resources to distribute to people in need. Johnson's method however is in melody and rhythm as they pour composition after composition online.

"The adversary — the fascist element — you know, the folks that are out here raining misery on other folks, what they would prefer is that I'd be miserable and silent," Johnson said.

Compassion is central to Johnson's approach to the current movement and they encourage everyone to ask how they

**JOHNSON** Continued on Page 12

# To fight US racism, research prescribes a nationwide healing process

By **BENJAMIN APPEL**  
and **CYANNE E. LOYLE**  
The Conversation

As the U.S. celebrates white independence July 4, the country is paying renewed attention to the founders, and how their legacy of slavery is linked to systemic racism.

Calls for reform to policing across the nation can help to directly reduce police violence against civilians but don't address the centuries-old underlying problems in American society. Our research indicates that the country is not likely to escape its historic cycles of violence and racial oppression without addressing this painful and troubled history.

Sparked by the killing of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police, protests have emerged across the United States demanding police and criminal justice reform. Reform efforts abound — including Minneapolis city councilors declaring they will dismantle the police department, school districts cutting ties with local police and states banning the police use of chokeholds.

Those efforts can make meaningful differences in individuals' lives, but they do not address the systemic injustices perpetrated throughout the nation's history. Our research into how war-torn and fractured nations find peace, justice and societal reconciliation offers one possible approach. Truth commissions and reparations programs can effectively involve all perspectives in a conflict in a national-level discussion about longstanding political and economic grievances. In other countries, those efforts have led to sustainable and lasting peace in divided societies.

## How do truth commissions work?

Truth commissions are investigations into past wrongdoings by a group of authorities, such as community or church leaders, historians or human rights experts. There is great variation in how truth commissions are designed, but their missions are the same. These investigations include the voices of those who experienced the wrongdoings as well as those alleged to have done harm.

Typically, truth commissions create a forum where wrongs can be disclosed, examined and confronted through education, prosecution, compensation or other forms of redress.

Perhaps the most recognized example was South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, established in 1995 at the end of apartheid. The commission collected personal statements from 21,000 victims of gross human rights violations at the hands of South Africa's government and police. Much of this testimony was broadcast on national television. The commission later compiled and published a seven-volume report into the abuses suffered under apartheid, which included recommending reparation payments to victims and prosecutions for those denied amnesty.

Other countries have had similar processes aimed at righting wrongs. For instance, a Canadian truth commission documented the legacy of physical



Photo by Mark White

**Seattle police aim at protesters of the killing of George Floyd. The belief that police brutality is a symptom of deep problems is growing.**



Rep. Barbara Lee

recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country." Its work also sparked reforms to the national education curriculum.

Truth commissions promote reconciliation when they help victims heal from the wounds of the past by publicly acknowledging those wrongs. Commissions also educate other members of society about the suffering incurred by victims through the publication of summary reports, public dissemination of findings and education campaigns.

In the wake of Floyd's death and the resulting protests, California Rep. Barbara Lee, a Democrat, has introduced legislation calling for the establishment of a national Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Commission to "fully acknowledge and understand how our history of inequality continues today."

In recent years, others have suggested similar efforts to address anti-Semitism, racism and other social injustices.

## When are truth commissions effective?

Our work provides specific guidance about making these processes most effective.

First, they must include all parties to the dispute.

In a U.S. discussion of racial injustice, that means white and Black Americans

and sexual abuse inflicted on thousands of Indigenous Canadians in a program of forced assimilation and education. The findings led to a formal government apology that said "Today, we

must participate together. The commission's hearings would be an important opportunity for Black Americans to heal through discussing their shared experiences.

But it is at least as important, or possibly more so, for white Americans to hear this information, which is likely to be unfamiliar to many of them — and acknowledge the long-term effects of slavery and systemic racism in U.S. society.

In South Africa, for instance, research found that the commission was most effective at changing the racial attitudes of white South Africans by teaching them about the abuses Black South Africans suffered. This facilitated reconciliation because once the truth was shared, people could apportion blame and responsibility.

Second, our research suggests that national-level processes are an important component of durable peace, as measured by the lack of a return to violence following civil conflict. Structural injustice is a nationwide problem in the U.S. Larger social change therefore requires an approach at the national scale.

Those processes can often lead to wider public understanding of how and why reparations, financial compensation payments to victims of wrongdoings, can be a vital part of national healing. These programs directly address the material and personal losses inflicted on the victims of prejudice and injustice. Some notable leaders like author Ta-Nehisi Coates and media magnate and BET founder Robert Johnson have made the case for financial payments to Black Americans. That is one way to approach the wrongdoings.

Our work, however, finds that community reparations, such as funding for community development programs like

public spaces and hospitals and educational scholarships, can also be effective when they are adopted as part of an effort that reveals truth and acknowledges grievances. Reparations can bring about social healing because they send a strong signal to the population that the government is committed to addressing historical wrongs.

But a word of caution is also in order. Our work has found that reconciliation efforts can be susceptible to political manipulation and hijacking. Truth commissions and reparations can fail to bring about reconciliation when they do not incorporate diverse perspectives and experiences. Overcoming these challenges requires a national process with widespread participation across communities as well as strong community organizations and a free press to monitor its progress.

The killing of George Floyd has once again revealed the racism and racial oppression that continue to plague America. The protesters and their broad-based group of supporters also make clear that many in the country are ready for leaders to finally adopt a fundamentally new approach to racial equality.

It may be tempting for people to work locally to address these injustices, and those efforts can indeed make changes. But our research shows that a national solution would be the best way to heal from America's "original sin" of slavery and from longstanding institutional racism and achieve lasting peace and justice. ■

*Benjamin Appel is an associate professor of international relations at Michigan State University. Cyanne E. Loyle is an associate professor of political science and international affairs at Pennsylvania State University.*



# LIFE ON PAUSE

Supporting Indigenous villages during the pandemic



Lana Jack, a Celilo Wy-am activist, is organizing relief for the Indigenous villages along the Columbia River.

By **CELESTE NOCHE** and **JOHN MCDONALD** | *Street Roots*

**O**n the banks along a stretch of the Columbia River between Oregon and Washington, Lana Jack brings supplies to Underwood, Lyle and Lone Pine. These are just a few of the fishing villages that are the homes of the Columbia River Indians, who typically make their living fishing — an activity put on pause as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Apart from one death at Celilo Village, there have been zero deaths or confirmed cases of COVID-19 among the other villages. Jack's relief efforts are, thankfully, preventive.

In these villages, which often have just one common shower and kitchen area for several households, elders and community members with preexisting health conditions are both at greater risk and have limited access to proper sanitation. On May 11, Jack delivered masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, laundry detergent and plants to members of the Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Nez Perce living along the river. At the end of April, Jack launched a



A neighborly detergent delivery is made to Karen Frank, above. Left, Chief Johnny Jackson at his home in Underwood, a Native fishing village on the Washington side of the Columbia River.

As soon as she receives donations, she's out again to deliver them.

Jack led Street Roots through allotments of land for the Columbia River Indians. Our first stop was to see Chief Johnny Jackson at Underwood. Jackson, who is Yakama, received surgical masks and spoke with us about the experiences of his people.

At 89, Jackson has many thoughts about the world.

"I blame the government for modernizing the highway," the chief said, before recounting how his people were pushed away from the fishing villages.

Sitting outside of a long gray trailer on the banks of the White Salmon River, the chief said the government told his people to stay away from the river during the 1920s and 1930s.

One issue back then were Indigenous fishing methods using spears. Nets were wrong, he said.

"The white man wanted to make money, so our people walked to Warm Springs," he said. "I watched my elders go to jail for catching a steelhead."

The chief shared how his people were once strong and powerful but now struggle to take care of each other. He bemoaned the

GoFundMe campaign for COVID-19 relief for the Columbia River Indians and dedicated the funds raised to sourcing hand sanitizer, masks with filters, gloves and food cards. Although the \$3,000 goal was met quickly, she has faced logistical hurdles and has not yet received the funds to redistribute.

Jack, who is Celilo Wy-am, has been making daily trips to neighboring villages to drop off supplies during the pandemic, serving about 100 people.

"We are the echo of the water off the rock of the falls," Jack said, speaking from outside the Bridge Mart in White Salmon, Washington. "We are survivors beyond every attempt to get rid of us."



Left, Eliza Wahchumweh at her home and fish shop at Lone Pine. The shop has closed in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Below, Lana Jack delivers vegetable starts to a community member in their Underwood fishing village.

Photography by Celeste Noche

"We are the echo of the water off the rock of the falls. We are survivors beyond every attempt to get rid of us."

— Lana Jack

more stops in Washington, where she dispensed more heirloom tomato and zucchini plants and personal protective equipment.

A woman named Martha appeared from one of the mobile homes and said she was enjoying the "quarantine life" with her 3-month-old puppy and was grateful for the visit from Jack. Martha lives on a piece of land with breathtaking views of the river. She recounted memories of sharing the land with her community for fishing.

Our last stop brought us south of the river to Lone Pine, a village overlooking The Dalles Dam with fishing scaffolding dotted along the riverbank and the structural remains of a longhouse resting nearby. Children ran about.

The dam is one of the 10 largest hydro-power dams in the United States, but across the river at Lone Pine, a resident loaded a car trunk with empty bottles to replenish their water supply.

We visited Eliza Wahchumweh's home and fish shop, which closed in response to the pandemic. Rose bushes and raised beds remain among the dusty heat of the riverbank. Wahchumweh, a member of the Yakama tribe, has posters advocating for sanitation and social distancing to protect their elders and communities. The salmon season just started, but the shop remains closed until further notice.

Electricity, water and food are needed here, Jack said. The garden beds are drying out.

"We deserve more," she said, with a hint of anger in her voice. "A lot of our young people are seeking healing. We are not poor, drunk, lazy Indians. We are tired of being manipulated and stereotyped."

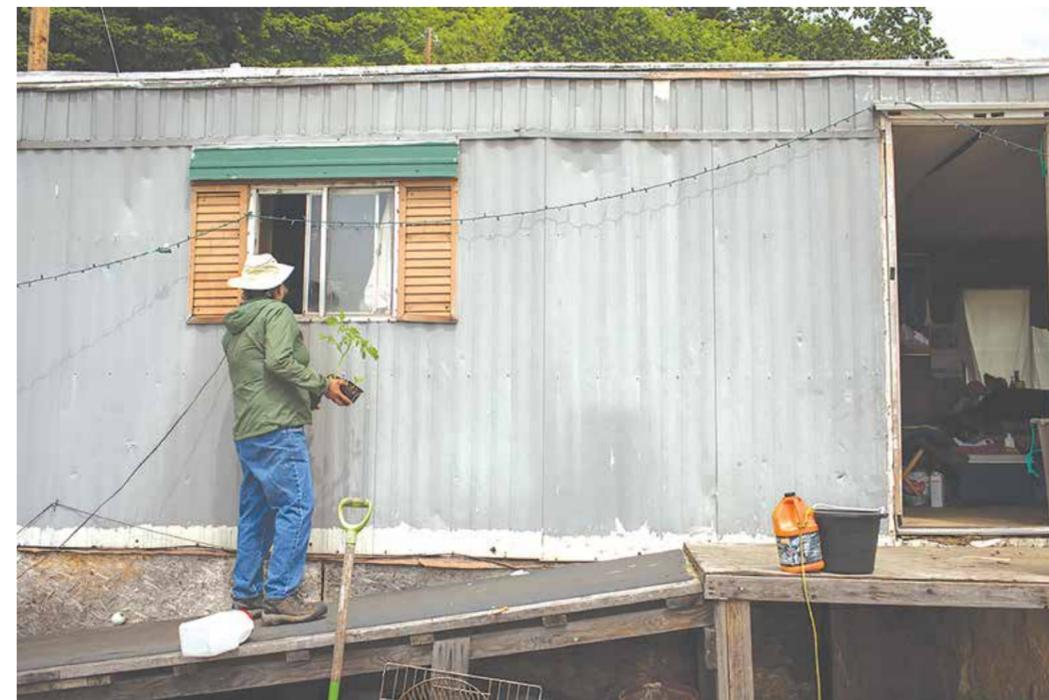
While Jack waits for the GoFundMe money to be dispersed, she continues to collect donations and take supplies to the fishing villages as quickly as possible.

"With the state reopening, ultimately I can't stop being concerned for them in the state of extreme poverty that they're in with their lack of resources," she said. "Anything we can get from the Portland area [helps], even if it's clothes, blankets, sheets, towels, hand soap, bleach, Lysol—anything that would help us fight being sick."

Jack is collecting donations and specifically requests sanitation supplies, including masks, hand sanitizer, hand soap and gloves in every size. She is also accepting food, clothes and other necessities.

"We're saving lives," she said. ■

Courtesy of Street Roots / INSPngo



overfishing of Chinook salmon and steelhead and the opening of bars and casinos, which resulted in drinking and disabling addictions.

Now, he said, he will settle for a good shower. Underwood is one of the few fishing villages without a functioning shower.

"It is very easy to dismiss my people as drunks and drug addicts," Jack said, back at the Bridge Mart. Ashlynn Sohaapy, Jack's daughter, rides along in their nondescript Honda CRV. She often joins her mother while delivering supplies and has been in recovery for eight months, Jack said.

Jack gave us a small bundle of sage bush when we met and proceeded to take us on a tour of Native American treaty access sites along the Washington and Oregon banks of the Columbia River.

After visiting the chief, we headed east along the Washington side to Lyle Point, a grassy area sprinkled with camper homes where trucks and boats lay in apparent disuse. Karen Frank, 61, emerged from a mobile home to greet Jack and Sohappy.

There were many dogs, with tails wagging, as we approached.

"I mostly stay in the house," Frank said when asked how the pandemic has affected her. She wore a cloth mask and petted the dogs as they ran around her. Frank was especially excited to receive the tomato and zucchini starts Jack delivered. She took us to one of the RVs on site where she's growing herbs and her prized black irises.

Unlike Underwood, Lyle Point has a communal shower but no electricity. The closest grocery store has been closed for almost two months, so Frank now has to

drive to White Salmon, The Dalles or Hood River for provisions. She said her immediate needs are water, propane and gas cards for their generator.

As Jack visited people and delivered supplies, she gave gentle reminders to wear masks and use hand sanitizer often.

"We've been teaching people about practices behind sanitation with the gloves and face masks and hand sanitizer — and having to use it incessantly," Jack said. "These are taught things, not a practice for them. I don't know if they'll catch on, but I can't not have hope."

"We have paid a steep price for our ancestral land," Jack explained. "We should be honored, but we don't get that. Society has basically written us off. We didn't ask to be made to conform to this way of life."

Jack's delivery route led her past two

## BOOK REVIEW: 'Every Day We Get More Illegal'

By Juan Felipe Herrera | City Lights Publishers | 2020 | 90 pages | \$14.95



Illustration by Jon Williams

In 'Every Day We Get More Illegal,' former U.S. poet laureate Juan Felipe Herrera imparts hope through poetry

Review by MEGAN WILDHOOD | Contributing Writer

Many people are intimidated by poetry, so let me, a poet myself, offer a frame: Poetry is not pieces of fiction chopped up and dropped at random on the page. If it helps as an entry point, though, you might imagine the synergy between such pieces. Poetry takes longer to read than nonfiction — at least it should, since poetry does not explain but transports and, in so doing, transfigures. Poetry is not for processing with the mind to reach a conclusion or argument. It is an adaptogen; it gives you what you need, whether that's a punch in the gut or a healing of the heart. In his full-length poetry collection, "Every Day We Get More Illegal," Juan Felipe Herrera does it all.

This 'esperanza' says to hell with your bullying and your lies about who we are and what we're worth. We do not give in to your smorgasbord of injustice: We hope.

Herrera, who was the United States poet laureate from 2015 to 2017, is speaking to you and not to you, depending on who you are. He toggles between English and Spanish, sometimes with translation, sometimes without. Check yourself: do you criticize or complain when you come across language you don't understand? Are you assuming you should have access to everything because "this is America?" The Spanish serves as a door: sometimes, it's closed (no translation), showing you the boundaries of identity. Sometimes, it invites you to understand. But Herrera makes it clear that, despite whatever caricatures we have had imprinted in our minds about immigrants, working-class people, border crossers, people who speak Spanish natively, he is not asking for your permission to be who he is. Nor is he asking for your pity.

He is not saying "pity me" when he writes to himself and others like him from the voice of discrimination and oppression: *are you a Segmenter without eyes or heart or blood*. He is showing you what it's like to be constantly questioned for who you are, constantly being told you are not who you are and simultaneously that you are what you are and that is against the law. He is showing you what that's like so well that those of us who are willing — those of us who are open to our humanity — can feel our bones hollowing out through his literary radiation.

"Every Day We Get More Illegal" is not, as my implicit biases led me to assume, a plea for equality via sob story. It's a declaration. An indictment of the unremitting, gratuitous, self-congratulatory hypocrisy of our self-appointed city-on-a-hill nation. You've heard such duplicity called out before: For so many, this is decidedly *not* the land of the free. But you have not seen it in Herrera's clothes, bodies, chants, dust-coated belongings, adaptations, interlocations, sidewalks, skin, land, bones. This is the brilliance of Herrera's work: through the poetry — that is, the white space, the words, the places where they separate into new lines — you see human beings. It's not all about avoiding deportation and climbing over walls and barbed wire fences and all the other bloodless two-dimensional ideas we've got in our minds thanks to our racism-soaked, white supremacist culture rabid for comfort, ease and enemies. Herrera obliterates the stereotypes of the migrant, the farm worker, the low-income resident, the person who breaks her back for your seamless convenience. He simultaneously puts skin on such experiences, blowing up the stereotypes — *i am not a paid protestor*, he writes, arguing with one of those gaslighters who is so common to the woodwork of America — and ignoring them altogether not in an inspiration-porn way or a way that asks those who are under the blanket of brutality, but in a total-human-package way.

The last word in Herrera's collection is *esperanza*. Hope. This is on-point defiant. This hope has backstory: ongoing oppression. This *esperanza* says to hell with your bullying and your lies about who we are and what we're worth. We do not give in to your smorgasbord of injustice: We hope. At the same time, this word, as well as the rest of Herrera's words, ultimately defy translation. What they need is to be invited into your body so they can be experienced. ■

## AWNG | By Tenzing Dorjee



## Systemic racism is everywhere, even — and oddly — in math

The U.S. Census Bureau is projecting that for the first time ever, U.S. kids under 16 are mostly either non-white or Hispanic, according to the Associated Press.

Over the whole population, non-Hispanic whites now account for 60 percent of the population, but the percentage is expected to drop to less than half by 2045, at least.

Immigration is accelerating the change, so white supremacists want to clamp down on immigration. But that's not enough because the decline in the numbers of non-Hispanic whites is also due to their low birth rate compared to death rate.

White people just aren't having children like they used to.

I've always said that babies are mental parasites. They get into your brains and force you to produce chemicals or juices that make you think they're super cute and turn you into their slave. Next you know, you're feeding one end and diapering the other. You should always shield your eyes when a baby is brought to you. They're invaders from another generation!

Apparently, the average non-Hispanic white person agrees with me. This probably drives white supremacists up the wall. I'm sure it's very disheartening, to say the least.

Because I am writing this in a Google document, and Google computers peek at everything I write, I can expect in the coming days to get targeted ads for baby food. I can blame mathematicians for this sort of thing. Mathematicians are responsible for coming up with the kind of algorithms Google computers use to decide from my text what to try to sell me.

## Adventures in Irony

Dr. Wes Browning

They aren't as good at it as they'd like to be. No, I would not like some baby food! Go away!

Mathematicians must have been involved in the Census Bureau's projection that I began with. I believe the projections are obtained by integrating trends across multiple demographic subgroupings, the idea being that the trends in narrower populations are more likely to hold as the count increases.

Mathematicians have been employed lately in telling us how to expect the pandemic to progress given current policies. The methods there include mathematical modeling. The simplest models describe the population by a network with nodes representing people and assumptions of varying degrees of communicability between nearby nodes, assumptions of death rates, recovery rates and wishful thinking about how much immunity results after recoveries.

The latest type of mathematical modeling that's come to my attention is the modeling of crime for police departments.

I was a dues-paying member of the American Mathematical Society, AMS, until I could no longer afford it, sometime around Reagan's second term. So, they stopped sending me the newsletters, and I've ever since been late to get updates.

It turns out that whole bunches of

applied mathematicians have assembled various companies to supply police departments with computer software predicting crime. (For money.) There are different kinds of predictions, based on crime type, reports of crimes, geographical data, times of day, etc. In some cases, the police will see a map of the city with little colored boxes showing where they should concentrate patrols.

Why am I bringing this up now?

Since the murder of George Floyd, a significant number of AMS members are calling for an end to this sort of mercenary work for police departments. They say these kinds of models put a scientific veneer on racial profiling.

The companies doing the work say their models don't take race into account.

However, they take economic factors into account, which indirectly means race is a factor.

But going beyond that, their software lets the police cover what racial profiling goes on, by letting them say they were just following the suggestions of the model. "The software indicated we should patrol that neighborhood. We never concerned ourselves with the fact that it was a minority neighborhood." If it sends them to a White neighborhood they don't have to arrest anyone. "The software isn't perfect."

When we say there is systemic racism and systemic inequity in this country, we have to consider systems at all levels of all kinds, including the mathematical systems that try to make sense of crime statistics. ■

Sound off to Dr. Wes:  
drwes@realchangenews.org

Access Denied



Hanna Brooks Olsen

## Working from home(less)

The tempo of downtown Seattle has changed. Gone are the crowds of commuters getting on and off buses. Lunch spots that haven't been without a line in years are dark most of the time; takeout hasn't turned enough business to make it worth their while to re-open.

Instead of foot traffic, the sidewalks of Second and Third avenues are now populated by wrappers and discarded face masks, urban tumbleweeds blowing south.

The restaurants are still boarded up, even when the boards have come down in other parts of the city, in downtown. That plywood is a kind of universal language. It spells the demise of a city — it's a civic shorthand for "this place is no longer inhabited."

But downtown Seattle *is* inhabited. It's just inhabited by the kind of people who most other people don't want to live around.

Because there are still a lot of people living down there and needing services — buses, places to eat — they're just people who don't have permanent housing.

Teleworking has proven itself to be functional for workers, for the environment — but where does this leave downtown? When many of the people who can't leave need access to things to eat and places to stay more than ever?

Working from home has the potential to change the game in Seattle. To release us from the iron grip of gridlock and improve our water and air quality in real, salient ways. To allow employees to work more flexible hours and live more flexible lives.

But there is a reality, too, that faces our local economy: The social safety net is heavily reliant on the idea of a 9-to-5 work schedule that includes a lot of people coming into downtown every day.

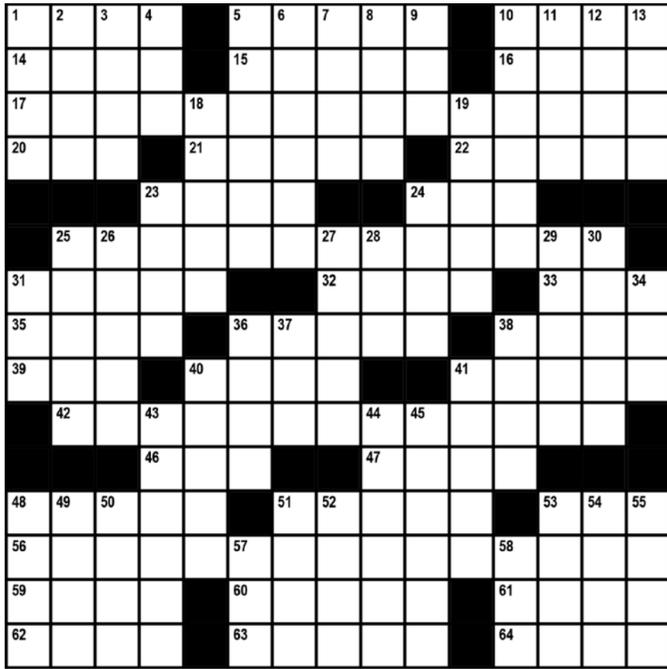
Since its earliest days, Seattle has had a resistance to putting service providers — like low-income housing, shelters, food banks — into the neighborhoods. Or, perhaps more accurately, the people who live in the neighborhoods have rejected this idea.

Instead, we've had a tendency to push our most at-risk populations into downtown; that's where most of the social services are located. It's where most of the shelter beds are.

Which means that now, our most vulnerable have been left exactly where we've pushed them, but without the services or businesses which they've come to rely on.

As we abandon downtown in the pursuit of a new workplace and a new economy, it has become more important than ever that we not abandon those who have been left behind. ■

Hanna Brooks Olsen is a writer and policy consultant. She has written for *Crosscut*, *Bust Magazine*, *the Atlantic*, *the Nation*, *the Democracy Journal* and elsewhere.



**Celebrate Freedom!**

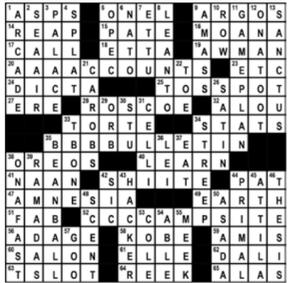
Puzzle by **Patrick "Mac" McIntyre**

**ACROSS**

- 1 Target of splicing
- 5 "\_\_\_ Stop Loving You" (#1 Ray Charles hit) (2 wds.) (1,4)
- 10 Huck Finn's had a wigwam on it for sleeping in
- 14 Kind of hygiene or exam
- 15 Five-time Olympics gold medalist gymnast Comaneci
- 16 Old Chevy model renamed the Sonic
- 17 Something associated with Independence Day (2 wds.) (8,7)
- 20 French designer's monogram
- 21 Handy (2 wds.) (2,3)
- 22 Difficult situations
- 23 Hawaiian strings
- 24 "\_\_\_, dear" (most prudent response from one receiving a honey-do list)
- 25 Something associated with Independence Day (2 wds.) (9,4)
- 31 Elite Navy warriors
- 32 "Now it's clear!" (2 wds.) (1,3)
- 33 Student and/or athletic team member of a Spokane, WA-based university, familiarly
- 35 "\_\_\_ for the poor"
- 36 Happen
- 38 Glasgow gal
- 39 "Help us!" signal, at sea
- 40 "Ride of the Valkyries" from "Die Walküre," for one
- 41 Main artery
- 42 Something associated with Independence Day (3 wds.) (5,3,5)
- 46 Prof.'s helpers (Abbr.)
- 47 "Don't bet \_\_\_!" (2 wds.) (2,2)
- 48 Lunch hour's end, typically (2 wds.) (3,2) (incls. Lat. abbr.)
- 51 Suitcase tie-on (2 wds.) (2,3) (incls. abbr.)
- 53 Unruly crowd
- 56 Something associated with Independence Day (2 wds.) (9,6)
- 59 Former Yugoslav leader Josip Broz, familiarly
- 60 Swab a deck again
- 61 Polish language?
- 62 Mmes. of Madrid (Abbr.)

**DOWN**

- 1 Pass (2 wds.) (2,2)
- 2 Notable time periods
- 3 Table salt, to a chemist
- 4 Yellowstone sight
- 5 Shortly, slangily (3 wds.) (2,1,3)
- 6 Legendary tenor who made the first million-selling record
- 7 Tacks on (to)
- 8 "I'm impressed!"
- 9 Chinese ideal of central truth
- 10 Debonair and devil-may-care
- 11 Bard of \_\_\_ (Shakespearean sobriquet)
- 12 Clash of clans
- 13 Small fry
- 18 Hitches together, as a pair of oxen
- 19 Not so pleasingly plump
- 23 WWW addresses
- 24 River to the North Sea
- 25 Cooler person?
- 26 "You are not!" rejoinder (3 wds/1) (1,2,2)
- 27 Puerto \_\_\_ (San Juan native)
- 28 Wildcats of the Big 12 Conference
- 29 Arkansas's \_\_\_ Mountains
- 30 Fritter away (as time)
- 31 Flier to Copenhagen (Abbr./acron.)
- 34 Cookie-selling grp. (Abbr.)
- 36 Valuable deposits
- 37 Org. concerned with bugs, moles and plants? (Abbr.)
- 38 Booty
- 40 "Likewise" (3 wds.) (2,2,1)
- 41 Fidel's female friend
- 43 Computer fixer-uppers (2 wds.) (2,4) (Abbr.)
- 44 E-business, briefly (2 wds.) (3,3)
- 45 "Make it \_\_\_!" ("Hurry up!")
- 48 Withdraws, with "out"
- 49 Former Neet rival
- 50 Jazzy James
- 51 Old Roman road
- 52 Mighty slender legal tender
- 53 Earned
- 54 Valhalla chief
- 55 "All \_\_\_ are off!"
- 57 Blessing - curse link (2 wds.) (2,1)
- 58 Workout unit (Abbr.)



**SOLUTION**

**Working Those Quads**  
June 24 Issue

Solutions to this week's puzzle will appear in the next issue.

**Donate an old car to REAL CHANGE**

1.877.537.5277

realchangenews.org/index.php/site/giving

**Streaming to stay sane**

Events for optimal physical distancing

**July 6**

**Pop-Up Blood Drive at The Paramount Bloodworks Northwest: 911 Pine St., Seattle; 10 a.m.-6 p.m., free, 16+; tinyurl.com/yba45r6**

Giving blood may not be on your to-do list these days, but the need for blood in local hospitals and patients is always a high priority. Bloodworks Northwest and The Paramount have joined forces to create a space that follows all social distancing rules and public health guidelines to allow you to give blood in a safe environment. Every donor must

make an appointment and follow the rules provided. If you're able, this is a great way to give back to the community in a different and deep kind of way.

**July 8**

**Intro to Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest, Salish Mushrooms: online event; 3-5 p.m., \$15; tinyurl.com/yxenxu3e**

Do you love mushrooms? If yes, this online event is for you. In this two-hour class you will learn how to forage, identify and cultivate mushrooms on your very own. You'll get information on best places to go, what to bring,

Calendar compiled by **Michelle Galluzzo**. Got something we should know about? Email it to [calendar@realchangenews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangenews.org). The deadline for calendar submissions is nine days prior to the date of publication.

what to avoid and more. If foraging isn't up your alley, you'll also learn how to start growing your own mushrooms. This class is a great start for anyone interested in the world of these delicious little fungi, also sounds like a pretty fun summer activity to abide by social distancing!

**July 9**

**Love in the Time of COVID - BIPOC Solidarity & Mutual Aid, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods and Seattle Public Library: Facebook or YouTube; 6-8 p.m., free, all ages; tinyurl.com/y8ud45pb**

This virtual event is meant to bring us closer and uplift us during these unprecedented times. A group of artists and community activists are coming together in celebration as we grow and learn through resurgences of racism and the virus. Their write-up says it well: "If Indigenous Sovereignty, Black Love, Immigrant Rights, educational justice and food justice is your jam this all-ages event is for you. Come celebrate elders, our 2020 graduates, and our city's vibrant mutual aid and community organizing efforts." Help spread joy while maintaining social consciousness. A musical prelude will start at 5:30.

**July 11**

**More Fats More Femmes: Quarantine Edition, Indian Summer: 534 Summit Ave. E, Seattle; 2-7 p.m., free, all ages; tinyurl.com/ydg8od9d**

Indian Summer owner Adria Garcia, previous manager Kim Selling, and current shopbabe Castle Cooke will be selling racks on racks of plus sized clothing and pre-loved items. Sizes will range from 12-32+ but as you know, sizing may fluctuate between makers and brands. All racks will be outside the shop allowing for proper social distancing. You are asked to come ready with a face mask, gloves and hand sanitizer. If you don't have gloves or sanitizer, Indian Summer will have some on-site. There will also be mirrors and a change room set up to get some quick looks in your new pieces. Remember, just because we have to wear face masks doesn't mean we can't abide by the long standing saying of "suns out, buns out," so get yourself some new clothes!

**Change happens when we all help.**

Please make a difference with your gift today.

Real Change offers low-barrier jobs, award-winning journalism, and anti-poverty advocacy. Our Vendor Center has remained open through the pandemic, and it is thanks in large part to donors like you.

Your gift of any amount makes Real Change possible. [bit.ly/RealChange2020](https://bit.ly/RealChange2020)

- Yes! I want make a one-time gift of:
  - \$50  \$100  \$150  \$250
  - \$500  \$\_\_\_\_\_ other amount
  - Make a monthly recurring gift of:
  - \$10  \$20.83  \$41.67  \$62.50  \$83.33
- Gifts of \$150 or more will be matched, while funds last.

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CV code \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_



Make checks payable to Real Change and mail to: 219 First Ave. S., Suite 220, Seattle, WA 98104 Or use our secure online giving option at [realchangenews.org](https://realchangenews.org).

Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.



**REGIONAL PROFILE**  
Maddy Brown-Clark

**'LITTLE RICHARD BELIEVED IN ME'**

*Former Street Roots vendor Maddy Brown-Clark remembers her encounters with music legend Little Richard, who passed away in early May at the age of 87 and 'had a heart of gold.'*

By **MADDY BROWN-CLARK**



**Maddy Brown-Clark**

Some memories, though wrapped up in tragedy, are precious. This one is to me. It's the memory of how I met my friend, the late, great Little Richard. I was homeless in Los Angeles, many years ago. I sat upon Crocker Street all night long, camped out with my acoustic guitar and all my belongings, afraid to go to sleep for fear I would be robbed. I had to wait until morning to get into the Weingart Center shelter, the best one in downtown L.A.

I watched a long black limousine drive by, and my dark eyes filled with hope. One day I would ride in one. Somehow, I made it through the night safely.

The next morning, I gathered my things and walked to the shelter to line up.

Suddenly that limousine pulled up in front of the shelter. The back window rolled down. Then a very familiar voice echoed through the smoggy air. It invited, "Gather 'round me, everybody." He peeped his head out the window. It was the great singer Little Richard. And he had a hand filled with cash.

I was the first one over to him as one of his bodyguards got out of the limo to look after things.

"I have cold hard cash for you all till it runs out," he announced and handed me a \$20 bill. The others desperately reached and grabbed for the money he was handing out. I kept standing there as close as I could, and he winked at me.

"You're a pretty thing. How did you become homeless, madam? Are you mentally ill? A lot of homeless women are?"

"You could say I'm just a little bit crazy," I replied.

"I'll bet you're crazy like a fox," he said. "I'm a singer, Mr. Richard," I said.

"Yeah, I see your guitar. I'll have to hear you sometime."

Just then, a big pickup truck pulled up behind the limousine. It was filled with food and hygiene products for the homeless. It was all Little Richard's gift to humanity. He had a big heart. He even paid for the medical care for a homeless senior citizen who was stabbed twice, shot three times and robbed of his Social Security check.

One day, Little Richard sat in the back of his limousine and sang to some homeless people who were gathering in a small park in the middle of Skid Row near Crocker Street.

One time he told me, "You can't stay on these streets, Madeline. You're a rare flower. You're going to wither up and fade away down here."

Later on, I sat with him in the back seat of his limousine and sang the Otis

Redding song "These Arms of Mine" for him a cappella.

"Yeah. Now that's what I call music," he applauded. "We'll have to get you somewhere with a voice like that."

So I was supposed to go to the hotel he was living in on Sunset Strip and meet a talent agent there. But I felt very ill from being on the streets and had to go home to my parents back up in Tillamook, Oregon.

If I had been able to make that meeting and stay, who knows how far I could have gone, who I might have been.

Little Richard was a great man. He had a heart of gold, and golden as a million shining suns.

Goodnight, Sweet King. ■

*Maddy Brown-Clark is a former Street Roots vendor who now resides in Tucson, Arizona.*

\*\*\*

**A poem for Little Richard**

By *Maddy Brown-Clark*

*Goodnight Sweet King  
You will be missed  
May you never be forgotten  
As long as music exists  
Your love for humanity  
Was big and broad  
But now you have gone  
To meet the Lord  
When I hear Tutti Frutti  
And Long Tall Sally  
I'll dance to your music  
And remember your beauty  
And may all remember just one thing  
You Little Richard were truly the King.*

*Courtesy of Street Roots / INSP.ngo*

most part, no one questions it. However, for years, I have shared time and time again how Black people in particular carry the weight of not just the effects that racism has on our daily lives but how we often live with the fear of how it will play out next, and to what degree will it affect us this time? The stress of this type of reality places an emotional burden on a person that someone who does not experience this could never imagine.

The level of never-ending resilience that it takes to live day after day under these conditions while taking care of all the other things we have to take care of just to exist (eating, sleeping, working, child-rearing, going to school, running errands, going to doctor's appointments, etc.) would be an unattainable feat for many. However, Black people are just supposed to do it, every single day of our lives, without complaint. As a matter of fact, from a very young age, I received the message loud and clear that we, Black people, are not to show how hard our reality really is to the outside world. This was our business, not to be shared openly or even admitted amongst ourselves. That message was reinforced in adulthood as I navigated through one dehumanizing event after another, most of which I only had to experience based on the fact that I am Black. I have rejected and will continue to reject that message! From my perspective, everyone who is not Black needs to hear about our reality and they need to hear about it from us. Until I take my last breath, I will continue to be one of the Black voices who unapologetically speaks to exactly what our reality is by sharing my own life experiences.

The emotional toll that living in a Black body takes on a Black body is largely considered something that many believe is just not real. Unlike when someone says that they are physically ill and needs support, when a person needs time to care for their emotional well-being it is not considered necessary or even valid. So, when I and many others have said that Black people need time to take care of themselves, we are largely ignored. When I would tell people that my personal boundaries and commitment to self-care were non-negotiable in order to support my overall wellness, they'd often seem perplexed. Sometimes, very rarely, people would understand and even agree that these strategies were good ones for wellness. However, there is not a true level of real support in our society for that to happen — at least not in the way that Black people need.

From living with the insidiousness of racism that permeates every facet of our lives from activities of daily living to health disparities and the very real threat of being killed — violently, while unarmed — because our lives aren't valued and we are seen by far too many as less-than and therefore unworthy of human decency, what do we do? How do we support ourselves emotionally? What would that even look like if it could be done adequately enough so that Black people get time to, at the very least, get restorative rest to recharge to try and exist another day? I can tell you right now, it is NOT spending less than 30 minutes at the beach wearing masks in the midst of a viral pandemic. So finally, I ask, can Black people living in a society, reality and climate like this ever, really, get a break?

Of course, the answer is absolutely, unequivocally, no. ■

*NaKeesa Frazier-Jennings is a longtime Seattle-area resident. She is an advocate for race and social justice, often using the written word to shed light on the many issues faced by Black people, other communities of color and women.*

EMERALD Continued from Page 2

to the horrific death he had suffered. Back then, in the 1950s, there were no surveillance videos, camera phones, or any other technology to show in vivid detail what took place and led to the death of that 14-year-old Black boy. His mother's insistence that his casket be open during his funeral and the pictures that were shared by the news media, though, were enough.

Fast forward to the year 2016, which is when my husband and I bought our first home. We were proud, happy, felt accomplished and felt all the other things people feel when they buy their first home. The afternoon that we went to pick up the keys to our new home from the realtor was the day after the news of the deaths that week of both Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, two more Black men who had been killed. When my husband picked me up from work so that we could head over to the realtor's office our conversation was only, could only be about these two men. By the time we pulled into the parking lot of the realtor's office we were both sobbing. We felt these deaths so deeply. I felt not just sadness for those latest two victims and their families but I also felt such a strong sense of grief for every single Black person who was not safe and who is not protected from this either becoming their fate or the fate of someone they love. Every year on the anniversary of the purchase of our first home, we can only think of the Black men who were killed, because "celebrating" just does not feel right.

Since George Floyd's death on the same day as our beach outing, I have been inundated with not only my feelings of sorrow that he died in the way that he did, but my heart is just consumed with sadness for his family. I am re-traumatized every time I am online and see still shots of his body lying on the ground or when I don't get to the television remote quickly enough so that I hear, yet again, the pleas he makes for his life and then him calling out in absolute anguish for his dead mother. The news coverage and the reality of living through everything that has ensued since his death is so heavy and is quite so burdensome to absorb on a daily basis. The depths of the collective pain, fear and exhaustion that so many Black people are experiencing cannot truly be described in mere words.

Seemingly, though, many individuals, institutions, groups, authority figures and more have come to an agreement and have even gone as far as to say to Black people in the wake of George Floyd's death we should "take time" to take care of ourselves. It seems very logical to some that we should do that and now, more than ever, we deserve to do just that — take the time to take care of ourselves. But how exactly are we to do that when we live in a society where caring for oneself emotionally does not seem to be socially acceptable beyond short-term or momentary pleasures like binge-watching television programs or movies for a day, or enjoying a few hours at a spa or indulging in your favorite meal?

During my adult life, I have seen people respond with great kindness to other people and their families who are experiencing a physical illness of some sort. People will rally around them in support by doing things like bringing them food, medication, flowers and, in some instances, money has even been donated through crowd funding programs, collections from church members, fundraisers, and more. When someone says that they themselves or their family member is sick with a physical illness and needs time to care for themselves or their family member, for the

JOHNSON Continued from Page 4

can contribute using the passions and skills that inspire self-reflection. After all, Johnson sees self-doubt as a central force in allowing racism to persist.

“If we can let go of self doubt, if we can understand that, of course you won’t be perfect, but you will have tried. You will have made a start. You will have made a mistake that will teach you something, and you can take that lesson and go forward,” Johnson said. Wanting a new paradigm in society means having to take new kinds of action, “ which means some of us are going to have to get off the couch. Some of us are going to have to rest because

we have to keep the pressure on. And that’s only going to be sustained if we sustain ourselves.”

For Johnson, that grounding, and sustainment comes not just from singing and the solace of music, but from the sense of community and connection that their art and resulting faith create. Music sustains Johnson, and that sustenance gives them drive and courage through this current time of social transformation.

“My rebellion is in song and it is still being visible to people and it is still attempting to uplift people. I become a riot this way in, and of myself, my standing somewhere still existing, smiling, like a crazy person.” ■

## CHALLENGING MISCONCEPTIONS OF HOMELESSNESS THROUGH PERSONAL STORY

Speakers share personal stories that give the audience a glimpse into the reality of living in poverty. They deconstruct the line between the “us” and “them” and provide unique wisdom into systemic issues of poverty.



**HOMELESS SPEAKERS BUREAU**

Request a speaker: [tinyurl.com/HomelessSpeakersBureau](http://tinyurl.com/HomelessSpeakersBureau) or call 206.441.3247



Born and raised in Tacoma, Stephanie Anne Johnson started vocal lessons and playing guitar at age 14. They were a choral singer through high school and college, and then worked on a cruise ship singing four hours a day in front of an audience.

Photo courtesy of Stephanie Anne Johnson



INDEPENDENT EYEWEAR FOR INDEPENDENT MINDS.

THE ONE AND ONLY, SINCE 1996.



THE UNIVERSAL LIFE CHURCH MONASTERY

is a proud supporter of



☯ ⚡ ☸ 🌿 ⚙️ ✝️ ॐ 🌀 ⚔️ ⚖️ ▼ 神道 🌀

WE ARE ALL CHILDREN OF THE SAME UNIVERSE

Pres. Chaplain - George Freeman