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# Creale Change

Reaching Out to End Poverty • Volume 11, No. 4

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## Daily Grind

For street youth, a shot at a better life

**Inside: Slum tenants storm  
Olympia • A pot to pee in • Big Bush Lies •  
Sorrows of Empire • Have a heart for kids!**

COVER PHOTO BY WILL BOSSEN

By Patrick Schultz

She's got a big friendly smile and she shakes your hand like she's genuinely glad to meet you. At the age of 14 she left a violent home. She has endured six years of youth shelters and underemployment. Now 20, she's struggled with homelessness for nearly a third of her life.

For Sarah, or "Rabbit" as she's known to her friends, the Barista Training Program offered by FareStart and YouthCare is a caffeinated boost towards getting off the streets and into a decent job, permanent housing, and a new life.

The eight-week program trains homeless and formerly homeless youth in the art and business of making espresso drinks. It covers everything from brewing coffee and steaming milk to serving customers and writing a resume.

"I had a rough go of it until I turned 18," Sarah says. Then she decided to

get her GED. "That's when I started buckling down." Now, as a student of the Barista Training Program, she's on her way to having a straight job.

For Sarah, the ultimate value of the program goes beyond landing a job making lattes and mochas. "What I'm getting out of (the program) has nothing to do with coffee. It has a lot to do with trust and self-confidence."

Sarah is excited to be in the program, and enjoys talking about her plans for the future. Housing, health insurance, employment, and self-sufficiency: She has a lot riding on the outcome of this class.

Completing the program is both a goal and a step on her career path. She talks about the different job opportunities at places like Tully's or Starbucks, with benefits and tips. She wants to go to school and study business management. Maybe someday, she says, she'll have her own restaurant.

Right now, the jobs Sarah is prepar-

ing for won't ensure her economic security. She's a long way from being able to rent a place of her own. No job at or near the minimum wage in the entire state of Washington will provide enough to make a one-bedroom apartment affordable. In greater Seattle, she'd have to earn about \$14 an hour — nearly twice the minimum wage — to comfortably afford the rent on an average one-bedroom apartment.

But to begin with, she just hopes to earn enough money to move out of the downtown YWCA shelter and into the subsidized housing she's applied for.

Getting a job, applying for affordable housing, making ends meet: "It is something I worry about. You put all this effort into it, and you hope it works out. It's just something you have to have faith in, I guess."

The program is a collaboration between two well-known local nonprofits: FareStart, which trains homeless adults for jobs in the food service industry, and YouthCare, which provides services to homeless youth.

The class progresses through eight weeks, starting with the history of coffee, then how it's grown, harvested, and roasted. The second week, students are studying food safety and sanitation, learning how to steam milk and pull

espresso shots, and making their first drinks. By week three, they're learning customer service, teamwork, and communication skills. Weeks four through seven are spent working as baristas at the FareStart Café at Antioch University's Seattle campus. In their final week they are back in class, putting together their resume and learning how to find a job.

While classes include field trips to cafés and guest speakers from local businesses, the staff expects students to think of the program as a job. There's no tuition fee; in fact, students are paid minimum wage to attend. Unexcused absences or tardiness can cause a student to forfeit their space in the class — in effect, to be fired.

Since the program began last September, Sarah's class is the third group to take the course. Two prior graduating classes have yielded 12 graduates. Classes start out with eight students, but not everyone makes it through the eight-week program; before Sarah graduates, three of her classmates will have dropped out.

And even graduating doesn't guarantee a job afterwards. As of December, only three of the program's graduates had found work, while others were

Continued on Page 12



Look for the Mockingbird Times Inside!







## Kucinich: real integrity

Dear *Real Change*,

How sad to hear Paul Loeb's superb imitation of a media pundit/propagandist ("Light and Heat: Dennis Kucinich, Howard Dean, and what makes a winner in the presidential race" *RC* Jan. 22). He sets about telling us how Kucinich was at the forefront of dissent during Bush's wan march, organized colleagues to do the same, and is essentially setting the pace of debate by bringing up issues and ideas his peers would rather avoid.

"But it's hard to imagine [Kucinich] winning the nomination," writes Loeb. Huh? Were not talking about horses here. What about issues? The bit about him being a vegan reminded me of the right-wing ink wasted on discussing whether Hilary Clinton baked cookies like Barbara Bush!

The things he lauds Dean for could as easily be said about Kucinich. With all the war metaphors Loeb used to convince us, we are obviously to deduce that Dean is not on "the path of timidity." If we were looking for real toughness, we should be talking about Carol Moseley-Braun, who's shown toughness through her intelligence, ideas, and ability to slice through political baiting and doublespeak to core issues. Of course for Loeb and other pundits, "electability" and "visibility" (both determined by privileged White males) are

more important than integrity.

I am not criticizing Dean or his supporters, which can only benefit Bush. But being marginalized by an alleged ally of democracy warrants a reaction. Integrity and a consistent platform that comes from his commitment, and not how he appears to Republicans, are reasons why I'll support Kucinich or anyone else who demonstrates them. I believe it's also what can get Americans sickened by the political cesspool back to the polls.

The Party — call it Democrat, Republican, Corporate, or whatever — has silenced real choices for far too long.

Elaine Waller-Rose  
Seattle

## Kerry: just real

Dear *Real Change*,

Paul Loeb's comment about the "astoundingly craven notion of Presidential electability" he felt Senator Kerry evidenced is simply nonsense. [In the debate prior to the Iraq invasion] the White House did a tremendous job of putting up the proverbial curtain before a very little man — as in the end of *The Wizard of Oz*. Only after the troops went in did many people really seem to ask, "Hey, what was this all about?"

Granted, Howard Dean might have been there first. But even he was quoted as saying, "Saddam was a threat."

It's this simple: do you want four more years of President Bush? If so, back Kucinich or Dean, feel pure, and then watch the country continue to be run into the ground. John Kerry appeals to veterans like me because of his service to his country — during and since the Vietnam War. The Left has never given any Vietnam veteran his due, not Bob Kerrey, John McCain, or John Kerry. Screw the Left. Back John Kerry and win back the White House for the people.

Terry Parkhurst  
Seattle

## The Left: don't bash 'em

Dear *Real Change*,

The lead article in your Jan 8-21 issue ("Our Hero") nearly pegged my propaganda meter. I have no doubt that Melissa Bailey is a wonderful person doing her best with limited resources. Why does Chris LaRoche feel it is necessary to assert that "she carries no banner for the outraged leftists of the Bush II era"? Does this mean she loves the Religious Right's social agenda? That she doesn't do banners? Or is it that she does do banners, but only for stoic leftists? It's a jolly bit of rhetoric, but what is it doing in this article?

Just today *New York Times* columnist William Safire described that old-fashioned liberal Ted Kennedy as "Old Left," but that doesn't leave much room on our narrow political spectrum for anybody else. I'm a bit of a leftist myself, so left-bashing by everyone from Rush Limbaugh to Dan Savage doesn't surprise me. America loves a winner and delights in kicking losers. This is what we mean by "fair play." The "ins" dictate that our national debate now consists of humiliating and shaming the "outs." Criticism, no matter how well or how poorly founded, is dismissed as whining, even by the victims of the policy, because we all want to be on the "winning" side.

But I'm a little surprised to see this attitude creeping into *Real Change*. As a communication organ for some of the most "out" among us, you should be cautious about adopting gratuitous denigration of any disenfranchised group. I have seen and heard enough of your staff and advisors on picket lines, at hearings, and in meetings to believe that you know better.

Bill Clifford  
Seattle

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# Real Change

Reaching Out to End Poverty

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Mission Statement:

*Real Change* exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

Goals:

Provide a foundation for grassroots organizing. Publish the views of marginalized communities. Create direct economic opportunity. Build bridges with a broad range of allies in the struggle against poverty.

The **Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project** is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Programs include the *Real Change* newspaper, the **StreetWrites** peer support group for homeless writers, the **Homeless Speakers Bureau**, and the **First things First** organizing project. All donations support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

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Articles appearing in *Real Change* reflect the opinions and perspectives of the authors. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry, and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives on poverty and homelessness can find expression. *Real Change* reserves the right to edit any material for length and style. Articles considered libelous or which encourage violence, sexism, homophobia, or racism will not be considered for publication.



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# When will Children be a Priority?

## Olympia needs to get serious

By Jon Gould

As you read these words, our state representatives in Olympia are debating the so-called "high profile" issues of the day: higher education, medical malpractice insurance, and corporate tax breaks for research and development.

Lost in this debate are thousands of children who bore the brunt of last year's budget crisis. The effects of that crisis on our state's children are real and immediate. Who are these children?

They are the ones who show up in hospital emergency rooms gasping for breath from an asthma attack that could have been avoided with preventive healthcare.

Because of budget cuts, nearly 70,000 children in Washington will lose access to health care coverage. That will double the number of uninsured children in our state.

They are the children whose parents can't find childcare.

In the last two years, over \$67 million has been cut from the state program that helps low-income families pay for quality childcare.

They are the children who show up at school with empty stomachs. Nearly 150 elementary schools around the state don't offer school breakfast while Washington continues to be among the top five states for hunger.

According to Governor Gary Locke, we're out of crisis mode. But how can that be when we leave children vulnerable to hunger, illness, and neglect?

If children were a true priority of government, their most critical needs would be met.

So, this year, we are asking legislators one simple question: When will children be a priority?

We'll be able to say children are a priority when every child has access to basic medical care, when no child goes hungry, when our state's children are truly protected from abuse and neglect.

We have a long way to go if we are truly going to give children the childhoods they deserve. But even the longest journeys are made up of concrete, individual steps forward. The legislature has the opportunity to take at least four such steps in the next 30 days. It can:

1. Restore health coverage for children by eliminating proposed monthly premiums for families below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. This can be done with little or no impact to the state budget, due to new federal money and savings from past budget cuts.
2. Invest more in the child-care subsidy program so that families needing assistance have access to the child care they need.
3. Pass the Act for Hungry Families Bill (H.B. 2769 and S.B. 6411). These bills would expand food assistance to families and expand school breakfast and lunch programs.
4. Pass the Healthy Food in Schools bill (H.B. 2760) to get rid junk food in public schools.

Until our elected officials act to renew the state's commitment to children, our youngest, most vulnerable residents will remain in harm's way. They deserve better. ■

*Jon Gould is the Deputy Director of the Children's Alliance, a statewide advocacy organization, and the past president of the Real Change Board of Directors. More information about the Children's Alliance is at [www.childrensalliance.org](http://www.childrensalliance.org).*

### HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP!

CALL YOUR LEGISLATORS FOR "CHILDREN'S CALL-IN DAY" ON FEBRUARY 10

Join thousands of parents, students, youth, and other advocates for children by calling your state legislators on Tuesday, Feb. 10.

To make the FREE call to your legislators, call the legislative hotline at 800-562-6000.

You don't need to know your legislators names—the operator will tell you. When they ask for your message tell them to MAKE CHILDREN A PRIORITY and mention any or all of the issues above.

While you are calling, hundreds of child advocates will be meeting with their legislators for the Children's Alliance's annual Have a Heart for Kids Day. If you want to join us in Olympia, call (206)324-0340 ext. 22 or email [kat@childrensalliance.org](mailto:kat@childrensalliance.org).

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5/01/03



## Meet the People

On Thursday, January 22, low-income downtown residents met with city councilmembers Nick Licata and Peter Steinbrueck in the second of a series of face-to-face meetings designed to bring politics to life for those less likely to vote. The Get Out the Vote Coalition organized the meetings with the belief that poor people, homeless people, people of color, and others who don't vote in high numbers would be more involved in elections if politicians addressed their concerns.

Not surprisingly, the 15 residents of the Gatewood Apartments, a subsidized low-income building, told the councilmembers how hard it is to find affordable housing: the long waiting lists, the difficulty saving enough for a deposit, and the cycle that people get stuck in between shelters, motels, and the streets. The councilmembers heard these concerns and vowed to continue working with advocates and "regular people" to solve the problem. Steinbrueck noted that a studio apartment costs \$600 to \$700 in Seattle, less than most poor people can pay on a limited income, and said, "The cold reality is that housing is not a right."

Both councilmembers also had a chance to talk specifics. Licata told the group about his proposal to incorporate downtown day services for the homeless into the new Command Center planned for Pioneer Square. Steinbrueck encouraged the group to keep organizing to prevent the rapid loss of affordable housing. Both urged the residents to stay involved — before and after elections — and offered to try to do a better job letting people know when their voices can make a difference.

Most everyone in attendance was hopeful after the meeting, and for good reason. Licata described the significance that a building like the Gatewood Apartments could have on a candidate. In a City Council election, there are rarely more than 90 votes in any precinct — fewer than the number of people living in the Gatewood. If just half of the Gatewood's residents voted, the number of votes in that precinct would "jump out" on a precinct map, spurring candidates to look more closely at what was going on — and possibly see those low-income residents as a meaningful voting bloc. Poorer people don't give money to campaigns, he said, but money only matters because it gets a message out — and the message wins votes. So, to counter big-money interests, lower-income people need to vote, and they have to be visible as they organize for power. And in the end, each developer, like each Gatewood resident, still only gets one vote.

After the meeting, a resident named Michele said this event would make her future voting seem more real, since before, she didn't know anything about the City Council. Lily Tran, an organizer of the event, was happy with the results, saying that she was surprised by how powerful it was for people to have a chance to share their personal stories and struggles with important decision makers.

—Rachael Myers

## Cate Building opens

The Reverend Bill and Jan Cate may not have always taken the most popular stand on some issues, but the two longtime housing advocates were honored last week for their lifelong concerns for social justice.

Last week, the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) dedicated its newest housing unit, the Cate Apartments, at 312 NW 85th Street in Greenwood. The apartments are comprised of 31 new flats and townhouses for families and individuals earning less than 50 percent of the area median income (about \$31,000 a year for a two-person household).



THE GREENWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD'S NEW CATE APARTMENTS. PHOTO COURTESY LIHI.

"Affordable housing for families with children is difficult to find in North Seattle," said Sharon Lee, LIHI executive director. "Market rents are out of reach for many working families."

Rev. Cate served as President-Director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle from 1970 to 1990. He was instrumental in initiating the first food banks in the Seattle area. The Cates withheld their



personal income taxes to protest the U.S. nuclear arms buildup and in protests against Seafirst Bank (now Bank of America) for investing in South Africa during apartheid. In 1977, the Church Council under Rev. Cates' leadership threatened to sue the Seattle School District for stalling on desegregation.

"The Cates had passionate feelings about peace and social justice and were willing to take public and controversial stances," says David Bloom, who introduced the Cates at a ceremony of about 50 people on Wednesday, January 28.

According to LIHI housing developer Sallie Lin, the Cate Apartments opened last month; 15 of the 31 units are filled. Seattle Housing Authority is in the process of approving tenants for six more. Linn expects the complex to be filled in the next few weeks with applicants coming from the Holly Park Replacement Program, which compensates for public housing destroyed at the Holly Park housing project.

—R.V. Murphy

## Fire on Queen Anne

Fire in a 53-unit Seattle Housing Authority building sent one man to the hospital overnight and caused damage estimated between \$35,000 and \$50,000 near midnight on January 29.

The man (whose name was not released) had fallen asleep while smoking, says Helen Fitzgerald, spokesperson for Seattle Fire Department, and the fire was noticed after 11 p.m. He was taken to Harborview Medical Center for smoke inhalation and minor injuries, while fellow tenants waited outside for about an hour as the Fire Department inspected the building.

Upon getting out of the hospital, the man was relocated to another SHA building. The fifth-floor unit was "pretty much totaled," says SHA spokesperson Virginia Felton. Additional damage was done to other units.

"If he was determined to be responsible for the fire, depending on the reason, he could be evicted," Felton says. The investigation is pending.

The building, called the Queen Anne Heights and located at 1212 Queen Anne Avenue North, has both strobe and audible fire alarms but no sprinklers.

—Kathleen Mitchell

## Relief, at last

Automated, self-cleaning toilets are being installed in five locations around the city, and they're liable to enliven water-cooler conversations for months. Will people say "I'll use them only to see what they're like" or "I wouldn't go in one if you gave me Mariners tickets"? Time will tell.

The City of Seattle has entered into a lease arrangement to provide the toilets for public use at a yearly cost of \$675,000. Just in case the high-tech self-cleaning systems don't work, maintenance people will check each toilet twice a day and clean up if necessary.

According to Ron Perkerewicz, handling the project for Seattle Public Utilities, everything begins March 1. "We expect to finish all work by the end of February."

Using the facility is free. To do so, you hit a button; the door opens. Inside, the toilets are complete with an emergency 911 button and a wireless phone. The door is automatically locked. It will open, no matter what, after several minutes. Exactly how many is one detail that's still up in the air. Perkerewicz says the times will vary, because disabled people will need more time than others.

One homeless person relaxing in Pioneer Square after arriving from San Francisco has seen similar toilets in the City by the Bay. "Tim" says they are both good and bad. "The biggest problem is that some of the junkies and boozers will lock themselves in for 20 minutes," he says. "I saw one of them in downtown San Francisco and three men, a woman with a bike, and a dog came out after 15 minutes. I've gone into a few and found blood on the walls, needles on the floor, and bottles of wine and beer."

Most homeless people spending their days in Pioneer Square utilize facilities at the rear of the fire station across Main Street from Occidental Park, where an attendant is present. Problem is, after 9 p.m., persons in the area don't have a readily accessible toilet.

The toilets will present a challenge for Seattle police. "We're concerned about overriding the locked doors," one bike officer patrolling the area commented. "If we know several people are inside rather than one person, well, who knows what's going on?" Perkerewicz said a back door is available for maintenance personnel using a key, and arrangements might be made for police to have similar access.

—Ed Cain

Do you have any stories we should look into? Call Adam at 441-3247, ext. 207, and just maybe we will.



# Truth to Power

## Tired of their landlord's neglect, tenants of a decrepit Auburn building take their grievances to Olympia

By Polly Keary

Thursday, January 29, Olympia.  
10:00 AM

Zandra Lea, 16, is bored. Her mom, Tamra Leigh, 43, is nervous and getting more nervous. Belinda Meehan, 54, their neighbor, is tired but ready for battle. All three are sitting in the back row of the plastic chairs set up at the Episcopalian church in rain-soaked Olympia, listening as speakers talk about the need for low-income housing. It's Housing Advocacy Day, and Tamra, Zandra and Belinda are at the capitol for the first time. Belinda is learning how to lobby, Tamra is preparing a speech she will deliver at a hearing on House Bill (H.B.) 2870, and Zandra is enjoying a day off from school.

They live at the Oxford Apartments in Auburn, which is on the verge of being condemned. If it is, all the residents of the 20-unit building will have to relocate. Most of them don't have the money for a deposit and first and last months' rent. That's why these three have come to Olympia. H.B. 2870 would force landlords of buildings that are condemned to fork over enough money to allow low-income tenants to move, about \$2,000 per family.

There are over 100 people here, some dressed shabbily, some in power suits. Homeless people, activists, and politicians share coffee and muffins, listening as speakers prepare them to address their legislators.

"What brings you here?" I ask Belinda.

"I'm here to support Tamra in her speech and support our cause. We're trying to get this bill passed because we are going to have to move," she says. She explains that the residents of the Oxford Apartments finally called in experts, in spite of fears that the building would be condemned, only to find that the 54-year-old plumbing and electrical systems need to be replaced entirely.

"Our landlord wouldn't fix the minor things, I don't expect he'll fix the major ones," she says.

People there are being evicted for complaining, she says, and one woman developed an infection on her surgical sites from bathing in the contaminated water. A city official had suggested that Tamra contact the Tenants' Union, an activist group that helps renters. That's how they met Michele Thomas, who is shepherding them through their first

day in Olympia.

"It's going to be an interesting day," Tamra says.

11:10

Michele is conferring rapidly with Tamra.

"It's going to be packed," Michele says.

"They're asking people to cut their speeches so that everyone has time to speak." Tamra's four-minute speech will have to be cut to one minute.

Tamra pulls two typewritten pages out of a folder, already covered with black ink where she has made notes and crossed things out.



BELINDA MEEHAN, TAMRA LEIGH, AND ZANDRA LEA VISITED STATE LEGISLATORS JANUARY 29, TALKING UP A PROPOSED TENANT RELOCATION ORDINANCE. THE WOMEN LIVE IN AN AUBURN BUILDING THAT MAY SOON BE CONDEMNED. PHOTO BY ANDREA LEE.

"We'll be fine. I'll cross some more things out...." She starts a radical edit.

Nancy Amidei, a longtime activist, takes the stage and runs through the political process of lobbying. She explains that everyone should talk to their legislators and leave something in writing. She also has everyone rehearse a small speech on why they are here.

Zandra is proofreading her mom's much shorter speech. So much of the speech is crossed out that it's hard to tell what, if anything, is left.

12:30

A van drops us off in front of a high gray building on the capitol campus. The marble halls are impressive. It's a far cry from Tamra's apartment, which is so bad that she sends Zandra to stay at her brother's house as often as possible.

Michele herds us to the first of the offices we will visit, that of 47th Dis-

trict Representative Geoff Simpson. There is no one at the desk. Michele puts a folder with information and a small bag of chocolate-covered espresso beans with a slip attached that says "Need a lift? Housing is an economic stimulant!" into the drop box. Tamra includes a video tape with a note explaining that the video was made by the residents of the Oxford Apartments to show the conditions they live with.

On a low table near the desk we find a candy dish printed with the logo of the Washington Association of Realtors.

"It's from a landlord group," Michele says.

"Our espresso beans are nicer," Belinda sniffs.

1:30

We find 47th District Representative Jack Cairnes' office, where Tamra and Belinda have an appointment.

As we wait, we see lobbyists from other groups working the cubicles like reverse trick-or-treaters; instead of asking for goodies, they are handing them out.

When Cairnes returns, Tamra gives him a copy of the video and explains

why they think he should vote for H.B. 2870. Cairnes asks about the apartments. Tamra and Belinda explain about the raw sewage that gets in the water because of the overburdened plumbing.

"Oughta fix that with a Roto-Rooter," Cairnes says.

Belinda looks at Tamra, who explains that they've tried that. Belinda goes on eloquently to

explain the history of the tenants' struggle to get their home fixed.

"Seems like the only option is to tear down and rebuild," Cairnes says.

"Yes, but we have elderly people and single parents and they have not been able to save enough to move. That's why we need Bill 2870," Belinda explains.

Cairnes guesses that the landlord can't afford the repairs or he would make them. Michele says the landlord doesn't seem to care.

"I really don't believe that," Cairnes says. But he promises to read the material in the folder and look at the tape.

1:45

The hearing room is packed. Testimony on H.B. 2870 begins before the Local Government Committee. Two people from the Olympia City Council get up and display poster-sized photos of the Juanita Apartments, which were

condemned last year. One shows walls black with toxic mold. The city ended up pitching in to help the residents relocate. It was expensive. A realtor protests that buildings that are condemned because of the action of the tenants shouldn't have to pay this money. When it is Tamra's turn, she delivers her speech into the microphone, her voice clear.

"Despair is the right hand, fear is the left hand of the greedy slumlord," she says. "The current laws are the veil which the slumlords hold tightly with both hands to hide behind. House Bill 2870 would force accountability of the slumlord, not the government and the taxpayer. Why should the slumlord profit from the low-income, the government, and the taxpayer?"

"Imagine a single parent working 40 hours per week, not eligible for any type of public assistance because the parent makes a shade over the maximum allowed. History has proved itself, in this complex and others, that people live with the problems because it is better than the street. Single parents cannot risk the outcome of a complaint to the slumlord or a codes officer. What if the building is condemned? A low-income parent's choice: roof or street.

"This pattern is the plight of each tenant in low-income housing owned and operated by a greedy slumlord.

"I would like to share with you the condition of the Oxford Apartments we have inhabited. The building was constructed in 1950; the plumbing and electrical have never been updated. We have electrical conduits popping up through floors. We have electrical outlets that catch on fire, baseboard heaters that spark or do not work at all. If a second-floor toilet is flushed, it backs up in a first-floor kitchen sink. We have second-floor bathtubs ready to fall into the first-floor bathtubs. We have moldy, rotted drywall. The entire building is sinking.

"The abuse of the low-income, the elderly, the disabled, the single parent, and the less fortunate by the greedy slumlord is not a recent development. The slumlords use the low-income as commodities; once the commodity complains, it is disposed of and replaced with a new one, at great cost to the disposed-of individual.

It is my hope that the governor of Washington State will be our champion. House Bill 2870 would help protect the low-income from this type of corruption, this type of abuse. House Bill 2870 would help protect the taxpayers from the slumlords' neglect."

2:50

Back outside, Tamra is still shaking. "How do you feel?" Belinda asks.

"My legs are weak."

"You should have seen their faces, Tammy," Belinda says. "They really listened. They," she pauses, "listened."

Tired but hopeful, they plan to carry on.

"The mayor's next," says Belinda.

They meet with him in early February. ■





## politics of failure

politics of failure  
 that's  
 a hidden agenda  
 what's  
 an ulterior motive  
 an ulterior motive  
 what's  
 a hidden agenda  
 that's  
 politics of failure

—R. UNGRICH

## When a Shark Smiles

Two suitcases flew into an oblivion  
 Paradigms and histories pinning stubborn plaids  
 While shrinking in the white washing of the spin cycle.

Ammonia was a real gas but failing  
 As a cleanser delivering us not from evil  
 Castrating the arousal that dances with body chemistry.

Swimming in the vain streams covering humanity  
 Inflated egos float treading in a gala of insanity  
 Fallen idols wrestle each other frightening Halloween.

Flung into a landfill but not catapulted  
 Into a monastery or a froth-filled hypochondria  
 Propped up by stubborn pillars of the community.

Losing solid footing slipping from a galilee sky  
 The moon is in the spotlight the morning a dewy teardrop  
 Bishops are bobbing postponing the benediction of the ninth wave.

—CAROL KOSCHE

## The Old and Poor in the City

They fade as memories fade,  
 and are puzzled when asked of things unseen.  
 Eyes empty with sky,  
 their lives will soon be strewn among the stars.

Standing in line for buses,  
 their patience presumed like paving stones.  
 I see them rage quietly in waiting rooms.  
 Or dark lumps on park benches  
 their lust slides across the square.  
 Their love glows like a candle at noon.

They return home in the afternoon  
 neglected as plants in cellars,  
 their wisdom ignored like noble words  
 hung above a market place.

—LEONARD L. TEWS

### Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning



**L**et's talk about baseball!  
 A lot of people think I don't care about baseball, just because I don't like to play it or watch anybody else play it, or hear about baseball games and scores, or know when the season begins and ends, or know how to play baseball.

But how wrong they are. I care, every bit as much as I care about all the other great joys of life, e.g., the daisies of the meadows, the smiles of little boys catching and gutting their first fishes, fishes in general. Oh, I don't know, kites are good. Mom, apple pie, rhubarb roasting on an open fire, whatever. Baseball is like one of those kinds of things to me. I actually think about baseball a lot, even when it's not happening, like now.

Parts of baseball I especially like to think about are the bat parts and the running parts. I don't like to think about the catching parts, because of a certain traumatic experience that occurred to me as a kid. My grade school had my gym class play baseball, and it so happens I am a myopically challenged person who requires glasses (the technical term in baseball jargon is "four-eyes"). The teacher disallowed my glasses on the playing field for the very reasonable reason that if I were hit with a baseball it could shatter them and send shards of glass through my eyes and on into my brain, leaving me a vegetable.

So I was put out to one of the "fields" (I think it was the "right" one) to look for and catch fly balls, without my glasses. But I couldn't see this one fly ball that came at me, so instead of catching it, it caught me, right in the head. Good thing I wasn't wearing my glasses at the time or it would have been just like I just told you, with me being a vegetable and all, and the shards! But it still left an emotional scar for life. Ouch!

In spite of that trauma I still want to talk about baseball. I want to share

my excitement about the recent ruling by Seattle Municipal Court Judge Jean Rietschel that dismissed charges against some men for scalping Mariners tickets on the streets, on the grounds they were the victims of selective enforcement of Seattle's anti-scalping law.

Now I don't understand anything about Seattle's anti-scalping law. What I especially don't understand about Seattle's anti-scalping law is, how is scalping wrong if capitalism is right? I mean, there are crimes occasionally associated with scalping, like theft and counterfeiting and fraud, but we have laws against those things already. Why do we have to throw a net out broadly for scalpers? Isn't that like arresting people who drive in order to put a stop to hit and runs?

**"I think we need an Amendment Nine and a Half that says, 'We really meant Amendment Nine.'"**

I have lots of questions like that. Why doesn't the Ninth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ever get a nod in courts? That's the one that says a right of the people doesn't have to be on the list to count. I think we need an Amendment Nine and a Half that says, "We really meant Amendment Nine."

According to a *Seattle Times* story, Judge Rietschel based her ruling in part on her opinion that the scalping arrests would not have occurred had the Mariners themselves not pursued them by hiring off-duty police officers to look for scalpers. Also, she pointed out the Mariners allow scalping on their own website by letting sellers use fake out-of-city addresses to get around the city ordinance. I guess that's OK to the Mariners, because they get a cut of the online sales.

Here's what I'm really excited about: It can be done, people! It's possible to win a case of selective enforcement in Seattle! There's hope for the rest of us yet, that the courts might protect us from

the selective enforcement of city and state ordinances by police in the hire of businesses.

There shouldn't be ANY police in the pay of businesses. When an off-duty police officer uses his power to arrest while in the pay of anyone but the taxpayers, proper accountability is skirted and government authority is subverted. The power to arrest belongs only in public hands under public direction.

Hooray for small steps toward sanity. ■





# Street Talk

Interviews and photos by Kristina Mageau

**Saturday, January 10, 4:44 p.m., Third Ave. & Yesler Way.** A transient Black male aged 60 was observed standing in Prefontaine Park at Third and Yesler. Officers were aware that the man was currently excluded from all Zone 4 parks for one year; this ban includes Prefontaine Park. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

**Sunday, January 11, 1 p.m., Fourth Ave. S.** Officers were dispatched to a report of a disturbance at the Ryerson bus base. They contacted the suspect, a homeless White male aged 47, who was refusing to leave the facility. He had been found sleeping on the bus when it arrived at the base, and had been escorted off the bus and asked to leave. Officers warned him that he had to leave the facility or face criminal trespass charges. The suspect stated he was angry at Metro for not waking him up earlier, and demanded to be taken to White Center. He appeared to be intoxicated, and refused again to leave the base. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

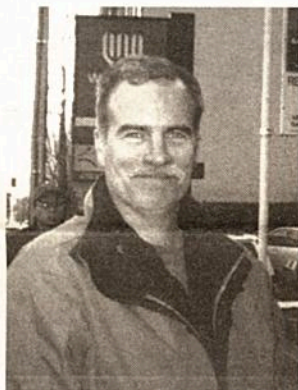
**Sunday, January 11, 1:45 p.m., Fourth Avenue and South Lander St.** Officers responded to a 911 call from a Shell station on 4th and Lander. A man had started yelling and throwing things at customers. The suspect, a homeless White male aged 32, then picked up a bottle of anti-freeze and poured it out next to a gas pump. He then tried to ignite this with his lighter. Witnesses stated he was mumbling, but could not be understood. It seemed he was attempting to blow up the gas station. He was transferred to Harborview Medical Center for decontamination, as he was covered in anti-freeze, and for a mental health evaluation.

**Monday, January 12, 9:52 a.m., Broadway QFC.** QFC security detained a transient White male aged 33 for stealing a bottle of wine. Police arrived and placed him into custody. A routine name check showed he had been trespassed from QFC before. A search of his belongings revealed a note that the suspect had written prior to the incident, and which stated that he wished to enter a clean and sober treatment program. The officers contacted several facilities, and the Union Gospel Mission agreed to take him. He was dropped off at their treatment facility. Charges are still pending on the shoplifting charge.

**Tuesday, January 13, 4:16 p.m., Elliot Ave. and Blanchard St.** Suspect, a transient White male aged 39, was contacted inside a posted "No Trespassing" area under an onramp to southbound Highway 99. The sign is posted in clear view, and police state the area is a haven for drugs and vice. The suspect admitted to police he knew he was not supposed to be there. He also had alcohol on his person. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail. Arrested at the same time was a transient Native American woman aged 40. She was found in the same area, and was booked into King County Jail.

Last year, in addition to a \$3.2 billion tax credit, state officials promised to give Boeing a host of state-subsidized bonuses if the company chose to assemble its new 7E7 in Washington. State officials enticed the company by pledging a wider freeway, better seaports and air terminals, and publicly paid worker training. Many of the details remain secret, but the bonus package will cost the state at least \$44 million. Washington's offer beat out other states; Boeing will build the 7E7 here. *Street Talk* asks Seattle: *Was it wise to promise the airplane manufacturer all those billions?*

"The state needs to make it welcoming for businesses, because otherwise they will all move out and Seattle will be left with high unemployment. The state also needs to practice sustainability... \$3.2 billion should be geared towards sustainable business practices, not just a one-time thing."  
—Andrea Leary, 46, vocational education teacher



"It's almost a form of corporate bribery, in a way. I think the state did what they had to do. [The expansion of] HOV lanes will solve traffic problems."  
—Kevin Leary, 48, truck driver

"It's basically extortion, where people are desperate for jobs. You start wondering if different states will become third-world nations. It's a big, corporate "bum fight" — "Hey, you're both desperate. I've got a dollar. Why don't you fight for it, and I'll give it to whoever wins."



—Bill Bullock, 24, retail clerk / freelance journalist

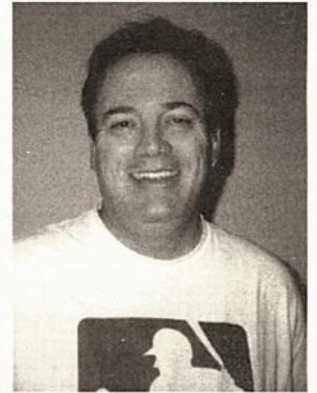


"I have mixed feelings because I know it would have been disastrous for our state if Boeing did not build the 7E7 here. However, I worry that they might've given away too much, in the form of financial resources. I hope they considered all the consequences in doing so."

—Eileen Langlois, 44, salesperson

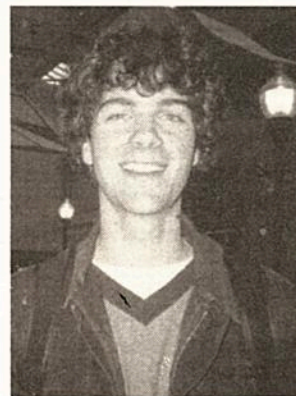
"Anything that keeps people employed is good for the area. If people are upset about the tax breaks, business has been done this way for 200 years in this country. They may not like it, but that's the way it is."

—Hal DeBerry, 43, baseball coach



"This is the disintegration of our country's ability to support the general welfare. Free Trade does not work."

—Will Mederski, 19, political activist



"Boeing is rich already and they don't need more money. They could spend their money other ways — [for the poor], the hungry, [and the] schools."

—Aysia Bell, 17, student



"I disagree with it if they want to employ people they're just going to lay off. If the government really wanted to make a difference with the money they have, they'd give it to companies that help people."

—Evin McKline, 15, student

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SARAH DEMONSTRATES HER SKILLS AT YOUTHCARE'S CLASSROOM COFFEE BAR.  
PHOTO BY ALICIA POLLETT.

### GRIND, Continued from page 1

"on the verge," according to John Farrage, who helps to oversee the training program as an employment specialist with YouthCare.

### In Class

"I loved coffee when I first started, then we started pulling shots. My first day I had six or seven cups!"

It's week three of the program for Sarah. At this point everyone in the class has earned a food handler's permit, they've studied the history and cultivation of coffee, and they've begun to learn the basics of working in a café. She talks about how to make a good shot of espresso, and, importantly, how to show up on time.

"They give you one five-minute freebie," she says of being late, and then the teachers give verbal warnings before progressing to written warnings. Just like a real job.

And for Sarah, it *is* a real job, since she's getting paid minimum-wage to be there. Next week, her class will start their on-the-job training at the FareStart Café, where they'll make espresso and serve the lunchtime crowd of the adjoining Antioch University.

### Working at the Cafe

The skinny punk rocker behind the espresso machine has three rings in his lower lip. The manager takes my order while Sarah works in back, making sandwiches in preparation for the lunch rush. This could be any of Seattle's independently owned cafes. My double-tall latte is good and strong, with velvety foam — better than Starbucks.

Taking a break, Sarah says her first week of on-the-job-training was "stressful. The first day I was sick to my stom-

ach, worried I wouldn't be good at it."

She's discovered that sitting in a classroom is one thing, but applying what you've learned is another. "Everything always looks good on paper," she says. "I was nervous that the skills I was learning wouldn't carry over to the workplace."

Now it's her second week at the café, and she's finding her groove. "Actually putting your knowledge to work... after I got into the flow, I liked it." She was worried she wouldn't be able to focus, but "once you find it, you can get it every time. You just got to find the flow."

While acknowledging that dealing with the public can be tough, Sarah doesn't lose her cool with customers, though "there were a couple of times when I wanted to put a latte in a guy's lap" she says, laughing.

It's a busy environment, but she's had lots of support while adjusting. "[Supervisors] Cle and Loretta were re-

ally nice the first day. It really eased my anxiety."

Are they strict bosses? Sarah glances at Loretta behind the counter, bites her lip, and laughs. Loretta answers for her, smiling: "Only if necessary!"

Sarah adds, "Just getting eight teenagers to show up on time is a feat in itself."

It's week five, and Sarah and her seven fellow classmates rotate through a schedule of different shifts in the café. By now she's noticed that some of her fellow baristas-in-training put more heart into it than others.

"Some students are really good at making drinks, and some are just doing it for the paycheck," she says.

At \$7 an hour part-time, the pay isn't enough for her; she's applying for a job making pizza, and has an interview at UPS. Her housing situation is still up in the air, and she's had to move from the YWCA to a women's shelter at the Salvation Army.

With a break for the holidays, graduation is still five weeks away.

### Graduation

By the seventh week of class, Sarah has nearly four weeks of café experience under her belt. There's one more week left in the program, but she won't be there.

She'll be too busy working at her new job.

**"I had a customer I wanted to choke, but I gave him my best Rabbit smile, made his drink just the way he wanted it, and told him to have a nice day."**

Wearing a smart-looking dress shirt, tie, and slacks, Sarah says she landed a full-time position at World Wrapps as a cashier. She'll be making \$7.50 an hour to start, with a raise after three months. Medical and dental benefits start immediately, and she's eligible for their 401(k) retirement plan after a year of employment.

She won't be making espresso. Rather, she'll start out as a cashier and then learn to make smoothies, eventually working up to cooking.

"You can move up! That's different from any job I've had," she says. "This is the first time I've ever been given room to grow."

Barista program staffers John

Farrage and Jeff Thompson provided personal references and a pre-interview pep talk. Sarah says that "John said 'You can do this — just breathe, don't pass out!'"

She had to go through two interviews. The management was looking for someone who could work quickly, so they were glad to hear about her experience as a barista. In the first interview, "The manager said, 'I want to know how you handle stress.' I said I leave it out of my work."

The second interview with the district manager was more difficult. They asked to hear a story about when she demonstrated good customer service.

She told them about one time she was treated rudely: "I had a customer I wanted to choke, but I gave him my best Rabbit smile, made his drink just the way he wanted it, and told him to have a nice day."

They asked her to start on Monday.

Even if she didn't complete the course, Sarah says the barista training helped in a number of ways. It gave her something to put on her resume and work-related experiences to talk about in the interview. The paycheck helped buy some nice new clothes to use in the job hunt.

And even though she won't be making espresso, it gave her a field in which to start looking for work; she found the World Wrapps job while looking in the paper for a barista gig.

FareStart and YouthCare put on a graduation ceremony for students who complete the training. Sarah's class graduated on January 9.

"At first I was worried I couldn't graduate," since she missed the last week of class, where they work on their resumes and prepare for interviews.

But Farrage says she'll be allowed to miss the last week for work and get her certificate anyway, "since the purpose of the program is to find them a job," he says, "and she's got one."

It's her last day at the FareStart Café. Next door, Antioch University is out for the holiday, so business is slow. The rest of her shift consists mostly of cleaning up and other closing duties.

She's looking forward to full-time work, because money is tight right now. She's still waiting for her housing application to go through. Though the Salvation Army shelter she's in costs only \$150 a month, she can only stay there six months.

If her housing application is successful and she gets an affordable, subsidized apartment, she'll be incredibly fortunate. After all, the odds are daunting. She has joined the ranks of the state's 370,000 low-wage workers — workers who typically don't earn enough money to pay for the myriad costs of housing, food, transportation, education, and child care.

But since entering the training program, she has a newfound sense of optimism for the year ahead.

"I have a lot more confidence since I started [barista training]," she says. "I'm good at what I do and there's no reason why I can't do it." ■

## About the Barista Training Program

**New classes begin** every four weeks.

**Classes are held at** YouthCare's Barista Training classroom and the FareStart Café at Antioch University, both in downtown Seattle.

**They're made possible by** a grant from the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, Starbucks Coffee Company, SVP Kids, The Laurel Foundation, coffee bar supplier DaVinci Gourmet, and Almonetto and Sons Inc.

**To apply for the program,** pick up an application at the Orion Center, 1020 Virginia, in downtown Seattle. Their phone number is 206-622-5555.

To make a donation, or find out about volunteer opportunities, contact YouthCare at 206-694-4500.



# Manifest Destiny

Chalmers Johnson helped explain 9/11 to a shocked America. In his new book he lays bare *The Sorrows of Empire*

Interview by Adam Holdorf

UC Berkeley International Studies professor Chalmers Johnson has been a Cold Warrior for much of his career. When the Soviet Union crumbled, he expected the United States — declaring itself the winner of the US-Soviet face-off — to pack up its Cold War military outposts, consummate its nuclear disarmament treaties, and devote itself to peacetime pursuits. Appalled by U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s, he began to wonder: had America's arms race against the Soviets masked some more fundamental purpose?

The result of those musings was his 2000 book *Blowback: the Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, which ignited a brush fire among foreign-policy wonks over to what degree U.S. citizens are endangered by their country's foreign policy in places such as the Middle East. Then came September 11, 2001, and people asking "Why do they hate us?" had, in *Blowback*, an answer. The network of American military bases on every continent except Antarctica; the secret and not-so-secret wars which have taken civilian lives from Panama to the Philippines — the price of American hegemony, he had warned, is terrorism against its citizens.

Now, writes Johnson in *The Sorrows of Empire*, "it no longer seems necessary to issue warnings; instead a diagnosis, even an autopsy, may be more appropriate." The American Empire — the military's untempered and untethered operations, the Bush doctrines of "preventive war" and unilateralism — is all about us. And no regime change in the White House will make it go away. "A revolution would be required," he writes, to simply declassify the expense accounts of the Central Intelligence Agency.

But Johnson finds hope, too — in the millions of marchers who opposed the Iraq War; in the anti-globalization movement that debuted in Seattle in 1999; in the vehement disagreement of 30 percent of the American public to our nation's policies. And ultimately, in the good intentions of the 70 percent — the misinformed and distracted Americans sending their sons, daughters, or neighbors into danger in Iraq.

**Real Change:** You have said that you began thinking of the United States' foreign policy as one of empire when you visited Okinawa.

**Johnson:** I was invited by the governor of Okinawa, the poorest, most southerly island of Japan, after the incident of September 4, 1995, in which two Marines and a sailor had abducted, beaten, and raped a 12-year-old girl. The Pentagon would have you believe the 1995 rape was a single, unusual incident. The truth of the matter is that the rate of sexually violent crimes in Okinawa leading to court martial is about two per month. One of the things I remember most vividly is the locals' deep and abiding belief that they were being victimized by both the Japanese government and by the Pentagon. The island was essentially a military colony between 1945 and 1972. The Japanese government, which wishes to have the alliance with the United States but does not want to have American troops located very close to its own citizens, essentially dumps them all in the equivalent of Puerto Rico.

My first reaction was that Okinawa must be exceptional. As a result of studying American bases around the world, I concluded that the real tragedy of Okinawa was not that it was unusual or atypical — it was far too typical of the sexually violent crimes, environmental pollution, noise, bar

brawls, drunk driving accidents that are associated with our overseas bases.

**RC:** Are there lessons for our occupation of Iraq in this?

**Johnson:** It's really interesting how much the American press has tried to suggest that our bringing democracy to Japan under General MacArthur after World War II is a model for our activities in Iraq. I've wanted to always say that if you believe that, then you've got to leave Okinawa entirely out of the discussion, because the last thing we ever did was bring democracy to Okinawa. It's certainly a place where no one thanks the United States for its presence.

**RC:** Your very first quote in *The Sorrows of Empire* is President Bush saying "Our nation is the greatest force for good in history." You trace that sentiment back to Woodrow Wilson and his League of Nations, and show it's led many a leader astray. Where did we go wrong this time?

**Johnson:** The United States has made a potentially fatal mistake after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 in starting to convince itself that it is a new Rome. That we are a colossus afoot in the world, no one can possibly resist our military power, we are beyond good and evil, we do not need friends. We begin to sound like the Roman Empire,

which of course was a military dictatorship.

When George Bush says we are the greatest force of good in history, or when he says "You're either with us or against us," which is a line Lenin liked too, but it actually comes from the Bible — we're talking about a passionate ideological error that is leading us into, in my opinion, very very dangerous straits.

Security of Defense Rumsfeld in October said that "we don't have a metric" — his phrase, meaning a measure — we don't have a metric for whether we are succeeding against terrorism. But I think we do have a metric: in the eight years between 1993 and 2001, including the attacks of 9/11, Al Qaeda carried out five major bombing incidents around the world. Since that time, in just two years, including the suicide attacks in Istanbul against the British consulate and the HSBC Bank, Al Qaeda has carried out 17 major bombings. The situation of terrorism is clearly worse since 9/11, and reveals the inappropriateness of an overly militarized response to terrorist incidents.

**RC:** You say it would take "a revolution" to return to some of the principles that were expressed in the Declaration of Independence — a declassified CIA budget, for example. Is it too late for the democratic principles that founded our republic?

**Johnson:** That's what we're going to find out, in a very short period of time. My last chapter called "The Sorrows of Empire" has a discussion of four main sorrows. One is perpetual war: Bush and Cheney have mentioned between 50 and 60 nations on earth that they would like to bring about regime change through preventive war.

Second, the end of the Republic, in the sense of the hollowing out of the Constitution: James Madison, easily the most important author of the Constitution, declared that the single most important article in it was that the right to go to war had to be in the hands of those elected by the people, never in the hands of a single man. In October 2002, our Congress voted to give that power to a single man when he felt like it, on his impulse, including the use of nuclear weapons [with regard to Iraq].

Third, a tradition of deceit by the government in speaking to the public. I would cite above all February 5, 2003, when Secretary of State Colin Powell sat in the United Nations Security Council and issued a long statement that, as we now know, was an utter tis-

sue of lies. Our Secretary of State has simply no credibility left on earth.

Fourth, bankruptcy. Everyone knows what is happening to the American federal deficit; it is catastrophic. As Herbert Steinman, who was once Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers once said, "Things that can't go on forever don't." Whatever you think of the Constitution, I guarantee you an economic crisis is something that everyone will have to come to grips with when it occurs, and it could happen at any time.

**RC:** You're saying that the fault lies deeper than with the current administration. Do you see hope for change in your lifetime?

**Johnson:** I think it's perfectly possible to imagine the removal of President Bush and his administration. He seems

well on his way toward discrediting himself. But no matter who replaces him, we'll have enormous difficulties standing up to the vested interests of the Pentagon, the intelligence agencies, and the military-industrial complex. If you ask me right now whether I think that's going to happen, I'm sorry to say I really don't. I think the polls strongly suggest that 70 percent of the public endorses the Bush Administration and the war policy; 30 percent is adamantly opposed. And 30 percent in a country as big as the United States is not a small number.

One of the things that appalls me about the current political situation is how none of the Democrat [presiden-

tial candidates] seem to be offering an alternative to what American behavior in the world should be. None of them have any real criticism of the size of the Defense budget, the amount of money spent. Some of them — that is, most of them — voted for war powers to be transferred to the President [in the case of Iraq]. ■

*Chalmers Johnson speaks at Trinity United Methodist Church on Wednesday, February 11, at 7 p.m. Tickets (\$5) are available in advance at Elliott Bay Bookstore, 1st and Main Street in Pioneer Square. Trinity United Methodist Church is located at 6512 -23rd Avenue NW, the corner of NW 65th Street and 23rd NW in Ballard. Co-presented with KBCS 91.3 FM (www.kbcs.fm) and Seattle Thunder (www.seattlethunder.net).*



**The United States has made a potentially fatal mistake after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 in starting to convince itself that it is a new Rome.**



# Truth or Consequences

*The Five Biggest Lies Bush Told Us About Iraq*  
By Christopher Scheer, Robert Scheer, and Lakshmi Chaudhry  
Independent Media Institute, 2003  
Paperback, 174 pages, \$9.95

Review by R.V. Murphy

**T**he *Five Biggest Lies Bush Told Us About Iraq*, brings to mind the first Political Science class I ever took in college. Professor Sullivan made the same point that Christopher Scheer, Robert Scheer and Lakshmi Chaudhry make in their new book: "Americans always like to think of themselves as the good guys in the white hat."

My former teacher used to talk a lot about "propaganda," but the Scheers and Chaudhry are more blunt: they call George W. Bush a liar. On June 27, 2003, AlterNet ([www.alternet.org](http://www.alternet.org), the sister web site to this book's publisher) posted Christopher Scheer's article, "The Ten Most Appalling Lies About Iraq," the most-read article on AlterNet in 2003. Scheer then hooked up with his dad, Bob Scheer, a *Los Angeles Times* columnist and a political muckraker since the '70s, and Chaudhry, AlterNet's foreign policy expert, to produce this book in less than six weeks. Saddam Hussein's capture missed the December 1 deadline, but other than that the book is pretty up to date.

For the record, the five Bush lies that make the book are: (1) Al Qaeda's ties to Iraq and that Saddam had something to do with 9/11; (2) Iraq illegally possessed chemical and biological weapons which were a threat to the U.S.; (3) Iraq was fast pursuing and might even possess the means to build

and use a nuclear bomb; (4) Occupying Iraq would not only be "a cakewalk" but a party, as liberated Iraqis welcome us and cooperate in our plans to rebuild their country; and (5) With U.S. aid and guidance, Iraq would become a democratic model for the rest of the region.

More importantly, the authors examine the reasons for the lies. The invasion of Iraq was the "pet project" of Bush's foreign policy advisors: a high-risk project that went beyond running Saddam out of office or taking over the oil reserves, but also included invading, occupying, and reconstructing a nation. And according to the authors, future Bush advisors such as Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, and Vice President Dick Cheney have been writing, talking, and even thinking about occupying Iraq and remaking the Middle East since the '80s.

But as the authors note, "Americans don't like to think of themselves as imperialists, getting their hands dirty to secure wealth. U.S. presidents know that to sell a war to the American people, they need at least two basic ingredients: self-defense and moral duty."

**"U.S. presidents know that to sell a war to the American people, they need at least two basic ingredients: self-defense and moral duty."**

Although the book is only 174 pages long, the authors prove their points and then some. The amount of info they barrage the reader with can be overwhelming on occasion, and they are tough to argue with, particularly when they let people like Wolfowitz (who said that Iraqi soldiers would lay down their guns and join the U.S. cause) hang themselves with their own words. Comments

from military personnel who were against the war, such as General Anthony Zinni (who led U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf War) are also fascinating, and mostly absent from the mainstream media. Anyone enticed by these comments may want to rush out and buy Bob Woodward's *Bush At*

*War*, which features direct interviews with those who attended Bush's War Summit at Camp David on September 15, 2001.

The biggest flaw with this book sounds like a minor one, but becomes a major hassle for anyone attempting to review it. The book has no table of contents — a no-no for any non-fiction work. Upon coming across a good quote from, say, General Brent Scowcroft, I had to go hunting through earlier parts of the book to see exactly who Scowcroft was. I'm still not sure what jobs Richard Perle and Stephen Hadley hold, since they're often mentioned in only general terms, as part of

Bush's inner circle.

In their conclusion, the authors admit that of course, all presidents lie — in recent memory, one has lied about his sex life. But the lies of the Bush Administration have cost the country plenty in terms of blood and money. Generally, Bush's polling numbers have been dwindling, but they get a predictable bounce with events such as the capture of Saddam (and they'll get another if and when Bin Laden is captured). After these lies are laid bare, the authors note, "the only question that remains is how long the American people will continue to place their faith in false Messiahs." ■

## In Memory: Dolores Beamon

**O**n Monday, January 5, at 6:30 a.m., the body of longtime Hammond House shelter resident Dolores Beamon was found in a Seattle parking lot. While the cause of her death has yet to be determined, it has been theorized that homelessness, poor health and the snowstorm that had brought the city to a virtual standstill all contributed to her sad and unexpected demise.

Fifty-four years old at the time of her passing, Beamon was born and raised in the Seattle area and is survived by her mother, her siblings, and many nieces and nephews.

Dolores had a positive, cantankerous, and humorous influence on many of the women she knew during her three-year stay at Hammond House. She was well known for the kind and intelligent hand she offered to her friends, the courageous demeanor she presented in the face of great physical discomfort, the withering commentary she offered to her detractors, and her love of anything related to the Mariner's baseball team.

During a January 14 memorial service, homeless women's organizer Michelle Marchand remembered a recent conversation she had with Dolores at a recent WHEEL (Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League) event. Dolores commended WHEEL for the publicity they have brought to the otherwise unnoted deaths of homeless women and men; she said that someone had to stand for all the people whom no one else seemed to care about. No one could have known that the next individual that Women in Black would stand for would be Dolores herself.

When asked how the death of Dolores would affect the residents of Hammond House, program coordinator Kim Sather cheerlessly waved a hand in the direction of many of Dolores's friends despondently lost in thought, and said, "All one has to do is to look around at the faces of [these] women to see the effect her death has had upon the people who cared for her." In the end, it was Hammond House resident Sylvia Coleman who seemed to encapsulate the general feeling on the part of the women who knew and who loved Dolores. She "is with the angels now," Sylvia said softly, "but she is in a place where she has no more pain or sorrow.... We will miss our friend, but we have to say goodbye now. Go with God, my sister, go with God."

—Cynthia Lee Ozimek

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# Valentine's Day Notables

Friday 2/6

**Sixth Annual Seattle Arab & Iranian Film Festival**, sponsored by the largest Middle Eastern film distribution company in North America. Featuring films from Morocco to Iran, this year's event will provide insight and entertainment. Feb. 6-12, continues Feb. 13-15 with a different theme, at Broadway Performance Hall, Seattle Central Community College, Broadway and Pine. Info 206-322-0882 or [www.saiff.com](http://www.saiff.com).

Saturday 2/7

**Finding Hidden Constituents through Values**, a workshop sponsored by Center for Ethical Leadership and featuring author Paul H. Ray. Non-profit organizations seeking better ways to reach powerful, loyal constituents will find practical tools at this workshop. Fee \$75, scholarships available. 8 a.m.-noon, at Seattle University. Registration, location, and info 206-328-3020 or [www.ethicalleadership.org](http://www.ethicalleadership.org).

Monday 2/9

*ColorsNW* Magazine and Town Hall present "Living Colors: The **Comedy of Race and Ethnicity**," featuring Northwest comedians of color Vince Valenzuela, Cherokee Pettis, and Selena Whitaker-Paquet. This event mixes comedy and conversation, moderated by comedian Isiah Anderson. Free and open to the public. 7:30-9:30 p.m., at Town Hall, 1119 8th Ave. at Sen-

eca St. Info 206-444-9251 or [www.colorsnw.com](http://www.colorsnw.com).

Tuesday 2/10

World Affairs Council presents a discussion "Journalists vs. Governments: **What Independent Journalism?**" with Ann Cooper, Executive Director of the Committee to Protect Journalists and a correspondent for National Public Radio. Press freedom is important because without it, few other human rights are attainable. \$8, students \$5. 7 p.m., at University of Washington, Kane Hall, Room 220. Info 206-441-5910 or [www.world-affairs.org](http://www.world-affairs.org).

**Have A Heart for Kids Day** in Olympia, the Children's Alliance annual advocacy day at the state capitol, begins at 9:30 a.m. with a morning filled with advocacy training, a briefing on children's issues, and presentations from state legislators. All are welcome! Transportation available from several locations. Info 206-324-0340 x22. Registration information is at [www.childrensalliance.org](http://www.childrensalliance.org).

Wednesday 2/11

**Henry Louis Gates, Jr.**, renowned scholar and chair of Harvard's African-American studies department, discusses his latest book, *America Behind the Color Line: Dialogues with African-Americans*. Dr. Gates traveled across the country conducting interviews with such notables as Colin

Powell, Maya Angelou, and Morgan Freeman as well as talking with everyday folk. Tickets \$15 at the door or in advance at [www.foolproof.org](http://www.foolproof.org). 7:30 p.m., at Town Hall, 1119 8th Ave. at Seneca St. Info 206-325-3554.

Northwest **Labor Employment Law** Offices, sponsors current affairs show, "Speaking For Ourselves, To Each Other." 7:30 p.m., this and subsequent 2nd Wednesdays, on SSCAN TV Channel 77. Info LELO 206-860-1400.

Thursday 2/12

The Seventh Annual **Homelessness Marathon** will be broadcast from the steps of city hall in Cleveland, Ohio. The Marathon will cover many topics with guest hosts and the voices of the homeless. 7:30-10 p.m. on KBCS 91.3 FM. Info [www.homelessnessmarathon.org](http://www.homelessnessmarathon.org).

Friday 2/13

Sixth Seattle Arab & Iranian Film Festival, "**Framed: The Corporate Media at War**," examines the ongoing war of information and images and how the media is shaping the public perception of the Middle East. Feb. 13-15 at Broadway Performance Hall, Seattle Central Community College, Broadway and Pine. Info 206-322-0882 or [www.saiff.com](http://www.saiff.com).

Sunday 2/15

Seattle Chapter **Fellowship of Reconciliation** program, "An Introduction to Anti-Racism," people of all races welcome and appreciated. Potluck 5 p.m.,

program 6:30 p.m., at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N. 70th, Seattle. Info 206-789-5565.

Tuesday 2/17

Meeting of TimeBucks, a community of people **trading non-commercial services**. A unique feature of TimeBucks is that members "earn" hours for volunteering in the community. 7 p.m., at Elliott Bay Books, 1st Ave. S. and S. Main, Pioneer Square, Seattle. Info [steve@timebucks.org](mailto:steve@timebucks.org) or [www.TimeBucks.org](http://www.TimeBucks.org).

RCTV, a **television show associated with Real Change**, airs at 11 p.m. tonight and every third Tuesday of the month through April. ©Dr. Wes Browning says the show is "a rollicking adventure through the world of *Real Change*: its staff, its vendors, its issues." So watch it! Check local listings for your Public Access channel.

Friday 2/20

**Seattle Labor Chorus Annual Sing-Along**, everyone welcome. Hearty snacks, song sheets provided, prizes and fun. \$10-\$15, pay as you can, kids free, no one turned away. 7-9 p.m., at University Unitarian Church Community Hall, 6556 35th Ave. NE. Info 206-723-6511.

*Calendar compiled from Jean Buskin's Peace and Justice Events Calendar, available in full at [www.scn.org/activism/calendar](http://www.scn.org/activism/calendar). Are you holding an event? Email calendar submissions to Real Change at [calendar@realchangenews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangenews.org). Please allow three weeks' notice.*

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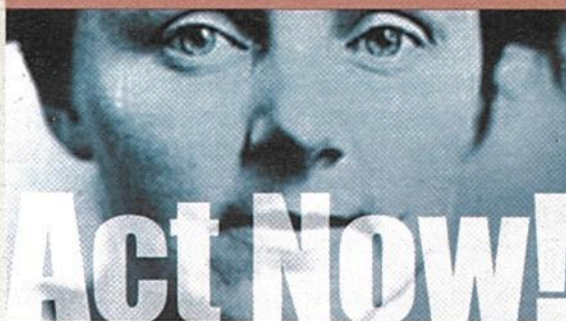
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citizens participation project



## Give young offenders a brighter future

**Issue:** Any young person with a troubled past should not have to wait as much as 10 years to put it behind them by having a criminal record sealed.

**Background:** Adolescents and young adults with criminal records continue to be denied safe housing, employment, educational scholarships, military service, and other opportunities, all because they must disclose their felony or misdemeanor backgrounds. They have not committed any new crimes, and have successfully fulfilled court mandates, e.g. treatment, jail time, and fines.

The disclosure of felonies impacts all youth convicted of crimes. But it is particularly onerous to those who are transitioning out of the foster care system or find themselves homeless. Under the current law, young people who have made significant positive changes continue to be unnecessarily punished. They are demoralized and further marginalized. Finally, they are at greater risk of chronic homelessness, unemployment, and turning back to crime.

"Julie's Story," in the February issue of the *Mockingbird Times* (inside this copy of *Real Change*) tells how, at the age of 17, Julie Mount wound up with a felony conviction for kicking a police officer in the shins. Three years later, it's still on her record. Consequently, Julie can't find work.

"I turned in job applications to anywhere and everywhere that was hiring. Each time I called them back; they told me that they couldn't hire me since I have a felony. I have changed so much.... I quit drugs and drinking... I am going to UDYC School to get my diploma in June. Right now I'm in the Barista [Training Program]... I am in a better place in my life to understand my feelings a lot better."

If Julie and thousands of other young people could look forward to a time in the near future when they didn't have to disclose their criminal backgrounds, they could look forward to a stable job, a regular apartment, and a place in society that many without convictions take for granted.

This is the aim of House Bill (H.B.) 3078 and Senate Bill (S.B.) 6609. If passed by the Washington State Legislature, these bills would halve the 10-year waiting period to seal a Class B felony to five years. Class C felony waiting periods would be shortened from five years to two years. Gross misdemeanor waiting periods would be shortened from three years to two.

Such reforms would provide an incentive for youth to redirect their lives in a positive direction. Family members, attorneys, counselors, and other supportive mentors will be able to provide an incentive to young people who would otherwise struggle to make meaningful changes. Those who do make significant and genuine efforts to develop a crime-free lifestyle, and who are engaged in pro-social activities, will be able to enter the mainstream of society.

**Action:** Call your legislators toll-free at 1(800)562-6000 and deliver the following message: **Please approve S.B. 6609 and H.B. 3078. Criminal convictions prevent adolescents from getting work, housing, and many government benefits. Any adolescent who's gone straight after a Class B or C felony or a gross misdemeanor should be able to have their records sealed in a matter of two to five years. No young person who has played by the rules should have to wait a decade to put her past to rest.**

Don't know who your House and Senate representatives are? Call the toll-free number — again, it's 1(800)562-6000 — and ask. For future reference, order a new 2004 edition of "They Represent You: A Citizen's Guide to Elected Officials." Produced by the League of Women Voters of Seattle, it's a free directory of the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of local, state, and federal representatives. To get a copy, drop by the offices of Real Change. We're located at 2129 Second Avenue, downtown Seattle.

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Bring story ideas, comments, suggestions, and questions to the second monthly open meeting of the Real Change Editorial Committee. Wednesday February 25, 4:30 p.m., at the Real Change office. Everyone welcome. For additional information about the meeting, please call Adam Holdorf, editor, at 206-441-3247, extension 207.

Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project  
2129 2nd Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98121



# Mockingbird Times



Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth



FEBRUARY 2004

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak out Across the Nation

VOLUME IV, ISSUE II

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## Youth Advocates Fight for Kids Rights

By: WILLIAM NELSON

### Julie's Story

JULIE MOUNT



The ASK-Y (Advocates for System Kids and Youth) Coalition is hosting an Advocacy Day on February 6th, 2004 in Washington State's Capitol; an opportunity for young people and service providers to meet with legislators and advocates to discuss the rights of youth and young adults. The group will focus on the following two issues: prioritizing the health and safety of Washington's adolescents and sealing juvenile records. Following is a description of each issue.

### Prioritizing the Health and Safety of Washington's Adolescents

ASK-Y is concerned that CPS (Child Protective Services) workers are downplaying and not investigating reports of abuse of adolescents; steering them to manage the situation on their own. It is also suggested that the Attorney General and DCFS (Department of Children & Family Services) are declining to submit CHINS (Child in Need of Services) petitions as an attempt to roll back the number of out-of-home placements (see page 4).

### Sealing of Juvenile Records

Most juvenile records are open to the public, until the individual carries forward a motion to have them sealed (making their records available for law enforcement and court purposes only). Washington State has the most rigorous law regarding the sealing of juvenile records in the country. ASK-Y's focus is on the amount

of time it takes for juvenile offenders to seal their records. In many cases, an offender will have to wait several years after their eighteenth birthday to seal their records, depending on the crime they committed. This makes it very difficult to find education, employment, housing, and access to services once they emancipate because of public access to juvenile criminal records. Prior to July 1997, the sealing of juvenile records was available for any offense after the individual had spent two years in the community without committing another crime. ASK-Y would like to see the changes outlined below. All Class A felonies are untouched in this proposal

- For misdemeanors (such as insulting a teacher, possessing a stolen shopping cart, or possessing alcohol) the subject must wait two years after release from custody (and must be at least 18) to petition the court to seal.
- For gross misdemeanors (such as making an obscene or late night anonymous crank call or publicly wearing an altered U.S. flag), the subject must wait three years and be 18.
- For Class C felonies (such as riding in a vehicle s/he knows has been taken without permission, belonging to a subversive organization, or illegally obtaining a prescription drug), the subject will have to wait five years.
- For Class B felonies (such as possession of anything stolen and worth more than \$1,500 or making a threat to damage a school building), the subject will have to wait ten years.

**My name is Julie and I am 20-years-old.** When I was 17, I lived in a treatment group home for being suicidal. The doctor prescribed me Paxil. Some of the side effects are anger and violence. Since I already had some issues with anger, it put me in a bad situation. I lashed out by beating up three other youth who also lived there. That put me into Juvenile Hall.

When I got out, the doctor told me that I couldn't get taken off the Paxil, so I left and took my anger out on one of the staff. When the Police Officer booked me back into Juvenile Hall, I kicked his knee. So now I have a felony on my record. When I turned 18, I started living on the streets of Seattle—dumpster diving. I found a [homeless youth] drop-in center called UDYC (University District Youth Center) that helped me get a case worker, counselor and drug and alcohol counselor. They also told me where the youth shelters are. When I turned 20, I realized that I wanted to live in my own place, but couldn't since I have a felony. They helped me get into transitioning housing.

After I got into Straley House, I wanted a part-time job. I turned in so many job applications with no luck, since I have a felony. I managed to work at the Garden Works Program for three months. Then I was back out to find another job. I turned in job applications to anywhere and everywhere that was hiring. Each time I called them back; they told me that they couldn't hire me since I have a felony.

I have changed so much since I was 17. I quit drugs and drinking, I live in Straley House, where I pay rent. I am going to UDYC School, to get my High School Diploma this June. Right now, I am in the Barista program (job training program). I have not [committed] any crimes since the age of 18. I am in a better place in my life to understand my feelings a lot better. I was put on medicine that is helping me a lot better.

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Founded in Seattle, WA, 2001  
Mockingbird Times is special insert in *Real Change*

## I Still Have a Dream

DARIUS REYNOLDS



**He had a dream—a dream of fairness and equality.** I love Martin Luther King's dream, I share his dream. His dream was about more than color. He wanted his people to be treated fairly and to be accepted. He wanted the whole country to have what the Constitution promised: freedom and opportunity. He wanted all people to be able to enjoy each other's company without being judged or beaten.

MLK was a great man and a smart man who did all he could do to make his dream come true. I am glad that he had this dream and I am glad he shared it with the world. Without it I don't know what life would be like for me today. Back in his day the pot was about to boil over; black people and white people were sick of what was going on. I believe that if Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. didn't gather the troops and take leadership when he did that things would be a lot different right now. I think there would have been a big revolution movement and there would have been a lot of people killed — black and white — which would have probably led to the wipe out of my race. Although things could be better; without him things could be a lot worse.

Thank you Dr. King.

P.S. Please check out the full *I Have a Dream* speech at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org). And have a knowledgeable Black History Month.



## Letter from the Editor

The Mockingbird Society welcomes 2004 with a great deal of enthusiasm for the number of exciting initiatives we are involved with as well as a deep sense of hope that our work will indeed improve the current and future lives of the children and youth we serve. We are thrilled to be in our new site which comes with great neighbors, more than doubles the square footage of our previous office space and has windows!

Our new space and a generous grant from the Marguerite Casey Foundation allows us to create more employment and leadership opportunities to youth who are homeless or in foster/kinship care. Over 30,000 copies of the Mockingbird Times is distributed to every state in the nation — spreading the insights, wisdom and hope of young people who know first-hand the trials and tribulations of out-of-home care.

One of the first gifts of the New Year came to Mockingbird when two talented young people from Franklin High School (Seattle) informed us that they wanted to organize a fundraiser for The Mockingbird Society.

Another exciting aspect of the New Year is the implementation of The Mockingbird Foster Family

Constellation Project. This collaborative project, in conjunction with UJIMA Community Services and the University of Washington's Northwest Children and Family Institute, demonstrates a model that reduces multiple placements, allows siblings to live together, is culturally relevant and provides foster/kinship parents with much needed and well-deserved respite care.

Additionally, we have partnered with some of the most dedicated organizations and individuals across Washington State through Advocates for System Kids and Youth (ASK-Y), joining together to ensure that the health and safety of adolescents is a priority of the Child Welfare System. ASK-Y members are also committed to ensuring that young people who have fulfilled their obligations to juvenile court and have remained crime free are able to secure safe housing, gainful employment, scholarship opportunities and if desired military service. As you can see, our agenda for 2004 is ambitious, especially with a paid staff of 2.5 employees. I encourage you to remember The Mockingbird Society as you consider where best to donate your time, money and goodwill.



Jim Theofelis

### Meet Our Staff

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jim Theofelis

#### MFFCP COORDINATOR

Shannon Barello

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Anna Trombley

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#### SATELLITE REPORTERS

Shay Deney, J. Eboh

#### CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Julie Mount

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Valerie Douglas, Siri Throm Saxe

#### THANK YOU'S

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Senator Jim Hargrove, Representative Mary Lou Dickerson, Wyman Youth Trust Fund, Jonathan Peters, Hanah Goldov, Jo Anne Anderson, Rick Harwood and Cleveland High School, Franklin High School, Patricia Brown.

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## Letters to the Editor

Dear Mockingbird Times,

Thanks for putting dental care in the spotlight in your January 2004 issue! Courtney Konietzko's experiences in the dental health care delivery system are very important. As the current chair of the Washington State Oral Health Coalition and a former Children's Medicaid Program Manager, I would encourage Ms. Konietzko to contact me. I would be happy to help her find acceptable oral health care.

Patricia Brown  
Resource Development Manager  
Region 2 Children's Administration

Dear Mockingbird Times,

I want to take a moment to let you know what an excellent job Dennis has done setting up your network during the move. The Mockingbird Times is extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated employee. Dennis' level of professionalism is outstanding and his knowledge of computer systems and networking is quite advanced. The success of your current system infrastructure is 100% due to Dennis's hard work.

Jonathan Peters, MBT Volunteer

"Speak up for those who can't speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."

Proverbs 31:8-9

### About Us

The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents in foster care. The Mockingbird Times is a monthly newspaper that is written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.50 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$20 per published piece. The Mockingbird Times has a monthly circulation of 28,000 copies being distributed across Washington and the U.S.A. Youth involvement is key to the philosophy, values and success of The Mockingbird Society and as such youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. All donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the Mockingbird Times may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2003 The Mockingbird Society.

### A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox: Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth.

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# Positive Power: Being who you are!

BRIDGETT SIROSHTON



**A person can't change who they are** — they can't change their wiring. For example, some people think that being gay is wrong, though for reasons that are often difficult to put in words. Some reasons might include: they haven't explored it, they just simply think that it's wrong (which is a very ignorant way to live), the fear of difference or fear of being identified as part of that group — or maybe some unspoken desires or situation that may have happened to them; religious values that might conflict; and/or cultural norms — if someone is taught their whole life that something is wrong or bad, is it not hard to break that cycle?

In my opinion, there is nothing wrong with being gay. People cannot change who they are. Just like someone can't detach their arms or feet. Society has come a long way, from back in the day where you couldn't see two guys or two girls kissing on the street, or even holding hands. What does it matter who you decide to love?

It seems we are evolving slowly but surely. Lots of kids and even adults experiment to know what they are looking for and who they are attracted to. It's completely natural, though some people might not think

so. It's so hard to come out (when someone is vocal and upfront with being gay). The trials and tribulations that form within your mind can be overwhelming and you might feel ashamed and depressed, but if that is who you are, then I say more power to you!

According to the BGIOK website, "There will be time when you want to tell other people this huge part of your life which is being gay, you will discover people still love you after all, because the part of you which makes people love you has not changed. Perhaps most importantly, the moment you start to come out, it marks a time of acceptance within yourself, "being gay is okay. ([www.bgiok.org.uk/](http://www.bgiok.org.uk/))"

People are people and don't discriminate against the unfamiliar. Fear is just a projection of what you're hiding inside. It really upsets me

that some people don't evolve, I still hear words that are uncalled for like "dyke" or "faggot" but that is just ignorance.

People who get called those names only get stronger in the end. So if you don't understand why someone is the way they are, look inside yourself and ask "Why am I the way I am". Because you can't change who you are and why would you even want to? Believe in yourself and things will all work out in the end.



## Court Sends DSHS A Message

J.EBOH



**On December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the Washington State Supreme Court declared that all children in the foster care system have a right to safe care** while in the state's custody. Currently there are 10,000

children in foster care in Washington State. This ruling and recent headlines highlighting the deaths of Rafael Gomez and Zy'Nyia Nobles, two foster children who died after being returned to their biological parents, have reignited the flames of continual debate about whether children in the state's custody receive adequate care.

Gomez died last September at the age of two as a result of blunt force trauma to the head. At the time of his death Gomez was in the custody of his biological parents, despite a history of being injured while in their care and continual pleas of the foster mother to not return Gomez to his biological family. After his death, Gomez' four siblings were placed in foster care. Ephrata police stated last month that they planned to ask prosecutors to charge the parents with homicide by abuse ([www1.dshs.wa.gov](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov), [www.seattletimes.com](http://www.seattletimes.com)).

Zy'Nyia Nobles was a four-year-old Tacoma girl who died four months after being reunited with her mother,

due to internal bleeding caused by blows to her abdomen after her mother allegedly kicked her to death. Noble's lived in five foster homes, had five social workers assigned to her case and eight dependency hearings to determine the outcome of her case.

Similar to the Gomez case, there were repeated recommendations that the child not be returned to the biological mother. Twice it was suggested by caseworkers that Aretha Sconiers (Nobles mother) lose her parental rights, and a five person DSHS committee once even suggested that Nobles and her brother be adopted out of the system. Despite the recommendations, both children were returned to their mother in February of 2000 ([www.governor.wa.gov/nobles](http://www.governor.wa.gov/nobles)).

What is the significance of the state Supreme Court's ruling? According to Casey Trupin, attorney for Columbia Legal Services, "This is the first time that the state Supreme Court said what the legal rights of foster children are in terms of treatment by the state ... the effect is that, when the state fails to provide adequate services to meet the basic needs of foster children, they now have a remedy in court."

This ruling sent a clear message to DSHS: foster children have constitutional rights that must be respected. For more information about this ruling, visit [www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov)

## DENTAL DEEDS: A HAPPY ENDING

COURTNEY KONIETZKO



**"Washington doctors are among the lowest paid when it comes to getting reimbursements from Medicaid and Medicare patients. Washington ranks 36<sup>th</sup> in the country in Medicaid reimbursement rates and 42<sup>nd</sup> in Medicare reimbursements, according to Bob Perna, director of health care economics at the Washington state medical association ([www.businessjournal.org](http://www.businessjournal.org))."**

This is the third article I've written in what I guess could be called, "Courtney's Dental Series."

There is a happy ending to my story. After much stress and anger I feel better because I have found a dentist who's willing to help me—who is capable, nice, and someone I can communicate with. He answers my questions thoroughly and his Novocain shots are the least painful out of anybody who has treated me.

I prayed a lot for my teeth to be taken care of this past year and feel that my prayers were answered. I have now found a dentist who's willing to work on my teeth *pro bono*, as long as I remember the three F's — floss, fluoride, and fun. I finally have some answers as to what's going on with my oral health and feel more in control because my teeth are getting taken care of. I don't need to worry about losing another one due to not having adequate dental care. I want to thank everybody who responded to my second dental article, "Dirty Dental Deeds." It is the most response that I have ever received since I started working at the Mockingbird Times!

### RESOURCES:

For those of you still looking for adequate dental care, I have listed some dental resources in King County for low-income people. Please know that I have not been to any of these dentists. This is a collection of resources found on the internet and the Medicaid assistance line. As far as I know everybody listed accepts medical coupons.

Dr. Reza Nabaie (425) 774-0296

EZ Dental (425) 746-6090

Dr. David Silver (206) 725-7176

Dr. Greg Pyfer (206) 542-7494

Dr. Saifullah Zakaria (206) 364-7680

Bright 32 Family Dentistry (206) 533-9693

Lake Washington Technical College Dental Clinic (425) 739-8354

Shoreline Community College Dental Hygiene Clinic (206) 546-4711

Dental Assistant Clinic at Seattle Vocational Institute (206) 587-4930

Harborview Oral and Maxillofacial Clinic (206) 731-3189

Renton Technical College Dental Clinic (425) 235-2297

Smile Dental Clinic (206) 306-7700 (425) 614-1300

Dr. Sohrab Moshiri (oral surgeon) (425) 451-9990

Union Gospel Mission Dental Clinic (homeless people only) (206) 621-7695

Provail Dental Clinic (special needs clinic) (206) 632-2612

North Seattle Dental Clinic (children 18 and under, seniors 60 years or older, and pregnant women) (206) 205-8580



# LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING

COURTNEY KONIETZKO

**There's a stereotype going around** that fat people are lazy people who can't control themselves as far as eating goes. There's also a stereotype that fat people are ugly people. How do you classify a genuine, bonafide 'fat' person? Is it body mass index? Is it being bigger than the majority of the people you see each day? Is it not being able to see your feet? Is it a slight pudge around the tummy?

According to the Health Encyclopedia at [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com), "being obese is different from being overweight." "An individual is considered obese when weight is 20% (25% in women) or more over the maximum desirable for their height. When an adult is more than 100 pounds overweight, it is considered morbid obesity. Obesity is also defined as a BMI (body mass index) over 30kg/m<sup>2</sup>. Patients with a BMI between 25 and 29.9 are considered overweight, but not obese." This definition is what doctors use to determine if somebody is fat. According to <http://nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm>: "Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to both adult men and women."

The media constantly puts images of "beautiful girls" in our face. Girls with perfect skin, who are perfectly thin, with long legs and perfect smiles. Magazines displayed at your everyday store are full of these beautiful women. Teens and women buy these magazines setting off more consumption of having to go buy some of the clothes or makeup advertised to try to attain that flawless beauty. Maybe this doesn't happen to everyone, this mad consumerism of purchasing products to be pretty. But I think the images of unreal, untouchable, always beautiful, Hollywood women affect all women on some level.

Even though, "only 10% of the nation's population

genetically fit models' height and weight zone" ([www.yougottareadthis.com/mindyk.html](http://www.yougottareadthis.com/mindyk.html)), it seems like images of this body type are everywhere! Through music videos, television and movies, the majority of women we see look like super models. Through shopping at Nordstrom's in the make up department I see more super model types. There's this product being hyped and this one and more than I can count that promise to make you beautiful and when you're beautiful you got a better shot of being wealthy and having friends and all that jazz ... at least that's what I

think the media wants you to believe. I have felt bad going into an upscale department store because of the way I dress, which is usually a black t-shirt and cargo pants. I felt out of place, like in some way I wasn't as pretty as the people that worked there, therefore I shouldn't shop there because I'll never attain what they have without liposuction, starvation, and plastic surgery. I know I'm not the only one who has felt like this. It may be something simple like having dark hair and wishing it was lighter or straight hair and wishing it was curly but it becomes a problem when you cannot accept the body you were born with and work with what you have. I have bought make up products and clothes that sit on the counter or in my closet for years having only been used or worn a few times and I wonder why ... maybe it's because these products symbolized something else like being accepted into the elite class of perfectly beautiful

people or maybe I thought I'd like myself better or maybe I even thought that somehow they'd take away the things I didn't like about myself. I now avoid buying fashion magazines because I know I'm not strong enough to just read them for enjoyment. Besides, I don't have the money to stay on top of the latest trends in make up and clothing. By the time I buy whatever it is that's advertised it would probably be out of style and something else would be hot. I've given up on knowing what's cool to wear. Buy what you need and

buy what you enjoy but nothing can buy confidence or love of self, which is priceless. I say if you're uncomfortable with your body wear what's comfortable or something you feel good about yourself in. Challenge yourself every once in a while by wearing something that's a little sexy if you're feeling up to it because all human beings are beautiful and sexy in some way. If you can't see anything good about yourself on the outside focus on the positive things about yourself on the inside because that's where it all has to start anyway. It has to begin with you. It has to happen from the inside out because nobody else can give you that complete acceptance of self except you.

## FAMOUS FAT MEN AND WOMEN

Queen Latifah  
Whoopi Goldberg  
Kate Winslet  
Minnie Driver  
Mae West  
Sophia Loren  
Marilyn Monroe  
Jane Russel  
Anita Ekberg  
Camryn Manheim  
Maya Angelou  
Bette Midler  
Nancy and Ann Wilson of Heart  
Rosie O' Donnell  
Delta Burke  
Kathy Bates  
Dan Aykroyd  
John Belushi  
Danny DeVito  
Chris Farley  
Alfred Hitchcock  
Santa Claus  
Elvis Presley (in his later years)

## "Accepting your appearance: why it's important"

Not liking your reflection can hamper your ability to assert yourself. You may tend to expect less from yourself and from others and have trouble making decisions. A poor body image may prevent you from enjoying simple pleasures, such as a day at the beach, sap your confidence and put a damper on your sex life. In the extreme, disliking your appearance can set the stage for anorexia, bulimia, binge-eating disorder, depression and sexual dysfunction. **Start now** because happiness and, yes, even good health depend in large part on a positive body image – if you're turned off by your body, you may not give it the necessary care and attention – it's important to accept yourself right now. Start with these tips:

- Appreciate the ways in which your body serves you. You're able to walk, talk, hear and hug.
- Find enjoyable ways to incorporate movement into your everyday lifestyle.
- Wear attractive, well-fitting clothing. Don't wait until you reach your ideal weight to enhance your wardrobe.
- Don't weigh yourself more than once a week. Constantly assessing your body size, whether you use a scale or regularly or regularly try on a snug skirt, reinforces the link between body image and self-worth. ("I'm bad because I gained two pounds.")
- Stop comparing yourself to other women and judging others by their appearance.
- Strive for a healthy weight that's within your reach. (If you have to subsist on rice cakes to maintain your weight, it's not within your reach!)

— All information from [www.mimc.healthwords.com](http://www.mimc.healthwords.com).

## Deprioritization of Adolescents, Cont. from page 1

**Proposal:** Require the Division of Child and Family Services to conduct a full review of their policies, procedures and practices related to adolescent services including consistency across regions and report such findings to the legislature. The full review should include:

- Review CPS assessment of adolescents to ensure that the findings and treatment plan are not based disproportionately on the age of the alleged victim but the evidence of abuse.
- Review CRC practices and assessments to determine that appropriate services and referrals are being provided by DCFS and the DCFS is functioning in the way specified by law.
- Review FRS files to ensure that appropriate referrals are being made for families in conflict and that FRS staff are following their legal requirements as a mandated child abuse reporter.
- Review DCFS policies and files to determine if there is any discouragement in filing Dependencies or CHINS petitions regarding adolescents.

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