

DECEMBER 9, 2004



REAL CHANGE

Fairness • Opportunity • Community • Vol. 11, No. 26

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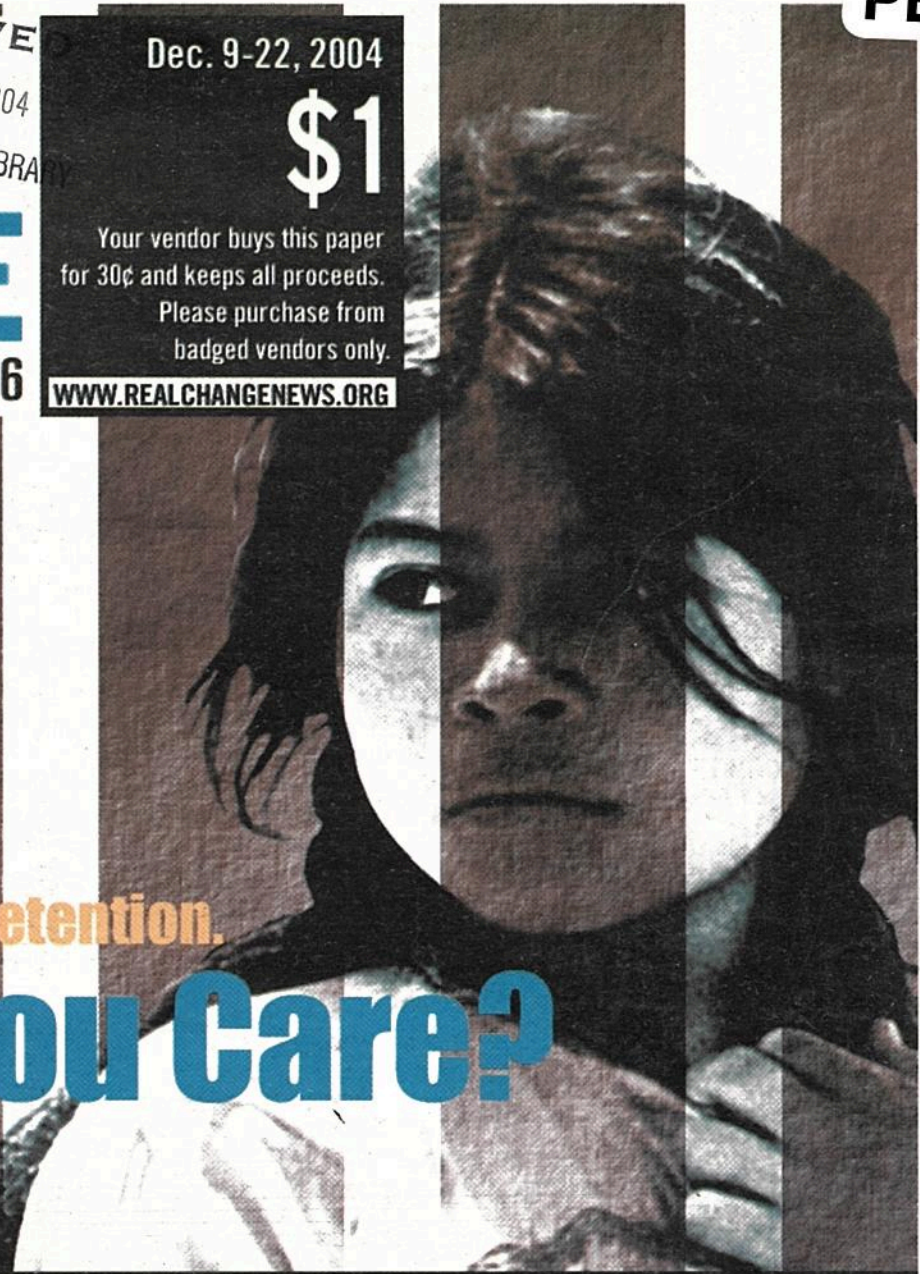
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The Women's Issue

Girls in Jail

More teenagers than ever are in detention.

Why Should You Care?



The Kindness of Strangers

9

You Can't Beat a Woman

10

Books: The War at Home and the War on Women

11

Calypso

14

GRAPHIC BY TOM. M. DOUGLASS

By Silja J.A. Talvi

The story you're about to read was inspired by a remarkable organization called Powerful Voices, but this is not your everyday news story or feel-good feature. This is not a story laden with quotes or statistics. It is not the kind of story I usually write.

This is a story that is intended to show you how a "professional" 34-year-old journalist like me could start out as an angry and depressed juvenile offender.

It's a story I've been reluctant to write, but it's a story I'm going to share with you to make the work of the Seattle-based Powerful Voices worth paying attention to. Based in the Central District, Powerful Voices has been around since 1995. The group is unique — not only in Washington State, but in the nation as well. Key to its mission is to help promote the power and potential of adolescent girls, and particularly those who have ended up in the criminal justice system.

The people who make up the core of the program are incredibly dedicated and passionate about the work that they do. They do not exist to judge, change, or condition the girls that they work with. They exist to try to meet the girls where they are, whether in their twice-a-week workshops in detention, through their peer education program, their middle school program, or through their nascent employment and case management work.

When they talk about girls in detention, they talk of them with the kind of

candidness and affection that is rarely showered on juvenile delinquents. They do not romanticize the girls — or their potential — but they see them as being every bit as deserving of a chance as the rest of us.

In the past year, they reached out to 775 girls in detention.

And that's where my original interest in this story stemmed from. These days, as any one of my friends can tell you, I am something of a "prison geek."

It's a joke among friends, of course, but it's not far from the truth. In my day-to-day life, I write about a wide variety of social issues — gender, immigration, class, and ethnicity rank at the top of the list — but nothing gets me going as much as a story revolving around the American criminal justice and prison system.

I frequently get asked the question of why I chose to focus on this area in the first place. I usually respond with part of the truth, but not all of it. I tell people that I saw a lot of my friends cycle through the juvenile justice system with bad results. I also tell people that the intricacies and complexities of that system are endlessly fascinating and disturbing to me. The way that I view it, our adult and juvenile criminal justice and prison systems speak volumes about where we're headed as a nation.

Nothing, to my mind, is a better measure of how we value human life than how we treat those who misstep, who commit crimes, and who become

unwanted members of society. The very definitions of "crime" and "criminal behavior" are historically subjective and change from city to city, state to state, and country to country.

At this junction in our history, things are not looking particularly good. We have developed a prison industry that rivals nearly every other industry in the nation. Well over two million men, women and children sit behind bars as I write this, and those numbers are only projected to grow.

Girls and women are, in fact, the fastest growing segment of the nation's increasing prison and jail populations. While juvenile crime rates have actually decreased somewhat in the last decade, the arrest, detention and prosecution of girls has actually increased. According to research from the American Bar Association and the National Bar Association, delinquency cases involving girls increased 83 percent between 1988 and 1997 alone.

That's a national trend that has been echoed here in Washington State, as well as in King County. Although the actual number of overall juvenile arrests has decreased somewhat over the last several years, the number and proportion of girls getting in trouble with

the law has increased. Consider this: in 1990, 17 percent of the youth in detention were girls. In 2002, they had risen to 28 percent of the under-18-year-olds in detention.

Traditionally speaking, girls have been the easiest to divert from arrest and incarceration. Decades of psychological and sociological research have backed up the fact that, among girls, expressions of anger and sadness tend to go inward, not outward. When nearly one in three kids in detention in Washington State is a young female, that's something to be asking questions about.

When nearly one in three kids in detention in Washington State is a young female, that's something to be asking questions about.

Accompanied by a few of the women from Powerful Voices, I had the opportunity to sit and talk to a few dozen female detainees over the last couple of months.

There's a limit to how deep you can get with these girls when you're given an hour at a time to sit in their presence, in just three visits. But it was enough to give me a good idea of what's going on in their lives, and how much (and little) things have changed since I was their age. The average age of these girls, as Powerful Voices told me — and

Continued to page 8



True democracy

Dear *Real Change*,

If instant-runoff voting was already in place in this election year, we might have avoided all of the drama surrounding the recount ["Stuck in a Voting Rut" Nov. 11], since Chris Gregoire would have likely gotten all of Ron Sims's write-in votes, assuming they picked her as their second choice. There would be a clear winner already. So it would be to the advantage of the Democrats to support instant-runoff voting, and considerably cheaper than paying for the hand re-count.

While the Progressive Party of Washington and other "minor" parties are for it, in most cases, IRV will be to the greater benefit of the big parties because most people won't have much knowledge of other groups and their candidates. This is mainly because the major media ignores the fact that minority party candidates are running — even if there is only one other opponent. It is routine for minority party candidates, even in a three-way race, to be excluded from debates.

The original intent of the direct primary, which was part of the Progressive Party's 1912 Platform, was to have each party pay for their own party primary. Currently, all of us — Democrats, Republicans, independent voters as well as the members of minority parties — are expected to cough up tax money to pay for a primary for the Democrats and Republicans. Democratic and Republican candidates get free ballot and media access. The Progressive Party opposes this use of our tax money. Instant-runoff voting would skip the primary, allowing all of the choosing of candidates to be done on the final ballot. It would also allow voters to cross party lines, ranking candidates from all parties, as well as Independent candidates, and their favorite write-ins. Instant-runoff voting is by far the better way of replacing our current — and initiative mandated (I-872) — top-two primary.

There are other barriers to the full political participation of us minor parties. Currently, independent and minority party candidates have to get on the ballot using a nominating convention. The Secretary of State requires that these candidates come up with 100 perfect signatures on one single day at one single location. That's four times what was required in 2002. The dates during which they may be gathered are set by

law. And if the nomination convention is held in a public park, we have to pay \$50 for the event.

Sincerely,
Linde Knighton
Progressive Party of WA
Seattle

Separate and equal?

Dear *Real Change*,

Re. "Gregoire and the Black vote" [Nov. 11], I think most Americans who have been to college are aware that when there were white-only sororities and fraternities, there were also Black-only organizations of the same type. So when a few Black spokesmen condemned Gregoire for belonging to a white-only sorority, they probably alienated an awful lot of people, both Black and white, who were aware of that.

Thanks for being a very readable and important news source.

Sincerely,
Maria Abdin
Seattle

Free at last

Dear *Real Change*,

Thank you, Wes Browning, for the wonderful article on vander Velva Thomas. I am currently reading the book *The State Boys Rebellion* by Michale D'Antonio, which is the story of the United States' eugenics movement and how state institutions were founded to house the "feebleminded." I shudder to think what life would have been like for my sister, who has Down Syndrome, during the late 1800s to the 1950s. And for some, of course, even later. Good for Velva for claiming her life, through all of its ups and downs. She is a true inspiration.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Brush
Seattle

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Real Change

Fairness, Opportunity, Community

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<http://www.realchangenews.org>

Email rchange@speakeasy.org

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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.

Editorial Policy

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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Follow Your Heart

This holiday season, support the work you care about

Still grieving over the 2004 election? When you contemplate the next four years, do you feel a mixture of bewilderment and despair? Are you looking for a way to make a difference now? Let us help.

Real Change is Seattle's community newspaper that reports on the issues that matter, creates opportunity right now for the poor and homeless, and brings people into action by offering up-to-date advocacy opportunities with each new paper.

Along the way, relationships get built between the poor and the more affluent that change the way we see. We learn how poverty affects us all.

Real Change needs your help now to go weekly in 2005. We want to be Seattle's most widely read community newspaper, building an informed foundation for unity and action.

We depend upon readers like you to take the next step. Last year, more than 700 people gave nearly \$157,000 to *Real Change* because they believe our work is important enough to write a check.

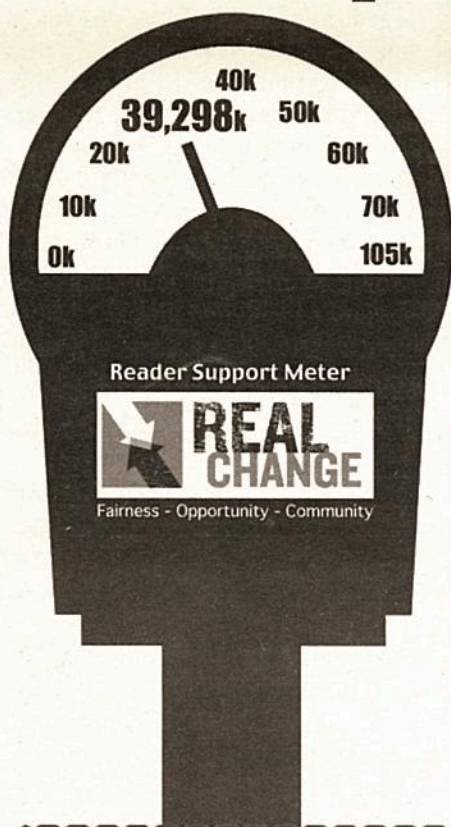
We're a small organization, working wonders on about \$400,000 a year. Last year's donors represent about 5 percent of our readership. If everyone who valued *Real Change* helped out just once a year, we'd never have to worry about making rent again.

We have ambitious goals for our next ten years, and we need your help to make them happen.

- *Real Change* is reaching out to the many communities and issue groups in Seattle that stand for a better society. We're a good ally to the causes you care about.
- In February, *Real Change* will begin weekly publication. This will mean more up-to-date news and a fresh issue for our vendors each week.
- We're gearing up our advocacy capacity to build pressure for change. This means being more strategic in our advocacy choices, more connected to our community, and more effective in mobilizing readers.

Social change doesn't happen overnight. Along the way to a better society, we need to build powerful institutions that bring people together, offer hope, and move people to action. Be a part of the solution. Support *Real Change* today.

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In Seattle you'd pay \$1 for the paper you're Reading. The vendor pays 30¢, we pay the printer.

You don't get much for nothing these days, and that includes *Real Change*. More than 40% of our 2004 budget comes from donations made by readers like you. That support keeps our doors open.

We need your help to continue to make a difference in the lives of hundreds of homeless and low-income vendors who sell *Real Change* every month.

We need to raise \$105,000 by December 31st to start 2005 on solid ground. Your contribution will help us provide a dignified alternative to panhandling and allow us to continue publishing the stories you've come to expect. As you consider your holiday giving, please consider doing a little more. Use the coupon below to make a tax deductible contribution today. We'll keep you updated on our progress.

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Inside:

Opinion

Girls in Jail: Teenage incarceration. Who cares?
by Silja Talvi 3

News

News You Can Use: Location, location; making a movement
by Tom Cogbill, Chantelle Lusebrink, Ken Dean 4
 Steady Judgment: Domestic Abuse Court a step forward
by Breanna Laughlin 5
 North American Newsbriefs
by Patty Lane 5

Features

Adventures in Poetry: Dumb Luck
with ©Dr. Wes Browning 6
 Xmas Rescue Mission: holiday saved by State Patrol
by Liz Smith 9
 Grande Dame: anti-violence advocate Ginny Nicarthy
interview by Breanna Laughlin 10
Book Reviews: Frances Fox Piven on the War at Home; Debran Rowland on Women's Rights
by Timothy Harris and Stacy Silliman 11
 Street Talk: Who's Yer Mama?
by Meghan Peters 12
 Street Watch
by Emma Quinn 13
Real Change Hero: Sandra DuRan, Vendor #3597
by Erin Anderson 14
 Classics Corner: Odysseus n' Calypso, sittin' in a tree
by Perfess'r Harris 14
 Calendar
compiled by Sandra Enger and Regina Liszanckie 15
 Citizen's Participation Project: Kudos to County Council
by Rachael Myers 16

Poetry

Insights and surprises from Stan Burriss, Earle Thompson, Tom Kubick, Carol Kosche, Esther Helfgott 6-7

Activism

Citizens Participation Project 16

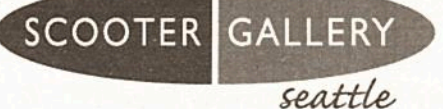


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Location, location

National studies of where payday lenders locate by zip code indicate they target not only poor neighborhoods, but military bases, as well. A recent study shows a clustering of payday lenders around Washington's major military installations. The reason? Financially inexperienced young recruits are particularly susceptible to the business strategy of such outfits. In fact, the number of servicemen and women falling into a black hole of debt has grown so in recent years that military officials around the country are becoming alarmed.

In Georgia, legislation was passed this year to clamp down on the exploitation of service personnel by predatory lenders. In New York, both U.S. senators have decried loopholes allowing payday lenders to circumvent already strict laws to get at their target population on military bases. Here in Washington, military officials requested a meeting with various federal and state regulatory agencies in October to focus attention on the issue. No businesses were singled out, and no proposals for dealing with the problem have been put forward yet, but the various divisions of the armed forces are still reviewing the matter.

While it is unclear whether they will press for reforms in Washington's regulatory laws, the military has already availed itself of other options elsewhere. In Virginia, for example, base commanders have apparently put payday lenders off-limits to certain military borrowers, and at Langley Air Force Base outside Norfolk, the base credit union has started offering its members payday loans of its own but at much more reasonable rates than those of outside lenders.

Payday lenders maintain they do not intentionally target military bases. The fact that the ratio of payday lenders to ordinary banks and credit unions in Washington is about eight times higher surrounding military bases than in the state as a whole belies this contention, however. Anyone with concerns or complaints about a payday lender's practices are urged to contact the Federal Trade Commission (www.ftc.gov) or the state's Attorney General's Office (www.atg.wa.gov).

Payday lenders have been operating in Washington for several years, charging high interest rates on short-term loans drawn against the borrower's next paycheck. The maximum interest rate is capped at a whopping 391 percent per year. According to the Securities and Exchange Commission, the business plan of such lenders emphasizes location, location, location. Companies gravitate towards low-income areas, where residents are more likely to be living from paycheck to paycheck, less able to secure loans from standard financial institutions, and in greater need of quick cash to cover their basic needs.

—Tom Cogbill

Common interests

Rich color emanates from the paintings hung against the windowless, industrial walls in the conference room of a small building on Capitol Hill. Ordinarily the room is used to showcase local artist's work. On Wednesday Dec. 1, however, a youthful man was at the head of the crowded room, speaking on his vision to spark a progressive movement in Washington. "The other side is already mobilized and is marching," he stated emphatically, "now let's show them what we can do!"

Community activist Michael McAfoose is best known for his counter-protest to the conservative Mayday for Marriage at Safeco last May and his organized efforts to help Micah Painter, a victim of felony assault and malicious harassment last July.



However, Dec. 1 marked the launch of McAfoose's largest endeavor to date: a new organization designed to increase solidarity between local social activist groups by providing them with a network of support on their various platforms.

In the aftermath of the recent election and in response to various challenges moving through the government, ACTION Northwest (which stands for Active Communities Together In One Network) hopes to unite diverse organizations interested in peace, women's reproductive rights, labor issues, as well as marriage equality and socio-economic justice.

To do this, the organization has outlined goals such as increasing funding to existing progressive groups by providing quarterly grants, actively promoting awareness for different social justice issues at quarterly coalition dinners, and building rapid response, with volunteers and money, to attacks on civil liberties. By offering these services ACTION Northwest, hopes to strengthen and solidify the activist community that is already present in Washington State.

Admittedly, "we don't all need to agree with each other, but we need to educate ourselves on the issues involved in the progressive movement," McAfoose stated. "We can't be fighting against each other."

A lot of people are looking for ways to get involved, especially after the recent election, suggested Jeffery Leitch, a community member attending the meeting. "I am not joining an organization but I am in a movement," he said.

McAfoose hopes to take advantage of this desire to volunteer by forming ACTION Northwest as a 501(c)3 non-profit early next year, which will enable it to apply for large grants and collect private donations. "The money is out there, that's the easy part. Once we are able to be tax-deductible, it will be easy to harness the energy."

ACTION Northwest is also building a web site dedicated to opening dialogue between the various local organizations, as well as providing opportunities for politically unaligned volunteers to become involved and people to donate funding.

"The network ACTION Northwest is providing is giving people who aren't necessarily involved with the activism of one group but who are still passionate about social justice one place to come and get information," says Erin Stallings, another board member of ACTION Northwest.

"It is important to connect up," said Douglass Kennedy, an organizer for Marriage Equality Now, "because we all have a common interest."

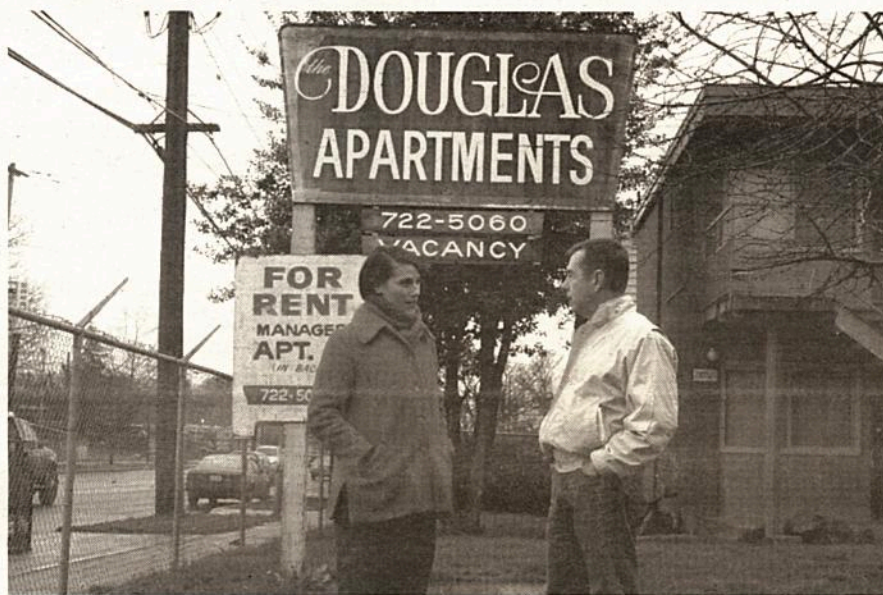
Along with the website, McAfoose intends to launch a hotline that will allow groups to communicate civil rights violations in their area and receive immediate aid through quarterly grants. Increasing aid to various parts of the state will ensure that social justice for all individuals and organizations is met, said McAfoose.

Unexpected by McAfoose was the success of the meeting, which was announced by word of mouth but drew several local organizations and many community members hoping to connect with each other and form common goals. Among those who attended was the newly formed UW student group Rally for Change, the Seattle Human Services Coalition, Not In Our Name Washington, and Marriage Equality Now.

When asked about her interest in ACTION Northwest, Ashley Miller of Rally for Change said that McAfoose had approached her at a previous rally and has since taken her organization and its leadership under his wing. "This is when we need to come together and this is when we need to fight back."

—Chantelle Lusebrink.

Surveying the scene



TENANT ORGANIZER MICHELE THOMAS LEADS SEATTLE CITY COUNCILMEMBER TOM RASMUSSEN ON A TOUR OF HOUSING CONDITIONS IN SOUTHEAST SEATTLE, INCLUDING THE DOUGLAS APARTMENTS, OWNED BY LANDLORD ALAN HUA. THE SEATTLE WEEKLY HAS DOCUMENTED HUA'S UNWILLINGNESS TO RESPOND TO TENANTS' REQUESTS FOR REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE. ON THE TOUR, RASMUSSEN TOLD THE TENANTS UNION THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT LOW-INCOME AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND STRONGER ENFORCEMENT OF CITY CODES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. PHOTO BY KEN DEAN.

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

Steady Judgment

City's domestic abuse court a step forward, say advocates

By Breeana Laughlin

Seattle's municipal court system is trying to address domestic violence by establishing a separate court designed to deal specifically with its perpetrators.

Two new domestic violence courts were established in September. Now, one judge will hear multiple cases concerning the same defendant. In the previous system, one domestic violence case could be heard by several different judges throughout the course of a trial. This may have allowed some defendants to slip through the cracks.

Judge Jean Rietschel, one of the two new Domestic Violence Court judges, favors the new setup. "We handle the case from beginning to end," she says. "It gives the judge a better chance to be fully informed. We're hoping that having one judge keeping judicial ownership of the cases means the cases are kept in better control."

Rietschel says the new system gives judges an idea about the dynamics of a case, including the family situation.

While the new court is a step in the right direction, its administrators are still trying to fix some issues.

Roberta Petersen is a community advocate for New Beginnings, an organization that provides service to women and children whose lives have been affected by physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Petersen has been to many domestic violence court cases. She is frustrated by different aspects of the system. Petersen says she has witnessed defendants' attorneys trying to confuse victims in court.

"They manipulate their words to get things done," says Petersen. She says women with previous cases have been turned away from the courts. Petersen says the women tried to get help, but the court said the act of domestic vio-

lence was so long ago that they shouldn't be in danger anymore. Meanwhile, Petersen says, the perpetrator could be showing up at the woman's house at all times of the night, taking her keys from the kids, and going to the apartment when she wasn't there.

In the past, the court has fallen short on consistency, says Merrill Cousin, a member of the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence. "Sometimes the court does a great job of holding defendants accountable, and sometimes they don't."

Why? Cousin and Petersen say the court is so overbooked that it can hardly do the proper follow-up.

"One area that needs strengthening is a consistent monitoring and enforcement when someone doesn't comply with the conditions of their probation sentence or court orders," says Cousin.

Petersen hopes that in the new court, all the commissioners will be educated about domestic violence and will be able to recognize a domestic violence case when it's put in front of them. "To this day," she says, "there are still a lot of commissioners out there that are unable to recognize a case where domestic violence is occurring."

Having two specific domestic violence court judges should help that situation.

Judge Rietschel says: "I've gone to a lot of extra trainings on domestic violence. One of the things we like to keep up on is what the research shows."

The judges try to find the answers to questions like, does domestic violence treatment work? What are the best practices? What is present-day research showing?

In meting out punishment in domestic violence cases, "We have a gamut of possibilities," says Rietschel. "Not all

cases are the same. Sometimes it's the only offense. Sometimes someone goes to domestic violence treatment and it works, and the situation is resolved."

There are cases where there are multiple offenses, intervention is not successful, and there is nothing you can do but put the defender in jail and try to give the victim some time to get away. There are also cases where a person is accused and at trial, it's concluded that they are innocent. Or, perhaps, they've arrested the wrong person.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT JUDGE JEAN RIETSCHTEL

Rietschel also deals with cases that are called domestic violence under the statute, but really aren't domestic violence. She had a case awhile ago where a young man had been convicted of assaulting his father and did anger management training. Rietschel said he had grown up in a family where violence was normal and, after treatment, he realized that there were other ways to deal with things.

Anger management may have worked in that specific case, but Petersen warns about the consequences of sending domestic violence perpetrators to anger management. She says it can be more harmful to the women because the perpetrator learns how to abuse her without leaving a mark.

Domestic violence cases, in general, are very difficult to handle, says Judge Rietschel.

"I think it's extremely important we try to handle them appropriately," she says. "It's probably the most difficult kind of case we handle in courts of limited jurisdiction."

The public shouldn't rely on the courts alone to deal with the issue of domestic violence. Petersen believes there needs to be more community education about domestic violence everywhere, and it needs to be done by the appropriate people.

"There are so many children that could benefit, and teens who have learned domestic violence in homes who think this is ordinary behavior."

"There needs to be a norm where violence and coercion are not acceptable," says Cousin, "And that needs to be consistent." This includes increasing everyone's

awareness about domestic violence, and giving them the skills to deal with domestic violence in everyday situations. Families, teachers, school nurses, preachers, etc. need the competence and skill to respond. There needs to be major changes in society to solve the issue of domestic violence, says Cousin, but there are smaller things people can do.

According to Judge Rietschel, prevention plays a very important part in ending violence.

"The court can only do so much." Domestic violence is a very difficult problem in society, and we have very limited resources to deal with a very difficult problem, says Rietschel.

"I think it's a very serious problem that we need to address, and this is our court's attempt to deal with it in a better way." ■



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WWW.STREETNEWSERVICE.ORG

As many as 100 of Denver's homeless will be kept out of the cold now that an **all-night coffee shop** for the homeless has opened near downtown. "We're giving people another option for a place to go," Tom Luehrs, director of St. Francis

Center, tells the *Denver Post*. The center, which has been a day shelter for homeless for 21 years, opened its doors at night for the first time for those wanting to avoid shelters but escape the cold and violence on the streets. It's a place homeless people can be safe and warm and socialize, read, or work on personal projects. There are no cots or mats for sleeping. "If they want to put their heads down and sleep, I don't think anybody will mind," said Nan Morehead, community liaison for Denver Human Services and a member of the Denver Commission to End Homelessness. "Basically, it's just to get them in, give them some coffee, and keep them safe."

A homeless man in Dallas has learned that a plate he inherited from a great-aunt has links to the **sunken luxury ship Titanic**. The *Dallas Morning News* reports that the plate has been authenticated as being made in a Czech factory exclusively for the doomed cruise liner. Jay Sherman, who has reportedly been sleeping under a freeway bridge, told the paper that his great-aunt was a *Titanic* survivor. He's now listing the plate for auction on Ebay, with an opening bid of just under \$50,000. The *Titanic* sank in the North Atlantic in 1912 after striking an iceberg on its maiden voyage. About 1,500 passengers and crew died.

A homeless veteran is off the streets and **heading to Iraq**. The *Rockdale Citizen* reports that 38-year-old Robert Henderson, an Army veteran, was tired of being homeless on the streets of

Atlanta for the past two years, so he decided to sign up. He joined the Georgia National Guard and now Specialist Henderson is preparing for deployment to Iraq next year. Henderson says the decision was a natural one after serving four years in the Army shortly before the first Iraq war. "I was looking for a job. I was tired of doing the hustle and bustle," he tells the *Citizen*. "I was tired of going out there and going for interviews, and it just hit me." He says his Army training prepared him for life on the streets. "Those survival skills, or those camping skills, really help you out to try to find some shelter," he says. Henderson became homeless after losing a temporary clerical position at the Small Business Association two years ago. While on the streets he worked a number of odd jobs, like picking up trash and cleaning bathrooms at Turner Field. He says the best place he found to catch some sleep was on the early morning MARTA trains, but most of the time he slept in the woods of Washington Park and ironed his shirts for job interviews on its picnic benches. In his new position, Henderson will be providing clerical support to the commander and staff of his unit.

About nine people were arrested in Halifax, Nova Scotia during a protest against homelessness staged at an **abandoned library** they want used for affordable housing. The building is owned by the Halifax Regional Municipality. Officers took action when some of the 40 demonstrators filed into the building and barricaded themselves on the third floor; they rounded up protestors from inside the building and others from the roof. Protestors yelled at police as they were hauled away in a police van. "This building has been determined to be unsafe for the folks to be inside there," Sergeant Randy Snow told ATV News. "The CEO of the city has directed us to make sure that it's safe and locked up and that the people are outside." Those arrested will be charged with violating the Protection of Property Act. A male youth and an adult female were also facing charges of obstructing an officer.

—Compiled by Patty Lane

poetry

In Morning

He would fill
 his.
 The
 depth
 was beyond him,
 yet he could

 not
 know—
 only,
 reach for it!
 And be

 present. Whenever
 he
 slept,

 tonight.

—STAN BURRISS

A Poem for Kelly

There was no poem as she prepared herself to write one. There was no heartfelt expression, no escaping a prison called "home," no purpose beyond wanting to be the most she'd ever been.

So she rested in a shallow riverbed of hope and separated the determined stones from those that needed to be released.

she tossed the discardable stones the distance of a couple, three hundred years back in time, If the past and time can be measured in distance.

She watched and listened to them plunk into the water's surface, following their uniform patterns of growth outward, broadening their external demise.

Her more determined stones remained firm
 In a shallow riverbed of hope—

—TOM KUBICK

Survival, etc ...

stand in line for an hour
 or so rain bears down
 at least got a rollie
 cars and buses gawk
 elliot bay whips
 hair and face
 crazy person driven by
 the bible rants and raves
 some snicker others swear
 some women and men claim
 they are a couple
 so they can enter the mission
 in front of the line
 course it's legit
 on the street
 water goes down shirt
 and jacket
 some mission stiff passes
 out bed & food tickets
 sometimes because of seating
 there isn't enough chairs
 the food is better if you
 buy a ticket otherwise
 you get leftovers
 and some don't give a fuck
 the unlucky ones
 they gather their belongings
 blankets and cardboard
 for the night
 I'm lucky I guess
 for now and I'll figure
 out tomorrow.

—EARLE THOMPSON

Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning



Last time we mentioned the homeless Kenyan teenager who found a roughly \$5,000 prize while urinating in a Nairobi park. As we said then, our motivation in mentioning that story was mainly to be able to use the word "urinating" repeatedly. As you will see, it can continue to serve that purpose.

But just when we were thinking that the Kenyan's story was one of a kind, we saw this one concerning a homeless Dallas man. Jay Sherman found out that a plate that his great-aunt passed on to him really came from the Titanic, the sinking of which she survived. The Czech company that originally made the plate has corroborated the story of Jay

Sherman's great-aunt, certifying that the plate is one of theirs and one of a set made exclusively for use on the Titanic. So Mr. Sherman put it on E-bay with an asking bid of \$49,995. As of this writing we don't know if any bids of that magnitude have been made, but we are definitely rooting for Jay.

We are so happy for him and so much want him to succeed that if anyone out there were to come up with \$49,985, we would kick in the last \$10 to make the sale happen. That's a promise from me, Wes "Always Poised to Help in a Token Way" Browning. (I am subtly acknowledging a failing. Please forgive.)

In my own experience, the finest way to get out of any one particular bout of homelessness is to have someone related to you die and leave you money. I highly recommend that the inheritance be in the form of cash, preferably small bills, personally handed to you in a sack by the dying relative just at the last moment, so they can hear you graciously thank them before you get the hell out of there and rent an apartment.

In my own case I didn't get cash. The money was held up in probate for three years. It came in the form of a check from a lawyer, and I had to split it 50-50 with the ex as per the divorce decree or I wouldn't have been allowed to cash it at all. But my half paid for a deposit and a month's rent, new clothes, and three month's worth of groceries, so I didn't complain.

Another technique that you can use to get out of being homeless is to have a close friend leave the state and bestow upon you his apartment with the deposit and a month's rent already paid, just because he thinks you're a cool guy who deserves a break. It's not as good as cash from a dead person because you don't get to choose the neighborhood, but it beats the freeway underpass, on account of the extra walls.

Some people get out of homelessness by selling drugs. I don't recommend this technique at all because it is not only illegal but puts you in dangerous company. I only mention it in passing here because I hear a lot of people say that they're afraid of homeless people because they're all "drug dealers and prostitutes." I guarantee you, if anybody you meet is a drug dealer or a prostitute, and they're any good at it, they're making enough for a room. The same goes for diamond smugglers and professional car thieves. In fact, the only diamond smuggler I ever met owned a house near Wedgwood outright, with a huge yard and cherry trees and a turn-around driveway. People like that don't get rained on.

Another way to get out of homelessness is to have the incredible good fortune to live in a society where the general public understands that A, homelessness is the result of long-standing public policy decisions that have over time eroded the supply of affordable housing, causing hundreds of thousands of people to be priced out of the housing market and to thereby lose the means necessary to maintain their employability and make themselves viable consumers of commercial housing, and that B, the same public (the general public who originally stood by and allowed those public policies to go into effect and in some cases even clamored for them) has the moral responsibility to correct the effects of those public policy decisions, even to altogether reverse them.

But we've got a long wait now before anything like that will ever happen. In the meantime, let's keep our eyes open while we urinate in parks used by treasure hunts to hide prizes, and let's inherit plates imagined to have great historical value by folks with more money than they need. ■

I guarantee you, if anybody you meet is a drug dealer or a prostitute, and they're any good at it, they're making enough for a room.



dispute

It shatters at
once...
and,
each moment? When
does it last—
this
thing?
Where
does it make an
appearance—
this,
time- in
-one?
And! earn a name?
It
falls
from you. Now,
it falls from you.

—STAN BURRISS

Sage Keeps the Mosquito Away

Ageless souls memorize
Volumes of life
Verse by verse knitting a
Cat in a hat
Crankshafts of diseased
Blond wheat
Stick needles into powdery
Monarch butterflies

Cynics of God rant
Cursing the sandstorm
Feeding doves who can
Fend for themselves
Washing down the bitter pill
With sweet madeira wine
Knowing freedom can be quicksand
Strewn with imaginary flowers

Cinderella's slippers are
Sculptured from blocks of ice
Midnight strikes melting
Heels into flats
Voile and lace reveal
Remnants underneath
Velvet gloves unravel
Reviving yellow Rubbermaids
Lilac perfume evaporates
Like foaming carpet cleaner

Sculptured from a pillar of salt
Fright dissolves in the surf of the ocean
No longer a mermaid flailing inside a net
Opal wriggles out from her passive submission
Vigorous blinking a purified water eclipse
Panic vaporizing into the azure skyline.

—CAROL KOSCHE

In the Back of the Laundromat

I don't want to live in Tent City 4 or in any other tent city.
I want to live in the back of the laundromat, alone,
where it's warm and I can wrap myself in towels
and discarded sweaters.
People think I'm crazy. They're afraid of me too,
like the woman named Esther, Genevieve's friend,
who I saw in the bathroom at Ballard Hospital
that time. Boy, did she run. I guess I smelled bad,
but where am I supposed to wash?
I wish they'd put a shower stall in there, wouldn't kill 'em.
Not that I'd use it. Who'd watch my cart?
I schlep it all over town,
and now I'm gonna leave it for another homeless person
to pilfer? I don't think so.
Weren't those the days when I used to visit Genevieve!
I'd water her flowers even when she'd tell me not to
and leave my bags on her front porch.
Once, I pinned a Valentine to her front door.
She must be 90 by now. The last time I saw her,
Esther was giving her a birthday bash
and that was a couple years back already.
Maybe I'll pay the old girl a visit.
Oh, but she'll just think I want more money
and run for a few coins.
Not that I couldn't use them,
but I'm doing ok. Nobody's bothering me,
and I'm not bothering anybody else.
So I smell bad. Who cares?
The folks in Wedgwood and Laurelhurst,
Medina, Queen Anne, Bothell?
The good souls in churches and synagogues and mosques
and universities?
I do care, you know, but this is who I am now.
At least I'm not killing anybody. I don't make bombs
or order them dropped on people's heads.
I don't put human beings on leashes either, and my name isn't George W. Bush.
By the way, did I tell you my name is Ellen?*

Yes, it is. My name is Ellen.
Look at me.

—ESTHER HELFGOTT

*Ellen is a character in Helfgott's continuing docu-drama *The Homeless One: A Poem in Many Voices* (www.suesske.de/esther_helfgott_homeless-one.htm)

GIRLS IN JAIL, Cont. from page 1

as I witnessed in the detention center — is 15.

This is where my story takes a different turn, because I want to share a small snapshot from my life, when I was also 15 years of age.

And that's the moment that a heavy cell door slammed shut in front of my face in 1985.

That's the moment that I remember feeling more alone than I had in my entire life.

I knew I was in a Long Beach, California police station and jail. This wasn't juvenile detention; this was the adult "drunk tank." After the door slammed in my face, I sank down on a low, concrete bench, feeling momentarily defeated and worried about my friend in an adjacent cell. I had passed a grip of pills to her a half-hour before we were arrested, and I figured they would try to peg a possession charge on her instead of me. I started scheming how to get her out of it. (It was a scheme, I might add, that eventually worked out.)

After a few minutes, the stench of the vomit all around me in the dark, dank cell finally reached my nostrils. It wasn't mine; I vaguely recall thinking that at least I handled my alcohol better than the "grown-ups" who had occupied the cell before me.

I was 15, and I had already been drinking for four solid years, to say nothing of my habit of consuming nearly every drug I could get my hands on. At this point, even two 40-ounce bottles of Olde English 800 malt liquor went down like water. The problem was that it went through me like water, which is how the police busted me and a few of my girlfriends. There's no other way to put the humiliation of the fact that we were pissing in an alleyway outside of a rowdy punk club when the cops rolled up on us.

I was a very long way from my mom's house in Hollywood. Earlier that afternoon, my girls and I had hopped on a succession of buses to get here, and then tracked down a nice homeless guy to buy us our cheap alcohol.

The journey to Long Beach had taken almost two hours — Los Angeles is not a city that makes public transit easy by any stretch of the imagination. Yet no matter where we went for

shows, it was always worth it. We shaved our heads, put on our tank tops and flannel shirts, got loaded, and clustered together at the back of the bus. The other passengers averted their eyes and tried their best to stay away; we seemed crazy because, in truth, we were already halfway out of our minds.

The L.A. hardcore scene was still in full swing, and it was really the only place where we felt somewhat normal. By the time I was 13, I had started panhandling my way into shows across the urban sprawl of L.A., throwing my little five-foot-four body into monstrous, swirling, slamming "pits" in order to swallow up the energy that the scene provided. In the punk scene, I was just another anonymous punk rock girl. I had a nice Mohawk and a penchant for tank tops, thin black suspenders, Docs, and flannel shirts. Aside from lipstick, there was nothing remotely "girly" about me back then. If anything, I was hell-bent on being as strong and tough as possible. Around older punks, I was able to learn serious fighting and survival skills from the bad-ass freaks around me.

In the scene, it was a relief to know that I was far from the strangest kid around, and once I learned the ropes I got respect. I rarely got into fights unless I started them. The scene was raw, angry, and completely untamed: Punk shows drew people in the hundreds and thousands, and police riots were so common that I had grown to find them predictable. I saw hundreds upon hundreds of shows that I now only remember vaguely, be it for reasons of intoxication, depression, trauma, or all of the above.

The Long Beach arrest was already my second, and it was not going to be my last. I wasn't interested in belonging to mainstream society in any shape or form, and my appearance made me — and other punks — a very visible target.

A filthy metal toilet bowl sat in the middle of the drunk tank. The cops who threw me in here hadn't even thought to hand me a roll of toilet paper, so after a few minutes, I started to bang against the door, loudly demanding my "right" to a roll of toilet paper.

A female cop eventually walked up and told me to "shut the fuck up." I never got toilet paper, but they eventually moved me to a slightly cleaner cell

for what felt like the longest night of my life.

They released me to my mother early the next morning. I was still fucked up, and my mom kept asking me how it was possible that my blood alcohol level was so high. I told her the cops had read it to her wrong, and she believed me rather than accept the truth of how horribly depressing and disconnected our relationship had become.

Our broken-down car had no working windows and the passenger side had gotten stuck while the window was down. As she drove me home in silence, the cold air blasted my face. We didn't say anything to each other, but I remember looking back and seeing my younger sister asleep in the backseat, looking scared and unhappy in a well-worn blanket.

I felt like shit. I felt like crying, but I had lost the ability several years prior, and I didn't regain it until I was almost 30 years old.

The truth is that I already felt like an old woman. I don't remember a damn thing about the next day, or the next day, or the day after. At least not in chronological order. From age 12 to 18, I lived my life in a crazy blur of intoxication, guided by my strong survival instinct, rage, and sheer tenacity.

I was unquestionably a seriously depressed young girl, a hyper-sensitive and initially nerdy, bespectacled immigrant kid who found Hollywood as foreign as if my family had moved to the moon. I saw people around me as being incredibly cruel, sadistic, and predatory. I was attacked, molested and raped by people who were close to me and who were complete strangers to me. All throughout, I was tormented by school kids until I became too frightening to fuck with. But in truth, I was frightened all the time. I drank to numb the fear.

That's one side of it. The other side was that my entire experience as a young adult was tempered by an overriding sense of compassion for people who had it worse than I did. Really, I had compassion for almost anyone else except for me. Even when I genuinely wanted to die — and took steps toward that end goal — I still cared about the people around me. I thought about the people living under a then-apartheid system in South Africa, the people dying in El Salvador and Nicaragua, the people with whom I had interacted on Skid Row in L.A., and the people who lived in filthy squats and injected heroin on a daily basis. Suicide felt, in that sense, like a cop-out. It didn't stop me from thinking about it everyday, but it did keep me from taking the final step. And that was my saving grace.

Because back then, there was no group like Powerful Voices to intervene and try to get me to feel good about myself. I remember, distinctly, thinking that if I could make it to 21, it would be a miracle.

I made it to 21, and kept going.

My life didn't so much get easier as it became clearer that I had a purpose for being. That there was something I could make out of even the worst as-

pects of my life.

To this day, my early struggles crop up in strange and unexpected ways. Depression still plagues me like the demon that it is, but at least it comes and goes, and doesn't accompany me through my every waking moment.

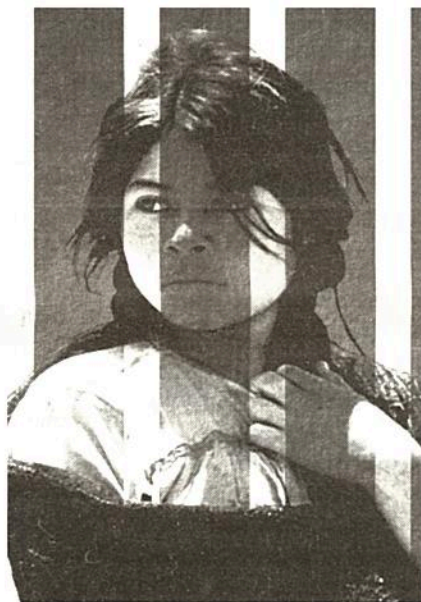
When I visited the girls in detention accompanied by the women of Powerful Voices, I decided to break out of my role as a journalist to tell them some of this. It's usually not done; some of my peers would even consider it wholly unprofessional.

But I felt compelled to do it, because they were allowing me to sit with them in such a difficult time in their lives. Sitting there, amongst them, I could feel the weight of their sadness as if it were my own. I could see straight through the bluff, the posturing, the "hardness" that some of them exhibited as a matter of habit and self-protection.

I told them that they could make it, but I also knew the truth of the matter. Only some of them *will* make it. Statistically speaking, several of them will end up going to women's prisons. (Already, many of these girls are spending their second, third, and fourth times in detention.) At least some of them will get pregnant — one particularly depressed girl was already pregnant in detention. Many will suffer from alcohol and drug problems, or end up homeless.

For its part, the people of Powerful Voices have dedicated their working lives to improving these girls' chances. For my part, I'm still hoping that all of the girls I met can look back 10 or 20 years from now knowing they defied the odds. Here's hoping they do. ■

Silja J.A. Talvi is a Real Change Advisory Board member and a Seattle-based journalist and essayist who has reported for National Geographic, The Nation, and the Christian Science Monitor, among dozens of other magazines and newspapers nationwide. She is currently working on a book about women in prison, and can be reached at sisu@well.com. Special thanks to Tanya Kim, Amy Muno, Katrina Davis, Amy HyunAh Moline, Blak Washington, Ayana Carroll, and Jennifer Greenstein of Powerful Voices for their time and assistance. Thanks also to the King County Juvenile Detention Center, and to the girls of C and D Halls.



My entire experience as a young adult was tempered by an overriding sense of compassion for people who had it worse than I did. Really, I had compassion for almost anyone else except for me.

Powerful Voices

To find out more about Powerful Voices, to contribute, or to volunteer your time, visit

www.powerfulvoices.org, or call 206-860-1026. On February 7, Powerful Voices will be holding special event, "The Girl in Your Life," a community event focused on the ways that parents, friends and mentors can help girls experience adolescence as a time of opportunity. The event is open to the public and free; donations will be accepted at the door.



Xmas Rescue Mission

A boy's holiday saved by the Washington State Patrol

By Liz Smith

Being poor is terribly dispiriting. Being poor at Christmas brings poisonous floods of dissatisfaction. Being poor at Christmas with a little child, however, is when you really feel like a winter solstice failure. No toys at Christmas are a sad thing, especially in our consumer-driven economy. This is what I was facing 11 years ago on behalf of my three year-old son. I found a number for the Community Information Line and asked them where I could get help for Christmas for my little boy. I was determined; I wanted my boy to have something nice, some toys.

I have been a poor woman most of my adult life, so I am pretty used to it, but that year was particularly bad. My husband helped me find an apartment and then we got a divorce, so I was even denied the aid and comfort of the enemy. My son's standard of living and mine sunk down. Our new apartment was 233 square feet — that's 15 feet by 15 feet, before the furniture: a bookshelf, a cabinet, a table, and two chairs. No bed; we slept on the floor. Not even a radio. We stayed indoors when it rained or snowed because I had holes in my shoes that duct tape wouldn't fix. I washed clothes in the bathtub. We did get WIC food vouchers and food stamps, but when averaged out over a month, it amounted to 91 cents per person per meal. Ha ha, says the govern-

ment, go out and live it up — don't spend it all on one pork chop.

Of course, we never went out to eat or to a movie or to any of the usual places people go to have fun. The five usual places we went were the Queen Anne library, the grocery store, the food banks, the park, and our clinic to see about my boy's frequent earaches. I have severe claustrophobia, and the cramped apartment drove me crazy. And my son had ADHD, undiagnosed.

It was like living with a hyperactive comet whizzing here and there, getting into everything. He had so much energy that one day we walked all the way from Woodland Park Zoo to the fountain at the Seattle Center, where he promptly commenced to chase pigeons for a half an hour. He never got tired. Needless to say, we took a lot of walks.

So that October, we found ourselves applying for Christmas help at the Fremont Public Association. This was in 1993, the year the FPA started its Adopt-a-Family program. A very stern-looking woman came into the room. She began with a lecture about how we shouldn't ask for help from more than one agency. This is called double-dipping, and if you are a pauper it is considered

a heinous crime — a crime, by the way, that I had personally committed that fall. Unless you have faced my situation, you can't know how being poor in America eats away at you. The tempta-

I have been a poor woman most of my adult life, so I am pretty used to it, but that year was particularly bad. My husband helped me find an apartment and then we got a divorce, so I was even denied the aid and comfort of the enemy.

tion of help for Christmas from people who actively wish you well is too hard to resist.

The stern woman went on to warn us that she was going to check up on us and if we were double-dipping, we would get nothing. No one said a word. "Okay," she said. She passed out our applications. "Don't be too greedy," she said. By then I was scared to ask for anything. I

held back and suddenly she became encouraging, asking did I want a bathrobe (no), or a Christmas tree (yes).

Discussing your exact state of poverty with a complete stranger is not ever an easy thing to do. But I wanted my son, my little three year-old, to have toys and candy and a tree — all things I couldn't afford.

In about a month, a phone call came from the FPA. The State Troopers, headquartered in Bellevue, had sponsored us. This was doubly exciting, since my son could not resist a man in uniform. He loved policemen and firemen, and at three years old was planning a dual career in these fields.

The day came when the State Troopers were to come to our apartment. I was very nervous and had been working to have the apartment neat and clean. I knew I would not be arrested for living in squalor, but I wanted to make a good impression — that I was a heroic single mother who belonged in with that group so beloved by charity, a "deserving" poor person with an appealing young child.

There was a knock on the door. "Get the door, honey," I said. Outside were about eight state troopers bearing gifts for us. What a sight. It was like being at a convention of refrigerators in Law Enforcement Blue. I mean, these guys may spend hours in their patrol cars but they weren't fat. They were big. All were smiling at my son. They gave him some little State Trooper badges. They gave us everything you could want to eat for Christmas, and many packages of clothes and toys. There was also a very shapely Christmas tree and ornaments.

While I was putting away the turkey and other food, the Troopers (I am sorry I didn't get them to write their names down) were kneeling down talking to my son and putting up the tree. My son was wild with joy: policemen and presents at the same time. The visit was winding down and it was time for them to leave. We shook hands with them all around, and as they filed into the hall

Continued to page 13

Applications to Adopt-A-Family On the Rise

In the past, Adopt-A-Family accepted applications from five specific zip codes. In 2001, 80 families applied; in 2002, 139 families; and in 2003, 188 families. The Bush years, part one. This year it's open only to homeless and formerly homeless families involved in groups operating under the F.P.A. umbrella. If you are in need of Christmas help, call the Community Information Line at (206)461-3200. Even at this late date, they may be able to offer something. If you or a community group you belong to wants to help someone for Christmas, you can call the same number and they can get you in touch with any number of agencies.

REAL CHANGE on **TV**

Public Affairs in Focus – Real Change
 Monday, December 27, 7:30 p.m.
 On cable Channel 77 (Comcast) or 29 (Millennium)

SCAN
Building Community Through Media

SCAN is a nonprofit organization supporting diverse expression and building community through access to training, media tools, and distribution channels.

Grande Dame

Ginny Nicarchy pioneered the local movement to end violence against women

Interview by Breeana Laughlin

Ginny Nicarchy has been engaged in the fight against domestic violence for over three decades. Her work has ranged from helping people individually to raising awareness about abuse of power in national and international campaigns.

She is a founder and former director of Seattle Rape Relief, one of the first rape crisis lines in the country. She is also a board member of King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and of CHAYA, a nonprofit organization that serves South Asian women in times of crisis and need, and raises awareness of domestic violence issues.

Nicarthy has written many books, including an easy-to-read handbook for abused women who want to free themselves of domestic violence and turn their lives around. She has written a comprehensive guide for counselors, mental health workers, and community activists about starting and sustaining a group for abused women. Nicarchy has also written a book called, *The Ones Who Got Away: Women Who Left Abusive Partners*.

Her book *Getting Free* has been called "a most important work in the movement to end domestic violence." It has become a bestseller and has helped to change the lives of thousands of women since its first publication in 1986. The latest edition of the book came out in October, published by Seal Press. It includes important new information about the latest studies and research on the subject and more online resources. It also contains new chapters about immigrant women and abuse and discusses how religious beliefs can affect the choices of women facing violence. Another new chapter asks whether abusive men can change. The book's other new editions address how domestic violence affects children and gives suggestions about what communities can do to address the issue of domestic violence.

Real Change: *How long have you been involved with the issue of domestic violence?*

Ginny Nicarchy: I was involved in the anti-rape movement since 1972, and in 1976 some of us realized women were being battered, and nobody was doing much about it. As we had found with the issue of rape, the so-called experts really didn't know. First of all, they ignored violence against women in general, and secondly, those who didn't ignore it just didn't understand it at all.

Groups around the country began to say, "We need to find out about this." We mainly learned from the women who were under siege from partners — certainly I did. I wrote *Getting Free*, which was published in 1982, from what I learned from the women. I would also write papers so I could hand them

out at the group next week because I knew some of them would not come back. I was trying to capture them while I could.

RC: *Can you explain the term "battering?"*

Nicarthy: Battering refers to when someone beats up his wife, and it also refers to a pattern of ongoing physical abuse: threats, economic and psychological control, etc.

When we started out, it was the violence that was shocking. The shock and the horror of men who supposedly loved their wives or girlfriends — and slamming their fist into their faces, knifing them, or turning a gun on them. We were trying to get legal help, trying to get that recognized first by police and then by prosecutors. At the same time, we were learning that violence was the symptom of power and control that the husbands wanted to maintain over the women.

Later, some people came up with the various ways that people try to control others — through isolation, through ridicule, through economic control — a whole series of things. Pretty soon, the women controls herself the way the power-monger wants her to. And when she does that, he doesn't have to do much.

A lot of women can slip into it, both traditional women and women who are very feisty and modern. Sometimes a woman could be hit once and have a black eye. She never knows when it's going to happen again. If she says "the wrong thing," his fist might go up six or eight inches. He hasn't touched her or come near her, but that's enough.

RC: *Do men who abuse their partners share common personality traits?*

Nicarthy: When the so-called experts finally got it that the women who were

being battered were not mentally ill, then a lot of people tried to find out what was wrong with the guys. What was their mental illness? Most of us believe mental illness is not the problem.

Some people say there are deep character flaws. Some of the people who batter fit into the category of personality disorders, which are not mental illnesses. They're people who don't have a social conscience. They're not willing to empathize with other people because they don't view them as having the same kind of rights or humanity that they think they have. The hardcore response to your question is that they batter because they want control.

RC: *Can men who batter change?*



PHOTO BY MARK SULLO

Nicarthy: This is another one where there is no simple answer. A lot of people who have been in the movement, including some women who have been battered, say, "Forget it, they won't change." And some women say, "My husband or boyfriend went to a treatment plan for a year and then he came out he started bashing me again." That happens.

There is a kind of funnel. Let's figure there are 5,000 women who are battered. Three thousand of them call the police, and in 2,000 of those instances the police come. Police make a report in maybe 1,000 of the cases. In most places now they take a report, but there are probably some small towns in other states where they don't. Then a smaller number of police follow through on the report and charge the person with battery or something. A small number (this varies tremendously around the country depending on judi-

cial districts) will be assigned to some kind of intervention. Now we're down to about 200 people.

You have a very large number of people who don't go to the group, or drop out after the third meeting, so now you are down to about 12 people. They must stay in the group, work at what they're supposed to working at, continue for six months (most experts would say a year) and follow the state mandates for intervention. The leaders of the intervention must understand it's a manner of control they're talking about, and the women need to be able to talk to the leader to see what's happening in the group. And it really needs to be connected to the court system. But, you end up with three of these 5,000 batterers who have changed. So when

When we started out, it was the violence that was shocking. The shock and the horror of men who supposedly loved their wives or girlfriends — and slamming their fist into their faces, knifing them, or turning a gun on them.

the women ask, "Can they change?" My answer is yes, but most of them will not change.

RC: *What should you do if you know someone who is being battered?*

Nicarthy: First, listen and don't make judgments. Don't try to solve the problem unless you're asked to. Just try to be there and find out what's been happening. The woman is more likely to underestimate what's being done to her than to exaggerate it.

Just be patient about hearing the story. And the woman, when

she's told you the story (or a bit of it), she's probably done that because she's desperate. She may be very ambivalent, especially if she's kept the secret for a long time, because she feels foolish and guilty, and like she's betraying him — all kinds of feelings that want to keep her from really telling the whole story.

You need to learn a lot more about the situation. You can ask her, what have you thought about doing? What are your options? After you've listened for a long time. And how can I help? What would you like me to do? I want to be here for you, but I want to be here for you in a way that you want. It might mean staying at my house or it might mean that I just listen. It might mean that I call you every week. Or it might mean that we set up a signal so if your in physical danger, and you phone and say a code word, I know and call the cops immediately. It could be a whole range of things. ■



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Why the Bush Agenda Will Fail

The War at Home
The Domestic Costs of Bush's Militarism
By Frances Fox Piven
The New Press, 2004
165 pages, \$13.95

Review by Timothy Harris

Frances Fox Piven's books tend to endure. *Regulating the Poor* and *Poor People's Movements*, thirty years later, are still regarded as poli-sci classics. This one is different. Authored in the heat of a tight Presidential election, *The War at Home* feels dated just months after its publication.

In December 2004, the idea that President Bush would exploit a war and 9/11 to cement a second term and gain support for a "domestic agenda of plunder" seems too obvious to at least 49 percent of us to justify a book, even a brief one. And all those pages of speculation over the outcome of the election now have their answer.

Nor do we gain any comfort from Piven's insight that right-wing social movements flourish when Republicans are in power, while progressive social movements fare best under Democratic administrations.

Survival services for the poor have been under steady attack since before the Reagan administration, and where they must exist, says Piven, the Washington consensus is that the process should be as humiliating and difficult as possible. To do otherwise would be to undermine the attractions of work on any terms available, however dismal. To those who have read her other work, these are all familiar ideas.

Piven breaks fresh ground, however, in her analysis of why the Bush plan is

unsustainable. Although the President delivers in spades on the right-wing agenda of pumping up militarism, attacking labor and social programs, cutting taxes, and deregulating business, the war that has offered political cover for his domestic agenda and papered over deep divisions on the Right could be the very thing that undermines Bush's second term.

Historically, says Piven, Presidents have repaid the sacrifices demanded of the public during wartime with expanded social supports. Given the escalating cost of the war and this administration's radical commitment to tax reduction, Bush has little choice but to break with tradition.

The war that has offered political cover for his domestic agenda and papered over deep divisions on the Right could be the very thing that undermines Bush's second term.

Even cornerstone programs such as "No Child Left Behind" are under-funded, a fact that undermines support for the President's education agenda even within the Republican Party. Bush's plans for Medicare and Social Security, while popular with the Wall Street crowd, are political landmines awaiting the President's heavy footstep.

And the War, which was to have been a relatively easy victory leading to a wave of democracy and nation building in the Middle East, loses public support every day. It looks as though the "Vietnam Syndrome" that administration hawks were so eager to put to rest may experience a bloody revival.

The War at Home, while written in the fervent hope of a Kerry administration, remains a clear-eyed and up-to-date assessment of the damage done and the work before us. These are dangerous, dispiriting times, but when the winds finally shift we need to be ready. So get informed, stop whining, and get back to work. ■

Nice Girls Finish Last

The Boundaries of Her Body: The Troubling History of Women's Rights in America
By Debran Rowland
Sphinx Publishing, August 2004
832 pages \$29.95

Review by Stacey Silliman

Women in America are losing ground. Attempts to turn the clock back to a time when fetuses ruled and women were merely slaves to their bodies did not magically reappear with the "election" of George W. Bush in 2000, nor do they continue today simply because he has been re-elected.

In *The Boundaries of Her Body* lawyer and author Debran Rowland shoves this point home with extensive research, statistics, and a careful review of the law through prominent and not-so-prominent cases that have tested women's rights in the courts. It chronicles the evolution of women's rights from the landing of the pilgrims at Plymouth Rock to the present day. The book gives a thorough history of women's evolving rights, and includes an examination of some current global problems such as AIDS and violence against women. Rowland's book comes at a time when, for many women, feminism has become a dirty word and is obsolete in this supposedly "post-feminist" world.

Many of the problems that the now infamous women's movement of the 1960s and 70s attempted to rectify still haunt women today. Women on average still earn 76 cents for every dollar men earn; they are still overwhelmingly the victims of domestic violence and rape. While often taught to fear dark alleys, strangers, and walking alone at night, women are "more likely to be victimized at a private home" — by friends, family members, or intimate partners — "than any other place," according to the Justice Department.

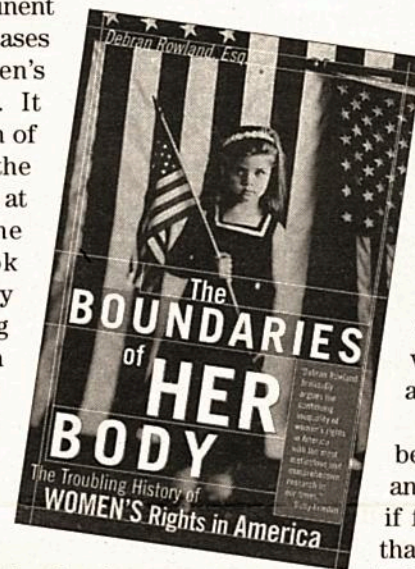
And while we'd like to believe that our country has progressed beyond the naïve belief that "nice girls" don't get raped and those who do asked for it, Rowland cites many cases from the last decade where defendants argued just that. One such case involved "a 41-year-old Missouri woman [who] was allegedly attacked and raped in her own home after her wine was spiked in a bar. The defendant was charged and convicted of rape, sodomy, and sexual assault. But a Franklin County circuit judge chose to disregard the jury's recommendation for sentencing. The judge apparently found the woman's actions in going to a bar unacceptable. 'If anyone is listen-

ing, this is why you don't go to bars,' the judge reportedly said during sentencing." This case was prosecuted in the year 2000.

The problem for women today seems to be that they are unaware of the "battles" that are being waged against them daily. Rowland makes a point to discuss several significant changes that have happened since the decision in *Roe v. Wade*. One change that is significant is the evolution of the term "unborn children" vs. "fetuses," which has further served to humanize fetuses and dehumanize the women who carry them. In addition to semantics, the government of nearly every state has consistently attempted to limit a woman's right to choose. In 1977, Congress passed the Hyde Amendment, which made it illegal to use Medicaid/Medicare for any abortion not required to save the mother's life. This effectively foreclosed poor women's right to choose abortion. These are just a few of the "battles" that women have lost and are still losing today.

This book should be required reading for any woman (man too), if for no other reason than the one the book jacket states: "No matter what your political beliefs are, you must know what the law says about you." I can think of no better introduction to the law than Rowland's succinct and at times sarcastic prose. The ease with which she is able to explain complicated cases and legal issues that concern women makes this book an informative and enjoyable read, interrupted only occasionally by quotes from judges' decisions. After each passage, Rowland offered a summary for those of us lacking a J.D.

The stakes are high in the battle for women's rights. "Gone in all but name today is the notion of a woman as an individual — separate, complete, and autonomous from a developing fetus," Rowland writes. "Obviously, I don't have a crystal ball. But from all I've read in creating this book, if I had to guess at the future for women I would say we stand to lose many more significant battles — and the rights that go with them — if our 'leadership' doesn't begin to abandon the niceties of a comfortable life with educated opinions and start waging the kind of aggressive, no-holds-barred guerilla war that anti-choice groups have been riding to victory." With as many as three Supreme Court Justices likely to retire in the next four years, I'd be willing to bet that Rowland is correct. ■



The problem for women today seems to be that they are unaware of the "battles" that are being waged against them daily.

Street Talk: Pillar Talk

Photos and interviews by Meghan Peters

Whether it's a mother, daughter, sister, or friend, everyone has had an amazing woman touch their life in some way. For our women's issue, *Real Change* asked you who is the most important woman in your life and what has she done that makes her so special?



My wife. She's helped me through a lot of really rough times medically. I owe her for the support she's given me.

—Tim Celmer, 38, software analyst

My older daughter at this point. She's the thing my life revolves around. She really taught me about unconditional love.

—Jeff Hempel, 30, technical analyst



My mom is the most important female in my life. She's very good at encouraging me in the things I want to do. I can show her my artwork and she'll tell me I'm talented. That's always good to hear. She's really interested in what I want to do.

—Vicki Thurman, 38, artist

It would be hard to pick just one since different people are important in different relationships. I'd have to say my daughter because when you have children, it's like an investment in the future and that's really important. She has brought perspective to situations and has helped me to rethink my motives and ideas.

—Rebecca Rickabaugh, 57, administrative assistant



As cliché as it sounds, I'd have to say my mother. She picks me up from work even though I'm 24 years old. I owe her absolutely everything.

—Tom Payne, 24, server

Obviously, it should be my mother. I mean, she gave me life. She's my role model. She's everything to me. She's the kind of person I'd like to become.

—Xavier Tinoco, 25, waiter/cashier



My mother. I don't know how much longer she'll be around but she's great. I've been overseas for the past three years, so she's glad I'm back here. She worries about me a lot and gets excited when I call her.

—Shawn King, 28, GAP Employee

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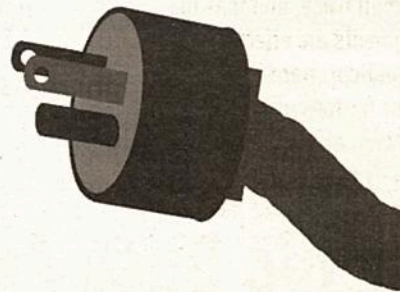
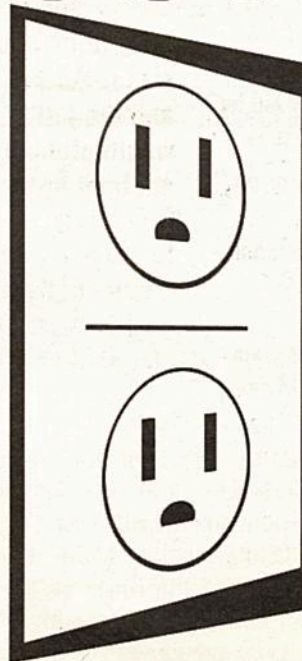
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Saturday, November 13, 6:02 p.m., Westlake Mall. Officers were dispatched to the lower-level men's restroom in Westlake Mall after mall security called 911 to report that the subject, a transient white male, was in that location and appeared to have OD'd on heroin. Officers arrived with Fire Department medics and found the subject in the listed bathroom, lying unconscious on the floor. The security guard showed officers the drug paraphernalia lying on the countertop, including a syringe. He stated that the subject is a known drug user, that mall security have trespassed him from the mall twice, and that the admonishments are effective until 2007. Seattle Fire Dept. transferred him to Harborview for further treatment, and the medics stated he would make a full recovery. Mall security asked that trespass charges be lodged against him, and the officers requested a charge of criminal trespass.

Thursday, Nov. 25, 9:13 a.m., Fourth Ave. and Jackson St. Complainant stated that about three months ago, he observed the suspect punch the suspect's pregnant girlfriend in the face while they were walking down Union Street. He stated he does not know the victim's name or address — he knows the suspect because they had stayed in the same shelters in the University District. He stated he last saw the victim, a transient Black female around 16 years of age, by the Bon downtown about a week ago, and stated that she was around nine months pregnant, thin, and with black eye. Today the complainant observed the suspect on the bus with some younger females. He went up to them and warned them about his behavior. The suspect became upset, swore at the complainant, and moved to the front of the bus. He exited at Westlake. An area check for the suspect was performed — officers were unable to locate him.

Friday, Nov. 26, 5:30 a.m., Elliott Ave. loading dock. Officers were dispatched to a trespass call on Elliott. Radio informed them

that a male who had been trespassed in the past had returned. A security guard would be standing by. When officers arrived, the suspect was gone. They contacted the complainant, a security guard for the business, and he stated he was performing his rounds when he saw the suspect, a transient white male aged 53, sleeping on the loading dock. Suspect has been trespassed from the location several times. He was located a few blocks away on the corner of First Ave. N. and Denny. He was placed into custody and issued a new trespass

admonishment. Officers warned him to stay away from that location, and he was booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

Saturday, Nov. 27, 6:41 a.m., Ninth Ave. N. and Thomas St. Officers observed and stopped the suspect for prostitution on this date at approximately 6 a.m. At that time, she was released with an order to leave the area. She stated that she would leave. At 6:41 a.m. officers again spotted her attempting to flag down cars at the intersection. Officers arrested her for prostitution loitering. A transient white female aged 38, the suspect is known to officers as an active prostitute, and suffers from the AIDS virus. Once at the West Precinct she informed officers that she had several large abscesses on her legs and had been rejected by King County Jail for this problem. Officers observed the abscesses and agreed that hospitalization was required, and the jail would probably not take her. Officers offered to get her medical attention for her legs, but she declined. She was identified and released. ■

Compiled from incident reports of the Seattle Police Department by Emma Quinn. Got your own experience to relate? Call us at (206)441-3247 ext. 207 and we'll get the scoop.

Officers observed the abscesses and agreed that hospitalization was required, and the jail would probably not take her. Officers offered to get her medical attention for her legs, but she declined.



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XMAS RESCUE, Cont. from Page 9

the captain wiped his eyes in sorrow. The apartment for once felt big, now that the company was gone. I shut the door with relief. "Do you want a candy cane?" I asked. Silly question, he rarely got candy because he hated to brush his teeth. This was a rare treat for him. We made it through the day, decorating the tree and cutting paper slips to tape together into chains that wound

around the tree at the height of a three-year-old. We put up our stockings, opened the last window on the Advent Calendar, had supper and a bath, and finally I got to put the whirlwind to bed.

"Tomorrow is going to be so easy," I said to myself. And it was. We opened toys, tried on new clothes, and had a great dinner, except the turkey, which was a 16-pound bird. So little freezer space, so much turkey, only one hungry apartment manager.

Without the kindness of those wonderful State Troopers and the truly charitable help from the FPA, our Christmas would have been grim. These strangers went out of their way to help us, and we remember them and their kindness every December. ■

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REAL CHANGE HERO

Sandra DuRan, Vendor #3597

While women have always made up a relatively small proportion of our vendor base, longtime vendor Sandra Duran demonstrates the strength, courage, and compassion that women bring to the face of *Real Change*. Getting out there and selling the paper isn't easy for anyone, but Sandra embraces her job as a vendor with gusto. She credits *Real Change* and the many kindnesses of people in Seattle with helping her to overcome her tumultuous past and get her life back on track.

After enduring a family tragedy, Sandra's life fell apart all around her. She found herself unable to care for herself, let alone her four children, and eventually wound up homeless with her children spread throughout foster homes across the Southwest. "I had a breakdown, and at one point I thought my world was gone. But I wound up here in Seattle. Through counseling, through meeting a lot of good people here, it has helped me a lot."

Sandra would like to thank all of her regular customers who have given her moral support over the years, especially the people at the Downtown Seattle Association's Metropolitan Improvement District. Of her relationship with her customers, she says, "It's not just the money. It's being a friend."

Struggling with depression and with pinched nerves in her back, Sandra sees *Real Change* as a way to make an honest living doing something she can be proud of. "I take my paper and my *Real Change* very seriously because, I don't know, it's part of my life. It's part of me. I enjoy it. I support the *Real Change* all the way."

As a woman vendor, Sandra encounters many challenges in her work selling the paper. On the street, she has seen the ugly face of sexism first hand, and confronts it bravely without the recourse of sexual harassment clauses that protect women in corporate America. "I had a guy once come up to me and say, 'My partner's looking for a girl.' And I guess I got a little silly and I said, 'So am I. If you find her, let me know.' But I figure that was the best way to handle it, you know?"

While she is able to use humor to overcome some of life's everyday struggles, other things Sandra takes very seriously — four of them, to be exact.

In helping to build up her confidence and stability and giving her a reliable source of income, *Real Change* has helped Sandra to accomplish her most deeply felt desire: to become a mother again.

"I felt bad, but when my children said, 'Mom, we forgive you,' and they really meant it, now the world has opened up to me. As long as my children can forgive me, because they're the ones that went through it, I don't care what nobody thinks. The only ones who have the right to judge me are my four children."

Sandra never misses a chance to show off the many photos of her children (and now grandchildren) that she carries around with her wherever she goes. Recently, she was able to fly her "baby boy" to Seattle for a visit, and it is her dream to get herself into a regular apartment so that she has a home for her youngest daughter when she moves to Seattle for college. Her daughter currently lives in California with her foster mother, Winnie, "a wonderful woman."

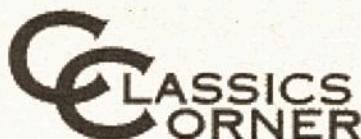
Of being reunited with her children, Sandra says, "It's a big part of my life, and it helps me go on. I can remember a time when I didn't think this would be possible. I thought I lost them forever. But I've had a lot of help and encouragement, and I see that anything is possible."

—Profile by Erin Anderson



REAL CHANGE HAS HELPED SANDRA TO ACCOMPLISH HER MOST DEEPLY FELT DESIRE: TO BECOME A MOTHER AGAIN.

"It's not just the money. It's being a friend."



BY PERFESS'R HARRIS

Odysseus' Real Problem: Fear of Intimacy

Lately, we at Classics Corner have been thinking about Odysseus and Calypso. They made such a nice couple. Even when it was over, they spent that last night "deep in the recesses of her cavern, long in each others arms, lost in love." We think Odysseus felt for Calypso more than he let on, what with all his endless "sobs and groans and anguish, gazing out over the barren sea through blinding tears."

That had to get old pretty quick.

Calypso is, of course, the Goddess who waylaid Odysseus for seven years on his way back from Troy. By all accounts, she was a 10, a total babe in braids who had a place in the woods most yuppies would die for, surrounded by cedars and alders and black poplars and owls and hawks and ravens and not one but four bubbling springs to water the wild parsley and the violets. And she adored Odysseus and she loved sex.

Calypso also offered Odysseus eternal ageless life in paradise. The "ageless" clause was key, as numerous gods had mixed with mortals before and neglected to think that one through, only to shamble through eternity with some rotting geriatric who couldn't die.

So, this is a problem why? Penelope was nice enough: faithful, clever, subservient, et cetera, but not a Goddess. And that was almost two decades ago. Odysseus was the sort of guy to move on.

The problem wasn't his love of Penelope. It was his fear of intimacy. He just wasn't built for long-term relationships. Odysseus wanted out.

If you put pretty much any couple alone on an island with no one else to talk to, after the first year or so things are going to get ugly. He'll hate the way she always leaves the sewing on the kitchen table, and her habit of dropping the names of Gods in casual conversation, as in "I was talking to Hermes the other day, and he said"

She'll notice how he always burps like a sailor after gulping his pramnian wine, and the way he picks his teeth after eating some oxen. After awhile, things get strained. Conversations start to sound like this:

"Hi honey. How was your day?"

"Oh, same old same old. I sat on the rocks, staring over the water toward Ithaca, racked with anguished sobs."

"You know, you could try doing other things. You should go hunting or something."

"Why? You getting tired of ambrosia and nectar?"

Silence. "You know, you don't always need to be so hostile."

"What? What did I say?"

It doesn't take much of this before eternity starts to feel like a very long time. For Odysseus and Calypso, it was really all about the sex, but after seven years, that just wasn't enough. And Dr. Phil was nowhere to be found. ■

For Odysseus and Calypso, it was really all about the sex, but after seven years, that just wasn't enough.

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Upcoming & Notable

Friday 12/10

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice present Friday Night at the Meaningful Movies, with the film *Fixing Elections: The Failure of America's Winner Take All Politics*. Discussion follows, free, donations welcome. 7 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl., north of 50th, Seattle. Info wfnfp@bridgings.org.

Join the Seattle Office for Civil Rights in a celebration of **Human Rights Day** with keynote speaker and author Peggy McIntosh. Human Rights awards will be presented to Mike and Ruth Yarrow, co-organizers of Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation. Noon-1:30 p.m. at the Arctic Building, 700 3rd Ave., downtown Seattle. Info 206-684-4540 or 206-684-4500.

Saturday 12/11

Indian Art Market and Salmon Bake with cultural performances, Native artisans, and a market place offering weavings, baskets, jewelry, photography, carved masks, and much more. Proceeds benefit the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, a nonprofit community-based organization providing services to the Native community. Saturday Dec. 11 and Saturday Dec. 18, 11 a.m.-4

p.m. Salmon Bake \$10 at noon, at Daybreak Star Arts Center, Discovery Park, Seattle. Info www.unitedindians.com.

Sunday 12/12

Amnesty International presents three films as part of the Seattle Human Rights Film Festival. At 2 p.m., *Battle-ground: 21 Days on the Empire's Edge*, about the guerrilla war in Iraq. At 4 p.m., *The Corporation*, an examination of the power and influence of today's corporations with interviews of important commentators such as Michael Moore, Noam Chomsky, and Howard Zinn. At 7:30 p.m., *Innocent Voices*, which tells the story of a family caught in the civil war opposing the Salvadoran army. At the Seattle Art Museum, 100 University St., Downtown Seattle. Info 206-324-6941 or www.amnestyusa.org/filmfest.

Tuesday 12/14

Join **Jobs With Justice** as they celebrate the holidays with the 10th annual "Grinch of the Year Party." Bring potluck desserts, \$5, children free, no one turned away for lack of funds. All proceeds benefit WA State Jobs With Justice. 6 p.m., at Local 6, SEIU, 150 Denny

Way, Seattle, entrance in back. Info and tickets 206-441-4969 or wsjwj@igc.org.

Thursday 12/16

Radical Women meeting with free screening of the film *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism*. This documentary examines the dangers of huge media conglomerates controlling the information highways. Dinner, with vegetarian option, available at 6:30 p.m. for \$6.50 donation. 7:30 p.m., at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle. Info 206-722-6057 or 206-722-2453.

Saturday 12/18

Interfaith Vigil for Peace in the Middle East this and subsequent 18th of each month, at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave. E., Seattle. 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. in McCaw Chapel. Info 206-270-9170.

Sunday 12/19

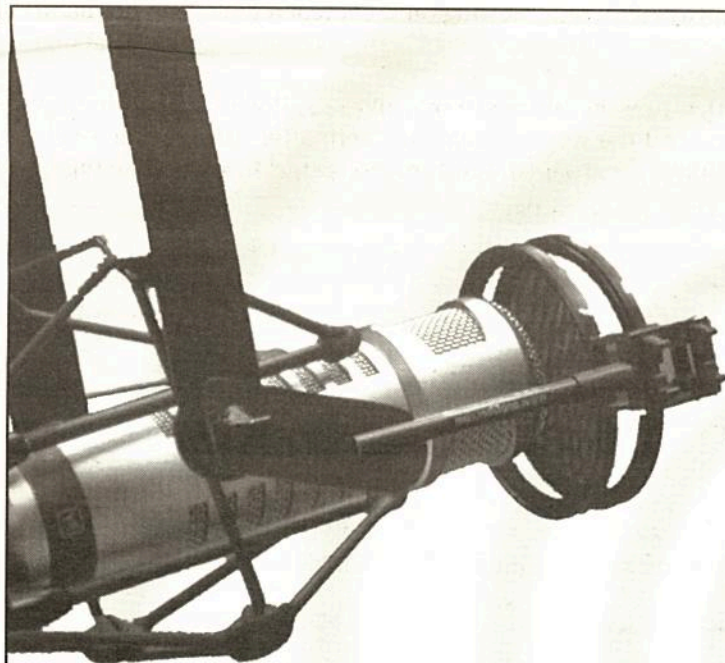
Seattle Chapter **Fellowship of Reconciliation Holiday Party**, honoring departing organizers Mike and Ruth Yarrow. 5-8 p.m., at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N. 70th, Seattle. Info 206-789-5565.

Calendar compiled in part from Jean Buskin's Peace and Justice Events Calendar, available in full at www.scn.org/activism/calendar. Email calendar submissions to calendar@realchangenews.org.



Two Winter's Tales

Get your season's cheer with two offbeat holiday plays presented on the Mainstage of the Seattle Public Theater. Charlotte Peters and Noel Sherrard, above, are the lower-class kids who take over the annual Christmas nativity in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, running Thursday through Sunday at 7 p.m. with matinees Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. Also playing, for adults only, is a one-man production based on David Sedaris' behind-the-scenes account of being Santa's Elf at Macy's Department Store in Manhattan. *The Santaland Diaries* runs Fridays and Saturdays at 9 p.m. Both show through Dec. 24 at the Seattle Public Theater Bathhouse on Green Lake, 7312 W. Greenlake Dr. N., Seattle. Tickets and information at 206-524-1300 or www.seattlepublictheater.org.



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citizens participation project



Kudos to Council for Women's Shelter

Issue: With the days getting shorter and the nights getting colder, it's become even more important that we provide safe, overnight shelter so no one has to survive outdoors. Each year, King County hosts a winter shelter for men from October through March, and this year, in response to advocacy by homeless women and their allies, they included \$65,000 in funding for a similar shelter for women. The County Council deserves a word of thanks.

Background: The number of homeless women keeps growing every year. The lines of women waiting at the Women's Referral Center grow longer. Women are turned away from shelters every night. Twenty-six homeless people are known to have died outside so far this year. Two women, Jackie Ortega and Renee Williams, died just last month.

Severe weather shelters open on the coldest nights of the winter, but less-than-freezing temperatures can also debilitate and kill. We need increased shelter capacity all throughout the coldest months of the year.

The County Council had a tough budget year this time. With revenues growing less than 3 percent each year and expenditures growing over 5 percent, they face a budget shortfall of around \$15 million annually. Over the last four years, the county's operating budget has been trimmed by more than \$100 million.

Even so, they listened and responded by funding a winter response shelter for women. The challenge now is in implementation: County staff are working hard to find a provider to run the shelter and identify a location. We have faith that the county, working with homeless women and their allies, will be able to get a shelter opened quickly to help prevent any more unnecessary nights outside in the cold.

Action: Please contact King County Councilmembers and King County Executive Ron Sims to say thank you. Here is a sample message:

"Every year, more and more women become homeless. More women are turned away from shelters and spend nights alone, outside, where they are vulnerable to violence and the health problems that arise from sleeping outside. Just last month, two more homeless women died. I know that you had hard decisions to make in developing the 2005 budget, and I'm glad the final budget prioritized helping people meet their basic human need by including funds for a women's winter response shelter. I hope we can get a shelter open soon, to avoid anyone spending any more unnecessary nights outdoors. Thank you for taking leadership on this important issue."

Contact:

- Carolyn.Edmonds@metrokc.gov, 296-1001, District 1
- Bob.Ferguson@metrokc.gov, 296-1002, District 2
- Kathy.Lambert@metrokc.gov, 296-1003, District 3
- Larry.Phillips@metrokc.gov, 296-1004, District 4
- Dwight.Pelz@metrokc.gov, 296-1005, District 5
- Rob.McKenna@metrokc.gov, 296-1006, District 6
- Pete.vonReichbauer@metrokc.gov, 296-1007, Dist. 7
- Dow.Constantine@metrokc.gov, 296-1008, District 8
- Steve.Hammond@metrokc.gov, 296-1009, District 9
- Larry.Gossett@metrokc.gov, 296-1010, District 10
- Jane.Hague@metrokc.gov, 296-1011, District 11
- David.Irons@metrokc.gov, 296-1012, District 12
- Julia.Patterson@metrokc.gov, 296-1013, District 13

Or write to them at:
1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104-3272

So he knows you care, c.c. Executive Ron Sims at Exec.Sims@metrokc.gov or the mailing address above.

It's always okay to recognize elected leaders for their good work, even if you don't live in their district, but it means a little more coming from a constituent. In your message, you might want to let your representative know that live in his or her district. Find out who represents you at www.metrokc.gov/mkcc/members/members.htm.



The **Central Area Senior Center (CASC)** Hot Lunch Program seeks volunteer lunch-welcomers and kitchen helpers. Volunteers are needed daily, monthly, and during special occasions, between 10:30 am and 2:00 pm. Free meal offered in gratitude. The *suggested* donation for seniors to eat is \$3; no Senior is turned away for lack of funds. For more information call Rhonda at (206) 726-4926, ext. 29.

World Heritage, a non-profit student exchange program, is currently seeking a volunteer local community representative to provide **high school exchange students** with program support. World Heritage also provides international opportunities for families to host a student and for an American teen to become an exchange student. Please call Diana at 1-800-888-9040 or visit our website at world-heritage.org.

Help people resolve conflict! Learn conflict resolution skills and contribute to **peace and harmony** in the community. The King County Dispute Resolution Center seeks good listeners to volunteer as Telephone Conciliators in our Seattle office. Information: www.kcdrc.org; volunteer@kcdrc.org; or call 206-443-9603 ext. 100.

To post a volunteer opportunity for **FREE**, email adsales@realchangenews.org or call Candi at 206-441-3247 ext. 205.

We want to hear from you!



Bring story ideas, comments, suggestions, and questions to the fourth monthly open meeting of the **Real Change Editorial Committee**. Wednesday Dec. 22, 4:30 p.m., at the *Real Change* office. Everyone welcome. For additional information about the meeting, please call Adam Hyla, editor, at 206-441-3247, extension 207.

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

Seattle Public Library, Serials Unit
1000 - 4th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98104

