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FEBRUARY 24, 2005

## Check, Please

**Sonics arena upgrade would cost  
restaurants, taxpayers**

By Cydney Gillis  
Staff Writer

Seattle taxpayers dropped nearly \$90,000 last year to help the Seattle SuperSonics steal restaurant business from lower Queen Anne.

That's the upshot of a new "concept plan" that calls for the public to put up \$175 million to renovate KeyArena, the Seattle Center venue that the Sonics lease, along with paying off the remaining \$58 million in debt from the facility's last remodel in 1995.

Consultants finished the proposal last summer at a cost of \$177,000, a fee Seattle Center and the basketball team split, center spokesman Perry Cooper says. With a new remodel, the idea is that the Sonics, which have lost money since 2001, when Starbucks chairman Howard Schultz and a group of investors bought the team, would generate more revenue.

That, in turn, would help Seattle Center, which uses its cut of KeyArena's suite and club-seat sales to pay down the bond debt and dig out a \$9.4 million hole it's gotten into since 2001.

But the revenue wouldn't come from selling more tickets. Only 500 seats would be added to KeyArena's current 16,700. Using hotel-motel tax funds that currently go to the arts, the Sonics want to double the arena's size, pull out 24 luxury suites, and enlarge the concourse area — primarily to add more restaurants and bars.

For other events, the plans includes a new theater of 5,000 to 7,000 seats, an underground truck-load zone for concerts, and new kitchen facilities to capture more banquet business.

"They're looking to improve revenue streams throughout the building," Cooper says of the Sonics. "The biggest key to that is to encourage fans to get in before the games starts and enjoy an experience that's more than just the game."

Many restaurant owners on lower Queen Anne say the idea stinks. Not only are the Sonics going after their pre-game business, but the team is

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FEDERAL PROSECUTOR JEFF SULLIVAN SAYS SENTENCING GUIDELINES ALLEVIATE RACISM IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM. JUDGES AND DEFENSE ATTORNEYS SAY THE GUIDELINES GIVE TOO MUCH POWER TO PROSECUTORS.

PHOTO BY BRUCE SAVADOW.

## A Crack in the Wall

**Judges, attorneys ponder ruling on prison sentences**

By Polly Keary  
Contributing Writer

When they told Freddie Booker that anything he said could be used against him, he wished he had believed it. A jury in federal court found him guilty of possession of three ounces of crack, enough to fill an Altoids tin. That was bad enough; it wasn't the 51-year old Chicago man's first waltz, and mandatory minimum sentencing laws guaranteed him 21 years for the offense.

But a cop said that Booker had told him that previously he'd sold about a pound. (Police often tell you upon your arrest that they are your "friend," that "you can help yourself out" by giving up information about your activities and that if you insist on your Miranda rights they will arrest a loved one or get you a longer sentence.)

The prosecutor never proved to a jury that Booker had sold a pound; it wasn't necessary. A jury needs to be convinced beyond a reasonable doubt. A judge just needed to be convinced by a preponderance of the evidence, a lower standard of proof. So at Booker's sentencing hearing, the prosecutor told the judge what the cop had said.

The judge, given that information, had no choice under federal sentencing guidelines but to sentence Booker for the crime of selling a pound, not three ounces. Booker got 30 years.

Then last summer, the Supreme Court struck down Washington state's sentencing guidelines, ruling it a violation of the Sixth Amendment to sentence a defendant based

on evidence that a jury never found him guilty of. Booker appealed. On January 12 he won, and the U.S. Supreme Court struck down federal sentencing guidelines — then, in an odd reversal, allowed so long as they were "advisory."

As courts all over the country scramble to figure out what that means, Washington State's federal legal community is adjusting with an aplomb that may result from having been an oasis of reason in a 17-year storm of increasingly hysterical sentencing.

On one thing, everyone agrees: this ruling gives power back to judges.

"Generally speaking, throughout the country, judges feel it's a good decision," says Tom Hillier, head of the

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## BUSH'S THING

Forget Social Security.  
Let's talk real issues.

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# It Ain't Broke

The only "fix" needed for Social Security is better education, health care

By MARILYN WATKINS  
Real Change Advisory Board

It turns out that what's good for the American economy is also good for Social Security. Investing in education at all levels and solving our health care mess are the best ways to assure that our children have futures full of hope and opportunity.

First it was weapons of mass destruction. Now it's Social Security. Doesn't the president have anything better to do than create a crisis when there is none?

President Bush claims Social Security is going broke. That is simply not true.

For the past 20 years, Social Security has been generating a significant surplus, and it will continue to for at least 13 more years. Even under the most pessimistic long-range forecasts, payroll taxes in 2045 will fund higher benefits after inflation than today's retirees receive.

Social Security is a huge success. It has nearly eliminated severe poverty among seniors and supports millions of children and disabled workers.

Privatizing Social Security will lower guaranteed benefits for everyone and require trillions in new tax dollars to cover the transition. Private accounts would not provide annual cost-of-living increases, family benefits, survivor benefits, and lifetime guarantees, and would be devastated by crashes in the stock market. Privatization would guarantee profits to investment firms and guarantee that millions more seniors, children, and disabled workers would live in poverty.

There is a logic to this madness. By dismantling one of the nation's most trusted and important programs, Bush rewards hard-core conservatives who believe that no government is good government. He rewards financial interests that will profit from priva-

tized accounts, and he rewards the investment class that already has the means and wherewithal to weather downturns in the financial markets.

Instead of messing around with Social Security, here's where we should focus attention.

First, we need to roll back the tax cuts on households making over \$200,000 annually. The 2004 federal deficit is \$477 billion, the same size as the entire Social Security budget. Bush's tax cuts, which went mostly to the wealthiest Americans, accounted for well over half the deficit. According to analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, between 2005 and 2014 the direct cost of enacted and proposed tax cuts will total \$2.8 trillion.

We also need to overhaul our nation's health insurance system. The United States has by far the most expensive health care in the world, but more than 20 other countries have lower rates of infant mortality and longer life expectancies. We spend 70 percent more of our economy on health care than the average in Western Europe. We are the only developed country that does not provide universal health coverage. Not only does the health care mess cost lives, it is killing U.S. businesses in international competition and requiring federal and state governments to pay billions in unnecessary expenses.

We can also strengthen our long-term economy by investing more in the workforce and voters of tomorrow: our children. Millions start kindergarten each year without the early education they need to flourish in school. High-quality preschool is the single

investment that will have the biggest payoff for our nation's children now and later. The federal government has imposed strict new educational standards on the K-12 system without providing sufficient funding, while state governments are still reeling from the impacts of recession. Our kids are not keeping up with their peers in other countries. Meanwhile, college is getting increasingly out of reach. The federal government is cutting financial aid, and strapped states are raising college tuitions. Workers in dying industries are flocking to community and technical colleges to upgrade their skills. We should be throwing open the doors of higher education, not slamming them shut.

It turns out that what's good for the American economy is also good for Social Security. Investing in education at all levels and solving our health care mess are the best ways to assure that our children have futures full of hope and opportunity. They are also the best ways to assure that the productivity of the workforce continues to grow and that the promise of Social Security remains strong for generations to come.

For 70 years, Social Security has knit the American people together. It has given hope and security to millions of senior citizens, disabled workers, and widows left to raise young children on their own. It has strengthened our families, our communities, and our democracy. It is a precious legacy we must protect and pass on to future generations. ■

Marilyn Watkins, PhD, is a member of the Real Change Advisory Board and Economic Security and Tax Policies Director at the Economic Opportunity Institute ([www.eoionline.org](http://www.eoionline.org)), a nonpartisan, nonprofit, public policy institute that seeks to define policy debates on the issue of economic security.



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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.

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

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# Change Agent

**A**fter almost four years, a court battle still rages between Seattle resident Bert Sacks and the U.S. government over its 12-year-long siege of Iraq.

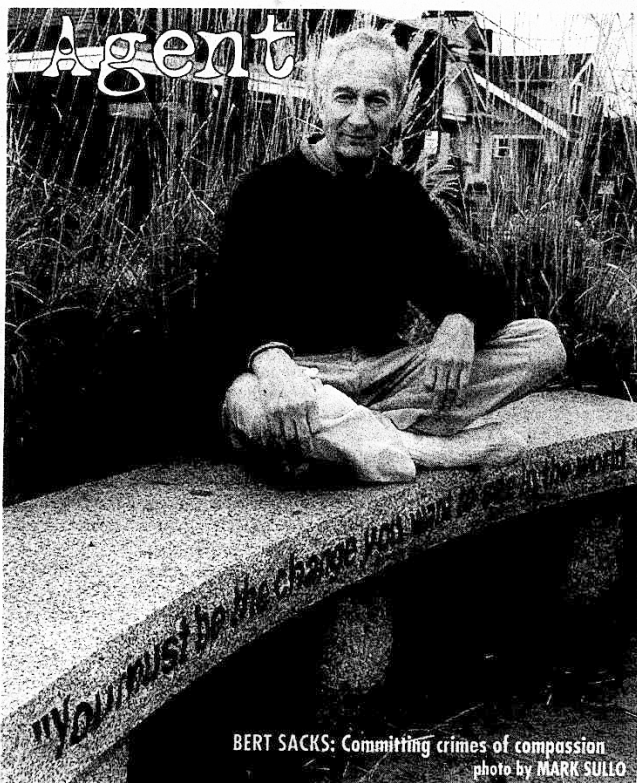
The Treasury Department has fined Sacks for a 1997 visit to Iraq, where, in violation of U.S. law, he gave out medical supplies to Iraqi civilians. Sacks sued the Treasury Department in return, citing the Geneva Convention's provision that parties to the treaty must allow free passage of medicine and hospital supplies.

A federal judge dismissed the suit in October, saying that the Geneva Convention is not binding in the U.S. To Sacks, that was the most shocking part of the ruling.

"It doesn't make sense to you and me, but it does make sense. The U.S. wants to have the reputation of supporting these conventions and treaties, but then look at how we act."

The case has its moments of humor. Meeting recently with the government's counsel, "My lawyer said, 'How about this: We'll withdraw our lawsuit if your client withdraws from Iraq.'"

—Jennifer Gore



BERT SACKS: Committing crimes of compassion  
photo by MARK SULLO

## The Occidental 20

What's the future of Pioneer Square park?

By Cydney Gillis  
Staff Writer

**W**hen the city is finished cutting down 20 trees in Occidental Park, aren't cars sure to follow?

That's what Pioneer Square business owner Laine Ross says she heard — and she and other residents aren't happy about it, much less the city's plan to chop down one-third of the trees this

spring in Pioneer Square's main park.

"There's a pretty good rumor mill in the neighborhood that the removal of trees... is part of a larger plan to open up street traffic," Ross said Jan. 18 at a public workshop on the city's final solution for upgrading Occidental Park.

Four years and nine public meetings after Seattle passed the 2000 Pro Parks Levy, Pioneer Square residents say the \$1.8 million revamp now planned for Occidental Park will make it lighter and brighter for visitors — at the expense of those who enjoy or live in the park.

The plan calls for upgrading lighting, replacing the cobblestones with

flat pavers, removing the park's current bench shelter, and adding chess tables, bocci ball courts and an uncovered slab of a stage at the park's north end.

If the remodeled park does its job and attracts commercial development to the block, the question of opening Occidental will come up, city project planner David Goldberg told Ross. So far, he said, the city's planning department has had two preliminary discussions with the Seattle Department of Transportation, which has no plans to open Occidental at this time.

The trees, however, are slated to be cut down in early spring — a subject that raised steam for more than 20 residents who attended the Jan. 18 meeting.

"What I see here in my opinion amounts to government-sponsored vandalism," said landscape architect Jim Brighton.

The trees "have another good 50 to 80 years of growth and health in them," he said. "Pruning is the answer, not taking them down."

"We have a little bit of Paris right here," said art dealer Carolyn Staley. "It will just change the whole thing to take the trees out." ■

## Just Heard ...

### Warning: warming

The Post-Intelligencer ran an alarming lead on Jan. 25: "Global warming is approaching the point of no return, after which widespread drought, crop failure and rising sea levels will be irreversible, an international climate change task force warned."

Given its apocalyptic tone, it seemed strange to find the story buried on page four. The front-page article that morning concerned the lack of snow shutting down local ski resorts. Readers were left to their own devices to connect the two stories.

We asked *P-I* Managing Editor David McCumber why news of the report wasn't screaming from the front page? He explained that "it's just one more study, just one more report."

As if the steady stream of such reports made them less newsworthy, rather than more.

—Jess Grant

### Passing the baton

Carl Mack leaves Seattle in mid-February for a job as the head of the National Association for Black Engineers, where he says he will endeavor to get more African American children involved in math, science, and technology "than are going to prison. That's a lofty goal but that's the way I roll."

Let anyone think his absence will weaken the NAACP, Mack says his cohorts are ready to step in; attorney Alforster Garrett has assumed his title. "People thought it was all about me," he says, but a core of passionate folks has been behind him all the time. "Those same people are in effect right now."

—Adam Hyla

### Disease unease

**Q:** What sort of plan exists for isolating or quarantining the homeless?

**A:** Well, none really. But abandoned correctional facilities might be an option.

This Q&A was part of a Jan. 21 King County Board of Health meeting on how a communicable infection might necessitate the large-scale isolation or quarantine of urban populations. Most people would be quarantined at home, said Jim Jorgenson, program manager for the Public Health Preparedness Section. City councilmember Richard Conlin took the microphone. What about the homeless, Conlin asked: where would they be housed? There was no real plan, Jorgenson admitted, but potential options included abandoned correctional facilities, substance abuse sites, or transitional housing. Jorgenson then added: Clearly, this is an area of concern for us. Clearly.

—Rosette Royale



## Attending to Neglect

### Bill means more work for strapped DSHS

By Cydney Gillis  
Staff Writer



State Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson believes DSHS needs more resources and less red tape.

Could a few words have saved the lives of Justice and Raiden Robinson?

The toddler and his baby brother starved to death last November in the Kent home of their mother, Marie, an alcoholic who had been reported to the state many times for neglect — and visited twice last year by Child Protective Services.

On each visit, however, the CPS worker found nothing wrong. Even if she had, neglect is defined so narrowly under current state law, says state Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson (D-Seattle), that it's nearly impossible for the state to remove the child from the home.

On Jan. 25, Dickerson introduced legislation to change that. The Justice and Raiden Robinson Bill (H.B. 1482) would broaden the wording of the law to cover situations in which long-term neglect "causes harm or presents a substantial risk of harm to a child."

It would also mandate that the Department of Social and Health Services follow up and petition to take children away when a parent like Marie Robinson fails to go to alcohol or mental health treatment.

Children's advocates say the bill — which addresses one item on a long list of reforms DSHS is hoping to get funded

this year — is a step in the right direction. But, without more funding to cover the extra follow-up, the new wording may be little help.

"We believe there will definitely be a workload issue involved," says DSHS spokeswoman Kathy Spears. "The department supports the concept of being able to intervene sooner and more often in neglect cases, but there's no money in the budget for that."

Whether there will be remains to be seen. In mid-2004, after flunking a federal audit and getting sued by foster child Jessica Braam over poor care, the department released a 10-point plan of reforms which would take six to eight years to implement and cost at least \$50 million to fund.

It's now up to the governor to include all or part of that funding in her budget, which is due out in mid- to late-February. But lawmakers are already looking at cutting human services in order to balance the state budget.

Dickerson currently has no estimate for the cost of HB 1482. But, in the long run, she says, the state will save money — and lives.

"Obviously, there will be some fiscal impact," she adds, but the way the system works now "it costs the state a lot of money to process sometimes dozens of reports of child neglect on the same family."

"It makes sense to believe that it will save state taxpayer dollars if they intervene early," Dickerson says. ■

#### [Resource]

For a full copy of the bill, go to <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/legislature/> and enter bill number 1482

## Short Takes

### Prevention pays

Drafters of the county's new 10-year plan to end homelessness went to Olympia in mid-January, asking state legislators for the funds necessary for the plan's implementation.

The Committee to End Homelessness in King County (CEHKC) tried to convince legislators in the House of Representatives' Housing Committee to raise the Housing Trust Fund from \$80 million to \$100 million. The new funds would go towards the establishment of 9,000 homes for the homeless, 4,500 newly built for this purpose.

The CEHKC's call for more housing relies heavily on a study by the University of Pennsylvania showing that the cost of supportive housing (i.e., apartments with case managers and other services at hand) was cheaper for the communities studied than providing emergency shelters and other forms of temporary care.

However, finding the money for such efforts may prove problematic with a legislature trying to manage a \$1.8 billion deficit.

Convincing legislators to invest in a long-term plan to end homelessness will be difficult; politicians may fear they would lose support for re-election from a public unable to see the slow progress towards helping the homeless.

"We have a moral obligation to help people up," says Rep. Larry Springer, D-Woodinville, who serves as vice-chair to the Housing Committee.

Springer recognized that convincing legislators to invest in a long-term plan would be difficult; politicians may fear they would lose support for re-election from a public unable to see the slow progress towards

results in helping the homeless.

Supporters of the plan tried to make the point that long-term success, in both preventing homelessness and getting people back off the street, requires partnerships at federal, state, and community levels.

The CEHKC discussed this issue with the King County Council in November 2004.

"Prevention is tough, because it's not as compelling," says Patricia McInturff, Director of the Human Services Department at the City of Seattle and a member of the Committee to End Homelessness.

"We're not going to let people freeze to death or have no food but it's hard to get funding upstream" for long term systematic changes.

Springer still seemed skeptical of the plan, noting that "advocates need to do more about dispelling myths of the homeless," such as the idea that homeless people are inherently violent. Upon being asked his thoughts on bringing a homeless person to the Housing Committee Springer replied, "I think they need to bring some people in from Tent City 4. I'd drive them down if I could."

— Jason Siegel

### Coming: Clean

A new \$3.2 million homeless service center may be headed for Pioneer Square, unless outraged neighbors and the mayor's office can stop it.

City councilmembers Tom Rasmussen and Peter Steinbrueck are backing the plan, which would house hygiene, referral, and treatment services for homeless people at the Morrison Hotel on Third and Yesler.

Rasmussen's choice would be cheaper and larger, and would open more quickly than what the mayor had planned. It also could supply a greater range of basic services, says Rasmussen, and therefore jumpstart the new 10-year plan to end homelessness in the county. "What's really important is

that we begin to implement the 10-year plan," he says.

However, the Morrison site would have to undergo a zoning change before the City Council — a chance for Pioneer Square neighborhood activists to mount opposition.

Mayor Greg Nickels put \$3.2 million for a center in last fall's budget, designating it for the new Emergency Operations Center at Fourth and Yesler, on the outskirts of the International District. The City Council has until Feb. 28 to debate the two alternatives.

— Adam Hyla

### Setting the table

The search to name a permanent site for the city's Outdoor Meals program may reach its culmination this week, if First Presbyterian Church agrees to house it.

After weeks of keeping mum, city officials and food providers acknowledge they are in discussions with First Presbyterian to provide a home for the now homeless program. Patricia McInturff, head of human services for the mayor's office, says they wanted to keep quiet about the potential site to afford congregation and community members ample time to consider the issues.

The early part of the process — which has been ongoing for several weeks — involved a series of community meetings wherein neighbors of the church, located at Eighth Avenue and Spring Street on First Hill, could voice concerns and direct questions to meals providers, church members, and city officials. These meetings involved input from the congregation as well, though there has been at least one closed meeting held specifically for parishioners. Rising from all of these meetings were a number of concerns that remained

unresolved. These have been forwarded to the mayor's office. In an effort to show good faith to the congregation, McInturff says she is unwilling to share them.

Rasmussen's choice for expanded hygiene, referral, and treatment services would be cheaper and larger, and would open more quickly than what the mayor had planned.

While not having seen this list specifically, Beverly Graham, executive director of the meal provider Operation Slack Lunch, says that during a community meeting she attended, concerns covered a spectrum from neighborhood safety to drug use among potential clientele. "I tried to drive home the point that homelessness doesn't mean criminal activity, that being homeless doesn't mean that somebody is unemployed," she says.

If the city can answer the questions sufficiently, church elders for First Presbyterian will vote upon the matter. Their vote, which may happen as early as Tuesday Feb. 1, might resolve whether the meals program finds a new home.

— Rosette Royale

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**A Hand Up, Not A Hand Out**



## Outing the Dead

*Grave Concerns memorializes, lifts stigma from the mentally ill*

By BREEANA LAUGHLIN  
Contributing Writer

People were committed to Western State for all kinds of reasons during the late 1800s and early 1900s. ... A family member in the hospital was a skeleton in the closet.

**P**atients who died at Western State Hospital were once buried anonymously, with only a number imprinted on a four-by-eight inch concrete slab to mark where they lay.

Between 1876 and 1953, more than 3,200 patients were buried in anonymous graves in the Tacoma hospital's cemetery. Over the years, the cemetery fell into disuse and the patients—infirm, insane, and already forgotten once, in life—were forgotten once more in death.

But in 2000, a group called the Grave Concerns Association came together to build awareness and respect for those with psychiatric disabilities by restoring, enhancing, and maintaining the markers at the hospital's historic cemetery.

Laurel Lemke remembers having her picture taken by a lilac bush in the park across from the hospital. She had no idea she was standing in the hospital's historic cemetery.

A former employee at Western State, Lemke became the chairperson for the Grave Concerns Association soon after the cemetery was rediscovered. "It's been a great teaching tool," she says of the cemetery. "People in the park will come up and ask questions, and it's a non-threatening way for them to learn about mental illness."

The Grave Concerns Association is the first of its kind in this area, but it is part of a nationwide movement to bring an end to the social stigma surrounding mental illness.

People were committed to Western State for all kinds of reasons during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Perhaps they didn't speak English and had nowhere to turn, or could no longer care for themselves and had no one to call on. Perhaps they were simply considered odd. A family member in the hospital was a skeleton in the closet.

The group needed to find out more information about the patients buried in the cemetery in order to properly dignify them. But public officials refused to release their names, claiming it was confidential.

"They said it could be embarrassing if someone found out they had a relative who was in Western Hospital, even though the last burial was over 50 years ago," says Sherry Storms, a Grave Concerns Association member.

Storms made a public disclosure request and filed for a court hearing. State lawmakers teamed up to help the GCA achieve their goal. Rep. Mike Carrell (R-Lakewood) and other representatives sponsored a bill to open the records and release the names, birthdates, and death dates of the patients buried in cemeteries of the state's three mental hospitals. The bill passed unanimously in the House and was later approved by the Senate. A complete list of the patients' information has now been compiled.

Soon after the bill was passed, Lemke started helping people chart their family history with the help of such old

*Hearing voices:  
Sherry Storms in  
the historic cem-  
etery at Western  
State Hospital.*

—Photo by Tom Cogbill

See GRAVE CONCERNS, Page 8



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# A Bloody Message

Hate crimes slam the door shut on minorities, says Journalist David Neiwert

Interview by GENTLE VUONG  
Real Change Intern

As the rapping on the car window became more and more insistent, the white faces blurred, so that they appeared to the three Asian American men to completely surround the car. Chris Kinison waved the confederate flag, drawing his finger across his throat. This was the first trip by Minh Hong, his brother, and their friend to the small seaside town of Ocean Shores, and it ended with the assailant stabbed to death and his intended victim, Hong, on trial for a desperate act of self-defense.

Seattle-based journalist David Neiwert covered the trial of Hong and then wrote *Death on the Fourth of July: the story of a killing, a trial, and hate crime in America*. Neiwert also regularly produces intelligent and arresting journalism on his weblog *Orcinus*, which draws alarming ties from white supremacists in the backwaters of America to conservatives in the White House. He sat down with *Real Change* recently to talk about how greater awareness of hate crimes can open the doors to political and social change.

**Real Change:** The FBI states that a total of 7,489 hate crimes were reported in 2003, though thousands go unreported. What is the significance of hate crimes in America?

**David Neiwert:** If you're an African American, you're acutely aware of the fact that it was only 60 years ago that we were stringing Black people up for just being the wrong person in the wrong place at the wrong time. That's what hate crimes are: an extension of

the lynching mentality. Lynching was a phenomenon that didn't exist just for the pure bloodlusts. It effectively kept people in their place. Hate crimes essentially represent that same impulse, to oppress minorities.

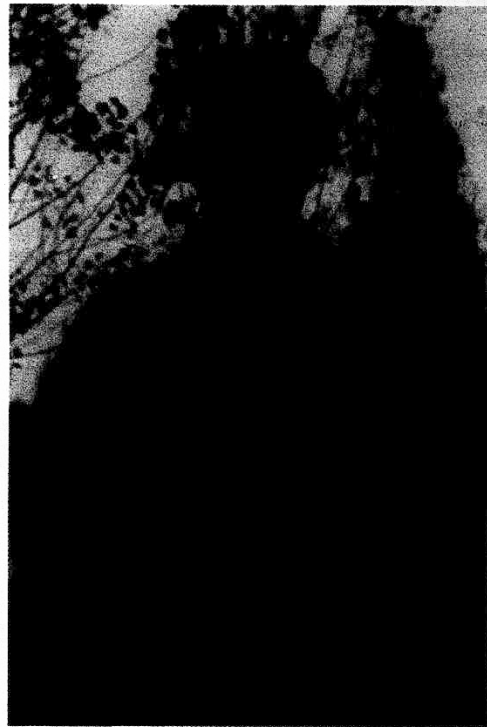
**RC:** Tell us how you became interested in this subject.

**Neiwert:** I became interested by looking at white extremism. The thing about white supremacy is that we tend to think that it is relegated to the fringes of society. The number of people who belong to white supremacist organizations is very small, but their influence is much farther reaching. Members of white supremacy organizations commit only 8 percent or so of hate crimes, whereas more than 80 percent of all hate crimes are accompanied by the rhetoric and symbolism of these organized groups.

The guy mentioned in my book was classic. The young man who died was waving a Confederate flag. He and his friends were screaming, "Gook, go home," all these racist chants. Kinison didn't belong to any hate groups. He had that Confederate flag; he really subscribed to those beliefs. He was tapping into a real visceral fear that anyone who is a minority in this country, and that includes a sexual minority, understands all too well.

**RC:** Who commits hate crimes?

**Neiwert:** The typical hate crime perpetrator is a young white man between the age of 18 and 23. A lot of the time they have antisocial, narcissistic personality disorders. They have a pronounced tendency to scapegoat and blame others for their problems. They believe that they're acting on



"When a perpetrator gets a nudge and a wink and is sent on his way, it's not just that he believes he got away with it, but it's seen as a positive sign of encouragement: 'Yes, see, this is really what the community wants.'"

PHOTO BY JUSTIN MILLS.

the secret wishes of their community. When a perpetrator gets a nudge and a wink and is sent on his way, it's not just that he believes he got away with it, but it's seen as a positive sign of encouragement: "Yes, see, this is really what the community wants." That's why it's so vital that the community send the message that it's not acceptable.

That is especially true against crimes with gays and lesbians, because aspects of the violence involves some

psychologically sick people. In the broader sense, it suggests that these perpetrators have difficulty fitting in, even though they think they fit in anyway and they commit the hate crime as a way of proving it.

**RC:** Some people say that laws against hate crimes just reinforce differences between people. How do you respond to that?

**Neiwert:** The argument that people make is that we already have laws on our books for assault and murder, so why do we need to add another layer? We have penalties that go up and down depending on the amount of harm that they cause. And the harm that is caused by hate crimes is quantifiably greater than that of an average assault, intimidation, or threat. Anyone who thinks that a swastika painted on a synagogue is the same as graffiti is missing the point.

When you're victimized by hate crimes, you're essentially targeted for who you are, for your identity. This has a profound psychological effect on the victim. Another level of harm is to their community: These are message crimes that are meant to intimidate the community the victim belongs to. They also victimize the larger community, because they undermine our equality of opportunity and our democratic institutions.

**RC:** Is rape a hate crime?

**Neiwert:** Some rapes are, some are

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## HATE, Cont. from Page 6

not. Gender is in fact one of the categories of bias that qualifies a person to be charged with a hate crime in only a handful of states, notably California, and so a rape committed with that bias can bring a harsher sentence — especially if the perpetrator intended to terrorize the community.

**RC:** While hate crimes laws don't include homeless people, perhaps they should; the National Coalition for the Homeless during 1999-2003 reported 281 cases of violent assaults on the homeless, two-thirds of which resulted in death. Do you see similarities between hate crimes committed against the homeless and hate crimes for reasons of race, religion, or sexual orientation?

**Neiwert:** Kids learn to intimidate, bully, and threaten when they're young. Ultimately, that's what these crimes are. They're saying we're going to drive you out, you can't play on our playground. Most hate crime perpetrators, in addition to being bullies, are cowards: they go for vulnerable people.

On top of that, we've developed a real intolerance for homelessness in our country, and I think it comes from the very top — with George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. If you're poor or if you're homeless, it's your own fault. I was watching *Fahrenheit 9/11* again the other night, and Bush was saying to Michael Moore, "Hey, get a real job!" If you're a homeless person, you hear that all the time. That's also very typical of the whole right-wing attitude about homelessness that asks, what's wrong with these people? I think it greenlights these acts at the ground level.

**RC:** Why aren't there hate crimes laws for homeless people?

**Neiwert:** The categories of bias motivation are religion, ethnicity, race, and in many cases sexual orientation. It's going to be difficult to word the laws so that you can include homeless people and still meet the 14th Amendment equal protection requirements.

**RC:** Why don't we have a single federal hate crimes law?

**Neiwert:** The House of Representatives once again killed another federal hate crimes law last fall, because it expanded funding for local law enforcement to receive proper hate crimes training. It also expanded the definition of bias crime to include sexual orientation. So they killed it.

They use all these bogus excuses, of course, that "all crimes are hate crimes." These were the people who attacked John Kerry for referring to Cheney's daughter as a lesbian, yet they're quantifiably making life worse for families of gays and lesbians.

**RC:** The author Frances Fox Piven noted in a recent interview with us (RC Nov. 24) that authoritarian fascism hasn't come to the U.S., but that the conservatives who hold power exercise a kind of "rough control" over the rest of us by whipping up popular frenzy over values. You write on your web site that the conservative movement in America is pseudo-fascist: "less virulent and less violent" than Hitler, say, "and thus more likely to gain broad acceptance." How are hate crimes of use to conservatives?

**Neiwert:** I don't think hate crimes yet — quite yet — fall into the rough control Piven is speaking of, but they could, especially as anti-immigrant fervor whips up over the next few years. Certainly there has been a major demphasis of enforcement of hate-crime laws under this administration, and I will be shocked if we don't see a major uptick in hate crimes when the 2004 statistics come out. I wouldn't count on the spineless Democratic Party to make it an issue, either.

The mobilizing passions of fascism are being stirred and manipulated by the corporate ruling class. They think they can control this. What I fear, however, is that they're going to awaken someday and rue the beast they nurtured, after it roars well out of their control. I think the groundwork is currently being laid for what could become a serious outbreak of American fascism. But I also believe the forces that have kept it at bay over all these years, while eroded, remain strong enough to win. We just have to wake up to what's happening to us. ■

## Street Talk

### Civil Rights. Who Needs 'em?

A recent poll by Cornell University found that 44 percent of Americans favored some curtailment on the civil liberties of Muslims in the U.S. Those most in favor of restrictions tended to be Christian, conservative, and watch more TV news. What do you think?



Where is the mainstream Muslim mosques' outrage against the radicals? They should give up some civil rights to end all of this. Why do they hate us? Look at Indonesia. Who's providing aid there right now? The U.S. has saved the world time and time again but we are always the bad guys. It's time to boot out the rats. The Koran says "Go kill the infidels," while the Bible says go forth and save the world.

—Curtis L. Hawley, 53, vermiculturist



I would tell them to go read the Koran in English. I would read it to them if I could. Ninety-nine point nine percent of those opinions would change if they read the Koran. No one would reach that kind of conclusion. Why would you violate someone you know nothing about?

—Samsam Yusuf, 20, student



I would say I am more spiritual. The Bible says people of the world come together. I think people have a right to their privacy. Any kind of people see their own kind doing the wrong thing, they wouldn't criticize it as much as they see people of another kind doing that some thing.

—Clifford Miller, 50, singer



It's just like a repetition of what happened to Japanese Americans during World War II. I think that doing something like that undermines the foundation that this country is built on. And people who watch TV news are just drilled with biased propaganda.

—Antonio Haw, 23, research scientist

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# Idealism Disenchanted

*Into the Buzzsaw: leading journalists expose the myth of the free press*

Edited by Kristina Borjesson  
Prometheus Books, October 2004  
Paperback, 462 pages, \$18

Review by ADAM HYLIA  
Real Change Editor

Neither doctors nor teachers are as likely to write things down, so it's impossible to say for sure, but it seems that no profession is more replete with disenchanted idealists than journalism.

For good reason. First, corporate consolidation decimated and demoralized the press. Then we had the elaborate lies of the *New York Times'* Jayson Blair. Now comes columnist Armstrong Williams, taking a \$240,000 grant (i.e., bribe) from the administration he's writing about. *Into the Buzzsaw* illustrates that, even without such gaffes, journalism is already fraught with pitfalls. The 17 confessors and accusers who make up this anthology sing a chorus of frustration about the mainstream media's cowardice and credulity. What emerges is a number of rules of operation that have put Big Media in its present fix.

Like: If they don't confess, it's not proven. The late Gary Webb, investigative reporter for the *San Jose Mercury News*, saw this in the fallout from his stunning series "Dark Alliance," which explored the relationship between the CIA and the *Contras* — a relationship that during the 1980s brought tons of cocaine to the streets of South Central Los Angeles. This was a story that could have been done years earlier by the biggest names in the nation's media, when it might have made a difference. Now, the big dogs were loathe to follow up on a scrappy little Bay Area newspaper's work. Their method, mostly, was he-said she-said.

"Is this story true?" they asked CIA officials.

"No, of course not."

"OK, then, thank you for your time." Case closed.

Then there's this little *modus operandus*: fear your sources. Investigating the 1996 crash of TWA Flight 800, Kristina Borjesson had a colleague in D.C. discredit some intriguing allegations because he wanted to keep faith with the Pentagon brass who answered his phone calls. Borjesson can't really blame her colleague, she says, for acting in the military's interests. "In the hard and fast TV news business, quick access to sources is a bottom line."

Borjesson's grappling with the Flight 800 story illustrates the next lesson: muckrakers risk being smeared. After a predictable parting with CBS, she hooked up with Oliver Stone to make an ABC pilot on the subject. Soon after, the buzzsaw roared to life. *Newsweek* reported that "conspiracy crank" Stone was resurrecting the "widely discredited" theory that Flight 800 was struck by a missile. Other outlets chimed in, and their line went this way: government inspectors had concluded that a short circuit caused the plane's fuel tank to erupt, end of story — except the cranks won't let it go.

That was no "conclusion," but a guess, unsupported by either eyewitnesses or forensic tests. But the propaganda campaign worked, and ABC cut and ran (spurred on, perhaps, by the network's news division, which had already swallowed the official "conclusion" and didn't want to look soft). "Of course," Borjesson writes, "this is the old 'marginalization' routine. If you don't go along with the party line, you're shoved into the margins and eventually out of the picture." That's the fate of many of the book's authors: eminent outcasts who did their jobs too well and then got smeared.

There is cause for cheer amid this gloomy litany, for *Into the Buzzsaw* demonstrates how some whistleblowers won't shut up, even when a pack of newshounds calls them cranks and the FBI darkens their door. Some journalists listen. We can take heart in an American tradition, battered as it is, that gives short shrift to the words of authority figures. From Flight 800 to 9/11, popular skepticism has hung on. ■

## Moses Lake

someone said the barn was burning and it was. i ran there direct, but who am i midst hellfire with my small hands? did you ever hear pigs be screaming? these are the choices a man must choose between: the pigs, the tractor, or the horse. save but one you still lose the farm. dear lord, i made a prayer and you burned it. i plowed a field and seems it's ruined. i tendered a batch of pigs when they came frightful into the hay, lay nights i did in worry and walked the dray horse up and down the rows past twilight. now these friends and animals, tools and plows are waste. i took the horse. took the horse fore the fire would, and threw dirt upon dirt on the rest till dawn piled a mound over pigs now quiet and the blowed up tractor dug and threw till cool came, and wept fore myself like i had built and stood beholding my own grave.

—ANONYMOUS

## [Disillusionment Is Spreading]

Disillusionment is spreading quickly and it would be alarming except that disillusionment is spreading.

—ROGER STUKEY

### GRAVE CONCERNS, Cont. from Page 5

records. The patients started coming to life. One woman found the gravesite of her German immigrant great-grandfather, who was hit by a beer keg while working at a Tacoma brewery. Grave Concerns discovered that the founder of the city of Des Moines was buried in the cemetery.

Hundreds of volunteers from Lakewood City Hall, community groups, and patients from the hospital have helped with the restoration of the cemetery. Once overgrown and covered with debris, the graveyard is now enclosed by a wooden fence. Each marker is visible.

A Tacoma headstone shop offered to make markers at a reduced rate, and

the association has purchased a number of them. Eventually, they would like to put one on each grave, with not only the name but the ID number that used to be the dead person's sole identifier.

"We want to make sure that people really have an understanding about how these people were buried anonymously," Storms says.

Storms is a poet who has read her work at fundraisers for the grave marker replacement project. "I believe the people here were telling me something, and that's what I put in the poems.

"I think there's a great sense of presence here. And I think they are really at rest now, knowing they're remembered." ■

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Adventures  
in Irony

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I see a host  
of ironies  
rising up to  
drag me into  
a fiery pit  
of flaming  
sulfurous  
irony-hell.

On this page. But I am now bearded, fat, and my head somewhat resembles a bell pepper. Moreover, I can't draw bell peppers. So, goodbye carrot-head man. Hello some photograph, one that we will try to doctor to keep from scaring anyone.

As *Real Change* marches forward into its brave new future of weekly publication, I find myself pausing to reflect on the past. Mostly when I do this I reflect on my own past because other people's past would be history and I would have to study to reflect on that.

I reflect on poorer days, when I would sell myself to university psych professors and students as an experimental subject. I did so occasionally when I was a homeless college student. It made more sense to me than being a medical subject, because I figured they'd be less likely to do permanent damage. Plus, on my campus, they always paid \$5 just for applying, even if they turned you down.

I got turned down once because I knew too much. The experimenters wanted someone who hadn't heard about Milgram's study of obedience to authority. That was the one where Stanley Milgram found that more than 60% of people studied, when told forcefully enough to do so, would administer dangerous and painful electroshocks to innocent strangers, even when it appeared that the victims might die. Since I knew that all I got was \$5 that time.

We've got your *Real Change* right here! Out with the Old! In with the New!

When I started writing this column in the dim past, I was beardless and thin and my head somewhat resembled a carrot. Thus "carrot-head man" was born as a self-portrait, and we used him to represent me all these years

All of this jumped into focus this week when I read an article in the Seattle P-I about a new study planned to find out if believing in God helps you deal with pain.

Now, a lesser-known aspect of Milgram's study and it's spawns were indications that the more religious subjects in such experiments were more likely to obediently torture their victims than were the less religious.

Of course, "religious" doesn't equate with "believing in God." Still, I see a host of ironies rising up to drag me into a fiery pit of flaming sulfurous irony-hell.



Carrot-head R.I.P.

In the new study volunteers will submit to pain and experimenters will see whose brains show the most pain activity. Will it be those of the believers or those of the non-believers? Then, to make things more interesting, they'll show various religious symbols, to "see if that helps."

What a great idea! Let's show a crucifix to a guy in agony and see if he gets the message! How about a nail or a martyr's knuckle? OK, maybe we should consider other sorts of symbols. How about one of those pictures of a lamb being led by Jesus? That would probably work.

Isn't it just wonderful that religion has now come full circle since the Inquisition? In the Olden Days it was a bitch rounding up heathens for torture. Nobody wanted to hurt. But now everyone wants to be the newest and best Jackass for Jesus.

First, you get paid. All of these kinds of studies pay their "volunteers," who are invariably impoverished college students and poor people living near colleges. Secondly, if you are at all religious, this is your chance to prove to the world that your gospel/doctrine/prophet/or whatever really works the one miracle everyone wants the most: numbness.

This might work: apply, but tell them you're a masochist. Get disqualified, take the \$5, and run. ■



Fri., Jan. 21, 11:10 a.m., Western Avenue, Victor Steinbrueck Park. Suspect, a transient Native American female aged 20, is known to officers by sight due to numerous contacts, most involving Victor Steinbrueck Park. Fellow officers had pointed her out to the reporting officer several days earlier, saying that she had been trespassing from the park by them for a year. Reporting officer spotted the suspect, wearing the same clothes, sitting inside the park. Radio verified the one-year exclusion. Suspect was placed into custody and booked into King County Jail for trespass in the parks. A new one-year ban was issued.

Fri., Jan. 21, 12:40 p.m. Third and Harrison, Seattle Center. Officer was walking inside Seattle Center where the food court is located. A citizen complained to him that a man in a blue coat was going from table to table and asking for money. Officer observed the suspect, a transient white male aged 35, going up to several tables where mothers and small children were eating. He asked for money, and several people gave it to him. He started to leave as he saw the officer approach, but was stopped and brought to the security office. The officer learned that the suspect has been trespassed three times from the Seattle Center since August 2004. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

Fri., Jan. 21, 1:54 p.m., Seventh and Pine. Officers contacted suspect, a runaway white male aged 15, rolling a joint at Seventh and Pine. They recognized him from numerous other contacts. He had been taken in for a warrant and a missing-persons charge on other occasions. Officers ran his name, and it showed that he had two Youth Service Center warrants and a missing person's notice. All hits were verified. His small amount of marijuana fell into a puddle and was destroyed. He was transferred to the West Precinct, and his foster mother was called. He was then booked into the Youth Service Center.

Fri., Jan. 21, 2:45 p.m., Third and Yesler. Reporting officer saw the suspect loitering with known narcotics users in Prefontaine Park. Officer contacted the suspect, a Black male aged 43, and recognized him from a narcotics arrest he had done a year earlier in the same location. He asked the suspect why he was hanging out with known narcotics users in a high narcotics area. Suspect said that he was homeless. An officer ran his name and found him to be Department of Corrections active. He contacted the DOC, who asked that they search the suspect. Officers located two pushers — tools used to scrape residue from crack pipes — and a three-inch folding blade inside the waistband of his jeans. Suspect made several references to needing the blade back. The DOC asked that officers take the suspect into custody and bring him to their offices. After a meeting with the DOC a detainer was placed on the suspect, and he was booked into King County Jail for parole violations. ■

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.

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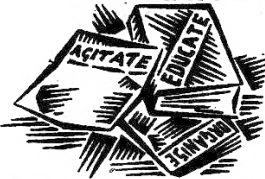
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beseeches the soil,  
grow, grow, grow,  
and it does and all is  
a happy ending, a blessing;  
but its not like that yet  
and people don't know  
what lies ahead,  
but we can guess  
make informed decisions  
about leaders who can't,  
vote, shout, carry signs,  
"Not In Our Name."  
Let our revolution ring  
as we take back  
our democracy,  
go radical like  
march,  
declare a head count,  
an accounting of wrongs  
committed, blood money  
spent for ill gotten gain,  
the number of people  
dead or shamed  
into silence.

—ANGELA TRUDELL VASQUEZ

## Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

## Girls in jail

Dear Real Change,

Thank you, thank you, thank you  
for your outstanding article ("Girls  
in Jail: more teenagers than ever are  
in detention. Why should you care?"  
RC Dec. 9). It literally moved me to  
tears.

I think the article meant a lot to me  
for several reasons. I am from Long  
Beach, California, so the references  
to Long Beach caught my attention.  
I am also a psychiatric nurse, and my  
first job way back in the early '80s was  
at the King County Jail. I am embar-  
rassed to admit it, but I hated working  
with the women in jail. Why? Because  
it seemed even more hopeless than  
trying to help the men. Almost all the  
women inmates were so locked into  
being abused as children and then as  
adults. The services for the female  
inmates were so limited, both in the  
jail and in the community.

In my life and in my work, I have  
witnessed the brutality and injustice  
of our economic and political system.  
The jail is full of poor and illiterate  
people that most of society would  
rather not know about. Add being fe-  
male to that equation, and you become  
even less important to our dominant  
culture.

Anyway, thanks again for the ar-  
ticle, and thanks to Powerful Voices.  
I hope that you will continue writing  
about these important issues.

Sincerely,  
Janet Voorhees  
Seattle

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## Corrections:

Last issue's story about Tent City 3's move to the campus of Seattle Univer-  
sity ("Hearing the Call" RC Jan. 19) misidentified the subject of a photo.  
That was Joe Orlando, director of  
campus ministry, not university  
president Steven Sundborg.  
We omitted the photo credit off  
the following excellent picture of  
Franklin Bullock ("Gone, But Not  
Forgotten," Jan. 19). The photo  
was taken by Mark Sullo.



## CLASSIFIED

## Help Wanted

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition seeks Co-Direc-  
tor to coordinate fundraising, manage office, recruit  
& supervise staff, volunteers, interns. Call 206-  
324-3063 or email jean@wroc.org for application  
packet. Deadline Feb. 22.

## Volunteer

The Multiple Sclerosis Association of King County  
seeks volunteers with handyman skills such as car-  
pentry, basic electrical, plumbing, or yard work to  
help people with MS continue living independently.  
We offer a life enriching experience, high-quality  
training and supervision, and the chance to build

lasting relationships. Call Gregg Robinson at 206-  
633-2606 or visit [www.msa-sea.org](http://www.msa-sea.org).

Sacred Heart Shelter for homeless families and  
single women is seeking energetic new members  
for our Fundraising Advisory Board to help plan  
events and build endowment. Call Nancy at 206-  
285-7489 or [nancy@shshelter.org](mailto:nancy@shshelter.org).

The Central Area Senior Center Hot Lunch program  
seeks welcomers and kitchen helpers. Volunteers  
are needed daily, monthly, and during special occa-  
sions, between 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Free meal  
offered in gratitude. Call Rhonda at 206-726-4926  
ext. 29.

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# Calendar

## This Week's Top Ten

Friday 2/4

**Stop the Assaults on Reproductive Freedom**, an action agenda for women and men of all colors and ages. Featured speakers include Kim Gandy, NOW President, and others. Sponsored by SCCC Women's Programs, EMPOWER, and Seattle NOW. 2-4 p.m., at Seattle Central Community College, BE 1110, Broadway just north of Pine.

Saturday 2/5

**War Resisters League** presents Father Simon Harak, S.J., speaking on "Stopping the Merchants of Death: the ethics of the means and ends of U.S. Policy in Iraq." 7-9 p.m., at Schafer Auditorium, Lemieux Library, Seattle University, 900 Broadway. Info 206-789-5565.

Foolproof presents "Now What? On the Future of America," a private performance with former Vermont governor **Howard Dean** and many more to be announced. Recharge your batteries with an evening of humor and inspiration and benefit Foolproof's American Voices series. Tickets \$25, \$45, \$75 plus handling, on sale at [www.foolproof.org](http://www.foolproof.org). Private pre-show dinner 5:30-7:30 p.m., program at 8 p.m., at the Paramount Theatre, 911 Pine St., Downtown. Info 206-325-2993.

Sunday 2/6

A showing of the documentary **Peace, Propaganda, and the Promised Land**, exposing distortions in Middle East news coverage through the voices of scholars, media critics, peace activists, and experts. Admission is free; donations of food for the Ballard Food Bank are requested. 6:30 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512 23rd Ave. NW in Ballard. Info 206-784-2085.

A Wave of Relief: Songwriter's Benefit Concert for **Tsunami Relief**, with featured artists Jim Page, Reggie Garrett, Kym Tuvin, Val D'Alessio, Richard Middleton, and many more. Non-smoking show, \$10 donation suggested. Sponsored by Seattle Rolling Thunder and Butterflysound Productions. 7:30 p.m., at Conor Byrne Pub, 5140 Ballard Ave. NW. Info 206-784-3640 or [www.conorbyrnepub.com](http://www.conorbyrnepub.com).

Tuesday 2/8

The Seattle Biotechnology Legacy Foundation presents the second lecture in a three-part series on "**Herbicides and Human Health: Are Frogs Our Canaries in the Coal Mine?**" Renowned researcher Tyrone Hayes, Ph.D., will discuss how herbicides commonly found in our air, food, and groundwater have been shown to have profound effects on the sexual development of frogs. Reception to follow. \$10 with advance reservation, \$12 at the door. 7-8:30 p.m., at Seattle Art Museum, 100 University St. Info and registration [www.iceh.org](http://www.iceh.org).

Wednesday 2-9

Antioch's Center for Creative Change presents a Global Issues & Perspectives free winter lecture series on "Writers, Fighters, Road Hunters: **American Indians and Choices of Rebellion.**" Lummi author Keith Egawa will read selections from his recent novel, *Dispatch from the Raft*, and a facilitated discussion will follow. 7-9 p.m., at Antioch Campus, 2326 6th Ave. Info 206-268-4906.

Friday 2/11

The film *The Murder of Fred Hampton* features the electrifying speeches of the 20-year-old Black Panther leader and investigates his 1969 killing by Chicago police. Discussion follows, free, donations requested. 7-10

p.m. at Safeco Center, 306 23rd Ave. S. at Main St., one block north of Jackson St. Info: October 22nd Coalition to Stop Police Brutality 206-264-5527 or [www.october22.org](http://www.october22.org).

Ongoing

The Electric Heavyland and Interruption will host the black and white photographs of Rachael Jackson until Feb. 20. The silver gelatin prints in this show take a microcosmic view of **Washington's organic wonders**. The Electric Heavyland is a toy store, record store, art gallery, and performance space at 252 NE 45th St. in Wallingford. Info 206-545-2800 or [www.electrichheavyland.com](http://www.electrichheavyland.com).

## Director's Corner

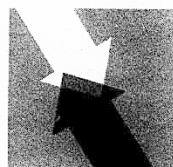


Sometimes, I think the hardest thing any of us can do is to live up to what we can be. Last year we asked our friends what they valued most about *Real Change*. They told us that they loved supporting our vendors, and that they were grateful for the opportunity. They said they were hungry for news that matters and that they wanted to get *Real Change* more often. They said that our activism gave them hope for a better world. They said that after ten years of *Real Change*, Seattle is a better, more compassionate city. They said we could be even better.

*Real Change* is working hard to be the publication that the times demand. We are activist. We are principled. We are fair and balanced and we respect our readers. We are bridge-builders, bringing people together across lines of race and class to repair the divisions that keep us apart. We are building a framework for social justice that is based upon caring relationships and not being afraid.

We are grateful to all of those who have believed in our work and helped us along the way. Last year, we let our readers know that we needed to raise \$105,000 over November and December to come into 2005 strong. Your responded, and we beat our goal by \$1,500! With this issue, we begin weekly publication, helping our vendors to succeed by bringing you the news and information you need twice as often. Thank you for doing your part to keep *Real Change* moving and growing.

—Timothy Harris, Exec. Dir.



## First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

### End voting discrimination

**Issue:** More than 150,000 potential voters in Washington cannot vote because of past felony convictions. They've completed their sentences and are usually struggling to survive because good jobs are hard to come by, even without a criminal record. As it stands, they remain unable to vote until they pay off their court-imposed debt.

This year, discussions of election reform in the state legislature are focused primarily on preventing voting fraud. The turmoil over felons improperly voting in the governor's race indicates that a time-consuming and profoundly undemocratic task — purging the voter rolls of felons with unpaid fines — should simply be eliminated. The legislature can unburden county elections officials and promote democracy by eliminating financial barriers to voting.

**Background:** The racial disparity of our criminal justice system, combined with the felony disenfranchisement law, means that 24 percent of African American men in Washington can't vote. Many consider this the modern-day equivalent of the poll tax. Only a handful of other states disenfranchise a higher percentage of their residents.

A felon's financial obligations are unrelated to the severity of his crime. Someone who commits a property crime can incur more debt than someone who commits a violent crime. Debts include court costs, attorney fees, restitution, victim compensation, and more. They compound annually at a rate of 12 percent; for some people, debt becomes a permanent barrier to voting.

Eliminating financial obstacles to the ballot doesn't stop the state from continuing to collect the debt. Just like it collects child support or educational debt, it can collect court-imposed fines. As long as they owe the state money, people with past felony convictions continue to have an open criminal record, which potential employers can access easily. They are subject to collections and garnishment, and even jail if non-payment of the debt is shown to be willful. So people have plenty of incentives to pay up; they don't need the added sanction of disenfranchisement.

When people leave prison, we expect them to live their lives more responsibly, being accountable to society, to their communities, and to their families. Voting is one way for people to participate in community life and act for the greater good. Voting is one of our most cherished freedoms. Economics should play no part in whether one can exercise that freedom. We should be long past those days.

**Action:** The ACLU of Washington is supporting legislation to allow people with felony convictions to vote if they have completed all conditions of their sentences, but still have financial obligations to settle. **Contact your legislators today and ask them to eliminate financial barriers to voting for people with past felony convictions.** You can send a message to your representatives and the Governor by calling the state legislative hotline at 1-800-562-6000. You can also send an email directly to your representatives by visiting our Online Action Center at [www.realchangenews.org](http://www.realchangenews.org).

For more information, contact the ACLU of Washington at [www.aclu-wa.org](http://www.aclu-wa.org).

## KEY ARENA, Continued from Page 1

lobbying state legislators for a public subsidy to do it.

"I always think it's interesting when people decide to get into one business because they're not making enough in their primary one," says Brian Curry, owner of Ten Mercer.

Curry's financial backers at Ten Mercer are Tom Griffith and Don Tremblay, owners of the nearby T.S. McHugh's and Floyd's Place.

"They're not making money?" Tremblay asks of the Sonics. "So they say. But they haven't put a quality team on the court" in three years.

With the Sonics winning games this year, dinner crowds and sales have been better, Tremblay says. But that's no reason to finance KeyArena competing with restaurants in the neighborhood.

"If you're going to spend millions of dollars to add 500 seats, it's ludicrous. It's just to appease Howard Schultz — that's why they're doing it."

Since KeyArena's last remodel, Seattle taxpayers have financed luxury suites at Safeco and Qwest Fields.

"If you're a company and you're going to spend money on a suite, you're probably not going to buy three suites," Cooper says. "Before, you only had the choice of one stadium."

As a result, Sonics spokeswoman Valerie O'Neil says, KeyArena doesn't generate enough revenue to pay the debt service and its operating expenses — something the city must address, says Marianne Bichsel, spokeswoman for Mayor Greg Nickels, who supports the plan.

"Right now, city taxpayers are financing a debt that isn't working for the city or the Sonics — it's losing money," Bichsel says.

Going farther into debt, however, is something city councilmember Nick Licata questions. "We need to do a financial analysis of what would happen if the Sonics left," says Licata. "Right now I don't see a game plan." ■

## SENTENCING, Continued from Page 1

Federal Defender's Office in Seattle. "Judges like discretion."

They had precious little discretion under the guidelines. In most cases, judges were reduced to the role of clerks with rubber stamps, formally handing down sentences already determined by prosecutors.

Congress tied the hands of judges in 1987 in order to address the very real problem of disparity in sentencing. With no formal guidelines, racism could, and often did, result in harsher sentences for non-white people. Although some, including Jeff Sullivan, head of the criminal division of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Seattle, say they were successful in that regard, others disagree.

"The guidelines have not eliminated disparity," Hillier says, calling them an "unmitigated disaster." "Disparity just became present in a different form, now it's prosecutorial disparity."

U.S. attorneys have a 98 percent conviction rate in the federal courts, because they choose what to charge the defendant with — so terrifying her with the possibility of decades in prison should she lose that she virtually always accepts a plea deal. The prosecutor, of course, also decides what deal to offer.

Thus, the fate of the defendant rested on the reasonableness of the prosecutor. Some wielded their power with an inquisitor's zeal. In one headline-grabbing 2004 case in Utah, for example, 25-year-old Weldon Angelos got a 55-year sentence for selling 20 ounces of pot because a search of his house yielded three guns, each of which "enhanced" his sentence dramatically.

Washington state's prosecutors have been more reasonable, which is why the ruling may not have a pronounced effect here.

"We're very fortunate to have a U.S. Attorney, John McKay, who is very professional," says Western Washington district chief judge Robert Lasnik.

"Prosecutors here traditionally have tried to work with the defense," Hillier agrees. Angelos' case "wouldn't

have happened here."

Because judges are free to go a little easier on some defendants than they were before, the Supreme Court ruling has also given a little more bargaining power to defense attorneys. "Under the former sentencing regime, the judge was constrained from considering the character of the defendant," says Hillier.

"Now we can approach the prosecutor with a client with mental health issues or an abusive childhood and say, 'Let's work something out.'"

However, some defendants may be worse off.

"I'm not convinced it's going to be just downward departures [sentence reductions]," Sullivan says. In identity theft cases, for example, sentences have been based on financial damage. "The damage done to someone's life may be considerable, but the financial damage not as much. We may be able to get a longer sentence."

Judges will still be forced to give out sentences that many feel are overly severe, though. Mandatory minimum sentences, the least a judge is allowed to impose for a given crime, are still in place.

James Doherty of Kettle Falls, Wash., found out the hard way about those. He and seven friends grew 1,000 marijuana plants in a field near Colville, Wash. Although only 100 of them were his, because of conspiracy laws, each defendant was held accountable for all 1,000. Mandatory minimum: 10 years.

Doherty told the mother of his

four children not to wait for him. He hopped out of prison to prison throughout the United States, making visiting nearly impossible. During that time, he found out that drug dealers are punished more harshly than many violent criminals.

"You watch murderers and rapists and thieves come in and leave, and you're still there," he says.

Doherty was released three months ago, and hopes that the minimum sentencing structure is eventually struck down as well.

"I wish I could have stood in front of the judge and told him my side," says Doherty. "I know he wouldn't have given me 10 years."

As drastic and drug-war obsessed as the minimums may be — selling less than two ounces of meth carries the same penalty for a first-time offender as does providing material aid to terrorists — many fear that Congress may respond to the Supreme Court ruling by imposing more mandatory minimums.

"Right now as we speak, there are people in Congress threatening more regressive policy," Hillier says.

"We're trying to develop some energy around it, start some letter-writing campaigns," says Chuck Armsbury of the November Coalition, an organization based in Colville devoted to greater fairness in drug sentencing. "We don't know what is going to happen."

"Congress has the right to put in mandatory minimums," says Lasnik. "We don't think it's good policy." ■

## Capital Offenses

Federal sentencing guidelines have been a factor in the growth of the nation's prison-industrial complex. Since mandatory minimums and sentencing guidelines were put in place, the federal inmate population has increased seven-fold, from 24,000 to 181,000.

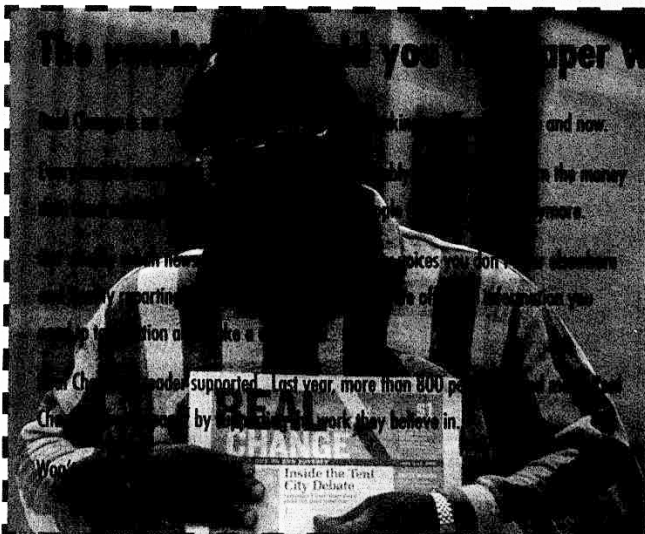
It has taken 65 new prisons to accommodate the influx.

Although some say the harsh sentences are responsible for a drop in violent crime, 77 percent of federal inmates are serving time for nonviolent crimes.

Housing only the nonviolent offenders costs \$1.7 billion a year. Each inmate requires the entire tax burden of four average American families every year.

All told, including the cost of administration and prosecution, the federal justice system spent \$19 billion on the drug war last year, or \$600 every second.

The U.S. incarcerates more people per capita than any other country in the world.



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All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.



# Mockingbird Times

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February 2005

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Volume V, Issue 2

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Check out our bonus  
articles section online  
at  
[www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org)

## Tsunami Hits Young Victims Hardest

DARIUS REYNOLDS

ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 26 2004, an earthquake that measured 9.0 on the Richter scale hit the Indian Ocean. The earthquake was the largest in forty years, causing tsunamis with waves as high as fifty feet; destroying the coasts of Thailand, India, and Indonesia. The devastation even reached as far as the coast of Africa. Sri Lanka was one of the worst to be hit by the tsunamis. Hambantota, a city in Sri Lanka, was completely destroyed. Over 30,000 people were pledged dead and 850,000 are now homeless in Sri Lanka alone. The United Nations (UN) International Children's Emergency fund reports a total of 225,000 deaths.

The United States has given \$350 million in relief money to help. President George W. Bush and Presidents George Bush Sr. and Bill Clinton came together and held their own private fundraiser. The World Bank has given \$250 million. Many countries have given money to help and many private agencies are currently working hard to raise more money. Students from over 50 schools in the northwest are raising money for Sri Lanka.

An article in the *Christian Science Monitor* states that the people in Indonesia were too close to the epicenter to be warned early enough to be saved; stating that having a tsunami-alert system in the Indian Ocean could have saved thousands. Japan offered to help pay for a system to prevent this level of devastation should this kind of tragedy happens again.

TSUNAMI CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

## Tsunami Reflections

DARIUS REYNOLDS



CURRENTLY THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN in Sri Lanka living in camps and orphanages. The recent tsunami has made conditions much worse. After hearing about the conditions in Sri Lanka, I decided to sponsor a youth living there because I was particularly heartbroken to hear that kids are being abducted and sold for sex and that many of the children in the camps have no parents. I went to the Plan USA website and found a story about a 15-year-old girl who was trafficked and sold to a brothel in Bombay until a man came and took her home. The brothel owner paid her \$100 for four years of her life.

All of this was happening before the tsunami hit Sri Lanka but nobody heard about it. This reminds me of when people walk past homeless people in America who really need help but they act like they don't see or hear them. It took a tsunami happening for me to even know about the conditions in Sri Lanka; it took a tragedy so big that people couldn't ignore it anymore. What will it take to get people to help with the homeless issues in America? Do we need a tsunami to hit our coast to get people to pay attention to them? The National Coalition for The Homeless states that there are over 3.5 million people on the streets in America; I implore you to find out what you can do to help homeless people locally to calm the wave at home.

## February is Black History Month

PRINCESS HOLLINS AND MBT STAFF

The Mockingbird Society is honoring hundreds of years of African-American history with compelling articles that will educate us about African-American culture and the many oppressive obstacles that have been overcome throughout the years.

In 1926, blacks were honored by "Negro History Week" which later evolved into Black History Month, although African-Americans have been in America since Colonial times. February is the month dedicated to educating people about the struggles and successes of African-Americans. Dedicating the whole month of February for African Americans to shine is a great accomplishment, but the *Mockingbird Times* wants to extend this by providing articles throughout the year that honor the many contributions made by African-Americans over the last few centuries. Prepare yourselves for eye-opening, strength-building articles about African Americans and other under-represented cultural groups to be featured in the coming months. In this issue, read Rico Evans' piece on African American Inventors, and Echo Speed's account of former slave Margaret Garner.

In addition to the articles our reporting staff is busy preparing, we want to challenge you out there to send us articles, poetry and artwork that honors and celebrates the often unrecognized contributions that African-American and other underrepresented citizens have made to American history. Contact us at [newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org) or call 206-323-KIDS (5437).

## Black Inventors

RICO EVANS



THERE ARE A LOT OF GOOD THINGS ABOUT THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY, but in my opinion the best thing about February is that it is Black History month. African-Americans are known for a lot of things, like being artistic and creative. They are not as well known for their inventions. African-Americans have made a lot of things that make our lives a lot easier; things that we take for granted, like the hairbrush or air conditioner to things that help save lives like the blood plasma bag and the gas mask. Let me tell you about two African-Americans whose inventions were so important that we still use them today. Granville T. Woods was born in Columbus, Ohio in April 1856. At the age of ten, he began work in a machine shop. In 1884, Woods received his first patent for the steam boiler furnace. In 1885, he invented a system called Telephony. This system allowed telegraph lines to carry voice signals. People used this device to send messages from train to train, but it wasn't until 1887 that he patented his invention. Woods owned his own company called Woods Electric Company. Through his company, Woods sold the invention that he made, but because of the color of his skin he had a hard time marketing his invention.

He later sold his patents to a general electric company. During his career he received 35 patents for his invention that made such an impact on the transportation and communication industry.

Another important African-American inventor is Henry T. Sampson. Sampson was born in Jackson, Mississippi. In 1956, he got a Bachelor of Science degree from Purdue University. He graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with a Master of Science degree in engineering. If you ever wondered who made the cellular phone system, Henry T. Sampson is the man. Sampson invented the cellular phone system in 1983. This made portable phones available to more people. Before 1983, there were car phones and they only had one antenna with only 12 to 24 frequencies. That meant that there could only be that many calls happening at the same time, which resulted in people waiting for 15 to 30 minutes for a call to go through. With this invention, phones no longer depended on cords.

These are some of the many inventions that African Americans contributed. Without these inventions, life would be a lot harder. Just think, if Granville T. Woods didn't invent the telephone system, how you would talk to your friend who lives in a different city? We would be still writing letters back and forth. You would have to wait for up to five days just to get a reply. African-Americans and people from other ethnicities are very important to this country. Without their contributions, we wouldn't know half of the things that we do and our lives would be much harder.

READ ECHO SPEEDS ACCOUNT OF MARGARET GARNER INSIDE ON PAGE 4...

## Letter from the Editor

JIM THEOFELIS



**GREETINGS AND HAPPY FEBRUARY!** February is Black History Month and as such you will find a number of articles in this issue related to the trials, tribulations and contributions of African-Americans in American history and culture. The connection of African-American children, adolescents and families within the foster care system is clear and not surprisingly somewhat disturbing. Children of color in general and African-American children in particular are as over-represented within the foster care system as they are in the juvenile justice system. For example, children of color constitute one-third of the King County child population but make up more than one half of all children currently in foster care in King County. African-American and Native-American children are over-represented at nearly every decision point in the child welfare system, which clearly suggests a systemic flaw.

There is a myth that African-American and other racial or ethnic groups have a higher rate of child abuse and maltreatment. However, this myth has been dispelled through a number of research projects including the National Incidence Study commissioned by Congress and conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services. After three studies ranging from 1980-1993, researchers reported that, "No significant differences in the overall rate of child

maltreatment between African-American and Caucasians were found..." The Mockingbird Society is dedicated to improving the current and future lives of the children involved in foster/kinship care and we are committed to building a system that provides services that are of the highest quality, timely and culturally relevant to the family.

Many of you have been following our progress regarding the Mockingbird Foster Family Constellation Project. The federal grant expired on December 31<sup>st</sup> however we have secured the funding necessary to continue this project with One Church One Child/UJIMA Community Services AND replicate the model in at least two new sites. As you may recall our outcomes for the test-piloting of the Mockingbird Model have been very positive including: minimal placement disruptions, siblings able to live together, services that are culturally relevant and competent, high satisfaction of caregivers including 24/7 respite availability AND nearly all of the participating children improved their academic performance in most subject areas.

Finally, we're hoping you will attend our Annual Fundraiser on February 6<sup>th</sup>. The youth at Mockingbird have been developing a video on foster care/youth homelessness and we plan to show a preview of this video due for release in March 2005. Come get a sneak preview, listen to youth speakers, enjoy great food and donate to a good cause!

Jim Theofelis

jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

## Letter to the Editor

*This letter is from a foster mom of two young women employed to distribute the Mockingbird Times.*

Jim,

I want to say thank you to you and your staff for all you have done for us. I am willing to continue to deliver about 25 of the papers myself in an effort to continue to support everything you do. I would like to continue to promote your work in this area. You have been so gracious to us. The girls now have a first job they can put down on job applications and resumes. We are almost at that age where we can begin to look for summer jobs. [The girls] have been able to experience some of the responsibility of a real job. They have learned the in's and out's of how to establish a bank account, how to keep a balance, what it's like to save in order to buy something for themselves. These are lessons that build self esteem and life long real world skills. I do hope that things continue to go well for you and your endeavors to improve life for young people. I will encourage the girls to submit work from time to time. Once again THANK YOU for the ways you have supported us throughout the years.

Sincerely,

Glena Felker

### Mockingbird Fundraiser

**Don't forget to join us at our  
4th Annual Fundraiser on  
February 6th from 4-6pm. Call  
206-323-5437 for information.**

### Quote of the Month

**YOU'RE NOT TO BE SO BLIND WITH  
PATRIOTISM THAT YOU CAN'T FACE  
REALITY. WRONG IS WRONG, NO MATTER  
WHO DOES IT OR SAYS IT.**

-MALCOLM X (1925 - 1965)



**All incoming Letters to the Editor should be addressed to Mockingbird Editorial Staff and will be opened by Editorial Staff. All incoming correspondence to reporting staff under 18 years of age will be opened first by Mockingbird Editorial Staff.**

### THANK YOU'S...

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Sarah Henderson, Stella L. Pitts & Associates, PLLC, Al Hillel & Sue Wiedenfield, Picket Fence Real Estate, Barry Eben & Beverly Winter-Eben, C.R. & Kerry Anne Schuller, Daniel Keiner, Shawn Mintek & Elizabeth Ungar Mintek, Merck Partnership for Giving, Sherri Bloomer, William & Patricia Lavelle, James & Rosemarie Flaherty.

**ABOUT US:** The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents involved in homelessness and foster care. The Mockingbird Times is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.50 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The Mockingbird Times has a monthly circulation of 60,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the U.S.A. through a private distribution list and as an insert in Real Change, South Star and Seattle Sun community newspapers. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the Mockingbird Times may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2005 The Mockingbird Society.

### A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox

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**MFFCP Coordinator**  
Shannon Barello

**Administrative Assistant**  
Lauren Frederick

**MSW Intern**  
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COURTNEY KONIETZKO



If you missed the first installment of *Money Management 101* in the December 2004 issue of the *Mockingbird Times*, I recommend it if you are interested in learning more about money management; specifically, increasing your net income, budgeting, controlling variable expenses, cash flow, and managing paperwork. Most of the information in both articles comes courtesy of Kelly Port's *Money Management* class, offered at the Fremont Public Association in Seattle.

HI, I'M HERE TO HELP EXPLAIN THE MYSTERIOUS CONCEPT OF CREDIT in Part II of my series on *Money Management*. The concept of credit baffled me at first and I avoided getting a credit card because of not wanting to rack up debt. To this day I still don't own one but plan on building my credit six months before I become a vehicle owner so I can get lower insurance rates. I also avoided understanding credit because it seemed like an alien foreign concept that was just too hard to understand. One of the things I didn't understand about debit cards before I took Port's *Money Management* class was that if you chose the option of credit on your debit card when paying for a purchase you aren't establishing credit. The only difference between the two is how they are processed. If you want to start establishing credit, the first thing to do is get your credit report and start understanding your credit so you can see where you stand and fix anything that's going to get in the way of you buying something important, like a home. For example, because of lack of health care, homeless youth rack up enormous medical bills that can screw up their credit.

As of December 1, 2004 ANY person in Washington can get a free credit report from each of the major credit reporting agencies once a year: Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. Eventually everybody in the United States will be entitled to their free credit reports. This is slowly being put into effect to prevent an influx of requests. The way you go about getting your reports is to go to [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com) or write or phone each company. It is also good to get your credit rating

along with your report. This is something you will have to pay for (should not be more than \$10) but it will help you understand what your credit reports mean. Once you have your report what do you do with it? The first thing to do is check it for errors. If you find an error contact the credit agency in writing and include any copies of documents you have to support your stance. Do not send originals! There will be an example error dispute letter online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org) along with the addresses and phone numbers of the three credit reporting agencies. Port's money management booklet advises you to, "send your letter by certified mail, return receipt requested, so you can document what the CRA received."

Interested in building credit? It's an important thing to do before making a major purchase like a car or a house because insurance rates will be lower.

Port asked the class what some of the ways people in the class knew of to establish credit. I blurted out that the only way I knew of doing this is to get a department store card. Port responded by saying that there are better ways to go about establishing credit. For example, there is a specific type of savings account you can get through your bank that offers a better way of establishing credit with lower Annual Percentage Rates (APR).


One of the most important things I learned in Port's class is that "pay day loans=costly cash." In other words, steer clear of places that offer quick and easy loans and check cashing options! These agencies have an outrageously high APR of 391 percent—meaning that if you roll over the loan (extend the time to pay it back) you will be paying back over 50% of the amount you borrowed. It makes me so mad to receive the flier from (one of the anonymous check cashing places) that says, "Your first loan on us is free, get a free dinner (a pizza) and a free movie rental!" I know there are probably a lot of poor people out there who will be suckered into this 'scam' thinking it's a 'deal.' The best advice is avoid these places all together and if you can't avoid them make sure to not roll over your loan and pay it back! There are other options!

According to the class booklet, "When you need credit, shop carefully. Compare offers. Look for the credit offer with lowest APR—consider a small loan from your credit union or small loan company, an advance on pay from your employer, or a loan from

family and friends. A cash advance on a credit card also may be a possibility, but it may have a higher interest rate than your other sources of funds: find out the terms before you decide. Also, a local community-based organization may make small business loans to individuals."

Rental companies are also places to steer clear of. They prey upon poor people by making the total amount paid in their rent-to-own program obnoxiously higher than the person would have paid at a store by the time the person owns the item. For example, a brand new Playstation 2 retails for approximately \$179. I have a friend who is renting a Playstation 2 through one of the rental agencies at \$40/month. He asked them how much it would cost to buy it straight out and it came out to over \$300.

Be wary of advertising that promises to take away or erase bad credit. This can't be done. Creditors score credit with something called FICO scores. According to Port's class, "Fico scores provide the best guide to future risk based solely on credit report data. The higher the score, the lower the risk. But no score says whether a specific individual will be a "good" or "bad" customer. There is no single "cutoff score" used by all lenders and there are many additional factors that lenders use to determine your actual interest rates." FICO scores are used by lenders a lot of the time by themselves or with the lenders own scores to determine what your interest rates are going to be and whether you are good candidate for a loan or not. Your FICO score at each of the three credit reporting agencies might be different because the information that each agency has on you differs. Equifax calls their scores Beacon. Experian calls their scores Experian/Fair, Isaac Risk Model. Transunion calls their score Empirica. As your data changes at the credit reporting agency your credit report changes too.

If you find yourself still wanting to know more, and/or if you have questions about credit or money management take Kelly Port's workshop and learn it all first-hand! You'll walk out of there with useful skills to apply to your life. Again, I know I've said it before but I'll say it again because it really is an EXCELLENT class that breaks it all down in an easy to understand format. Take the FREE financial education classes that Kelly Port offers at the Fremont Public Association! You can contact her to register for the class at (206) 694-6864. This class will help to demystify credit. 




**Hey You! We are looking for articles, poetry, artwork and photography from our young readers who have experience in the foster care system and/or homelessness. If you want to be published in the *Mockingbird Times*, call us at 206-323-5437 or email [newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org). Check out [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org) for more information.**

## TSUNAMI CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A fund raising group called Plan USA has been working in Sri Lanka for eight years to raise money, build schools and to help protect the children of Sri Lanka because of the many problems before the tsunami hit; problems like a shortage of drinkable water a lack of proper medicine. The tsunami has only made these problems worse. Plan USA is working with government agencies to make sure there are clean water tanks and bathing houses for people living in camps. There are also thousands of children being taken and sold for sex and labor. Plan USA's Marie Staunton, National Director, United Kingdom National Office (UKNO) writes in a January 12, 2005 article, "Our research shows that during a disaster the physical survival needs of children (safe water, food, shelter, clothing primary health care) are usually given a very high priority. However, other needs and rights, which are also essential for children; like protection from abuse and harm, education, rest, privacy and the right to participate in matters that effect them are too often overlooked."

Plan USA reports that children are top priority to their organization and state, "Children recover from disasters quicker when they are called upon to help to rebuild their community." To give them a chance to help, the children are given jobs like getting water and helping take care of infants. Because of the tsunami children are even more vulnerable to traffickers and other predators. Plan USA is helping to end the exploitation of children in Sri Lanka. The Child Protection Act was formed in Indonesia to protect children from sexual predators but Plan USA says that children are being penalized for prostitution rather than the traffickers. Plan USA is also working with local organizations to help locate trafficked children and make sure they are put in safe-houses and receive proper health care and counseling.

Sri Lanka and all the other countries hit by the tsunamis still need a lot of help; if you would like to help or donate money you can contact Plan USA at 800-556-7918 or visit [www.planusa.org](http://www.planusa.org). There are many other programs that you can contact if you want to help. To find out the closest one to you visit [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov). But please do not forget that there are people here in America who also need your help. 

## CREATIVE CORNER

We are One

By Paige Felker

We are a family  
of three, all girls, are we.  
We unite.  
We talk.  
We fight.  
But, all in all, we stay strong  
through hurricanes and lost friends,  
through depression and strong hate  
we learn. To love.  
To forgive.  
We love each other no matter what  
we say.  
When obstacles are hard we come  
together.  
We are one.  
One like the ocean.  
One like the wind.  
We will love each other till our end.  
On and on for eternity.  
I love my family.



# The Dirt on Heroin Abuse

SHAY DENEY



**HEROIN (DIACETYLMORPHINE OR DIAMORPHINE) IS PART OF THE OPIATE FAMILY, A GROUP OF PAIN KILLING DRUGS (ANALGESICS) DERIVED FROM THE OPIUM POPPY FLOWER.** Heroin affects the user by activating many regions of the brain. The brain regions effected are responsible for producing both the pleasurable sensation an addict often gets when taking the drug and also the physical dependence that the user feels when becoming addicted. Together, these actions account for the user's loss of control and the drug's habit-forming action. It mimics certain chemicals in the brain that are already present; such as endorphins which block pain and induce feelings of pleasure and contentment.

Soon after using, heroin crosses the blood-brain barrier. In the brain, heroin is converted to morphine and binds rapidly to opioid receptors. The user will often feel a surge of pleasurable sensation, called a "rush." Heroin is particularly addictive because of how quickly it enters the brain—the effects are almost immediate when injected and the user may initially feel sick. A feeling of calm and warmth spreads throughout the body and any troubles or pains seem very distant and unimportant. At higher doses, the user slips into a dreamlike state where they are not asleep nor awake, but somewhere in between.

Other than being a very powerful painkiller, heroin also depresses the central nervous system activity, making the heart rate and breathing slow down, suppressing the cough reflex and depressing the activity of the bowels, causing constipation. Some blood vessels dilate, releasing heat through the body, giving a feeling of warmth. Opiates can change the brainstem, an area that controls emotions to increase feelings of pleasure and can block pain receptors transmitted by the spinal cord from the body.

Heroin is dangerous, although heroin itself does not damage any major organs (including the brain) when pure. Health problems can arise from the impurities that are added during the manufacturing process.

Death generally occurs when the user's breathing slows to a halt and/or the user's lungs fill up with liquid.

With intravenous drug use, the user should take extra care because a lot of diseases can be spread through sharing needles and equipment and using dirty needles and equipment. The user can contract HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C (which can progress to Cirrhosis) and many other blood transmitted viruses when sharing needles and equipment. By using dirty needles and equipment, the user can get abscesses and other infections of the veins, skin, and muscles.

Most of the time, when someone finds out that a loved one is addicted to heroin, they speak to the addict about stopping by threatening, pleading or begging. This won't work. Heroin is too strong of an influence over most addict's lives for them to be able to stop just because somebody wants them to. Heroin users will only stop when they are ready to stop. If they are forced to stop by being put into a detox center or by keeping them away from it, they will only go right back to doing it as soon as they possibly can. According to "Jane," an addict of six years, "you gotta know it's not an affront to you if a person relapses after you try to get them help...something has changed in their brain so it's not a choice anymore. It may have been a choice at first, but it takes more than willpower once you get hooked."

Jane goes on to say, "you can't play the role of saviour, therapist, mom, and friend all wrapped up into one. Most likely you don't have the energy to! As much as you may love and care deeply for your friend you have to let them take the first step and can't enable them by keeping them from feeling pain and sometimes that means stepping away." Here are some things you can do to encourage an addict to stop when they are still using:

**Keep firm contact**—don't break all contacts because your loved one is a user. They won't come to you when they need help and the best way to succeed in getting clean is with support. Let them know that they can turn to you and that you will do what you can.

**Treat them the same as before**—many people start treating users like children, speaking down to them and not trusting them with simple things. Unless they do something to break your trust, have some.

One of the major dangers of heroin is overdose, which mostly occurs through intravenous use and when the user gets a hold of a more pure form of heroin than what they are used to. Overdose symptoms are as follows:

- Blue lips
- Shallow breathing
- Clammy skin
- Pinpoint pupils
- Excessive fluid in the lungs
- causing raspy breathing
- Irregular heartbeat
- Death

**Make a rule about money**—It's okay not to lend them money if you think they are going to go get high with it. Remember, though, that they will find other ways to get high and you may be keeping them out of trouble and danger if you can afford to lend them a little bit.

**Be honest**—Speak to them about any worries you have without lecturing them. Let them know you are concerned—it will let them know you care about them and they might be able to reassure on some things you are worried about.

**Be supportive and avoid suspicion**—Appreciate that it is hard to detox from heroin and that not everyone is successful. If they fail, don't take it as a personal insult, offer support for the next time they try. Remember that most people relapse a few times before they make it. Don't keep asking them if they are still clean or lecturing about not starting again because if they do relapse, they will most likely keep it from you.

**Remember the difference between lapse and relapse**—after going through detox, trying heroin again is classed as a lapse, not a relapse. Try to encourage them to think of it as a minor mistake, one that is NOT to be repeated. Only if they continue to use is it considered a relapse.

The best way to encourage a junkie toward a safer lifestyle is to be understanding and supportive of them. You can't make decisions for them. Keep in mind that most heroin addicts do eventually get and stay clean and that the average length of time that someone stays addicted to heroin is about three years. If you have a loved one who is a heroin addict, try to be supportive as best you can but don't let them walk all over you. Remember to ensure that YOU come first. Always explain your reasons for things and be honest. Hopefully if you are honest about your feelings then they will be about theirs.

\*Jane is a pseudonym for an anonymous source who has been battling a drug addiction for over six years. All other information for this article came from the following sources: <http://www.drugs.com/drug/heroin>, [www.addictiontreatmentresource.com/heroin-treatment.html](http://www.addictiontreatmentresource.com/heroin-treatment.html), [www.herointimes.com](http://www.herointimes.com), [www.heroin.org](http://www.heroin.org)

## Black History Month Series: Margaret Garner's Story

ECHO SPEED



IN LATE JANUARY 1856, within the beautiful rolling hills and impressive mountains of the famous Bluegrass state, Kentucky, 17 slaves of neighboring areas designed a desperate plan of escape from the wretched life of slave labor. Among this fraught, somewhat forlorn group of prisoners was a young mother and domestic slave woman named Margaret Garner.

22-year-old Garner resided on the Maplewood farm laboring in the cookhouse. Maplewood was a very prominent farm in Boone County that was owned and controlled by Mr. Archibald Gaines. Margaret Garner was wife to Robert Garner and mother to four children (two boys; two baby girls) whom (many believe) she loved exceptionally.

On a cold Sunday evening buried in snow, Garner and her family, including her husband's parents, joined up with the group of slaves who had all been plotting the grand flight to freedom. The plan was to make it to Wester Row, Ohio by way of the Ohio River. With two horses stolen, the group used a sled and drove up the frozen solid waters of the Ohio River. They got to the river below Covington, opposite Wester Row, by daybreak. Here is where the band of travelers split up, considering the odds of being discovered were greater if people walking the streets noticed an assembly of 17 black slaves wandering about. The Garners headed to a cousin's place in Cincinnati's Mill Creek, whose name

so happened to be Mr. Kite. Kite had been a former slave from Garner's whereabouts, but was bought out of slavery by his father, Joe Kite. Mr. Kite's house was at the bottom of Mill Creek and so Margaret's party had to make several inquiries in town as to the locality of Mr. Kite's residence before they found it.

Ultimately these inquiries previously made in town are what led pursuers to Garner and others' position so quickly and easily. Masters of escaped slaves accompanied by officers and a posse of angry white men stormed Mr. Kite's house. The fugitives inside the house had the door and windows barred. They fought off the pursuers as hard as they possibly could. Garner swore she would not only take her own life, but the lives of her children before they'd go back to slavery. Soon, despite how bravely the fugitive slaves fought, it was clear they were going to lose this fight. Garner must have seen this when pursuers broke through the door and beat down her husband dragging him away outside. Garner got a hold of a nearby butcher's knife and in one stroke sliced her little girl's throat, from ear to ear they say. Before she could complete the desperate slaughter, she was overpowered and hampered before her next attempt to take another one of her children's lives. Everyone was thrown in jail.

The trial lasted two weeks. Garner's Council for Defense argued that she was brought there a number of years ago by her master to be a nurse girl (being pregnant at the time), and because of the law that unfettered slaves brought to free states with their owner's consent, Garner was free from that time and so were her children being as they were born after that time. The judge decided, however, that since Garner voluntarily went back to slavery after visiting a free state, the conditions of slavery were re-enacted.

Garner never made it back to slavery though. When the vessel that was taking her back shipwrecked, she and one of her other children sorrowfully perished.

Stories like Margaret Garner's are the kind that reminds us of how awful it could be to try and survive in a world that makes you a slave because of your skin color. All through history we can see how people who are viciously oppressed

eventually react. It can even push someone to lose their sense of right from wrong and death becomes a blessing.

Sources: Levi Coffin, *Reminiscences* (Cincinnati, 1876), [rootsweb.com/~kypendle/slavemargaretgarner.htm](http://rootsweb.com/~kypendle/slavemargaretgarner.htm), [coax.net/people/twofmar\\_gar2.htm](http://coax.net/people/twofmar_gar2.htm), [luminarium.org/contemporary/tonimorrisonmuckley.htm](http://luminarium.org/contemporary/tonimorrisonmuckley.htm)

**Stampede of Slaves.**  
**A TALE OF HORROR!**  
 An Arrest by the U. S. Marshal.  
 A DEPUTY U. S. MARSHAL SHOT  
 A Negro Child's Throat Cut from Ear to Ear  
 by its Father or Mother, and  
 Others Wounded.  
**CORONER'S INQUEST.**  
 Writ of Habeas Corpus Taken Out.  
**GREAT EXCITEMENT!**  
 The city was thrown into much excitement  
 yesterday morning by the information that a  
 party of slaves, sixteen in all, had made a  
 stampede from Kentucky to this side of the river.  
 Other circumstances, however, which afterward