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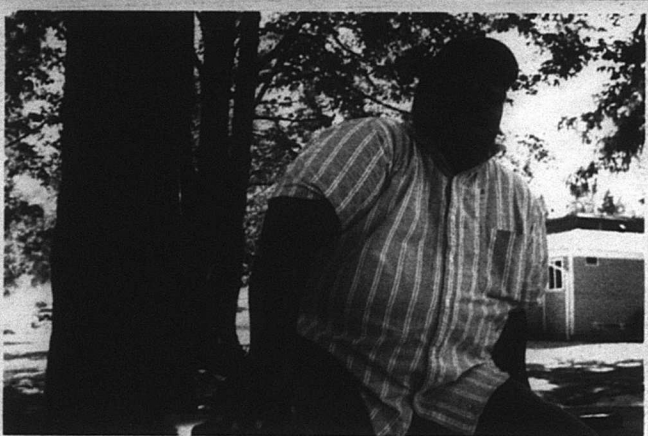
# REAL CHANGE

ISSUES • INSIGHT • IMPACT

## The Change

Ad-hoc group pushes for transgendered policy in county jails

By ROSETTE ROYALE  
Staff Reporter



THEARD "TATE" LAZARD AND HIS SISTER JOINED THEIR MOTHER IN SEATTLE AFTER THE HURRICANE. HE STILL MISSES NEW ORLEANS, WHICH "IS NOT A PLACE. IT'S A WAY OF LIVING." PHOTO BY SHERRY LOESER

The King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention's first-ever policy on transgendered inmates, which is undergoing final review, comes in the wake of an unfortunate event.

According to Lincoln Rose, chair of the Seattle Trans Jail Policy Working Group, in the spring of 2005, two transgendered men were arrested on misdemeanor charges and held downtown. When the men informed jail officials they were transgendered, Rose says the men were made to strip, as proof. In a room open to numerous staff members, the two had to expose their genitals, which brought a rash of jeers from staff, Rose says. While both inmates were self-identified as male, only one had a license with a corresponding gender affiliation. That individual, says Rose, was housed with female inmates; the inmate whose license carried a female identification was housed, in turn, with males.

Months after the pair's release, one of the men recounted his experiences to Rose. It was the question-stential spark that ignited a question for Rose: "How can we fix this?" His answer came almost immediately. "We can create a policy."

The policy, which is expected to be signed by the director of jails by month's end, will help to establish protocols on providing appropriate treatment of "transgender, transsexual, intersex, and gender variant persons" (TTIGV) housed within the county's jails. Draft guidelines pertaining to intake, transfer, and release state that strip searches will not be done to view an inmate's genitals and/or determine gender. All TTIGV inmates, the draft continues, will be classified and assigned housing based on safety/security needs, housing availability, gender identity, and genitalia. Staff who talk about or ridicule TTIGV inmates will be committing harassment. Once the policy is graced with the director's pen, current

## SORRY, CHARLIE

Call it the chicken of the sea, but there's nothing cute about canned tuna's high mercury levels.

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## WHITE NOISE

KBCS confronts an era when listeners across the country are tuning out their radios.

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## AT EASE?

Soldiers suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, too often return to a country unwilling to help.

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## Resettled and Homesick

Tate Lazard survived Katrina only to experience great loss

By CYDNEY GILLIS  
Staff Reporter

When Theard "Tate" Lazard recalls what happened to him one year ago in New Orleans, the story rolls out with a matter-of-factness that hardly lets on what he's been through or how much his life has changed — until he chokes up about his loss in Seattle.

After Hurricane Katrina hit last Aug. 29, Lazard, 58, was trapped with his 49-year-old sister, Antoinette, for five days in a second-floor apartment. He broke into the empty unit after floodwater reached a lower apartment where they had been staying near Xavier University.

For three days, he trudged into the water to get fresh food from the refrigerator downstairs. When that was gone, he and his sister, who is diabetic and had just been released from the hospital, ate what canned food there was until a rescue boat finally came that could take them both away.

But Lazard hardly stops on any of this, or the days they waited with thousands of others to get out of the New Orleans airport, or the weeks they spent in limbo after being evacuated to a building-turned-shelter at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

No, what stops Lazard is any mention of his mother. After the flood, Em-

ily Lazard, an 80-year-old widow, came to Renton to stay with another daughter who lives there. In December, she had a stroke and went into a coma. On March 2, Emily Lazard died.

"She died of a broken heart," says her son.

Lazard says his mother was independent. Like other New Orleanians, she spent her days visiting with family, friends, and neighbors, going where she wanted to, when she wanted to, for days at a time.

"New Orleans is not a place," Lazard says. "It's a way of living" — one that he misses very much. Two months ago, he and his sister moved into an apartment in Bellevue.

Up here, he says, there are no grocery stores cooking takeout dinner on the corner, no catfish that bite back ("If it didn't go up the muddy Mississippi River," he insists, "it didn't taste good"), no neighbors chatting on stoops or children playing in the streets.

That's how Lazard, who served in Vietnam and lives on an Army pension, describes his neighborhood in the 17th Ward. "You'd walk down the street, shoot the breeze, talk," he says. From time to time, he'd hear shots as well.

## AND THEN SOEM

Seattle's Office of Emergency Management learns some lessons from Katrina outcome.

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## INHUMAN BONDAGE

Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary finds people of color suffer a collective affliction: post traumatic slave syndrome.

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See "TATE", Continued on Page 12

# The Six-Ounce Problem

*Tuna, America's affordable seafood, endangers mothers and infants*

By LAUREL DYKSTRA  
Guest Writer

Canned tuna is a cheap, popular source of protein purchased by more than 80 percent of American households. Because of its popularity, eating tuna is the largest single avenue of exposure to mercury in the United States.

The United States government has declared albacore tuna safe for pregnant women, putting them and infants at risk while protecting the coal and tuna industries. Worse, the Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC) gives low-income mothers tuna, which may contain dangerous levels of the neurotoxin mercury.

One in four infants in the U.S. is born with levels of mercury the Food and Drug Administration considers dangerous. According to the Center for Disease Control, one in 10 women of childbearing age have dangerous levels of mercury in their bodies, putting 60,000 children a year at risk of brain damage. Mercury is a neurotoxin that passes from mother to developing infant across the placenta during pregnancy and in lesser levels to nursing infants and toddlers through breastmilk. Fetal and infant mercury exposure is toxic to brain and nerve development; it impairs vision, memory, mobility, and ability to learn.

Coal-burning power plants release mercury into the air, causing most mercury pollution. It enters the water cycle when it rains and then moves up the food chain into the bodies of large predatory fish. In March 2004, the FDA and the Environmental Protection Agency recommended small children and pregnant or nursing women avoid all swordfish, shark, tilefish, and king mackerel due to high levels of mercury. The agencies advised women to eat no more than 12 ounces of fish a week, total, and no more than six ounces of albacore tuna.

Tuna is the biggest issue. Canned tuna is a cheap, popular source of pro-

tein purchased by more than 80 percent of American households. Because of its popularity, eating tuna is the largest single avenue of exposure to mercury in the United States.

Environmental groups claim the FDA and EPA are bending to pressure from the vast tuna fishing, processing, and marketing industry and failing to protect the public. U.S. mercury exposure levels are twice those recommended by the UN-World Health Organization. The weak and confusing guidelines do not account for variations in mercury content between individual fish, or for the fact that larger albacore or white tuna have on average four times the mercury of the smaller tuna marketed as "light." They don't account for the weight of the woman consuming the tuna, or for her previous mercury exposure (it collects in the body over a lifetime). Beyond recommending "smaller" portions, there aren't any specific instructions regarding how much tuna is safe for children.

The independent watchdog Environmental Working Group recommends that women of childbearing age and children under the age of 5 eat no albacore or white tuna at all and limit their intake of light tuna.

Many women concerned about mercury levels in tuna can choose non-animal protein sources or less dangerous fish. Unexplored by most environmental groups is the fact that poor women and children are particularly at risk. Low-income mothers are given tuna as part of the federal Women, Infants and Children nutrition program. Breastfeeding mothers receive checks to buy 26 oz. of tuna per month. If they buy albacore, this exceeds even the FDA/EPA safe limit.

Some states provide women with information about the higher levels of mercury in albacore, others do not, but WIC does not regulate the types of tuna provided. The risk is increased by the fact that USDA surplus tuna is frequently available free through food banks and soup kitchens. In stark terms, the government puts poor women in the position of choosing whether or not to take free food that may harm their infant. This calculated endangerment of poor children, starting in utero, is particularly ironic in light of President Bush's stated commitment to the rights of the "unborn."

The current role of the government in the tuna situation is doubly disturbing, since it's also dismantled regulations that would reduce mercury pollution. Before the Bush administration came to power, federal policy mandated a 90 percent reduction in mercury emissions by 2008. Then the energy industry contributed \$40 million to the Republican party and upwards of \$1 million to Bush's first campaign; now, the EPA has rolled back that deadline to 2018.

Alan Stern is a toxicologist who resigned from a National Academy of Sciences panel that studied the dangers of mercury. The panel studied mercury's effect on fetal-infant development; it was the basis of the EPA's original plan to regulate mercury emissions. Stern and other members of the panel spoke against changes made to the report by White House officials minimizing the danger of mercury exposure. "I think the EPA knew what it wanted and edited the health report to fit their proposal," Stern says.

It's enough to make you sick. Spread the word. ■

[Learn more] Environmental Working Group: link to their Tuna Calculator [www.ewg.org/issues/mercury/20031209/calculator.php](http://www.ewg.org/issues/mercury/20031209/calculator.php) NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council): [www.nrdc.org/health/effects/mercury/index.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/health/effects/mercury/index.asp) Mercury Policy Project: "Can the Tuna" report: [www.mercury-policy.org/new/documents/CanTheTuna061903.pdf](http://www.mercury-policy.org/new/documents/CanTheTuna061903.pdf)

Laurel Dykstra is a Vancouver writer, artist, and activist and co-editor of *Baby Bloc*, a zine and website for activist parents ([www.babylbloc.org](http://www.babylbloc.org)).



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#### Mission Statement:

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

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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# ange Agent

**F**aced with tragedy, Cindy and Craig Corrie took a bold step. In 2003, their daughter Rachel was killed in the Gaza Strip while trying to protect the home of a Palestinian from demolition by an Israeli bulldozer. In response, her parents began the slow process of building an organization that would preserve her spirit of activism and understanding.

Among the projects of the Rachel Corrie Foundation are a scholarship for Middle Eastern study, a memorial lecture, and rebuilding efforts in conflict zones. The Corries, who live

in Olympia, have also traveled to Gaza and the West Bank, brought Gazan families to speak in the U.S. and stood in solidarity with Palestinians, Israelis, and Americans for peace and justice in the Middle East. At the root of their action, they hope to promote a simple message instilled in them by Rachel: that all humans are interconnected. Craig and Cindy add that peace depends "on our ability to truly want for other children those basic things that we want for our own: shelter, health, education, safety, opportunity, and joy."

— Rachel Rubinstein

## Radio Static

Community radio station aims to balance talk, music

By **CYDNEY GILLIS**  
Staff Reporter

"We've been asking ourselves how a station like ours grows its audience."

— Steve Ramsey, KBCS general manager

**W**hen you're No. 2, the saying goes, you have to try harder. But what do you do if you're an idealistic radio station offering "a world of music and ideas" that few people tune to even as a third choice?

It's a question that KBCS 91.3 FM, a community radio station licensed to Bellevue Community College, has grappled with this year as it deals with an overall flattening of radio listenership across the nation and more than a few setbacks that the station has suffered internally.

Since February, KBCS, which is funded primarily by listeners and dedicated to airing authentic music and alternative voices, has lost its program director and its public affairs director and has had to move from its studios in Factoria to a cramped, converted house on the campus of BCC.

The good news is the changes have nothing to do with KBCS's current level of listener support or funding. In the six years since Steve Ramsey came on as general manager, in fact, the station's budget has grown from about \$180,000 to \$540,000 last year, and its staff is up from one full-time and two part-time staffers to five of each, with more than 200 volunteer DJs and public affairs producers.

All the same, KBCS hired an organizational consultant earlier this year to try to figure out how it can grow its listenership and raise more money to compete with much larger public radio stations such as the University of Washington's KUOW, which transmits on 100,000 watts compared with the 8,000 watts that make KBCS a spotty catch in Seattle.

As part of the effort, the station is inviting the public to a three-hour input session that it's

holding Sept. 9 at Seattle's Museum of History and Industry to discuss its future direction.

"We've been asking ourselves how a station like ours grows its audience," Ramsey says. Community radio is "a format unto itself," he says, so "you get this quilt of musical programs and community programs that is hard for the average citizen who doesn't really know what we're doing."

Ramsey doesn't rule out a format change.

"We're trying to be smart and reactive to what the community's assessment is of us," Ramsey says. "Is that going to result in a format change? I don't know."

Though KBCS's bluegrass, folk, jazz, hip-hop, and other music lovers are devoted to the station, "Our numbers are small. There's no question about that, especially in relation to some of the other stations that our listeners listen to," he says. "We are lots of people's third choice, not their second."

To boost the numbers, former public-affairs director Bruce Wirth and others say more local public-affairs programming is needed, preferably during the critical morning and afternoon drive time. But that could mean moving or cutting shows such as "Drive Time Jazz," a morning program with Diane Sweeney, a 20-year KBCS volunteer.

But Sasha Summer Cousineau, a two-year public affairs volunteer, says "as is" won't help the station grow.

"Democracy Now" has the highest listenership of anything on that radio station," Cousineau says. "If you rate the fundraising during pledge [drives] that happens during 'Drive Time Jazz' compared to 'Democracy Now,' it's a landslide. 'Democracy Now' makes money hand over fist."

Sweeney acknowledges "Democracy Now" has brought in listeners, "but I don't want to see [KBCS] turned into another KUOW with a different slant," she says. "The uniqueness of KBCS is mostly the music — offering all kinds of different music for all kinds of people." ■

## Just Heard...

### Separation

Welcome to the split: Thanks to maneuvering at City Hall, the two initiatives that make up the Great Schools for a Great City Campaign will now appear on separate ballots in the Sept. 5 primary and Nov. 7 general election.

Initiative 88, which will be on the September ballot, would allow the Seattle City Council to collect a six-year property tax of 39 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value in order to raise \$40 million a year for Seattle Public Schools. Initiative 87, which is expected to appear on the November ballot if the City Council approves it, would specify that the funds be spent on hiring teachers, restoring art and music classes, and providing all-day kindergarten in Seattle Public Schools.

The *Seattle Times* reported last week that the mayor's office arranged the split vote — a move that could hurt the initiatives, which the mayor is suing to stop.

— Cydney Gillis

### No food

Workers at the 13 Coins restaurant are being joined by the King County Labor Council in a boycott against the South Lake Union restaurant. Having purchased the place last winter, the new owners threw out the union contract, which offered retirement and health benefits to approximately 140 workers. Talks to renegotiate the agreement have so far failed.

"The new owners need to feel the pressure from the community that we will not allow them to erode the decades-old standards that their employees have earned," said Elana Dix in an email to supporters affiliated with the Seattle Alliance for Good Jobs and Housing for Everyone.

For more information, go to [www.13coinsunfair.info](http://www.13coinsunfair.info).

### Needlework

The county Public Health Department's needle exchange on Second Avenue and Pike Street gives out vouchers for methadone, treats drug addicts' sores and abscesses, and tests and counsels clients who might be HIV-positive. So it's no surprise that the Downtown Seattle Association wants to move it from a block long considered by out-of-towners to be the scariest part of the neighborhood. And thanks to building owner Richard Nimmer, the group of downtown business boosters will get its wish.

Nimmer has decided to renovate the historic building they occupy, with Public Health looking for another space somewhere in downtown, says spokesman James Apa.

"Talking about the details of the move at this time would be premature," Apa says.

— Adam Hyla

# Walking Wounded

PTSD challenges veterans and communities alike

By **ANGIE JONES**  
Contributing Writer

"Our veteran's wounds are our wounds, as individuals and as a nation."  
—Edward Tick, psychotherapist

The invisible cost of combat was on display last week at St. Mark's Cathedral, when a gathering of Middle East war veterans, survivors, and their families and friends confronted the problem of coming home.

"Vets don't come home from war," said Stephen Hunt, medical director of the Veteran's Affairs Deployment Health Clinic, "they come home with war. We need to incorporate vets and their experiences into our own sense of community."

Speaker Edward Tick, a practicing psychotherapist for more than 30 years and author of *War and the Soul: Healing Our Nation's Veterans from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*, challenges conventional approaches to treating PTSD, which are measured by what degree veterans are able to participate in normal civilian culture.

"Once you've been to war," says Tick, "you are never the same. You can't go back to the person you were before the war; you can't regain that lost innocence and simplistic view of life."

Tick believes veterans should be dealt with in terms of "identity" and "soul," as the wounds of war are so pro-

found and transforming. "When you've been in zones of hell, where life has been rendered ultimate; when you know how fragile life is, how easily snuffed out it is, how difficult it is to repair... you're in the realm of the soul," he said.

As a therapist, Tick finds when he speaks to veterans from this perspective, the disconnect between veterans and civilian culture can be bridged, and veterans, who are often silent, open up about their experiences.

According to a National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Survey, more than half of all Vietnam veterans are affected by Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a debilitating problem that often includes emotional detachment, nightmares and intrusive memories, panic, and irritability.

Tick and others believe that traditional medical and psychological means of treating PTSD fall short, and that programs must be created to help veterans find a new identity that includes the war experience.

To this end, a handful of support networks have sprouted in Seattle. "We're not just talk," said Ayesha Anderson, representative of a national group called Soldier's Heart, "We want vets to know that we're here and want to be of service to them."

The forum was a grim testament of war and the victims it leaves for generations to come. But hope was found as survivors spoke up, advice was offered, and focus shifted to community education and the pledge to honor and recreate a safe home for our veterans.

"Our veteran's wounds are our wounds, as individuals and as a nation," said Tick. "We need to invite their stories out." ■

#### [Veteran Support Organizations]

Soldier's Heart. Contact: Ayesha Anderson (206)356-6180 or [faja387@yahoo.com](mailto:faja387@yahoo.com)

Veteran PTSD Counseling Program: A Service for War-Era Veterans and Family Members

Washington State Dept. of Veterans Affairs. Contact: Thomas Schumacher (800)562-2308 or (360)586-1076

Veterans Conservation Corps: Veterans Volunteering for Habitat Restoration Projects

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs  
Contact: Mark Fischer  
(800)562-2308 or [markf@dva.wa.gov](mailto:markf@dva.wa.gov)

## Id I.D.

Hi My name is Fraction  
It's just a fraction of my identity  
You can call me that but it's not what I call myself  
I don't need a name to separate me somebody else  
I think of myself in thoughts that only sometimes come in words  
I know who I am without the auspices of a name  
Why call you by name when it's you I'll remember, not a word  
Your identity, you see, is as abstract to me  
as your image would be for me to paint  
On a canvas of air  
With a paint brush of words  
Using colours we can only hear

Hi My name is Fraction  
It's just a fraction of my identity  
You can call me that but it's not what I call myself  
I don't call myself  
I'm never that far away

## Snakeheads

The 21st century slave ships  
Use 16th century tactics  
But instead of 500 people stacked  
In the hold of a 200' long boat  
Snakeheads put 20 people in a 50' container  
Hidden a few among a thousand  
On a 1,000-foot-long ship

To catch even one is hit or miss  
Landing in Long Beach, Seattle and Vancouver B.C.  
After 2-4 weeks in a containers on the sea  
Some don't make it and die along the way  
The ones that do make it have labor to pay

Is Slave Trade Fair Trade?  
Ask the WTO

—ARTIS

# In Light of Katrina

City disaster-response agency adjusts approach, worst-case expectations

By J. JACOB EDEL  
Contributing Writer

Seattle has made some adjustments in how it plans for natural disasters this past year and is launching a reformed neighborhood preparedness program this fall.

The changes occur because of the lessons Seattle's Office of Emergency Management (EM) learned from recent natural disasters and to meet the necessity of easing the process of preparing residents.

As a result of last year's hurricanes Katrina and Rita, EM has become more liberal with its planning assumptions, according to its director, Barb Graff. That means the department now presumes more destruction may occur in Seattle than previously thought likely.

"The magnitude of the scope of Hurricane Katrina taught us that we need to do some more worst-case planning," Graff says.

Also, EM now realizes that the messages disseminated prior to and after a disaster have to be consistent throughout every level of government.

"We paid particular attention to the lack of a command-and-control center in place," says Graff. "What we learned from Hurricane Katrina was that the message has to be in conjunction with Emergency Management, the mayor's office, or your barber, or anyone you trust. So you will take safe action."

In addition to adjusting its planning assumptions, EM is launching a new, updated neighborhood preparedness program. It is intended to simplify the methods currently used to prepare residents for the region's dangers while continuing to supply the necessary knowledge and resources.

This fall, the former Seattle Disaster Aid and Response Teams program, or SDART, is getting a name change and several significant modifications. The redesign is intended to simplify the task of getting residents and their neighbors prepared.

The replacement program will be called Seattle's Neighborhoods Actively Prepare, or SNAP — a name EM's public education coordinator, JoAnn Jordan, says reflects how simple she wants it to be.

"My goal is to make it a snap to prepare," Jordan says.

The most significant change within the program directs the focus from teams to tasks, while it also alters the agency's definition of what constitutes a neighborhood and shortens the number of neighborhood meetings needed to prepare.

Under the old program, the first priority for neighborhood groups was to establish seven different teams that were responsible for completing specialized tasks that prepared them for disaster response. SNAP breaks away from the team orientation and urges residents to focus on the most important tasks first.

"We kind of just narrowed it down to, 'Here's the responsibilities that somebody needs to perform, or the priorities,'" Jordan says. "How you organize it is up to the group."

Also, the program now urges residents to use pre-existent social relationships, rather than create a new disaster planning committee.

Under SDART, neighborhood Block Watch or community council members were whom the program relied on to implement disaster preparedness. SNAP forfeits that and loosely defines a neighborhood as any social group. According to Jordan, a social group could be two friends who live nearby one another or a church's congregation.

"Get personally prepared, then prepare with your neighbors, or your coworkers, or your church, or whatever you consider neighborhood or family," Jordan says.

Finally, the program is going to be easier to deploy, according to Jordan, because it takes only three meetings instead of five to get a neighborhood program activated. The new approach attracts interested residents to attend an initial meeting at a large venue with other residents from throughout the city. After that meeting, a neighborhood's resident can delegate the information gathered to other members of their social group.

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## Still Bearing the Scars

Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary says people of color need to tune into the internal damage wrought by Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome

By SILJA J.A. TALVI  
Contributing Writer

"It's irrelevant that you weren't alive during slavery days. I wasn't there either! But what we as a nation face today has been heavily impacted by our history, whether we're talking in the gulf between the haves and have-nots, education gaps between white and Black children, or the racial disparities in our prisons."

Racism erodes our very humanity. No one can be truly liberated while living under the weight of oppression, argues Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary in her new book, *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*.

Leary, who teaches social work at Portland State University, traces the way that both overt and subtle forms of racism have damaged the collective African-American psyche — harm manifested through poor mental and physical health, family and relationship dysfunction, and self-destructive impulses.

Leary adapts our understanding of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to propose that African Americans today suffer from a particular kind of intergenerational trauma: Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (PTSS).

The systematic dehumanization of African slaves was the initial trauma, explains Leary, and generations of their descendants have borne the scars. Since that time, Americans of all ethnic backgrounds have been inculcated and immersed in a fabricated (but effective) system of race "hierarchy," where light-skin privilege still dramatically affects the likelihood of succeeding in American society.

Leary suggests that African Americans (and other people of color) can ill afford to wait for the dominant culture to realize the qualitative benefits of undoing racism. The real recovery from the ongoing trauma of slavery and racism has to start from within, she says, beginning with a true acknowledgment of the resilience of African-American culture.

"The nature of this work," Leary writes in her prologue, "is such that each group first must see to their own healing, because no group can do another's work."

**Real Change:** What kind of reaction have you received to your book? And has that reaction differed based on who is in the audience?

**Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary:** Overall, the response has been very positive, although I'm sure the naysayers are out there. The difference in reaction is noticeable when I deal with grassroots folks in the African-American community. With them, the response has been extremely emotional. It's as though I'm speaking people's personal stories, which seems to give them a feeling of hope.

Of course, I'm not the first person to initiate this kind of work into the intergenerational nature of trauma in the African-American community.... What I did differently is that I pulled from many different historical sources and scholarly disciplines. In essence, I created a "map" of knowledge so that people could see how African-American self-perception has been shaped.

**RC:** Throughout your book, you emphasize that an acute, social denial of both historical and present-day racism has taken on pathological dimensions. You write that this country is "sick with the issue of race."

**Leary:** The root of this denial for the dominant culture is fear, and fear mutates into all kinds of things: psychological projection, distorted and sensationalized representations in the media, and the manipulation of science

to justify the legal rights and treatment of people. That's why it's become so hard to unravel.

Unfortunately, many European Americans have a very hard time even hearing a person of color express their experiences. The prevailing psychological mechanism is the idea, "I've not experienced it, so it cannot be happening for you."

Truly, how can anyone tell me what I have and have not experienced? This is a very paternalistic manifestation of white supremacy, the idea that Af-

frican Americans and other people of color can be told, with great authority, what their ancestor's lives were like and even what

*Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary believes African Americans are suffering from Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome. Photo courtesy of Faith Holmes*



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### Continued from Previous Page

their own, present-day lives are like. The result for those on the receiving end of this kind of distortion is an aspect of PTSS. People begin to doubt themselves, their experiences, and their worth in society because they have been so invalidated their whole lives, in so many ways.

**RC:** Attempts to encourage European Americans to join in on a more honest, national dialogue about "race" and racism often results in defensive posturing and positioning. Common responses include "slavery happened a long time ago," or people saying that they're tired of being made to feel guilty about something they didn't do. How do we respond to this detachment from the crucial issues of the legacy of slavery?

**Leary:** It's irrelevant that you weren't alive during slavery days. I wasn't there either! But what we as a nation face today has been heavily impacted by our history, whether we're talking in the gulf between the haves and have-nots education gaps between white and Black children or the racial disparities in our prisons.

I don't believe in making people feel "guilty." We have to recognize that remnants of racist oppression continue to impact people in this country.

Much of my work really is about Black people looking at ourselves and understanding how our lives have been shaped by what we've been dealt. I don't want to wait for permission to examine this, or to hear that looking back into our histories is somehow counterproductive.

**RC:** An eye-opening experience for you was your first visit to New York's largest and most overpopulated jail facility, Rikers Island. What kinds of insights did you gain about PTSS from talking to imprisoned African-American young men about their lives?

**Leary:** It was remarkable to see their physical disposition. They walked into the room with their heads held low, shuffled in... for lack of a better word, [they looked like] slaves. They had lost their way, and there was no light in their eyes whatsoever. Young people typically have a high level of energy. While there was a feeling of angry rebelliousness, the prevailing feeling of hopelessness was staggering.

It's also significant that it took about a half-hour for them to realize that I was talking to them, not at them. In that brief moment, I felt as though I gave them hope. Their body language had already changed by the time they were getting ready to leave. They had become students by the end of our time together.

These young people are being raised by these institutions, and then unleashed back into their communities to wreak havoc. Most of these young men grew up in poverty, and they have the experience of being Black and poor in a materialistic society that says if you have nothing, you are nothing. In comparison, when I was in Africa I witnessed incredible poverty unlike

anything I had ever seen before. I always talk about how tall and proud the people walked. Their greatest shame was their lack of education, not their lack of wealth. But in America, you are what you have, what you wear.

**RC:** You write about the fear that many African Americans have of being "exposed" or having family or community "dirty laundry" aired. "Never let them see you sweat," as the expression goes.

**Leary:** Shame is such a big issue in our society in general. What many African Americans have internalized is a sense of shame about just not being "good enough." That's a horrible thing to be sentenced to for your life.

When a person walks around with that sense of shame and self-hatred, they are likely to function poorly in society, no matter who they are. Add the extra layer of racist socialization, of being devalued, and what it means to be just human in America, and all those things just make the shame worse. We as African Americans don't get a pass on all the problems that humans have to deal with in life: finances, career choices, personal crises, relationships, and so forth. But when we add that to this intergenerational trauma in the context of a society that is in denial about its racism, people's lives can become overwhelmed, even frozen in place.

I'm saying let's just take a few of those burdens off of people's shoulders. Look at what we, as African Americans, have been able to do even with those burdens on our shoulders. Can you imagine what we could accomplish if some of those burdens were removed?

*Silja J.A. Talvi is a member of the Real Change Advisory Board, a senior editor at In These Times, and an investigative journalist and essayist with credits in many dozens of newspapers and magazines nationwide, including The Nation, Salon, Santa Fe Reporter, Utne, and the Christian Science Monitor. She is at work on a book about women in prison (Seal Press/Avalon). This interview is reprinted with permission from In These Times, March 10, 2006.*

**[Resource]**  
For more on Dr. Leary's work, see [www.posttraumaticslavesyndrome.com](http://www.posttraumaticslavesyndrome.com).

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And they have all control  
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—DAVID LAWPAUGH

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## Force and Beauty Truly Rendered

First published in 1951, Richmond Lattimore's translation of *The Iliad* remains unequalled for its precise rendering of Homer's alien but compelling vision.

*The Iliad* of Homer  
Translated by Richmond Lattimore  
Phoenix Books, 1951  
Paperback, 528 pages, \$14  
Book Review by JOHN SISCOE  
Contributing Writer

**T**he *Iliad*, a poem of over 15,500 lines, is the oldest surviving work of Western literature. Its merit, however, does not rest on its antiquity, but on its artistic excellence. For the Greeks and Romans, it was simply the greatest poem of all time and its author the foremost of poets. Today it is seldom read outside the classroom, which is a pity, for *The Iliad* remains a work of tremendous power, an unrivaled meditation on mortality and violence. It is also, and not incidentally, a work of great formal beauty.

*The Iliad* bears the unmistakable marks of oral poetic tradition, but it is likely to have achieved its present form at the hands of a single poet, probably in the eighth century BCE. The Greeks called him Homer and credited him with *The Odyssey* as well as other works. Modern scholars are far less sure. Where Homer lived and when, and what role writing did or did not play in his work, are questions we shall never settle. Perhaps the answers are less important than we imagine.

We tend to refer to *The Iliad* as a poem about the Trojan War, but this isn't strictly true. The action of the poem takes place within the span of a few weeks in the ninth year of the siege. It begins with an angry quarrel between the Achaean leader Agamemnon and the greatest of his warriors, Achilles. Furious at being publicly insulted by a man he despises, Achilles retires to his tent, determined to fight no longer. His anger sets in motion a series of events that will run like a riptide of slaughter throughout the rest of the poem. In Eric Voegelin's memorable words, "The anger of Achilles creates a gap in human order, and through that gap is pouring an unconquerable darkness from beyond." The consequences of Achilles' anger, not the Trojan War, comprise the true subject matter of *The Iliad*.

In spite of the grimness of its setting and the brutality of much of its action, *The Iliad* is an exhilarating book to read, for to do so is to participate in one of humanity's finest achievements. *The Iliad*, though it seems odd to say it, is a poem of beauty, a masterpiece of rhythm, cadence, flow, and clarity. The desire to reproduce its glories has been the goal and despair of translators for centuries.

George Chapman produced the first useful English version in 1598. Keats admired it intensely, and transla-

tors consult it even today. Alexander Pope's translation of 1717 is a major English poem in its own right, although his elaborations sometimes obscure Homer's sense. In 1870 William Cullen Bryant brought out a fine translation in blank verse that has since been largely (and unjustly) neglected.

But these translations, accomplished as they are, are mainly of historical interest. Recently Robert Fagles has published an *Iliad* that received considerable acclaim. It is full of energy, it is direct, and it reads smoothly. For the general reader, it is as good as the translation by Robert Fitzgerald, a version it resembles and has largely supplanted. But for the reader who wants more than a glimpse of Homer's force and beauty, there is only Richmond Lattimore.

First published in 1951, Lattimore's translation remains unequalled for its precise rendering of Homer's alien but compelling vision. Furthermore, the book comes with an introduction by Lattimore that is both informative and unpretentious. And last but not least, the fact that the paperback has remained in print for half a century means that there are many inexpensive copies available in secondhand stores and online. The greatest epic poem in Western literature is available for the price of a sandwich. ■

John Siscoe owns and operates The Globe bookstore in Pioneer Square.

## Swimming to New Islands

Heading South  
Directed by Laurent Cantet  
Opens Fri., Aug. 25.  
Film Review  
By LESTER GRAY  
Arts Editor

**C**oarsely described, *Heading South* is a story of sexual tourism — finding partners for carnal relations in a place where no one knows you — where the laws, customs, and in this case social repercussions are relaxed. It's the '70s, and three white, middle-aged women, previously strangers, find themselves together in poverty-stricken Haiti, seeking favors with the young men of the island.

Brenda (Karen Young), a pathologically cowed, classically repressed southern wife, exudes neediness. Three years earlier, visiting a resort on the island, she finally found someone who could appreciate her. A young local, named Legba (Menothy Cesar), had allowed her to identify and indulge parts of her physiology previously unexplored and uncelebrated.

Upon her return to the former French colony, she is chastened to find herself with two like-minded female guests, whose very presence implies something far more pedestrian about her experience than she had previously allowed. One of them has also cultivated a relationship with Legba. Ellen (Charlotte Rampling), a haughty professor of French literature from Boston,

claims to have a special insight into the young man's nature. As unfulfilled as Brenda, she nonetheless couches her relationship with Legba in the sublime light of a casual exotic affair, in spite of its manipulative Oedipal overtones.

Sue (Louise Portal), a factory manager, carries less emotional baggage. Like the other two, she is attracted to the young, lithe, Black bodies and the undemanding, vacation-span relationships. But she indulges only the most basic of fantasies. She just wants to get laid.

Legba, barely out of pubescence, lives in a world of abject poverty. He instinctively knows that the prostitution to which he has been introduced, and that now enhances his life, depends on his successful participation in Laura and Ellen's delusions. As such, remuneration for his services must be cloaked as funds for necessities such as bus fare. While these compromises involve nothing like costuming, he comes to find them demeaning. The women, on their part, find it difficult to comprehend his discontent.

Initially, the images of *Heading South* might suggest that we are headed for all the clichés, subtle and well-worn, about white women and Black men. But director Laurent Cantet, a Frenchman, is either unaware of these political cul-de-sacs or does not care; he neither exploits nor avoids them.

The result is rich and embrocated. At times, even Cantet seemingly fails to fully grasp the depth and power of his material, adapted from several short stories. This is not the Academy Award-winning *Crash* — a medley of contrived and entertaining contradictions. It's the moral ambiguity that makes this film. The sexually liberated become the exploiters, culturally blind and desperate.

But no one is judged. Clumsily ingenuous, *Heading South* offers a messy truth most often obscured in the tidiness of political correctness. Gritty performances by Rampling and Young only add to the refreshing and stimulating rawness. You will not have bad and good defined for you. But you will find honesty. ■

Charlotte Rampling and Menothy Cesar in *Heading South*.







Adventures  
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning

It's time we decent, hard-working, voting, living people stood up to bone-headed, do-nothing liberals who always want us to mollycoddle lifeless people and who constantly apologize for their good-for-nothing behaviors.

# Down with the Lifeless

More and more laws now target the homeless. There's the Las Vegas ordinance that prohibits feeding anyone who even looks homeless in public parks. There's also a Sarasota law that lets non-homeless people sleep on public land if they're neat and tidy and don't dig

holes, but makes it a crime for homeless people to do the same, no matter how good their behavior.

These laws are based on the governing principle that even if we can't get rid of the homeless people we have, we can at least make them miserable in order to make examples of them and so discourage others from joining them.

As always, the organization behind this gutless, bleeding-heart, liberal rag is so opposed to such laws that I wouldn't dare support them in this column. That's why I want to change the subject and talk about another class of wastrels out to get a free ride at the public expense: the lifeless.

It's time we decent, hard-working, voting, living people stood up to bone-headed, do-nothing liberals who always want us to mollycoddle lifeless people and who constantly apologize for their good-for-nothing behaviors. Or, I should say, non-behaviors. That's the trouble with the lifeless: they've taken non-behavior and turned it into high art. You could call them "ne'er-do-e'er-agains."

Come on, people, do you really buy the liberal line that lifelessness is almost always involuntary? These lifeless people may not enjoy being lifeless now that they're all up in it and they've found out it means they can't watch *Survivor* anymore, or eat *pâté de foie gras*, but I guarantee you, every last one of them got that way by means of their own bad lifestyle choices.

Even if a lifeless person is housed underground and out of sight, it still sickens me to know

that I'm living in a city that lets them lie about in padded boxes every day and all night too, never lifting a finger to help themselves or to contribute to society. They may not be watching TV, shooting heroin in front of my kids, or taking up space on my sidewalk, but they're sure as hell also not taking baths, working, paying taxes, or making America great, like the rest of us do.

Oh, wait; they do pay taxes, don't they? For now they do, but they won't be paying taxes when those liberal do-gooders, George Bush & Company, get their way. Here's a population that pays not one cent of income tax or sales tax, and George Bush and his buddies want to relieve them of the one significant tax they do pay. Why? You know perfectly well they're not going to use the break we give them to pull themselves up out of the holes they got themselves into. They're not even going to use it to fly themselves to France and get out of our lives.

I first realized what a drag on society the lifeless could be a few years ago when comedian Bob Hope became lifeless. Instead of presenting him to our children and our feeble-minded as an example of how far a once-good man can fall, our liberal media spent an entire week praising the man and giving his current condition a complete pass. Sure, he was a great comedian years ago, but now he's lifeless, and whose fault is that? It sure isn't mine. I didn't tell him to get 100 and die.

What we need is a law like Sarasota has, for the lifeless instead of the homeless. Say a person who isn't dead lies in a box and decomposes. That should be legal. But if a person lies in a box and decomposes because he's incapable of doing anything else, we should fine that person \$500 and/or jail them for 60 days.

That may not end lifelessness, but it would show our impressionable children, and our feeble-minded, that being lifeless isn't "cool" and it isn't going to be tolerated. And that's worth doing. ■

## His legacy

We couldn't grow vegetables because people who grew vegetables in his mind did so from necessity  
We couldn't use the dryer for the same reason we couldn't turn on the heat  
He strung up clothes on a line inside the house because if it hung outside people might think that we had no dryer or worse that we were poor  
I couldn't shower over two minutes soak, soap, then rinse  
I couldn't open the refrigerator without knowing precisely what it was i was after  
He had weathered depressionary times overseas in his plundering naval sinecure  
He grew up poor and died technically rich but he was always poor far as i was concerned

He was my grandfather and i hated him then and i hate him still  
He taught me this  
This was all the taught me as well as to turn the light off whenever i exit a room which quite often i let burn whether i'm in there or not

-LARRY CRIST



### Fri., Aug. 4, 2:32 a.m., Pine St. Westlake Park.

Reporting officer states he has verbally warned suspect, a transient male aged 51, numerous times about sleeping in Westlake Park after hours and has issued him eight Parks Exclusion Notices, the last one being on June 23. At the stated time and date the officer observed the suspect asleep on a bench in Westlake Park. He had seen the man sitting in the park at 10:15 p.m. that day, but was unable to make contact at that time as he was in pursuit of another suspect. At 2:32 a.m. suspect was contacted on the bench for trespassing in Westlake Park. The park is clearly posted with notices saying the park is closed to the public from 11:30 p.m. until 6 a.m. Suspect was handcuffed, and officers gathered his bag and placed it into safekeeping. Suspect was issued another Parks Exclusion Notice, which he refused to sign. He was booked into King County Jail for Trespass in the Parks.

### Fri., Aug. 4, 10:20 a.m., Second Ave. and Pike St.

Officers on patrol spotted suspect, a transient white female aged 27, whom one of the officers recognized from previous contacts. A records check revealed an outstanding warrant, which was verified, and suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

### Fri., Aug. 4, 9 p.m., Minor Ave. N., Kerner-Scott House Women's Shelter.

Police received a call regarding a person hurting her and responded to the stated address. When officers arrived they spoke to subject, a white female aged 54. Witness, a staff member, stated that she was speaking with the subject when she lit a disposable lighter and held it under her own chin, by her neck. She refused to hand over the lighter to staff. Subject was also observed taking lit cigarettes and holding them next to her skin. At this time she had not hurt herself, but staff felt it was only a matter of time. Subject agreed that a talk with a doctor would benefit her greatly, and she was transported by ambulance to Harborview Medical Center.

### Fri., Aug. 11, 11:31 a.m., Western Ave.

Suspect, a transient Hispanic male aged 48, was contacted for liquor in the park. He was issued a seven-day exclusion notice and told to leave the park in both English and Spanish. Suspect refused to leave and sat back on the bench. He was told that if he did not leave the park he would be arrested and taken to jail. Suspect stated, "Fuck you, take me to jail." Officers once again warned the man that he needed to leave the park or be arrested. He replied, "Take me to jail, I don't care — I get two meals and a place to sleep." Suspect then took his copy of the drinking citation, crumpled it up, and threw it on the grass. He was given another citation for littering, and officers contacted his Department of Corrections officer. They then placed a detainer on the suspect, arrested him, and booked him into King County Jail for trespass in the parks.

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.

## KATRINA, Continued from Page 5

residents can delegate the information gathered to other members of their social group.

Because the new neighborhood program makes it easier to implement disaster preparedness, EM hopes it will help prepare all citizens. Graff admits that less-affluent or low-income residents are disadvantaged when it comes to disaster preparedness and says the best way to improve the situation is to strengthen their social networks prior to a disaster.

"Natural disasters exacerbate current conditions," Graff says. "When you're talking about people that are already living on the edge of their means, the impacts of a disaster push them over that limit. These are people already with fragile networks, so if we can strengthen those networks before the disaster, we can prevent them from going over that limit." ■



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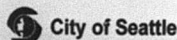
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## Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

## You're Punished

Dear Real Change,

I am taking a good chunk of my lunch here at work to write to you in response to an article by Cydney Gillis entitled, "Collectively Punished" [Aug. 16.]

You are right, it is very easy for an American to lump the violence in Lebanon in with the rest of the violence in the world. It is also, at least for you, quite easy to ignore the facts.

Your problem clearly begins with the fact you use only one source. That source is an Iraqi, presumably a Muslim, who clearly represents one side of a very complex issue with many shades of gray. What you proceed to do in your article is rely heavily on your single source and produce a work that is both an example of extremely poor journalistic integrity and the expression of your anti-Israeli and, therefore, anti-Semitic biases.

It is so easy for you as a journalist, an American, and a non-Jew to write about the horrible crimes that Israel is committing. It is easy for you to fall for the media-savvy tricks of terrorists and extremists. It is so easy because you are blatantly refusing to recognize or learn the history of a region, a people, and a world.

You should be ashamed of writing an article that simply refuses to examine

more than one, very dark perspective. You refuse to acknowledge history, fact, or even so much as a second opinion (no, your opinion doesn't count).

With your article, you encourage terrorist and extremist groups to continue to wage a savage, unjustifiable war against innocent people. Please, in the future, try and be unbiased in your NEWS articles.

Stephen Rosenshein

PS: If you would like to defend your article, I am very interested in hearing your rebuttal.


## RC replies:

Dear Stephen,

First things first: The offending article was clearly identified as coverage of a speech, offered at a peace conference, by a leading independent journalist who covers the war in Iraq, not as a balanced exposition of the Arab-Israeli conflict. That said, Dahr Jamal, is not, as you say, "an Iraqi, presumably a Muslim," but a fourth-generation Lebanese American who grew up in Houston. While there are many other points in your letter to which we could take exception, we'll focus on just one. Your letter equates non-support of Israeli foreign policy with anti-Semitism. This is not the sort of tactic that anyone interested in "balanced" journalism would employ. It is, rather, just the sort of polarizing rhetoric you claim to despise.

Timothy Harris


Real Change welcomes letters to the editor of up to 250 words in length. Please include name, address, phone number, and email for author verification. Letters should be addressed to Editor at Real Change, 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA, 98121, or emailed to [editor@realchangenews.org](mailto:editor@realchangenews.org).



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## Opportunity

**Arab Center of Washington's** cruise raises money for the humanitarian crisis unfolding in Lebanon and Palestine. Tickets \$50. Sun., Aug. 27, 5:30 p.m., Ballard Fishermen's Terminal, 3919 18th Ave. W. Info: (425)787-8900.

**Show your opposition** to the Iraq War at the White Center Vigil. Wed., Aug. 30, 3 p.m., 15th Ave. SW and SW Roxbury St.

## Award-winning investigative journalist

and senior editor for *In These Times* magazine seeks an intern for book and article-related research and organization. I am working on a book regarding female incarceration and need a quick-learning intern to help maintain my files and correspondence with prisoners. Research and organization skills essential, as well as an interest in women's and criminal justice issues. I'm only looking for someone to come into the office (currently Pioneer Square in Seattle) one to two times a week, for a few hours each time. Please email Ms. Sijja Talvi at [sisu@well.com](mailto:sisu@well.com). This is an unpaid position, but I am happy to serve as a professional reference.

Real Change classifieds are a way to reach 30,000 loyal readers. Call 441-3247, or email [classified@realchangenews.org](mailto:classified@realchangenews.org).

# Calendar

## This Week's Top Ten

### Thursday 8/24

*McLibel* is the true story of a former postman and a gardener from London who sued McDonald's in what became the longest trial in English history. Every aspect of the fast food chain's business was cross-examined, including nutrition, animal cruelty, worker exploitation, and environmental damage. 7 p.m., Camp Long Environmental Learning Center, 5200 35th Ave. SW Info: [www.mcspotlight.org](http://www.mcspotlight.org).

### Until Saturday 8/26

*Junglebook* is Edward Mast's exciting adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's classic work. When Mowgli's parents are killed by a tiger, he is raised in the jungle and must learn about himself and his place among the animal tribes. Tickets \$6. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday 7 p.m., Friday 1 p.m., Seattle Children's Theatre, 201 Thomas St. Info: [www.sct.org](http://www.sct.org).

### Saturday 8/26

**"Working Women: A Vibrant Force for Labor Militancy"** is a panel of feminists, activists, and unionists discussing the unique position of female workers in the revitalization of the U.S. labor movement. Donation \$2. 7:30 p.m., New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S Info: (206)722-6057.

**"The Nat Turner Slave Rebellion Teach-In"** is a day-long event for people of color to explore historical movements of Black resistance to enslavement and honor the slave rebellion of 1831. Taught in a one-room schoolhouse by Seattle activists, its sessions include "A Discussion on Hurricane Katrina," "The Continued Impact of Lynching," and "Solidarity Between Black and Chicano Freedom Movements." The evening ends with a celebration of spoken word. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., YWCA, 2820 E. Cherry St. Info: (206)276-9059.

The Bite and Jazz Festival is an opportunity for families to enjoy the minority business area of the Central District. The celebration includes a rally, food, crafts, children's activities, and music by The Goodybag Jazz Band and The Davis Drummers.

10 a.m., Pratt Park, 1800 S. Main St. Info: [www.blackdollar.org](http://www.blackdollar.org).

### Saturday 8/26 and Sunday 8/27

Tibet Fest brings to life the country's ancient culture with stories and legends told through melodies and movements, symbolic masks, and costumes. Festivities include a photograph exhibition, film show, dance and music performances, food, crafts, talks, slide shows, and a bazaar. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., Seattle Center, 305 Harrison St. Info: [www.washingtontibet.org](http://www.washingtontibet.org).

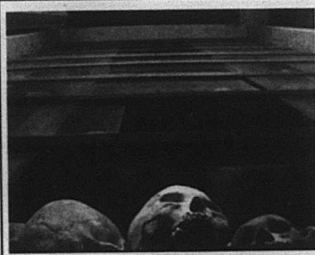
### Sunday 8/27

The Center for Constitutional Rights screens their documentary *How to Impeach a President*. Following the film, they will discuss their handbook *Articles of Impeachment Against George W. Bush*, which clearly details four separate charges against the president: warrantless surveillance, misleading Congress on the reasons for the Iraq war, violating laws against torture, and subverting

the Constitution's separation of powers. 2 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S Main St. Info: [www.articlesofimpeachment.net](http://www.articlesofimpeachment.net).

*Within*, a thought-provoking theatrical performance, uses themes of community to inspire, challenge, and transform the audience. It beautifully articulates the complex experiences of queer people of color and creates a safe place for audience members to share. Tickets \$8. 5 p.m., University of Washington Ethnic Cultural Theater, 3940 Brooklyn Ave. N.E. Info: [www.qpocliteration.org](http://www.qpocliteration.org).

Seattle Peace Concert features Don Glen's guitar playing and vocals, the rock 'n' roll of Special Meds, and the blues of Sugar Farm. Noon, Volunteer Park, 1247 15th Ave. E. Info: [www.seapeace.org](http://www.seapeace.org).



The Khmer Rouge, the Maoist-extremist organization that ruled Cambodia in the late '70s, is responsible for the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people through starvation, execution, and forced labor. Attorney Katrina Anderson discusses her work in international criminal law and the preparation for the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, which will try the country's former leaders for crimes against humanity. Tickets \$7 and up. Tues., Aug. 29, noon, offices of the Washington State Bar Association, 2101 Fourth Ave. Suite 400. Preregistration required: (206)443-9722. Photo courtesy Victoria Teresa Pryor.

Calendar compiled by Dena Burke. Have a suggestion for an event? Email it to [calendar@realchange.org](mailto:calendar@realchange.org).

## Director's Corner

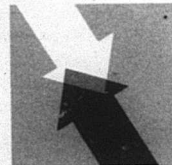


This has been a good month. Our summer fund drive ended last week when generous readers helped us reach our \$80,000 goal. Our staff is always happiest when they get paid. Thanks to your support, we'll be able to continue offering opportunity to our vendors, publishing quality advocacy journalism each week, and providing the effective advocacy on poverty issues that you've come to expect.

But it's also a good month because two vendors reminded me of why we do this. The first is a guy named Michael, who has been selling the paper for a few years, through mostly hard times. He took me aside the other day to say that *Real Change* helped him "learn who he is." Through *Real Change*, he said, he's "found his family." He's not talking blood relations there. He's talking about you, the readers who have supported him and offered a sense of community over the years.

The second is a woman named Yvonne, who said that before she sold the paper, she "could never have sat down to talk to me like she is now." She was too shy and isolated. While it's hard to imagine this smiling, friendly vendor being without friends, that's where she was at. "Now," she said, "I have good friends, and I met them selling *Real Change*."

Thanks for being our friend, and for making our work possible. We're changing the world, one paper at a time.



## First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

### End the Unfair, Arbitrary Death Penalty

**Issue:** Despite its own study demonstrating racial and geographic inequalities in the use of the federal death penalty, the U.S. government continues to carry out executions. In the past year, federal judges in New York and Vermont have ruled the federal death penalty unconstitutional based on concerns ranging from the likelihood of executing someone who is actually innocent to the lack of due-process safeguards in the 1994 Federal Death Penalty Act.

Policy-makers must no longer ignore reality: The system of capital punishment in the United States is administered unfairly, arbitrarily, and in a way that risks executing those who are undeserving of death. A temporary freeze on executions would allow us to resolve these problems and re-examine the role of the death penalty.

**Background:** The relationship between race and the death penalty is very well documented. Recently released Justice Department data demonstrate that racial disparities permeate every level of the federal death penalty system. Seventy-four percent of those prosecuted for federal capital offenses are people of color. A staggering 81 percent of federal prisoners currently facing death sentences are members of racial/ethnic minorities.

Whether someone convicted of a capital crime will receive a death sentence is highly dependent on the state in which that person was tried and convicted. U.S. attorneys in 16 states, including Texas, have sought the death penalty in at least 50 percent of the cases submitted for consideration to the Justice Department, but U.S. attorneys in 21 other states have either never requested or never obtained authorization to seek the death penalty. Of the inmates currently sitting on federal death row, almost 30 percent were prosecuted in a single state, Texas.

Before leaving office, former Attorney General Janet Reno ordered additional studies to determine if bias plays a role in the federal penalty system. And during his confirmation hearings, Attorney General John Ashcroft agreed to continue the studies and said, "I fully agree that we should have a thorough study of the system and that the death penalty should be imposed only upon satisfaction of the full rigors of due process. Nor should race play a role in determining whether someone is subject to capital punishment." It is unconscionable to execute any federal prisoners when the government itself admits to serious questions of racial bias.

Information for this alert comes from the American Civil Liberties Union. Visit [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org) to learn more.

For more information regarding the personal stories of those who have been recently exonerated from wrongful convictions, check out the Innocence Project online at [www.innocenceproject.org](http://www.innocenceproject.org). This site also raises awareness about the failings of our criminal justice system.

**Action:** Urge your members of Congress to halt executions by filling out a simple form online. Visit [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org) and click "Action Center."

Or Contact your members of Congress directly.

Sen. Patty Murray, (202)224-2621, [senator\\_murray@murray.senate.gov](mailto:senator_murray@murray.senate.gov)  
Sen. Maria Cantwell, (202)224-3441, [maria\\_cantwell@cantwell.senate.gov](mailto:maria_cantwell@cantwell.senate.gov)  
Rep. Jim McDermott - 7th Dist., (202)225-3106, [www.house.gov/mcdermott](http://www.house.gov/mcdermott)  
To find other members of congress, visit [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov).

JAIL, Continued from Page 1

staff will be provided with particulars and new staff will receive training.

Deputy director of King County's jail Mark Bolton says that the policy for transgendered inmates has been on the radar screen within the department for some time. Bolton says that to cite a specific incident as the trigger for the policy — and Bolton offers no comment on the alleged treatment of the two trans men — is incorrect. But he concedes that working with Rose's group was the impetus for finalizing the policy and that there was a need for it within the system. "We're way ahead of the curve for jails our size," he says.

As of Aug. 22, Bolton says, there were 2,363 inmates housed downtown and in the county's Kent facility. Of these, he says there are an unknown number of transgendered inmates, as that is protected information held by jail health services. Regardless, he says it's a good idea for metropolitan jails to have a policy addressing transgendered inmates. "Every individual has the right to be safe," says Bolton.

Support for the policy, says Rose, came from such organizations as Stop Prisoner Rape and the Northwest Women's Law Center, along with City Councilmember Tom Ras-

mussen, who encouraged jail administrators to institute new protocols in a June 20 letter. Brian Hawksford, legislative aide to Rasmussen, says the councilmember supported the group's efforts from the get-go. "Until it sort of bubbled up from the community," says Hawksford, "I don't think people were even aware of the issue."

But the issue is one of which Rose — and others in or supporting the transgendered community — is acutely aware. While the two trans men arrested never

filed charges, their alleged treatment, says Rose, led the working group members to consider how they might be treated if jailed. Now, with a policy addressing that very concern, Rose says

the group is pleased with how things have worked out. "We wanted to address what happened here," says Rose, "and prevent what was happening around the nation." ■

"We wanted to address what happened here and prevent what was happening around the nation."

— Lincoln Rose, chair, Seattle Trans Jail Policy Working Group

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"TATE", Continued from Page 1

But, "People I grew up with, if they had a problem, they'd call me and I'd come fix it. I always had something to do."

Lazard got into the rescue boat with nothing but his wallet and the pants he had on. He had no shirt, and he'd lost his shoes in the water. The boat dropped them in burning heat on a bridge where a helicopter picked them up four or five hours later.

At the shelter in San Antonio, Lazard and his sister decided to follow their mother to Seattle and got on a Greyhound bus, keeping their plan a secret until they surprised her in a tearful reunion. Lazard stayed with a nephew for a few weeks, then got an apartment through the King County Housing Authority at the old Park Lake Homes near White Center.

He and Antoinette now share a tree-lined, two-bedroom unit in a Bellevue complex run by the housing authority, and Lazard gives thanks to the agency's Rhonda Hollingsworth for getting them into it. "That's what you call a friend," he says.

Still, between Burien and Bellevue, Lazard finds the Seattle area cold in more ways than one.

"People up here don't socialize," but "that's what it's all about," he says

— neighbors communicating, telling each other if someone on the block is violent or a sex offender or simply a lonely human being in need of company.

"Most of the time when a kid is kidnapped up here, it's someone he knows," he says. "Know your neighbors. Sit down and talk. Don't just walk away. Give them some time. See how they feel."

Lazard says he is slowly meeting people, but it's not easy.

"I used to call my mama or walk to her house and see her," he says. "She'd vex my nerves. I'd vex hers. We'd part."

But, "A mother's love takes care of you. It looks after you," Lazard says. "I could take the hurricane, but not the



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