

# Notable & quotable

*A sampling of insight from some of our most interesting interviews of 2014*

When you realize the unique scale of not just American poverty, but American inequality in the 21st century, the fact that France doesn't have it, Germany doesn't have it, Canada doesn't, Australia doesn't. Even England, which is the closest to us in terms of economic models. Even the United Kingdom doesn't have the levels of inequality and social immobility that America has.

— *Sasha Abramsky, "Sasha Abramsky talks poverty - American style" Jan. 17*

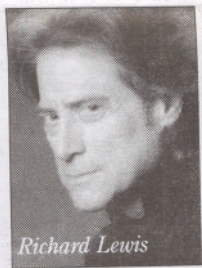
The values of justice and fairness and speaking truth to power supersedes any of the concerns that I might have about staying above the fray.

— *City Auditor LaVonne Griffin-Valade, "The other corner office," Jan. 31*

Once you are an addict, you are an addict for life. Of course Philip (Seymour Hoffman) was one of the greatest actors of all time but he was a person first and sadly an addict as well. I'm sure if he could, Philip would want his death to be a reminder to all addicts who slip and sadly court death, that rather than shoot up, pick up the phone and ask for help before experimenting yet again with a premature death.

Philip's passing, overdosing rather — it bugged me, as much of a genius as he was ... (Lewis trails off to a moment of silence). But what we should really focus more on is that there are a lot of people in his position and if he had picked up that phone instead of the needle, he'd still be with us.

— *Comedian Richard Lewis, "Relax ...," Feb. 14*



Richard Lewis

We're going through a sea change. We are sending billions to Mexican drug cartels, and it's like Al Capone. Prohibition made Al Capone. We need better research on marijuana impacts. The DEA, with its restrictive research, will give research grants to people who show how bad marijuana is but not the therapeutic aspects. We need a good test to determine who is impaired to drive, because the traces stay in the system for days when they may not be impaired at all. Let's get this squared out.

— *Rep. Earl Blumenauer, "Talking pot, polls and politics with Earl Blumenauer," July 04*



Rep. Earl Blumenauer

Border Patrol in the early 1990s, in the whole country, there were fewer than 4,000 agents. And now it has increased to 21,000. And they're part of Customs and Border Protection, which is actually 60,000, and they have an air and marine division. Sixty thousand — it's the largest federal law

enforcement agency in the country, and it's double the size of Ecuador's army. It's gigantic.

— *Author Todd Miller, "The border war," April 11*

If the first female executive editor of the New York Times can't get equal treatment, what hope does anyone else have? She didn't feel comfortable. She spoke up. She was punished for it. And not only was she punished, she was punished using the same language that has been used to demean and browbeat women all through history.

— *Bitch Media's Andi Zeisler, "Redefining Bitch," July 18*

Publishing has changed in the last 20-plus years because international corporations bought out all the major publishers and began handling books as commodities, like potatoes or corn. Amazon is just the big super bully in the commodities market. Well, you know what's happened with potatoes and corn. Toxicity, obesity, tastelessness. Who cares, so long as it sells?

— *Ursula K. LeGuin, "The otherworldly and utterly Portland Ursula K. LeGuin," Aug. 1*

Robin Williams' great influence on me was that he always reminded me to be grateful for the sheer joy of being on stage. I met him, maybe, three times. He was always an advocate of standup. He loved doing it and loved watching it. He was a good guy to be around at a comedy show. Which is another great way to influence comics — hell, people. Leading by the example of courtesy and support.

— *Comedian Jackie Kashian, "Addicted to standup," Aug. 15*

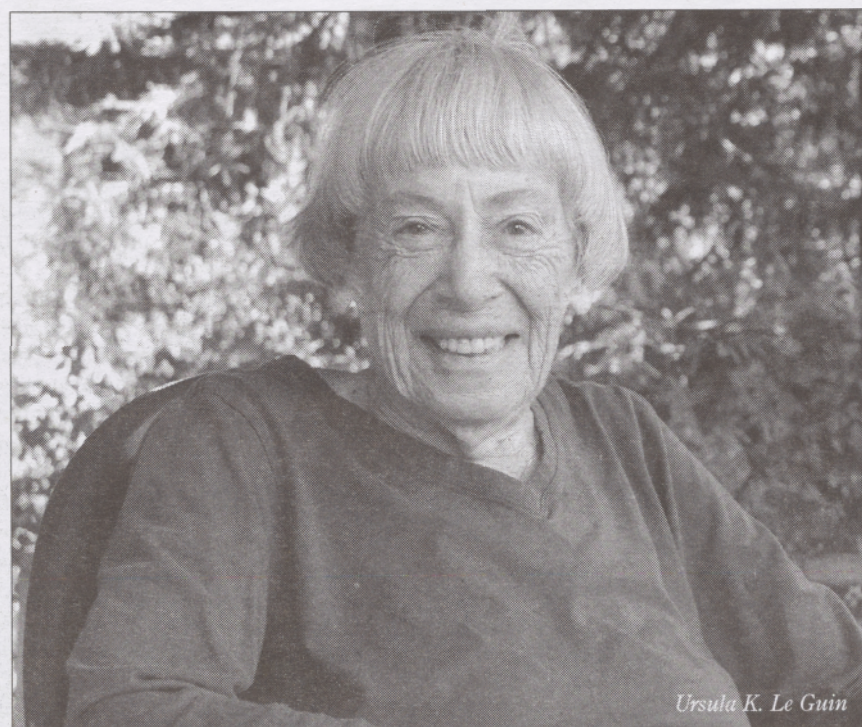


Jackie Kashian

Pleasure and consent go hand-in-hand and that needs to be taught. Our society is producing people who don't understand how sex works. Who don't understand that they need to ask permission. Who don't



Jansine Larson, second from left, with some of the women of World Pulse



Ursula K. LeGuin

understand they need to give permission. Who don't understand that permission is not a one time thing and then it's a free pass forever. That permission can be rescinded. That when you agree to something, if it starts feeling bad you can rescind your agreement. And it stops. And both sides of this equation don't know that.

— *Erika Moen of Oh Joy Sex Toy, "Drawn to Sex," Sept. 12*

Some people are really determined but are also really evil. So determination and struggle and doing good and interesting work — I do admire those people. Nelson Mandela is obviously one. I think he may have been one of the greatest people who has ever lived. Because he is not calling on god, he is not saying he is a saint, he is just a guy but he did push very hard and did it with such honour. He learnt Afrikaans, he learnt the language of people who were against him. And I am learning languages now and doing stand-up in the languages of people who are not against us, but who in our history we have been pitted against. I'm doing stand-up in German this year.

— *Comedian Eddie Izzard, "Radar, phone bugging, death rays and Nazis!" Sept. 12*

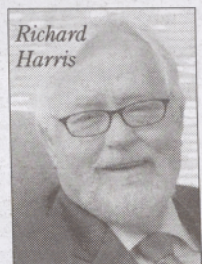
It's emotional contagion to know that what's happening in your country — the widow stoning, the rape of infants, the oppression of women of color — is happening everywhere. You start to band together to stop it. If we have a less free Internet, less free access, it does not bode well for this revolution of positive transformation led by women.

— *Jansine Larson, "The heart of a universal pulse," Sept. 26*

Most of the literature tells you right now that marijuana used responsibly, not using it while driving, is OK for adults. For kids, the message would be, your brain is

still developing and you don't want to be using this drug or other drugs. It's cautionary. It's not scary. What we have right now is moralistic, and you're a bad person and you'll die if you use it; so there's no credibility. I was a manager at Hooper Detox for nine years, and we never detoxed someone for marijuana. So it's not the same level of danger that's occurring with other drugs. Right now the message is, it will make you sick or kill you, and it's not an effective message with adults. So you can't run education and prevention programs that aren't credible.

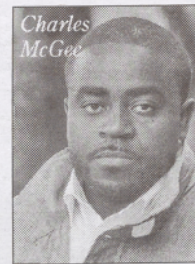
— *Addiction specialist Richard Harris, "Legalize, regulate pot ...," Oct. 10*



Richard Harris

Honestly, I really believe that the world is a really interesting place where people are tired of black issues. First of all, we're turning the page from Ferguson already. If you notice the news and everything else, we're on to the next drama. I think America does in very interesting ways sort of says to us, 'When are you gonna be OK now? You've got your black president, you got Oprah, what else do you want?'

— *Charles McGee, founder, Black Parent Initiative, "Empowering Minds," Oct. 10*



Charles McGee

Why doesn't anything change? It's a big, big subject, and politicians have sort of caught on to it. Obama talked about it at different times, Elizabeth Warren talks about it. It's just very hard to address — and it also is not a subject that the people who fund politicians really want to hear about. So it may be something to talk about, but not too boldly. I don't know. There's a lot to say about why nothing changes on that front, but the fact is nothing changes. In fact, it got worse with the financial crisis and the recession.

— *New Yorker journalist George Packer, "The Divided States of America," Nov. 7*

I was driven to do this as I was firmly against the war in Iraq and didn't see the point in kicking the hornets' nest. When I started to see people coming back without their limbs, I felt compelled to say something. It wasn't enough just to march in protest. The politicians weren't listening to the people.

— *Bryan Adams, "Scars of war," Nov. 21*