

but are unable to find good work. Few are the authors of their own poverty. Who would willingly write a tale of their own dependence, humiliation, desperation, and invisibility?

While children under the age of 18 account for just 24 percent of the U.S. population, they constitute 36 percent of the U.S. poor. And they make up America's largest non-voting bloc, excepting those so harried by daily life or so frustrated by daily political theatrics that they abstain from voting. Politicians know only too well that children don't vote, and that the poor seldom do.

Hungry, stressed, ill-educated and neglected — babysat years on end by television and video games — too many millions of our children have little real hope of future success. A society that tolerates this condition is one eating its seed corn.

Todd Huffman, M.D.
Eugene

WE NEED THE BELLS

I appreciated reading Anita Johnson's tribute to Derrick Bell (10/27) and only wish he would have stayed as dean or visited more often our School of Law in Eugene. We do need to reflect on his and

his wife's leadership in these difficult times. More emphasis on civil rights in our community might have prevented the selfish behavior we find in the Tea Party's climb to prominence in our community. Has the Tea Party inherited the Klan's years of popularity and racist behavior?

When I read some of the letters to the editor I can't help but wish for someone like the Bells to respond with more understanding to those participating in the Occupy movement. Where is compassion and caring for our neighbors? With more than one person in three in Lane County in poverty we have hit very difficult times and those devoting their lives to the Occupy movement are seeking answers for a better tomorrow. I want my grandkids to have a more loving community in this beautiful state.

Ruth Duemler
Eugene

CATASTROPHE NEARS

"Who Are These People and What Do They Want?" (cover story, 11/10). So the first person queried is Peter DeFazio, a *manager* of this rotten system.

Or is Occupy Eugene like Portland's; namely, its "representative" declared on

OPB Radio Thursday (11/10) that "If you're not nonviolent you are *not* part of Occupy Portland."

I am wondering when resistance will replace the veneration of authority and property (which is not subject to violence, by the way, cannot be violated). When will resistance replace the prevailing liberal/progressive nothingness?

Community is gone and eco-catastrophe is arriving. Will the rules of the game always prevail? Will we have an unlimited number of opportunities to find out?

John Zerzan
Eugene

REALLY, MAX?

After reading Max Burris' letter last week (11/3) I was somewhat annoyed. As a trans man myself, I know what it's like to be in his shoes. It's been 15 years since my transition and it has not been easy. Sure, would have been nice if insurance covered my surgeries, but it didn't. So you know what I did? I *worked* for it — two, sometimes three jobs to make a little extra each month and eventually I reached my goal.

I don't fault insurance companies for not covering gender reassignment procedures; I do however think it's wrong

for anyone to exclude medical care to an individual because they are transgendered. (Be happy you have insurance at all!). In the insurance companies' eyes, any SRS related surgeries are deemed "elective." Well, in a way, they are right. Sure, we were born with GID, which was not a choice. However, like you, I chose to have surgery. Calling it a medical necessity is a stretch; I lived with tits and female parts for 27 years, and a few more after transition. It sucked a big donkey dick, but I got through it. Also, there are plenty of non-op FTM guys out there who don't even want surgery.

On a side note, the proverbial hoops trans people have to go through are there for a reason. I can't imagine what it would be like if *all* insurance companies covered SRS-related costs. To me it's a scary thought because it would most likely make things worse. Yes, we would have an easier road during transition, but how soon or how many lawsuits would arise from people who discovered they made a mistake? Thus, creating higher premiums, costlier procedures, and probably stricter standards or screening procedures for all things involving SRS.

Not to dis you Max, but since you have wanted this for 30 years, you should have

viewpoint BY MARY DEMOCKER

Threatened? Yell No!

A mother's uncivil disobedience

My friend Ann looked up from shopping to see her 7-year-old leave with a stranger. The man had followed them from a restaurant where waiters interview children on their birthdays. Later, at a big-box store, Ann left Sarah in "Toys." Armed with key details, the well-dressed man approached. "Thank goodness I found you, Sarah! Mommy's tummy hurts from lunch, and she asked me to take you to Aunt Jen's for your party."



Like Sarah, I was taught to obey adults. Now a mother, I teach my children a more nuanced approach: Obey trusted adults. Ignore others — or, if necessary, flee. To explain why adults might need running from, I say, "Some people are unhealthy and can't consider your best interests," or, if pressed, "They might adopt you without asking."

Who are my children's "trusted adults?" My husband and I, of course. Though we run a dictatorship, it's benign, most days anyway, and represents our children's best interests. We provide basics, carefully timed luxury upgrades — defined by us as Prince Pücklers, by them as Disneyland — and a complaint forum. Their impassioned campaigns train them for the democracy they'll transition to at 18.

But then what? To help my children know who to trust, I teach discernment. Don't wire money to displaced African princes. Study politicians to discover whose interests they protect. Be suspicious of the apparent sincerity and allure of corporate representatives since, as Ann found, even the well-dressed can be deadly. Call me old-fashioned, but my interests include healthy soil and oceans, because I like eating. Drinking clean water and breathing rank high, too. But our economic system threatens everything I love.

I'd rather not hand my kids a charred planet to live on, so I've done my part. Politely. I've recycled, carpoled and begged leaders to stop clearcuts and torture. I've visualized peace. I voted for the "change" president. Yet, the Supreme Court, nine judges-for-life we can't fire, dealt our democracy a staggering blow when it affirmed corporate personhood, allowing unlimited and anonymous campaign financing. Citizens seeking a healthy future battle a Goliath on steroids.

I feel like a mother watching her children's abduction by well-heeled predators. I might be accused of hysteria, comparing corporate marauders to child murderers. But what should I call those who destroy the planet that keeps my kids alive? I am hysterical. That's appropriate when your child — or planet — is under siege.

When Ann saw her daughter disappear, she screamed, "STOP HIM!" Guards materialized who didn't leap to her aid — sure you're not mistaken, ma'am? — so she elbowed them aside. Shoppers froze. As the kidnapper reached his car, Ann, still shrieking, grabbed her daughter. Guards didn't tackle him or get his license plate. Instead, they tried to quiet Ann. Police later said a man matching his description was wanted for murdering several girls. He was never caught.

Mainstream commentators posing as trusted adults would have us dismiss the outcry from Occupy Wall Street. I quiz my children: Who gains from mocking peaceful demonstrators? Who benefits from silencing them for business as usual? If corporate interests didn't dominate, mainstream media would listen to citizens upset enough to camp downtown shouting, "STOP!" It would scrutinize an economic system gone postal.

When Occupy Wall Street refused to leave Zuccotti Park, something remarkable happened. Overnight, 951 solidarity marches were organized throughout the world, including an ongoing occupation in Eugene. That's the visibility Americans enjoy. Disobedience with nonviolence and resonance can instantly gain international momentum. So when friends quietly despair over their kids' futures and our powerlessness, I disagree. Because of the high stakes — the planet's very ability to sustain life — our voices have never mattered more. Few in history have possessed our potential for influencing world events. As Americans we have rights, for now anyway, that millions only dream of, yet most of us stand paralyzed, bewildered witnesses to wholesale abduction.

The world listens. If we make noise, disobey. If we get hysterical, damn it, the 99 percent of the world has our backs. Because they're hysterical, too.

It's time to leave our comfort zones. It's time to disobey. We can unplug, stop shopping, put up tents — real or metaphorical — and end business as usual. Demand tight bank regulations and corporate personhood's repeal. Call flash mobs around CEOs who oil up our oceans. Forgo the bathroom or boob remodel and fund wake-up campaigns instead. Re-create democracy. Grab megaphones and invade the mall. Run for mayor, Senate, president. Turn lawns, cars, office doors, Facebook pages, and bodies into billboards shouting "NO!" Because, like predators, some people — and policies — are unhealthy and must be stopped.

Ann disobeyed. She created a spectacle. Her daughter lives.

Media pundits may trick many into believing we're dismissable. But remember what we tell our kids: If threatened, disobey. Yell "NO!" Tell trusted adults.

Better yet, become one.

Award-winning writer Mary DeMocker teaches folk and classical harp and has pursued creative disobedience in Eugene for 23 years. View photos of her current lawn installation at marydemocker.com