

Cell Talk

By Asmar Abdul Seifullah
(aka Joe West # 40404)

By Stevie Hoggans 38921

As I walk throughout the confines of this prison, Black faces express many characteristics significant to their situation. There are smiling faces, brothers talkin' the jive, and faces that are lost. However, it is unmitigated fiction for anyone not to believe that depression is indeed apart of their minds and that anger is inscribed into the framework of their minds as the whip was to the back of our historical heritage!

Prison administrators constantly question the rationale of incarcerated Blacks, with that old patronizing cliché "we are trying. Haven't we given you this, what more do you want?" This expression is one of the 60s! Now, inside the walls of Oregon State Penitentiary, we have a staggering population of Black men with a 1980 mentality that will no longer accept the satisfaction of the 60s, but demands the fulfillment of today!

Racism, even though it is alive and living in the criminal justice systems, is a tool of yesterday's oppressors. Black mentalities of today are no longer geared towards this channel of acceptance. Neither are the Black men of Oregon State Penitentiary. We are no longer satisfied with the small concessions issued out to us while we're being systematically castrated and snuffed out. We are outraged...appalled at the concerted efforts perpetuated against Black prisoners to

keep us locked in the same self-destructive lifestyles we so desperately seek to abandon. We will no longer accept plastic satisfaction in place of meaningful change! The black men of Oregon State Penitentiary crave fulfillment! We crave and demand the fullness of life and the promise of joy that accompanies Black liberation. Dignity...integrity...and worth as Black men must be included in the program. Through these channels alone, can the bond of self-destructiveness be broken and Black men generated towards productivity.

Black prisoners hunger, their appetites call for just, fair and equal treatment. It is by no means our desire to experience another attica or New Mexico tragedy; that must never happen here! However, what will happen is that the prison administration at Oregon State Penitentiary must stand accountable to the people, to the courts and to their racist consciences. They will have to be responsible for the natural flow of their conduct, meaning, the same system that oppresses today, will free us in the morning if we fight and support each other. This is a call for community support.

Editors Note: Steve Hoggans is one of the many Black prisoners trying to find viable answers to the problems that plague us as incarcerated Black men. I've watched this brother grow from a struggle mass of confusion into a positive

force for change. He articulates himself well and has a genuine concern for his fellow prisoners. Steve is perhaps one of the most stable people I know, he is warm and alive, he shares himself with other people and inside this yellowing carcass called prison Steve Hoggans is forming, growing, transcending the shallowness of prison walls and bars. It's vital that Steve and brothers like him receive the reinforcing factors necessary to produce goodness. If he can survive this purgatory and return to the community wholesome then there will be one more soldier for the liberation army.

I think that it's necessary that we ask ourselves can we afford to lose the Stevie Hoggans of the world. If you believe the answer is yes, then it's obvious that the man has done a job - his job on your mind. Because of the forces that are working to keep us separated from our true selves, it's important that we as a people begin to take a second look at each other. Look again and decide whether or not the Blackmen confined in O.S.P. are losers or is it just that the game was fitted all the time. Always remember that the people who control the lives and destinies of people like Steve Hoggans are the same people who control the Black community. There isn't a way to separate the two, we are still bound by the embilical cord of slavery and oppression and until we sever the cord together - none of us will be truly free!

PCC offers reading skills

Classes available this summer for those who lack in basic reading, writing and spelling skills are provided through Portland Community College's Developmental Educational Program at the Cascade Center, 705 N. Killingsworth.

Ann Berry, who has been teaching English for about ten years, will help students learn how to read with comprehension, write complete thoughts and improve grammar. Punctuation, newspaper and map reading, as well as tips on filling out job applications will be taught.

The sessions, in four-week blocks, start July 21 and end August 15. The second session begins August 18 and ends September 12. Classes are held Monday through Thursday, from 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Students may take either one or both Comprehensive Language Development sessions, entering on their own level and working at their own pace.

Learn computers

A second five-week course in Data Entry Operation is available at Portland Community College beginning August 5th.

Candidates for this eight-credit course must pass the operators aptitude test and type 40 words per minute. The tests are given in the Sylvania Business office, 12000 S.W. 49th, at no charge.

Students will learn to operate a variety of data entry machines. Successful completion of the course will qualify students for employment as a trainee with job referrals through the placement office.

Pauline Ellis instructs the morning class, which is available from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. or another class is available from noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For more information, call the Data Processing office at the PCC Sylvania Center. The number at Sylvania is 244-6111.



RUSSELL L. LEGGROAN

Leggroan heads S & L branch

Former Gresham resident Russell L. Leggroan has been named branch manager of Benj. Franklin Federal Savings & Loan Association's new office in Springfield, according to Rocky Johnson, vice president and regional manager. The office will open for business there in mid-July. It will be housed in temporary quarters at 2073 Olympic St., at the southwest corner of Olympic and 21st Streets.

Leggroan joined Benj. Franklin as a teller at the Lloyd Center office in June 1977. He transferred to the Stark Street office in downtown Portland in July 1978, and later that

year was named assistant savings supervisor. In October 1979 he joined the downtown Portland headquarters in the loan department, where he worked prior to his most recent promotion to branch manager at the Springfield office.

A native of Portland, Leggroan was graduated from Grant High School in 1972. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in business management at Pacific University in 1977. He also has completed courses in finance through the Institute of Financial Education.

Leggroan has been active in the Black Metropolitan Club.

OSP prisoners earn degrees

By Benjamin W. Davis 40272

Have you ever done something whimsical, just out of curiosity, with no purpose in mind except to see what happens, not really caring what the outcome might be?

I started college merely out of curiosity. Two years ago I spoke to an inmate who had just received his diploma in this very visiting room. With this degree, he told me, and seventy-five cents, a person can get a good cup of coffee at Sambo's. Yet, tonight, I have an Associate's Degree, three boxes of notes and essays under my bunk, and numerous, well-educated friends pumping gas, laying bricks, and cooking hamburgers.

However, while I'm in prison, the opportunity for an education must have some significant purpose. Would the State of Oregon knowingly waste its money on my education? The State's good intentions have, on occasion, been subject to unintentional, unfortunate catastrophes, but no one could be more aware than myself of how easily this can happen!

Last night I sat down and went through my three boxes of notes, trying to find a reason, a significant purpose, for two years of studying. I dusted off quadratic equations and predicate adjectives, hailed the ancient Egyptians and Paleolithic men, squirmed through the synaptic canals, and cried through a Shakespearean Sonnet. In one of the boxes I knew there had to be an answer. After several frustrating hours, on the verge of considering a career at Sambo's I remembered the Pharisee, a great lawyer, who, having read the hundreds of Old Testament laws, asked: "Master, which is the greatest commandment

of the law?" Apparently, the Pharisee lawyer was as perplexed by the volumes of laws as I was by the reams of notes and essays under my bunk.

As the Pharisee was wondering if one law was more important than the others, I, too, was wondering if one class or one subject is more important than the others. Why is it required to have math and English classes when I like anthropology? Algebra has nothing to do with anthropology, which deals with lifeless prehistoric humans, while algebra deals with numbers -- figures and symbols that are far from lifeless. They often appear to be frantically alive, scrambling around with reckless abandon.

To control the confusion of numbers I have learned how to discipline them, putting them in an ordered, manageable pattern I can see and understand. Unlike anthropology, discipline and logic are obviously essential to mathematics.

I am conditioned to take this discipline for granted after leaving the equations and settling down in another class. Not only have I neglected it in anthropology but I often forget to use it in other areas. That same discipline I used to my advantage in mathematics should be applied to typing, to sociology, and to psychology. However, I saw this discipline brought to life in literature. In their works, the great poets and novelists ordered the physical environment and even human nature the way I ordered the x's and y's and traingles. These men are the most respected of their time and are still respected today, long after their death. they had not only learned to order and to classify but they had learned to discipline themselves and record the vastness of the

world in words from which we still gain great pleasure. They are capable of appreciating the discipline in the world and of bringing a great deal of self-satisfaction to themselves. The esteem for the great poets must, in part, be for this self-respect.

I return to the two men mentioned earlier. what is the difference between the man at Sambo's, flashing his parole papers and a diploma for a cup of coffee, and my friend behind the grill making the coffee and cooking hamburgers? The man at the counter was disgusted, he needed something to drink. My friend behind the grill was pleased -- smiling as he flipped the hamburgers and prepared the buns and coffee -- all in an orderly fashion, the result of his discipline to do a job and arrange his world to be pleasant. These fixed habits of thought and action are the expression of his manner. They are the outward expression of his intellectual and moral convictions, the behavior of a truly educated man or woman, be it cooking in a restaurant or managing the curriculum of a college or university, both jobs requiring disciplined thoughts, disciplined actions, and a good deal of self-respect.

I have worked these words in an orderly fashion and arranged them from the despicable algebra class all the way to self-respect. The Pharisee lawyer also found out about self-respect. The Master told him to love thy neighbor as you would yourself was only one of the two most important laws. Without self-respect it would be difficult to love my neighbor.

Therefore, I believe, that upon self-respect hangs all the knowledge, textbooks, and patient instructors of the last two years. Self-respect is imperative if I am to show esteem for my fellow human beings, a basic concern to keep me out of prison. My very presence here shows I have not respected someone. Ultimately, if I have gained self-respect, then I believe I have fulfilled the purpose of prison education.

Editor's Note: Benjamin W. Davis was one of 23 inmates at OSP who received Associate in Arts and Associates in Science degrees on July 13th through Chemeketa Community. Receiving degrees were:

Stanley C. Aloan Jr., John Francis Cooper II, Richard O. Coym, Benjamin W. Davis, James J. Eder, Jr., Donna L. Firth, George A. Garcia, Richard A. Goyette, Carl W. Harrison, Robert L. Inglis, Delbert R. Lammers, Gary Alan Lewis, Joseph A. Pinto, Jack E. Puritt, Jr., Jerome K. Salwei, Larry Carl Sharp, Karl F. Slimm, Ben A. Summer, Vincent N. Tryner, David Gene Wright and T.L. Zimmerlee.

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FROM THE FRONT DOOR

By Tom Boothe

From the front door, I wish to further explain and describe the four zones of relationships and interactions, which are: The family zone, the social and acceptance zone, the policy belief zone and the economic zone. This week I will speak only of the family zone, which is the most important and primary zone from which all other relationships and interactions spring.

The family zone is the zone of the greatest amount of familiarity and informalities, the quality and consistency of the family is most important, for this is where our children develop their values and behavior patterns, which subsequently set the tone of their social attitudes.

The family zone is the beginning point of all civilization, it is the mother of all social psychology. Children are directly affected genetically, as well as, by their immediate environment. children carry with them what they are taught, or what they are not taught, into the social zone. Children learn confidence and respect from the family, they also learn how to take responsibility and temper their emotions with love and understanding.

People who don't respect the family zone, are simply people who don't understand the value and strength of the single most powerful force on earth, it is the root of all we know, and it is the primary force behind all accomplishments in the development of modern civilization. It is the family forces that influence, inspire and motivate; communication, transportation and industrial technologies.

Adult people who loose their respect for their family through drugs, alcohol or senseless vanity, are people who loose their social and economical qualities and become subjected to those who hold strong the inspirations of the family zone.

Constructive and productive people, are people who value his or her family as priority number one.

Disruptive and destructive people, are people who value their addictions, social belief and economic vanities as priority number one.

Remember, your family should be number one on your mind. Your purpose should be to develop your family to a collective force of constructive productivity.

Your family is your natural foundation to life itself.

Your family is your source of confidence, strength, sense of security and home base of refuge from negative forces.

Your family, your children, they are your responsibility, don't expect outside social-economic entities to help you, for they are busy responding to their own responsibilities.

Know from this day forward that the quality of your family's environmental zone is your responsibility, it will be no better, or worse than you make it; regardless of your situation of circumstances, your blame factors and excuses. The reality of your family zone always speak the truth through you and your children's attitudes.