

# Promoting Gospel...

Grassroot News N.W. - Depending on what world you live in, the name George Fitz conjures two different types of respect. If you're in the world of furniture rental, George Fitz means number one sales manager. For the Black community, Fitz is the number one gospel D.J. in the northwest.

Fitz is a native Portlander and after spending time in the service, his interest in radio broadened. But it was Fitz's motivation and determination that spun an interest in gospel. "I've always had an interest in radio. I use to listen to Dick Novack from KPOJ and started to fantasize about being behind the mike. I became an air operator in 1972 at YSOL. I would get up on Sunday morning and record the services. I would play this on the air in-between records. I realized that I wanted to stay in this profession and ended up in broadcast school.

After that, I worked at KLIQ and monitored the seven-seconds delay on a talk show. Later, working as an independent producer for KQIV."

Currently Fitz is producing a gospel show on the A.M. and F.M. dial. Other than J.W. Friday, Fitz is the only Black programmer on both sides of the channel.

According to Ron Herring, a sales supervisor where Fitz is employed, George is a very productive sales representative. "He extends the awareness of the company and develops rental agreements for business. His sales attitude is one of perseverance."

Ruth Gray from the corporate office added that Fitz has a positive attitude that's contagious. "George is concerned about his clientele and does everything in his power to make sure they're satisfied."

"I'm what you call a lead service representative and I'm out in the field to show businesses how they can save money by renting instead of buying office furniture. Some people go and make a sale, and feel that they really got that person. When I close a deal, I really feel good because I've helped that person," he explained.

As Fitz says every Sunday, "Peace, Love and attend the Church of your choice."

In his format Fitz has always been quite consistent. "When I was in broadcasting school, our instructor asked what type of music we wanted to go into. There was rock & roll, soul, jazz and blues. But no one was into gospel. I decided on gospel because at that time gospel was beginning to change. I always felt that the gospel industry is a multi-million dollar industry that has yet to be tapped. Today Gospel music is beginning to get the exposure that it deserves. I do my show not so much to get a message across but as a form of entertainment. I play traditional, contemporary, progressive gospel. These different forms can relate to everybody at some stage of their life."

There are those who feel that the gospel played by Fitz is much too contemporary for their taste.



George Fitz spends his spare time spinning Gospel for Portland listeners. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

"Some people who aren't aware are used to hearing gospel played one way. They turn on my show and hear a bouncing, jazzy tune and consider it too worldly. I feel that when you're on the radio, you shouldn't gear your show for just one audience. The airwaves goes all over and you have to be creative

enough to take everybody into account. When people start to criticize me, all they hear is the beat. Many songs that's classified as soul really has some very moving lyrics. It might not say you need to go to church or you need to get saved. But it does say love your maker and your neighbor."



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## Refugees

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country and work-identity. When he knows that his native work-identity can be translated into American skills and talents, his employability increases his identity, and his self-esteem is strengthened." But Dr. Haldane warns that culture barriers exist that prevent the regaining of identity and a strengthening of self-esteem.

"Strong elements in S.E. Asian culture are barriers to discussion of a person's native-work identity. For instance, if a refugee recalls his work back home it is likely to be associated with memories of friends, family and co-workers left behind, some of them killed or starving. His face could show distress, and this might bring a sympathetic response. Such a reaction tends to be viewed - in the prevailing Bhuddist culture - as upsetting the harmony in a person. That is forbidden!

"Two centuries ago upsetting the harmony in a person could be seen as an insult and result in beheading. Now, in order to avoid upsetting the harmony of others, Asian refugees tend to indicate agreement or understanding where there is no agreement and understanding. (This eliminates the possibility of conveying the criticism that the other person doesn't know how to make things clear.) The feeling of refugees are hidden behind impassive public faces. And information about past work history also tends to remain hidden. So, it cannot be translated."

S.E. Asians refugees living in the State of Oregon fall into six basic categories: Lowland Loa; Loa Hmong; Loa Mien; Vietnamese; Cambodian (Khemar) and Ethnic Chinese; with each group sharing a distinct origin, a distinct language and a distinct cultural heritage.

Cambodians (Khemar): The Khemar refugees subscribe to values and patterns of living derived from several cultural influences that

governs their social relationships.

(1) Relationships must be clearly defined; meaning that each person involved has a distinct status and a prescribed role to play; (2) The individual is expected to remain attuned to the Buddhist code of personal conduct. Crimes of violence such as murder, assault, and rape is extremely rare, instead, temperance, diligence, thrift and self-discipline are stressed; (3) Cambodian families do not function under the "unlimited family" concept. The family is close and it is normal to see the grandparents sharing the same home with married children or married grandchildren; (3) Children are treated affectionately but not fussed over and are encouraged to take care of themselves at an early age; (5) Premarital activities by girls are condemned. A man usually marries between the ages of 20 and 25, a girl between 16 and 22. Marriage within the circle of blood relatives is strictly forbidden, but first cousin marriage is allowed.

Vietnamese: According to Cuu-Long-Gang and Toan-Anh, "Vietnamese are an intelligent people. They possess a keen sense of observation which gives them the ability to grasp things quickly; it also gives them a tendency to imitate others. Vietnamese have a high regard for morality and uphold the five Confucian virtues of humanity, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faithfulness as guides for their daily conduct. They love book-study and have avid minds.

"Ordinarily giving an appearance of being shy and afraid, they value peace and harmony in all relations. However, when they are faced with danger, or are on the battlefield, they display great bravery and know how to maintain discipline, giving death itself as much weight as an airborne thistle-down. Often motivated by compassion for others, they have a strong sense of gratitude."

Next week: The Mien and Hmong.



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