

The Portland Quarterly 25¢

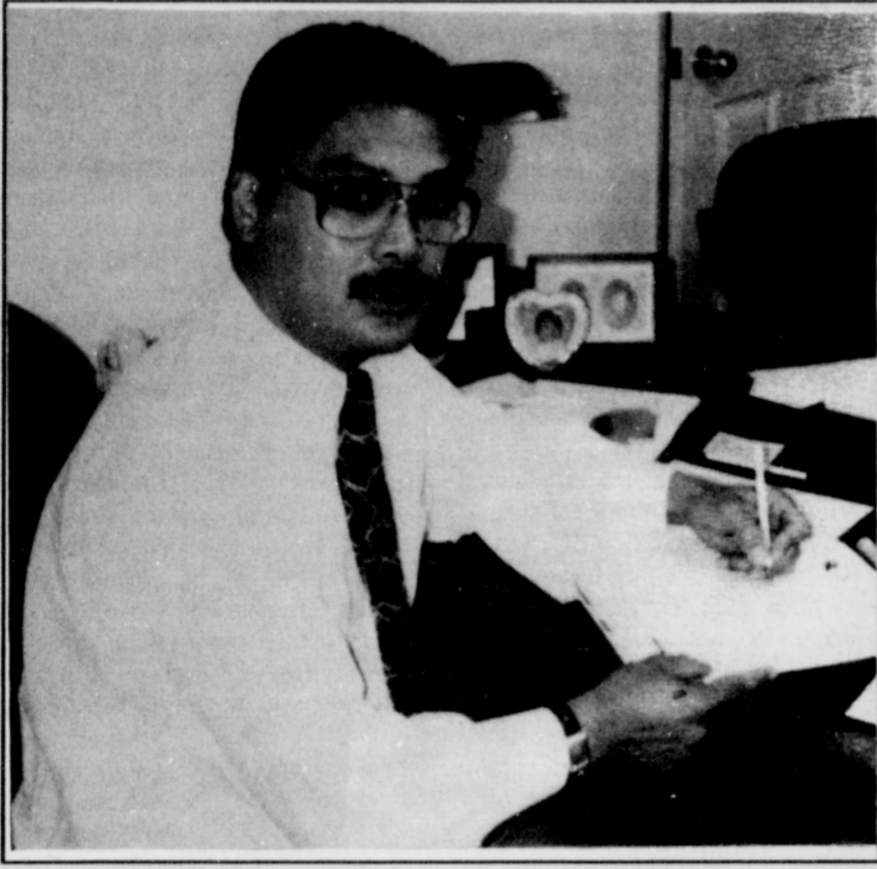
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Gregory Oliveros: Community Lawyer

by Bill Barber

Gregory Oliveros has lived in the community for over 40 years. More than that, he has had an important impact on the area. It seems he has always had an interest in community service. He was a teacher at Fernwood Middle School from 1973 to 1979. Oliveros also worked as a loaned executive with the United Way. Before getting his law degree from the prestigious Northwestern Law School at Lewis & Clark College, Oliveros was the assistant principal at Humbolt Early Childhood Center.

It seems like quite a leap from grade school administrator to attorney. "When I left undergraduate school in the early 70's," Oliveros explained, "I thought about pursuing law. I didn't perceive it as a leap. At that time, at law schools across the country, the emphasis was on public service, civil issues and human rights. So I always had that idea planted in my head, in terms of what I thought law practice should be all about; the direct service kinds of activities or where you can just have that interchange between two people. There are obvious differences between education and the law, but in my mind the premise is the same. I'm working in an assistance capacity with another human being, to accomplish a certain objective." Many people have known Oliv-



eros in both positions, as an educator and later as a lawyer. I expect many would still characterize him as a very warm, fair, energetic and committed individual. When he got out of law school, Oliveros didn't go after the big bucks payoff of corporate law for an international conglomerate. "I wanted to be a neighborhood practitioner. What I really like concentrating on is the civil

litigation end of law. I'm not that interested in criminal defense work." He has worked on a lot of family law cases, as well as bankruptcies, wills and personal injuries cases. Oliveros also takes on some Pro-Bono (cases at no charge.) cases. "Quite naturally, being a person of color (Filipino-American), I'm interested in civil rights. It is a terribly complicated area of the law. I would

like to assist in remedying glaring problems at that lowest level. I could analyze the facts situation with a client and give them some assistance in turning that situation around."

After spending \$35,000 to \$40,000 on his education, Oliveros is aware that he still has to charge a fee to make a living. "The purpose of my life goes beyond earning dollars. One of the reasons I left the school system was that I wanted to get back to the community on a different level. Not on a higher level, just a different level," he affirmed. One of the things I've observed about the law business is that it has been, for a long time, traditionally very white and very male. While there is nothing inherently wrong with that, I believe in diversity, at all levels. My ethnic background is recognized. I am a person of color and very proud of it. I DO understand...because I've experienced it! I can work side-by-side with all people and I don't have to make the leap going either direction," Oliveros concluded. It goes beyond his ability to feel a genuine empathy with clients. His clients say "He is a good attorney. He takes the time to explain the law to me. He made recommendations and he made me feel like a person. He made me feel like I WAS the process." It is just natural for Gregory Oliveros. Watch for Gregory Oliveros' column in the Portland Observer.

Weatherize Housing For the Disabled and Elderly in North Northeast Portland

The Community Energy Project (CEP) teams up with the Corporate Volunteer Council of Oregon* (CVC) to weatherize housing for the disabled and elderly in North and Northeast Portland. This volunteer event has been named "Project Storm Window."

Project Storm Window intends to weatherize 20 households on Saturday, November 2 when approx. 100 volunteers from CVC will warp pipes, make plastic storm windows, and apply weatherstripping around drafty doorways. The elderly and disabled are often unable to perform these simple weatherization techniques so CEP and CVC will be there to create a warmer dwelling for these individuals.

CEP is a nonprofit organization

whose purpose is to provide free education and training in energy conservation and weatherization techniques. They also provide free weatherization material to low and moderate income persons.

"CEP is happy to have the assistance from the service groups in the business community. This year we will weatherize 200 homes and CVC is helping us reach this goal," says Project Coordinator, Matt Emlen. "Although this is a year around business, the prime season begins in November."

To learn more about weatherization and energy conservation, or to volunteer your time and efforts, call the Community Energy Project at 284-6827.

Oregon Selected As Pilot For Minority Program

On Friday, November 1, 1991 the Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission along with the Regional Research Institute of Portland State University will announce their grant for a Special Emphasis Minority Program. The press conference is scheduled for 11:15 a.m. at the World Trade Center, Mezzanine 3 and 4, 121 SW Salmon, in Portland.

The State Commission has responsibility for administering the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Formula Grant Program in Oregon. In 1988 three amendments designed to address overrepresentation of minority youth in the juvenile justice system were made to the JJDP Act by Congress. Those states participating in the formula grant program are now required to "address efforts" to reduce the disproportionate incarceration of minority youth.

Following is a sampling of the extent of the problem for African American youth, particularly in Multnomah County. Lane, Marion, and Multnomah counties have been targeted for the first phase of the program.

Oregon is one of only five states to receive the Special Emphasis Minority Program supplemental federal grant. In addition, a technical assistance grant was issued to Portland State University to assist the pilot states in the development of this initiative.

The purpose of this initiative is to assist states in:

- identifying the extent and nature of overrepresentation of minorities in the juvenile justice system;
- developing program strategies and practical guidelines to respond to the problem; and
- evaluating the effectiveness to these approaches.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

For Helpful Hints, see Trick-or-Treat Page 3.

Crime and Punishment In America, Part 4

by Prof. McKinley Burt

A principal thrust of this series is to provide a useful frame of reference for examination of African American experience in the nation's legal system. We stated last week the GHETTO was a "fiery furnace" deliberately and systematically structured to provide maximum economic benefit (and social control) for absentee owners of the real estate. As we may see from the following excerpt, the American styling of *innocent plantations* has substantially departed from the model of the Middle Ages.

"The word *ghetto*, as it is used today, derives from the Italian term for the island in Venice on which Jews were forced to live in 1516. The Venetian Ghetto, established at a time when other nations were expelling Jews entirely, controlled the Jewish presence while, at the same time, allowing Jews entry into the dynamic mainstream of Venetian life...commercial to medical." ("The Venetian Ghetto," Roberta Curiel and Bernard Cooperman).

For three centuries now, there has been so such "DYNAMIC MAINSTREAM" available to American blacks -- only an occasional escape valve provided by the establishment when confronted with the possibility of a *real* revolution. These have usually been in the form of allegedly "great social and economic strides for the race," as described by some, both within and without the system. But in my hometown ghetto of a quarter-million black souls (St. Louis) the banks would finance at any one time only one each: Appliance store (G.E.), construction company and several other categories. There was absolutely no funding available for markets, furniture and jewelry stores, pawn shops, apparel stores, finance companies, or similar enterprises which would be in competition with fields dominated by other ethnic groups.

Therefore, the organic nature of the scores of such INNER-CITY PLANTATIONS was guaranteed to produce, each generation, exponentially increasing

numbers of young, better educated but frustrated young blacks who would realize that the "American Dream" was just that, a dream! To condemn the few who were able to escape the psyche-shattering environs as "middle class traitors who abandoned their brothers and sisters" would be as stupid as a similar indictment against Jews who fled Europe ahead of Hitler. One must understand all the forces that were at work, and accept that we are all human, not all heroes.

A well-rounded-idiot should have been able to perceive that over the generations there would have developed an institutionalized disillusionment and blighted hope among a growing class of those abandoned to employment discrimination, residential segregation and family deterioration, i.e. that ubiquitous "UNDERCLASS." The civil rights legislation of the postwar years is even less than a *band aid* when we consider the type of social hurricanes that are sweeping up our youths and hurling them against the staffs and walls of our criminal justice system.

In the 1970's both the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal published articles that, surprisingly, revealed the basic rules for constructing an American ghetto. Both writers chose *Harlem* for a model. First, and most importantly, there must be *Restrictive Covenants*, against black occupancy of dwellings outside of the prescribed racial perimeter; and there must be a conspiracy between the realtors, the mortgage companies and the banks to assure the maintenance of a CAPTIVE RENTAL AND RETAIL MARKETPLACE! Next, banks, City bureaus and UNIONS in the building trades must conspire to prevent the construction of any new buildings within the lucrative cash box -- except in special circumstances. This, of course, maintained the non-competitive position of absentee landlords (the "exceptions" were usually reserved for large chains or other ethnics. What about Portland?)

It was also pointed out that huge tracts of ghettos like Harlem are owned

directly or through investment trusts by America's FOUNDATIONS, UNIVERSITIES AND CHURCHES. It is indicated that the *take* since the turn of the century in terms of rent differentials and retail price-fixing is in the TRILLIONS OF DOLLARS. The cruel, murderous and *criminal* system is far more advanced and sophisticated than anything South Africa ever dreamed of. The rats, the lead poisoning of the children and the breakdown of the educational system and *crime-in-the-street* are all seen by today's establishment media to have derived from some mythical "forces of urban decay." They only wish to gain time for their constituency while less obvious *urban renewal/removal* modes are crafted.

We must wonder if the African American is to find himself as a protagonist with life as is the person in the following poem. Conclusion next week.

Sometimes I play that
I catch up with myself.
I run with what I was
and with what I will be,
on the race of what I am.
And sometimes I play that
I pass myself.
Then maybe I run
in the race of what I'm not.
But there's still another race
in which I'll play that I'm overtaken
and that will be the real one.
Roberto Juaroz,
"Vertical Poetry"

Perspectives



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Too Legit To Quit:
M.C. Hammer

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Give Your Best To The
Master

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Kid Talk



My Favorite Subject
Is...
Students From Trinity
Lutheran Grade School

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