

# EDITORIAL

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**I**n support of the national day of commitment to children on June 1 - Stand For Children - Children First for Oregon is releasing a new report called "County Data For Community Action: 1996 Status of Oregon's Children."

The report provides 36 fact sheets with information of how counties are doing on 14 indicators of child well-being and reports on progress toward meeting the 1995 statewide benchmarks. Information is included on how to use the county data to improve the quality of how to use the findings in the report for community action.

"The report's findings highlight the need for all Oregonians to get involved in turning things around for our children, if we are to reach the Oregon Benchmarks for Children and Families," said Gary Dombroff, Executive Director. "We hope all Ore-

## NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

### New Report On Children To Be Issued

gonians will join the Stand For Children effort by pledging to change at least one thing in his or her life in order to put children first -- anything from reading daily to your own child to volunteering in your local school."

The Children First report compares county data rates in 1990 to 1994/95 and assesses whether there

was a change for better or worse, or no change for each of the 36 counties. It found several clear trends that were true for the majority of counties across Oregon.

The percent of women receiving adequate prenatal care has increased in 30 counties (however, no counties have achieved the 1995 benchmark of

95 percent). The Mortality rate among infants has decreased in 21 counties and more childcare spaces have been made available in 27 counties.

Crimes against individuals has increased in 26 counties and the juveniles arrest rate has increased in 27 counties. Teen suicide has increased in 24 counties.

"The First step to improving the quality of life for Oregon's children is to become better informed about the overall condition of the children in out county and to identify the issues that need out attention," said report author, Swati Adarkar. "We are hoping that the county profiles will provide communities with a snapshot of your children and families are doing on some important indices of community health and well-being and that the suggested action steps will hop more people to get involved in reaching the childhood benchmarks."

## Civil Rights Journal: An Inside View Of Father's Day

**BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON**  
**T**hose who find themselves incarcerated on Mother's Day and Father's Day often find themselves forgotten by the outside world.

So, as we approach Father's Day, it would be well to remember that there are men in our prisons who are striving to change their lives and their relationships with others, including their families. Here are two stories of healing and hope.

### Bad Dads

That's the name of a Fox Television documentary which will air on Father's Day, which focuses on an unusual parenting program called H.O.P.E. for Life. Conducted at Lewisburg Federal penitentiary in Pennsylvania, this program places incarcerated fathers, who admit to

having been "bad dads" together with at-risk teens who have been neglected, abandoned or abused by their parents. Over the course of four weeks, the men struggle to become better fathers and the teens struggle with the connection between their actions and their past.

The dads are faced with the undeniable effects of their actions and apathy on their children and their families and then are provided with concrete ways to improve their relationships with their children, regardless of age or circumstance. The teens are helped to realize the consequences of their behavior.

Through participating in this program, these incarcerated dads not only can help themselves and their children, but they can help the children of others to stay out of prison.

This is a very different Father's Day present to all involved.

### God's Inside-Out Kitchen

Most Americans have heard of Sing Sing. Most, however, have not heard of a program dubbed "God's Inside-Out Kitchen," which was begun by Sing Sing inmates this year.

Fifteen Sing Sing prisoners, who are students in the master's degree program of the New York Theological Seminary, organized a food drive for the homeless for Easter. They collected 500 cans of food, even though inmates earn at most \$1.55 a day and a can of tuna costs 65 cents in the prison commissary.

"We are portrayed in a certain way, not as caring, giving people," said Leonard Lott, a student in the program. But students in this program devote 15 hours of volunteer

work with other prisoners as chaplain's assistants, AIDS prevention teachers and Alternatives to Violence program leaders.

For this project, the prisoners linked up with the Rye Presbyterian Church, whose members visit with the prisoners twice a month.

The church youth group held a fund-raiser, earning more than \$600 and church school members sponsored a food drive during Lent and the food and money were all given to the Interfaith Soup Kitchen for Easter dinner and for their food pantry's future use.

This Father's Day remember the dads in prisons across this country who are working to help others and working to help themselves.

(Bad Dads will air at 7:00PM (6:00PM Central) Fox Television)

## Vantage Point

### The Ballot As A Weapon In The Black Freedom Struggle

**F**rom the perspective of the new White power in the South, the most important element of the system of apartheid instituted in the Post Reconstruction period was the disenfranchisement of African voters.

The betrayal of 1877 effectively removed the protective cover of federal troops which had ensured that Blacks could vote in the south. Though the ballot was not immediately taken out of the hands of Blacks after 1877, the populist revolt, which saw Whites and Black coalesce at the ballot box to challenge for power, persuaded the power elite that vast majority of Blacks must be permanently disenfranchised.

A series of legislative measure was adopted throughout the South to make it virtually impossible for most Blacks to qualify to vote: the Grandfather Clause, which provided that only those Blacks who grandfathers had voted would be eligible to vote; the Poll Tax,

a monetary fee which had to be paid before you could register, a decided disincentive for a population of people who were largely impoverished; Literacy Tests which were used to check the prospective voter's understanding of various clauses and provisions of the U.S. Constitution, a difficult task for former slaves who were mostly illiterate; If all else failed, there was lynching, terror and intimidation, a tactic which was very effective in the absence of federal troops to protect Black voters.

By 1895 when Booker T. Washington made his famous Atlanta Exposition Speech, the glory days of Black Reconstruction were over. The White-Black coalition which had threatened the power elite in the South was shattered, and the ballot had been removed from the hands of Black folks as a weapon of Black advancement. Defying Booker T. Washington's advice that Blacks and Whites should remain "as separate as the fingers on the hand; on social and

political issues/concerns, young turks like W.E.B. Dubois would insist on mounting legal challenges to the system of apartheid, including the disenfranchisement of Black voters. It would be the NAACP which would hammer away on this issue in lawsuit after lawsuit until all of the Post Reconstruction era barriers erected to prevent Blacks from voting would eventually be overturned by the federal courts. These victories proved to be moot, however, in the absence of mechanisms to protect Black voters from the terror tactics employed by Whites to discourage Blacks from registering to vote.

While Blacks in the South were disenfranchised, Blacks in the North retained the right to vote. However, the effectiveness of Black ballot power was severely limited for decades because of a fierce allegiance to the Republican Party. For decades northern Black Voters were locked into the Republican Party, the party of the corporations and the rich and the

super-rich, paying a debt of gratitude to Abraham Lincoln for "freeing the slaves." In the process, Blacks became a non-factor in the inter-party rivalry between the Democrats and the Republicans.

All of this would change with the Great Depression. Blacks began a gradual and decisive shift to the Democratic Party, pragmatically responding to the New Deal initiatives of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The Great Migration to the North had positioned the Black vote to be pivotal in the competition for presidential power between the two parties. With Roosevelt enacting an Executive Order banning discrimination in federal employment and advancing social programs which positively impacted the lives of millions of Black poor and working people, Blacks cast their lot with the Democrats. Blacks became a part of a New Deal Coalition which would allow Roosevelt to occupy the White House for an unprecedented four terms.

## On Black Conservatives

**BY TAVIS SMILEY**

**G**addy Vasquez, the first Latino president of the Orange County board of Supervisors in California derided Gov. Michael Dukakis by saying, "He may speak Spanish, but he doesn't speak our language."

That's exactly how I feel about so-called black conservatives. They're of my color, but not my kind. Isn't the phrase "black conservative" an oxymoron anyway? I've often wondered what it is these black Americans are conserving.

The "Right" (or half-right as I prefer to call them, since they only tell half the truth) isn't just Newt Gingrich and Pat Robertson.

Part of the front line of the attack on Black America included Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, talk show host Ken Hamblin, professor Shelby Steele, economist Thomas Sowell and congressman Gary Franks of Connecticut. Like the black soldiers in the film "Glory," these black conservatives have been pushed to the front of an armed charge to retake the hills upon which America was built. The only problem is that it is not an America that was available to or open to black people.

In 1995 a protest march orga-

nized by black leaders took place in front of the home of Clarence Thomas to express the black community's disapproval over his attacks on practically everything that is black.

Clarence Thomas is black America's worst nightmare; neither he nor other black conservatives speak for Black America.

They have been appointed by the Right establishment, mostly because of their pigmentation rather than their argumentation. The Right's very promotion of black conservatives is an enormous act of duplicity and deception.

Too much Right-wing politics are aimed squarely against minorities. Unfortunately, like slavery itself, many of the advances of present day conservatives could not have been accomplished without help from the ranks of those being victimized.

Just as Africans aided slave traders in search and capture of other Africans, black conservatives have aided and abetted efforts to roll back many of the hard-won social, economic and political gains among the

African American community over the past 40 years.

By endorsing the half-truths and distortions of conservative whites for ending affirmative action or cutting welfare, black conservatives have allowed themselves to be used to carry out the dirty work of close-minded people who do not have the interests of African Americans and poor people at heart. Worse, they lend credibility to the views that are misguided and even racist.

The campaign of Alan Keyes and the publication of books such as "Please Don't Feed the Blacks" (re-titled "Made in America") by Ken Hamblin, will undoubtedly add to the hoopla surrounding black conservatives.

One almost gets the impression that African Americans are becoming a bunch of Right-wingers. Yet every poll, study and survey in America shows that the overwhelming majority of black Americans believe that affirmative action is fair, remedies a historic injustice and allows

for the admission, hiring or promoting of all qualified candidates. Many adamantly oppose school choice, fearful that it will further ruin inner-city schools; oppose three strikes legislation, not because they are soft on crime but because they believe in second chances; oppose the death penalty not because they don't want to punish criminals but because they are aware of how unfair the system can be; and support a more expansive view of government.

The debate between black liberals and black conservatives dates back at least as far as W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, who had profound disagreements on the direction of social, political and economic policy for Black Americans at the beginning of this century.

However, Dubois and Washington always had the best interest of black people at heart. I think many of the Black conservatives today are interested primarily in their self-promotion and financial gain.

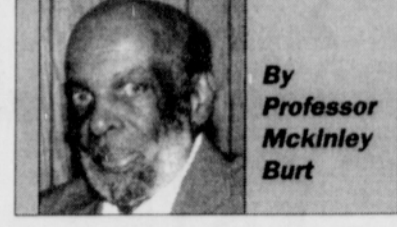
The only thing the Right wants for black people is a vote and their help in condemning those black stereotypes of which they don't approve and which they blame for the moral decay of America.

## perspectives

### Summer Reading List, Conclusion

**P**ushing that word "electic" to the limit, I suggest the following titles for your enjoyment as well as an understanding of the swiftly changing and dangerous world around us.

"The War Against Children: How the Drugs, Programs, and Theories of the Psychiatric Establishment Are Threatening America's Children with a Medical 'Cure' for Violence." by Peter R. Breggin, M.D. St. Martin's Press, 1994.



By Professor Mckinley Burt

Some readers are familiar with his best-selling books which oppose the "establishment drug dealers": "Talking Back to Prozac", "Toxic Psychiatry". And some remember my 1994 article on the U.S. Government-sponsored conference called "Genetic Factors in Crime", where I detailed the resurgence of last-century's pseudo-scientists and their racist theories--the very same used by Hitler's Nazis to support their use of drugs and gas ovens as a solution for "inferior races".

It is fortunate that we have people like Dr. Breggin to warn of the "dangerous assault on inner-city school children with

such bio-medical social controls as "ritalin". As the doctor predicted, the wide spread use of the mind-numbing ritalin has found quick acceptance in the white communities. The nation (and the profit centers of the world's major pharmaceutical companies who now work with and fund many local educational establishments). All of this, not withstanding the fact that this racial, genetic and I.Q. nonsense was so adequately refuted in Jay Stephen Gould's little book, "The Mismeasure of Man," W.W. Norton, 1981. Get it!

"The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge." V.Y. Mudimbe, Indiana University Press, 1988. I heartily recommend this book which intelligently and honestly addresses fundamental questions that concern us all. "What is the meaning of Africa? "What is and what is not African philosophy? "Is philosophy part of Africanism? "These are the kinds of fundamental questions this book addresses. We know only what Europeans have taught us.

Everyday manifestations of these African concepts are seen all over the place. "Osiris" the African god of vegetation and yearly resurrection appears today as "The Jolly Green Giant" a logical trademark for a good products company (1925, Minnesota Valley Canning Co., Symbols of America', Biking Press). And the eye of "Hours" is incorporated into the official seal of the United States, see reverse of your dollar bill (At the request of Thomas Jefferson).

See "Isis and Osiris," Jonathan Cott, Doubleday, 1994 and also see "The Myth of Isis and Osiris", Jules Cashford, Barefoot Books, 1993 To fulfill the request of many teacher, I have continued these citations on another page.

trying to understand themselves. As the case with black thinkers who seek to "deslaverize" the African American mind set, Mudimbe's historical anthropology achieves the "decolonization" of academic knowledge of Africa.

V.Y. Mudimbe is professor of Romance Languages and Comparative Literature at Duke University. All of the books cited here have excellent bibliographies and references.

I highly recommend the following (or either of) two books which so beautifully tell and illustrate the ancient Egyptian (African) myth of Isis and Osiris (and Horus and Seth)--the story of a goddess' search for and reassembling of her husband's/brother's dismembered body -- has haunted humanity's imagination for millennia (including Sigmund Freud and entire schools of psychiatry).

The tale of love and betrayal, death and resurrection, has made its way from the Nile Valley to affect cultures all over the world. Isis' journey to find and awake Osiris echoes Psyche's quest for Eros and Orpheus' search for Eurydice, and direct parallel exists between the worship of Madonna in early Christianity and the cult of Isis and her many devotees in Greece and Rome.

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