

EDITORIAL

ARTICLES APPEARING ON THIS PAGE DO NOT
NECESSARILY REFLECT OR REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF

The Portland Observer

Attention Readers!

Please take a minute to send us your comments. We're always trying to give you a better paper and we can't do it without your help. Tell us what you like and what needs improvement...any suggestions are welcomed and appreciated. We take criticism well! Get your powerful pens out NOW and address your letters to: Editor, Reader response, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

The Portland Observer

Charles Washington
Publisher

Mark Washington
Distribution Manager

Danny Bell
Account Executive

Larry J. Jackson, Sr.
Director of Operations

Yvonne Lerch
Account Executive

Gary Ann Taylor
Business Manager

Jim Bennett
Layout/Graphic Design

Michael Leighton
Copy Editor

Contributing Writers:

Professor McKinley Burt, Lee Perlman
Neal Heilpern, Eugene Rashad

4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Portland, Oregon 97211
(503) 288-0033 • FAX (503) 288-0015
e-mail: pdxobserv@aol.com

Deadline for all submitted materials:

Articles: Friday, 5:00 PM • Ads: Monday, 12:00 PM

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

Portland Observer
PO Box 3137
Portland, OR 97208

Periodicals postage paid at Portland, Oregon
Subscriptions: \$30.00 per year

The Portland Observer welcomes free-lance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of the newspaper and cannot be used in other publications or personal usage without the written consent of the General Manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. ©THE PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED.

The Portland Observer—Oregon's oldest multicultural publication—is a member of the National Newspaper Association (Founded in 1885), and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., and The West Coast Black Publishers Association.

Serving Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington.

Subscribe to The Portland Observer

The Portland Observer can be sent directly to your home for only \$30.00 per year. Please fill out and enclose check or money order and mail to: Subscriptions @ The Portland Observer, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

Name _____
Address _____
City/State _____
Zip Code _____

A New Kind of School For Training Youth Leaders

by Dr. Lenora Fulani

Last week I brought 15 young men and women from New York

City to Washington, D. C. They are the first graduating class of The Development School for Youth, a new leadership training program for young people between the ages of 15 and 21 which I co-direct along with Pam Lewis. Pam is the national producer of the All Stars Talent Show Network, a highly successful anti-violence program for inner city youth. Both the All Stars and The Development School for Youth are sponsored by the non-profit Community Literacy Research Project, which creates and funds programs that are based on a performative approach to human development.

Our two-day sojourn in Washington was no ordinary class trip. Rather, the trainees -- a diverse group which includes a young Asian American woman, a recent immigrant from Eastern Europe, an Italian-American, young man, 2 teenagers who came to this country as children from the Caribbean, and 10 African Americans -- were learning to perform as leaders.

We met with four members of Congress, a mix of Democrats and Republicans including several Congressional Black Caucus members as well as a spokesperson for the Reform Party and a representative of U.S. Term Limits. The trainees asked interesting questions and raised important issues of concern to young people. For example, they wanted to know why neither the media nor any elected officials have acknowledged that young people deserve some of the credit for the widely reported downturn in crime

in some of New York's toughest neighborhoods; when the statistics go in the other direction, they pointed out, young people are often the first to be blamed.

Their responses to questions about the program were forthright, intelligent and to the point. For example, when an aide to one of the Congressmen asked what they meant by "performance," one young man said: "Sir, we're performing right now!"

The Washington trip was simply one "act" of a "play" which includes hands-on training in such practical skills as computer proficiency, resume writing, and dressing for success, and several other horizon-broadening trips. One of these was a visit to the ABC television studio complex, where our host was Claire Labine, a head writer of the daytime soap opera "One Life to Live." Another was a tour of the New York Stock Exchange conducted by Joseph Forgione, the retired managing director of a prestigious Wall Street firm. The final "act" of this "play," a paid summer internship in a corporate setting, will be yet another opportunity for our young trainees to create (rather than go through) stages where they can continue to perform their lives. Bravo!

Lenora B. Fulani twice ran for president of the U.S. as an independent, making history in 1988 when she became the first woman and African American to get on the ballot in all fifty states. Dr. Fulani is currently a leading activist in the Reform Party and chairs the Committee for a Unified Independent Party. She can be reached at 800-288-3201 or at www.Fulani.org.

RAINBOW PUSH COALITION

The Worst (III)

This town has been full of praise for Franklin Delano Roosevelt, much of it from politicians who voted last year to butcher Aid to Families with Dependent Children, one of FDR's real legacies.

It's too bad they didn't remember what FDR said, before they voted to repeal welfare:

"The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

In that same vein, we continue our series of excerpts from Peter Edelman's recent Atlantic Monthly article about welfare repeal. The article was entitled, "The Worst Thing Bill Clinton Has Done," and reveals in detail just how much damage was done to FDR's safety net.

"The basic issue is jobs. There simply are not enough jobs now. Four million adults are receiving AFDC. Half of them are long-term recipients. In city after city around America the number of people who will have to find jobs will quickly dwarf the number of new jobs created in recent years..."

"The fact is that there are not enough appropriate private-sector jobs in appropriate locations even now, when unemployment is about as low as it ever gets in this country."

"When the time limits take effect, the realities occasioned by the meeting of a bottom-line-based labor market with so many of our society's last hired and first fired will come into focus. Of course, a considerable number will have obtained jobs along the way..."

"But there will be suffering. Some of the damage will be obvious--more homelessness, for example, with more demand on already strapped shelters and soup kitchens."

"The ensuing problems will also appear as increases in the incidence of other problems, directly but perhaps not probably owing to the impact of the welfare bill. There will be more malnutrition and more crime, increased infant mortality, and increased alcohol and drug abuse."

"There will be increased family violence and abuse against children and

women, and a consequent spillover of the problem into the already overloaded child-welfare system and battered-women's shelters."

"I am amazed by the number of people who have bought the line that the bill was some little set of adjustments that could easily be done away with."

"Congress and the President have dynamited a structure that was in place for six decades."

"If there is going to be a short-term fix of the new law, it will be not in the fundamentals of the new structure but in some of the details. It might include the following, although I hasten to say that even this list stretches credulity."

"Jobs. Congress could make extra funds available to the states for job creation, wage subsidies, training, placement, support and retention services..."

"Time limits. The Democrats tried very hard to create a voucher covering basic necessities for children in families that had run up against the time limit. The idea failed by a narrow margin in the Senate, and is worth pursuing..."

"Work requirements...It would help a little if people were permitted to receive vocational training for longer than 12 months..."

"Limits on state flexibility in the use of funds..."

"Data. It is vitally important that adequate data be gathered and reported on what happens under the new legislation."

"If reliable and affordable health care and child care were added to this list, and were available beyond a transitional period, it would help a lot. However, my crystal ball tells me that whatever is enacted in these areas will be modest at best, and the new structure will remain substantially in place."

"And of course not even these adjustments would solve the fundamental problems created when the previous structure was dynamited: the disappearance of the national definition of eligibility and of the guarantee that federal funds will be available for all eligible children."

Would it really be so hard to move a wheelchair into the new FDR Memorial? Isn't that the least we could do for the disabled community?"

After all, as Reverend Jackson said many times on the 1988 campaign trail, "I'd take Roosevelt in his wheelchair any day, over Reagan on his horse!"

Perspectives

Is Science Scientific - Are Scientists Ethical?

by Prof. McKinley Burt

Years ago, we ordinary citizens, or laypersons as they like to term us, would not dare make such an inquiry. Today, we dare not fail to question the purposes and objectives of such erudite disciplines with a reach from the sublime to the ridiculous -- from halting epidemics to the base immorality of the notorious "Tuskegee Syphilis Experiments."

But before we raised our culture-driven expectations in the age of high technology, should we not have better defined and examined the practitioners of sometimes arcane arts - or the hallowed institutions and communities from which they operate: Academic, corporate or federal. Of course, our naive and artlessness might be (might be) forgiven if we consider the breathless haste and push of those who promise their technology will lead mankind to a quality of life even greater than that assured by established religions. We seem along for the ride.

Now, many more are compelled to put some critical questions to those with whom we have entrusted our health, environment, national security and our welfare in general. And

we realize that we deal with a powerful and well-oiled machine with which the media has a rather torrid love affair. It is no longer the case that we interface with a tribe of doddering old graybeards (if that were ever a good example), but what we have, rather, is close to a syndicate of an the august champions of everlasting good life (nirvana).

This is a new arena where new gladiators, armored in expensive suits and equipped with computers, cell phones and degrees from the allegedly-best universities battle it out for the funds revealed in the Federal Register or in state budgets. In this situation the health and welfare of the average citizen is neither certain nor predictable. Black men with syphilis are given placebos instead of available treatment; hemophiliacs are transfused with tainted blood, greed (don't forget U.S. atomic tests on humans).

So how does science fit into such an immoral world! All of the swirling combatants for dollars, power and prestige - Public Health Administration, Food and Drug Administration, (and their state counterparts), Pharmaceutical manufacturers,

medical associations and think tanks' - boast a roster of the most competent and reputable scientists known to mankind. For how long have so many with whom we've endowed our most basic respect ignored the fundamental tenets of the Hippocrates Oath or the Ten Commandments?

Perhaps we have to get back to basics here -- as it seems we must today where there are vital issues that concern our welfare -- over very survival! What science? What are ethics? Is morality only seen how in the context of sex? Most of the practitioners of the arts and sciences under discussion would seem by media attribution to have solid religious and fraternal affiliation.

Webster says "science is a state of knowing -- a systematic study". We have it that "Ethics is the discipline of dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligations... values." All well and good, except that we have people, systems and philosophies that value "good and bad" on their own terms. Do you?

Rogert's Thesaurus says, "Science is a field of concern, of inquiry, a



BY
PROFESSOR
MCKINLEY
BURT

branch or discipline of knowledge; it is technology, it is 'natural', or applied pure." Thanks a lot old buddy, and I happen to know that there is an entire discipline in the field of philosophy called, "epistemology" which is about determining the 'validity' of knowledge.

As usual everything seems to get up an walk away when those smart folks try to describe the nature of things. But where does that leave us laymen, the people in the neighborhoods who daily are frightened and traumatized by the discoveries or conduct of the scientific community. Was Humpty Dumpty right? "Things are what I say they are."

Continued next week.

Police Brutality: What Can We Do About It?

by Bernice Powell Jackson

Last week I wrote about what seems to be the rise of cases of police brutality across the nation. A recent National Emergency Conference on Police Brutality was held by the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) in New York City to look at the growing number of complaints. Conference participants came from 50 states and 16 states to share their stories and examine this phenomenon.

In the week since I wrote that column Atlanta Police Chief Beverly Harvard has announced that she will study how to discipline two Atlanta officers, one of whom is a sergeant, who beat an Atlanta man repeatedly with a baton and who was caught on videotape by a passer-by. The Atlanta man, carrying his wife and two children in his car, was attempting to fill a prescription for his sick child and exited an interstate, only

to be told to get back on the highway by police officers who had closed the exit because of Black College Spring break activities. What is causing this epidemic of police brutality? As more and more middle class Americans move to the suburbs and to gated communities with private police forces, they cut themselves off from people in the cities and they seem to care less how the police keep the peace.

Then, as more and more city residents are losing their jobs as factories move out of the country or become obsolete, there is growing economic pressure on poor, unskilled and poorly-educated men, sometimes causing them to turn to crime. As we as a nation continue to deny the existence of racism, we do not take on police officers or others who exhibit racist behavior.

"It feels as if America is at war against itself and that there is a mili-

tary occupying force targeted against citizens to many people in our cities," said Richie Perez of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, an organization which has worked with many families of police brutality victims. "It almost feels as if we've adjusted to police brutality and corruption and to inferior education in our cities," said Rev. Jesse Jackson, another speaker at the conference.

What can we do about law enforcement official brutality? First, mayors and police chiefs must make it known that such brutality will not be condoned and will be punished. Only if these officials understand that the public will not tolerate police brutality will they take steps to end it because of the power of police unions and the code of silence which is prevalent in police forces.

Secondly, the Center for Constitutional Rights is working with Con-

gressman John Conyers from Michigan on this issue. It is hoped that Congressional hearings will be held on police brutality since it is so widespread and that the Congressional Black Caucus will hold a workshop on this critical issue at their annual fall meeting.

In addition, CCR is working to set up a national network for parents and families of victims of domestic violence. This is critical, especially, for those families where the victim was killed.

Finally, CCR is hoping to set up a national clearinghouse to collect data on police and other law enforcement official brutality. Right now there is much anecdotal information showing that this phenomenon is on the rise, but no one is collecting statistics to prove it.

(For more information, call the Center for Constitutional Rights at 1-800-764-0235.)