



OPINION

Opinion articles do not necessarily reflect or represent the views of
The Portland Observer

The Portland Observer USPS 959-680 Established 1970 4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97211	STAFF	EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, PUBLISHER Charles H. Washington	COPY EDITOR Joy Ramos
		BUSINESS MANAGER Gary Ann Taylor	DISTRIBUTION MANAGER Mark Washington
		ASST. PUBLISHER Michael Leighton	CREATIVE DIRECTOR Paul Neufeldt
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Portland Observer PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208 Periodical Postage paid in Portland, OR • Subscriptions are \$60.00 per year			
503-288-0033 • FAX 503-288-0015 • EMAIL: news@portlandobserver.com subscription@portlandobserver.com ads@portlandobserver.com			

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance 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. © 1996 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., New York, NY, and The West Coast Black Publishers Association • Serving Portland and Vancouver.

CHARLES JORDAN SPEAKS

Civic Leader Addresses Church Scandal, Racism

The Portland Observer is proud to present the following interview with Charles Jordan, the esteemed director of Portland Parks and Recreation and a former city councilman. Our correspondent, Yugen Fardan Rashad, recently sat down with this dynamic leader for this first part of a continuing series:

Yugen: Charles Jordan. Now there's a name that records Samaritan proportions of service and commitment to community life.

Jordan: Through parks and recreation, I serve. This is one of the tools of my trade. At one time, it was education and research. When I was a gardener, I had certain tools. But whatever I have, whatever I do, it's all about service.

Yugen: I know you place a lot of stock in the faith community and the role of service. Therefore, I suspect this matter regarding certain priests of the Catholic Church is a bit unsettling for you.

Jordan: Yes. Of course I look at things a little differently. We shouldn't be shocked. It's unfortunate that we stereotype, because there are far more (priests) out there who would never abuse children and who reject the worldly life. They're doing a great job; but we don't read about them.

Yugen: Is this a simple case of bad things happening to good people?

Jordan: If only the good ones who knew (about priest misconduct) had spoken out and gotten rid of the bad ones... But the good ones didn't speak up and now they're tainted. Everybody is not called to preach. A lot of people volunteer and go on their own. But the real preachers, people who are called by God to preach the word, he will bless. And there are so many of them.

Now, having said that, Yugen, there are those who are sick. Some have sicknesses and can't help themselves. I think some people just have to be sick to do what they do. And in cases like this, I think there are some mysteries about life that none of us will

never understand. And since we don't understand, I don't think we should start guessing and experimenting with how to fix it. What I propose is to leave this matter to God.

Yugen: Are there higher standards for the preacher, priest, imam or rabbi in matters of behavior and morality?

Jordan: No. The Bible wasn't written just for preachers, it was written for all of us. Even though we don't call ourselves preachers, we don't have any less responsibility than an ordained minister.

Yugen: I want to shift to another social problem: Racism and equality.

Jordan: Racism is ignorance and fear. Yugen, we don't know each other. And so when we judge people, we do so based not on what I see "you" do, but by what the group does. That's where the stereotype and discrimination comes in.

Yugen: In this America, people generally draw social lines based on skin color.

Jordan: But I will say we like to hang with our own, and there is nothing wrong with that because I sure do (smiles). I sure enjoy being around my people. I feel good being around my people, and it's natural that people of like kind enjoy being around each other, and there's nothing wrong with that. But it doesn't mean I'm going to discriminate against you because you're different or because you're a white person.

Yugen: Power and race is a powerful combination that often creates iniquities and prejudice, particularly in the workplace, which of course ties into economics, politics, and affects quality of life issues such as business, mortality, health, housing, etc.

Jordan: This is what I see: Black people are a very fair people. Take for example where we're bosses. We don't have to talk about diversity because we don't think about just hiring a bunch of black people. We are a fair people. In some ways that has hurt us in the world, but



Charles Jordan

not with God. It hurt us because people have taken advantage of that fairness.

Yugen: I also hear you saying that to be fair is not exclusively a black thing.

Jordan: All white people aren't racists. "Oh God! No-No! Black people have never won a major civil rights battle without Jewish people involved either as attorneys or victims.

Yugen: Racism lives in the subconscious mind. Yet, it's a very lucid idea, and influences the lives of many Americans.

Jordan: The world is a good place and God didn't make a mistake. People, all people, are basically good. Racism came about because of a small number of bad people, and the majority, didn't say anything or do anything and didn't want to get involved. See, you've got to speak up. Institutional racism happened because good people didn't say nor do anything. If you don't say something, racism will thrive. The rest of the people we call racist are just fearful and ignorant and that includes black people. We just don't get to know each other.

Yugen: It's the modern day leprosy written about in the Old Testament. Will the patient ever recover?

continued on page A5

When You've Got Family Behind You,
You're Never Alone!



That's why so many single people, in your hometown and all over the country, rely on American Family Insurance for their insurance protection. American Family Insurance is committed to providing insurance coverage at a competitive price for millions of people, just like you. And, we're dedicated to handling your claims with impeccable speed and care. Call an American Family Insurance agent today, or visit us at www.amfam.com



© 2002 American Family Mutual Insurance Company and its Subsidiaries, Madison, WI 53783-001 www.amfam.com

H. & B. Too

NOW OPEN

Oregon's Oldest Licensed Pawnshop
4709 N.E. Martin Luther King Blvd.

2 blocks south of Alberta

Weekdays til 6 p.m. – Saturdays til 4 p.m.

Free Parking – State Controlled Rates – Se Habla Español

www.hbloan.com

Oregon Family Business for over 50 years

Lic. #306