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# Fred Meyer

What's on your list today?

# LOCAL NEWS

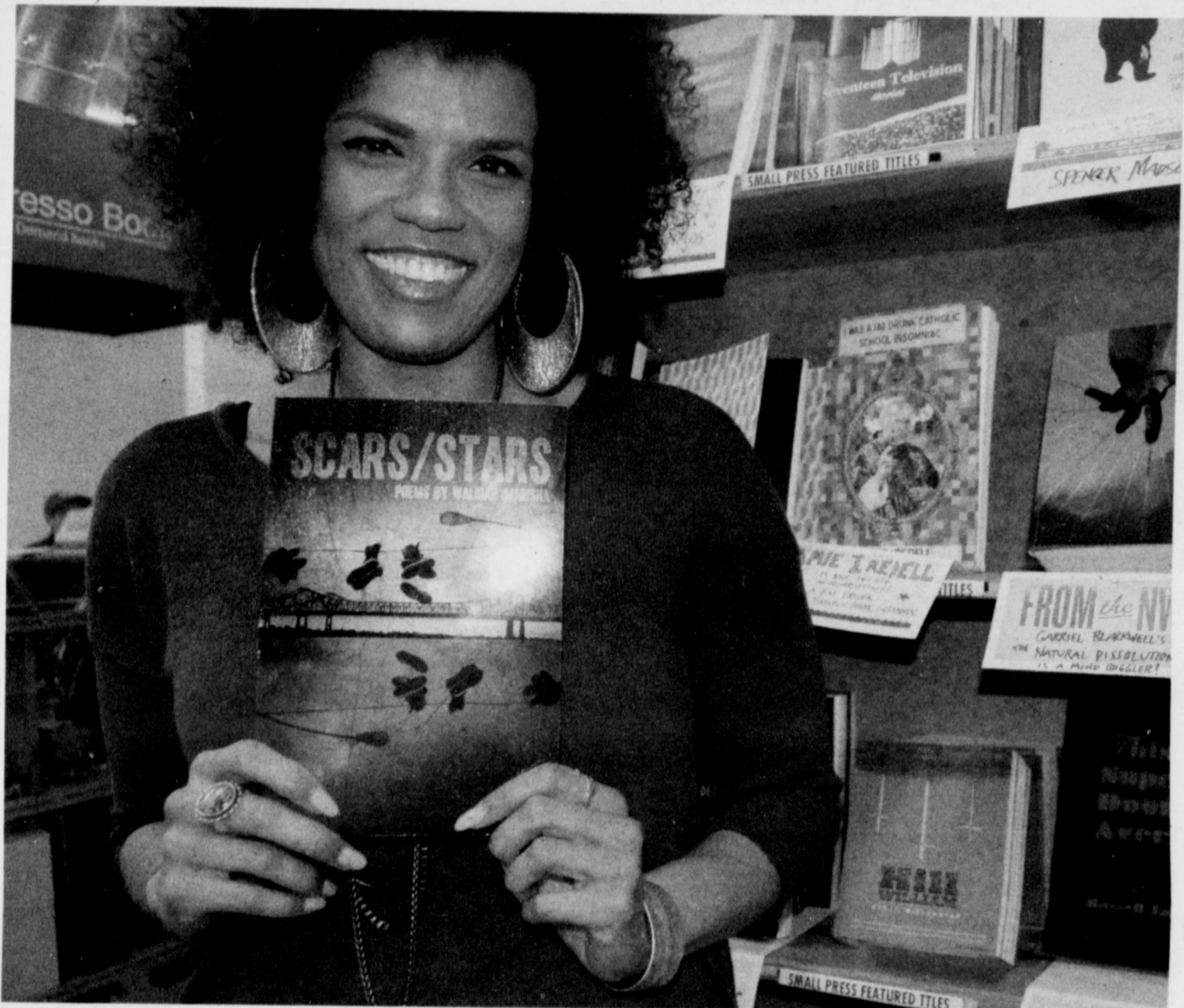


PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Walidah Imarisha, a local activist and professor of Black Studies at Portland State University, has published her debut book of poetry weaving personal tales about the pain of political prisoners and the power of the black American experience.

## The Black Experience

### Local author weaves personal tales into fascinating read

A debut book of poetry about the pain of political prisoners and the power of the black American experience intricately weaves personal tales into a fascinating read. The author, Walidah Imarisha, is local activist and professor of Black Studies at Portland State Uni-

versity.

The Portland Observer's Donovan M. Smith sat down with Imarisha at Powell's Bookstore to discuss the inspirations behind "Scars/Stars" and to dig into the nuances behind her work. The following is edited for clarity and brevity.

**Q:** *Scars/Stars* seems really autobiographical. You referenced someone who had the last name Imarisha in the poem "Masterpiece." Did you get

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## Public Testifies in Police Lawsuit

### Judge reviews historic settlement agreement

After a day-and-a-half marathon of testimony, a federal judge is now reviewing the details of what could be a historic settlement against the city of Portland and the Portland Police Bureau.

In 2012, the federal Justice Department found that Portland Police had engaged in a pattern of excessive force against those with or perceived to have mental illness. That same federal inquiry also found the city's police use greater force than necessary, and their use of stun guns was sometimes excessive, inappropriate, and done with little justification.

More than 60 people testified at last week's hearing before U.S. District Court Judge Michael Simon. Many were critical that the proposed settlement failed to address controversial police shootings involving race and the disproportionate police stops of black men and women in Portland. The Police Bureau released a report a day after the hearing showing that African Americans were stopped at almost twice the rate of their population.

On March 3, transcripts of the hearings will be made available on the U.S. District Court website. Judge Simon will hold a final hearing March 24 when additional arguments from the city, the Albina Ministerial Coalition for Justice and Police Reform and the Police Bureau, can be addressed before he makes a ruling.