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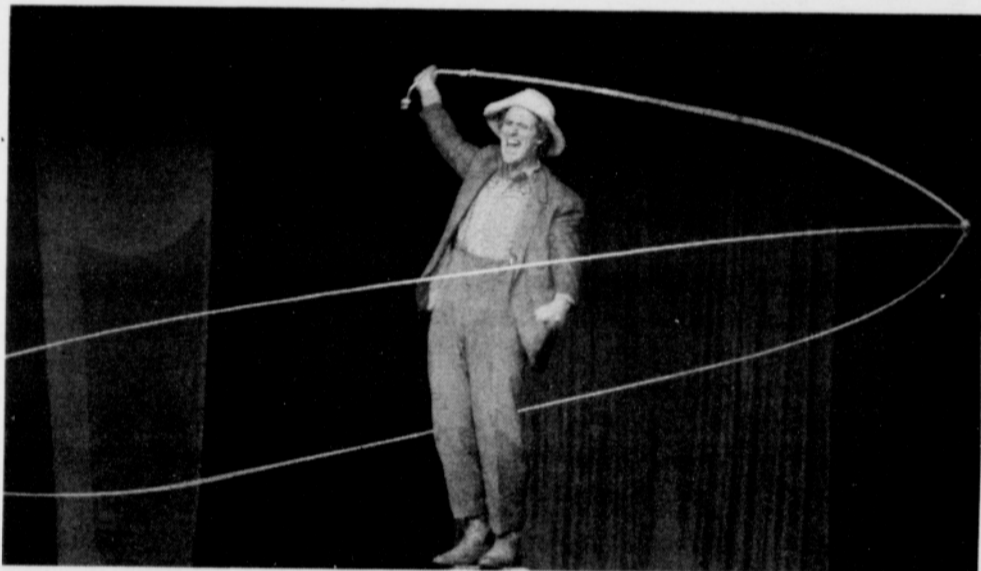
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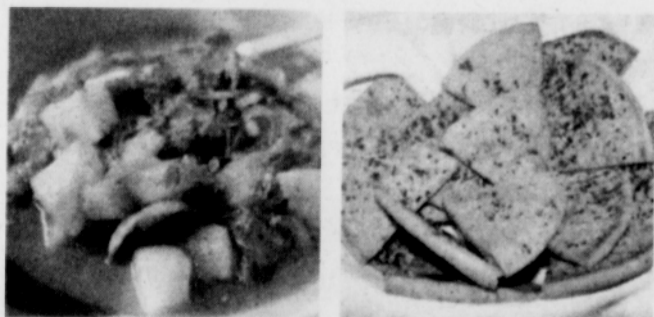


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What's on your list today?

LOCAL NEWS

Hip Hop Disconnect

Police review director updates investigation

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The turmoil that has erupted between the Portland Police Bureau and a community of entertainers catering to the Hip-Hop scene has gained new eyes and ears.

The subject is now before the Independent Police Review Board, currently headed by Constantin Sever, a lawyer and first generation Haitian-American transplant.

Sever estimates that his office has received about 10 informal complaints regarding a police presence at Hip Hop events in the last year. Most of the input has come from phone calls expressing dismay rather than getting at any specifics.

He says the recent Department of Justice stipulation on police use of force polices gives his office more weight to investigate police complaints, including provisions that the IPR board complete more investigations, reviews, and reports on an annual basis.

As part of the settlement over the police brutality issues relating to people with mental health issues, Severe now has five investigators, doubling the board's previous investigative workforce. The IPR Board serves under the direction of the City Auditor office.

Sever says the police and hip hop investigation will differ from most of the review board's work, because it looks at police conduct from a systematic point of view rather than the conduct of a single officer or police unit. In other words, are police treating people the same at Hip Hop shows as with other entertainment in the city?

"We wanna look at the whole

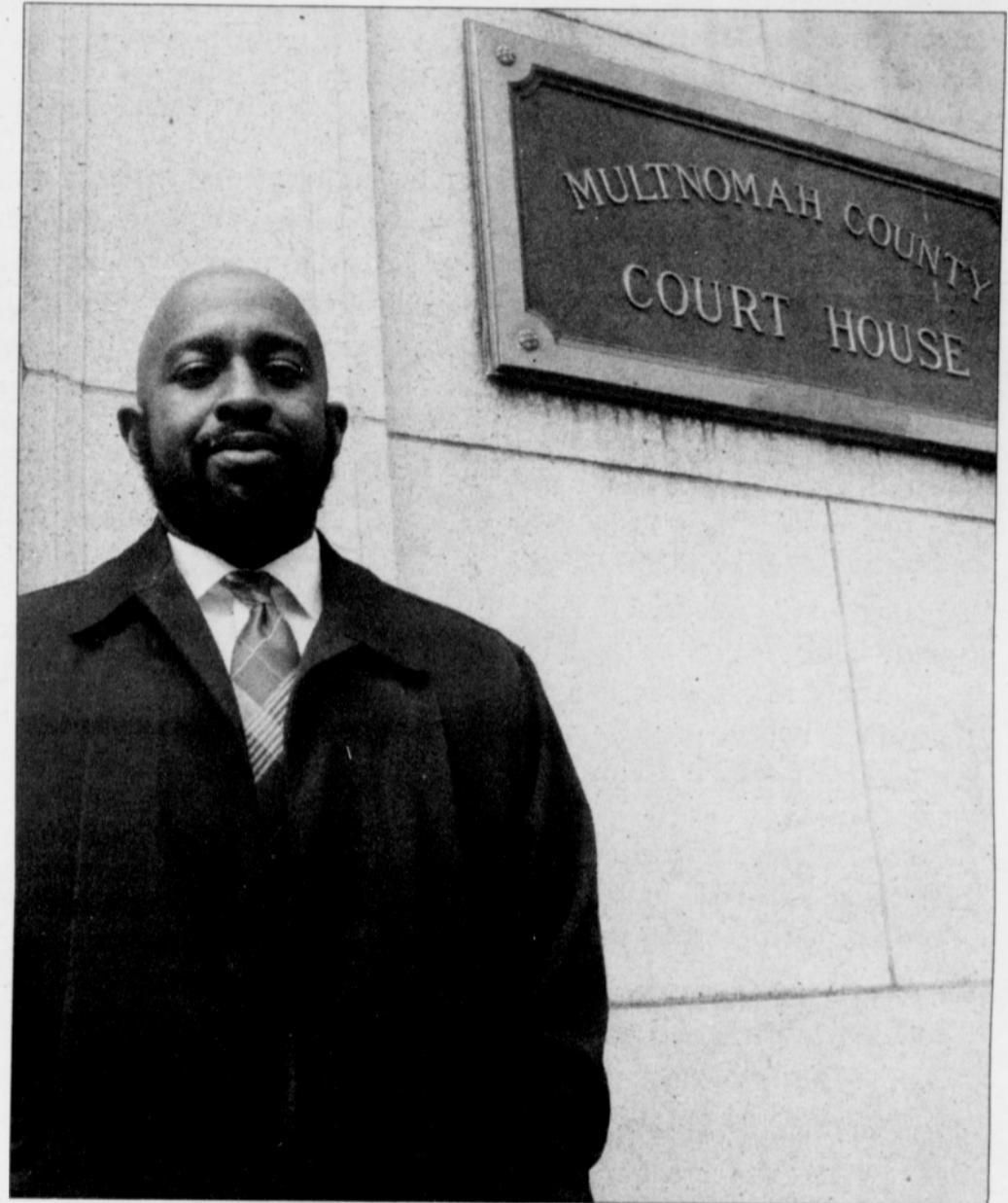


PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Constantin Sever, director of Portland's Independent Police Review Board, says that recent reports about heavy-handed enforcement at Hip-Hop related events has caused his office to launch an official review of Police Bureau practices.

practice," Sever says.

Since launching the review earlier this month, Sever says that there have been no formal or written complaints received at his office. People directly involved or affected by these events have been particularly less responsive to take part.

"We're trying to talk to everyone, the police officers, the people from ONI [Office of Neighborhood Involvement] and all the different organizations. We'd like to reach out to members of the Hip Hop community whether you're a performer or a promoter."

He acknowledges there's a his-

tory of mistrust between some members of the Police Bureau and the Hip Hop crowd, especially for persons of color.

"We have a special obligation to treat them in an equitable way that recognizes the history there and that we have an ongoing outreach effort," he says.

Ultimately, Sever says people must advocate for themselves.

To contact the Independent Police Review Board with concerns or information, call 503-823-0146. To file a complaint or commendation online, visit portlandonline.gov/auditor.

Jimmy Carter Making Portland Visit

President Jimmy Carter will be in town Sunday, March 30 to sign copies of his new book "A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power" at Powell's City of Books, 1005 W. Burnside St.

Only those with a newly purchased copy of the book will be

permitted into the line. Carter, 86, will start signing the books at 2 p.m.

"A Call to Action" is Carter's report on the worldwide abuse of women and girls and uses personal examples from his travels to call attention to the problem. Carter believes that discrimination and vio-

lence against women and girls is "the most serious, pervasive and ignored violation of basic human rights."

His most recent memoir, released March 25, is the 30th publication for the former head of state's bibliography.