

## Community

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nity involvement and how he's built the O.G. One brand.

Ecclesia Athletic Association  
The meat of the book, originally released in 2010, deals with Jackson's time with the Ecclesia Athletic Association. EAA moved from Watts to Clackamas to help kids see a different scene and train for the Cascade Run-Offs, says Jackson.

Things began souring when local news media raised suspicion that the group was a cult.

This took a tragic turn in 1988 when the 8-year-old daughter of the EAA's founder

Making good impressions and building relationships would become a theme for Jackson.

Proactive Community Involvement  
Although music was a part of Jackson's life when he was in Watts, Jackson didn't really get in focus on his craft until 1992.

Instead, he put his time into the Portland community.

One of the first issues he tackled was the proliferation of gangs.

Jackson was a gang member from the ages of 10 to 15. He chose to leave after his pastor Eldridge Broussard of Watts Christian Center stepped in to fill the needs the gang was serving, such as protection, support, refuge and financial gain.

"Those are excuses," he says. "I'm in this gang because I get this. I get that unconditional love." When I talk to people I'd ask, 'Why does a child feel all this but they don't feel that from regular citizens in their neighbor-

hood?'"  
People try to complicate the problem, he says. It's about being proactive and eliminating the politics and red tape.

"I'm supposed to be the positive person but I can only help you between 9:00 and 5:00?" says Jackson. "We don't have a gang problem. We have a community problem. Just for the fact that any of the kids in our community feel that's an option.

"If we can change people's mindsets, values, and actually hold each other accountable for making a difference, our communities will change instantly but people think it's politics, money or the next man's problem.

The word passed around and he built a good rapport with both students and their parents. His reputation grew in the process.

### Building the O.G. One Brand

Jackson got the name O.G. One from a program established by inmates at Oregon State Penitentiary called "Original Gang-



O.G. One

way." Each member was assigned a number and he got the numeral one because of his leadership in the community and his involvement in bringing young men to the penitentiary for intervention. Although the program didn't take off, he decided to keep the name.

When Jackson got his first real DJ gig, it was a concert featuring Naughty by Nature and Run-DMC at the Roseland Theatre. His career soared from that moment.

"The program director, he asked me 'Why is your name on the radio more than the DJs that work here and you don't work for us?'" says Jackson. "I said, 'That's a question you've got to answer.'"

He attributes a large portion of his success to the relationships he's built over the years.

One example is when Jackson helped put together a mix for a young lady on the Benson High School dance team. He found out the girl's father was related to a producer for BET. The father made a call without Jackson knowing, and the next thing Jackson knew, he was on the celebrated show, "Rap City: Tha Basement hosted by Tigga."

Now the O.G. One brand includes his role as the official DJ of the Portland Trailblazers, a headphone deal with Sol Republic, a growing partnership with Nike (they devel-

oped exclusive O.G. One shoes), being part of the Brand Jordan family, Official Football team DJ for the Portland State Vikings, and a show schedule that would be exhausting for some just to look at.

### What's Next?

In 2011, Jackson decided to go back to school for personal reasons and as part of an effort to reach a broader audience.

He got his GED in 2012 and now he's pursuing a degree in general studies. His classes include everything from psychology to mass communication to writing.

Ultimately, the goal is to expand the O.G. One brand so he can support the community without necessarily being attached to one organization. He wants to avoid the ironically territorial landscape that can arise in community work.

"When you're attached to one organization people will become possessive," says Jackson. "Unfortunately, it's kind of like how gangs act."

"The Man Behind the Music" is now available on e-book. There will be a release party at Quartet on Sep. 12 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. For more information about Jackson, go to his official site.

## He attributes a large portion of his success to the relationships he's built over the years

Eldridge Broussard Jr., was killed. An autopsy revealed she was beaten to death.

A national media frenzy, which included a TIME magazine story and an infamous appearance by Broussard on Oprah, ensued and eventually four people were convicted in the death.

After Broussard died in 1991, the EAA broke up and many were left to find their way.

At the time, Jackson was in his mid-20s.

Since all their money had been tied up in the group, he and his future wife were living from home to home and eventually on the street.

Jackson worked odd jobs and ingratiated himself with fellow employees. One McDonald's colleague allowed him to purchase their car, which he and his wife would sleep in for a period of time. Another fellow employee gave them a chance to live in her apartment when the opportunity presented itself.

## King

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who we've made King to be (and rightfully so). She wanted to examine who would he be like as a human, and how can we see him as a man who puts his pants on the same way, who was this really ordinary man who did extraordinary things — and that is really the crux of the play.

It's not the 'I Have a Dream' King; it's a more radical King, it's "warts and all," basically, and not this Christ-like figure which we have made him to be.

We have to remember that night in history, that night before his assassination, and everything leading up to it — he had dissent in his own movement, and not just the FBI and everything like that. Also he was suffering from depression, because of all the mounting pressures, being away from his family so much. So we are seeing King there.

**TSN:** And this is King at the Lorraine Motel, in Memphis, in 1968, the night before his assassination. Have you ever been to the Lorraine Motel?

**RH:** Yes I have!

**TSN:** Talk about that a little. Why is that moment in time so important? Because I have a feeling that a lot of people agree that, actually, the fate of the whole planet was changed. I think it is fair to say that.

**RH:** Absolutely.

You know there was so much leading up to his night before — he was receiving death

threats already, and they were putting on the radio, that night before, where he was staying. Also on that night before, he and some friends were all planning to go to a soul food dinner. Just before the bullet was fired, as he stood with friends on the motel balcony, the last thing King said was about that planned dinner: "Make sure they play Precious Lord Take My Hand." The last words he said in public.

Assassination aside, when I found that out, it changed a lot of things for me. And his legacy — I mean he could have died in his sleep. His autopsy showed he had the heart of a 60 year old. And at that time, being 60-years-old is like being 90 in our times. You know?

If he'd died in his sleep, he would have been revered. But the fact that he was assassinated changed our whole course of history and the legacy of what he could have continued to do. He would have only been 80-something years old now.

**TSN:** You are an incredibly thoughtful actor. How has this current part changed you?

**RH:** First, at the outset — I gained 20 pounds to play the role. Right? Back in April. And that was just the physical.

But it changed me in terms of really knowing who this man was. Not just, oh it's Martin Luther King Day, or smiling when I see Martin Luther King Boulevard. It changed me when I really delved deep into

## Key

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fit from the "race to the bottom."

Instead, the report says states should increase efforts to graduate more students, help dropouts get GEDs, hold down tuition costs and improve the education system from pre-school through high school.

who this man was, and it made me see — he could do all of these things and achieve all of that at 39? And then I looked at myself and said, I'm 39 right now.

And then you flash forward to all the things that are happening today, with the Voting Rights Act overturned, and the things that are happening in North Carolina, and Trayvon Martin — all of these things — you can't escape him, I can't escape him now.

I don't think I have ever been in a rehearsal process for a show or a Shakespeare play or musical where I actually broke down. It wasn't until this show, and I will leave you with this in terms of how it's changed me: It's opened me up even more to the possibilities, to the possibilities of the human condition.

There's a section in the show where Camae, the maid who is played brilliantly by Natalie Paul, she asks him: You're not afraid? And he says, basically: I've known fear my whole life. I've seen it in pulpits even in my own church. Fear doesn't both-

"We know what's preventing higher educational attainment and what's needed to improve it," said Sheketoff. "We just need to make those policies a priority and stop the wasteful tax subsidies that plainly don't work and rob the state of valuable resources."

er me because I know if I'm still awake and still afraid, I'm still alive. I'm paraphrasing but you get the gist. He was afraid of many things—everything else but fear itself. That didn't bother him. But there were a lot of things that he was afraid of.

We were in the middle of that one speech and I just lost it. It was strange because it wasn't Rodney losing it — it was a spiritual thing happening. And I just sunk to the floor. The same thing happened to our actress several days later—she had this moment as well.

I think this show, and under Rose Rordan's direction, I think people are going to be touched in a whole other way that they cannot fathom. I really do.

You will stop thinking that you're watching a play. And that's her goal.

**"The Mountaintop" opens for previews Saturday, Aug. 31, and runs through Oct. 27. For ticket information go to [www.pcs.org/mountaintop](http://www.pcs.org/mountaintop), or call the box office at 503-445-3700**