

OCTOBER 1996

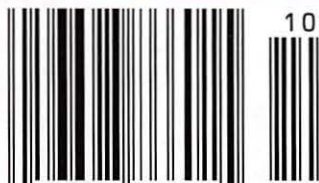
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THE END OF REHABILITATION

PRISON LIFE

MAN OF THE YEAR

EDDIE ELLIS

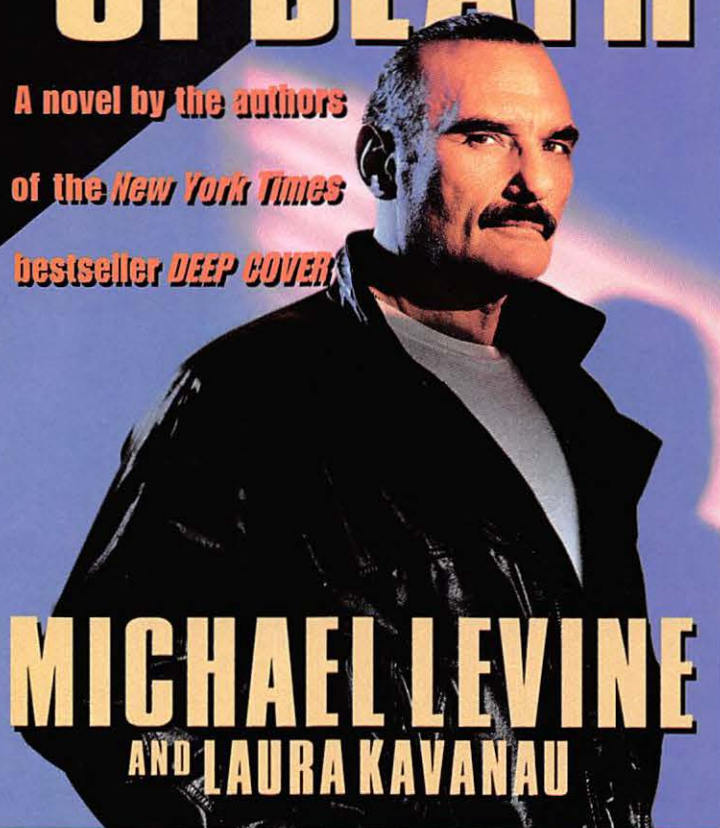


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Drama—excerpts from plays or screenplays, limit 30 pages.

VISUAL ARTS:

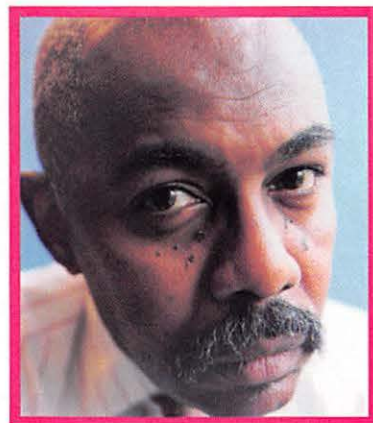
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Contest Deadline: December 31, 1996.

PRISON LIFE

OCTOBER 1996



Cover photo by Flonn Reilly

FEATURES

44-MAN OF THE YEAR: EDDIE ELLIS AT LARGE

by Pam Widener

After 23 years in New York's toughest joints, former Black Panther and Attica veteran Eddie Ellis is back in the 'hood. The message he brings from behind the wall is one of self-rehabilitation through education, community awareness and political action.



24-MORE INSIDER ART the art of ronnie white

by Phyllis Kornfeld

Meet the first place winner of our '95 Art Behind Bars Contest and see his stunning portfolio of jailhouse art.

30-CONFESSIONS OF A CONVICTED MURDERER

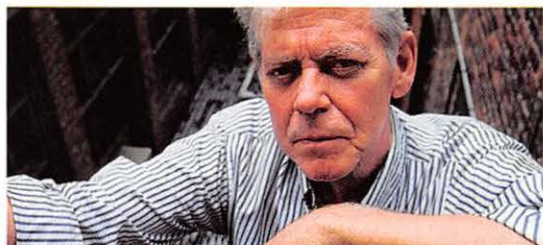
by Larry Bratt

It's all about redemption through self-awareness in the second place essay from our '95 Art Behind Bars Contest.

34-TWO CONVICTS

by Terry McClain

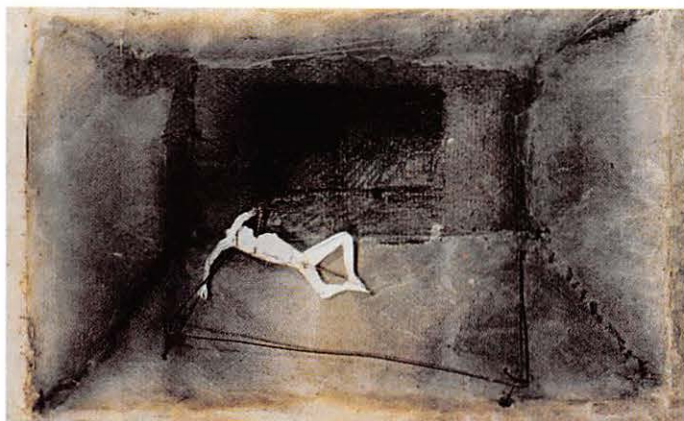
Second place fiction: a chilling story of life and death in the penitentiary.



40-PROSE AND CONS:

Fielding Dawson by Anthony Papa

Fielding Dawson runs the writing workshop at New York's Sing Sing penitentiary. His convict students are producing some notable writing.



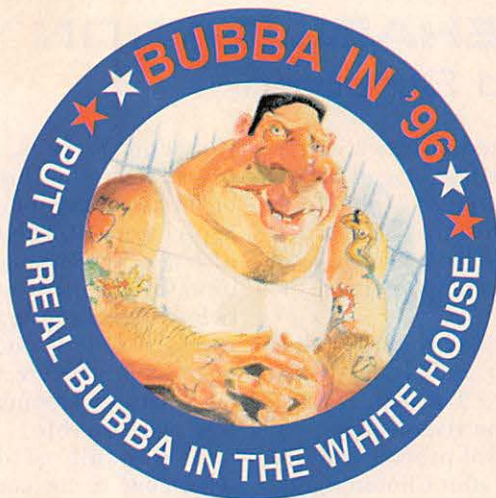
Prison Life ISSN # 1065-0709 October 1996. Prison Life magazine is published bimonthly by Joint Venture Media of Texas, Inc., 1436 West Gray, Suite 531, Houston, TX 77019. Prison Life magazine is printed in the USA and all rights are reserved. © 1996 by Joint Venture Media of Texas, Inc. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission of the publishers. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs are the responsibility of the senders. All letters sent to Prison Life magazine will be treated as unconditionally assigned for the publication or brochure, and are subject to Prison Life magazine's unrestricted right to edit and comment. Single copies in the U.S. \$4.95. Subscription rates one year in U.S. \$23.70 for 6 issues; in Canada, \$35; an additional \$12 elsewhere; all payable in U.S. funds only. Please mail all subscription orders and changes to Prison Life magazine Subscription Department, 1436 West Gray, Suite 531, Houston, TX 77019. POSTMASTER: Please forward address changes to Prison Life magazine, 1436 West Gray, Suite 531, Houston, TX 77019. Application to mail at 2nd Class postage rate is pending at Houston, TX and additional mailing office.

72-UNCLE SAM'S TAX SCAM

by Irwin Schiff

Irwin Schiff says organized crime begins with the government shaking down citizens for a tax they have no legal right to collect—and he's been to prison to prove it.

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PRISON LIFE

1436 W. Gray, Ste. 531
Houston, TX 77019-4946

Printed in USA

VOICE OF THE CONVICT



THE END OF REHABILITATION

By Richard Stratton

*This morning I woke up in a curfew.
Oh God, I was a prisoner, too.
Could not recognize the faces
standing over me.
They were all dressed in uniforms
of brutality.
How many rivers do we have to cross
Before we can talk to the boss?
All we have got it seems we have lost.
We must of really paid the cost.
That's why we're gonna be
Burnin' and lootin' tonight.
Burnin' all illusion tonight.*

Bob Marley, *Burnin' and Lootin'*

Attica. The word conjures images of state-sanctioned mayhem and butchery. Official brutality. Helmeted, faceless men in black uniforms swinging truncheons. Helicopters dropping tear gas bombs. Police sharpshooters in flak jackets picking off caged, defenseless men as though they were shooting ducks on a pond.

Thirty-three prisoners and eleven civilians were murdered by state police at Attica. Eddie Ellis—*Prison Life's* first Man of the Year—lived through the 1971 prison uprising and is back on the streets now to remind us that the revolt at Attica resulted in the largest number of deaths to Americans by gunfire since the Civil War.

Attica may well be the pivotal battle in the latest permutation of our on-going civil war, The First Battle of Bull Run in the struggle between the condemned and the keeper, yet just one more melee in an endless conflict between the haves and the have-nots. Attica was the turning point, the first major post-'60s exercise of police violence. The line between the fascistic forces of wealth and power—greed, oppression, state-sanctioned killing and brutality—and the positive urges of man to better his lot

was clearly delineated at Attica. After Attica we saw the fire bombing of MOVE in Philadelphia, the return of the death penalty, Waco, and the continued stripping away of the basic principles of mercy, decency and compassion for the downtrodden.

How many Atticas must we live through before our leaders recognize the lessons of history? The men at Attica revolted for the same reasons that men and women in federal prisons went off last year at this time after Clinton signed yet another piece of shit legislation denying the basic right of equal protection under the law. By refusing to

Consent Decrees, like most recent prison reform in this country, came out of the aftermath of Attica. I remember September, 1971 during the siege and ultimate massacre at Attica, watching news of the riot on TV. Even then, before I had been to prison, I was on the convicts' side. I watched the riots and negotiations before the bloodbath and felt what the prisoners were demanding was reasonable. Even the most unreasonable of demands seemed reasonable to me considering what had been done to these men. It was clear then and it is clear now that if you treat men like vicious beasts, if you deny them

access to opportunities to improve their lives, they will rise up and resist.

What the prisoners demanded at Attica still makes sense to me. Humane living conditions: Try living in a filthy cage, a brutal animal factory, as another ex-con named Eddie labeled our penitentiaries, and see how long it takes you to either kill yourself or kill someone else. An end to racism: I know that if I were mistreated and denied what others were receiving because of my color or my heritage I would fight those who sought to treat me unfairly. Education and rehabilitation: Again, if

those in authority told me I could not take part in programs designed to help me make a better person of myself and give me more of a shot at getting out of prison and staying out, I would resist them with everything I could muster.

When I was in prison the Pell grants were in place and I was able to complete the college education I'd abandoned while on the outside. I was holed up at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan for nearly two years fighting a second prosecution for "engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise." I was



Sunny Kresser, Pam Africa, Richard Stratton and Kim Wozencraft at an anti-death penalty, anti-police brutality rally in Woodstock, NY.

eliminate gross disparity in the crack versus powdered cocaine sentencing laws, the Congress of Doom and the Wimp of the Year, Bill Clinton, hammered another spike into the stinking corpse of democracy.

In July federal judge Harold Baer Jr. of the Southern District of New York, citing the Prison Reform Litigation Act signed by Clinton in May, caved in to demands by Mayor Rudy Guiliani and eliminated the Consent Decrees that regulate conditions in New York City's jails.

All we have got it seems we have lost. The

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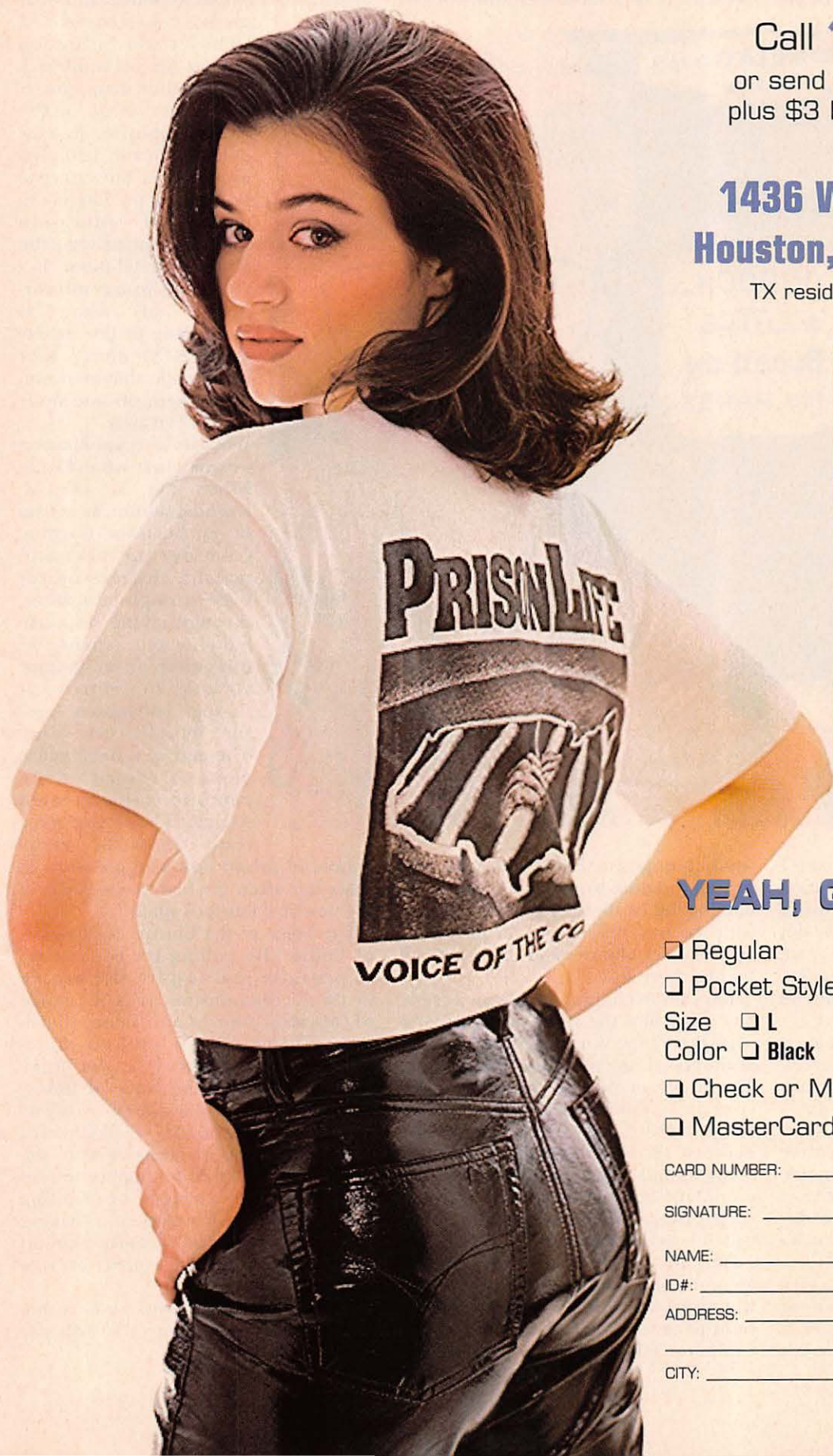
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facing life in prison for essentially the same crimes for which I had already received 15 years. MCC was, and I'm sure still is, a crazy joint. The noise and insanity on the housing units was relentless. One of the few ways to escape the din and chaos was to go down to the library. I began my study of the law at MCC. If I had not had the basic education necessary to read and understand the law, I would not have been able to comprehend the charges against me and I would not have been able to exercise my rights under the Constitution to defend myself. Had I lacked the education to understand the language of the law, I would never have been able to see that what the government was attempting to do to me was in violation of their own statutes.

While leaving the law library at MCC one day I saw some prisoners sitting in a classroom having what looked like an engaging discussion with a civilian teacher. I knew one of the men, later I asked him what he was studying and how he happened to enroll in the class. He told me it was a writing course offered by Empire State College to sentenced prisoners. Because I had already received one sentence and was serving that time while fighting the new case, I was able to enroll in Empire State College. Eventually I earned a BA while locked up.

When I arrived at the penitentiary, I got a job as an orderly in the education department. At first I was cleaning toilets, mopping and waxing floors, but when my duties were done I could read, write, continue my study of the law that eventually freed me and helped land me my first job with a law firm once I got out of prison. In time I was able to enroll in some classes through the Pell grants and to receive credits toward my degree. I met my first computer in a prison education class. And I met other men who were trying to use their time to improve their minds and enhance their chances of staying out once they were released. The education department was an oasis of sanity and calm in the mad world of prison.

Eddie Ellis too availed himself of every education opportunity he could during the 23 years he was locked up. Now he is using that education to improve his

community and help others stay out of prison. Educated convicts who come back out and use their prison learning to improve their communities are a vital force against the crime-generative conditions Eddie defines as being the primary reason most men and women

pleadings, I would still be in prison today serving a sentence that three federal judges found illegal. The law is immensely complex and difficult even for judges to understand. To punish people for committing crimes and then deny them the right to understand their predicament is barbaric.

The Prison Litigation Reform Act is a throwback to pre-Attica times, just as the resurrection of the chain gang is an atavistic mutation in the deformed evolution of our criminal justice system. The elimination of education programs in prison, the end of rehabilitation is a gross bighouse mirror-image of what is happening in the society at large. No mercy. Kick them while they're down. Write them off and hope they will go away.

What does rehabilitation mean? Just what Eddie Ellis says it means: learning about the causes of our behavior, learning from our mistakes and making changes in our lives through education, through taking responsibility for our actions and our environment and striving to improve it through community work that benefits everyone. The end of rehabilitation means a return of the conditions that created Attica. There are over four times as many

people in prison now as there were 25 years ago when the first major battle in the new civil war took place.

The Voice of the Convict is the voice of Eddie Ellis calling for ex-convicts to organize and inspire the people in their communities. It is the voice of Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row calling for an end to state-sanctioned murder. It is the voice of Eddie Bunker, the voice of Jimmy Baca, Susan Rosenberg, Danny Trejo, Sadia Zoe Ali and Charles Dutton. These prisoners and ex-convicts know: By ending opportunities to make positive changes, by resorting to the tactics of brutality and making sure our prisons remain animal factories, we force the convict back to violence.

All we have got it seems we have lost. But it is society at large that will pay the cost.



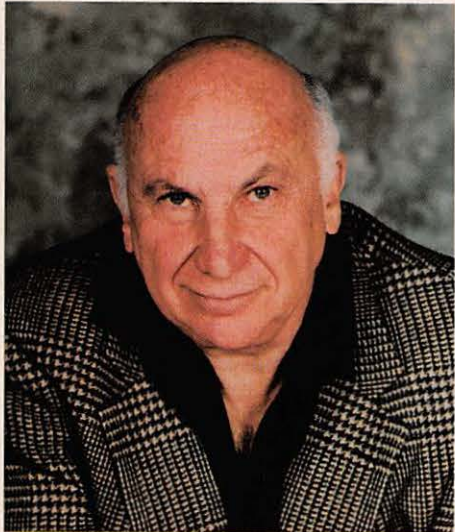
wind up in prison. Education is the only proven antidote to recidivism. With the elimination of the Pell grants, and now with the new restrictions on prisoners' access to law libraries and the courts, all that has been lost.

You cannot charge a man with a crime and deny him the right to understand what that crime is or deny him the skills and opportunity to answer the charges. The largest single cause of crime in this country is illiteracy. Education is basic to the fundamental struggle for equality. To deny those who have been charged and punished for committing crimes the right to understand what it is society doesn't like about their behavior will only assure that they do it again.

Had there not been laws in place guaranteeing me the right to access to the courts through *habeas corpus* and the right to access a law library and obtain the materials needed to prepare my

Contributors

IRWIN SCHIFF is a leading anti-tax advocate whose latest book is *The Federal Mafia: How It Illegally Imposes and Unlawfully Collects Income Taxes*. He was quoted in *The New York Times* as saying, "Repressive regimes always send people who speak the truth to prison." He was on the ballot for the Libertarian Party's presidential nomination this year.



LARRY BRATT is a lifer at MCIH in Maryland whose work has appeared in *Yoga Journal*, *National Health* magazine and *American Libraries*. His essay "Confessions of a Convicted Murderer" won Second Place in *Prison Life's* 1995 Art Behind Bars contest.

MANSFIELD FRAZIER is a contributing editor to *Prison Life* magazine. His collection of essays, *From Behind the Wall*, was published by Paragon House and is available through **Books on the Block**.

JUNE LEAF lives in her studio, wherever that is, and has done so since she was old enough to walk. She was born August 4, 1929, and is still alive.

TERRY McCLAIN, whose short story "Two Convicts" tied for second place in *Prison Life's* 1995 Art Behind Bars contest, has been down for the past 21 years. He is presently at El Dorado in the Kansas state system. He has received numerous awards for his writing, including Best Column in the Penal Press Awards in 1986 and 1989.

THIERRY MARIGNAC is a French writer, translator and editor who

specializes in slang and crime fiction and translated *Smack Goddess*. He does not wish to comment on the reasons for his interest in the subject matter, except to say that Paris, deemed the City of Light, is forever to him a city of tiny dark streets and shady action.

CATHERINE A. SALMONS is a writer who lives in Boston. Her work has appeared in *The Boston Phoenix*, the *Boston Globe*, and *Boston Magazine*. Her poems and translations into French have appeared in *Partisan Review*, the *Harvard Review*, and *Exquisite Corpse*.

PAMELA WIDENER is a contributing writer to *Prison Life* magazine. She grew up in New York City and spent five years working in screenwriting in Los Angeles. Her work has appeared in *Creative Nonfiction*.

RONNIE WHITE won First Prize for visual art in *Prison Life's* 1995 Art Behind Bars Contest with his *Reflections of a Convicted Soul*. He is currently finishing

up a parole violation in Massachusetts.

PHYLLIS KORNFELD is an artist, author and educator who has spent the last 30 years teaching art outside of traditional school settings. Since 1993 she has organized the exhibition, *The Hands of Time: American Prison Art* for the Phyllis Kind Gallery in New York City. Her book, *Cellblock Visions: Prison Art in America* will be published by Princeton University Press late this fall.

ANTHONY PAPA is serving a 15-to-life sentence at Sing Sing in New York state. His paintings were recently exhibited at The New York Theological Seminary.

WILLIAM LINCOLN is a federal prisoner serving time for stock violations.

DENNIS D. DECHAIENE is a poet doing time at the state prison in Thomaston, Maine.

RICHARD A. STREET is locked up in Massachusetts at Walpole State Prison.

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MAIL CALL



ALL ABOUT SELF-REHABILITATION

Dear Editor:

I'm a ninth-grade high-school dropout. When I returned to the Texas prison system in 1991, I had made up my mind that I was not going to just kick back like I did my first time around (I did 5 1/2 on a 10). This time I was going to take advantage of whatever program I was eligible for. Unfortunately for me, the State Classification Committee felt I was going to be a threat to the physical safety of other convicts or staff, and I was placed in ad seg lockup. The only thing that was offered in ad seg was GED and college correspondence.

One day a week this so-called teacher would come around, bringing us some school work. He would only spend about five minutes with everyone he worked with. I saw right away that one couldn't depend on getting anywhere dealing with him. So every week I would check out a book from the library. I studied three times a day for about two hours each session. I did this for five months.

I had a next door neighbor who would laugh and say I was wasting my time because I wasn't going to pass the GED test or at least not all five subjects at one time.

He said the teacher didn't come often enough or stay long enough. I admitted this was true but on the other hand, I wasn't going to wait around for him or depend on him. I was going to teach myself what I needed to know.

For five months all I heard from him and others was whining, whining, whining. This prisoner would tell me he was studying (I tried to encourage him) yet not long after, I would hear him ask someone else if they could send him some fiction book or some jack book. All he got from the library were fiction books or he would kick back and listen to his radio. The time came to see if our EA's were high enough to take the GED test. Soon after came the test and guess what? I passed all five

subjects on my first shot. The whiner? You guessed it again. There wasn't anything happening for him. Instead of whining about this or that, prisoners need to take matters into their own hands and not wait for someone else to give them something. Unfortunately, we are no longer able to go to school here but that shouldn't stop anyone from educating himself when there's a unit library full of educational material.

In my opinion though, they just don't want it. They would rather sit on their ass and whine about some BS or another. They love whining. They would rather ask for jack books than do something that will help them change from the person they were when they came in. They tell themselves, "When I get out, I'll

haven't fully recovered from the culture shock, I am adjusting and trying to retrieve some of my long-lost social manners, and remember that I don't have to be in compliance, be home for count, or hide contraband. I still sometimes search for my I.D. before leaving the house; when I realize what I am doing, I have to laugh. It's kind of strange, I guess. No one imagines that prison will make such drastic changes in your personality and the way you view life and the people around you. After numerous attacks of severe anxiety and countless other side affects, I am now beginning to venture into a mall and be OK with the 50 billion other people in there.

This may sound strange but there are moments in the day when I truly miss my convict family. It's odd that going to prison made me understand and learn the true meaning of love and family. The other day I bought a card for someone who taught me a lot and inside it said, "Friends are the family we choose for ourselves." How fitting, don't you think?

I guess I should quit rambling now and get to the point of my letter. I hope that you may be able to help me obtain information on how to become involved with the system as an advocate for prisoners and their issues. Since I transferred my parole to Ohio from Arizona, I would need to get in touch with Ohio agencies. Any help you could provide me in this, is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Beth A. Eaton
(Still a convict at heart)

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

Dear Editor:
Articles out of *Prison Life* such as, "Silencing The Oppressed," "Bleeding With Words," "Contract On America," "Let Inmates Mate In," "The Making Of A Criminal," and "Self-Forgiveness—The Heart Of Healing," etc., give me hope, drive,



take steps," when they need to do that now. It's all about self-rehabilitation.

Love your mag. I just saw it not long ago. Ain't got a sub yet but I will.

PEACE
Stephen Hernandez
Beaumont, TX

HEART TO HEART

Dear Editor:
I would like to begin this letter by letting the entire staff of *Prison Life* know that your magazine is great! It's nice to know that something this good is in publication. Most so-called "prison" magazines, books, movies, etc. are so far from the truth it's sickening. I appreciate the truthful and entertaining way *Prison Life* depicts prison life.

After 4-5 years in the Arizona Dept. of Corrections, I was released on September 5, 1995. Although I still

motivation and inspiration to want to learn more. I also thank you from the bottom of my heart for your dedication to the cause, your magazine, and all your efforts.

I sent copies of some articles to our Assistant Superintendent. Robin Casarjian's book, *The Houses Of Healing*, is now going to be used in our Substance Abuse Program here in the MO Dept. of Corrections.

Encourage other prison inmates to do this. This way the prison officials will be given a good aspect of the magazine before someone of limited intellectual capacity points out the bad and gets the magazine banned, as was done in California.

You must have both a positive and a negative or you'll get no juice. We need your magazine *desperately*. With knowledge comes understanding. With understanding comes change. Knowledge is *power*, and where there is action, changes do take place.

Jim Hunsucker
Western MO Correction Center
Cameron, MO

STRATTON, YOU PUNK!

Dear Richard Stratton, You're a fucking punk! And you know what? Fuck *Prison Life* too! Fucking puss mag! You fucking asshole! You think you're the "Voice of the Convict." You ain't the "voice" of nothing, you take it up the ass, pole smoker! I'd bust your fucking grape open if I could get my hands on you. I'd fuck that wimp looking mug of yours up so bad you'd wish you never slided your way out of that pussy Fed joint you were in.

Have I got your attention yet? I never talk like this, but I finally figured out that this type of language is all you understand. Maybe you think it's "cool" to talk like a "convict." I've been involved in prisoners' rights (and men's rights) since 1989 after I was wrongly convicted of "date rape" after this slug falsely accused

me in order to file a million-dollar lawsuit. There was no evidence of any

crime. She had a history of falsely accusing men of rape. That evidence was not allowed in court due to the rape shield laws. I know what you're thinking, "Oh sure, you're innocent, you rape-o." I'd expect that response from you. You seem to be too "politically correct" to mention in *Prison Life* that there are innocent men in prison due to

innocent men would love to hear about SAFAR.

Sincerely,
James Anderson
Oregon State Cor. Institution

SNITCH BITCH

To Whomever: (yeah, you Stratton!) What's this bullshit on page 71 of PLM's August issue Wanted poster? Is this what this magazine is about, selling advertising space to the fucking man?

Now I don't care what those two jerkoffs did or might have done but to run the advertisement requesting snitch information is outrageous. This magazine is *Prison Life* not *Snitch Life*. And as responsible publishers you should not be encouraging any one to drop the dime. Even if the two in the picture look like homos.

Being born and raised in South Philly (the fastest rising snitch capital of the country) I know firsthand what it's like to be dimed on. It's a fucked up feeling.

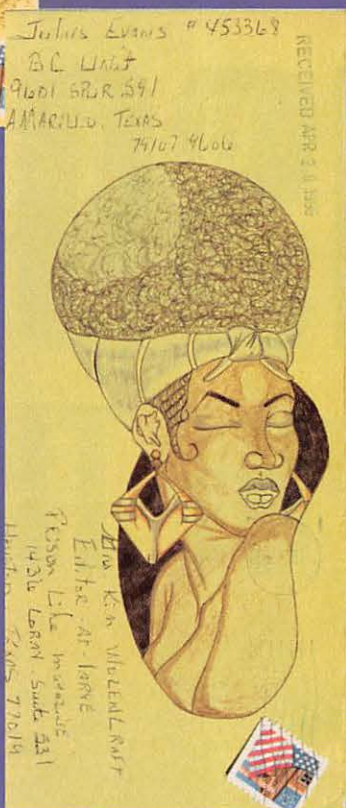
I dig this rag but wouldn't like it to become an instrument of this fast-becoming Stalinist country. So could you please cut out the soliciting of information? Most of us convicts are from the old school and don't appreciate this bullshit. Also try to make some documentaries on free T.V. I and others like me don't buy HBO because the cable companies and concentration camps are getting rich off our backs. Other than that, I have no complaints. Keep trying till you get it right.

Joey Diz
P.S. And just because I'm Italian doesn't mean I'm picking up for them homo-looking dagos in the wanted poster

Look again, Joey Diz. It's private investigators, not the Man, looking for info on these guys. Could it be that they're the snitches? Maybe we know something you don't know.

—The Editors

Write to:
Mail Call
PO Box 537
Stone Ridge NY 12484



false accusations and sex crime hoaxes. That would no doubt piss your feminist buddies off and we know you can't make your "We're all Victims" allies pissed off. Well, Stratton, if you ever grow a pair and do a story on how unjust rape shield laws are, how feminists profit off of false allegations, how rape crisis counselors tamper with witnesses, and how easy it is to send a man to prison on a rape beef, please mention my organization: the **Society Against False Accusations of Rape (SAFAR)** and the *SAFAR Newsletter*, of which I recently sent you our 21st edition. Rich, please grow a pair and make *Prison Life* the real "Voice of the Convict." Don't be a punk. A lot of

**CREATE YOUR OWN SYSTEM OR
BE ENSLAVED BY ANOTHER MAN'S**

PRISON LIFE

VOICE OF THE CONVICT

S U B S C R I B E

ROLL BACK THE CLOCK:

US JUDGE STRIKES RULES ON JAIL CONDITIONS

Judge Harold Baer Jr. of Federal District Court in Manhattan struck down a series of legally binding agreements, known as consent decrees, that have governed conditions in New York City jails for nearly two decades. The decrees dictate standards in a number of aspects of prison life including overcrowding, access to phones and to the

lawsuits over the conditions and legality of their confinement. The Prison Reform Act, far from reforming anything, essentially wiped out all the gains made in prisoners' rights legislation since the Attica rebellion over prison conditions 25 years ago.

"The degree of civilization in a society is revealed by entering its

in turning the land of the free into a fascist police state.

PRISONERS HIT HARD BY AIDS

Prisoners are almost six times more likely than other Americans to have AIDS, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. The CDC reported that in 1994, the rate of AIDS for prisoners in the nation's largest prisons and jails was 5.2 per 1,000. Most of the infected prisoners already had AIDS or carried the virus before they entered prison, said Juarlyn Gaiter, a psychologist with the CDC Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention.

— contributed by Brent A. Ellis

STICK EM UP, CONVICT

The Supreme Court surprised criminal defendants and defense lawyers on June 24, 1996, when it reversed the double jeopardy-forfeiture decisions in consolidated cases, *U.S. v. \$405,089.23*, 33 F.3d 1210 (9th Cir. 1994) and *U.S. v. Ursery*, 59 F.3d 568 (6th Cir. 1995). The court severely narrowed its recent prior forfeiture ruling in *Austin* and its double jeopardy precedent in *Halper* to hold that civil forfeitures do not constitute punishment under the double jeopardy clause. The Court relied on a rarely used alcohol prohibition case where a distillery was forfeited, *Various Items of Personal Property v. U.S.*, 282 U.S. 577 (1931), and the standards set out in a customs importation claim case, *One Lot of Emerald Cut Stones v. U.S.*, 409 US 232 (1972), and a gun case, *U.S. v. One Assortment of 89 Firearms*, 465 U.S. 354 (1984).

The Justices found that taking a defendant's home and property *in rem* by a civil action is not punishment, although it is punishment if the same property is taken from the defendant *in personam*, by indictment. A lawyer close to the \$405 case called the decision "intellectually dishonest," the same words Justice Souter used to describe the government's position during oral argument.

Justice Stevens concurred with the



Photo by Molly Wellpot.

law library for prisoners awaiting trial.

Mayor Rudolph Guiliani has been trying to have the consent decrees rescinded since shortly after taking office. But not until President Clinton signed into law the Prison Reform Litigation Act last spring was Mayor Guiliani able to find a judge craven enough to do his dirty work. (See related story, *The Choke the Court Act*, In-House Counsel, this issue.)

Judge Baer is the same federal lackey who caved in and overturned his own ruling in a controversial drug case after he became the target of fierce criticism from Guiliani, Governor Pataki and Clinton earlier this year. In his 52-page ruling, Judge Baer expressed strong reservations about the new federal law, pushed by Republicans who control Congress, to make it much more difficult, if not impossible, for prisoners to bring

prisons," Judge Baer wrote, quoting the great Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky, who spent seven years in the gulag for alleged political crimes. And though Judge Baer derided the Prison Reform Act, saying, correctly, that it had been "signed as part of a budget bill in the midst of an election year," he did not have the guts to stand up to the politicians and refuse to heed a law that is plainly a giant step backward.

President Clinton has continued to distinguish himself as the best Democratic President the Republicans have ever had. In the four years Clinton has been in the White House, he has done more to undo the progress made in upholding the Constitutional rights of the accused and the human rights of the condemned than any President since Nixon. Four more years of Clinton and the Republicans will have succeeded

majority's decision in *\$405*, that forfeitures of proceeds under 881 (a) (6) are never punishment, but he dissented on *Ursery* because he considered forfeiture of a working man's home—because marijuana was smoked there—to be punishment under the double jeopardy clause.

There was one ray of hope left for defendants in footnote 3 of the opinion, which states that double jeopardy may apply to civil forfeiture where the "clearest proof" indicates that it is so punitive "as to be equivalent to a criminal proceeding." Michael Montalvo, the jailhouse lawyer who represented the Lompoc prison inmates in the Ninth Circuit appeal of *\$405*, was shocked by the decision, which he felt demonstrated a total lack of fairness.

"The courts will protect the government's massive misconduct at the sacrifice of Constitutional rights," Montalvo said. "It's time to repeal prohibition laws and release the drug war prisoners, and if those in power won't do it, we must elect officials who will."

Montalvo felt that Chief Justice Rehnquist's opinion relied on the "legal fiction" that inanimate property, not the owner of that property, is guilty of the crime and is thus subject to forfeiture to the government.

"But it is comforting," Montalvo commented, "to know that the decision relies on a 1931 alcohol prohibition case, when those very prohibition laws were repealed in 1934."

THE REAL SKINNY

MILAN, ITALY (Weekly World News)

Authorities had to let Dominic Patti out of jail after his conviction for auto theft—because the 6'2", 127-pound man could slip between the bars of his cell. The warden of the prison said Patti couldn't leave the institution, but caused problems by wandering the hallways day and night.

FCI DUBLIN WALKATHON

Women Prisoners Fighting AIDS

Over Memorial Day weekend, more than 600 women prisoners at the federal prison and prison camp in Dublin, California walked 8,266 miles to raise over \$4,500 for AIDS services. \$1,500 was donated from women prisoners who earn an average of \$5.25 a month.

The FIGHT AIDS Walkathon funds went to the Ambassador Hotel, a residential hotel in San Francisco's

Tenderloin district providing housing and services for people with HIV and AIDS, and for scholarships to Camp Sunburst, which offers a supportive atmosphere and help for children with HIV or AIDS and their families. For many of these children, the 2-week camp is the only place they can be free of the stress of hiding their HIV condition.

Women prisoners spent four days of the long weekend walking in a stiff wind around the third-of-a-mile track in the recreation yard. For that brief period, an unusually positive, cooperative atmosphere prevailed in the prison. It wasn't just that the women prisoners were walking together, or that they were joining the effort to extend their support to their communities and families outside, caring for others enduring hard circumstances. It was also that we were, for a time, powerful instead of powerless.

"Fight AIDS" is not just a slogan; the women prisoners were struggling against myriad obstacles to take on the enormous problems we all face in the era of AIDS. The Walkathon was a project of PLACE: Pleasanton AIDS Counseling and Education, a peer advocacy and education group started by prisoners in 1991.

When the AIDS pandemic began hitting our communities, it was clear to us that if we didn't educate ourselves and care about women getting HIV, no one else would. PLACE has since sponsored a variety of activities, including classes and seminars on HIV/AIDS, TB, hepatitis, and a Health Fair. We adopted the Oakland Children's Hospital HIV/AIDS patients, making toys, gifts and holiday cards for them. We've designed and produced panels for the Names Project AIDS quilt, and sponsored a showing of part of the quilt here in the prison. The FIGHT AIDS Walkathon Memorial Day weekend was our second Walkathon.

Reaching through the prison walls to care for those with HIV and AIDS breaks through some of the isolation of prison. In this, we have had essential help from Carol Ghilardi and the AIDS Ministry of St. Augustine's Catholic Church in Pleasanton. Carol and the ministry generously serve as our outside volunteer sponsors. Several people from St. Augustine's community joined us in the walk, and they receive and disburse funds donated for the miles we walked. Donations can still be sent, earmarked to the PLACE Walkathon.

The Walkathon was a way for us to do something for our communities. We need support from our communities too. Fight for compassionate release and decent medical care for women and men in prison with HIV and AIDS.

—Laura Whitehorn, for the women of PLACE

ESCAPED CONVICTS EATEN BY LIONS

DINAJPUR, ZIMBABWE

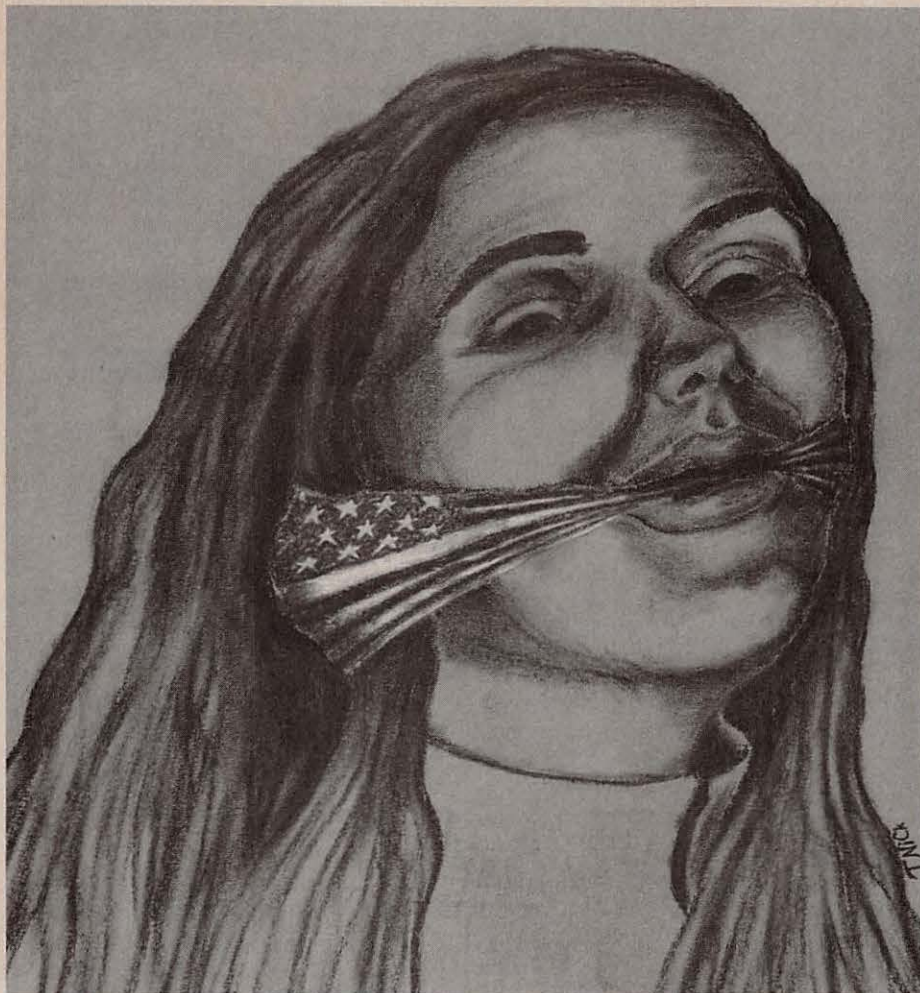
Three hardened convicts broke out of a jungle prison camp near here—and were eaten by lions before they'd gone a quarter of a mile. Prison authorities discovered the inmates' remains an hour after they were reported missing.

TO SERVE AND PROTECT

Prison Life magazine was honored in *UTNE READER'S* 8th Annual Alternative Press Awards. The service award said, "This in-your-face magazine gives us a realistic picture of a much-mythologized world—by offering everything from recipes for in-cell cooking to exposés of human rights violations in our nation's prisons. With growing prison populations, maintaining perspective on the human issues involved is critical, and *Prison Life* does just that—with courage and integrity."



"MUST BE A POLICE DOG!"



Art by Tom Coccolios

DEATH ROW PRISONER'S RIGHT TO INTERVIEWS UPHELD

PITTSBURGH, June 6 (AP)—Prison officials unfairly denied a death row inmate the right to give interviews in retaliation for a book he wrote describing his life as he awaits execution, a federal magistrate ruled today.

Kenneth J. Benson said state prison officials also violated Mumia Abu-Jamal's civil rights by opening and photocopying private mail sent to him by his lawyers.

Abu-Jamal, a former radio reporter and Black Panther, is on death row in the State Correctional Institution after a 1982 murder conviction in the death of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Abu-Jamal's attorneys have asked for a new trial.

Benson issued his 66-page ruling in response to Abu-Jamal's request for an order prohibiting prison officials from blocking future interviews or opening mail from his lawyers.

Benson recommended a court order that would prohibit officials from opening the prisoner's mail outside his presence unless they could show they

had expected to find evidence of a crime or violation of prison rules. Citing Abu-Jamal's Constitutional right to free speech, Benson criticized prison officials for barring him from talking to reporters for three months soon after they learned in February that he planned to publish *Live From Death Row*. Nor were officials justified in taking legal documents addressed to Abu-Jamal and passing them to state officials outside the Department of Corrections, Benson said. Prison officials had defended their actions by saying they were investigating whether Abu-Jamal had violated rules against conducting a publishing business from prison.

Benson dismissed Abu-Jamal's claim that prison officials violated his civil rights when they refused him access to a paralegal who had also visited him socially. And the magistrate said officials had a right to insure Abu-Jamal didn't operate a business from prison, which is a violation of the prison's regulations.

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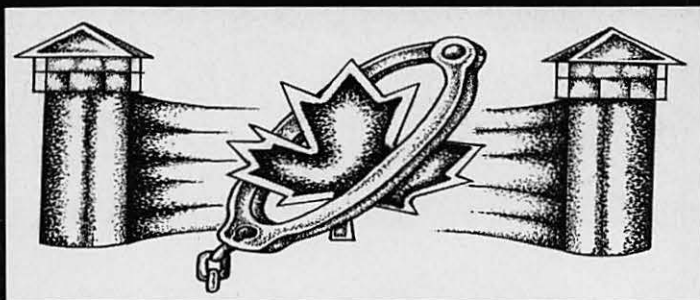
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THE CANADIAN SCENE



BON APPETITE

Convicts at Kingston, Ontario's Collins Bay Institution recently opted to refuse work and remain in their cells in protest of serious food shortages in the facility. Corrections Canada released a statement claiming the strike was in protest of a new, strict, anti-drug policy.

John Schaefer, Inmate Committee Chairman, suspects the government allegations were fabricated to reduce public sympathy for the prisoners' nutrition concerns by bringing drugs into the issue. Collins Bay prisoners must use their own funds to purchase food to supplement the meager institutional dietary offerings, yet the prison is noted for its failure to offer employment to most prisoners. An added complication is limitations on

access to monies deposited in institutional accounts, whether from outside sources or prison jobs. The demonstration remained peaceful in the historically volatile facility.

Drastic cutbacks in the Corrections Service of Canada budgets have resulted in an estimated reduction of the convict food supply by as much as 40 percent.

WRITERS WITH CONVICTIONS

The Journal of Prisoners on Prison publishes essays, interviews, book reviews and graphic art by prisoners and former prisoners on topics related to crime, justice and the experience and politics of punishment. Prisoners and former prisoners are encouraged to submit individual papers, collaborative essays, discussions and interviews transcribed from tape, book reviews, and photo or graphic essays. JPP

does not publish fiction or poetry. For more information, or to subscribe: *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons*, Box 54 University Centre, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2 Canada.

Write to Robert Rowbotham
PO Box 4510
Kingston ON K7L 5E5

RESOURCES

FROM *PRISON NEWS SERVICE*, WINTER 1996

TORONTO

Anti-Racist Action, P.O. Box 664, Station C. Toronto, ON M6J 3S1, 416/631-8825, sponsors the Anti-Fascist Prisoner Support Network.

Association in Defense of the Wrongly Convicted, 438 University Avenue, 19th Floor, Toronto, ON M5G 2K8.

Black Inmates and Friends Assembly, 189 Dufferin street, Toronto, ON M6K 1Y9, 416/588-9910, offers counseling and pre-release planning for Black prisoners, as well as counseling, support and assistance for their families.

Prisoner HIV/AIDS Support Action Network, 517 College Street, #237, Toronto, ON M6G 4A2, 416/920-9567, offers peer health education, prevention and support for prisoners.

Prisoners' Justice Day Committee, c/o A Space, 110-401 Richmond St. West, Toronto, ON M5V 3A8, 416/463-9129, coordinates Prisoners' Justice Day on August 10.

Quaker Committee on Jails and Prisons, 60 Lowther Ave., Toronto, ON M5C 1C7, runs Alternatives to Violence programs in prisons.

Rittenhouse - A New Vision, 736 Bathurst Street, #213, Toronto, ON M5S 2R4, 416/538-6900, sponsors Alternatives to Prison workshops and campaigns.

Spirit of the People, 251 Gerrard St. E., Toronto, ON M5G 2G1, 416/967-5650, provides a variety of services for Aboriginal ex-offenders.

StreetLink, 558 Gerrard St. E. Toronto, ON M4M 1X8,

416/466-3852, offers services for prisoners in the Metro Toronto area.

WINNIPEG

John Howard Society, 583 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1Z7, 204/775-1514, provides information about a variety of prison-related topics.

PETERBOROUGH

Prison Violence Project, OPIRG-Trent, Peter Robinson College, Trent University, Peterborough, ON K9J 7B8, educates the public about conditions in Canadian prisons.

OTTAWA

Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, #600-251 Bank St., Ottawa, ON K2P 1X3, 613/238-2422, lobbies for review of battered women's self-defense cases and offers other services for women prisoners.

Infinity Lifer's Liaison Group, Box 772, Station B, Ottawa, ON K2P 5P9, a support group for lifers and their families.

HAMILTON/BRAMPTON

Bridge, Box 83007, Jamesville Station, Hamilton, ON L8L 8E8, 905/648-6879, sponsors self-help groups inside and outside of prisons.

KINGSTON

Pen to Pen Club, 829 Norwest Road, #1207, Kingston, ON K7P 2N3, provides pen pals for prisoners.

Project Reconciliation, 100 Sydnam Street, Kingston, ON K7L 3H5, provides services for ex-prisoners and their families.

GOING TO MEET THE MAN

by
Mansfield B. Frazier

You always walk into the office with your fists balled up; you don't want to be there.

You've stepped off your time—had someone looking over your shoulder 24-7 for X number of years—and now you have to report to someone else, who is going to continue to look over your shoulder for X more years. The only other option was to turn down parole and remain in prison—which didn't seem like too much of an option at the time. Sure, there are some tough guys who tell the parole board that they'll "bring it to the door," but there aren't that many of those types left around anymore; you wanted out.

When you got busted and sentenced,

that he will be dressed in a black suit with a black shirt and tie, with one of those goddam handcuff tie tacks, and a monocle in one eye. He'll stand, rhythmically slapping a riding crop against highly-polished black boots, with a loaded cigarette holder clenched between his teeth and speak with a guttural high-German accent. His cubicle reeks of the fear of the thousand men who have preceded you through these portals on the road back to the penitentiary. The room is lit with one bare overhead 200 watt bulb, and the only thing on his desk will be a cartoon of a poor guy slipping on a banana peel and getting butt-fucked before he hits the ground. The legend will read, "One

required to violate you. They get promotions based on how many people they successfully negotiate through the parole period, not on how many violations they can make a month. True, you can draw a parole officer who can't be satisfied; personality clashes happen. But there are ways to handle this type of situation, as I learned while attending an orientation meeting at the federal parole office in Cleveland a few months back.

The conference room was spacious and well-lit. If it wasn't for us—a motley crew of twelve ex-cons sitting around the huge table—you would have thought that the board meeting of some large, successful corporation was about to

For the most part the new-breed parole officer would rather keep you out of the joint than send you back.

there were numerous people involved in the process. Even in the joint or at the parole board there were many people involved in determining your fate, but now you'll have just one person holding the cocked shotgun of revocation to your head: your P.O. This makes it an up-close and personal relationship.

And the horror stories you've heard while stepping off your bid don't help. Every convict has heard a prisoner, recently returned for a violation, tell how his P.O. was a power-crazed maniac who ate babies for breakfast and was out to get him straight off the dribble. Before the bullshit session welcoming the returnee back is over, everyone in the unit who has ever been on parole chimes in with their favorite P.O. tale. The consensus comes quickly: the people who regulate, or attempt to regulate, the lives of others are demented, nosey, twisted individuals. You wouldn't piss on them if they were on fire.

Before you meet this person who'll have the awesome power of allowing you to remain at liberty or sending you back whence you came, you might imagine

slip and your ass is MINE!"

But what happens when reality doesn't jibe with your preconceived notions? What happens when the dude (or dudette) is pleasant, helpful, decent, brave and reverent? Not that they're going to personally go out and find you a twenty-five-dollar-an-hour job testing mattresses, spring for a pair of first-class tickets to Las Vegas with a pre-paid room at Caesar's, or arrange for you to be able to work the late-shift at a local strip joint—but a regular good scout nonetheless. It's got to be a trick, right? Not necessarily so.

Granted, there are probably still some troglodytes from the *Shawshank Redemption* era lurking around parole offices, a few who take perverse delight in telling some ex-con, "The only thing that's going to beat you back to prison will be the headlights on the fuckin' bus!" but those types are—thankfully—few and far between nowadays.

For the most part the new-breed parole officer would rather keep you out of the joint than send you back—if for no other reason than all the paperwork

jump off. I was almost expecting some mini-skirted little thing (who couldn't type fifteen words a minute) to pop in and pass around leather-covered binders with profit-and-loss statements enclosed; I felt like lighting up a foot-long stogie, sitting back and blowing smoke rings.

The parole supervisor, John Peet, soon brought me back to *terra firma* by shooting straight from the hip. He started by acknowledging the fact that we no doubt weren't too thrilled by our required presence in the room, nor by the period of supervision we were about to embark on. He cited chapter and verse the laws which give parole officers the authority to govern our movements, living arrangements, and what chemicals we take into our bodies. He then outlined what would be expected from us. It was abundantly clear that the Northern Ohio District office intended to run a fairly tight ship. No, I couldn't jet down to South America for the weekend to visit my old friend Carlos, and yes, I would be required to remain gainfully employed—or at least attempt to.

"We don't have any deep, dark

secrets," said Peet. "Everything, except for specific information regarding a particular offender, is pretty open and straightforward. Our mission, first and foremost, is to insure that everyone under our supervision complies with the terms of that supervision as set down by the court."

A few people around the table looked mildly surprised. I imagine they thought the first priority was to assist them in readjusting to society. Not so. This is where the confusion begins. Their second concern is to protect the public. For instance, if an offender was incarcerated for rape, parole officials would look dimly on him working as a custodian at a girls' high school. While they normally don't go to employers and inform them of the offender's past, in this case they certainly would. Lastly, they concern themselves with the offender's reintegration into society.

"Parole—or supervised release under the new-law federal system—is far more intrusive today than it was twenty years ago," Peet admitted. "We have more tools at our command now: urine testing, home confinement and drug treatment facilities. While most people don't like this increased level of intrusion in their lives, it allows us to spot a potential problem and take action more quickly. In the past a parolee could pretty much do anything except catch a new case and we'd never know about it unless a family member informed us. Now we intervene early on, at the first sign of a problem."

The most prevalent problem is drug use. Roughly 60 percent of the violations in the Northern District of Ohio (which covers Cleveland, Akron, Youngstown and Toledo) are for dirty urine. Out of the 1,300 individuals on the caseload (77 percent men) 946 dirty urines were recorded in 1995: 369 cocaine; 252 marijuana (a one-third increase over the previous year); 149 opiates; and 110 for prescription drugs like Valium. Not that 946 people tested dirty, some were repeat offenders; a few gave as many as five or six dirties before being shipped back to the joint.

Parole officers hear every conceivable tale in regards to how urine can be dirty without using drugs: being in a room full of people who were smoking marijuana and catching a little passive smoke, having sex with a partner who used cocaine, touching a table some drugs had been on (osmosis I guess). Offenders tell these whoppers with straight faces, which I imagine is the hard part. Approximately twelve percent wind up back behind bars, but not before intervention efforts by the parole officer.

True, parole is more intrusive nowadays, but sending an offender back for the first dirty urine is rare. Outpatient drug rehab treatment, drug treatment at a locked facility, or home confinement is ordinarily tried first. Parole officers usually try to find something that works. Sometimes they can't.

"A guy gets out of prison after being locked up for a number of years," said Peet, "and the first thing he wants to do is let his hair down a bit. But he can't do it; we test from day one. And if he hooks back up with an old girlfriend who is still using, he hasn't got a chance. Within a few months he's going to be on his way back, guaranteed."

Peet readily admits that for some people old associations and habits die hard, but he also admonishes offenders to be well aware of the do's and don'ts of their new situation.

The next biggest problem area is firearms. Some men, before going to prison, had firearms around them all of their lives. But unless an offender can get an exemption from the rules (a one-in-a-million chance), they can never even get caught in the same residence with a firearm—unless they want to step off a buffalo for the feds. A felon with a firearm is a dead-bang case that carries a mandatory minimum of five years, yet some still get caught strapped. Even if the parolee is living with someone who has a permit for the weapon, they'd still better check with their parole officer and make them aware of the situation.

Travel restrictions are another area which makes parolees chafe. For the feds Vegas is off limits, but anyone who can go to Vegas and make it back without something dirty coming across his parole officer's desk probably doesn't need to go in the first place.

Changes in lifestyle, that's the message John Peet delivers. As society changes, so must the offender. A few years back domestic violence wasn't such a big issue; it is now. A dude who, prior to going to the joint, was used to punching his old lady's lights out whenever there was a disagreement had better understand that this type of behavior today is a sure ticket back to prison. If he can't get along with his spouse without throwing punches, then he had better make other living arrangements.

"Some guys have poor

problem-solving skills. I know of a guy who got a damn good job as soon as he got out of prison, but he got into an ongoing argument with his wife and felt that he couldn't leave the house to go to work until the issue was settled. He missed three days of work. Naturally he got fired, and it took him over a year to get another job half as good," recounts Peet. And the issue probably still wasn't settled.

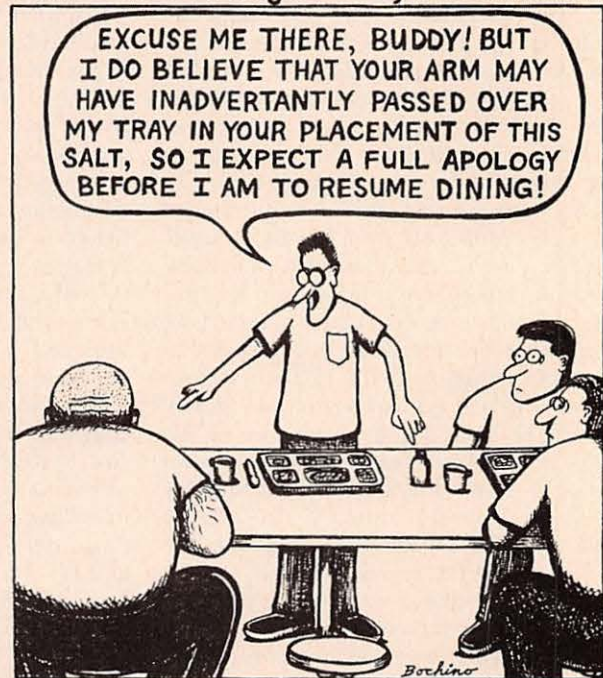
"I don't think anyone sets out to violate," says Peet, "but too often the offender doesn't do enough to correct a problem in his or her life."

There are cases where an offender has a real problem with his parole officer. All too often the individual will wait until the problem comes to a head before speaking up, and by then it's usually too late. Ignoring problems doesn't make them go away. "What happens is that the person will come to me when they are about to get violated," says Peet, "and in cases like that I get suspicious. Is the offender saying that there's a personality conflict just as an excuse? We don't routinely switch an offender to another parole officer, but if there's a real problem, the proper way to handle it is to have a talk with the supervisor early on, not when the papers are on their way to the judge."

The bottom line from John Peet is fairly simple and straightforward, albeit maybe not what a parolee wants to hear.

"Parole officers don't violate offenders," he says, "offenders violate themselves."

Home on Derange By James Bochino



Myron's last stand.

IN 1994, OUR GOVERNMENT SPENT BILLIONS TO ARREST AND JAIL 480,000 MARIJUANA SMOKERS.

[YES, THIS IS THE SAME GOVERNMENT THAT PAID \$1,200 FOR A TOILET SEAT.]

Of these 480,000 people, 84% were arrested for simple possession. The vast majority of them held down jobs and lived normal lives. But because they happened to smoke a relatively harmless plant, the government labeled them criminals worthy of intense, and expensive, pursuit. It's time to admit that jailing these otherwise law-abiding citizens serves no legitimate societal purpose. In a nation with 1.9 million violent crimes a year, surely we can find better ways to allocate our criminal justice resources.

As William F. Buckley Jr. stated "The amount of money and of legal energy being given to prosecute hundreds of thousands of Americans who are caught with a few ounces of marijuana in their jeans simply makes no sense . . . it is an outrage, an imposition on basic civil liberties, and on the reasonable expenditure of social energy."

Alcohol Prohibition was a terrible, costly mistake. The same is true for today's marijuana prohibition. NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, is not the only group to reach this conclusion.

Marijuana decriminalization has been supported by the Presidential Commission on Marijuana (1973), the National Academy of Sciences (1982), the California Research Advisory Panel (1990), and Britain's two most respected medical journals (1995). Today, marijuana decriminalization works in Holland, a nation with much lower crime and drug addiction rates than the United States.

If you agree that it's time to stop arresting people who smoke marijuana, join NORML. With your donation of \$25 or more, you can help NORML change our nation's marijuana laws. Write us today at 1001 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 1010, Washington, DC 20036, and we'll send you a membership kit.

Or call the NORML support line (1-900-97-NORML). For \$2.95/minute (18 years or older) you'll get information on your legal rights, drug testing, and our marijuana law-reform efforts. Whether you join NORML or call us, your confidentiality is assured.

We hope to hear from you.

NORML

Call Outs

Community Educational Outreach (CEO) is a private, non-profit organization providing free information to anyone and free academic and life skills instruction to people in Colorado whose educational level contributes to their risk of being incarcerated. CEO combines successful elements of academic, cognitive, life and job skills programs into an individualized curriculum directed at meeting the needs of educationally disadvantaged people at risk of losing their independence. The program includes instruction in the following areas: Academic—including literacy, ESOL, GED preparation and post-secondary tutoring. Cognitive—critical thinking, goal setting, learning methods and problem solving. Jobs—job search skills, interviewing skills, strategies and opportunities. Life—budgeting, time management, and essential skills. Currently, CEO has staff to cover the five-county Denver Metro area and Pueblo. CEO is funded by private and government donations; they do not accept fees from the students they serve. For more information: COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH, P.O. BOX 7957, BOULDER, CO 80306. TEL: 303/447-3353, FAX 303/444-3872.

Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos is a multi-cultural, non-profit organization whose mission is to prevent and curtail violence among youth by providing them with alternatives. The organization focuses on building positive self-esteem and cultural pride through meaningful activities, education and job training. For information: Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos/National Coalition of Barrios Unidos, 313 Front Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. TEL: 408/457-8208 FAX: 408/457-0389.

Stop Control Unit Prisons! The American Friends Service Committee/Criminal Justice Program's National Campaign to

Stop Control Unit Prisons will be held in Chicago on November 15-17. For information, AFSC Criminal Justice Program, 972 Broad Street, 6th Floor, Newark, NJ 07102. TEL: 201/643-3079 FAX: 201/643-8924.

Get Hip to Hep! The American Liver Foundation and Blues Haven Foundation work to educate prisoners and prisoner advocacy groups about the prevalence of hepatitis B and C in prisons. A 1994 survey conducted in California found that about half of the state's incoming female prisoners and one-third of males tested positive for hepatitis B virus (HBV), and the numbers were even higher—54.5% for females and 39.4% for males—for hepatitis C virus (HCV). Risk factors include body piercing and or tattooing with contaminated needles, sharing needles during intravenous drug use, unprotected sex with multiple partners and blood transfusion prior to 1990 (for HCV) or 1972 for (HBV). Prisoners who are at increased risk of infection should inquire about a blood test to diagnose chronic hepatitis. Further information on hepatitis is available by calling the American Liver Foundation at (800)223-0179, or write to them at 1425 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

C.A.P.S. (Caring About the Prison System) is comprised of people concerned about the health and welfare of their incarcerated family members and incidents of brutality, rape, medical neglect and murder in Texas prisons. In the past five years, a number of prisoners have suffered unexplained deaths. C.A.P.S. is a support group whose purpose is to share information with other families who feel that they may be alone. For information: Vina Payne, President & Founder, C.A.P.S., P.O. Box 1211124, Ft. Worth, TX 7621-1124. Phone (806)273-5422.

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PAROLE MAKES OLD-FASHIONED CENTS

by
William Lincoln

There is a wave of heart-hardening sweeping America. The legislators hum with buzz-words like “expediency” and “waste,” “truth in sentencing” and “throw away the key.” One of the first targets of their wrath is parole. Demagogues playing to public frustrations have fanned the emotional embers and gutted parole programs nationwide, but a close examination of parole proves that it is good for the American commonweal, and like most things that are good for us, parole makes old-fashioned sense financially as well. Here is why.

MILLION DOLLAR BABIES

Has anyone ever put the accountant’s pencil to the full cost of a term of imprisonment? Over and above the thirty thousand per year per prisoner, add inflation, support to families, health care, lost income tax, lost sales taxes and interest lost because that same thirty grand wasn’t invested.

With long sentences come heavy taxpayer burdens. On any single day in America’s federal courts alone, dozens of 24-year-plus sentences are meted out. With every gavel blow, another “million dollar baby” is created—to the tune of billions of dollars in long term obligations incurred per year. Include the states’ liabilities and you have hundred of billions of dollars added to the national debt, something worth considering when our nation is fueled on red ink.

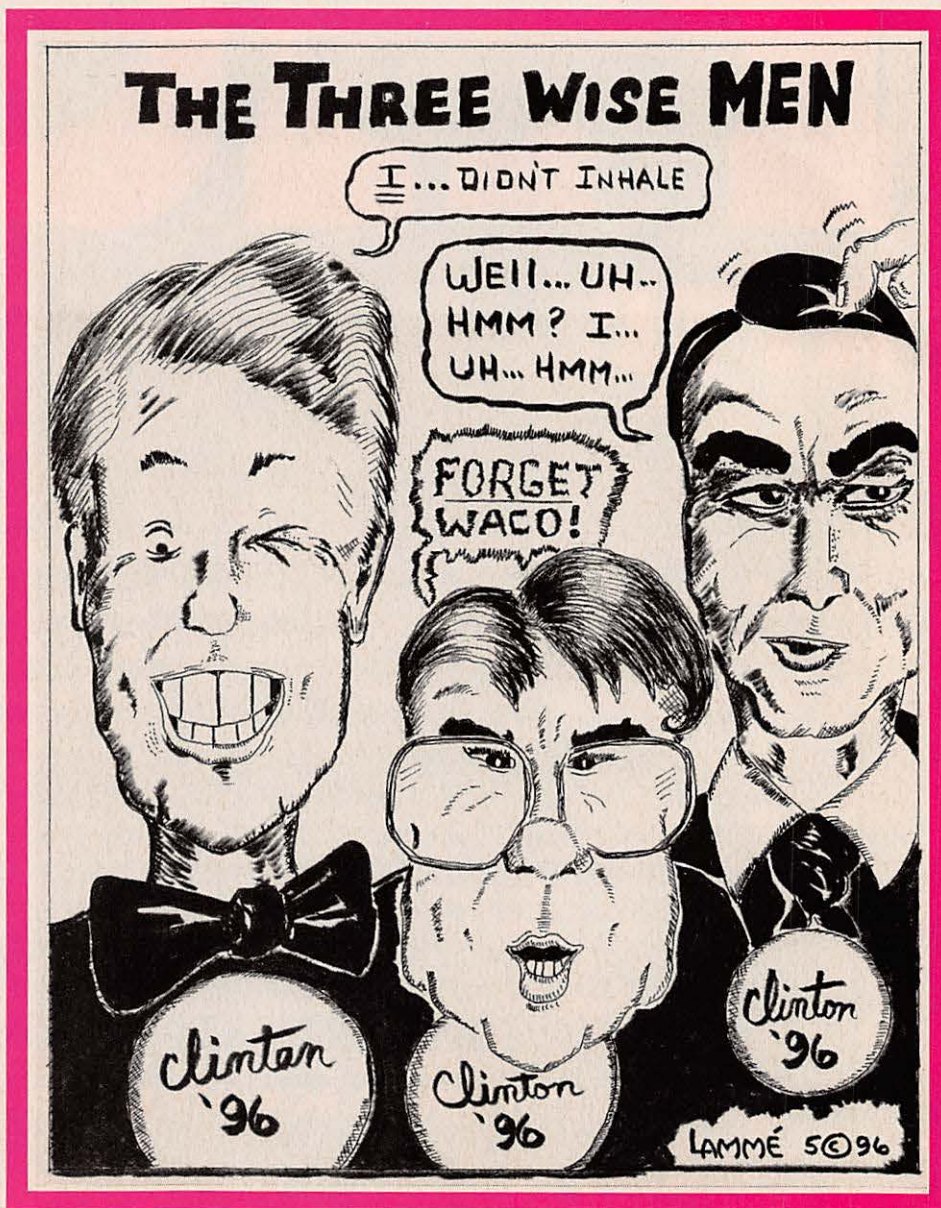
COMPASSION MAKES CENTS.

Our forefathers were not fools. They could spot a financial snowball rolling their way from a mile off. Applying their wisdom, they based punishment on experience and the Scriptures. What they discovered was that two children who disobeyed and were punished similarly responded differently to punishment. For some kids a swat across the butt went a long way, for others it didn’t. The moral wisdom of the times—

that a penitent heart well proven deserved mercy—was accepted in those days. The old folks listened to Biblical warnings not to repay evil with evil and that wrathful punishment was wrong. Old Abe Lincoln understood these concepts too. At the conclusion of a

bloody war, he blanket-pardoned the Confederates. France ignored this wisdom and after World War I brought its wrathful punishment on Germany, which set the seeds of the horror we recall as World War II.

Beyond being immoral, the exercise of



"wrath," whether by a parent, spouse or nation, invariably leads to bad results. Every great leader has moderated the pressure for wrathful punishment. They learned from their holy books, their children and the peoples and nations around them; with all of their accumulated experience and wisdom, they created and operated a system called parole.

But these days, attempting to grab votes, our politicians disregard the wisdom, experience, morality and financial common sense of our past. Their pogroms of wrathful punishment will bring a bad end for all.

This, of course, will happen because again our leadership will disobey our forefathers' admonition that "you reap what you sow." If you sow wrathful punishment and inhumanity, you will reap it. Our forefathers believed in corny old books like the Bible which told of these principles, and knew them to be true in practice.

FAIR IS FAIR.

Humans have a weather vane of sorts that tells them when punishment is inhumanely inflicted upon them. I know. I'm locked up with hundreds of men whom I assist with paralegal issues. The majority of these men have broken the law and they are the first to admit that they deserved to go to jail. But for a 19-year-old nonviolent first-time offender, found guilty on the basis of a witness saying the guy was "into crack," does not deserve a 20-year sentence. I read the pre-sentencing reports. There is no moral justification for some of these sentences.

And this is the kind of wrathful punishment that grows a deep-seated resentment and hate within these men. This is what society will reap on a massive scale: deep-seated hate and disrespect that will one day explode, right here in America. The lightning rods of dissident leadership are being forged today under the hammer blows of wrathful punishment in America's prisons.

Why? Because again we refuse to heed the wisdom of our forefathers. Our forefathers used parole as a tool to help the prisoner upon release. It is like the father who, after punishing his child and waiting for it to sink in, winds up giving the kid a hug. In doing so he tells the child you still belong. You did wrong, but you are still part of the family.

There is no difference in principle when those being punished are adults. Parole gives society the power to say to deserving prisoners, you are still part of society. The parolee leaves prison realizing that the American people have

shown mercy, for his imprisonment could have continued, save for the humanity of the people. Parole changes the mindset and attitude a prisoner takes back to the streets.

As a discretionary act of mercy, parole is seen as a second chance, hence its positive power in the mind of the parolee.

Wrathful punishment disregards what prisoners think. So what if the majority of Black prisoners think these inhumane sentences are genocidal. So what if men lie awake dreaming of getting revenge some day.

WAKE UP, AMERICA!

It does matter what prisoners think. They are the fallen sons and daughters of this country. They will return to society. But how will they return? Don't we have enough antisocial freaks out there? Do we need another 50 Unabombers? Do we need hardened, hate-filled ex-cons setting fire to the inner cities?

We, as a people, will reap what we sow.

I don't know about you, but I care what people think. My sentence is for stock manipulation and as an ex-broker I might be a little preoccupied with what people think. Brokers tend to concentrate on where things are headed—the flow-of-the-mind and whether that will end up benefiting them or not. From the inside, I am alarmed at where this is all heading. I have kids. Our nation is a free and open place. Trust begins in the minds of our citizenry. It is very important what people think. We cannot fence in all of our national treasures or vulnerabilities. These can only be protected by sowing humanity and reaping it. There will be failures, to be sure. But the successes will far outweigh them. People like Attorney General Janet Reno have been voices of reason amongst the clamor for excess. She has not failed to recognize the wisdom of our forefathers: wrathful punishment is not common sense. Nor does it make financial sense. She may not be the most popular person in this readership but her voice of moderation deserves credit, politics aside.

My authority as a commentator doesn't flow from college degrees in criminology. Instead it comes from the unique vantage point of dealing with prisoners day-to-day and being one myself.

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Parole offers a powerful tool to reduce national debt due to the costs of incarceration and in turn lifts some of the burden from future generations. Parole is the most powerful and lasting attitude adjuster known, letting the released offender know: you belong, and are a part of us. Parole offers many other advantages in custody control that enhance the safety of prisoners and correctional staff. Parole is in keeping with the moral fiber of America. The federal parole commission should not be allowed to sunset next year. It should be retained and revitalized.

Past abuses in parole policy can be prevented by legislation that limits eligibility. And society would be given credit by parolees for the granting of a remission from penal conditions and the extension of trust that goes with it. Thus, gratitude could supplant the present hostility, resulting in a pro-social attitude.

Like a lot of things that our forefathers left us, parole seems old-fashioned and surface simple. A closer examination beneath that surface reveals still waters running deep: currents that touch the soul of who we are as Americans. Parole touches that soul and makes cents too. Parole should be resurrected.

the art of ronnie white

by Phyllis Kornfeld

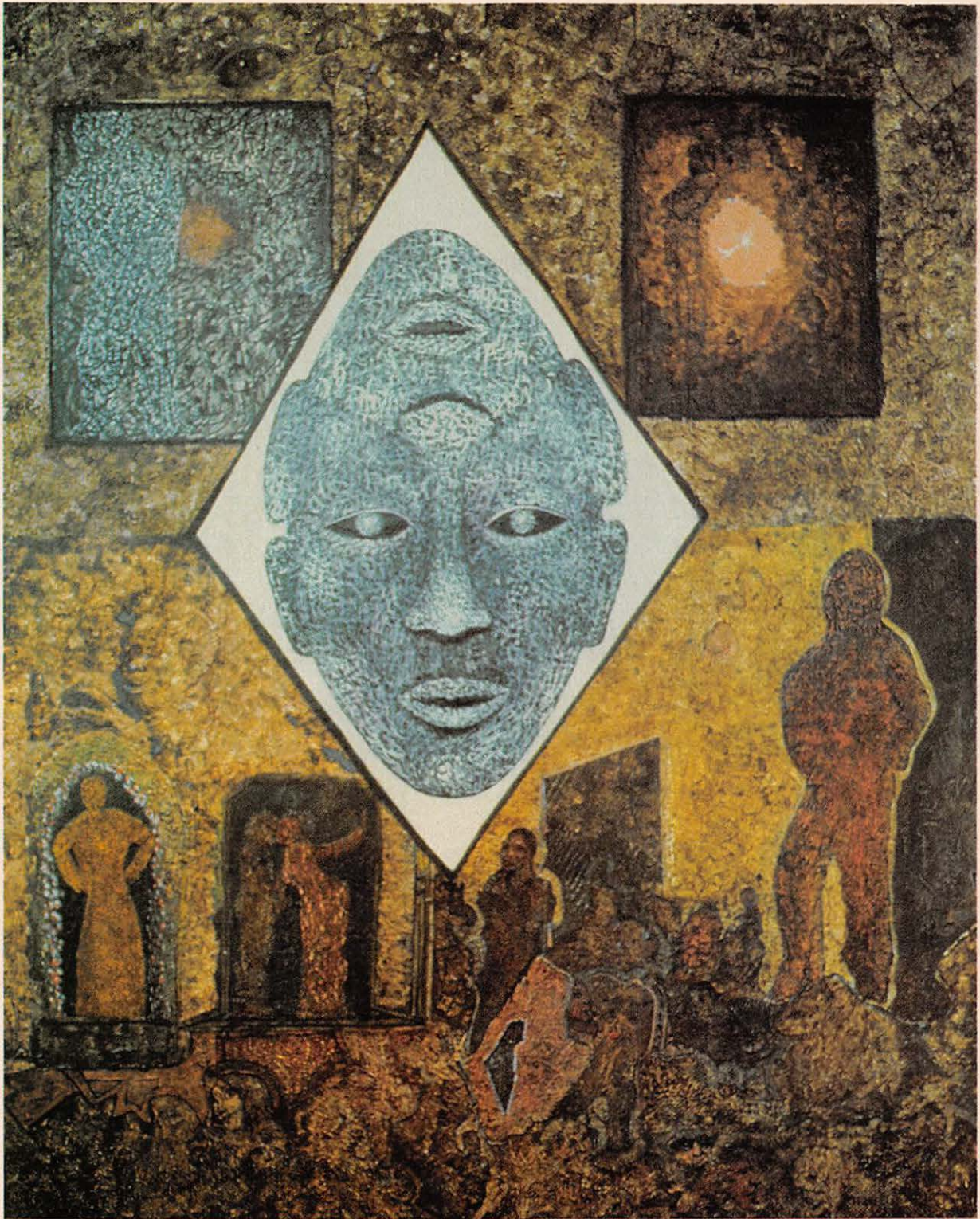
When Ronnie White was kept back in the sixth grade, in Fall River, Massachusetts, he was 15, and all his friends were going on to junior high school. He reported to sixth grade again on the first day and made it his last. His education continued at Joe's Cafe (not its real name), where he says he grew up drinking, smoking dope, and playing pool. He describes it as a run-down woeful place but it was a good time because he and his friends were the "stars of the show." He shined shoes and he learned how to pick pockets.

His newly trained slippery fingers acquired a key to the place, and he would enter in the middle of the night to drink and shoot pool for free and to steal everything in sight. This included breaking into the jukebox and telephone for change, and the cigarette machine, whose contents he unloaded cheap at the corner store. He walked off with the television set so many times they eventually chained it to the wall. To conceal his entry by key, White would smash the window before he left at dawn.

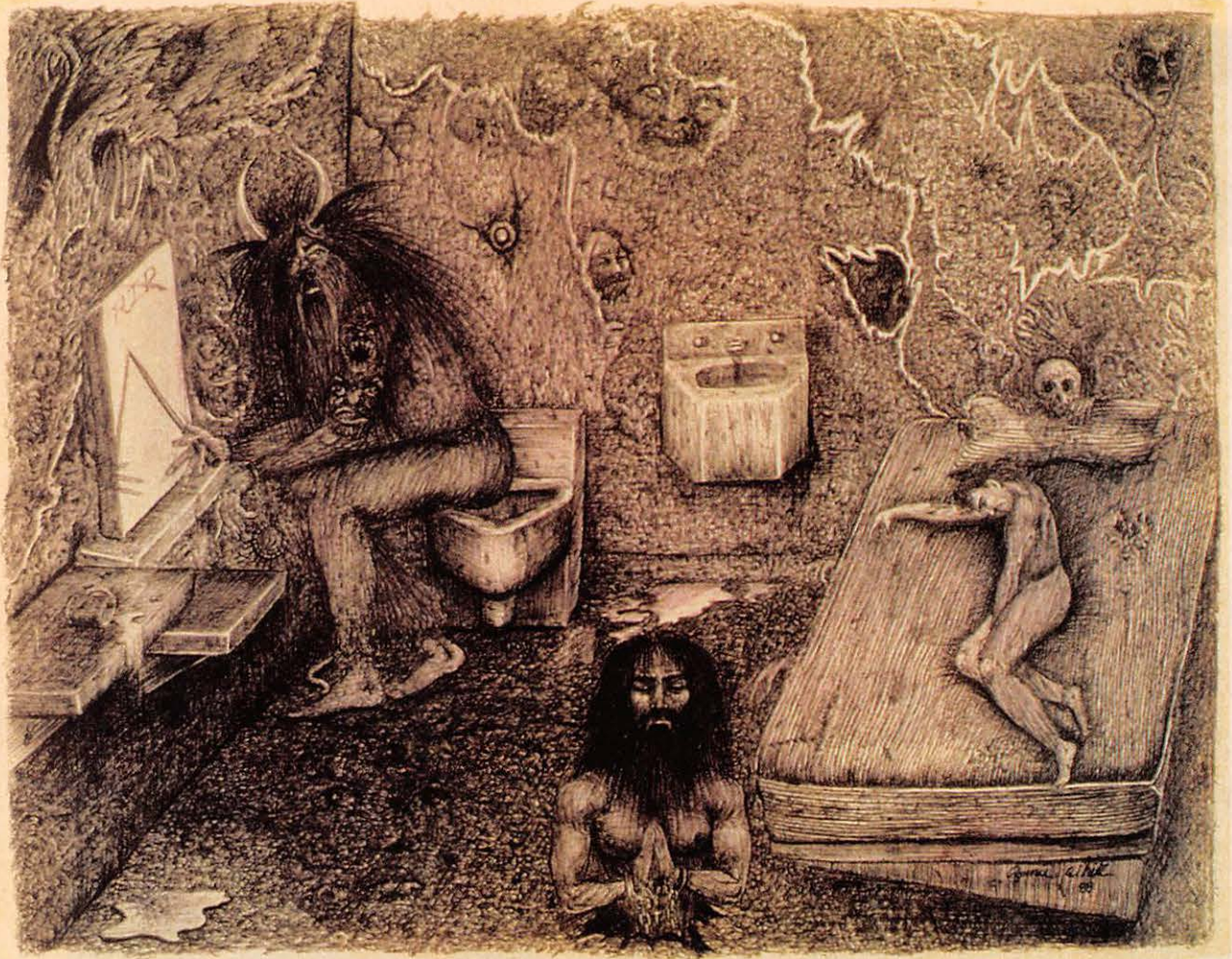
"I was hooked on sniffing glue and looking back, maybe that's where my style of art originated. When I sniffed I could see and hear things nobody else could experience, like an old rag stained with grease became an escaped puppet from the circus. It spoke to me and did tricks. I was in a world that I became obsessed with."

At seventeen he was doing two-and-a-half years for burglary, car theft, and shoplifting charges. In and out of institutions his whole life, White served much of his time drawing. During those periods he spent out in the general population, he survived by meeting the demands of the commercial marketplace.

White's skill with pen and ink (such artists are sometimes called "pen men") was admired. It was difficult to say no because he needed the money, and because it makes life easier to be cooperative and do things for one's fellow convicts. In between commissions, or when he didn't need the money, White allowed his ballpoint to wander. *Struggling Faith* (p. 27) is a close-up of the mass of his dreams, a swampy undulating scene. Living things, and parts of living things,



Mask



Dreamtime, 1989, ink on cardboard panel.

squirm in and out. At the top and in the distance are traces of elegance and romantic nights.

He experimented with the small amount of paint he could get his hands on at one point and finished an untitled fantasy with his ballpoint pen. The paint is turbulent sky and sea, a universe in the throes of creation, and in the midst of it, something ancient rises up, etched with every spirit that ever lived there.

White spent frequent periods in lockup for defiant behavior. He would not allow himself to appear broken. Segregation provided the solitude for creation. White would let the pen roll in the shadows of the dim light and watch for what he called "the spirits of the medium" to reveal figures and objects and places. He liked to work laying down on his stomach, the pillow under his chest and he drew sometimes for eight hours through the night.

In ten block, White made *Dreamtime* (above) with his ballpoint, one of the few possessions allowed in this most restrictive unit. He shows himself asleep on an old mattress in a cell also occupied by thousands of demons and memories, and two ghosts, perhaps White's inner selves; the saint and the monster.

"Dreamtime was a response to the atmosphere, all the hostility, the dead air filled with hatred, the spitefulness, the spit and filth covering the walls, the roaches all over the place, the monotony."

He served eight years, and on the day of his release, White's neighborhood friends

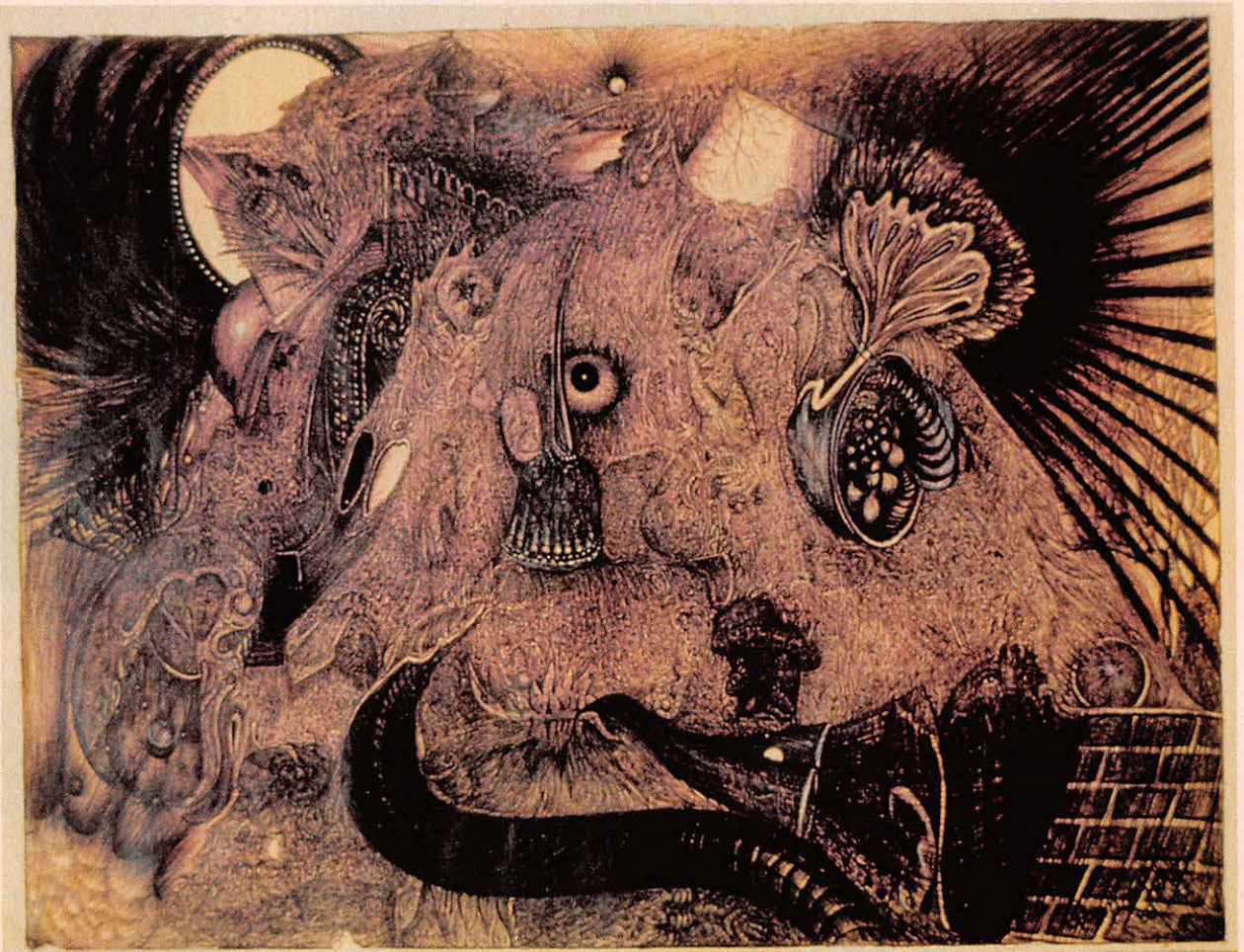
welcomed him home with gifts of cocaine. "I fell right back into my old ways because I really didn't know how to live in society. I was programmed to live in institutions, I need to be taught how to live out in the free world. Nobody understands how a guy feels getting out of prison after a long period of time. I was ashamed to fill out a job application. I had no references. I don't know how to drive a car. I'd look out the window and see people driving cars and think how do they do that, buy cars, have lives?"

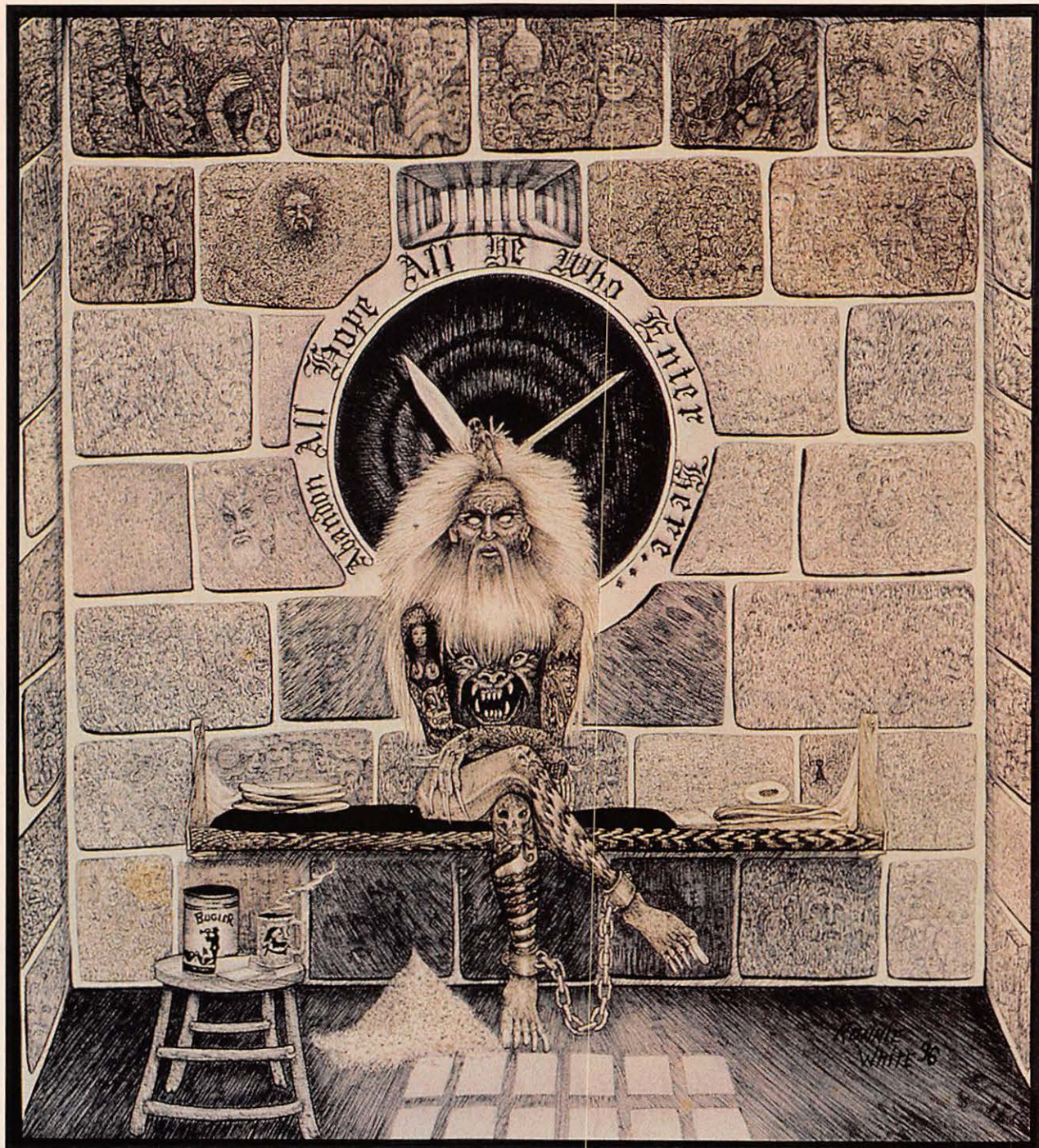
He did enter a local art contest and won first prize for best drawing. He went to the reception high on cocaine, stole some purses out of the cloak room and as he leaned over to pose for publicity pictures, one of them fell out. The art association did not have him arrested. He called the next week to say he was coming over to pick up his picture, and they said "you'd better have a cop with you."

He met a woman who was as into drugs as he was. They had a baby, and it all turned out badly. Soon he was back inside. White drew *The Sacrifice* (not shown) when he was in a condition of deep depression. It is meant as a monument to his self-destruction. "The cross is buried in junk: drugs, syringes, booze. I am handing the hammer to the mother of my child to finish me off."

The opportunity to paint came around again and he made a series of brown paintings. He would randomly scuff up his board to get some life going on it and allow the paintbrush to move as he did his ballpoint. In *Headgames*, a man sits in a confined space in the lower right of the painting. He is bent over his work, artist's work, the very mysterious process of uncovering images. Smoky visions float in and out through square walls and windows.

Struggling Faith, 1989, ink on cardboard panel.





Another Brick in The Wall, ink on paper.

"I know deep in my soul I have the makings of a master in my blood and it may take a lifetime to perfect my talent. I realize this because when I'm working sometimes I get these excitable feelings like I'm really on to something and the path is easy to follow. It's not my mind that gives me these messages, it's my soul. I want my work to be recognized for what it truly is, as pure as snow. I want to be appreciated for something I've done right for once."

As of this writing, White is serving seven to

ten years, has an eighteen-to twenty-year suspended sentence, and is a three time-loser. "I don't have any chances left. I think I'm gonna make it out there next time. I have to. I will go to the grave before I ever come back to prison."

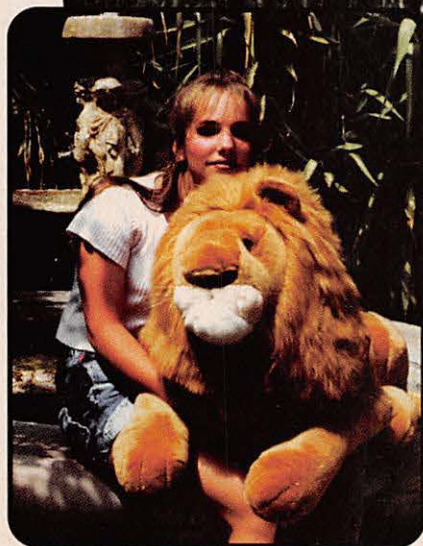
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Art Behind Bars 1995

Confessions of a Convicted Murderer

by Larry Bratt

Hagerstown, Maryland

"The Dreamer" by June Leaf



2nd Place Nonfiction

My first day at the Maryland State Penitentiary was memorable. A big black guy, jackhammer solid, sidled up to me in the chow line.

"Give me a smoke white boy!"

I banged him in his mouth. My first 30 days of incarceration were spent in a piss-smelling, roach-infested, loud-as-a-lunatic asylum segregation unit where I learned that men in prison lose all semblance of humanity.

I was fed cold, ill-prepared food that at times had ants and other insects in it.

Medical care, if you can call it that, was nonexistent in the seg unit; and, as I later learned, throughout the system. Hell, I sewed up the gash over my left eye that "Big Black" gave me with a needle and thread. Guards spoke to me as if I were a dog in obedience school, which in time made me bark my words at everyone, including family members.

I quickly learned to mistrust and hate everyone. Especially considering that physical abuse by guards on seg was rampant, as well as prisoners attacking

in him, which no doubt would have escalated into some sort of warfare with more than one person, because nearly all prisoners have walking buddies.

A walking buddy is someone to bullshit with, someone who's there to commiserate with on how you caught a losing hand in the poker game of life. All walking buddies talk shit with you. They talk about their big plans when they get out. But 95% of the prisoners here are serving life sentences and the four governors who have run Maryland

If someone asked me for a Little Debby snack cake, I charged them a few smokes. If they didn't have any, I smacked them upside the head and ran 'em off.

one another at the slightest provocation when four men at a time were let out for a walk on the tier.

Regardless of how tough a man is or perceives himself to be, living with the constant threat of violence soon turns anyone into a fearful human being. Not even a combat soldier lives with fear 24 hours a day. Living in fear every day for years, perhaps decades, eventually causes even the strongest of us to lose something of our humanity.

Fear, the great killer of men's judgment, robs us of the ability to reason and solve our problems nonviolently. I discovered that my fear of being maimed, gang-raped, or perhaps killed clouded my reasoning and made all prisoners my enemy.

So I walked alone, and when a stranger approached me I sent out signals of aggression. If someone asked me for a Little Debby snack cake, I charged them a few smokes. If they didn't have any, I smacked them upside the head and ran 'em off.

The word soon got around that I had a screw loose. I didn't make friends; I didn't want any. I didn't loan anything and if someone wanted something from me they had to have the money right there. I could have carried them on the books, but I was afraid that some fool would try me and I'd have to put a knife

since I got here ain't signing any parole papers for any lifer.

Thank you, Willey Horton. And I do every morning as he slops my nasty-tasting oatmeal onto my breakfast tray.

Still, a walking buddy will tell you daily how he is going to make a big score ripping off an armored car; or make a killing in the drug game; or kill the bitch who testified against him or who wrote him a Dear John Letter. But most of all a walking buddy is a potential bodyguard.

Men who can't stand being alone with themselves and their thoughts need a walking buddy. After all, most men in American society have always had a woman around to support, nurture and comfort them. Momma made life easier for us all and, without a woman to lean on, to speak with, men in prison will seek out and find another man to keep company with. Many of us fear loneliness.

Yet, I revel in the fact that I am alone. That oneness with myself helps me control my fear. I have discovered an inner peace which led me to understand why I did the things that I did, why I ventured into a life of crime. Many years passed before I achieved this ability. Still my story has merit in the telling.

From the age of five I grew up with a father who had to struggle with his life's



misfortunes. For 26 years he worked to rehabilitate his body and spirit after an auto accident left him a paraplegic. He never had the time—or perhaps the strength—to listen to secrets that little boys long to share with their fathers. I subconsciously felt deprived of a father, even though he tried to be there for me, especially when I became a teenager.

I now realize that I was the one who couldn't open up. After all, he had become a stranger to me and I have always been fearful of strangers. Besides, I couldn't share my feelings or secrets—I had so many.

I found solace in the arms of my mother, who worked hard to care for and support her family. She has always been my best friend, but inwardly I felt like a “Momma's Boy” and sought ways to identify with manly pursuits. When I reached high school, I became involved in sports. I took unnecessary risks in my car by speeding and drinking. I accepted foolish dares from friends, once jumping off of a bridge where weeks earlier a female classmate had committed suicide. And I ventured into crime: petty theft that eventually led to my involvement in an auto theft ring.

This criminal activity lasted for two years, until I graduated. After school I joined the United States Army's elite Airborne Rangers, where I experienced many wondrous things in sunny Vietnam: things that only enhanced the impressions of manhood that I learned from movies, athletics, and interacting with professional thieves. Violence. Weapons. Physical risk taking. I just knew that if I were strong enough, bad enough and had the balls to “bust a cap” I could own my own piece of the world. I got cap busting experience in many a violent mission with the Rangers and I enjoyed it.

The one key element missing for me during my eight-year military sojourn was money—Big Money. So I left the Army and eventually fell in with drug runners. Violence, unfortunately for me, became my companion. Now I have a double consecutive life sentence hanging over me. The bitch is that I didn't do it, but nobody, not even you, will believe this statement.

So, like everyone else behind bars, I live in fear of violence. The fear is always in the back of my mind: Will I be forced to kill today? Or be killed? It gnaws silently at my nerves. Yet I avoid a

someone—to this day I don't know who—slid a copy of *The Washington Post* in my cell. There was a long article about Nelson Mandela, in which was quoted a portion of a letter he had written to his daughter Zinza.

“While you have every reason to be angry with the fates for the setbacks you may have suffered from time to time,” Mandela wrote, “you must vow to turn those misfortunes into victories. There are few misfortunes in this world you cannot turn into personal triumphs if you have the iron will and necessary skills.”

It seemed as if Mandela's words had been written for me. My misfortunes could not compare to his and he never gave up hope. When all looked bleak, his iron will saw him through. He made his own light. With these words I now had a glimmer of hope that I could possibly survive my shipwrecked life. I vowed, after reading those words, that I would do no less than Mandela—live for a purpose. I made a conscious decision. I would assassinate time.

Converting my time to useful purpose while in prison proved no easy task. Although I was hired to work in the

I was preparing to cut my jugular with a jagged tuna fish can lid...

I was an excellent student with good grades and an outstanding reputation as an athlete. The weekends were for my enjoyment; that was when I and a friend began stealing cars for a professional auto theft ring. My friend was a Corvette enthusiast who in time was approached by a person who restored wrecked Vettes. He asked my friend if he wanted to make some big money stealing Vettes; my friend brought me into this venture. The man purchased key guns for each of us and taught us how to cut keys for any make auto, how to disengage alarm systems, and he showed us where to drop off the cars after we stole them.

Soon my pockets filled with money; the adrenaline rush I got from what I was doing was intoxicating. And I had no trouble living life as an upright student by weekday and a car thief on weekend nights. I easily soothed the concerns of my good and honest hardworking middle class parents when they asked why I was staying out late. I caressed them with my standard well-formulated lies of studying with my football teammates for the college entrance exams, or told them—since I was also babysitting to earn money—that the alleged couple I was sitting for stayed out later than expected. My family never knew anything about my secret life. Too bad I never got caught.

walking buddy, because his troubles become yours. Something I don't need. After all, I know, if forced to, I would kill in order to save my life or position in the prison structure. Many men feel that way. Even though I face the likelihood of dying of old age in prison and my assassination would be a blessing, I have the heart of a Spartan warrior. Honor compels me to fight. If I felt someone insulted my manhood, I would assault them. Thus I contribute to the cycle of fear that keeps the wheels of violence turning throughout every prison in America.

It was this attitude of always fight and never take flight that led me to more stays on lockup than I care to recall. In fact, during a particularly tough six months in the segregation unit, in my tenth year of incarceration—when I lost thirty pounds from the shitty food and suffered through a bout of walking pneumonia without medical treatment—I was on the verge of suicide. I just gave up. I cared about nothing—not even myself. I sought refuge in death from the stench of shit and piss that prisoners were flinging at guards and other prisoners, and from the hopelessness of this psychologically and physically sick world that is home.

As I was preparing to cut my jugular with a jagged tuna fish can lid,

prison print shop (one of 80 available jobs) this did not fulfill me. So I began a physical fitness regimen of running and calisthenics. This helped to keep me fit and healthy. Still it wasn't enough.

While in the library one day I picked up a book on yoga. It held my interest and so I ordered *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga*, by Swami Vishnu-devanando. Daily I practiced the exercises. I read his tenets on meditation and also practiced them. In time I came to agree with the Swami's philosophy:

“When body, mind, and soul are healthy and harmonious, the higher mind can easily triumph over the vicious instinctive lower mind. Obstacles become stepping stones to success, and life is a school for the development of character, compassion, and realization of the Divine All-Pervading Self.”

By incorporating the yoga philosophy of inner peace into my life, I discovered to my amazement that my attitude of calm transcended fear in my dealings with fellow prisoners and guards. No longer was I the hard-ass striking out at all those around me because I was fearful of being assaulted. I became polite in manner and appearance; my daily interaction with others was easier. Tension left me as I tried to find the good in all situations. I found that I had

the strength to simply walk away from situations that held the potential for violence. This reprieve from the stress of always having to be ready to fight proved a godsend.

When I decided to stop living in fear, fear of seeing confrontation in every face, my hunger for violence was satisfied. Others saw that I no longer was Alpha wolf looking to attack any potential rival in the pack. They all knew I could still go at it hard if necessary, but my fellow prisoners respected my transformation. Like me, they sighed with relief.

Although my life was beginning to take shape through these activities, I still yearned to contribute something to the outside world even though it did not recognize my existence. I thought about what I could do that would improve my life and show that I have worth.

Novelist Pat Conroy provided the answer in an interview I read, in which he said he wrote to "save himself." I decided to become a writer in the hope that writing would become my salvation.

I began writing without the benefit of a proper writing education. After 30 rejection slips for my first essay, I realized I needed to educate myself. I enrolled in two writers correspondence courses: children's short stories and nonfiction. My instructors encouraged me to read

everything I could get my hands on and to make sure that I studied the various writing techniques used. They also suggested that I write every day and that I write about what I know.

I took their advice literally. When I wrote my short stories and essays, I wrote about what I know best—myself. I soon discovered that writing had a meditative effect. It called to me like the priesthood called my favorite cousin many years ago. It was inescapable.


Through my studies and writing, self-discovery slowly unfolded. It wasn't always comfortable telling my stories. My life was beginning to resemble an onion. As I put my thoughts down I would uncover many layers beneath the surface that led to hidden meanings and feelings. For example, I discovered that my marriage to a loving woman had failed as a result of my domineering and philandering ways. When my wife finally began to exert her free will, I ended the relationship. By writing about this I understood I was selfish and immature.

Although at times writing has deeply saddened me, my epiphanies have convinced me that setting my experience to paper is beneficial. Understanding why I made so many wrong choices in life has enabled me to change for the better. I now eagerly help other prisoners who know that I am a successful writer with

over 50 major bylines. A few have succeeded in getting published.

It's become important for me to share my experiences with others. It shows my readers that I am alive and that I am able to contribute to society. Perhaps my words may help save someone from the pitfalls that used to ensnare me.

This ability to speak openly about my life, exposing secrets and the shame I feel, has brought me a freedom and a feeling of acceptance I doubt I could have known any other way in prison. My work also attempts to convey a message taught to me by Nelson Mandela, that life cannot be lived with bitterness. That feeling defeats the human spirit. Life should be lived in the shining, healing light of hope and forgiveness.

Although I have been incarcerated for the past thirteen years and most likely will spend the remainder of my life behind bars, it is due to my involvement with meditation and writing that I have changed from an antagonistic person to that of caregiver. My positive interaction with others is similar to being a lighthouse keeper. I hope that my life experiences will act like a shining beacon and guide readers safely through the treacherous shoals beneath life's deceptively calm waters. And I pray every night that my efforts make it easier for some to deal with their struggles. 

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Two Convicts

by Terry McClain, El Dorado, Kansas

Day after day I passed his cell and looked for the pastel-on-vellum portrait of a Japanese geisha framed on his wall. If he was dead, the wall would be bare and his cell empty, for I knew the guards would pack his belongings as quickly as possible. He often said to me: "I'm an old man and I'll die soon," and I thought his words idle.

But I watched him shrivel, waste away to a shell of what he once was, and I knew now they were true. There was no hope for him. The cancer had metastasized, spread throughout his body, and was killing him.

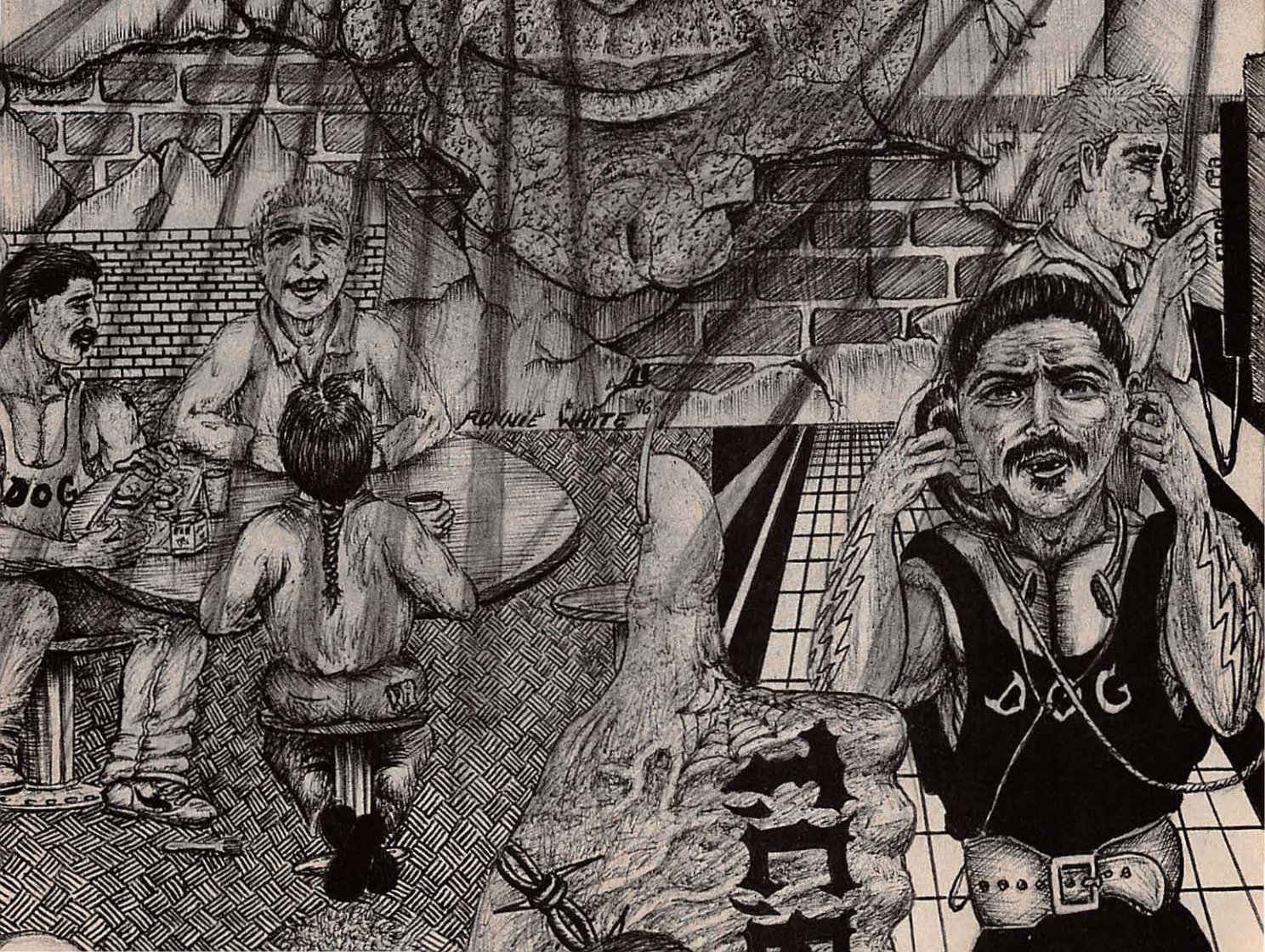
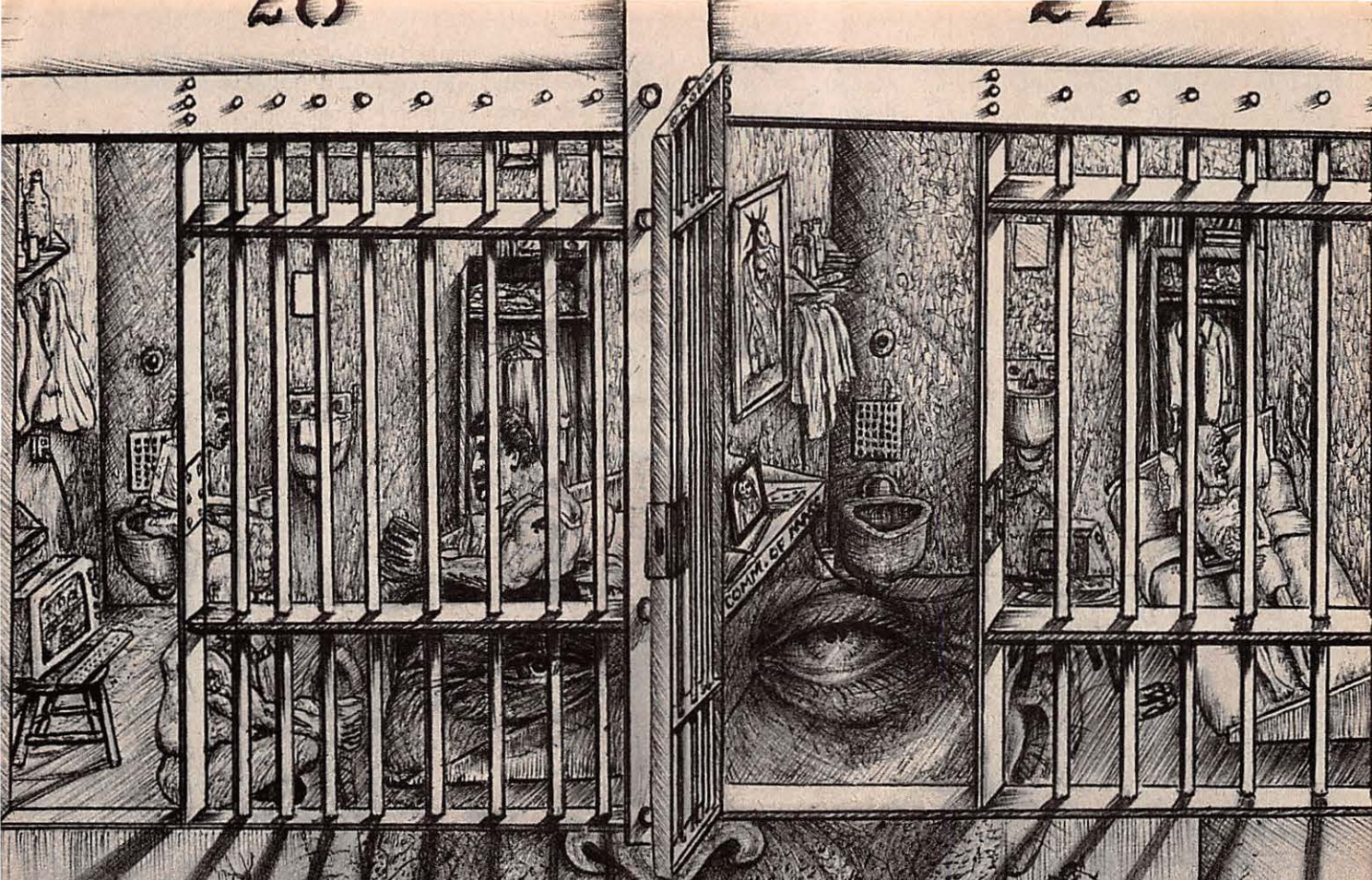
Every night as I lay in bed listening to the sounds of the prison, I softly said the word metastasized. It had first sounded innocuous in my ears, like a technical process common to muffler-and-brake shops. Now it was the ugliest word in our language and sounded to me like the name of some malevolent and evil being. It filled me with fear, and yet I longed to be near to it and to look upon its deadly work.

I overslept that morning. Amos Calvert and Darryl Purvis were at our table when I straggled into the mess hall for morning chow. Purvis spread margarine on a piece of toast.

"No," Calvert said, continuing his conversation with Purvis. "John was a good man alright, but there was something strange about that old boy. I'll tell you what I think." He slurped at his coffee, no doubt arranging his announcement in his mind.

I loathed Calvert. When I first knew him, his tales of riots and killings were interesting, but I soon grew tired of him and his endless boasting of his prison exploits.

Art by Ronnie White



"Not a lot of these guys knew ol' John like I did," he said. "He was different, no doubt about it, but it's hard to say how." He began to slurp his coffee again without giving us his theory.

Purvis saw me staring.

"The old man's gone," he said.

"Who?" said I.

"John Cavanaugh."

"Is he dead?"

"Calvert was just saying how the cops pulled him out of his cell this morning, before breakfast."

I was unprepared for the sudden, intense grief that seemed to well up from my bones. It must have given me a start, for a fork clattered off the table onto the floor. Calvert stared at me, then looked to Purvis for an explanation.

"After you got out that last time," Purvis said to Calvert, "him and ol' John were pretty thick. Before John got sick he swore he was going to make a convict out of the boy, come hell or high water."

Calvert crooked his eyebrows. I felt his rheumy blue eyes on me but I refused to look into his face. He returned to his coffee and gulped it audibly.

"I wouldn't think," he said, "that youngsters ought to have much to do with a man like that."

"Why, what do you mean, Amos?" asked Purvis. The indignation in his voice seemed to spur Calvert to truculence.

"What I mean is that youngsters ought to stay together in the joint, stick with their own kind. They get into trouble running with older guys, get wrong ideas about how things should be done."

A quick surge of anger flashed through me. I had a vision of my fists slamming into Calvert's dried out face; an image of him lying bleeding and broken on the crusted brown tiles.

"What are you trying to say, Calvert?" I barked at him. My body tensed, ready to pounce.

"Hey, I didn't mean nothin', man, for real!" he stammered, eyes suddenly wide, palms flying up in contrition. "Don't get me wrong; I mean, John was a great guy, one hell of a convict, and I really liked him!" Seconds passed; he felt safe enough to continue. "It's just that John seemed to stay in the middle of trouble. I remember he almost stabbed a cop named Barnes to death, and Barnes never messed with anybody. And he killed a friend of mine, Albert Knight, over nothing. John just seemed to keep things stirred up too much around here."

For once I was glad to go to work, relieved to have something to occupy

hands and mind. I gave no more thought to Calvert, except to recall the distant formality Cavanaugh had always shown him, the proper attitude of a convict toward a jailhouse phony. As I stacked heavy highway signs, I thought back to what Purvis had said about John molding me into a convict. I had stumbled into the prison a green kid right off a college campus. Cavanaugh was watching a few weeks later when I piped a dummy who had ordered me off the weight pit after a disagreement over a squat rack. After I got out of the hole, John introduced himself and, like a

and often punctuated his wisdom with a thin stream of brown juice onto the dirty concrete.

It was a testament to how widely John Cavanaugh was admired that the normally raucous shakedown line was somber and subdued that afternoon, each of us melancholy in our respective memories of him. I stood in the clear sunlight and the image of John in his last days came to me. His gray face was thin and tired, stricken with pain. There was a new guard assigned to shakedown and I moved to watch him, but the image would not depart. It was solemn and the

eyes were tight with a look of quiet, determined anger. The image spoke and, while I could hear no sound, the face was full of anxiety, as if it wanted to remind me of something. Then I remembered Cavanaugh had asked me a month or so before, if he died, to call his brother and let him know. The phone number was in a box under my bed. The face quickly receded and was gone.

Thirty minutes later I was at the telephone booths in the dormitory lobby. I punched in the number of his brother in Kansas City. After a few beeps, a voice came on the line and said that the number had been disconnected and that no further information was available.

Later that evening I went down to his cell, partly to see if his

neighbor knew how I could contact John's brother, and partly because that familiar haven of cells at the end of the flag might help me seal away forever memories of Cavanaugh from the gray indifference of prison. His neighbor, Leo McGogary, was a short, elderly man with a smooth-shaven head and heavy jowls. If John had still been alive and able to get around, Leo and I would have partnered up against him and Wayne Estes in pinochle, playing cards and sipping Wayne's infamous potato hooch until the guard called lights out.

Leo and Wayne were in Leo's cell swilling hooch and watching a TV game show with the sound off when I eased onto a wooden stool. Leo reached under the bed for a plastic jug while Wayne handed me a glass that I filled with the pale, foul-smelling liquid.

Wayne was a small, wiry man with a scruffy, unwashed look heightened by his failure to shower regularly. No matter; after a glass or two of his hooch, body odors became immaterial.

"At least he won't have to do time in this sewer no more," Leo said to the silent, flickering television.

"Did he... peacefully?" I asked.

After the riot of '76, we went strapped for weeks and, with two other convicts from the dorm, watched each other's backs wherever we went in the prison. I readily absorbed injunctions to avoid drugs, punks, and gambling.

master sculptor chiseling a block of rough stone, patiently set himself to teach me how to survive in the gutter world of prison. He never explained why he chose me to be the object of his labors and, after awhile, I was too grateful to ask.

He gave me my first shank, a sinister nine-inch piece of sharpened steel I hid by gluing it under the hollowed-out flap of a cardboard box. A roll of adhesive tape and a stack of thick *Life* magazines to serve as body armor against stab wounds became permanent fixtures in my cell. For when it was necessary to be strapped, I learned to hide a shank in my crotch or in a rolled-up newspaper to get by shakedowns. After the riot of '76, we went strapped for weeks and, with two other convicts from the dorm, watched each other's backs wherever we went in the prison. I readily absorbed injunctions to avoid drugs, punks, and gambling. Discretion is keeping your mouth shut and minding your own business, and I learned to shun inmates who did neither.

"It's not enough just to have heart," John told me. "If you're going to walk down a life sentence, you've got to be smart, too!" He chewed tobacco then

"Yeah, I think so," said Leo. "I got up to pee about three this morning and he was sleeping okay. About five, the cop was making his rounds and found him. The cop said it looked like he died in his sleep."

"What are they doing with the body?" I asked.

"No one knows for sure," Leo answered. "They usually take them down to the county for an autopsy and then wait for the family to claim the body. Nobody claims it, they bury it in a potter's field somewhere."

A fly buzzed lazily around the cell and settled on the television screen. Wayne hawked and spat into a tin coffee can Leo kept at the foot of the bed. In the distance, the sounds of dominoes slapping tables and the cries of players reviling each other echoed faintly down the stone canyon that was the dormitory.

"John asked me to call his brother," I said. "I tried this afternoon, but the number was disconnected. You guys have any ideas how I can get word to him?"

Wayne and Leo exchanged quick glances and fingered their glasses. I sensed something was wrong.

"The number's been disconnected, maybe you should forget it, just let it go," Leo said quietly.

"I told John I'd make the call," I answered stiffly, maybe a bit too much so. These were friends. "Why did you say that, that I should forget it?" I asked more reasonably.

"Because that brother, that Russell, is a maggot piece of garbage!" Wayne exclaimed loudly. These were his first words and they left me thoroughly bewildered. Leo saw my confusion.

"I double-celled with John in B when he first came in in '61," Leo said. "We grew up in the same neighborhood in Kansas City, but John's dad died and he went to work to support his ma and brother while the rest of us raised hell and got into trouble. The brother, Russell, was the apple of his ma's eye; hell, even John doted on him. The kid was smart, good-looking, popular, even made good grades in school. Everybody said he'd be the one to make his people proud. He was nineteen or twenty, going to some community college, when he took up with a floozie and she had him rob a jewelry store. Pretty soon, John's ma came crying to him to do something to keep 'their baby' from prison. What happened was, John took the fall. They gave back all the jewelry and he pleaded to a simple robbery, a 2-10. Since it was his first time, they told him a year, maybe eighteen months,

and he'd walk. John told Russell to quit the tramp and take care of their ma. The boy promised he would, so John came to the joint."

I listened raptly to the old convict, for, other than what I had seen of John and the little he had told me of himself, I knew almost nothing about his life.

"What was he like then?" I asked.

Leo paused a moment.

"He wasn't much different. But I think he was happier, he could laugh and have a good time then. Like one time when

"He was always looking to trick youngsters into celling with him when they first came in. He was real friendly and he had dope and money and he could make scared youngsters trust him. But as soon as he got them in his cell, he'd turn them out and make them his punks."

these two guys, Steve and Jason, lived next door, everybody was on Jason 'cause he snored so loud he kept the whole tier awake at night. Early on Saturday morning, John got a can of shaving cream and snuck over to their cell on his hands and knees. Steve made Jason sleep with his head toward the door, so John waited until Jason was in mid-snore and shot his mouth full of shaving cream. Boy, I tell you!" Leo laughed. "Jason came out of that bunk flapping and screeching like a gut-shot turkey buzzard! He went around roaring and threatening everybody, but no one told him who done it until John was already in the hole."

Leo and Wayne were still laughing as I refilled our glasses with the last of the hooch. I mourned the end of it; the powerful elixir was a pleasant fire in my stomach.

"What happened?" I asked. "Why did he go to the hole?"

"He got in a fight with a puke in the tag factory," Leo said. "There was a hammer nearby, and John cracked the guy with it. He told me later he wished he hadn't seen the hammer, 'cause a

fight then was only seven days in the hole and maybe then all that came later wouldn't have happened. But he split the guy's head open, so they gave him 120 days in solitary.

"Right after John went to the hole, his brother Russell got busted for a burglary in Kansas City," Leo continued. "Their ma was sick in the hospital so there wasn't anybody around to help. The boy pled guilty one day, got sentenced to a 5-20 the next, and was on his way here a couple of days later. That's how they did things then." Leo seemed to gather himself.

"Problem was, Russell just showed up and, before anybody could look out for him, they had him in C cellhouse hooked up with a real mutt named Albert Knight."

My ears perked up at the name Calvert had mentioned at breakfast that morning.

"This Knight was bad news," Leo said. "He was always looking to trick youngsters into celling with him when they first came in. He was real friendly and he had dope and money and he could make scared youngsters trust him. But as soon as he got them in his cell, he'd turn them out and make them his punks. He had just worked a boy so bad that the kid went and hung himself in the showers. So as soon as we found out what was going on, Wayne went over there to straighten things out."

Wayne seemed to have fallen into a deep reverie. At the mention of his name he shrugged.

"Yeah," he said softly, "I worked in the Electric Shop then so I made up an excuse to get in and talk to the day sergeant, a real jackass named Barnes. I tried to convince him to move Russell in with a friend of ours who had just come in from Wichita and needed a cellie, but Barnes wouldn't hear of it. He said, 'Boy, once I move an inmate, that's it. I ain't going to have inmates jumping around, causing me a lot of problems.' I tried to tell the puke that if Russell stayed in that cell, he was going to have all kinds of problems, but he wouldn't listen and told me to get out of his office."

"I figured then I better go talk to Knight," Wayne continued. "I went up to his cell and him and Russell were in their boxer shorts snorting chicken powder. I called Knight to the bars and told him Russell was John's brother and the best thing he could do was get him out of there, fast. Knight was cranked up pretty good on that stuff and he copped an attitude and started talking

loud and cussed me. I didn't care much for that, so I told him if he did anything to Russell, John would kill him when he got out of the hole."

Wayne ran his fingers through thinning hair. "While I was trying to talk to Knight, Russell just stood behind him watching. But when I told him John would whack him, Russell ran up and put his face right up in the bars. He was a real small kid; he looked like he was only fifteen or sixteen years old. But I'll be damned if he didn't start cussing and calling me names like no one ever called me before. He said he could take care of himself, that John didn't call any shots for him, and that me and my friends should leave him alone and mind our own business. I looked at Knight and he was smiling, real smug-like.

"I don't mind telling you I was a little rattled," Wayne confessed. "Just didn't expect that from somebody who was John's brother. I tried to talk sense to him anyway; tried to tell him he was getting in a mess and he'd better get out while he still could. I offered to wait while he packed his stuff; told him I'd get him out of there, take him to the Captain's office if nothing else worked. But he wouldn't pay attention; he just screamed and cussed louder. Knight put an arm around him and laughed. There wasn't anything I could do, so I left." He raised his eyebrows.

"About a week later a night cop was making rounds in C and caught Knight and Russell naked together, Knight up on Russell's back. They took them to the hole for a while, then put Knight back in C and moved Russell to A with the rest of the sissies." Wayne pulled out a rumpled pack of cigarettes and lit one.

"But the cops didn't stop there," he said, blowing out a plume of smoke. "Back then, when guys were caught like that, the cops wrote letters to their people on the streets and told them. They figured that letters would cut down on the faggot stuff. So Barnes wrote to John's ma and told her about Russell. She was already sick, but when she found out that her darling boy had become a jailhouse queer, it killed her. She died three days after she got the letter; it was in her hand when she died."

"My God," I said softly. "What did John do?"

"They put Russell on the farm a few days before he got out of the hole," Wayne said. "John didn't say anything to anybody that morning, but I heard later

he was out at the rec-shack where we kept our shanks. We racked out for chow and the cellhouse emptied. When it was clear, he ran into the cop's office and stabbed Barnes in the neck. Didn't kill the mutt, but he was paralyzed for years. Then John walked straight to the chow hall before anybody knew what was going on. He eased up on Knight while he was eating and stabbed him twelve times. Knight made it to his feet, but John left the shank buried up to the hilt in one of his eye sockets."

I knew the rest. The four years in solitary, the nineteen calendars he stacked in this joint after he came in with just the one or two, and the cancer that

"He eased up on Knight while he was eating and stabbed him twelve times. Knight made it to his feet, but John left the shank buried up to the hilt in one of his eye sockets."

stalked him like a maleficent fiend and killed him just before he was due to get out. A silence took possession of the small cell and, under cover of it, I got up and walked down the tier toward the toilets. Before I got there Wayne caught up with me.

"I don't know if this'll mean anything," he said, "but right before he died, John told me that you had become the son to him he never had." He looked at me a few seconds and turned away.

"Wayne!"

I stopped him.

"What happened between John and Russell later, after Russell left?"

"John hated his guts. Russell kept writing and tried to visit, but John wouldn't have anything to do with him. He asked us all early on not to mention him anymore."

"Then why did John want me to call him?"

"I don't know; that does sound strange. Guess you'll have to find out as best you can."

The next afternoon I worked through all the metropolitan phone directories

until I found a Russell L. Cavanaugh listed in Shawnee Mission. I called the number and a woman answered and said Russell was at work at an insurance company. I dialed the company and, after a secretary put me on hold, someone picked up the phone.

"Russell Cavanaugh," a voice said smoothly.

"Are you John Cavanaugh's brother?" I asked.

"Yes...YES! I am!" he replied quickly.

"I'm just calling to tell you that John died of cancer yesterday."

"WHAT! What did you say?!" His voice was loud and unsettled.

"John died yesterday," I repeated. "He asked me to call you when he died and let you know."

I watched a cockroach forage through detritus in a corner of the booth while Russell groped with his shock. It took him a while; I was tempted once or twice to ask if he was still there.

"John? Cancer? Dead?" He choked the questions out slowly.

"Yes," I said. "I'm sorry."

"NO!...NO! John can't be dead!" Russell exploded. "I need him! I waited for years...to forgive me...no...John...no."

Had I been a better human being I would have felt a measure of pity for Russell Cavanaugh as his voice trailed off to a frantic, incoherent whimper. Instead, I waited for him to regain his composure.

"Who are you, anyway?" he sniffed several moments later.

"I'm just a convict, a friend of John's," I said.

"Did John...did he give you a message for me?"

"No."


"Are you sure?" he pleaded. "We were brothers, and..."

"Yes, I'm sure," I answered. "He only mentioned you once, and that was just your name and phone number."

My duty to John was finished, but before I could say the usual things and close the call, Russell blurted: "Did John still hate me?"

"Yes, he hated your guts," I replied laconically.

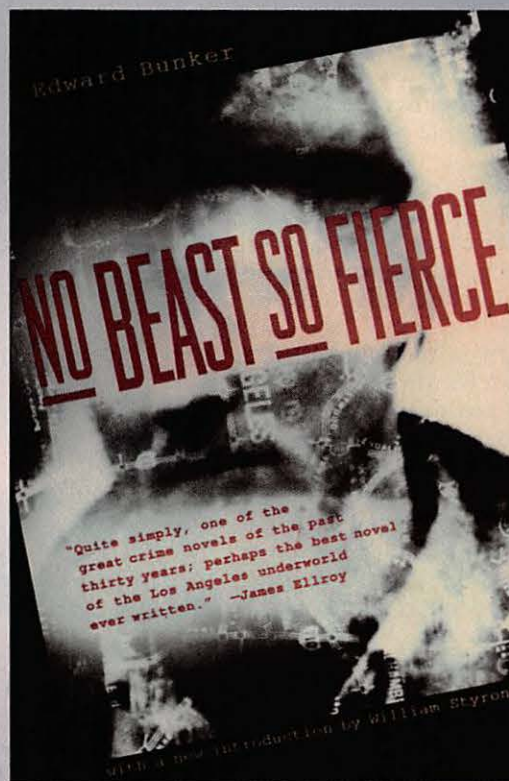
A distant crack came over the line as the receiver at the other end slammed down. I turned from the booth, and again I thought of the stricken face of the cancer victim. His visage was still gray and solemn, but instead of anger, a fierce joy now burned in his eyes. A smile of triumph flirted on his lips.

I smiled, too, and walked to my cell. 

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The Fielding Dawson Story

by Anthony Papa

Eight of us journey through the maze of steel doors and concrete corridors toward our weekly meeting with our literary guru, the man who teaches us how to express ourselves with the power of the word. It's a Tuesday evening in the sweltering heat of August. The small classroom is tucked away near the hospital here at Sing Sing.

When we enter, Fielding Dawson greets us with a big smile. He's a maverick writer who takes no shortcuts and is proud to tell the world about the little-known genre of prison writing. For most of the last decade Dawson has been teaching writing in Sing Sing and many other prisons.

He caught his first taste of teaching in 1984, at Attica prison in upstate New York.

"I was amazed by the talent," Dawson says. He made a vow to try to release some of the wealth of talent behind the walls into the larger world.

Fielding has lived in New York since 1956, a long way from his childhood roots in Kirkwood, Missouri, just west of St. Louis. He's the son of creative parents, and the grandson and great grandson of craftsmen and teachers. He attended Black Mountain College, a well-known experimental school in North Carolina, where his skills as a young writer, artist and poet were further developed. After two years in the Army he moved to New York, where he has lived ever since, though he's travelled widely. He is the author of 20 books: short story collections, novels, poetry and memoirs. His work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Arts Magazine*, and in numerous literary magazines.

Besides teaching and lecturing, Dawson leads workshops and gives readings at universities and colleges throughout the United States and abroad.

"One difference between teaching in prisons and in universities," he says, "is that intuitive connections with convict students are made much quicker and are more durable."

I think the difference lies in the makeup of his students. He never knows what to expect in his prison workshops, and he steers the class dialogue toward breaking down barriers that can prevent prison writers from getting to the core of their emotions and thoughts.

"Prison writing is more audacious," he says, "more honest and outspoken than conventional writing." Many great literary writers were convicts, including Melville, Voltaire, and Dostoevsky, as were some of the most popular writers, like Chester Himes, Nelson Algren and Jack London.

But most writers would not dare to enter the dungeons where we're housed, let alone challenge us to turn ourselves inside out through creative writing. What I like best about Fielding is his willingness to be one with us. And beyond the walls, he's always in the mix, advocating for prisoners.

In a recent interview, Fielding revealed that slave laborexists in prisons such as Clinton, in Dannemora, N.Y. He spoke of CORCRAFT, a prison industry that pays convicts 70 cents a day to produce steel desks, chairs, tables, bedding, uniforms and many other items for all New York State offices.

Fielding has also found a popular inside/outside audience as a regular guest on Bernard White's *Morning Show* at 6:45 a.m. every Thursday on radio station WBAI in New York City. Fielding reads letters from prisoners across the United States, forging a link between the incarcerated and those in the free world. Many of the letters are from convicts who have no way of releasing their anger except through writing. They look to him

as a prophet: not one who reads the future, but one who raises consciousness. He has encouraged students like Leslie Rodgers, now a published writer, who is currently writing a book on prison theology.

"The spontaneity of the classroom," he says, and responding to individual students, informs what I say in class. When student writers make mistakes, I try to learn from those mistakes. Teaching writing workshops in prison has gotten me out of myself, into others' lives,

and this has caused a change in my writing."

Fielding teaches us to pay attention to details in our observations, dreams, journals, stories and poetry.

"Prisons are the enemy," he says. "Do not give in to state language."

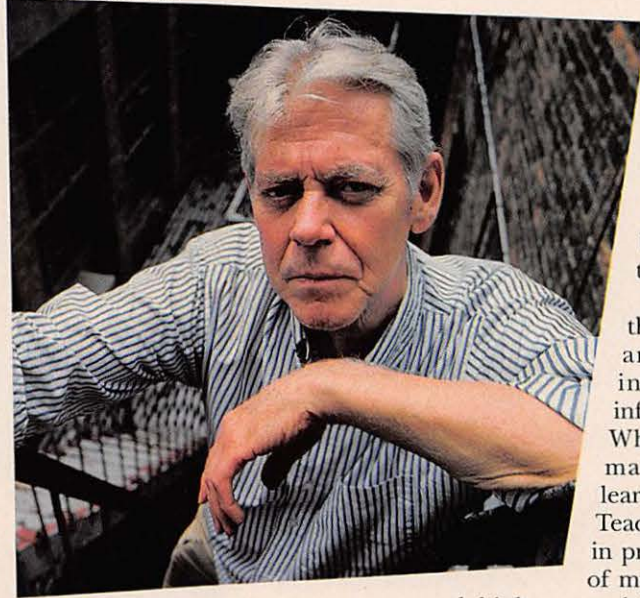
He says *prison*, not *correctional facility*. He says *guard*, not *correction officer*. *Warden*, not *superintendent*. *Prisoner* not *inmate*. We were the ones who told him that prisoners don't like the word "inmate" because it means mental illness to us.

Beyond tall, barbed-wire-topped, chainlinked fences, rolling hills of neighboring farms... where the guards were bored, hostile and picky on details as I cleared security before being escorted to classrooms. Or the big, ugly maximum security prisons, with their vast, high walls, gun towers, long corridors (that define tunnel vision), and always the dim, gray, drawn faces and expressions of male and female guards on guard, keepers of the kept, wherever I went, and I went wherever I could, like Johnny Applesed, looking for talent, scattering seeds to grow trees inside heads so after I'd gone, in the wilderness of the future, somewhere some way, pen or pencil might connect with paper, in a poem.

—from *The Rose*, a short story by Fielding Dawson

Fielding has touched many lives behind the walls of many prisons, and the seeds he has planted have not stopped growing. Writer, teacher and honorary convict Fielding Dawson is a unique, caring man who has given many prisoners a chance to discover themselves through creative expression, and we cherish this.

Photo by Bobby Adams



and CONS

Writing from the Sing Sing Workshop

A NAME, A NUMBER

by Robert Sanchez

Robert Sanchez is
The name I was given
That is
Robert without the OH!

Sanchez
Roll the Chez off
Your tongue
Feel the history behind the vibrations

88-B as in Boy
Eleven Sixty One
Is my other
Much more important name

A name is
a name
is a name like
a number is a number is a number

88-B as in Bird
Roll that off your tongue
History
without vibrations

I am what I am
But
What am I?
A name, a number.

A Christmas Story

by Leslie Rodgers

It was the day before Christmas, 1980, the first time my mother bailed me out of the Brooklyn House of Detention for Men. It was overcast and dreary outside, cold and humid. Although I was happy to be getting out of jail, the day set my mood dark. After being fingerprinted and escorted out to the general lobby, where visitors, lawyers and mothers with bail money inquired about friends, clients and sons, I saw my mother, a mixture of joy, rage and fear on her face and tears in her eyes. It hurt to look at this woman who never gave up on me. The scene tore at me, cutting deep into my heart, forcing an immediate, however temporary regret for my criminal lifestyle.

We hugged. I said something about gratitude, and she said something about love. It was an unbearable embrace, a painful five or ten seconds. Red, green and blue lights blinked on and off from a Christmas tree standing in the background. The tree seemed out of place, incongruent. It was supposed to represent hope, something of the goodness in humanity. I couldn't see that here. Maybe in the moment, maybe in this embrace, but I couldn't see it. I broke away, suggesting we leave before it rained.

I went to pick up my wallet. As I gave the clerk my name, commitment number and bail receipt,

I noticed a woman across from me at the next window. She was holding back a flood of tears, as she courteously but with great effort answered the clerk's questions. He had her sign a few forms and then gave her a bag of clothes, a pair of shoes and wallet very similar to mine. A captain then came out into the lobby, taking the woman to the side. It was all very official: neat, clean, impersonal.

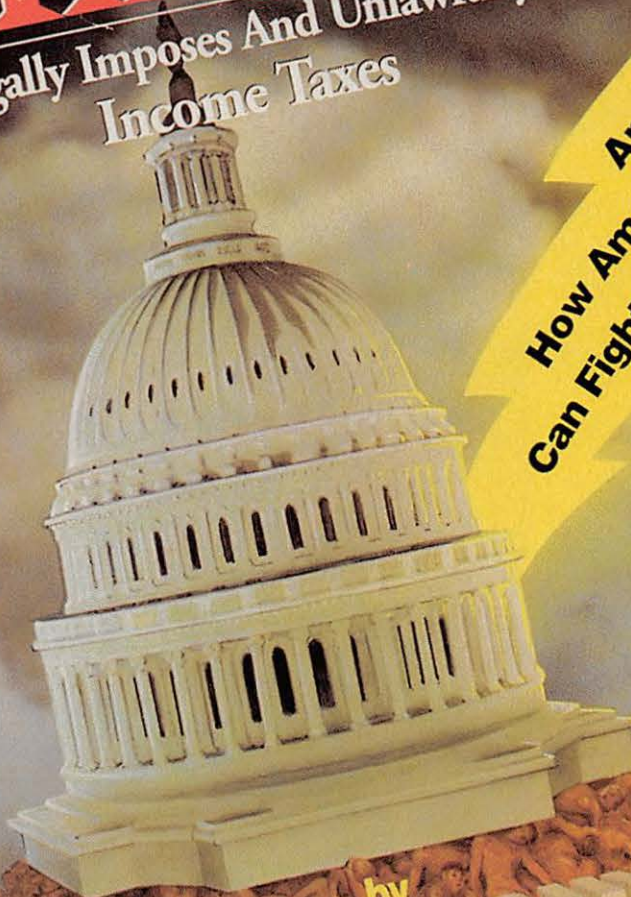
"I'm very sorry Mrs. Blank," he said. "Your son committed suicide at approximately 2:15 a.m." He eyed her. "Just after the officer made his rounds," he emphasized, as if to say she couldn't hold him or his staff responsible. "We discovered him at 3:00 a.m. But it was too late. There was nothing we could do."

The woman turned, hugging the bag of clothes to her chest, as my mother had hugged me only moments before. I could see in that bag the image of her son, fading slowly, reluctantly from her life. He was something like me, neither good nor bad but lost in time and place, without historical and lineal identity. I could see in that desperate embrace, in the teary eyes and the sullen face, a question: Why? There was no response, only the flickering lights of the Christmas tree answered the woman's silent plea.

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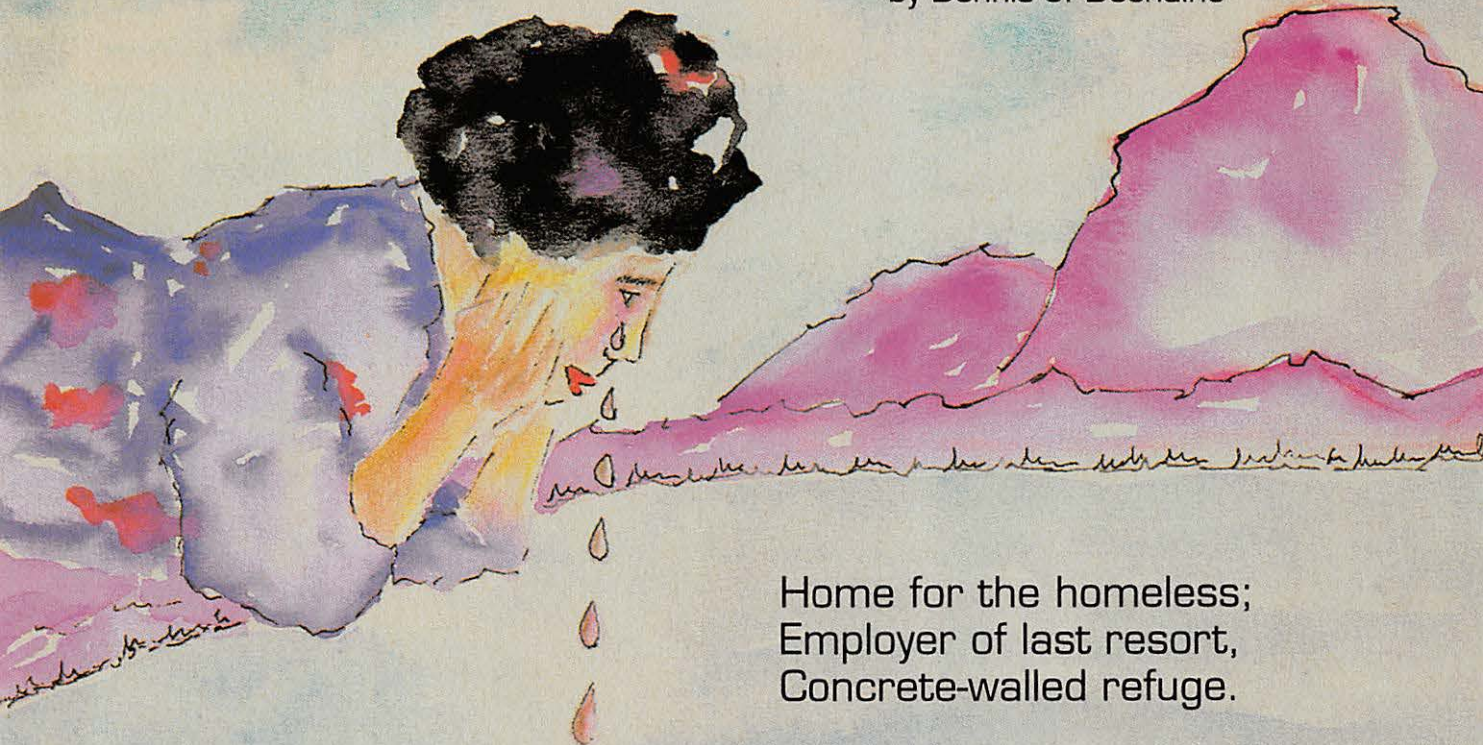
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Prison Defined

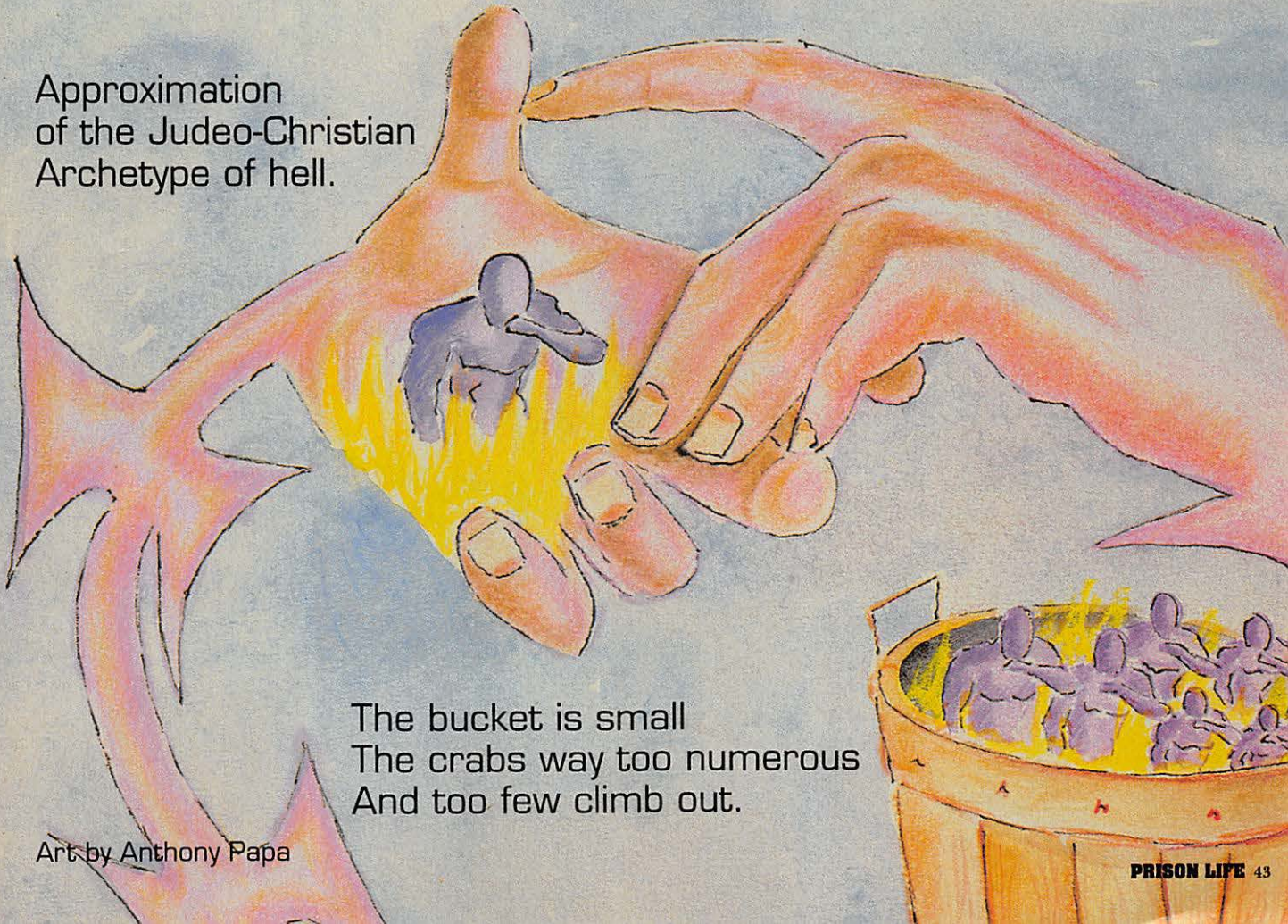
Three HAIKU Poems

by Dennis J. Dechaine



Home for the homeless;
Employer of last resort,
Concrete-walled refuge.

Approximation
of the Judeo-Christian
Archetype of hell.



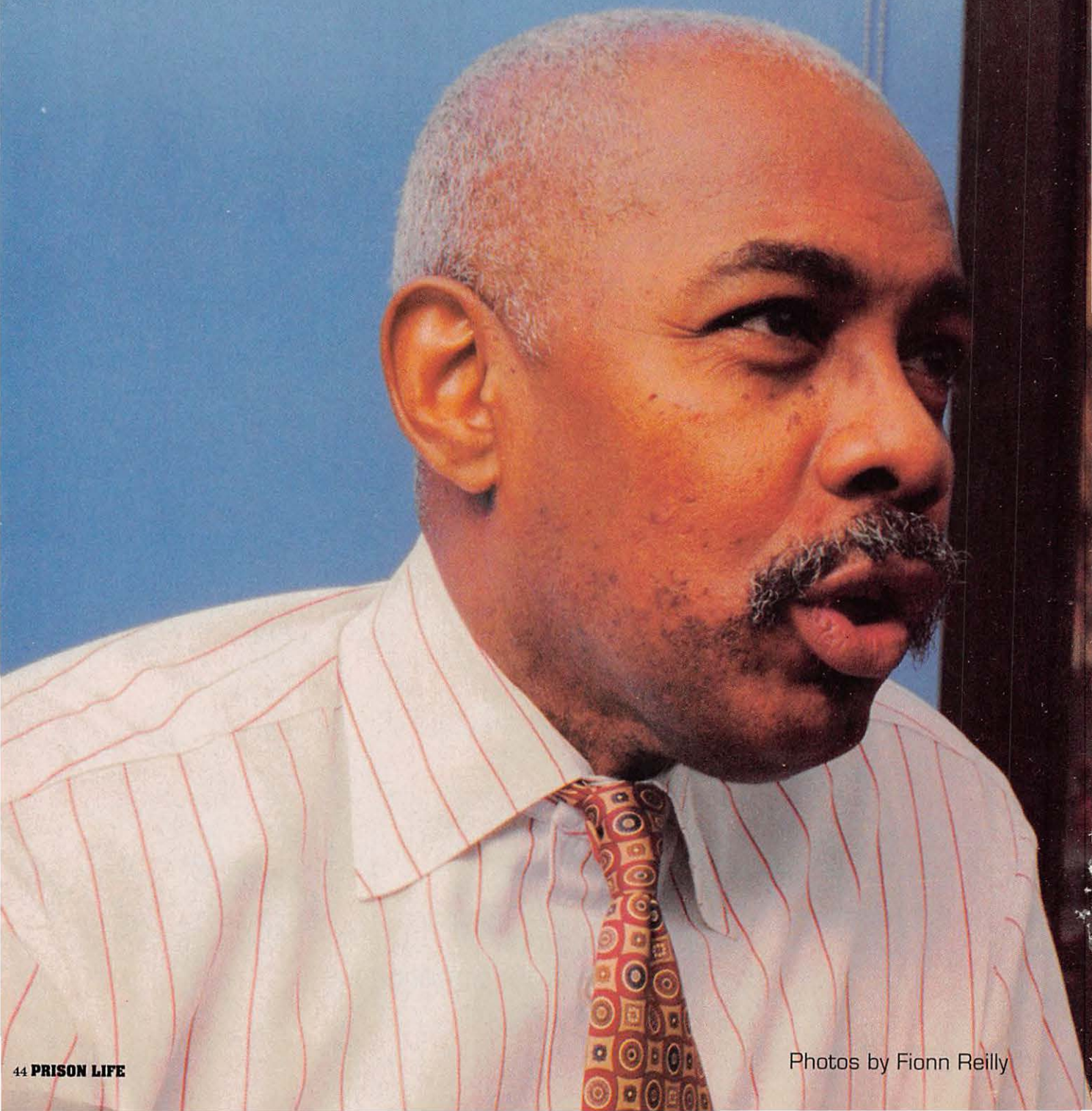
The bucket is small
The crabs way too numerous
And too few climb out.

Art by Anthony Papa

MAN OF THE YEAR

EDDIE ELLIS

By Pam Widener



Photos by Fionn Reilly

AT LARGE



Former Black Panther Eddie Ellis spent 23 years in New York State's toughest prisons for a crime he did not commit. Released just three years ago, he hit the streets running and hasn't stopped since, taking the organizational skills he honed in prison back to his community, where he works ceaselessly to help those who suffer most from America's latest economic boom: the prison business. *Prison Life* salutes Eddie Ellis for his tireless efforts to make desperately needed changes in his own community and in the justice system at large.

Man of the Year

Eddie Ellis

at Large

by Pam Widener

The Negro race, like all races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men.

W.E.B. Du Bois

With his usual red-faced exuberance and borderline Hell's Angel demeanor, this evening's moderator, activist-lawyer and William Kunstler protégé Ron Kuby never for a moment lets us forget why we have gathered. We are in the Puffin Room, a small gallery in downtown Manhattan hung with hauntingly beautiful art created by and for political prisoners the world over, a large number of whom are in the US. The panel is *The Politics of Incarceration*.

"Just imagine," Kuby says, "that there was some sort of disease that hit one white high school student in four. And what this disease did was it robbed these young white people of three, four, five, ten years, 20 years of their youth—their most productive years. Some of them it would cripple, and some of them it would kill. First it hit one in four young white high school students. And then one in three. And then finally people predicted this plague would hit one in two. You know what would happen in this country. There would be outrage. Hundreds of billions of dollars would be spent to cure this problem; no expense would be spared.

"That's the reality of what happens when white people are afflicted. As those of us here tonight know, when African-Americans and Latinos and when poor people generally are afflicted, the system is much different.

"I want to introduce to you a man," he continues, "who has suffered tremendously, and in his suffering has given incredible things to a generation of young people this country is trying to destroy. A man who is truly one of society's unsung heroes."

Enter Eddie Ellis. He is a tall, lean, dignified man in his early 50s, bespectacled, with soft white hair and a white-speckled moustache. He looks his age, but has the bearing of a wise village elder. Nothing about him suggests he spent 23 years in prison. He seems calm, at ease, grounded in thought. Yet there is an energy hovering with studied patience behind his eyes and there is a constant purse to his lips, making them seem like a floodgate about to give from the intellectual pressure behind them.

"It is a tremendous honor and a pleasure to be asked to speak here," he says, "particularly in the company of such distinguished panelists. Indeed, I think that we've come a long, long way for just being asked."

His voice is distinctive. Once you hear it you'll

*Eddie Ellis speaks in New York City, 1996.
Photo by Chris Cozzone.*



recognize it in a heartbeat, even from several rooms away. It is the first of countless times I will hear Eddie refer to himself as "we," and I will come to understand that it's a reflection of his community-based world view.

"Unfortunately," he continues, "I have—since I got out of prison, which has been about three years—a set, prepared speech that I normally give. And over the three years I've gotten fairly good at delivering it." Laughter. "When I spoke to Ron Kuby about what I would talk on tonight, of course I had in mind my set speech. And he asked me to deviate from that speech. He said that the other presenters—the other illustrious presenters—would be using

"The title of the speech," says Eddie slowly, pausing between each phrase and dragging his s's like snakes, "is From the Plantations to the Projects to the Prisons.

"And I think that somewhat describes the journey that African-Americans have taken in this country. We went from a plantation... to a project... to a prison."

THE WAR COMES HOME

The same sense of outrage and urgency that dissidents took to the streets in the '60s to protest the war in Vietnam now drives countless seminars, conferences, lectures, marches and rallies throughout the nation and across the World Wide Web in response to the

men now under some form of criminal justice supervision, with predictions that the number would increase to one in two in the next several years. Already in some cities, like Baltimore, the number was more than one in two.

The report documented the cost of criminal justice control for these nearly one million young black males at about \$6 billion a year; and went on to say that African-American women are the fastest growing prison population, rising 78 percent between 1989 and 1994. The number of black women incarcerated for drug offenses increased 828 percent from 1986 to 1991; African-Americans and Hispanics constitute almost 90 percent of offenders sentenced to state

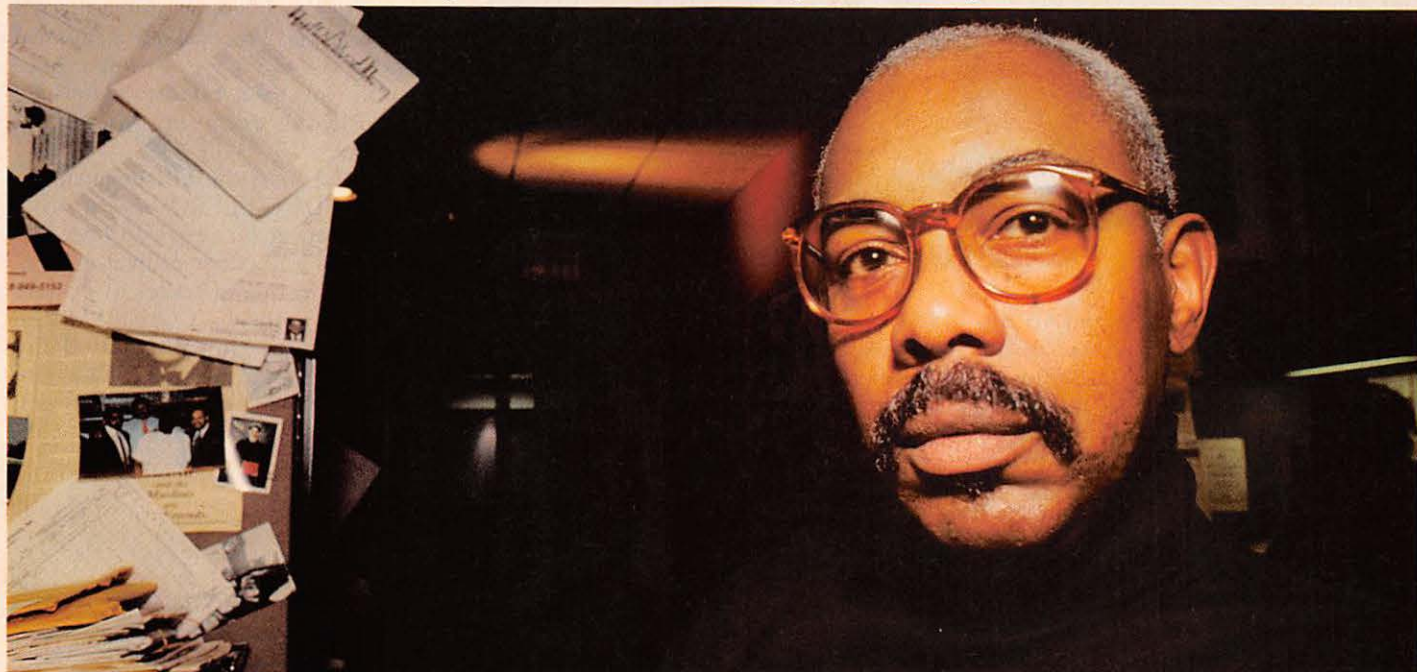


Photo by Chris Cozzone.

"From the plantations to the projects to the prisons.

I think that somewhat describes the journey that African Americans have taken in this country."

all of the material that I had in my set speech." Laughter. "Which they did." More laughter. "So I'm left here with this set speech that everybody else has already spoken about."

In the last three years, the set speech Eddie emerged from prison with has evolved into at least four versions, each of which can be customized on the spot to meet any occasion. His habit is to scribble a list of key words on whatever piece of paper is nearest while the other guests are speaking. When his turn comes, he speaks off the cuff, waving the piece of paper as though conducting his own symphony, consulting it only occasionally to make sure he hasn't left anything out, which is highly unlikely.

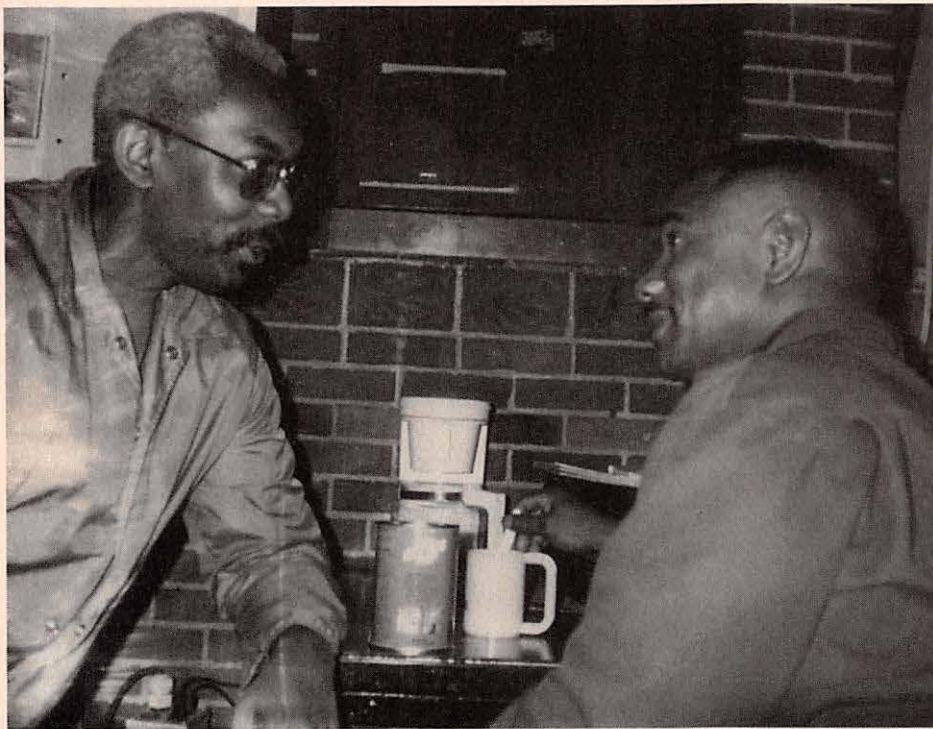
tragic failure of the War on Crime. In 1990, the debate was significantly stirred when The Sentencing Project, a non-profit research organization in Washington, D.C., released a report called *Young Black Men and the Criminal Justice System: A Growing National Problem*. The report revealed that almost one in four African-American males in the age group 20-29 was under some form of criminal justice supervision on any given day: in prison or jail, on probation or parole.

The Project's update in October 1995, *Young Black Men and the Criminal Justice System: Five Years Later*, revealed an even more outrageous situation: the numbers were up to one out of three young black

prison for drug possession.

"It would behoove us," the report admonished, "to learn from the mistakes of recent years and to begin implementing a strategy that will insure that the next generation of children will face a future filled with greater opportunity and promise."

In the months following the report, a new war has ensued. Special interest groups bent on building more prisons and prosecuting that "next generation of children"—already labeled "super-predators"—as adults to insure that the new human warehouses are well stocked, are up against community-based organizations working to stop them before the bottom of the pyramid



Eddie Ellis and Cardell "Blood" Shaird in Woodbourne prison.

erupts. It's a war being waged on our own soil, and if the prison expansion lobby isn't halted by the millennium, The Sentencing Project's year 2000

33 percent of the American prison population and 95 percent of most prison populations in the South. Black prisoners were separated from white

"Attica was one of the most brutal, oppressive and racist prisons that I have ever been in. There was no rehabilitation, there was no education. There was nothing going on except brutality."

report may very well be called *Slave Times*, and none of us will be able to afford it.

"Very soon," Eddie says, "we will see prison colonies all over this country that feed the local economies. And very soon we're going to run out of inner-city people to put in these prisons. And I think at that point all of us will be in some serious, very serious trouble."

As staggering as The Sentencing Project's findings were, the disproportionate rate of Black male incarceration is nothing new. African-Americans have been over-represented in prisons since the beginning of the American penitentiary system in 1790. During the period of Reconstruction following the Civil War (1865-66), Southern states enacted the Black Codes as a system of social control. Blacks who were unemployed or without a permanent residence were declared vagrants; they could be arrested and fined and, if unable to pay, be bound for terms of labor. By 1878, just five years after emancipation, Blacks represented

prisoners and subjected to more brutal and inhumane conditions than those suffered under slavery. During the 1880s, the death rate of Black prisoners was as high as 25 percent in some states—even while the disproportionate number of blacks in prison continued to grow.

"Prior to 1954," wrote noted '60s prisoner Eldridge Cleaver, "we lived in an atmosphere of Novocain. Negroes found it necessary, in order to maintain whatever sanity they could, to remain somewhat aloof and detached from 'the problem.' We accepted indignities and the mechanics of the apparatus of oppression without reacting by sitting-in or holding mass demonstrations."

In the prisons, Blacks were severely punished for protesting their condition. They had no political or legal influence, and no opportunity to complain or press charges against their white jailers. They lived with the constant threat and fear of lynching. Black prisoners were frequently taken from jails and hanged with the support and assistance of law enforcement officials.

In the late '50s, mirroring the attitudes and activities in the communities, black prisoners began to protest segregation and discrimination. Black Muslims initiated the prison protest movement, first by challenging discriminatory treatment of Muslims, and later expanding the struggle to include the constitutional rights of all prisoners.

The late '60s and early '70s saw the birth of radical urban political movements. The burgeoning Black and Latino prison population, many of whom were involved in radical movements such as the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords, began to apply their urban philosophies to the prison struggle. Black prisoners argued that they should be considered political prisoners; whether or not their crimes were political, their condition derived from political, economic and legal inequality.

Also in the '60s, the FBI began their infamous COINTELPRO operation, a systematic attack on organizations like the Panthers and other radical groups. Eddie Ellis was one of scores of leading Panthers targeted by COINTELPRO. The illegal operation decimated the Panthers with 768 arrests and almost five million dollars in bail bonds between

1967 and 1969. Thirty-eight Panthers were killed.

AMERICA AFTER ATTICA

Born and raised in Harlem, by 1966 Eddie was 25 years old and director of community relations for the New York City branch of the Black Panther Party. In 1969, as part of COINTELPRO, he was arrested and accused of killing a man he'd never seen before, had no connection to, and no motive for killing. There was no physical evidence linking him to the crime. He was sentenced to 25-years-to-life and wound up at Attica penitentiary in New York State.

"I was convicted," Eddie says, "on the testimony of two police officers who got on the stand and perjured themselves—said that they actually saw me shoot this individual."

To this day, Eddie maintains that evidence exists which can exonerate him, but the New York City Police Department and the FBI refuse to turn the records over on the basis that it would compromise national security. A

more likely reason is that in the few incidents where records have been made available—most prominently in the case of Dhoruba Bin Wahad—they exposed illegal covert operations specifically designed to pervert the criminal justice system and use it to remove people with undesirable political views.

Dhoruba Bin Wahad, like Eddie, was a Black Panther convicted of murder and sentenced to 25-to-life. It took him three years of his prison time just to read through the 300,000 pages of documents turned over to him under the Freedom of Information Act, but

11 state employees were killed.

“After Attica, there was a tremendous spotlight focused on the criminal justice system and on the prison system. The 19 demands made by the brothers at Attica ultimately became the groundwork for a minimal set of standards by which prisons would be run.”

THE THINK TANK

In the wake of the Attica rebellion, a number of political prisoners from throughout the state were transferred to Green Haven prison near Poughkeepsie, New York. Most of these prisoners shared a background of political

activism and consciousness raising, and they were concerned with trying to make sense of the prison experience: what they were doing there, what the purpose of prison was, and how they could best prepare themselves and other prisoners to return to their communities.

By the time Eddie arrived at Green Haven, he had already been in five of New York's 13 prisons. There are now close to 70 prisons in the state.

“Every prison I was in,” he says, “I seemed to know everyone, they seemed to be very familiar to me. People who came from the neighborhood. And if I

“The day they took the prison back was the day I witnessed state-sponsored murder. That was a turning point, not just for me, but for criminal justice in America.”

eventually he discovered that the FBI had withheld evidence and “disappeared” witnesses, leaving Dhoruba in no position to mount a credible defense. In 1990, after serving 19 years, his conviction was reversed and he was released.

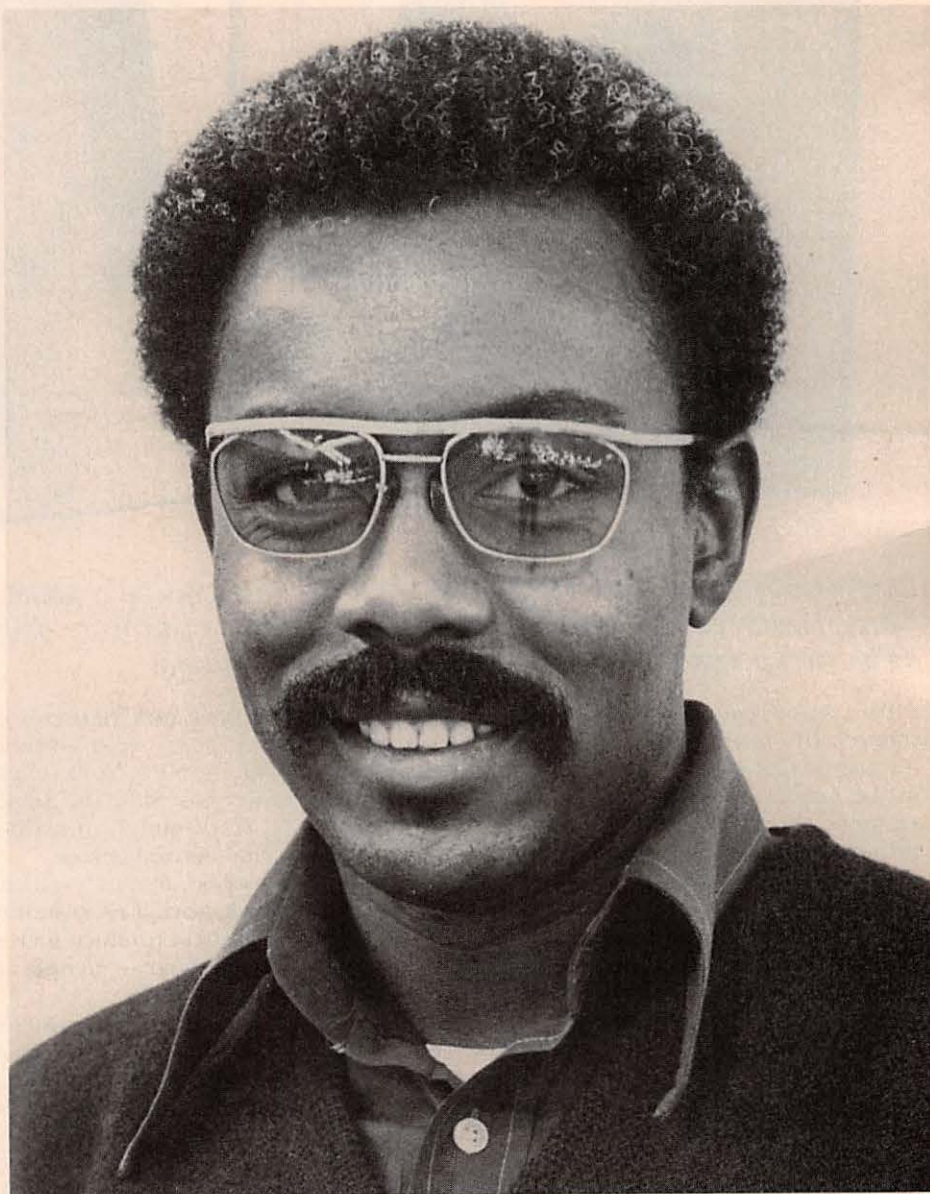
Several other political prisoners—some still incarcerated, some finally released after serving their entire sentences—continue to argue their cases. Eddie, though he spent every moment of his 25-year bid working toward his exoneration and release, has never been inclined to dwell on his own case. He's too busy moving forward.

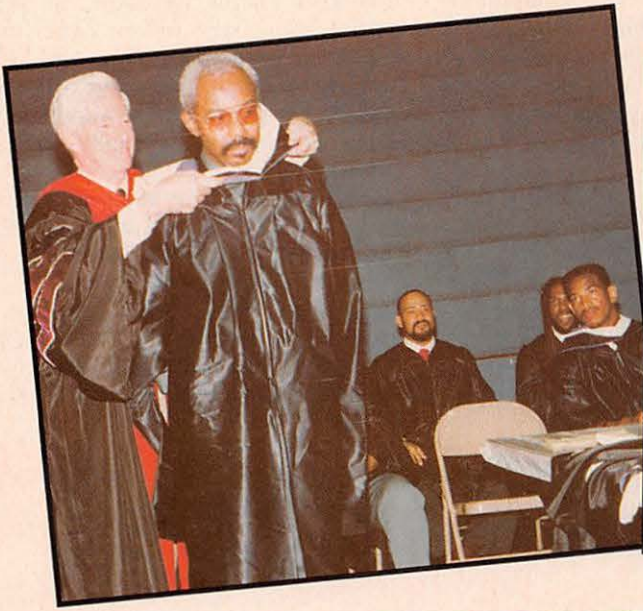
“Attica was one of the most brutal, oppressive and racist prisons that I have ever been in,” Eddie remembers. “There was no rehabilitation taking place, there was no education. There was nothing going on except brutality and racism. And it was this brutality and oppression which ultimately led the guys to rebel.”

In September, 1971, the growing revolutionary consciousness erupted at Attica. At the first signs of revolt, the school where Eddie was working was sealed off and abandoned by the guards, who joined forces to repel the prisoners back through B-Block and C-Block to D-Block, where the standoff took place. Eddie was locked down in C-Block, with a window overlooking the D-Block yard.

“The day they took the prison back,” he recalls, “was the day I witnessed state-sponsored murder. That was a definitive turning point, not just for me, but for criminal justice in America. Attica was a watershed.”

In what still stands as America's deadliest prison revolt, 32 prisoners and





Clockwise from top left: 1989, Sing Sing masters degree graduation ceremony; late '80s, Green Haven Resurrection Study Group; 1989, a surprise visit from daughter, Greer, at Sing Sing; early '80s, with parents, daughter and aunt at Green Haven.

didn't know them personally, some friend of mine knew them. We discovered that we knew almost everyone in the prison system. Which seemed to suggest that the pool from which prisoners come is a very small pool."

Under the "guiding intellectual spirit" of Papa Rage, a/k/a Larry White, who had been transferred to Green Haven as a leader of the 1970 Auburn prison rebellion, and energized by the creative mindset of Senior Chaplain Ed Muller, a group of prisoners—mostly lifers—formed a "think tank" to begin investigating just how small that pool was. They soon discovered that over 75 percent (the figure is closer to 80 percent now) of all

the people in the New York State prison system come from just seven neighborhoods in New York City: Harlem, the Lower East Side, the South Bronx, Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, East New York, and South Jamaica.

How is it, they asked, that in a state as large as New York, with 150 assembly districts, just 18 of them produce such a disproportionate number of people in the prison system?

"If you look at those seven communities," says Eddie, "you find some common characteristics. One of them, of course, is that they're populated by people who are of African-American and Latino descent. You find social conditions that by every possible

measure—health care, housing, family structure, substance abuse, employment, education—rank at the very bottom in the state."

As Eddie explains it, people born and raised in inner-city areas where basic social institutions that should support and sustain their lives are dysfunctional develop a different way of seeing themselves and a skewed world view.

"We call it a 'crime-generative attitude.' And that attitude basically says that I'm living in a society where my community has been written off, relegated to the back of the bus...and so consequently I have to get mine; I have to do what I can do for myself; and I have to do it however I have to do it.

"By the time children get to be eight or nine years old, they've already formulated some very concrete ideas about themselves, about the world, about law enforcement, about what's acceptable and what's not acceptable. And in communities such as this, where unemployment is as high as it is, people automatically gravitate towards income generation that is marginal at best, and in the worst case scenario is criminal, so-called.

"One of the first things that happens in prison," he continues, "is you become very isolated. You begin to feel that the prison experience is a total experience in which you are totally powerless. And that feeling of powerlessness on the part of prisoners, I think, feeds a feeling of

vocational training and were welcomed into union positions when they got out of prison. But as the minority prison population grew, the job market for released convicts shrank, and so the notion of rehabilitation was discredited.

The Nontraditional Approach says that education in prison can no longer be based in a white, middle class, Eurocentric foundation, but must be rooted in African-American/Latino value systems.

In the tolerance for reform that followed Attica, the prisoners at Green Haven began to develop programs they could suggest to state prison authorities. Among the ideas that were ultimately co-opted from prisoner proposals were pre-release centers, regular phone calls, and

prison baccalaureate program in the state in 1973, and, by 1982, the first masters degree program.

"I spent most of my time in prison in some degree program," says Eddie. "And the other portion of the time I spent developing programs and teaching various kinds of educational classes." Eddie went into prison a college dropout and came out holding associates degrees in liberal arts and in paralegal studies, a B.S. in business administration, and a masters degree in theology.

"If I had more time," he says, "I probably would have gotten more."

He credits one man in particular, Marist College professor Lou Howard, with helping to develop his command of language.

"Ninety percent of all the people in the New York prison system are either Black or Latino. Three quarters of them come from seven neighborhoods in New York City."

powerfulness on the part of the administrators and the guards. And that power relationship is the relationship that dominates the entire time that people are in prison."

Over the next 10-15 years, the Think Tank's five core members—Larry White, Cardell Shaird, Charles Gale (all of whom are still locked up), Lawrence Hayes and Eddie Ellis—continued to analyze the umbilical relationship between the communities and prison. They began to publish papers, using what they described as a Nontraditional Approach to Criminal and Social Justice, emphasizing that the fundamental solution to crime, violence and drugs lies in the community and that the relationship between prisoners and the communities should be enhanced.

"It's an analysis based in fact," says Eddie. "It's a fact that close to 90 percent of all the people in the New York prison system are either Black or Latino. It's a fact that over three quarters of them come from seven neighborhoods in New York City. It's a fact that approximately 90-95 percent of everybody who is in the prison system will one day come out. And it's a fact that over 90 percent of the people who come out go back to the same communities they lived in prior to going in."

The Think Tank did a study of the New York State prison population between 1940 and 1990 and discovered that most of the prisoners in 1940 were Irish, Italian, German and Jewish, and up until the 1960s the rate of recidivism was relatively low. The reason, they found, was that the white prisoners got

special trailers for weekend family visits. Under an umbrella prison organization, Political Action Committee (PAC), they developed model programs, such as The Resurrection Study Group, that teach prisoners individual and civic responsibilities and prepare them to return to their communities committed to educating young people before they too get into trouble. The programs teach Afrocentric values, history, economics, politics, and belief systems designed to build self-esteem, enhance self-confidence, and encourage constructive social attitudes.

The Green Haven think tank was instrumental in implementing the first

"He had a drill," says Eddie. "I still remember it—A parts and B parts—you've got to know them backwards and forwards, you've got to be able to diagram sentences and pick out the verb and the preposition, and understand the relationship of adjective to adverb. It was almost paramilitary the way the guy drilled it into us. But most of us really needed that kind of approach to education, and certainly to the English language."

Professor Howard remembers not so much what he taught Eddie as what he learned from him.

"I think we assessed Eddie's progress," he told me recently from his office at



Martin Luther King's Birthday commemoration at Green Haven.

Manhattan Borough Community College, where, at age 71, he continues his language drills, "by the extent to which he could help me to see that a particular author had written something that was relevant to some social problem." For an entire semester, the two studied world literature together in private, one-on-one classes. Eddie had enrolled in a course that wasn't actually being offered, and Howard had shown up to teach it anyway. Eddie remembers it as the most rigorous—20 books in 12 weeks—and the most enriching of his career.

"It was incredible," he says. "For a whole semester I was immersed in the classics. It really broadened my scope, gave me a whole other dimension—experiences I would not have gotten otherwise."

Prisoners, prison administrators, and even politicians know that lack of education is largely what lands people in prison in the first place. A 1994 study by the federal Bureau of Prisons found that the more education a person receives in prison, the less likely he is to return to prison. Yet an amendment to the 1994 crime bill banned federal grants to prisoners for post-secondary education, and in June, 1995, prisons throughout the nation faced the painful reality of commemorating their last college graduation ceremonies. The amendment was sponsored and pushed by a handful of politicians who claimed, falsely, that prisoners were receiving a significant amount of federal money that should rightfully go to more deserving students on the outside. In fact, prisoners received about 6 cents of every 10 program dollars, and no qualifying student on the outside would have been denied a grant, regardless of how many prisoner applicants there were.

At Green Haven, where higher education in New York prisons had been conceived 23 years earlier, the last graduation was an especially charged occasion.

"This ceremony," said graduate and prisoner Mario Andre in his valedictorian speech, "marks the end of a 23-year relationship between Marist College and this prison. Like many other efforts at engineering a more just and equitable society in this country, it, along with college programs for prisoners all over America, has fallen victim to a chilling wind that at the moment is blowing uncompromisingly hard to the political right."

Former prisoner Latif Islam reminded the graduates and their families that there was a time when young men entering the system were immediately taken under the wings of prisoner-scholars like Eddie Ellis and shown



Eddie Ellis in his Harlem office.

something in themselves they hadn't seen before.

"Maybe," said Latif, in a practiced speech-maker's voice with a hint of street in it, "we need to begin to see something in those brothers who are not here tonight enjoying this. Maybe we need to begin to see something in them that they don't see in themselves. Don't let this adversity knock us down. Don't let it stop us. Make this degree your teaching degree."

During slavery, when literate slaves risked losing their fingers—the penalty

for breaking the illiteracy law—to pass their knowledge on to the others, a tradition developed in African-American scholarship: a Black scholar owes the rest of the Black community a commitment to service. W.E.B. Du Bois canonized the commitment at the beginning of this century in *The Talented Tenth*, and today, the grandchildren of the talented tenth, scholars like Cornel West and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., are vociferously keeping that commitment alive and in the mainstream. In *The Future of the Race*, published earlier this

year, Gates and West explore the paradox of the largest black middle class ever coexisting today with one of the largest black underclasses. In the last quarter of a century, the size of the black middle class—primarily because of expanded opportunities afforded by gains in civil rights—has quadrupled, while the size of the black underclass has grown disproportionately as well. In 1995, 45 percent of all black children were born at, or beneath, the poverty line.

"If it is the best of times for the black middle class," write Gates and West, "it is the worst of times for an equally large segment of our community."

When Eddie Ellis entered prison in 1969, West and Gates were entering the "first-generation Ivy" Black student bodies at Harvard and Yale. While Eddie was helping to create Afrocentric programs in the New York prison system, Gates and West were helping to establish African-American Studies as an academic field at universities throughout the country. The underlying premises of *The Future of the Race* are that American society has failed to protect the basic, ostensibly inalienable rights of its people—equal access to education, adequate housing, affordable medical care, and, finally, equal economic opportunity, "equal access, indeed, to hope itself"—and that the leadership of the African-American community has a special responsibility to attend to these rights and to "design, promote, lobby, and agitate for bold and imaginative remedies to the conditions of inequality and injustice." The underlying premise of the Think Tank's Nontraditional Approach is that these failed social institutions (education, housing, medical care, economic opportunity)—and hope itself—are directly responsible for generating crime and imprisonment, and that prisons must be converted from "warehouses for the living dead" into universities that teach self-identity, sense of community, commitment to social change and empowerment. And that it is the special responsibility of those who have been imprisoned to attend to these rights and agitate for reform.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEFENDER

Eddie Ellis sits in his office at the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem on 125th Street. Below, beyond the floor-to-ceiling window of the second floor office, the pride and tragedy of this legendary boulevard bustles by as Eddie regales me with

another breathless marathon sentence.

"So what I'm saying is that in these communities, there are these crime-generative factors that produce a certain kind of an attitude, and if you live in a community you acquire that attitude, and you begin to act it out. Now, if that's true—and we work on the assumption that it's true—then the prescription for law enforcement that deals specifically with criminal behavior, that is, the identification, apprehension, conviction, sentencing and incarceration of so-called criminals, that approach is doomed to fail, because the people who are involved with this criminal behavior are involved in this criminal behavior because of larger, systemic, socioeconomic reasons."

Looking down at the stream of activity in the street, I think about how extraordinary it must be for Eddie to be in this office every day—to be on this

nobody calls them for help, they go out of business. Part of Eddie's job is making sure the community knows the service is available. Most people who get into trouble with the police don't know that they can call a lawyer. Most people, even if they know what their rights are, do not know how to exercise them in a moment of crisis. Eddie works to educate the community about how to respond if they or somebody they care about is arrested; how to avoid confrontation with police; how to avoid making the legal trouble worse than it is.

When designing NDS, Vera Institute Director Christopher Stone drew primarily on his experiences as a Yale Law School student in the early 1980s—not his time at the school, but the time he spent working in prison. In 1980, as a first year law student, he helped develop a program eventually known as PACT, or



Think Tank members at Green Haven.

block—to be in this village of Harlem.

"All the time I was in prison," he had told me, "the 23 years I was in prison, I just thought about and worked towards one thing, and that was coming out."

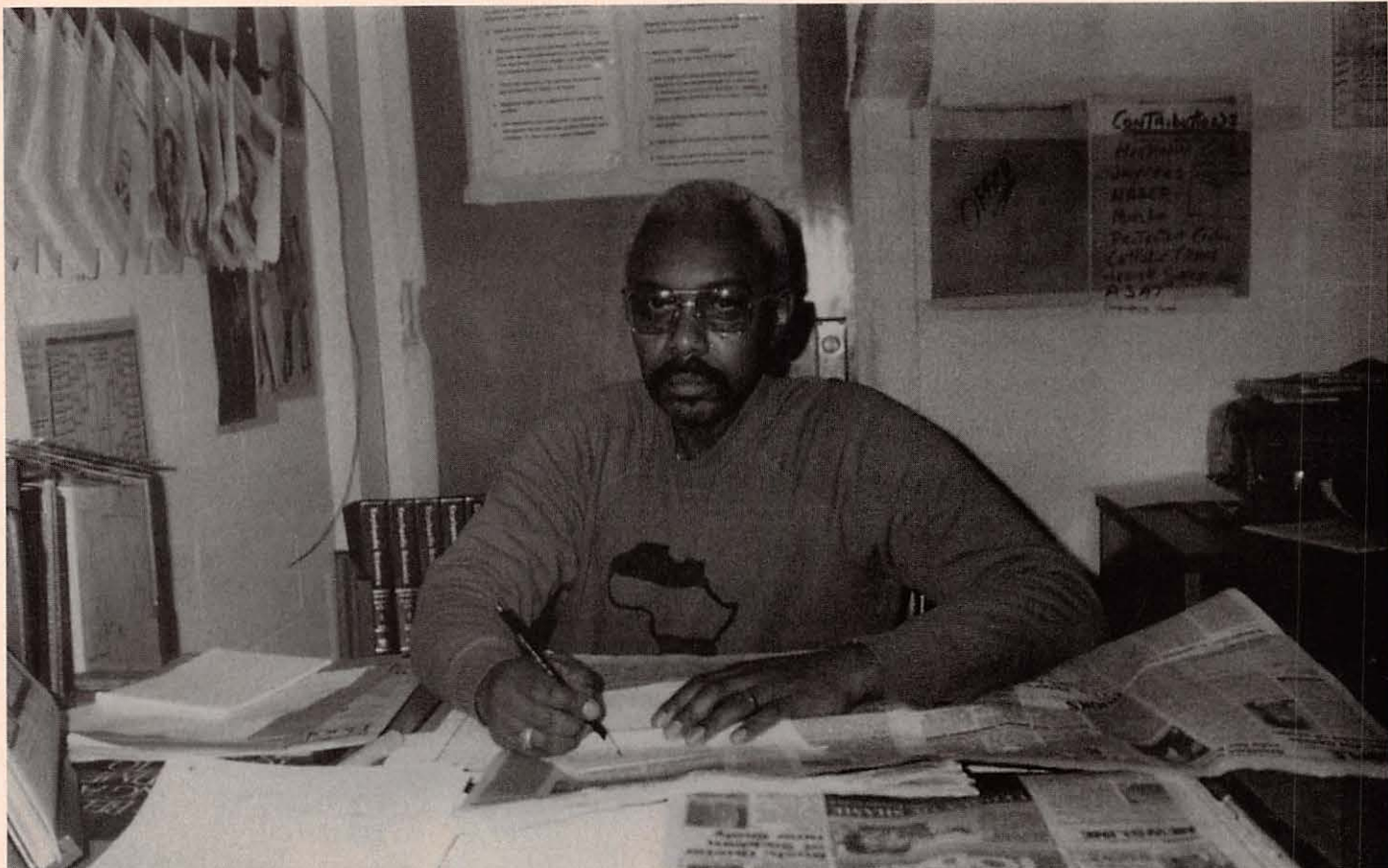
Twenty-six years later he's the Coordinator of Community Education for the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, an agency set up in 1990 by the Vera Institute for Justice to provide free, high-quality legal defense to residents of Harlem and East Harlem who are accused of crimes but cannot afford to hire private lawyers.

One of the many distinctions between NDS and other legal defenders is the degree to which it maintains a close connection with the community. Unlike most public defenders, they don't get appointed to cases, which means that if

Project for a Calculated Transition, that brought Yale law students to Green Haven prison for discussion groups. In the classes, students kept prisoners—mostly lifers—up to date on current law, and prisoners lectured students about prison and crime in the streets.

From these early discussion groups at Green Haven, Stone gained valuable insights that helped him meet his goal of designing a truly helpful, client-oriented public defender.

Though he wasn't working closely with Eddie, Stone met him on several occasions over the two-and-a-half years he visited Green Haven. He remembers being particularly impressed with how smart and organized Eddie was at editing and publishing the Green Haven newspaper; and at how little he



The Editor of the Woodbourne Word in the late '80s

focused on his own case.

"A lot of the more sophisticated lifers," says Stone, "had figured out that it wasn't the first thing they should talk about. But it was rare that I'd meet someone who over time wouldn't find a way to bring up his case and ask for help. Eddie was always focused on the people, on organizing."

About a year after NDS was formed, a staff member came into Stone's office to ask him if he would add his signature to a petition to urge the release—or work-release—of a prisoner by the name of Eddie Ellis. Although Stone hadn't seen Eddie in almost ten years, he recognized the picture of him immediately.

"Does he have a job?" he asked, "because a job is probably more important than an extra signature on this petition." When he discovered that there was in fact no job waiting for Eddie, Stone created one for him.

"Most guys," he says, "when they get out, if they have a job at all, they're lucky to have a manual labor job. And those things are hard—tough hours, occasional work, low pay. It's really hard."

Having not only a job, but a job with an organization that understood where he was coming from, what his own needs were, and that meshed with his personal gifts and interests, has probably made all the difference in the world for Eddie.

As much as Stone was doing Eddie a favor, it felt more like he was repaying a debt.

"The men at Green Haven," Stone says, "really taught me a huge amount, and it influenced the work I've done in my life a lot. Being able to create that job for Eddie felt like we were giving him something he deserved. He did a lot for other people along the way, long before he ever got out of prison."

Anyone who's ever had any kind of involvement with the prison system knows that there is prison time and there is freeworld time, and the two are entirely different. In prison, no matter how much you try to maintain your connections to the outside world, it's ultimately impossible to hold onto the big picture. Even Eddie, who was known for how able he was to keep up with things while he was locked up, was stunned when he got out.

"He just couldn't believe it," says Stone. "He couldn't believe what happened to Harlem. He couldn't believe the way the kids were acting, he couldn't believe the music, he couldn't believe life in the streets."

One of the things that carried Eddie through 23 years in prison was a tireless fascination with the world—an ability to keep learning and to keep moving forward. He came out of prison

convinced that community education should be based in an Afrocentric curriculum, and within a few months, he was able to incorporate it into a much broader political view of the world and how rich and diverse it is.

"It's a rare gift," says Stone, "and it's why he's so good at what he does. And it's why the connection between what he does for a job—education and outreach work for NDS—and what he does as an avocation with his political work in the community, is such a nice mix. He manages to use the connections in his life—his time in, his time out, his politics, his profession, his skills—in a powerful way to advance the causes he's interested in."

Eddie's avocation is his work as co-founder and president of the Community Justice Center a few blocks east of NDS on 125th Street. One of the things the Think Tank resolved was that they needed to develop an organization in the street that could carry out the work—the research, publishing papers, policy advocacy and development—as well as continue to create innovative programs for prisoners and analyze existing programs to determine their efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Shortly after Eddie's release, he helped set up this outside arm. The uniqueness of CJC is that it is operated entirely by prisoners

and ex-prisoners, and the Board of Directors, with one or two exceptions, is comprised of people in prison.

Just as the Nontraditional Approach provides an analysis of the prison population and determines what kinds of programs that specific population needs, the Community Justice Center strives to determine and define what changes people in inner-city communities want to see in the criminal justice system.

"One of the big problems," Eddie maintains, "is that someone else always

to make specific recommendations to the Legislature and the governor.

Thanks largely to Eddie's unusual organizational capacity, the CJC has a dozen major programs in action or development, including Operation Cease Fire, their major youth program; a Food Services Program which works with disabled veterans; a Post-Release Program; a Drug Elimination Program, which works with the Housing and Urban Development Corporation to rid drugs from public housing developments; a Work Study Program

of land in northern Harlem into a model community with commercial businesses, public housing for special-needs populations and a state-of-the-art educational & entertainment complex.

Because of their expertise and education, the CJC is fast becoming one of the DOC's most valuable resources. Soon they will work exclusively on a consulting basis, hired by state offices such as HUD, Corrections, Parole and Probation, to solve problems that up to now have been unsolvable, largely because,

"More Americans were killed by gunfire at Attica than at any other event since the Civil War."

gets to speak for us. The academicians speak for us, the professional penologists speak for us, the law enforcement people speak for us, the politicians speak for us, the media speak for us. We haven't really heard from the people in our communities." CJC holds forums and conferences all over the state in predominantly black and Latino and poor communities to get a sense of what the leadership, the community-based organizations, the clergy and the elected officials want to see the criminal justice system do, so that they'll be able

which unites City University students with recently-released prisoners; a rally to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the insurrection at Attica; an educational and vocational skills program for adolescents on Rikers Island; a voter education and registration campaign called Operation Big Prison Vote, which will soon be in every county jail in the state; and their most ambitious undertaking, the Uptown Development Project, a multi-million dollar plan initiated and run by prisoners to rebuild four square blocks

according to Eddie, "the perspective has not been as good as it could be."

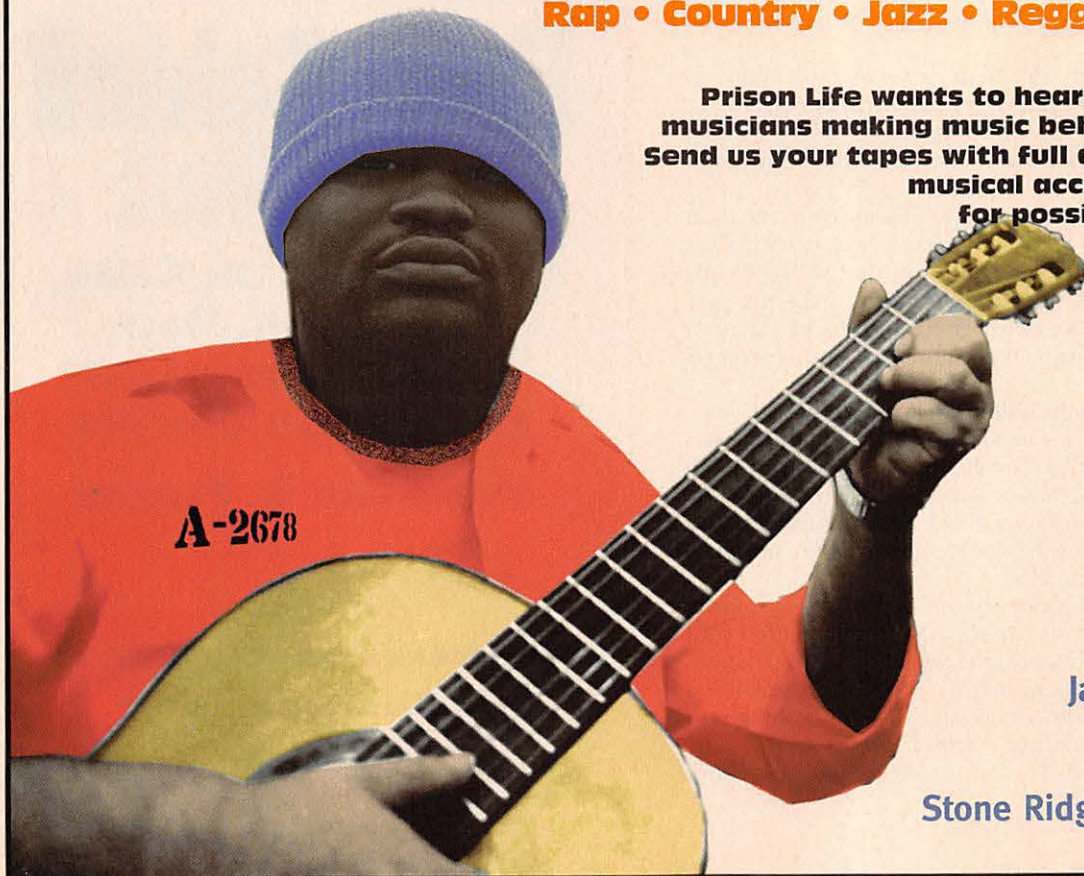
"Eddie is a real force for progress," says Stone. "He never stops working, moving the ball forward. And as a result, he brings people who are working with him forward. It's very rare. Not just for people who've been inside, it's very rare among humanity."

"There's a group of men who formerly were incarcerated in many prisons throughout the state of New York," Eddie says, "who made a commitment while we were in prison that once we got

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out of prison, we would try to do something to assist our brothers and sisters who were still in prison to come out; but even more importantly, begin to try to make some fundamental changes in the society out here so that many of our younger brothers and sisters will not ultimately have to go in."

THE REAL WAR ON CRIME

On a clear April morning, I'm driving toward Rikers Island to teach when Eddie's unmistakable tenor torrent comes sailing into my car over the WBAI airwaves.

There's something immensely appropriate about listening to WBAI New York on your way to jail. No other station devotes so much air time to prison issues, prison voices, and to the direct relationship between the street and the yard. No other station gets so many calls from concerned mothers needing advice on how to keep their sons from being arrested or killed.

Brother Shine, the station's resident recovering prisoner and producer of most of the prison shows, is broadcasting a speech Eddie delivered a few days earlier at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn.

"Over the last few months," Eddie says, "I have been rapidly coming to the conclusion that we seem to be stuck in what Martin Luther King used to call the 'paralysis of analysis.' That is to say, we become paralyzed by analyzing and re-analyzing and discussing and re-discussing these issues over and over again. And while I agree that there is a need to share information and fellowship and to be able to feed off one another's positive energy, I think at some point we have to make some distinctions, we have to draw some lines, we have to come to terms with the fact that while we're analyzing this problem, it's getting worse and worse.

"What we have here, essentially," he continues, "is a serious assault and attack on poor people all over America, and people of color in particular: Latinos and people of African descent. And depending on where you line up in the spectrum, sometimes you can see this war and sometimes you can't. And the serious problem for most of us is that we don't even know that we're in a war. And because we don't now that we're in a war, we're losing the battle very rapidly."

Twenty-three years down, this man never lost the ability to see himself—to see us all—in a larger historical perspective.

"Some people take the position," he says, "and I think I stand with them, that from the point that Europe invaded Africa we've been at war. Sometimes it's a hot war, sometimes it's a cold war, sometimes it's more overt than others, but at least since then we've been at war. Our organization has an analysis, and we say that we've simply moved from the pyramids to the plantation to the projects to the prisons. That has been the sojourn of African people: from the pyramids to the plantation to the projects to the prisons."

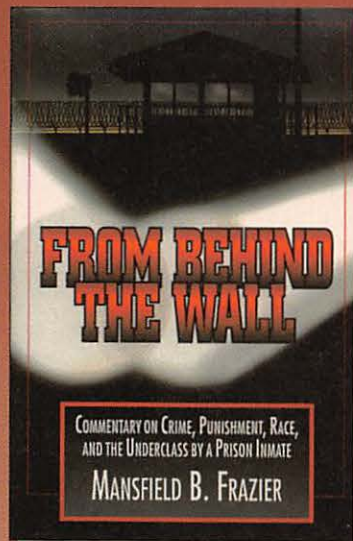
In 23 years, he never lost the ability to expand his world view.

"We look at what's going on in New York City. The mayor has declared war on the so-called 'quality of life' type crime. I'm not really sure what that means or what that is, but I know the ultimate effect of it is that young Black and Latino men and women are now being arrested for things that they normally would not have been arrested for.

"We know for a fact that young truants—juveniles—are being picked up by the police, in some cases fingerprinted and photographed. We heard this morning about the kinds of abuses police brutality brings. We know that the police department has been picking up young men, school age, and putting them in line-ups without authorization from their parents.

"There's a war going on. This is not accidental, this is not

"The problems of the underclass in America have been ignored for years . . ."



From Behind The Wall

COMMENTARY ON CRIME,
PUNISHMENT, RACE,
AND THE UNDERCLASS
BY A PRISON CONVICT
MANSFIELD B. FRAZIER

To Order,
See Books on the Block,
Inside Back Cover

Crabs in a Barrel

It's about as difficult for a young white female to get to Rikers Island as it is easy for a young black male. It takes three passes and one guard trailer just to get to the Control Building.

I exit the Control Building. Two turnstiles, one DOC bus, a metal detector and five iron gates later—I arrive in the classroom in the catacombs of one of Rikers 10 jails.

On any given day, there are about 20,000 people at Rikers. Thirteen are in my writing class. I know how slim their chances will be. When they are released, just getting home from Queens Plaza, where the DOC bus will leave them at 4:30 in the morning—after 10 hours in a small, overcrowded, stinking bullpen—will be an unlikely victory. Not buying a quart of beer from Brothers & Son Deli will be the first thing not likely to happen. Not picking up as many cracks as \$4.00 can buy from the dealer who greets the bus every morning is also a low odd. The flow between Rikers

“If you feel so helpless because your leaders were killed,” Clarence yells despairingly, “you need to learn what they knew so you can continue the struggle!”

and the street is constant and seamless.

Clarence, a student this term, has been one of two things for most of his life: high in the street or sobering in jail. The sober periods are filled with sudden clarity and hope, but mostly with remorse over a wasted and offensive life. He is weary, but still has the trickster's gleam in his eye. I imagine he'd frighten me in the street, and I'm not easily frightened.

As it turns out, Clarence is a wandering bard. Scores of poems, all in his head. Long, rhyming histories and morality tales. Sometimes I think he must have written the verse long ago, before the drugs took over, and that the lyrics resurface during his straight times. Or I imagine he creates the poems constantly, whether he's straight or high, but only cares enough to recite them when he is sobering in jail.

At the other end of the spectrum is Kevin, one of the younger students, a bright-eyed bundle of conflict crying out in subtle ways to be saved while demanding overtly to be killed. He's the sort of kid I imagined when I read Cornel West's description in *Race Matters* of “the nihilism that increasingly pervades black communities... a numbing detachment from others and a self-destructive disposition toward the world.” Only there's something trying to shine through in Kevin. His eyes tell me that, his eyes and the fact that he shows up every day.

Kevin has a lot to say, but it's nearly impossible for him to speak. The language just isn't there for him. He makes all the motions—he even raises his hand politely when he wants to offer something—but what comes out is a muffled, halting, nearly aborted effort. Usually, he manages to get a key word out so that we can all finish his thoughts for him. Clarence, being a trickster, can sometimes get Kevin to elucidate—and he can always get him to smile—by pretending to be deaf in one ear.

An ongoing debate about victimhood and empowerment has dominated our class all semester. The men have a deeply ingrained belief in conspiracy theories and none has enough education to argue his way out of feeling oppressed and

enraged. As the semester wears on and the drugs in Clarence's system wear off, he has become more frustrated with his situation, with the disunity in his community, with his own shame at being unconscious all these years, and with the unconsciousness of the men around him.

“Crabs in a barrel,” he says now, “pulling each other down.” He tells us that this awakening occurs every time he's in jail, but then when he leaves, his Master (drugs) takes over again. This time feels different: he finally understands the futility of complaining; he finally feels compelled to take responsibility for his own life. Unfortunately, he also feels compelled to preach it to the others, who are growing increasingly tired of it. Listening to him sermonize to the young, headstrong guys in the class is heartbreaking—mostly because they don't want to hear him.

This morning, Clarence's recitation of his epic *Master Plan*, about how the Black community has been divided to be at war with itself, sends some of the younger guys off on a violence tangent, wanting to shoot leaders and blow up buildings.

“If you feel so helpless because your leaders were killed,” Clarence yells despairingly, “you need to learn what they knew so you can continue the struggle!”

All Kevin knows is that he has no power and no voice, and that talking and marching don't seem to get anyone anywhere.

“Guns,” he says. “Bombs. Blow up all—just—everything. Total—”

I wish Eddie Ellis were here. Kevin needs to meet a man who understands his rage, who has taken arms for it, served legendary time for it, and is now more powerfully able to avenge it—with his mind.

After class, moving past streams of brown and black men in green uniforms strutting in haphazard single-file from mess hall to yard, I catch up with Kevin.

“Listen,” I say. “I've been meeting a lot of these men lately.” He's listening. “Guys who were leaders in the Black Panther Party and who were targeted by the government and locked up and—”

“Those were, they—” he waves a hand to indicate total destruction. “*Set up.*”

“Totally shafted,” I agree. “But I gotta tell you, these guys are doing some powerful things now. These are the men who are going to be making the changes you want to see. A lot of these men are coming out now after doing 20, 25 years. They're coming out committed to fighting. And they're the ones who can do it. Because they know *everything*. They just spent half their lives in prison, no one knows as much as they do—”

Kevin nods, respectful of that kind of time in.

“Yeah,” he nods, “they know.”

“Not only do they know the system,” I say. “While they were locked up, they got educated. They got college degrees. Masters degrees. They got as many degrees as they could. There's nothing these guys don't know. They stand a better chance of making changes than anyone.”

Kevin nods some more and looks sideways at me.

“You mean,” he says, “you actually met some of these brothers?”—PW

coincidental, this doesn't just happen in a vacuum."

Hearing Eddie's voice on the airwaves makes me consider just how profound and far-reaching his accomplishments have been.

In addition to his normal workload, his calendar includes countless speaking engagements at high schools, colleges, churches and community centers, talk show appearances, lectures to parole boards, presentation of proposals to the Department of Corrections, and lobbying the State Legislature in Albany. He has become a primary source for local papers, radio and television. There simply isn't anything happening in the criminal justice system—and particularly in the New York prison system—that Eddie isn't aware of or involved in.

He serves as a member of the National Criminal Justice Commission, a diverse,

recommendation the Commission makes is that "all states—absent some demonstrated urgent need—should impose a three-year moratorium on new prison construction."

The most effective campaign for this recommendation, at least in New York State, has been launched by the Community Justice Center. Their latest program, the Prison Moratorium Project, has united community-based organizations throughout the state to lobby for a halt to prison construction over the next five years, and to establish an "Alternative Budget" to re-allocate the \$900 million dollars Governor Pataki currently proposes for building three new maximum-security prisons and creating an additional 4,300 cells.

Based on proposals for criminal justice change and changes in the juvenile justice law (trying 13-year-olds as adults

begin to formulate the beginnings of another movement. A movement that may have as profound and deep ramifications as the human rights movement of the '60s and the anti-war movement of the '70s.

"We're in the beginnings right now, we think, of the development of a movement that will have major implications—socially, politically, economically, educationally, recreationally, religiously. A movement that must, at this time, begin its forward assault on those forces that are assaulting us.

"We say that we will begin this movement—and we're in the process of beginning this movement—from this day forward."

Twenty-five years ago, Eddie Ellis survived the watershed Attica revolt. In its aftermath, he and a handful of other prisoners initiated a wave of reforms in

"We're asking everyone in this audience to join us in calling for a moratorium on prison construction for the next five years."

nonpartisan group of about 40 citizens, scholars, criminal justice experts and community leaders from across the nation who originally came together two years ago to assess the state of crime policy in America. The result of their efforts, a report called *The Real War on Crime*, published earlier this year, provides the most definitive analysis of crime and punishment in the United States since the 1968 Kerner Commission report on civil disorder. It offers solutions for reducing violence and provides a set of recommendations that will fundamentally reform the criminal justice system and begin to cure its deep afflictions.

The Real War on Crime concludes that the criminal justice system is in crisis. Although the prison population has tripled and law enforcement expenditures have quadrupled since 1980, citizens in record numbers report that they feel unsafe in their homes and on the streets while crime rates have remained virtually unchanged. In order to fund jails and prisons, state and local governments have been forced to divert money from education, health care, job programs and community development. Moreover, our practices and policies have helped set the nation back on the same "separate and unequal" racial divide the Kerner Commission observed more than a quarter of a century ago. The rate of incarceration for African-Americans is six times the rate for whites, "a fact that has much to do with discrimination," the report states, "as it does with rates of crime."

The very first, and most critical,

and moving 16-year-olds into enhanced penalties), Pataki anticipates needing 10,000 new cells between now and the year 2000 to accommodate the new prisoners coming in.

"And we don't have to ask what those people are going to look like," Eddie tells the students at Medgar Evers. "And we don't have to ask where they're coming from. What we need to do is we need to begin to stop the process.

"We're asking everyone in this audience to join us in calling for a moratorium on prison construction for the next five years.

"We believe that the linchpin of social policy in America is built upon the construction and the maintenance and the development of this prison-industrial complex. And if we do not bring it to a halt—or in the worst-case scenario slow it down—we've got a serious problem on our hands. This is what we intend to do."

The applause ringing through my car speakers begins to subside, but Eddie is not finished.

"Frederick Douglas," he begins again softly, "used to say that power concedes nothing without demand. And Marcus Garvey said that world history is never kind to weak people. And part of the reason that we're in this quandary, part of the reason that we're in this problem, part of the reason that we're even here today at Medgar Evers talking about this issue, has to do with our weakness, has to do with our disunity, has to do with the fact that although we're all warriors in a battle, we don't have a strategic plan.


"We say that if we can do this, we can

the prison system, critical reforms that sought to enable prisoners to make the positive changes in themselves that ultimately would impact on the communities they came from. Eddie and his peers identified the vital relationship between prisoners, their neighborhoods and the conditions that create criminal behavior.

In just the past few years, short-sighted politicians have wiped out post-Attica prison reforms and assured the perpetuation of the root causes of crime—lack of education, few job opportunities and poverty—and thus ensured the continued boom in the prison-industrial complex.

Eddie now stands at the center of another maelstrom. The war has spilled out onto the streets. Men like Eddie Ellis, who lived through Attica and decades of life in some of America's worst prisons, know how to deal with this kind of ignorance.

We need to listen to Eddie Ellis, I think yet again as the applause subsides. He knows. He's been there.

And now he's out of the cage. 

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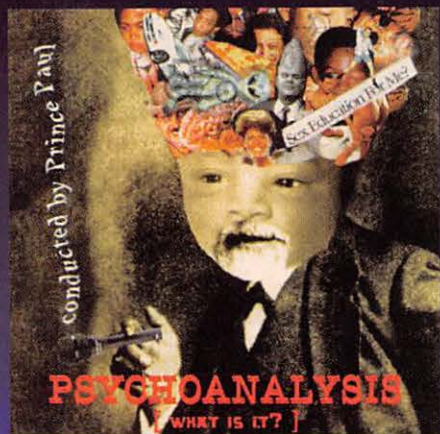
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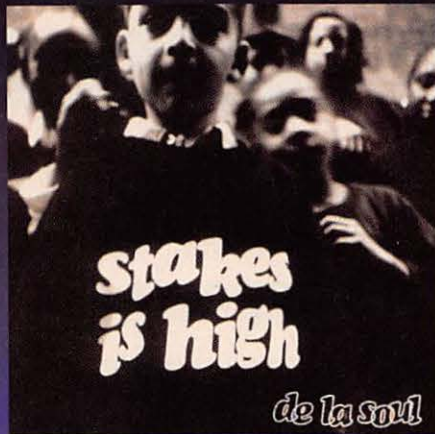
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BREAK BEATS



Psychoanalysis (what is it?)
Prince Paul
WordSound Recordings

From the cerebral cortex that brought you Hip-Hop's first band Stetsasonic, De La Soul, the now-defunct Dew-Doo Man records (remember the Dew-Doo Man single back in the day?), and Gravediggaz comes "Psychoanalysis," a probe into the mind of super producer (and super slept on) Prince Paul. This is no ordinary release, it's going to be hard tracking it down, but well worth the search. With no commercial commitments to hold him back, Prince Paul gets busy and delivers a fusion of buttery production skills and his twisted comedic sense to create a totally new sound and style. Breaking new ground musically is nothing new for Prince Paul, he's been doing it for over a decade, but somehow has managed to remain out of the limelight of the industry. The album analyzes the state of music (and each one of us) today: totally ridiculous over saturation of sex, violence, and materialism. The cut "Beautiful Night" illustrates manic psychopathic behavior over a smooth R&B like track, while "Drinks" is a hilarious example of escapism. Guaranteed you will relate to every cut on the album, "Psychoanalysis (what is it?)" will be hailed as a classic example of going against the grain of the industry and just having fun, an element that unfortunately everyone seems to have forgotten. Laughter is the best medicine, and for it I highly recommend copping this.



De La Soul
Stakes is High
Tommy Boy Records

It's the Supa emcees!

A few years back a virtually unknown trio hailing from Amittville, Long Island put their town on the map with their classic hit single "Plug tun'in." Posdnus, Mase & Trugoy collectively make De La Soul. The year was 1989, the album was "Three Feet High And Rising." Since then De La has managed to keep busy over the years. "RAP" has changed, there's no question that the music industry is saturated. In this day and age it's sink or swim, industry currents are treacherous and most acts get pulled down by the undertow only to get lost in the sea of mediocrity. "Stakes is High" provides us all with a long overdue breath of fresh air.

De La Soul successfully elude the pressures of conforming to the socially prescribed guidelines and subject matter that is seemingly afflicting the content of most rap acts and tracks by going against the grain. De La's chosen to take a detour and venture off the frequently traveled road of monotony and has dared to create their own path not sacrificing anything in route.

De La shines on tracks like "Itzsoweezee," "Big Brother," "The Bizness" featuring Common Sense. "Stakes is High" proves to be without a doubt one of the most entertaining albums to come along in quite awhile and is a must for any hip hop fan's collection.



Axiom Altered Beats
Assassin Knowleges of the Remanipulated
Axiom

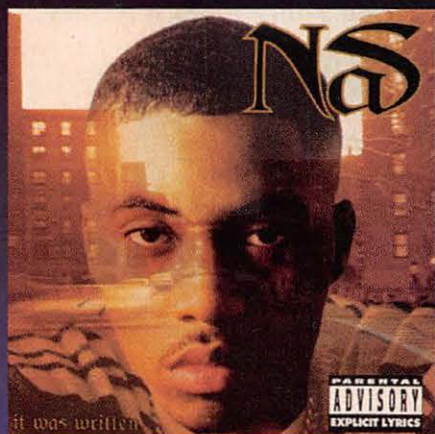
Remember when every album had a DJ cut on it? Just about every song had a break in it where the DJ would just get loose and cut shit up. Don't ask me how this happened, but somehow the DJ became an endangered species and scratching became a thing of the past. Axiom is helping to keep DJ's in the the mix.

This is an exciting collection of turntable wizardry laced with Kung Fu flick samples and plenty of scratching. The 1200's definitely got a workout during these recording sessions! DJ Rob Swift of the X-Men gets busy on the wheels of steel as well as DJ Krush, New Kingdom, Jah Wobble and DXT. Sitting back listening to this collection would make anyone want to grab a turntable and attempt to catch wreck, but don't try this at home or you'll be the proud owner of damaged records. These guys are professionals! My favorite cut is by the Invisible Scratch Pickles featuring turntable grand wizards DJ Q-Bert, DJ Disk, Mixmaster Mike, and Shortcut on "Invasion Of The Octopus People".

"Axiom Altered Beats" is an excellent choice for examining turntables as instruments and exploring the endless possibilities of sounds that it can produce. This album is a must.

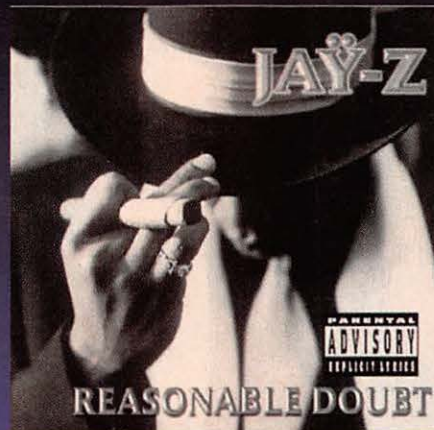
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BREAK BEATS



Nas
It was written
Columbia

Upon the 1994 release of Nas's debut album "Illmatic" it was immediately hailed a hip-hop classic, possibly the first and only album to receive an unprecedented five mic's on *The Source* magazine's rating scale. Almost two years later enter "It was written" the highly anticipated sophomore effort by Queens Bridge native Nas. With a bulk production work provided by Track Masters and special guest appearance by producer extraordinaire former NWA/Death Row artist Dr. Dre, "Affirmative Action" Volume One which makes the album worth purchasing for this track alone, hosts the all star line up of Nas Escobar, AZ, Cor Mega and Foxy Brown is one the hottest tracks on the market right now. They also revamped the Curtis Blow hook from the 1984 sound track to "Krush Grove" and replaced Curtis Blow with the sultry multi-platinum sounds of Lauryn of "The Fugees." Warning, Lauryn is not to be slept on; this track is hot. Notable mentions are "The Message," "Shootouts," and "The Set Up." My only gripe with this album is that Track Masters' production doesn't quite complement the brilliant lyrical skills of Nas. Don't get me wrong, Nas is probably the only rapper that could flow over the sounds coming out of a blender at full speed and still come off. Above all "It Was Written" was well worth the wait and ranks high on my list of suggested purchases.



Jay-Z
Reasonable Doubt
Roc-a-fella records

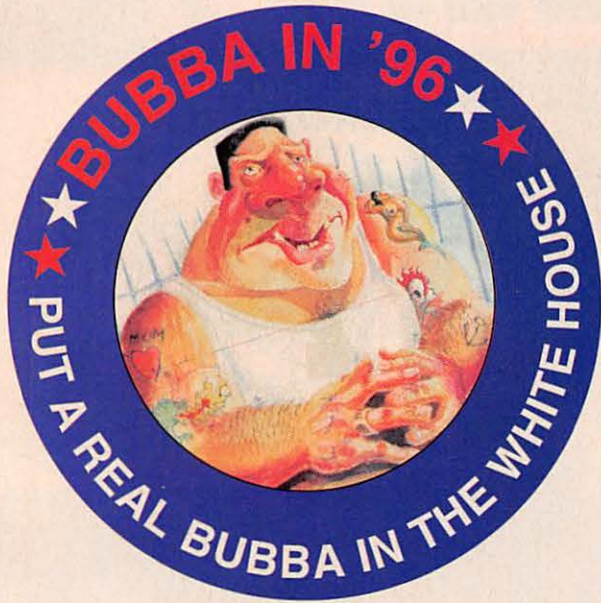
After the overwhelming success of his first two singles "Dead Presidents" and "Ain't No Nigga," Jay-Z appeared to have the rap world drinking Crystal out the palm of his hand. Having witnessed both singles go gold, the feature act on Roc-A-Fella records is also in part running the label along with company CEO Damon Dash. Jay-Z's style would best be described as laid back, never coming off as overly anxious while trying to get his point across. It's almost impossible to envision Jay ever losing his poise under any type of pressure. It's the combination of his laid back style and cleverly worded verses that add to the believability of Jay's street savvy.

The exposure Foxy Brown received on LL Cool Jay's "I shot ya'" remix is what initially attracted fans to Foxy, but it was Jay-Z's "Ain't No Nigga" joint that helped launch The Ill Nana's career and catapulted her into the realm of the most sought after entertainers in the business today. Jay-Z doesn't stop there, he also collaborates with the queen of R&B Mary J. Blige on "Can't Knock The Hustle," a sure fire hit. On "Brooklyn's Finest" we can find Jay swapping verses with the Notorious B.I.G. "Bring It On" features Big Jaz and Sauce Money. Other tracks to check for would be "22 Two's," "D'Evils," and "Politics as Usual." "Reasonable Doubt" is a tight debut album leaving Jay finding himself once again scoring big.



Sadat X
Wild Cowboys
Loud

Sadat X is no stranger to the game. He's put in mad work since he first blessed the mic on "One For All" with his unique voice and lyrical flow. No longer with Brand Nubian—although a reunion with mic-mates Grand Puba and Lord Jamar is in the works—Sadat's ability to launch a solo career was questioned by many. Unlike Grand Puba's disappointing attempt to go solo, Sadat comes through with a solid effort with production by some heavy hitters behind the SP's such as Pete Rock, the Beatminerz, Diamond D, Buckwild and Showbiz. Cuts like "Lump Lump" and "Stages and Lights" are prime examples of smooth lyrical delivery over thumpin' basslines while on "Open Bar" he teams up with Grand Puba and brings back the old chemistry. "The Hashout" and "Hanging High" are also on the list of top notch cuts. "Wild Cowboys" is 15 tracks deep, with about 9 outstanding cuts on it. "The Funkiest" is one track that should have been omitted, it's got a wack beat and is just there for filler. But overall this is a successful debut album, better than expected. This is also another hit for Loud Records who have been on a rampage releasing smash hit after hit. Check for Xzibit (you heard it here first!). "Wild Cowboys" is all that and a ten gallon hat.
Raw hide!!



NOT!

Dear Bubba:

If you could vote, who would you vote for? Clinton or Dole? I read your column in Prison Life and I think you have a pretty good idea who would be the best President as far as us convicts is concerned.

*Signed,
Ralphie Bones*

Bubba replies:

Wouldn't you know it would take a Republican to recognize me for what I really am: friendly to families! I'm friendly with the Gambino Family, the Genovese Family, *La Familia*. I'm connected to a 30 Watt light bulb. Fuck Dole. Who would vote for a guy with a name like that, anyway? Bob Dole. Rhymes with mole. I had a teacher in gradeschool named Dole. She had the worst body odor I've ever smelled on an American. Little short fat frumpy old bag. We used to draw pictures of her on the blackboard with those way lines coming off her like in cartoons to let you know something is stinking. Whenever she came snooping around my desk to see what I was up to, I cringed. The kids used to chant, "BEEEEEE OOOOOOH," but she never got the hint. Dole. What a jerk. What amazes me is that there are people living in this country who are so brain dead they might actually vote for this fool.

And that other guy. Don't get me started on Bill. Worst sell-out since Sammy "The Bull" Gravano. You think there's any difference between organized crime and the scum who run this country? Well, you're right. There is. When these guys get caught, they don't go to jail. Clinton has done more illegal shit than I have. Forget about White Water. That's just a smoke screen. Let's talk about White Powder! Mena, Arkansas and the planeloads of guns going down to Central America and coming back stuffed with coke. Bill and his boys washing all those coca dollars through the banks in Arkansas. When his pal, that guy Don Lassiter, took the fall, Bill pulled some strings and got him a skid bid. He says the criminal justice system saved his half brother's life. My ass. I wonder if he'd say that if the guy got 30 years with no parole like some stiff whose brother ain't the motherfucking governor.

Forget about voting. I'm declaring myself President by default. At least I admit I'm a crook.

* * * NEWS FLASH * * *

Republican Presidential candidate Bob Dole calls Prison Life a "nightmare of depravity," but declares Bubba, "friendly to families."

AP—Presidential candidate Bob Dole called for the of banning *Prison Life* magazine, saying the controversial convict publication is a "nightmare of depravity." The conservative Republican Presidential hopeful did, however, praise the writings of one of *Prison Life's* contributors, known only as Bubba, who writes an advice column, Ask Bubba, published in the magazine. The former Senator said he found Bubba's writing "friendly to families" because the hardened convict often spoke of his love for his mother and for kids. "Bubba's okay," Dole told reporters, "just as long as they keep him locked up."

Books on the Block



Triangle of Death

Michael Levine & Laura Kavanau

Delacorte Press

\$23.95 ISBN 0-305-31475-2

Reviewed by Thierry Marignac

Under a bright red sunset more than fifteen years ago, at the end of an afternoon spent ingesting various controlled substances in a Parisian slum, we decided to split. In the dank staircase that would have made a suitable set for one of those realist French movies of the '30s, we bumped into a couple of guys whose eyes had that unmistakable hunter's look that marked them as hoodlums. From the way they carried themselves, we city boys knew they weren't City of Light dwellers. Riviera tough guys, maybe. Nods were exchanged, we were on our way. By the time they ran after us onto the street and grabbed our collars, something else had dawned on us city boys: they were the law.

And such is the thin line between cop and criminal tread by Michael Levine and Laura Kavanau in *Triangle of Death*, a fictional variation on that age-old theme: how much gangster is there in a cop who spends his life rubbing elbows with the criminal element, figuring their scores before putting them away?

Levine, a veteran drug agent turned writer familiar to the readers of *PLM*, takes it to the next level. In this riveting page-turner, Levine's double and namesake seeks revenge after the brutal murder of his best friend and mentor, René Villarino, an undercover DEA operative like himself, who was offed in Bolivia during a sting operation meant to trace and neutralize the source of a newly synthesized lethal drug, the White Queen.

Experienced in the solitude and forlornness of undercover work, this narc on a mission finds new lows as he discovers that the upper echelons of command—the suits—are not particularly interested in avenging the death of his friend. They tag it on the Colombians, whereas Levine knows there's more to it than just another contract carried out by the cartels.

At Villarino's funeral, a grim ceremony that takes place near a little

harbor in the Isle of Beauty, Levine takes an oath to carry out the vendetta—blood for blood—called for by his friend's Corsican family.

Meanwhile, the new designer drug causes ODs at an alarming rate around the world. Heading Argentina's DEA office, already under investigation for the many and various misdeeds drug cops routinely commit in order to survive in this cloak-and-dagger world, Levine voluntarily botches "the rip" (arrest) of the Colombian capo in Miami who has been targeted by the suits to be the scapegoat for Villarino's murder.

From that point on Levine is a Lone Wolf: the suits want his head. But our drug cop's hectic schedule has him traveling all over the world with government money. He uncovers a deadly organization, the "Triangle of Death," set up by former Nazi refugees and their offspring, connected to many a mafia, many a secret service, headed by the coldest blonde in history, Nadia Ricord, daughter of a famous French collaborator who escaped to South America after WW II.

Levine mounts his own one-man sting operation. Being of Jewish descent, he calls upon his cousin in the Mossad, the Israeli secret service, to help. They'll train him to pass for an Arab gangster in this ever-paradoxical world turned upside down, where the lie, the cheat, and the betrayal is everyone's mother's milk. He sets up an oil-for-drugs-for-arms trade-off involving the Nazis, the Mafia, the Cartels, and a couple of outlaw governments. As Levine will find out, the Nazi organization has been protected all along by the CIA and most everybody else, and the new drug is seen as the ultimate chemical weapon. Details and ending are too sweet to spoil.

Fittingly to the book's topic, there's a flip side to this novel. Riding the crest of adrenaline, Levine has to admit to himself he is chasing the very thing he is supposed to loathe: the high. Like any junkie, he's ready to forsake most everything—friends, family—for a pursuit he knows is deadly. Meanwhile, the web of deception he weaves with every law enforcement scam takes him to the brink of forswearing the very values that put him there in the first

place: honor, loyalty, dedication. The mindset is yet again blurred by static from all sides and ominous bureaucratic interferences.

It's highly significant that a former top-level drug cop would delve into his considerable experience playing the masters of this world against one another to project such a picture. Would it be for fun? For the sake of another book on the drug shelves?

Triangle of Death is fun to read, it never loses its edge, yet finds a way to be existential. According to Levine, any good guy in the war on drugs is likely to be crushed. By any means necessary.

In Time: Women's Poetry from Prison

Edited by Rosanna Warren

& Teresa Iverson

Boston University

Prison Education Fund

\$1.00

Reviewed by Catherine A. Salmons

As American prisons strain to house more than a million inmates, increasingly bleak statistics flood the headlines. Mandatory sentencing laws for drug offenses mean longer prison terms for women in particular, leaving fragmented families and children stranded as wards of DSS. In line with the 1994 Crime Bill's get tough rhetoric, rehabilitative services have suffered sharp cutbacks. In 1990, there were 350 higher-education programs for prisoners nationwide. By 1997, there will be eight. Despite evidence that such programs lower recidivism rates, politicians lambaste them as soft on crime.

Against this grim backdrop, *In Time*, a chapbook-length anthology of poems by female prisoners at the Massachusetts Correctional Institute in Framingham, stands as a record of women prisoners' courage. Astonishingly well written—especially for novices subject to enormous constraints, both literal and psychic—these poems grew out of a year-long writing workshop for prisoners taught by acclaimed poet and Boston University professor Rosanna Warren and poet Teresa Iverson.

Fierce honesty and formal discipline were clearly the workshop's guideposts, helping each poet sculpt raw experience into insights that defy the ugliness of prison life.

One student, the former '60s radical Katherine Power, stunned the nation in 1993 by turning herself in more than 20 years after fleeing a notorious Boston bank robbery/murder. In "Snatches of Vivaldi," Power projects her feeling of slow strangulation onto a "bare-limbed" prison-yard tree, reaching toward the "solstice sun/Glinting off razor-wire loops." Her "Sestina" is a metrical tour de force, its stealthy repetition underscoring a mother's daily grief at being separated from her son.

An exuberant chorus of line endings makes rhyme the driving force in Jamie Papa's sestina "Love" a randy celebration of lesbian eros.

Guilt is also a common theme, along with the freeing power of atonement—best expressed in Jacqueline Dash's crisp lines, "I awaited the hope of a world/and am culpable/now." "Never Forgotten," her elegy for a brother tortured and murdered by thugs she identifies only as "gunmen," hints at a life plagued by inconceivable violence and abuse.

Evoking personal failure, lost love, and the children they've been forced to leave behind, these women explore the strength of shaping a chaotic past into words. The poems have rough edges, but their emotional intensity puts many a polished poem to shame. These women teach as much as they've learned. It's hard to imagine a better argument for prison education.

In an era when grants to support the publication of prison writing have all but disappeared, these poets owe their public voice largely to the organizing efforts of Rosanna Warren. Juggling her frenetic schedule as associate professor of comparative literature at BU, poet (her widely praised second collection, *Stained Glass*, was published by Norton & Co. in 1993), classicist, literary critic, and translator of Greek and Latin poetry, she secured a grant from the Lila Wallace/Reader's Digest Fund, with a mandate to create writing courses in Massachusetts prisons. Since she'd already been involved with BU's prison education program for male prisoners, which was founded more than 20 years ago by the now legendary Professor Elizabeth "Ma" Barker and is currently directed by Walter Silva, Warren set out to devise a workshop that would fall within the rubric of the University's new degree program for women, established three years ago at the Framingham prison.

Warren designed a "rigorous, college-

level course." Her partner Teresa Iverson, whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *Agni*, *Orion*, *New Criterion*, *Boston Review*, and *Salamander*, taught poetry last year at Wheaton College. Part of their goal was to help bring the women's education program up to speed.

"Until recently," Warren acknowledges, "women's sentences tended to be much shorter than men's, so they didn't have time to complete a degree program."



in time

Women's Poetry from Prison

EDITED BY ROSANNA WARREN AND TERESA IVERSON

"That's partly to do with a change in policy toward drug offenders," Iverson adds. "Eighty to 85 percent of the women are in for drugs—frequently because their partners have been accused of such crimes, and now they're automatically considered accomplices. So suddenly these women are getting five-to-ten-year sentences."

"The ethical question," Warren says, "is, how do we most effectively address the origins of crime, and rehabilitation?" Education is one answer: whereas the national recidivism rate is 66 percent, fewer than five percent of prisoners who complete BU's degree program return to prison.

Teaching in prison entails challenges, from the forbidding environment to strictures that limit students' attendance.

"You might go in to teach," says Warren, "and somebody will be in solitary, or having some special

interview for a parole hearing."

Within that daily struggle, poetry came to represent hope, and a way for the women to rediscover themselves. Warren says disciplined study of literature allowed the prisoners, "some of whom had led disorderly and violent lives, to envision a different shape for their lives. Our text was the [Norton Anthology]—"The Mansion," I called it.

In each class, we wandered through the mansion; and the wonderful thing was, the grant paid for the books. It's hard to have books in prison. Everything's hard in prison! I'd tell them, this is your mansion, this is your house, and you own this. You should go into these rooms and take over: a poem is really yours if you memorize it."

Although the atmosphere in class was explosive at times, Iverson maintains the experience was an incredible gift.

"It wakes you up again," Warren echoes, "to the internal force of literature, and to its dangerous balancing of forces that want to erupt."

Former prisoner and class member Jamie Papa agrees. With her waist-length dark hair and steely eyes, Papa is every inch a warrior. She bristles with ambition and determination, traits that have seen her through the worst of times. Released last April, she works full-time and is finishing her degree at BU. She's trying to save

money, negotiating to regain custody of her eight year-old son—and still striving to improve her poetry.

Like Warren, she believes that education and self-help are crucial to a prisoner's survival. The prison experience, she says, is "very degrading, very humiliating. The food is disgusting, the living conditions are disgusting, every woman in there has athlete's foot because they don't disinfect the showers. You freeze—it was never warm enough. Even now I can't get warm enough. You're locked down three times a day so they can count. If you're not standing in front of your bed when they look through the window, you're locked for five days in isolation."

The only hope is "to take advantage of what the system does have to offer. I went into the system in April '92: by June I had my GED. By July I was enrolled in college. I did every single program they

had. I took English literature, then this poetry workshop. Also news writing and journalism, business and management, psychology and sociology. I got my manicuring license, my computer degree, typing certificates—I taught myself to type—I did the 'Women in Building Trades' program, joined the Catholic Church, started an AA group on Saturdays." She enrolled in recreation and sports, worked part-time as a secretary, and took a course in "Death and Dying" that helped her grieve her mother's loss, nine years after the fact. She also pursued an appeal on her conviction for drug possession, maintaining her innocence and fighting to clear her name.

And she put herself through strident drug rehabilitation, making use of the prison's counseling resources.

"You have to be self-disciplined in there so you don't end up going back." The poetry workshop helped her hear and articulate her most intimate thoughts; it challenged her to build self-esteem.

"I hated the class at first," she laughs. "Teresa made me do all my poems over!" She felt intimidated by classmates who had a broader background in literature.

"They were wicked intellectual," Jamie says. "They used words I can't even find in the dictionary!" In the end, though, "they'd come running to my room all the time for me to critique their poetry." From seeing the class as more stressful than pleasurable she grew to understand that she was becoming a better poet.

With confidence that would have seemed unthinkable three years ago, Jamie was able last fall to recite her poem at the public reading, held on the BU campus, that launched *In Time's* publication. With their authors still behind bars, the other poems were read by proxy. Nostalgic for the unity and support she found in the group, Jamie cried when she heard Jackie Dash's poem, 'Me, Again.'

"I know why the recidivism rate is so high," Jamie says. "If prisoners don't try to better themselves and shore up their self-esteem, all they learn is how to be a better criminal, and how to come back."

"We're devastated by the results of Congress cutting back on these programs," Warren says, "and we hope the BU program will survive. It's social insurance for all of us."

"I learned I was writing for myself," Jamie says, "to help myself to be strong. I feel that every prison should offer a poetry writing course. Not only is it educational, it's incredibly therapeutic. A lot of the stuff I write is about breaking out, and fighting back—there's negativity, but it always ends on a

positive note. This kind of class can work in so many positive ways."

In Time can be ordered from:
Rosanna Warren
Boston University
The University Professors
745 Commonwealth Ave.
Boston, MA 02215

The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga

by Swami Vishnu-devananda
Reviewed by R.A. Street

The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga by Swami Vishnu-devananda should be read by all convicts. Indeed, they should own a copy of it, and there is no excuse not to because it is available to prisoners—free of charge—in softcover, brand new from the publisher. This same book sells for \$14.95 in a bookstore.

As the title states, this book is complete, covering all aspects of yoga, from A to Z and is profusely illustrated with detailed explanations enabling you to learn the postures (asanas) that stretch and relax your body; the breathing exercises (pranayama) that calm and focus your mind; and meditation (dhyanam) to free your soul from illusion (maya) so that you may obtain liberation and know the Supreme Creator.

Yoga is not a religion and will not interfere with your religious beliefs, if any, plus it may be practiced by atheists or agnostics. Everybody needs yoga, especially incarcerated persons. This is one of the most important books you will ever read. You may obtain it from International Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Center, 8th Avenue, Val Morin, Quebec JOT2RO, Canada. Postage from the US to Canada is 46¢.

America's Dumbest Criminals

Daniel Butler, Alan Ray & Leland Gregory
Rutledge Hill Press
Reviewed by Thomas Falater

Since we are all in prison, on parole, or waiting for our next sentence, we will always be—in one way or another—criminals in the eyes of society. Some of you may feel offended or embarrassed by this title and try to hide it but personally, with the way things are in this country, I'm rather proud of my status as a criminal. There is one thing we all agree on, however: if you're going to be a criminal, don't embarrass the rest of us.

A new book from Rutledge Hill Press, *America's Dumbest Criminals* by Daniel

Butler, Alan Ray and Leland Gregory, exposes criminals who do just that: embarrass the rest of us.

How would you like to share your cell with an accused vending-machine thief who paid his \$400 bail entirely in quarters? Or how about the guy who robbed a bank with a note written on the back of an envelope he received from his probation officer—with his name and address still printed on it?

This book has it all, everything from the Beer-Box Bandit, a guy who put an empty beer box on his head as a disguise to rob a liquor store, to the idiot who ran from the cops at night wearing high-tech tennis shoes that light up with every step. The three authors spent over six months interviewing police officers to come up with the material for this book. As expected, much of the material is slanted. A quote from a police chief to one of the authors: "Son, if you'll show criminals for the cold-hearted dumbasses they are, and if you'll show our police force as being professional at all times...well, then, I'll help you any way I can."

If you want to enjoy a few laughs, *Dumbest Criminals* is a worthwhile read. But don't take it too seriously. You may find yourself prowling the yard, looking for the dumbasses who ended up in this book.

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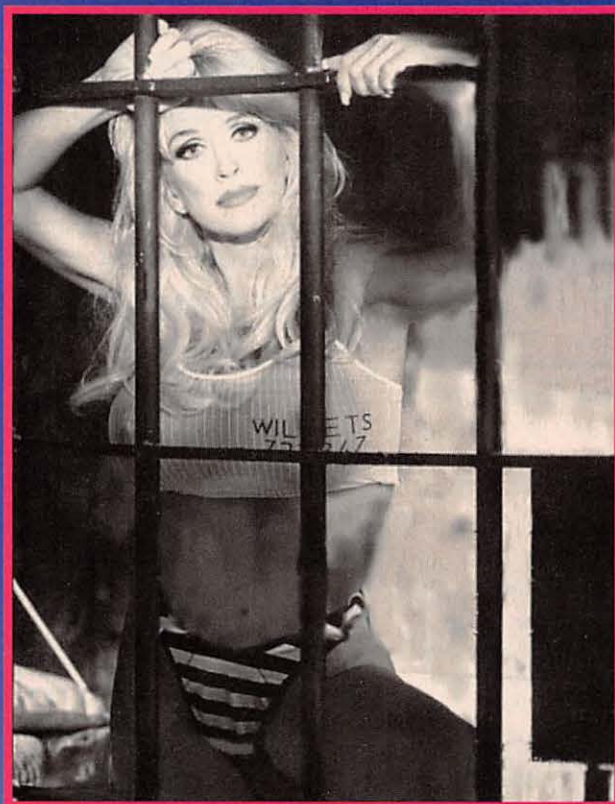
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THE CHOKE THE COURTS ACT

by

Michael Montalvo, Drug War P.O.W.

The 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Clinton last April was thought to be typical election-year grandstanding that probably wouldn't affect too many people. Most of us don't run around blowing things up. With all the news about the Oklahoma City blast, the World Trade Center bombing and the "Unabomber," the Antiterrorism Act in an election year was no big surprise to anyone.

But ex-senator Bob Dole and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orin Hatch, who had been pedalling their very mean-spirited crime bill, SB 3, since 1994, saw opportunity in the Act. SB 3, which sought to limit state and federal *habeas corpus* filing to one year after final decision in state courts, one year after final decision in federal courts, and 180 days in death penalty federal *habeas*, was just too extreme and contained enough anti-convict, anti-alien meanness that it was defeated several times. Civil liberties advocates, defense lawyers, and prisoners who were aware of SB3 breathed a collective sigh of relief when the bill appeared to have died.

Dole and Hatch simply slipped in and surgically altered the Act, attaching their SB3 "*Habeas Corpus Reforms*" and "Criminal Alien Procedure Improvements" measures as a rider the week before the Act came to the floor for a vote.

It is a testament to the sleazy nature of election-year politics that the Act, which affects potentially every state and federal prisoner in the United States, particularly death row prisoners, passed both houses of Congress with little scrutiny from the members.

DRASTIC CHANGES IN FEDERAL POST-CONVICTION MOTIONS UNDER 28 U.S.C. §2255

Many federal prisoners and attorneys thought the Dole/Hatch Crime Bill, or the 1996 Antiterrorism Act, only

affected death row prisoners or non-capital state prisoners on federal *habeas* petitions. Let me dispel any such rumor. The 1996 Act states in Section 153, that 28 U.S.C. §2255 is amended: "(1) by striking the second and fifth undesignated paragraphs, and (2) by adding at the end the following new undesignated paragraphs: a 1-year period of limitations shall run from the latest of (1) the date on which the judgment of conviction becomes final; (2) the date on which the impediment to making a motion created by government action in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States is removed, if the movant was prevented from making a motion by such government action; (3) the date on which the right asserted was initially recognized by the Supreme Court, if that right has been newly recognized by the Supreme Court and made retroactively applicable to cases on collateral review; or (4) the date on which the facts supporting the claim or claims presented could have been discovered through the exercise of due diligence."

There is no reason to panic if your appeal was final several years ago, because it appears that you could still have one year from the date the law became effective—April 24, 1996—to file your §2255 motion. It is not retroactive, and it does not apply only to new prisoners. It appears to apply to all federal prisoners.

There is more. If your §2255 motion is denied, you can no longer automatically appeal. "Unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability, an appeal may not be taken to the court of appeals from (B) the final order in a proceeding under section §2255." [28 U.S.C. §2253(a), (c)(1)].

Further, a certificate of appealability may issue only if the applicant has made a substantial showing of the denial of a Constitutional right, and the certificate indicates which specific issues satisfy that

substantial showing [§2253(2), (3)].

There are also new restrictions on successive §2255 motions. The second or successive §2255 motion "must be certified as provided in §2244 by a panel of the appropriate court of appeals to contain (1) newly discovered evidence that, if proven and viewed in light of the evidence as a whole, would be sufficient to establish by clear and convincing evidence that no reasonable fact-finder would have found the movant guilty of the offense; or (2) a new rule of Constitutional law, made retroactive to cases on collateral review by the Supreme Court, that was previously unavailable."

There will undoubtedly be several constitutional challenges to this section 153, but at this writing I am not aware of any filing except that of California state death row prisoners who have filed concerning their sections.

NON-CAPITAL STATE CASES HAVE ONE YEAR AFTER STATE EXHAUSTION TO FILE FEDERAL HABEAS

State prisoners must still exhaust their claims in the state court system, but the Act has several new twists and obstacles to watch for in filing for federal *habeas corpus* relief in the local district court. There is now a one-year limit after state court finality on direct review for filing the petition for writ of *habeas corpus* under 28 U.S.C. §2254. The time is tolled if the facts underlying the claim would not have been discovered with due diligence or if state collateral review is pending [28 U.S.C. §2244(d)].

The Act requires that the state expressly waive the exhaustion of remedies argument before a federal court may find such a waiver. Section §2254(b)(3) says the state cannot be found to have waived this requirement of exhaustion. The Act now requires a more rigorous standard for a federal district court to overturn a state conviction. Before a federal court can

grant relief on a claim adjudicated on the merits in the state court, the petitioner must prove that a state court decision was (1) contrary to clearly established federal law as determined by the Supreme Court, (2) an unreasonable application of the law, or (3) an unreasonable decision in light of the evidence [28 U.S.C. §2254(d)].

The Act also limits evidentiary hearings. A petitioner who challenges his state conviction in federal court can only rebut the presumption of correctness of a state factual finding by clear and convincing evidence [28 U.S.C. §2254(e)(1)]. A petitioner cannot get a federal evidentiary hearing if he has failed to develop the factual basis of his claim in the state court—unless the claim he brings relies on a new rule with retroactive application, or the facts underlying the claim could not have been discovered earlier through due diligence. Again, to get an evidentiary hearing, the petitioner must prove, by clear and convincing evidence, that but for the alleged error, no reasonable fact-finder would have found him guilty [§2254(e)(2)].

The Act limits second or successive §2254 motions in the same way §2255 is limited, and an appeal also requires a certificate of appealability [§2244(b), §2253].

DEATH ROW PRISONERS

The Act requires federal *habeas* petitions to be filed by state death row prisoners within 180 days after final state affirmance on direct review if the state provides for the appointment and compensation of competent counsel in state post-conviction proceedings under U.S.C. §2261 or §2265. The 180-day period is tolled by a *certiorari* petition and any pending first state petition for collateral review under §2263. Parties are given 120 days to complete all pleadings and any evidentiary hearing [28 U.S.C. §2266(b)(1)(A)], and the district court must decide the cases within 180 days after the petition is filed. The district court may extend the time 30 days by submitting its reasons to the Administrative Office of the Courts, but unextended time limits may be enforced if the government petitions for writ of mandate under 28 U.S.C. §2266(b)(1)(c),(4)(B). Capital *habeas corpus* cases are given priority over all non-capital cases [28 U.S.C. §2266(a)].

There are also new deadlines for the appeal of a denial of the federal *habeas corpus* petition in state capital cases under the new Act. The federal court of appeals must decide the case within 120 days after the reply brief is filed, must rule on petitions for rehearing within 30 days after

the petition or any responsive pleading, and must decide the merits within 120 days after granting rehearing or rehearing *en banc* [28 U.S.C. §2266(c)]. These time restraints can be enforced by the government by application for a writ of mandate from the U.S. Supreme Court [28 U.S.C. §2266].

The Act restricts review of procedurally barred claims in capital *habeas* cases unless the petitioner shows (1) that his failure to exhaust claims resulted from unconstitutional state action, (2) he is raising a retroactive new rule, or (3) the facts could not have been discovered with due diligence [28 U.S.C. §2264(a)].

Additionally, the new Act limits stays of execution in states that provide for the appointment and compensation of competent counsel in state post-conviction proceedings. Federal stays of execution expire if the petitioner failed to timely file a federal *habeas* petition, or if the petitioner waives his right to pursue federal *habeas* relief or the relief is denied. A new stay may not be granted unless a successive petition is properly authorized by the federal court of appeals [28 U.S.C. §2256].

FEDERAL JUDGE ISSUES A TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER ON CAPITAL HABEAS RULES OF NEW ACT

There has been a challenge to the Act's new restrictions of federal *habeas corpus* review by California prisoners fighting capital case conviction from death row. The class action, *Ashmus v. Calderon*, 96-1533, applies to 439 prisoners on California's death row. The judge, Thelton Henderson of the Northern District of California, has set a short timeline for both sides to address the issue and issued a temporary restraining order preventing the state from enforcement of the new Act's *habeas* rule as applied to capital cases.

The class action, filed in the name of San Quentin prisoner Troy Ashmus, argues that California's procedures for appointing and compensating lawyers in capital cases does not satisfy the requirement of the new law. State prosecutors can only capitalize on the Act's strict new *habeas* rules if they establish proper procedures for the appointment of competent counsel and the payment of "reasonable expenses." The petitioner argues that California has no written guidelines whatsoever for the selection of counsel in capital appeals and *habeas* petitioners, and that litigation funding is inadequate under the new federal law.

SUPREME COURT ISSUED AND REMOVED A STAY ON NEW ACT

The U.S. Supreme Court granted an expedited review to Georgia death row inmate Ellis Wayne Felker's challenge to the constitutionality of the Act's federal *habeas* provisions. On May 3, 1996, the Court stayed Felker's execution and announced that it would hear argument on June 3, 1996. In dissent, four Justices, Stevens, Beyers, Souter, and Ginsburg said it was unnecessary and unwise for the court to expedite the important question presented.

The Court ordered lawyers for Georgia and Felker to brief whether section 106(b)(3)(E) of the Act is an unconstitutional restriction on the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. That section prohibits federal courts from considering successive *habeas* petitions containing claims presented in an earlier application, or claims with a factual predicate that could have been discovered previously through the exercise of due diligence.

The Court's order also required briefing on whether Title I of the Act applies to petitions filed under 28 U.S.C. §2241, and whether the Act in this case is a suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* in violation of Article I, Section 9, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

On June 28, 1996, the Court denied the *habeas* petition in *Felker v. Turpin*, No. 95-8836 (A-880), and upheld challenged provisions of the 1996 Antiterrorism Act. The Court held that the Act does not violate the Constitution by requiring prisoners to get permission from a federal appeals [gatekeeper] panel before filing a second *habeas* petition in a U.S. District Court, or by foreclosing Supreme Court consideration of such decisions, or by setting tougher standards for such petitions.

The justices also ruled that while the Act does not affect the Supreme Court's ability to entertain *habeas* petitions, it will affect the standard the Court will use in reviewing prisoner petitions and in granting such relief.

The Supreme Court has granted an original *habeas* petition only four times this century, the last time in 1925.

THE FUTURE OF FEDERAL HABEAS

There is a clause in the Act that states that if any part of it is found unconstitutional, the rest of the Act is not affected. So, even if current or future challenges to some sections of the Act succeed, federal §2255 movants and state §2254 petitioners will still be under the Act's restrictions. As it reads, the Act affects every federal and state prisoner as of April 24, 1996.

My prison counselor noted that a lot of the prison factory workers were starting to ask for time off to do the §2255

motions. There could be a large number of prisoners in the law libraries for the next eleven months, trying to make that one-year filing deadline before April 23, 1997. Every prisoner with a prior final appeal will likely be in the rush.

What is finality for §2254 and §2255? According to the Supreme Court, judgment is "final" only after "the availability of appeal [is] exhausted, and the time for a petitioner for *certiorari* [has] elapsed or a petitioner for *certiorari* [has been] finally denied" [*Griffith v. Kentucky*, 479 U.S. 314, 321, n.6, 107 S.Ct. 708, 712, n.6, 93 L.Ed.2d 649 (1987)].

There is an appealing theory that the time restrictions for §2254 and §2255 are unconstitutional in that they "suspend" the Great Writ of *Habeas Corpus* in violation of the Federal Constitution [Article 1, Section 9, Clause 2]. Surely, many prisoners will make this argument because they cannot get all their records from the courts and former attorneys, or they cannot with "due diligence" obtain the new evidence of a rat's perjury in time to meet the one year deadline. I have observed many courts and attorneys refuse to give case files to a prisoner trying to prepare his §2255 motion to vacate conviction or sentence. One Louisiana judge denied a prisoner's request to borrow the record of his case and told the defendant to just go ahead and file his §2255. The prisoner did,

and the judge denied the motion as frivolous since it was filed with undocumented claims.

There is no love for prisoners trickling down from the courts. We should expect hostility, tricks and bad rulings. Nonetheless, we must challenge our unjust convictions, sentences and the politically motivated drug laws.

Prisoners working all day in the factory or in various prison jobs may have a built-in exemption if they cannot get six months off from work to research their cases, read the transcripts, track down the applicable law, write a few drafts of the issues, and type a final document. That takes a lot of time. I've heard many prisoners, unskilled in law, estimate that it would take them six to eight months to prepare a §2255 motion. Perhaps prison officials will provide a declaration that the prisoner was not allowed time off. But a collection of official denials of kites and inmate requests and grievance forms attached to a late §2255 motion might help meet the exemption from the one year limit based on "the date on which the impeding to making a motion created by government action in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States is removed, if the movant was prevented from making a motion by such government action" [§2255].

It is likely that prison law libraries will become very busy places because of this new Antiterrorism Act. With the one year

do or die deadline for §2254 petitions and §2255 motions for all the previously final appeals, hundreds of thousands of state and federal prisoners will be competing for the use of ancient prison typewriters. My prison has 13 typewriters for about 1500 federal prisoners.

The law offices of post-conviction attorneys will receive a flood of requests from desperate prisoners who might still have access to a few dollars to hire counsel. Many a criminal trial or appellate counsel will be called upon to work on the lower paying *habeas* petitions and §2255 motions, an area of procedural expertise unlike a trial or appeal.

Federal courts and prosecutors can expect a tidal wave of §2254 petitions and §2255 motions, hurriedly done, meritorious and frivolous, all trying to beat the Act's arbitrary deadline rule. But that isn't all the courts and prosecutors should expect. There is a strong possibility of increased civil rights *Bevins* actions from federal prisoners and Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaints from state prisoners claiming a constitutional denial of access to the courts when prison officials do not let prisoners take time off from their prison jobs to spend a few months in the library to meet the new deadlines for *habeas*.

Of course, terrorists will be the group least affected by this Act. I can't recall a single case of a terrorist abusing *habeas corpus*.

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UNCLE SAM'S TAX SCAM

by Irwin Schiff

IF YOU ARE INCARCERATED FOR INCOME TAXES, YOU ARE INCARCERATED ILLEGALLY HERE'S WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

There are no laws making alleged income tax offenses crimes, and no court was ever given jurisdiction to prosecute anyone for committing any such offenses. There are a number of reasons for this and we will turn to them shortly and to the real criminals involved in your incarceration—the judge who conducted your trial and the U.S. attorney who prosecuted you. But first let me prove my opening claim.

To prove that there are no crimes—or civil penalties—involving income taxes, you need only turn to the table of contents of the Internal Revenue Code. There you will see a number of entries for a variety of federal taxes. For example, focus on the codes involving Alcohol, Tobacco and Occupational taxes. Under each of these headings, you will see subheadings directing you to Code sections dealing with the “liability,” “payment, and “penalties,” for each of those taxes. Now turn to the heading for Income taxes, and see if you can find similar subheadings. You won't find any. This is because there are no laws establishing a liability for income taxes, or requiring anyone to pay such a tax. It also proves, if you are in jail for tax evasion or for willful failure to file (pursuant to Code sections 7201 & 7203 violations), you are in jail illegally, since how could you have evaded—or failed to file—a return in connection with a tax that no statute required you to pay, for which no statute made you liable and for which no statute creates a penalty?

In addition, if you turn to the jurisdictional section of the Code, section 7402(f), you will discover that section only gives federal courts civil jurisdiction in connection with this title. There is no mention of criminal jurisdiction.

For comparison, check 8 U.S.C 1329. It provides that in connection with that title, district courts “shall have jurisdiction of all cases, civil and criminal, arising under any of the provisions of this title.” However, no similar mention of criminal jurisdiction is contained in 7402(f). So, at the very least, you have a habeas corpus action charging that the federal judge who conducted your trial had no subject matter jurisdiction to do so, and that you were denied your Sixth Amendment right to a fair trial because of “ineffective assistance of counsel”—since I doubt your attorney raised this issue in the form of a pretrial motion to quash your indictment or information, or addressed this issue on appeal. And this is only one of many issues that I will cover here that can be raised in a habeas corpus petition charging ineffective assistance of counsel—or in a malpractice suit against the attorney who represented you.

Let me briefly explain why there are no laws requiring anyone to pay income taxes, though my books cover this subject in far greater detail. If federal income tax laws were mandatory, they would violate all of the Constitution's three taxing clauses, as well as the 1st,

4th, 5th, 6th, 13th and 16th Amendments to the Constitution. So as not to be unconstitutional on these and other grounds, the payment of this “tax” was not made mandatory, which is why the I.R.S. continually refers to the “voluntary compliance” nature of this tax.

So why do people go to jail for violating income tax laws that don't exist? They do so because of the rampant corruption that exists on the federal bench and/or because of the general incompetence of the lawyers who defend them. If the American public really knew what was going on, practically every federal judge—and most Justice Department attorneys—would be behind bars, since most of them have been involved in illegal 7201 and 7203 prosecutions. Thus they have “conspired,” in numerous prosecutions, “to injure (and) oppress (such defendants)... in the free exercise (and) enjoyment of (numerous) rights and privileges secured to (them) by the Constitution (and) laws of the United States,” in blatant violation of these provisions as contained in 18 U.S.C. 241. These illegal prosecutions are, of course, designed to intimidate and coerce the public into paying a tax that no American is required to pay, and which the U.S. Constitution, in numerous clauses, bars the government from collecting in the manner it now does. How does the Constitution do this? Let me count the ways. First, since all information on a 1040 can be used

against you, there can be no law requiring you to give it: any such law would be in obvious violation of an Americans' right not to be compelled to be a witness against himself. However, you could waive that right, if you were first given a Miranda warning. And, sure enough, such a warning appears in a 1040 booklet. The warning tells you, that with respect to the information you put on a 1040, the I.R.S.: "... may give the information to the Department of Justice and to other Federal agencies, as provided by law. We may also give it to the states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. commonwealths or possessions to carry out there And we may give it to foreign governments."

Obviously, all those governments and governmental agencies who would want such information, want it so they can use it against you. And the government tells you this right here. And if you give the I.R.S. the information, despite this warning, you are saying "It's okay with me if all these agencies use this information against me." Is it really okay with you? Of course not. But the government buries its Miranda warning

immunity before the Government agent and refuse to produce his books. *After the Government has gotten possession of the information with his consent, it (is) too late...to claim constitutional immunity.*" (emphasis added)

From these entries in the I.R.S.'s own manual, we can learn a good deal about the nature of the income "tax" and the duplicity of federal courts in connection with it. Since this handbook admits that individuals—for constitutional reasons—cannot be required to turn over their books and records to the I.R.S. (because the information they contain can be used against them) can they, therefore, be required to turn over a summary of their books and records? Obviously not. But what is a 1040, if not a summary of your books and records? And since all information on a 1040 can be used against you (in the same manner as information in your books and records) — if you can not be required to turn over your books and records on constitutional grounds, obviously you can not be required, on the same grounds, to supply such information on a 1040. What's hard

5. "There can be no question that one who files a return under oath is a witness [against himself] within the meaning of the [Fifth] Amendment." (emphasis and brackets added)

Thus this 1927 decision (*Sullivan v. U.S.* 15 F.2d 809, 4th Circuit) would, for obvious reasons, have ended the income taxes right then and there—just on these grounds alone. Therefore, the government appealed that decision to the Supreme Court, which, in a totally fraudulent decision, saved the income tax for the federal government. In reversing the Appellate Court, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, who wrote the decision for the Court, did not contradict any of the above claims made by the Fourth Circuit. Space will not permit me (and it is not essential to this article) to analyze the fraudulent basis of Holmes' decision; however in that decision, he did, nevertheless, hold that Sullivan could "test that or any other point" on his return. In other words he held that Sullivan could have taken the Fifth in connection with any question asked on an income tax return. Subsequently, lower federal courts

PERVERSIONS OF LAW AND THE CONSTITUTION ARE ROUTINE IN FEDERAL COURT DECISIONS, AND QUITE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THAT BENCH.

in the gobbledygook of its "Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Note," knowing that the public won't even notice it, or recognize its significance even if they do notice it. But why don't tax liars, I mean tax lawyers, point this warning (and its significance) out to their clients? If your's didn't, you have the basis of a malpractice suit - especially if you were convicted on the basis of a tax return your tax liar, I mean tax lawyer, advised you to file. For further clarification of this, let's look into the I.R.S.'s own Handbook for Special Agents paragraphs 342.12 and 342.15 (1-18-80), which says:

"(1) An individual taxpayer may refuse to exhibit his/her books and records for examination on the ground that compelling him/her to do so might violate his/her right against self-incrimination under the Fifth Amendment and constitute an illegal search and seizure under the Fourth Amendment. (*Boyd v. U.S.*; *U.S. v. Vadner.*)"

The next paragraph captioned "Waiver of Constitutional Rights" explains that those who turn over their books and records to the I.R.S. waive constitutional rights in doing so, since an individual, it points out, can, "claim

about that?

In 1926, a South Carolina bootlegger and automobile dealer decided he couldn't file an income tax return, because; (he correctly concluded) if he reported his illegal income they could prosecute him with for bootlegging, and if he didn't report it, they could prosecute him for tax evasion. Therefore, he did what any logical, intelligent person would do under the circumstances: he filed nothing. He was subsequently prosecuted and convicted for failing to file an income tax return. And in what is the only other honest federal court decision involving income taxes, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal reversed his conviction, and ruled as follows:

1. Requiring Sullivan to file a tax return would be "in conflict with the Fifth Amendment."

2. The language of the Fifth Amendment must "receive a liberal construction by the courts."

3. No one can be compelled "in any proceedings to make disclosures or to give evidence which tends to incriminate him or subject him to fines, penalties or forfeitures."

4. The Fifth Amendment "applies alike to civil and criminal proceedings."

totally misrepresented what Holmes said, and claimed that he said that Sullivan could only have taken the Fifth in connection with the "sources" of his income, but that he was still required to report the amount of his income. Thus, lower courts took a fraudulent Supreme Court decision and compounded its fraud even further, and now maintain "it is not a return unless it contains information from which a tax can be computed." Not only is this a total perversion of what the Supreme Court actually held in *Sullivan*, but it is an impossible legal conclusion given the obvious, uncontested and irrefutable contentions in the appellate court decision, which was reversed on other grounds. But perversions of law and the Constitution are routine in federal court decisions, and quite in keeping with the character of that bench.

Because federal courts so totally perverted the *Sullivan* decision, they now enforce a totally untenable position - the fact that they get away with it is a tribute to the ignorance of the American public and the media when it comes to the Constitution. If, as our "courts" claim, you are required to report illegal income, how can you do so without incriminating yourself? Well, say

our honorable judges, you can do so by reporting it as "miscellaneous" income, and since you are not identifying the "source" you will not be incriminating yourself. This, of course, is pure, unadulterated bullshit, since there is no way you can report illegal income without incriminating yourself. How can a drug dealer, for example, report illegal income without incriminating himself? He obviously can't report his gross income, since how can he list his "business" deductions? Can he show and report as deduction what he paid for the drugs he sold? Can he show and deduct what he might have paid to pilots, hit men and cops he might have on his payroll, overlooking the many other business deductions involved in distributing drugs? Is he, therefore, allowed to merely report his net income and not his gross? But if he can do that, then why can't legitimate business men do the same thing? Therefore, for a taxpayer to be able to only report a composite "net" income, he must, obviously, have to claim that his income was earned illegally. And that wouldn't incriminate him? Aldrich Ames the C.I.A. agent who was a Russian mole, was convicted of espionage and also tax evasion, because he didn't pay income taxes on the millions he received from the Soviet Union. According to our courts and Justice Department, had he reported the money he received from the Soviet Union as "miscellaneous" income, that would not have incriminated him. So, picture this. Assume that Ames' 1988 C.I.A. salary was \$75,000 and in the same year he received \$1,000,000 from the Soviet Union. He was supposed to report on his 1040 the following: "\$75,000 in wages and \$1,000,000 'miscellaneous.'" And that wouldn't have incriminated him? Counter intelligence officers would have been all over him the next day, had he done so. And Jonathan Pollard, who worked in the navy code room, was convicted of spying for Israel and was also convicted of tax evasion, because he did not report and pay taxes on the money he received from Israel, which, I believe, for one year was \$100,000. So, suppose in that year he reported his salary from the navy as \$18,000 and also reported on his 1040 "\$100,000 miscellaneous income." If Naval Intelligence did not get on his case the next day, how intelligent would be our Naval Intelligence?

And, of course, if you are required to give any information to the government on a tax return, then that information is compelled. And the government can't use compelled testimony against you in a criminal trial. Let me give you an

example. Suppose in passing a jewelry store (which had just been broken into) three cops grab you, and claim you were the one who broke in and robbed it. You deny it, but one starts twisting your arm behind your back, while the other two hold you, and he says, "Unless you sign this confession admitting you broke in and robbed this store, I'll break your arm off, right here and now." So what do you do? You sign the form. Why? Because you don't want your arm ripped off. Is your confession worth anything, assuming it could be proven that your arm was being twisted at the time you signed it? Suppose you were later charged with robbing that jewelry store (which you subsequently denied) but at your trial the prosecutor introduces your signed "confession." Suppose your lawyer knew that at the time you signed it, three cops were holding you and threatening to "twist your arm off, if you didn't sign it," but he: doesn't point this out to the court, doesn't raise any objection, but allows your "confession" to be admitted and used against you - as if it were voluntarily given. Now suppose you were subsequently convicted based on that "confession," would that lawyer be held to be ineffective in a subsequent *habeas corpus* petition? You bet he would. And don't you think that you would prevail against him—just on this basis alone—in a civil, malpractice suit? You bet you would. Well, if you were convicted of any (alleged) income tax violation in which the government used your own tax returns against you - and your lawyer did not vigorously enter an objection to their being admitted—then your lawyer would have been guilty of the same omission as the lawyer in my example. Since the government claims, that unless you file a return and provide "information from which a tax can be determined," you will go to jail for "failure to file" —the information on that return is compelled as surely as if the I.R.S. twisted your arm to get it. In my latter example, only the nature of the compulsion was different. But compulsion is compulsion. And information that the government compels you to give under threat of imprisonment, can't be used against you—if the proper objection is raised.

While incarcerated, I met numerous prisoners whose lawyers got them to plead guilty to both committing some crime and also to evading the tax on the illegal income generated by those crimes. Invariably all such convicts admitted that they would have loved to report their illegal income and pay the tax on it, so they could spend the proceeds openly. But they didn't report it, not to evade the tax but to avoid

incriminating themselves. Obviously if an individual earns \$100,000 legitimately and only reports \$50,000, he fails to report \$50,000 in order to evade the tax. But if a man earns \$50,000 legally and \$50,000 illegally, does he fail to report the \$50,000 he earned illegally in order to evade the tax? No, he doesn't report it because he does not want to incriminate himself by reporting it. So by no stretch of the imagination did such persons seek to evade the tax on their illegal income. All those people who—on the advice of counsel—pleaded guilty to tax evasion for failure to report illegal income were sold down the river by their lawyers. At most, they could only have been subject to civil penalties, not criminal ones. (Though the law, as shown in the Code's Table of Contents does not even provide for civil penalties.) Since there is no way anyone can report illegal income without incriminating themselves, the claim by the courts that one must report illegal income is specious on its face, and amounts to Congress having passed a law requiring all those who commit crimes to confess to committing them; and if they don't confess, and are caught, they then can be charged with committing two crimes, the crime they committed and the crime of not reporting the crime they committed. Would any such law, if passed by

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Congress, be held constitutional? Of course not. So by enforcing their own fraudulent and lawless decisions (instead of enforcing the statutes as written) our lawless federal judges have, by themselves, succeeded in creating and enforcing a "law" that Congress itself never could have passed. Can there be any question but that the greatest collection of criminals in America sits on the federal bench?

There are a number of other reasons, besides the 4th and 5th Amendments, which would make a mandatory income tax unconstitutional. I will quickly cover some of these reasons for you, and give you the supporting references, so you can check them out for yourself. There are three taxing clauses in the Constitution which establish two general classes of taxes: excise taxes which have to be imposed on the basis of uniformity, and direct taxes which have to be imposed on the basis of apportionment. And all federal taxes, in order to be mandatory, must be imposed on one basis or another. (See *Pollock v. Farmer's Loan and Trust*, *supra*; and *Brushaber v. Union Pacific R.R.*, 240 U.S.1) Since the income tax is imposed on neither basis (though the Court in *Brushaber* [incorrectly] held the tax to be an excise), its payment can not be made mandatory. And, obviously, no one can be legitimately prosecuted with respect to a tax not imposed pursuant to the Constitution.

Further, the 16th Amendment did not amend the Constitution nor did it give the government any new taxing powers (such as the ability to impose a direct tax on income without apportionment). See *Brushaber, supra* and *Stanton vs. Baltic Mining Co.*; 240 U.S. 103. Despite the claim in its caption, Section 61 of the Int. Rev. Code does not define "Gross Income" (since a word can not be defined with itself), therefore, what constitutes "income" is not defined in the Code. See *U.S. v. Ballard* 535 F.2d 400,404. In addition, Congress has no power to define the meaning of "income," since by doing so, it would be amending the Constitution by legislation alone. See *Eisner v. Macomber* 252 U.S. 189, 206. The Supreme Court defined income to mean a "gain or increase arising from corporate activities." See *Doyle v. Mitchell*, 247 U.S. 179, and *Merchant's Loan and Trust Co. v. Smietanka*, 255 U.S. 509, 518,519. Therefore, no American can have any income subject to an income tax, since the word income, for tax purposes, means a corporate profit. If anything we have a profits tax, not an income tax. In addition, if the income tax were mandatory, it would have to be declared

"void for vagueness," by any legitimate court, since no one (let alone someone of average intelligence) can understand our income tax laws. In a speech given at Southern Methodist University in Dallas Texas, on April 14, 1993, Shirley D. Peterson, the former Commissioner of the I.R.S. and head of the Tax Division of the Justice Department said this about the income tax: "Eight decades of amendment and accretions to the Code have produced a virtual impenetrable maze. The rules are unintelligible to most citizens - including those holding advanced degrees and including many who specialize in tax law. The rules are equally mysterious to many government employees who are charged with administering and enforcing the law. The overall cost of compliance reaches into the hundreds of billions of dollars. The key question is: can we define income in a fair and reasonably, straightforward manner. Unfortunately, we have not yet succeeded in doing so."

So how can a tax law which is admittedly impenetrable, unintelligible, mysterious and which does not even define what it purports to tax, not be void for vagueness?

In addition to everything else, all I.R.S. seizures in payment of income tax are illegal, and not provided by law. By statute the I.R.S. is only an administrative agency, and unlike the BATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) does not have any enforcement powers. In essence an I.R.S. agent has no more authority to seize property and impose I.R.S. liens than some clerk who works for the Department of Education—though they make approximately 3 million such illegal seizures and liens each year. To prove this check section 7608(a) of the Code. You will see that, pursuant to that statute, I.R.S. agents only have the authority to issue summons, make seizures, etc. etc. only in connection with liquor, tobacco and firearms taxes, while Section 7608(b) only authorizes Special Agents to do anything with respect to all other taxes - which supposedly includes income taxes. However, the job description of Special Agents as contained in their own Organization and Staffing manual (Mt 1100-344, par 1132.75, 1-6-87) only authorizes Special Agents to "enforce the criminal statute applicable to income, estate, gift, employment, and excise taxes...involving United States citizens residing in foreign countries and nonresident aliens subject to Federal income tax filing requirement..." So the combination of Section 7608 and the job description for Special Agents proves that no I.R.S. agent has any lawful authority to bother anyone living within

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the 50 states in connection with income taxes. Naturally, since there is no such thing as an income tax with respect to anyone living within the 50 states, how could tax collectors be authorized to bother anyone in connection with such a tax. In addition, all I.R.S. tax liens are filed illegally. All states require that federal tax liens be certified by either the Secretary of the Treasury or someone with the delegated authority to certify such liens. Since federal tax liens are never certified, nor signed by the Secretary of the Treasury, or anybody else for that matter with the delegated authority to do so, they get recorded in violation of both federal and state law—on these and other grounds.

Unfortunately, I have only been able to cover the tip of the iceberg in connection with the income tax scam, but you now have enough material to get you started on a habeas corpus action and a malpractice suit against the lawyer who helped put you there. All things considered, the federal income tax represents the most extensive program of organized deceit and extortion ever conceived by man, and proves that, in America, organized crime begins with the federal government.



JUNE '94

Herby Spurling: A Look at His Own World; **SOLD OUT!** The Mar... Convict; Bubba's Debut ... and more!

OCTOBER '94

Former DEA Agent Michael Levine Debunks the "Phony" War on Drugs; Snitch 'n' Bitch: Confessions of a Government Rat; 3 Strikes, You're In—For Life!; Prison Fiction: *Lee's Time* by Susan Rosenberg.

JANUARY '95

PLM's First Cover Woman, Karen White—One woman's triumph over 18 years in hell; Ground-breaking journalism exposes the scam on UNICOR: The Economics of Imprisonment; Julie Stewart, founder of FAMM.

MARCH '95

Art Behind Bars—Winners of PLM's 1st annual Art and Writing Contest; Olive... **SOLD OUT!** ...ment Rights... Prisoners by William Kunstler & Ron Kuby; Gangbangers Speak Out.

MAY-JUNE '95

Gangland USA: A Inside Look at Prison Gangs; John Gotti's Lawyer Bruce Cutler Tells Why the Feds Want Him In Jail; Contract On America by Richard Stratton; Liberating Prisoners With Kindness: Bo Lozoff.

JULY-AUGUST '95

Novelist Kim Wozencraft on the Controversial Case Of Mumia Abu-Jamal; **SOLD OUT!** ...le; The T... "Resort" Prisons; Prize-Winning Ex-Con Poet Jimmy Santiago Baca.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER '95

America's Greatest Living Convict Writer Eddie Bunker, by Richard Stratton; **SOLD OUT!** ...path Rov... ...atraz of the ...; Inside the Capital's Cage; plus fiction by Dannie Martin.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER '95

An inside look at Alabama Chain Gangs; A CURE for Crime; Gettin' Out & Goin' for the Green ... Legally! 3 ideas for starting your own business; plus Animal Factory—fiction by Eddie Bunker.

JANUARY-FEBRUARY '96

Special HBO issue! Prisoners of the War on Drugs: King Rat by Michael Levine; Junk in the Joint; Women Casualties of the Drug War.

MARCH-APRIL '96

Scoring in Hollywood: Trejo, Allen, Dutton & Piñero; Dead Man Walking; The Heart of Healing. Fiction by Eddie Bunker.

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IN CELL COOKING

BY R.A. STREET

LUSCIOUS LINGUINE

- 1 can red clam sauce
- 1 can white clam sauce
- 1 can mushrooms
- 1 can jalapeño peppers
- 1 pepperoni
- 1 pkg provolone cheese or grated Parmesan
- 1 box linguine or spaghetti

In a hot pot, heat the clam sauces and mushrooms. Meanwhile chop finely several jalapeño peppers, according to taste, and add some to the sauce. If you love it hot, pour in some juice of the peppers. Stir occasionally. Remove the skin from a stick of pepperoni and chop in tiny pieces. You can use the edge of a can to dice with but be careful not to cut your fingers. Wrap the lid with cloth to protect your hand. Let this sauce simmer as long as possible. Meanwhile cook your pasta separately. Empty fluff containers work well for this meal, or else any large plastic container. Pour your sauce over the pasta, cover with a large slice of provolone cheese and cover so it melts. As an alternative, use grated Parmesan. Serves 2-4 hungry cons.



Art by Virgil Barfield

DECADENT DORITOS

- 1 large bag Doritos
- 1 can chili
- 1 pepperoni
- 1 can jalapeño peppers
- 1 pkg American cheese

In a hot pot, heat a can of chili mixed with jalapeño pepper juice while you dice a few peppers and add to the chili. Dice a stick of pepperoni and mix well. Add package of cheese and keep stirring until it melts. Continue stirring well to prevent sticking. Dump Doritos in a large tray or bowl and spoon the sauce over them. Feeds 2-4 convicts.

Send recipes to: In Cell Cooking,
P.O. Box 537, Stone Ridge, NY 12484
Winning recipes appear in this column and the chef
gets a free one year subscription.

CELLMATE OF THE MONTH



By Horace Boyle

Rap Sheet

Name: Cheyenne Valentino
Yakima

Age: 40

Birthplace: Detroit, Michigan

Conviction: Bank Robbery

Sentence: Life—to be eligible for parole after 7 years

Time Served: 14 years

Ambitions: *To open a martial arts school for kids ages 5 to 20, to publish my books and to complete my mission on earth: serving humanity.*

Some folks will tell you that no man is ever born out of his time. But if you knew Cheyenne Valentino Yakima (a/k/a The Iceman), you might just have second thoughts. I first met him in 1984, at the state prison in Reidsville, Georgia. I was having problems lifting weights, and since he looked like a black Hercules, I figured he could help me out, which he did. We all used to wonder why they call him Iceman.

"The nickname Iceman was given to me in the very early '70s, when my youngest sister was raped. When my brother Jack and I found the guy who raped her, I chopped him up with a meat cleaver, then threw him in a large old icebox, pouring ice all over his body. I guess that was also the beginning of my

long criminal career.

"My parents passed away

criminal activities.

"I went to the can for bank robbery in 1978. After serving 37 months, I was paroled from the federal penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indiana. Within a few months of my release, I was at it again. After robbing a bank in Macon in January of 1982, it all came to an end. I had made up my mind whether I got caught, got away or got killed, this would be it for me.

"Within three months of robbing the bank, I was convicted and sentenced to life in prison with possibility of parole after seven years. In mid-1982 I was placed on a prison transfer bus and sent to one of the most violent maximum security prisons in the nation, the Georgia State Prison in Reidsville.

And that's where I



when I was a teenager. There were seven of us—three girls and four boys. My father taught us long ago to look after each other."

Yakima started robbing banks in 1975, gathering his knowledge from veteran bank robbers who took great pride in their

stayed for the next seven years. Within a year of my incarceration, I began not only to instruct other convicts in bodybuilding, physical fitness and martial arts—something I've been into since 1969—but also the staff members as well as some of their kids."

In 1983 Yakima was assigned as the photographer for the G.S.P. Convict newspaper.

"Shortly after I started taking and developing pictures for the newspaper, I started writing my own articles called *Bodybuilding From Within*. I wrote about weight lifting programs so the guys would get a better understanding of how to lift weights properly. All the different events and activities that took place within the prison, I would be on the scene with my 35mm camera."

THE ICEMAN COMETH

In the summer of 1986, the Channel Eleven News staff out of Savannah, Georgia, came to the prison to do a sports presentation on the convicts, and naturally Yakima was one of the convicts who participated, doing bodybuilding poses and martial art forms and techniques on the heavy bag. "After they aired the final sports presentation from the prison, the news editor said that folks had been calling the station wanting to see the 'Iceman' one more time.

"To be honest, my own change started taking place when I entered the system on this here bit. In the past I never even entertained the thought of changing my character. Since my incarceration, I've talked with and shared my experience and knowledge with kids and adults all over the country. I have been transferred to ten different prisons, where I have trained staff members in physical fitness and set up programs for other convicts. A man doesn't have to give up his manhood, self-respect, or his mental liberty to work with others for a common cause, a better tomorrow for the next generation. We either control our own minds and destinies, or somebody will do it for us, and

prison is a place where we all should at least get along, 'cause we're all in the same damn boat.

"The only type of rehabilitation we are ever going to get is self-rehabilitation, and if we don't have the guts to correct ourselves, then we are going to fail every time. Education is essential, and I know if a guy like me can obtain a college degree, ministerial credentials, a Ph.D. and countless other certificates while incarcerated, then you can get off your ass and do even more.

"I'm looking forward now to getting both my books published, *Bodybuilding From Within*, and my autobiography: *The Iceman—A Rebel In The Midst*. Once published, I'm sure they will help somebody, somewhere, to see things in a different way. To all other convicts I just want to say this, 'I dare you to make a positive change, to do something worthwhile with your own life; to set a good example, not only for your own children, but for all kids.'

The effort to break the cycle of recidivism must be initiated by us, while we are still incarcerated. We must begin from the day of our arrest to develop the kind of behavior, habits and attitudes that will limit our presence behind bars and ensure that we'll never return. Just because we have made our share of mistakes doesn't make us mistakes as human beings. My brothers—all of my brothers—be you black, brown, red, white or yellow: the only time it's too late is when we are dead and gone. A great man who was himself a prisoner once said: 'To have been a criminal is not a disgrace, but to remain a criminal, that is the biggest disgrace of all.' May God—whomever you conceive him to be—bless us all."

AN HONORABLE MAN

by
Cheyenne V. Yakima

You hold the key to your future in your own hands. It is limited only by the restrictions you impose upon yourself, by your inner fears and negative thoughts. What is the happiness of our lives? Little courtesies, little kindnesses, pleasant words; genial smiles, a friendly letter, good wishes, good deeds. Once in a lifetime we may do a heroic act, but the opportunity to do one of the little things that make our lives beautiful comes every day and every hour. If we strive to make the apparently trifling events of life beautiful and good, then our whole existence will be full of harmony and sweetness. How can we sweeten life but by the presence of little charities day by day? Are not kind words the music of the world? Are they not the antidote to vindictiveness? Nothing can constitute good breeding that has not good nature for its foundation. Courtesy and honor are inseparable. Therefore, I shall strive to live honorably. My words shall speak honor. My actions and deeds shall proclaim it. My hands shall be true to it, my feet shall tread its path. No gold, or crowns, or fame will bribe me to leave it. These pledges I make to myself and shall strive to live by them all the days of my life.

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Tired of doing time you do not deserve? Have you given up on all possibility of any justice since your confinement? Please write: Freedom Press, Prisoner Support Division, PO Box 4458, Leesburg, VA 22075. Include a narrative and copies of your sentencing documents. Phone: 703-491-8725. Collect calls are accepted on Saturday and Sunday only.

HOME CONNECTION

Jack-I am all yours. Always yours. I love you. Can you feel it yet? Love, Shari

To All My Brothers & Sisters I left behind: I want all of you to know that you have truly touched my heart with your prayers, love, cards & support. I'm not saying goodbye-I'm saying hello. You have given me the inspiration & the will to carry on. God Bless All! Carl Sherlock & Mother, Prison Program

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SPARE YOURSELF THE HEADACHE: ALL FEDERAL AND SOME STATE PRISONS PROHIBIT CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN PRISONERS.

SWM, 28, 6'1", 210#, Muscular, grey eyes, brn hair. Looking for good lady for long term relationship that will blossom into something very special. Being honest is what's important to me. I enjoy weight lifting, reading, traveling & the outdoors. I go up for parole in April 1997. Sorry, no prisoners! Kevin Porth #40656, PO Box 1989, Ely, Nevada 89301.

Arr! Arr! Arr! SWM, 41, tattooed, grn eyed pirate from the Florida Keys. Seeking women to bring a little light & fun into my life. Will exchange photos & fun, friendly letters. Come on Babe, "Make my Day." I'm the cream of the crop of the scum of the earth. Trust me! I'm known as "Thee Craze." Will respond to all. Ricky Hedberg O-892347—E1-113L, Rt. 1 Box 1086, Perry, FL 32347.

WM, 38, redhead fighting the system segregating inmates. After 10 yrs of being down w/ no security problems. On going civil rights complaint #CV-N-95-788-ECR. Help is needed, please write: Keith A. Warren, Box 1989-23562, Ely, NV 89301-1989

21-year-old, 5'8", 175#. Healthy, handsome, buff Chicano. Looking & hoping for a down, righteous Firme Hina who's tired of getting her heart broken & looking for the right person to trust to come into her life. Attention all you righteous, beautiful females! I just want you to know I ain't giving you the run-around. I ain't fake. I'll be getting out in 23 months & looking for a serious relationship w/ some one I could get to know a little through letters. I'm a very loving & caring person. Life is too short to live alone w/out someone to call my own. Will exchange photos for photos! God Bless You! Write to: Frankie Cruz #87446 CSP-F6-22, PO Box 777, Canon City, CO 81215.

SWM, 28, 5'5", 140#, brown hair and eyes. Seeking women for pen pals. I'm lonely & in need of correspondence. Age/race unimportant. I'm doing a 7-15 year sentence w/ only one year in. Will answer all letters. John Braya #274973-CIN, Riverfront State Prison, PO Box 9104, Camden, NJ 08101.

22 year old Chicano from Fresno, CA. I'm a 5'10", 180 lbs., brn hair, grey-eyed

huero. I get released in '98 & I'm searching for a firme woman who is in need of a down vato to share a lil of her time & thoughts with. To take a chance on me, send to: A. Anthony Avila #11330621, EOICI, 2500 Westgate, Pendleton, OR 97801.

19 yr old Chicano from Houston doing 35 agg. In search of white or Chicana littlemamma doing hard time behind bars. Let's do time together! Q-Vo! Lawrence Macias 736570, HC67, Box 115, Kenedy, TX 78119.

Please be my blue sky, my sunny day. Lord knows you can make me high. Turn your love my way. Tan, 39 year old surfer. Paul Powers #A0706031, 2199 Kamehameha Highway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96819.

Not at all what you would expect. Widowed WM Lifer. 36 yrs. old, 6', 230 lbs., long brn hair/hazel eyes. Father of three incredible sons. Catholic convert & still growing. Martial arts instructor over 25 years. Oklahoma State graduate & Certified Legal Assistant. Athletic & very successful. Looking for emotional support, not financial. Last of the true romantic souls. Will answer all. Bill Wanless 211723, D C C C, Box 220, Hominy, OK 74035.

Aryan-Christian, 32, 5'10", 155 lbs, brn hair, blue eyes. Free-spirited, enjoy reading, art, music. Honest, caring, sincere, supportive, adventurous. Seek to hear from females w/ similar characteristics for friendship. Female inmates ok. Perry Waynick 677112, Rt. 1 Box 150, Tennessee Colony, TX 75884.

SWM, 21, brn hair, grn eyes. Seeking woman 21-41. Looks unimportant, personality a must. Hopes of friendship, maybe more. All letters answered. Billy Joe Preas #625672, Michael Unit. PO Box 4500. Tennessee Colony, TX 75886.

SWBF, 32, searching for some fun, realness from the heart and soul, serious talk also! I'm getting short so to meet someone new would be sweet, may move to S.F. After awhile. Gay girls are my style, older ladies is my guest so I know you're out there whether you're free or lockdown like me! Lousy-iana

women have bored me long enough. Can you help me smile more inside & out? I'm real, loveable, affectionate, & handsome. Are you lonely, loyal, strong-minded, & seeking someone special to love & cherish—then write me quick. Pat "Pacifier" Bell #100035, PO Box 26, LCIW-St. Gabriel, LA 70776. Can you feel me?

Convict seeking correspondence with anyone interested in the following topics: Vampires, Ninjitsu, Kuji Kiri, psychedelics, witchcraft, astrology, T'ai Ch'I, Ch'I Kung, hypnotism, yoga, Taoism, Buddha Hands, Kung Fu, Boboji Nagaraj, poisons, explosives, & other such arcane and occult matters. R.A. Street, 2405 Main Street, Walpole, MA 02081-1027.

Anglo-Hispanic male, 5'11", 160#, From Califas doing time in New Mexico. Seeking open-minded, honest, sincere female to correspond w/ age and race immaterial. Am trying to better myself, & don't have much more time to do. My main hobby is learning the law. I'm already a paralegal & intend to become a lawyer. Am lonely after getting screwed over by someone I truly trusted. Will answer to all who write & will send picture for picture. You only love once, so take a chance on me. You won't regret it!!! Robert McDaniel-Ortega Jr., #44351 N3Q4, PO Box 1059, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1059.

Help Me Please! One brokenhearted puppy, 30, 5'6", 140 lbs. I was mischievous, caught & thrown away forever. I have grown up some since I've been locked up. I still have much to learn. My one desire is to find a female willing to partially own this loveable pup. Of course, the system I am in holds full ownership. Hopefully that will change. For now, any female who isn't locked up, please throw this puppy the bone of correspondence. I'm good at fetching & returning. Anything would excite this lonely pup. This puppy answers to the name of Elmer H. Powers 930863.I S P, PO Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46361-0041.

SWM, 28, 6', 185#, Blond. Been down 10 years on life bid. I'm gorgeous & muscle bound. Looking to write, call attractive

ladies. Visits would be nice! Please send photo(s). No inmates. Write: Mark Smith #803215, Iowa Mens Reformatory, Box B, Anamosa, IA 52205.

I'm a WM 47 years young, whose been locked up w/in the Michigan Dept. of Corruptions since 12/20/68, & everyone that was writing to me has either died or fell off the face of the earth. So if there's any females out there that's good-looking or ugly, & if you have children, that's cool because it doesn't stop me from answering all letters. So please help this country boy survive. I have gray/brn hair, brn eyes, & stand 6'1. Never been married. Love country music & Harley Davidsons. But my life is lonely & I'm willing & able to get married to the right lady. So come on ladies & drop this good-ol' boy a line. Larry "Lizard" Schleicher #121788, Huron Valley Men's Facility, 3201 Bemis Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48197-0911.

My life is just beginning at age 40. This 6'5", 200#, handsome DWM seeks a wife. I am romantic, real, sexy, educated, non-abusive, emotionally stable, faithful, hard working/playing, goal-oriented, adventurous, open minded, loving, deserving, fertile, honest, disease free, & affectionate. I love the outdoors, dining, quiet nights, good humor, sensual erotica, life, motorcycles, & heartfelt movies. Been down 9 years w/ 3 left to expire, 1 if I make my parole. My free world income is medium to high. If you are an attractive woman proportionate in height & weight, 18-35, desiring a good man & possibly a family in our future, & if your qualities & goals are similar to mine, then send a photo & intro letter. If you're "down", piggyback; otherwise, send directly to: Wayne Sommerfield, 24894, PO Box 359, Lovelock, NV 89419.

SWM, 5'10", 175#, Brn eyes & hair. Interests include poetry, world affairs, sports, & prisoners rights. I will respond to all correspondence, male & female, regarding prisoners' rights issues. Knowledge is freedom! Please write: Christopher Harris, #86592, Colorado State Penn., PO Box 777, Canyon City, CO 81215-0777.

I'm the kind of guy who dots my i's w/a heart. SWM, 5'9", 160#, young enough to play, old enough to know. Looking for Ms. Right. I love to write & receive letters. Mike Caban #CM7876, 1111 Altamont Blvd., Frackville, PA 17931.

Gentleman seeks correspondence w/ communicative ladies of all ages who are honest & sincere. Edward

Hernandez #E98461, PO Box 7500, Crescent City, CA 95531.

SWM, 40, 5'8", 200#. Need some communicating with the outside world. Been down 10 & got a few more to go. Long ways from home-Dallas, Texas. Will answer all letters. Looking for honest, sincere lady who can help me ride out the rest of this time. Sammy Quinn #159386, Algoa C C, PO Box 538, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

SWM, 31, 5'10", 175#, brn hair, blue eyes. Never married, no kids. Musician, writer, activist seeking correspondence w/ like-minded women on the inside or out. Into alternative culture/lifestyles. Can piggyback, will answer all photo for photo. Tom Hutchins #8393156, 2500 Westgate, Pendleton, OR 97801.

Downed Peckerwood. 29, 155#, long brn hair, blue eyes, tats, dig workin the iron, handle is "Snoopy." This wood's pulling a 5 spot w/ a dollar & change left. Love to hear from all. Interests & experiences vary w/ who's flying the line. Give me a chance. Later. Jeff Behnke, #83344, E/POD, Box 777, Canyon City, CO 81215.

Fat, ol' wop, 335#, Gay. Like to cruise the weight pile (a real turn-on). Seeking romance w/ young boyz 18 yrs.+ macho for macho photo, I do it all. Serious inquiries only. Write: "Big Daddy" Joe Massaro, #83413-020, Box 1000, Leavenworth, KS 66048.

SWM, 5'10", 170#, 37 years old w/ light brn hair & hazel eyes, & a lot of time courtesy of the state of MI. Just trying to keep it together in hopes that the courts will give me some relief. Any letters from 17-40 who would care to share drop a letter & photo to Steve Burton, #150980-3510, N. Elm Road, Jackson, MI 49201-8877.

Hi guys, I 'm a sexy white widow who would love to share thoughts & letters w/ older inmates. No young men will be answered. Prefer someone 55+, who are incarcerated. Are you lonesome, need a friend? I would like to be your friend & confidant, just for fun & possible relationships. We'll have a hell of time. I'm in the free world & have written younger men only to get my heart broken. If any of you older gentlemen in the free world care to write, I will answer. No jokers, let's just have a wonderful time talking about world events, prison life, music, religion, whatever you enjoy; keep it clean. My hobbies are music, riding, motorcycles, traveling, dancing, camping, fishing,

rock hunting, talking for hours, candle lit dinners, theatre & so much more. I'm easy to please. See you on the flip side! Come on guys, don't be bashful. We can exchange funny stories that have happened in our lives, everyone has a story. Write to: Dorothy J. Konig, PO Box 73, Perris, CA 92572-0073

SWM, 28, 6', 185 lbs. Employed by the State of Wisconsin & commissioned to write poetry for my own pleasure. One fringe benefit include free room & board in a semi-public building. I love you sassy prison ladies, so write me! Prisoner to prisoner correspondence is okay. Tim Drummer #134769, Kettle Moraine C.I., PO Box 31, Plymouth, WI 53073.

I'm a handsome Italian man (DWM), 37 years old, 5'8". Good sense of humor, play chess & read novels. Seeking a very compassionate white female 30-39 years old. Please no games. Serious minded only. Salvatore De Sarno #81A1798, Green Haven CF, Route 216 Drawer B, Stormville, NY 12582.

Southern Beauty, SWF, 5'2, 110 lbs., brn hair & eyes. Been down 10 on 12. Looking for friends to write & help ease the pain & loneliness of living life alone. All letters will receive a response. Can't wait to meet ya. Sharon Johnson #117937, LCIW Capricorn, PO Box 26, St. Gabriel, LA 70776

BM, 29, 6'10, 190, powerfully built, carmel complexion, long hair, LA kitchen, temporarily incarcerated in CO. Seeks strong, intelligent, open-relationship-minded woman who is not biased or prejudiced against brothers temporarily incarcerated. Only the serious & sincere to reply. Send photo & I will do likewise. Anthony Blevells #81253, CSP F-6-11, Box 777, Canon City, CO 81215-0777

SWM, 24, 6'1", 190#, did a serious crime, doing serious time. Looking for a woman who is willing to give support in both material & mental ways. Interests in earth religion, mysticism, Eastern/Western philosophy. Love the outdoors. Desire women 18-40+. Promise to be straightforward & honest. What more could you ask for? Nathaniel Ellibee # 55052, Box 107, Ellsworth, KS 67439-0107

SWM, 24, 5'8", 185#, hazel eyes, dk brn hair, college grad, law student, seeks any good women that are interested in a long lasting friendship & possible relationship w/ an innocent man who is fighting for his freedom. Seeking lady 5'-5'8", w/ warm, sensitive heart &

personality, educated, kids ok. Love doing for you as much as you could do for me. Marty Tankleff #90T3844, Box 2001, Dannemora, NY 12929-2001

SBF, 26, Aries, loveable, kind, respectable, honest young lady who likes sports, writing, movies, & love music of all kind. 5'1, 150#, GA girl doing fed time in TX, looking for someone to correspond w/ male or female, 25-45, race unimportant. Would like to hear from all bro & sis especially locked down & understand prison life. No letter will go unanswered, waiting to hear from all of you. Pamela Thomas #08019-021, Box 27137 E.T., Ft. Worth, TX 76127

I'm a young Italian/Irish male, 19, 5'8", 180#, release date '98. Seeking females to write & help pass the time away. James Molinari #J52440, 3C05-247 low, Box 3471, Corcoran, CA 93212-3471

Puerto Rican male, 25, brn hair, grn eyes, 5'7", 160 solid. Honest, caring, loving, most of all understanding. Seeking friendship, possible relationship, age, race unimportant. Lonely heart, I'm down & out. My hobbies are writing, sports, & weightlifting. Waiting to hear from sisters in the struggle, but most of all serious, honest, loving women. Write fast cause I'm waiting to correspond back! Anthony Gonzalez #B42008, Box 711, Menard, IL 62259

SWM, 25, 5'9", blond hair, grn eyes. Looking for sincere white female, age, weight, looks don't matter. I have 3 yrs left & I sure could use some help getting through it. I will answer all letters. James Stokely #184902, W.M.C.C., 609 E. Pence Rd, Cameron, MO 64429

SWM, 25, 5'9", 170#, Brn hair, blue eyes. Likes are Harley Davidsons & outdoors. Not interested in fantasy romance—been there, done that. They hurt way too much. Lookin for something real that will last. Someone sincere, mature, & wants a good friend in a man they can write to share thoughts & feelings. Will answer all. Pic for pic. Wesley Kizer #669977, Circle Dr, Sugarland, TX 77478

SWM, 27, it's difficult to be happy in prison. Mail is a tangible form of happiness for all prisoners. It's a special kind of escape & freedom to be allowed in someone else's world & share w/ them. PLEASE SEND HAPPINESS! I will return it. James D. Murdock #19832, USP, Box 250, Draper, UT 84020

My name is Oliver Hooker, 27, BM, 6', 185#, from Las Vegas, & I would like to

correspond w/ an emotionally strong female for friendship, race not important. Oliver Hooker #35368, Box 1989—E. S.P., Ely, NV 89301

SWM, 42, 210#. Heroin has been my path for many yrs, but now I've come to a fork in the road. I've finally chosen the different path but I don't want to do it alone. Looking for someone to share these lonely times. I'm well worth your time and 32 cents. Photo for photo. No forwarding facilities. Robert C. Lewis #47100, Box 7000, Carson City, NV 89702

WM, 44, 5'9", 160#, blnd hair, blue eyes. Enjoys the outdoors, R&B, jazz, & country music. Want to hear from anyone. Male or female, age, looks, not important. Will answer all! Paul Hale #862345, ISP, Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46361

BM, 33, 6', 210#, in search of correspondence & companionship. Very lonely, sincere, openminded, not violent! Would like to hear from anyone who needs the same. Age, race unimportant Dwayne Williams #089862-G1-12, C C I, Rt.7 Box 376, Lake City, FL 32055

The best things in life cannot be seen or touched. They must be felt w/ the heart. Black/Indian, 40, 5'10, 210#, handsome bodybuilder/martial art instructor. PhD. Never indulged in tobacco, alcohol or drugs. My morals & values you'll appreciate. I'm a 1 woman man, romantic & in spite of circumstances, my heart/spirit is undamaged. Long ago I tasted the sweetness of true love & would like to fall again. Seek sincere, mature, intelligent Caucasian, Indian, Spanish or Oriental lady over 21. You won't be disappointed. Cheyenne Valentino Yakima, ACI/145002/G2/Box 648, Pelham, GA 31779-0648

SWM, 34, 6'1", 195#. I'm looking for a special lady to share some lonely times with. Age, race, looks unimportant. Been down 6 yrs & have 4 more to go. I'm very easy-going & understanding. I'm into romance, outdoors, dancing, movies & quiet evenings at home. Please write soon, I will answer all letters. Benny J. Ray #562984, Ferg. Unit TDC, Rt. 2 Box 20, Midway, TX 75852

GWM, 31, from S. Dakota wants gay penpals. Not a golddigger. Likes: Citizen Dog cartoons, Big Bald Buddhas. Dislikes: Social workers, Druggies. Please write: Randy L. Wilson #28666, Box 5911, SE, SD 57117-5911

Healthy, handsome NYC/SWM Polish-American never married, college-

educated, blue eyes, 5'8, 160#, 50 but look 30, somewhat financially stable, 1st time in prison, fighting to prove innocence. 3 yrs to parole, nonviolent, nonsmoker, nondruggie, just a rare glass of wine. Love jazz, classical, Cat Stevens, jogging, camping, theater, writing, poetry (Maya Angelou), politics. Seeking tender, caring, loyal & emotionally supportive Italian, Hispanic, or Afro-Amer mature female over 21. I'm not a hardnosed gangster, I'm a soft nosed sensitive prankster. Would also like to write any Liberal Democrats if any are left!, students, teachers, anyone who smiles, laughs & stops to smell the flowers while sipping cappuccino. Sam Smolen #85A4082, Box 500, Elmira, NY 14902-0500

Struggling published writer & poet, seeking those interested in helping him w/ his writing efforts. Straightup, I'm not looking for any love relationships, just a little help-be it w/ costs, contacts, advice or otherwise. If you've got it in you to help, please write: Derrick "Jack" Corley 90T1984, Box 700, Walkkill, NY 12589-0700

SWM, 31, interested in intelligent, honest communication. If you are interested in the same, contact me: Edwin D. Wolff III #506882 Wynne, Huntsville, TX 77349

Tall, dark & handsome, 100% Native American Apache rebel. 6'2", 220#, straight waist long raven black hair & dark eyes. Looking for sexy, lovin, caring & sharing lady to give her all to this lonely man. Write today & send photos please. Margarito Arguello Jr. #895698, Box 30, Pendleton, IN 46064

BM, 26, light complexion, 5'9", 190#, muscular build. Will be released by the end of '96. Hobbies include reading, writing letters & writing poetry & weight lifting. Interested in corresponding w/ females who are willing to explore their erotic side & write about their fantasies & hear mine. Hopefully soon I can make some females fantasies a reality. Race unimportant but sincerity is. Pics a plus, not a must. Anthony Quander, Box 76001 Drawer A, 310 McPherson Ave, Ft Leavenworth, KS 66027-1363

PEN PALS
One FREE ad w/each new sub. \$10 otherwise. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.
(No pictures.)

These are nonprofit and volunteer-run agencies. Do the right thing—enclose some loose stamps or an SASE. Or contribute. Even one dollar can help.

SOCIAL SUPPORT AGENCIES

- American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 (215/241-7130): A Quaker organization that works for peace and equality can provide literature on a variety of prison issues. There are six regional AFSC offices in the U.S.: CA, MI, NJ, MA, OH and NY.
- Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, 251 Bank Street #600, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2P1X3 (613/238-2422): Provides services and programs for women in Canadian prisons through 19 local offices.
- John Howard Association, 67 E. Madison #1416, Chicago, IL 60603 (312/263-1901) is involved with prison reform and criminal justice issues in Illinois, but they can provide materials of interest to all prisoners. There is a separate JHA branch in Canada.
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Criminal Justice Prison Program, 4805 Mount Hope Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215-3297 (410/358-8900): Offers referrals and advisory services for prisoners who want to break the cycle of recidivism. Projects operate through regional offices and are not available in every area. Write for local contact addresses.
- Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR), 301 Park Drive, Severna Park, MD 21146 (410/647-3806): Provides post-release assistance for prisoners in IA, MD, NJ, PA and VA, through 12 local offices.
- Community Education Outreach is an educational/life skills organization providing information to anyone and free instruction to people in Colorado. The CEO offers essential academic and life skills assessment and instruction for disadvantaged people at risk of incarceration who want to succeed in living productive, independent lives. CEO, P.O. Box 7957, Boulder, CO 80306. (303)447-3353 Fax (303)444-3872.

ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

- CURE, P.O. Box 2310, National Capitol Station, Washington, DC 20013-2310 (202/789-2126): Organization for prison reform, with state chapters and special groups for veterans, lifers, sex offenders and federal prisoners.
- Citizens for a Safe America, 635 Slaters Lane G-100, Alexandria, VA 22314 (703/684-0373): Works for a more progressive and human crime policy.
- Campaign for an Effective Crime Policy, 918 F St. NW #505, Washington, DC 20004 (202/628-1903): This agency works for effective criminal justice reform. Ask your warden to join.
- Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM), 1001 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, #200, Washington, DC 20004 (202/457-5790): Works for the repeal of federal mandatory minimum sentencing laws.
- Justice Watch, 932 Dayton Street, Cincinnati, OH 45214 (513/241-0490): Works to eliminate classism and racism from prisons.

PUBLICATIONS & MAGAZINES

- *Fortune News*, ATTN: Inmate Subscriptions, 39 West 19th Street, New York, NY 10011 (212/206-7070): A publication of Fortune Society.
- *Inside Journal*, c/o Prison Fellowship, P.O. Box 16429, Washington, DC 20041-6429 (703/478-0100): A publication of Prison Fellowship.
- *National Prison Project Journal*, ACLU National Prison Project, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW #410, Washington, DC 20009 (202/234-4830): \$2/year for prisoners.
- *Outlook on Justice*, AFSC, 2161 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02140 (617/661-6130): A newsletter of the American Friends Service Committee; \$2/year for prisoners.

BOOK AND READING PROJECTS

- Books Beyond Bars, P.O. Box 4865, Hialeah, FL 33014 (305/444-0120): A for-profit company that offers a book-ordering service for prisoners.
- Books to Prisoners, c/o Left Bank Books, 92 Pike St., Box A, Seattle, WA 98101 is a volunteer program that sends free used books in politics, history, literature, legal

materials (when available), education. No religious materials or mass market fiction. Please specify subjects. Limit 1-2 pounds per package.

- Prison Book Program, Redbook Store, 92 Green Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130: No books can be sent to prisoners in KS, NE, IA, MI, OR or CA.
- Prison Library Project, 976 W. Foothill Blvd #128, Claremont, CA 91711.
- Prisoner Literature Project, c/o Bound Together Books, 1369 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA 94117: Free books for prisoners.
- Prison Reading Project, Paz Press, P.O. Box 3146, Fayetteville, AR 72702: Free books for women prisoners.

PAROLE & PRE-RELEASE INFORMATION

- American Correctional Association, Publications Dept, 8025 Laurel Lakes Court, Laurel, MD 20707-5075 (301/206-5059 or 800/825-2665): offers a parole planning guide, "As Free as an Eagle," and sells self-help books.
- Interstate Publishers, 510 North Vermillion Street, P.O. Box 50, Danville, IL 61834-0050 (217/446-0500 or 800/843-4774): Sells a parole planning manual, "From the Inside Out."
- OPEN, Inc. (Offender Preparation and Education Network), P.O. Box 566025, Dallas, TX 75356-6025 (214/271-1971): Sells "99 Days & a Get-up," "Man, I need a Job!" and other pre-release guides—for \$4.95 each.
- Manatee Publishing, 4835 North O'Conner St. #134435, Irving, TX 75062: Sells "Getting Out and Staying Out," a parole-planning manual, for \$22.45.
- CEGA Services, Offender Referrals, P.O. Box 81826, Lincoln, NE 68501-1826 (402/464-0602) offers pre-release referrals for prisoners (housing, employment and substance abuse treatment programs.) \$15 fee for each city. CEGA also sells the "Survival Sourcebook" and "The Job Hunter's Workbook."
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Veterans Incarcerated Liaison, 1224 M St. NW, Washington, DC 20005 (202/628-2700): Publishes "From Felon to Freedom," a pre-release guide for imprisoned veterans. The Graduate Group, P.O. Box 370351, West Hartford, CT 06137-0351 sells a book entitled Opportunities for Newly Released Offenders for \$27.50.

PRISON AIDS RESOURCES

- Correctional Association AIDS in Prison Project, 135 E. 15th Street, New York, NY 10003 (212/674-0800): Offers resource information concerning AIDS in prison, especially for inmates in New York.
- HIV Prison Project, NYC Commission on Human Rights, 40 Rector St., New York, NY 10006 (212/233-5560).
- National Prison Hospice Association, P.O. Box 58, Boulder, CO 80306-0058: Helps develop hospice programs for terminally ill prisoners.
- National ACLU Prison Project, AIDS Education Project, 1875 Connecticut Avenue NW 410, Washington, DC 20009 (202/234-4830).
- Oasis Project, c/o Susan K. Meadows, Prison Program Director, 923 S.E. Bay Blvd, Newport, OR 97365: Provides a peer outreach support network for those infected with HIV or diagnosed with AIDS.
- "One Day at a Time," c/o Richard H. Rhodes #05353-018, U.S.P. Leavenworth, P.O. Box 1000, Leavenworth, KS 66048: An AIDS newsletter for prisoners.
- People With AIDS Coalition of New York, Inc. (PWACNY), 50 West 17th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10011 (212/647-1415): Publishes *Newslines*, a monthly magazine by and for people with AIDS, in which they provide a space for prisoners living with AIDS.
- Prison AIDS Project, Gay Community News, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116 (National AIDS Gay Task Force: 800/221-7044).
- Prison AIDS Resource Center, P.O. Box 2155, Vacaville, CA 95696-2155; or 926 J. Street, #801, Sacramento, CA 95814.
- Prisoners with AIDS/Rights Advocacy Group, P.O. Box 2161, Jonesboro, GA 30237 (404/946-9346): Offers support, educational materials, referrals and political lobbying for prisoners with AIDS/HIV.

MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES

- Families in Action for Incarceration Reforms (FAIR), 309 Mamaroneck Ave., Suite 293, White Plains, NY 10605 (914/946-2734): A volunteer group that assists

prisoners with the following: locating a non-legal aid lawyer, reaching the media and finding pen pals. They also provide how-to books below cost and legal items and gifts at cost.

- Infinity Lifers Group, c/o Julie Travers, Chairperson, P.O. Box 772, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 5P9: A volunteer prisoner's rights and political advocacy group.
- International Legal Defense Counsel, Packard Building, 24th Fl., 111 South 15th St., Philadelphia, PA 19102 (215/977-9982): An advocacy agency for American citizens incarcerated overseas.
- League for Lesbian and Gay Prisoners, 1202 East Pike St., #1044, Seattle, WA 98122: A project of Gay Community Social Services.
- James Markunas Society, 245 Harriet Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 (415/775-5445). A resource for lesbian, gay and bisexual prisoners.
- Mothers Opposed to Maltreatment of Service Members (MOMS), 8285 Black Hawk Court, Frederick, MD 21701: Advocates for prisoners in military prisons and disciplinary barracks. Offers a pre-release booklet entitled "New Beginnings."
- The Prison Chess Program, P.O. Box 44419, Washington, DC 20026 (301/530-4841) provides chess books and magazines for prison libraries and institutional chess groups; they do not send materials to individuals.
- Native American Indian Inmate Support Project, 8 Dallas Dr., Grantville, PA 17028: A Native American group that supports the introduction of Indian religious ceremonies and programs in prisons.
- Native American Prisoners' Rehabilitation Research Project, 2848 Paddock Lane, Villa Hills, KY 41017: Offers many services for Native American prisoners, including legal and spiritual support, tribal and cultural programs and direct contact with prison administrators.
- PEN, Writing Program for Prisoners, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012 (212/334-1660): Offers a great resource booklet for prison writers. Also sponsors an annual writing contest for prisoners.
- Prisoners of Conscience Project, 2120 Lincoln St., Evanston, IL 60201 (708/328-1543): A religious-based agency that works for the release of prisoners of conscience/political prisoners in the United States.
- Prisoner Visitation and Support, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 (215/241-7117): Provides institutional visits to prisoners in federal and military prisons nationwide.
- Project for Older Prisoners (POPS), c/o Jonathan Turley, Director, The National Law Center, 2000 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20052.
- The Safer Society, Shoreham Depot Road, RR 1, Box 24-B, Orwell, VT 05760-9756 (802/897-7541): Self-help materials for sex offenders.
- Stop Prisoner Rape, Inc., PO Box 2713, Manhattanville Station, New York, NY 10027 (212/663-5562); e-mail: sprdon@ix.netcom.com; Web: <http://www.igc.apc.org/spr/>. Information and advocacy on sexual abuse and exploitation of prisoners; support and advice for victims and targets of both sexes including info on psychological and health consequences, legal action and survivors' options.
- The Poetry Wall, Cathedral of St. John, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10025: Displays poetry written by prisoners.

CHILD & FAMILY RESOURCES

There are many organizations that help prisoners who have children. These agencies provide literature, information, advice and support on how to cope with family problems while in prison. Direct assistance is usually available only in the local areas that these programs serve.

- Aid to Imprisoned Mothers (AIM), 599 Mitchell St., SW, Atlanta, GA 30314 (404/221-0092): An advocacy group for incarcerated mothers. Although social services are only provided in the Atlanta area, AIM can provide helpful information for all women in prison who have children.
- Center for the Children of Incarcerated Parents, Pacific Oaks College, 714 W. California Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91105 (818/397-1300): Provides free educational material for incarcerated parents and their children.
- Family and Corrections Network, Jane Adams Center M/C 309, 1040 West Harrison St. #4010, Chicago, IL 60607-7134 (312/996-3219): Provides information about programs serving families of prisoners.

- **Fathers Behind Bars**, P.O. Box 86, Niles, MI 49120 (616/684-5715): A by-prisoners, for-prisoners agency that helps to set up institutional parent groups for incarcerated fathers. Only the serious need apply!
- **Legal Services for Prisoners with Children**, 474 Valencia St., #230, San Francisco, CA 94103 (415/255-7036): Legal services are provided in California only, but some general information is available.
- **National Institute of Corrections, Information Center**, 1860 Industrial Circle, Suite A, Longmont, CA 80501 (303/682-0213): Provides the "Directory of Programs Serving Families of Adult Offenders."
- **National Resource Center for Family Support Programs, Family Resource Coalition**, 200 S. Michigan Ave., #1520, Chicago, IL 60604 (312/341-0900): Provides information about family programs, including prison projects.
- **Parent Resource Association**, 213 Fernbrook Avenue, Wyncote, PA 19095 (215/576-7961): Support for child/parenting programs in prison; offers referrals and information to incarcerated parents.
- **Prison Family Foundation**, P.O. Box 1150, Auburn, AL 36831 (205/821-1150): Works to support family education programs in prison. Sells pre- and post-release books and other publications; works with prison administrations to form institutional family support groups.

LEGAL RESOURCES—FEDERAL/NATIONAL

There are many agencies that provide legal services for prisoners; most of these organizations dispense information or offer reference material. Note that these agencies do not usually handle personal legal services such as filing appeals, post-convictions or lawsuits—with the exception of for-profit companies (not listed here) that charge large fees.

Federal

- **U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Special Litigation Section**, Washington, DC 20530 (202/514-6255): Enforces the "Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act" through lawsuits against state or local prison officials who deprive prisoners of their constitutional rights or who practice racial discrimination.
- **U.S. Supreme Court, Public Information Office**, Washington, DC 20543-0001 (202/479-3211): Can provide up to five Supreme Court decisions per term. Supreme Court slip opinions are available through the Government Printing Office. Contact: The Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 (202/783-3238).

National

- **ACLU National Prison Project**, 1875 Connecticut Ave., NW #410, Washington, DC 20009 (202/234-4830): A branch of the national ACLU that works on prison legal issues. Sells resource directories, criminal justice statistic books and legal aid manuals; also offers a prison newsletter for \$2 per year and sells the "Rights of Prisoners" handbook for \$5. Doesn't handle individual cases; they only litigate large-scale state or national prison reform legal actions.
- **Columbia Human Rights Law Review**, 435 West 116th Street, Box B-25, New York, NY 10027 (212/663-8701): Sells the "Jailhouse Lawyer Manual" (JLM) for \$30 a copy (\$13 for prisoners).
- **Correctional Law Reporter**, Civic Research Institute, 4490 Route 27, Box 585, Kingston, NJ 08528: Case law newsletter; \$125/year.
- **Georgetown University Law Center, Criminal Procedure Project**, 600 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001. (202/662-9468): Publishes the Georgetown Law Journal, the annual "Criminal Procedure" issue costs \$30.
- **Freedom Press**, P.O. Box 4458, Leesburg, VA 22075 (703/866-1446) or: (800/370-7052): A prison project run by volunteer paralegals. They offer legal services at reduced rates, sometimes on monthly payment plans; they also offer ministry and counseling services.
- **Inside/Out Press**, P.O. Box 188131, Sacramento, CA 95818: Publishes self-help legal guides. Inside/Out is the mail-order business for the Prisoners' Rights Union, which focuses on California prison issues.
- **Lewisburg Prison Project**, P.O. Box 128, Lewisburg, PA 17837-0128 (717/523-1104): Sells low-cost literature regarding constitutional rights, due process and other legal issues of interest to prisoners.
- **National Lawyers Guild, Prison Law Project**, 558 Cap Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 (415/285-5067): A national legal agency with an interest in helping jail-house lawyers.

- **National Legal Services**, 710 Lake View Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30308 (404/874-9553): Post-conviction specialists; fees for service.
- **Oceana Press**, 75 Main Street, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522 (914/693-8100): Sells prison-related legal books, including "The Prisoner's Self-Help Litigation Manual" (\$30) and "Post-Conviction Remedies" (\$20).
- **Paralegal Associates**, 209 S. Broadway #246, Baltimore, MD 21231: Offers a case-laws summary news service; \$30 annual subscription.
- **Prisoner Legal News**, P.O. Box 1684, Lake Worth, FL 33460: A magazine published by prisoners in Washington that covers nationwide prison legal issues. Subscription rates are around \$12 per year/12 issues.
- **Starlite**, P.O. Box 20004, St. Petersburg, FL 33742 (813/392-2929 or 800/577-2929): Sells the CITEBOOK, which is a collection of positive federal and state case law, both criminal and civil. The CITEBOOK is updated quarterly and costs \$28 (\$112 annually). Although this is fairly expensive, perhaps your law library can subscribe; this company also sells other books regarding business, consumer and legal issues.
- **West Publishing Company**, 610 Opperman Drive, Saint Paul, MN 55123-1340 (800/328-9352): Publishes "Corrections and Prisoners Rights in a Nutshell" and "Criminal Procedures in a Nutshell," at \$17 each.

PARALEGAL PROGRAMS

- **Blackstone School of Law**, P.O. Box 701449, Dallas, TX 75370 (800/826-9228): Offers a well-known correspondence program.
- **Southern Career Institute**, 164 West Royal Palm Rd, Boca Raton, FL 33432 (800/669-2555 or 407/368-2522): Offers a complete paralegal course that costs \$1595 to \$1977; monthly payment plans available. This school is accredited by the D.E.T.C.
- **The Paralegal Institute**, 3602 West Thomas Road #9, Drawer 11408, Phoenix, AZ 85061-1408 (602/272-1855): Offers paralegal courses for fees ranging between \$1290 and \$2750. Monthly payment plans and an Associate degree program available. Accredited by the D.E.T.C.

MINISTRIES & BIBLE STUDIES

- **A/G Prison Ministry**, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, MO 65802: Offers Christian ministering programs.
- **Emmaus Bible Correspondence School**, 2570 Asbury Rd, Dubuque, IA 52001 (319/588-8000): Offers free Bible courses for prisoners.
- **The National Convocation of Jail and Prison Ministry**, 1357 East Capital St. SE, Washington, DC 20003: A national agency for prison chaplains.
- **Good News Mission**, 1036 Highland Street, Arlington, VA 22204 (703/979-2200): A Christian organization that provides support, witnessing and spiritual counseling to inmates in 110 prisons across 14 states.
- **Guideposts**, 39 Seminary Hill Road, Carmel, NY 10512 (914/225-3681): A Christian organization that publishes *Guidepost* magazine. Also sponsors the FIND information network, which provides information referrals: FIND Network, P.O. Box 855, Carmel, NY 10512.
- **Hope Aglow Prison Ministries**, P.O. Box 3057, Lynchburg, VA 24503: A nationwide religious organization that offers Bible study courses.
- **International Prison Ministry**, P.O. Box 63, Dallas, TX 75221.
- **Liberty Prison Ministries**, P.O. Box 8998, Waukegan, IL 60079: This Christian ministry publishes the *Liberator* newsletter.
- **Liberty Prison Outreach**, 701 Thomas Road, Lynchburg, VA 24514 (804/239-9281): Provides religious assistance to prisoners, mostly in central Virginia; Bible correspondence courses available.
- **Prison Fellowship**, P.O. Box 17500, Washington, DC 20041 (703/478-0100): A nationwide ministry that sponsors spiritual activities in prison.
- **Prison Ministry of Yokefellows International**, The Yokefellow Center, P.O. Box 482, Rising Sun, MD 21911 (410/658-2661): A religious organization that offers information and literature to prisoners.
- **Set Free Prison Ministries**, P.O. Box 5440, Riverside, CA 92517-9961 (909/787-9907): Provides an extensive Bible study course.
- **Southern Prison Ministry**, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30306.
- **U.S. Mennonite Central Committee, Office of Criminal Justice**, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500 (717/859-3889): Offers many publications concerning crime and religion—most are free to prisoners.

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS

- **Islamic Prison Foundation**, 1212 New York Avenue NW #400, Washington, DC 20005: Mostly works with Muslims in federal prisons.
- **The National Incarcerated Muslim Network**, c/o Maurice Taylor, #476837, Route 3, Box 59, Rosharon, TX 77583: A prison-based organization that networks with incarcerated Muslims for support and educational purposes.

JUDAISM ORGANIZATIONS

- **Aleph Institute**, P.O. Box 546564, Surfside, FL 33154 (305/864-5553): A full-service Jewish advocacy agency with regional offices.
- **International Coalition for Jewish Prisoners Services**, 1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036-3278 (202/857-6582): Offers support, referrals, guidance, educational and religious programs, and pen pals.
- **Jewish Prisoner Services**, an outreach/advocacy program of Congregation Pidyon Shevuyim, offers referrals, information, pre- and post-release counseling, learning materials, and marriage enrichment seminars that assure a smoother, permanent return to the real world. Contact Sid Kleiner, National Coordinator, 10188 Winter View Drive, Naples, FL 33942-1520.

BUDDHIST/MEDITATION GROUPS

- **The Engaged Zen Foundation**, P.O. Box 700, Ramsey, NY 07446-0700, publishes a newsletter for incarcerated Buddhists entitled *The Gateway Journal*.
- **Human Kindness Foundation, Prison Ashram Project**, Route 1, Box 201-N, Durham, NC 27705: Provides reading material for spiritual living.
- **Iskcon Prison Ministries**, 2936 Esplanade Ave., New Orleans, LA 70119.
- **Prison Dharma Network**, P.O. Box 912, Astor Station, Boston, MA 02123-0912: Offers Buddhist meditation literature.

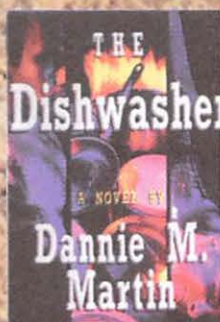
The SYDA Foundation offers a correspondence course in meditation, free of charge and available in Spanish translation upon request. Write to: Prison Project, 1132 Stanford Avenue, Oakland, CA, 94608, Attn: Tom Toomey.

DEATH PENALTY RESOURCES

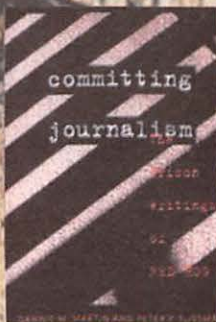
- **American Civil Liberties Union, Capital Punishment Project**, 122 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002 (202/675-2319): A branch of the ACLU that deals with death penalty issues.
- **American Friends Service Committee**, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 (215/241-7130): A Quaker peace organization that works to ban the death penalty as one of their Criminal Justice projects.
- **Amnesty International, Project to Abolish the Death Penalty**, 322 8th Ave., New York, NY 10001-4808 (212/807-8400): Works to abolish the death penalty through public letter-writing campaigns.
- **Capital Punishment Research Project**, P.O. Box 277, Headland, AL 36345 (205/693-5225).
- **Catholics Against Capital Punishment**, P.O. Box 3125, Arlington, VA 22203 (703/522-5014): A religious organization against the death penalty.
- **Death Penalty Information Center**, 1606 20th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009 (202/347-2531).
- **Death Row Support Project**, P.O. Box 600, Liberty Mills, IN 46946 (219/982-7480): Offers pen-pal services to death row inmates.
- **Endeavor Project**, P.O. Box 23511, Houston, TX 77228-3511: A magazine produced by and for prisoners on death row.
- **Friends Committee to Abolish the Death Penalty**, c/o Charles Obler, 802 West 3rd Street, Farmville, VA 23901: Publishes the *Quaker Abolitionist*; subscriptions \$6/yr for prisoners.
- **NAACP Legal Defense Fund**, 99 Hudson Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10013 (212/219-1900): A legal branch of the NAACP that supports minority rights; also has an anti-death penalty project.
- **National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty**, 918 F St. NW #601, Washington, DC 20004 (202/347-2411): Works to abolish the death penalty. Also provides a booklet listing anti-death penalty resources in each state ("The Abolitionist's Directory," \$2).

Changes, additions and new information should be sent to: Prison Life Magazine, Resources Department, P.O. Box 537, Stone Ridge, NY 12484.

BOOKS ON



1. **The Dishwasher:** Dannie Martin's novelistic journey into the world of the ex-convict told honestly by a man who's been there.



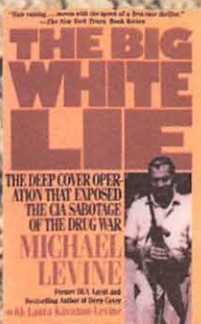
2. **Committing Journalism:** Dannie "Red Hog" Martin's essays. Solitary confinement and diesel therapy did not stop him. This is the book prison authorities didn't want published.



3. **Hauling Up the Morning,** edited by Tim Blunk & Raymond Luc Levasseur: Writings and art by political prisoners and POWs in the United States.



4. **No Beast So Fierce:** From Eddie Bunker, "America's greatest living convict writer," with an introduction by William Styron.



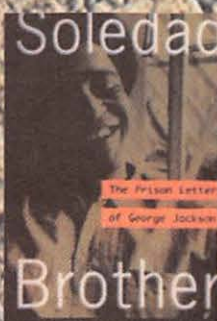
5. **The Big White Lie:** From ex-DEA agent Mike Levine, the inside story of the deep cover operation that exposed CIA sabotage of the drug war.



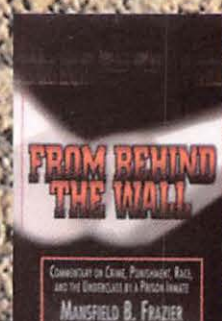
6. **Deep Cover:** Also from Mike Levine, the inside story of how DEA infighting, incompetence and subterfuge lost the biggest battle of the drug war.



7. **Notes From the Country Club:** Kim Wozencraft's gripping tale of a battered woman's struggle to survive in the psych unit of a federal prison.



8. **Soledad Brother:** By George Jackson. The classic collection of prison letters by the sixties Black revolutionary leader



9. **From Behind the Wall:** Ex-convict Mansfield Frazier comments on crime, punishment, race, and the underclass.

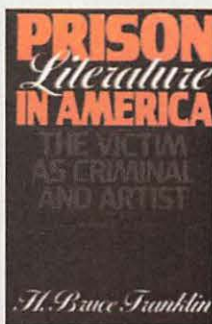
THE BLOCK



10. The Bad Guys Quote Book: compiled by Robert Singer, here are the vicious comments, pulverizing put-downs, rotten riposts—and great one liners—from history's worst at their wicked best.



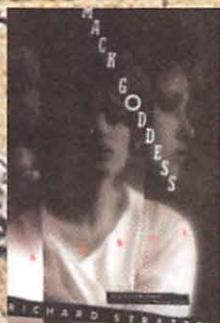
11. Rush: ex-cop, ex-con Kim Wozencraft's novel about undercover narcotics work. Entertainment Weekly called it "a classic of street lit."



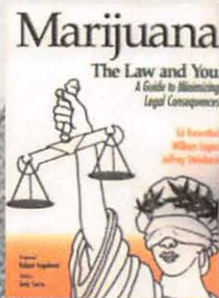
12. Prison Literature in America: H. Bruce Franklin explores the relation of crime and art in this ground-breaking study of prisoner literature.

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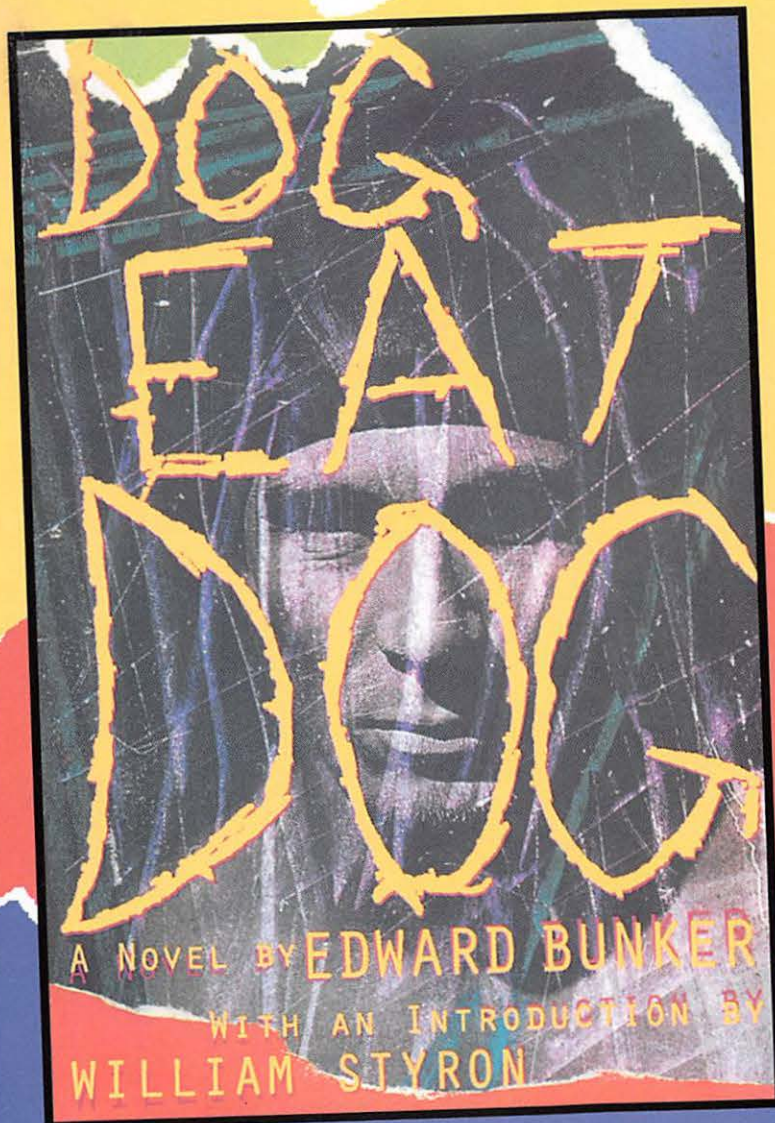
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