THE Round Table

Summer 2013

"...a path from where we are to where we should be." --Peter Maurin

Why This Issue?

We'd been talking about the police. Here and there, side conversations, and also in our Round Table committee meetings. There was the Round Table discussion we had over a year ago where we sat in our dining room and conversation focused on how to respond to police. There was the letter to the editor by "A. Friend" and Jenny Truax's response after her article on non-violence and the Catholic Worker. And then there was the recent encounters by Catholic Workers with the police, the rights of the homeless in downtown St. Louis being trampled, the use of drones in the US by local police units, the pepper-spraying of Occupy students sitting defenseless and the massive arrests of Occupy protestors on the Brooklyn Bridge, the rise of private police forces, and the ever growing pervasive use of surveillance cameras. We couldn't ignore the issue of policing.

We had noticed that talking about the police brought up lots of feelings for people. The desire for safety, fear of the other, anger at repressive and oppressive behaviors, respect, disgust, and a whole lot more. We wondered aloud about the difference between the police and the military. Peace activists are so often decrying war and the military ventures abroad as unjust and oppressive, but are police simply the other side of the same coin? Do police exist to keep us controlled and submissive lest the people rise up and resist? And why is it that, when there is an anti-war march, waves of white people show up, but when there is an anti-police brutality march, mostly African Americans are there?

It became obvious to us that to think about the police in our society we were going to have to really take into account the way race, class, and gender affect our perception. And we wanted to think about how it is that we have police in our society and what have other societies looked like that don't use coercive violent force to motivate their population. Teka Childress begins this Round Table trying to approach a Catholic Worker perspective on the police, taking into account all of the challenges of being a personalist, anarchist, and pacifist. Then James Meinert presents a series of first person stories about experiences with the police and policing. Daniel Ryskiewich's article is a compelling piece on the militarization of the police and the deterioration of our rights. Ben Schartman shares an enlightening history on how the police and our oppressive society developed together and poses the question, "Are police necessary?" Jenny Truax rounds out the main articles by analyzing race, white privilege, and the ways in which all are not policed equally. House-taker Pat Poehling gives us an update From Karen House and James Meinert follows with one From Kabat House. Carolyn Griffeth contributes a piece on raising children in community for Catholic Worker Thought and Action.

We hope this issue is stimulating, causing you to second guess some things you presumed, and that you may start asking yourself, "Is this what a police state looks like?" ✚

-James Meinert

Cover: Jason Gonzalez
Centerfold: Jenny Truax and James Meinert

The Round Table is the quarterly journal of Catholic Worker life and thought in St. Louis. Subscriptions are free. Please write to *The Round Table*, 1840 Hogan, St. Louis, MO. 63106. Donations are gladly accepted to help us continue our work. People working on this issue include: Jenny Truax, Teka Childress, James Meinert, Daniel Ryskiewich, Carolyn Griffeth, Ashleigh Packard, Ellen Rehg, Mark Becker and Ben Schartman. Letters to the editor are welcomed.

A Personalist's Perspective

by Teka Childress

Many of our supporters may not understand that Catholic Workers do not see a place for police in the society they hope for. Catholic Workers are believers in decentralized communal living. They long for, and work for, a radically different type of life than one dictated by the State and monitored by Law Enforcement. They instead wish to help create a society where there are nonviolent and communal solutions to problems, where no one carries a weapon, where the freedom necessary for love is possible and where violent coercion is not acceptable. This is not a vision of a conflict-free utopia, but one of a human and imperfect community based on a very different way of organizing life. We have seen examples of our vision among smaller communities, such as the Amish. But, even in larger society, there have been inspiring examples of organizing on the principles of nonviolence over coercion, and examples of forgiveness and reconciliation over punishment and imprisonment – the reconciliation process in South Africa being one of the most notable and well known.

We were prompted to address the issue of policing and the movement towards a police state in this current Round Table issue because we have seen numerous examples of people's rights being curtailed or denied. This has increased since the passage of The Patriot Act and the further militarization of the police. While many may see this as necessary, Catholic Workers believe that society benefits when there is justice and mercy, not when society is more repressive. Of course there are many complexities in human society and we must address the reality of evil and search for ways to provide for safety and well-being.

Lieutenant John Pike of UC Davis campus police casually pepper spraying detained peaceful protestors in 2011. Photo from blog.plos.org

Yet, in the end, we must choose whether we put our energy and resources into fostering communities where human beings thrive, or whether we put them into the creation of ever more repressive structures and ways to monitor and control people's behaviors.

Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day addressed this issue. Those of us continuing in the movement and those in the midst of city houses of hospitality must struggle with our own ways to continue toward making the Catholic Worker vision a reality. With this goal, how do we see the role of the police and how do we interact with the police in the political realm and in our own houses?

Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day's Thoughts on the State and Police

Both of the Catholic Worker founders saw the dangers of State power and the enforcement of its frequently unjust set of laws. Peter Maurin addressed this in some of his Easy Essays.

SELF-ORGANIZATION

. . . Thomas Jefferson says that
the less government there is,
the better it is.
If the less government there is,
the better it is,
then the best kind of government
is self-government. . .

Peter specifically addressed the place of police in one of his essays:

PRIESTS AND POLICEMEN

Jean Jacques Rousseau said:
" [the human person] . . . is naturally good."
Business men say:
"[the human person] . . . is naturally bad;
you can do nothing
with human nature."
If it is true,
as business men say,
that you can do nothing

Teka Childress co-authored a letter to the Board of Public Service opposing effort by some downtown developers and residents aimed at closing New Life (see back page for details.)

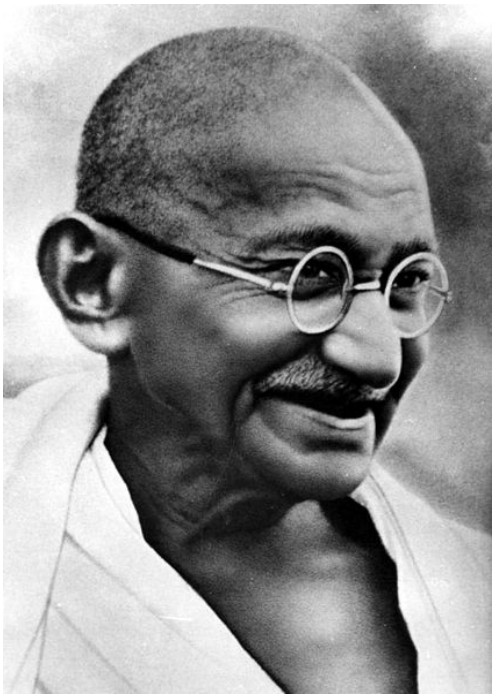
with human nature,
then we need fewer priests
and more policemen.
But if God . . .
sent [the] . . . begotten Son
to redeem men [and women]
then we need more priests
and fewer policemen.

Dorothy Day once commented that Peter made people feel that they were capable of great love. This comment explains the heart of his vision, his hope in people, and why he thought it more important to have spiritual guides than to have people who enforce laws.

In her Nov. 1936 article, "The Use of Force", Dorothy Day similarly wrote about people being invited to love rather than forced by coercion:

"Christ . . . came and took upon himself our humanity. He became the . . . [Human One]. He suffered hunger and thirst and hard toil and temptation. All power was his but he wished the free love and service of men [and women]. He did not force anyone to believe. . . He did not coerce anyone. He emptied himself and became a servant. . . He taught the example and we are supposed to imitate him. His were hard sayings so that even his servants did not know what he was saying, did not understand him. It was not until after he died on the cross . . . that they were enlightened by the Holy Spirit that they knew the truth. . . They knew then that not by force of arms, by the bullet or the ballot, would they conquer. They knew and were ready to suffer defeat—to show that great love which enabled them to lay down their lives for their friends. . ."

Here Dorothy makes clear that she believes at the heart of the human project is the invitation to become holy and that following the example of Jesus will get us and others there, rather than use of the "ballot" or "force of arms."



Mahatma Gandhi coined the term "Satyagraha," translated as "soul force" and understood as civil or nonviolent resistance. Photo from commons.wikimedia.org.

Living in the Middle

It would be a mistake to look at the vision described by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin and say, "Isn't it lovely, but then here we are in the 'real' world." This is similar to professing to be followers of Christ with little or no desire to really follow him. We must always be working toward that which we believe. Yet it is tricky to live out these ideals because we are not separate from the world; especially those of us living in city houses of hospitality. Many Catholic Workers, in urban Catholic Worker houses, have chosen to live where they have precisely in order to be in the world among those in need. Since we have not set ourselves apart from the world, we find ourselves living in the midst (like everyone else) of government structures and laws over which we have had little say. This is simply the reality in which we live. How then do we live authentically? And how do we view the role of the police while not living separate from the world, but in a more complex society where there is lot of violence and oppression?

The Role of the Police and the Policing of Society

While living in the midst of a large society, it makes sense to have respect for many laws that enable our interacting lives. It is necessary to have agreed upon ways of doing things. It is necessary to protect people from bodily and other harm and from serious violence. Yet, Catholic Workers would not see the establishment of long lists of federal, state and local laws as an ideal way to organize society.

In addition, we have an inherently unjust economic system as the basis of our society. This creates a need for more laws to regulate and uphold the system and more police to enforce its laws. Ben Schartman addresses this problem extremely well in his article in this issue of The Round Table. Also, many of our laws are enacted by legislators who are lobbied and often elected by corporate wealth. The laws passed often reflect and protect many basic injustices. This was what was at the heart of the Occupy Movement. People saw that most of us are no longer protected by this system which leans heavily toward the protection of the needs and wants of fewer and fewer people. Consequently, more and more frequently, the role of the police becomes a job of upholding this system and many of its unjust laws.

A simple example that illustrates the above reality is what I witnessed on my way to work recently. I watched as a police officer moved several homeless people from where they were sitting on a beautiful spring day. He was essentially doing the bidding of the people of influence and wealth who have moved downtown and do not want to look out of their windows to see homeless people sitting there. Local downtown developers have been meeting with City officials who then apparently tell the police what assistance they desire in policing downtown. The homeless, unfortunately, have been here far longer but now that those with wealth have moved in, the homeless must go.

A further problem with the role of police is the obvious danger in giving any group or individuals undue power. They become the enforcers of the law and they have weapons and handcuffs to carry out their decisions. The old adage, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely is simply true. This is a basic flaw and danger of policing. We give a group of people power to essentially monitor and control the behavior of others. In theory, they are guided by law, but as I noted, the laws are both sometimes unjust and often enforced arbitrarily. People have experienced arbitrary, violent and unjust treatment at the hands of the police. The poor and people of color, who are unduly targeted by the police, have always felt this acutely. (This issue is addressed by Jenny Truax in this Round Table issue.)

Also, since 9/11 there seems to be less tolerance for dissent. There have been several incidents in the past year when St. Louis Catholic Workers and friends have been arrested or had unpleasant encounters with the police. A member of one of our communities was arrested while downtown with friends. She was present when another Catholic Worker was handcuffed for taking

pictures of the police while they kicked the feet out from under some men they had detained downtown. (That story is described in this Round Table in another article.) The above mentioned woman, who was leaving the scene, was apprehended and dragged by a police officer apparently only because he remembered her being at an Occupy protest earlier in the year.

Two of our neighbors and friends were also recently targeted by the police while at a public Occupy event last year. Both were arrested arbitrarily and later found not guilty of charges. One was simply standing when he was pointed out to be arrested and the other was a victim of police violence. He was pushed down and hit by the police. His face was scraped along the sidewalk until he was bleeding. His injuries required medical treatment and stitches.

I myself was arrested at the same Occupy event, much to my surprise. I had seen our friend, described above, and a second young man, come back bleeding profusely in police custody. While standing on a public sidewalk away from the event after most of it was over, I had tried to ask the police why these people were being beaten. I never even got the question out. I was told to leave. After saying to the officer that I was on a public sidewalk, I still stepped back from the officer, off the sidewalk and into the gutter in the direction of the car I hoped to leave in. I did this in order to show the officer I wanted to talk and felt a strong need to address their actions, but had no other agenda. I was arrested for not leaving quickly enough I suppose. I pleaded not guilty but I was convicted by a City judge who said by leaving the public sidewalk (by my own admission) and moving into the street, I was being disruptive of traffic. Anyway, I didn't immediately do what the officer told me to do.

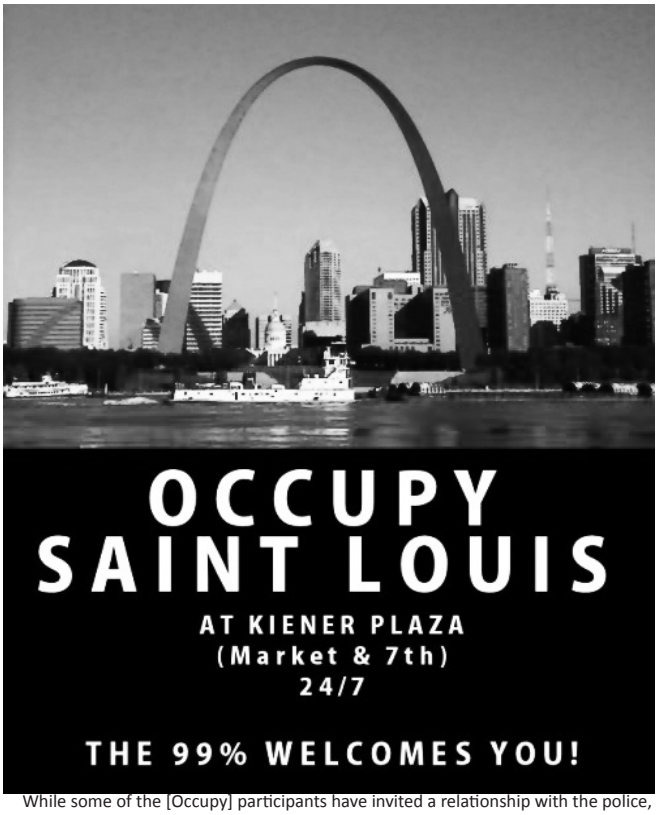
There are obvious problems therefore with the role of policing—the obvious part it plays in helping to maintain order in a system, even when it is wrong, and the simple problem of giving power to some people to control the behavior of others. And yet, does this mean that everything the police do is bad? No. There are times when police officers help people and act with great courage. How then should we relate to the police as we encounter them, and in what cases should we seek their help given our own ambivalence?

How Might a Personalist Respond to the Police?

Hanging on the wall in the library at Karen House is the following quote from Dorothy Day written in 1948, "When you love people you see all the good in them. We should see Christ in others and nothing else, and love them. There can never be enough of it." The same woman quoted above is pictured in a classic photograph at a Farmworker protest bookmarked by the police. Anyone who has seen the photo (printed on p. 11 of this *Round Table*) could not misread the disapproval she has toward the police's action at this event, nor her own resolve to do what she is doing. These apparently contrasting images illustrate that the two attitudes—love, and a refusal to comply with injustice, easily accompany each other and are not truly in conflict. Rather they belong together and illustrate the heart of personalism.

This issue of how to interact with the police while they are engaged in their duties has been clarified for me by a series of recent events and discussions. I have been at several Occupy events where there has been mixed response to the police. While some of the participants have invited a relationship with the police, inviting them to see they are part of the 99%, others have led chants, "The Police are not are friends." I did not participate in this chant and it led me to think about this issue a good deal further, as did after another discussion in which I took part. At a Round Table discussion in the dining room at Karen House we talked about the arrests at the Occupy event in which others and I were arrested. I had mentioned that while I was in the police van I had heard an officer complaining to the other officers that he had wanted to be home with his family. I had taken the opportunity to call him over and explained to him that I too had planned on being home with my husband who was ill. We talked for a while waiting for events to unfold. He ended up being the officer who drove our van. Several of the others being arrested and riding in the back of the van compared his actions to those of the Nazis in Germany. He was taken aback. He responded saying he did not consider his actions to have been anything like that. The back and forth in the van was quickly reduced to yelling and banter, and I personally found little ability to participate, though it could have provided an opportunity to tell the officer how his actions participated in a greater injustice. I heard in his response to the protestors that it mattered to him to feel he was doing the right thing. It could have been a fruitful discussion.

It was an interesting interaction and the dialogue it raised at the Karen House Round Table discussion was also very enlightening. I realized that I believe it important to follow Dorothy Day's example and acknowledge how the police participate in a system that is unjust, to actively challenge all arbitrary or targeted abuse of authority, and to simultaneously understand that this is only one part of who any individual police officer is. They are also other things, a father, a daughter, someone who may be taking care of an elderly parent, even someone who initially became a police officer in hopes of helping people. Some activists believe



While some of the [Occupy] participants have invited a relationship with the police, inviting them to see they are part of the 99%, others have led chants, "The Police are not our friends." Photo from mobile-cuisine.com

that if someone has taken on a job of a police officer they have put themselves on the other side. I believe this is antithetical to our Personalist philosophy. However, it is also antithetical to our philosophy to minimize or make light of the violence or injustice in which any of us participates. I myself have chosen to approach the police with the same respect that I give to all. While I am a Christian anarchist who does not over regard their power, I give them the respect and love I have for all people.

It does not seem possible to address the issue of the police without addressing the issue of nonviolence. Nonviolence is a direct extension of personalism and is necessary to fully respect what is sacred in others. There is an interesting discussion among activists at this time about the validity of nonviolence. Many see nonviolence as one option in the potential use of a diversity of tactics. This issue has come about in part because many activists are justly frustrated at what they see as a lame use of nonviolence in actions over the past several years. I think it is in part the failure of the peace movement to engage in more creative uses of nonviolence that has led to this apathy about nonviolent practice. I have become disheartened myself from participating in actions and going to court for a slap on the wrist and walking out with little repercussions to our lives, thinking we have somehow done something to stem the tide of violence in our world. (This is not to diminish the actions of many who are making inspiring choices to act and have risked a lot over the years. I am speaking more to the prevalence of rotating door actions.)

Nonviolence is a direct extension of personalism

It is additionally important to distinguish the difference between nonviolence and politeness. Nonviolence requires that we recognize the value of each person, but it does not require being complicit out of a sense of good manners. I will never forget the inspiring words of a man arrested at a protest in St. Louis at the General Dynamics shareholders' meeting. He addressed the CEO of General Dynamics who was addressing the shareholders. The protestor said something along these lines to him, "There you are addressing us in almost a fatherly way, and yet you are building Trident submarines capable of carrying enough nuclear missiles to destroy life on earth."

In all cases, to live nonviolently requires great commitment to the truth and an active pursuit to end injustice and all types of violence, especially repression. Gandhi's Satygraha means "soul force." And there is nothing passive, nor lame about it.

Some Dilemmas

While Catholic Workers have to question how to respond to the role of police and our relationship to them in the political setting, it is also an issue and sometimes a dilemma whether to involve them in our life at a house of hospitality. We believe in responding to our guests nonviolently and we make great efforts to resolve issues in a nonviolent fashion. Yet there are some times we have found this challenging. We were challenged by a friend to be true to what we believe about nonviolence—that if we truly believe in it we should not make use of police coercion to respond to issues at the house. This was a worthy challenge that we should make great efforts to live up to. It raises the issue of what we do in very scary or difficult circumstances.

For instance, Karen House recently received a very serious threat from an anonymous source. The caller was looking for someone who owed them money. We did not have any way of doing a nonviolent intervention with that person. We couldn't even continue the conversation as they said they planned to "fire bomb the house" and then hung up. Therefore we found ourselves in an already less-than-ideal reality where people we did not know have access to weapons and all sorts of ways of doing harm. As it happened, there was not much more the police could do than we could ourselves, but if they had been able to protect us in some way, it might have been tempting.

Many years back, we had a guest who had had a disagreement with another woman at the house. That young woman was put out of the house and came back to attack the woman with whom she had argued. She brought three other women, members of a gang, with her. They were surprisingly violent and came with the plan to apparently seriously hurt the woman. They came at her and it took every effort of another community member and I to keep her from being seriously hurt. We had managed to keep knives out of their hands by forethought--our policy of locking up the butcher knives. They searched desperately for them. After being thwarted in this effort, however, one of the women grabbed a teapot of boiling water to pour it on the woman. At this point, my fellow community member said, "I am calling the police." The women decided to run out of the house. I had not actually thought of calling the police, but I was grateful that the other community member had and that it had apparently caused the women to leave. I can only say, while I did not want to use the threat of the police to keep them from hurting anyone, I was relieved that we had that option in the end.

In writing this article I was reminded of the writings of Angie O'Gorman, who offers examples of dealing with serious personal violence in creative nonviolent ways. In her book, The Universe Bends Toward Justice, she specifically addresses occurrences not unlike some we have had. I was thinking that it would be fruitful to have a discussion to seek out creative ways to deal with a variety of situations.

In Summary

We hope to build a society where it is easier to be good and one where we develop nonviolent solutions to deal with conflicts that do not require police. While currently living in the midst of a complex society, we must still make efforts to be true to our vision. Most importantly we should resist all efforts toward further militarizing our police and our country. Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day understood that we find joy in community and in living just and merciful lives. When we experience mercy and justice ourselves we are more likely to create a world based on these things. If we seek this type of society we need more inspiration and more generosity, not more laws, nor more police. Let us build something more inspiring, more loving, more merciful and just than a police state. ✚

Targeted

compiled by James Meinert

Throughout the last several months, friends of The Round Table have been in situations where the police were arresting them, harassing them, yelling at them, ignoring them, and just plain policing them. Putting together this issue of *The Round Table* we wanted to really think about the police. Also, we wanted to share the voices of those who are targeted by the police, the same groups targeted by oppression in our society—specifically women, immigrants, and people of color. In spite of our best effort, it was not possible to find an immigrant willing to talk about this topic. The African-Americans we contacted also had reasons they chose not to participate. I believe this highlights the level of fear and control directed at people of color, while white people have trouble understanding what could be wrong with police. We also chose to include the words of a police officer who struggles with the decisions he has to make doing his job. We wanted to include this because he is a friend of the Catholic Worker and struggles with the ideas and practice of nonviolence in a world of violence.

Name withheld (pseudonym used), female, homeless, white Interview by Ellen Rehg

The police "definitely discriminate against the homeless," Sheila told me as we sat together on her front porch. She lives in an apartment today, but that wasn't always the case. Struggling with mental and physical illnesses and drinking heavily, Sheila was homeless for a period of about 2 1/2 to 3 years. Understandably, she characterizes being homeless as a "very rough experience."

"It's tough enough being homeless. You can't loiter, but when you're homeless you have nothing else to do. The average homeless person walks at least 20 -30 miles a day. There is nowhere to sit and just be.

"I was not fond of shelters," she related. "I mostly stayed outside, on the riverfront of East St. Louis because it was quieter there. Not a lot of people."

The police knew who was homeless, and who wasn't, and they "went out of their way to hassle them." No matter where they are or what they're doing, the homeless are often targeted by police. At best they are shooed away, asked to move on. At worst, they are arrested or pressured to inform on others.

"For any of these crimes, of loitering, begging, drinking in public, the police might issue a summons to the person involved, which sets them up for trouble once again." -Ellen Rehg Photo by: Ashleigh Packard

"They see a group of homeless people sitting under a bridge under the shade and they'll start harassing them. 'Go somewhere else!' Where else are they supposed to go, they don't have any place to go.

"When you have a bunch of homeless people coming into an establishment, bringing luggage, all sitting in one area all together, they don't want you to be there. If you're in the Library with a bunch of other homeless people, you are harassed. I put my head down on a desk at the library one day, and was sleeping. I was exhausted that day. They kicked me out for doing that.

"Homeless people are not looked at in any kind of equal way, like we have rights, but that we're scum. But, every person's story is different."

Sheila pointed out the double standard that exists with regard to how the homeless are treated in comparison with others. "Lots of homeless people will sit and

James Meinert is on the verge of writing an epic folk-punk album. He just needs 11 more songs...

drink," Sheila said. If she was "sitting under a tree drinking, the cops come over and make you pour out your beer. But when the game's coming to town, people who have money can walk ten wide, around town and it's ok for them to be drinking."

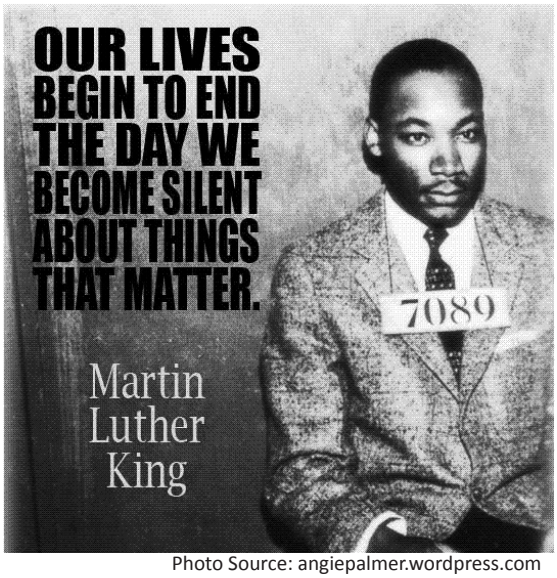


Photo Source: angiepalmer.wordpress.com

Sometimes police will question the homeless about incidents of crimes the police are aware of. "If they see a familiar face, they'll stop them and question them." They try to make informants out of people, and get them to tell on others. Sheila felt like doing this to homeless people set them up for trouble.

The St. Louis Board of Alderman passed a law stating that people can't aggressively beg, a law which is open to interpretation. The police use their own discretion to decide whether to ticket someone who is "flying a sign" (holding a sign asking for help) in front of a business, or near the street, charging them with blocking traffic. For any of these crimes – loitering, begging, drinking in public – the police might issue a summons to the person involved, which sets them up for trouble once again. How likely is it that a homeless person will be able to appear in court on the day they are summoned there? Since that is difficult for them to do, they end up with outstanding warrants, which give the police leverage to use against them.

"People end up with warrants. Then then can arrest you. They can use that against you, to get you to inform. They can take you in, you're vulnerable. It's hard to stay legal if you're poor and homeless.

"Police have their targets, and they'll go up and run their names. They might let one person go who has six or seven warrants, and arrest the person with one. I've seen squad cars come from every direction and start running people's names. You're under suspicion because you're homeless."

One event was particularly frightening for Sheila. "They tried to put charges on me that I didn't know anything about. I was flying a sign one day under the Martin Luther King Bridge. Two cars pulled up, four doors opened up and police piled out. I thought I was going to jail for flying a sign. They asked me where I was on a certain day, and they took a picture of me. They said I fit a description of a woman who had robbed someone on the Landing. I told them I didn't know anything about it. They were pretty rude, and harsh, and told me I'll probably get arrested here in the future. I told them where I was staying, where they could find me."

Sheila was terrified, and the fear of an imminent arrest added to her already high anxiety. However, she never heard back from them. "To me that was very unprofessional," she stated. She felt they thought they could treat her however they wanted since she was homeless. ✚

Sarah Latham, Catholic Worker, female, white

As I sat on the curb with my head down and hands cuffed, I felt calm and clear--certain that I had done the right thing.

Earlier that evening I had been invited to a bar on Washington Avenue by a friend. After having spent a couple of hours at the bar, staring at TVs and yelling conversations at each other, two of my friends and I decided to go home. While weaving through heavily manicured sparkly people, fumbling in their bags for their car keys, we noticed ahead of us, about seven police officers who had three black men pinned up against a wall. As we came closer, one of the cops kicked one of them. Because I hoped to prevent any further physical abuse to this person, or at least thought I might be able to hold the abuser accountable, I started video taping with my phone.

Watching the video as I write this, I see how frightened the people are who were being harassed. I also hear a friend in the video comment on the number of white people allowed to stumble past us with alcohol in open cups and cans. But because these other people are of color and had their alcohol in a bottle in their coat pocket, the police have an interest in targeting them.


"As I sat on the curb with my head down and hands cuffed, I felt calm and clear-- certain that I had done the right thing." -Sarah Latham Photo source: 4closurefraud.org

About a minute and a half into the video an officer grabs my arm and pushes me into the street saying, "I told you, you can video tape all you want, but you're not gonna stand behind us."

The recording

is uneventful for the next few minutes, until minute six when a different cop tells me I need to leave because, “the guys are afraid you'll put this on YouTube.” (referring to the people they have detained.)

I respond, “I will put the camera down, but I won't go away.”

This is where the video cuts out. As I went to put my phone in my pocket, one officer pushed my hands behind me into the open handcuffs in another cop's hands. I was being arrested for failure to obey a lawful order.

I was ultimately held, cuffed on the curb for thirty minutes, eye level with the weapons: pistols and nightsticks at the officers' hips. I was lectured on how my refusal to listen put everyone else around us in danger.

I was eventually uncuffed and given a pink carbon copy of a court summons. My friends embraced me, massaged my wrists, held me, listened.

As we walked down the sidewalk, towards the car a second time, feeling angry and a little jittery, I heard someone yell, “You! Stop!”

Within seconds, my friend who had driven there with me was being forced into the middle of the street with her hands pinned behind her. Her face red, as she screamed, “What did I do?”

It appeared a patty wagon had shown up just as I was being released and one of the police didn't want us all to get away so quickly without an adequate lesson. My friends and I begged the police officers for an explanation of what was happening from the decorative-light-strewn sidewalk. They arrested two more of my friends who wouldn't quiet down. We made too much of a scene. We weren't okay with the people with badges and guns acting violently, with impunity, against the powerless. ✚

Name withheld, Police Officer, male, white.

I am not a theologian. I am a Midwestern male who has worked as a law enforcement officer in several departments trying to make streets a bit more peaceful and homes a bit less violent. I understand the concepts of nonviolence, though I necessarily require a different reality. I have to use force, use it well, and use enough of it to prevent worse violence. However I believe that understanding ‘the other’ is essential to the long arc of peace and justice we hope and work for. I humbly invite you to consider the spiritual challenge of the police officer as ‘the other,’ and the spiritual poison that we receive in daily doses.

Let me begin with what I mean by ‘poison.’ I mean experiences that tear our souls from the Holy Spirit and keep us from knowing God in our neighbors. I first experienced this as a rookie assisting a domestic assault victim. It was my job to document the bruises and wounds in detail. When we started I realized I was seeing actual prints of household items in bruise form on the victim’s body, including sensitive areas. The spiritual challenge of the officer is to hold the poison of society close to their heart that it might drive them against the injustice while simultaneously holding their soul apart, so as not to become that which they distain over the course of a long career.

“Next time you pass a line of police lights would you consider being thankful you’re not seeing what they are?” Photo source: mncit.org

Here’s where the Spirit comes in: Seeing the wounds of the victim incited a passionate anger to the perpetrator. I just finished a grueling academy in order to make a difference - to help people in these situations. I held on to that rage because it drove me and felt right – and is right. No one should see such things without feeling rage against injustice. But another voice says, “You can’t use the same senseless force on the abuser. Necessary force - yes. Compelling force – yes. But you have to be better.”

This is the dynamic that officers face day in and day out. We hate the injustice we see and so dive in to know and fight against it. Like Thomas, we doubt because we want to be sure and end up touching the wounds. And this leaves a reciprocal mark on our spirits. I worked with a detective who was about to retire after over 30 years in a Crimes Against Persons unit. Attempting to joke, but touching truth, he talked about leaving the office, going home, sitting down on the floor of a cold shower, and trying to wash away years of all the “shit” he’d seen. Some officers retire fortunate to not have been shot or seriously injured, but none escape what I’ve described above. Daily, officers remember the pain we have been called on to shoulder and account for. Officers sign on to carry this burden for a modest salary for 30 years. Next time you pass a line of police lights would you consider being thankful you’re not seeing what they are? ✚

Policies of Fear

by Daniel Ryskiewich

Patriotism in the United States is rooted in celebrating the fact that we live in a democracy and "the home of the free." This sentiment is so prevalent that it can be difficult to publicly question how democratic the United States really is. It is especially important to carefully analyze the structures of power in such a society because the sentiment and appearance of democracy might cover real erosions of democratic life.

The first step in answering the question of how democratic is the United States is to develop a concrete definition of what is a "democracy." It is more than holding elections. Democracy, 'rule by the people', as opposed to an aristocracy, 'rule by the elite', requires an active citizenship and a wide distribution of power and property to the citizens instead of a concentration of power and wealth in the control of a few. Liberal democracies are also founded on the idea of rights, and the government has a dual responsibility to protect them. One responsibility is to advocate for citizens whose rights are being infringed upon by other citizens, and the other is to limit the government's own intrusiveness and power in citizens' lives. In the United States, these rights include freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, protection from unreasonable search and seizure, right to a speedy trial, due process of law, and prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment.

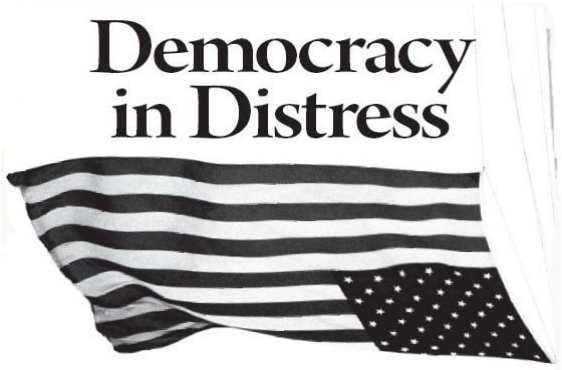


Photo source: my-3-sons.com

So how does the United States currently match up to elementary definitions of democracy and its own Bill of Rights? In 2011 Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen was assassinated in a drone strike in Yemen that was approved by President Obama. Awlaki was accused of being a member of al-Qaeda, but he was not charged with any crimes and no evidence of his guilt was released to the public or to any reporters. The whole drone program operates under secrecy. The details about which U.S. officials are responsible for selecting targets and what information is used to justify the attacks are not revealed. What seems clear from several investigations, however, is that a very small group of people led by counter-terror chief, John Brennan, independently adds names to the list.

The reality that a few appointed members of the executive branch can secretly act as judge, jury, and executioner for people anywhere in the world, including U.S. citizens, if they happen to be abroad, without any oversight or accountability, is about as tyrannical and undemocratic a situation as can be imagined. Yet a recent Gallup pole claims 50% of Americans support using drones to kill U.S. citizens in other countries if they are terrorism suspects. The logic of 'national security' is winning out. Politicians have exploited the threat of terrorism so that citizens are fearful enough to grant unlimited use of force to the government.

Executive power often ignores civil liberties in times of war, but the 'War on Terror' threatens to do so permanently for the first time in U.S. history. Politicians tell us to be afraid of terrorism no matter where we live and how much time has passed since the last major attack. There are no conceivable conditions of 'victory' in the war on terror. No matter how many terrorism suspects are detained or tortured or killed, we will still be afraid and still be looking for more enemies. The 2012 National Defense Authorization Law legalizes indefinite military detention without charge or trial for citizens and permanent residents of the U.S. for the first time in history. The Obama administration's legal argument for the law is that it reasserts powers granted by the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists, passed hastily on September 14, 2001. Chris Hedges, a former journalist for the New York Times and a Pulitzer Prize winner, is currently suing Obama in a Supreme Court Case over the NDAA law because he believes that it would allow the military to imprison journalists, activists, and human-rights workers on vague allegations.

The policy of fear and force is not limited to foreign policy or the federal government. Military style policing and omnipresent surveillance are already well-established in American cities. Radly Balko, a former senior editor at *Reason Magazine*, charges that the War on Drugs was the leading cause of militarization for 20 years before the War on Terror. He explains that "the militarization of America's police forces has been going on for about

Daniel Ryskiewich has been enjoying his time working at New Roots Urban Farm and is currently in Arizona working with "No Mas Muertes."

The U.S. drone program operates in secrecy, as which officials select targets and what information is used to justify the attacks are kept hidden. In recent years, drones have been used to assassinate American citizens without conviction and due process. Photo source: dronewar-suk.wordpress.com

a generation now. Former Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates first conceived the idea of the SWAT team in the late 1960s, ". . . [He] wanted an elite team of specialized cops similar to groups like the Army Rangers or Navy SEALs that could respond to riots, barricades, shootouts, or hostage-takings with more skill and precision than everyday patrol officers."

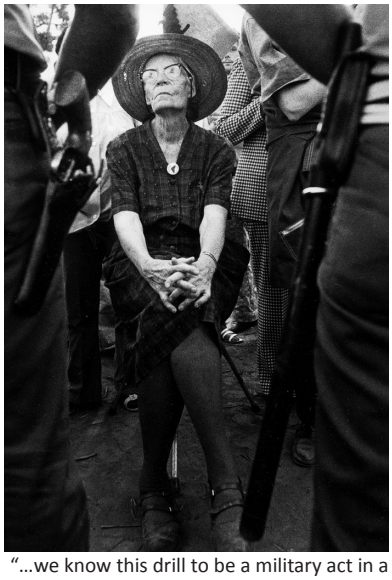
The idea caught on, and by 1995, 90% of cities with 50,000 people or more had a SWAT team. A criminologist at Eastern Kentucky University estimated that in the mid 2000's there were 50,000 SWAT raids per year in the U.S. He also alleges "the vast majority of those raids are to serve warrants on people suspected of nonviolent drug crimes. Police forces were no longer reserving SWAT teams and paramilitary tactics for events that presented an immediate threat to the public. They were now using them mostly as an investigative tool in drug cases, creating violent confrontations with people suspected of nonviolent, consensual crimes." In certain city neighborhoods, SWAT raids would most often not result in any arrests. Highly armed teams were violently breaking into people's homes in the middle of the night, and didn't find any illegal activity. Cheye Calvo, mayor of Berwyn Heights, Maryland, became a critic of SWAT teams, when a raid mistakenly targeted his house in 2009 and killed his two Black Labradors. Calvo said, "This is one of the most intrusive things a government can do. These are government agents, breaking down your door, invading your home. And yet it's all done in secret. In most cases, no one knows what criteria police are using when they decide how to serve a search warrant. There's no transparency, there's no oversight." These terrifying raids cause uproar when they happen to the powerful and well-connected, but poor minorities are usually the targets and don't have the ability to draw national attention to the injustice. Graham Boyd, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Drug Law Reform Project says, "There is a never-ending stream of ruined homes, ruined lives and innocent people who are killed or terrorized. Many victims of botched or abusive drug raids are poor minorities whom the public is unlikely to hear about or rally around.

Recently the efforts to fight crime and terrorism have merged. An investigation by the Center for Investigative Reporting found that the Department of Homeland Security has given more than $34 billion in grants to police departments for "military-grade guns, tanks, armor, and armored personal carriers." This dynamic was clearly demonstrated recently after the Boston Marathon bombing. Former congressman Ron Paul described and criticized the lockdown and military policing of the city:

"Forced lockdown of a city, militarized police riding tanks in the streets, door-to-door armed searches without warrant, families thrown out of their homes at gunpoint to be searched without probable cause, businesses forced to close, transport shut down--these were not the scenes from a military coup in a far off banana republic, but rather the scenes just over a week ago in Boston as the United States got a taste of martial law. . . The Boston bombing provided the opportunity for the government to turn what should have been a police investigation into a military-style occupation of an American city. This unprecedented move should frighten us as much, or more, than the attack itself.

"What has been sadly forgotten in all the celebration of the capture of one suspect and the killing of his older brother is that the police state tactics in Boston did absolutely nothing to catch them. While the media crowed that the apprehension of the suspects was a triumph of the new surveillance state – and, predictably, many talking heads and Members of Congress called for even more government cameras pointed at the rest of us – the fact is none of this caught the suspect. Actually, it very nearly gave the suspect a chance to make a getaway."

Every year from 1955 to 1959 Dorothy Day and other Catholic Workers refused to participate in Operation Alert, a mandatory air raid drill in New York City, and instead protested in the street. Their message was that only peace and non-violence could make the nation safe, not preparation for war and faith in weapons. They handed out leaflets that said, "…we know this drill to be a military act in a cold war to instill fear, to prepare the collective mind for war. We refuse to cooperate." We need witnesses like that now to lead us out of the culture of fear.



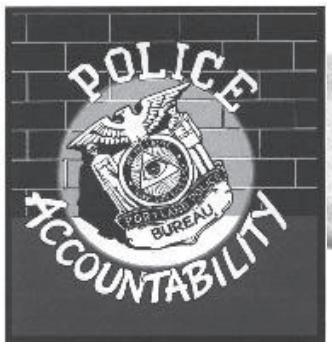
"…we know this drill to be a military act in a cold war to instill fear, to prepare the collective mind for war. We refuse to cooperate." -Dorothy Day and New York Catholic Workers circa 1955-1959 Photo by: Bob Fitch

THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE

AN OPEN SOCIETY: Characteristics include a clear separation of powers, free speech, and free elections. Individuals in society are well-educated about, engaged in, and consulted on decisions which affect their lives. Humanitarianism, equality and political freedom are the open society's hallmarks.

Civil Liberties

...including protection against unlawful discrimination, freedom from unwarranted government intrusion into your personal life, and the right to due process for everyone, are defended at all levels of government.



...Is held accountable to the local community, with transparent structures, and citizen involvement at every level.

Immigration

Rather than assimilated into a homogenous melting pot, immigrants are welcomed as unique participants in the salad bowl of society, deserving of equal rights.

Quality of daily life is a high priority; high standards for education, health care, worker's rights.

Multitude of public "democratic" spaces, accessible to all segments of society for celebrations, demonstrations, and expressions of community.

Public Spaces

* Sources and further reading, page 2

THIS IS WHAT A POLICE STATE LOOKS LIKE

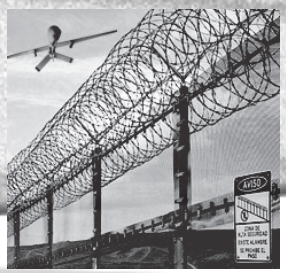
Characteristics include controlling and monitoring the populace without judicial oversight (wiretapping, email monitoring etc.), media control, and persecuting dissent. Police states can and do emerge in democratic countries, and depend on the consent of the people; the loss of individual freedoms are rationalized by perceived threats from external, domestic, economic or terrorist sources.

..are curtailed in the name of national security. Surveillance of populace, freedoms of speech are narrowed.

Law Enforcement

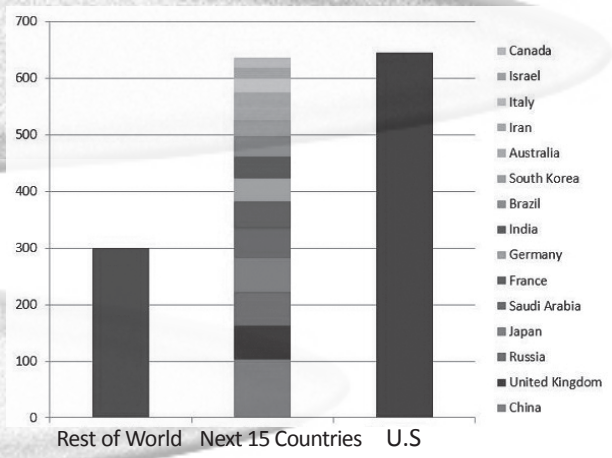
Highly militarized, utilizing private armies and military bases that are outside of U.S. law. Little or no accountability to populace.

Borders are militarized, efforts to purify the country of foreign influences deemed to be unfavorable are common.



National Priorities

Fear-based governance aimed at consolidating power, doctrine superseding science, permanent war the norm.



U.S. Military Spending compared to the rest of the world.

Public spaces are increasingly commercialized, privatized and militarized, not to be used by "undesirables".

The Creation of the Police

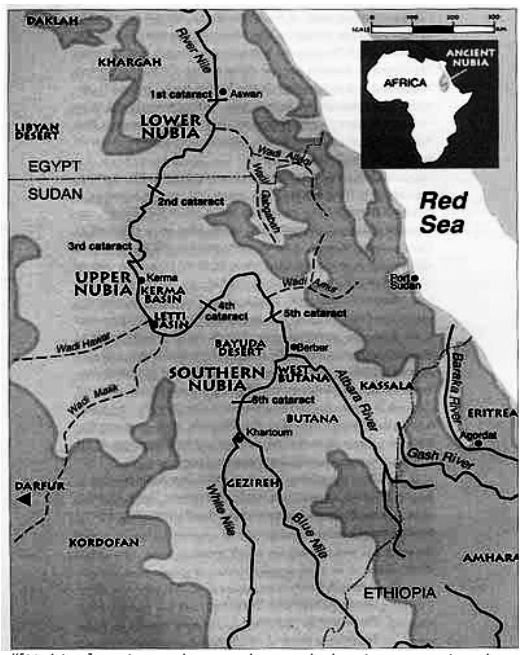
by Ben Schartman

As this issue of *The Round Table* concentrates on how the institution of the police affects our society, a fundamental question that we are asking ourselves is: are the police necessary to society? The answer is neither emphatically yes nor no. Rather, the police are necessary to some societies but not to others. Modern western societies seem to require police. In our society, the police are the institution that is charged with meeting our very real needs of 1) safety and 2) the resolution of disputes. But it could be different; other societies meet these needs in a great variety of different ways.

One example of such a society is that of the Nubians. Nubians are sedentary farmers in Egypt. They have a much more communal culture than our own and view one person's problem as everyone's problem. Their whole society takes on the work that in our society has been given or delegated to the police. So, when there is a dispute in their society, friends, relatives, or other third parties intercede to maintain everyone's safety and to help those in conflict come to a resolution. "According to anthropologist Robert Fernea, Nubian culture regards quarrels between members of a kinship group as dangerous, in that they threaten the supportive social net on which all depend."[1]

This culture of communal responsibility for safety and the resolution of disputes are encased in a wider system of communal cooperation and sharing. Important property, such as waterwheels, cattle, and palm trees, have traditionally been communally owned so that in the daily work of feeding themselves people are immersed in cooperative social bonds. "Additionally, the kinship groups which comprise Nubian society, called 'nogs,' are interwoven, not atomized like the isolated nuclear families of Western society: 'This means that a person's nogs are overlapping and involve diverse, dispersed membership. This feature is very important, for the Nubian community does not easily split into opposing factions.'"[2] In Nubian society, disputes that are not resolved in the natural course of daily life are brought to a family council with all the members of the nog, including women and children. The council is presided over by an elder kinsman, and the goal is to reach consensus and get the disputants to reconcile.

The Nubians provide one example of a society without police, and if we look far enough back in the history of our own society we will find a time before police. If we examine some of the Judeo-Christian myths/history that concerns the creation of our society, we will see there were no cops in the Garden of Eden. The stories of the exile from the Garden of Eden as well as the murder of Abel by Cain show the loss of organic balance within an egalitarian society and the transition to a hierarchal society maintained by force. The police are one of the manifestations of this force.



"[Nubian] society takes on the work that in our society has been given or delegated to the police." -Ben Schartman
Photo from napata.org

The story of the exile from the Garden of Eden is the story of a human community in balance and at one with the world around them, and the subsequent loss of this initial balance and peace. What this suggests is that this human community had cultural patterns and practices that provided the foundation for a peaceful and egalitarian existence, and this culture probably existed for countless generations before the events that led to the Exile. The loss of this way of life stems from a conflict between the

Ben Schartman is planning to move to Columbia, MO and will have to submit his regular articles for the RT from there.

genders. It is possible that there was equality between genders before this time and that this story marks the loss of this equality and the beginning of the domination of women by men. This myth is our starting point because it points to the breakdown of organic, cultural forms for keeping peace—the police eventually arise, many, many generations later as a response to the absence of these original peace keeping practices.

With the story of the murder of Abel by Cain we have a mythical description of the next step away from our initial, egalitarian society towards a society where police are necessary. In this story Cain, a farmer, murders his brother Abel, who is a shepherd, because he is jealous that Abel's sacrifice is more pleasing to God than is his own. The commentary of Professor Leon R. Kass suggests that it is not just Abel's sacrifice but his whole way of life that is more pleasing to God; that is, there is something more pleasing to God about the way of life of the shepherd as opposed to that of the farmer. The fundamental difference between these two seems to be that the farmer is attempting to control and even possess the natural world. In Hebrew the root of Cain's name is "kanah," which means to possess. On the other hand, the shepherd is not attempting to change the world around her but rather accepts the world as it is and is clearly aware of her belonging within it.[3]

After the murder, God declares that Cain will be "cursed from the earth" and destined to be a fugitive and wanderer. At this point Cain leaves his homeland, "goes out from the presence of the Lord" and wanders, eventually to settle again and have children of his own. He builds a city and within seven generations civilization has flowered within this city producing music, metallurgy, new forms of wealth and habitation. Lamech, the seventh in Cain's line, rules over this city.

"We are now in a position to pull together some threads, connecting the deeds of Cain and the civilization that rests upon them. Concerned with his position as number one, eager to establish himself as lord and master of his domain, Cain (like Romulus, the mythic founder of Rome) commits the paradigmatic crime of the political founder: fratricide. For the aspiration to rule entails necessarily the denial and destruction of radical human equality, epitomized in the relationship of brotherhood... And, personal ambitions aside, civil order in the city once founded needs authority and hierarchy (perhaps even divinely sanctioned); not simple equality, but rule, is required."[4]

In Ishmael, Daniel Quinn goes further and describes this incident not as the murder of one brother by another, but rather as a symbol of the genocide committed by an acquisitive, agriculturally-based human culture upon a non-acquisitive, hunter and gathering based human culture.[5] This genocide happens not just once, but becomes the main current in human history as the city/empire displace and destroy more egalitarian human communities. Domination- and accumulation-based civilizations spread not because they are beneficial to people, but because of the military advantages, and the imperative to dominate, hardwired into such civilizations. Though it was easy for domination-based civilizations to subjugate surrounding societies, the oppressive nature of these civilizations leaves them full of internal tensions and prone to rebellion.

The Roman Empire is the archetypal domination-based civilization and policing institutions were first created within the Roman Empire in order to manage its own internal tensions. In the transition from the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire, Augustus developed many of the police institutions of Rome in order to secure his new political position as the first Emperor. These police institutions were exported to the provinces where they functioned alongside already existing methods for maintaining order and resolving disputes. According to Christopher Fuhrmann in his book, Policing the Roman Empire, these police forces did a poor job serving the needs of the communities in which they functioned.[6] They were proactive only when responding to enemies of the state: such as Christians or revolting slaves. Indeed a significant responsibility of these Roman police was apprehending runaway slaves, which is something that we will see again in early American policing.

But before we move from the Roman Empire to the American Empire we can follow the evolution of the development of modern police within the British Empire. After the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, power was organized more locally and on a more limited basis. "The origins of the English police system are to be found in the tribal laws and customs of the Danish and Anglo-Saxon invaders."[7] Another set of invaders, the Normans, added their laws and customs to the existing milieu and at the end of the 11th century, created the the frankenpledge system. Within this system, heads of families made a pledge to one another to obey the law and maintain peace. Together they were responsible for enforcing the pledge and responding to anyone who violated it. If they failed in this, they would be fined by the sovereign.[8] This system relied on the interdependence of small communities. In this way, it is similar to the model of the Nubians mentioned earlier. However, it is also the case that the law that these communities swore to uphold was the law of the Norman conquerors and not

"Sheriff" comes from the Old English "shire reeve," an official responsible for keeping peace (reeve) in a county (shire). Photo from collectors-badges.com

based on their own self-determination.

Over the years, English monarch's added the position of the shire reeve (sheriff), and then the justice of the peace, to make sure communities kept this frankenpledge and to perform other military, fiscal and judicial duties. In the 13th century, towns of significant size were ordered by the crown to institute a night watch. This was an unpaid position, which every man in the town over a certain age was required to participate in. The responsibilities of this position were to keep watch through the night and apprehend any persons breaking the law. At first this was a respected duty, but over the years it came to be seen as an onerous responsibility, and those who could afford to paid others to take their shifts. Night watchmen were notoriously irresponsible and prone to drunkenness. Yet, this system for maintaining security lasted until the massive changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution.[9]

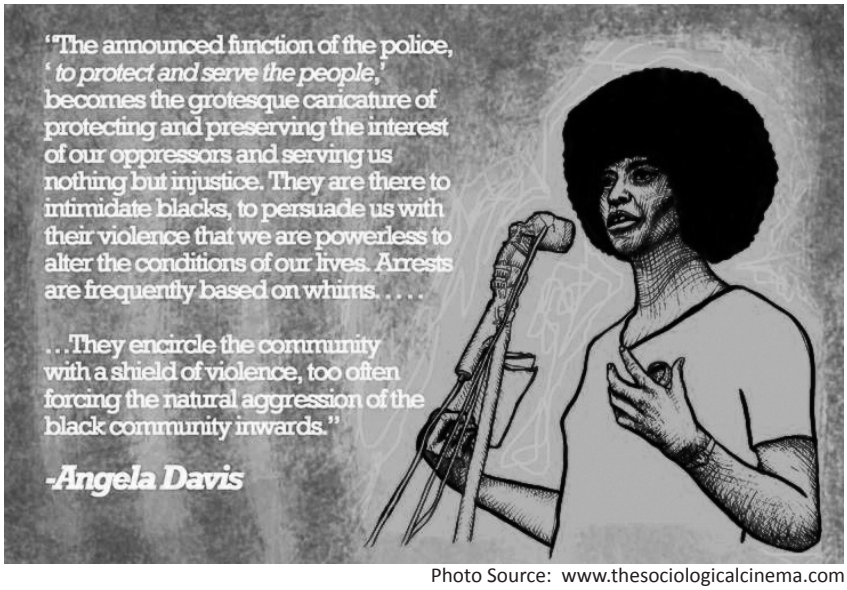


Photo Source: www.thesociologicalcinema.com

It was the stability and cohesion of the local communities themselves, not just the systems of the frankenpledge and night watch, that maintained security over this time. This stability was severally weakened in the tumult and violence of the Industrial Revolution. This great tumult was part of the process of reorienting society from an agrarian, feudal power structure to an industrial, capitalist power structure. And the Metropolitan Police of London, established in 1829 as the first bureaucratically organized police force, emerged as one of the results of this massive transition. "Traditionally in times of social upheaval the landed aristocracy called out the yeomanry. However, neither the yeomanry nor the landed aristocracy had sufficient interest in protecting the property or lifestyles of the urban industrialist. Consequently, the urban bourgeoisie promoted the idea of the London Metropolitan Police Force as a 'class-neutral' social control apparatus."[10] Thus, the Industrial Revolution's breakdown of stability in local communities, and the rise to power of the new bourgeois class, provided impetus for the creation of modern police in London.

Creation of modern police forces modeled on the Metropolitan Police of London quickly followed in most American cities. However, there are significant differences between the context for this in the North and the South. In the North the creation of modern police forces followed the trajectory of London with the police replacing the night watch. However, in the South, the history of the police cannot be separated from the history of white supremacy and slavery.

In the American South the precursor of the police was not the night watch but the slave patrol. The pre- Civil War Southern economy and culture was founded upon the enslavement of black Africans by white settlers. This was a social order of profound oppression. Slave patrols were a piece of the institutional violence upholding slavery. They were created at different points throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. They employed mostly poor whites and their main duties were to catch people who were fleeing from slavery and to prevent enslaved peoples from rising up in rebellion. At the same time that cities in the North began turning their night watches into modern police forces, Southern cities began adding policing duties to their slave patrols.[11]

As we have seen, this history of policing is intimately linked with the very creation of our society. This history shows there are societies that do not need police, societies such as that of the Nubians, which have a natural, egalitarian order. The stories of the Exile from the Garden and the murder of Abel by Cain show how and when our own society lost this natural order. Modern times and the birth of the modern police trace the continued loss of this natural order. Two themes jump out over and over again in this narrative. The first is that there is a dichotomy between egalitarian communities and hierarchical power structures. The second is that real or perceived differences (i.e. difference between genders, difference between races, difference between people of different economic classes) have provided the grounds of conflict which has led away from a naturally ordered egalitarian society towards a more hierarchical society that requires police. If ours is ever to become once again a society without police, it will have to address these differences and redress the enormous violence that has been done because of them. ✚

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Being White in a Police State

by Jenny Truax

If you're white like me, you don't want to read this article. I don't even want to write it. It's bad enough to read about the police state – and we're adding racism and white privilege to the mix? No way!

I'm a suburbs girl; I was raised there in four different states. I was raised white, with all of the privileges, safety nets and blind spots that go along with it. During my plaid-skirted Catholic school years, I was taught that the police help us when we're lost, and that they protect us from baddies. If you have a similar experience, this article, while maybe uncomfortable for you to read, is written with you in mind (plaid skirt notwithstanding). It is those of us who benefit from white privilege who need to learn the most about the interplay of race with the police state. We have some inner work to do too - unfortunately, many of our actions and inactions inadvertently reinforce racism. With work, whites can become allies to people of color.

"With work, white folks can become allies to people of color."
–Jenny Truax photo: Source Unknown

I know the phrases "white privilege," "only whites can be racist," and "police state" makes your skin crawl. You associate them with deodorant-shunning paranoid radicals who are completely out of touch with regular people. Let's look at these terms a little more closely. These phrases might make us uncomfortable because they challenge our framework of understanding. (Again, deodorant notwithstanding.)

Racism: Just the White Hoods?

In a nutshell, the definition of racism is "racial prejudice + power = racism." But what does that mean? So, anyone of any race can have "racial prejudice" (positive or negative stereotypes based on racial characteristics,) and commit violent or unjust acts based on this prejudice. To be racist (rather than simply prejudiced) requires having institutional power, and in the U.S., this power is held by whites. We mostly run the banks and corporations, we make up the largest proportion of lawmakers and judges, we have the money and we make the decisions. Whites control the systems that matter. Because of this power, when we act on our racial prejudices, we are being racist. So, our uncomfortable punch-line for today: Only white people can be racist, because it is we who have institutional power. People of color can be prejudiced, but they cannot be racist, because they don't have the institutional power.[1]

Racism operates in a variety of venues, but whites only often recognize it in its most extreme form (you know, Ku Klux Klan rallies and the occasional celebrity racist slur). In reality, it's much more pervasive. It occurs at the office and the ballpark where "personal racism" occurs: individuals making racial slurs, jokes or characterizations. You can find it in the classroom, where "cultural racism" propagates racist values and standards: biased and white-washed history textbooks, assimilation of students into the dominant white culture, etc. It's in the corporate boardroom and government hall, where "institutional racism" occurs: people of color are considered collateral damage to the idea of "progress" and profit.

Quick Definitions: Target Groups, Dominant Groups, and Allies

For the purposes of this article, let me be clear about some terms I'll be using. If you'll call to mind some different "-isms": racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc. **Targeted groups** are those groups of people "targeted" by the oppression. People in the **dominant group** reap the benefits of the "-ism" and have the power (aka, women are the targeted group in sexism, while men are the dominant group.) We are each a mix of different identities. I am mostly defined by my membership in the dominant group of being raised white and upper-class, and at the same time, as a lesbian, I also identify with the targeted group of LGBTQ people. **Allies** are people within the dominant group who seek to acknowledge their privilege, challenge injustice, and work with members of the targeted group to create just structures.

Jenny Truax has started playing tennis again with her high school doubles partner. Watch out, Venus and Serena!

The Police State and Racism

The common definition of the police state involves the government exercising repressive controls over the social, economic, and political life of the population through the arbitrary use of police power. As you've already read in Daniel's article, the U.S. is accumulating lots of characteristics associated with a police state: massive surveillance of the public, increased militarization of the police, and the curtailing of civil liberties. While white folks are just starting to notice this, people of color have experienced the wrath of the police state throughout U.S. history. Just ask the Native Americans, who were and are the target of genocide, or a Japanese American about the internment camps during World War II. You've seen the photos of police water hoses and dogs pointed at African-American Civil Rights marchers, but also check out the deaths of Fred Hampton and other Black Panther leaders (targeted assassinations organized by the FBI and Chicago police.) The operations of Cointelpro, a secret FBI project that infiltrated "subversive" organizations (often movements for self-determination by people of color,) provides another example, as does the routine, widely-embraced racial profiling that currently happens in Arizona, New York, and yes, even St. Louis.[2]

We like to gloss over this, but throughout U.S. history and still today, race has been a convenient category for the powers-that-be to control and profit from people who are not white. Historically, and today, we criminalize behavior in people of color that in whites, we ignore or excuse. Tim Wise notes, "the development of modern white supremacy was very much connected to the way in which the class system developed... planter elites during the colonial period used the notion of whiteness as a way to split class-based coalitions between enslaved Africans and indentured Europeans."[3]

If you take a quick look at our prisons, you will generalize that either African Americans and Latinos use drugs and break laws more than whites, or that our system somehow targets them. Looking back to the history of prisons in the U.S. unearths some interesting facts that support the latter supposition. For our purposes, we'll just look at Alabama. Before the slaves were set free, 99% of people in Alabama's penitentiaries were white. Soon, states including Alabama revised Slave Codes into new "Black Codes," criminalizing acts such as missing work, handling money carelessly, and performing "insulting gestures." (Obviously whites were free to do any of these things.) Within a short period of time, the overwhelming majority of convicts were black. The newly created convict lease system and the county chain gain then used these black convicts to create a new unpaid workforce. The parallels to today's privatized jail system are unmistakable.[4]

I know what you're hoping now - all this happened before the 2000s, before Obama, so it's all good now, right? Sorry. Unfortunately, these practices are not all ancient history. In report after report, it has been extensively documented that people of color are watched and arrested at a vastly higher rate than whites. Furthermore, they are imprisoned and sentenced more often and for longer times than whites. To use one example, Caucasian and African American men speed, steal, deal and use drugs in proportionally equal numbers, but Black men are five times as likely to be arrested for a drug offense. The evidence that the "criminal justice system" continues to target people of color over whites is compelling.[5]

Tragically, the racism of our criminal justice system pervades both the everyday experiences and the psyches of targeted groups. Internalized racist oppression looks different for different people, but common elements include lowered self-esteem, a sense of inferiority, low expectations and imaginations of possibility. I often wonder what it is like for the African American mothers of young boys at Karen House. Many of these mothers' experiences show them that their son is more likely to end up in jail or dead than in college.

How Whites are Affected by the Police State

People who are considered white benefit - historically, and today -from racism enforced by the police state. Accumulated wealth is an easy marker to look at; whites benefited from land stolen from Native Americans and granted to white settlers. Whites benefited from the free labor of enslaved people for 200 years. The state has consistently limited the rights (the right to vote, own property, etc.) of targeted groups, which has bolstered the power of white, wealthy men in the realms of government and business.

RACIAL PREJUDICE + POWER = RACISM

But let's go to utopia for a minute and pretend that everyone is born on a level playing field. Right now, how do whites benefit from a racist police state? Broadly speaking, we are not targeted and policed in the way other groups are. Ask any African American about their experience of the phrase "Driving While Black". Ask any Muslim about their experience of racial profiling. While the police are busy policing communities of color, white kids' drug use goes unnoticed, and certainly unpunished in terms of jail time. The scrutiny directed toward other communities gives whites a free pass that is unacknowledged and even denied.

How might the racist police state hurt white people? I've never considered that racism might hurt me too. As it turns out, racism scars the oppressor group as well. In his book Uprooting Racism, Paul Kivel lists some of the many ways whites are hurt by racism. He observes that white people tend to:

- Feel a false sense of superiority, a belief that we should be in control and in authority, and that people of color should be maids, servants, and gardeners and do the less-valued work of our society.
- Live, work, and play in "distorted, limited, and less rich" settings that are largely white, and thus lose the presence and contributions of people of color to our neighborhoods, schools, and relationships.
- Fail to see that we're being economically exploited by those who divert our attention into mistrust of race-based scapegoats.
- Suffer spiritually, to the extent that we've lost touch with our people's original spiritual traditions toward the goal of assimilating into being white.

- Become cynical, despairing, apathetic, and pessimistic when we do acknowledge the ongoing existence of white racism.

How Whites Respond to Racism

No one wants to be the bad guy! White people don't really want to talk about racism - it's icky and uncomfortable! When we hear about police brutality against African Americans or the continued oppression of Native Americans, we do all kinds of things to get around it - we minimize it, blame the victim, and deny it (see "Distancing Behaviors" graph). We can either show a lack of sensitivity (when we see racism existing only outside of ourselves), or an awkward oversensitivity (paralyzing guilt, fear of saying the wrong thing); both can damage our ability to form relationships and grow. Where are you on this spectrum? I myself tend towards the latter.

So why do we use these distancing behaviors? A few reasons come to mind. 1) Many of us feel paralyzed with guilt about racism. We know it's there, we know we think racist things and we see it in the media. Without any positive, safe space to talk about it, we get bound up and defensive. 2) We are afraid of what our family, friends and co-workers will think of us if we start to be honest about where we see racism. We feel uncomfortable, we know people of color will feel uncomfortable, so it's easier to dismiss and avoid racism than to name it. 3) We feel entitled to what we've earned, and threatened when our myths about the level playing field begin to tumble. 4) As members of the "haves" in terms of race, we have to de-humanize and minimize the have-nots as a coping mechanism for the suffering we are causing them. This is a difficult one, but I think deep down a lot of white people don't really believe that the Chinese sweatshop worker, the mother in Africa, or the Mexican immigrant living in South City has the same sorrows, struggles, pain and joy that we do.[6] If the dominant group really embraced the personhood of people in these targeted groups, revolution would occur tomorrow!

It's no wonder that whites like to proclaim that we are color-blind, focus on our ethnic heritage when race is brought up, and claim we live in post-racial society - things get more complicated when we step away from these beliefs. When we are engaged in communities of color - whether it's volunteering at the International Institute with immigrants or living at a Catholic Worker house in an African American neighborhood, it's easy to fall into some traps - destructive mindsets that prevent our growth. One trap is the idea of "diversity training". Diversity training often leads to tokenization (aka, people of color are like the raisins in my oatmeal; it just takes a few to make the dish more rich) rather than true anti-racist analysis and action.[7] A few additional traps are described by Shelly Tochluk in Witnessing Whiteness. The first is the Savior Complex.

I'll use a not at all (!) personal experience to describe this trap. In this scenario, we graduate from college, and we want to change the world - end racism, end poverty! Maybe we join Teach for America, the Catholic Worker, or Jesuit Volunteer Corps. We often start out inexperienced, fairly skillless, and soon, we don the mindset: 'I can't leave- then, who would they have? They need me.' We see ourselves as necessary and indispensable, even though we've been there a short time, and will probably be gone within a few years. For our own sense of identity and worth, we need our client/patient/student to succeed, to break from poverty, to score well. This is a paternalistic objectification, if a well-intentioned one.

Within this trap we also tend to ignore the privilege that enabled us to join these volunteer-type groups, and believe that our good intentions will make up for our lack of skills and cultural knowledge. They do not; it is racism that allows the unqualified and uneducated white do-gooder to teach a roomful of inner city students. The Savior Complex, which can rear its ugly head in cross-racial justice work, and in any stage of our lives, undermines awareness of the larger context and inhibits our growth as allies.

We especially don't like to think about the **Superiority Complex**. For whites, it's easy to unconsciously engage communities of color with an attitude of internalized superiority. We believe that our unique skills and good heart make it ok for us to take leadership positions, to direct conversations, and to steer meetings and work. This often this happens too quickly, before we know the community and its people or have the appropriate experience or skill set. If we enter a new job, volunteer in a campaign, or start a new community to help 'save people,' with an unconscious attitude of "I know best," rather than one of humility and openness, we might be perpetuating the racism we claim to decry.

You'll probably recognize the **Sympathy Trap**. Sometimes our outrage over the effects of oppression - poverty, hunger, etc - turns into pity, leading us to act in disempowering ways. Our narrative of pity leads us to neglect some resources that are available in the community, or to have low expectations of people of color which may unconsciously limit their growth and progress. Or conversely, we may undermine the others self-worth by equating it with success or authority - things that may be unattainable.

Towards Liberation!

I told you that you didn't want to read this article. So, rather than gnash our teeth and flounder in the oceans of racism, oppression and dysfunction around us, let's look for some life rafts towards liberation and wholeness!

Shelly Tochluk gives us some direction as she describes her own process in becoming a white ally to people of color: "I needed to look closely at myself. First, I had to stop seeing the racist as some evil bad person out there, disconnected from me. Second, I needed to find supportive people to help me discover the subtle ways that racism continues to live deep in my psyche. Third, I had to admit that my work was as much about myself, and my need to heal, as it was about those with whom I worked... Recognizing the way guilt and unresolved anxiety concerning my whiteness sabotaged my work actually released me to become a more appropriately confident person engaged in more effective work, and able to be more intimate and honest in cross-race relationships."

Racism occurs at the personal, group, and institutional level; we can't fix it all at once, but we can engage it in many places. Personal work is the most essential thing – we can't dismantle racism in our groups, in the government and society if we aren't doing the work within ourselves. As our understanding grows and expands, guilt, shame, and defensiveness often arise. It's helpful for whites to have other white people with which to process their own racism (remember, it's not the job of people of color to help white people unlearn racism). The following list describes some helpful guidelines for whites seeking to be anti-racist allies.[8]

- Acknowledge and learn more about how you benefit from racism.

- Do the inner work, being gentle with yourself and know you'll make mistakes. Reflect the role of race in your upbringing and education. Honestly name your own racist thoughts and behaviors (if only to yourself at first).
- Talk about race at the dinner table, in the office, and with friends. When you do, acknowledge that people of color have been talking about these subjects for a long time, and have been routinely ignored in the process.
- With your time, talent and treasure, support groups that challenge racism.
- Expect to be uncomfortable, and know this can lead to deeper reflection, understanding and growth.
- Learn about the connections between racism, sexism, and other oppressions.
- Listen responsively to people of color.
- Know that you are part of an anti-racist freedom struggle with a long history and a strong future.
- Commit to challenging racist jokes, references and policies.
- Seek out others who seek to challenge racism.
- Remember, white privilege is not having to deal with racism all of the time. Assume racism is everywhere; just as gender, age, and economics influence everything, so does race.
- Consider how your favorite organization can become a better ally to targeted groups.
- Be an agent for change: defend civil liberties and civil rights for all people, especially those from targeted groups.

So, is it a stretch to believe that my efforts to become an anti-racist ally will end police brutality or democratize our laws in regards to people of color? Maybe, but it's not a stretch to believe that when we do this anti-racism work, our eyes are opened further, bringing new energy and awareness to the people and groups we touch. When we bring an anti-racist presence to our neighborhood associations, play dates, and work interactions, we are building alternatives to the racism, fear and greed that undergird the police state. Maybe you too will end up writing an article about white privilege that seems too depressing to write, and then maybe someone else will pass on this idea. After all, how else is the world changed, but through personal relationships?

Sources, Resources, and Further Reading

1. stuffwhitepeopledo.blogspot.com/2009/09/wonder-how-to-define-racism.html
2. Racial profiling info: racialprofilinganalysis.neu.edu/ and aclu.org/blog/tag/racial-profiling
3. timwise.org/f-a-q-s/
4. Are Prisons Obsolete? by Angela Davis
5. For more on racial disparities related to the "criminal" justice system, visit colorlines.org, Bill Quigley's "Fourteen Examples of Racism in Criminal Justice System," and The Sentencing Project
6. "Hey, White Liberals: A Word On The Boston Bombings, The Suffering Of White Children, And The Erosion of Empathy" - blackgirldangerous.org/new-blog/2013/4/22/hey-white-liberals
7. "Diversity Training: Good For Business but Insufficient for Social Change" by David Rogers
8. Sources for Action: jlove.mvmt.com/2013/04/25/code-of-ethics-for-white-anti-racist-allies/

Common Distancing Behaviors

Simple Denial - "Racism ended when Obama became president/blacks got the vote…" "I'm not racist, I never owned slaves or lynched anyone."	**Lack of Personal Responsibility -** Asking individual people of color to represent the whole group; expecting people of color to help us become less racist
Bad Apple/Blame the Bad Apple - "Racial profiling isn't a systemic problem, it's just a few isolated cases" "I couldn't believe how racist my neighbor is…." Denying systemic injustice with claims of isolated incidents. Accusing the bad apple in order to feel righteous while actually closing down meaningful discussion.	**Blaming the Victim -** "If they weren't so angry/lazy/violent, maybe we could help them." "Trayvon Martin shouldn't have been walking outside late at night with a hoodie over his head" "Crossing the border is illegal, so they deserve whatever the police give them."
Utopia - Focusing solely on how things should be, rather than how they are now. "We just need to love well, and racism will end"	**Competing Victimization -** "The Mexicans are taking all our jobs." "Women have it worse than blacks do." "Well, it's so hard to be a police officer."
Over Aanalyzing - Talking the issue to death without committing to any action; nitpicking about facts (especially when we wouldn't on another issue) and ignoring the big picture	**Minimization -** "You should see the racism that happens in other countries!" "Well, at least it's better than it was in the 60s." "If you're not doing anything wrong, you shouldn't mind the police policy of Stop and Frisk"

From Karen House

by Pat Poehling

On any given Wednesday, around 12:45pm or so, I can be found walking up the ramp at Karen House to start my afternoon house shift. The ramp was a welcome addition--especially when the car needs to be emptied of whatever I am bringing to the house that particular week.

In 2001 when our daughter graduated from St. Louis University and our tuition expenses were about to end, I began to look for some different volunteer opportunities. I had been introduced to Karen House by my best friend, but was able to drop in only once in a while because of time constraints. I loved the concepts of the Catholic Worker and believed in what Dorothy Day was trying to accomplish. I thought I was living those concepts, but when I started taking house on a regular basis I realized that I was not, because I really didn't know what those concepts meant! Sure, I knew the corporal works of mercy. I was a "cradle-Catholic" who went through Catholic schools all of my life – as did my children. I was taught to give to the poor and figured I had done that well. But not until I walked into the doors of Karen House did I realize that I had never really lived in relationship with the poor nor did I know how to accomplish that.

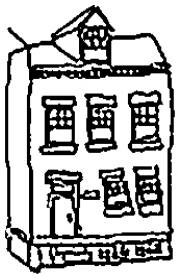
"Sure, I knew the corporal works of mercy... But until I walked into the doors of Karen House I realized that I had never really lived in relationship with the poor nor did I know how to accomplish that."
-Pat Poehling

Webster Dictionary defines relationship as the "state of being connected." What and how does that definition play out at Karen House? When I first came, I was under the notion that I could help fix the lives of the people who came for help. After all, I was an educated woman who had a lot of experience with people who had been through lots of trauma in their lives. I had raised two children who were now college educated and felt successful in my relationship with my spouse and those children. So I came to Karen House on my white horse ready to ride in and save the day…NOT! The first day when I walked in, the house was chaotic! Melissa Brickey, who trained me to take house, said "just hang in there…it gets better…" I remember leaving the first couple of weeks thinking that I was used to organized chaos but I wasn't used to the happenings of Karen House: the interactions both good and bad between the women, the community loving them unconditionally and supporting them and each other, doorbells going off simultaneously, phones ringing and kids screaming. I prayed for a sign that I was really supposed to be here--and then it came! I remember Annjie and Coco giving a talk to junior high kids and Annjie saying it is not my job to "fix anyone--it is my privilege to walk this journey we call life in relationship with the women and my fellow community members and try to be the best we can be to each other". That was my sign!

It is my honor to be at Karen House and walk this journey with the community and the women--and I needed to be there. Is it always easy? I can answer that with a resounding no! Sometimes, especially when the temps are 150 degrees and tempers even hotter, I leave wondering where I am supposed to be. But then the words that Annjie said that day resound in my head and the answer is "Yes!" I am blessed to have been in relationship with some beautiful women who are faith-filled and strong, who have worked through poverty and addictions, who have borne and raised children alone and yet will sit in the office and tell me they are blessed because they found Karen House and love it there. I have met and witnessed strong relationships among community members who have supported each other through all kinds of anguish and shared each other's joys, and I feel a part of that community. I have driven women to doctor's appointments, learned how to cook corn on the cob and greens from Sherrye Brooks, witnessed the birth of their babies, seen the pride in their eyes when they finally get their own place . . .cried at the funerals of their children . . .I have been humbled by it all . . .and blessed by it as well.

It's not always easy, and there are days that I question what I bring to the house, but I can say that being a part of the Karen House community has taught me to live in relationship – and what that word really means. Here's to another 12 years!

Pat Poehling has been a great friend of Karen House and works with the St. Vincent DePaul Society at St. Vincent's Parish.



From Kabat House

by James Meinert

Sometimes I feel like I need a little change in my life. I'm not sure what it is, though—a new job, a new living space, a new relationship, a change in a relationship, a graduation, maybe a dog, maybe a change of mental state. Sometimes I get what I want. And then it seems like everything is changing.

Kabat House is going through one of those times. I realize that change isn't something that happens suddenly but only seems so. An asteroid may surprise us when it crashes into Earth, but it was on that path for quite a while. And I don't think that the changes are either inevitable or just a turn of chance (though we are in the 14th Baktun since December 22 so maybe this is the "forces of change and evolution of consciousness" I heard was coming if the world didn't end). I simply believe that people keep growing, moving, making decisions for their life in the best way they can given the information they have in order to live as well as possible.

"In Kabat House a season is coming to an end and a new Spring is upon us sooner than we know." – James Meinert
Photo by: Ashleigh Packard

So lots of little changes take place over time until all-of-a-sudden it looks like a big change. What changes, you are asking? Well, new jobs, new living spaces, new relationships, changes in relationships, a graduation, a new dog, etc. Some folks that have been living in Kabat House for some time look like they are moving out. Some folks who have been building connections with our community for some time are looking to move in. Change is in the air. One person who doesn't really have any big changes going on right now, though, keeps emphasizing that he'll be moving to Louisiana in July... of 2014.

So to some people big changes are attractive and maybe even contagious, in as much as to others they are also scary and confusing. And I think the changes happening aren't that big really. Kabat House will continue being what it is: A place where people grow and find themselves, a place where people who have been marginalized because they are immigrants are given a home and a community, and a place where life is celebrated.

We have some big questions still looming for us as we move forward. How will we continue to fight against racism, ours and society's structured racism all around us? How will we respond to the winds of gentrification that are blowing in our neighborhood? What do we do about Paul McKee taking people's homes away? Because to him and many other developers they are just houses not homes—either in the way of a big development or an opportunity for profit. How do we build a supportive community where people thrive, have their voices heard, and needs met? The exciting thing is that we are still energetically taking these and other battles on. In all the changes there will be no giving up.

In fact, one of the biggest changes going on is that eternal cycle of change that happens every year as winter eases us into spring, and this one has been easing as slowly as possible. But just like last year and the years before that, we are out in the many gardens on our block and beyond working the soil, sowing seeds, watering, and waiting. Not that much watering though, as the rain has been plentiful. With much love we tend our gardens and with much fretting we hope they produce food for us and our neighbors.

In a way, all of the changes happening in our community can be seen as a part of the eternal cycle. Our collective grows larger, then shrinks, then grows again. It takes on new projects while letting go of others. People come and others go. In the same way in a garden from year to year there are rarely any plants in the same place as last year (except perennials like Asparagus but even that got moved at New Roots this year). Its similar to how all that rain we are getting has taken our river from drought to flood. In Kabat House a season is coming to an end and a new Spring is upon us sooner than we know. So we turn towards the coming changes in expectation and hope. What will the community be like? What new passions and joys will surface? How much more will we get to enjoy banjo playing now? And with all of our questions, we know that it is good. It is good. ✚

James Meinert is excited about moving to the N. 18th street apartments where he will live with his partner Mary and their cat they are trying to adopt, Parsnip.

Catholic Worker Thought & Action: *Community*

by Carolyn Griffeth

Recently, my eight-year-old son, Finn, has shifted my sense of what raising my kids "in community" means. It began when I noticed how busy he had become with school and the demands of training to be a circus artist—his self-chosen passion. I saw that his life could become so full with these activities that he would have little time to play with his neighborhood friends, most of who live in the Section 8 apartment building next door. Without prioritizing these friendships, Finn would likely grow apart from his friends who have less opportunity.

"What would it look like to make these friendships a top priority?" I asked myself. From this question came the idea of starting a Kids' Club for neighborhood kids that would meet at our house on Saturdays. I ran the idea by Finn and by some of his neighborhood friends, who loved the idea. On the following Saturday, when a couple of Finn's friends came over to play, I suggested that we go invite other kids to join us. I followed behind as they knocked on the doors of various apartments to invite friends to come out and play. When possible, I met the parents, explained Kids' Club, and invited them to join us. To my surprise, some did!

In the following weeks several parents and some of my Kabat House community members gathered to play games and do crafts with the kids in the neighborhood. New kids joined us each week and some met each other for the first time. One mother said to me that her daughter didn't have any friends in the neighborhood before Kids' Club. One Saturday, we saw three boys hitting apartment doors with a baseball bat and running. I ran out after them and asked if they wanted to come over and play. They joined us sheepishly, explaining that they were new to the neighborhood. It didn't take long for these boys to become mainstays of Kids' Club and cherished friends of my son.

The immediate effect of inviting kids over on Saturdays is that often the same kids will return on Sundays or whenever they suspect Finn is home. As our kids have grown closer, so have I and the parents involved in Kids' Club, and gradually it has become our shared project. Perhaps the most enthusiastic is Shameka, a grandmother who cares for her two grandsons and who lost both or her sons to street violence. While I was down with the flu, Shameka arranged for a Kid's Club Thanksgiving dinner at her house. Likewise, when we got free tickets to take kids to the City Museum, Shameka invited other families and provided transportation. When I commented to her about how pleased I was about how exceptionally well the kids played together, she replied, "Why shouldn't they? They're neighbors."

This week Finn and I have been reading Tom Sawyer. We reached the part where Tom and Becky are lost in a cave for three days and everyone in town has given them up for dead. When Tom and Becky escape and return to town in the middle of the night the village bells are rung and "in a moment the streets were swarming with frantic half-clad people" banging pots and pans, blowing horns, and shouting, "Turn out! They are found!" The scene gives the impression that not a soul in town wasn't in the street celebrating the return of Becky and Tom.

I paused the story and said wistfully to Finn, "Isn't it amazing how everyone in town cared so much about Tom and Becky? Community like this just doesn't exist any more."

"Not really," said Finn. I looked at him quizzically.

Finn continued: "I am building that kind of community with my friends in the neighborhood."

Amazed I replied, "You are Finn. Really you are."

The truth of Finn's words filled me with wonder. Yes, kids do know how to build community! The separation that adults often feel from one another and particularly from those of a different race or class background, doesn't exist with young children—it has yet to be instilled. Perhaps what I have gained most from Kids' Club is this reminder of the closeness that is natural to being human. This authentic bondedness that we who live "in community" work so hard to achieve comes naturally to these children.

I can't help but ask, "What has kept me from being equally close to the other mothers in our neighborhood?" Have our differences in race and class led me to unconsciously believe that we can't be close, that somehow we don't belong together? Perhaps. Yet as I sit with three neighborhood moms and watch our children play together, it feels so right; it is as if the children have dug a passage that we too can squeeze through. ✚

Carolyn Griffeth has been working hard on developing workshops on community and also recently celebrated Ghana's graduation from high school.

The Round Table

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Teka Childress House
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314-588-9901

www.KarenHouseCW.org

Thank you for your support!

With your recent donations we've done some major repairs on our 100+ year old building - tuckpointing, roof work, window replacements, and gutter fixes. Your support has enabled us to ensure that our building will be warm, dry, and safe for our guests - thank you so much!

House Needs

Karen House:

Fans

Fare Trade Coffee

Kabat House:

Love and Friends to visit!

Little House:

Gas Dryer and Refrigerator

Help with new roof

Announcements

Round Table Discussion on
"Marching Towards a Police State"
Join us to discuss the articles and ideas from this issue, Friday August 17th at 7pm, Karen House Dining Room.

New Hope CW Farm Workshop
Alternative Education, Sept. 8-13, 2013
From folk schools to unschooling, ecological education to Waldorf schooling, we'll explore the world of radical pedagogy for children and adults. The workshop will integrate reading, discussion, healthy food, prayer, manual labor and lecture. For more info or to register call Eric, 563-556-0987

New Life Hearing
The Winter Outreach group is opposing efforts by downtown developers and residents to name New Life a "nuisance property." You are invited to attend the hearing on this issue on Sept. 24th 1:45pm at City Hall, Room 208. Call Teka, 314-974-2552 for further details.

We welcome your donations and participation. As Catholic Workers our hospitality to the homeless is part of an integrated lifestyle of simplicity, service, and resistance to oppression, all of which is inherently political. For this reason, we are not a tax exempt organization. Furthermore, we seek to create an alternative culture where giving is celebrated and human needs are met directly through close, personal human relationships. Thus, all of our funding comes from individuals like you who share yourself and your funds so that this work can go on.

Check **www.KarenHouseCW.org** for updates on Karen House, information on the Catholic Worker, an archive of past Round Tables, and more!