

Dear Blog Readers,

Once again I bring to you a few stories which I think will enlighten you to some of the in justice that goes on in the prison system. Just like the story I posted a while back from the New Yorker title The Program, our State Officials don't want the public to know the truth of all the corruption going on and at what cost.

These stories I am posting come from "The Real Cost of Prisons Project." The characters in these stories are fictional, but the their experiences were taken from actual case histories.

The Real Cost of Prisons Project brings together prison/justice policy activists with political economist to create workshops and materials which explore both the immediate and long-term cost of mass incarceration on the individual, her/his family, community and the nation.

Since my incarceration I've notice the large amount of teenagers being arrested and inprison to long and harsh numbers with life on the back in most cases for drug sales. Another large amount of people who are incarcerated with like numbers are people who should have gotten drug treatment. The national average cost to imprison a person for one year is \$29,041.00

If after reading these stories you would like to learn more go to; [www.realcostofprisons.org](http://www.realcostofprisons.org) or [info@realcostofprioions.org](mailto:info@realcostofprioions.org)

For more work by the artist Sabrina Jones, go to;

[www.sabrinaland.com](http://www.sabrinaland.com)

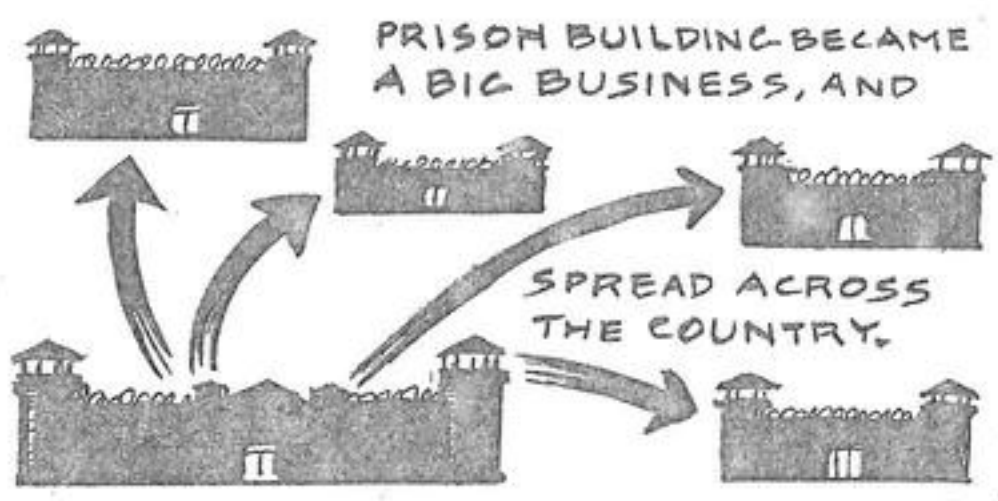
Any comments you may have for me write me at the address located on my profile page or just leave a comment on blog site.

God Bless  
George Jarge

FROM THE 1920'S TO THE 1960'S, AMERICA INCARCERATED ABOUT 1 IN EVERY 1,000 PEOPLE.

IN THE '70'S, THE RATE SUDDENLY ROSE, WITH THE PASSAGE OF TOUGH NEW DRUG LAWS - THE 1ST STRIKE IN THE WAR ON DRUGS

BY 2000, NEARLY 5 IN EVERY 1,000 PEOPLE WERE INCARCERATED.



PRISON BUILDING BECAME A BIG BUSINESS, AND

NOW U.S. PRISONS HOLD OVER 2 MILLION PEOPLE.

WHO'S NEW ON THE INSIDE? MOSTLY PEOPLE CONVICTED OF LOW LEVEL DRUG CRIMES:

# PRISONERS OF THE WAR ON DRUGS

MOSTLY AFRICAN-AMERICANS & LATINOS

MORE & MORE WOMEN

MY BOSS GOT OFF ON A PLEA BARGAIN BY POINTING TO ME. I HAD NO ONE TO POINT TO.

IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD THE COPS WILL STOP YOU FOR NO REASON

NOW WHO'LL TAKE CARE OF MY KIDS?

WITH SO MANY DRUG DEALERS AND USERS BEHIND BARS - THE STREETS MUST BE SQUEAKY CLEAN, RIGHT?

WRONG! DRUGS ARE CHEAPER AND MORE AVAILABLE THAN BEFORE THIS "WAR" BEGAN.

# "BOBBY" <sup>59</sup> \*

WAS 16  
WHEN HE  
STARTED  
WORKING  
IN THE  
DRUG  
TRADE.



\* BASED  
ON VARIOUS  
TRUE STORIES



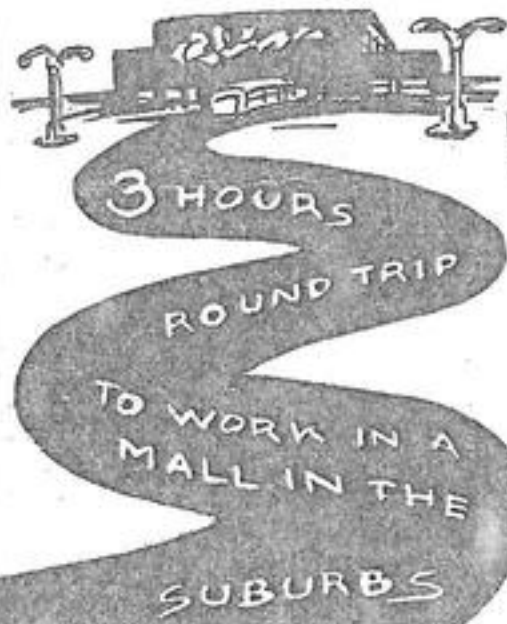
HE LIVED IN A SMALL  
APARTMENT IN  
CHICAGO



WITH HIS MOM, HIS TWO LITTLE  
BROTHERS, AND HIS SISTER.



EVERY DAY  
HIS MOTHER  
RODE THE BUS



3 HOURS  
ROUND TRIP  
TO WORK IN A  
MALL IN THE  
SUBURBS



LET'S GO,  
GUYS! GET  
READY FOR  
SCHOOL

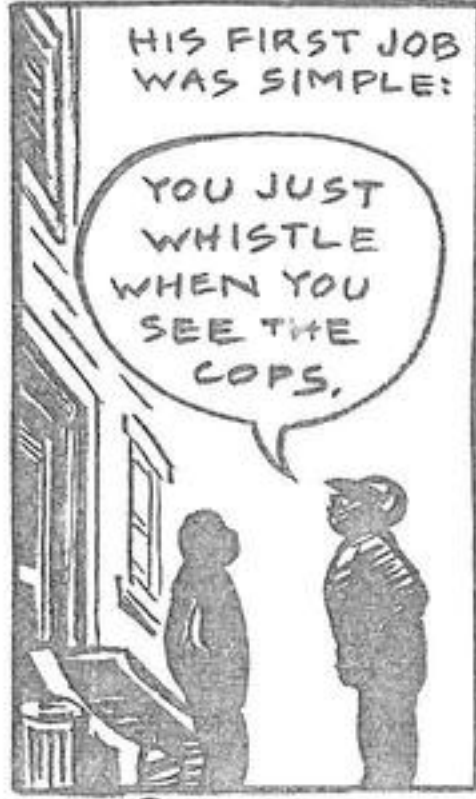
THEY  
ALREADY  
GREW OUT  
OF THEIR  
CLOTHES  
AGAIN!



HI KIDS,  
I'M HOME

HI MOM

I CAN'T  
ASK HER  
FOR ANY  
MORE  
MONEY



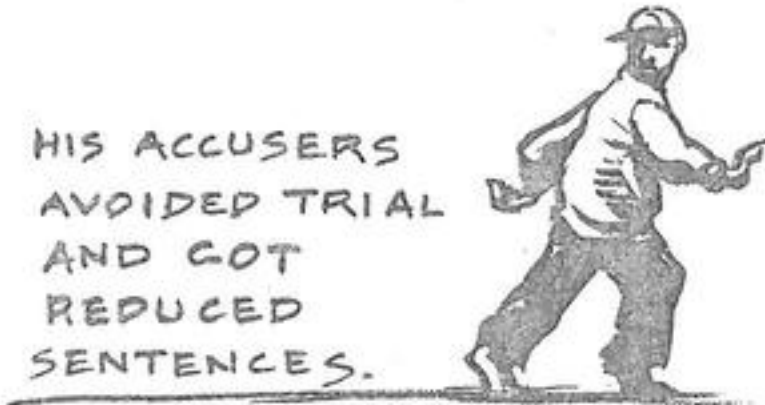
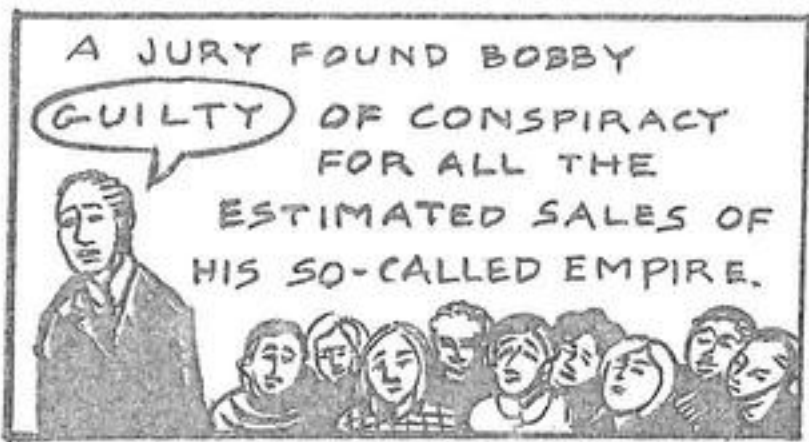
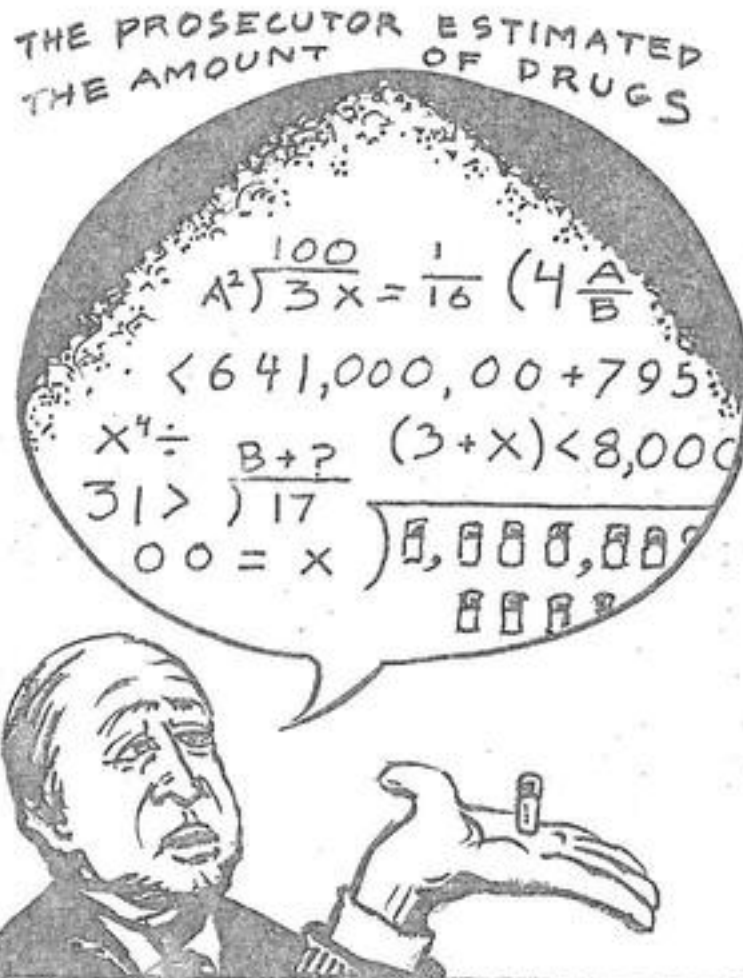
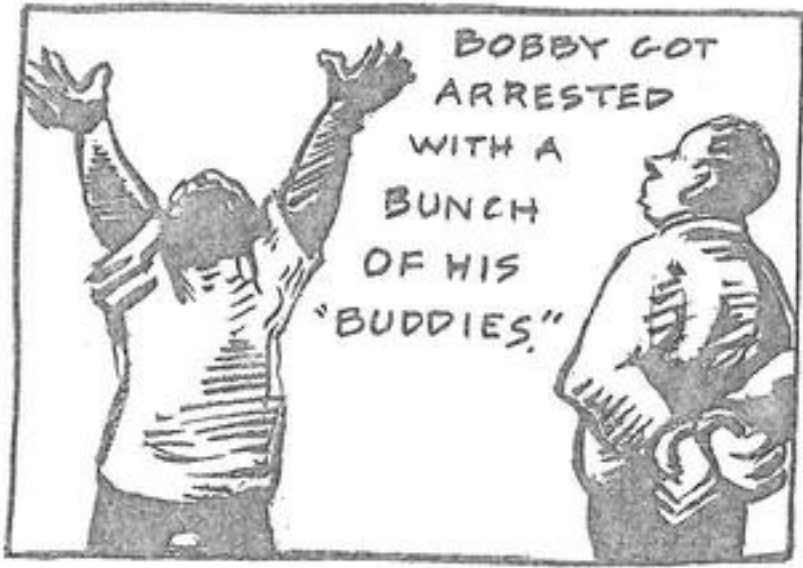
HIS FIRST JOB  
WAS SIMPLE:

YOU JUST  
WHISTLE  
WHEN YOU  
SEE THE  
COPS,

BOBBY MADE  
\$300 A  
WEEK  
CASH

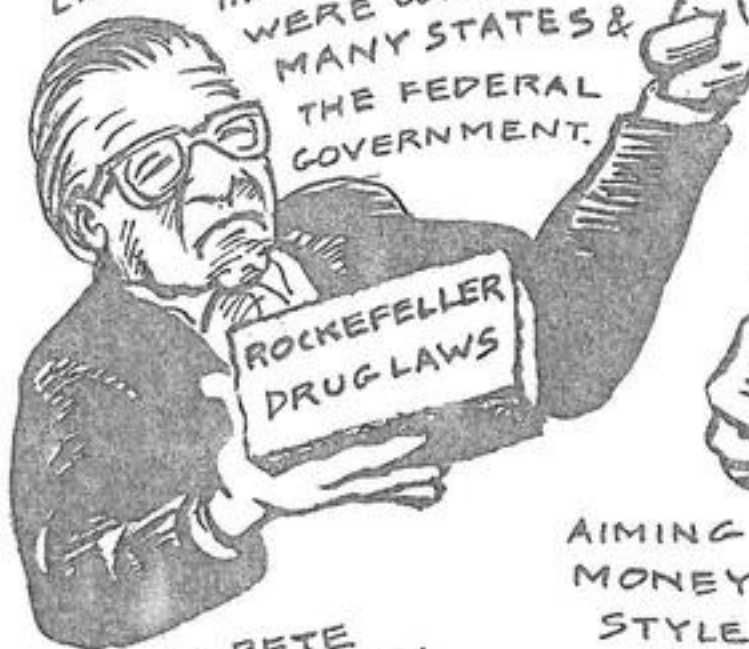


& STAYED IN SCHOOL.

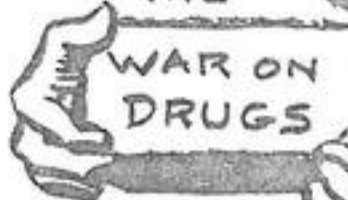


# MEET THE BUILDERS OF THE DRUG PRISON BOOM

NY GOV. NELSON ROCKEFELLER LAID THE 1ST BRICK IN 1973. HIS HARSH SENTENCES WERE COPIED IN MANY STATES & THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.



PRES. RONALD REAGAN IN 1981 DECLARED THE



FIRST LADY NANCY: just say no!

AIMING LOTS OF MONEY AT MILITARY-STYLE POLICING IN URBAN AREAS.

CA GOV. PETE WILSON HIT A POLITICAL HOME RUN: 3 STRIKES LAWS 1994



25 YEARS TO LIFE FOR A 3rd FELONY (EVEN NON-VIOLENT.) THE LAW WAS COPIED BY 22 STATES & THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

PRES. BILL CLINTON: SOME FOLKS CALL ME A LIBERAL, BUT WATCH HOW TOUGH I AM ON CRIME!



BANNED PEOPLE WITH DRUG CONVICTIONS FROM WELFARE AND FOOD STAMPS

NO STUDENT LOANS IF YOU ARE INCARCERATED OR A FORMER "DRUG FELON."

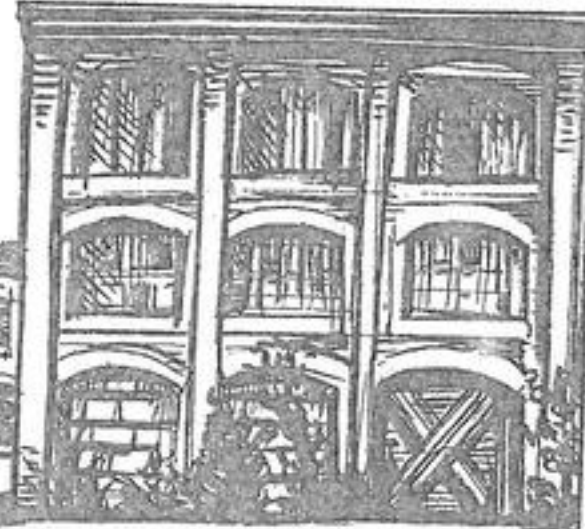




# Yvonne

IS 22 YEARS OLD AND PREGNANT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

HER NEIGHBORHOOD IN SPRINGFIELD, MA. HAS BEEN DELAYING AROUND



SILENT FACTORIES SINCE THE JOBS WENT SOUTH.

ON HER WAY TO THE STORE ONE SUNDAY NIGHT...

HEY-DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO BUY SOME CRACK? I'LL PAY YOU \$20.

STUPID CRACKHEAD

\$20!

WAIT RIGHT HERE.



YVONNE DOESN'T DO DRUGS, BUT SHE KNOWS HER NEIGHBORHOOD.



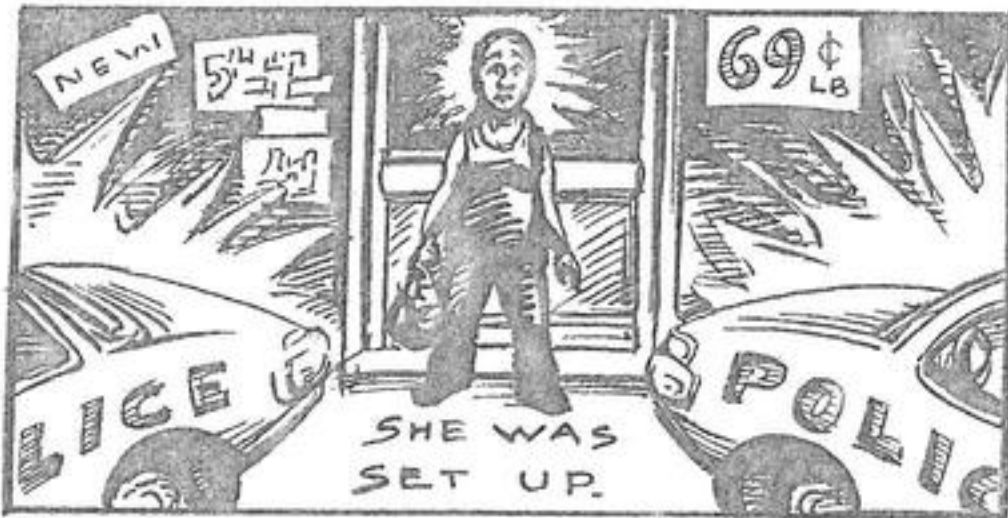
IT LOOKED LIKE

THE EASIEST \$20

SHE EVER EARNED.



SHE DIDN'T KNOW HER "CLIENT" WAS A POLICE INFORMANT



SHE WAS SET UP.



CHARGED WITH SALE OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN A SCHOOL ZONE.

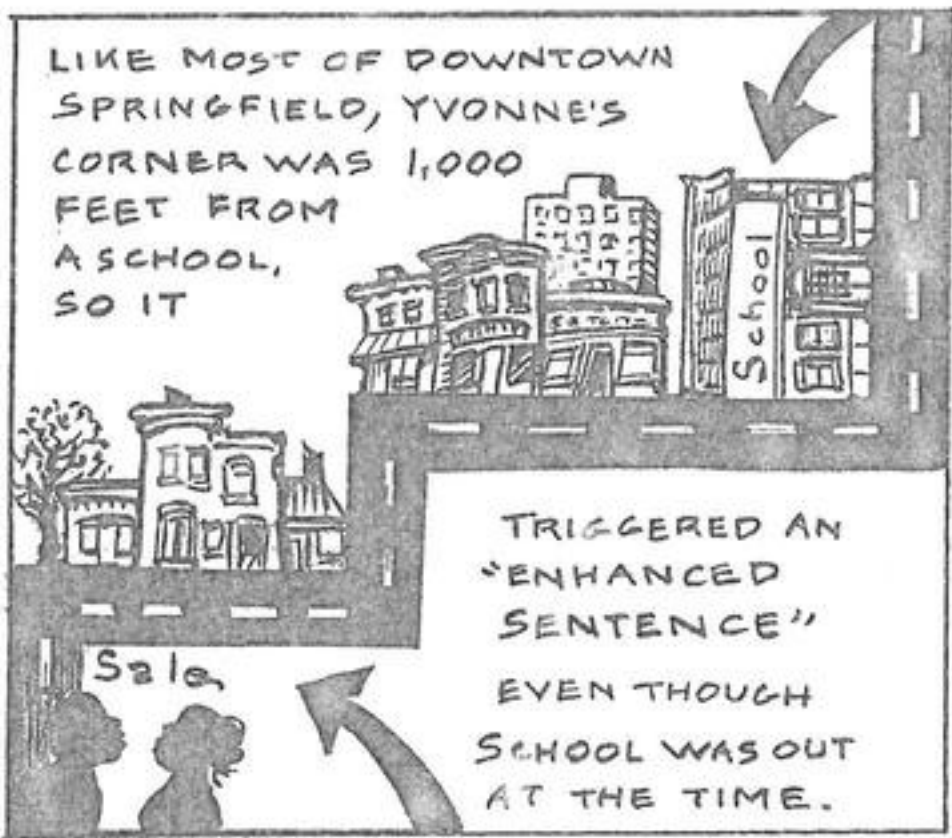


THE TROUBLE SHE'S SEEN



MEN MAJ

BUT WOM MU



LIKE MOST OF DOWNTOWN SPRINGFIELD, YVONNE'S CORNER WAS 1,000 FEET FROM A SCHOOL, SO IT

TRIGGERED AN 'ENHANCED SENTENCE' EVEN THOUGH SCHOOL WAS OUT AT THE TIME.



IN 20 STATES, 5 ZONE LAWS RAISE SENTENCES IN CI

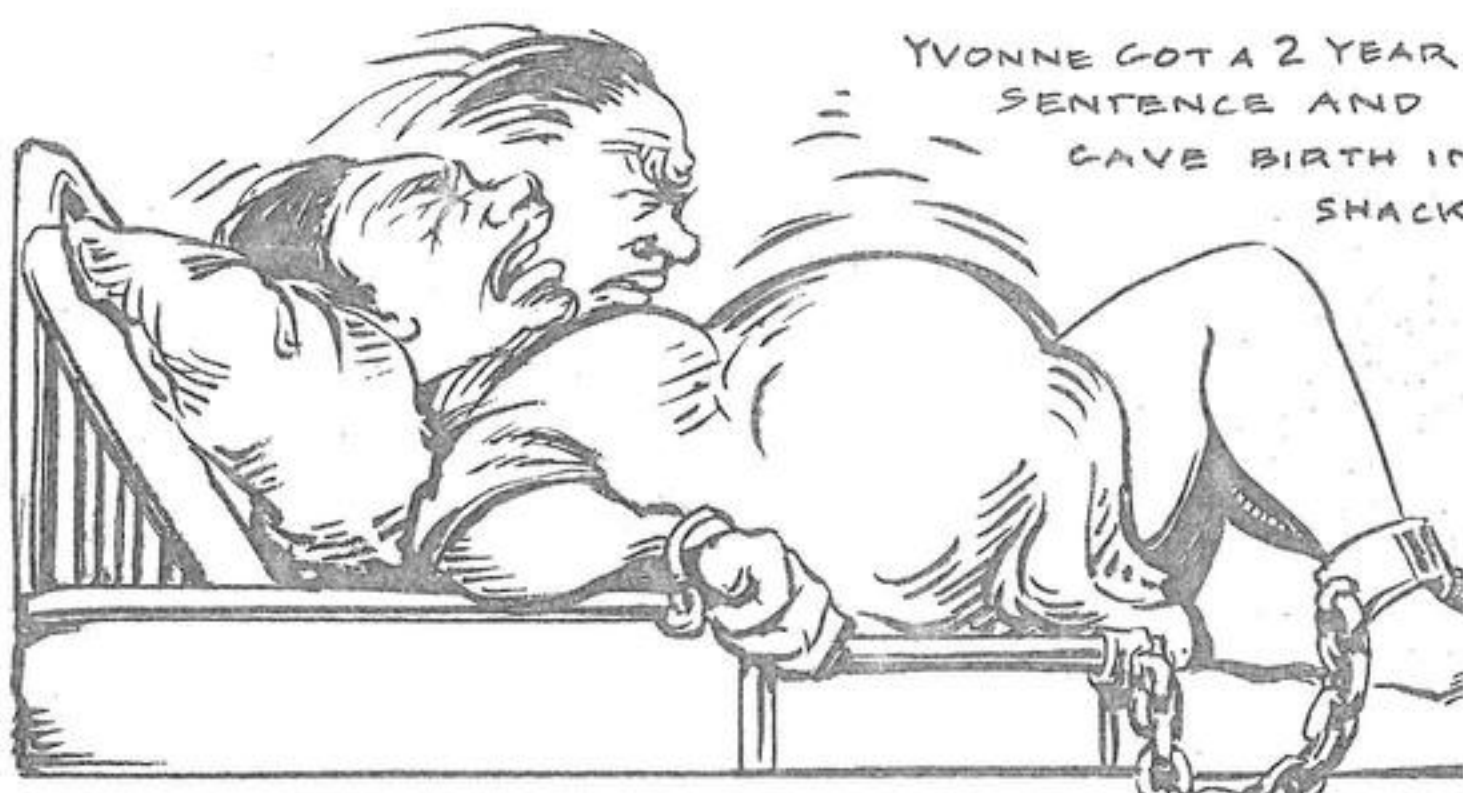
AND HAVE NO EFF ON THE KIDS THE SUPPOSED TO PRO



THEIR BOYFRIENDS OFTEN RECRUITED THEM AS PARTNERS IN CRIME.



OVER HAV



YVONNE GOT A 2 YEAR SENTENCE AND GAVE BIRTH IN SHACK



FOR EVERY MOTHER IN PRISON, A FAMILY IS PUNISHED.

IF HER KIDS ARE IN FOSTER CARE TOO LONG SHE CAN LOSE PARENTAL RIGHTS FOREVER.



ALLOU KIDS

MAY EASIE CLOS. REG



SINCE NONE OF HER RELATIVES COULD HELP...



SHE HAD TO PUT HER BABY IN FOSTER CARE.

# Sam & Alec



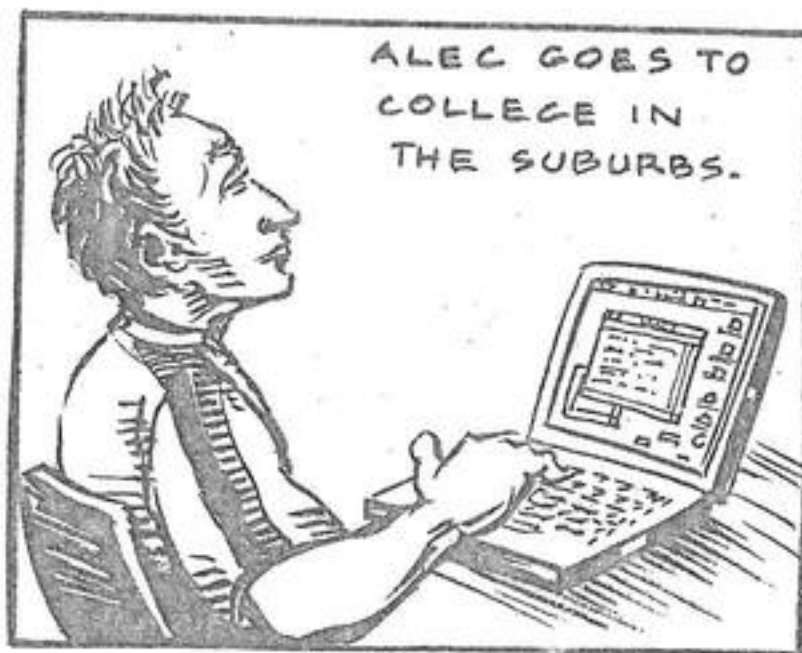
ARE BOTH



19 YEARS OLD.



SAM DRIVES A  
DELIVERY TRUCK  
IN THE CITY.



ALEC GOES TO  
COLLEGE IN  
THE SUBURBS.

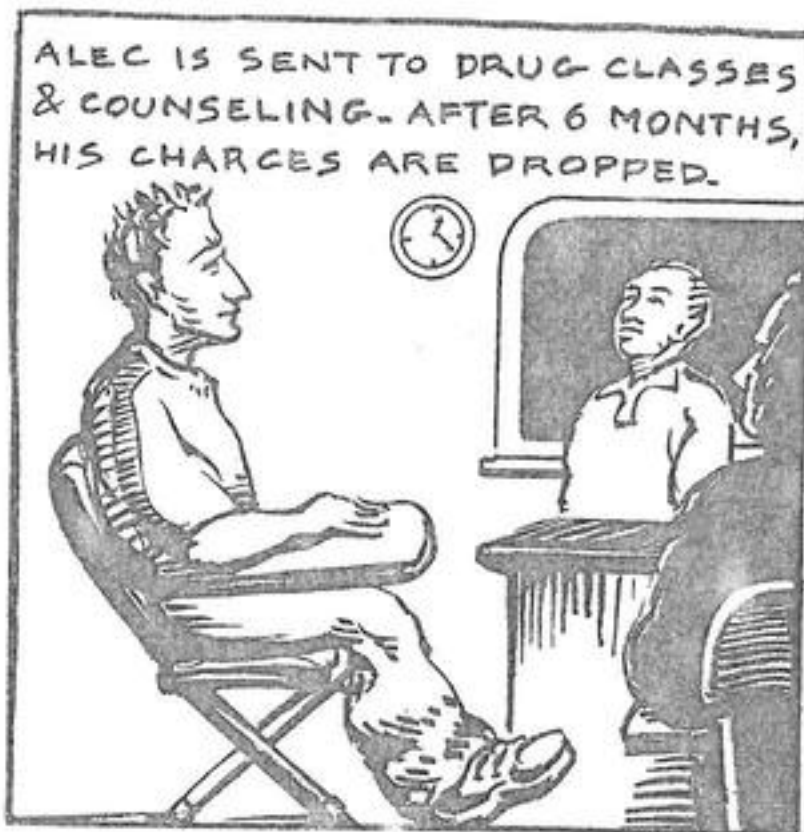
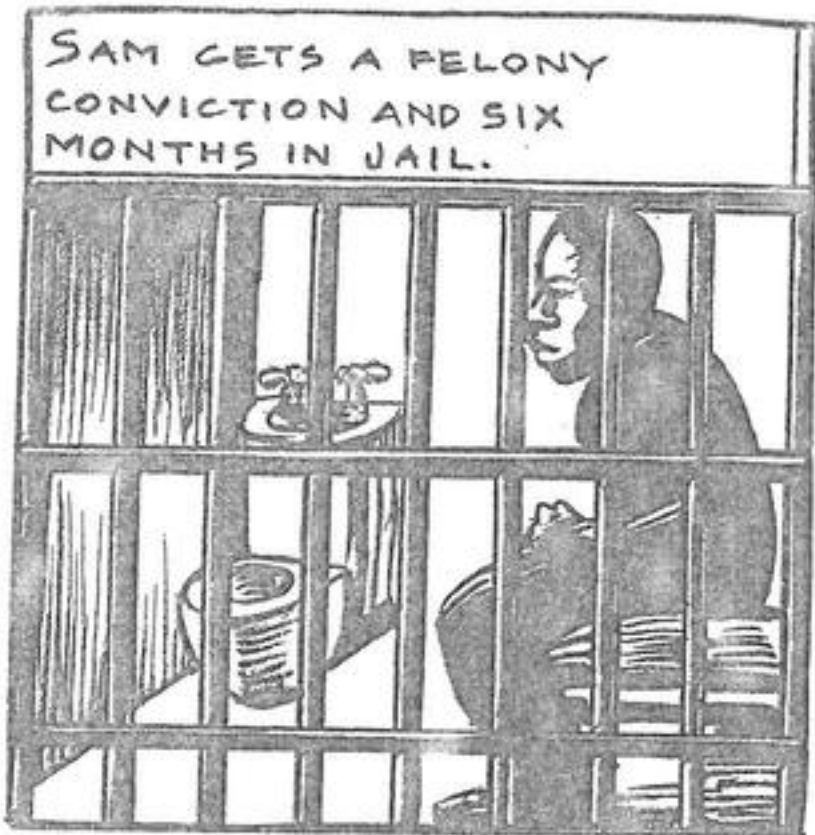


ON HIS WAY HOME FROM A PARTY,  
SAM WALKS INTO  
A DRUG RAID.

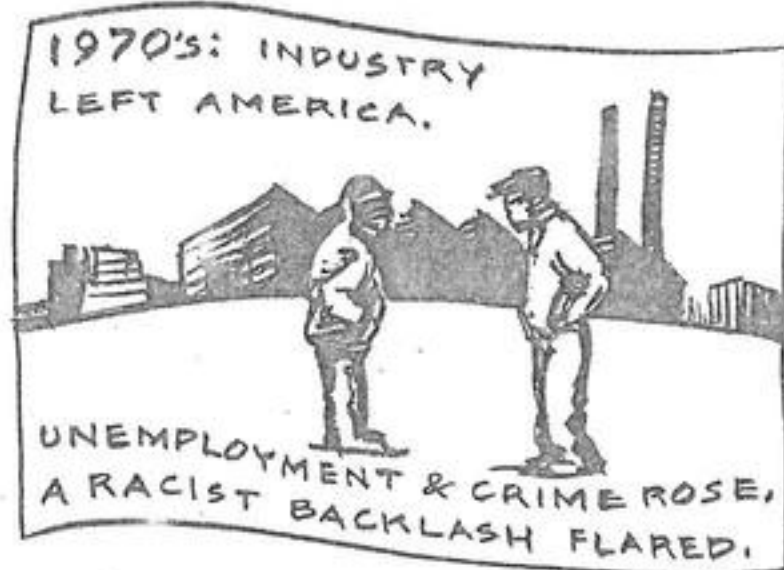


ON HIS WAY HOME FROM A PARTY,  
ALEC RUNS A STOP SIGN AND  
GETS PULLED OVER.





# WHAT'S RACE GOT TO DO WITH IT ?



1980's: POLITICIANS RAGED AGAINST CRIME & DRUGS

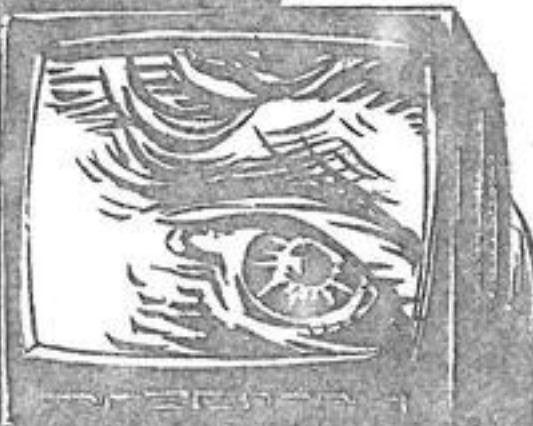


THE MEDIA FLASHED IMAGES OF BLACK MEN.

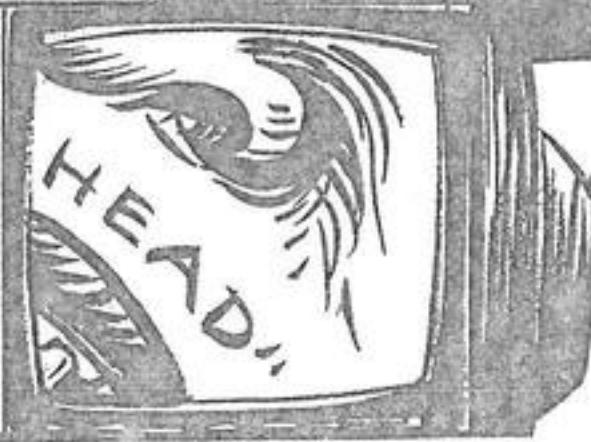
THE MYTH OF THE



EXPLOITED IMAGES OF LOW-WEIGHT BABIES OF POOR MOMS WITH NO PRE-NATAL CARE.



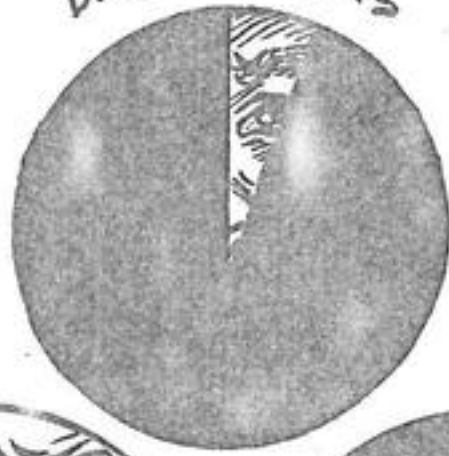
AMERICA'S OLD DEMON RACISM WAS USED TO SELL THE WAR ON DRUGS.



AFRICAN AMERICANS  
MAKE UP 13% OF  
THE U.S. POPULATION



AND 13% OF  
DRUG USERS



35%  
OF DRUG ARRESTS

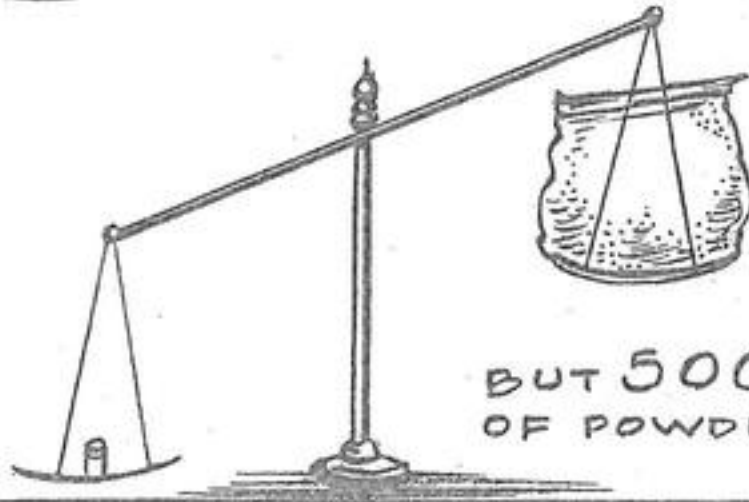


55%  
OF DRUG  
CONVICTIONS



74%  
OF THOSE  
SENTENCED  
TO PRISON  
FOR DRUGS.

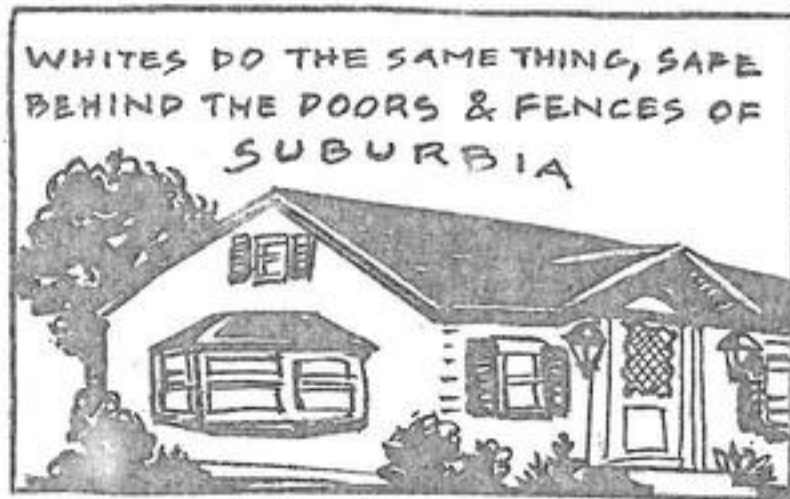
LAWS TARGET  
DRUGS USED BY  
PEOPLE OF COLOR.  
TO GET A FEDERAL  
MANDATORY MINIMUM  
SENTENCE OF 5  
YEARS, IT TAKES  
ONLY 5 GRAMS OF  
CRACK COCAINE,



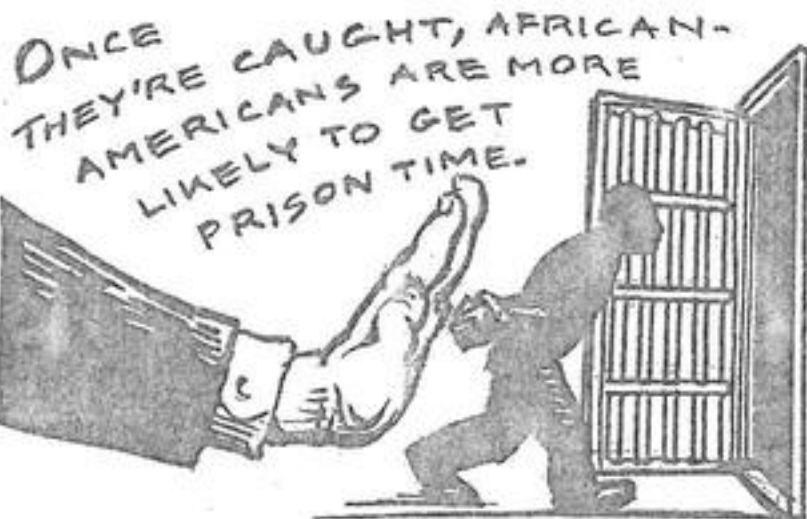
BUT 500 GRAMS  
OF POWDER COCAINE.



POLICING TARGETS  
INNER CITIES,  
WHERE POOR  
PEOPLE OF  
COLOR DO  
BUSINESS &  
SOCIALIZE  
OUT ON  
THE STREET.



WHITES DO THE SAME THING, SAFE  
BEHIND THE DOORS & FENCES OF  
SUBURBIA



ONCE  
THEY'RE CAUGHT, AFRICAN-  
AMERICANS ARE MORE  
LIKELY TO GET  
PRISON TIME.



WHITES ARE MORE LIKELY TO  
GET ACCESS TO TREATMENT.

THE WAR ON DRUGS HAS COST TAXPAYERS BILLIONS,  
DEVASTATED LIVES, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES AND  
COMPLETELY FAILED TO REDUCE DRUG USE.

# CONSIDER THESE ALTERNATIVES

**END MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES.**

REVISE FEDERAL SENTENCING GUIDELINES,

LET JUDGES JUDGE FAIRLY,

CONSIDERING THE WHOLE CASE,

NOT JUST DRUG WEIGHT.

IN 2002, MICHIGAN REPEALED

ITS 1978 MINIMUMS, WHICH

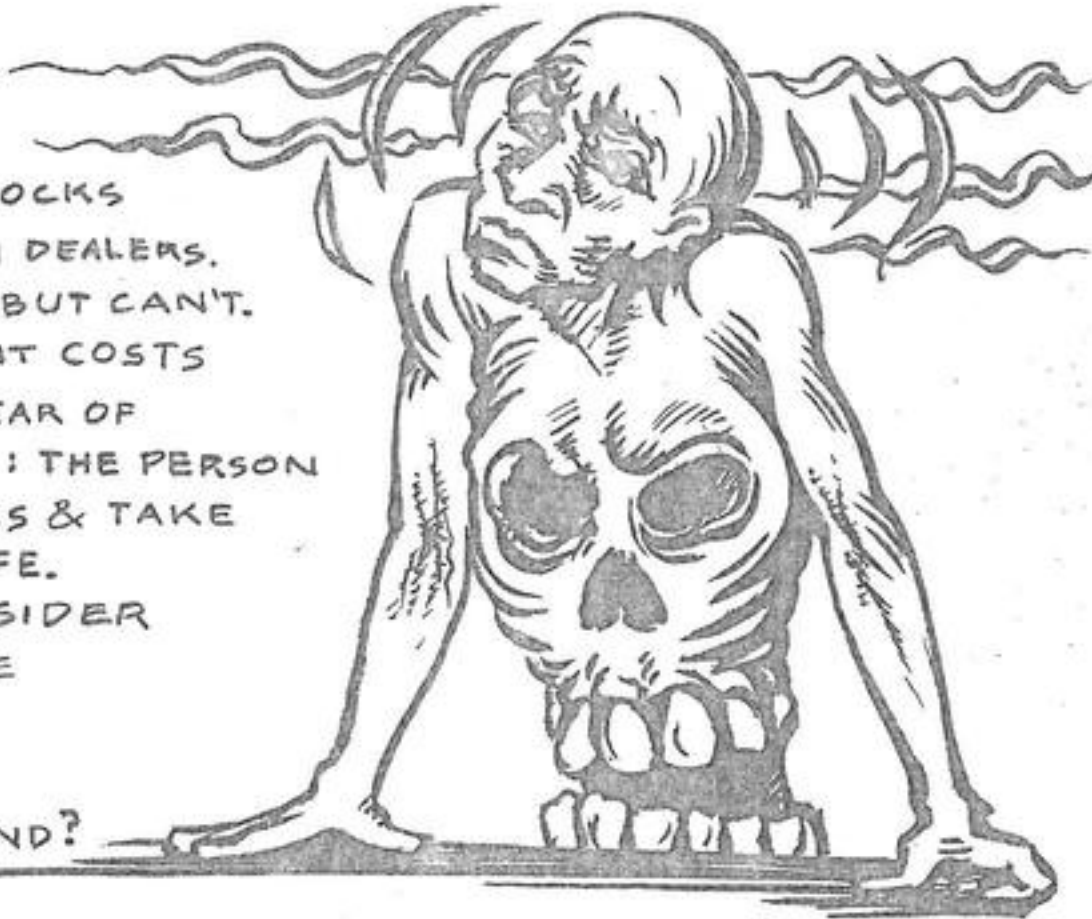
THE EX-GOVERNOR CALLED:

"THE WORST MISTAKE  
OF MY CAREER"



## OFFER DRUG TREATMENT

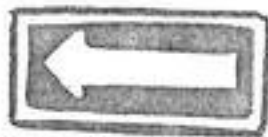
THE WAR ON DRUGS LOCKS UP MORE USERS THAN DEALERS. MOST WANT TO QUIT, BUT CAN'T. A YEAR OF TREATMENT COSTS MUCH LESS THAN A YEAR OF INCARCERATION, PLUS: THE PERSON CAN WORK, PAY TAXES & TAKE PART IN FAMILY LIFE. A FEW STATES CONSIDER TREATMENT BEFORE INCARCERATION. WHY NOT OFFER TREATMENT ON DEMAND?



## CHANGE PROBATION

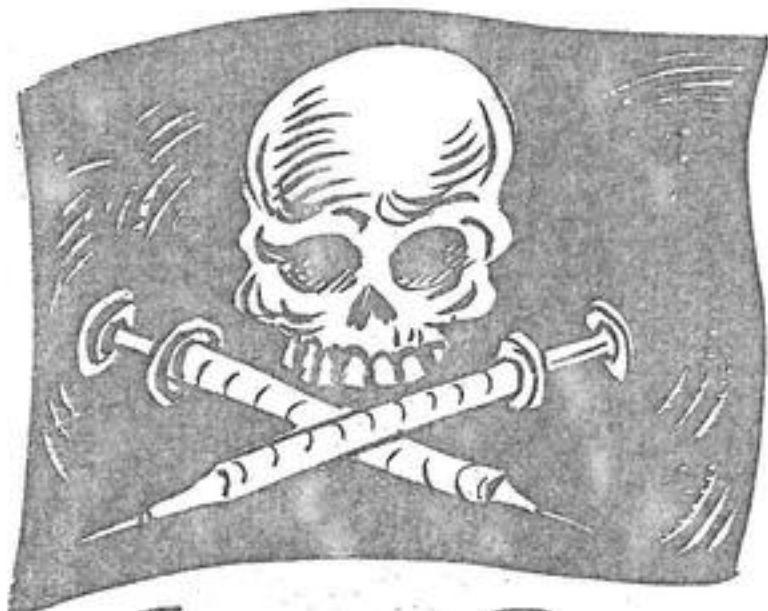
TWO THIRDS OF PEOPLE ON PROBATION ARE RE-ARRESTED, MOSTLY ON TECHNICAL VIOLATIONS, LIKE MISSED APPOINTMENTS AND FAILED DRUG TESTS, NOT NEW CRIMES.

PROBATION OFFICERS SHOULD HAVE RESOURCES TO HELP PEOPLE STAY OUT OF PRISON.



# END LEGAL DISCRIMINATION

AGAINST PEOPLE WHO HAVE DONE THEIR TIME. LET THEM LEAVE PRISON BEHIND. RESTORE FULL ACCESS TO PUBLIC HOUSING, WELFARE, FOOD STAMPS, STUDENT FINANCIAL AID, DRIVERS' LICENCES, STATE LICENSED PROFESSIONS & VOTING RIGHTS.



## HARM REDUCTION

REDUCE THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF DRUG USE ON FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES & THE DRUG USER. NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS REDUCE TRANSMISSION OF HIV & HEPATITIS C.

## JUSTICE REINVESTMENT

CREATE SAFER, VIABLE COMMUNITIES BY LETTING THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE TAKE CONTROL OF THE MONEY SPENT ON

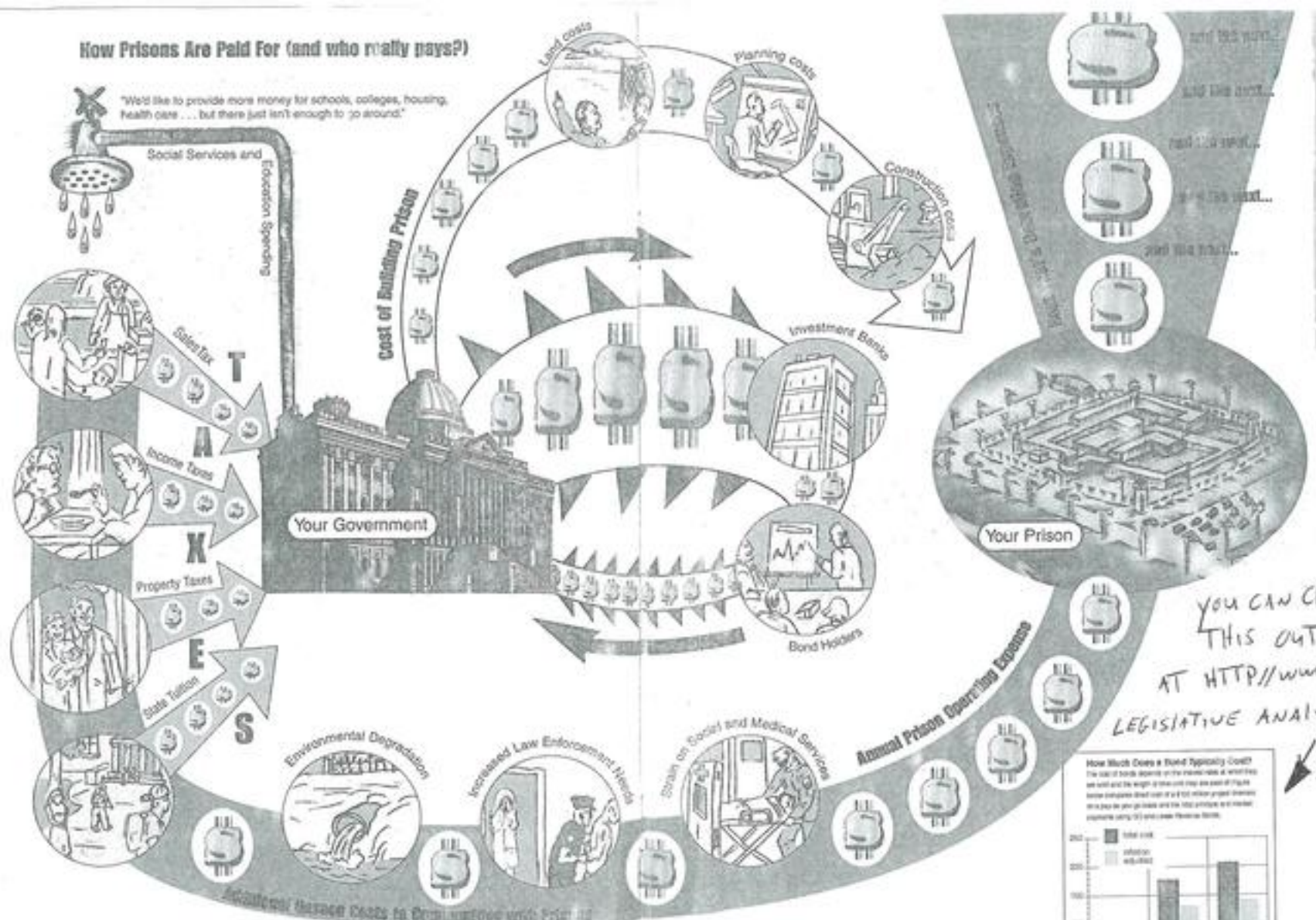
POLICE  
PRISONS  
JAILS &  
COURTS,

AND INVEST  
IT IN: →



"Justice Reinvestment" concept comes from a paper by Susan B. Tucker and Eric Cadora, *Ideas for an Open Society*, Vol. 3, No.3, 11/03

# How Prisons Are Paid For (and who really pays?)



"We'd like to provide more money for schools, colleges, housing, health care ... but there just isn't enough to go around."

Your Government

Your Prison

YOU CAN CHECK THIS OUT AT [HTTP://WWW.LAO.CA.GOV](http://www.LAO.CA.GOV) LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS OFFICE, CALIFORNIA

**What is a bond?** A bond is a loan made to a government. Governments pay investment bankers to make the loan attractive ("structure the deal") and find lenders ("issue the bonds"). Governments then pay lenders ("bondholders") principal and interest on the loan. Governments issue two broad categories of bond: General Obligation (GO) bonds and Revenue Bonds.

General Obligation bonds are guaranteed by the taxing power of the state. Most GO Bonds require approval by the voters, and in many states by 2/3 of the voters. Revenue Bonds are designed to be paid off by revenues generated by the project being built, like highway tolls, bridge tolls, student tuition, etc.

Most prisons are now built with some form of Revenue Bond, even though prisons generate no real revenue and Revenue Bonds cost taxpayers more to repay. Why would a state use the most expensive way to borrow money to build prisons? Because voters have consistently voted down GO Bonds to build more prisons. Using revenue bonds to build prisons is a means of getting around the voters and taxpayers.

