

THE FACTIVA

The Shining Rays Of Education:

By: Anon.

On May 5th, the Norfolk Education Committee held its 5th annual Educational Awareness Seminar themed around educational empowerment.

With dark clouds looming overhead, the skies opened up in an attempt to rain on their parade. However, even the gods couldn't put a damper on

such a positive event. it may have been a gloomy day on the outside, but inside the auditorium, it was shining bright!

In a packed house, the men listened intently to a slew of guest speakers from both inside and outside the Norfolk walls. To open it up, Mr. Quinlan eloquently spoke about how education has the power to change the lenses in which we view the world.

Therefore, education does not give us power over other people, it gives us power over ourselves and what we can accomplish.

It was tough to follow the opening act, but recent arrivals to the Norfolk Educational Staff did an awesome job introducing themselves. Each went on to explain why they chose to teach in a prison environment and how rewarding their experiences have been. Putting such deeply human and emotional

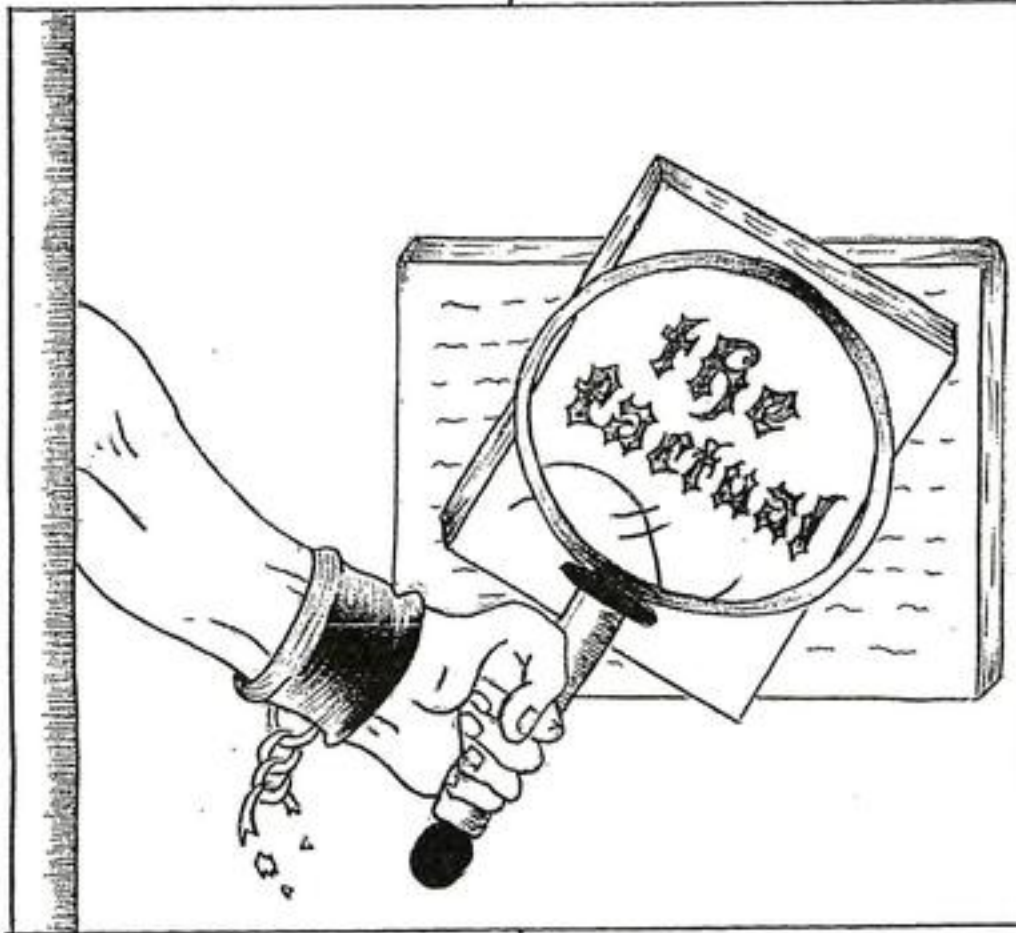
touch to an environment that is normally anything but had the men out of their seats in acknowledgement of their noble efforts; this showed that education is the great equalizer of man. Next to follow were representatives of the Petey Greene Program and B.U. P.E.P. faculty which all shared their own personal stories about how education has empowered them. Professor Perlman was deeply inspirational with his testimony of being a highschool drop-out to a M.I.T. professor with a Ph.D. in

philosophy; clearly showing that education has the power to transform anyone at any age and station in life.

The keynote speaker of the event was the honorable MA. State Representative Kay Kahn. Rep. Kahn enlightened the captivated audience on her push to allocate more spending within the state budget for post-secondary education within the D.O.C. She clearly sees the validity of educational

empowerment and has introduced Amendment 848 into the House Budget Bill in an attempt to provide resources to colleges as well as the D.O.C. to work collaboratively in bringing back college programs to MA. state prisons. Rep. Kahn assured the audience of her drive to fight for criminal justice reform to which she received a standing ovation from a normally skeptical audience.

To close out the event and ensure



that no amount of rain or clouds would wash away such powerful and transformativive afternoon, members of the Education Committee along with fellow artist brought down the house with original music performances based on educational empowerment. The crowd was electrified and even Rep. Kahn was bobbing her head to the lyrical punch lines that informed us all on the reality and dire need for educational support for the disenfranchised in prison. Everyone left the auditorium that afternoon already buzzing about and anticipating the next annual educational seminar and The Factual will be sure to capture it all...

Barb Wire Resistance

By: Anon.

Do not pathologize against the prisoner; nor say, he is exempt and free from taking responsibility for his crimes, if his alleged crimes are in fact true. Believe in justice for victims -- all victims. Even the victims locked up inside "Incarceration Nation" suffering violations upon their persons and spirits yearning to emanate therefrom. Our collective identity is degraded and viewed as worthy of unwarranted punishment. By the second, prisoners' rights and civil liberties are violated. Our so called freedom of speech is non-substantive; our due process is non-substantive; our protection from cruel and unusual punishment is non-substantive; our equal protection is non-substantive.

The advocates of "law and order" and -- unfortunately -- even those who have internalized their prisoner identity may say: Be grateful, this is not slavery era, Jim Crow, or Iraq. Must we bring back the physical infrastructure of Jim Crow

in order to recognize the apparitions of the past that live in modern day statistics? Has not the "War on Drugs" targeted black and brown people? Has not the "War on Drugs" led to mass incarceration? Is not mass incarceration responsible for "Chi-Raq"? And why is the prisoner who wants to hold his government and criminal Justice System accountable ungrateful? Shaming are we? SMH. Nice try. What about those fighting for \$15 per hour, should they shut up and be grateful that they don't live in Haiti? Should they not strike and protest peacefully when they have every right to challenge laws they deem unfair. When prisoner rehabilitation is stifled by hypocrisy should we not push back peacefully? Or is that a sign of ingratitude?

It is prima facie that somewhere in some prison, a prisoner is being violated and victimized at some point in this country. I know this is true because I see it, and I live it. The subsequent trauma is then swept under the rug right beside the trauma already there. Prisons breed cultures of RAGE, not cultures of REHABILITATION. The recidivism rates attest to this -- so we must take action. It takes collective effort to place one woman or man in a cell and it takes a collective effort to keep them there. It too takes a collective effort to uphold prisoners' rights and the promise of "Correction" made to the public. But if this country cannot -- which historically and presently, it has not -- there must be a collective effort to downsize until it can. Michelle Alexander notes in The New Jim Crow:

[T]he National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals... issued a recommendation in 1973 that "no new institutions for adults should be built and existing institutions for juveniles should be closed." Their recommendation was based

on their finding that "the prison, the reformatory, and the jail have achieved only a shocking record of failure. There is overwhelming evidence that these institutions create crime rather than prevent it" (pg 8).

In order that we may live in a MORE civil society there must be monolithic and unyielding restitance against the epidemic of confinement and its miasmata. In my opinion, the dawn of such resistance has appeared. Educational awareness of mass incarceration is catching traction. Public outcry is growing. In response, the Obama administration mobilized and pardoned an unprecedented number of federal detainees. Trump is now president. However, we can still push to change policy at the state level since states have autonomy over its institutions. The more states we can push to adopt progressive policies in regards to ending mass incarceration, the better chances we have to influence the national legislature. With this in mind, scholars, students, activist, clergymembers, lawyers, and everyday people have all started to mobilize. We from behind the barb wire fences have mobilized as well, but we have yet to become foremost in resistance even though our resistance is needed the most to end mass incarceration. But neither will I pathologize because I know the severity of supression meted out to us who organize and speak truth to power. I just desire that we all occupy the vehicle of resistance, no matter whether you are in the driver's seat or seat buckled passenger. And I hope that despite the odds of overcoming the ambitions which will undoubtedly seek to counter our own, we will continue to command the cause through necessity. In solidarity. #StuckonReplay and facebook @ emancipation.initiative.

--The Trustworthy

YOU KNOW:

"It's The Department of Corruption"
SO TELL THE HARD TRUTHS

By: Timothy J. Muise

Nothing seems to work. No matter how hard we try, all these activist and abolitionist, nothing seems to change in the system. Some make it seem as if the reason for this is a mystery or that it is some complicated social order impossibility; nothing could be further from the truth. The problem is the guard culture, plain and simple, and until we change that with real consequences and accountability, all our collective efforts will rain into the abyss of failure.

72% of the DOC staffers have "gone on the record" to say that they are not here for rehabilitation! The guards union, a sadistic machine with vile self-serving goals at its heart which dismantle public safety, has released a statement that members of the union are here for "security" only and that the DOC's "Team DOC" propaganda does not apply to them. How are you going to adhere to your legal mandate to rehabilitate prisoners if 72% of your staff state they are not on board? You are not.

Of the 28% of the DOC employees left after the union dregs are discounted, only about 50% of them even have contact with prisoners. Many of them steal their money from the state by being in one of the untolled support positions; hordes of secretaries and assistants all on the public dole while kids kill eachother in the Mattapan corridor and beyond. Lives are at stake and Buffy and Sherry are enjoying Appletinis at China Garden Restaurant.

The Department of Corruption produces a 50% recidivism rate but yet is allowed to promote, each and every year, those responsible for that epic failure. With "life-Without-Parole-Sentences" you now have a bottleneck

of endless geriatrics housed in abusive hospital units with that evil guard's union demanding they stay there until they perish. The hopelessness this breeds results in prison drug addiction and deep rooted anger entrenched so deep that it may prove impossible to address. 95% of these angry and unprepared men are released onto the street of our cities and towns and no one in the "Corruptions Department" is ever fired.

These are the truths that are not being told, and this silence is responsible for much of the work toward change being derailed when it reaches the prison level. We must allow citizens to be made aware and have the power to hold individuals who work for the public safety accountable. We must tell the truths of the evil and abusive guard culture, or all our efforts will be in vain. We must take the fight to expose the "scum of the Earth and dregs of humanity" as Mark Twain once called prison guards, to the streets and seek a citizens advisory committee comprised of real stakeholders. We must tell the hard truths. Please join us in spreading the message: "You know, it's the Department of Corruption."

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