

# Mockingbird Times,



Recipient of 2005 Congressional Angels in Adoption Award  
Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth.

June 2006

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak Out Across the Nation  
Visit us online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org) or call 206-323-KIDS (5437)

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## Pathways to Adulthood Conference

JAMICA  
HENDERSON



From May 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, Najja, Misty, and I went to a conference in Portland Oregon called the Pathways to Adulthood. We attended the conference to meet with other organizations and individuals who were also working to help foster and homeless youth make a smooth transition to adulthood as well as to conduct a workshop on Mockingbird Society's Youth LEAD program. This conference was nation-wide and people came from almost everywhere. It was good to meet all the people that work with foster youth and hear about all the cool programs. It seemed that every one who was there had a goal of finding a better way to fix transition process for those aging out of the foster-care system and who are homeless.

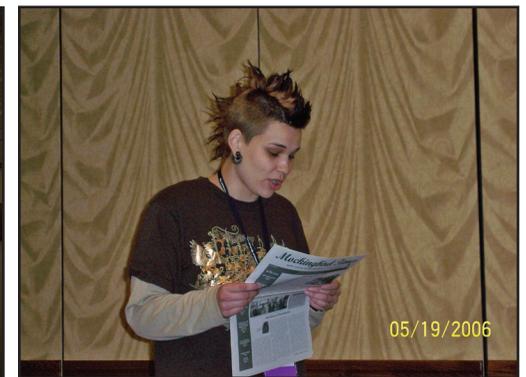
On the first day, we checked into our hotel room and later that evening we all met in the conference room to get a feel for who was there. Once we finished that, we attended a reception in the dining hall and watched young Native dancers perform. They were beautiful and the food was delicious (sponsored by Casey Family). It was a great night and I went to my room excited for what the morning would bring.

The next day, we attended three workshops and each of them had lots of information explaining what they do or would like to do to help young people transition to adulthood. It was good information and gave me many ideas. Later that afternoon, Najja and I went on a site visit to Bridge House, a transitional housing program for homeless youth (including parents with their young children). The home offered many opportunities such as employment, independent living skills and case management that was all in place to help them get on their feet.

On the last day, I went to one workshop and then we did our presentation. I was a little nervous at first, but once it was time to present the nervousness went away. We had a pretty good audience who were very interested in what we were doing on behalf of homeless youth and those in the foster-care system. I was excited that they were so interested and willing to learn more. In all, I had a great time and would love to go all over the world to tell everyone about what we do here at Mockingbird Society and how we are making a huge difference in the foster-care system.



Jamica and Najja all smiles during conference workshop.



Misty "speaking-out" during Youth LEAD workshop.

### Get Published — Get Paid!

We are looking for articles, poetry, artwork and photography from our young readers who have experience in the foster care system and/or homelessness. If you want to be published in the Times, contact us at 206-323-5437 or via email at [newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org). For more info and to check us out, go to [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org).

## Remembering Stonewall

MISTY  
LOU COOK



"The Stonewall Riots were a series of violent protests and street demonstrations that began in the early morning hours of June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1969, and centered around a gay bar in the Greenwich Village section of New York City" (1). The riots and physical protests were in response to the homophobia and oppression of queer (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, etc.) people, especially queer people of color and working class queer people. The Stonewall Inn was a gay club where the New York queer community congregated, supported each other and created memories. The Stonewall was also a place where queer people routinely got beat up, harassed, raped by the police and then charged with the crime of "homosexuality". During the turbulent time of the 1960's, there were no state or federal laws that specifically outlawed homosexuality, but there were so many harsh laws prohibiting ANY homosexual/queer intimacy or sexuality, dress, activities, behaviors or expressions that they might as well have prohibited homosexuality and identifying as a queer person altogether!! Police laws restricted how queer people dressed, where they could gather, whom they could love and show affection, even the way they expressed themselves.

"At the end of the 1960's, homosexual

sex was illegal in every state but Illinois. Not one law - federal, state or local - protected gay men or women from being fired or denied housing. There were no openly gay politicians. No television show had any identifiably gay characters ... There were no openly gay policemen, public school teachers, doctors or lawyers ..." (2). The queer community in America during and previous to the 1960's was strictly underground and in constant danger of being discovered. If you were found to be gay in the 1960's, you could lose your job, housing or worse. Queer people were frequently written off as being insane, emotionally unstable, perverted and generally unfit for society. In California hospitals and elsewhere, queer people or anyone discovered as having queer behaviors were frequently hospitalized and/or incarcerated, given "electrical and pharmacological shock therapy, castrated, and lobotomized." (3). New York police frequently arrested any person (especially at a queer bar/park/part of town) for wearing "fewer than three articles of clothing 'appropriate' for their gender". The religious right in this country condemned queer people and called them "sinful", the police enforced outdated homophobic laws imposed by fearful fanatics of the religious right and all of the institutions of medicine and mental illness called them "perverts" and "insane" ... it seemed that queer people were pushed into a smothering corner filled with laws, fears and hatred from outside communities.

Around 1:20AM on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1969, New York police and undercover investigators went

in to "bust" the Stonewall Inn for "serving alcohol to homosexuals" and arrest the patrons of the Stonewall Inn for acts of homosexuality and/or being homosexual. There was a lot of nervous energy in the Stonewall Inn, young lives were at stake, families could be destroyed, jobs lost, futures forever ruined. The street-involved youth and queer people of color were especially effected by this particular police raid, as well as the transgender community, who were usually targeted and punished/beaten the most often.

As police began to round up the queer people of the Stonewall Inn, and demand ID's and any condemning homosexual information, there was a spirit of resistance that was new to both the queer people and the cops that were present. This spirit was the beginning of what later be called "The Stonewall Rebellion". The queer people of Stonewall, after being pushed around and brutalized by the New York police, REVOLTED and REBELLED against the police raids and homophobia, and that initial rebellion started SIX DAYS OF RIOTING that would eventually spark THE QUEER LIBERATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT !!! The transgender men and butch women in the front room and throughout Stonewall were resisting police brutality and insisting "we have a right to be here." (4) while the drag queens and transgender women were screaming "get your hands off me!" (5) in the back room. In

STONEWALL CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

## Letter from the Editor

**JIM THEOFELIS**



*Take Good Care of the Folks who Take Good Care of Kids:* The **Foster Parents Association of Washington** (fondly known as FPAWS) released the news that they are moving toward unionization of foster parents across Washington State. This is a bold move on the part of **Steve and Daniele Baxter who are the Co-Presidents of FPAWS** as well as being stellar advocates and veteran foster parents. At this point there remain a lot of unanswered questions regarding how this will ultimately impact the children and adolescents who are in the foster care system. However, it is very clear that foster parents continue to feel under appreciated and under supported in their roles. If we want to retain and recruit great caregivers we must figure out how to value and support their work. If you are a foster parent and/or just want more information you can contact FPAWS at 1-800-391-CARE or visit their website at [www.fpaws.org](http://www.fpaws.org)

**HB 2002 the Foster Youth Achievement Act** is new legislation that allows youth to remain in foster/kinship after age 18 if enrolled in a college or voc-tech program. **Rick Butt is the Washington State Independent Living Program Manager** who is leading the implementation process of this exciting new program. For information regarding eligibility and the intake process you can contact Rick at 360-902-8243 or [RLBU300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:RLBU300@DSHS.WA.GOV). You can also contact me at Mockingbird Society.

On behalf of the staff, Board of Directors and the children, youth and families we serve I want to wish each of you a very warm, safe and fun filled summer. This is the time of year when kids really need the chance to be kids with lots of visits to the park and other fun activities. This is also the time of year when we get so busy we forget about supporting the programs that enrich the community. Please give consideration to making a donation to the Mockingbird Society or some other wonderful organization that you feel good about. Happy Summer!

 Jim Theofelis  
[jim@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:jim@mockingbirdsociety.org)

## My Experience with Passages 2006

**JESSICA GARCIA**



Jessica with her ILP Case Manager Khaliah at this year's Passages event.

Every year, Treehouse holds an event for youth aging out of foster-care. The name of the event is called Passages. This event is a great success every year. It is held in celebration for youth aging out of care and the ones who graduated with their High School Diploma or GED. It was the first time I had ever seen anything like that before. It made me feel like I was special and that being in foster care was not the worst thing after all.

The event took place on Friday, May 12, in the evening at the Safeco stadium. The youth that were aging out of the system were very smart. They had a lot to say that that made me feel proud. They spoke about how graduating did take a lot, but in the end, they have a greater path ahead of them. To have an event for these youth is very important. I feel they really deserve it because they could have just given up and went to using drugs or not even finishing school and possibly attend college, but because they had that much determination and wanted to do better things in their life, they didn't give up. They decided that they didn't want to be the "person next door", but something better.

To hear all this just gave me a better perspective on life. I want to grab life and make it what I want. Not what another individual wants or sees for me. Going to the Passages event has made me want to do great things!

## Mockingbird Society: The Story Behind the Name

The 1962 American classic *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is the inspiration for our name, Mockingbird Society. Atticus, the widowed father of Jem and Scout, joins Miss Maudie in teaching his kids that it's a sin to kill a mockingbird because "...Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us." What if

we created an organization, a community, indeed a world in which our most vulnerable children and youth were protected and valued with the same commitment that Atticus had for mockingbirds? Join the Mockingbird Society today and help us give young people a safe place to nest and sing.



Misty and Jamica accompany Jim in his acceptance of the 2006 Voices of Children award.



Mockingbird Youth Representatives, staff, and guests meet with State Children's Ombudsman.

## HB 2002 Reminder

New legislation allows youth to remain in care and receive their medical benefits while pursuing higher education. Talk to your caseworker for details about taking advantage of this legislation or contact Mockingbird Society at (206) 323-5437 for more information.

## Become a Foster Parent!

If you are considering becoming a foster parent, now is the time to get involved and learn more! King County and Washington State are in great need of foster parents. For more information, please call Why Foster at 1-800-760-5340, visit [www.whyfoster.org](http://www.whyfoster.org), or contact:

**Billy Hancock, Recruitment Specialist**  
*Amara Parenting and Adoption Services*  
(206) 260-1700  
[billy@amaraparenting.org](mailto:billy@amaraparenting.org)  
[www.amaraparenting.org](http://www.amaraparenting.org)

**Nadia Nijim, Foster Parent Recruiter**  
*King County, Region 4*  
DSHS-DCFS  
Office (206) 691-2401

## Thank You's

Frances DeMarco; Judy Cook; Margaret-Ann and Mark LeRoy; Roberta Blayney; David Eiffert; Yancy Wright; Hannah and Joseph Voss; Britton Steel; Janis Avery; Kathryn Brooks; Lisa Taylor; Sue Gagey; Virginia Blayney; Phyllis Duncan-Souza and Casey Family Programs.

## MEET OUR STAFF

**Executive Director**  
Jim Theofelis

**Youth LEAD Coordinator**  
Najja Morris

**Operations Manager**  
Ros Ghan

**Public Relations**  
Darcie Gray

**Executive Assistant**  
Lauren Frederick

**Americorps Member**  
Dietra Clayton

**Senior Youth Representatives**  
Misty Lou Cook, Dennis Fisher, Jamica Henderson

**Youth Representatives**  
Ashley Grant, Larishica Asher, Terasa Asher, Anthony Guess, Maleka Taylor, Cassandra Davis, Surri Evans, Jessica Garcia, Raquel Granath

**Contributing Writers**  
Sherrell Dorsey, Ashley Olzendam

**Volunteers**  
Patricia Gray

**ABOUT US:** The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents involved in homelessness and foster care. The *Mockingbird Times* is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.63 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The *Mockingbird Times* has a monthly circulation of 50,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the U.S.A, through a private distribution list and as an insert in *Real Change*, a Seattle-based community newspaper. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the *Mockingbird Times* may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2006 The Mockingbird Society.

## A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox

Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth and support the Mockingbird Society!

Donations may be tax deductible and all donors receive the *Mockingbird Times*. Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Suggested Donations:

\$ 1,000+..... Protector    \$500-999.....Caretaker    \$250-500.....Organizations    \$50+.....Supporter    \$25.....Foster Parent

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to: The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South Suite 240, Seattle WA 98144, or donate online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org).

- Please bill me for the amount indicated.
- My employer will match my gift; enclosed is my matching gift form.
- I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.
- Please do not include my name on published donor lists.

**STONEWALL** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fact, it is widely known that the transgender community, the gender-bending social outcasts and the poor people of color are the ones who sparked the Stonewall Riots.

Today, the outlook for queer (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, etc.) people is much less bleak. The Stonewall Rebellion gave courage and inspiration to thousands of queer people and allies, and throughout the 1970's, groups such as the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) (6) and many other Gay Civil and Human Rights Groups began to form, and demand respect, recognition and a place in society. Through the Gay Rights Movement that

was sparked by Stonewall, we now have openly gay politicians, actors, lawyers, advocacy groups, bars, cafes, community centers and so much more. Here in WA State and elsewhere, there is legislation to protect queer people from discrimination at work and school. The queer social justice movement still has a ways to go: queer parents still aren't legally able to adopt in some places, hate crimes still happen to good queer people and queer people still cannot legally get married and get access to 2,000+ marriage benefits, including the right to visit your loved one in the hospital and in the emergency room. However, we've come a long way from where we started, and June is the month to celebrate

Queer and LGBTTT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Two-Spirited, etc.) Pride !!! Here is a list of a few Seattle Pride Events that are coming up, in celebration of our history, our struggle, our beauty, our futures and our accomplishments:

**The Bend-It Queer Youth Extravaganza:**  
ALL AGES !! FREE !!!  
June 16th - 18th  
Locations Vary Daily  
www.myspace.com/bend\_it

**Seattle Dyke March:**  
ALL AGES !! FREE !!!  
Saturday, June 24  
RALLY at 5PM

at Seattle Central Community College  
MARCH at 6PM  
**Seattle Pride Festival:**  
ALL AGES !! FREE !!!  
Sunday, June 25th  
MARCH at 11:00AM from  
Westlake Park to Seattle Center  
FESTIVAL from 11AM - 6PM  
at SEATTLE CENTER  
www.seattlepride.org/

(1 - 6) "STONEWALL: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution"

## IDA Accepting Applications

JAMICA HENDERSON

At Mockingbird, we come across a lot of opportunities that are helping foster-youth that are aging out. It is important to have somewhere to go when you age out or have a plan. There is this program called the Individual Development Account (IDA) Foster Youth Pilot. This is a great program for those in foster care that are aging out, or have already aged out. While being in this program, you can save money before you age out; so that when you do you will have it for beginning your independent life. The IDA will match whatever you put in at a rate of 2:1 during your participation in the program (see table at end of the article). You can use it for things like: housing, automobile, education, a computer and/or health insurance. This program is currently able to fund up to 25 participants ages 15-20 and those who are planning to leave foster care at the age of 18. The goal of having this type of program is to provide access to building resources that will increase the economic self-sufficiency and improve long-term outcomes for youth in foster care. Are there requirements? Yes, but they are not hard to meet.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

- Be 15 or older and a current or former dependent of the Department of Social Health Service (DSHS)
- Net worth cannot exceed \$10,000

- Foster youth must be less than 80% of the area median income of (\$44,184 household or 1) adjusted for household size: or 200% of federal poverty guidelines. (\$19,040-household of 1)
- Account holder savings should be derived from earned income, taxes, incentives

**Program Requirements:**

- Participants will be required to deposit a minimum of \$ 25 each quarter into their IDA savings account at the Washington Mutual Bank
- Deposits will be from earned income, tax refunds or incentives offered by the program.
- Participants may make purchases after participating for at least six months and making two deposits into their IDA savings account.
- Participants will have the maximum of 48 months from the date they sign their Savings Agreement to save and purchase their assets.
- Participants must complete Financial Skills and asset specific training before making an asset purchase.

Also, you have the chance to add money in your account by completing some of the incentives that they offer to you. It may not seem like a lot, but the money adds up faster than you think! Here are some incentives that the program will offer and you can choose whichever one you want, but you can't make any more than \$200 per calendar year. In all you can earn the max of \$375 over the life program from the following list.

**Incentive List:**

- Completion of intake survey and account opening: \$20
- Completion of semi-annual survey: \$20
- Participation on approved board or youth advisory group (annual): \$40
- Participation in approved service learning project (annual): \$40

- Completion of financial education curriculum: \$20
- Maintaining a good grade point average: \$25-\$40
- School attendance rate at least 95% (quarterly): \$50

Overall, the IDA will be a good program for those in foster-care (or formerly were, up to 20) and who are soon to be aging-out. If you know of anyone who may want to participate in saving money for their future, please feel free to send an e-mail to the director who can be reached at THolcomb@uwkc.org. Her name is Terra Holcomb, and she will help you with any more information that you need or you can ask your DSHS caseworker or ILP for more information and/or an application. The deadline of June 16th is fast approaching, so don't delay! Remember, there are very limited slots available so take advantage of this awesome opportunity today.

**PROGRAM MAXIMUMS**

WHAT YOUR MONEY GOES TO	MATCH RATE	YOUTH SAVINGS	STATE MATCH	TOTAL ACCUMULATION
HOUSING, AUTOMOBILE, EDUCATION, HEALTH INSURANCE	2 TO 1	\$1500	\$3000	\$4500
COMPUTER	2 TO 1	\$500	\$1000	\$1500

## Knowing Who You Are

MISTY LOU COOK

"Knowing Who You Are" is a movie that discusses the importance of foster care youth knowing their cultural and individual roots. The movie, produced and distributed by the independent and innovative foster care reform group Casey Family Programs, discusses the difficult and important topic of why race and ethnicity matter for young people in the foster care system. According to Casey Family Programs, "A healthy racial and ethnic identity provides an anchor and solid foundation for youth to become productive, independent and well-adjusted adults"(1). I must say that I whole-heartedly agree: a young person in the foster care system who knows their roots and individual cultural identity is more likely to rise above life's many obstacles than a young person with no cultural foundation or personal roots. "Knowing Who You Are" is a film that is both a documentary and a cultural competency tool that could be used by legislators, case workers, foster care and homeless youth alike to educate people about the importance of foster care

(and homeless) youth knowing who they are: culturally, racially and individually. It is an educational and inspiring movie that would be particularly useful as a cultural competency tool for case workers, or, as I like to call them, Social Justice Representatives.

The movie highlighted former foster care youth, their families and their struggle to find their roots, culture and individual identity. Olivia Gonzalez is one of many former foster care youth who was having trouble "fitting in" at school, work and in foster care homes while growing up. She was being made fun of and teased, both at home and at school, for how she looked, dressed and talked. Olivia commented that she had "no foundation to refer back to"(2) and had no idea that she was mixed with Native American and Spanish ancestry. Olivia recalled, "Luckily, I was blessed with a really good social worker who cares about ME" (3). With the help of a culturally competent and knowledgeable case worker, Olivia discovered her racial roots and ethnic identity and now she isn't afraid to

distinguish herself from "the crowd" and is proud of her personal cultural identity.

Kelvin is a former foster care youth who commented on the importance of foster care youth knowing their cultural, ethnic and personal identity. He said, "Without identity, you would never, ever know who you are and the most important thing to survive in life is ... to know who you are ... and you have to be comfortable with yourself." (4). Janelle is another former foster care youth whose testimony about never knowing her cultural roots seemed to echo what Kelvin was commenting on. She said, "I never really had developed any type of culture identity, except for being a foster kid" (5). As one birth parent, Vivian, said, "The social worker might be the ONLY PERSON that these children have that is stable in their lives" (6). Because of this fact, the next part of this article will directly speak to any case managers or Social Justice Representatives that would like some advice regarding how to effectively help foster care youth discover and be proud of their roots, ancestry and personal identity.

Mary is a social work supervisor who has an inspiring understanding of the need for foster care youth to have a strong

personal identity and culturally competent social worker. She believes that foster care youth suicide, homeless and pregnancy rates are directly related to those foster care youth's need for a personal foundation and cultural center that tells them, "No matter what is going on around me, I at least know who I AM" (7). She realizes both the need for foster care youth to have a personal foundation and the need for the foster care youth's case manager to connect with the youth and help with the discovery of their personal and cultural identity. Mary took cultural understanding a few steps further when she said, "I don't think you help somebody else explore themselves if you're not exploring yourself and you're not looking and seeing how you fit into it or how you react to it or how you feel about it."(8). She insisted that, "A youth who has a healthy racial and ethnic identity is going to be successful ... and that is the work" (9). Mary emphasized the need for cultural competency and personal identity when she stated that, "We are dealing with human lives here." (10). For more information check out www.casey.org.

(1 - 10) "Knowing Who You Are" by Casey Family Programs

## Entertainment on a Cheap Budget

**SHERREL  
DORSEY**



Creativity, imagination and open-mindedness are the only tools you need to find fun things to do to entertain yourself as a broke college student. Whether you are a movie addict or simply someone that needs some place to go on a sunny day when you're bored and broke, I suggest some activities, low cost or totally free that may help you maximize your time. Your summer vacation is the perfect time to take advantage of your city and what it has to offer.

The library is a great place to start. I'm not suggesting that you spend hours every week reading through the classical literature section. You need a break from the rigorous "studying" you did this semester. Surf the website of library branches in your area. You will be surprised to find that many have different activities. In New York, where I attend college and presently reside, libraries have everything from community celebrations to networking events with various companies, speakers and even seminars. And guess what? The majority of the time they are free. Home buying courses and book clubs are great ways to meet new people and build skills that you will need after college.

Visit other colleges after you have explored your own (and get a chance to see what it is you are paying all of that money for!). Besides making connections that will get you invited to various college parties,

many schools have free seminars, student plays, film festivals and performances that are open to other students. Check the website of these colleges for more information. Who knows? You may find programs that you can get involved in that are not offered at your school.

Volunteer and make it count! There are plenty of organizations that need your help. I suggest finding a program where you can use your experience as a college student to help other college-bound students. One place that can really use your words of wisdom is community organizations in the inner-city, where students need an inspirational role model. Some places you should consider volunteering for include the following:

- Technology Access Foundation
- Rainier Vista Boys and Girl Clubs
- John Stanford Powerful Schools tutoring program

Local community papers and magazines often hide big events with great deals within their publications. Thumb through the "Events" or "Arts & Entertainment" sections and dig for the hidden information. One week prior to the release of "The Da Vinci Code" I found a listing for free movie preview tickets. The majority of the time all you need to do in order to score the tickets is R.S.V.P by phone.

Museums, as well as theatres, also offer discounted tickets to students. Whatever your tastes are, you don't have to be stuck at home with nothing to do. There's plenty to do on a college student's budget. You just have to know where to look and use your community as a stepping stone. Happy hunting!

## Music Today

**RAQUEL  
GRANATH**



I think that everyone today can relate to music. That's why it's so popular. No matter what genre or style, people flock to the beating of the bass and the ring of the percussion. But more importantly today is the obscenities that are put in the ears and minds of our young people. Many people claim that "they're just words" or "I wouldn't do any of that in real life!", but, with the success of the CD's and now movies gratifying sex and violence, how could you not be affected?

The world is a different place from what it used to be when Elvis sang about being "shook up" and "hound dogs." Now rappers sing about blunts and 40 ounces, while rockers sing about suicide and drugs, and of course pop stars sing about sex and broken hearts. This is what's being fed into the minds of girls who now grow up insecure, and confused about themselves. We're breeding boys that defile women, gangbang and outright rebel against all that's right. Only 20% of women will make it through their teenage years without sex.<sup>1</sup> The other 80% end up with STD's, unwanted pregnancies and most of all a warped sense of intimate rights and wrongs for their age. It's my opinion that music has taken a toll on society as a whole. It's setting standards that say its "cool" to steal, kill, party and engage in promiscuous sex.

What's wrong with this picture? I have even discovered for myself the lack of respect shown by kids who partake in the listening to vulgar violent "I don't care" style music. Studies have shown that kids who watch music videos depicting explicit sexual and violent behavior are nearly 3 times more likely to get arrested, and 2 times more likely to have multiple sex partners, get an STD, use drugs or drink alcohol.<sup>2</sup> That alone should be a deterrent to most people, but quite contrarily, the fact that it's bad makes it that much more popular. Another surprising fact is that although rap music illustrates inner-city "tough" living, the widest audience is suburban white children who are more likely to have access to cable channels such as BET and MTV.

On the other hand, record labels claim that it is the duty of the parents to monitor and set up morals and values for their children. I find this to be true but what of children in foster care, runaways, and other latchkey youth who lack parental guidance? Those are the ones who act out the behavior they see on TV and become the statistic in a study. It is society's problem. It is everybody's problem. Is it going to take penetration of middle class America before it is reformed? Is it going to take more Columbins and more 12 year olds getting pregnant from rapes? I sincerely hope not, but if the world keeps digressing, we'll all be in the toilet 20 years from now.

1) [http://www.gutmacher.org/pubs/fb\\_teen\\_sex.html](http://www.gutmacher.org/pubs/fb_teen_sex.html)

2) <http://www.webmd.com/content/article/61/68559.htm>

## Creative Corner

**Untitled**

**ASHLEY OLZENDAM**



it's kind of sad  
that it took 19 years  
for someone to finally  
stand their ground when they say that  
"because" and  
"i had to"  
aren't [grit teeth]  
really [clench fists]  
answers

(aren't really good enough answers)

and i actually felt compelled to elaborate

they always seemd good enough to me.  
made sense.  
perfect, even.

and i actually felt compelled to elaborate  
but couldn't

i haven't quite figure out  
how to pry open  
"because" and  
"i had to"

(backed up in my head  
with fist-packed self-truths  
half suppressed by time  
half suppressed by reasoning and  
half suppressed to

save  
the  
world)

safely enough  
so that nothing escapes  
that isn't meant to see light  
and no one gets hurt in the process

(yet).

## Barista Training Program

**SURRI  
EVANS**



For the past two weeks, I have experienced training through the BTEP (Barista Training and Education Program). When I went for my orientation, I thought, "OK, I'll just do the 8 week program and get my stipend". But now that I have been in the classroom and actually learned about coffee and it's history, I have a different outlook on it. Coffee has a very long history and you would be surprised at what it takes to make a perfect shot of espresso. I am working in the 2100 café right now and it's going very well, it's actually a fun experience.

During my first three weeks of training, I learned a lot about coffee. Every morning when I go into the café, I pull a test shot. A perfect shot is pulled in 20-25 seconds. Pulling a test shot is your practice before you make a drink so that you can know if your coffee is going to extract slow or fast. I also learned a form of art called "latte art". This technique is done on lattes, cappuccinos, macchiatos and

mochas. There are two different types of the art. One is free pour and the other is etching. "Free pouring" is when you take your milk and you pour to make a heart or a flower. Etching is where you take the left over foam from your milk and you are able to create a design with chocolate sauce.

I think that it is great that this program is available to foster-care and homeless youth. It gives us an opportunity to learn about something that some of us would never have access to. The program is run through Youthcare and they provide a lot of support for us like helping us get valid identification and/or our birth certificate and training to become a fine barista one day. Once you're enrolled in the BTEP you will get an employment counselor that will stay with you for two years. The program also has great incentives for completing certain things.

I have five weeks left until graduation, and so far... so good. Everything is going great and I feel that this program is something that all you eligible readers should take advantage of (that's if your interested). It's very fun and educational while giving you a chance to grow and develop in your skills as a young adult. I am enjoying the program very much. For more information on the BTEP, contact Lisa at 206-204-0626.