

The G-Spot

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Local Activist to Stand Trial

Serena Turley

Laro Nicol is a family man. Speaking with this father of three, you get an overwhelming sense that he genuinely loves his wife and children. And yet because the government has painted Laro as a gun-toting madman, Laro has been robbed of his ability to provide for his family and may lose his ability to spend time with them altogether if he is convicted of erroneous weapons charges when he goes to trial next May. But how did this ex-Marine turned peace activist get in his current predicament? Last week I had the opportunity to sit down and listen to Laro as he told me his story:

S: Can you kind of take me through the charges that they brought up against you?

L: Certainly. When I was originally brought into court and arraigned they originally brought two charges to bear against me. The first charge was being a prohibited possessor. That is a person in possession of firearms who is prohibited by law from possessing firearms.

S: And what categories of people would be prohibited?

L: Previous felony convictions. For instance, if you're a felon you're prohibited from owning firearms. And that's really the only one that I can think of.

S: And

L: I'm not a felon, no. Their justification for that was an informant's statement that I was a drug addict.

Free Laro, Continued Pg. 2

ASU Students Celebrate Roe v. Wade Anniversary

Maryanne Benedict

January 22, 2004 marked the 31st anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that recognized a woman's right to control her reproductive choices. Demonstrations both for and against woman's reproductive freedom took place on campus to commemorate this historic event.

Cami Kalman, a representative of Voices for Choice (VOX), a student group sponsored by Planned Parenthood, stated that VOX organized the pro-choice rally to both celebrate *Roe v. Wade*, as well as to provide a counter to the misinformation that has been disseminated by other groups such as Students for Life and Voices for the Moral Choice. One such claim is that pro-choice supporters and feminists only push for abortion and do not provide adequate information about other reproductive options. According to Candace X, president of VOX, "we're really here to push for education about all kinds of contraception and let people know that they do have choices."

Many students came out today as "Pro-Choice and Proud." Megan Brice-Heames came to counter the people who are trying to make the political debate about abortion a moral matter. "The President and the people he wants to put on the Supreme Court are trying one by one to kill the woman of America. This is not an issue about morals, it's an issue about freedom and choice." Megan Faragher said she attended the rally because "I support a woman's right to choose. And pro-life is not pro-choice. It's not even pro-life at all. If you want to be pro-life, you're pro-choice."

Roe v. Wade, Continued Pg. 7

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Welcome Back to School Get Informed and Get Involved!

G-Spot Editorial Staff

Happy New Year everybody! After a long break, G-Spot is back in the swing of things and ready to bring in 2004 with a bang. This year promises to be very exciting: we've got the presidential "elections," the one-year anniversary of the Gulf War Part II and the Million for Roe march coming up in the very near future. We hope you will make a New Year's Resolution to get informed and get involved, because there is plenty of activism to be done right here in our own back yard.

Join the G-Spot staff! We meet every first and third Monday of the month at 5:30 PM in the Womyn's Coalition office on the 3rd floor of the MU. Everyone is welcome to stop by.

Going on a Rant Where Are the Pro-Choicers?

Serena Turley

Today's rally out on Hayden Lawn should serve as a wake-up call for people who consider themselves to be "progressive," "pro-womyn," "pro-choice," or "pro-active." While it's great that so many people did come out to support Voices For Choice, it is also pathetic that on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, those who call themselves "pro-life" are making a bigger showing than the pro-choice crew. We have no one to blame but ourselves.

The Religious Right has been using tactics of cooption and misinformation for decades now. The fact that the "student" group Voices for the Moral Choice has intentionally chosen a name that confuses it with the pro-choice group Voices for Choice is not a coincidence and should not be a surprise to anyone. The fact that the Religious Right is now using rhetoric like "what do we want? Equal rights for unborn womyn!" should be no surprise either. But when we continue to let the Religious Right outflank and outmaneuver us even when we know the methods they use, who do we have to blame but ourselves?

Free Laro, Continued from Pg. 1

L: The second charge was possession of destructive devices, i.e., two pipe bombs is what they classified them, or explosive devices. These were not found in my possession. These were turned over to them by an informant. And these are the ones I've showed you right here. One was nothing more than a harmless smoke device. The other one was this firecracker and that's all it was. It was a simple and small firecracker. Nothing big. Nothing dangerous. As a matter of fact I had a booklet in my possession called *The Underground Reports* that told you how to make anything from plastic explosives to dynamite, tear gas, any number of items. But the point being is that this information is of course not illegal to possess.



L: And here's what I have to say, I have to talk to the skeptics who are like, "if you're a peace and justice activist what are you doing with firearms?" Well, first I'd have to say don't question my motives, because that's what the government is doing. They're questioning my motives. Secondly, I would have to say that I was in the Marines for eight years. I grew up in the country. I used to have firearms around all the time. I was raised around firearms. I was raised to safely handle firearms. So to me it was never an issue of I was a hunter or I liked to plink or I was a gun nut. It was none of those things. I just like to collect these items for my own use, as a hobbyist or an enthusiast. I would take them out and teach my children how to fire, the older children. I was trying to make sure that my children didn't have that gun fascination that a lot of kids grow up with. And by virtue of exposure and teaching them very early on to very safe handling of firearms and how to use those firearms.

L: Another item to note, too, was that all of these items were locked in a gun safe, securely in the house. None of them were out. There wasn't magazines you know inserted into these firearms laying around the house just waiting to be picked up, none of that stuff. And these firearms were all legal and all purchased legally. A number of them belonged to my father-in-law who purchased the gun safe for me to keep those firearms in the gun safe and so that's where they were at. I would go shooting occasionally.

Free Laro, Continued Pg. 3

Free Laro, Continued from Pg. 2

L: I would usually always go shooting at the ranges. So kind of getting back to I wouldn't want my motives to be second guessed, that's really all I had those rifles for. Nothing more. I didn't carry a weapon with me, I didn't have any small arms, I had all rifles. You know, I didn't carry a machine gun as the informant said. I had an Uzi under my seat according to her.

L: I didn't tote a machine gun around. All she had seen was on occasion I would place one of my rifles in the trunk of my car. As you know, I worked at Goodyear Airport. I lived in Tempe. The only place I knew that I could fire a weapon other than the range was out Jackrabbit Lane out there by Buckeye. Well my thought was that if I put a rifle in my car when I went to work and I got off of work and I wanted to plink a little bit I could just drive from work another 20 miles out and go plinking and then come home because it was a long drive across town if I drove all the way across town and back again if I wanted to do it that way. So occasionally when I would go to see Daisy, that was the one informant who betrayed me, she would see that in my trunk on occasion because on occasion I would bring her clothing, I would bring food boxes and things. Well occasionally I would get down there in the trunk and we would talk about it a little bit. But she would never handle it. I would never do anything like that. So she claimed that I had an Uzi under my seat, that I toted a machine gun. And it was nothing more than her having spotted a rifle in my trunk at one time or another. Once again, not an illegal act. Nothing considered illegal.

L: The informant told them that I was an eight year methamphetamine addict, that I had know her for eight years and I had used methamphetamines every day since I've known her, including while I was at work as an air traffic controller. The people who worked with me know that this is bullshit. The people around me know. And yet the government's contention is the one that they used to deprive me of my job, deprive me of my livelihood and the livelihood of my family and to take me out of a position that I quite enjoyed. I loved being an air traffic controller. And so what you have is a situation here where you have

to ask yourself how did I get into this? Well, I guess that's where the story really kind of gets started.

L: I was involved in what I would call my own form of community outreach via Copwatch and self-empowerment projects. We had decided at a number of Copwatch meetings early in 2002 that we would opt to put more effort into community outreach in the Copwatch organization. That was an issue that had been discussed amongst most of the members at a lot of the meetings, including a retreat that we had. We decided that more than anything we needed to get people more involved in policing themselves when it came to Copwatch. You know we don't want to be a bunch of white people riding into the neighborhoods saying, "we're here to help you."

L: So what I had done, being a white guy who lives in the suburbs with a middle-class income being an air traffic controller, it was pretty tough for me to get into the inner cities, to get into the communities where they need it the most. So I met this person when I worked at America West Airlines named Yvette and she knew a lot of people around the area so she introduced me to some people around there. And these were people who were having concert run-ins with the law, not because they were committing illegal acts but just because they lived in a neighborhood where that was what happened all the time.

L: She introduced me to a woman named Brenda. Brenda became sort of my contact. So what she would do is she would bring people in for me to talk with. I would talk with those people about Copwatch. I would talk to them about what we did, what our issues were and how we were trying to strengthen communities to get people more involved in community policing. It wasn't a

success in that I couldn't get a lot of people involved because a lot of these people had a lot more to fear from the cops than they had to gain in confronting the cops. And so they would lend me an ear and they would listen to me and I did develop their trust because I was introduced in a fashion that people could tell that I wasn't a cop, I wasn't a snitch, that I wasn't there to cop them. And so because of that I gained the trust of a lot of people.

L: Along the way, about probably six years ago, Brenda introduced me to a woman named Daisy. Well about five years ago, Brenda moved in with her daughter so she moved out of the neighborhood. So I didn't have any contact in the city anymore. And so I thought of Daisy. I looked Daisy up. She was like, "whoah, what are you doing here?" and I was like, "well, I want to ask you if you'd be willing to talk to me about things. To introduce me to people when they're having trouble with the cops. To let me know what's going on in this neighborhood." Well that neighborhood was constantly having shootings, police shootings. She introduced me to other people in the neighborhood that had had run-ins with the police, and some of them quite brutal. I saw scars, I heard tales of just absolute brutality taking place against these people and I took notes. I took a lot of notes. I handed out a lot of information to these people on Copwatch, what Copwatch was about. But my biggest issue was I really wanted to empower them. I didn't want to just be here to do this for people, I told them, "you really need to do this for yourself," and that's what I'm here for. So I didn't push it. And at the same time I didn't back off. I was always a constant presence.

Free Laro, Continued Pg. 5



Shelters Not Jails! Carolers Protest Tempe's Criminalization of Homelessness

Serena Turley

On December 24, 2003, the Free to Camp Coalition and Food Not Bombs organized radical Christmas caroling on Mill Avenue to protest the Urban Camping Ordinance. Their general slogan was, "If the Baby Jesus was born in Tempe, Mary would have been arrested!" Carolers sang songs about the criminalization of homelessness and passed out literature to those who were out on Christmas Eve.

The demonstrators then proceeded onto Mayor Giuliano's house to spread the Christmas Spirit. Although the group sang and chanted outside the mayor's house for nearly an hour, Giuliano refused to come outside to talk with them. However, they did manage to leave him a bag of coal, along with Santa's "Naughty List," a collection of radical Christmas carols and the message that they would not give up their fight until the City of Tempe built a homeless shelter.

The Christmas Eve protest was the third in a series of demonstrations organized by the Free to Camp Coalition. The group has been actively collecting signatures for a petition to get the City of Tempe to repeal the Urban Camping Ordinance, which makes it illegal to sleep in public. Since there is not a single overnight shelter in the City of Tempe, the law basically makes it a crime to be homeless.

Homelessness, Continued on Pg. 3

Twenty Intersections of Homelessness & Patriarchy

Elizabeth Venable

1 domestic violence is a huge cause of homelessness *2* criminalization of and inadequate services for the homeless and poor do not encourage abused persons to escape their situations *3* homophobic rejection of teens by family and community is a major cause of teen homelessness *4* instead of providing enough services to pregnant homeless women, babies are sometimes taken away from their mothers by child protective services *5* the refusal of society to take care of poor mothers and the limits on welfare exacerbate the stresses poor women live under and may contribute to homelessness *6* trans-women are commonly rejected from women's shelters, and often do not feel comfortable (or feel threatened) in mixed and male shelters *7* homelessness sometimes drives people to prostitution, which they may feel to be a victimless crime and which is generally much more lucrative than many jobs available to welfare or working class people, but which can be considered an extreme form of exploitation of women *8* prostitution is a crime *9* when prostitution is criminalized, persons who are prostitutes end up having fewer rights and being more exploited and abused *10* women are offered lower wages than men *11* women are more likely to be left with the burden of children *12* homeless people are often very fearful of and commonly faced with rape and sexual assault *13* homeless people are often victims of physical assault perpetrated by richer, stronger, and whiter male abusers (this includes incidents of homeless people being lit on fire and

murdered in other ways) *14* a large number of serious drug addicts were sexually abused or molested as children *15* there are very few homeless shelters with a focus on or specific programs for queer youth *16* public assistance is not offered with respect and sympathy *17* women often bear the material or emotional costs of helping sick or homeless relatives, while other family members are reluctant to pick up the slack *18* stress placed on the extremely poor and homeless causes the collapse of families *19* abortions and oral contraceptives are not free and are extremely expensive for poor people when there is no financial assistance *20* as the homeless population has grown, it has become more and more acceptable to consider them second-class citizens, just as it is and has been acceptable to reject and stigmatize women, people of color, queer people, and other poor people.

It is just as wrong to treat homeless people as less than human as it is to treat any other group that way.

Contact Free to Camp Coalition:
freetocamp@bust.com

Recommended Reading:

Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America. Jonathan Kozol. Ballantine Books, 1988.

Tell Them Who I Am. Elliot Leibow. Maxwell Macmillan International, 1993.



Free Sherman Austin!



On January 24, 2002 federal agents raided the Southern California home of Sherman Austin, a young activist from Sherman Oaks. Austin was the webmaster of the anarchist/direct-action website Raise The Fist. Austin was charged with distributing information on how to make explosives.

Raise the Fist offered free web hosting and someone else had posted a link to the *Reclaim*

Guide, which details how to make explosive devices. The teen who actually posted the link signed a legal document claiming responsibility but the FBI never charged him. So why target Austin? The teen responsible for posting the information was both affluent and white; Sherman is working-class and black.

Like Laro Nicol, Sherman Austin has committed no crime. He was railroaded into accepting a plea agreement for a crime he didn't commit because federal prosecutors threatened to charge him under the Patriot Act. He initially refused to sign the agreement. But facing up to twenty years if he went to trial, Sherman accepted a plea deal that would sentence him to three months in prison with one year of probation. After the plea deal had been accepted, the federal judge declared that Austin would have to serve one year in federal prison with three years of probation, arguing that the sentence handed down by Ashcroft's Department of "Justice" wasn't tough enough.

Austin is currently serving time at the federal penitentiary in Tucson. Sherman's release date is September 3, 2004. There is the possibility that he will be moved to a halfway house sometime in July. Even after his release, Austin's computer usage will be restricted and he is prohibited from associating with any groups that seek to change the government.

WRITE A LETTER OF SUPPORT:

TCI Tucson
Sherman Austin, 51565-054
FCI Tucson
8901 South Wilmot Road
Tucson, AZ 85706

FOR MORE INFO:

www.freesherman.org
www.counterpunch.org/merlin10112003.html

E-mail Jennifer Martin Ruggerio, Sherman's mother:
jmi46@sbcglobal.net

Free Laro, Continued from Pg. 3

L: After a while I kind of gained a certain sympathetic streak towards Daisy's situation and her kids, right. I'd buy her kids toys for Christmas. I would bring fireworks back from Las Vegas to play with. And I kind of got a soft spot if she needed money I'd lend her money when she needed it. But we had this relationship going that was based upon a mutual consideration for one another, as well as the fact that she needed help on occasion and I'd provide it for her. And at the same time she provided me with something I needed, which was the ability to talk to people and to introduce me. Because everybody that she introduced me to asked me if I was a snitch right off the bat.

L: Well, finally Daisy moved to a new place out on 27th Avenue and Camelback at the indoor swap mart, right across the street from there. And while she moved out there, I helped her move, and I looked her up one day and I sat there and talked with her and she said it's horrible. She said, "the cops are just so bad out here." They were always there. Always. Right across the street in their little golf carts, watching. So I made it a point of coming out and I would buy like those Kodak instamatic disposable cameras and I would get little notebooks and I would bring them to people and I would say, "OK I'm going to give you this stuff, this is what you do." Well, I started noticing that they were watching me while I was watching them. I would be watching them and they would be watching me. I think that's why they targeted me and that's what got their attention.

L: Here's how the betrayal occurred, OK. At one point or another I gave Daisy this smoke device. I told her this is for making smoke. When you light it, it should make a pretty good amount of smoke. This is an M80 or firecracker, so make sure the kids are away from it when you light it. Apparently there was a federal paid informant in the complex who was acting as a security guard. Daisy didn't know this. But she did show him these items. Well, when he saw this he said, "where did you get these items from?" And she told him that she got them from a friend of hers who was an air traffic controller. Well, after I gave her these and she showed them to that guy, he said, "I have somebody that I'd like you to meet."

Free Laro, Continued Pg. 6

Free Laro, from Pg. 5



L: The person that he wanted her to meet, this person's name was Doc. Tall, slender, blond-haired guy that pretends to be a biker but it's obvious he's not. And he said that he wanted her to meet somebody. And so she went with him to meet somebody. Turns out that the person that he introduced her to was ATF Agent Tristan Moorland, the guy heading up the operation against me.

L: Well, as far as I know, this is what I've read in the reports, the Phoenix Bomb Squad was called out to dispose of these items. Can you tell these really need to be bomb squad disposed of, right? But they go ahead and try to render it safe and it explodes while they're trying to render it safe. They hit it with some sort of a porcelain shot under high pressure. So they're trying to crack the surface of it or something like that and make it explode. Well, it's got gun powder in it, I don't deny that. But it's also got sugar in it to make it make smoke, I put that stuff from road flares in it to make the smoke color red, so I mean yeah. I didn't even know if it would work. And so they made it explode. And according to the Phoenix Bomb Squad report it was an explosive device. The ATF agent, Tristan Moorland, referred to it as a pipe bomb and referred to this thing here made out of cardboard as a pipe bomb. So it amazes me that the ATF calls it pipe bombs. But the Phoenix Police Department just calls them explosive devices.

L: So as I was arrested I called my defense attorney and told his investigator who the informants were so they could look them up right away and find out what's going on. Well, they go and get Daisy and they find out that Daisy was threatened with an arrest and incarceration for something that had happened like twenty years ago. And she was told that if she didn't cooperate she would be thrown in prison. And so she was told to say anything she could about what she knew about me. And in order to make herself look better she told them anything she could.

L: Based upon that information, they send Doc over to try to sting me, set me up. This is where the betrayal comes in. Daisy brought this guy over to my house, where my family lives, where I've got my kids. If Daisy had asked to come over and visit I would have said, "sure." And she did call me and ask and I said, "No. I don't want any visitors." She comes over anyway. She waits outside until I get home from work that night. My wife's home, the kids are home, she could have come in and visited. But she waits outside until I get home. Then as I get out of my car, she gets out of the car with this guy named Doc. I give her a hug and say, "How are you doing Daisy, it's good to see you." And I said, "I really don't want any visitors, but since you're here why don't you come on in."

L: So Doc comes in the house. I introduce myself to him, I introduce him to my kids, show him my kids' snake you know on the way in the door. He sees that I've got my family here. I show him into the garage, I show him where my rockets are. And then I told him how I make all these things, I make these small firecrackers and things for the kids. And I showed him that book with all that other stuff and said, "yeah this stuff shows you how to make incendiaries and it shows you how to make napalm and all that stuff." So I said, "I guess if you really wanted to

you could make all these things if you had the know how." I said, "but I keep it pretty strict to this stuff." I said, "of course if there was a big rebellion I'd have the means available to me in the way of knowledge to put stuff together."

L: So I said things that could be misconstrued you know as wrong. But at the same time, is speaking a crime? Can I not speak my mind? If I'm not conspiring to commit a crime, can I not speak my mind? I told them I despised the police, that I thought that cops were absolute pigs and that they are just despicable, that they operate outside the law, that they don't care about the law and they don't care about us. And I said, "one day it's either going to come down to an armed rebellion or we're going to become nothing more than the cogs in a big police state." I said, "I don't see this going any other way." I talked about things like that openly with him. I told him my philosophies on life and the government. But I didn't say anything about committing any crimes, I didn't say anything about doing anything wrong.

L: So I showed him around the house. He met my family and then he left. He tried to get me that night, he was trying to imply that he would like me to make him some firecrackers, and he used the word firecrackers, in exchange for something. I wasn't sure what he meant, but I could only assume he meant drugs. And I was like, "no." And so later, I had a motorcycle I wanted to have fixed and I don't know how to work on it. Well, he said he knew how to work on bikes, so I was telling him maybe I'd like to have him work on my bike, would he be willing to work for money. And he said, "no. How about if you make me some firecrackers and we'll do it that way?" And I said, "no," so he leaves.

Free Laro, Continued Pg. 16

Roe v. Wade, From Pg. 1

Anti-abortion advocates, on the other hand, argue that pro-choice supporters do not give womyn enough information to make an informed decision about abortion. Mary Cohl said that she came to the "Respect for Life" rally "to let womyn know that there are consequences." Cohl admits to having several abortions in her past but says that she now regrets those decisions. She also says "the truth as I know it is that abortion hurts womyn."

Mark Truman, a pro-choice demonstrator, counters this by saying, "I think it's really important that there be honest and truthful facts given out because the pro-life groups tend to distort facts achieve what they see as an ethical prerogative." Candace Byman says, "They're using a bunch of propaganda and scare tactics. Nobody who's out here advocates abortion as the only or primary option. But there are times when it's the only thing left

and it has to be something that each womyn has control over. We're here to make sure people know what their options are."

For instance, anti-abortion activists claim that abortion poses health risks to womyn, such as an increased risk of developing breast cancer. However, the National Cancer Institute has released several studies refuting these claims. In fact, their studies reveal that pregnancy itself is just as likely to be connected with breast cancer rates as abortion.

Byman said that she felt something was achieved by the pro-choice rally "because it's always good when we show a presence. We're outnumbered here on the ASU campus for various reasons. But at least by us being here people who were out and about on campus today and felt attacked by the other groups have a place where they can come and vent and feel like they have a safe space."

G-Spot Thanks

Many thanks to Linus Graybill for helping us revamp our website, to be unveiled by the end of the month. An extra special shout out to Dr. Kathleen Ferraro for all her support through the years as our previous faculty advisor. WE MISS YOU!! We also appreciate everyone who contributed to this issue. Keep the submissions coming! And a big thank you to the professors of the ASU Womyn's Studies Department for giving their students a safe space to learn how to get active in their community.

ASU Group Continues Battle for Reproductive Freedom

Cami Kalman

VOX, Voices for Choice, is a student group started by Planned Parenthood that works to educate young people about reproductive choices and enable students to get active in maintaining reproductive freedom.

This semester is an exciting and crucial time for pro-choice citizens to become active and make their voices heard. The March for Women's Lives is just on the horizon. The march will take place April 25, 2004 in Washington, DC as a necessary demonstration for pro-choice citizens, women, and for the preservation of women's freedom of choice over their bodies. The goal for the 2004 march is one million people.

Freedom of choice for women is dangling precariously in the Supreme Court and has already been chipped away in Congress with the recent ban on "partial-birth abortion." If we do not speak out for choice now we will lose it. For more information or to sign up for the March for Women's Lives please visit www.marchforchoice.org.

It is way past time for us to be active in fighting for our reproductive freedom! For 31 years women in the United States have had control over their reproductive lives. Without reproductive choice, women will once again be powerless over their bodies and the women who fought so hard for reproductive freedom will have fought in vain.

ASU VOX meets every other Thursday at The Muse coffee shop in Tempe at 6pm. Meeting times may change. For more meeting and group information email us at voicesforchoice@topica.com.

New Club on Campus: ASU Feminist Organization Speaks Out

Sara Cruz

Spring semester marks the beginning of The Feminist Organization at ASU. This new club begins its first semester at ASU with fresh ideas and goals to educate students and the community about various women's issues. The Feminist Organization encourages all students to join and become active in the revival of the feminist voice on our campus. The Feminist Organization is led and composed of ASU students that believe in women's rights and equality, and more crucially, are ready to have a strong voice on our campus and in our community.

The Feminist Organization will join the fight for reproductive rights in April 2004 at the March for Women's Lives in Washington DC. We will join the potentially one million pro-choice activists in the march to secure women's reproductive rights. This is a great opportunity for students to become active and have a voice, not only locally, but also nationally. Better yet, we encourage students to join the march for free with The Feminist Organization. For more information about the march please visit www.marchforchoice.org.

The Feminist Organization is open to new ideas and members and invites all interested students to join our first informational meeting on Thursday, January 29th in the MU 302 Maroon and Gold room on the Third floor of the Memorial Union at 3pm. For further information please visit www.asu.edu/clubs/asufeminist.com or email us at ASUfeminist@hotmail.com.

Homelessness, from Pg. 2

Some of the carolers' songs included lyrics like, "No homeless shelter, no graffiti . . . No compassion for the needy!" They sang messages about the racial and class dynamics of Tempe's anti-homeless statutes and spoke out about the harmful effects of gentrification. They also painted Mayor Neil Giuliano as the Grinch who stole Mill Avenue away from the working-class of Tempe.

Gentrification has left a noticeable mark on Mill Avenue, an area that used to be characterized by locally-owned businesses but is now wasteland of chain stores like Borders and Hooters. According to Tempe resident Rod Fitzhugh, "Gentrification is everyone's fight. I've been renting here for ten years and felt the property values get pushed up as mom and pop stores leave and chains like The Gap move in. The lasting effect is less diversity and less community say in what goes on in our neighborhoods."

On January 7, 2004 members of the coalition met with the staff of *Echo* magazine, the Valley's leading LGBTQ magazine. Originally, a protest was planned in front of *Echo*'s offices because of the lack of coverage the magazine has given in the past to homelessness. The protest was called off at the last minute when the magazine's editors agreed to meet with Free to Camp to discuss the possibility of a cover article discussing queer homeless youth.

SPEAK OUT! Contact the Free to Camp Coalition to find out about future actions.

Cost Comparison of Shelter v. Jail

\$64 a day per person to house & feed the homeless
\$136 a day per person to incarcerate the homeless*

* **Source:** Michael Horn, Australian homeless rights advocate

Homeless Rights Advocates Address Tempe City Council

Serena Turley

On January 15, 2004 members of the Free to Camp Coalition and other homeless rights advocates and social justice activists presented nearly 1200 signatures to the Tempe City Council in protest of the Urban Camping Ordinance, the law that makes it illegal to sleep in public in the City of Tempe. Turnout for the presentation was amazing – the City Council's chambers were packed, leaving many people to stand around the perimeter of the room. Once the floor was opened up for public comment, at least 30 audience members spoke out against the law with only one respondent, DTC president Rod Keeling, in favor of it. The Downtown Tempe Community (DTC) is a development agency that was responsible for the law's initial passage.

ASU graduate Elizabeth Venable presented the signatures on behalf of Free to Camp. During her remarks, Venable noted that the inhumane nature of the law puts homeless residents in a situation where they have become criminalized by virtue of their being homeless. If arrested for sleeping in public, homeless residents may be fined \$500 and face up to 30 days in jail. The City of Tempe has started the practice of offering plea deals for those who cannot afford to pay the fine which ban residents from the downtown Mill area.

"A ban from the Mill area will effectively cut off the homeless from many of the resources allotted to them, including the Tumbleweed Center and Salvation Army, as well Mill Avenue itself. Because of lack of adequate information, resources and choices, many homeless people have accepted this solution," says Venable. "These are not effective or appropriate solutions to the problem of homelessness. Therefore the law must be repealed and more efforts must be made to meet the needs of Tempe's homeless residents."

Other Tempe residents also addressed the City Council. Eric Jordan, an operations manager for J&P Contracting, says, "the homeless as a class are not dishonest, harmful or disrespectful to our community. They are not criminals. Failing to address the situation with ethical solutions and merely criminalizing indigent members of society is a moral travesty." Beth Swadener, a professor here at ASU, explained that she has done field work with homeless youth in Kenya and that citizens of developing nations are treated much better than they are here in Tempe. And Rebecca Larang, a volunteer who helped collect signatures, stated that, "This law is shameful and I urge each of the City Council members to do some serious soul searching on this issue."

The City Council did not respond to Venable or any of the other residents who spoke because by Tempe law they are not allowed to. But Venable did say that she felt something was accomplished by collecting the signatures. "At least people are aware of the law now. Before the petitioning campaign, many people didn't even know this was on the books." It is unclear how the City Council will respond to the petition, but the indication from the residents who filled the meeting with a sustained response overwhelmingly suggests that for city residents, the law must be repealed.

Our Father

Genevieve Betts

Our Father, who art in heaven

I didn't realize my own power.
My small hands under his,
finger-tracks purple
along the easel of his neck,
a relentless grabbing of Adams apple.

*Honor your father and mother:
that your days may be long upon the
land
which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

I was eight when he said
it was the only way
to have a happily ever after.
It started with my punishments,
a spank or a slap, and always
the touching.
He made me choke him
when he was almost done,
each little death
a means for his Eden.

*Endure what you suffer
as being a father's punishment.*

Maybe it was my grip- too tight,
or extra pressure from his hands.
Now his body platinums cold
as I slide the wallet from his pocket.
I wipe his belly clean, his thigh,
memorize the look on his face
and fold his stiff limbs into his body.

*But you are not really alone,
because the Father is with you.*

He was always kind when I did it right.

**"If you have come to
help me, you can go
home again. But if you
see my struggle as part
of your own survival,
then perhaps we can
work together."**

~Ivan Illich



Kucinich Courts Progressive Voters

Serena Turley

I first heard about Dennis Kucinich when my roommate told me that he was vegan. Being vegan myself, I was excited to hear that someone might bring this life-centered ethic to the White House. But realizing that dietary considerations are probably a poor criterion for selecting a presidential candidate, I decided to learn more about the man who seems to have replaced Ralph Nader as the long-shot candidate in this year's presidential election.

Dennis Kucinich initially got involved in politics at the young age of 23 when he was elected to City Council in Cleveland, OH. He then became mayor, where he fought to save the city-owned electric system from corporate takeover after the city went bankrupt. As a Congressperson, he has been an ally of the working-class and environmentalists. And he is the only presidential candidate who voted against the Patriot Act.

Cindy DiGeronimo-Silacci, co-coordinator for the Kucinich campaign in Arizona, says that Kucinich embodies a kind of honesty that is missing from most other politicians. Silacci found out about Kucinich while visiting a vegan website. There was a link to his homepage and she noticed that there was a campaign meeting being held in

Phoenix that same night. She has been active with his campaign ever since. "This is my first campaign. I was never politically involved before this. But I've never met anyone like him." After listening to him speak, Silacci said she turned from a being support to a being a believer. "Kucinich is not the kind of person who just pays lip-service to the issues, he delivers."

Kucinich has promoted himself first and foremost as the peace candidate and a supporter of universal healthcare. Upon taking office, Kucinich would completely pull US troops out of Iraq within 90 days. However, it is also important to note that Kucinich is an avid supporter of LGBTQ rights and advocates full federal recognition of same-sex marriages. According to Mari Engelhardt, the national LGBT outreach coordinator of the Kucinich campaign, "Equality before the law includes marriage, a position that separates him from other Democratic presidential candidates . . . To suggest that same-sex marriage is a state issue is like saying that women and African-Americans should enjoy civil rights but that such decisions should ultimately be left to the states. That's not a pro-civil rights position."

A pro-labor candidate, Kucinich supports a living (not minimum) wage for all workers and would end the US's involvement with NAFTA and the WTO. Instead, he believes that trade agreements should be negotiated bilaterally and should be contingent upon fair labor and environmental protection standards. Although the WTO does offer smaller economies the forming trade blocks against the US, withdrawal from WTO and NAFTA would help ensure that American companies remained in the US instead of sending their factories overseas.

Kucinich, Continued on Pg. 11

Kucinich, Cont. from Pg.9

Kucinich would also repeal the heinous Patriot Act, passed in the wake of 9-11 without any public debate on the floor of Congress. Because it rolls back the Constitution, "we must challenge the rationale of the Patriot Act . . . We cannot justify giving the Attorney General the ability to designate domestic terror groups . . . We cannot justify a government which takes from the people our right to privacy and then assumes for its own operations a right to total secrecy."

Kucinich also has a plan to provide tuition-free higher education to millions of students in state universities. There are 12 million young Americans who attend public institutions, colleges, and universities. They pay an average of four thousand dollars a year. That adds up to 48 billion dollars a year. That's less than a third of the President's most recent tax cut for the wealthy.

But why vote for just another white guy? In an era where all the candidates look and sound the same, it's hard to seriously believe that Kucinich would be different than anyone else. So why not vote for Carolyn Moseley-Braun (who sadly dropped out of the race just before this issue went to press), especially if you're a womyn or person of color (or both)?

Silacci explains that "this is a hard question, because all women are different. Moseley-Braun has the distinction of being both black and a woman. But Dennis doesn't want to just look at the outside, he looks at what a person stands for." Brad Graupner from ASU Students for Kucinich adds that, "like Martin Luther King said, we should judge the candidate on the content of their character and not by what's on the outside."

Like Kucinich, Moseley-Braun was pro-education and supports universal healthcare. But unlike Moseley-Braun and the other Democratic candidates who would continue to support keeping US troops in Iraq, Kucinich has a plan to get out and that's the bottom line.

I guess now that Moseley-Braun is out of the race, this is all a moot point. But for me, this was the critical comparison, not Kucinich versus Dean (who only supports civil unions for LGBTQ couples) or an ex-NATO General like Clark. But, like Emma Goldman said, "if voting really mattered, it would be illegal."

Many people, myself included, feel disillusioned with party politics, especially after the last "election." Those of us who voted for Nader knew that he didn't stand a chance of actually winning but felt so strongly that the Democratic Party had sold out the Left that we believed we had no other choice.

Kucinich might be an underdog in this campaign. But like he said during the Iowa Democratic debates, "if you vote for me, I'm electable." So if you do choose to vote this year, vote your conscience in the primary and save the strategizing for November.

Kucinich on the Issues:

Non-Violence:

- ✓ Unequivocally against the war in Iraq. Unlike any of the other candidates, he would pull US troops out of Iraq within 90 days of taking office and revoke all US claims to Iraqi oil.
- ✓ Complete nuclear disarmament
- ✓ End the death penalty
- ✓ Repeal the Patriot Act

Womyn's Rights/Reproductive Freedom:

- ✓ Universal healthcare with full and equal access to abortion
- ✓ Universal healthcare coverage that covers contraception
- ✓ Universal healthcare that includes midwives & doulas to give pregnant womyn a choice in their birth plans
- ✓ Ratify the UN Convention to End All forms of Discrimination Against Womyn (CEDAW)

LGBTQ Rights:

- ✓ Complete federal recognition of same-sex marriage
- ✓ Adoption and immigration rights for same-sex couples.
- ✓ Repeal the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that prohibits LGBT service members from disclosing their sexual orientation.

Environment:

- ✓ End logging, mining & ranching on public lands
- ✓ Ratify the Kyoto Protocol on Global Warming
- ✓ End dependence on fossil fuels by actively promoting research and investment in renewable energy sources

For more information: www.kucinich.us
ASU4Kucinich@hotmail.com



Earth First! Ranchers Last! Environmentalists Protest at Annual Stock Show

Phoenix Earth First!

Livestock grazing on Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and State Trust lands has ecologically degraded the Southwestern landscape for more than 100 years. This land did not evolve to support grazing by great numbers of large ungulates (cows and sheep), and the results can be seen in the eroded soils, devastated aquatic habitats (rivers, creeks, streams, riparian areas), declining wildlife populations, and an ever growing threatened and endangered species list, all across the arid Southwest. The grazing industry is heavily subsidized by taxpayers, from seeding programs; property tax breaks; fence, roads, corral, stock tank and windmill construction out on the range; predator extermination; and many other direct and in-direct financial gifts.

December 2003 brought ranchers from around the West to Phoenix for their annual convention and stock show, a cultural event where stockmen show off their plumpest cattle for cash prizes. Due to the fact that ranchers are responsible for so much damage to Southwestern ecosystems, their arrival could not go unchallenged. Phoenix Earth First! organized an action to roll out the *unwelcome* mat for the ranchers coming to Phoenix, sending the message that they were not wanted in Arizona as long as they continued to destroy the biological diversity of the Southwest. The event comprised of street theater and protesting, featuring a giant cowboy puppet leading the charge against the ranchers.

Do the write thing – submit to G-Spot!

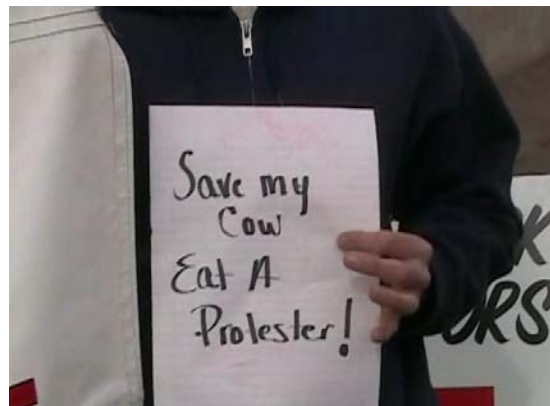
G-Spot is currently accepting submissions for our next issue. We need your poetry, prose, editorials, artwork, rants, raves, review, and much, much more.

E-mail your submissions to:

gspotsubmissions@yahoo.com

Bearing slogans like, “Mad cow, it’s what’s for dinner,” and “Keep the public in public lands,” demonstrators stood out in front of the main entrance to the state fair grounds, which became temporary stockyards for the ranchers and their exploited animals. Protesters jeered at the ranchers as they entered and exited. This brought a hastily made sign by one of the ranchers stating, “Save my cow, eat a protester,” which was thrown at the demonstrators as their truck drove off the premises. Bringing the mad cow issue to light while the national stock show was being held in Phoenix, as well as continuously pointing out the gross injustice of tax money being given to the likes of wealthy car dealer Hal Earnhardt to ranch on public lands, fuels Earth First! and the direct action that helps bring such ludicrous activities to a halt.

Phoenix Earth First! is a collective committed to protecting the native biological diversity of Central Arizona through public education, grassroots community organizing, and direct action. For more information send e-mail to: phoenixef@excite.com



Drops of Sagittarius

Alex Bollinger

I'm absolutely smitten by Dave, so I make a plan to be alone with him after work. As he's walking back home, I ask him if he wants to join me for a walk.

"Of course I do."

We walk along a road and flirt, like always, but this time we're alone. We come to a soccer field and he says, "Let's walk through it barefoot." So we do. I point out Orion and we look for constellations together. I feel the cold grass under my feet and we're alone and looking at stars on a night so clear they could fall out of the sky like dew drops and it's so romantic I want to yell but I can't.

He might not feel the same way about me.

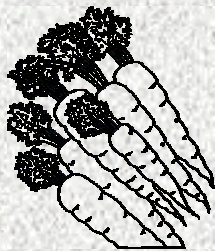
I stop thinking about that when Dave comes close to show me Sagittarius. Close enough to feel his arm brush mine and his breath on my cheek. I turn to him and lean in. Close enough to feel his hand on my chest.

It pushes me away.

"I'm sorry, I'm straight." Silence as I stare at the ground. "We probably should be getting home."

But I stay in the field, thinking about how this has happened too many times. Each time my faith in dreams dies a little, but now I'm having its funeral. I cry in that soccer field until I run out of tears. I'm still sad, so I look up to Sagittarius and promise not to try again.

Vegan Nutrition Tip



Having trouble getting enough calcium in your diet? Tums are actually an excellent and inexpensive way to supplement your daily calcium needs. And unlike many calcium-fortified juices, Tums do not derive their calcium from animal sources.

SNIP: THE DEATH OF MARILYN MONROE

By: Max Siegel

you comb in
Feminism, the Sing-Along
I play Marilyn Monroe
dreaming in neon
of drowning

you
an everything

meanwhile in real life
hand jobs in fisticuffs
bludgeon our sheets
the curlicues about my throat

(it's better without blood
as pleasure is
without God)
"therefore

"it's fashionable"
you compliment my illness
while your good health sickens

me
the blonde bombshell roped between your legs
doesn't see anyone
so neither will you

not because of the prejudice
we sometimes admit hurts
you and your reversible religion

Marilyn goes bye-bye
because I've become better at
oh-oh-oh - staying alive - staying alive
than actually living

I will step higher and farther
but not closer
snipping

what we share
from out your hair

Music Reviews



Erykah Badu: Worldwide Underground (Motown, 2003)

Erykah takes the funk to a whole new level on her third release "Worldwide Underground." Ditching the neo-soul repertoire for hard drums, etched-in-the-groove bass lines and vocals evoking social consciousness, art and music all at the same time and collaboration with underground hip-hop greats Roy Hargrove, Dead Prez, Queen Latifah, and Angie Stone only adds to the maximum funk feel Badu creates all by her lonesome. *Bump It* opens up the disc, with a feel good verse "You know I love it when they play my music loud" and by god she tells you what do to with the chorus, telling old-school hip-hop to take it the next level: "Push up the Fader, Bust the Meter, Bump it." *Back in the Day*, featuring Lenny Kravitz on guitar, is a throw back to the days of Tribe Called Quest and 70's soul when all you needed was a car stereo and a night hanging out at the park to have a good time. *The Grind* is a hip-hop activist shout out to those who hold the economic power, facilitated by Dead Prez who asks the soul-searching question "Have you ever been hungry before?" as they point the fingers at those who make it hard to make ends meet with Erykah backing up their plea. *Danger* tells the story of a woman involved with a hustling man and the horn lines that drive the rhythm give it an Afro-Cuban feel, driving the tale of hiding money and wondering where her man is at 2 a.m. *Think Twice*, a love song about being cautious before jumping into the gripping waters of love, features jazz/funk aficionado Roy Hargrove on trumpet, adding mad ambience to the late night scene Badu's got going on. Erykah tends to save the best for and "Love of My Life Worldwide Remix" is no question the cherry on top. Featuring the ladies of underground hip-hop, Queen Latifah, Angie Stone, Bahamadia and Miss Badu, their cover of female rap trio Sequence's "Funk You Up" keeps the old-school soul and gives props to females gaining musical headway. Erykah knows it's all about the love, the soul and no question, da' Funk. Take heed and check it out.



Reid Speed: Life After Dark (Breakbeat Science Records, 2003)

Reid Speeds relocation from New York to LA didn't disrupt her groove at all. On her second release, "Life After Dark," the fast-paced vibe is still apparent and it feels good. A mix of darkwave, melodic, and two-step drum and bass, Reid lets you know right off the bat that it's all about the dance floor. The album is filled it with beats to keep the floor pulsing till 4 a.m. A slow start with Dylan's Black Rainbow's deconstructing chill-out beats gives way to a send off through K's Blur and into Filthy Dirty Rich's Second Skin, pulsing with "crazy in love-lost" vocals over heart-attack drums. London Elektric's The Great DnB Swindle pulses like crazy with it's "end of the world" theme, comprised of keyboards and vocals over spastic drums. DJ Dara of Breakbeat Science fame, teams up with A-Sides to turn the beat sideways into darkwave on UnHoly Grail. Garon sexually rises and surprises on Good Loving with pointed lyrics over hard grooves. Reid throws in some two-step with Total Science on Sat There and then goes out the way she came in with Foul Play's Music is the Key. A master of manipulation, Reid will have you rollin' across the dance floor and you'll never know what hit cha.

Peaches: Fatherfucker

(XL Recordings/Beggars Group, 2003)

Peaches doesn't fuck around when it comes to making good music and giving the system a kick in the ass. She subordinates gender and music entirely on her second release, "Fatherfucker." While her first album "The Teaches of Peaches" wasn't quite able to hold it before all 15 tracks commenced and only gave a few goodies as a result (*Fuck the Pain Away* and *XXAAA*), "Fatherfucker" is good to the last drop. Peaches yells her way through a loop of Joan Jett's *Bad Reputation* and raps about doin' her sex-positive thang just the way she likes it on *I'm the Kinda*, with pointed lyrics "I'm the kinda bitch that you wanna get with" over super-simple beats. Giving a nod to the threesome on *I U She*, she gives the finger to the current gender binary system as we know it: "I don't have to make a choice, I like girls and I like boys." She also rocks out with her cock out with Iggy Pop on *Kick It*. Food and sex mix well, too, as Peaches points out on *Stuff Me Up*, with ambient b-boy beats over a recipe for a healthy sex drive with Taylor Savy: "I see you sittin' there stuffin' your face, why don't you stuff me up?...Eat a cookie and a big dick every day/Eat a cookie and a big clit every day." *Back it up Boys* gives props to the prostrate and exposes the hidden pleasure that boys don't want to talk about but they know it. Peaches makes sure the boys know that she knows. "I like to lick it and suck it like you do...you know what I'm talking about right? It could only be one thing. Don't you know it's supposed to feel better for boys?" over staggard rock-guitar slashes and her MC5 groovebox beats. With the lyrics being pointed, the beats feel good left on their syncopated, synthesized lonesome so you can fuck and think at the same time.



Alicia Keys: The Diary of Alicia Keys

(J Records, 2003)



Alicia Keys has been in the soul music kitchen cooking up grooves for her second album "The Diary of Alicia Keys." What she came up with was a blend of funk, soul and hip-hop that shows where her roots are. The music has a little more edge than today's blend, termed "neo-soul," and that razor-blade edge gives it a dose of funk—simple but heavy drum grooves propel the tunes, violin licks ala "Saturday Night Fever" give a hint of disco, and the piano trickles underneath it all. Instrumentally, Keys shows her ability to really nail the soul genre—no contrived groove here—Marvin Gaye would be proud. Alicia's "diary" consists of heartbreak and crush entries mostly, not too much introspective musing to be found in her musical notebook. The catchy hooks that come with all this emotional hoopla can be a lot of fun to sing along with and relate to, but 14 tracks is a little much to be repeating the same scenario. Call me a feminist, but Miss Keys should be hip to the fact that a man is not essential for breathing. The track that stands out on this disc of groove and emotional instability is *Diary*, a slow jam with a simple storyline (keeping secrets between two lovers) that allows the piano, drums and guitar to breathe and groove. Tony Toni Tone' accompanies Keys as the male love interest and it's a simple, soulful vocal match with some call-and-response licks that make it all just melt, just what good soul music should do. Alicia is etching her name on the wall in the soul music kitchen and joining the ranks of Erykah Badu and Jill Scott quite nicely. Welcome her in.

Music reviews by Jessica Nelson

Free Laro, Continued from Pg. 6

L: Well, I get a call the next day, "this is so and so, how about coming over to work that deal out where you make me some firecrackers in exchange?" And I said no. And he calls me again. Well, all week he calls me to try to get me to do this exchange thing and I won't do it. Well, I started to wonder, "why is he calling me like this. On Wednesday, him and Tristan Moorland show up at my door while my wife was home. They ask if they can come in and see the motorcycle gas tank which was in the shed of my backyard. This allowed them the opportunity to walk through the entire house and then go to the backyard. What they were doing was casing my house for the raid. Because Tristan Moorland introduced himself as somebody else. My wife didn't know any better, she didn't know what this was all about. She thought they had come about fixing the gas tank. I hadn't done anything illegal. And yet, there they were. They were casing my house for a freaking military style assault, a raid.

L: That following Tuesday I'm at work and I get a call from my wife. She's irate. We've gotten a tip from a very concerned neighbor, somebody who knows that whatever's happening is absolute bullshit. When I found out that this was happening, I asked my boss to escort me home because I didn't know what was going on, I had no idea. So we drive back here, Brian's got a cell phone, he's talking to my wife. We decide to go ahead and meet up before going to the house. So we meet up over here at the Texaco just caddy corner from my house. I've been told that there were twenty to thirty fully armed semi-military cops around the house. There was a helicopter, there were news cameras and trucks. It was a full on military-style assault on my home. And my oldest son has pulled up during this and they have frisked him and taken him inside of the house. And I don't know what's going on. But what I did know was that I wasn't going to let anything happen to my children. So Beth took the kids to a safe house, to a very good friend of ours, and we said if we don't come back take them to Los Angeles to their grandparents' house. Because we didn't know. We had no idea what was going on. **L:** We decided that instead of going to the house and giving them the gratification of us showing up there, plus my wife was concerned that they were going to shoot me dead if I showed up. She just has this really overwhelming feeling that they were going to kill me if I showed up there. And it's quite possible that based upon what they were doing they may have wanted to shoot me. I don't know. They were probably just looking for an excuse to shoot me. You know, saying I was pulling something out of my car, my non-existent Uzi maybe. She was very concerned, so we decided to go to the

Tempe police department and wait and demand to see a search warrant.

L: So we went to the Tempe police department and walked in and told them what we wanted. Well, during the process of waiting because they said they would call, apparently they had some Tempe representatives over there because it was in Tempe. I did notice that they had taken positions between the door and us so if I had decided I was tired of waiting and I wanted to leave they wouldn't let me. But they didn't let on. They just kept us there. So I waited. We fully expected that when whoever it was that was there came they would do nothing more than show us a search warrant. About two hours later, ATF agent Tristan Moorland and his buddy walk in. And he says, "Mr. Nicol?" And I say, "yes." And he says, "I'm agent Tristan Moorland with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and I'm placing you under arrest." And they puts the cuffs on me. And that's where I said something that I shouldn't have said, but once again it's only something I said. It was very sarcastic. I said, "you know, I should have left for Cuba when I had the chance."

S: So you didn't actually turn yourself in the way the *Arizona Republic* covered it.

L: Right.

S: Because they said that you were going there to turn yourself in.

L: No. I was there demanding to see a search warrant. I had no idea that I was wanted. I didn't know that there was any warrants out for me. You know. I didn't know what was going on. I would assume that if you were guilty of something you would know that this jig is up. And it's OK, you know, the jig is up. But I had no clue what was going on. I definitely had no clue that they were going to arrest me. Especially because I hadn't done anything

L: Now of course I'm in prison. I spend the night in jail, I go to the detention hearing. During the detention hearing it turns into just a kangaroo situation. The same guy, I don't know if you've heard about this, but the same guy, his name is Magistrate Duncan, he's the same one who signed the search warrant and put this stuff before the grand jury. So these are the same guys with this secret evidence without me having a chance to confront any of this who decide that they're going to progress with this raid, military-style raid on my freaking home. You know, all based upon an informant's statement.

L: That next day when I was brought in they asked me if I would be willing to take a urinalysis test. And I was clean. I had just taken one the day before. I was clean. I was subject to random urinalysis testing every day of my life for the last eleven years and I've been clean every time. Well, the ATF went into my home and didn't find any drugs. And I don't know if

you saw the police department report, but they said they found methamphetamine paraphernalia. Do you know what that was? Some small baggies that we used for crafts and a compact mirror that they took out of a bathroom drawer. That's the methamphetamine paraphernalia that they found. All of those items have been tested and have come back negative for any residues for any kind of a narcotic. So the only proof that they have that there's any kind of drug use here is from Daisy, a known drug addict. A woman who was threatened with incarceration if she didn't cooperate. There was never any discussion of drugs or anything like that with Doc. His only involvement with this was to try and get me to make firecrackers for crying out loud.

S: So that kind of comes back to the question of them saying that you had the components to make grenades or whatnot in your house. I mean, looking at this, this is essentially stuff that anybody could have in their house, right?

L: Right. Especially if you own a home. If you own a home and you garden or you do yard work, you're gonna have stuff like that. You're gonna have PVC pipe around the house, you're gonna have conduit. You're gonna have a lot of that.

S: Empty bottle for recycling.

L: That's what they did to Sherman Austin. They said he had the components to make Molotov cocktails. They said in my case I had the components for making a pipe bomb. But you know you can have the components for anything they choose to find if that's what they want to find. So what is the law? Do I have to have explosives devices or the components to make one? I haven't done anything wrong. And yet here I sit. I've been accused and my family's lost income that I was providing. We've lost our security. And there's no telling what the future holds. I try to remain positive. And when I'm with my kids that's what strengthens me. But it hurts me sometimes to know that I could miss out. My son's seven. He'll be eight this month. My daughter will be fourteen in May. I don't want to miss out on the rest of their childhood. And that's what they're trying to take away from me, the rest of my children's childhood. So even with all the support from the community that I have of people coming together, there's always that moment of sheer terror where I'm in my own loneliness sometimes and I realize that with as many people that have come out to support me I could lose my children. And that's really the biggest thing in my life to me is my kids.

S: Do you think that there's any connection between the timing of this and their targeting you because of the Patriot Act? Because you've been involved in Copwatch for years. And I don't think it's a coincidence that this has happened now, with the Patriot Act denying people of their Fourth and Fifth

Amendment rights. Do you see a connection between these things?

L: I think there is. I think in the bigger picture and the bigger scheme of things there is that connection. It really plays in well to how they've conducted their operations.

L: So what have they charged me with? What is my crime? Knowledge? That's what Duncan said. He said I'm dangerous because of what I know and I'm a threat to my community. That's why he urged to have me held prior to trial in my hearing. What you know makes you a threat and a danger to your community. I didn't think that knowledge was a crime. But I guess in today's day and age it's more of a crime that you know.

L: I want to bring this up, too. Everything that I've been charged with, three charges, is a possession of charge, not a single one is an action. Not a single one have I done anything that I've been charged with. But every one of these charges is a possession of charge and they are violent felony charges. They could put me away for anywhere from eight to fifteen years. Violent felony charges though even in the charges themselves I have done nothing. So how is it you can commit a violent felony without actually doing anything? But hey, that's the law, right? Welcome to the world of Ashcroft and Bush.

S: What can college students do to help you?

L: Get the word out there. Tell other people about it. And question authority. Question it. I would also say that if you know anybody in prison, please write to them. And let them know that you care and you're still thinking about them.

S: What do you think the odds of a successful outcome are in your case? And you're free to define success however you want.

L: Honestly, I don't know. I mean, I am hopeful. And that's because hope is a positive emotion based upon some substance, something verifiable that's there. Faith, on the other hand, I can toss in the wastebasket because faith is a belief in something not there. I don't have any faith in the system. If I walk out of that door fully acquitted, I'm not going to say, "oh thank you, justice has prevailed." That's bullshit! I never should have been here in the first place. So I've learned to be cautiously optimistic, hoping for the best, but expecting the worst.

S: I guess the last question I have, is your trial open for the public?

L: Yeah. It's open. So please come out on April 27th and show your support, even if you just want to see what it's like.

Community Calendar

Roots, Rasta, Reggae**Jan. 24th**

Kindread & Jah Boo present live, socially-conscious reggae
The Sail Inn in Tempe – Doors open @ 6:30 PM (\$5 cover)

Pro-Choice Political Academy**Jan. 31st**

9:30 AM – 3:00 PM @ ASU Downtown Center
For more info e-mail bkearl@ppcna.org

Womyn of Color Conference**Feb. 20th**

For more info e-mail: Karen.Leong@asu.edu

Local to Global Justice Conference**Feb. 20th – Feb. 22nd**

Featured speakers: Ward Churchill & Frances Lappè More
Massive homeless rights demonstration planned
For more info: www.localtoglobaljustice.org

Rebirth Festival**Feb. 28th**

Proceeds to benefit womyn's charities
For more info: www.therebirthfestival.com

The G-Spot at Arizona State University
c/o: The Womyn's Coalition
Memorial Union
Tempe, AZ 85287

Send to: