

HOSPITALITY

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vol. 18, no. 4

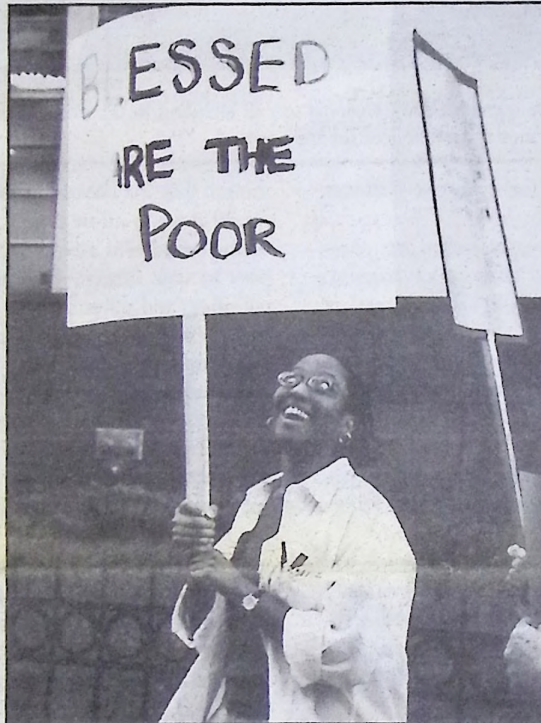
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-4212

April 1999

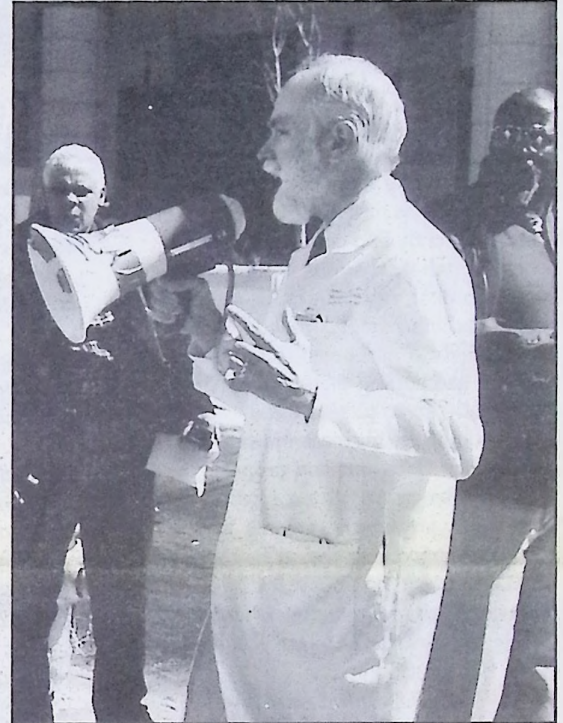
Grady Hospital: Critical Conditions



BETTY JANE CRANDALL



GLADYS RUSTAY



GLADYS RUSTAY

The Coalition for Grady Patients/Friends of Grady Hospital gathered on March 1, 8, 15, and 22nd to picket and rally in front of the downtown public hospital. *Left photo:* Joyce Dorsey speaks to the crowd. Next to her in a wheelchair is Ronald Spencer. Mr. Spencer is homeless and suffers from congestive heart failure. Because he could not afford to pay for his medications after March 15, he had to be admitted to the hospital with heart failure. His doctors refused to release him until the pharmacy gave him enough medication for 30 days. He was released on March 21 and came to live at the Open Door Community. He spoke eloquently to the Grady Board on March 22 about the plight of Grady's uninsured patients. *Center photo:* Senior Emory Medical student Marissa Rogers joins the picket (Marissa coordinates the Open Door Thursday Night Free Clinic). *Right photo:* Dr. Samuel Newcome, Associate Professor of Medicine at Emory University, protests denying adequate care and medication for Grady patients. Dr. Newcome has headed the Hematology-Oncology Clinics at Grady and the VA Hospitals, but has recently been placed on "Administrative leave" by Emory for speaking out on behalf of his patients.

by Murphy Davis and Elizabeth Dede

In 1892, Grady Memorial Hospital was chartered to provide health care for the poor and the sick of Atlanta, Georgia. For generations the hospital has served patients who had nowhere else to turn for care and treatment. At the same time, the hospital has served as the leading teaching institution for Emory and Morehouse Medical Schools and countless institutions that train nurses, technicians, social workers, pastoral counselors, and other professionals. Grady has also provided the premier trauma center for the region and the poison control and burn treatment centers for the entire state.

On March 15, 1999, Grady Health Systems implemented a policy that has brought suffering and perhaps even death to the poor who come to the hospital and its satellite clinics for help. By requiring even the poorest of the poor to pay for clinic visits and a minimum \$10 co-payment for each of their prescriptions and medical supplies, the Board of Directors and administration of the hospital undertook a policy that caused medical emergencies and

probable death for some of its patients most dependent on life-sustaining drugs and regular care.

In response to this policy, the Coalition for Grady Patients/Friends of Grady Hospital was formed. Since March 1, 1999, weekly marches, rallies, and protest actions have been held at Grady Memorial Hospital. Members of the Open Door Community, People for Urban Justice, Southern Prison Ministry, Concerned Black Clergy, Fulton-Atlanta Community Action Authority, the AIDS Survival Project, Rainbow/Push Coalition, ACT-UP/Atlanta, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Oakhurst Presbyterian Church, Emory University School of Medicine professors and students, Grady Hospital doctors, staff, and patients formed this coalition and have participated each week in political actions to seek restoration of free care for the poor and uninsured and to advocate for funding for Grady Hospital from the State of Georgia, Fulton County, DeKalb County, and from other public and private sources.

On March 15, 1999, the day the policy was implemented, 16 advocates for the poor risked arrest and entered Grady Memorial Hospital, demanding a

meeting with Mr. Edward Renford, President and CEO of Grady Health System. After nearly two hours of singing, chanting, and negotiating, a meeting was arranged, and we gathered with Mr. Renford and other Grady Health System administrators for five-and-a-half hours. While we requested that the policy be rescinded so that the poor could receive their medication and treatment, the result of the meeting was that the Grady Administration clarified their new policy and its implementation. We also learned that \$4.9 million had been budgeted to provide assistance to those who had no money.

In the intervening week between March 15 and March 22, 1999, horror stories began to surface of indigent Grady patients who were turned away from the pharmacy because they did not have the \$10 to pay for each prescription, of poor people who were forced to choose between one necessary medication and another because they did not have enough money to pay for two prescriptions, of chronically ill poor people who ended up in cardiac arrest, were rushed to the emergency room, and spent several days in the hospital because the

(story continued on page 2)

("Grady," continued from page 1) pharmacy would not supply them with their heart medication if they could not pay the \$10 fee. At least one death seemed attributable to the new policy. Pharmacists did not inform poor patients of the \$4.9 million emergency fund, did not refer the poor to Social Services, and told concerned physicians that they would have to pay for their patients' prescriptions.

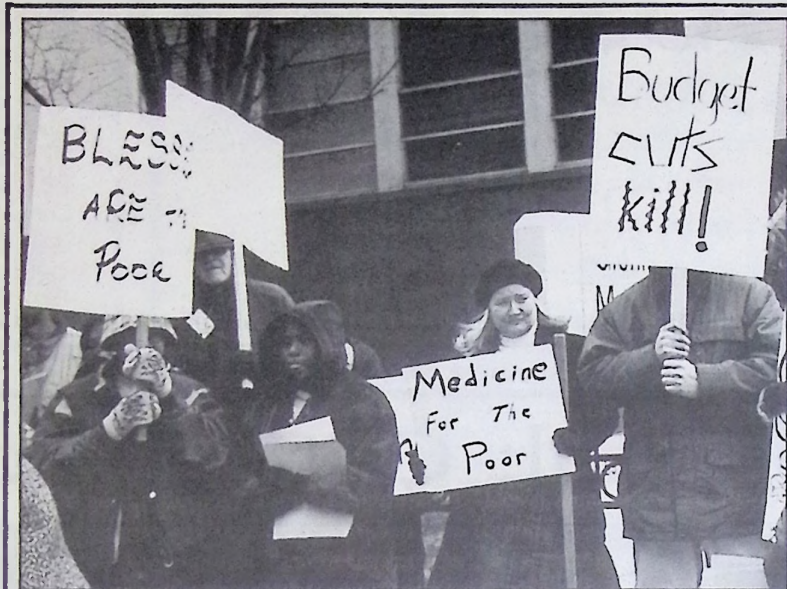
In addition, Governor Roy Barnes, state legislators and county commissioners began to meet to discuss ways to alleviate the budget crisis at Grady Memorial Hospital, and to pressure the Board of Directors of Grady Health System to rescind the policy.

On March 22, 1999, Concerned Black Clergy called upon the clergy, concerned citizens, and the Coalition for Grady Patients/Friends of Grady Hospital to attend the Board of Directors meeting to demand that this deadly policy be rescinded. After waiting patiently and quietly for two hours through discussions of new signs for the hospital, new names for satellite clinics, and other budget reports, the advocates, who numbered more than fifty and had packed the board meeting, were finally given time at the conclusion of the business meeting to present their questions and proposals.

After powerful testimonies from Grady physicians, patients, and advocates concerning the suffering and death caused by the policy, the following *Call to Commitment and Action for Grady Hospital* was read to the Board of Directors:

We understand that the reduction of funds available from federal, state, and county sources has caused a crisis for the hospital, but we call on the Hospital Board of Directors and Administration to vigorously advocate for the needed care for Grady patients, and in the meantime to immediately adopt the following proposals:

1. *No co-payments for prescriptions and medical*



BETTY JANE CRANDALL

Protestors rally outside Grady Hospital to call attention to the crisis caused by recent cuts in money for services for the poor.

supplies for indigent patients.

2. *No charges/co-payments for clinic and emergency room visits for indigent patients.*
3. *Restore all free emergency and non-emergency transportation for patients.*
4. *Work quickly and persistently to communicate these changes/restorations to all Grady patients, especially those who have already missed critical clinic appointments and are going without life-sustaining medications.*
5. *Seek the immediate resignation of any/all members of the Hospital Board of Directors and Administrative Staff who are not ready, willing, and able to act as passionate advocates for the patients of the Grady Health System.*

After this call to rescind the policy was delivered to the board, member Dr. Otis Smith brought a

motion that the board rescind its policy for 30 days to allow time for members of the board and advocates for the poor to seek funding from the state, counties, and other sources. The motion was seconded, but in discussion an amendment was proposed that left the policy unchanged. The board voted down the motion to rescind its policy, and the advocates took over the board meeting, calling for the resignation of the Board of Directors.

The board went into a private session and returned after ten minutes, with the Chair of the Board calling for another vote. Unanimously, the board voted to rescind its policy for thirty days, and effective immediately, the poor and uninsured will pay 50 cents for each prescription and clinic visits will be free.

The struggle continues, however, as the Coalition and the Board of Directors pledged to work together to restore funding to Grady Health System. We will be knocking at the doors of the Governor, the state legislators, and the county commissioners until Grady Health System is financially secure for

decades to come.

Please join us in this struggle:

Write, fax, or call:

1) Edward Renford, President
Grady Health System
80 Butler St., SE
Atlanta, GA 30335
404-616-4307
404-616-9204 (fax)

Ask him to lead the Grady Health System Board of Directors in demanding a restoration of funding from Fulton County, DeKalb County, and the State of Georgia.

2) Fulton County Commission
141 Pryor St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-730-8206
404-730-4754 (fax)

DeKalb County Commission
1300 Commerce Dr.
Decatur, GA 30030
404-371-2886

Ask them to restore funding to Grady Health System so that the poor and uninsured will be able to receive prescription drugs and health care.

3) Georgia State Department of Medical Assistance
2 Peachtree St.
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-656-4507
404-651-6880 (fax)

Ask that funding be released to Grady Health System for indigent health care so that clinic visits and prescriptions will be free for the poor and uninsured.

Please joyfully support public institutions that provide health care and other necessary social services for all of God's children, especially for the ones whom Jesus called "the least of these my sisters and brothers," and Moses called "the orphan, the widow, and the stranger within your gates."

Murphy Davis and Elizabeth Dede are Partners at the Open Door.

HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is published 11 times a year by the Open Door Community (PCUS), Inc., an Atlanta community of Christians called to ministry with the homeless poor and with prisoners, particularly those on death row. Subscriptions are free. A newspaper request form is included in each issue. Manuscripts and letters are welcomed. Inclusive language editing is standard. For more information about the life and work of the Open Door, please contact any of the following:

Brenda Smith—Volunteer Coordinator;
Group Work Project Coordinator
Ed Loring—Correspondence
Elizabeth Dede—Resident Volunteer Coordinator; Guest Ministry;
Hardwick Prison Trip
Murphy Davis—Southern Prison Ministry



Open Door Community

PHOTO BY GARY BECK

Newspaper

Editorial Staff—Chuck Campbell, Murphy Davis, Elizabeth Dede, Joyce Hollyday, Ed Loring, Tamara Puffer, Gladys Rustay, Brenda Smith, and Stan Saunders
Managing Editor—Michael Galovic
Layout—Michael Galovic
Copy Editing—Alice Alexander, Gabriella Boston, Murphy Davis, Elizabeth Dede, Julie Martin, Tamara Puffer, Gladys Rustay, and Heather Spahr
Circulation—Phillip Williams, Joe Miller, and a multitude of earthly hosts and guests
Subscriptions or change of address—Anne Wheeler
(A \$7 donation to the Open Door would help to cover the costs of printing and mailing *Hospitality* for one year.)

Open Door Community
(404) 874-9652; 874-7964 fax

In Memory of C.M. Sherman

(Editor's note: C.M. Sherman was a Partner at the Open Door Community, and as we reported last month, he died in December, 1998. The following are reflections from his many friends.)

Dear Friends:

I was profoundly saddened, (but not surprised), by your report of C.M. Sherman's death. I shall always remember C.M. and the impact he had on my own spiritual development. Your article was so moving, Murphy, but I must add that C.M. Sherman gave me much more than I ever gave him. Thank you for dignifying his passing with your obituary.

Ruth Allison
Nashville Greenlands
Nashville, TN

Dear friends:

I just got back from 2 months in Africa and was sorting through my mail when I saw the notice in *Hospitality* about C.M.'s passing away. I was shocked and deeply saddened. I remember fondly his gentle presence at 910 during the time I was volunteering at the soup kitchen. His life has borne faith, abundant and lasting, in all those whom he has touched, both in community and in aloneness. I pray that God's gentle grace will fill the void, and the grief, that his departure has left among you all.

Sincerely,

Carla Roncoli
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Friends at the Open Door Community:

I hope this letter finds everyone there well and busy with lots of donations and help. I have not been to see you recently as I no longer manage apartments so have few and far donations to bring. The reason for writing you is to express my sincere condolences at the news of the loss of C. M. Sherman. I cannot tell you how grief-stricken I was upon reading your article last Friday night.

As I mentioned, it has been some time since I was able to bring clothing donations and I miss seeing you. When I used to come regularly, there were times that I did not particularly want to go (due to my own personal struggles), but something inside always urged me on. Every single time, *without exception*, when I arrived, car full of clothes, kitchen stuff, etc., I could always count on C.M. to meet and greet me at the door and round up lots of folks to help with unloading. I always came away feeling better than when I arrived! What a gift C.M. had and was.

Addiction illness is a tragedy and a loss of which I am all too familiar. I am deeply saddened that C.M. lost the battle with it, especially on Christmas Eve! Sometimes, for me, the only thing that helps ease the pain of loss is to write about it. My poem about C.M. was written Friday night after reading the article and going through several tissues. Please hold it in remembrance of a good friend.

C. M. SHERMAN

C. Is for your caring, compassionate, helping hands,
M. Is for the many ways you reached out to let others understand
S. Is for the glimpse into your soul through eyes sometimes weary, yet wise,
H Is for your loving, though broken, heart that melted at another's cries
E Is for every time you greeted me with a warm handshake and a smile,
R Is for much deserved rest offered to those who've trudged for miles
M Is for the memories, I received so much more than what I gave,
A Is for the anguish felt for a life we could not save
H Is for "nearer, nearer my God to Thee,"
for as "you have done to the least of these,
you have done to Me."

- Susan Hickman
February, 1999

him in our times of prayer here. (I know we Presbyterians should not be praying for the "dead," but it is our good spiritual exercise to remember those who have gone on as still being alive.)

Persons still take time to look at that tape on the conference we held here some years ago in which C.M. took part. At least he lives on here in some small way, still helping others with words of encouragement and justice. Many in this community over the years have struggled with similar fate. Two years ago we had the funeral for one of our long-time friends who, as a young man, was a major league ball player with the San Francisco Giants. Although we knew him in the years before his death, and even though he struggled with alcoholism which literally destroyed his body—he was a true friend to all in our community, and a true hero to many homeless people who encountered him in the woods or on the streets. At his funeral, the members of his family were grieving almost without hope at his seeming failure. We, on the other hand, were able to celebrate a great soul who succumbed to the weight and sadness of life on earth, but whose soul shined brightly even through it all.

I am certain that C.M. in his journey, was similar and I know you miss him a lot. It was our privilege to have known him as well, and we thank you at "Open Door" for the work of love and community which never dies. Our love to you all.

Shalom,

Carl Mazza
(For all at Meeting Ground)
Elkton, MD



ELLEN SPEARS

C.M. Sherman helps Frances Pauley into her seat at Sunday worship at the Open Door. Every Sunday C.M. faithfully went and brought Frances to our worship.

Yours in faith, hope and belief in a better day and place,

Susan Hickman
Norcross, GA

Dear Murphy and Ed:

I read with much sadness your note in *Hospitality* that C. M. Sherman had died. It was very sad to read this news, and we will remember

Join us as a Resident Volunteer!

Spend 6 to 12 months as a Resident Volunteer

- Live in a residential Christian community.
- Serve Jesus Christ and the hungry, homeless and prisoners.
- Bible study and theological reflections from the Base.
- Street actions and peaceful demonstrations.
- Regular retreats and meditation time at Dayspring Farm.

Contact: Elizabeth Dado
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212
404/874-9652; 874-7964 (fax)

The Street Lawyer: A Reflection The Story of a Search for Life

by Ed Loring

One day a person came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, what is the good that I should follow in order to get spiritual life?" "Why are you inquiring about 'the good'?" Jesus asked, "The good' is one. But if you want to come into the life, abide by the rules."

The lawyer said, "Which ones?" Jesus answered, "Why, the ones that say, 'Don't murder, don't sleep with someone you're not married to, don't steal, don't lie, take care of your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.'" "I've kept them all," cried the young person. "Why am I still flunking?"

"If you want to be a mature person," Jesus said, "go, sell your stuff, give it to the poor—you will be spiritually rich—then come share my life." When the young lawyer heard that bit, he walked away crying, because he had quite a pile. Jesus said to his students, "I'm telling you a fact; a rich person finds it extremely difficult to come into the God Movement. I say it again, a pig can go through a knothole easier than a rich person can get into the God Movement."

Upon hearing this, the students were completely flabbergasted. "Who can make the grade?" they asked. Jesus looked straight at them and said, "Humanly speaking, this is impossible, but with God anything can happen." Then Rock [Peter] popped off, "Look at us! We have thrown everything overboard and shared your life, so how will we come out?"

Jesus answered, "Let me tell you something: When the new order is ushered in and the Human One takes office, then you all who have shared my life will be appointed to the twelve posts of the cabinet and will be responsible for the functioning of the new government. And anybody who has thrown overboard houses or brothers or sisters or fathers or mothers or children or farms for the sake of my cause will get them back a hundred times over, and will also receive spiritual life. But many on top will be on the bottom and many on the bottom will be on top."

(Matthew 19:16-30; Clarence Jordan, *The Cotton Patch Version of Matthew*, 1970, adapted)

The Street Lawyer is an interesting novel written by a mainline American novelist for mainline American people. The author, John Grisham, is one of the most successful living

American writers. At times he has two books on the best selling lists simultaneously. He is white, rich and handsome. Mr. Grisham has achieved through literature what every Associate at the legal firm of Drake & Sweeney dream of and work 80 hours each week to possess: success and wealth. The American Dream in a wallet.

Why then does Mr. Grisham write "a tract for the times"? What brings this novelist to a radical Christian proclamation? The novel has 39 chapters. Only in the final chapter of 5-page

length does Grisham soften his preferential option for the poor and offer the volunteer/charity option to his readers. An option, sadly enough, where he places inordinate hope and naive expectations for the establishment of justice. The failure of the fine novel, like the failure of much American thought since President Thomas Jefferson sneaked between the dark and shifting shadows to Ms. Sally Hemmings' slave cabin, is the failure to understand evil as a power and principality. Neither the Protestant work ethic, the self-help programs for will-power and assertiveness, nor more education will topple the powers of evil and injustice. Mr. Grisham's failure with the powers, thankfully, is far from absolute failure. His novel, in fact, among contemporary best selling American letters is radical and a helpful step in the left direction toward justice. He helps the reader as we in the USA confront the shadows and murderous evil that manifest themselves in homelessness, hunger, drug addiction, the pursuit of wealth,

success and luxury.

The Street Lawyer is a novel about conversion. Two conversions occur. Both conversions take place in the hearts and lives of white males. White male conversion is the most pressing reformation among us, for, as the writer makes plain, the white male system is the locus of power and

blindness in American society. The novel is hopeful and evangelical throughout. Not only does conversion take place among two powerful servants of the system, but also there are resources of goodness, courage, and a willingness to take risks

and make sacrifices with the system itself.

Hector Palma, an Hispanic male who is inside the white system, is a key actor upon the stage. It is this brown man, no lawyer himself, who leads Michael Brock to the truth, the poor, justice, and gives Brock the tools to build a new structure for legal aid and advocacy in Washington, DC. What are the roots of Mr. Palma's character formation? Why does he need no conversion? We are not told, but we do learn that he is a faithful Catholic and a man who loves and serves his family.

Throughout the novel there are three primary institutions of social life: the legal firms, the court system, and the church. All these institutions have promise and curse. Yet, the protagonist, Michael Brock, must undergo radical conversion and make a preferential option for the poor to find his abundant life.

Our problem in the USA is money and its power. Money is not a neutral item depending upon the

choices of its user for effect. Money has a will of its own. Money is hungry and wants more; it is never satisfied. Money is scared and wants a wealth of security in banks, protected by police and laws, and guaranteed by harsh punishment for those who fondle her uninvited.

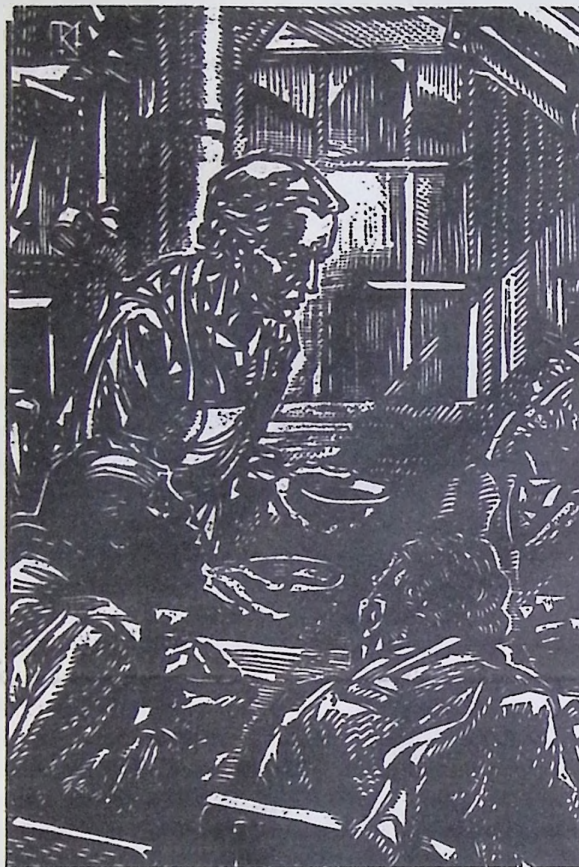
Money is also a harsh slave driver. She makes her followers work 80 hours per week. Divorce in the Drake & Sweeney firm is common. Rudolph Mayes, Michael Brock's supervisor, is in his third marriage. Friendships are lost. Pleasure is a commodity purchased with money earned for which one sacrifices pleasure to earn it.

Money demands obedience unto death. The road to death is often long for those with money, though spiritual death claims the children as brutally as Herod's troops seeking little boys in Bethlehem of Judea. Literal physical death is a consequence of poverty. The poor live their lives and die their deaths under a non-judicial death penalty. In this novel only the poor literally die. N. Braden Chance, the lawyer who drove the renters out of the abandoned building, believed, as is so often the case, that the poor had no redress for their rights. No need here to listen to the cry of the poor. Just follow the green. That decision was the right one for the firm until he was caught. Then Chance was expelled from the firm. He was dead professionally. Not because of his sins (he was being faithful and obedient to money) but because he was caught. He was sacrificed by the god who could use him no longer.

Money numbs. Money makes us forget our hearts and neighbors. Greed, the motivating fire which burns like napalm between the green and vivacious-feeling bills, pushes its long and bony fingers into our eyes until they pop like swollen plums in August. Or, like Oedipus scratching out his own eye balls upon learning he was more than Jocaster's lover boy: She was his mama. The prophets, Jesus, and John Grisham are profoundly concerned about blindness. Like Jesus and the Prophets, Grisham wants to bring sight to the blind, liberty to the captives.

Money, like we ourselves and our institutions, was created good. Money has a loving, community-building, and justice-seeking function in our economy and culture. Money was created in love, has fallen into evil, and is being redeemed by the Lord of History. In our culture and

(continued on next page)



ROBERT F. MCGOVERN

economy money is the chief tool of Beelzebul, the god of our way of life. To work for justice in the USA is to work to redeem money to its rightful place.

How are the blind given sight? What leads a person to conversion? Why Michael Brock? His reorientation to life came with a new way of seeing and a new way of living. He reduced the distance within the human family and began a journey in solidarity with the poor. Michael Brock became a Street Lawyer. There is conversion for the multimillionaire 80-year-old CEO of Drake & Sweeney law firm also. Arthur Jacobs is given a new way of seeing, but not a new way of living, with this caveat: Mr. Jacobs is generous with the labor and time of his subordinates and promises to require them to volunteer legal aid for the homeless. Time is money and a gift of love and a requirement for justice.

In greedy and locked down America this volunteerism for the poor and prisoner is, as *The Street Lawyer* makes clear, a fundamental shift for a first class law firm. It is also an essential source for justice inside the system. We at the Open Door Community have numerous friends and supporters from prestigious law firms and excellent law schools from across the nation. These committed men and women labor lovingly and save lives on Georgia's death row. The law firm which took the City of Atlanta to court and won over the anti-homeless ordinances is a prestigious firm from Boston.

John Grisham gives us four responses to the numbing, blinding, killing power of money in America today. Ched Myers in *Who Will Roll Away the Stone?* suggests the Gospel of Mark understands sin as blindness, deafness, and hardness of heart. Grisham's response to the power of money and its death helps those of us who hunger and thirst for a biblical ethic to see, hear, and love.

Hector Palma, like Mordicai Green (Black street lawyer), Sofia Mendoza (Hispanic street social worker), Abraham Lebow (Jewish street lawyer) and a few other minor characters who have reduced their distance from the homeless and live in proximity to the poor, need no conversion. However, Hector Palma is not poor nor does he live or work in proximity to the poor. He is simply a good man. Some people, and their numbers are minuscule, can handle money and not be captured by greed and blindness. There are women and men who can live in the world but not of it. We know a few prisoners who are free in their chains. Three tenured faculty members who teach from the

heart and tell the truth and put their love and teaching into practice volunteer at our home. We are joyful and thankful. They are few and far between.

Hector Palma, significantly, is a paralegal; he is not a lawyer. He makes \$30,000 a year. Partners at Drake & Sweeney take more than a million dollars each twelve months. Hector Palma is an acolyte not a priest. Mysteriously, he has a heart formed by compassion and kindness. He has a character shaped by the pursuit of truth and justice. He has guts that enable him, with fear and trembling, to make a way out of no way for justice in the death of Mister De Von Hardy and the illegal eviction of 18 "homeless renters" (this is no oxymoron, just a new concept in the housing market). These men, women, and children are worthless in our money-mad economy just like the folk in our front yard. The warehouse renters are disposable people in a culture of abundance.

Hector Palma is an enigma in our social analysis. He is a C.S. Lewis character. Palma, who in the end of the story is a volunteer coordinator between Drake & Sweeney lawyers and the homeless, raises a difficult set of questions: Where does goodness come from? Why is there goodness in the world? How are some folk able to see in the dark? How may some people hold money and not be captive? Would there be homelessness and hunger in a world filled by the Hector Palma character formation?

Mr. Grisham's second response is the most grievous. Money and its concomitant blindness and hardness of heart often deafens people to the call to conversion to the poor and marginalized. Barry Nuzzo is Michael Brock's best friend, a brother in law practice, and in the social life of the law firm. It hurts like a nail in the hand when one takes a step toward the poor and has to leave best friends, sisters of the soul, even family, behind counting their money, planning their retirement, living for their holes-in-one. Barry Nuzzo believes Michael Brock is nuts. Reflecting a theme fundamental to the Synoptic Gospels: After Jesus went public with his ministry following the execution of John the Baptist, his family and the religious leaders believed Jesus was nuts. Barry, along with Michael's parents, brother, wife, and fellow Drake & Sweeney lawyers agree that stress and mental breakdown is the explanation for anyone casting their lot with the poor. A biblical and expected response. None of this homeless and street stuff for Barry. He feels sorry for his friend.

Donald Rafler, the aggressive and psychopathic litigator, is Michael Brock's enemy. Rafler is hard of heart and cares not a damn about anyone or anything but winning. He is, sorrowfully, little different from Barry Nuzzo with whom he shares captivity in the system that substitutes earning money for good work and vocation. In this novel Barry Nuzzo and Donald Rafler are no different from N. Braden Chance, the scapegoat for Drake & Sweeney. Chance is obedient and faithful to money. His sin was getting caught. His punishment was exile. Nuzzo, Rafler and their counterparts throughout American society are condemned to work 80 hours a week, never satisfied or happy, until they drop dead or retire, forgotten and wasted. Could it be that the history of American religious thought is wrong? What if abundance and affluence are Yahweh's punishment upon us rather than prosperity verifying God's love and our virtue? How does the manna turn rotten today should one or a nation gather more than is needed? (see Exodus 16)

The third response to the living death which has been named the American Way of Life is the most important and most viable for church and society. Grisham gives this response only 3 pages out of 346 (pp.342-345), but here he addresses a means for amending the imbalance of power and inequity before the law inside the American justice system. This way of the mainline smacks of Niebuhr realism and tends toward the white liberalism that drove Malcolm Little into Malcolm X. This response is a cause of the homeless man, who is right now screaming in our front yard from a rage boiling just above his bottom. He cannot see how some people have more than enough and some folk cannot survive in our land flowing with milk and honey and liquor and money. He is not lazy or shiftless. He is broken, abandoned and dying. Nonetheless, this is the way of the mainline churches, democratic liberalism, and, Grisham hopes, elite law firms. What is it?

After the lawsuits are settled and justice established and the March nights promise no more freezing deaths for 9 months, Arthur Jacobs, the CEO of Drake & Sweeney is converted. He is 80 years old and has practiced law for 56 years. The series of events surrounding the illegal evictions, the deaths of Mister De Von Hardy and the Burton family, the virus in the Drake & Sweeney system exposed in the person of N. Braden Chance, and Michael Brock's witness to the radical response of love and calling in the place of 80 hour weeks and one million dollar plus reward was "troubling" to Mr. Jacobs. He is likely clothed in the flesh and a member of the ethnic community in which Yahweh chose to reveal God'sself by the Law, the Prophets, and Jesus Christ. In the tradition of the Psalms this troubled old millionaire was "finding sleep difficult." The turning point (metanoia) was not the deaths of the Burton family or the wrongs of the firm—these were lights cut on in darkness enabling Arthur Jacobs to see. What he saw is the absolutely essential ingredient to behold for conversion and salvation in the North American context: money. "He was tired of chasing money," we are told. The possibility for new life has been achieved! Can it be actualized?

Of course, God makes a way out of no way. Michael Brock and Arthur Jacobs devise a pro bono volunteer program whereby mainline lawyers help homeless castaways get their rights. (Housing was not mentioned as a right or a goal. Housing is the single shared need among all homeless people no matter the cause, consequence or variety of their homeless status). In fact, Mr. Jacobs decides on the spot to require the volunteerism of his employees at Drake & Sweeney—all 400 of them—in the pro bono clinic. Is there any way to freedom without coercion? Is required volunteerism a contradiction in terms? Or just the American way? Does it help to subsidize a minimum wage that is not a living wage?

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Memorial Day Meal

Memorial Day is our largest meal of the year--most soup kitchens are closed. We need to be prepared, and so we need over 320 pounds of ground beef, along with adequate amounts of hamburger buns, cabbage and baked beans.

Bill Shain: Something There Is That Does Love a Wall

by Murphy Davis

When Bill Shain died in February, the most wonderful and diverse crowd gathered with Lora and their children and grandchildren in Milledgeville to remember him. There were memories shared of Bill the quiet disciple whose love and deep faith in the Prince of Peace led him right out of the United States military and into a life of practicing the works of mercy. We remembered the steady resister who put his body on the line again and again against war and oppression and violence. We recalled him just last November when he took his frail frame—weakened by cancer and treatment but buoyed by his lively spirit—over the line to call for the closing of the School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Georgia. And there was the man who sat quietly in court and stood steadfastly in vigil to witness against the death penalty. Bill Shain was one we knew as a family man, who shared a deep love and solid companionship with his sweetheart Lora, and who loved with all his heart his children and grandchildren.

But I will remember Bill most of all in the garden. He loved so much to get out and dig in the dirt and mulch it and work it and tend it and coax the tiny seeds into great growing things that bloom and nourish. And the walls: the beautiful artwork of his rock walls in the gardens he tended.

Ed and I were at Dayspring when Lora called to say that Bill's time was close. I went out to the front porch and stood and looked at the lovely terraced walls that Bill built there over a period of several years. And I thought, "Something there is that *does* love a wall! That wants it built and wants it beautiful." It's funny: our theology is usually one of breaking down walls: walls of oppression, of prison, of race, class, and gender.

Some of us preach it long and hard, and Bill was surely a part of it. But think about it! He never took exception, but what was he doing all along, in Bonair, at New Hope House, at Dayspring, in Milledgeville? He was steadily, patiently, persistently building walls, and building them out of stone! It was part of his earth tending—his care for the living and growing things of God's good creation.

E.B. and Katherine White were a great literary couple of a few years back and she was a gardener as well. E.B. once wrote of her in her autumn garden and said that she was planting bulbs "and calmly plotting the Resurrection." I think that's pretty much what Bill was up to. He knew just what to do to coax from the soil the most beautiful flowers, shrubs, trees, and vines. He knew how to take garbage: stinking rotting mess, useless stuff—and work with it and dig in it and knead it and get deep rich soil, the stuff that life grows in. And he knew how to take rocks—pesky worrisome rocks that Georgia dirt is full of—the things that get in your way when you till and break the blades of your shovel. But Bill was not peeved by the rocks. He took them tenderly from the earth and laid them one on another to create those exquisite walls: walls that made flat spaces where the little plants grow; walls that hold back the forest and rushing waters and protect the space for the garden.

Bill was a man of few words, but he dug in the earth and talked with God; and he worked with the rock and grew wise. And he stood with a wry smile when he looked at the fleeting beauty of the flowers among the eternal stones.

When the Hebrew people crossed the Jordan River and went into Canaan, Yahweh told Joshua to set up memorial stones. When the children would ask "What is the meaning of these stones?" it would always be an occasion for the elders to tell the story of God's liberation of and care for the people. Bill Shain has left us memorial stones, and his walls will most likely outlast all of us. They will remind us that ours is a God of liberation and justice and tender care. And as we go about the work of building the life of struggle and resistance, Bill has become a part of our great cloud of witnesses. He would remind us to work every day for the abolition of the death penalty, for the closing of the School of the Americas and all such institutions of torture and oppression, to welcome the stranger and tear down prison walls and build the Beloved Community. But he would want us not to forget to plant flowers and trees as we go, and with every seed and every stone to calmly plot the Resurrection.

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Bill Shain: My Brother In Peace and Justice

by Ed Loring

(Editor's note: Bill Shain was a longtime friend of the Open Door. He died recently, at the age of 65, after a brave struggle with cancer; Ed Loring and Murphy Davis spoke at a memorial service for Bill in Milledgeville, Georgia.)

Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God.

I live and play and work at the Open Door Community. We are a "Protestant" Catholic Worker House. Every year for 16

years, St. Jude's Catholic Church in Atlanta has given each member of our house of hospitality a Christmas gift. This year I was given, at my request, a Catholic Bible. I turned to the back and found several books that we do not have in our Protestant Bible. In one of the writings I read:

Blessed are the fisherfolk for they shall be tellers of tall tales.

Well, I am no fisherperson, and I am not going to tell Bill Shain fishing stories. But I once did have a fishy experience. One afternoon after I had finished my visits on death row, I went into Jackson, Georgia, to do some grocery shopping. At the back of the store in front of the fish counter I overheard Bill say, "No, we want them with the heads on!" Bill and his friend Ed Weir were talking and finagling with rapt seriousness. I waved and went on home.

The next week, Ed and Bill were showing off pictures of the large fish they had caught on the nearby Towaligah River. If you looked closely, however, you could see that they were flounders. *Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called the daughters*

and sons of God.

Bill and Lora's partnership, with its 40 years of marriage, and lived in the context of Christian Catholic life, has been a journey of love and transformation. They have traveled from the military to peace making; from toeing the line to crossing the line; from a comfortable bed in their home to nights on the streets with homeless men and women; from a vision of Imperial America to the Church of Jesus Christ with its call to practice the abundant life. Bill Shain talking, walking, working, visiting, protesting, along with Lora, came to embody gentleness and forgiveness among us. Bill's prayers for restoration, restitution, and reconciliation were learned and lifted while he walked the hard road and entered through the narrow gate the life of an abolitionist. He asked for and practiced a way of restitution and healing for murderers and victims. He wanted an end to violence and death as punishment. With a quizzical look on his face and a merciful depth in his eyes, Bill would quote the standard of our movement: *Why do we kill people who kill people to show that killing people is wrong?*

How blessed was Bill that in his last days Pope John Paul II came to the United States. In Missouri, our Pope proclaimed that the death penalty is wrong. It is sin. He called upon the Catholic Church world-wide to stand opposed to the use of death as punishment. The Pope then learned that an execution had been scheduled during his visit, to be stayed only until he returned to the Vatican. Pope John Paul asked the Southern Baptist governor to commute the sentence. The Governor did. Bill Shain's life and witness bore fruit and life in that moment. We are thankful.

II

We all face death. We do not all face life. Bill did. He teaches us to follow his example, to appropriate his gift.

(continued on next page)



We blessed the wall that Bill Shain designed and built for the gardens at Dayspring Farm.

I loved Bill's blue eyes, his beautiful, tender, life-loving eyes. On several occasions I would stop in the midst of our conversation and exclaim, "Bill, I love your blue eyes." A bit embarrassed, but with a bright twinkle he would stammer, shake his left foot almost imperceptibly, and continue talking about Roger Collins, his friend on death row.

Bill faced death well. He is, even today, teaching us about our deaths, which we have yet to face. He died well for he faced life lovingly, profoundly, seeking peace and justice. We could tell it in his blue, blue eyes.

III

Bill Shain was a retired military man—the U.S. Air Force. He knew about the machinery of death. When he stepped over the line and away from that base, he walked with love and humility and understanding. He had learned discipline, focus, and hard work. He was thankful for his life and his history.

One Sunday night a couple of years ago, Bill came to me after the worship service at the Open Door. That night we had ended with the freedom song, "Oh, Mary Don't You Weep Don't You Mourn." We sang:

*It was Moses first proved the notion
The world is safer with the army in the ocean.*

Bill took exception. "If we are to be makers of peace, if we are to stand against the death penalty and care for victims of violence, we should not sing about the destruction of soldiers." We are thankful for Bill's admonition and call to accountability in our lives. We are thankful for his witness in word and deed to peace and non-violence.

In November 1998, this blue-eyed handsome man, head covered, took his big heart and short legs across the line at the terrible School of the Americas, Fort Benning, Columbus, Georgia. Bill Shain was a peacemaker, a child of God. Another 2,318 folk crossed the line on that Gospel day as an additional 5,000 of us prayed and watched their courageous action. The School of the Americas action, even agitation as Peter Maurin would have named it, was done in love for the ends of peace. Bill wanted the school closed!

Bill also came to the School of the Americas because he was a Catholic Christian. The call had gone out from Bishops, Orders, and publications all over this land to come forward and in the name of Jesus Christ to step over this line. "Say Yes to life and No to the militarized power of death." Bill heard the call. Felt peace in his bones. Put down his shovel and dropped the rocks for his final wall project and followed the Prince of Peace to the School of the Americas. Thank you, Bill. We will honor your action in our pursuit of peace.

The last time Murphy and I visited Bill was just before the birthday of our Prince of Peace. We were gifted by love and friendship as we shared our memories of the years God has given to us. At one point, Bill's blue eyes filled with tears, and he began to shake his head. He lamented the silence and comfort and complicity of the Church of Jesus Christ in the making of war, the advocacy of violence and prisons as tools of control and retribution, and he was deeply pained by the domesticating of the Word of God by priests and preachers. "How could this be?" he queried. Lora, Murphy, and I felt

his pain; we know it as our own as well. Bill's life and Bill's death call us to a deeper commitment to our baptismal vows.

IV

Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called the daughters and sons of God.

Bill Shain, born in Wisconsin, died in Georgia, has joined our mighty Cloud of Witnesses. We are his living legacy. Every time we practice the gift of peacemaking, Bill will live in peace. Let us follow him, as he followed our Resurrected Lord, and step over the line for truth when truth calls us to step over the line. We shall do so with preparation, with hearts shaped by love, with means formed by non-violence, with prayers for the coming of the Beloved Community on earth as it is in heaven.

Bill would have us visit in the prison; work to abolish the death penalty. We are urged to call ourselves, our Church, our society to restorative justice whereby the lion and the lamb will lie down together.

To Lora, the Shain family, the Church, and to this extended and gathered community: Bill Shain has lived well. Bill Shain has died with dignity. We are thankful for his life and commend him in death. We are strengthened for having known him and walked with him. May we now go and do likewise.

Ed Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

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Letting Go the Garden

by Barry Lee Burnside

"Bill, it's just not fair!" That's what I announced to my friend in the wheelchair. "Yeah," he retorted, "it wasn't fair when the owner of the vineyard gave the same wages to all the workers, regardless of how long they'd worked that day. When they complained, he just said, 'You got a problem with that?'"

The man in the wheelchair had been diagnosed with cancer less than six months ago. Although the doctors had originally given him two years to live, it now looked like a lot less time was available. Though in pain, he didn't seem to mind. Of all the people I have ever known in similar straits, he was ready for the change.

My friend had retired from the Air Force a few years ago; but I have to admit, picturing him in uniform is like imagining St. Francis in a suit of armor. Long before his retirement he had started to see things differently regarding violence and the military. In the early 80's he and spouse Lora helped begin the Pax Christi chapter in Warner Robins, Georgia. Eventually, they became a part of New Hope House, a community committed to serving prisoners on Georgia's death row and their families.

On Sunday evening, February 7, 1999, my friend Bill Shain met the Owner of the Vineyard. He was pretty well-known as a skilled gardener himself. He confessed during our last hours together that his garden had become one of the most difficult things to let go. "There were so many things yet that I wanted to do."

The night Bill died I came across a story about a Chinese monk named Yun-Yen, who asked his master, "Every day there is hard work. Who do you do it all for?" And the reply came, "There is someone who requires it." Yun-Yen then inquired, "Why not have him do it himself?" The master responded, "Because he has no tools."

We are thankful that Bill Shain was willing to wield the tools of peace, justice, and compassion in God's garden. We are equally thankful he now can rest from his labors. Our love and continued prayers go out to Lora and all the Shain family, as we mourn this gap in the small circle of Georgia's death penalty abolitionists.

(Reprinted with permission from the February 1999 issue of "Gatherings," the newsletter of Victim Offender Services, a ministry of Americus Mennonite Fellowship.)

- Memorial Service -

The Open Door Community will hold a memorial service for Bill Shain at our Spring Retreat on the weekend of April

16 - 18. Bill's family will be joining us for this service to be held at Dayspring Farm. Call us for more information.

Book Review:

Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, Pantheon Books (1988)

by Brian S. Kammer

Have you ever had the feeling that what you read in the newspaper or see on the nightly news is not the whole story? Or that the authors and editors of seemingly objective news analyses have an unspoken interest in what stories get published and how the stories are told? If so, you are ready to read *Manufacturing Consent*. In this book, linguist, political writer and media analyst Noam Chomsky, along with economist Edward Herman, set out to determine whether America's so-called free press is really all that free. Their conclusion: it isn't.

The title of the book refers to a phrase originated by Walter Lippmann, an early 20th century American propaganda theorist and founder of the field of public relations. In his view, propaganda was an important tool in a society where the ignorant masses did not have the wherewithal to determine on their own the proper course society should take. Rather than engage in the messy, time-consuming process of participatory democracy — which would only result in disaster if the common people's agenda won out — the elite governing class of men should take it upon themselves to determine society's agenda and use propaganda to manufacture the consent of the governed.

According to Chomsky and Herman, today's institutions of mass media function much like the propaganda apparatus envisioned by Lippman. Conspiracy theorists will be disappointed to find that the authors do not posit a secret cabal of government and corporate agents whose task it is to brainwash the public. Rather, Chomsky's and Herman's propaganda model of the mass media is an institutional critique which describes the mass media as a system guided in large part by free market forces. The result is a kind of ongoing self-censorship, rather than an imposed system of restrictions on what can and cannot be aired or published.

According to the authors, the propaganda model does not focus on individual journalists or editors, but looks instead to the ways in which wealth and power influence what stories are deemed worthy of publication as news. In a market-based system like ours, they contend, potentially newsworthy events will

pass through several filters before emerging onto the front page of the New York Times or appearing on NBC Nightly News. For example, the major mass media enterprises are profit-oriented above all else, and they are owned by a handful of large multinational corporations with economic interests at home and abroad. Executives of the parent corporation will frequently sit on the board of the media subsidiary. What are the chances that NBC will air a documentary criticizing the weapons-exporting activity of its parent corporation, General Electric?

The fact that advertising is the primary source of funding for mass media organizations is another powerful filter for information. Media institutions rely on advertisements for the money to make their large scale operations profitable. Advertisers in turn are generally major corporations which use print and television media to convey consumers to their products. Corporations tend to want to place their ads in media which attract a relatively affluent audience — an audience which has the money and mind-set to buy the corporation's products. If we assume that a left-wing journal which features articles about welfare, poverty and labor issues will tend to attract a lower-income, anti-consumerist audience, the journal will likely not attract the kind of advertising money lavished on more mainstream journals.

Moreover, the multinationals which advertise in mainstream media tend to have an interest in both consumer confidence at home and a good investment climate abroad. Might corporate decisions about what media to support be influenced by such interests? Take the case of public-television station WNET, which in 1985 lost its corporate funding from Gulf/Western Corp. after the station aired a documentary called "Hungry For Profit", which criticized the conduct of multinational corporations in the Third World. Get the picture?

A media institution's choices about the newsworthiness of events are also influenced by the sources of its information. The news media must maintain a steady and reliable flow of information in order to produce the news in a timely and economically efficient manner. Because media organizations are constrained by economics from sending reporters and camerapersons

to every locale where something newsworthy is happening, they rely on other institutions to provide ready-made news items complete with proper spin. The institutions most capable of organizing and processing information for ready consumption by news media are, you guessed it: government and corporate entities. Many large corporations have funded so-called think-tanks in order to provide the media with expert analysis of a given series of events which comports with corporate interests. Many such organizations, such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies, are staffed by former government, military, and corporate officials. When a CSIS expert provides his opinion as to the proper strategy for dealing with Saddam Hussein, few will question whether his views have been influenced by his years of employment with Shell Oil or the Pentagon.

Chomsky and Herman identify the ideology of anticommunism as yet another filter through which a story must pass to become fit to print. This ideology, combining a chauvinistic sense of American superiority with an ardent opposition to alternative political and economic systems, pervades all elite institutions, including the mass media, and profoundly influences what becomes big news. Thus, if the issue is political violence, we can expect that some victims of political violence will be worthy of reportage, while others will be unworthy. The authors conduct several empirical studies which grimly illustrate this principle. For example, in 1984 an anti-communist Polish priest named Jerzy Popieluszko was murdered by the Polish police. The incident sparked outrage in the U.S. media over the injustices visited upon dissidents in Communist states. Using the propaganda model, Chomsky and Herman predicted that the Polish priest would be given the media attention due a worthy victim, while murdered priests and religious workers in states within the U.S. sphere of influence would be considered unworthy victims. The authors compared the amount and character of news coverage (both print and broadcast) of the Popieluszko murder (for which the perpetrators were tried and convicted) with accounts of the murders of one-hundred prominent religious figures in U.S.-allied Latin American countries, including the

murders of Father Oscar Romero and four American Maryknoll religious workers (including Jean Donovan) in El Salvador in 1980. The comparison revealed that the total news coverage surrounding the Popieluszko murder exceeded the coverage of all one-hundred unworthy victims, which rarely rated more than a few lines of newsprint or scant minutes of air time. Apparently, none of the murders of religious figures in U.S. client states, including the murders of U.S. citizens, warranted the kind of outrage reserved for victims of the Communist police state.

Although *Manufacturing Consent* was published in 1988, its conclusions still ring true today, perhaps more so after a decade of corporate mergers and takeovers which have concentrated mass media enterprises into even fewer hands. This past Sunday, an editorial in the March 7 New York Times brought the book's lessons home to me again. The author of the piece, Clifford Krauss, is commenting on the recent United Nations report which directly implicates the United States government in the systematic torture and genocide of the Mayan people of Guatemala during the 30-year civil war there. Could there be any justification for our country's involvement in genocide? The author concludes that while American cooperation with Guatemalan government death squads created a frankenstein monster which killed many people, the monster was a response to a real challenge. What required the creation of the Guatemalan killing machine? Why, the threat of Communism, of course.

Manufacturing Consent remains an invaluable tool for those who want to be able to read between the lines of the stories in the Times, to critically assess what passes for news in the mainstream media, and to challenge the reliability of information supplied by government or corporate institutions and passed off as objective reportage. The book also helps us identify clearly how the system works, so that we might learn better how to develop successful alternative media institutions and networks, so desperately needed in these times.

(Editor's note: Brian Kammer is an attorney who represents death row prisoners in Georgia. He is a regular volunteer who helps serve our Tuesday breakfast.)

Volunteer Profile: Donnah Wilson

By Richard Rustay

In April of last year, at 6 a.m., a quiet young woman appeared at the front door of the Open Door Community and said she had come to volunteer and serve breakfast at the Butler Street C.M.E. Church, a place we had been serving breakfast for over thirteen years. Her name was Donnah Wilson, and she had come to the Open Door Community at the suggestion of Georgia Tech's Baptist Campus Minister, David Roland. He had told her about our breakfast a year earlier, but because of 8 a.m. classes she wasn't able to come. So here she was, a year later, saying this was the first time she hadn't had an 8 a.m. class and was ready to serve breakfast. So Donnah went to breakfast and served our homeless friends.

Well! Donnah returned to serve. She not only came herself, but began recruiting other students from Georgia Tech. Soon she had three or four different people coming several times a week. They continued coming through the Spring Term. At the end of the school term most students dispersed for the summer, but Donnah kept on coming, and continued to come right through the summer months. Something had caught Donnah and she felt compelled to volunteer with us for breakfast. This "something" was so powerful that she began bringing her parents and siblings to help out when we had a special meal on Labor Day.

When I asked Donnah what it was that drew her to serve the homeless, she replied, "One time I was serving breakfast and one of the other volunteers said to me, 'You're obviously enjoying yourself serving. You shouldn't. Instead you should be sad because there are so many homeless.'" Donnah's answer revealed she understood Jesus's words in Matthew,

Chapter 25: "As much as you have done it to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you've done it unto me." "They're like family to me." Donnah said, "I gain so much from them. I believe I get more from them than I do from the people of Georgia Tech!" She added, "I learn more from the guys at the Butler Street Breakfast because I



Donnah Wilson serving up lunch at the Soup Kitchen

can be myself and feel comfortable. God teaches me so much just by my being with these people. At Georgia Tech I almost feel that the classes are less important than the things I learn at the Butler Street Breakfast. I'm learning what it means to be a human being, the practical things of what is important in life—how to relate to people on an honest basis without putting on airs or having certain

assumptions that our society says are important. So often people try to fill themselves up with things that don't work. When it comes to personal integrity and concern for others, I've learned to have a deeper trust in God through sharing and talking with the guys at breakfast. Now, when I walk downtown I see many of the same people that came to breakfast, and we stop and have conversations. They're my friends, and not some strange terrible objects people so often fear and ignore."

Donnah is majoring in earth science at Georgia Tech and wants to use her knowledge to improve farming methods and to make sure that food gets to people who need it. "God gave me a good brain and I want to use it. I want to share farming methods with people, to work with them and be part of them. I've taken trips to Mexico and worked along side people there. Even though they have very little, they are willing to share what they have with others. There is enough food in the world, and we need to learn how to share it. I can't understand why people are dying of starvation in a world that has so much."

Since we had to move our breakfast to the Open Door Community, Donnah still comes and continues to be with our friends on the streets. Her enthusiasm has not diminished, and she still recruits many of her fellow students to volunteer at the Open Door. She is anxious to finish her schooling at Georgia Tech and make use of her abilities even more with the "least of these."

Because of people like Donnah, the Open Door is able to feed and clothe the hungry and naked.

Thank you, Donnah, for "having eyes to see and ears to hear."

Dick Rustay is a Partner at the Open Door.

My Complaints

By Joyce Hollyday

We had an unusually warm winter in Atlanta—days with temperatures twenty or thirty degrees above normal. So it seemed unfair that frigid weather finally decided to visit on March 8. Especially since the daffodils and cherry blossoms were already out. Most-especially since that's the day I was planning to demonstrate with the Open Door at Grady Hospital. On my way down Ponce de Leon Avenue, the car radio told me that, with wind chill, the temperature was twenty-two degrees.

We rode to the hospital in vans and reluctantly left their warmth when we got downtown. The tall buildings around Grady created a wind-tunnel effect as we marched with our placards. My placard—which read "It is wrong to deny medicine to the poor, the homeless, and our children"—kept blowing out of

control and threatening to take off into the air. It seemed like a burden to carry. Until I saw a frail man coming out of Grady, tubes in his nose, lugging a large canister of oxygen on wheels behind him.

Two weeks before the demonstration, I had injured my left foot. As the march wore on, I started to limp a bit. I thought that I probably was impeding my foot's healing. I thought about how much it hurt. Until I saw a woman come out of the hospital in a pair of worn-out old shoes, the backs bent flat by her heels because the shoes were too small for her feet. A woman on the corner waiting for a bus was wearing ragged bedroom slippers made of cloth.

Most of the time, most of us move smoothly through life, having no idea what cross the sister or brother across town has to bear—having no idea of our immense affluence and privilege. We were protesting at Grady because the hospital pharmacy, which had charged fifty cents

for every prescription, was going to begin charging ten dollars the following week. The new policy was triggered by the success of wealthy Atlanta homeowners getting their property taxes lowered, leaving less money for the city's public hospital. The result, a Grady doctor told us, will be that three thousand poor Atlantans will die this year because they cannot afford their medicine.

I was pondering all this when my feet began to ache in that way they do before numbness sets in. I felt chilled to the bone. Until I saw two men, dressed in the bright orange jumpsuits of city prisoners, come out of the hospital and slowly shuffle down the street with a guard. Their hands and feet were shackled. They had no jackets, no socks. They were wearing those flimsy rubber sandals that as kids we always called "flip-flops." They did not complain.

"The Street Lawyer,"

(continued from page 5)

In the individualistic mode of American revivalism Arthur Jacobs had been saved. "...he was," we are informed, "much happier" and he had found "a new purpose." Mr. Jacobs was a "man on a mission." We cannot buy salvation. Arthur Jacob had received the gift of life.

Michael Brock is jubilant. Disproportionate power will be leveled like a valley lying in the path of John the Baptist's sandals. In one of the most poignant and ingenuous sentences in the book Mr. Grisham has Michael Brock share his thoughts: "I almost felt sorry for the politicians and bureaucrats and office workers at the thought of four-hundred Drake & Sweeney lawyers suddenly seized with a fervor to protect the rights of street people." (p.345) Where has all the evil gone? What causes homelessness in the first place? Has the spirit of covetousness, the greedy idol of love of money that killed De Von Hardy and the Burtons left Drake & Sweeney? Did the repudiation of N. Braden Chance and the conversion of Arthur Jacob who is now "tired of chasing money" change the gods who rule America and find the fruits of obedience in the number of children, men and women who live under bridges and in church basements during the winter months? Has the shrill cry for lower property taxes abated? Is there now a welcome for the stranger dressed in rags at the gated golf communities 30 miles from the center of the city? I think not. "The good that I would I do not do. The evil that I would not do I do. Oh, wretched one that I am." (Romans 7) Paul teaches us, as does William Stringfellow and Walter Wink, that the same is true for our institutions only more so.

Good works based upon a system of volunteerism is the best source we have to offer in church and society for the establishment of justice for the homeless. Mr. Grisham is 100% correct about that! We have 125 people in our front yard right this minute waiting for lunch to prove his point. EXCEPT we have Jesus' way--the little way--the way of Michael Brock.

The final response to America and its money is to follow Jesus into the highways and byways of discipleship. Mr. Grisham never makes Michael Brock's radical conversion explicitly Christian. But for those of us who read America biblically rather than read the Bible Americanly (William Stringfellow),

we meet in Michael Brock a viable paradigm for conversion and discipleship in modern America.

Faced with death as a hostage, taken into captivity by one whom he has from the foundations of the earth been called to serve, washed in the blood of the poor, Michael Brock is given the grace to see that life is more than money. Arthur Jacobs was 80 years old when he tired of chasing it and serving Mammon. Michael Brock was the age of Jesus, 32, when he embarked upon his public vocation of servanthood and advocacy in solidarity with the homeless. He was "convicted" by the illegal eviction and De Von Hardy's death. He was converted to the homeless poor by sharing cookies with Ontario Burton, a valueless child of no more worth than was Matthew Shepherd to the Christian Right.

Brock was radicalized and born again a second time with Ontario's death and the extermination by gas in the chamber of an old car of the entire Burton family. When he came to understand the evil and deadly consequences of the Drake & Sweeney illegal evictions, he, like Hector Palma before him, broke the law to establish justice.

When Mordecai Green offered Brock a new vocation, as our ancestor Mordecai offered the same to Queen Esther, he counted the cost and stepped over the line. He left, like fishnets beside the sea, the land of the money god to which he could not return. Michael Brock was now set free. He was a street lawyer. "Freedom is what we have--Christ has set us free! Stand, then, as free people, and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again." (Galatians 5:1)

The cost of discipleship is always high. The cost is always a cross with nails of loss, suffering and persecution. Brock lost his wife, and the understanding of his mother, dad, and brother Warner. He lost his career. He had to move his residence toward the poor in a seedy, rougher part of the city. His license to practice law was revoked for 9 months. Former friends believed him crazy. He spent more time in church basements than on the upper floors of tall buildings. He wore running shoes.

Michael Brock, the street lawyer, gained a new life. His work was now good work and purposeful. He had a calling and a vocation

revealed in the suffering and cry of the poor. He had moved from the seat to the street and was being pursued by truth, justice, and a life among the lowly. His needs for money were greatly reduced the moment he was able to put love and work together. Brock also found the church in the guise of the Fourteenth Street Legal Clinic. The primary mark of the discipleship church in America today is diversity. Here Brock cast his lot with an African American leader, a Jew, and an Hispanic woman. Now a Samaritan/Gentile (the furthest out on the margins in the struggles of the New Testament Church) was engrafted in the Body: a WASP male. Goodnews indeed!

The Street Lawyer is a modern story of conversion to the poor, a central motif at the heart of the Christian faith. We hope that the voices of the poor will be heard and the suffering of the homeless will be seen and felt through Mr. Grisham's well-told tale. Sometimes, when a good story is told or a truthful sermon is preached or a gospel song is sung, someone or two or three will get up out of their seat, empty their pockets of all their money and credit cards. Then they take a step toward Jesus our Leader and Liberator. They join a freedom movement and journey their lives toward justice and the Beloved Community. What are we doing this afternoon?

Ed Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Ed:

Ed, I often think of the struggles of 910 when I walk past the intersection of Broadway and Osborne, here in Winnipeg. It has been said that if you stand at that corner, and point in all 4 directions, you find "action, salvation, legislation, and urination." The four buildings at this intersection are: The Great-West Life Insurance Company (the largest insurance company in Canada), an Anglican church (which is also the site of *Agape Table*, a soup kitchen), the Manitoba provincial legislature, and a public washroom. I'm sure you could stand there and use that corner to illustrate many-a-lesson. I'm not blind to the multitude of injustices perpetrated in our city. But the image of a permanent building (and heated! It is almost -30F!!) whose sole purpose is a public washroom overlooking the seat of power in Manitoba may give some hope to your struggle to Pee for Free with Dignity in Atlanta.

I have not heard news recently from the Open Door, and so I can only imagine that you are continuing to nurture a community of resistance and inclusivity in the hope that the door will be open for Christ's coming when she stumbles down the back lane to the back yard and knocks. And I imagine that sadness, pain and anger also mark your shared lives. My prayers and cries are with you.

I currently work nearly full-time for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, as director
(continued on next page)

Hannah Loring-Davis



GLADYS RUSTAY

We sent Hannah Loring-Davis off to Ghana in our Sunday worship on March 7th. The meditation was given by Dr. Ndugu T'ofori-Atta. Joyce Hollyday led us in the commissioning prayer. Hannah will be studying in Cape Coast, Ghana for five months as part of her studies at Guilford College.

of Peace and Justice Ministries. This has taught me a lot about structures, and I am grateful for my time with the Calvinists in Atlanta for helping to nurture an appreciation for the importance of structures which help in the search and struggle for justice. A key focus of my work is to find ways to encourage and enable Mennonite congregations in Canada to be structured for peace and justice in their own context.

I am also quite involved in the Christian Peacemaker Teams. I wrote you after my two months in Sarah & Hagar's city, Hebron. I may return in Spring. But right now I am trying hard to connect Palestinian families, whose houses are targeted for demolition by the Israeli army, with churches in North America. This is essential to personalize what may otherwise seem to be an impersonal issue, and to root a response in relationship. I hope, too, that understanding the issues in the West Bank leads to new insights about the dynamics of my own ancestors' settlement of the Canadian prairies and the displacement of the aboriginal peoples. This was a major insight for me.

A colleague of mine, who works for the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (Ontario & Quebec), is Chris Buhler—the one who encouraged me to go to The Open Door. He is a key person in raising the issue of racism in the church, and doing good things. Racism's head is ugly here in Canada, though because the issues are different than those in the U.S., it is far too easy for middle-class white church folks to dismiss the issue as a concern of YOURS (in the U.S.), but not a relevant one up here. Those in our churches who are of Aboriginal, Hispanic, or Asian origin tell us otherwise.

Grace, joy and peace,

Jeremy Bergen
Winnipeg, MB

Dear Murphy:

While reading through a copy of *Hospitality* several months ago, I noticed belts listed among the numerous items you all perpetually need.

Since my imprisonment started in 1977, I've often been unable to contribute anything at all to the Nation's groups and organizations which I believe in: those who attempt to believe in and to meet the simple yet complex criteria shared with us through the Sermon on the Mount.

But this year, I'm able to help here and there a little bit. I've

managed to earn my craft shop privileges back, get my leather and tools sent back in and, well, I hope the enclosed light belts will brighten the days and help shoulder the burdens of those whose lives "out there" are more difficult than mine is in here. I'd planned on getting these to you before Christmas—but the whole state prison system was locked down a couple of weeks and my plans were delayed. At any rate—here they be.

God bless and help all of you there. My thoughts and prayers and hope.

Peace,

Philip Brasfield
Gatesville, TX

(Philip Brasfield spent many years on death row in Texas and is now serving a life sentence in Gatesville, TX. With this letter he sent eight beautifully tooled leather belts that were given to our homeless friends through the Open Door clothes closet. We are grateful for this loving gift.)

Dear Friends:

Hospitality continues to busy my spirits. Thank you for all you do and what you write about.

A couple of friends have begun a ministry which has something in common with part of yours—taking people from other worlds and giving them a personalized experience of life on (or over) the edge, where the down and out live. Here in San Francisco, the Tenderloin is definitely one of the main such places.

Please send the Faithful Fools *Hospitality*, as I know it will help keep them going, as it does our whole community.

B' Shalom,

Jim Haber
Martin De Porres House of
Hospitality
San Francisco, CA

Dear Open Door Community,

I was asked how we Africans in America maintain our sanity amidst all of the church burnings, Texas dragging death, Virginia decapitation, N.Y. police 41 bullet massacre, etc., etc. I maintain my

own by keeping racism in its proper perspective. Racism is a person's struggle with his/her own evil tendencies because good and evil don't come from outside—both emanate from the heart alone.

A friend said that he maintains his by projecting a certain image. He said that during tornadoes and hurricanes he envisions the big bad Ku Klux Klan fleeing for cover and hiding in holes with thumping hearts and nervous stomachs. He actually laughs during terrible weather because Mother Nature is truly no respecter of persons.

Since it is impossible to remove everything from this world that we don't like or understand, people who tear themselves apart with hatred and prejudice are not very wise. My favorite t-shirt reads "An angry person lives in an angry world, A loving person lives in a loving world, Which world are you in?"

Lewis Charles
Atlanta, GA

Dear Ed and Murphy,

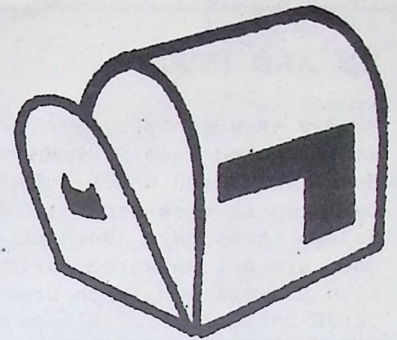
I have not heard from you for a long time but I understand you are communicating with Fr. Jim Considine in the Christ Church.

I trust this finds you all well and able to keep up with your good work.

Christine Fletcher, Mayor of Auckland, has just come back from New York where she studied police response to crime and plans to follow the ideas picked up there. A friend, a Catholic Priest, expressed deep distress to me a few Sundays ago as he saw a convoy of concrete trucks pouring the foundations of a new remand prison. We do not have capital punishment here, except de facto as desperate prisoners take their own lives.

An elderly couple, (the wife had been attacked by a robber), are circulating a petition calling for stiffer penalties for violent crime, and it has been getting a lot of support. But not from us of course.

I suggest you send a letter to; Christine Fletcher, Mayor, Auckland City Council, Auckland, New Zealand, and/or Hon. Jenny Shipley, Prime Minister, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, New Zealand. Or perhaps send something to Rod Donald MP, same address. He is a



Green MP and much closer to what we believe. I have sent him a copy of Murphy's 1994 "Bag of Snakes" article, [*Hospitality*, Feb. 1994], which he appreciated. Got any updates on that one?

The news here has been full of the terrible murder of the Black man towed behind their pick up, the first one being sentenced to death. I have just read Sister Helen Prejean's very powerful book, "Dead Man Walking."

According to an article in last Wednesday's *New Zealand Herald*, Black people in New York are being persecuted and killed by police—a very grim picture of a very harsh form of racism—as bad as it is down south?

Bill Clinton will be here in Auckland at the APEC conference in September. We are spending vast sums on this affair and there will be attempts to keep protesters away from the limelight, including, no doubt, visibly armed police and guards. Already one man has had his home broken into by the Security Intelligence Service (SIS), just because of his alternative views about APEC.

Some time ago a woman and I were on the front page of the *Herald* leaning against a line of police in downtown Auckland. Later the woman was picked up by police and thrown against a brick wall. She got a concussion and is fortunate that she is still alive!

We have a much better City Council since the last election and one of our best councilors is Bruce Hucker, a Presbyterian minister. Anything you could send to the mayor you could, perhaps, send copies to him.

The Auckland Casino is making millions and doing terrible damage to the poorer sections of the community. It looks as though the next casino will be built in Hamilton in the King Country, about 85 miles south of Auckland, even though about 85 percent are against it.

Yours in Christ

John Miller
Auckland, New Zealand

WE ARE OPEN. . .

Monday through Saturday: telephones are answered from 9:00am until noon, from 2:00 until 6:00pm. The building is open from 9:00am until 8:30pm those days (Both phone and door are not answered during our noon prayers and lunch break from 12:30 until 2:00). Please call in advance if you need to arrange to come at other times. On Sunday we are open from 7:30am until noon. Sunday afternoon our door is answered until 5:00pm.

* * *

OUR MINISTRY. . .

SOUP KITCHEN: Wednesday-Saturday, 11 am - 12 noon

SUNDAY BREAKFAST: Sunday morning at 910, 7:30 am

WEEKDAY BREAKFAST: Monday-Friday, 6:45 am

SHOWERS & CHANGE OF CLOTHES:

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 2-4pm (Be sure to call; schedule varies)

USE OF PHONE: Monday-Saturday, 9am-noon, 2:00pm-5pm

CLARIFICATION MEETINGS: Selected Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm.

WEEKEND RETREATS: Four times each year (for our household and volunteers/supporters), next retreat is our Spring retreat, April 16 - 18.

Our Hospitality Ministries include: visitation and letter-writing to prisoners, anti-death penalty advocacy, advocacy for the homeless, daily worship and weekly Eucharist.

If you have found Hospitality helpful and would like to know more about the Open Door Community, please fill out, clip and send this coupon to The Open Door Community * 910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE * Atlanta, GA 30306-4212.

____ Please ADD to the Hospitality mailing list.

____ Please accept my tax deductible donation to the Open Door Community.

____ I'm interested in volunteering. Please give me more information.

____ I would like to explore a six to twelve-month commitment as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door. Please send more information.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____ + _____

Phone _____

Open Door Community Worship

We gather for worship and Eucharist on Sunday evenings followed by supper together.

Please join us!

April 4 7:30 a.m. Easter Breakfast with our homeless friends followed by Worship in the front yard (no 5 p.m. Worship)

April 11 5 p.m. Worship at 910

April 16 - 18 Spring Retreat at Dayspring Farm (no Worship at 910)

April 25 5 p.m. Worship at 910

Acosoa Ayisha T'ofori-Atta finds her father's sermon "restful" as she meditates on her mother Alice's lap.



GLADYS RUSTAY

Are You Moving?

Bulk rate mail is not forwarded by the U.S. Postal Service. Send Hospitality, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA, 30306-4212, your new mailing address as soon as you know it. Please enclose the mailing label from your most recent issue.

Thank you!

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

Plan to join us on selected Tuesday evenings for presentations and discussions of topics relevant to the justice struggle. Call us for dates and times.

Volunteer Needs

Soup Kitchen on Fridays
Showers on Wednesday - Friday
Hardwick Trip
Sunday Morning Breakfast

If you would like more information about volunteering, contact Brenda Smith at 404-874-9652.

Open Door Community Needs

JEANS
T-Shirts
Men's Work Shirts
Quick Grits
Cheese
Coffee
Multi-Vitamins
MARTA Tokens
Postage Stamps
Underwear for Men
Men's Shoes (all sizes)

BLANKETS
Meat for the soup in our Soup Kitchen
Sandwiches
Table and Floor Lamps
Vacuum Cleaners
an Accoustic Guitar to be available for visitors to play at our Sunday Worship

Disposable Razors
Women's Underwear
Toothbrushes
Deodorant
Vaseline
Towels
Socks
Shampoo
Men's Belts
Washcloths

From 11am til 1:30pm, Monday through Saturday, our attention is focused on serving the soup kitchen and household lunch. As much as we appreciate

your coming, this is a difficult time for us to receive donations. When you can come before 11 or after 1:30, it would be helpful. **THANK YOU!**