



# STATEVILLE SPEAKS

*Voices from inside. . . .*  
**A Quarterly Newspaper**

Volume 1

Issue #1 (2004)

## From the Editor

I have frequently wondered what would the scent of peer-pressure smell like. And today, as I walk through the valley of personal decision making, I now have a general idea of what it would smell like, but I dare not knuckle under the pressure.

Therefore, I find myself compelled, to stand up and speak out on this very controversial and important problem. A problem that's causing the majority to suffer because of the uneducated actions of a few, misguided individuals. It's time for us to acknowledge that drugs are, without question, weapons of mass destruction, and those who deal the drugs are clearly members of the real axis of evil. Where it's coming from, and who are indulging isn't a question for this editor. The administration must deal with these questions. And as we all can see, they are.

We, the prison population must deal with the reasons for drugs among us. And the effects they continue to have on our families and communities. One of the ways we can work to eliminate this is through education. We must use education to change attitudes and mindsets, by being voices of reason among each other.

We spend everyday of our lives being filled with daily bombardments of negativity, and even though that is true, we don't have to surrender to the outrageous notion that all of us are either drug dealers or drug users, because this clearly isn't true. And we, the sober minded brothers, must stand up and say so.

Am I the only one who has taken offense to this outrageous notion? Do I stand alone in this honorable position? Shall I bear the burden of fighting this evil alone? Is there anyone willing to fight this monster with me? Am I the only one offended by these stereotypes? Stereotypes caused by a few dealers and users.

Do I stand alone at being offended by drug sniffing dogs, drug drops, strip searches, shake downs and long lock downs? Do I stand alone at being offended by the humiliation our families and

We the men at Stateville need to be encouraged to hold on. We need to know that with all the racist issues we deal with, there is hope that our voices will be heard. This is our purpose and aim. We hope to bring our issues before the public in a positive and intelligent form.

We also hope to entertain our readers with essays, short stories and poetry. We are faithful that we will also receive letters and articles from the prison population. We need your views. There can be no progress without struggle. So give us your best. As we will give ours to you in each issue.

The first issue of *Stateville Speaks* is being published outside the prison because the Illinois Department of Corrections denied our request to publish it inside. We deeply appreciate the financial support from friends that made this possible, especially Hollywood Producer Abby Mann & Youth Advocate Programs. We hope to be able to publish *Stateville Speaks* quarterly, but we will need additional funds to do so. If you would like to contribute or have any questions, please contact:

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friends must endure to come into the prison to visit? Grandmothers being subjected to shameful experiences, mothers and fathers being interviewed like possible criminals for crimes they would never commit. And our children being subjected to searches they should never endure, just to give us a hug or kiss to reassure us that we are stilled loved. Unfortunately, many of them are being turned away because they couldn't answer the question of the day.

They say, "Drugs are hiding among you, but we're not sure which of you, so all of you will suffer these humiliations until we find the drugs". Drug users and dealers, make no mistake about it, We, the Majority, know that you are sick and misguided, and doing all that you can to disguise it. You love the power of deceit, intoxication and trickery, but your message, "Smoke this and you'll feel better", is a Lie!

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# **“Surviving in Prison”**

Survive .v ~ to remain alive or in existence; continue life or activity.

My composition may start off sounding rather ox-moronic. The stance that I've taken on surviving in prison is in direct contradiction to the definition of the word. I've been instructed to die daily to the deeds of my flesh. some may ask "How can this help you to survive?" Most of us, if not all, are in prison for a careless act of the flesh and others have been wrongly convicted. But there's a certain responsibility that comes along with being a true "Man of God". You realize that you're also a "Child of God", and almost all children depend on their parents to provide supervision, food, health-care, provision. God has not only done these things and more, He's also provided a survival kit. The contents of this kit will help any man, woman or child survive in any kind of environment, including prison. the love of Christ constrains those that love & obey Him. This love prevents me and others from doing things such as taking our own lives or that of someone else's'. Understanding that God sees straight through our hyaline lives and knows the inception of our being, we should allow Him to bring about the felicitie that He desires for us. But many of us don't want help. We've deemed this place a "Living Hell" and would just like to get it over with. Not so with God, He has purposed and planned a life for us even before the worlds were formed. So, when we were incognizant and knavery, God loved us enough to step down off of His throne in the person of Jesus Christ and went to the cross and bled for you and I. You ask me "How do I survive in prison?". I survive in Christ! Amen. . . There is no other true method of survival. Amen!

Respectfully Submitted

Dominique Johnson

aka/ Duke Hvelic "The Preacher"

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## **Surviving a Day on the Plantation**

Prison is a place that decays the possiblity of hope of mankind. Everyday is so much like the one before, that holidays and birthdays have no significance and are not appreciated as they should.

You have to first have a very strong spiritual nature and a strong relationship with the Creator if you want to survive a day here. Myself, I'm always praying for strength, tolerance, forgiveness and humility. Also, you **must** steer clear from the negative elements that will definitely turn what's already a bad situation, into a complete nightmare. Surround yourself w/ positive brothers, do positive things and keep a positive attitude.

A very important method that will help you to survive day to day is to always - always keep an optimistic outlook on your situation.

Because I see quite a few brothers who has given up hope and has lost their will to fight. You can look at them and see that their spirit is on Life-Support.

Loved ones may have left their side, their moral support may be gone and they may have exhausted all of their legal options of getting back to court or to go home, but I believe that if God is w/ you - the whole world can be against you and it wouldn't matter.

The fire should never become extinguished inside a man's soul. There is a bigger fight that we should stay prepared for, and we must make peace w/ our Creator and ourselves.

Finally, we should not use this time as a rest period. We should take time out of every day to educate ourselves by doing some form of studying to stimulate our minds.

It's a lot of focus being put on lifting weights and developing body muscles, but the most important muscle, besides the heart, is the brain. And it is the most neglected.

Prior to our incarceration, we spent plenty of time in the free world wasting our minds and stagnating the development of our education and knowledge of the world, God and ourselves.

I am positive that doing these things will help you survive a day on the plantation we call prison. May God bless you, and keep you strong and safe.

By: Marvin Alexis

## From the Editor

Continued from Page 1

Make no mistake about it, we see you for what you are, you're our enemy, an enemy of self improvement, an enemy of rehabilitation, an enemy of human dignity. You're the enemy to all of us, who are fighting for freedom and justice for all, regardless of creed, class or color. And to all of us working to clean up our lives. There is no question in my mind, you're the enemy to everything reasonable. Look around you. I'm sure you see the effects of drugs on the communities, and all those who fall under the lying spell of drugs. If we look hard enough, the effects are clear for all to see. Many of us are here because we got hooked by the lie of drugs, and many more are on there way here.

Drugs are Dream Killers! How dare you continue this form of genocide, by selling and using this poison in our mist. . . And expect us to sit idly by like we don't care if all of us live or die. Well, believe it or not, We Care! And you can't hide behind me. We can't give you all the blame, for being ignorant, but you're very much responsible for the pain you cause, you're accountable and if you don't get your act together, you'll pay a price you can't afford! We can't blame you for being sick, it's clear you're suffering. And the despair is effecting all of us. We can't allow ourselves to forget our duty to the struggle for freedom, justice and equality for all, regardless of creed, class or color. If we're not part of the solution, then we're part of the problem. . .

We all are part of this massive problem, from the so called "Best" and the so called "Worst" of us. From the three branches of government and everyone in between. Because everyone knows that the only way to really fight, is to combat these problems with positive programs. Drug abuse programs, educational and self-improvement programs. And we, the majority, are calling upon everyone of you within these walls to stand up and ask for positive programs to combat these drug problems. Men, we must say to the young brothers around us, "Say No to Drugs and Her Lies"! Brothers - you can write and request these programs, the worse thing that can happen is they say "NO!"

We must seek programs that encourage each of us to teach the misguided. We must continue all of our efforts to bring our families back into our lives.

In the meantime, we the majority and men of god, must live by the code of accountability and responsibility, and we can't allow ourselves to be ashamed to help lead the misguided brothers out of the darkness. By giving them a different kind of peer - pressure. The kind of peer-pressure that reeks with the scent of love and helps to fight off their insatiable urges.

Our lives and livelihood demand that we stand up and help turn this problem around. Stand up, and take actions to prevent us from traveling down these predictable paths of self-destruction. History is watching us, what we do will effect us today, but many more in the future.

Once more, drugs are weapons of mass destruction. We should never work to hurt each

other. There is no room for playing with drugs. They cause nothing but distress, torment and dissension.

I knew when I committed to writing this editorial, that there would surely be some negative feedback. But my prayer is that some of you men of God, would stand with me, to wake up the population. We have the power, what are we going to do with it? We can be positive or negative. . . I want to spell relief. How do you spell relief? E-D-U-A-T-I-O-N! Well, brothers of Stateville, let me hear you! Positive views and negatives views are welcome. . . THIS IS OUR NEWSPAPER!

In closing, please allow me to apologize to all the mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, grandmothers and grandfathers who have suffered some humiliation because of the actions of a few. I apologize to all the children and friends who must suffer because of the misguided actions of a few.

Pray for us, we need help. I know where I stand, what about you, man in the dark?

Editor-in-Chief  
Rinaldo Hudson

### **Inside this Brown Suit**

***This is my royal attire  
which cannot be stripped, stolen,  
or destroyed.***

***Made from a unique fabric  
grown in the gardens of the Lord.  
Relentless efforts of duplication,  
trying to achieve these genuine  
features & complexion w/no success,  
but it's what that's inside this Brown  
Suit that makes it so special,  
no matter how much duress.***

***From within, stands a soul as ancient  
& mysterious as the pyramids & the  
land from where it derived, a natural  
force unscaved, unconquerable,  
the true reflection of light.***

***It is said that you cannot kill what's  
not meant to die, which is the spirit of  
God, the begining & the everlasting  
that lies in I.***

***Since the times of old, we've been  
pursued, subdued, but endured through  
unthinkable pursuits, it is that fire,  
that essence, that soul, you see today,  
that remains inside this Brown Suit.***

***Marvin Alexis***

# Surviving a Day in Stateville

Surviving a typical day here in Stateville C.C. consists of several things, but none so outstanding as the morning announcements broadcasting through the house intercom announcing the early morning visits, the people going home that day, and of course the most important announcement of the day, "You are on Stand-by" for what ever is going on in the morning, you are on stand-by for whatever activity on that day in your house.

So the process begins of getting out of bed with the sound of the intercom still buzzing in your head about something because you really couldn't make it out, only experience tells you it is stand-by for something. You get your cell in compliance in which I am reminded of my younger days when I had to put away my toys before I could go out and play, then the enduring wait of when the line will be ran as sometimes it is right then before they finish making the announcement and other times it is a few hours later while you waited.

You finally get to enjoy the recreation time, but it is always seemingly cut short, even though the yard will sit empty the rest of the day, not one extra minute is given as you are only given just so much time out of our cages regardless of time or space availability. Then it is off to chow where talk of which patty will they serve today tops the list of conversation towards the chow hall. After the hustle through the lines and picking through the food, it is back to the cage where one has to wash up and think of how to pass the rest of the day away with such activities as legal work, writing letters to loved ones, watching T.V. if there is anything on, and if you get along well with your celly then you can play some cards, chess, or just shoot the breeze about the old days when we were not in cages.

Here comes that "Stand-by" for chow announcement in the evening, so once again comes the cell compliance of putting everything away just to pick through some simulated food, the return to the cage again only to pull it all back out again to finish what you were doing before you were interrupted by the intercom and in my theory of how to survive a day in Stateville C.C., Be on stand-by.

By: Tom Odle

## Castaway

My sorrow is cast upon an empty shore, on barren land, steeped in grief on the burning sand.

Anguished by the rocks, that clutters the mind, saps my strength and makes me blind.

My woe is an ocean filled with sin, drinkless water that makes me cringe.

Regrets from time, of action and deeds, lost to the world by thrift or need.

Marooned by a ship, that was never meant to sail, piloted by a captain from a sordid tale.

Ship Recked by vice and left alone, sunk by scandle, snared and now, forlorn.

Donald McDonald

## A C-Number

As one of the brothers suffering under the cruelty of the Indeterminate Sentence. I'm able to share from a heart that has seen many day of Hell on Earth. I can speak about the overwhelming spirit to surrender, yet holding on for dear life by a thin finger of sanity.

I can talk about losing love ones, and watching friends walk out of prison to leave me behind to continue my suffering. With all my reasons to give up. I have hope. I want to say to all the C-Numbers. Hold on, the fight isn't over. After 27 years, I'm not getting weak, I'm getting stronger. Because I know Yah, is faithful. The race isn't swift, but it's to those that endure to the end. Brothers and sisters, keep the faith, we will win this fight. C-Numbers, we must remain a light for the young brothers who don't have hope.

Stand Soldiers! Tall men can't hide in short grass. Get ready, Our Day is Coming.

Marlon Shannon

# ***Essays Submitted by Stateville Inmates will be published in future editions***

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## **Every Tomorrow**

### **George Whittington III**

Society has labeled me prisoner N72861, but I am so much more. I am a father, I am a son, I am good, I am bad . . .

I am, I am . . . I am Nat Turner's rage running rampant in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, I am Denmark Vessey's vengeance unchecked and precise. I am the sword of Gabriel Prosser penetrating his master's skull, I am every drop of blood sweat and tears the first and last slave ever shed . . .

I am Marcus Garvey's vision for his people, I am Malcolm's passion for truth, I am Che Guevera's love for the people, I am Martin's unfulfilled dream floating in the air here in 2003, I am George Jackson's unbroken will and spirit, I am Fred Hampton's resistance, I am Frederick Douglass' persistence for abolition, I am James Byrd's last breath rising up from that cruel highway in Jasper, Texas . . .

I am the pain Emmett Till endured in Money, Mississippi, I am the strange fruit Billie Holiday sung about, I am every Bob Marley song, I am the wrath Shaka Zulu brought to the British, I am the truth wrapped in grafted European lies, I am Jesus's twin, feet of bronze, hair of wool just like the Good Book says . . . I am a scientist deep in my soul, a master mathematician made up by design to seem to be a master manipulator . . . I am a man short 40 acres and a mule and the tools to break me free, I am misery manifest manufactured by a mad scientist named Willie Lynch and his Uncle Sam. I am a mountain of grief soon to be a volcano of retribution and redemption, I am every scream yesterday ever produced, I am justice denied and delayed . . .

I am an untapped reservoir of black gold waiting to release riches to my people. But most of all I am every tomorrow until tomorrows cease to be and my redemption song is sung . . .

What can I do to make myself better? I can be my harshest critic and accept my shortcomings and faults and make sure an effort is made each day to improve upon my shortcomings and faults. I can strive towards love and charity for my brother man, accepting him and his faults.

I can immerse myself in truth and strive for justice while standing firm amongst this world and all its lies . . .

There are so many things I could do to make a better me, but the most important thing I can do to better me is to know and acknowledge God each day through prayer, studying his word and practicing his word at every opportunity, and believing wholeheartedly in him and the hereafter, because the life I now know will surely one day end and then there is only God and eternal paradise or hell and eternal damnation.

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# **Essays Submitted by Stateville Inmates will be published in future editions**



## **Silent and Afraid**

**Shondell Walker**

Sitting here silently and afraid, afraid to finally reveal to the world who I am. But since given the opportunity to explain to the world who I am, I am more anxious to reveal who I am.

After bearing the brunt of a broken home, and after enduring so much despair, and after enduring countless years in prison, the man whom I became to be is far from the man that I ever thought I would know. I am compassionate, humble, thoughtful, somewhat brave, and apathetic to no one. Mistakes have plagued me throughout my childhood, and despair has befriended me for years. My struggles are sometimes cantankerous, but manageable. As a child I had no guidance, as an adult in prison I am self taught, through fear, self hate, and determination. For years fellow friends looked down upon me as a nonentity. But I am somebody, maybe not infallible, but an individual who has been deemed a villain by society. For my mishaps I blame me, for my misery I blame me. For abandoning a child before she could leave the womb and grow up with a father who's love for my child would have never ceased. For not knowing my child and never ever seeing her to this day, while tears roll down my eyes because of it, I blame me.

Being looked upon as mere filth has only made me stronger, being deemed unworthy has only progressed my growth, and I shall continue to strive for ways to aggrandize my life, since it has been so full of strife.

Ambiguous and rather obfuscated, I honestly feel as though I can do more to improve my productivity and creativity by setting goals and having morals and principles, and by assisting other's who desperately are in need of urgent help. Being a brother to everyone I encounter, at the same time being amicable, while unveiling my hospitality, I begin this odyssey by loving myself, then I will love others. And by abating the more diminutive things in life and making important things in my life a priority, such as family, God human entity's, my career, and giving my all to all of those in need of it. I seek not money for this essay. I seek just to enlighten people on who I am and what I've become. I look back in retrospect of what I once was and whom I became to be, and pleased with the results of today as opposed to the times of antiquity. I leave those time's behind me as I move on continuously in search of self.



# "Lifers"

## IN HOPE OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR THE LIFERS IN ILLINOIS' PRISONS

In representation of the lifers in Illinois' prisons, we would like to show our appreciation for giving us this opportunity and for your unwaivering support.

We, the lifers, are launching a campaign to educate the public of the gross nature of sentencing men and women to **life without the possibility of parole**, and to join other countries and organizations around the world that oppose the inhumanity of this sentence and the death penalty because all humans have redeeming values.

Lifers need grassroot support for abolition of life without the possibility of parole, because all sentences must reflect society's efforts and interest in rehabilitating its citizens. This could be accomplished by incorporating more humane sentences like, 20 to life, 25 to life, 30 to life, etc., etc., where the minimum would have to be served before considered for parole.

Lifers need the public to realize that the moral intergrity of our communities calls for mercy for men and women who have done 20 or more years to be considered and afforded a chance at being useful and productive members of society.

Lifers need to send the message of remorse and healing, and emerge from the pre-assumed symptom of callousness to the forefront of education, integrity and communication in an effort to help diminish the false perception that we are all irretrievable cold blooded menaces - who lack the propensity to be remorseful or unredeemable or effected by our crimes against victims whose families remain and is more or less surviving in wait for what they (wrongfully) believe is closure.

Lifers need to make valid contributions to the healing process upon wounds and scars of the people effected by our past actions thru programs committed to lifers taking responsibility, and living under a concept of true accountability to the public, victims, survivors and ourselves.

Lifers need to encourage friends, families and supporters to attend future meetings to discuss strategies and to form committees to start reaching out to other people, groups and organizations around the world to petition and lobby Legislature Committees for programs to rehabilitate lifers, repealing the sentence of life without the possibility of parole to return lifers to useful and meaningful citizenship, and to petition the Governor for Executive Clemency.

Lifers need to extend our collective ideas, thoughts and concerns, and start spreading our message on the inside and outside to maximize our chances of achieving total success of having this inhumane sentence repealed and eradicated.

**NOW** is the time to come together in one voice to push our agenda forward. We need everyone that supports our efforts and agenda to write, fax, e-mail and/or call upon Judges, Legislators, Community Leaders and the Governor to make sentencing laws more humane.

# THOUGHT RESTRUCTURING

## PROGRAM PROPOSAL

Thought Restructuring Program is a concept based upon rooting out and eliminating patterns of thought that contribute to counter-productive behavior. As of now, ILDOC does not have or provide in any sense, programming that targets, specifically, restructuring patterns of thinking. That could ultimately lead to ill-decision making and reacting negatively in everyday situations.

There can be no debate that every human action, begins with a thought. Therefore, it is our thoughts that truly define who we are and what we are to become. So, positive and constructive paths will only lead to positive and productive lives. Now, if only given a structure of abnormalcy, the end result is self explanatory--poor social skills, miseducation and all around foolishness. And prime candidates for recidivism.

To counter-act this abnormalcy. It is proposed that a STRUCTURED ENVIRONMENT be instituted whereas a steady flow of positive and productive information is instilled. In order for this structured environment to exist, all levels of mental IDLENESS, mis-INFORMATION and IGNORANCE must be abolished. There should be a separation of those who are willing to become better and those who wish to continue deteriorating into nothingness.

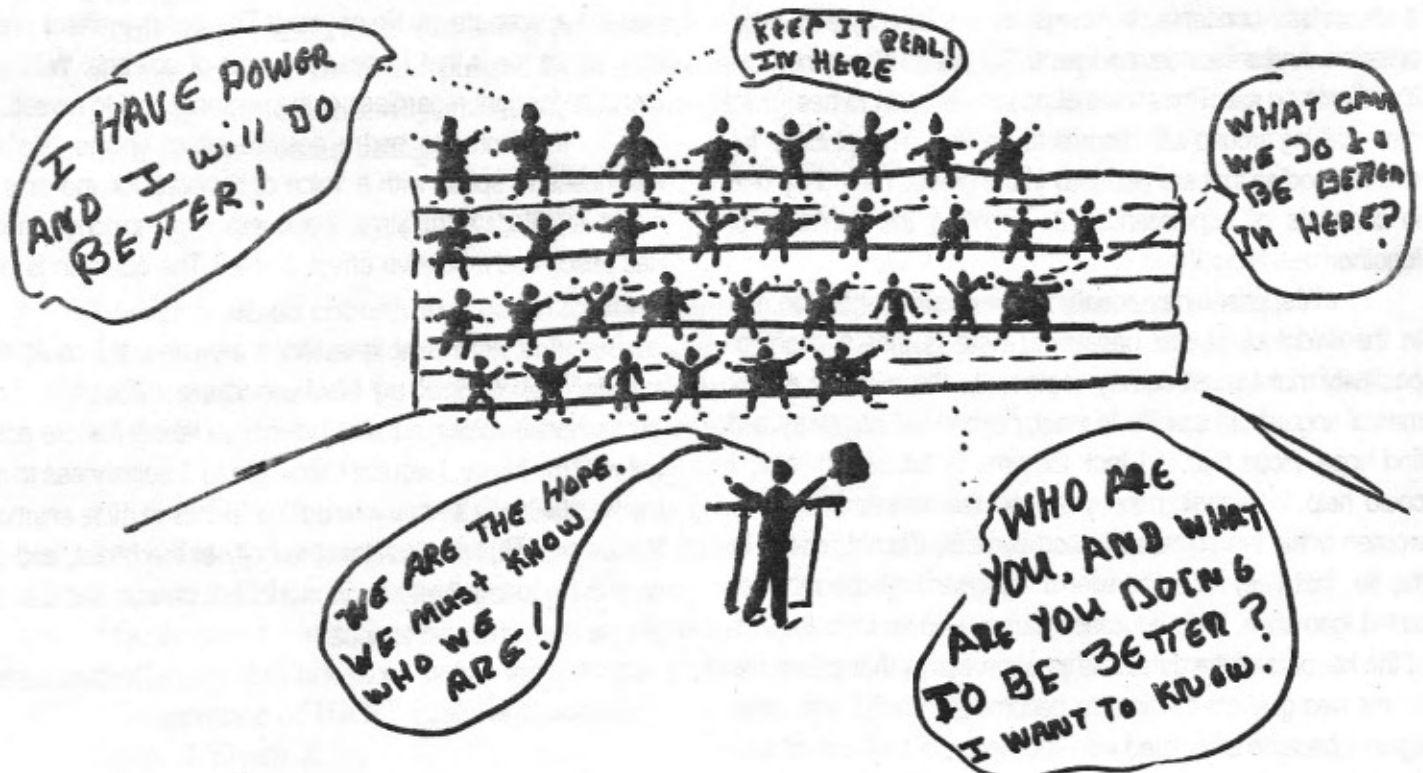
The approach to this new program must be steadfast. As the main objective is to break down the walls of negative thinking and REBUILD them with stronger walls of positive and productive thoughts and behavior.



Participants in this program should include a teacher for educational and program legitimacy. A religious counselor for spiritual strength and guidance. And LIFER'S for the purpose of sharing their life experiences, mistakes and triumphs. And to help weed out negative elements or those who may cause a disruption to the program. There should also be guest speakers. (pending security approval). Who have been successful in business, political and educational fields. And any other positive source that would help contribute to the growth of this program.

Given the opportunity, this is a program that many can benefit from. Individually and as a community.

PROPOSAL PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY:  
ALDWIN MC NEAL



# PRISON EFFECTS!

The effects that prison has had on my life are immeasurable by the human mind. Yet, I'll try to expose this insanity imposed upon my soul, by the foolishness of my youth. I dare to speak from within this belly of the beast. Which continual to feast on my defeat. Its clear to me, prison has had a negative effect on hatefulness & hazardous ignorance that runs rapidly within these walls. And the effect of these things had me insane to the reality of my responsibility to the human family,

The negative effect that prison had on me was filter through the extreme hostilities of the dying code of the convict. Which only produced more elements of negativity. We are daily bombarded with negative images of ourselves & surrounded by men whom spirits are broken by the system. Men whom voices go unheard. Because they no longer know the language of the beast. Kill or be killed mentality.

We are controlled by officers that are irritated over the idea that you want to change your life. We must keep in mind it's your beastly behavior that keeps them employable. So they will show disgust over the concept of remorse. Yet we must continue to push forward. The reality of prison life is simple & not very complicated, prison gives life to foolishness & senseless concepts. It frowns on any concepts of rehabilitation. And smiles on recidivism. The prison clearly has had it's effects on me. The effects of prison are plain to see, dead men walking around with dreams to be free. This place is full of dead bodies that are yet to lay in the grave. They daily pipe in concepts of hopelessness & dispelling the concepts of togetherness altogether.

Yes, prison has equally had a positive effect on me. In the midst of all this negativity, there is also a beam of positivity that I must equally confess. In the midst of all my mental anguish, I was able to reach beyond the negativity and find hope. Hope that, if I took the time to educate myself, I could help in returning the voice to the voiceless men & women within the so-called justice system. I could speak to the lie, that (we) I was forever the property of the monster called ignorance. With education came freedom from the lies of the keepers of the gate. The positive things that prison did for me was give me the time to become stimulated with hope again. I became stimulated with knowledge of self and others. I was open to the reality that justice must be for all regardless of creed class or color.

The positive thing that came from prison was the time to wake up to who I am, and to learn what my purpose in life should be. I learned that I couldn't allow myself to become stagnate by the negative feedback from other who couldn't see the vision that I felt GOD had placed in me. So many of us don't believe (we) can be or do any better than life in prison. I have learned that the only thing that can keep you suppressed is your unwillingness to fight for your vision. I have become inspired by the idea of doing better each day, one step at a time. Not running ahead of my ability, at the sametime not allowing anyone to place limitations on me.

The positive effect prison has had on me into the closet for introspection & accepting responsibility for my actions. The positive effect prison has had on me was, I learned to take off the mask. And start keeping it real with myself. This place can easily inspire anger & violence. Yet even in this world of violence over reason, you can still find peace & purpose. Yes, the positive effect prison has had on me are many. I choose today love over hate. Today I realize this is a slaveship headed toward keeping us for life. But we can become free from her belly. Yes, prison has given me the time to wake up to the foolish boy I was 20 years ago, when I couldn't appreciate my life or yours! The positive effect prison has had on me is that I became a man of courage. Willing to stand up for right regardless of the personal cost to myself.

If prison has had a positive effect on me, it's my willingness to speak with a voice of remorse for the sins of my youth. Today I'm alive, the question is no longer mine. Has prison had a positive effect on me? The question is now yours!

And there is no question in my mind, if I could start my life over, 99.9 of my life I would live differently. From being more involved in the community to taking a more active roll with my family. I wouldn't allow greed & selfishness to rule my life. Jealousy & envy wouldn't be friends of mine anymore. Yet as I speak, I'm still within the belly of the beast, and she is till trying to legally feast on my foolish defeat, because my people are still scared to speak.

Renaldo Hudson

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## Self Improvement Activities for Inmates

The adage, "Idle hands/minds are the devil's workshop," is doubly true of those who are already involved or succumbed to the criminal mind set. When human beings are not engaged in the pursuit of positive goals, the void will be filled by negative, destructive and anti-social endeavors.

Even if correction officials have forsaken rehabilitation in favor of punishment, it is still practical and pragmatic to promote, facilitate and encourage behavioral/attitudinal change in the prison population. Why? For whose benefit?

\*From a security perspective an inmate who is positive, polite, respectful and non-violent contributes significantly to the safety/well-being of both prison staff and inmates.

\*Recidivism in IDOC is astronomically high, thus creating a financial and logistical burden for prisons and tax payers. Shouldn't we at least explore other methods that might be conducive to a measurable decrease in crime and the prison population?

\*The IDOC and Illinois in general are in severe financial straits. Now imagine we created a program that trained the inmates in computer repair/ assembly or some other product. Then a contract is negotiated with the company to manufacture a certain number of products.. Inmate would be paid a salary but this would be less than an employee on the outside. A certain percent of the profits could be designated to offset costs of inmate health care, education, clothing, food, and recreational activities. There is nothing like giving a person a chance to earn a clean living, especially those who most often have never worked a legal job in their lives. This would instill a sense of responsibility, accomplishment and self-worth. It would also prepare those of us destined for eventual release to be productive when we return home instead of being a blight or scourge.

\*This proposal is not about being pro-inmate or pro-criminal. I am not pro-criminal as I desire to see the criminal mind-set purged from myself and others. This is about repairing broken, mentally and emotionally, mis-shaped human beings.who because of their deficiencies victimize their fellow human beings.

## CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

We are realistic enough to recognize that change can only be achieved when an individual is determined to do and be better. Therefore only those who sincerely desire to improve and alter their conditions will be accepted. We are about the business of ameliorating the dire conditions of those deemed unfit to participate in "normal" society. Criteria for participation are:

\*Convict must be at least B (but afterwards must maintain a consistent A grade status)

\*Absolutely no gang members! A convict must renounce all affiliation with gang and gang activities. This will not be a conduit for gang activity or negatively of any kind!

\*Participants must observe cleanliness of person, speech and mannerisms.

\*Courtesy and civilized behavior towards fellow inmates, correctional officers is a must.\

\*Observance of IDOC rules is mandatory.

Bro. William X

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# Daddy's Sorry

She pressed her little hand  
against the glass, reaching for the  
one who was always called dad,  
daddy where'd you go?

And as he turned to walk away,  
remembering things he'd never get to  
say, daddy where'd you go?

Icy fingers gripped his heart, as the  
love of life drifted apart, gone by  
mistake, wrong step, ignorance or  
deception, where'd you go?

A man destroyed, lost of hope,  
deserted by time, youth, family and  
possessions, daddy where'd you go?

Now older and turning gray, only  
thoughts of olden day, searching for  
a chance to make it right, daddy  
where'd you go?

Knees worn from prayer and  
desperation, hollowed eyes of lost  
dreams, ashamed by the air he  
breathes, daddy where'd you go?

Haunted by life and a love never  
known, never quite seeing a place  
called home, daddy where'd you go?

A first step, a first word, wetting the  
bed, running on the ice, playing in  
the sand, daddy where'd you go?

Was a bad choice, a crumbled dream,  
not listening to mother, too many bad  
things, lost in prison, sentenced to  
life, dad where'd you go?

Haunted by a voice, haunted by  
dreams, haunted by life, haunted by  
time, haunted by strife, haunted by  
mother, aging and old, left in the  
world, who's heart is cold, three  
strikes your out, and daddy, where'd  
you go?

Donald McDonald

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## ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE WILDERNESS

Looking back over my life, when I had no hope, no vision, no guidance, and most of all, NO LOVE! I come from a dysfunctional family, where there was nothing but pain, sorrow and hurt.

I remember as a child, I was beaten by my alcoholic mother, and sexually molested by a man I didn't know. I was laughed at by other kids, because I had a learning disability, and no father to love and care for me. My heart was broken, and I felt so ashamed.

But one day, I ran into Jesus Christ, my LORD and savior, who picked up the brokenness in my life, and healed the pains and hurts in my heart, and today my friends, I can honestly say, I'm free from my past. I have hope, vision and guidance that GOD has given me. And most of all, I have a father that GOD has put in my life. His name is Pastor Bill Artzt.

Who I love, trust and respect. I look up to him, and GOD has blessed my life with him. So my friends, let me encourage you, when you think or feel that nobody loves and cares for you. Then, at this point, call on the name of Jesus Christ, and watch GOD work a miracle in your life.

By: Brother Michael Wyatt

# ~ ~ DARKNESS ~ ~

*With the night,  
Falls my inspiration,*

*Like fog on a morning shore,  
Pours messages to heart and mind,*

*Then I am great!  
As the stars smile down on me,*

*And the moon shines with aspirations,  
While mankind's dreams cheer me on!*

*I have saved the world,  
Eradicated pain with my ideas,*

*But soon dawn calls me,  
Sleeping through my window,*

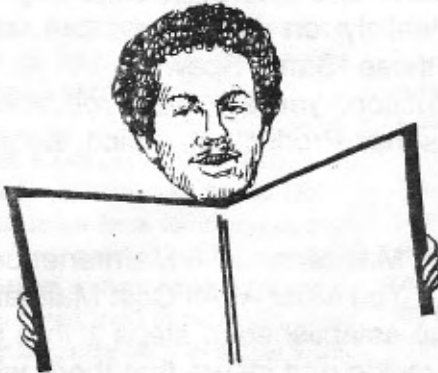
*Noble thoughts flee!  
Reality lets me down,*

*Ah but tomorrow's dusk reawakens,  
I will be again,*

*Straddling the shadows of dreams,  
As the darkness falls and  
the dreamers sleep.*

*Donald McDonald*

## How to Survive a Day in Prison



First, you must pray to the Creator for guidance and strength. Then take a long look in the mirror, all you need to survive is looking back at you. Think about that for a moment or two. Now, let me break it down to you. You have (2) eyes, (2) ears, (1) mouth and yourself. I'm from the ol'school, and the first time I came to prison at the age of 18, it was wild. A older guy I knew from the hood (P. Slim) told me the only way I would get out alive, and with my man-hood is if I did page 4. I had no idea what page 4 was, but I knew P. Slim was a stand-up guy. So I kept my hard-core mask on my face and acted like I knew what it was.

Page 4 (Do Your Own Time), this was in 1976. Everyday someone was getting piped (hit in the head with a iron pipe) or shanked (stabbed with a homemade knife) the C/O's (Correction Officers) didn't want to come on the gallery because they was getting hit everyday. You saw it. . . (2) eyes, but you didn't speak about it (1) mouth, and you got out of the way before the tower or cat-walk c/o started to shooting. (It a 12 gage shot-gun with double-odd buck shot, and a mini-14 high-powered rifle that shoots .223). You could be in your cell, the yard, or chow hall and get shot if you are around a fight. So, you are always on the look out (2) eyes, if you are asleep or eating and you hear the pump-action "click-click" (2) ears, you look up, to see what is going down ready to take cover. You must also be a good judge of people, you could be in the cell with a person who has a mental problem, so you must listen to how they talk, and watch how they act. You must be a person who can think, adapt, adjust and improvise. You must look, and hear twice as much as you speak. Never give up hope. Mind your own business. Pray that God keep you in your right mind. And "think and do, not do and then think". Before you speak, say it to yourself, if it don't sound right to you don't say it out loud. In other words, do Page 4.

By: Vicent Galloway



## “The Production of a Prisoner in 8 Easy Steps”

(Patent Pending)

**The 1st Step** is to select the seeds that produce the Best Prisoners, Black and Brown seeds are ideal, but White ones will due in a pinch. . . .

**The 2nd Step** is to soak the seeds in poverty until they are soft and supple to the touch. (This process takes approximately 9 months).

**The 3rd Step** is to find fertile ground in which to plant the seeds, any Ghetto and or Barrio near you will do.

**The 4th Step is to Water the Seeds,** you water them with stereotypes, misinformation and a sense of self loathing. And then, when they poke their heads above the ground seeking the sun as it rises in the East, you block the light in the East and they will turn to the West in a desperate quest for survival. .

**The 5th Step** is to further disrupt the growth process by allowing a select few to reach “Seeming Success” while keeping the rest “Poor and wanting more”. At this point in production, you can count on the residue of Institutionalized Racism to rise and bring with it the optimum conditions for Step 6.

**\*Step 6 is** to maintain a media that massages the mind of the newly produced “Manchild” with, misogynistic music and maintains every manufactured stereotype associated with the Black and Brown male. This step places the Black and Brown male in Societies crosshairs, making it fair to persecute and persecute them at anytime, in short they become the ultimate scapegoat!

**\* Step 7 is** to advertise the Black and Brown male. Advertise them on the Nightly News, Ricki Lake, Jerry Springer, etc., etc. Being sure to Highlight All Their Shortcomings, Ignorance and Violent Behavior. Then you position Police, Prosecutors and Politicians to Pontificate Publicly on how they can save Society from these “Satan Spawns”. . . . At this point in production, you are on a roll and in control of Prisoner Production, which leads to Step 8.

**Step 8 is** Maintenance, Maintenance, Maintenance. . . You Must At All Cost Maintain the Status Quo established in steps 1 thru 6, those steps provide and insure that there will be plenty of “Useful” Black and Brown males to maintain the Justice “System”, to maintain the Political “System”, to maintain the Judicial “System” and to maintain the “System” of Economic and Educational Exclusion that ultimately creates and perpetuates a continuous Bumper Crop of Black and Brown males, that are destined, due to this design, to be perfectly produced prisoners. . . .

**P.S.** We the United Prisoner Producers Local #666, would like to send shout out to Willie Lynch, Jim Crow and Uncle Sammy. Without you, none of this would be possible.

\* Written by George A. Whittington III  
aka/ The Comendable Soilder  
*Broadcasting live from the Belly of the Beast*  
(copyright 2004)

# Exercise and Back Pain

**B**ack pain can be caused by overexertion, such as lifting too much, or by nonexertion, such as sitting too much. But no matter what the cause, back pain hurts! The keys to preventing back pain are good posture and regular exercise.

## POOR POSTURE HURTS

It's hard to believe that chronic back pain can result from something as mundane as poor posture, but it's true. Poor posture puts a strain on muscles and ligaments and leads to back pain. Good posture keeps the body in proper alignment, relieving muscles of unnecessary stress and strain.

Try this simple alignment test. When standing, you're in alignment if you can drop an imaginary straight line from your ears, through your shoulders, hips, and ankles. When sitting, your ears, shoulders and hips should be in line.

Good posture keeps the three natural curves of your spine in balance, and allows your back muscles to support your spine without additional strain.

## WHICH MUSCLES NEED TO BE STRONG?

Some people have the mistaken belief that only the muscles of the back need to be strong to prevent back pain. Actually, having strong muscles in the lower back isn't as important as having well-conditioned abdominal muscles.

The abdominal muscles work with

the back muscles to stabilize the spine so that the spine is kept in a neutral position. So, if your abdominal muscles are weak, you may overcompensate with your back muscles when lifting or playing sports, leading to the danger of a back sprain.

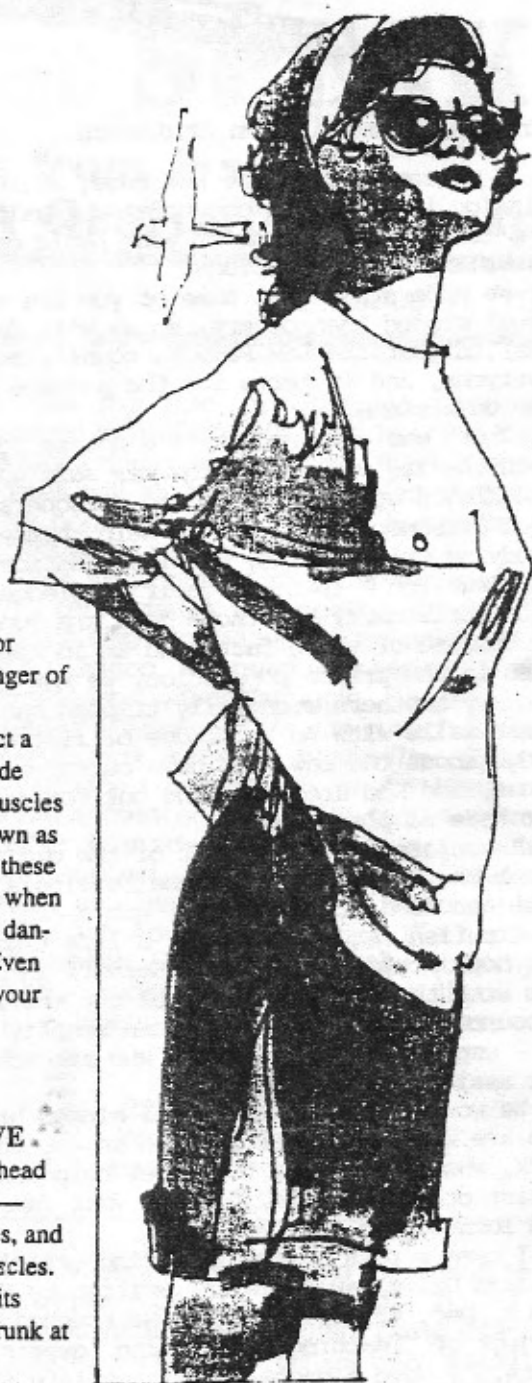
Other muscle groups that affect a healthy and pain-free back are side (also called lateral or oblique) muscles and the front of your thighs, known as the quadriceps muscles. Making these leg muscles do most of the work when lifting takes a big—and possibly dangerous—burden off your back. Even strong arms mean less work for your back.

## EXERCISES YOUR BACK WILL LOVE

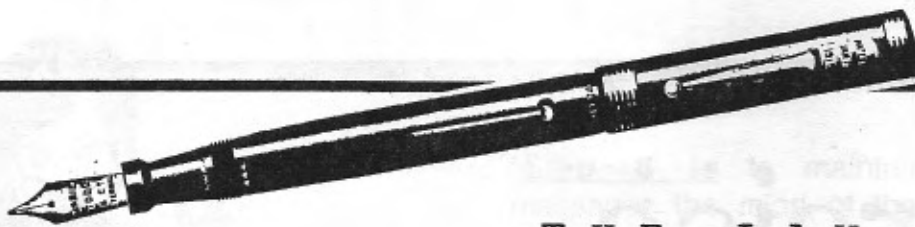
Partial sit-ups—where just your head and shoulders come off the floor—strengthen the abdominal muscles, and they slightly stretch the back muscles. This aids in flexibility and benefits both the front and back of your trunk at once.

Aerobic exercises, such as walking, cycling, cross-country skiing, stair-climbing, and step training, are great for your quadriceps and other muscles of the lower body. And they have cardiovascular benefits.

Remember, if you are currently suffering from any type of back pain, consult your doctor before beginning an exercise program.



If you want to reduce your risk of back pain, practice exercises that improve the flexibility, strength, and endurance of your abdominal, back, and leg muscles. These exercises can be done at home without weights. Get in the habit of exercising daily, and you'll be rewarded with a life free of back pain.



## T H E L A W P A G E

### Introduction/Mission Statement

I welcome you to the Law Page, where our mission is to pass along updated legal info and to educate and answer your basic or most troubling legal questions.

We understand that some of you are more legal minded than others, so we will do our best to gear the Law Page to equally benefit everyone, and in terms for the average person can understand.

There was once upon a time not so long ago, when the law was geared towards safe guarding the Rights of the accused and prisoners, and when prisoners were able to help themselves by studying Criminal Law, Criminal Justice and Paralegalism, then use their knowledge to help other prisoners, but those days are long gone.

Because of those facts and an increasing rise in the prison population, we now have far to many brothers wrongfully trapped behind these walls with no knowledge or limited knowledge about the law, who have outrageous sentences, and who are screaming out for assistance but have no place to turn.

Therefore, in the spirit of the old proverbs, "each one, teach one" because "giving a man a fish can feed him for a day, but teaching a man how to fish can feed him for a life time," it is our hope of forming a Legal Network in conjunction with the Law Page, to pool our knowledge and resources together where it can benefit all of us - especially the brothers who are screaming for assistance and knowledge.

We would like for all legal minded brothers, who are willing to participate in our future network, who are willing to either help teach and/or assist other brothers, to send your name, number and location to the Law Page.

I came across a very inspiring article in the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, written by Margaret Basch, Dec. 16, 1998, where she touched on the Subject of "Teaching Law, Making Lawyers." She wrote, "I have a vague void in my life from ages 19 to 22 - my law school years, during which I learned two important things. I learned how to use a library and how to read a case. These two skills could be taught in high school civics in two weeks. The next three years (of law school) I read hundreds of cases." She went on to say that law school didn't make her a lawyer, and that learning how to draft motions, affidavits, court orders and petitions from other lawyers is what made her a lawyer.

I've used her article many times on Death Row and in the Cook County Jail to inspire other brothers who were totally ignorant to the law, but who wanted to learn, into knowing and believing they can.

Therefore, we would like for all the brothers, who want assistance and/or who want to learn by participating in our future network, to send your name, number and location to the Law Page.

Until we are able to get the network established, anyone who have a legal question can submit it to the Law Page for an answer. And anyone who have pertinent or updated legal information can submit it to the Law Page for possible publishing.

Due to a large number of highly publicized wrongful convictions, the Criminal Justice System has come under a tremendous amount of scrutiny and criticism. And in response to exposure and pressure organized by prisoners (families and friends), activists, attorneys, and so many groups and organizations, politicians are now seemingly committed to reforming the system to right some of the wrongs that were the root cause of so many wrongful convictions.

But until they are committed to rightfully replace the educational programs back behind these walls, it is our job to help and work with each other.

We must not allow anything or anyone to stagnant our growth and progress, and esp. not the growth and progress of our younger brothers that's in our mist.

Remember, ignorantia legis neminem excusat / ignorance of the law is no excuse, and the life you help, just very well may be your own.

Send all questions, comments, suggestions and articles to the Law Page - and please be as concise as possible.

Stateville Speaks  
C/O The Law Page  
Stanley J. Howard  
Legal Correspondent

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**Stateville Speaks,**  
Wishes to thank C.I. Print for it's help with this issue.