

Is justice simply locking them up?

Vincent Chin's funeral has long since come and gone but the scars remain. Even though many who were enraged over his violent death have forgotten his name, the case is not closed. The leniency of the sentence received by his attackers has enraged many more. But even some of those have lost interest.

To refresh our memory, Chin, who was of Asian descent, was violently murdered in Highland Park. His attackers were given probation, a sentence which provoked disbelief and anger.

Although the entire event has slid off the front pages, the questions surrounding the matter cannot be allowed to go away. Many are asking for justice and their request cannot be denied.

THE REAL question, however, is: In what does that justice consist? For some, it is simply a matter of re-sentencing — "throw the book at them." While such a solution may seem simple, it may do little more than to serve vengeance and ignore justice.

Real justice far more than an eye for an eye. It is the process of making



moral perspectives
Rev. Robert Schaden

things right. Will a period of time behind bars make things right? Or might it only serve to fuel us into ignoring the conditions that spawn the sort of violence to which Mr. Chin and his survivors have fallen victim?

To suggest an alternative is not to condone the violence. Neither is it to condone the violence. Neither is it to seek a way to make things right, not only for the Chin family but for an entire community that continues to live in fear of their very violence it produces.

What way, for example, could be devised that the victimizers of Chin might experience what it is like to be a person of color in America. Racial prejudice is still alive and well.

THE AUTO workers who killed Chin

thought he was Japanese — a symbol of the cause of their unemployment. The fact that he was Chinese only serves to point to the facelessness of violence and prejudice.

When our own systems can provide scapegoats for their own mistakes, there will always be those who will pick up the hammer, or the gun, or the bat, or whatever other means they choose, to take out their anger.

Perhaps far more important than time in prison to read books and make license plates is a program for education in the realities of labor and racism. There are not very many programs available in our prisons which will put less dangerous persons back on our streets. Why not an enforced education designed to eliminate the seeds of

prejudice which inevitably lead to violence?

WAYS TO HELP the violently inclined to deal with their drug problems (alcohol and otherwise) may be more conducive to making things right than pre-parole time in a cell. Help in dealing with anger may also provide greater security for the community than systems destined to increase it.

And what about Chin's survivors? Admitting that no proposal can take away their grief or bring back their loved one, what might help them to live less painfully? More does not return the dead. However, it would seem that if the killers were made to work for the benefit of the victimized there might be some sense of evening the scales and making things right.

And what about the rest of us? What ways might be devised to help communities deal with misplaced anger? How do we learn to challenge the systems that perpetuate the conditions of violence? Indeed, how do we stop supporting the causes of the very violence we decry?

Bank clerks are too fast, man says

Dear Jo:
I wonder if you could get a word through to bank managers to train their staff to please slow down their pace when an elderly person is cashing a check. If these younger persons would proceed to count the bills more slowly it would be greatly appreciated.

Over the past few years, I have had to change branches of my bank three times because all the cashiers are just too "quick." I must admit they do not count more slowly when I ask them to, but I can see myself as having the reputation of the "old man who always asks for a slow count" not an image I particularly relish.

I don't think any one can call this a complaint against the most reliable, respectful staff at our



gerontology
A. Jolayne Farrell

banks but I would so love to see a little compassion by these workers, and perhaps, some improvement as some day, they too, will be older and truly understand.

Joe E.
(age 81 with a few health problems)

Dear Mr. E.:
To answer your question, I spoke to the manager of public relations of a major bank about your concern. He was distressed that you felt you had to change your bank three times, and he suggested that you continue to ask the teller to count more slowly. Seldom is there a loss of dignity or the "old man who asks for a slow count" image that worries you.

He also suggested that after you have been given your money by the teller and before you leave the wicket to take your time and count your money yourself at your own pace so that you are satisfied with the transaction.

If you are not happy about this, or any other transaction at your bank, you should speak to someone at the customer service department the side counter or to a senior member of the branch staff or, possibly the manager.

Banks are very concerned about customer satisfaction, and a concern such as yours, is not, as you say, a complaint, but a request a request that is easily filled.

It is my hope, as a gerontologist, that persons serving the public, not only banks, but in all services, will become more aware of the normal changes associated with aging (particularly those that relate to the slowing down of certain physical processes) and act accordingly or, as you say, "show a little compassion."

Thank you for your letter.

Readers may write to Jolayne Farrell at P.O. Box 66, Postal Station G., 1075 Queen Street East, Toronto, Canada.

volunteers

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau has a current file of volunteer opportunities for more than 200 agencies. Non-profit organizations needing assistance may list with the bureau. For more information about these and other volunteer openings call the bureau, 642-7272.

HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS — Good listeners, not upset by illness, are needed by Complete Home Health Services as hospice volunteers. Volunteers should be at least 20 years old. Volunteers will visit patients and families in homes, provide transportation, respite care and follow up. The work involves four hours per week.

PR ASSISTANTS — Concerned Citizens for the Arts in Michigan need articulate, well-groomed volunteers as contacts for radio stations and arts organizations. An art background is helpful. Volunteers work weekdays, four hours between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.

PARENTING AIDES — Oakland Family Services, a counseling, education and support organization for new parents, has several openings: perinatal coaches, 20 years old and up, who will visit expectant parents with information and support; group facilitators, 22 years old and up, who will assist staff in leading groups, three hours a week for 12 weeks; newsletter help, weekdays, 15 hours every three months; and labor support, 25 years old and up, to give support during labor and delivery. Volunteers must be willing to work as called. Training is provided.

FRIENDLY VISITOR — Pontiac Nursing Home needs someone 18 or older who speaks Lebanese or Armenian. Volunteer is needed for one-on-one visits hours 11 a.m. and 8 p.m., one hour a week.

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