

SAVE THE DATE!!

Tuesday, September 26th - Colorado Springs

THE JAILS ARE FULL-NOW WHAT?

Keynote, workshops, community strategy session and evening panel discussion
 All events are at Victory Outreach Ministries (formerly Colorado Music Hall)
 2475 East Pikes Peak Ave, Colorado Springs

For more information, contact (720)314-1402 or (719)459-2538.

Co-sponsored by: The Pendulum Foundation, Youth Transformation Center, Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition, Grassroots Leadership, Colorado Progressive Coalition, UCCS Beth-el College of Nursing, Violence Intervention & Prevention Center, NAACP, Workout Ltd, Teen Court and the Colorado Springs Independent.

Building Connection and Capacity in the Community
 1:00pm - 6:00pm, \$35 per person, pre-registration required

Workshops and strategic planning session designed to empower and connect non-profit and faith based organizations in the El Paso County area.

Workshop topics:

- ◆ Building the Bridge: Understanding Effective Community Re-entry from prison and jail
- ◆ Australian Model of Restorative Justice
- ◆ Grassroots Fundraising and Grant Seeking
- ◆ Gangs: A Community Challenge

Register at www.youthtransformationcenter.org or www.pendulumfoundation.com

Evening Panel Discussion: The Jails are Full-Now What?
 6:15pm - 9:00pm, Free and Open to the Public

The DOC has announced it will run out of prison bed space this fall, and has contracted with private prisons to expand. The recently expanded El Paso County Jail is also full. Can we keep building more and more jail and prison beds? Is there another way? What are the solutions?

Moderator: Representative Buffy McFayden (D-Pueblo)
 Panelists: **Si Kahn**, Executive Director Grassroots Leadership, nationally recognized anti-private prison/labor organizer and author of "Fox in the Hen House: How Privatization Threatens Democracy"
Terry Maketa, El Paso County Sheriff
Jack Ruszczak, Chief Probation Officer, 4th Judicial District
Mike Krause, Independence Institute
Dr. JoAnn Glittenberg, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
Pastor Promise Lee, Relevant Word Ministries
Christie Donner, Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition

Larimer County Jail from Page 3

four years (2007-2010). In the first four years, the proposal advanced by Larimer County officials would be allocated as follows:

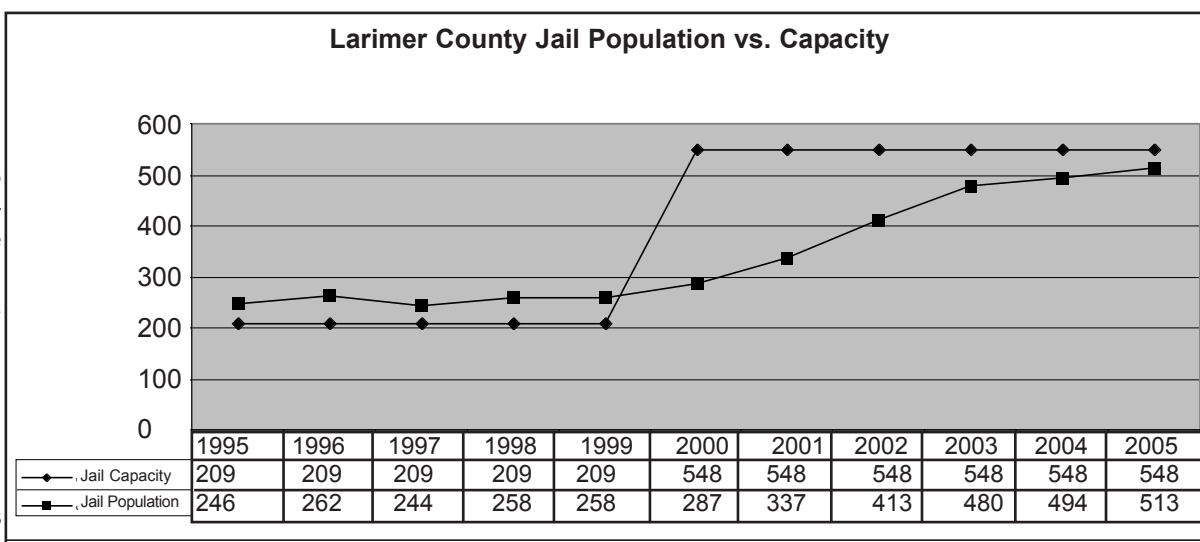
- ◆ 87% (\$65 million) would be spent to expand the jail again (296 beds), backfill the operating deficit from the previous jail expansion, fund operating expenses for the expanded jail, expand the work-release program (250 beds), and pay the debt service.
- ◆ 5% (\$3.6 million) in a one-time expenditure to construct both a detox and mental health/substance abuse treatment facilities.
- ◆ 5% (\$3.8 million) to fund community-based substance abuse and mental health treatment programs.
- ◆ 2% (\$1.8 million) to expand pre-trial services.
- ◆ 1% (\$630k) would be for reserve.

How these permanent tax revenues would be used in the future has not been identified by County officials. In addition, Larimer County is also separately expanding Community Corrections by 150 more beds which should be completed by this fall. Although Larimer County has instituted several strategies to reduce the jail population, including adding a work release program and early release, it doesn't address the misplaced priorities. Wouldn't it be better and couldn't public safety be better achieved through investment in the community in the form of substantial funding for substance abuse and mental health treatment and re-entry services rather than continuing to expand the role and net of the criminal justice system? Currently, there is NOT ONE residential substance abuse treatment bed in all of Larimer County. The funding in the County proposal for treatment and mental health is a small fraction of the overall investment required for another major jail expansion. What is the County going to do in 3 years when the expanded jail is full?

Larimer County's history just proves the old adage that, "if you build it - you will fill it." The proposal advocated by Larimer County officials will not address underlying problems but, rather, will continue to shovel problems into the criminal justice system under the mistaken (and politically expedient) belief that more cages translates into greater public safety.

The November election isn't far off. If you are interested in working to oppose this permanent tax increase, contact Sandy Lemberg at sandylemberg@juno.com. (The county also has a web-page dedicated to this campaign at <http://www.co.larimer.co.us/cjcrisis/>)

CCJRC is a member of Community Shares!
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YES! I want to join CCJRC and help stop perpetual prison expansion in Colorado. Enclosed is my **tax-deductible** annual membership or additional contribution:

Annual membership dues:
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 Household: \$50 Prisoner: \$3 (or equivalent in postage stamps)
 Sustainer: \$100+

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COLORADO JUSTICE REPORT

September 2006

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM COALITION

1212 Mariposa St., #4, Denver, CO 80204
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Founded in 1999, CCJRC is a network of organizations, faith communities and individuals working to reverse the trend of mass incarceration in Colorado.

How "Broken Windows" Policing Works Against People of Color

by Lisa Calderon, M.L.S., J.D.

On any given day, you can drive down in the Cole neighborhood in Denver and be a witness to "broken windows" policing: flashing lights from police cars as motorists are pulled over and their vehicles searched; Black and Latino people standing on sidewalks being frisked and handcuffed; or youth of color lined up to gain entry to the juvenile "community court." My own African American son, who was doing nothing more than walking his usual way home from East High School, was slammed into a wall in an alley by a White police officer, frisked, and given a citation for "being a wise guy" after he had the audacity to ask to call his mother (an instruction I had given him through the years *when*, not *if*, he was confronted by the police). His offense? Taking a few steps into a "crime scene" to avoid getting hit by a car. We had only been living in this neighborhood for six months before my then 16-year old son had his first run-in ever with the police.

Why should the high police presence be a concern to law-abiding residents? Doesn't increased police presence make us safer? I guess that depends on how you define safe. Is it "safe" to the long term mental health of children of color to grow up believing they are criminals or internalizing the fear of harassment from gangs, drug dealers, and police officers? Is it "safe" for children to have few helping institutions to turn to that will feed and nurture their whole selves, yet are reminded daily of the potential for their incarceration as they stand in the shadow of the Gilliam Juvenile Youth Detention Center?

Since when did we as a society believe that living in the vestiges of a "police state" was an answer to what ails our communities? The root of pervasive crime is poverty. Increased police presence does nothing to get at the root causes of poverty nor increase access to meaningful opportunities for quality education, safe housing and gainful employment.

The broken windows theory asserts that aggressive policing of disorderly conduct activities prevents major crimes. In July 2006, the Rocky Mountain News reported that, "the Denver Police Department's "broken windows" policing initiative in the Westwood neighborhood has **increased arrests there by nearly 50 percent**" within the first six months of the project (emphasis mine). Traffic stops doubled. It was further reported, "**officer-initiated calls for police service in Westwood rose to 1,844, or nearly 70 percent...Meanwhile, citizens seeking police assistance declined by nearly 10 percent** in Westwood during the six-month period (emphasis mine)." Does this mean it is the police, not the residents that are generating the "need" for the police to be in the area? Without more information, it appears to be the case.

The local public relations spin for the "broken windows policing approach" is two-fold: 1) it is the Westwood neighborhood residents, low-income/working class and mostly people of color, who want a crack-down on criminal activity; and 2) this aggressive approach by police has not produced more than a few complaints of harassment. However, there also seems to be a third implicit rational: 3) that the increased number of arrests creates safer neighborhoods.

These justifications for aggressive policing are fundamentally flawed. First, living in a "high crime area" myself I can totally understand the need to live in a community where I don't have to worry about gang shootings, drug activity, or having my property vandalized. As a legal director for a battered women's program, I witness the aftermath of the brutality that occurs everyday as a result of family and sexual violence. However, when people are afraid, hurting and asking for help, our solution should not be replacing one oppressive force with another. Police are part of the solution for promoting safer and healthier communities. But the quality of that police interaction must be measured and implemented with as much consideration to civil rights safeguards as to pro-arrest strategies.

I am also one of the "few" people in the last six months who did take the time to complain about the treatment of my son, only to have the case hastily determined by DPD's Internal Affairs Bureau to be without merit (did I mention in their "investigation" they didn't even bother to interview my son?). It seems to me that the low number of police complaints in the Westwood neighborhood is less about the lack of police abuses and more about what many folks collectively know what will happen if they file a complaint - virtually nothing. Questions about police abuse and accountability remain, including whether there will there be increased police accountability with increased police powers.

The third implicit rationale for the aggressive policing policy is that the increased number of arrests creates safer neighborhoods. Since when has increased arrests been good for communities of color? According to the Human Rights Watch 2003 Report, *Incarcerate America*, more than 2 million men and women are now behind bars in the United States. The connection between "tough on crime" policies and their devastating consequences for communities of color is clear in the reality that, overwhelmingly, people of color comprise the majority of those arrested and incarcerated.

It is not rocket science to figure out that there is a connection between poverty and criminalization. Many policies are reactive to the "cycle of poverty" but rarely address the inequities inherent in the "cycle of wealth" that reinvests the resources in the most prosperous communities. Nor is it a big leap to understand that people of color have been historically targeted for criminalization and "tough on crime" policies since the time of the post-slavery Reconstruction era. In the South during slavery, prisons were mostly comprised of white men. After emancipation and with the imposition of the Slave Codes the prison composition quickly changed to a Black inmate majority. The Slave Codes were the legal way to reinstate informal slavery through the penal system by convicting Black men, women and children for often low level, disorderly conduct type violations. (See Angela Davis' book, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* 2006)
[See Broken Windows on Page 3](#)

My name is Bob and it's my first day back in prison

(This is the final installment of a 3 part series about Bob, a man recently released from prison to Denver and his experience in those first few days. In our last installment, Bob had been out of prison for 4 days and was still trying to get an ID and a job. He was living at the 11th Avenue hotel.)

The cell doors slam shut. Up and down the hall, I can hear the automatic door lock kick in and the sound echoes on and on. I sigh and look down at the scars in the painted concrete. I just got out a little over a month ago and here I sit again. Most of that time, I have been sitting in County Jail. As I look out the window, I wonder how it all happened so fast.

The last thing that made sense was when I was going to the Holy Ghost church to get my I.D. I remember leaving the hotel and running to the old church to stand in line in the freezing cold. It was about four o'clock in the morning when I got there and I hoped that I would be able to get in and get out soon enough to make it back to the Day Labor place, so that I could make enough money to stay another night.

When I got down to the church, there were already a couple of people hanging out. I asked one of them what time the church opened, and he said not till about 7:30. We shared a smoke and he told me his name was Tom and he had a job, but he was trying to get a voucher for his medication at Walgreen's. I asked him about what he was doing for work and he said that they had a small crew doing some drywall. It was a short-term job but if I had any experience, it was all under the table and I wouldn't need an I.D. I said that I did have experience, but I didn't have anyway to get around. Tom agreed to pick me up at the church the next morning at 5:00. It felt like things were looking up finally. I went inside with the other guys.
[See Bob on Page 2](#)

Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
 1212 Mariposa St., #4
 Denver, CO 80204

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It seemed like days later when I had a chance to go in and talk to the tired looking, nice young guy running the program. He asked some questions about where I had been born and then he said they would send for my birth certificate, it was going to take a couple of weeks though. He told me that I could go and get in line for a sandwich at 10:30. He also gave me a hat, a pair of warm gloves and a couple pairs of socks.

It was about 11 in the morning when I got done, so I raced up to the day labor place. The line was long and I stood there for about an hour without seeing any movement, they closed at 1:00 so I didn't really see why I should stay. I thought about some of the things that Rick, my old cellie, had told me, so I thought I should go down to the Parole office and see if they could help me.

I got to the Parole office, and went inside and knocked on the smoked glass two-way mirror. I asked to speak with my parole officer and the receptionist said he wouldn't be in that day. I told her that I needed some help with a place to stay and she said, "Sorry, there isn't anything I can do." Therefore, I left there. I stood in the parking lot on Sherman St. in a fog. I didn't know what to do or where to go.

I pulled my change out of my pocket, a little under nine dollars. Looked like I was moving out of my cozy little room, and check-out time was at noon. I moved slowly up the street towards the hotel. It wasn't nearly as cold out today as it had been. The weather was cooperating, mid-forties. The wind was calm but my mind was racing. I needed to get my things, andand what? I knew it was time to head to the shelter, there just wasn't anyplace else, but I needed to get a TB card first. I walked down through the alley's to get back to the shelter glancing into the big dumpsters as I did, hoping to find something to carry my stuff around in.

Boxes of belongings are for people who have a place to keep their boxes.

Somewhere in between 10th and 11th, I saw a strap hanging over the edge of the dumpster and I pulled out a nylon duffle bag. The zipper was broke but the bag was intact with someone's odds and ends inside. I emptied the bag and moved towards the hotel.

When I got back down to the hotel it was about 2:00, I went into my room and started to go through my things. I certainly couldn't carry all this stuff around with me. I started to toss everything that wasn't necessary for my survival. I laughed to myself as I pulled out my certificates and work evaluations and tossed them in the trash, sure wasn't gonna need those. I went down to the front desk and asked for a trash bag, which was grudgingly handed over. Packing up hygiene and the few t-shirts and socks was the only thing I could do. I also grabbed the blanket that was on the bed, and left the coffee pot there as a trade-in. I took a quick shower down the hall, since I didn't know when I would get another one.

I pulled everything together and walked out the door for the last time. I dropped the key off down at the front desk and headed off to the shelter to find out what I needed to do to be able to stay there. My nine dollars was burning a hole in my pocket and I needed to eat, so I stopped at a Subway and got a sandwich for three dollars, (no chips and a drink, thank you). The wind was picking up a little and I headed towards the Crossroads Shelter.

When I got to the shelter, the man at the front desk said that they would start letting people in at 5:00. He gave me directions to the TB clinic down by the hospital and said that they were doing TB shots for free, but I had to get there by 5:00 when they closed. It was just 3:30 so I headed towards the hospital as fast as I could.

I got to the clinic and got the paperwork filled out and when I got done it was 5:15, I hustled out to the street. It was almost dark and the temperature had dropped

about 15 degrees. I knew that they would only take the first 80 people down at the shelter, so I went and spent \$1.50 out of my \$6.00 to catch a bus downtown.

I was literally running when I came around the corner and my heart sank as I realized that there were 20 people in line ahead of me. I stood there with my hands and teeth clenched and a long slow sound of despair grumbled through the line as lucky number 80 made it through the door. I looked up and saw 15 people ahead and another 5 people behind me.

I asked the man in front of me if there was anyplace else we could stay; he shook his head and said "head for the river, man".

That's where I went. I was under a bridge an hour later, close to Broadway and the hospital. I put on all the clothes that I had and curled up under the concrete and listened to the cars full of people with lives pass by overhead, and I drifted off to a troubled cold sleep.

Something scuttled over my foot. I woke up in a hurry and realized I may not be the only thing living under the bridge. Fear and horror overtook me and I knew it wasn't anywhere near five o'clock in the morning, but I could not stay in the cold anymore. I washed off my face in the frigid water of the river and headed to the street to look for an all night coffee shop to wait it out.

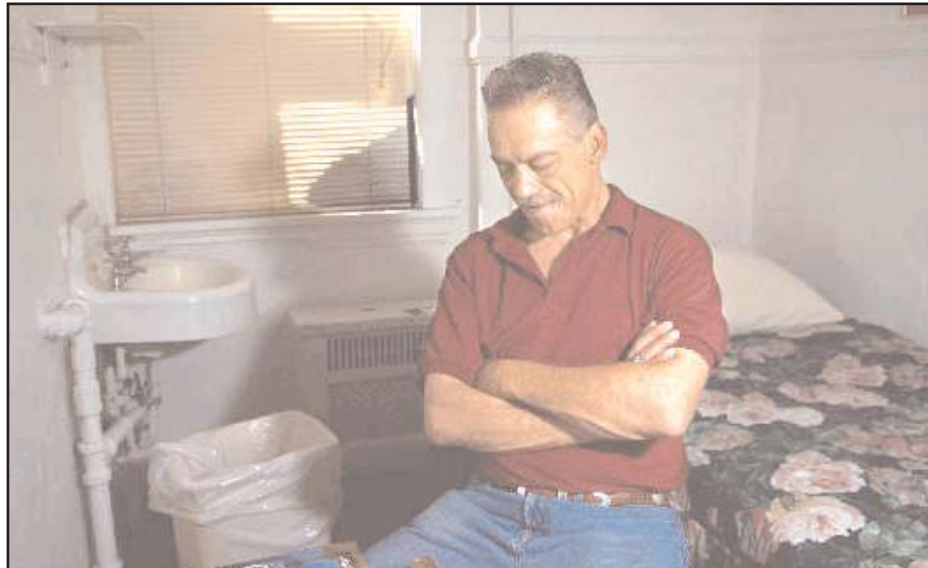


Photo by Chris Takagi, Alpheios

I found the Denver Diner and went in to bear the brunt of the stares of the other customers. I read the newspapers and drank coffee until four-thirty finally came and I headed up to the church to meet Tom and I hoped that it was the start a new life.

He was there right at five o'clock just as he promised. I sure was nice to get into a car and warm up. He also brought me a pair of jeans and a flannel shirt. It felt great to put on real clothes, even if they were someone else's. We worked hard that day and I felt like a new man. The boss paid us each \$75.00 in cash, and said he'd see us on Monday.

I had told Tom what had happened the night before trying to get into the shelter, hoping that maybe he could give me a ride downtown by 5:00. He told me to come and hang out on his couch that night and his wife would make us some dinner. Then he would be able to take me downtown in the morning. I felt like I had turned the corner and for the first time I didn't feel the need to look over my shoulder.

It was a good night. Tom's wife looked at me a little warily, but she made beef stew and homemade biscuits, and I ate as I never had before. She served big glasses of fresh cold milk and we had ice cream afterwards. We watched a movie, and they gave me a couple of blankets and a pillow to sleep on the couch and they went off to bed. For the first time in years, I went to sleep with a full stomach and a sense of contentment.

"BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM!" Somebody was pounding on the door. It was dark and I was disoriented. I didn't know what to do. The bedroom door opened up and the light showed through, and I saw Tom come through the living room and heard him grumbling. "They never show up on Saturday," I heard him say.

He opened the door and two men walked in. All I could see was the badges that they had swinging on their necks. It was Tom's parole officer and his partner.

Things happened pretty fast after that. The officers saw me on the couch and asked for my identification. As soon as he saw the DOC I.D., he had me up against the wall. They arrested both Tom and I and took us down to the City Jail.

Tom apologized, he said he'd been on parole for over a year, and they hadn't come by his house for months. He'd said he'd never think that they'd come by on the weekend. He said that my parole officer would probably show up in the next day or two, and that maybe if I explained what had happened that he'd give me a break. We weren't doing anything illegal, so hopefully, we'd get some play. I just thanked him for what he had done to help me out.

A week later, I was sitting in the day room when the officer bellowed out "Bob, you have a visitor." I went into a small room and there was the young man I had seen two weeks before at the parole office. He told me that he had been down to the 11th Ave Hotel to see me on that Friday night. I had forgotten to call in for my U.A., so he went to check on me and when I wasn't there, he issued a warrant for my arrest. I explained to him what had happened, and he just shook his head.

"Sorry, Bob, you have an Association charge, and Not in Residence violation. Since you missed your U.A., it's automatically considered hot. My hands are tied. I'll see you at your revocation hearing. We'll see what the hearing officer has to say."

Tom's parole officer was a little more understanding; he was released the next day. I was glad, he was just trying to help a brother out, and I didn't feel good about the whole thing.

For me things are a little different. Long story short, they filed an Escape charge, which is a new felony and gave me another year. I have two technical violations. One is for a hot UA and the other is for Association. I'd like to just finish my entire sentence and get out free. I have a new charge though which means that I have to go out on mandatory parole again. I didn't want to come back, I just couldn't keep up. Maybe by the time I am supposed to get out again someone will have figured out what's really going on out there.

Colorado Supreme Court Decision

The ACLU filed a lawsuit to challenge the constitutionality of the state law that prohibits people on parole from voting. CCJRC, Colorado CURE and Pastor Michael Danielson were the plaintiffs. The state District Court said the current law was constitutional and the plaintiffs appealed to the Colorado Supreme Court.

Unfortunately, the Colorado Supreme Court upheld the lower court's decision and stated in a unanimous opinion that parole must be considered part of a sentence, and convicted felons have not served their full sentence until all components including parole are completed.

CCJRC deeply appreciates the effort and commitment of ACLU attorney Mark Silverstein and attorney's Ty Gee and Norm Mueller. We will continue to push for full participation in society and the democratic process for people on parole.

Election Dates Around the Corner!

October 10th - Last day to register to vote for the November general election

November 7th - Election Day
CCJRC encourages its eligible members to remember to register and to vote!

Broken Windows from Page 1

Broken windows policing will do little to rehabilitate this view held by those people of color who have a collective historical memory of police brutality and a present reality of police harassment. My son did not have a police record and has never been involved in drugs or gangs, but for that moment he was deemed by a White police officer to be a "criminal" with no actionable rights, no recourse, and no voice. He was even mocked that he would have to bring his "mommy" to court with him. The case was later dismissed after the hiring of a lawyer, two court hearings and missed days of work and school.

All of these concerns about broken windows policing might be moot if the policy actually works. Alas, there is no hard evidence that it does. Many human rights advocates on the East coast, where this policy became popularized under the Rudolph Giuliani administration, have protested long and hard about the consequences of aggressive policing. Their analysis is meticulously documented by activist Robin Skyler at www.ambiguous.org/robin/word/brokenwindows.html.

The concept for broken windows policing, or "public order as crime prevention," began with an article by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling entitled *Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety* (Atlantic Monthly, March 1982). The basis of the theory was that "little things lead to big things" and that "small-scale neglect leads to antisocial behavior." Therefore, improving order reduces crime. However, the authors point to only one study to document this "pre-existing consensus" that "[s]ocial psychologists and police officers tend to agree that if a window in a building is broken and is left unrepaired, all the rest of the windows will soon be broken."

In the 1990's then mayor Rudy Giuliani implemented his vision of broken windows policing in New York City and crime dropped, theoretically indicating that the broken windows policy worked. However, at the same time Boston also experienced a decline in crime rates, yet had "less vigorous arrests and stiff sentences" and more police-community cooperation. According to Bernard Harcourt, Professor of Law at University of Chicago, crime fell just as much or even more in many other cities during the same time. According to one study, "NYC's drop in homicides is neither unparalleled nor unprecedented." According to Skyler, Wilson stated in 2004, "I still to this day do not know if improving order will or will not reduce crime...People have not understood that this was a speculation." As early as 1982, it seems that Kelling had information from a study he co-authored in Newark by the Police Foundation that "foot patrol had not reduced crime rates."

Further evidence is mounting against the broken-windows fad. In an article titled *Broken Windows: New Evidence from New York City and a Five-City Social Experiment*, author Bernard E. Harcourt, Professor of Law at University of Chicago and Jens Ludwig, economic researcher with Georgetown University - Public Policy Institute (GPPI), conducted the most recent analysis of the New York City crime data, and explored new findings from an important five-city social experiment called Moving to Opportunity (MTO). In the MTO experiment 4,800 low-income families "living in high-crime public housing communities characterized by high rates of social disorder were randomly assigned housing vouchers to move to less disadvantaged and disorderly communities." Harcourt concludes that, "We find no evidence for the proposition that disorder causes crime or that broken-windows policing reduces serious crime."

So if there is no proof that improving order reduces crime, why is there such hype and resources poured into these policing efforts? Maybe the answer is because they *feel* good. Feeling good not only applies to the residents who genuinely want to feel safer, but also to politicians who want to be perceived as doing something. "Political feel good" is certainly an important motivation. Apparently, feeling good

means *feeling* safer. As the 1982 article points out, people who live in fear can actually feel safer "even though there was no drop in crime." Should we then as a society condone locking people up so we can feel better? Well, perhaps it depends on who we target to lock-up. According to the pro-policing consultants, most people are afraid of 1) a violent attack by a stranger, and 2) disorderly people. While we can all get behind efforts to prevent violent attacks, the predominant resources under the broken windows model focuses on curtailing the "disorderly people": the homeless, the drug addicted, the teens hanging out.

Skyler poses the questions we all should be asking within our communities, "Who gets to decide what 'orderly' means? How far will it go?" "... [B]roken windows policing does not target crimes typical of the rich [such as] predatory lenders, embezzlers, slumlords, redlining banks...These practices also have adverse effects on a neighborhood and might foster crime later on." Certainly there are disorderly conduct and nuisance offenses occurring regularly on the University of Colorado campus in Boulder. Yet, expanding broken windows policing onto this majority White and largely affluent student population would be inconceivable today. Clearly aggressive policing strategies are still social management tools reserved for the poor, those who lack political voice, and who have skins of a darker hue.

There would be a severely decreased need for police intervention if the financial, intellectual and personnel resources that went into promoting feel-good police and political responses were shifted into building community infrastructure, addictions treatment centers, employment training centers, after-school programs, and family intervention and support services. Shouldn't we demand an answer to the question, "Couldn't public order be achieved with urban renewal projects, homeless shelters, and social workers, instead of more police arrests?"

It appears the answer is "yes" according to a new report that debunks the broken windows theory and offers real solutions through the application of "collective efficacy." In a ten-year study in Chicago, Felton Earls, Robert Sampson and Stephen Raudenbush set out to learn "the causes of street crime, and its working preventions." In *What Works - Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy*, the authors defined collective efficacy as "social cohesion among neighbors and their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good." Further the study indicates that collective efficacy is the "the greatest predictor of neighborhood crime--not, it turns out, the windows, or any other symptom of 'disorder.'" According to the New York Times the Chicago researchers work "directly contradicted Dr. Wilson's notions...The connection between disorder and crime appears to have been invalidated. Community presence, rather, is what deters crime."

Broken windows policing sells communities of color short by over-simplifying what is needed to heal hurting communities. We owe it to our children to let go of the myth that increased police presence automatically equates to increased community safety. Communities need resources, not feel good initiatives, to increase community presence and investment in creating alternative visions of safety and accountability, of which police are a part. However, these solutions take time and must be thoughtfully cultivated, whereas aggressive policing strategies are quickly implemented and the results are quickly felt, for better or for worse, such as a 50% increase in arrests in the Westwood neighborhood. Yet, we must not be fooled that these trendy policing strategies will transform our communities. Our children deserve real safety, not "stop and frisk" spectacles that leave them averting their eyes in shame.

Lisa M. Calderon, M.L.S., J.D., is a life-long resident of Denver and currently resides in Denver's Cole Neighborhood. She is the Legal and Social Policy Director for Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence in Boulder, Colorado.

Video Visiting

THANK YOU to all our members that joined CCJRC in opposing the all video-visiting plan for the new Denver jail!!

Thanks to you, it looks like we were successful in challenging the plan to only allow video-visiting at the new Denver jail.

Earlier this year, CCJRC heard of this plan and expressed our opposition and concerns with members of the Crime Prevention and Control Commission, Undersheriff Bill Lovingier, and James Mejia, Project Director for the Justice Center. CCJRC advocated for a "menu" of visiting options that would include contact visiting (which allows people to visit in person), non-contact (which allows people to visit with a glass partition between them) and video (which has people see each other on a computer screen).

In an effort to show Mayor Hickenlooper and City Council members how important this issue was to our members, we issued an Action Alert asking members to sign on. Over 360 people and organizations in Denver added their names to this letter and it appears that they heard us.

We have been advised by Undersheriff Lovingier and James Mejia that the current jail design will allow for some non-contact and contact visiting, along with video visiting. Unfortunately, even with this victory, there will only be a limited number of non-contact booths for approximately 386 people out of a jail population of 1,500. We appreciate the effort and additional expense involved in the redesign of the jail. However, the majority of people at the new jail will still only be allowed to visit via video and video-visiting is the only option available at the jail on Smith Road until after the renovation is completed several years from now.

This is a phenomenal example of how community activism works at the ground level. You really made the difference and we deeply thank all of the members and endorsing organizations who added their voice to oppose this dehumanizing plan to reduce families to images on a TV screen. CCJRC will continue to monitor this issue closely and share information as it becomes available. To read the full letter to the mayor, visit www.ccjrc.org

Misplaced Priorities

Larimer County Proposes Another (Permanent) Tax Increase to Fund Another Jail Expansion

In 1983, Larimer County built a new 152 bed jail that was expanded in 1992 (209 beds total) and again in 2000 (548 beds total). As detailed in the graph below, after the jail expansion was completed, Larimer County experienced a 67% cumulative increase in the jail population between 2000-2003. Once capacity pressures resumed, the jail population growth rate slowed significantly to 2.9% in 2004 and 3.9% in 2005. In contrast, the overall population of Larimer County grew by 6.9% between 2000-2004. Although it is common for jail population growth rates to increase following plans to expand the jail, the increase in Larimer County's jail population growth rate was exceptional.

Now Larimer County is in a pickle. The jail is almost full and the 1998 voter-approved .2% sales tax increase to expand and operate the jail isn't enough to cover the cost of construction and ongoing operations. Plus, the sales tax increase expires in 2014 with no dedicated revenue to fund the annual cost of operating the jail. The Larimer County Budget Manager projects that by 2008-2009 fiscal year, there will not be enough revenue from the sales tax to cover expenses and there will be a cumulative \$45 million budget shortfall by the time the current tax increase expires in 2014. This creates a huge unfounded community liability.

So, the solution proposed by Larimer County Commissioners is to go back and ask voters to approve yet another 5 mill property tax increase that would be permanent. According to Larimer County, this tax increase would raise \$75 million over the next