

They Don't Want Us Around  
Today's Crisis

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**Waterways  
Project  
Publication**

Barbara Fisher &  
Richard Spiegel  
co-directors

at PS 18  
Staten Island-

Gary Gullo  
Poet in Residence

Thomas Perry  
Assistant

Kimberly Davis  
Irene Rivera  
City-As-School  
Interns

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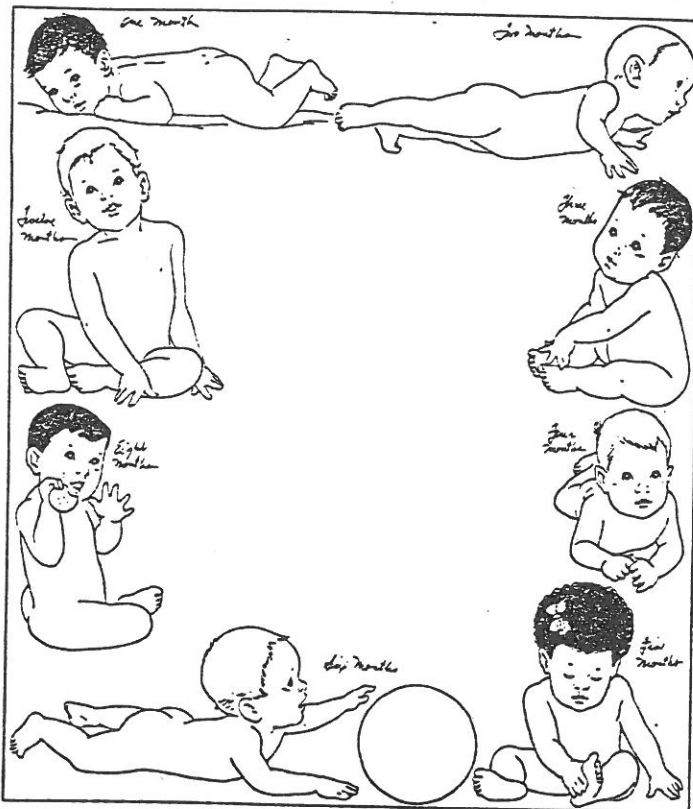
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# THEY DON'T WANT US AROUND: TODAY'S CRISIS

## *Gary Gullo's note:*

I think the material in this magazine has entered another phase. Students with consistent commitment to the practice and class have gained self-confidence for much of the exercise and technique to fall away and reveal authentic poetry and prose. Discussion has become a regular part of the process and the experience of later century America with all its incomprehensible turnings a likely subject. As one student said, "They've only replaced ropes and trees with guns, clubs and wars."

Is there racism in America? You bet there is.



**TODAY'S CRISIS**  
**Kimberly Davis, Linda Diaz,**  
**Gary Gullo, Thomas Perry**  
**and Dona Taylor**



Blackness, poverty, uneducated,  
If you're Black you're worthless,  
If you're white it's all about you,  
If you see a Black person driving a nice car  
You will get harassed by a cop,  
But if you are white the cops won't bother you.

Also, if you're Black you have to be uneducated,  
There can't be any Black doctors,  
If a white person gets a Black doctor,  
They'll ask for another  
Because the Black man or woman doesn't know  
Anything about medicine.  
They're just there to give a little color.

Racism in stores is very famous on Staten Island,  
You walk into a store and you are Black  
Automatically the store security starts to follow you  
There are several stores that have bells  
When you walk in  
The Gap is the main store; Macy's another one,  
JC Penny and many more.  
These stores don't realize  
that Blacks are their best customers

We are the young people of today  
So please let us grow  
Give us a chance to be us, the Black Youth.

# I DON'T MISS HIM ANYMORE

## *Brigitta Hajduk*

(written in Dutch and translated by Brigitta Hajduk)

I like reading under trees  
I like books  
My brother likes apples better  
Tomorrow is Christmas and everybody  
Is coming. I put up the decorations yesterday.  
My sister with her baby is coming too,  
She isn't married, but she is still coming  
Only one person is missing, that's my father.  
He left when I was little  
I don't miss him any more.  
I can't wait until tomorrow  
I hope it snows!

Mar ő nem hiányzik

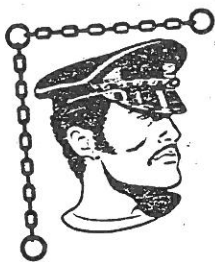
Én szeretek a fa alatt olvasni  
Én szeretem a könyveket  
A testverem szereti az almát jobban.  
Holnap lesz a karácsony, és mindenki  
itt lesz, én díszíttem a karácsonyfa  
tegnap. A testveremnek már van babája  
de nincs férje ő is jön  
Csak egy ember nem jön, az apukám  
Ő elment amikor én kicsi voltam  
De nem hiányzik már. Nem tudok varni  
holnapra. Jó lenne ha havazna!



## FUTURE: A COLLABORATION *Shawn*

I want my future to have happiness emotionally and economically. If I don't become an actor or a model then I would like to become an accountant or doctor, possibly even a judge or lawyer.

The future is what you make it. You can make it good or you can make it bad. If you believe in the future then you believe in yourself.



## A MAN *Kimberly Davis*

My idea of a man should be someone who is strong. Someone who knows who he is and his purpose in life.

I don't think a man should ever try to use his strength to over power a woman. If he does he's not a man. A man should be strong and walk away. That's what I mean by saying a man should be strong. There are a lot of other ways a man and a woman can be strong - by being there for one another and families and friends as well.

Getting back to what I was saying about it being wrong for a man to use his strength to overpower women - I think any woman that allows such acts to go on doesn't have the right idea about being a woman. She should find herself, because no one Black or white should be put through such abuse.

The role of woman should be loving and there also for friends and family. She should be strong and know who she is and what her purpose is in life.

There you have the perfect man and woman -only if it were true...





# I AM THE ROSE

*Kenya Jones*

The beautiful rose healthy and red,  
The others lie lifeless and all were dead  
The one rose all alone, it stands  
And no one seems to understand  
Why there is only one rose  
The answer to this no one knows  
I am the rose, healthy and red  
My friends are the others lying dead  
What killed them off was a big weed  
Made up of jealousy, anger, and greed,  
Why do I still stand alone  
Because I left the crowd  
And went on my own.



## GENERATION *Vinny J.*

Kids having kids with no education  
What is the world coming to  
To be a parent depends on you  
We have to try to raise them good so they can  
Grow up to be as they could  
We try real hard to keep them straight  
But sometimes they just make too many mistakes.



## PROBLEMS OF TODAY'S WORLD *Vinny J.*

A man's heart beats for love  
A girl's life is used  
A baby cries out for milk  
The rent is due  
The street lights go out  
Blackness overthrows lightness  
A man coming home from a hard day of work  
Looking for something to eat  
Trying to stretch a dollar  
Problems we face today  
Problems we face today.



**ABOUT**  
***Shawn Acevedo***

I am thinking about what I'm going to do this week  
on my home visit  
I'm also thinking  
About going to get a job  
And about buying a new car.



**EATING RITUALS**  
***Shawn Acevedo***

Throw salt over your left shoulder for good luck  
Tap my plate and glass with a fork three times  
Spill a sip of the beverage on the floor  
When I receive my food

I take a piece of meat and fling it  
At the end of my meal I take my plate  
And bang it on the table



## BAD COMPANY

*Linda Diaz & Vinny Pabon*

On the far side of Boston lived a man named John. John's company was sending him on a trip to New York. While staying at the Hilton Hotel, John met a woman named Cindy. They spent every day and night together. John and Cindy would go for carriage rides at night. When the two weeks were up, they were both very sad because they lived very far away from each other.

When Cindy got back to Florida, she couldn't wait to tell all her friends about John and how much fun they had in New York. John wrote Cindy all the time. In one of his letters he told her he wanted to be with her. Cindy was overjoyed to know John felt the same about her as she felt about him.

One year went by. John finally decided to go and see Cindy. He wanted to marry her. When John's plane arrived, Cindy was there to meet him. They kissed and hugged for a long time. Finally they went back to Cindy's house and had dinner. When morning came, John and Cindy woke to the sun shine. They walked along the beach and had a wonderful picnic. When night fall came, they had dinner by candle light. The flames would dance to the sound of music. John would always sing to Cindy; and each day was spent in the sun's rays. The two would make love on the beach under so many beautiful stars, more beautiful than any imagination. Cindy would always water her flowers while whistling to herself. When John awoke, he would always embrace Cindy in his arms and kiss her for a long while.

Then one day while going into town there stood a woman. This woman had wanted to meet John for some time. Cindy really had no clue as to what was going on. All of a sudden one day Cindy found John and Clara becoming very friendly. At first Cindy didn't really mind until she found John always talking about Clara. Cindy started getting ideas about what was going on. She asked John a lot of questions, but John would say he and Clara are just friends. Cindy wanted so much to believe him. Then one day she found both of them holding hands on the beach.

When John got home, Cindy was very upset, but John had no idea why.

When Cindy finally pulled herself together, she asked John what happened to all the love they had. She told him what she saw. So John finally told her he'd fallen in love with Clara. Cindy asked why? John didn't reply. So John and Clara got together, but his life is going all down hill.

The End

(When you have a good thing hold on to it because everything is not what it seems.)

INEZ  
*Linda Diaz*

Inez is a one year old girl  
With big, red cheeks and a wonderful smile  
She loves to play and dance.  
Her eyes light up the room.  
She gets into everything.  
She's the love and joy of my life.

MILES DAVIS  
*Linda Diaz*

Blackness, images all around  
Loneliness, being alone,  
Freedom expression,  
Smoke filled room,  
All eyes on me,  
Words to be spoken,  
But hard to say,  
Feelings being shared,  
Unity,  
Damp, dark alleys,  
Rain coming down hard.  
Trying to get away,  
Silent, being brought over the room,  
Worrying,  
Fears shared with each other,  
Death finally hit.

**MAY 11TH**  
**Linda Diaz**

There are so many things that can happen in a year, but to me May 11th, 1990 will always be a special day. The reason I say this is because on that day I married a wonderful man named Tony. Tony is 5'7" and has broad shoulders and a wonderful smile. His eyes can make you melt. Tony treated me like a queen. But then one day he was gone. No, he didn't die. He found someone else. I can't get upset because I prayed every night he would come back. I never stopped loving him. There is a God, because he came back on May 11th 1992. So to me May 11th will always be a blessed day.

**WHAT IS?**  
**Linda Diaz**

H is for the hugs so strong and sweet  
U is for the understanding he shares  
S is for the sensitivity he has  
B is for the boldness within him  
A is for the attitude he can't always control  
N is for never asking why  
D is for determination

F facing each day with a smile  
A admiration for others  
T time he shares with others  
H heart filled with love  
E energy he has  
R reasoning he gives

Husband and father - not always the same person.

SIR "L"  
*Red*

He's tall and light skin  
And very good looking  
We argue, curse, and fight  
But he's always there when  
I need him  
"L" isn't like any other man  
He's different  
Why you ask?  
Because he's "My Guy"  
It's good to have a good  
Man by your side  
Because when you are feeling  
Down  
He's always there to make you  
Laugh  
When I'm with "L", I always  
Feel safe and secure  
When he's not with me in person  
He's always in my heart  
To bring it all together  
He's "My Guy"  
And we'll be together to the end.



## TOGETHERNESS

*Dona Taylor*

It was a hot summer night, "L" and I decided to go for a drive. We argued over who was going to drive. I gave in and let him do the driving. We drove for hours and we weren't sure where we were. But we didn't mind just as long as we were together.

After a while it all started to look the same and I asked "L" - do you know where we are? We had stopped in front of some woods and we started to eat. That was because I was really hungry.

While we were eating he tried to read the road map. So after he rested a while we started back on the road again. "L" didn't know where he was going. I told him to let me drive for a while. I had seen a corner. So I made a turn and we were home again.

All we did was just go in circles. So girls when your man decides that he wants to go for a drive. Tell him to let you do the driving.



## DRINKING

*Dona Taylor*

It all started one night. My man and I were sitting around after eating a good home cooked meal that he had cooked for me that night. I don't know why I began laughing, but once I started I couldn't stop. He had made me laugh so hard that I started crying. After I calmed down I started to think about the way he really treats me. Then I started to cry. Why? Because I really loved him and he treated me like a piece of trash.

We always had a good time together but it all started when he started drinking. That's all he would do when we were together. I told him to calm down on the drinking and all he would say was, "I left my mother at home."

Then we started to argue. He went to slap me and I moved and swung back. He told me that no woman had ever hit him before. But like they say, "There's always a first time for everything." We argued the whole night. Then all of a sudden the whole truth came out.

My man, the one that I gave all my love to was seeing another woman. I didn't want to believe it, but I had to face the truth. I knew who it was.

All of a sudden he told me that if you really love me the way that you say you do you'd want to let me go. He had wanted me to go and fight for his love. I told him that no man was worth fighting over. So the laugh that I had started with was just a way to hide what was really happening to me.

## LOVE *Dona*

Love is a wonderful thing  
Everyone should enjoy it  
Because, when you're in love  
It will always make you feel good  
Some people lose weight  
When you're in love with the right person  
You will want to be with them all the time  
When you're not with them it hurts

But when something happens  
Love will hurt  
And when that happens you wouldn't  
Know what to do

So don't fall for any person  
Let it be the right one

## BATTERED WIFE *Dona*

Why do you hit me? Why do you yell at  
Me? I'm only doing what I'm told.  
If I do this or that I'm always getting hit  
Well, that's all going to stop right now  
I'm a human, not a punching bag  
We're supposed to love each other  
Not hate each other. I try my best to keep  
You happy. When you come home it's  
Always a clean home. Also I always have  
Your dinner ready. You have two lovely  
Children. What else do you want. But  
Does that seem to satisfy you. No!  
Nothing I do makes you happy. I'm  
So tired I don't know what to do anymore  
I'm tired of you!! This all has to stop.

I wish it didn't have to end this way....

# CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

## *Dona*

People are great  
Oh, what a wonderful world we live in  
Some are silly  
Some are weird  
Oh what a wonderful world we live in  
When babies are born it's a good feeling  
Some are weird  
That's when they grow up  
When babies are born it's a good feeling  
Some die because of drugs  
That's when they grow up  
So while there are kids in this world  
Let's try to make it a safe world  
Let's stop the violence.



# BABIES

## *Dona*

Babies are born every day.  
And babies are killed every day  
The question is why take a life  
If you don't give life  
As it is said, God gave you life  
And only he can take it away  
Don't try to kill another defenseless human being  
If you're going to have sex use protection.



# ADDICTION

## *Dona*

Addiction. What is addiction?

There are many forms of addiction. One form of addiction is drugs. Drugs can be very dangerous to the human body. They can make you say and do things that you wouldn't normally say or do.

Also if you are a first time user then drugs can really hurt you. That's where addiction comes in. After taking drugs for a couple of times you will get addicted. Then you'll need to take them all the time. If you don't have them then you would do anything to try to get them. You would steal from your family and friends. Robbery would come to a head. The last straw would be to kill someone to get their money.

Most women who use drugs normally turn out pregnant. While on the use of drugs they don't know what they're doing. If they had used protection they wouldn't be pregnant. Drugs can mess with your head. After finding out that they were pregnant it didn't stop them from the drug use. What they don't know is that while pregnant and on drugs the unborn child can be addicted to your drug habit.

Babies that are born addicted to drugs aren't born healthy. Most of them never leave the hospital alive. The ones that do live will go to adoption agencies. That's because their mothers had abandoned them. It usually takes the newborn a while to kick the habit. But that's only if there's someone to help them.

So while pregnant don't do drugs. It's not healthy for you or the unborn child. To everyone - don't let the addiction habit get the best of you.

## FEAR

*Dona Taylor*

What is fear?  
Fear is everything  
To little children fear can be darkness  
To adults fear can be losing a family  
Member or a close friend  
To me fear is Life  
Fear can also be not getting the  
Job you wanted  
Fear can get the best of you  
Don't let it  
Just take life as it comes  
And you will never fear anything again.

## HOMELESS

*Dona Taylor*

As I walk along the streets of New York there are many different people we see each day but I just look and go on to my destination.

In this story you will see one of the reasons why people become homeless.

This story is about a man in his early 30's. His name is Kelly Jones. Kelly had led a normal life. That's before his accident of course. It was a normal Monday morning. Mr. Jones woke and started to his new job. His job consisted of spray painting cabinets. His supervisor, John Castorino, told him that they had run out of face masks and they had put in an order for some more.

Kelly really didn't want to do the job without a face mask. But he had just gotten off welfare and he didn't want to go back on welfare. So he did the job without a face mask. The fumes from the spray painting bothered him, but he didn't want to complain. Since it was his first day on the job Kelly Jones took at least two hours to do his job. It was because he had trouble breathing. He was breathing in all the fumes. The other workers complained about Kelly because he took too long and held them up

Two weeks later...

After two weeks on the job the fumes didn't bother him anymore, but as the days went on Kelly had been feeling sick. He also had been coming in late to work. Of course he was called into Mr. Castorino's office to talk about the problem. Kelly Jones told him that he wasn't feeling well. So Mr. Castorino told him to go and see a doctor. John would give him the day off with pay. The next day Kelly went to see a doctor. Doctor Sellars was his name.

Dr. Sellars asked Kelly about his problem and also what he did for a living. Mr. Jones told him that he spray painted cabinets. Dr. Sellars asked how long he was at this job. Kelly told him that he had only started the job.

The doctor took some blood and ran some tests. Kelly asked how long it would take before he had results. Dr. Sellars said the results would take at least a week. So Kelly returned to work the next day not knowing what his sickness was.

One week passed...

Kelly Jones returned to the doctor's office on Tuesday morning. The nurse called him into the office. The doctor saw that he was getting worse as the days went on. The doctor told him he had been poisoned by the fumes. He had inhaled too many paint fumes. Kelly Jones knew that it was because he didn't wear a face mask. The doctor told him that he would have to take time off from work. Kelly told the doctor that he couldn't afford to take the time off. His doctor said that if he didn't he would get sicker each day. So he went to work the next day to tell his supervisor that he would need some time off. His supervisor said that he wouldn't be paid for the time off because he had so little time on the job. Kelly was worried because he didn't know when he was going to return to work.

Two months passed...

Kelly wasn't feeling any better but he had to return to work because he was running out of money. So he returned to work on Monday morning. When he got there everything was different. Kelly saw that someone was at his post. Right away he went to Mr. Castorino's office to see

who the new person was and the supervisor told him that he was his replacement.

"My replacement?" Kelly said.

"You took two months off and I didn't know when you were coming back. So I hired someone new. Also he does double the work, and I get no complaints from the other workers."

"But you knew I was sick because of this job," Kelly said. "Now I see that everyone wears face masks."

John told Kelly, "Go and clean out your locker and don't start any trouble."

So Kelly left to clean out his locker. He didn't have any money for a lawyer so he left it alone. He didn't know where his next meal was coming from. He just went home to think the situation over.

One month passed...

Kelly Jones never found a job. He spent the little money he had for food; also he was about to lose his apartment. He left the apartment owing three months rent and found himself living on the streets begging for money to eat with. He found himself eating out of the garbage.

He was getting sicker and sicker each day and had no money to get his medicine. Kelly asked himself, "Why is this happening to me?"

One day Kelly was walking to see where his next meal was coming from and all of a sudden he fell. But did anyone pay him any attention? No! To them he was just a bum. The cops came to see what his problem was. Kelly told them that he was sick but they thought that he had AIDS and left him alone. People ignored him. Little kids made fun of him. Kelly didn't get up for the whole day but did anyone miss Kelly Jones? No! To everyone Kelly was just a bum.

The point of this story is that when you see a homeless person always remember that they are people, too. They had a life at some point. Always remember that this could happen to you.

# HOPELESS

*Dona Taylor*

In today's society there are a lot of people  
Who are in need of certain things  
But there also are those who  
Don't need things at all  
But they ask for them anyway

I will try to explain my definition of hopeless

What I mean about hopeless is that  
Sometimes you read about people asking  
For money they say that they need  
Money to pay off their car or to just  
Feed their children

How do we really know if they really  
Need money?

These kind of people are lazy

There are hundreds of people who really  
Need help, but they are too proud to ask  
For it, they would rather suffer than to beg

Those people have more pride in themselves

You really can't tell who really needs help today.

It's just hopeless to try to help everyone



## REMEMBER ME

*Dona*

When I die don't try to revive me  
Don't mourn me  
Please don't cry  
Just remember all the good times  
Remember me  
Always remember me with a smile  
Remember the joy I tried to spread  
Remember the love I gave  
Remember how much fun it was to play  
With little children  
And all I ask is to just  
Remember me.

## TO REMEMBER ME

*Dona Taylor*

"At a certain moment a doctor will determine that my brain has ceased to function and that, for all intents and purposes, my life has stopped.

"When that happens, do not attempt to instill artificial life into my body by the use of a machine  
And don't call this my 'deathbed'.

Call it my 'bed of life',

and let my body be taken from it to help others lead fuller lives.

"Give my sight to a man who has never seen a sunrise, a baby's face or love in the eyes of a woman.

"Give my heart to a person whose own heart has caused nothing but endless days of pain.

"Give my blood to the teenager who has been pulled from the wreckage of his car, so that he might live to see his grandchildren play.

"Give my kidneys to one who depends on a machine to exist from week to week.

"Take my bones, every muscle, every fiber and nerve in my body and find a way to make a crippled child walk.

"Explore every corner of my brain.

Take my cells, if necessary, and let them grow so that someday a speechless boy will shout at the crack of a bat and a deaf girl hear the sound of rain against her windows.

"Burn what is left of me and scatter the ashes to the winds to help the flowers grow.

"If you must bury something, let it be my faults, my weaknesses and all prejudice against my fellowman.

"Give my soul to God.

"If by chance you wish to remember me, do it with a kind deed or word to someone who needs you. If you do all I have asked I will live forever."

**CARMEN**  
*Dona Taylor*

Carmen's a four year old little girl  
That's my girl  
At times she acts like an adult  
Sometimes she would want you to act like her  
That's my girl  
She's smart  
Sometimes she would want you to act like her  
Carmen knows how to speak to adults  
She's smart  
Carmen loves to go to work with me  
She loves to work the computers on my job  
Carmen knows how to speak to adults  
When she gets sleepy, boy is she cranky  
But to top it all off  
Carmen will never change  
She's not my daughter  
She's my niece  
But she will always be my first child  
And that's who Carmen is.

**MOTHERS**  
*Dona Taylor*

Mothers -who are mothers?  
Mothers are people who you  
Can sit down to talk to  
A lot of us think that mothers  
Are here to get on our nerves  
But if mothers weren't there to  
Give us support  
Then what would we do  
So while mothers are around  
Let's not take advantage of them  
Let your mother know that you  
Still love her  
Once in a while give her flowers  
Or just tell her that you love her.

## HOW MANY BULLETS

*Dona Taylor*

Why are there so many guns?  
Please don't kill me  
You try to kill us without any reason  
Some of us are just bystanders  
Please don't kill me  
I'm just here because I have no where else to go  
Some of us are just bystanders  
When will you learn  
I'm just here because I have no where else to go  
Will it all stop  
You can't kill us all  
It will all come to an end.

AMERICA  
*Dona Taylor*

White America  
Black America

Why is there so much hate in America?

Red, white, and blue America  
Let's all be as one

Stop the beatings  
Why is there so much hate in  
America?

Poor America  
Rich America,

Everyone is equal in America

Black America  
They say we can sit wherever we want  
So why don't we get the respect we deserve  
White America  
You think that you're on top of the world  
But let me tell you that it is us who are supporting you  
Without us you wouldn't know what to do  
So let's stop all of this  
And be as one!

