

BOCC MEETING PUBLIC COMMENTS

06/01/2022

These are questions and comments received through the County website and through the Strategic Communications email.

Name:

Brandi Prime

Contact Information:

brandiklprime@gmail.com

Received By:

This comment was received through the Communications email.

Subject:

Crime Stoppers

Comment:

Hello, all. I am Brandi Prime. I am a combat veteran, a reader of science, philosophy, and fiction, an aspiring writer, and a concerned white woman. I'm here to talk about Crime Stoppers and to name an illness in hopes of helping with community healing.

Crime Stoppers is a program that uses community engagement to catch suspects of crime after suspected criminal activity has occurred.

I have recently been reading "All About Love: New Visions" by bell hooks, and I feel it is relevant here. A good philosophy book takes me awhile. I don't just look at the words and skim. I take notes and use it as a lens if I feel convicted by it. "All About Love" is a book that has both convicted me and filled me with conviction. She quotes Dr. M. Scott Peck as echoing psychologist Erich Fromm on this definition of love: "the will to

extend one's self for one's own or another's spiritual growth", listing these as the components of love: "care, commitment, trust, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and affection." She also writes about "the dangerous narcissism fostered by spiritual rhetoric that pays so much attention to individual self-improvement and so little to the practice of love within the context of community." bell hooks explains at length about how a consumer culture driven by greed and a lust for power and wealth sets the perfect stage for criminal activities such as selling drugs, stealing cars, running guns, or other stereotypical gang activities; how those with power and wealth are addicted to it, and how all of it is evidence of a lack of understanding of love in community. hooks also wrote about how systems of domination require each and every one of us be socialized to believe that in all human relations there are inferior and superior parties, despite all evidence to the contrary about the supposed inferiority or superiority.

On April 28 (2022), I scrolled to the beginning of the year on the Sedgwick County Crime Stoppers Facebook page. I don't know why I initially did this, but I noticed a trend. It worried me. So I started recording data. The rate at which black folks photos were being posted was 22% higher than census data, compared to 12% less for white folks and 5% less for Latinx folks. I asked myself "What impact might this have on our communities?" I remembered all the places I've lived around Wichita. How it's always the working class neighborhoods where I see both more racial diversity and more policing. In contrast, the middle and upper class neighborhoods are where I actually get harassed. I remembered how the history of policing as an institution was founded on catching human beings, PEOPLE, either trafficked through the middle passage from Africa or born into bondage, yearning for freedom. A yearning all Americans should be able to identify with, in this, the land of the (ostensibly) free.

The illness I am here to name is white nationalism. It encourages those of us classed as white to believe the paradox that white nationalism doesn't exist (especially within our own minds) while the evidence of it is plain to see everywhere. Writ bold on the rifle, in the manifesto of the Buffalo shooter, on the Sedgwick County Crime Stoppers Facebook page, and throughout our history. This paradox and our addiction to whatever

power we think we hold is what allows the violence of white nationalism in all its forms to continue through the centuries. I'm "white". I see it, because I dig deep into our histories, I listen when people say they are hurting, and rather than getting defensive when I get it wrong, I ruminate vociferously on love and correct myself. This Commission is uniquely positioned to promote love in community. A good place to start is changing Crime Stoppers so it no longer socializes us all against our neighbors with more melanin. From there, maybe we could take a preventative approach to crime stopping, such as community programs dedicated to promoting the general welfare of the people in our lovely county, as directed by the US Constitution. Thank you.

My research is here:

<https://ourladyofperpetualmeta.wordpress.com/2022/04/28/codes-of-care-and-compassion-a-crime-stoppers-story/>

(yes, I know it's a blog page, but it's my blog page that I wrote and this is my research and someone else can replicate my methodology and see what results they get, because that's how science works, bay-beeeee~::~)