

## Editorials and Commentary

### Molestor still at large

When is too much information not a good thing?

Apparently when it concerns the publication of a composite sketch of the "Potsdam Molester."

According to Potsdam Village Police Chief Don King, the publication last week of a composite sketch of the slender man who makes obscene suggestions and then "grotes or mauls" his victims-sometimes wrestling them to the ground - has led this department "up a lot of blind alleys."

He gave the impression that his department has been investigating several leads which are due to the over-reaction of young women who think they have seen the man who has made at least four attacks over the past nine weeks.

At the present the police are still baffled and "have no real suspects" in the case.

We are not certain that the publication of the composite is necessarily a bad thing, however, despite the blind alleys the department has been led up following leads.

Citizens outnumber policemen in this and any other village and as police officials have pointed up time and again a department needs the cooperation of the local populace to help it be as effective as possible.

In our opinion the composite should have been circulated to every newspaper in the area and copies should have been made

available to local television stations.

Further, we do not think that it is out of line to suggest that posters of the composite be distributed.

We say this because we believe that if nothing else it might cause the molester to lay low and stop making his frightening attacks on young women who choose to walk in the evening.

We say this too because citizens should be expected to, and we believe they will, respond to a call for help from the department to bring this man to justice.

In our opinion there cannot be too much exposure when dealing with the kind of mentality which forces a man to prey upon women who are alone. At the present time he only gropes, next time...next time he might grow bolder.

We understand that the police are working on the case and have questioned a number of suspects in the case.

We understand too that unlike Kojak the Potsdam police are not blessed with a scriptwriter who can wrap up a crime within 60 minutes of air time.

But, even though we understand the problem, we must say that we feel the police have done the community a disservice by not more widely distributing the composite sketch.

### Consider this question...

We put before you today a question which we believe deserves consideration.

The question, simply stated, is "should a parent or parents be compelled by the state to support an offspring when that offspring is over the age of 18 and not living at home?"

Before you answer we would like you to consider this hypothetical case.

Joan and Steven are married and she finds that she is pregnant. Steven works full time but does not earn enough money to carry comprehensive medical insurance which would cover the cost of having the baby. Joan and Steven go to the Social Services Department and are told that they cannot apply for Medicaid to cover the cost of the delivery of the child unless her parents are declared by the state to be unable to meet the cost. Joan is 20 and has been married for two years. Steven is 27. Neither has lived at home since they have been married nor do they receive support payments from her parents. Joan's hypothetical father earns \$15,000 per year. Her hypothetical mother does odd jobs and brings in an additional \$3,000 per year so her parents gross income is \$18,000.

The Social Services Department hypothetically then looks at this income and tells Joan and Steven that it will not grant them Medicaid; they must draw upon her parents' resources.

Her parents tell her that they cannot afford to shoulder the burden. Despite the fact that they earn a total of \$18,000 per year they say that they don't net that much money. They have house payments to make, insurance to purchase, and food and clothing to buy. They must pay utilities. They must pay school, state, and federal taxes. They must also buy gasoline, oil, and a new tire now and then.

In point of fact, they argue, they haven't got the money.

Social Services declares that it can only go by state guidelines and will not handle the cost of delivery. They also take down a complete financial statement from Joan's parents, something they are reluctant to give since they claim that it violates their right to privacy.

In our opinion the state should assume the burden of the cost of delivering the baby and the hospital recovery time.

We say this for a number of reasons.

First, our hypothetical husband Steven works full time and pays state and federal taxes. Since he pays into the system he should be entitled to the benefits of the system.

Second, Joan is above the age when she is declared a full citizen according to the

Constitution which gives her the right to vote at age 18. Because of that fact we believe that - even though she herself does not actually pay into the system - she is entitled to full assistance under the law. To not grant her assistance, in our opinion, because her parents have a GROSS income above an arbitrary level established by the state is discriminatory.

It, again in our opinion, discriminates against her parents, it discriminates against her husband, and it discriminates against her.

Her parents are being discriminated against because they are being compelled to support a child over whose actions they have no control.

Her husband is being discriminated against because even though he must pay taxes in support of the Medicaid system he is being denied its usage. If he did not have to pay taxes it is conceivable that he might have been able to afford medical insurance.

Finally, Joan is, in our opinion, discriminated against because she is being treated as a minor child at an age when she is old enough to fully participate as an adult in the democratic process of government as an equal partner.

Since the state is allegedly discriminating against the two families it is also our opinion that neither should be required to pay any taxes in support of these so-called services.

After all, you wouldn't pay \$3 to see a movie knowing in advance that the doorman wasn't going to let you enter the theatre...would you? The same principle, we believe, applies in this case. We feel that Joan's parents and Steven are being asked to pay for services which they are being denied access to and because of that they should be ethically exempt from having to pay the taxes which support them.

We believe that for the state to continue the practice of what we feel is a bias against the middle income earner is unethical and indefensible. One might argue that the middle income breadwinner should pay more than the lower income worker because of his greater potential for payment and we would agree.

But, the fact that the middle income earner does foot the larger amount of the bill shouldn't stop him from reaping the benefits of the system which he supports.

And it should definitely not cause a middle income family to go into debt to support an offspring who is married and has been living beyond the parents' control for any length of time when that offspring is aged 18 or over.

That's how we see it.  
How do you see it?

ON ROUTE 56 lodged between Potsdam and Norwood, this smoke blackened shell stands idly by, glaring at the traffic. The building burned more than a year ago and has not been torn down. Besides being ugly, it is also not the ideal way to say "welcome to Potsdam" or "welcome to Norwood" and its

unsightly appearance presents a look of decay and lassitude - neither of which are positive signs for someone who may be looking at this area to locate a business. We think the building ought to be torn down or rebuilt. To leave it as it is constitutes a disregard for the welfare of this area, in our opinion.

### By-pass concerns Willow St. resident

Dear Editor:

I live on Willow Street in the Village of Potsdam. I work as a salesperson in a local department store and receive foodstamps. I am very distressed that the Village board and the county planning board are attempting to destroy my neighborhood by building the Relief Route. I attended the county planning board hearing, concerning the Relief Route, two weeks ago. I heard many sides, was shown maps, diagrams and asked questions. I asked the village board the following questions: How does a small child cross a four lane highway? I was told with traffic lights. How will this route relieve the "traffic problem" on Market Street if the Relief Route will have crosswalks and or traffic lights, and a 30 mile an hour speed limit? This question was not answered. How will the elderly survive this isolation-tapped between the highway and the river? I was told urban renewal was going to come and "help" the isolated people. How will the route affect the value of the homes on the "other side of the tracks"? I was told that the value of the land will increase because we are going to build high rises along the river. How can urban renewal invest money in an area that will be knocked down for high rises? There was no answer to this question. I wonder how many people

who are planning this route have visited this area, and really asked questions to get answers. I have. If the people who will be greatly affected are not involved in the planning of this route, how can it be representative of the peoples wishes and needs? If the real traffic problem in Potsdam is internal traffic, how can a route that only effects through traffic help this problem? I am proud of where I live here and I do not want to live next to a highway. When the village board said

they were thinking of the future of Potsdam, I knew they were not thinking of my future or my children's future. I am proud to call the people who have chosen to live by the river my neighbors. I urge the board to reconsider the relief route and think more conservatively about my future. I plead with the rest of Potsdam to help us - your neighbors.

Thank you,  
Carol Ten Eyck  
13 Willow St.

### Library questionnaire

The Potsdam Public Library would like to obtain information from current or potential library users concerning increased services or hours. It is requested that each household cut out and send to or drop off at: Kathy Cassel, Librarian, Potsdam Public Library, Potsdam, New York 13676.

Current Hours

- Generally satisfactory.
- Should be extended by:
  - more evenings
  - 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. time period
  - longer hours on Sundays
  - Others; Specify

Current Services

- Generally satisfactory.
- More mini-bookmobiles.
- To where?
- Better parking.
- Other; Specify

### Village resident questions bypass vote

Dear Editor:

Early this month the Village Board of Trustees and the Village Planning Board made a joint presentation at a regular meeting of the County Planning Board. Their program was designed to persuade the County Board to approve their choice of a particular highway "relief route" to be built through Potsdam. All the Village Board members who spoke were insistent that an immediate vote among the twelve county board members present even though some of them are new to the board, were unfamiliar with many details, and were asking questions that revealed their uncertainty. In spite of this, a vote was taken on the spot and resulted in 6 approvals, 5 disapprovals, and 1 abstention.

Two editions of the Courier-Freeman have appeared since then, but no news coverage of this vital (and controversial) issue. This is my concern that a public hearing will be by-passed and that once again Village residents will wake up too late to find out what has happened.

I do not question the sincerity of the Village Board members and their desire to do what is best for Potsdam. Many of them have spent years reviewing one proposed by-pass after another, and I sympathize with their impatience at yet more discussion, which to them is repetitious.

But I have heard some sensible plans that would reduce traffic over the bridges, without requiring a four-lane, limited-access highway through our neighborhoods. Your newspaper could serve our community well by presenting clear descriptions of all the problems and all the proposed solutions. Readable maps would help!

Sample problem: How do school children, senior citizens and others in the neighborhoods trapped between the highway and the river walk safely to school, church, stores, post office etc? (This question was dismissed as "a

technicality" by a Village Planning Board member.)

Sincerely  
Ruth Beebe

### Writer recalls visit to Presley home

Dear Editor:

On our recent vacation last month, we had the opportunity to see Elvis' home, Graceland (July 27th). We had a tour of the grounds and were allowed to take pictures. Elvis' uncle (his father's brother) was the tour guide and told us about the house as he drove along. People rode in a jeep from the gate to the front of the house. The uncle said they no longer let people walk in because they had started to tear up the shrubs, and they could control a crowd better in a jeep. Having forgotten our camera at my sister-in-law's where we were visiting, I was unable to take pictures but Elvis' uncle had some for sale, so I got one of his home and one of Elvis during a concert. I've enclosed a xerox copy of each. (If you want to see the prints, let me know).

We have been to Memphis to visit relatives several times but this is the first time we went to see his home. Little did we know he'd die within 3 wks after being there. His uncle informed us he was in the house sleeping and we were to be quiet so as not to wake him. There was a Cadillac in front of the house his uncle said he'd given to his girlfriend, Ginger Aldin. The Cong. friend in the picture, he said, he'd given to another girl friend.

I thought you might be interested in this information. Friends who have seen the pictures say "you were there?" If he hadn't died, it wouldn't have been such an event, I guess.

Martha Timberlake  
Rt. 2  
Potsdam, N.Y. 13676



PROMOTED—Kevin Bailey has been made a third class petty officer in the U.S. Navy. A graduate of Parishville-Hopkinton Central School, he enlisted in August, of 1975. He is now stationed in the area of Palma, Spain, and will return home on leave in October. Bailey is the son of Theresa Reid of Brasher Falls.



### Norwood Library News

The Norwood Library reopened August 29, after being closed for the annual two week vacation period. During that time an extensive cleaning, painting and rearranging of materials was accomplished.

The Trustees of the Norwood Library have decided, in an effort to encourage the return of overdue library materials to receive the same without overdue charges for the period of August 29 until September 5. Two much-needed copies of our circulating encyclopedias are still away from "home."

Area ladies wishing to register for the September toy making classes must contact the library without delay; the class size must be limited to 12 persons. The classes, to be taught by Mrs. Spencer Moon, will be held from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on September 8, 15, 22 and 29. There will be no charge but those registered should plan to attend all sessions in fairness to those who were unable to take the course due to limited enrollment.

The Norwood Library is now back to the regular open hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, 2-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.

**Courier & Freeman**

MIKE BILLINGTON, Managing Editor

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