

Greetings from the Editor, Winter 2008

“What experience and history teach,” the great nineteenth century philosopher G. W. F. Hegel wrote, “is this—that people and governments never have learned anything from history or acted on the principles deduced from it.” The *Metroscape*® staff fervently hope that isn’t true because we have spent a good deal of time and energy putting together an issue rich in historical detail that teaches vivid lessons about the region. The back anchor of this issue is a colorful piece by Meryl Lipman about my old Political Science Professor, Dorothy McCulloch Lee, once the scourge of the licentious and corrupt in an earlier Portland. In the middle years of the last century, the city was a hotbed of various strains of vice and political hanky panky. Portlanders tired of the blind eye officials turned to the bad behavior put her in the mayor’s office, where she rolled up her sleeves and swept out the bad influences. Apparently, her earnestness was more than they bargained for and she was soon voted out. But Lipman shows us a very different Portland from the one we know today and how the popular will can find a focus in a single individual and change the tenor of an entire city.

Another historical piece is an oral history from one of twentieth century Portland’s most distinguished citizens. The late Sid Lezak was, in various roles, a leader of the community for decades and in his work shaped the local legal culture while touching many lives. We were fortunate to run across the long and rich transcript of his oral history interview for the Oregon Jewish Museum and to receive permission from the museum to reprint it in these pages, in abbreviated form. The edited transcript focuses on some of the watershed justice-related events in the region’s history in which he participated. In one brief aside, you’ll note, Lezak

even comments on Dorothy Lee's administration.

Our Landscape essay is the third feature that invokes history, comparing the historic Kenton with the vibrant Kenton of today.

The evolution of the region politically, covered so well in the Lee and Lezak stories, is overlaid by two important pieces that lead off this issue. Our main feature and the atlas focus on equality and opportunity in the region, matters of concern to us all. In the feature, Janet Hammer examines the key indicators of these two fundamentals of the good life in the region. The atlas, compiled from the Coalition for a Livable Future's recently published Regional Equity Atlas, a laborious four-year project, provides a revealing graphic look at these issues. Together they offer a penetrating look into the state of the Portland metropolitan area that is animated by a sentiment I think most of us share, best articulated—speaking of history—by Theodore Roosevelt in his unsuccessful 1912 presidential campaign: “In the long run, this will not be good place for any of us to live unless it is a reasonably good place for all of us to live.”

We hope you enjoy these enlightening and lively works, because we think that together they form a mosaic which provides a picture of at least part of our past and our present, and perhaps yields clues to our future. Finally, and as always at this season, the staff of *Metroscape*® wishes you a great holiday season and all the best in the new year.

Craig Wollner
Editor in Chief