

REDDING RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

July 20, 2009

To Whom It May Concern,

Quakers have long been concerned with easing the plight of those who suffer because of their color, religion, ethnic origin, gender or conscience.

So imagine my joy when I had the great opportunity to introduce and see the play, *Lucasville: The Untold Story of a Prison Uprising*, written by social justice activist Gary Anderson. This play is based on the book of the same title by historian, activist and fellow Quaker, Staughton Lynd. *Lucasville* tells the story of a small group of Black Muslims and members of the Aryan Brotherhood who peacefully brought to an end the 1993 riot at the maximum-security prison in Ohio.

A true tale of brotherhood among men, it explores how these inmates worked together, despite tremendous opposition from their respective gangs, both Black and White, to end the violence and killings in order to improve conditions at the prison.

Later in the play, it was disturbing to see these same men, these peacemakers, given the death penalty for murders that occurred during the riot. Their wrongful convictions came as a result of false testimony coerced by state officials. This testimony has since been recanted by the very men that put these leaders on death row.

Through interesting characters, dramatic scenes and some funny moments, *Lucasville* compels the audience to think not only about the justification for these convictions, but the case for the death penalty itself.

As a Quaker, I would definitely recommend *Lucasville: the Untold Story of a Prison Uprising* to any group who is interested in issues such as social welfare, prison reform, civil right activism, equal justice and the workings of the justice system itself.

Sincerely,

Doris Bond
Treasurer