

I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered...America, the richest, most powerful nation in the world, can well lead the way in this revolution of values. There is nothing except a tragic death wish to prevent us from reordering our priorities, so that the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war.

These are the words of Reverend King but they could have been the words of our colleague and beloved friend Steven Brion-Meisels who died last Sunday.

Steven was someone who moved in the world not necessarily sharing enough of his own wisdom because he was so committed to lifting up the voices of others - some famous voices like Dr. King's whose pin like this he wore each day, more often more ordinary people like many of us in this room. In the week after his death, hundreds of us gathered in his name and got to acknowledge how loved we felt by him and how he was our foundation - a recognition which may have eluded this humble man in life. He was someone who not only worked for peace as Alice Wolf said but was a peaceful person. Steven loved his life. Educator, peace activist, restorative justice proponent, father, husband and recent grand-father to his first grand son, he felt a responsibility based on his gender, race and class privilege as well as his conscience to create a world which welcomed all people especially young people.

In this spirit, I want to not only support several issues on the agenda - passing the inclusive foundry resolution, shrinking the court house to a human scale, impacting smoking habits of young people - but approaches to these issues which include organizing, listening, empowering and diversity. Let the progressive youth of YPP be a visible part of the Foundry process not just recipients of training, let the neighbors of East Cambridge in concert with families and all voices for a livable Cambridge redesign the court house and extend their vision to all of Cambridge, let the campaign for ending smoking be an organizing effort by the youth themselves - not something done to them.

2 events coming up which Steven would have been at - Salsa for El Salvador Saturday night 5:30-9 at the Amigos School for a family friendly evening of food and music.. and April 5th 10-4 at Area 4 Youth center for a day of responding to the issues of mass incarceration and the school to prison pipe line. Spearheaded by George Halfkenny.

And the final event which he will be at - his memorial service on April 26, from 1-4³⁰ at First Parish, church street in Harvard square.