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HOMELESS YOUTH ISSUE

Real Change
is a
non-profit organization
and
is a project of
**The Pike Market Senior
Center/Downtown
Food Bank.**

Real Change is published the first Monday of each month, and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Submissions are encouraged and should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 Second Ave, Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247. Fax (206) 728-9108. Articles should be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Subscriptions for one year (12 issues) are available for \$35, and help to support *Real Change*.

Real Change vendors receive 75¢ of the \$1.00 paid for this paper.

MISSION STATEMENT

Organize, educate, and build alliances to find community-based solutions to homelessness and poverty.

Goals

- 1.) provide a foundation for grassroots organizing.
- 2.) publish the views of marginalized communities.
- 3.) create direct economic opportunity.
- 4.) build bridges with a broad range of allies in the struggle against poverty.

Editorial Policy

Articles appearing in *Real Change* reflect the opinion and perspective of the author. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives that exist regarding poverty and homelessness can find expression. The editorial committee reserves the right to edit any material for length and style. Articles considered libelous or which encourage violence, sexism, homophobia, or racism will not be considered for publication.

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Editorial Committee this issue: Jean Dawson, Michelle Marchand, Max Chandler, Tim Harris.

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- 2.) Vendors must wear their *Real Change* Badge in a clearly visible manner while they sell the paper.
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- 5.) Do not fight other vendors or panhandlers over turf. Either agree to share space, or find somewhere else to go.

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Give Youth A Chance

On Saturday Night, September 10th, hundreds of youth and their supporters participated in a demonstration in the Broadway area of Capitol Hill to protest harassment by the police.

The protest, which began non-violently, got out of hand when the police appeared in riot gear and moved aggressively to disperse the crowd. Most protesters remained peaceful and non-violent in the face

Rev. David Bloom

of the police action, and they quickly counseled those who responded with bottle-throwing and profanity to stop. Nonetheless, in the ensuing melee at least 19 persons were arrested, including some innocent bystanders who were just out for a Saturday night on Broadway.

Demonstrations on the following two nights were more peaceful, primarily because the police, perhaps mindful of their initial overreaction, kept their distance.

Later in the week, a temporary tent city erected by the youth on the Central Seattle Community College Campus was closed down with a cooperative spirit involving the youth, college administrators and the police. But the problems facing these young people continue, and I hope we are listening.

The youth claim that police officers from Seattle's East Precinct routinely harass and intimidate them, using the city's new anti-sitting law as an excuse to single them out. They say that three specific officers have been abusive. If this be true, Police Chief Norm Stamper should investigate and take appropriate action.

In addition to improving relations with police, these youth also need housing. Many, if not most, have run away or been thrown away from abusive homes. With no home to go to and precious few shelter beds, they do their best — sleeping out of doors or in cars or in unsanitary "squats" in abandoned buildings or "couch surfing" in overcrowded apartments. Can't we do better than this for our own children?

For example, the Homestead Organizing Project has established a remarkable record of transforming vacant buildings into housing for homeless persons, working cooperatively with owners and using the labor of the homeless themselves. Couldn't we do this with homeless kids?

While City Councilmember Sue Donaldson has expressed concern for these young people and seem interested in looking into requiring owners of vacant housing to make their buildings available for this type of "self-help" housing, there has been little response from other elected officials.

Capitol Hill Pastors have opened a dialogue with the youth to gain a clearer understanding of the difficulties they face and possibly assist them in improving relations with the police and capitol Hill merchants and in finding safe and secure places to gather and for shelter.

John Fox of the Displacement Coalition, who has worked with many of these youth, hopes that church involvement might even go further. The need, says Fox, is for local churches to develop mentoring relationships with these kids and help them with long-term solutions for their education, job training, healthcare, and permanent housing.

"Most young people are not on the streets by choice, but by circumstances that have made their own homes intolerable."

We are at risk in our society of becoming alienated from our own children. Most young people are not on the streets by choice, but by circumstances that have made their own homes intolerable. All they are saying is what any of us would say: I want a place to call home, people to

respect and care about me and a chance to develop my skills and improve my life.

We need to see beyond the sometimes "outlandish" appearance of street youth and look into their hearts.

Passing anti-sitting laws and throwing our youth in jail and telling them to shape up does not help. The churches can help by listening to them and working with them to find the kinds of solutions John Fox proposes. The City can help by providing modest funding for programs to help them find housing and training. The police can help by showing restraint and working with them and their advocates to make the streets more peaceful and to eliminate laws like the no-sitting law that criminalizes homelessness.

The church has consistently been called by God to stand with the poor and marginalized. It is a unique challenge for us to stand with our own children who are now living on the margins in increasing numbers. They have not created this situation, nor should they be blamed for it. We all bear responsibility for what has happened and have the obligation to do something about it.

Reprinted with permission from The Source, the newspaper of the Church Council of Greater Seattle. Rev. Bloom is the Associate Director of the Church Council and is a member of the Real Change Advisory Board.

MAILBAG

2129 2nd Ave., 98121

Dear Real Change,

Last week I found myself in Pioneer Square and was lucky enough to purchase one of your papers. I found the articles, photos, and poems well done and inspirational!

I was in Seattle for a seminar, and always enjoy a trip to Pioneer Square. In no way have the homeless folks I have seen had a negative effect. These people simply represent a reality that most of us would love to deny. A reality many are one mortgage payment away from.

I feel it is important to help in any way, and not ignore our neighbors on the street. We really are the same people in our hearts and souls. I'm sorry we are not judged in our good deeds, instead of our houses and cars.

Thank you again for an excellent paper.

Maggi Bingenheimer, RN, C
Otis Orchards, WA

Dear Real Change,

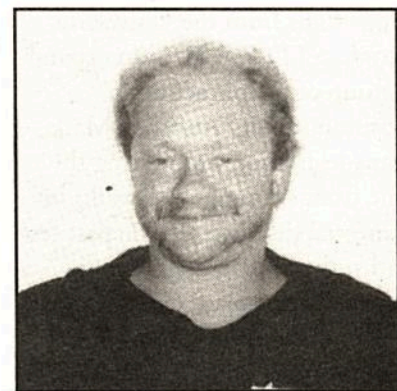
I've had the chance to read the first two issues of Real Change. I bought the first issue from a man on Second Avenue and wished him good luck. I bought the second issue from Kitty and her son Ian at the Market and learned a little bit about her and her story. Actually, I had given her a few bucks on 15th Avenue in front of a cash machine several weeks before. The change in her between the first time I met her and now is striking. She's full of hope and plans and looking forward, it sounded like, to the future.

Not only is the paper a great idea, in terms of helping people get off the street, but I think the articles are excellent, a real contribution to making heard the wisdom of these voices in the city. I'm very impressed with the poetry of Marion Sue Fischer. All in all, your paper represents a real change from the

Continued, page 18

Vendor of the Month Give Jerry a Job

Jerry Dwain Campise has won vendor of the month a second time, and is looking to move on up. The following is Jerry's own account of what selling Real Change has meant to him.



Selling Real Change has made me more responsible, helped me to have respect for people, and given me confidence to know that I am somebody, not a piece of trash to step on before you throw it away.

It feels great to be so successful in selling these papers. I would like to thank the people of Seattle for supporting me and actually making this paper work. And of course, I can't forget the tourists, who have also been generous.

This has been an excellent opportunity to create real change for me. My motto is "business before pleasure" and "a closed mouth never gets fed."

I do, however, want to keep moving up the ladder, and am looking for steady, decent paying, work opportunities. I have experience painting, laying carpet, and landscaping. I would also like to try telemarketing with a company that appreciates my potential and wants to give me a break.

Right now I stay at the Compass Center, but I am on the waiting list to get into the Gatewood apartments. I hope to have a place of my own before winter sets in.

Serious offers for work or housing can contact me by leaving a message at either Compass Center, 461-7835, or Real Change.

Figgy Pudding VIII Sing for Their Supper

Teams are now forming for The Great Figgy Pudding Corner Caroling Competition! This year's event is set for 5:00 p.m. Friday, December 9th at the Westlake Center.

This is the eighth year of this offbeat event. It is a great holiday project for any business or office group. Get in the holiday spirit by helping those who are hungry and homeless in downtown Seattle.

Offices and businesses across downtown are participating, including; Immunex, Washington Mutual, Perkins Coi, and The Bon Marche. If you or your group would like to participate - form a team!

You don't need any musical abilities to participate in this slightly skewed production of holiday hoopla. Anything goes from three part harmonies to tap dancing lawyers in antlers to Elvis impersonators. It's all good fun for a good cause.

Teams collect pledges from friends, family and fellow office workers and turn them in the night of the event. All proceeds benefit the work of the Downtown Food Bank and the Pike Market Senior Center. Teams carol for an hour on preassigned street corners and then assemble for a sing off and awards ceremony on a stage in Westlake Park.

The audience votes for "The People's Choice Award," and the team that raises the most money receives the coveted "Figlanthropy Award."

The event is graciously sponsored by US WEST Communications, Washington Mutual, KTZZ TV 22/ Cable 10, Ackerley Communications, KMPS Radio and the Westlake Center.

Call the "Figmaster" at 728-2773 for registration information.



ELVIS SIGHTINGS ARE COMMON AT THE PIKE MARKET SENIOR CENTER/ DOWNTOWN FOOD BANK ANNUAL FIGGY PUDDING CAROLING COMPETITION. TEAMS ARE STILL BEING FORMED. CALL THE FIGMASTER AT 728-2773 FOR MORE INFORMATION. PHOTO BY JOHN STAMETS

S.I.D.R.A.N. Strikes Yet Again No-Sitting Signs Removed

Early this morning, S.I.D.R.A.N. (Sit in Down town and Reclaim Areas Now!) removed numerous "No Sitting" signs from the University District. S.I.D.R.A.N. is an expanding group of people acting in opposition to City Attorney Mark Sidran's legislation prohibiting the public from sitting on sidewalks in commercial districts. In the past few months, the Seattle Engineering Department has placed over 50 signs on utility poles throughout the city.

S.I.D.R.A.N. opposes the "No Sitting" ordinance which is designed to remove the poor from shopping areas in the name of progress and "economic revitalization." Poverty and homelessness are problems which deserve permanent solutions, not laws which simply remove the victims from public view. We challenge City Attorney Mark Sidran and other elected officials to institute real solutions, rather than laws which prey on those who have the least power in our society.

S.I.D.R.A.N.'s first action occurred on May 30, 1994 and resulted in the removal of 13 "No Sitting" signs from Pioneer Square. These signs have not been replaced.

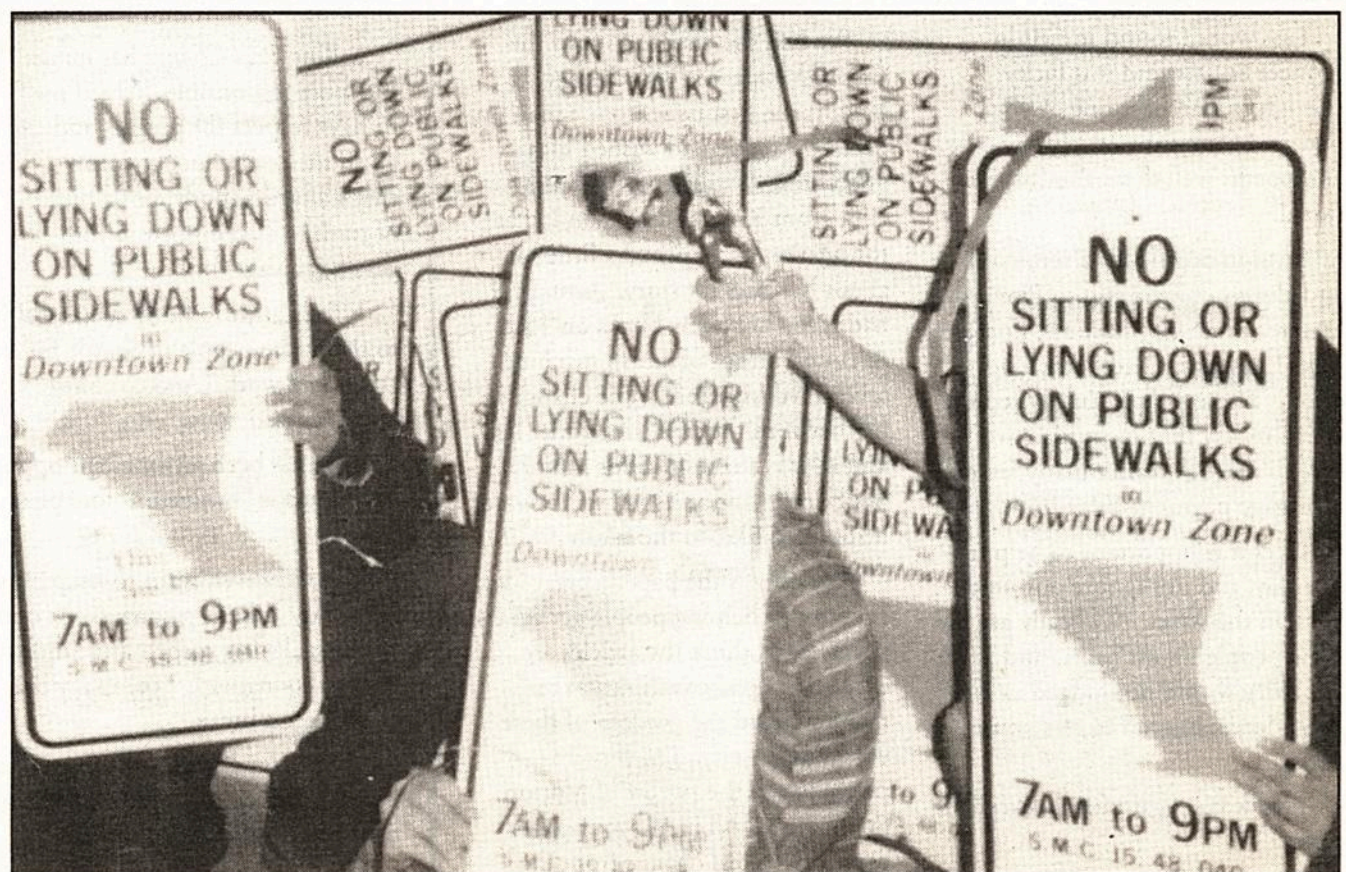
Later S.I.D.R.A.N. recycled the signs into benches and installed them in two Pioneer Square parks. S.I.D.R.A.N.'s second action occurred on August 25th, when 19 more signs were taken down from the Westlake Mall and Belltown areas. Again, benches were made

from the signs and installed in Belltown.

Until the ordinance is repealed or declared unconstitutional, S.I.D.R.A.N.'s protests will continue. Signs which proclaim hanging out is criminal will not be

accepted in our community; we will continue to resist and reject attempts to make shoppers more comfortable at the expense of those already marginalized by poverty, homelessness, age, lifestyle, etc.

S.I.D.R.A.N. communique, issued October 10, 1994



PROOF! SEATTLE'S URBAN GUERRILLAS FROLIC IN THEIR TROPHY ROOM. PHOTO BY S.I.D.R.A.N.

Thy Shelters Overfloweth

As happens every year, there has been a flurry of activity this fall to provide as many "extra" shelter beds as possible during Seattle's cold, wet winter.

Some of these beds have become standard operating procedure. From October to March, the Municipal building opens its lobby evenings for shelter. The City provides funding for the Downtown Emergency Service Center to operate the program. The lobby of the King County Administration Building opens as well, funded by the County and operated by SHARE. Immanuel Lutheran Church has opened its doors during the winter for over a decade. Beginning this year, the shelter will be self-managed.

In addition to these regular winter resources, there are a half-dozen "pocket shelters," open in winter only, housed in church basements, and volunteer run on various nights of the week, which take in 10-15 people each.

This year, however, these measures are insufficient. Various estimates put the net number of

beds available at 100 to 200 fewer than last year.

The Pacific Hotel, a self-managed 40 bed shelter, has closed. Immanuel Conception, which usually does 60 beds, closed as well. In addition, the Jungle, a homeless encampment along I-5 in which people lived year-round, was razed. Worse, Payne and Pioneer Square Hotels, which provided rooms to the very poor, have shut their doors as well.

Operation Nightwatch, which opens at 10 p.m. to refer the homeless to shelter, was turning people away even in September.

Due pretty much entirely to the efforts of SHARE, who has worked hard to find space for those displaced from the Pacific and others, new options will become available this year.

In early November, Catholic Community Services will open up its cafeteria space to 40 men and women for the next 4-6 months. Accommodations will consist of a mat on the floor, which beats a doorway any way you look at it.

As we go to press, negotiations are still underway that might open the City Light lobby for winter shelter as well. SHARE has been camped there since abandoning their sleep-out at the *Seattle Times* (see related article).

In addition, Gethsemane Lutheran Church has opened its doors to homeless women. SHARE will operate a program there that will eventually provide shelter to 15. Single homeless women are critically underserved in Seattle. While they make up, at most, 20% of the homeless, last year they accounted for 36% of those turned away from shelter.

Pacific Hotel refugees are still hoping for "more than a mat on the floor." One possibility is the Harbor Light building at 2nd and Yesler. SHARE hopes to use the second floor of the building as a temporary bunkhouse prior to the construction of artists lofts scheduled for next year. While building owners have already approved the project, neighborhood objections may prove insurmountable.

Ultimately, SHARE wants to open shelter that offers dignity and a reasonable amount of comfort to its residents. "We'd like a bunkhouse, like we had at the Pacific," said SHARE organizer Michele Marchand. "We'd like to have common space, showers, a kitchen... stuff that real people have. It's great that CCS has opened its doors, but our dream is to have more than a mat on the floor."

A past success, says Marchand, has been the small, church-based, shelters, which have the flexibility to accommodate demand. Perhaps this system can be expanded to offer adequate shelter year-round.

The notion of winter overflow shelter presupposes that it's OK for people to sleep on the street during less inclement weather. "The need is year-round," said Marchand, "and summer is dangerous too, for different reasons. We need to look at making the winter overflow programs year-round, and beginning a true overflow system that kicks in whenever Nightwatch turns people away, regardless of the time of year."

—by Timothy Harris

Citizens Lame

Seattle Times responds to SHARE with indifference

The *Seattle Times* property became a temporary camp ground as approximately 50 people slept in front of their Fairview and John building between October 10th and 14th. The group was drawing attention to Seattle's lack of space for its homeless population. The event was organized by SHARE, who provided blankets, mats, and food, as well as moral support for the participants.

The *Times* was chosen, according to SHARE because "The *Times* disappointed us the most." It was also pointed out that The Mart, a building owned by the Times, is an unused warehouse with approximately five to seven floors that could hold thousands of people.

Most of the participants had been temporarily housed at the Pacific Hotel, which stood vacant until a much publicized September 1992 takeover. Since that time, the building has been turned over to the Plymouth Housing Group.

Last April, Plymouth Housing allowed the building to be used as a temporary shelter, until it was to be remodeled this fall.

Despite the increase in the demand for shelter beds caused by events such as the destruction of the homeless jungle, Seattle has about 150 fewer beds than were available last year. SHARE has historically taken the lead in pushing for additional beds as foul weather approaches.

place to go, the decision was made to sleep out in front of the *Times* building.

One of the participants, Frank, 25, describes the situation. "It was really exciting because there was such a strong turnout. Everyone meshed real well. Only one thing occurred that night. Some people decided to

the participants was rain. By the fourth night the numbers had thinned to about 20. An attempt was made to move to the loading dock of the *Times* building, but security asked them to leave after checking with higher ups as to whether this would be allowable. The group voted to comply, spending the remainder of the evening in the rain.

At that point, according to Frank, "nobody knew where to go." The group has since received word that City Light will open for temporary shelter. The group has moved to the lobby of City Light, and this arrangement has worked well so far.

"Security has given them a good report, and they decided we were so cooperative they extended our lease," said Frank. At press time, the group is still there.

Frank concluded that "unity works. Strength is in numbers... Since we've been looking for another place, we've sent out letters, numerous flyers and press releases asking people who have leads for a place to stay to call SHARE. The phone number for SHARE is 448-7889.

—by Bill Delisi

"An attempt was made to move to the loading dock of the *Times* building, but security asked them to leave after checking with higher ups as to whether this would be allowable. The group voted to comply, spending the remainder of the evening in the rain."

The September 21 deadline was extended to October 1, and then October 10. During that time, some people were able to find other places to stay. Others were not as successful. As Pacific tenants faced cold and wet weather without a

maliciously attack one of us. (Just one of the everyday problems faced by the homeless.) A security system was set up as a result to deal with other potential attacks.

But the major problem faced by

The Spirit of Street Youth

There are no Birthday party games
No little children to laugh or rhyme
The wading pool is empty: I feel so bloody lame
As I wait for sleep to whisper my forgotten name
It's after nine and closing time
At the city park; in the middle of dark

I'm scared to be alone
but hope to God I am
I nestle in the Rhododendron bushes that tonight I call home
I wonder when I traded bedtime television
For candy-flavored wine
It's after nine and closing time
At the city park; in the middle of dark

Last month, young people and adults representing a wide range of Seattle social service agencies converged together for a day of song, dance, drama and laughter. The program was entitled "Celebration of the Spirit of Street Youth," and that pretty much describes what occurred.

Jim Theofelis

The event, held October 19th and coordinated by Youthcare's Orion Center program, was part of Homeless Children's Awareness week, sponsored by the Seattle-King County Coalition for the Homeless.

Staff members and kids from a number of Youthcare's programs were present, as were folks from the YMCA Independent Living Program, the Denny Place Youth Shelter, A Cultural Experience (ACE), as well as city officials, all of whom spend considerable amount of their life working with the issue of homelessness.

There were young people who are currently living in local shelters, parks, "a friends house", and addiction recovery programs, or who have managed to recently find their own home. All of those gathered were well aware of the dearth of resources for youth who are without a home.

It is estimated that every day in Seattle there are 1200 children who are without homes, of which 500 are under the age of five. How is this situation allowed to exist in a city as "livable" as Seattle?

Young people want programs designed to address their needs, rather than demanding that they fit into a cookie-cutter theory. In fact, most service providers are well aware of the ongoing struggle to stretch limited resources to match the increasing needs.

The lack of adequate residential treatment programs, foster homes, independent living programs,

chemical dependency treatment and educational and employment opportunities are ever-present. The recent demonstrations on Capitol Hill brought renewed focus to the issue of homelessness among young people, as well as their fatigue and impatience with a community that ignores their need to be viewed as teenagers without safe housing, rather than as ungrateful, malingering monsters.

Our experience at Youthcare is that while many of the young people we work with are clearly skeptical of adults in general and "do-gooders" in particular, they all still have the same basic needs as all young people, including the need to belong and feel emotional attachment.

Perhaps most astonishing, given many of their histories as survivors of trauma, is that most still respond to the genuine offering of respect, care and relationship.

Youth are the Future

Orion Center staff wanted to ensure that some time during the Awareness Week we honor the talents, skills and SPIRIT of young people.

It is paramount that the general public realize the full impact of having children in our community living in abandoned squats and city parks because of a lack of shelters and group home beds.

A Celebration of the Spirit of Street Youth was a day of belonging, sharing, playing and working. The most salient theme throughout the day was that the young people had center stage; to give them the microphones so they could tell all who would listen about their own experiences; to give their unique perceptions on the issues, such as addiction, homelessness, police, belonging and love, that truly affect their lives.

Program moderator and Orion Center Director Charlie Demarre

said it best in his welcoming statement. "We see you as young people who have talent, skills and most of all we see you as young people who have a FUTURE"

It was quite paradoxical that one felt a great sense of hope and goodness and at the same time sadness that these beautiful teenagers would be so touched and even surprised that adults would publicly declare a belief in their future. Perhaps that was what was most promising about the day and the people who make the day.

It was inspiring and humbling to watch these kids stand up in front of strangers and peers to sing songs, dance, rap and act. The courage, self-confidence and integrity to face an auditorium full of people while singing solo and unaccompanied by music defied any and all stereotypes of homeless kids. Children of all colors played, sang, laughed, and most of all, dreamed together.

I know some day I'll have my turn
To show the world that I can fly
For now I fight just not to burn
The Eagle knows we both could die
It's after nine and closing time
At the city park in the middle of dark

Jim Theofelis is Director of Clinical Programs at Youthcare



THESE YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN THE EVENTS AT THE LANGSTON HUGHES CULTURAL ARTS CENTER DURING HOMELESS YOUTH WEEK. RENAE GAINES (CENTER) WORKS WITH YOUTH AS A DRUG AND ALCOHOL COUNSELOR, REBUILDING FAMILY DYNAMICS, AND IMPROVING INDIVIDUAL SELF-ESTEEM. PHOTO BY DANA SCHUERHOLZ.

Adrift

YOUTH living on our city streets is both distressing and bewildering for most of us. A middle-aged woman who had recently immigrated to Seattle from a developing South-east Asian country expressed her amazement at seeing so many homeless children and youth living on our streets. She asked why, in a city of so much wealth, are there children living with nothing? Have they been abandoned by their families, or are they out there because they don't want to live by their family's rules? These questions are echoed by many of us.

Rev. Tom Pirie

First, let us not confuse material prosperity with moral and ethical sufficiency. In many respects we have become the commercial and material giant of the world but our heart and soul lags far behind our ability to motivate and guide our most precious resource.

Youth are living in abandoned house, "squats," cars, parks, or just staying up all night in cafes or on the streets because they can. In Washington State it is legal for a child or teen to be unaccompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

If a runaway report has been filed with the police, a youth may, if found and apprehended, be returned to the family. But after subsequent runaways, the police concede there is not much use in continuing to return them home.

Worse, there are kids who have been kicked out of their homes, "throwaways." Unless their family initiates the search, there will be none. Teens can remain homeless and on the street indefinitely, ignoring family and state authorities.

No Place Like Home

The streets are indeed lonely, cold, and frightening. But there is also a lure quite new to a teen. That is complete freedom from any responsibility, and being accountable to no one. They are at liberty to revel in alcohol, drugs, sex, and other indulgences as they please. The experience of freedom, without the counterbalance of responsibility, is intoxicating, addictive, and destructive, particularly for an adolescent.

Youth move off the streets only when they want to. They have chosen to access a social service system that is slow, overburdened, and often unresponsive, and which, for many, has been a painful experience they'd rather avoid.

There is a flawed assumption that a young teenage runaway has the ability to make the right decision as to where and with whom she or he is going to live. That is often not the case. At best, they are moving from a place of greater to lesser pain.

There is typically sexual, physical, emotional, or chemical abuse in their lives affecting their judgment. It is unrealistic to expect young "at risk and in crisis" teens to be sufficiently mature and of sound mind and judgment to make these kind of survival decisions. This is made all the more difficult when many of the young people don't trust adults, the very people desperately trying to offer guidance.

Spent Time

I find it grossly irresponsible, if not immoral, for any society to give children and youth the option to live and be unaccompanied by a responsible adult unless the youth has been legally emancipated.

Even if a teen decides they want to leave the streets, it's not going to be easy. They will need to make some tough decisions and a radical change in lifestyle. The months, often years, on the streets have exposed them to a host of experiences which at best have taught them not to pass this way again.

They will probably be required to obtain drug and alcohol treatment, and have verification of being clean and sober before being accepted into any assisted-living situation. Again, this is difficult because they can simply walk away from the program at any time.

Additionally, their formal education has been on hold while they are on the streets. Yes, they can make this up, but even obtaining a GED can pose a formidable undertaking for many street youth.

Maybe the most disturbing and difficult condition to quantify is what I and others who work with street youth see as a stunting of the normal maturing process. During the very important years when the normal pressures and influences of family, school and work nurture them in making the arduous and essential transition from child to adult, many street youth are idle or just surviving from day to day, begging spare change for food, beer, drugs, and cigarettes.

Many homeless youth will boast of being "streetwise" or "street-smart." I see little redeeming value to those lessons on how to hustle, steal, and stay high on pennies a day.

It would be better termed "street-dumb" and what would be wise would be to run, not walk, as fast as possible from streetlife.

System Failure

Those teens that reach a point where they are willing and able to receive help are further frustrated in that their opportunity to receive scarce resources must coincide with their decision to get help. It is often like two unpredictable, changing windows of opportunity which must synchronize for a match, and tragically, for many this may not happen.

This is a rather dismal picture; it is also, I think, realistic. What I most want to communicate is that the causes of youth living on the streets are very complicated. The cures will require more than the addition of a few youth programs—much more.

There are insidious cancers choking the life out of many in our society, and for proof you need only look at our precious children, abandoned to the streets. Lasting

solutions will require moral and ethical surgery deep into our culture. It will be painful to some, thrilling to others, and costly to all.

I'm convinced that when our families and communities lift up and esteem above all else the role of parenting and community support for children and youth, our children will thrive and even astound us with their vigor and persistence to build a better society.

When this occurs, we will have taught and modeled an ideal which will give them confidence and courage to face even greater challenges. They will further empower their children, and their children's children. And on it will go, gaining wisdom and momentum from generation to generation.

Of course we don't have to do anything differently than we are now. We can pursue the path of least resistance and stay the course. I pray we do not.

—Tom Pirie is Executive Director of University Street Ministry.

Where are the Services?

A recent one-week "snapshot" count of homeless youth documented the inadequacy of current services for that population. As a result of this census, the following conclusions were reached:

THE NUMBER OF EMERGENCY AND SHORT-TERM BEDS IS INADEQUATE. During the "snapshot" count of homeless youth, 327 youth were identified as "chronically homeless." These youth are without any resources and need on-going shelter care every night, not just for one or two nights. In addition, there are an estimated several thousand youth who have recently run away or been "kicked out of their homes," and who will need emergency and short term shelter beds. Currently there are only 40 short term beds for up to 30 days of residential care, and an additional 30 beds for emergency, overnight shelter.

TRANSITIONAL, LONG-TERM HOUSING IS NEEDED IF THE CHRONICALLY HOMELESS ARE TO ESCAPE STREET LIFE. Many of the youth identified in the count have been homeless for over a year, but could be encouraged to leave street life if transitional, long term housing were available that also offered a wide range of supporting services, including education, employment, and life skills training. Over the past 15 years, the number of available beds has decreased from 1,600 beds statewide to a current level of just over 200 beds. There are none in King County.

REGULAR CONTACT WITH OUTREACH WORKERS WOULD BUILD TRUST WITH THE YOUTH, AND COULD PROVIDE THE CRITICAL LINK WITH LIFE OFF THE STREETS AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT TO SEEK SHELTER AND SERVICES. Efforts to provide outreach workers to contact homeless youth on the street are very limited, primarily because there are not adequate services available to serve the needs of youth, even if they were persuaded to leave street life.

Excerpted from "King County Homeless Youth Count: A One Week Snapshot" of Runaway and Homeless Youth, August, 1994. Conducted by the King County Special Task Force on Runaway/Homeless Youth, (206) 296-5229.

"Pseudospeciation"

On Seeing the Person and Not the Category

Psuedospeciation is a term invented by Erik Erikson to describe the practice, all too common among humans, of defining people you wish to isolate and maltreat a nonhuman. If they are nonhuman, they need not be treated as having the qualities and rights of human beings. They can be abused and reviled with a good conscience. They can be seen as lacking human needs, such as the need for food, water, shelter, bathrooms, or such intangibles as dignity.

Are the homeless treated this way? Anybody who has spent any time at all on the street or in shelters can answer that. Clearly they are. People who would never so much as utter an unkind word to their neighbors or co-workers or even the people they meet when they're out shopping either approve or look the other way when "the homeless" are harassed—arrests, fines and treatment that resembles that normally meted out to those who are convicted of a crime—only without the recourses and right of protest and amelioration most prisoners (quite rightly) possess.

Indeed, the very existence of such a category as 'the homeless' contributes to this process. Once you start thinking in terms of "the homeless" instead of, say, Joe Example and Amanda Random, two human beings who happen to be homeless, you can start assigning characteristics to the group. "The homeless", you can say, are lazy, dirty, offensive addicts, who would do no better no matter what help they had, and who "really" need to be chastised and moved on until they realize the error of their ways and take advantage of all the opportunities that, "everybody knows" really exist if you just work for them.

Once such a stereotype exists, it is no good pointing to Joe or Amanda, and arguing that they do not fit this profile. Joe and Amanda are "exceptions" and exceptions, as everybody knows, "prove the rule" (by which is meant "confirm", rather than the original meaning of "test".) No matter how many "exceptions" there are, the category is not questioned.

Why does such an illogical way of thinking persist? Well, basically, because it is useful. By establishing categories and standards, it is possible to do things on a large (say, statewide or nationwide) scale. We know that all people in any category are not *really* the same, but by and large we can *behave* as if they are, and though some people are necessarily inconvenienced (as, for example, nocturnal people who find

"office hours" to be a synonym for "closed",) enough people are served well enough that the society does not collapse under its own weight.

This generally useful habit of thought becomes destructive, however, when it becomes a tool for disenfranchising a whole group of people based on an accidental quality. So long as Joe and Amanda are part of "The homeless", it becomes irrelevant that Joe is a talented artist and an inspiring and nurturing teacher, and that Amanda can make a computer sit up and whistle, as well as being a dynamite dancer. "The homeless" by definition, are wastrels and beggars, and their potential contributions are lost by a lack of demand.

a refrigerator to keep it in. What harm does the unquestioning rejection of "the homeless" do to such everyday production?

The answer is, the same that is done by the automatic rejection of any group of people. Take two more examples, Ken Normal and Joan Ordinary. Ken is a funny guy and can draw a mean caricature, but he will probably never make his fortune that way. Joan is a dab hand with cats, and a promising bicycle racer, but she will never make the finals, and though her cats are well behaved, they're no show cats.

But though Ken and Joan are not exceptional, Ken *is* working, though he's grossly underemployed, working mostly temporary jobs and rarely

applications, and it's hard to get a job if you don't always have access to a phone. She's been meaning to go back to school, but after food and other stuff is paid for, there's not much left, and as for raising the money for a deposit and rent—well, it's not very likely, is it.

So Ken and Joan are not contributing all they could to society, and even less so if they get sick (as they are at high risk of doing,) and with no insurance are forced to go to the hospital, where they are often too sick to be able to work.

Multiply these examples by several thousands, then add the few who really are addicts, and mentally ill, and can get no help, and the cost to society and to "the homeless" of such thoughtless and oversimplified categorization becomes tremendous—so large, in fact, that it overrides the advantages wrought by not having to deal with each case on an individual basis. The very, very few people who happen to meet *all* of the stereotypes (and even these are individuals and subject to varying degrees of alteration,) are (usually) isolated from society, but at what cost?

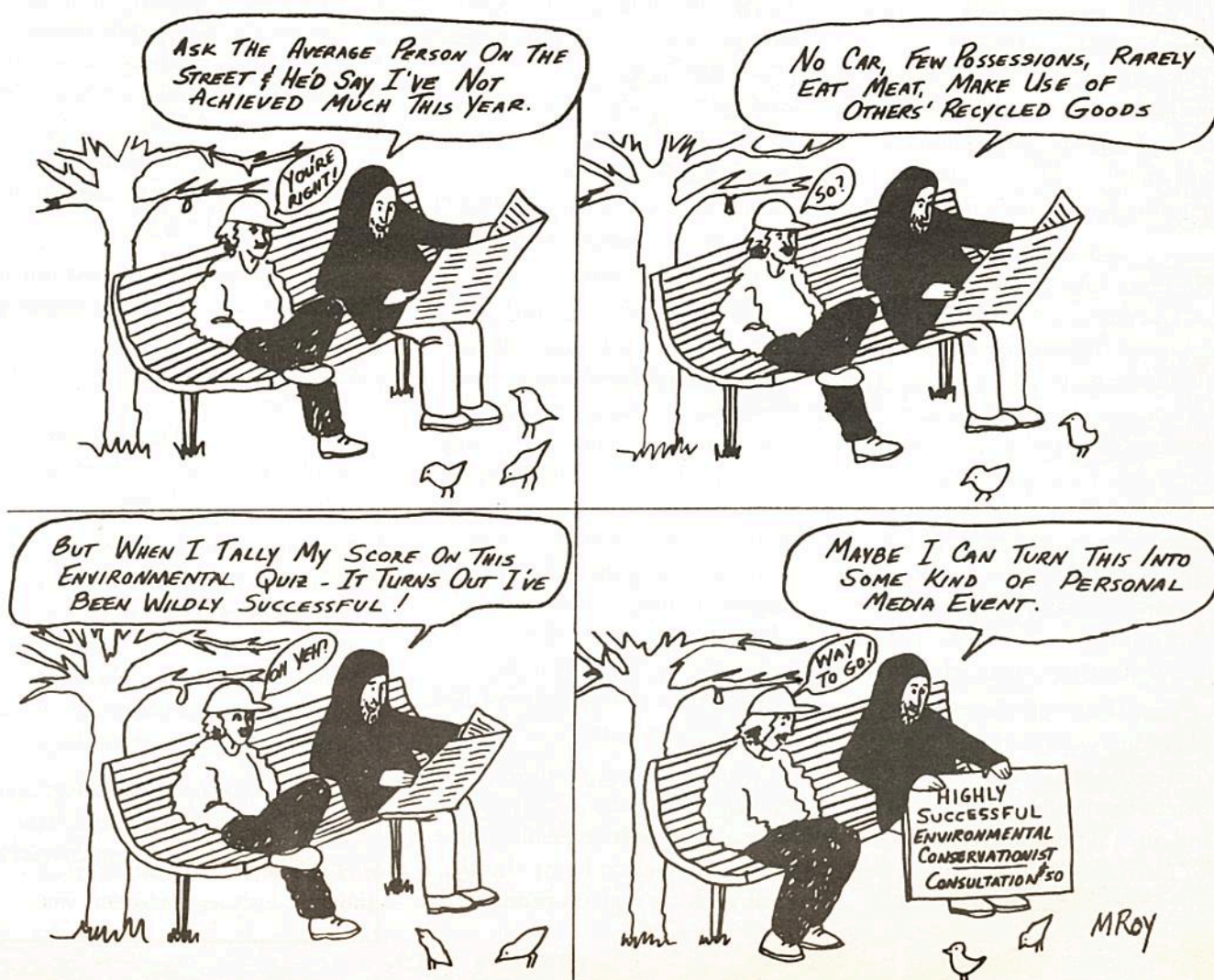
And all the others are lost, sometimes for life, often for most of their productive life, because we are in too much of a hurry to throw away "the homeless", without bothering to go to work with Joan and Amanda and Joe and Ken, and find a way to fit them into "the system".

by Valerie Shubert

"Why does such an illogical way of thinking persist? Well, basically, because it is useful. By establishing categories and standards, it is possible to do things on a large scale."

Such losses are easily identified as peripheral. How many of any group are really outstandingly talented? And after all, the outstandingly talented, though their contributions are remembered, actually have very little to do with everyday life. They may inspire and exalt us, but they don't put food on the table or build

managing to find the canonical 40 hours a week. What's more, he's lucky if he gets much more than minimum wage. As for Joan, well, she *is* looking for work, and sometimes she gets some, but there's not much call for library clerks, and the market is overstocked, and so she usually has to be very creative in job



Court Gestures

Seattle's Sidran Ordinance Has Its Day(s) In Court

Perhaps the most bizarre legal proceeding in Washington State history concluded October 25th, as lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union and the City of Seattle concluded four days in municipal court debating my fate.

John Hoffman

After months of blatant sidewalk-sitting activity, police finally arrested me, citing Seattle's notorious Sidran ordinance, when I sat down and leafleted directly in front of a mobile police station.

My intent was to inform passersby about a "sit-in" scheduled for the next day to protest the no-sitting law, an action that would, in itself, be illegal.

Clearly, I had become a pain in the ass to University District police, and they wished my defiant sitting to cease. What they clearly didn't expect was to see me arrive in court with ACLU lawyers John Sheridan and John Carpenter. Also testifying on my behalf were Displacement Coalition members John Fox and John Reese. Present in the courtroom was street-performing piano player Johnny Hahn.

"Please bring in the next John," the judge said at one point in the trial.

The City presented thousands of pages of documents, audio tapes, a video, maps, and many witnesses I had never met. The courtroom, which normally disposes of traffic tickets within moments, was filled with phrases like "Objection! Move to strike! Irrelevant!" Prior cases involving newspaper vending boxes and nude dancing were cited in my defense.

"So he's like a newspaper vending box?" the judge asked, wrinkling his brow.

"Yes," replied defense attorney John Carpenter.

The City offered up precedents about the illegal burning of draft cards and how this was not free

speech, and also the case of a city which had closed its public swimming school to avoid desegregation.

Thus the City of Seattle defended itself against the accusation that the sitting law was nothing more than a "stealth loitering law," designed to drive out homeless people. The City replied, in effect, "so what?"

Under vigorous cross-examination by Sheridan, Seattle Community Officer Will (not "Bill," like "Bill of Rights") Cravens confessed that the City had instructed him to cite homeless people who were begging, but not people who were engaged in other first amendment activities.

Upon hearing Officer Cravens confess this, ACLU lawyer John

faced lawyers could be observed turning the evidence photo sideways. Another photo presented by the City actually showed a homeless man in a wheelchair blocking the sidewalk. The City apparently forgot that people in wheelchairs are exempt, homeless or not.

The City presented a hundred letters from "ordinary citizens" calling for the sitting law's implementation, but City Legislative Aide Peter Clark confessed he'd neglected to mention the 150 letters opposed to the law.

As the trial progressed, it became even more apparent to me that the law had nothing to do with "economic vitality," and everything to do with hatred directed at a whole class

cited involving unlicensed motion picture theaters and, of course, more nude dancing.

While on the stand, highly-paid lawyers for the City questioned my intent when I parked myself in front of the mobile police station.

"My intent," I replied, "was to continue to enjoy my civil liberties despite an unconstitutional ordinance."

As the words left my mouth, the city vigorously objected and "moved to strike," the wording about the ordinance's unconstitutionality.

"Objection overruled," said the judge.

At the trial's conclusion, a KOMO radio reporter told me that



FIVE-TIME SIDRAN ORDINANCE ARRESTEE AND CHRONIC SIDE-WALK SITTER DAVID TODD EXPLAINS HIS POSITION TO NETWORK NEWSWOMAN. PHOTO BY DANA SCHUERHOLZ.

Sheridan turned to John Carpenter and grinned like a giant weasel.

As though God herself were on the side of the Displacement Coalition, the City itself presented the best evidence in my defense. The photo presented by the City to show I was not passing out flyers actually showed me with flyers.

"If you turn the photo sideways," I explained while on the stand, "Like this, see, you can actually read the words 'sit-in,' and see that the papers in my hand are the same as the defense exhibit."

During a recess, the City's red-

of people.

One witness for the City said he didn't like "picking over people on the sidewalk," that he didn't like "drunks reeling toward him," or "kids in \$100 shoes asking for bus fare." Sheridan was not allowed to "examine the witness for bias."

"Don't worry," Carpenter told me. "This stuff will never be allowed as evidence on appeal."

"Are you sure?"

"That's black letter law," he assured.

"Whatever that means," I thought. Further precedents were

Mark Sidran had vowed to fight "all the way to the United States Supreme Court." Were we willing to do same?

Of course. We were on the record saying as much months ago.

My fate, and perhaps that of the First Amendment, will be decided in night court, November 8th, 5:30 p.m., at King County Jail, with the Hon. Judge Michael Hortado presiding.

You're all invited.

—John Hoffman is a member of the Seattle Displacement Coalition

Ask Fabio

**Solid Advice from
our Resident Hunk Advocate**

Yo Fabio,

I moved here from New York a couple of months ago, moving into a building on Capitol Hill that seemed nice on the outside. After I moved in I found out it was a piece of shit. I have told the scummy landlord repeatedly to fix my Juan, but he just ignores me. It's been backed up for days and my friends have stopped visiting me. People look at me funny. What can I do? Can I withhold my rent? Can I go to housing court?

Rigaza di Bensonhurst

Ciao Rigaza,

Housing Court? Wake up Querida you are in Seattle. Home of landlord friendly judges and developer recruiting city council people. My advice to you is leave and don't come back! Get out! The City is evil!

**For Fast
Answers,
Call the
Tenants
Union
Hotline,
723-0500**

If, however, you don't have the means to get out of Dodge, there are some steps you can take to get your (aghhh) toilet working again.

Landlord tenant law RCW 59.18.070 gives the landlord 72 hours, where the defective

condition deprives the tenant of a major plumbing fixture. Fabio would argue that your john is a major plumbing fixture. You can also argue that whatever may be floating about there is imminently hazardous. Therefore, you might also be able to give them a 24-hour notice. You should also attach an estimate of how much you think it will cost to fix your toilet. Remember, the estimate does not have to be accurate; just good faith.

You can also ask for a city inspector to come out and inspect your unit for housing code violations. Like most city agencies, they're

pretty lax and lazy, but remind them it's their job to do something. The number at DCLU is 684-7899. Remember, if you have to stay in this city, always get all of the

landlord's promises in writing. Keep in touch.

*Fabio sweatily awaits your letters.
Send to "Ask Fabio," c/o Real Change,
2129 Second Ave., Seattle, WA
98121.*

Fabio Alert

The wrecking ball is back! The convention center is planing to demolish more low-income housing. Fabio's prayers have not been granted. Papal dispensation has been denied. You must organize as did the Partisanos before Fabio. You can do something about it.

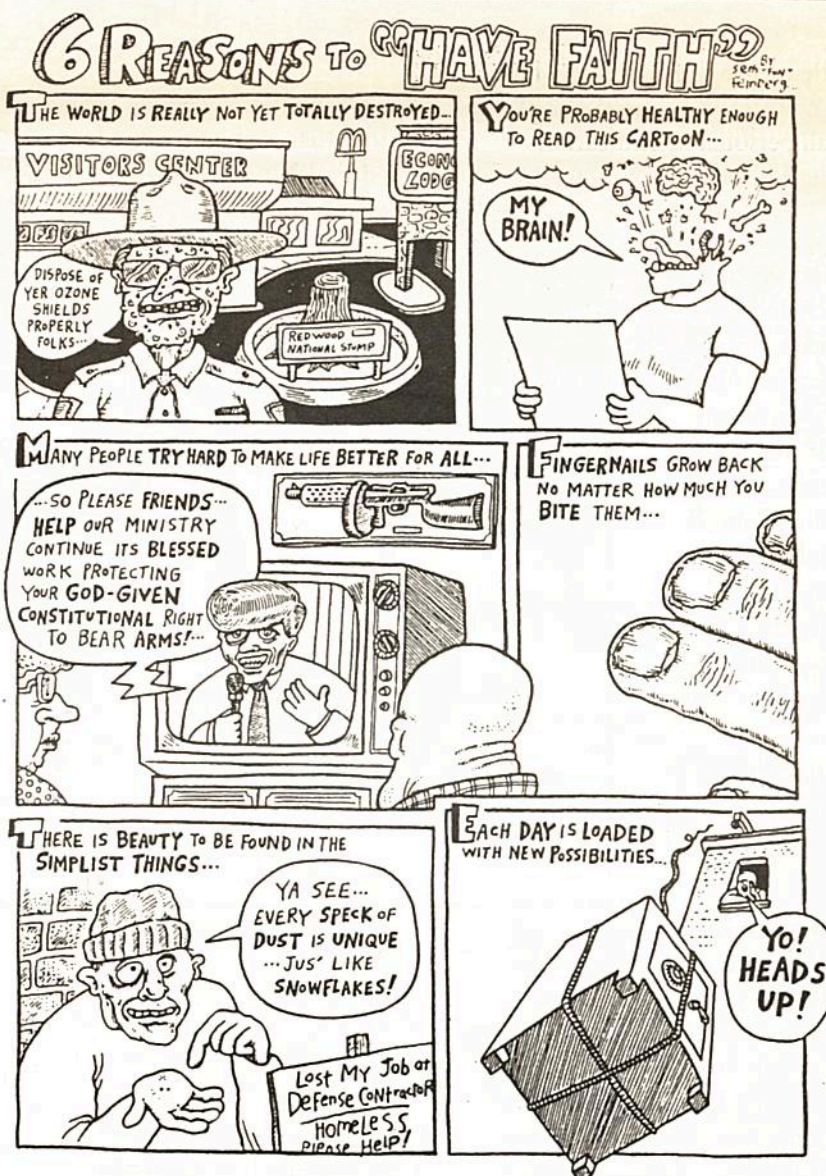
There will be a meeting at Virginia Mason Hospital on Thursday, November 17th, at 925 Seneca St. Rm. 4A, 4th floor (hospital conference room). Be there, especially if you live near convention Center. The wrecking ball can get noisy while you're watching Seinfeld.

Also, Jeanette Burrage is running for Washington State Supreme Court. This one is dangerous ragazzi! Her campaign headquarters are located in the same office as the Apartment Owner's Association, and she has the landlords' backing. Por Favore do not vote for her. Do your homework. Vote for the other candidate. Consequences for tenants will be catastrophic.

Kids' Advice to Parents How to Keep Your Kids Off the Streets

A group of youth involved with the University District Youth Center, many of whom are runaways, offer this advice to parents who want to keep their own kids home.

- You shouldn't do things you don't want your kids doing in front of your kids. These might include drinking and drugging, fighting each other, arguing, having sex, or lying. You are a role model. Live out what you expect of youth.
- You should pay attention to your kids, even when they're not getting in trouble. Kids get in trouble to get attention from their parents. If your kids have problems, *listen* to them. Talk problems through.
- Punishments should be reasonable and fit the offense. Beatings are never reasonable. Treat youth with the same respect you want from them.
- Be honest, even if the kid seems too young to understand. For example, don't try to pass off step-parents as biological parents. The kid will find out, and will not trust you. Trust is everything.
- Don't play favorites with step-siblings. Kids need unconditional love with no strings.
- Realize that youth will express themselves. If this is not against the law or harmful, put this behavior in proper perspective. Kids need freedom and independence. Accept your kids for who they are. Treat them like adults if that's what they want, and let them take responsibility for their own actions.



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Editors, Proofreaders, Photographers, Graphic Artists,
Mac Jockies, Office Volunteers, Drivers, Fundraisers**

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Max Chandler...

The Artist Behind The Art

IF YOU HAVE READ HIS POETRY and seen his sketches at the art gallery on Second and Bell, it may surprise you that Max Chandler discovered his artistic bent only two years ago.

"I pretty much decided there was a part of my life that was missing and that was art, so I started writing and drawing like crazy. I created thousands of pictures and poems. I've never been trained, never been to school," said Chandler in an interview at the Sit and Spin in downtown Seattle.

Chandler was born on Prince Edward Island and grew up in New York City. His interest in reading and in learning developed in his childhood and remains today.

"I'd call myself a scholar before I'd call myself an artist," he said.

Chandler moved from New York to Seattle in 1988. As a result of job loss, eviction from his home, and loss of all personal identification including his green card, he found himself without money. He believes that the six months he spent homeless affects the art he creates now.

"Being homeless puts you in a different kind of time. When you don't have to be anywhere at any time, you exist in a different time from people who have to work. When I draw, I sometimes become so focused that everything else becomes black around me. When I come out, I have to go through this almost painful process, almost like the process of getting back into the work world after being homeless."

Rather than "couch surf", to sleep on couches in the homes of friends, Chandler chose to sleep in the woods and in local parks. He eventually stayed with a friend for an extended period of time and, deciding he liked "having a warm place to sleep," took the steps to find a job. He is now a freelance com-

puter consultant on Internet and rents a one bedroom apartment downtown. He still visits food banks twice a week.

"Being homeless affected me in a positive way. After that experience, I know that my life now is basically stress free. I don't get stressed out as easily now. Being homeless and living in low quality places has also helped me develop my social skills."

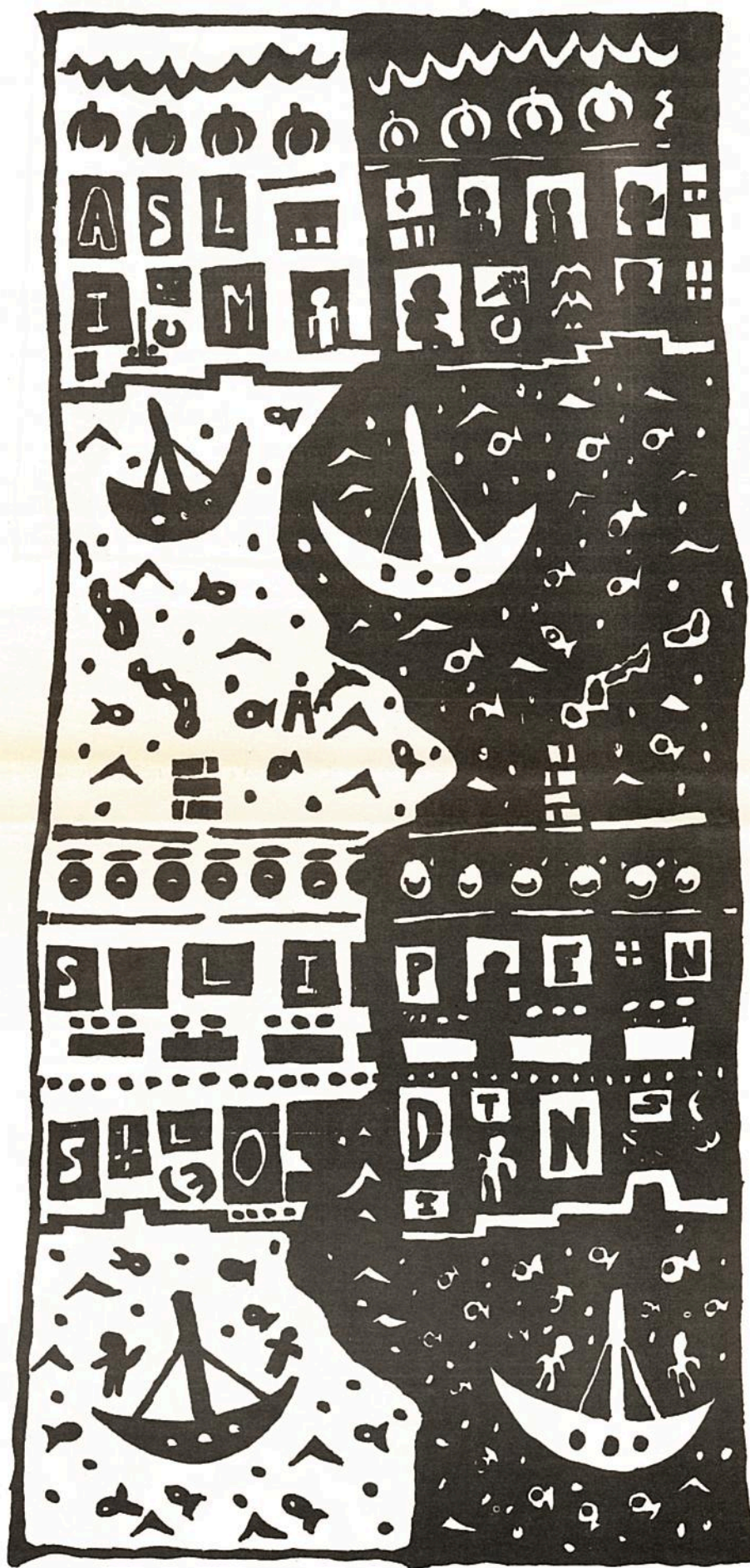
If he were to pursue a degree, Chandler would study history, anthropology, or linguistics. He has composed music for six years, yet he thinks his talent lies more in visual art and poetry than in music. All his original art is done on scrap paper then reproduced. Every piece he creates is first draft. His art has been published in local literary publications and sold for a profit totaling "probably less than \$300 so far." He has also completed several commissioned pieces.

"I find that writing is good for my health. Writing poetry and reading are good for my health. I seem to be able to regulate my physical being through what I do. Doing art does things to your body because you're using your mind in a certain way and your mind affects everything else."

What does Max Chandler want to share with the public about homelessness?

"It isn't always a bad thing to be homeless. It's another state of being you can use for different things if you're in control of your choices. I was able to use it as a positive thing. Unfortunately, the street is taking care of people who should be taken care of. Many homeless people have much more serious problems than the fact that they're homeless. Sometimes they can't ask for help. That's the essential problem, I think.

by Kristen Nicholson

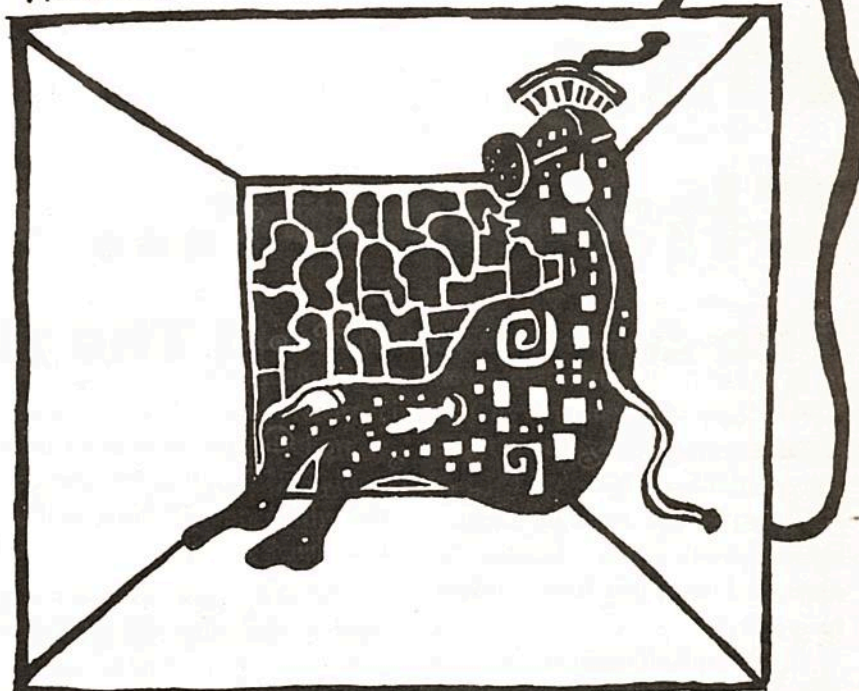


Street Life



SEVERE

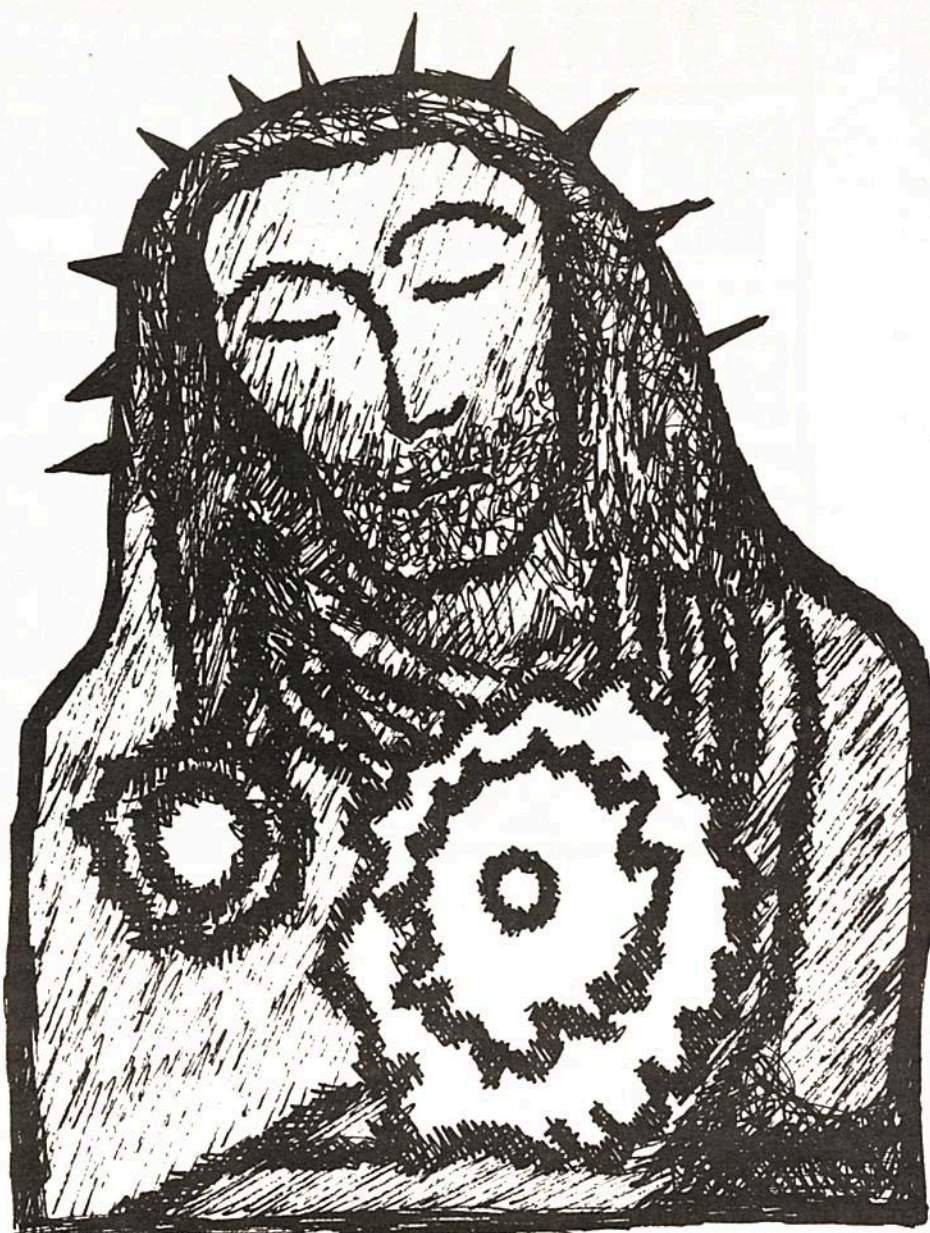
ALONE, I SENSE MYSELF



ALONE, THE WORLD DISAPPEARS



CONFINED IN 2 DIMENSIONS



Christ with Exploding Heart



The Hero



This is how i live



ΠΟΛΥΤΡΟΠΟΝ



ICARUS WITH A MIRROR
ON HIS CHEST

untitled

the posing fishes know what circuses are really for
they are constructing steel factories to get them into space
the seagulls are rearranging fermat's theorem
the sheep are resting and reading the new york times
everything is becoming not what it was
everything is turning into stars into the ocean
the universe is becoming a burning blue light
you are becoming an ice cream cone
the fish are becoming bricks

impossible light shine on me daily
they are changing me into the stone
i'm changing into a nail file
i'm slowly becoming a telephone pole
and a lacquered loaf of french bread
at the same time

i'm changing you into a jar of corn kernels
into the waxy effigy of jesus christ
i'm sprinkling candy on your feet and
telling you what will become of it
(fin)

by Max Chandler

The Kingdome and I

Thank you for buying this copy of *our* paper! Please feel free to pat yourself on the back. Your consideration is greatly appreciated. If you, the holder of this paper, pass this edition along, perhaps our voice will be heard by still others.

Joey Doney

I saw a few copies of the first print lying about, discarded litter, and hoped the message of homeless advocacy, helping the homeless, would mean more. But, if throwing your paper to the wind might grant some fella a bed to lie on, a blanket for cover, or even a piece of toilet paper (I've used all these methods for lack of better resources) then thank you.

There are many forms of homelessness with which this country has had to cope. Take for example the recent eviction of the Jungle residents. I was one of those residents encamped upon the Northwest slope of Beacon Hill.

Soon after the July 18th eviction, I couldn't believe that within the same week the roof of the Kingdome came tumbling down. In my bitterness, I thought that perhaps there was a sort of justice here. I mean, I had the roof over my head plowed under, so what the hell!

The significance for me person-

ally was this: if Seattle didn't care what it meant for we Jungle residents to secure our homes, perhaps this event, if anything, could put into perspective our plight. Forgive my vituperative propensities, but ... HA! HA! HA!

So now the Mariners and Seahawks are homeless. Well, Seattle, how does it feel? Does it frustrate you? Do you feel your efforts to secure a decent home have gone in vain? And now we hear the cry for funds to put a formidable structure over the heads of the *home* team.

In the meantime, through the charitable contribution of the University of Washington, the Seahawks have found shelter. The Mariners might have had a chance at the World Series. Had that happened, Seattle would have shared the embarrassment of many homeless. Media publicity on a grand scale mocks our existence.

Believe me, the rest of the U.S. would not have rushed to Seattle's aid. They would have looked at our homelessness and laughed, turned their backs, and said, "It's not my problem." It seems that so much of the U.S. is misled as to why people become homeless that people feel overconfident and comfortable.

They think that if they choose wisely in their life pursuits, that persistence and perseverance will pay off, and they will be sheltered. This

belief was shared by many homeowners in America, before their roofs fell in.

Look at the disasters that have struck the country over the 90s. High temperatures and low rainfalls set the west ablaze. Mass floods have swallowed entire towns in the midwestern states. Major hurricanes have hammered the southwest and eastern states. Earthquakes have pummeled the west coast. Tornadoes that once fell in uninhabited areas have cut through towns.

inherited wealth is handed down to those who care not one bit about vocation. They're on vacation!

And much of the country's property owners do not actually own property, but promissory notes to the bank. They have mortgaged their property to buy more property, with payments being made by those paying rent. Look at the cost of rent today, and tell me these month-to-month payments wouldn't secure a decent home loan. Rents are paying the loans, but not securing the properties.

"I no longer view my country as a democracy. We are a plutocracy, and many 'jungles' are being cleared through gentrification. The common wage-earner can no longer afford the American dream."

Is anyone actually safe? The once prevalent homeowner is now paying the high cost of rent. Many have paid with their lives.

I no longer view my country as a democracy. We are a plutocracy, and many "jungles" are being cleared through gentrification. The common wage-earner can no longer afford the American dream. What's really frightening is that America's

Fortunately, at least some of us have housing. Seattle did find Ivan the Gorilla a new home, where by Thanksgiving, he'll be sharing a bountiful meal with family and friends.

As the homeless here in "the concrete jungle" find their way each day, please remember them in your prayers.

My Best to Alice: The Saddest Words I Have Ever Heard a Human Being Say

Alice, a newly-found on-the-road friend I met in Bozeman, Montana... She was an equally-as-lost, equally white, middle-aged woman who had covered the map, criss-crossed and zig-zagged her way, running AWAY, running HOME (where?) and ran into me engaged in a likewise pattern...

Marion Sue Fischer

Casually, one day, while we were planning a roadwise getaway, I said, "Well, we could..." She BURST in with a steady, quiet and strained voice: "I HAVE LEARNED TO SAY 'I'!"

I paused in my pell-mell enthusiasm; this woman WAS a bit older than me, had "kicked" booze and, seemingly, cigarettes, and could, on those counts, *perhaps* be considered

wiser... certainly *stronger*. I took her remark under advisement, my spirits considerably dampened.

In the intervening years, I have often pondered her words, wondering... Perhaps I say "we" too easily... perhaps in my desperate need for camaraderie I *am* sometimes rash, somewhat impractical, premature, wildly inappropriate... YES...

BUT to this day, I say "WE" with such enthusiasm, often unfoundedly, frequently with a sad and private certainty that, in a given situation, the present tense, THERE MAY BE NO "WE..."

Just NOW, tonight, I am comfortable being ME, comfortable that, if I MUST err, it is on the side of hope... Yes, Alice, you are often "right," but I can *never* rule out the kind of partnership(s) I NEED to live a valuable, wholesome and joyful life.

Just TONIGHT I see the pain and futility, the crushing disappointments behind your remark, and yet I WILL say "we..."

No, Alice, we never *did* "team up" and leave Bozeman together... you were "RIGHT"... BUT I am happy here in *Seattle*... tonight.



MARION SUE FISCHER

Attention Artists!

The Compass Center is looking for homeless or formerly homeless artists to paint artwork for our lobby. You provide the talent & we provide the materials! Go to 77 S Washington 9am-3pm M-F or call 461-7837 for info.

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In The Spirit of Margaret: SWAC Builds Strength for Homeless Women

A strong woman is a woman who craves love like oxygen or she turns blue choking.
A strong woman is a woman who loves strongly and weeps strongly and is strongly terrified and has strong needs. A strong woman is strong in words, in action, in connection, in feeling; she is not strong as a stone but strong as a wolf suckling her young. Strength is not in her, but she enacts it as the wind fills a sail.

What comforts her is others loving her equally for the strength and for the weakness from which it issues, lightening from a cloud. Lightening stuns. In rain, the clouds disperse. Only water of connection remains, flowing through us. Strong is what we make each other. Until we are all strong together, a strong woman is a woman strongly afraid.

From "For Strong Women," by Marge Piercy

A while ago a story appeared in *Real Change* paying homage to a woman named Margaret. There are millions of Margaret stories, but the one we cite here seems symbolic of the Seattle Women's Action Coalition (SWAC).

...

During the last two weeks of Margaret's life she was admitted to the hospital many times, but kept returning to Pioneer Square to be near people who knew her. Payday arrived, and early that morning there was a pounding of the door at DESC's offices—Margaret, come to claim her check before someone ran off with it. She was barefoot and out of breath at the effort to protect what was rightfully hers, wearing nothing but a hospital gown, untied at the back. The day before she had been comatose at Harborview. We cashed the check and got her back to the hospital as quickly as we could. She died that night.

...

This story is a flash point of what members of SWAC witness everyday in the community of homeless women: a strength of will, an ability to persevere despite overwhelming obstacles. Margaret was a big, strong woman with unrelenting needs. She will be remembered both for her strength and for her stubborn desire to be acknowledged and seen in ways that seemed impossible.

In its own way, SWAC tries to embody the spirit of Margaret. We are a three year-old, still fledgling group of social service providers who

work with homeless and low-income women. Our goal is to complement existing services for women and to advocate for the expansion of services to this desperately underserved group. We stubbornly and persistently envision communities in which women's lives are celebrated and free from violence and oppression. Our task often seems Sisyphean—we are few, and the numbers and needs of homeless women ever increase as the streets get meaner.

In the past, SWAC has focused on outreach and education. Last year we actively worked with WHEEL (Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League, SHARE's organizing effort of homeless women) on a successful campaign to expand the availability of shelter and daytime drop-in services for homeless women, and create women-only floors in new low-cost housing programs.

We recently had a retreat to re-focus and discover new ways of working on our many unrealized and far-reaching goals. We realized, again, that our strength is in our community, and so we are asking for your help. If you can support our efforts in any way, please call Margaret King at 464-1570, ext. 3054. We will be writing a monthly column in *Real Change* to spread the word of our efforts.

—Michele Marchand,
Margaret King, SWAC



MARION SUE FISCHER READS HER POETRY AT A RALLY, ORGANIZED BY WHEEL, TO MOVE THE DESC ENTRANCE FROM THE ALLEY. PHOTO BY DANA SCHUERHOLZ

Block Watch Brings Hope to Pioneer Square Community

Block Watch is a new organization composed of the homeless, formerly homeless, and advocates. Its purpose is to address issues of violence in Pioneer Square, particularly as they affect women.

Block Watch was started by Julie Fisher as a support group when a woman was raped in the alley outside Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC). In the two weeks following, three more women became victims of assault in City Hall Park, located roughly one block east of the shelter.

Pioneer Square "becomes a ghost town at night," explains Fisher, "except for the strip where the nightclubs are." Women residents of the area's low-income housing are often afraid to leave their rooms after dark. "They feel isolated and scared," Fisher comments. All members of Block Watch, homeless and advocates alike, can identify with these feelings of fear and physical threat.

Block Watch also seeks practical measures its members can take to increase both personal and community safety. At a recent meeting of the group, invited speaker officer Kevin O'Neill emphasized the importance of calling 911 to report crimes.

Police manpower is distributed, he said, based largely on the number of 911 calls logged. Pioneer Square has been under-represented by this statistic. Residents are often hesitant to become involved with the police. There are feelings of mistrust and the sense that crimes against the

homeless are not taken seriously.

In addition, Block Watch is pushing to have the entrance of DESC moved from the alley to Third Ave. The alley has been particularly dangerous in recent years, a place where many crack deals are made. Some improvement has come recently. The alcoves have been leveled, the alley is closed from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., and police presence has been increased. However, further measures are necessary in order to insure the safety of those at DESC.

Remodeling the building to create a Third Ave. entrance will take time and money. In the meantime, Block Watch is exploring temporary options, such as hiring security guards to patrol the alley, or possibly adding a staircase onto the James Street side of the building.

Area business owners have expressed their concern that Block Watch, and other organizations like it, draw too much attention to the negative aspects of Pioneer Square. Ironically, it is the strength of groups such as Block Watch that keeps Pioneer Square alive with hope and community.

—Cassandra Halle Delaney

Block Watch Meeting Times

Alternate Thursday mornings, 10 a.m., Union Hotel activity Room, 3rd and Washington. 204 3rd Ave.

While some meetings are women-only, the next meeting, held Nov. 10th, will be co-ed.

For more information, call Julie Fisher, 464-1570, ext. 3055.

Stormy Thoughts

The following poems were written by youth involved in the writing group at YouthCare's Orion center, a drop-in center for street kids. The Orion Center provides a wide variety of services, including meals, case management, counseling and recreational activities for run-away, homeless and street-involved young people in crisis, and residential services.

All of these poems are taken from a book entitled The House on the Corner, published by YouthCare. This 54-page book of poetry may be purchased by calling YouthCare at 282-1288. All poems are the copyrighted property of YouthCare and the authors, and are reprinted here by permission.

Risks I've Taken

Rachel

The one risk,
which may seem like nothing to some people,
means a lot to me.
The risk I took
was sometime in the middle of November of 1988,
and that's when I went to my father's grave.
The risk,
for some reason,
was for the first time to meet my father
as he lies in the ground.
Sure, it may seem like shit,
but I was able to meet him
without anyone watching
and only him and I.
At that moment I felt happy
and loved,
which is a trip.
For some reason it was harder to meet him dead
than alive.
I guess it is better
than thinking he's alive
for the rest of my life.

I Don't Remember

Nicole, Justin, Jennifer I, and Richard

I don't remember people's names.
I don't remember before 4th grade.
I remember school,
but not home.
I don't remember my brother being born.
I remember my 2nd grade teacher;
My brother and stepdad teased me about her name.
I don't remember my dad;
I've never seen him, talked to him,
or seen a picture.
I don't remember my concussions.
I don't remember being born.
I do remember getting my diapers changed once.
I don't remember dying.

My Thoughts

Leon

I care about the whole world.
I think about myself
every day
cause I need money in my pocket.
I think about sex
every day
and every night.
I think about remote-control trucks and cars.
I think about buying
a Honda Accord
for \$400.
I think about dice.
I think about my brother,
he's going to do 20 days.
I'm going to miss him.
I don't know why.
And I miss all my homeboys
who are dead
like Catlow, Rico, June-June.

The House on the Corner

Monica

The house on the corner of your block is condemned and abandoned. The windows and doors are boarded up, there's no heat, running water, or electricity. The house is falling apart and decaying, with graffiti everywhere.

The house on the corner of your block is a squat. It is my home. There's dozens of street kids in the squat. They're all ages, all races, all different. It's one big homeless family. Everyone pitches in for candles or food. People donate blankets and sleeping bags, but sometimes we still get cold and wet. The last squat we lived in had holes in the roof, so when it rained, the house flooded.

The police visit the house on the corner of your block about twice a month. When they visit us, they harass or arrest us for breaking and entering or criminal trespass. Sometimes we even get a ride down to the precinct. And if we're really lucky, the judge locks us up for trying to find a warm place to stay.

The house on the corner of your block smells real bad from piss and puke. It has garbage and bugs all over. When people ask me where I live I say "around." I am too ashamed to tell them. I never have friends over for the day. They would cry if they knew I lived in a hellhole like that. The sun doesn't shine on my house, but the rain falls down on my squat all day long.

The house on the corner of your block looks empty, but it's not. There's dozens of starving kids inside, all waiting for the rain to stop. When you live on the streets you learn to survive, you learn to be mean. It's the nice kids who don't survive. It's the nice ones who get beat up, raped, mugged, pimped, stuck selling drugs for someone. It's the nice ones that get killed. You learn that no one cares about you and that you're on your own. The most important thing you learn is never to trust anyone, you'll just get hurt.

The house on the corner of your block is getting torn down right now as I write this. Tonight I have to find a new house on a new corner on a new block.

Don't Ask Me Why

Anonymous

Crack.
Crack is my drug of choice,
don't ask me why.
Crack will turn you inside out
into a hooker or a thief.
It's a great high,
but coming down I feel six feet deep.
I haven't slept in eleven days or nights,
don't ask me why.
At night I crawl on the floor with a flashlight
looking for a high.
Sometimes I wish I could stop.
Sometimes I just want more.
I love the way it sizzles
so beautifully,
but I hate what it does to me.
I am so lonely,
I love its numbness.
It can take all of my pain away.
I wish I could be happy.
It makes me so paranoid.
I look over my shoulder every few seconds
I wish I could stop this madness.
I don't care about anything
anymore
except getting high.
Don't ask me why,
because I don't know
anymore.

A Stormy Thought

Jasmine

Sitting alone
watching the rain
thinking of you
feeling the pain.

I was so young
unable to think
thirsty for love
and you let me drink.

Trusting in you
I gave you myself
just when I found love
you found someone else.

My thoughts clouded over
to resemble the skies
my tears fell downwards
and fell from my eyes.

My pride has been shattered
my heart scarred
but next time I vow
I won't fall so hard.

Warming Up

Tom

Alone in an ice cold world,
Solitude as barren as Siberia.
A heart sits in a deep freezer.
I sit here in solitude,
As my feelings turn to rage,
Molten rivers of emotions,
Run boiling through my veins.
Anger builds up,
Then comes the hate.
I just want to kill,
Then take and fillet.
Don't know how to be alone.
Don't know how to love.
All I know now
Is just how to to hate.

The Way I Feel About You

Missy

When I get around you I get that feeling,
the one I can't explain.
And it's really hard on me
to see you in this much pain.
I hope we can stay together
forever and a day.
In my heart I know it.
I know we'll find a way.
I hope you feel better,
for I hate to see you like this.
And when you are I wish
I could hold you close and give you a kiss.
In my heart it hurts me
to see you feeling so bad
Because you're the best friend
I have ever had.
I've always loved you,
and know I always will.
In this poem to you
my feelings I have spilled.

Why?

Rita

Why do I feel so bad
when I do something good,
and why do I feel so good
when I do something bad?
Maybe it is because
I didn't deserve the things I had.

What I had I destroyed;
and what I didn't
I have stolen.

November

8

Tuesday, Election Day. Polls open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. Remember to vote

CISPES monthly meeting, includes El Salvador update, all welcome. Firehouse, 15th E & E Harrison, 7 p.m., info 325-5494

10

Thursday, Palestinian Cultural Evening with dinner, drama, poetry, music and dance, speech by Emily Shehadeh, Palestine Concerns Task Force of Church Council, 6:30 p.m. reception, 7 dinner, 8 program, Bloedel Hall, St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave E, \$20, tickets or info 525-1213

11

Friday, David Barsamian reading from his book with Noam Chomsky and Edward Said 7:30 p.m., Red & Black Books, 432 15th E.

Friday-Saturday, Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation annual retreat, info 789-5565

1994 Seattle Human Rights Film Festival, 37 films including 9 Seattle premieres, to raise awareness and money for Amnesty International, Begins Friday, through the 20th, Grand Illusion, 911 Media Arts Center, Pike Street Cinema, info 483-2920

12

Saturday, All-day Consensus Facilitation Workshop suitable for both new and experienced facilitators led by East Coast activist C.T. Butler, 9 - 5 p.m., University Baptist Church, 12th Ave NE at NE 47th, Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia, info and registration 547-0952.

Physicians for Social Responsibility Annual Dinner with Mayor Norm Rice, theme: ending violence, keynote by Jennifer James, Ph.D., Seattle

Westin Cascade Room, \$50 - 60, info, reservations 547-2630

The Timberline, P-FLAG, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays event in planning, info Bob Klein 937-3427

16

Wednesday, "Haiti: Behind the Headlines, History and Politics: From Adams to Aristide," noon - 1:30 p.m., Downtown Library Auditorium, 5th & Madison, Seattle Library, Sponsored by FOR, info 789-5565

Washington Single Payer Action Network for single-payer health care plan, General Meeting, 7:30 p.m., call 233-1711 for location.

17

Thursday, Housing for All, WA State Housing Justice Campaign Kick-Off Event, Time TBA, Maple Ave. Apartments, 1622 Maple, Kent, WA, more info., 442-9455.

International Women's Day Committee monthly meeting, informal community building, 7:30 a.m., Elliott Bay Bookstore Cafe, 1st South at Main, info Lexie 587-3854 or Louise 632-8547

18

Friday, "Culture and Community in Haiti," noon - 1:30 p.m., Downtown Library Auditorium, 5th & Madison, Seattle Library, FOR, info 789-5565

No Punching Judy, a program for the prevention of domestic violence, including showing of 27 minute video puppet show, and presentation about using it by creator Margi McCue. Begins at 4 p.m. with Happy Half-Hour with snacks and displays, University Unitarian Church, 6556 35th Ave NE, Washington State Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Promise the Children. 6:10 buffet supper, 7 p.m. presentation by Margi McCue "Violence and Welfare", suggested \$5 for presentations, \$5 for supper, supper reservations 878-8706, info 526-7081

19

Saturday, Rally, "Clearcut: Costs of Pacific Trade," with speakers on the environment, music, noon, Victor Steinbrueck Park, north of Pike Place Market.

20

Sunday, "Family Preparation for the Winter Holidays with a Focus on Peace and Justice," Storytelling, Singing, Crafts, everyone welcome, potluck 5:00 p.m., program 6:30, Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 North 70th at Greenwood, Sponsored by FOR, info 789-5565

21

Monday, Noam Chomsky discussion group, 7 - 9 p.m., University Library, 5009 Roosevelt NE at NE 50th

22

Tuesday, Fellowship of Reconciliation film series, 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Place N, light refreshments, donation, info 789-5565.

24

Thursday, Freedom Socialist Party presents an Old-Fashioned, Laid-Back Thanksgiving, 2 p.m. through evening, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave S, buffet 3 - 5 p.m., videos, card games, conversation, sliding to \$9.50, rides, info 722-2453 or 722-6057

December

3

Saturday, Seattle Women Act for Peace Annual Fun and Fundraising Auction, entertainment, potluck dinner, 4 p.m., Melrose Terrace, 308 E Republican, donations or info 329-3666

Seattle Women's Ensemble, a lesbian-rooted chorus, with the Edmonia Jarrett Quartet, in "Winter Light: Crones' Night" celebrating the wisdom, beauty,

and inspiration of older women, 8 p.m., ASL interpreted, Unity Church, 200 8th Ave N

5

Monday, Start of trial of 5 housing advocates arrested at destruction of jungle encampments, 8:30 a.m., Public Safety Building, Court 1 room 700, 3rd & Cherry downtown

Ongoing

Through Nov 13, "A Day in the Warsaw Ghetto," a traveling exhibit, Museum of History and Industry, info 324-1126

Picketing in support of United Farm Workers boycott of Ste Michelle wine, info 525-1419

Weekdays, Sit In to Protest Anti-Sitting Ordinance, 7:30 - 8:30 a.m., in front of Seattle's Municipal building, 600 4th Ave, info 448-7889, call 517-9011 to report harassment or citations, volunteer for time-slots

Fridays, Black Dollar Days Task Force Lunches support African American owned restaurants, 323-4212

Sundays through Dec 4, Fascism: What it is and How to Fight It, 1 - 3:30 p.m., New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave S, Freedom Socialist Party Presents a Course by Andrea Bauer, \$2 - 4 per session, refreshments by donation at noon, info 722-2453

Special Thanks to Jean at

buskin@u.washington.edu. Please send notices regarding homeless, housing, poverty related, or other progressive events to Real Change, 2129 2nd Ave., 948121, 441-3247. Confirmation of listed events is advised.

Advertise in Real Change.

Call 441-3247 for rates.



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LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO CALL HOME?

Plymouth Housing Group provides permanent housing for single adults in downtown Seattle. Rents range from \$155 to \$350 per month.

Lewiston Hotel
2201 1/2 First Ave.

Scargo Hotel
2205 1/2 First Ave.

St. Charles Hotel
619 Third Ave.

Payne Apartments
1521 Seventh Ave.

William Tell Hotel
2327 Second Ave.

The Gatewood
107 Pine St.

Please call 343-7838 for application information.

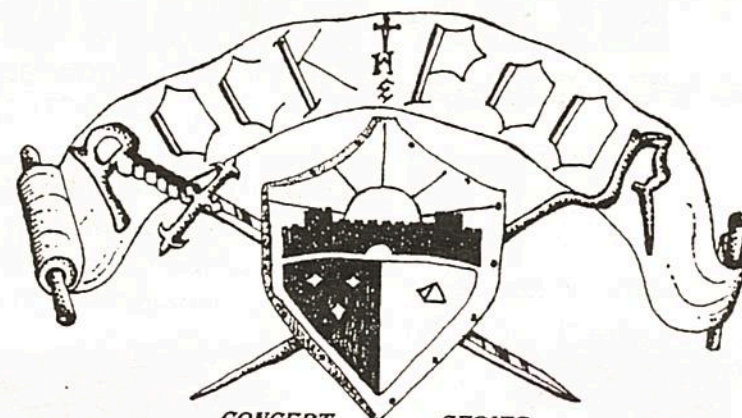
Common Meals trains and places homeless, unemployed men and women in the food service industry and provides low-cost, nutritious meals to the homeless shelters and other programs that serve low-income and disadvantaged people.

COMMON MEALS

JOB TRAINING TO END HOMELESSNESS

SUPPORTED BY THE PREMIER NORTHWEST CHEFS

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BLANKET HOMELESS

ROCK WITH
DAISY CUTTER

I - Amilius (Formerly Bran D Gale)
Crossbone River

ACOUSTIC ACTS, SPEAKERS AND MORE

November 25, 1994 Doors Open at 7:30pm
Odd Fellows Temple (915 E Pine)

\$5.00 donation

(please bring donations of blankets, coats, and/or sleeping bags)

Sponsored by: Community Action Network, Food Not Bombs, Real Change, Seattle Displacement Coalition, and SHARE. For info call 728-9108

Thanks to our new subscribers: Dorene Agenbroad, AIDS Outreach Program, Allen's Press Clipping Bureau, Maggi Bingenheimer, Broadview Emergency Shelter, Marzelie D. Dougan, Downtown Seattle Assn., Jeremy Farren, Daniel Goldsmith, The Green Group, James Griffin, Marie Herreras-Zinman, Key Bank, Robin Helmick, Daniel K. Malone, Sharon & Jim Moore, Mark and Jean Poole, Marilyn Seaman, Deb Shaw, University Christian Church, University Unitarian Church, YouthCare.

MAILBAG, CONT. FROM PAGE 3

often cynical neo-nihilism of other local alternative papers.

I wish you the best of luck.

Jeffery Eaton
Phinney Ridge

Dear Real Change,

I am writing in response to the many articles that you have had in your interesting publication.

I fail to understand how it is considered an injustice that the City does not allow people to sit or lie down on the downtown sidewalks.

After all, this ordinance only applies to downtown and for a portion of the 24 hour day.

Many individuals have to stand all day at their jobs; can't the street beggars do the same?

Although I am now comfortably well off, one time as a young man I and a buddy worked our way around the country and when necessary would sleep in barns and parks but never would consider stretching out on a sidewalk. We were always able to find some type of restaurant job as a dishwasher, busser, or short order cook. I cannot imagine us sticking out our hands and asking someone for money without working for it.

I now live downtown and have seen the same individual beggars on a daily basis with the same lines; need gas for their car which has their children in it, need money for bus fare so as to visit a dying aunt in Yakima (that's a favorite one), need money as her children were in Children's Hospital with spinal meningitis (which proved to be a lie), one who claims to be homeless but has a home in the Greenwood District, etc., etc.

This is not to say that some are not genuine, especially the mentally ill, but I cannot feel too sorry for the rest when they are not allowed to stretch out on a sidewalk with their hands out for money.

Now that I've undoubtedly destroyed myself in your eyes, I'll try and redeem myself by saying I do feel empathy for the truly deserving and I believe this is reflected in the 48 very low income SRO rooms that I provide on a truly non-profit basis. I also support charities that endeavor to get people on their feet again.

Martin Paup
Seattle

Dear Real Change,

I purchased *Real Change* a week ago for the first time and was greatly impressed. I'm hoping that *Real Change* will indeed promote real change in our society. Homelessness

is a problem that touches everyone and should be worked on by everyone, even if it comes in a small way such as merely supporting your publication. Sweeping the homeless into Seattle's dark corners must no longer be tolerated.

That is why I was greatly perplexed as to why City Councilor Margaret Pageler would say she would "pass information along" about *Real Change* but could not subscribe or participate. Does she subscribe to the *P-I* or *Seattle Times*? Are politics the reason? I am interested to know her reasoning. My wish is that all of Seattle's citizens (including all public officials) would band together and help solve our city's many problems.

Mary Locatelli
Maple Valley, WA
Univ. of Wash. student

Dear Real Change,

I have just read your premiere issue and applaud everyone involved. When approached in the street (4th & Pine) I thought it might be a zealot religious paper. However, the well-spoken man explained the concept in as much time as I tried to walk away. And I stopped, I asked, was answered, and bought *Real Change*.

I am proud of this city, which I chose from a world away (Australia)

to call home. I am proud of the recycling programs we all work with, the environmental laws passed in this state, the legal issues this state is not afraid to address. The list is endless until we come to the homeless, the vagrants that "litter" our streets. Visiting San Francisco, as a tourist, I saw hundreds of homeless but never thought it was sooooo bad here in my beautiful Seattle. I returned from vacation and was appalled with the number of homeless I counted here.

As an individual I did nothing. That vacation was 7 months ago. I am still catching up from it financially. Thankfully, I am not on the streets, but I believe that this newspaper can save many people from the streets, or help them find a center of their community to grow within.

So, I ask to do something to help. We all have talents to expedite change, and this paper is the most concrete idea I have seen amongst a group of tired and lost people to do SOMETHING. Anything to help this problem of the American Poor. Isn't that an oxymoron? The USA is famous for not having a "disposal class."

We can create a bridge to understand that in America, Money is not who you are. You are only what you are allowed to be.

Misha Galt-Martin
Seattle

REAL CHANGE TAKES MORE THAN SPARE CHANGE.



PHOTO BY GUERRY HODDERSON

JUSTICE IS MORE THAN CHARITY

Our newspaper is based upon some pretty simple ideas. We should listen to the poor. We should all have meaningful work. We should all work for justice.

Real Change publishes the views of homeless people and their advocates so that we may have a direct voice of our own. We provide honest, immediate work to those who are interested in helping themselves.

For us, *Real Change* is more than just words. It's creating economic opportunity, changing public perceptions, and ultimately building the sort of informed pressure that makes social change happen.

None of this can happen without you. By purchasing *Real Change* from a homeless vendor, you make the project work. We do, however, depend upon other sorts of support as well.

Your subscription contribution helps us cover the expenses involved in staffing and producing a monthly paper. Your volunteer hours help keep our expenses to a minimum, so we can focus our resources on what matters: creating jobs and a voice for the homeless.

You can help the homeless to help themselves. When we work together, real change is possible. For more information, call 441-3247.

COUNT ME IN!

I want more than just words!

Let's work together to make Real Change Happen.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (w) _____ (h) _____

**Checks should be made payable to
"Real Change," 2129 Second Ave., Seattle, WA 98121**

- ☐ Enclosed is \$35 for a 1 year subscription
- ☐ Enclosed is a donation of \$ _____
- ☐ Send me info about ad rates
- ☐ I can volunteer the following:
 - ☐ Typing Skills
 - ☐ Desktop Publishing Skills
 - ☐ Photography
 - ☐ Proofreading skills
 - ☐ Journalism Skills
 - ☐ Time and Energy
 - ☐ Other _____