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Seattle's Homeless Newspaper

Art for Art's Sake

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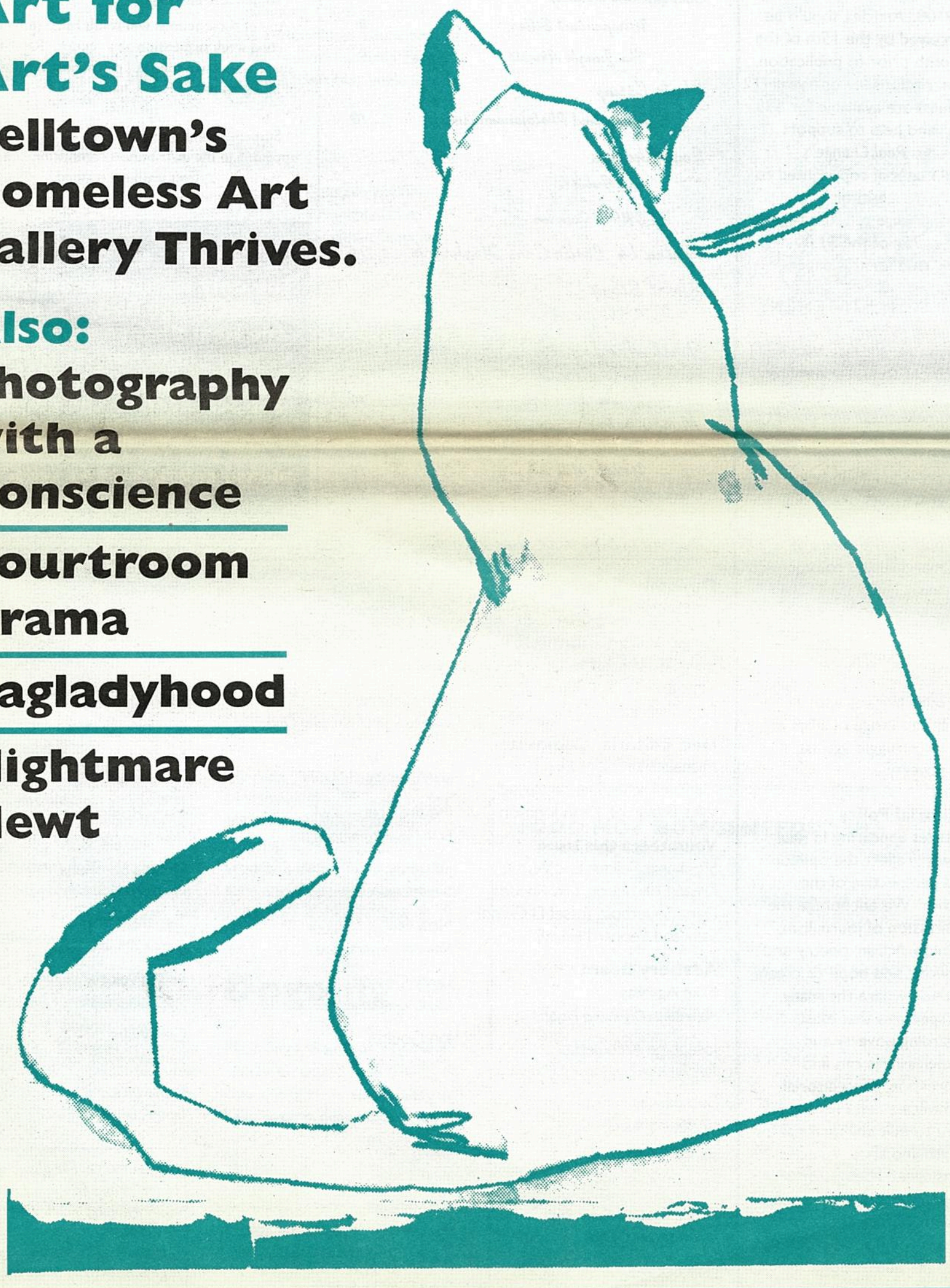

Real Change

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*.

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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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Cover Art by Bruce Vegar, Street Life Gallery

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CORRECTIONS: *The photos of Noel House women in the last issue were taken by Stacey Jones. Theresa Williams was misidentified as "Deborah." The photo on the back page was taken by Dana Shuerholz.*

The Problem with Welfare

Is More Hunger and Homelessness Really Reform?

Say the word "welfare" and you get images of teenagers producing babies at will. You get images of women having baby after baby to get more money; images of lazy women staying home when they should be out working; of the welfare queen driving of to then welfare office in a big car and wearing a fur.

Jean Coleman

When I say the word "welfare" I think of women who had the good sense to leave a marriage or relationship where they were regularly abused; images of women frugally shopping to stretch meager food stamps; images of women volunteering in their children's schools and community centers; images of women returning to school to gain the education they need in order to compete for jobs; images of single parents deciding which bill to pay and which to postpone a month.

As someone who works with parents who receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the main welfare program in question, I would say the second image encompasses the majority of people who use AFDC. However, myths and stereotypes occur because we all know someone who…

Yes women do have children while on welfare, but not to get more money. Some parents feel so debilitated they don't leave the home. Some women might even have borrowed a car to get to the welfare office because they cannot afford to maintain one.

The reality is that you have to have children and be really poor to get on welfare. Most people on welfare are women with children. Most got there because they left an abusive relationship or were abandoned by a husband or partner. Two parent families, where one has lost his or her job or is disabled, can also get assistance.

Your car can't be worth more than $1,500, and you can't have more than $1,000 in the bank. A woman with one child in Washington receives $440 per month. If she has two children she receives $546. These figures are higher than the national average, but only 46% of what the state says she really needs to live on.

Welfare has never been a big program. It takes 1% of the federal budget and less than 4% of the state budget. It first served white, middle-income widows and was designed to keep them out of the labor force and home with their children.

Since the late-60s, when rolls were opened to all women poor enough to qualify, welfare to work programs became an active part of the welfare system. These early programs did not consider that women often earn less than men; that single parents need child care and health care for their children; and that it now takes two incomes to make a decent living due to the disappearance of the family wage.

Later programs acknowledged that parents need child care and health care, but have not really addressed the economic questions of women earning less or the numbers of family wage jobs. Since the programs don't address the economic issues, most women have trouble leaving welfare and not returning. When society and government do not address the economic issues, we just blame poor women for being poor.

"There will be more families going to food banks and seeking shelters. We will see more hungry and stressed out children…"

This, then, is the basis for the current debate: do we reform the system, or do we reform the people who use the system? Since 1992, when candidate Bill Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it," the emphasis has been on reforming the people who use welfare without really exploring why they turned to welfare in the first place.

The Republican's Personal Responsibility Act would put into law all the stereotypes we have about welfare. It would legislate morality by denying assistance to children born of teen parents or of parents who currently receive welfare, require parents to work for their grant, generally at less than minimum wage, and allow states the ability to experiment with human/family subjects.

An even more dangerous proposal is to eliminate the entitlement aspect of AFDC and send the funds to the states as a block grant, which would be capped. This is dangerous for a number of reasons. First, it takes the Federal government out of the partnership with states in dealing with poverty. Second, by capping the funds, it eliminates the state's ability to be flexible in hard times when people need public assistance. Last, it will place greater reassure on counties, cities, and non-profits to absorb the fallout. There will be more families going to food banks and seeking shelters. We will see more hungry and stressed out children who will have problems in school.

Real welfare reform is making government a partner in helping families support themselves. It means creating jobs that will support families and helping parents get the training they need to compete for these jobs. It means universal health care so parents can keep their kids healthy. It means safe, affordable child care, so parents know their children are safe and supervised. It means making sure that all families have what they need to feed, house, and clothe their families.

With all the rhetoric around welfare, we expect a Bill to move quickly through the House of Representatives. We hope it will slow down in the Senate, and that they will consider the consequences, if not to the families at least to the states they represent. The Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition (WROC) is working with other organizations and individuals to let our representatives know this is not good policy. Welfare reform is not ending assistance for families.

Jean Coleman is Director of the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition (WROC)

MAILBAG

2129 2nd Ave., 98121

Dear Real Change,

In Reading Real Change I see no advocacy for low-rent housing for families and singles. Clearly, there's a dire need for permanent affordable housing as a first priority—not shelters for transitional housing but permanent affordable (geared to the federal minimum wage regulations) housing.

With the President's proposal to eliminate housing from the federal program, the future for all of us grows dim. Instead of making housing a local issue, we must begin to demand that our federal government make low/moderate rent housing a prime issue (along with universal health care). How long do we allow our government to ignore our needs while giving tax breaks to corporations who literally pay no taxes?

How long have we had our population of poorly housed persons? Long enough for real change! Our advocates would rather beg non-profits for help than go directly to the federal government. We must begin to bombard our Federal Representatives and Senators (and our President) to make affordable and permanent housing the law of our land. In the 1930s, the need for affordable permanent housing caused our Congress to formulate laws which did ensure low-rent housing—what happened to these laws? Have we gotten so smug and comfortable that we forgot that we must be ever vigilant? Once we let our concern for each other fade, we allow our rights to be diminished.

WE must turn the federal government around to our needs. WE must demand low-moderate

Cont., page 16

Vendor of the Month

December's Vendor of the Month has become a bit of a legend around here. Not one to waste words, everyday he would typically come in and say "100." When he felt talkative, he'd say "give me 200."

El is 50 years old and has recently arrived from California. He is in recovery, and says Real Change "has given me the opportunity to recover gracefully."

"I have a bad attitude, and need a job where I'm kind of free." He wants a house in the mountains, where he can write.

He says the money's not bad. "It keeps me from sleeping in alleys and on people's couches. It pays the rent and lets me eat what I want. If I want prime rib, I get prime rib. If I want soup, I get soup.

El will be eating at Common Meals soon with his two gift certificates for a gourmet meal. Not surprisingly, he opted to take his $25 cash in the form of papers.

Street Life

Art for Art's Sake

Belltown's Street Life Gallery Comes Into its Own

By Timothy Harris

Everyone there had to agree: the reopening of the Street Life Gallery last December was perfect in every way.

In recent months, the community center and work space, once known as the Homeless Art Gallery, has arrived. The reopening marks a turning point in the space's still brief history, where the artists themselves have formed a supportive and creative community of their own.

During the ribbon cutting, a brief moment of silence was held to "consecrate this place at 2nd & Bell as a place of nurturing and beauty." As the crowd of well-wishers settled into their meditations, one of the Second Ave. regulars loudly carried on outside the plate glass window in what for him was a normal tone of voice. It was hard not to smile.

The moment was perfect in its imperfection, for Streetlife is a place where creative chaos is harnessed and turned to power. The shouts outside the window were just as they should be: a gentle reminder that neatness and order are not everything.

The Gallery first opened in July, 1991, when a creative collaboration of homeless artists and writers were granted space in the Catholic Community Services building on Bell Street, and the Noel House shelter for homeless women agreed to administer the program.

Artist Michael Howell, whose life-like portraits of homeless people can be found throughout Seattle, is widely acknowledged as the Gallery's founding member. Howell began a Homeless Art Committee, whose members came from organizations like SHARE and the now-defunct Seatown Crier homeless newspaper. Until a nine-month grant from the City of Seattle allowed a coordinator to be hired, it was Howell who kept the Gallery glued together.

From the beginning, the Gallery has been "dedicated to providing a comfortable, hassle-free space for homeless and low-income artists to work, display, and sell their art." Artists help each other with their work and offer workshops to the community. Donated supplies allow creative expression to those with little or no money.

Since then, the Gallery has increasingly become a space in Belltown where preconceived notions of what it means to be poor and homeless are regularly challenged, and where the artists who use the space have taken responsibility for its operation.

December's reopening then, with the new name "Street Life Gallery," marks a profound turning point in the space's history. The new paint job and rearrangement of art displays are only the surface. What lays beneath the new sense of order is a fledgling creative community sustained by nothing less that a supreme faith in human potential.

Marion Sue Fischer and Wes Browning are known to their dismay as "Ma and Pa" of the Gallery. Both are warm, grey-haired, 50-somethings who take care to convey a sense of convivial welcome to Gallery members and visitors. Both have come to the Gallery by way of their own nightmares, and have found there a space where dreams of community are realized.

You would have to look far and wide to find a happier, more relaxed soul than Wes Browning. With his trademark bowler hat and twinkling eyes, he looks a bit like a tall, thin Salvador Dali who has lost his mustache wax.

To say Browning is bright is to understate the case. He holds a doctorate in mathematics and has taught at Rutgers. Frequent panic attacks and the onset of agoraphobia made teaching impossible, and he began to drive cab for a living. He first became homeless in 1985 when his life became confused, and he left his wife with $35 in his pocket and nowhere to go.

"I drove cab the whole time I was homeless," he explained. "I would stay in my car in the underground garage at U-Dub. At about 7 I'd get up and go pay the $2.25 parking fee and put the ticket on the dash for rent. By then, if I stayed in the car I'd be reported dead and there'd be more interruptions, so I'd sleep on couches at the University."

Browning is a lifetime alum at the Dub, so when security would find him on the couch, he could flash his membership card and that was that. This, and the use of the University library, made his homelessness more tolerable.

It was during his second period of homelessness, brought on by the demolition of his housing in the late-80s, when Browning began to meet with Michael Howell to play chess at Ralph's Deli.

"Street Life means I know people now. It completely changed my life around. I have friends.... Now there's something happening in my life. It isn't just one-dimensional anymore."
Wes Browning

Although his art was on display at Bell Street, Browning's agoraphobia kept him from going to the Gallery until Howell literally led him by the hand. Browning now credits the Gallery with turning his life around.

"Street Life means I know people now," said Browning. "It completely changed my life around. I have friends. I feel like I'm respected for something I do. Before, when I worked as a janitor, all I'd see was my co-worker. Now there's something happening in my life. It isn't just one-dimensional anymore."

"I have a feeling of hope now, and feel I could make it as an artist. I won't just be an ex-professor all my life."

But there is another reason that Browning is considered Pa to the Gallery. He deeply cares about the space and understands the people who use it. Wes is one of the artists who "sit" the gallery, orienting new users, coping with problems, and just being generally available.

He explained how a class in matting was given by one of the artists and he was the only attendee. "People are hungry or something and can't be there at that particular moment. I learned how it was done so I could pass it on to others."

Marion Sue Fischer is a lifetime wanderer who just may have found what she's been looking for. Her brilliant, lucid poetry, drawn from long experience on the streets and coping with mental illness, has been featured in these pages many times. Fischer's blue-eyed smile has brightened many rooms recently, but most often she

Artists featured in the Street Life Gallery book: from left to right, Stan Burris, Marion Sue Fischer, Istran Adics, Claudia Boles, Wes Browning, Jonna Taylor, Keith Layman, Gallery Coordinator Barbara Brownstein, Max Chandler, Grace Marshall. Photo by Sally Hagen

can be found sitting the gallery, helping make Street Life a place for everyone.

"I've been in Seattle about a year and a half, since I hit Noel House hysterical," said Fischer. "I thought at the time I'd lost my faith in humanity, as well as the rest of my posssessions. I was tired, frightened, and miserable, and credit Noel House staff with being very supportive, welcoming, and responsive to my efforts to lead a decent life."

Fischer became active in the Gallery when coordinator Barbara Brownstein was hired last year. "People who came in then and were doing work were respected. I was consulted on policy decisions, and my opinions were sought after and considered. People are amazed and pleased at how involved they've been able to become."

She, too, has found what she needs most at Street Life Gallery. "Being a creative artist, it's important to me to be part of a creative community. I'm likely to have a lot in common with the people there. Being part of an inspirational community helps me feel more valuable as a human being and artist."

Fischer is deferential about being known as "Ma Street Life." "It's kind of a kick, but I don't think it's accurate. People who are newer see us like that, but the atmosphere is one of warmth and welcoming. So if people see the family thing, it's just a perception. It's kind of cute and folksy, I think."

"The way I am is valued and encouraged here as it never has been. I haven't changed at my core that much. I've just found the deeply constructive, nurturing environment that has enabled me to grow and reach other people."

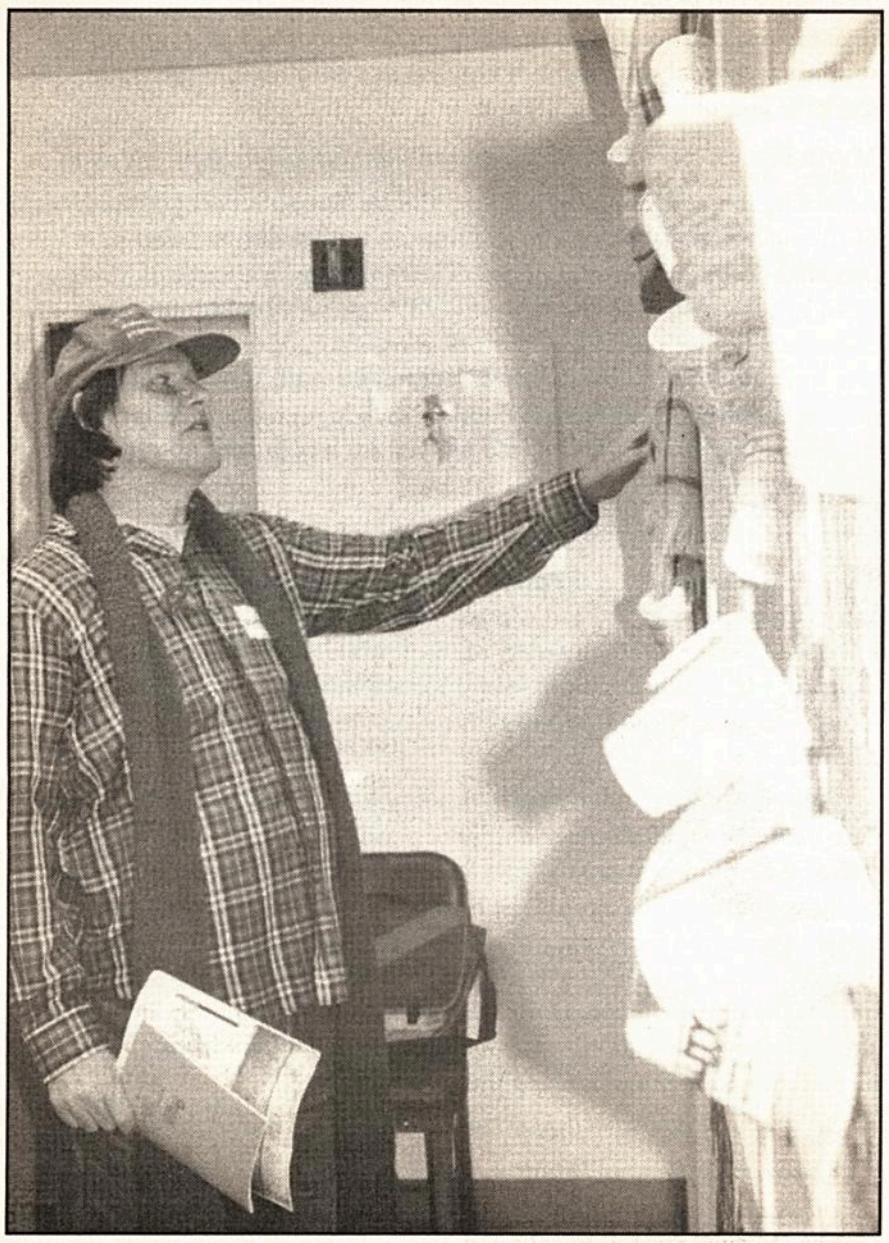
"How you are seen and appreciated by those around you really determines how you see yourself and how you live. I see myself taking more responsibility here and encouraging others. We all need to feel a sense of responsibility for the Gallery for it to continue to develop."

"It's a healing thing. You can't feel whole if you are treated like a child. People need responsibility."

SPACE PROHIBITS us from interviewing every active member of the Gallery, but if we did, they would probably all say pretty much the same thing. Darryl Ary and Boyd McLaughlin are both relatively new to Streetlife, and their experience is probably that of most.

The thing that strikes one immediately about Ary is how happy he seems when he has so little apparently to be happy about. He carries all of his possessions in two milk crates, and has been homeless since he arrived in Seattle.

"I came here and was given some paint, and things have been better ever since," said Ary. "My whole outlook on life has been better. This has filled the void since I broke up with my wife. I lost one family, but found another in the Street Gallery."



POET STAN BURRIS READS FROM HIS COFFEE CUP POETRY DISPLAY AT THE STREET LIFE OPENING. PHOTO BY SALLY HAGEN.

"Being part of an inspirational community helps me feel more valuable as a human being and artist."
Marion Sue Fischer

Boyd McLaughlin found the Gallery after he met Fischer one day here at *Real Change*. He and his partner had moved to Seattle with plans to do the craft/flea market circuit when they found that much of their art work and supplies had been stolen. "From there," said McLaughlin, "we ran out of money fast, and were soon on the street."

"To me, the Gallery was a whole new start," he said. "Supplies and things were available to get going, and things have worked out nicely since. I've found my niche."

"From the day I walked in, I felt accepted by everyone who was already established. People accepted me just like family. They make you feel right at home."

MUCH OF THE CREDIT for the sense of community and ownership the artists feel toward the Gallery must go to Barbara Brownstein, who became the space's part-time coordinator just nine months ago. In many ways, she is absolutely the right person at the right time.

Her extensive training and experience as a social worker and community organizer, and more recent formal training as an artist, have proved an unstoppable combination in solidifying what is surely one of the more unique and special programs in the country.

Brownstein credits a recent small grant, which allowed the publication of a book celebrating the work of Gallery artists, with "cementing people as a group and making them see what was possible."

"Up to this point, I've done a lot of the initiating, and would sort of push people along," said Brownstein. "There were a few, like Marion, who were always right there, but I was the rudder. But now people are showing leadership. People are developing their own ideas about how the space should run and how that should be decided. They're looking to create a system that allows people to participate."

"I'm happier than a pig in shit working there. They're all lovable eccentrics. Meetings happen for 3 or 4 hours, migrating all over the room, and I feel like an English Sheepdog. It's great."

Brownstein feels, as do others who are part of the space, that Street Life Gallery is just beginning to realize its potential. Members are in the process of creating a more formal cooperative structure, where they have more responsibility for the Gallery's operation.

The possibilities from there are virtually endless. "It could turn into more of a workshop space for developing cottage industries," said Brownstein. "Or there might be more of an 'art therapy' element, using the space as a tool for people in emotional upheaval. Of course," she qualified, "This means getting a few more grants."

Like many, Brownstein lives in a state of wonderment that the Gallery exists at all. "The irony is that this should be in every community. Art isn't just a frill. Here's this little gem that focuses on people who aren't particularly valued by our society, but this should be in every community."

"If more people were in touch with the creative process, There'd be far fewer problems. The creative process is a basic way to develop self-esteem.

WHILE THE GALLERY HAS ALREADY SUCCEEDED beyond anyone's dreams, its future is uncertain. WIth a less than part-time coordinator, and only minimal funding, it's hard to say just what will happen next. Yet, the space certainly doesn't lack for well-wishers.

When HUD Regional Secretary Bob Santos cut the ribbon at Street Life's reopening, he asked that we be vigilant in protecting the Gallery from things to come. "I remember when Pioneer Square was like this," he said, referring to Belltown's trend toward gentrification. "As you anchor this block in the community, remember... you were here first. Never be moved."

Gallery Wish List

- Small, sturdy, manual typewriters.
- MacIntosh computer equipment.
- A good acoustic guitar.
- Small refrigerator
- Small power tools
- Art supplies of all types, especially canvas board, mat board, charcoals, pastels, brushes, good markers, and watercolors.
- Supplies for quilting, knitting, jewlry making, and leatherworking.
- Office supply gift certificates
- Workshop teachers & volunteers, especially with crafts know-how and good people skills.

Call 328-5637

A Time to Act

Following President Clinton's proposal to "end welfare as we know it", the Republicans have unveiled their own plan to "reform" welfare. The Personal Responsibility Act, which is part of the GOP's "Contract with America", contains sweeping welfare proposals that would have a devastating impact on millions of low-income families and their children.

Rev. Tony Lee

If enacted, these proposals would eliminate cash assistance to over 50% of the families receiving welfare, affecting at least 5 million children nationwide. Most of these families would be rendered totally destitute, thereby increasing homelessness, hunger, illness, and the number of children to be placed in foster or group care.

The key provisions of the act are:

States would be allowed to eliminate all welfare benefits to families who have received aid for two years. This is a permanent ban, which means that the family would not ever again be eligible for aid. The states would be required to permanently terminate aid after the family had been on assistance for five years. In both cases, families with children would be left without assistance even when the parent was willing to work but unable to find a job.

States would be required to deny welfare benefits to children born to unwed mothers under the age of 18. This is a lifetime ban— which means that a 30 year old mother with a 13 year old daughter would be ineligible to receive welfare, even if she has never before applied for welfare.

States could take savings achieved by these cuts to build orphanages or group homes for teen parents.

Nearly all parents who had not established paternity would be ineligible even when the mother fully cooperates in establishing paternity, but the state child support agency cannot or has been unable to establish paternity. This provision alone will cut off aid to 29% of the families now on welfare.

Thus, millions of poor women and children will be denied benefits because an overwhelmed state child support system cannot or has yet to establish paternity.

In addition to these draconian welfare proposals, there are other provisions of the Personal Responsibility Act which will hurt low-income persons. Total Federal spending for low-income programs in the area of food, housing, welfare and social services would be cut by $57 billion over four years, weakening the safety net for poor families as well as for disabled persons, senior citizens and legal immigrants.

Nutrition programs— such as food stamps and school lunches — would cease to exist as entitlement programs and would be turned unto a block grant. Funding for these programs would be cut by about $18 billion over four years.

Almost all legal immigrants would be made ineligible for over 60 federal programs including Medicaid, housing, food assistance, and child immunizations. Many of these immigrants receiving aid are elderly or disabled. All of them are in this country legally and are required to pay taxes.

These welfare reform proposals and related low-income proposals are part of a broad attack on the poor, immigrants, and disabled persons. They are an attempt to find scapegoats for our country's economic and social problems. They offer a quick-fix solution and appeal to peoples fears and insecurities in a time of declining wages and opportunities for most American families.

The House Republicans have vowed to pass these proposals during the first 100 days of the new Congress. Passage in the Senate is less certain, with many Republican Senators expressing concerns over the impact of these cuts. Thus, we have time to educate and mobilize senior citizens, social services, providers, and others against this unprecedented attack on low-income vulnerable groups.

Tony Lee is Legislative Director of the Washington Assn. of Churches

Straight Talk on Welfare

Unfounded Stereotypes Lead to Bad Public Policy

By Kathy Morefield

No group of citizens has been more publicly misrepresented in recent times than those receiving welfare.

Welfare recipients have become a scapegoat for a frustrated middle-class that is working for longer hours for less pay. We watch our hopes and dreams diminish as more and more of us become un- or under-employed. We need someone or something to blame, and welfare is an easy target.

Current welfare reform proposals are based on stereotypes, myths, and prejudice about welfare recipients. It is essential that welfare reform measures are based on fact. Let's look at the myths and reality behind them.

Myth: Welfare is a huge part of our national budget.

A recent survey by the Harvard School of Public Affairs and the Kaiser Family Foundation asked people to name the largest federal expense today. 19% listed welfare. The truth is that welfare is just over 1% of the federal budget. The cost is $24 billion a year, the amount of interest paid to the government's creditors every 6 weeks. Welfare comprises less than 4% of the state's general fund.

Myth: Most welfare recipients are minorities and immigrants.

The stereotypical image of a welfare recipient as a Back woman with 10 children driving a Cadillac is just that: a stereotype. While people of color are disproportionately poor, the majority (three-fourths) of public assistance recipients in Washington State are Caucasian. Only 2.3% of the welfare population are legal immigrants. (Illegal immigrants are not eligible for welfare).

Myth: Most welfare recipients are able bodies adults.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)—the program we think of when we think of welfare—is available only to families with children. Two-thirds of the people served by AFDC are children.

Myth: Most welfare recipients are teen-aged mothers.

Unmarried mothers compose a small portion of welfare mothers—only 8% are under 20 years of age, and only 1% are under age 18. The average age of a mother receiving AFDC is 29. In a study conducted by the Washington Association Concerned with School Aged Parents (WACSAP), It was discovered that two-thirds of the teenagers who have given birth have been victims of sexual abuse or incest, and 50% have reported being abused by a member of the household. The majority of the fathers are not teen-agers. They are men in their 20s, 30s, and 40s.

Myth: Welfare mothers have more babies in order to get more money.

The reality is that the rate of births for families on welfare is slightly higher than the national average. In Washington, for example, half of all AFDC recipients have only one child. Thirty percent have two children, and only 4% have four or more.

Myth: People on public assistance are lazy and don't want to work.

According to a study done by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, half of all single mothers who spend any time on welfare during a two-year period also work during that period. Their jobs pay an average of $4.92 per hour, and few of their employers (only 28%) provide health insurance coverage. They are most likely to work as maids, cashiers, nursing aids, child care workers, and waitresses. Almost half require welfare to supplement their incomes between jobs. One-fifth work at such low-wage jobs that they continue to qualify for welfare, and ten percent require welfare as temporary disability insurance.

Myth: Welfare is too generous. It is easy for people to stay on welfare.

The purchasing power of the public assistance grant in Washington State is at the lowest point in 25 years. In ten years, the monthly amount has increased by only $70 for a family of three, while the amount required to maintain that family has increased by $555. The welfare payment—$546 a month—is 46% of the Standard of Need, the minimum required for essentials.

The most hurtful and damaging stereotype of all is that people on welfare have neither a work ethic, nor a sense of personal responsibility. The very title of the national proposal, "The Personal Responsibility Act," reflects faulty assumptions concerning the behavior of welfare recipients. It completely ignores the economic reality of poverty in the 90s: that there is a lack of jobs that pay wages that will support a family. If enacted into law and implemented, these proposals will further slash the meager resources of an already impoverished group of women and their children, forcing them further into poverty and keeping them there.

Kathy Morefield is Director of the Fair Budget Action Campaign.

Sources: US Dept. of Health and Human Services, WA Dept. of Health and Human Services, Joint Survey/Harvard School of Public Affairs and the Kaiser Family Foundation, US GAO, WA State Institute for Public Policy, WA State Legislative Budget Office, WACSAP.

Walking the Walk

Legislators Learn A Little of Welfare Firsthand

By Kristen Nichelson

Downtown Seattle, circa 1983. A camera pans the city skyline by early morning light. The Public Market landmark, long alleys, even a tooting ferry seem eerily familiar in *Streetwise*, the documentary about homeless teenagers filmed on and around the intersection of First and Pike. Lora Lee Troncoso remembers the filming of *Streetwise* very well. Her best friends were the main characters.

"I grew up with those kids. The majority of them are now incarcerated or dead," she said. Formerly a street kid, Troncoso is a student of criminal justice. She is a volunteer at the Department of Youth Services where she shares her past with troubled teens. She is eager to find employment in law and is making a difference in lives that paralleled hers only ten years ago. And, in these transitional years, she has been solely supported by welfare.

"I am a statistic, but I'm also someone who can educate an entire state and help change a lot of things, from welfare to homelessness to our prison system," she said.

Troncoso is among a group of welfare recipients that participated in the "Walk a Mile In Your Sister's Shoes" program, conceived for the purpose of educating legislators and public officials about welfare issues prior to their making decisions regarding welfare reform. Legislators were paired with a welfare recipient and were required to live on a food stamp budget with the assistance of their partner on welfare. The resulting perceptions of this program were twofold: there is need for change in the welfare system and there is need for its existence.

"We need to focus our welfare reform efforts on effective change instead of blame," said Jean Soliz, Secretary of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services. Of recent debate is how best to impose a two-year limit on receiving aid through the welfare program, a move that some believe will increase homelessness and prison populations.

What did policy makers take away from this program?

Humiliation after standing in line at a food bank. Frustration after waiting two hours at the welfare office to have a five minute conversation. Anger after having to cook turkey for dinner because it's a good buy and will yield several meals.

"What I had heard happens, I got to experience it. I got to see it," said Rep. Suzette Cook, R-Kent. She agrees that although she would have to have more of a lifestyle of someone who lives on food stamps to experience its effects, the program helped her understand that there is no "welfare type".

"How do you form policy that will fit the whole spectrum of personalities in the welfare system, people who respond to different motivating factors and incentives? That's the challenge I feel invested with. I think that we should always keep in focus that our objective is to get off welfare," said Cook.

"What I had heard happens. I got to experience it. I got to see it."

Rep. Suzette Cook, R-Kent

Granted, this is not easy. Soliz stated that most people are off public assistance after two years, and five years after seeking assistance more than half are not back on welfare. Yet single mothers such as Troncoso have had a harder time becoming self-sufficient. Troncoso grieves that the father of her child, who also receives welfare, pays no child support. Rep. Julia Patterson, D-Seatac, agrees that welfare reform should include more diligence in collecting child support.

"The welfare recipients that I had contact with were there because they were unskilled in the job market and their husbands were not making child support payments," said Patterson. "How unfair that we are placing the burden of rectifying this program on the women alone."

The fact is that there will not be an answer to welfare reform that will be satisfactory to everyone. And, Rep. Pat Thibaudeau, D-Seattle assures us, it no doubt will be changing soon. Presently less than 5% of our economy is put to welfare. Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it," and welfare recipients agree that certain aspects of the program should change. However, current welfare reform proposals are more concerned with limiting the time a person may be on assistance than possible practical improvements.

"Anytime we deal with a state wide policy where we try to make everybody fit in the same situation for the sake of efficiency,we wind up complicating things...we're unrealistic in expectations. Some folks are going to need welfare for a few months. Others are going to need it for a long time," said Cook.

Perhaps the greatest welfare myth is the idea that all recipients are using the system as a surfboard to coast through life without having to work and collect a check without lifting a finger. Soliz remarked that the theory is "there wouldn't be poor if welfare didn't exist to tantalize people to poverty". Single mothers will be the first to assure us that even the new math their children learn in school will not help cover all their expenses with the welfare check they receive every two weeks.

Although Troncoso perceives welfare as perhaps a necessary evil in her life, she understands that she has been protected and helped by the system. Welfare has prevented homelessness for her and for many others. As a volunteer at the Department of Youth Services, she shows the teenagers a photo album of convicts that were raised in the same youth center the kids now live in.

"I've had people tell me what I do is not right, by sharing with kids what will happen to them. Somebody needs to prepare them. Especially those without prior criminal history," said Troncoso.

She eagerly anticipates the day she will not need the assistance of welfare to raise her daughter. Until then, she hopes others who step into her shoes will attempt to understand her life.

TAKE ACTION

You Can Make A Difference

What happens to welfare (which means well being) affects us all. Aid to Families with Dependent Children, a safety net for nearly 60 years, has served to keep our children, families and communities from falling into utter poverty and despair. Demolishing welfare will destroy the very fabric of our country and communities. You can make a difference.

- **Speak out and spread the truth when you hear stereotypes about welfare from family members, co-workers and friends. Invite speakers from Fair Budget Action Campaign or Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition to speak to your organizations.**
- **Send letters to the editor of your local paper expressing your concerns and exposing the myths.**
- **Contact your Congressmember and Senators Gorton and Murray and tell them the cost, not only to the children of our state, but to the entire community. Call or write to your local state representatives and senator and tell them to contact the federal delegation, as well as ensure that legislation on the state level is fair and just.**

Join with thousands in Washington state concerned about the human cost of reducing or ending support to the poor, children, etc. in Olympia on March 22nd for a rally.

For more information on the above, or for additional ways to be involved, call one of the groups working on welfare issues — Fair Budget Action Campaign (727-0370) or Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition (324-3063).

Court Diary

Notes of An Unrepentent Sitter

I kept waiting for the judge to say, "Guilty. Guilty of sitting on the sidewalk."

There was no doubt, of course, that I had done the terrible deed. Not only did I sit down near a fully-staffed mobile police station but, what was worse, I freely admitted to breaking the law about fifty other times — always in front of cops. The cops would give me their little "business cards". I collected most of the SPD trading set. As if *that* wasn't bad enough, I confessed to organizing several illegal sit-ins and encouraging other individuals (minors, mostly) to commit acts of seated defiance.

"I am," I told the magistrate, "utterly unrepentant and even proud of myself."

Perhaps I should have added, "I regret that I have but one ass to give for my country."

For about half and hour, I wasn't allowed to enter the courtroom. The lawyers for both sides could enter. A mob of media people could enter. But I had to stay outside with the other sigh-carrying street rabble.

"But I'm the defendant!" I cried. "I mean, I booked these seats months ago!"

Seems I can *never* sit where I want to sit.

People kept showing up for traffic court and asking if they were in the right place. So I would try to explain the BS to them and radicalize them. It seems like everybody with their own trial is on my side.

Through the plexiglass I saw the judge walk into court and somebody said, "All rise." When the judge didn't look at me I knew how the decision was going to go. I found a chair somewhere and pulled it to the defense table. The lawyers for the city had a pitcher of water. We didn't have any water. I was about climbing the walls for a Pepsi.

A KING-5 television crew was there in the courtroom along with lost of media from radio and newspaper. Pretty good for a rainy election night, I figured. I kept looking at the KING-5 people and thinking to myself how that particular television station provided the cops with a videotape of the September 10 Broadway riot. To make this act of media treason even worse, the tape in question wasn't even *their* video, but was provided by a "newshound".

So much for protecting your sources.

The tape didn't just show the "newsy" acts of violence which the public saw on television, but the tape also recorded the faces of the "organizers." I bet the cops slowed down every frame and made stills of the "troublemakers" who organized the march against police harassment.

Next time KING-5 points a camera in your direction, beware. Your image, your identity and every word you say might be turned over to the police.

I thought the judge was going to make me stand for sentencing, like people do on television. And there was the KING-5 camera, pointed right at me, capturing every moment.

I thought to myself that if the judge made me stand for sentencing I was going to refuse to stand, I was going to tell him to "kiss my yankee doodle ass" and start shouting things about the Bill of Rights until I was hauled off by the bailiff.

"Man on trial for sitting refuses to stand for sentencing. Video at eleven." I would have been on CNN and every television in America. It was tempting.

But the judge never ordered me to stand.

Being on trial sucks. I had a crazy notion it would be *fun* to be on trial for something so ridiculous, with lawyers for both sides picking up the tab. Well, even a circus trial is no fun. The constant tension makes your stomach hurt. And everybody is too serious.

Facts mean nothing at a trial. Procedure is everything. You can be arrested or cited in the most ridiculous way, but by the time you find yourself in a courtroom it's all quite serious.

And none of the really stupid remarks that police make matter to the judge. I mean, Officer Bachelor plainly told me (in front of a witness, yet), "WELL, YOU JUST GO AHEAD AND GET YER BEVERAGE AND SIT, THEN!"

And the statements by Officer Cravens were so inaccurate I kept wondering if he was the same officer who got right in my face and said he had no choice but enforce the law and *was I going to pay his bills for him if he didn't do his job*?!

But, of course, the judges are very impressed by the "demeanor" of the officers. I guess judges don't get out on Broadway very much.

I don't think the judge was very impressed by my demeanor. Once I even went over to the prosecution's table and swiped their pitcher of water. They had their own loose-leaf binders emblazoned with my name, and it was hard not to walk up to the city attorney Mr. Finke and ask if he could, like, maybe spare an extra binder? But I kept telling myself, "he's the enemy, he's the enemy."

"Is that toilet still leaking?" one of the enemy attorneys asked me, during the recess.

"You're the enemy," I replied, "Find out yourself."

Meanwhile, my lawyer talked with the enemy about that great softball tournament where poor what's-his-name twisted his ankle. Another attorney for the ACLU kept assuring me that one of the city attorneys was a really nice lady.

During the whole trial it was very tough to keep a civil tongue in my head. When the police tell me "it's just my job" I generally get in their face and tell them what they can do with their job, but to hear a lawyer for the leading liberal organization in America agree, "It's just their job" was almost more than I could take.

Supposedly I committed an act of civil disobedience because I believe the Supreme Court or *somebody* with something on the ball will eventually find me innocent. Supposedly, an act of civil disobedience means you *believe* in the system.

I believe in the judgement of history. I don't believe in the damned system. I think the most valuable thing I did was tie up the municipal court for four days with a twenty dollar ticket, and frustrate the hell out of the city attorneys. For that I should get a medal.

I don't even think in terms of whether my appeal will be successful or not. The way I see it, we can't lose. If we "win," then the law is stopped dead in its tracks.

But, if we "lose," then these laws spread like wildfire through the United States. People engaged in

Cont., next page

"Being on trial sucks. I had a crazy notion it would be *fun* to be on trial for something so ridiculous, with lawyers for both sides picking up the tab. Well, even a circus trial is no fun. The constant tension makes your stomach hurt. And everybody is too serious."

CAN YOU HELP US CHALLENGE THE SEATTLE SITTING ORDINANCE?

We are filing court papers next January in an effort to have the Seattle Sitting Ordinance found to be unconstitutional. We are trying to prove what everyone on the street already knows — that the Sitting Ordinance targets the homeless and that it is being enforced like a loitering ordinance (which is unconstitutional). We are looking for persons who have knowledge about any of the following:

Homeless persons who have been told by police, while sitting, to move along (rather than to stand up).

Homeless persons who used to panhandle while sitting down, and who now find that they are being treated differently, by police and by the public, since they are forced to panhandle while standing.

Affluent persons who have sat on the sidewalks and not been harassed by police, even though the police were present. This may have occurred while lounging, waiting on line for tickets or to get into a store, theater, concert hall, etc. This evidence will help us prove that the ordinance is being used against the homeless and not against the affluent.

We need this information by January 10, 1995. If you have information contact: Marta Hontas (afternoons), Law Office of John P. Sheridan, Maynard Building, Suite 200, 119 First Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98104, Tel: 447-1560, Fax: 447-1523

The Jungle Arrests

Jury of Peers Finds Defendents Not Guilty

On July 18, 1994, in the area known as the Jungle, 11 homeless advocates were arrested for attempting to stop the City of Seattle from bulldozing 100 to 200 people's homes. Six of the eleven people arrested pled guilty to charges of second-degree trespassing. The remaining five decided to continue the struggle in court. At the conclusion of the two and one half day trial, (December 12-14) 6 jurors found the five not guilty.

Three pre-trial motions were heard by pro tem Judge Karen Donohue immediately before the trial. The defense presented two motions for dismissal and a request to use the necessity defense.

The first motion for dismissal was based on the First Amendment. Jennifer Horwitz, attorney for Scott Morrow, argued that the freedom of speech of the Jungle protesters was denied when the protesters were not allowed to voice their objections to the City's proposed destruction of the homes of the residents of the Jungle. Free speech is protected when it occurs in a public forum or a functional equivalent of a public forum such as a park, public street or sidewalk.

The protesters placed themselves in front of a dormant unoccupied trackhoe and the city made no effort to provide a means for the protesters to continue their demonstration in another location. There was simply a warning and then an arrest. The criminal trespass statute was applied in this case not as a reasonable time, place and manner restriction, as constitutional law requires, but as an unconstitutional abridgment of protected and political speech. Judge Donohue denied the motion.

The city attorney requested that not only could the issue of free speech not be addressed but that the word "homeless" not be allowed to be used at any time during the trial. The Judge decided that the word "homeless" must be used only in a limited manner, and that she would decide on when it would be appropriate.

The second motion for dismissal was based on the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Attorney for Blue Lahiff, Bill Long, argued that the property where the protesters were was owned not by Washington State Department of Transportation but by the City of Seattle, and, therefore, DOT had no authority to request the arrest of the protesters.

The Judge stated that this is a matter of fact and if, at such time during the trial, it is shown that the property does not belong to the DOT then the case would be thrown out.

The third motion was presented to the Court by David Westphal, who was representing himself. Mr. Westphal requested the use of the necessity defense to prove his innocence. Washington Law allows defendants to prove and argue the defense of necessity but it must be first presented as a motion before the Judge.

The defense of necessity is available when the physical forces of nature or the pressures of circumstances cause the accused to take unlawful action to avoid a harm which social policy deems greater than the harm resulting from a violation of the law. This defense is what would make it legally justifiable to run a red light to get out of the way of an ambulance.

The very existence of the defense of necessity in common law and in the law of the United States and the State of Washington governments is a recognition that common sense and morality should take precedence over the letter of the law in extreme cases. Judge Donohue, however, disallowed the defense.

Following the "courtroom gagging" of the use of the constitution, the panel of 25 potential jurors were brought into the courtroom. During the process of voir dire (the questioning of the panel) Attorney Jennifer Horwitz asked how many of the panel members had participated in a protest.

To the amazement of the courtroom, and especially City Attorney Lynch, over half of the panel raised their hands. This was definitely an uplifting and spiritual turning point in the trial.

The City presented six witnesses: one DOT employee who could not identify north on a map of the property, and five police officers. The defense presented five witnesses: the co-defendants, Scott Morrow, Vel Made, David Westphal, Blue Lahiff, and John Reese.

City Attorney Lynch based her case on the fact that we were there and so we must be guilty. The defense was left with little to discuss but the question of ownership of the property.

Over numerous objections of the City Attorney, Mary Lynch, and in spite of Judge Karen Donohue sustaining almost all of the objections, the defense attorneys, Jennifer Horwitz, Bill Long, Randy Hall, David Westphal (pro se) and John Reese (pro se) were able to get out some statements about the homeless and the fact that the City was responsible for demolishing the homes (be they shacks or whatever they were homes to the residents of the Jungle).

On December 14, the six jurors found the five defendants not guilty. Jurors indicated after the trial, that the basis for the acquittal was the prosecution's failure to prove that the defendants had been trespassing on state-owned Department of Transportation land.

The arrogance and stupidity of City Attorney Lynch and the inexperienced bumbling and obvious bias of Judge Karen Donohue had lost the case for the city. They had only to produce a map to show who owned the property.

A ridiculous technicality won the case. Not the right of free speech or the necessity of their actions. The illegality demolition of homes in the Jungle was not even discussed. The majority of those who lost their homes are still homeless.

The City, State, and Federal governments have failed to provide enough housing for the homeless. Were it not for the actions of a few, the homeless would continue to be invisible. The City, State, and Federal governments must be pressured or the homeless will continue to be ignored, criminalized, and run out of town.

—one of the jungle eleven

SITTER, CONT. FROM PREV. PAGE

innocent conduct suddenly become criminals. And the experience of being a criminal has a radicalizing effect. You sit in the courtroom, watching justice perverted, truth distorted, and you think how good that room would look with flame licking up its walls.

So go ahead. Strain the system to its breaking point. Write those tickets and pass them out like candy.

Truth is nothing in a courtroom. Procedure is everything. The words of lawyers sounded like something between probate law and a discussion of 19th century existentialism. Truthfully, it was hard to stay awake at times, except when someone was telling big fat lies about me.

For example, Officer Cravens stated I called him "a fascist pig." And so I did. But I didn't call him that when I was cited. I called him that on a prior occasion. So much for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The way I see it, the Judge had no choice but to rule against me. When the judge read his decision, he seemed to be saying, between the lines, "Please, please overrule me. I'm not a Federal Judge appointed for life. I'm just a judge in traffic court who tries to be fair to speeders and alcoholics and people who squeal their wheels too loud. I wanted to be part of something important, but really, you know and I know that there's only one way I can rule.

After both sides spent so much time in court, the Judge stated he was, after all, bound by the ruling of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

"There are strong emotions on both sides," Hortado said, sounding genuinely anguished. "I'm not going to comment at all on the wisdom of this law. I'm just—I'm just not going to comment."

In his final decision, Judge Hortado made explicit reference to the police photo, mentioning I did indeed have flyers in my hand. He said, however, I was not passing out the flyers at the time I was cited.

"What the hell does that mean," asked John Fox of the Displacement Coalition right after the ruling. "If I'm passing out flyers I'm OK, but if I stop to scratch my butt then I can get cited?"

"Or," I added, "If you stop passing out flyers because you think you're about to get cited, then you'll get cited. The butt scratching could take place at any point."

My ten hours community service were suspended pending appeal. My lawyers tell me it will take, oh, say three years for the case to work its way to the United States Supreme Court.

In the meantime, I guess I'll just have to go out and find some other law that needs breaking.

John Hoffman is a member of the Seattle Displacement Coalition

"When the judge read his decision, he seemed to be saying, between the lines, "Please, please overrule me. I'm not a Federal Judge appointed for life. I'm just a judge in traffic court..."

PHOTOS

Ethics & Photojournalism

PHOTO ESSAY DANA SHUERHOLZ

Photography can be a dangerous tool when used without clear intention and especially when used without recognition of the power relationship between photographer and photographed/ viewer and viewed.

When images of marginalized people are made, there is always the risk of deepening their marginalization by visually reinforcing the notion of "other". Homeless people are further vulnerable to the invasive nature of photography due to the lack of distinction between what is public and private for homeless people.

What is the difference for example between photographing a person in a restaurant eating lunch or photographing a person on a public bench eating lunch?

Basically, I see most photographers working as parasites. They take what they need, they leave, and the people that populate their images never have a say in how they are represented, let alone even see the photographs they're in. When I stopped photographing the man in the doorway in 1984 it was with that realization - I was taking without giving back.

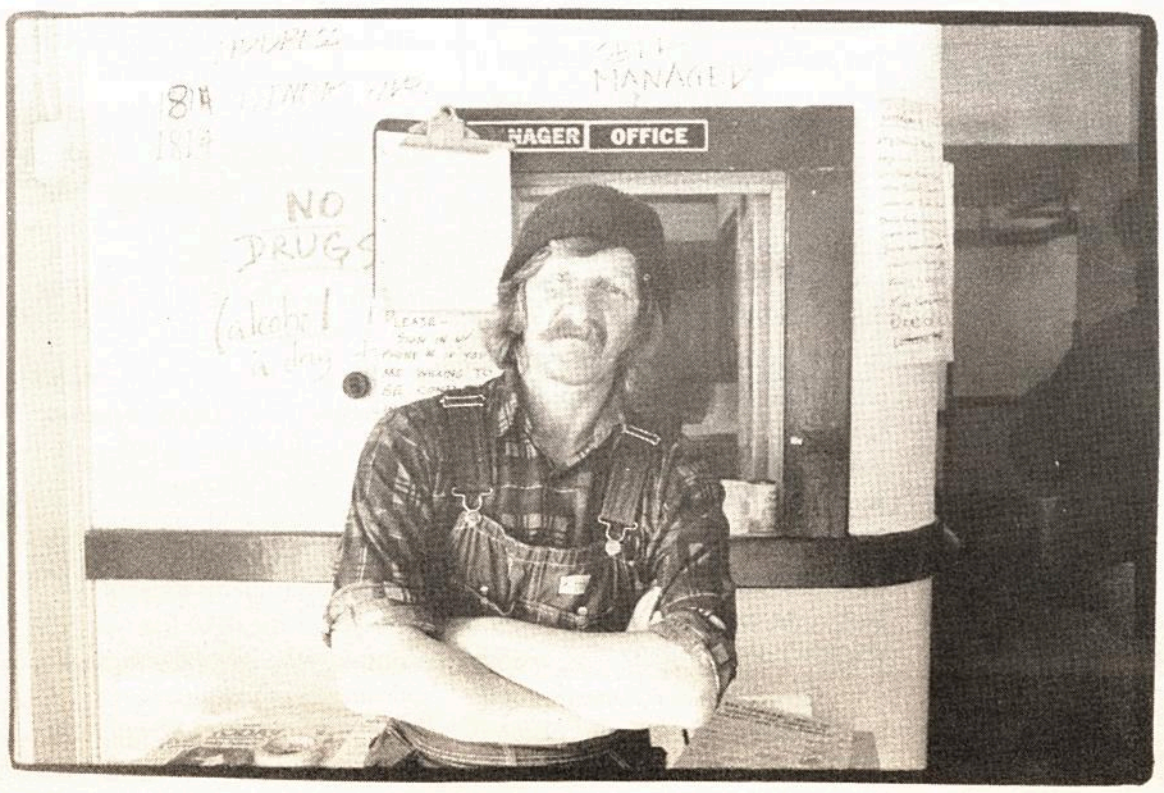
I was invading a person's private space rather than making a connection. Due to the lack of distinction between public and private space in the lives of homeless people, it seems crucial to me that anyone photographing someone who they assume to be homeless ask permission.

Since then, my work is increasingly about connections to people and the struggles that bind us. As a photographer it feels important to put images into the hands of the people in them, as well as using them as tools for enriching a community.

Photographs can provide an anchor for shared experiences and act as a mirror reflecting realities that mainstream media often portray inaccurately. It is important for all photographers and viewers of photographs to remember that photographs are a representation of an experience and not first hand information.

MAN IN DOORWAY, LONDON 1984

I took this picture in 1984 while living in London and going to school for photography. During one of my long walks through unfamiliar streets, I saw this man. I took my camera out and focused. After making two exposures, I stopped. Shame and discomfort overcame the desire to "capture" this extreme image. Clearly I was relating to just the image, not the person. In fact, he was still unaware that I had photographed him. I crossed the street and walked towards him, unsure why, just knowing that I needed some other connection to this man. As I approached him, he cowered further into the corner where he stood. He was afraid of me. I reached into my pocket for change, I had none. I offered him some bread from my bag, and he motioned with his hands, refusing. I walked away and withdrew from using my camera for the next two and a half weeks, much to the dismay of my professor. Instead of handing in photographs for assignments, I presented written essays arguing the ethics of photojournalism.

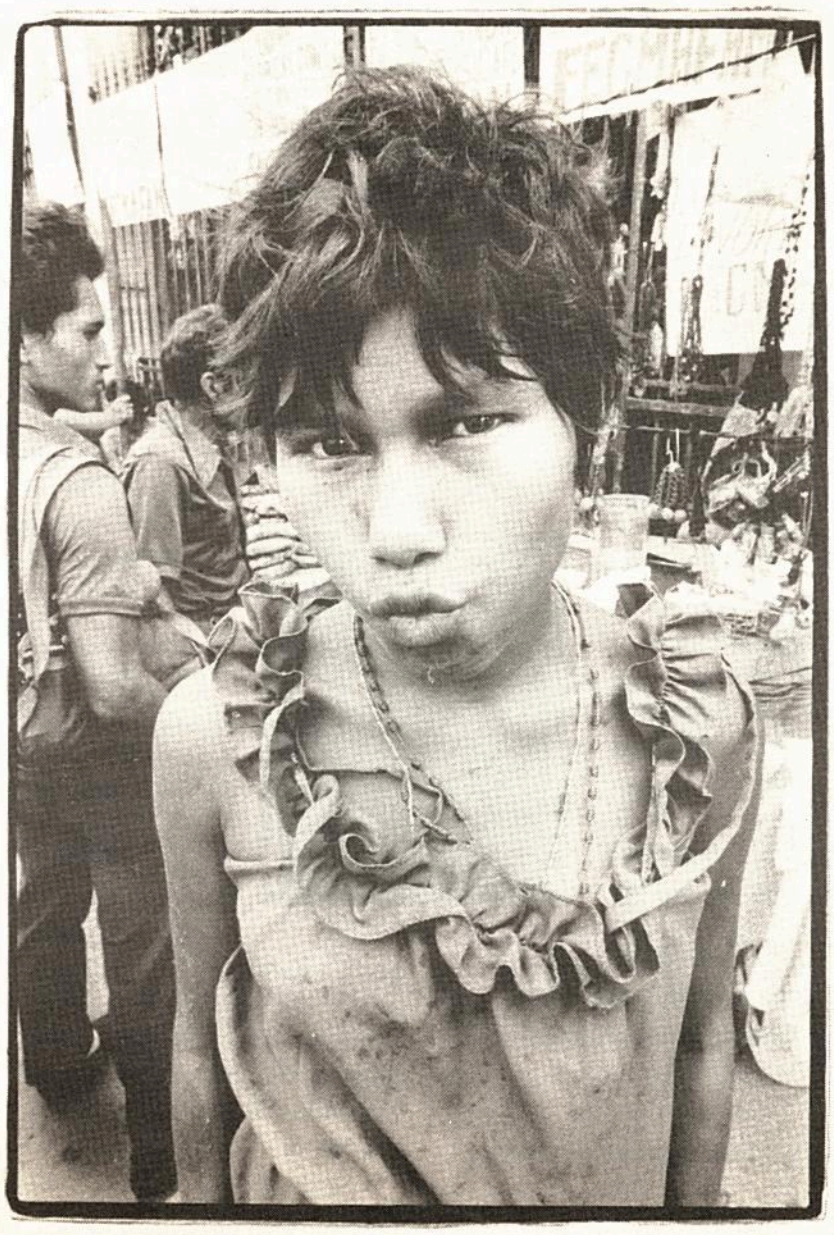


ARION COURT RESIDENT, SEATTLE, 1991

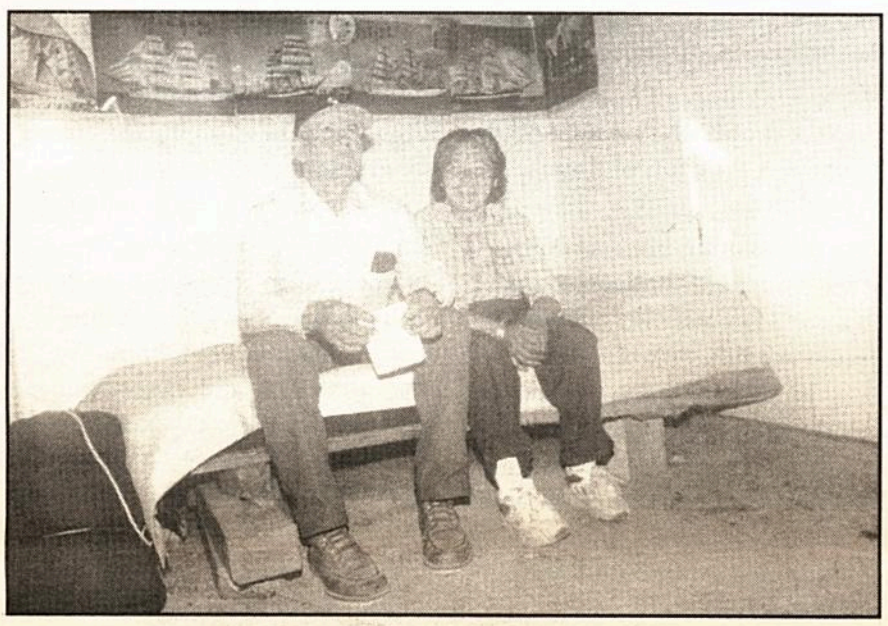
A couple days into the occupation of an abandoned apartment building that I was involved in, I met Roy. He was one of about 30 homeless people participating in the action. As a journeyman, he brought much needed skills and showed deep commitment. While we were talking at the security desk about what might happen if the police came, I asked him if I could make a portrait. He said, sure.

PHOTOS

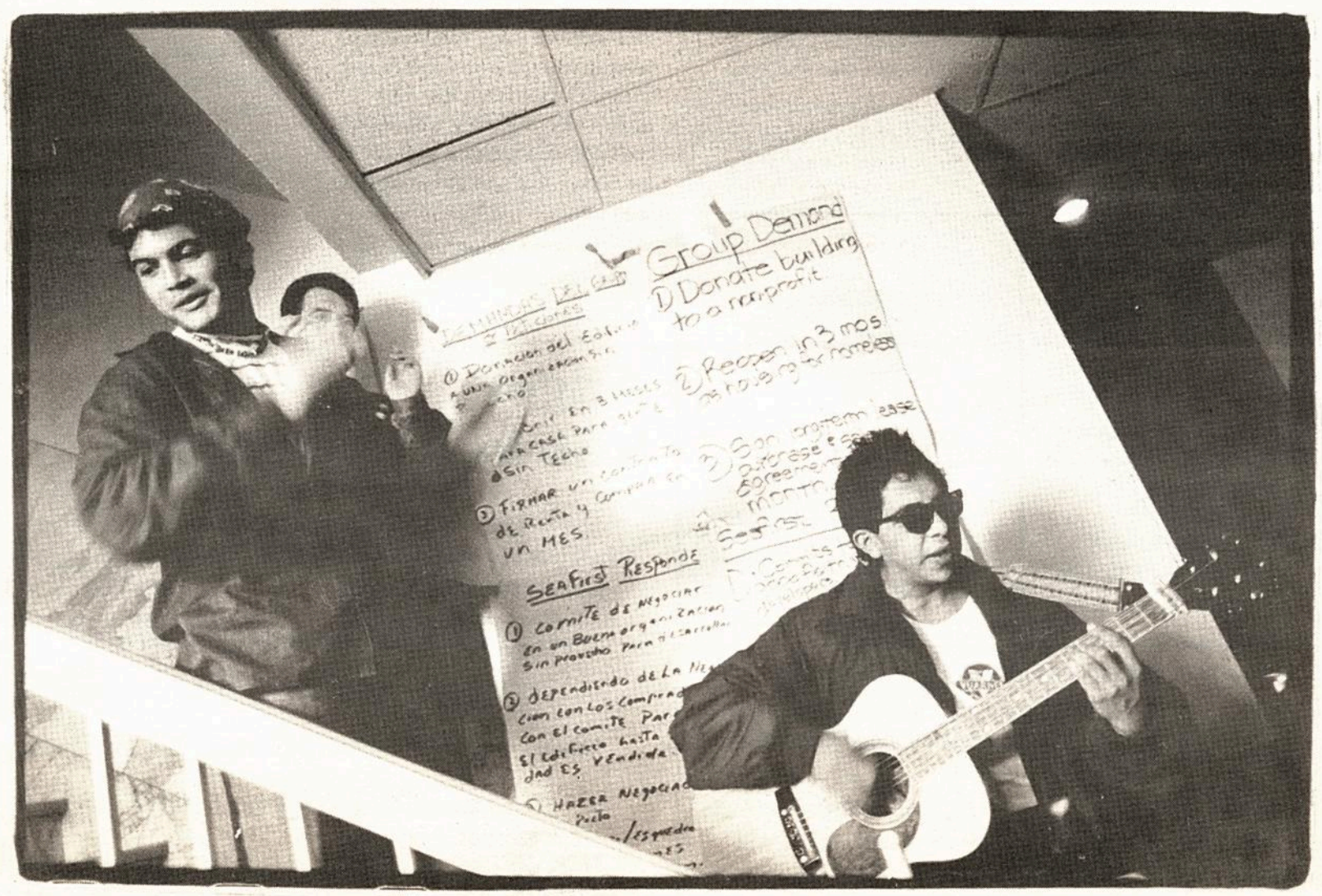
Market Girl, San Salvador, 1987
While wandering around the public market in this country wrought with civil war, I suddenly felt a gentle tug on my shirt. I turned around and she introduced herself to me. She lived in the market, the vendors were her family, her parents had disappeared in the war. Almost immediately, she asked me to take her picture. While we continued our conversation, I focused and just before I pressed the shutter release, she blew this kiss onto the film.



Vicente and Evilia, The Jungle, Seattle, 1994
I kept hearing about this woman and her partner who had built an amazing home on a steep slope in the Jungle. I wanted to meet her. Finally, I was lead to their house where we talked for a while in Spanish. Evilia invited me in and told me the story of the innovative making of their home that was being threatened by City plans to demolish every structure in the Jungle. I wanted others to know just what the City was calling "garbage" and therefore disposable. I told Evilia this and asked if I could photograph she and Vicente in their home.



Pacific Hotel Occupation, Seattle, 1992
This image came out of one of the many long meetings during the occupation of the Pacific Hotel, where over 250 people lived and worked together for about a week. This is one of many photographs I made during that time. The image making came naturally, as we built friendship and community with each other.



Ask Fabio

Solid Advice from our Resident Hunk Advocate

Yo Fabio,

I applied for a low income unit with CHHIP (a logical step for me since I'm a low income dude). They told me that they would need to do a credit check and a bunch of other crap. Since I'm a polite low income dude I said, "What The F***, ya know", even though, it did not make any sense to me since I'm broke, and could have told them that myself. Anyway, they turn me down, after being on their damn waiting list for nearly 8 months.
What's up with this? Aren't they supposed to help people in the community where they build their damn buildings?

Sincerely,

Disenfranchised Dude

My Queridisimo idealist dude,

Most of these non-profit corporations, although they have good intentions, are just that: Corporations. So, it is perfectly legal for them to run credit checks on you, and turn your disenfranchised ass down. I hate to break your picolo idealist heart, but the sad fact is, that these are not community based groups, but rather they are non-profit developers that are not accountable to the community in which they operate.

Check this out, Nancy Smith, The Director of SHRUG, a non-profit housing provider that was created by the Downtown Business dudes, has privately expressed her support for the demolishing of 400 units of affordable housing through the Convention Center's expansion plan. Some of them, like Common Ground, charge for their consulting services.

This information of course does not solve your problem, but querido the sad fact is that these folks, though nicer than Gary Philips or Gerald Frank, are nevertheless, landlords. Nothing personal, some of Fabio's best friends are non-profit developers.

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

Yo Fabio,

I'm behind 2 months in rent; the landlord just gave me a 3 day Pay or Vacate Notice. Can he kick me out after 3 days? How long does the process take?

Sincerely,

Evicted.

Querido Evicted,

It always breaks Fabio's heart when folks get put out on the street, there is no fairness in this County of ours. Back to your question, the landlord will have to begin a lawsuit in Superior Court called, an Unlawful Detainer action which is a lawsuit against you for holding the premises after 3 days. You will at that time be served by papers from a lawyer.

It will most likely be from Donald Allen or Richard Cohen, or some other poorly trained, mediocre lawyer that runs eviction services for landlords. Fabio awaits the day when he will put their butts out! After you lose in court (sorry querido for non payment, and these judges, not a chance) the sheriff will issue a Writ of Restitution, and that will give you about a week to be out; if you are not out by the date on the Writ, the overweight, overpaid Sheriff will come out to supervise your removal. If you need referrals please call the ragazzi at the Tenants Union 723 0500. Tell them Fabio sent you.

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

SALES MAKERS

We support "Real Change." Please do the same! Tell a Friend.

LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO CALL HOME?

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

Lewiston Hotel
2201 1/2 First Ave.

William Tell Hotel
2327 Second Ave.

St. Charles Hotel
619 Third Ave.

Scargo Hotel
2205 1/2 First Ave.

The Gatewood
107 Pine St.

Payne Apartments
1521 Seventh Ave.

Please call 343-7838 for application information.

A Bread and Butter Note From the Women

It's said that one of the things women are best at (and a skill I never quite assimilated from my own mother and background) is the writing of bread-and-butter notes, or the expression of gratitude for time and things given. What follows, on behalf of SWAC (the Seattle Women's Action Coalition), is one such note from a homeless woman expressing her thanks for the outpouring of gifts and goodwill this holiday season:

To the shelters nationwide...

to the volunteers of overflow (the ones they try to find room for where the shelters are truly filled to capacity)...

to the people who are responsible for opening the doors of churches across America...

to the beautiful-hearted people who have opened the doors of the House of God to shelter and warm and protect the "least of these"....

to the people who are in authority over the shelters who went to great lengths to have the poor set down to beautiful tables I know they checked and rechecked that everything would look just right as you would for honored guests..

A hearty and very warm thank-you from all our hearts to those bringing extra goodies, plus spending their time, and even letting their children be involved in an age-old, ancient habit of caring and sharing.

I personally would like to thank each and every one who took time away from their own families and their own interest to stay overnight—sleeping with us on mats on the floor, not questioning if the floor has been swept or who cleaned the bathroom.

How from the heart with the right words can one thank you for the abundance of not only exquisite food, beautifully set tables? It truly brings tears, how beautiful you people are. We are strangers, yet for a night we not only accept our differences in race, social status, dress, education...one night we are together. Alike, all agree. Caring we are warm, fed, at peace, safe. We will all be blessed alike for your hopes of a better future and healing for us.

We hope you have joy, unity, harmony with all. Peace is our hope to such beautiful people.

• • •

I have worked at shelters for many years, and the celebration of holidays at shelters never fails to astound me for its abundance, for the generosity that, frankly, isn't evident to us providers or to homeless women throughout the year.

The women accept this generosity with gratitude and gentle surprise. And my heart says to them: "We must argue against the prevailing world, which tells us the holiday time is the only time to live with this passionate communion. Gratuitous love must be made evident in our lives every day."

The members of SWAC are primarily line staffpeople at shelters and service organizations for single homeless women. They are the folks who navigate the holidays, their offices filled and overflowing with handpicked, hand-sewn, hand-wrapped gifts donated by the many good people of Seattle. They are also the folks who try to spread the holiday spirit to homeless women through the year. Should you like to continue your participation in this "age-old, ancient habit of caring and sharing" please call SWAC at #464-1570 X 3054.

—Michele Marchand

Anger Knows Cigarettes

Anger knows cigarettes as sidewalk
knows airplanes, buildings, cars all
say no.

Approved by the State. Damned
by citizens. Anger knows cigarettes.
Considerably so.

Home for the holidays but
buried at night. Anger knows
cigarettes. Your friend will
sometimes fight.

—Darryl Ary

American Lines

By Leslie Carl Highrock

Loss

The hole
In my pocket
Said
I am open

Loss

The hole
In my pocket
Said
I am here

Renewal

When the trees
Get greener
Than go
And
The cherries
Redder
Than stop
It
Is
Time
To
Listen

The Facts

Three feet
Is the length
Of a step
Four feet is the
Depth of a skip
Half backward
Is the length
Of a lie
Two forward
Is the length of a story
Rhythm is the tale
Of a black and white
And brown and red
Sound is not around
The colors of the world
Are lost
In the sound
Of inequality

No Excuse

I heard Gabriel
Blow his horn
I saw the people crying
On the grey day
Waving their hands
With ugly faces
The dogs were
Tearing at our heels
As we ran
To the firestorm
Of
Our
Destruction
We became soft
They came
And it ended

Apathy

Eraser three toes
From West River
South Dakota
Has a dog
That smells
Like my old sneakers
Does not
Piss in the house
And
Sees all the evil
But barks
For
No
One

Plantings

Johnny
Was the seed
For the apple tree

Ghandi
Was the seed
For passive resistance

Crazy Horse
Was the seed
For structured
Violent opposition

Materialism
Is the seed
For nature's destruction

Lost Warrior

I
Stand
As they
Look at me
With
Fear
Ignorance
Hate
And
Furry Eyeballs

(Untitled)

As America
Continues
Down the road
In their wicker cars
Feeding their young
A breakfast
Of technology
And haste
The birds
Can scarcely
Find a healthy bug
To taste

U.S.A.

Usual State of Affairs

The rich
Will xerox babies
To continue
Their way

The poor
Will die
With the lance
Of frustration
In their backs

The Shadows Yesterdays

The miles of smiles
Tell no tale
Of the trials

The dirt
The hurt
It left
When the doors
To the
Chief Seattle Club
Did not close

Mark the spot
It will not rot

Short Story

Bagladyhood

BY KAREN JACOBS

Someone's coming to take my stuff," she confided in an almost whisper, peeking her head into my room.

"Well, the doors lock," I reassured her. She was across the hall from me at the Y.W.C.A. homeless women's shelter. Small, with fragile features and a wispy voice, she reminded me of a wounded bird.

"The maids, though...I think they've been snooping through my things. I don't want them to get into this sack and steal my ideas..." Her voice trailed off. She dragged in a big black garbage sack, and opened it. "See?" It was full of paper scraps, and napkins, etc. with writing scribbled all over them.

"It's a book. Book about my life. Well, it isn't quite *yet*!" She paused. "It's all my important memories. I've been in my room reading and crying over them. I feel I relive the times every time I read the papers." She looked out my window. Her eyes had a faraway haunt too. Lately, I'd seen that look in my own eyes, and in my husband's, also. Suddenly, her eyes filled with tears. She quickly wiped them.

"So much pain!" she remembered, and exclaimed.

I could relate to her.

"Sometimes when I read my notes in my journals I cry," I confided in her. "I might want to talk about it later. Some of my memories. Not yet." She made a fist, clutching onto a napkin she'd scribbled on, and grimacing. She opened her hand then, releasing her tight grip while her expression softened. She put it in the bag. Then she put one hand over her tummy. Was she ill? Hungry? Sick from bad memories?

"Are you well, or do you feel sick?" I asked her.

"I hadn't eaten for 3 days, then I spent my last money on some Chinese food. I think it was bad food. I was sick last night."

"Did you eat at all today?"

She shook her head slowly.

"I don't know how to make it to these places," she pointed to a list of soup kitchens on my desk.

"I looked at the woman sitting across from me in my room. I imagined she's had similar experiences. I hadn't before felt a kinship with this "type" of person, if there is such a thing. Now, I could relate to the experience of homelessness."

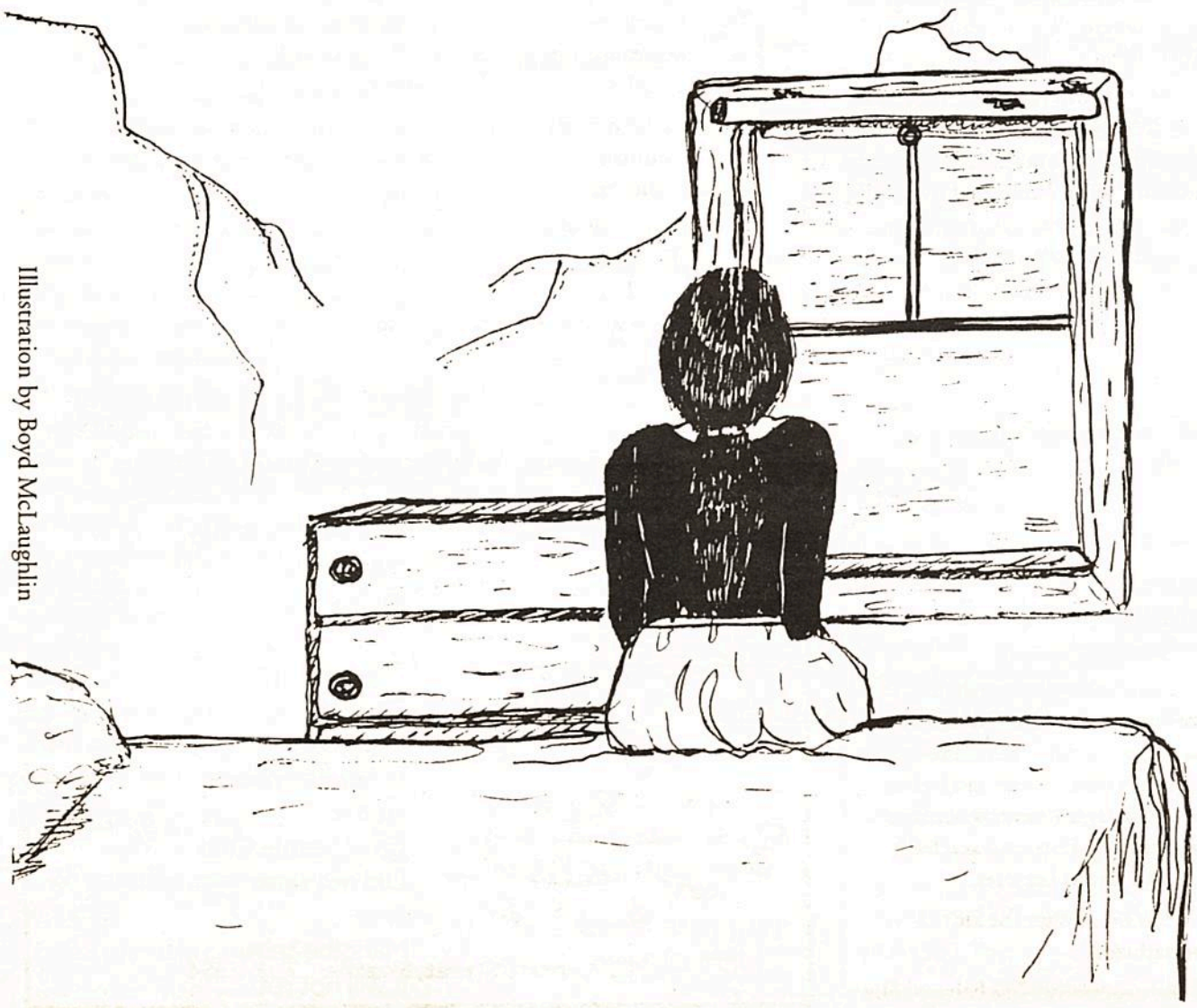


Illustration by Boyd McLaughlin

"I'd probably get lost. I'm new to the city."

"Maybe we can find one together," I said

"O.K. Maybe I'll go out tomorrow," she said timidly.

I opened my drawer and pulled out trail mix, some canned juice, and dried soup in a cup.

"Want some trail mix? Juice? I can fix you some soup," I offered.

"Oh?" she brightened a slight bit. "Yes. Thank you."

I handed her a can of V-8, a can of orange juice, and some of the nut and dried fruit mix. She began eating and drinking quietly, and thanking me many times.

Suddenly, a younger, college-aged fellow stopped in to visit us. He was part of a Life Skills course at the Y. Young people learned independent living skills. I'd met him in a Saturday morning class on writing about one's homeless experience that was offered free at the Y. I liked him real well although he was fanatical about some things. I put it down to his youthfulness.

"Aack!" he made a choking motion around his throat. "M.S.G.!" he exclaimed, pointing at the dried fruit and nut mixture. "You are pregnant."

"Sara is eating it now. Believe me, I've been very careful."

"Really. When you're pregnant..."

I interrupted him "I probably won't eat any more since you pointed this out."

Short Story

I WAS SIX AND A HALF MONTHS PREGNANT AT THE TIME. Being homeless is bad enough, but when one's child is involved it adds extra pressures. We had moved here from Eugene, Oregon about five months before this. We moved in with my brother. The back-up plan was to stay at my best friend's place. As it turned out, we had marriage problems, and my brother and his wife also had their own financial difficulties.

Finally, pressures boiled to the point where we had to leave. We couldn't go to my best friend's house after all. We weren't able to stay with my brother (other brother) or my sister either. We ended up hitting the streets with all our belongings. We put as much as we could in storage, then we started a round of shelter-seeking.

The bad weather was with us, as odd as it sounds. It snowed, and we got a poor weather voucher. We ended up in Pioneer Square Hotel. This was about a fifteen dollar per night value.

We got a cockroach infested room the size of a dorm room with a filthy bathroom down the hallway. This was ours for one whole week. I went down the hall to go to the restroom one afternoon when a hostile-looking man with a machete approached me. He glared at me, and I quickly returned to my room. I ended up urinating into a paper cup and dumping it down the sink. Whenever my husband was away, I felt a lot safer locked inside my room. The room was cold, but it sure beat the snow outside.

I looked at the woman sitting across from me in my room. I imagined she's had similar experiences. I hadn't before felt a kinship with this "type" of person, if there is such a thing. Now, I could relate to the experience of homelessness. "Do you want to go on a carousel ride downtown to benefit abused kids?" Josh invited us.

"I'd like to go," I said.

Sara was shy. She really thought someone might steal her ideas. She expressed the idea to watch over her stuff. Josh tried to coax her into coming with us. She looked down, shook her head, and dragged her sack of writing notes back into her room, shutting the door behind her.

"She's intense, really smart when you get talking with her," Josh commented.

"Sensitive, huh," I said. "She has a real perceptiveness, and a real feeling heart, too, I think."

"See! We know she's not 'just a bag lady,' right?" Josh whispered.

"I keep hoping I'm not," I laughed.

We got our coats on, and rounded up a few more carousel riding enthusiasts from our floor. My husband happened to be walking into the Y while we were walking out .

"Where are you going?" he wondered.

"C'mon! We're going to ride the Christmas carousel." I took his hand, and we moved with the group along the street.

ON THE CAROUSEL RIDE, I felt freed suddenly from the cares and worries we'd been plagued with for so long. Foe a few brief moments we were children again, laughing and breezy. Most of all, we lived in this moment of Christmas magic, of lightness, of just being.

When my husband and I went out for coffee afterwards, alas, we were grown-ups again. Where would I stay when my 3 weeks at the YWCA shelter were up? Where would my husband sleep tonight, for that matter? What jobs could we get? Who could we borrow from in the mean time? Where was there affordable housing? We certainly had concerns. But we also had each other. That made a difference.

"At least you aren't all alone. You have somebody who loves you. You're lucky." Sara was saying this to me again when I returned to the Y shelter floor. She says this to me every day, actually. Well, it was a helpful reminder. Helped keep my attitude thankful.

"Aren't you glad you have someone?"

Sometimes she was like a broken record.

"I've been alone before, too," I told her.

"On the streets?" she asked.

"Well, no." There was silence between us for a time.

"I was with someone before this. About a month ago. I'm married, you know, to this creep. He's got my daughters now. I just had to leave him, although I never wanted to leave them." That haunted look came back into her eyes.

"You must miss the kids" I sympathized.

"I do. Terribly. My babies!" She began to quietly weep. "I don't miss that man though."

I wondered what exactly "that man" had done to her. Beaten her? Raped her? Something so bad she had to get away from an unbearable situation.

"I had to have somewhere and something to take my children to," she explained.

"It must have killed you to leave them," I said. I didn't know what I could say to her.

"Half of this writing is about my husband and I" she told me. "Used to beat me almost every night." She shook her head. "When I moved here I thought that I could move in with my sister. She won't help me. I'm 'the family problem, the crazy one,' and all that."

"I have two brothers and a sister in this city, and I'm homeless," I shared with her. "Do you know the City?"

"Seattle? Not at all. I'm from L.A. It's scary here, but try it there. Drive-by shootings are commonplace."

I shuddered. "There's some gang activity growing in this city, but during the daylight it's relatively safe for a big city. I can help you get to know the area. Want to come to the church dinner they have advertised on the walls here—that Mary Magdalene Fellowship group thing?"

This I came to jokingly refer to as our "bag lady meetings." It was a group of women who met on Saturdays to attend a woman-led sermon and service. Women played instruments, sang solos, and shared their gifts. Homeless women then ate a good meal, met with counselors, and learned and shared various talents and skills.

This support group really afforded the opportunity to regain dignity and strength of personhood. We were people with much to offer, and not just stereotypes. We shared stories with one another, and we found strength in learning together from common suffering.

Thank you for taking the time to read my own personal story.

"Where would I stay when my 3 weeks at the YWCA shelter were up? Where would my husband sleep tonight, for that matter? What jobs could we get? Who could we borrow from in the mean time? Where was there affordable housing? We certainly had concerns. But we also had each other. That made a difference."

Thank You,
But Don't Stop Now!

Real Change would like to thank all those who have responded to the plea for support in our last issue. Still, we are still less than 35% of the way toward meeting our goal.

We were recently awarded a $4,000 matching grant by the SAFECO insurance company, which means that any contribution you mail will mean twice the amount of your check.

This paper is still a very new, struggling project, and depends upon donations for about half of our budget. You can help us build the foundation we'll use for years to come by contributing now. A donation of $35 or more will see that Real Change arrives by mail for the next year. Please use the backpage coupon to do your part now.

Thanks again to our new contributors: Andrew Anschell, Marilyn Bode, Atlantic Street Center, Catholic Community Services, Todd Davis, Lisa Fabatz, Ruth Frances, Ali Frimpter, Ann Gilbert, GlamOrama, Diane Jhueck, Richard Kelley, Michael Lippman, Elizabeth & John Meyer, Millionair Club, Kathleen Morefield, Jayne Muirhead, Nails Etc., Brian Pardo, Martin Paup, Scott Pinegar, Lynn Ray, Jim Reitz, Kristina Rhode, Seattle Public Library, Elizabeth Smith, Marcia Stone, Velma Veloria, Marcia Wallenfels, Lutz West, Maureen Weight.

WORLD PIZZA

"Delicious, creative pizza. The best in town"

—Steve Dickinson

205 Lenora Street, Seattle 728-2664

Firsthand

No Free Lunch!

Of Gumflappers and Earbangers

While making our rounds to the Bread of Life Mission, Lutheran Compass Center, and the Union Gospel Mission for food not to long ago my partner and I came across a sign advertising a big feed in at the Penial Mission. There was to be stew, apple pie, salad, pop and a few other assorted goodies.

(No mention of having to sit through a forced service for this meal). The meal was to begin at 3:00 P.M. but come early to be sure to get a seat.

When my friend and I got there (early) we were ushered into the chapel to wait for the meal. At around 3:10 P.M.. the Peniel Mission started up a sermon on demons as this was the day before Halloween.

Some of the people were a little put off by this but were greeted by the pulpit with such quips as "Shut Up!", "If you don't like it there's the door!" and when one fellow suggested that we eat... "Listen here Sonny-boy, one more word out of you and I'll throw you out personally. If you want to see a man of the cloth get physical just say one more word Sonny-boy!" This "Sonny-boy" appeared old enough to be this man's father for heaven's sake!

While analyzing the sermon I noticed that the devil was mentioned more than the name of Christ. The topic also included that all of us sinners were going to hell because of our hatred, greed, anger, etc., etc..

However, I saw more hatred and anger come from the pulpit than anywhere else. I might like to remind the "Most Right Reverend" that when he points a finger at the crowd he has three more pointing right back at him. Remove the beam from thine own eye, Reverend, so you can see well enough to remove the speck from thy brother's eye.

In conclusion, I have never seen a more disgusting display of pure carnality, hatred, anger and hypocrisy as I witnessed that day. The so-called Reverend needs to be seriously reviewed and I feel, removed from the pulpit. The Peniel Mission supporters as well as the Council of Churches should look into this matter. A lot of people can get hurt and a lot of long term damage can be done by such a "quack" minister.

Last, but not least, at 4:30 P.M.. we were finally fed... Only to find that we were packed in so tight that we could hardly move. To top it off, the food just wasn't worth it either! Next time the Peniel Mission should be straight up about having to sit through a sermon prior to the meal (don't deceive people) and put Love, Compassion, Understanding and Christ back in the Church.

"No free lunch there... Beam me up Scotty!"

—By Boyd McLaughlin and Jason

"We were greeted by the pulpit with such quips as ... "Listen here Sonny-boy, one more word out of you and I'll throw you out personally. If you want to see a man of the cloth get physical just say one more word Sonny-boy!"

Where Were You?

Blue Lahiff

Since the fateful day that the City bulldozers destroyed the homeless jungle, many many persons have approached me expressing and venting their indignant rage and contempt of that notorious action. And when I listen to these people, one thought goes roaring through my head: Talk is cheap!

That's right. Because instead of the skimpy handful of people (about 50) who were dedicated and outraged enough to take a stand for human rights, there should have been thousands. Yes, and had there been, I sincerely believe that the outcome that day would have been much different than it was.

Most people that did not attend will try to fall back on that pitifully lame and feeble excuse that they did not know it was taking place. It just doesn't wash, because for weeks in advance there was an abundance of news media hype on the subject. Also thousands of flyers were distributed by truly dedicated advocates explaining the place and time.

People from all over Seattle and vicinity, from all walks of life, who truly believed in their hearts that what the City and State were about top do was nothing less than fascist tyranny needed to be there that day.

People of the cloth certainly should have been standing in the very front rows (but they did not). Entire church congregations should have rallied to our cause (but they did not). And this was an excellent opportunity for the homeless community to appear in huge numbers and take a gallant stand for their rights (never happened).

And last, but foremost, there was a startling number of paid, professional advocates whose sworn duty and obligation was to be there (but they were not). That's right, because these professional, pompous blowhards, who strut and preen and brag how important they are, and what a gallant, noble, self-sacrificing job they do, fighting for the rights of the poor, sat idly in their offices while a major confrontation and battle took place. I won't mention any names for the present but the guilty parties know who they are.

But a second chance came for all those who had been absent to redeem themselves and maybe justify their salaries and at last strike a blow for freedom and justice. And that second chance was made available at the trial for the five advocates that bravely continued the battle in court.

At least hundreds of people should have been out front of the Public Safety Building demonstrating their outrage that five people were being unjustly tried. Once again it never happened.

Church leaders, organization directors, chairpersons should have rallied their memberships and congregations. Not only did they fail to do so, but they themselves did not even bother to show up. It's easy to talk the talk, but when it comes down to walking the walk, Seattle's church and advocacy community come up way short.

I personally am forced to take the entire year of 1995 off to repair my health as best a possible. I will return in '96 hopefully with more energy and stamina. I am going to need it because I know what my future agenda will be.

I plan to be totally out of control, and as wild and unrestrained as the wind.

I will not be at the head of an organization, nor even a member of one. My road is clear and there must be no anchors to burden me.

I plan to be totally out of control, and as wild and unrestrained as the wind. And for all those salaried advocates who continue to be quite content just sitting on their duffs and counting their pay checks, be warned!

Do not sit in my path, because if they do, they will assuredly be trampled. I do walk the walk.

LETTERS, Cont. from p. 3

rent housing—not urban development. WE must demand that our government put people's needs first on the agenda of the United States of America. For a healthy America, Housing, Health Care, Education, and Jobs with living wages are what we need. Not drugs, nor guns, nor super profits.

Mamie Jackson

Seattle

Dear Real Change,

Recently, I have been concerned about homeless people in our community. At school, my group collected clothes and gave them away to homeless people. I bought your newspaper last month, and it really helped me understand their situation a lot better. I did not realize there was a no sitting law in downtown Seattle. I am now doing a propaganda campaign on the sitting ordinance through my school. Could you send me more information? I would be happy to help out any way I can.

Bonnie Buchanan

Renton

SEATTLE, home ... ON THE EDGE

I have gained a foothold
in this city
ON THE EDGE
of the Pacific,
of Amarika,

WHERE the Walking Dead mingle with
the Newly-Rich,
the Bightly-attired,

WHERE eveyone smokes,
in defense.

WHERE the man with soiled pants
SLEEPS on a Modern Statue
(Public Art)
in front of a steel-and-glass building
in Beautiful Downtown,
while the "suits" stride by
(hurriedly)

WHERE Amarika's *still-fresh* energy/
dreams
CONFRONT Amarika's Shame:
the discarded,
the "irrelevant,"
the Industrial Waste

WHERE the System CRACKS,
exposing the Bodies,
the Ruins.
THAT ARE AMONG IT'S PRODUCTS

AND

WHERE the Hearts
of Good Amarikans
Work tirelessly at the Seams,
ON the Seams,
Mending,
Soothing,
INCLUDING and nurturing
the Lost,

HERE,

WHERE the Amarikan Ground
is *still vital*
WHERE i may HOPE...
here in Seattle.

God grant you Peace

—*Marion Sue Fischer*

Illustration by Barrett Heaton

Skid Road Hill

One cold and rainy day, on old Alaskan Way, a shelter rolls up and stops at Yesler Way.

A man steps out still shaking from his last bout, and on his way to down and out. No more drinks, he swears he's thru, it's too damn hard to start anew.

Now Yesler Way, it's well known to all those men who call it home. In olden days, they rolled the logs on down the Skid to Yesler's Mill, that gave the name to Skid Row Hill.

And now around this country wide, where the down and out reside, where life's one hard row to hoe, they call that place "Skid Row".

Gold Rush fever, broken men, loggers, drunkards, barfly friends, some men say, I'll quit drinking maybe someday, when my ship comes into Elliot Bay.

Now First Avenue and Pioneer Square have a lot of bars to trap and snare. If you hang out there, you'll get no where. The men they come, the men they go, around that square they ebb and flow.

To some they call this place a slum, and others come down for fun; but Skid Row's no place to play, and no damn fun when you have to stay.

So give some thought for those homeless men down Yesler's way, and thank the Lord you don't have to stay.

Letter from Jerry

Once I saw a star,
it was so very far.
I reached and tried to grab it.
And there was nothing there.
It was a dream that remains. A fantasy in the lonely and persistent world I live in. But it is starting to change — now that I've found a patient way to do things. Be thankful for what you got. Appreciate everything when it happens. And know what is right and what is wrong. I am thankful for everything. I appreciate everyone making me feel like I was a Real Person. I would like to thank the people of Seattle and surrounding areas for helping me to visit my family in Texas for Christmas and New Years. I couldn't have done it without them. Now that I am back, I will continue to seek employment and be a dedicated associate of the *Real Change* . Again I would like to say thank you.

Mary Quite Uncontrary

Dear Mary, poets say you are contrary, and want to know: how does your garden grow?

But I sometimes think, that every hyacinth your garden wears from your lovely head must have dropped there.

And never grows so red the rose as the sweet red hair of your head.

And a man old as I, looks longingly for a garden he too once had, nursed from his dreams.

For some I loved, the loveliest and the best, but now my bloom is gone, and I must lay to rest.

You see my garden had some poppies, oh so lovely red, but I grew a vineyard, and I took the daughter of the vine to wed.

And for all my logic, thought out by rule and line, for all of that, I was deep in anything but wine.
I was never deep in anything but nectar of the vine.

One more sweet smell of your garden, and I think I dreamed a butterfly or did it dream me? If so

before they take my breath away, may I drink from your cup of nectar for eternity?

Poetry by John Collado

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

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SUPPORTED BY THE PREMIER NORTHWEST CHEFS

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JANUARY

5

Thursday, Radical Women presents video "Lakota Woman - Siege at Wounded Knee" account of AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT seizing of Wounded Knee in 1973,7:30 p.m., New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave S, dinner $6 at 6:30, info 722-6057 or 722-2453

7

Saturday, Meeting of Mujeres Apoyando Mujeres - Women Supporting Women in El Salvador, time & place TBA, info 325-5494

9

Tuesday, Womentor (Lesbian / Bisexual Mentoring Project) orientation, 7 p.m., Capitol Hill location, info 720-0981 x9669

13-19

Friday, "Death of a Nation: The Timor Conspiracy," John Pilger's moving documentary on Indonesia's INVASION OF EAST TIMOR and the complicity of the U.S., Britain and Australia in the deaths of 200,000 people, probably 7 and 9 pm, Pike Street Theatre (at Boren and Pike - NOT the Pike Place Theatre), info East Timor Action Network/Seattle 547-7802

15

Sunday, Potluck, Fellowship of Reconciliation program with a speaker from Black Dollar Day Task Force, 5:00 p.m., program 6:30, Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 North 70th at Greenwood, info 789-5565

General Meeting of Freedom Day Committee, organizer of Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual Pride Day events, Seattle Central Community College, portable room B-103, info 292-1035

16

Monday, Martin Luither King Jr. Holiday, community events include workshops 9:30 a.m. and rally 11 a.m. Garfield High School, 400 23rd Ave at Jefferson, march starts noon

18

Wednesday, Talk(s) on East Timor by Constancio Pinto, organizer of the Nov. 12, 1991 march in Dili, East Timor which ended with Indonesian troops killing several hundred unarmed marchers, galvanizing world opinion to oppose Indonesia's continuiing illegal occupation of East Timor, times and locations to be determined, info East Timor Action Network/Seattle 547-7802.

24

Tuesday, Seattle NOW, National Organization for Women, Action/Membership meeting with Focus on 1995 Legislative Agenda, 7 p.m. Meet & Greet, 7:30 meeting, Seattle Central Community College room 1110, info 632-8547

February

5

Sunday, 7th Annual Benefit Dinner for Nicaragua Ecumenical Health Action Project, funding HEALTH CARE AND NUTRITION PROJECTS IN NICARAGUA, volunteers or info 860-8031

6

Monday, Washington State National Organization for Women Lobby Day in Olympia, get briefings on women's issues before legislature and meet with representatives, info 206-253-9276

Ongoing

Mondays, Radical Women study Group "The Rising of the Women is the Rising of the Race", newcomers welcome anytime, 7 p.m., 1903 NE 82nd St, info 722-6057 or 722-2453

Tuesdays, Planning for Jan 16th Martin Luther King Day Rally and March, representatives of organizations especially welcome, 7 p.m., CAMP, 722 18th Ave.

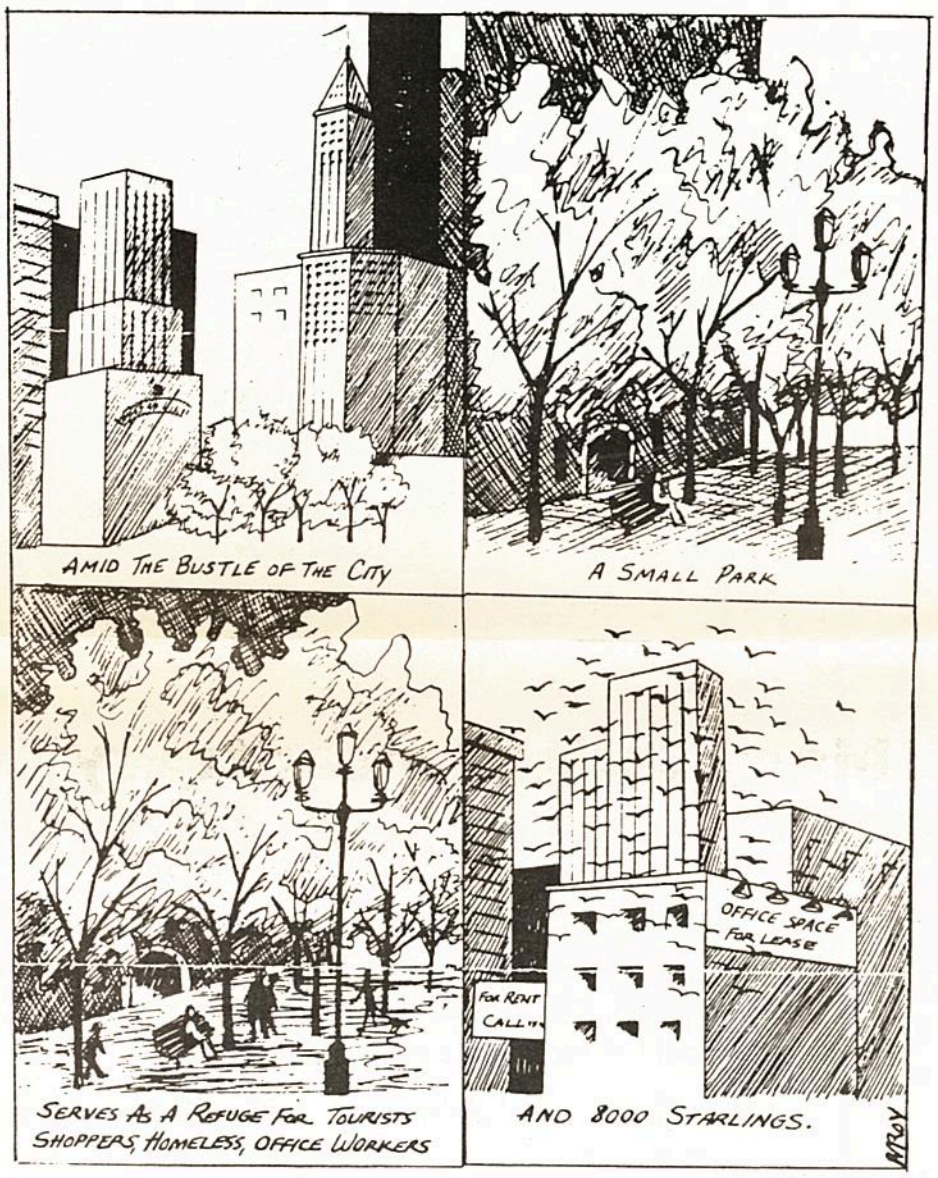
Thursdays, International Womens Day Committee planning meeting, 7:30 A.M., Elliott Bay Bookstore Cafe, 1st South at Main, info Lexie 587-3854 or Louise 632-8547

Fridays, Black Dollar Days Task Force lunches Support AFrican American Owned Restaurants, 323-4212

Through January 15, An exhibit "They Painted from Their Hearts: Pioneer ASIAN AMERICAN ARTISTS", Wing Luke Asian Museum, 407 7th Ave S, info 623-5124

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

Saturdays, David Cox's US War Against the Poor in Central America, 4 p.m., Channel 29, info 632-9203



FOOD NOT BOMBSNEEDS YOU

The Food Not Bombs organization has started several projects in the Seattle area:

- Free food distribution to local people in need.
- Literature tables to provide information about food, peace and justice.
- Providing hot healthy meals at demonstrations and events.
- Organizing creative actions in protest of war and poverty.

Food Not Bombs needs you as a volunteer to cook, drive and/or serve food. We are serving on Capital Hill on Fridays and in the University District on Sundays. A second group cooks on Sundays and feeds at 3rd and Yesler. The volunteers with Food Not Bombs also want to start feeds in other areas of the city on other days. We invite you to work with us to provide desperately needed services and information to our community. You can make a difference! Join Food Not Bombs today.

Call Food not bombs today at 728-9108
2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121

REAL CHANGE TAKES MORE THAN SPARE CHANGE.

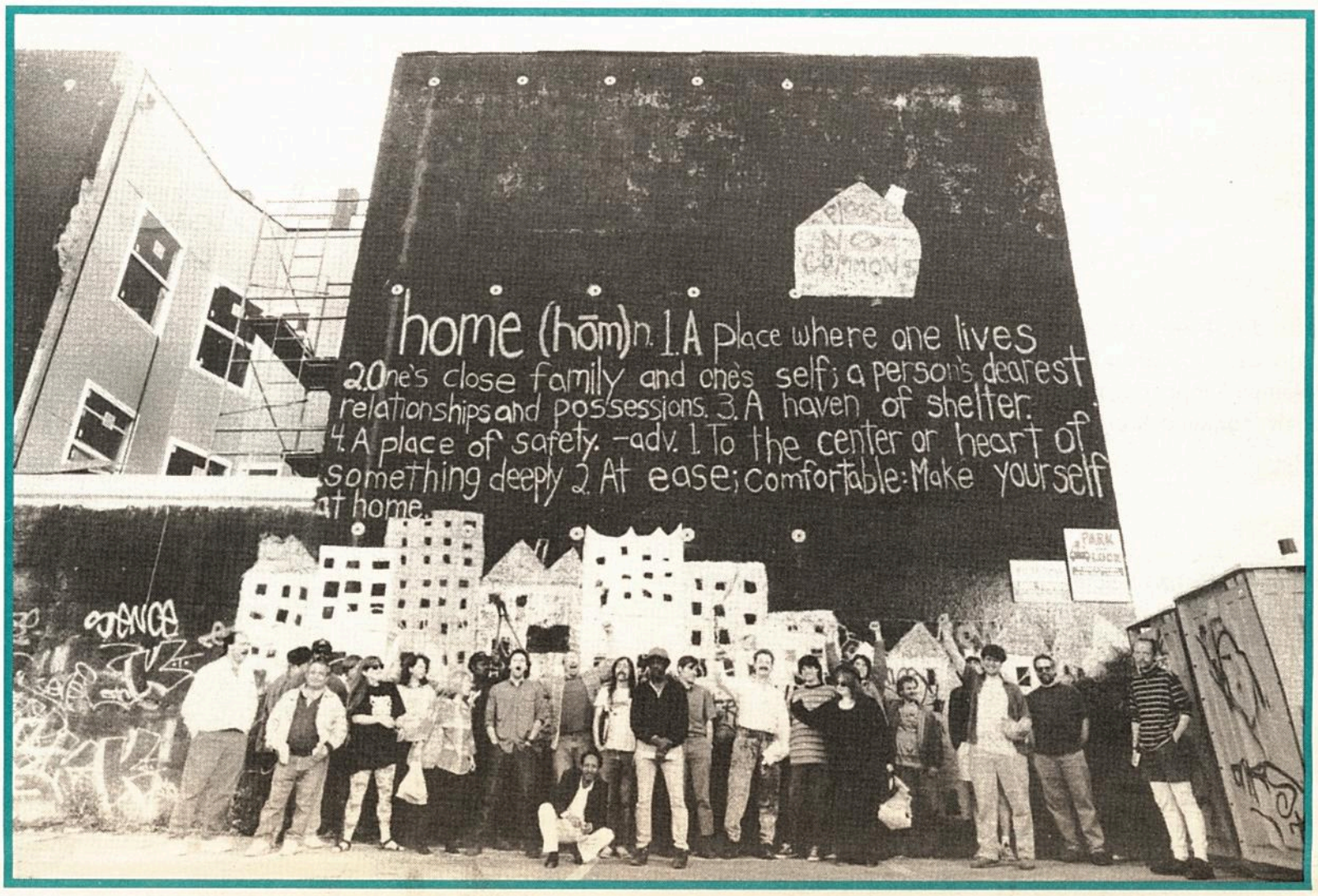


PHOTO BY DANA SHUERHOLZ

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 a1 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 _____