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Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 8, No. 23

**Inside: More Homeless,
Less Money • Boom — the Sound
of Eviction • The Mockingbird Times**

THE SITE OF THE FORMER HOTEL GOWMAN IS NOW HOME TO A PARKING LOT. PHOTO COURTESY OF WASHINGTON STATE ARCHIVES, PUGET SOUND REGIONAL BRANCH.



A Prologue to Homelessness

**Contempt, ignorance,
and the disappearance of
downtown's affordable hotels**

Story and interviews by Trevor Griffey

It's 10 p.m., raining lightly, and more than 150 people are lined up in the cold outside the doors of a social service agency in the Central District. They're hoping to get a place to sleep tonight, any place at all that's indoors.

Twenty years ago, this scene would have been almost unimaginable.

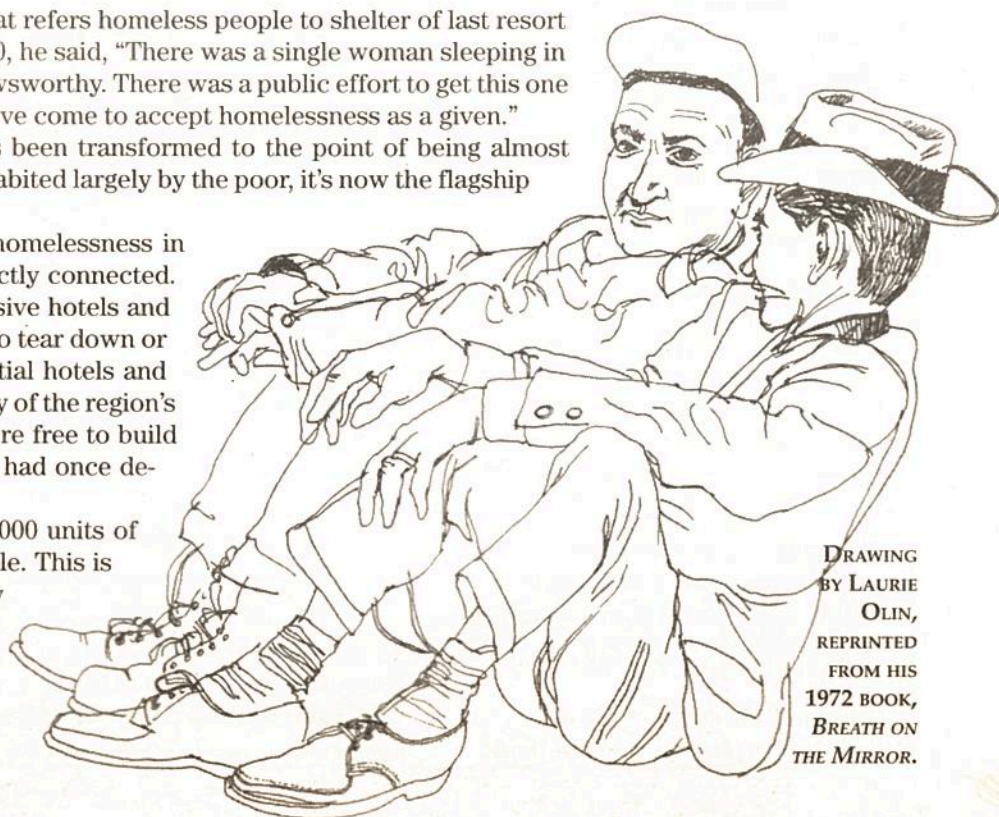
Reverend Rick Reynolds, director of Operation Nightwatch, an organization that refers homeless people to shelter of last resort late at night, remembers when homelessness was something extraordinary. In 1980, he said, "There was a single woman sleeping in the Public Safety [building] lobby. She was notorious in Seattle. She was almost newsworthy. There was a public effort to get this one woman an apartment. All of a sudden a trickle became a flood— 20 years later we've come to accept homelessness as a given."

That's not the only thing that's changed. In the past 20 years, downtown has been transformed to the point of being almost unrecognizable to those who grew up here 40 years ago. Once a struggling area inhabited largely by the poor, it's now the flagship of the region's high-tech and increasingly diversified economy.

This is no coincidence. These two seemingly disparate events—the rise in homelessness in Seattle and downtown's transformation and economic "revitalization"—are directly connected. To build a downtown dominated by upscale retail shops and tourist spots, expensive hotels and restaurants, high-rise office towers, condos and parking lots, developers first had to tear down or convert the historic buildings already there. And those buildings, largely residential hotels and apartments with retail first floors from the turn of the century, provided the majority of the region's very low-income housing. Once that housing was gone, downtown developers were free to build skyscrapers and freeways, convention centers and parking lots, while those who had once depended on this housing of last resort were now, literally, left out in the cold.

In the past 40 years, developers have demolished or converted more than 20,000 units of low-income housing in the greater downtown area to make way for the new Seattle. This is the story of the costs of downtown's redevelopment, and how the failures of the city and federal government to take these costs seriously helped create homelessness in Seattle, and encouraged many to falsely believe that it could never be solved.

Continued on Page 8



DRAWING
BY LAURIE
OLIN,
REPRINTED
FROM HIS
1972 BOOK,
BREATH ON
THE MIRROR.



Relating viewpoints

Dear *Real Change*,

Thank you for your paper. I was especially moved by the Rev. Rich Lang's article ("At the Last Resort," Sept. 20). This meant a lot to me. I am a secular Jew but my children practice Christianity. They are mestiza, of mixed race from New Mexico, and live there. We were having a little trouble relating our political viewpoints lately and I think this article can help us. I sent it to many people in my life that are living in New Mexico, along with a Yom Kippur letter asking forgiveness. Thank you so much for your wonderful paper and good work.

Sincerely,
Sheila

War solution

Dear *Real Change*,

This is my solution to war in Afghanistan. Instead of sending people with guns and bombs, send pretty girls who have been trained in the art of politics and psychology and sex and sociology. Have them make the bad guys fall in love with them and then tell the bad guys that they are American and to please don't kill Americans because that would mean killing mom and dad and little sister. Then send in people to teach Afghanis how to have better lives. It would cost less than war and America would have a new friend. I think it's a good idea.

Thanks,
LeeRoy

Our nightmare

Dear *Real Change*,

The attack on America, a nightmare, the vision of two airplanes directed into not one but two different skyscrapers. The Pentagon, a third aircraft crashing through its massive walls. Then passengers overcoming hijackers to crash another plane in a field, saving countless lives. Visions, previously thought only possible on television and movie screens, are now a reality. To me it still seems unreal as I seek to wake from this horrid nightmare. The nightmare continues, but then so do the dreams. The nightmare will end as we re-

group to make America stronger and safer. Cleaning up the rubble, the memorials of the innocent and the brave, and the investigations, that justice be done, are the immediate needs of our citizens. Blood given to help the survivors and muscle to help clear the rubble are just some of the sacrifices American citizens are making. In rebuilding the towers, we will demonstrate the power of the symbols they represent. America is the hub of world economics, the enforcers of peace, and the dream in which so many aspire. We will continue in our efforts to achieve success, the American Dream. We shall overcome this nightmare.

Roger W Hancock
Auburn

Visions of work

Dear *Real Change*,

Regarding your Sept. 20 article "Visions of the Ave" — Did I read the captions correctly? Is the young man with the cup, leaning against the utility pole, begging for money? He appears physically able to work.

Many decades ago, a buddy and myself traveled around the country and never even considered begging passersby for money! We worked our way around by taking temporary jobs in restaurants and resorts.

There was and is *always* work available as a dishwasher, short order cook, busser and etc. You don't even have to have a permanent address as many charitable organizations will provide a phone number and sometimes an address to use.

Don't these apparently healthy beggars have any sense of self respect, any sense of shame?

Sincerely,
Martin Paup

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Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the
Poor and Homeless

Real Change is published every other Thursday and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Annual subscriptions are available for \$35. All material is copyrighted to the authors. Submissions should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247.

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Mission Statement:

Real Change organizes, educates, and builds alliances to create solutions to homelessness and poverty. We exist to provide a voice for poor people in our community.

Goals

Provide a foundation for grassroots organizing.
Publish the views of marginalized communities.
Create direct economic opportunity. Build bridges with a broad range of allies in the struggle against poverty.

The **Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project** is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Programs include the *Real Change* newspaper, the **MacWorkshop** computer lab, **StreetLife Art Gallery**, the **StreetWrites** peer support group for homeless writers, the **Homeless Speakers Bureau**, and the **First things First** organizing project. All donations support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Editorial Policy

Articles appearing in *Real Change* reflect the opinions and perspectives of the authors. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry, and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives on poverty and homelessness can find expression. *Real Change* 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.



Rainee Maurer and Bruce Osman



PHOTO BY
ADAM HOLDORF

Rainee and Bruce do double-duty nearly every day outside the French bakery at the corner of Pike Place and Pine Street, and as tourists and locals pass by, Bruce calls out, "Real Change... Puget Sound's newspaper of the poor and homeless... support an honest living."

Pike Place Market is not only their regular base, but where they found out about the vendor opportunity when they first became homeless.

The couple met eight years ago, when Rainee was working as a dancer in Las Vegas. Together, they came north to Spokane, to take care of her aging grandfather. The two eventually returned to Seattle, where Rainee was raised. But Bruce's job prospects fell through, their savings ran out, "and it kind of hit us all at once," says Bruce.

When their baby girl was born, Rainee, who'd always thought she was unable to have kids, took it as a blessing. The toddler is living with her grandparents out at a ranch in Montana. She turns 3 this month. The whole family reunites once every two or three months at a Spokane hotel. Managing substance abuse treatment while raising a baby was too much, but Rainee is just happy her parents took on the responsibility.

"We've been so thankful to keep her in our family throughout all of our crises," says Rainee. Their greatest priority is to get stable enough to care for Chandler. Signs are improving. Because of the couple's whole year of steady recovery, her parents are thinking of moving to Spokane, so they can visit more easily. ■

Power

I-71 campaign proves organizing pays

By Timothy Harris

Back last April, we at *Real Change* had a wild idea. What if we ran a ballot measure campaign for more shelter and services for homeless people? It would make homelessness a high-profile issue over the election season, build a more powerful, activist organization, and show popular support for expanded homeless services. It was just crazy enough to work.

Early organizing meetings were well attended and enthusiastic. It was clear that an initiative campaign had broad support within our community. We raised some money, commissioned a poll, and formed an organizing committee. We named it Citizens for Shelter with Dignity. Over the coming months, we would see a great deal of each other.

Our poll came back saying that 400 likely voters would go for our initiative by about a 3-1 margin. By the end of May, we had a ballot measure campaign on our hands. Initiative 71 was born. We called for 400 new shelter beds and a 20 percent increase in supportive services for homeless people. In about two months, nearly 200 people collected over 27,000 signatures.

That's when reality began to intrude. King County, for example, took their sweet time in counting our signatures. We went to court and won validation, but not in time for the November ballot. This placed our initiative in direct competition with the renewal of the Housing

Levy, a low-income housing program that has been supported by Seattle voters since 1985. We ran the risk of splitting our ranks during the crucial levy campaign. We pretended not to care.

Then the economy began to tank. Over the summer, the recession took hold, and tax revenues shrank. September 11 made the budget outlook even worse. The

city released some very scary numbers, and declared that passage of I-71 would mean very tough choices in other areas of the budget. We said so be it.

On top of that, we found that I-747, Tim Eyman's property tax initiative, would take \$8 million out of the budget in the first year alone. Polls show his initiative is likely to pass. Apparently unphased, we said that wasn't our problem.

Then came the Mayor's budget. Last year, we fought hard to win passage of Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck's Strategic Homeless Initiative, which added about \$3.4 million to the Mayor's biennial budget on homelessness. Another \$2.75 million was allocated to shelter and transitional housing pending the outcome of a legal challenge to I-722, Eyman's last tax initiative. While the courts struck I-722 down this spring, the mayor reneged. All money saved in the I-722 challenge went to plug holes in the 2002 budget. We then knew we were in trouble.

All the while, we were negotiating for an acceptable compromise. We recognized that the ground had shifted beneath our feet, and that our poll had become meaningless. We worried about our possible role as spoiler to the Housing Levy. We put it back on the City Council. It was up to them, we said, to keep us from competing with the levy.

By the end of October, due largely to the efforts of Steinbrueck, an agreement was reached that I-71 would not go to ballot. In exchange, we regained the \$2.75 million that was redirected from savings on I-722. This will provide 170 new shelter beds and 70 units of transitional housing. We gained a commitment to a downtown day center and hygiene facility for homeless people, a place where people can get the services they need to get stable and off the street. We also got a commitment from City Council that the Housing Levy money would continue to serve those most in need.

In the end, we are still left with a glaring need for more shelter, better services, and more affordable housing. In a weak economy, the poorest get hit hardest, and the modest gains we attained pale in comparison to the need. Our work is far from over. Still, we proved that homeless people and their advocates are capable of building for power. We strengthened our organization, and created a base of support for homeless issues that will not go away.

We may not have gotten what we were after, but we're in a better position today than when we began. That's how *Real Change* gets built: bit by bit, beginning from the base. We'll be back for more, stronger every time. Count on it. ■

We may not have gotten what we were after, but we're in a better position today than when we began. We proved that homeless people and their advocates are capable of building for power.

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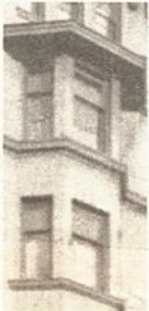
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More Than Meets the Eye

Real Change is much more than just a newspaper. We are a respected voice of the poor that reaches more than 30,000 people each month. We are a powerful grassroots organizing project that wins real gains for the homeless. We offer cultural and educational opportunity through our art gallery, writers workshops, and computer lab. Your support makes our work possible. Please give generously. All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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Wanted:

a "door-to-door" City Council

Is it possible to split Seattle into seven districts and elect local representatives to City Council?

On Saturday, October 27, City Councilmember Nick Licata convened a community forum on converting the current at-large elections to district elections for Seattle City Council. This was the third and final forum sponsored by Licata's "Campaign to Make a Difference," a series of civic-minded discussions sponsored by a re-election campaign with plenty of money but practically no opponent to campaign against. One of the former events looked at forming a civilian review board to pursue complaints against the police; the other considered building a day center for homeless people downtown (covered on page 18 —ed.).

The event, which drew about 100 people to a West Seattle auditorium, featured presentations by a diverse panel of Seattle voters and Tom Ammiano, president of San Francisco's City Council. Presenters included Walt Crowley, president of History Link, Terry Mast, National Secretary Treasurer of the Inland Boatmen's Union, Knoll Lowney, co-chair of YES for Seattle, George Howland, news editor of *Seattle Weekly*, Dawn Mason, former State Representative in District 37, and Jay Saucedo, a City Council candidate in this year's primary who launched his campaign to bring the districting issue to light.

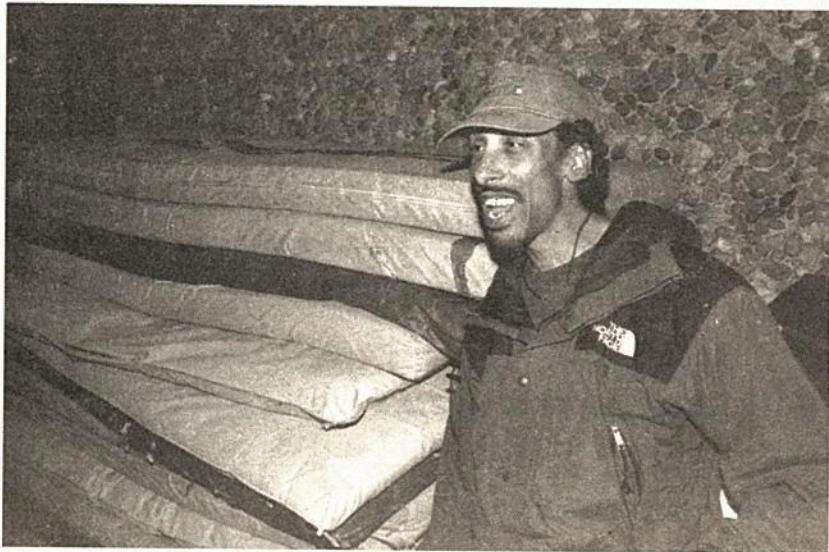
Mr. Ammiano served as the forum's "expert" on district voting, and began the meeting with a brief history of San Francisco's transition from at-large elections to district elections. He spoke of San Francisco's 1970s board of "monochromatic members" that made way for a more diverse panel upon conversion to district voting in 1977. Ammiano speaks for district voting because he believes candidates will have to spend less time raising funds to campaign across an entire city, resulting in more time spent getting to know the voters in their own district using "door-to-door" tactics.

An attendee of the forum asked Ammiano about the possibility of additional conflict in the City Council due to disparate interests of council members elected by district voting. Ammiano stated that "sustaining a council based upon district voting remains a challenge, however it continues to work for the prosperity of the city." He used the examples of homelessness and affordable housing to illustrate why even opposing interests work within a district-elected council. "These are issues that the council as a whole has to resolve, even though the issue may be somewhat different in each district, community planning issues resonate in every neighborhood. The council must keep the whole city's health in mind and work together to reach a solution, and by electing council members by district, 'the council becomes more account-



CITY COUNCILMEMBER
NICK LICATA.

Sleepout for survival



WILLIAM HOWARD PREPARES TO MAKE THE MOST OF SLEEPING MATS OUTSIDE THE KING COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING. HOWARD TOOK PART IN SHARE'S SLEEPOUT IN PROTEST OF KING COUNTY'S DELAY IN OPENING ITS WINTER RESPONSE SHELTER. THE SHELTER, WHICH HAD BEEN RUN BY SHARE IN PREVIOUS YEARS, WAS EVENTUALLY OPENED IN MID-OCTOBER UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE SALVATION ARMY. PHOTO BY MIKE HAMRICK.

able," added Ammiano.

Licata also believes that district representation would provide much-needed accountability in the City Council. "Seattle's voters need to know their councilmembers and what they represent with certainty," he said. "Ultimately this will give the City of Seattle better legislation."

Licata and Saucedo, who is now co-chair of Seattle Districts Now, agree that the best way to initiate district voting would be to compromise: have both at-large and district elections.

Here's their vision: The current system of nine elected councilmembers would become two at-large and seven district-elected representatives. The mayor and a city commission would draw the boundaries of seven electoral districts. The remaining two City Council positions would continue to be at-large.

Seattle Districts Now plans to put the issue on the 2003 city ballot. If it passes, district candidates would first appear in the 2005 election. To find out more, go to www.districtsnow.com. ■

—Romie Ponce

Donors bypass local charities to help New York

Here's one local impact of September 11: nonprofits here are seeing a dearth of charitable donations.

Outgoing Seattle Mayor Paul Schell convened a group of nine leaders from various nonprofit organizations in an effort to provide some spark to their monthly and yearly fundraising campaigns. All of the representatives agreed that giving is down dramatically in the past 45 days. They also admit that, whether it comes from taxes or through charity, money is tight. Very tight.

Mike Frederickson, executive director of Lambert House, said his revenue has dropped 95 percent in the past month. Lambert House provides assistance to gays, bisexuals, lesbians, and transgendered folk, including a substantial number of teenagers. "We've got to turn our attention home again, we're still here," Frederickson proclaimed.

That's unheard of in the nonprofit field, especially in Seattle. Rick Redman, campaign chairman of the United Way of King County, said the area has a long history of helping its own. It now has the highest per-capita donations in the country to United Way at \$55 a person, says Redman. St. Louis is a distant second, at \$31 a person.

These gifts are more important now, when government funds for social services are drying up. Operation Nightwatch director Rick Reynolds provided one example: the King County administration building, where 50 homeless men are sleeping in the lobby. Because of cutbacks in the King County budget, that's funded for only three months, to the tune of \$35,000.

"That money runs out sometime in mid-January, and we don't know where additional funding will come from to keep the mats on the floor," Reynolds said.

Meanwhile, across Fourth Avenue, 50 other homeless men spend the night in the lobby of the Municipal Building. Their spots are 'safe' for the foreseeable future, since the Seattle City Council allowed them to move in during the winter of 1997-98, and only they can change it. That dispels rumors in the homeless community that if Mark Sidran is elected Mayor, they will be out in a heartbeat.

Northwest Harvest doesn't get government monies, but relies on individuals and corporations for support. Individuals provide 78 percent of the money. "We did have a donor contact us and ask questions about our financial problems," said spokeswoman Ellen Hansen. "We did get two substantial checks to help our cause, but it will take many others to take a step forward to continue our regular programs."

Other nonprofits participating were the YWCA, CAMP, Children's Home Society, Lifelong Aids Alliance, and Family Services. Schell was asked if any special pleas were coming forward to the estimated 50,000 millionaires who live in the Seattle area. Redman quickly jumped in and said, "Many of those people are hopefully going to step up to the plate during this crisis. They won't forget the homefront." Last year, Redman pointed out, United Way raised more than \$93 million dollars and they've had double-digit growth for each of the past four years.

Bottom line is that a lot of money was sent to assist the families of those killed September 11. All present at the meeting urged that the focus now shift to helping King County residents in the tough winter days ahead. ■

—Ed Cain

Boom: a familiar sound

On November 9, at 8 p.m., the Whispered Media production *Boom, The Sound of Eviction*, will have its Seattle premiere at the 911 Media Arts Center. This documentary analyses the dot-com boom in San Francisco, the high cost of living that has followed in its wake, and the resulting displacement of seniors, families, artists, and the poor. The main focus of the film is

Continued on Page 18

Cut and Run

By Adam Holdorf

This month, armed with the mayor's recommendations and the city Budget Office's gloomy predictions, the Seattle City Council will begin dishing out the cuts to next year's \$2.4 billion budget. Missing from this year and next is at least \$27 million in tax revenue torpedoed by the economic slowdown. As the local economy's helium balloon continues to deflate, the budget gap just keeps widening.

Money for human services — everything from homeless shelters to seniors' programs — took it on the chin in Mayor Paul Schell's draft budget, released in late September. Schell gutted a \$2.75 million "contingent fund" for emergency and transitional housing that had been promised if the revenue-sapping Initiative 722 was found unconstitutional. Shelter providers have been waiting for that money since the state Supreme Court struck I-722 down earlier this year.

Schell also proposed stopping funds for the city's Severe Weather shelter, designed to save lives when the mercury drops below freezing. The cut would save \$35,000 — 3 percent of the \$11 million total for emergency and transitional housing. In this case, a little money goes a long way: Without it, Aloha Inn staffer Dan Owcarz told Council at an October 10 budget hearing, "people are going to freeze."

Yet it looks as though these cuts are going to be reinstated. On October 29, the City Council approved a resolution stating their intent to restore the funds. Council

City looks to restore budget money for shelters, services

acknowledged the force of Citizens for Shelter with Dignity, the coalition that mounted the Initiative 71 campaign, which called off its initiative drive in return for the reinstatement. The group also won promises for a new downtown day and hygiene center, and that half the units built with money raised from passage of next year's Housing Levy renewal would house people earning less than \$15,000 a year [see page 3 — ed.].

For some, it was a settlement made with regret. "I am personally very disappointed that we have to compromise down to what we thought we were going to get anyway," Flo Beaumon told the City Council during the budget hearing. Beaumon, who also works at the Aloha, helped gather 27,000 signatures in about two months to help I-71 qualify for the ballot. She said she probably wouldn't do it again. "I'll [compromise] because we need it. If this is being taken away from us, I'll use I-71 to try to get it back."

Drastic cuts to human services continue on the county level, where there's no money to keep the 50-bed county administration building shelter running past January 11, 2002. Gov. Gary Locke has proposed a 15 percent across-the-board swipe at state departments. Funding cuts are a reality all around — the only question this year is, how bad will they be?

Funding feast or famine

The city's cutbacks signal a very different environment from last year,

when money was sluicing in off a shiny new downtown shopping district and an economy that showed few signs of weakening. Then, Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck was pushing for \$12 million in additional city spending to combat homelessness.

But since the city budget is dependent for more than half its revenue on retail sales and business and occupation taxes, a slowdown in local spending really hurts. When people cut back on non-essentials, that revenue falls, and the budget — and those who get services with city money — suffers.

In the future, this can only get worse. If Initiative 747 passes November 6, property taxes will be capped at a 1 percent increase per year — well below last year's 4.1 percent rise. The city budget would become more reliant on a shrinking supply of sales tax revenue.

cent of its gross revenue to the city. That could be raised another 1 percent, raising \$900,000 for the city.

- Discarding Municipal Court staff positions. While the caseload at Seattle Municipal Court actually dropped by more than half during the '90s, the staffing stayed constant. Eliminating one judge, his bailiff and the related clerk positions would save \$215,000 a year.

Cost-snipping proposals also came in during budget testimony. Sharon Lee, director of the Low Income Housing Institute, submitted a list that included:

- Cutting a \$5.5 million Human Service Department's bureaucracy responsible for too many "layers of management and micro-managing" whose staff "add little value to all the community meetings they attend."

A Sorry Census

This is who was homeless and outside on October 19, according to the annual One Night Street Count:

742 men

135 women

34 children

543 of unknown age or gender

Total: 1,454 people — a 15 percent increase over the number found last year.

In addition to working to reinstate human services spending, Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck has proposed a municipal parking tax that would reach into the pockets of pay lot owners. The city budget office estimates this could bring in between \$6 million and \$12 million a year.

How else does council respond to the \$27 million shortfall? Other money-saving, fundraising possibilities, proposed in Council documents, include:

- Upping the cable franchise fee. TCI Cable TV pays an annual fee of 2.5 per-

- Cut the fat in other offices with overlapping functions, notably the Strategic Planning Office, the Office of Economic Development, and the Office of Housing.

Cuts like these would approach a \$4.1 million savings — enough for Council to reinstate the homeless funds Schell axed. ■

Another budget hearing is slated for Thursday, November 8, at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, 600 Fourth Avenue, 11th floor. The City Council expects to approve the budget on November 19.



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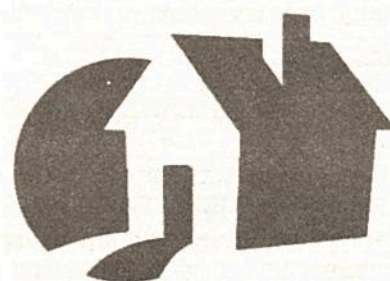
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Nov. 12**



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poetry

Staring Down a Gun Barrel

Sixty years from being struck by lightning the oak still lives,
Roots sinking deep in earth and several city blocks away,
Staring down the gun's barrel, you're already dead.

Mind twisted in a massive cleft-lump,
A unique feature of these urban, residential blocks of city
Sixty years from being struck by lightning the oak still lives.

Outdoes its amputated species in twists or whorls beneath the black-thick bark,
The very center of the being is a knot.
Staring down the gun's barrel you're already dead.

In the storage room you've escaped the cold, but the
Twenty-two might silence you before you'd heard it speak, Fate could wonder that
Sixty years from being struck by lightning the oak still lives.

Staring down the gun's barrel you're already dead.
And several city blocks away in the outdoor-vast and homeless concrete freezer, you
Share eternal life with a sixty-years-from-being-struck-by-lightning oak.

—HANS LILLEGARD

Earth Bound

My bones are shells, my flesh hangs soft,
they treat me like delicate china;
well,
my head does look like an egg in a cup.

I still tend my garden.
Butterflies weave among spires of delphinium,
lay eggs in the fireweed.
Hummingbirds sip from the honeysuckle
climbing all around the porch
where I eat wild strawberries
that the birds don't get.

When I was young the neighbors thought me queer,
digging and rooting, nurturing wildflowers;
no manly pursuits.
Now they pity me because I'm old
and haven't anything better than this to do;
earthbound, housebound, rootbound.

I think
someday I will rise, as I've always risen,
to the floating scent of leaf and petal,
the beating of wings,
and I will keep on rising

while they
may never know just how earthbound they are.

—ANITRA L. FREEMAN



Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning

Let's talk about titles!

Titles are the most important part of an artistic or literary "work." In fact, a good title may completely eliminate the need for the work part of a work. For example, you can take a blank white canvas and title it "A Diaper Dreams of Better Times." That's art, and it's a whole lot easier than mucking around with brushes and paints that would probably have just gotten on your shirt or up your nose, anyway.

Here's another illustration from my extensive poetry files:

The World's Shortest Poem Ever

BY ©DR. WES BROWNING

— Finis.

See how easy that was? I didn't even break a sweat! Other great titles of mine are the ever-popular "Nine Lines of Really Really Blank Verse," and the haunting "Sounds of Silence, a Spoken Word Piece of Indeterminate Duration." That last was inspired by a composition of John Cage, and is meant to be accompanied by a plucked stringless guitar, forever, or until everyone leaves. People who have heard my other poems as well usually pick these out as their favorites. It can only be because of the titles.

Literature is full of books that have become famous almost entirely because of their titles. *Moby Dick*, for instance. A book named after a whale, of all things. Nobody wants to read the book, but everybody wants to repeat the title. *Moby Dick, Moby Dick. Moby Dick.*

A particularly clever title is James Joyce's *Ulysses*. What a case of bait and switch that one is! It puts me in the mind to write the second by second story about the tragic day back in '78 that my toilet backed up and flooded the house. I would call it the *Iliad*.

The mistake most people make is to think that titles merely inform about content. They suppose that the title ought to just tell you what the piece is about, and then get out of the way. OK, maybe that's the way it should be, but

that isn't the way it is.

The crowning example of what I'm talking about is the topical, ongoing TV news program title. You turn on the nightly news, and instead of the usual title, "The Nightly News," or whatever, you get "America Strikes Back," with fancy graphics and its own specially composed theme music faintly suggesting Holst's "Mars" or the Empire theme from *Star Wars*. You turn the channel, and instead of "The Other Nightly News," it's "War on Terrorism" brand news. Also competing on more channels are "War in Afghanistan" and "America Fights Back" news, and who knows what other kinds.

These titles aren't simple descriptions of content. They express a clear bias. They tell you more than what's in the news. They tell you how the makers of these programs want you to think they are reacting to the news. The titles say to the majority of viewers, "We're feeling exactly the way you are, and we promise not to challenge you with viewpoints that might risk disagreeing with yours."

To see how unobjective these titles are, imagine how it would be if they used different titles. What would it be like if Dan Rather worked under a title that read "America Finds Scapegoats"? How about "1984 Finally Starts," or "America Lashes Out Exactly the Way Osama Wanted Her To," or "America Murders Back"?

Imagine a news program title of "America Steps In It" with a graphic of a foot landing on a burning bag, to the sound of a muted trombone. It could be fun for a change.

Say, if the nightly news can have an uninformative ongoing title, what's stopping the rest of us?

For the next couple of weeks title me "America Gets By." ■

**Imagine a news program title
of "America Steps In It" with
a graphic of a foot landing
on a burning bag, to the
sound of a muted trombone.
It could be fun for a change.**

Postcard City

Welcome to Postcard City
Where everything is picturized
But don't look for any substance

If you don't like it sail across the Bay

We have mountains, rolling hills and bridges
Postcard City welcomes out-of-towners
A land of tourists kicking out residents

Postcard City is temporary
Hard to keep up the appearance
A utopia stifling the other side of the story

Controlling with an iron fist
You can do anything
As long as it doesn't go against our rules

No SROs
No studios
No section eight vouchers

No benches
No mats in shelters
Playing musical chairs with no music

No more lodging in public
No sleeping in cars

No sitting at UN Plaza
No immigrants
No Affirmative Action

No diversity leads to our ultimate goal, a utopia
No more artists

No more socialists
More and more capitalists

No more free speech
No more Government cheese
No PG&E

Postcard City don't care
About healthcare or welfare
Cause we got our share

No more liberals
No more homosexuals
No individuality

Follow the cat in the big hat
He is over sixty
Still making babies

Politics is dirty
In Postcard City
You wash my back i wash yours

A 20 cent stamp
And you can send this beautiful scenery
Across the country

The Grass is always greener
But what you see
Is man-made not Mother Nature

Look beyond the window dressing
Unwrap the gift
Reality is more than a kodak moment

— LEROY F. MOORE JR.
SAN FRANCISCO STREET SHEET



LOVERS

To write is listening to lovers
in a July park
her oriental navel is pale
and she tears the butterfly label
from her faded backpack
we listen to the cacophony
of planes, the ferry horn
and the flutter of pigeon feathers
we watch our constellation
form on Elliot Bay
and I make tracings of the stars
on her skin with words.

—EARLE THOMPSON

Symbols

What are your symbols?
What do they define?
Are they portions of reality?
What is on your mind?

A sound,
An image,
A number,
A theme.

What are your symbols?
What do they define?
Are they portions of reality?
What is on your mind?

The future,
The past,
A village,
A path.

What are your symbols?
What do they define?
Are they portions of reality?
What is on your mind?

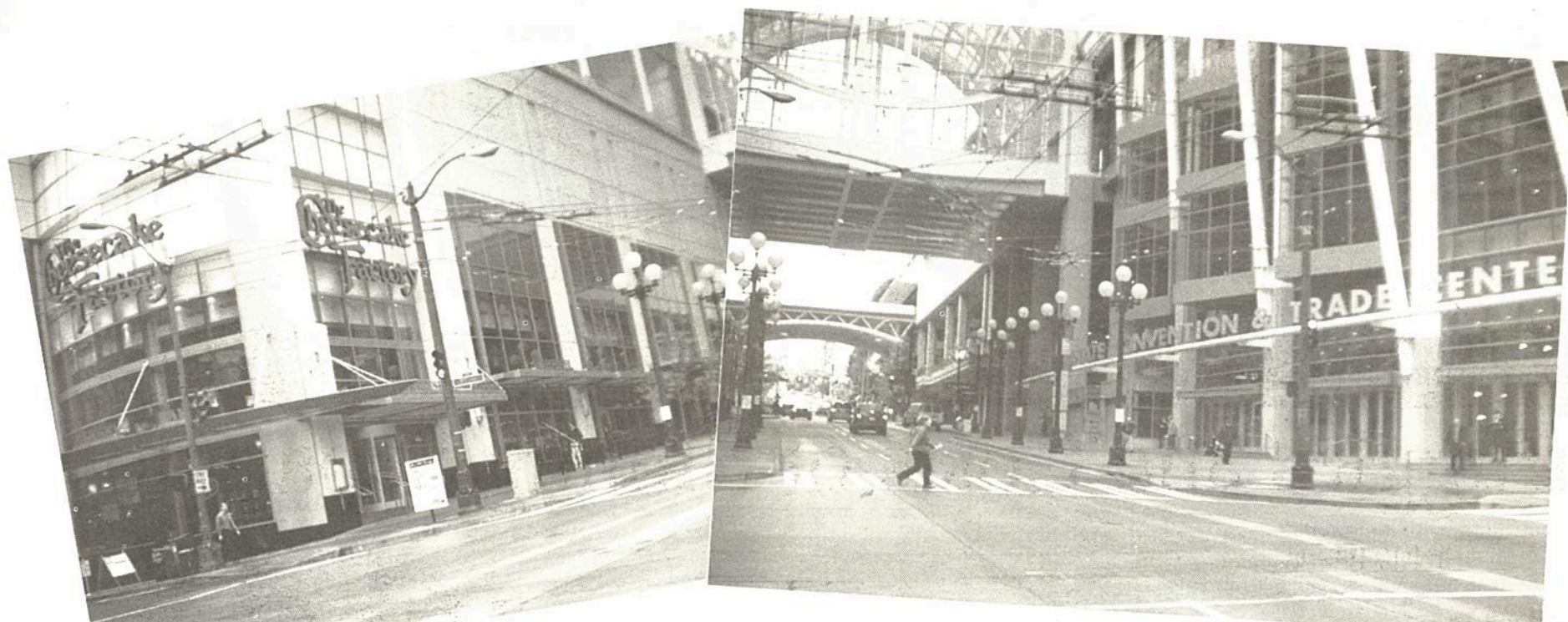
A figure,
A note,
A picture,
A dream.

What are your symbols?
What do they define?
Are they portions of reality?
What is on your mind?

A life,
A rhythm,
A poem,
A line.

These are my symbols.
They define my time.
Bits of my reality,
A system of my mind.

—
Symbols are the perceived reflec-
tions of reality by which we
manipulate the universe.
-KEVIN VANDERHOEF



THE EAST SIDE OF 7TH AVENUE AND PIKE STREET. NOW, ABOVE LEFT: THE CHEESECAKE FACTORY; THEN, LEFT: THE WALDORF HOTEL HAD 127 UNITS OF LOW-INCOME HOUSING. NOW, ABOVE RIGHT: TAKING UP ALMOST FOUR FULL BLOCKS, THE CONVENTION CENTER DISPLACED HUNDREDS OF LOW-INCOME HOUSING UNITS; THEN, RIGHT: THE 74-UNIT MCKAY APARTMENTS.

THROUGHOUT THIS STORY, CURRENT PHOTOS BY JACKIE RENN. ALL HISTORICAL PHOTOS COURTESY OF WASHINGTON STATE ARCHIVES, PUGET SOUND REGIONAL BRANCH.



SRO HOTELS Cont. from Page 1

A working neighborhood

Seattle was a town more than a city in 1880, with a population of 3,533. But once railroads found their way to the region, its pioneer days were over. In just 10 years, from 1880 to 1890, Seattle's population grew exponentially to number 42,837 people; it nearly doubled in the following decade, and by 1910 was estimated to be 237,174.

It was a time of growth that would define Seattle for the next half century. During that time, Seattle's economy became based on serving the migratory and immigrant laborers who passed through town seeking gold-panning, fishing, or logging jobs as far away as Alaska. To house and serve this population, downtown Seattle became a landscape dominated by residential hotels (called SROs, short for Single Room Occupancy) and cheap apartments that offered retail space and entertainment at street level and various kinds of cheap housing on the upper floors.

And while Seattle's economy changed over time, the housing it built from the 1890s to 1920s continued to define the urban space of downtown Seattle—in Belltown, Pike Place Market, along First Avenue down to Pioneer Square and the International Dis-

trict. Defined downtown, that is, until their postwar decline inspired urban planners to dream of a day when most of it could be razed for something new.

Downtown's decline

During the Great Depression and World War II, there was little new construction of any kind of housing in the U.S. The old residential hotels built at the turn of the century served many of the veterans who returned home when the war ended, but not for long.

Scared that the Depression might return after the war, the federal government created economic incentives to boost the economy. They made suburban lifestyles easier for middle-income people, while hastening economic decline in the nation's urban centers.

The Federal Housing Administration and Veterans Administration, which provided mortgages for more than 11 million homes, made it cheaper for many middle-income people to buy a house than to rent. But similar loans were not available for the majority of the country's low-income housing stock. Karen Frank writes in *New Households, New Housing* that "in 1949, federal minimum property standards defined an acceptable dwelling unit as containing a complete bathroom and kitchen. Their criterion classified all SRO housing as substandard, thereby preventing the use of federal

funds or mortgages for their rehabilitation as residential projects."

The federal government's transportation priorities also left cities out in the cold: in the postwar era, it spent 75 percent of its transportation budget on highways that made suburban living more convenient while spending 1 percent of that budget on public transportation.

In addition to suffering in the wake of the federal government's spending priorities, Seattle's downtown was impacted even harder than most cities by World War II. Along with farming, hotel ownership and management was one of the major sources of income for Seattle's Japanese community, which was locked out of other more lucrative professions by racism. Of the roughly 300 residential hotel buildings downtown in 1940, people of Japanese ancestry operated 183. According to Frank, when West Coast Japanese were forced into internment camps during the war, many of "their hotels fell into the hands of speculators who allowed them to deteriorate."

Add to all of this Seattle's increasing reliance on the suburban factories of Boeing, and downtown Seattle had every reason to go into economic decline.

"Deliberate ignorance"

After the war, downtown Seattle's population plummeted, and its buildings deteriorated and went vacant.

But contrary to stereotypes, downtown didn't die. It had become a neighborhood largely of those who, for one reason or another, did not take part in the suburban movement that had so profoundly transformed the lives of middle-class Americans.

From 1960-1973, downtown Seattle's population dropped from 32,000 to 21,000, accounting for 40 percent of all of Seattle's population loss during that time. Meanwhile, the percentage of downtown residents who were employed dropped 46 percent, and the number of retail businesses dropped 49 percent.

Those who were left downtown were predominantly the very poor, the disabled, and, quite often, retired elderly men who had worked as unskilled laborers in Seattle's prewar fishing-and-timber-based economy. In 1973, 25 percent of everyone living downtown were on welfare, and 49 percent were over 60 years old. By 1979, nearly 90 percent of those living downtown made less than 50 percent of the median income.

It was a population that included many who were referred to as homeless, even though it was rare that any actually slept outside. And the catch phrase used to describe the social network and businesses that made up the community was "Skid Road," with its

Continued on Page 13

SRO HOTELS Continued from Page 8

clearest and most concentrated manifestation in Pioneer Square.

Joe Martin, a social service worker in downtown since 1977 and founder of Pike Place Medical Clinic, describes the old Skid Road still present downtown when he first started working in Seattle as a collection of "taverns, cheap hotels, cheap restaurants with cheap cocktail lounges."

"It was a place where you came to get a cheap flop, a bed, a room, maybe to see if you could size up a hook into the logging camps or catch a ship. It was a place where mostly men could come and sell their labor. Skid road provided an infrastructure that catered to this community."

But it was also a community that had little to no political power. Regardless of what the inhabitants of downtown thought of themselves and their neighborhood, most city planners and officials who looked at downtown Seattle didn't see an area hurt by misplaced federal spending priorities or an important refuge for those left out of the postwar economic boom. They saw an area that had fallen behind and needed to be modernized. They saw "blight."

According to UC Berkeley architecture professor Paul Groth, blight is "a term planners really picked up with a vengeance in the 1940s and 1950s. A blighted district supposedly hurts the tax base by not paying for services it receives. Its visual problem is that it makes surrounding neighborhood real estate go down in value. It's the theory

that a bad building on a block might take a whole block down."

The term wasn't relegated solely to buildings. Expressing a huge gulf of understanding between themselves and their fellow residents, Seattle's planners increasingly conceived of the people who lived downtown as "blight."

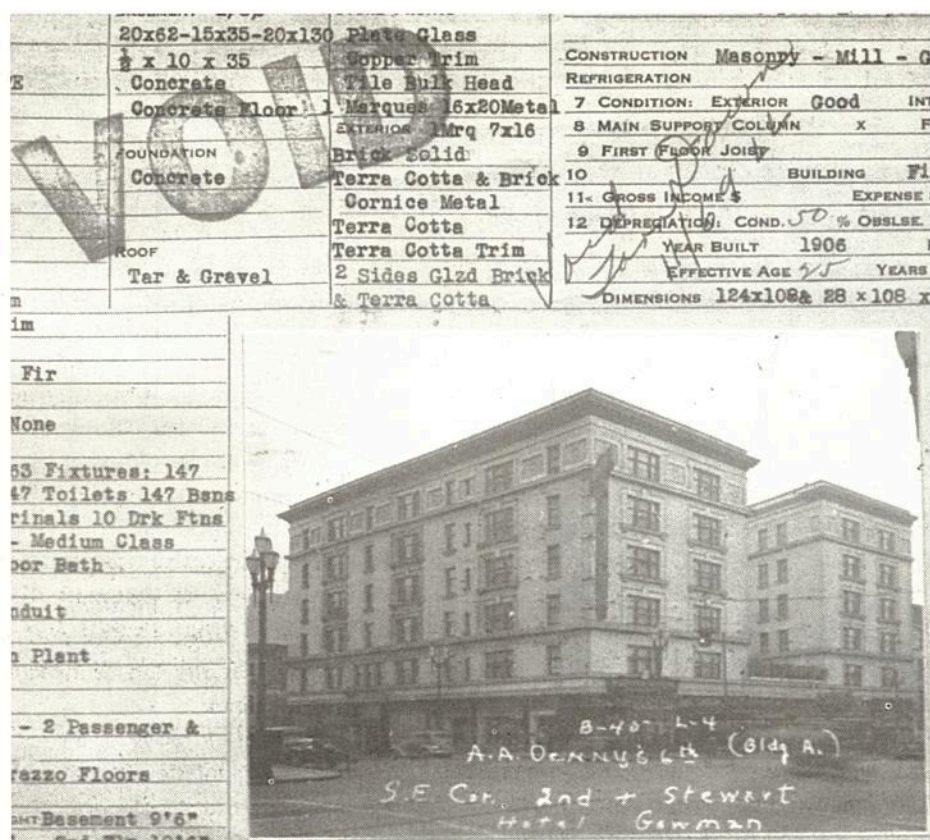
In 1965, more than 25 years before Mark Sidran advocated for his so-called civility laws, the City of Seattle published a report about revitalizing Pioneer Square that noted:

In 1940, people of Japanese ancestry operated more than half of the roughly 300 residential hotel buildings downtown. When West Coast Japanese were forced into internment camps during World War II, many of their hotels suffered from neglect.

"The 'itinerant element' occupying the substantial number of existing 'sub-standard' mission houses, boarding hotels, and other 'Skid Road' facilities in this area will be eliminated as a blighting environment factor... through a program of relocation and rehabilitation. This environmental influence is acting as a serious deterrent to private efforts at rehabilitation or the construction of new facilities in this strategically located portion of the city."

This view of Pioneer Square's residents was by no means unusual. Five years later, a young reporter for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* named Rick Anderson (who now writes for the *Seattle Weekly*) described Pioneer Square in bestial, Darwinian terms: "Here in the bowels of First Avenue, man has passed the turning point and now bares his link with the animal. Here man can be filthy, ignorant and superfluous. It is a cruel, hands-out world of coughing, limping, swearing, fatuous laughing, spilled wine, flying fists, swaggering, falling

Continued on the next page



THEN, ABOVE: THE 150-UNIT HOTEL GOWMAN, AT THE CORNER OF SECOND AVENUE AND STEWART, WAS TORN DOWN IN 1969. NOW, BELOW: A PARKING LOT. THE 44-UNIT AMHERST HOTEL, SOUTH OF THE GOWMAN, WAS ALSO DESTROYED FOR PARKING.

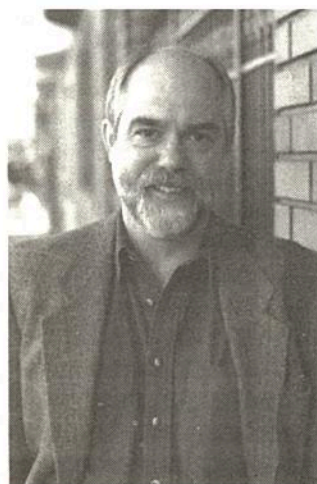


PHOTO OF PAUL GROTH COURTESY OF PAUL GROTH.

"It was a kind of fiction"

Paul Groth is a professor of Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, and the author of *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*.

Real Change: How could so many SRO hotels have been demolished without consideration of the social costs?

Paul Groth: Most city planners didn't understand the importance of SROs, and they didn't even classify it as housing. Until the 1970s, when a hotel was demolished, no one was listed as displaced. It was a kind of fiction everyone knew was taking place but didn't care to discuss because we didn't see SROs as decent housing.

RC: You've called this process "deliberate ignorance."

Groth: The planners, beginning with the influential "Real Property Surveys" of the 1930s, knew SROs had a lot of people in them and that they were important, but they consciously buried the figures. This was ignorance created out of the sense of what kind of home people should have. The irony is that as we did urban renewal, we tended to build very few units which those who were displaced could afford.

RC: What did we lose by not replacing hotel housing?

Groth: I think [we] missed a lot of diversity, a lot of uncles and aunts and grandparents who would have been able to live closer to their families. We did reinvent hotel housing in the '60s and '70s, in the form of retirement homes. But it meant the kind of services hotels could support [in their neighborhoods] became less viable. What hotel life requires is mixed-use neighborhoods: groceries, commercial laundries, recreation. The suburbs would have had to allow those kind of services within walking distance.

RC: Why didn't they?

Groth: Americans were afraid of change. The best way to preserve real estate value for all time is to make sure nothing that can be built next to it that isn't just like it.

RC: Do you consider yourself a critic of suburbs?

Groth: As a historian, I think in 100 years we may look back disparagingly on the suburbs we've built in the past 50 years, and that may become a popularly shared view and not just something specialists believe.

Delores Hayden, a professor of architecture at Yale, has said that garages in American houses are better built and have better utilities than half the houses in the world. She is right, and that situation is obscene. There should be a luxury tax on overly large houses. Instead they get tax breaks. It's enough to make you a radical. ■



SRO HOTELS Cont. from Page 13

down, crawling, groveling and spitting, always spitting."

"Most of all," Anderson wrote, "there are broken windows and broken people, empty buildings, empty hearts and vacant minds."

It was this kind of attitude, common enough that it could be edited and published in a mainstream daily newspaper, which legitimated what Paul Groth calls the "deliberate ignorance" of those who could plan the transformation of entire neighborhoods of poor people — with new highways and convention centers, office towers and parking lots — and barely stop to consider what would happen to those people after they lost their homes.

Massive losses

While citizen activists effectively mobilized to halt the destruction of Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market, it took longer for people to organize to stop the losses of low-income housing

that happened throughout downtown around the same time. And by the time such concerns went public, by 1973 or 1974, much of the damage had already been done.

From 1960-1974, 353 of downtown Seattle's 713 residential buildings were closed, and most of their 16,900 units were lost forever to demolition or conversion. By 1980, another 1,500 units had been lost, bringing the net total to 18,400 units lost, 53 percent of downtown's housing stock, in just 20 years.

For low-income residents, the losses were even more dramatic. Over 70 percent of the units lost from 1960 to 1980 were from residential hotels that catered largely to the poor. By 1983, it was estimated that only 7,311 units of housing remained affordable in the greater downtown core.

Entire neighborhoods were changed almost overnight to make way for what would become the downtown of today. From 1960 to 1979, 36 percent of all demolished hotel buildings were turned into parking lots, many of them

simply vacant lots; 29 percent were demolished for office/commercial buildings, and another 22 percent were razed to build condos.

The reasons for building closures varied.

The construction of I-5 through downtown destroyed roughly 3,000 units of housing. The Kingdome and Seattle Center construction also took out some buildings that had formerly been low-income housing.

While preservationists helped save the architecture of Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market, that didn't prevent developers from displacing the poor as they converted old residential hotels into condos, office space, or more upscale apartments.

Downtown's share of Seattle's retail sales dropped 49 percent from 1960 to 1974, which also hurt the many hotel and apartment owners who relied on the rents that came from their first-floor retail tenants.

And as all of these trends worked their way through the area, the Seattle City Council accelerated the crisis dramatically. In 1970, inspired by 20 deaths from a recent fire at the Ozark Hotel, the council raised the fire safety standards of hotels and apartments. Rather than pay for the renovations specified by the new code, downtown building owners closed between 5,000 and 7,000 more units of low-income housing in the following three years, with even more buildings falling under in subsequent years.

The causes of hotel and apartment demolition in Seattle and around the country were diverse and at times complex. But they were not random or unavoidable. The loss of this housing "cannot be seen simply as an accident of supply and demand in a free market," says Groth. "The crisis in residential hotel supply is a planned event, a function of local, state, and federal policies that have encouraged housing for some types of people and reduced supplies of housing for others."

Devastating impact

At the time when urban renewal first gained currency, the overall economy was booming, and it seemed within reason to some that they could expect that when substandard housing was demolished, it would be replaced with something better and more respectable.

But not everyone was so sure.

Victor Steinbrueck, a leading advocate of historic preservation, didn't endorse the kind of preservation that threatened to kick people into the street with nowhere to go. He cautioned that "human renewal is first, and then comes the rehabilitation of the

buildings."

Others were more direct. "It's obvious what's going to happen," Walter Banks, then the owner of the St. Regis Hotel, told *The Seattle Times* in 1973. "There's not going to be any room for these people."

Asked what the impact of hotel closures was on the downtown community, social service worker Joe Martin said: "It was devastating."

"First and foremost, people were scattered. It didn't happen swiftly, but the process of attrition continued.

Some of the missions were full, and they weren't used to turning people away or at least not in those numbers. It began to become very apparent that there were, starting as early as 1977, more homeless people out there."

Homelessness did not by itself emerge as a result of the hotel closures. But the losses of low-income housing before and during the major release of America's mental health patients sowed the seeds of a social crisis.

Martin and others co-founded the Downtown Emergency Service Center as the city's first secular shelter in the fall of 1979. According to

Reverend David Bloom, co-founder of the Seattle Displacement Coalition, "It was full almost right away and we didn't even advertise it. By the second or third night, we were at capacity. It confirmed what we suspected — that there was a huge need out there."

Government's inadequate response

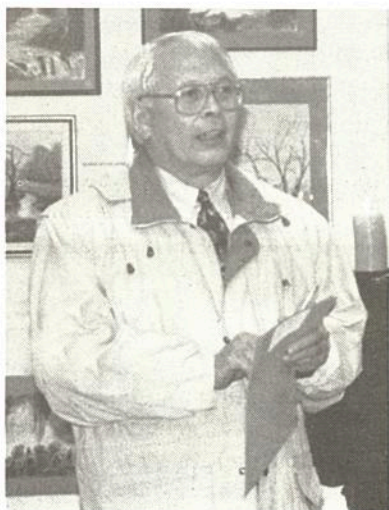
For the first time since the Great Depression, Seattle in the 1980s, like most other cities in the country, began to see its homeless population soar.

In 1972, there were four agencies in Seattle that provided free beds to the homeless, but they required payment after three days and rarely turned people away. Street counts that once were dozens soared in the early '80s into the realm of 300 to 400. By 1990, people estimated that there were maybe 1,200 homeless in Seattle on any given night. Within another 10 years, that estimate would increase by 500 percent, to at least 6,000.

Yet just as America was beginning to see a rise in homelessness nationwide, the federal government, under the direction of Ronald Reagan, was scaling back programs that might have helped address the problem.

"It would be impossible," says Bloom, "to understate the [impact of] federal cuts in housing programs. It went from \$30 billion to about \$7 billion a year in HUD programming over just a couple of years. The hundreds of billions of dollars that would have been spent is a

"We made sure that people weren't displaced"



BOB SANTOS FILE PHOTO.

Bob Santos is the executive director of Inter-Im, the International District Community Development Association. *Real Change* interviewed Mr. Santos in the lobby of the NP Hotel, a residential hotel where he grew up 50 years ago.

Real Change: What do you see when you look at the International District today?

Bob Santos: That we were able to preserve the neighborhood. That's what I see. A lot of changes have been made, and a lot of money has gone into the district, but it's still a neighborhood — unlike Pioneer Square, unlike the Belltown area. If it wasn't for the activists in the

early '70s, we would have lost this neighborhood long ago.

RC: How did you preserve it?

Santos: We insisted that the preservation of housing for working people and low-income people was the priority. We made sure that people weren't displaced out of their homes, people who would eventually become homeless.

We also built services to serve the people that were still in the community. We built the health clinic, developed an early childhood education center, built a community garden, and had nutrition programs for the elderly and working families. We established our own Public Development Authority. We developed a bunch of buildings.

We had to deal with the stadium, two major interstate freeways, the metro tunnel, you name it. But we were able to maintain [what] is now considered the Asian cultural center of the Pacific Northwest.

RC: Having grown up in this neighborhood, how do you view downtown today?

Santos: I feel bad for the communities downtown. You lost whole neighborhoods. Now there's a big deal about returning to the urban centers as neighborhoods but once you lose it, it's really hard to get it back.

There's going to be a point in 10, 12, 15 years, where the more affluent people in the higher-income apartments that are being built are eventually going to outnumber the folks that built the International District, and we will then catch up with the rest of downtown. When you have a new mix of people coming in, they'll want different kinds of amenities like T-shirt shops and antique stores. The dynamic of the district is going to change. Until then, this is still a pretty good, mixed neighborhood. ■



tragic loss we've never recovered from."

With the federal government largely unsympathetic, local housing and homeless activists turned their attention to the city.

Local activists logged a series of victories in the early to mid '80s during Charlie Royer's administration as mayor: an anti-abandonment law; an anti-demolition law; city expenditures on human services; a housing levy to build low-income housing first for seniors in 1981 and then for families in 1987; a commitment to stabilize the number of low-income units downtown at their 1983 level of 7311; and a TDR/Bonus program that encouraged downtown developers to contribute funds to low-income housing.

John Fox, director of the Seattle Displacement Coalition, recalls that many of these policies fell far short of doing what activists had hoped. The anti-demolition law, though "quite successful" for a few years, was ruled unconstitutional in 1987. The anti-abandonment law, says Fox, was "ground-breaking legislation" that city officials have ignored as if it were unconstitutional. "It's never been repealed, it's still in place, but DCLU refuses to enforce it." The money for low-income housing from the TDR/Bonus program, meanwhile, has been "just peanuts," making the legislation "almost worthless." Money raised by it for housing has in some cases gone to downtown redevelopment projects such as Benaroya Hall and "open space and plazas and other shit."

According to Sharon Lee, executive director of the Low Income Housing Institute, the levy, while invaluable, was also making up for federal cuts to housing programs.

And despite the city's 1983 commitment to maintain 7311 low-income units in downtown, that number has since eroded by as many as 1,200 units. According to Fox, the city's "own data, when they were actually doing studies, showed a continual drop — and then they stopped doing studies in 1989. Now they've started creating numbers that are bogus, just outrageous and totally ridiculous, obviously grossly over-inflated."

Erosion of responsibility

Unable to get responses from city or federal officials that could prevent homelessness entirely, housing and homeless advocates in Seattle helped create shelter and service programs that might at least mitigate the consequences of the crisis. The shelters and services were begun with names meant to imply the short term, "emergency" nature of their services. It's since become difficult for some to see when the emergency will end.

"Homelessness has become institutionalized," says Bloom. "What's alarming is that before we were talking about hundreds, maybe 1,200. Now we're talking about as many as 7,000, and there are vastly more shelter beds than we had before, and there are many more agencies. We said that we must not do this, and we did it, and I don't know

how we're going to get out of it."

Between 1980 and 1988, Seattle went from having 6 to having more than 33 homeless shelters. By 2000, there were 69 agencies in King County providing 195 different shelter or housing programs for the homeless. Yet these services continue to swell beyond capacity, as 1,500 people each night are still unable to get shelter in Seattle.

This disparity between services and demand for them won't get better anytime soon. As this article goes to press, there isn't a single level of local government, from city to county to state, that isn't planning on reducing funding previously earmarked for homeless shelters and services in the coming months. What once seemed better than nothing no longer seems so, as politicians flirt with budget cuts without providing any concrete steps to alleviate homelessness in other ways.

In this context, the sincere though ill-fated responses of the Royer administration to deal with affordable housing and homeless issues downtown have come to feel like part of a bygone era.

"A planned event"

As the poor have been dispersed out of downtown, at first into Seattle's outlying neighborhoods, and then increasingly out of Seattle entirely, the value of what was lost during downtown's redevelopment becomes ever more apparent.

"You can't find that kind of housing today," says Sharon Lee of the old residential hotel buildings. "The current zoning does not allow you, whether you are a market-rate developer or a low-income developer, to replicate that type of housing." From density restrictions to parking requirements, Lee cites a list of policies which, just as Seattle rid itself of its SRO hotels, prevented a similar kind of housing or neighborhood from being built downtown or anywhere else.

The consequences are dramatic.

Once the very low-income lived with rent that was week to week or month to month, close to the manual labor jobs they relied on, and within easy walking distance of basic services and entertainment. "It was not a particularly attractive life," says David Bloom of the old Skid Road, but it was better than being homeless.

Now, more and more, the working poor find themselves in housing where they must pay first and last month's rent with a deposit, where they must rent or buy furniture, stuck in neighborhoods in which they need a car just to buy groceries and get to work. Even if they live in housing that qualifies as "low-income," they still have to pay upwards of \$5,000 a year simply to maintain the car one must have to live in suburbs built for middle-class people. These costs partly explain why homelessness continues to increase long after the worst of downtown displacement occurred.

Some note that by 1960, Skid Road had become a relic of a bygone era when Seattle's downtown economy

"An ongoing apocalypse in slow motion"

Joe Martin is the founder of the Pike Market Medical Clinic. He has been a social worker in Seattle since he began with the First Avenue Service Center in 1977.

Real Change: City planners referred to Seattle's old Skid Road as blight. Was it blight?

Joe Martin: One man's blight is another man's home.

RC: What happened to Seattle's Skid Road in the '80s?

Martin: A tsunami of economic change came that was historically discontinuous with the organic community that grew up here over the greater part of the century. And suddenly [the community] just got flattened, and the people who comprised it were scattered. It happened at first gradually enough, but as the process continued, fewer and fewer options became available. Gradually the whole urban landscape shifted.



RC: Tell me about Mayor Paul Schell's background in this context.

Martin: Paul Schell was on the cutting edge of the transformation of downtown Seattle. He was one of those people transforming downtown Seattle not in the interests of the community that once had comprised it. Schell was more of a preservationist. But whether I buy a building and demolish it, or I buy it and kick you out and gentrify it, it really doesn't matter. You're out. Schell, I don't believe, ever exhibited any inordinate concern for the social calamity that homelessness became. As Mayor, he has become much more enlightened, but we're talking 20 years after the fact.

RC: He might argue that he was saving downtown.

Martin: This is a man who's very wealthy. He has a summer home in France and a home on Whidbey Island. Schell is not going to suggest he was a bad man. The problem is what didn't get preserved. The people who comprised downtown were considered superfluous or secondary to the hard capitalist redoing of the neighborhood.

RC: But why should people care if downtown lost its slum housing?

Martin: Because the phenomenon of gentrification which began in Pioneer Square gradually wove itself throughout downtown and has now impacted every neighborhood in Seattle. Many different communities have seen their old neighborhood business sectors transformed and made more upscale. When you do that squeeze, you are bound to generate increasing numbers of people who don't fit anywhere, and they then join the ranks of the homeless.

What we're talking about here is an ongoing apocalypse in slow motion. And we have absolutely no intention of addressing this problem. I don't see any concerted, systematic effort to deal with this problem at any level of government in this country. ■

was based on fishing, logging, and warehouse jobs. Yet a sizeable part of the city's working poor still finds jobs downtown.

"The irony," says John Fox, "is that now there's a huge number of office workers, janitors, and service employees who make up a kind of new blue-collar workforce downtown. They need housing close to where they work, and we've wiped most of that out."

Not only did downtown housing once serve the working poor, but for much of the postwar era, it also served the retired elderly who lived on fixed incomes, the disabled, people with drug

and alcohol problems, and the mentally ill. People who, for a variety of personal and individual reasons, one can see on the streets today.

The loss of this housing was, as Paul Groth has said, "a planned event." A generation has since become accustomed to the consequences of downtown's redevelopment — not only to the glitzy retail chain stores and towering office buildings, but to the thousands of homeless people processed through inadequately funded bureaucracies. But these consequences need not be final. After all, why can't the end of homelessness also be a planned event? ■

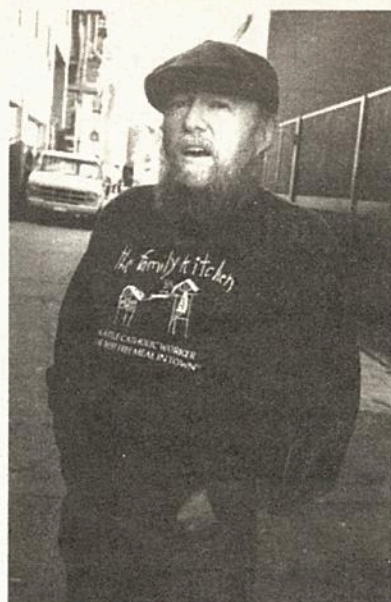
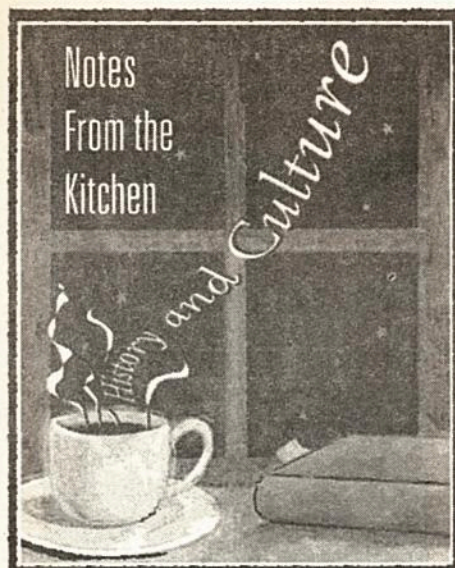


PHOTO OF JOE MARTIN
BY MIKE HAMRICK.



Autumn Music and a Fall Supper

By Liz Smith

Distractio. That's what the world needs now, not love, sweet love. We need distraction, and not just the same old distractions. No, we don't need more chocolate cake, boozing it up, strange bedfellows, new and improved illegal drugs, gambling away baby's new shoes. What we need is a Bach Festival. Bach soothes the jangled nerves, consoles the sad, inspires the weary, gives you back your strength. Bach takes away the temporal and connects you with the eternal.

On Saturday, November 10, Town Hall is hosting their second annual free Bach marathon, beginning at 1 p.m. KING-FM radio will broadcast the entire event live, as they did last year. Some of the highlights: a family concert at 1 p.m., a sing-along of choruses from the Christmas Oratorio, Brazilian jazz based on Bach, dance performances, lyrical juggling, and Bach performed on four didgeridoos. The Cafe Bach will once more be open for lunch, supper, desserts, and beverages. Now, in Bach's time, people did not use forks, but I think it can safely be assumed that forks will be provided.

The Town Hall brochure that I was sent doesn't mention whether Bach's "Coffee Cantata" will be heard. It is a very lively and cheerful piece of music, and fun to listen to while you are making dinner. It also reveals what a sly sense of humor Bach possessed, and it's sung in German, so you won't have any awkward explanations to make if there are children in the room.

Chicken with Honey and Orange

Serves 2

- 1 Tbsp butter or oil
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped in small dice
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 14.5 ounce can chicken stock
- 1 pound chicken, light or dark meat, in one-inch dice
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 2 Tbsp honey

1. Heat butter. Add onion along with salt and pepper and sauté on medium-high heat for five minutes.
2. Pour in chicken stock and reduce on high heat for four minutes.
3. Lower heat. Add chicken, orange juice, and honey. Stir to combine. Simmer on low heat for about 10 minutes, or until chicken is cooked.
4. Serve on a bed of cooked rice.



Fall Mushroom Soup

Yield: 5 cups

For this soup, I used a combination of white, crimini, and chanterelle mushrooms, with the addition of a few dried porcini and shiitake mushrooms. This soup will taste fine if you use white mushrooms alone. Criminis have a more intense flavor than the whites; when fully mature they are called portabella. Chanterelles range in color from orange to bright yellow and have a nutty, fruity flavor. Porcinis and shiitakes have a pungent, earthy flavor; for the best prices try Uwajimaya and some of the other grocery stores in the International District. When using shiitakes, remove the stems, as they are tough.

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 2 shallots, peeled and finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/4 tsp grated nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp each salt and pepper
- 1-1/2 pounds mushrooms, rinsed, drained, and sliced
- 1 ounce dried mushrooms (optional)
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 1/4 cup dry sherry
- 1/4 cup cream or milk

1. If using dried mushrooms, cover with 1/2 cup hot water and set aside.
2. In a saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat. Add shallots and onion and sauté 5 minutes. Add garlic and spices, sauté 1 minute.
3. Add mushrooms. Cook five minutes on medium heat. Lower heat and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes.
4. Cover mushrooms with 2 cups chicken stock and add dried mushrooms along with soaking liquid. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, for 20 minutes.
5. Let cool off-heat 10 minutes. Puree in 2 batches, return to pot. Add sherry and cream, simmer a few minutes, and serve.

Select the biggest mushrooms available to have less work time washing and slicing. They must be sliced by hand; using the food processor will make your soup turn out bad. ■

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Monday, Oct. 8, 11:38 p.m. 14th Avenue, Operation Nightwatch. The suspect, a nearby storeowner, had walked up to the front door of the shelter with a clear plastic cup in his hand. He stated, "One of your guys left this at my place; you can have it back." He poured the contents of the cup on the floor inside the doorway and walked back to his business. Operation Nightwatch told the officers that the fluid "was yellow, and smelled like urine." Officers observed a puddle on the floor, but were unable to determine what the substance was. They contacted the suspect inside his business, and he stated that he threw apple juice inside the shelter "to teach them a lesson." He stated he is tired of the transients using Operation Nightwatch who trespass on his property — they urinate and defecate on his property, and every morning he has to clean up the mess they leave behind, and he is "fed up." He was given a warning for his behavior, and was told to seek legal avenues for dealing with the situation.

Thursday, Oct. 11, 9:17 p.m. Seattle Central Community College, Broadway Avenue. On September 10, officers received a call from a businesswoman on Broadway. She stated that recently on Broadway she had come into contact with a mixed-race youth who appeared to be about 12 years old. She said she was concerned for the child, given his age and apparent vulnerability. She explained that he was in the company of adults, some of whom are known heroin users, and asked the officer to try and locate the child and place him into protective custody. She also thought he might be a runaway. The officer observed the child a few days later in front of Seattle Central, in the company of five or six street youth. He talked with him briefly, and found out that he was a runaway from a foster home, and could not recall the name of his case worker or foster parents. He was placed into protective custody as he had no adult supervision, and no means of support, and was in a high-crime area. Officers spoke with staff at the Secure Crisis Residential Center, and were advised that the youth was endangered and would be accepted at the center. He was released into their custody.

Friday, Oct. 12, 12:29 a.m. McGilvra Street/Broadmoor Golf Course. Officers responded to a complaint of a man yelling and screaming to the west of McGilvra Street. Complainant heard loud obscenities, and a man sounding distressed. Upon arrival the victim was found standing on the golf course, screaming. He was a homeless white male in his early 20s, and appeared disoriented and intoxicated. He was bleeding from a wound to his nose, and fell to the ground frequently. Officers were unable to determine what had happened to him, and he was transported to Harborview Medical Center for treatment. ■

Streetwatch is compiled from Seattle Police Department incident reports by Emma Quinn.

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NEWSBRIEFS Continued from Page 4

in the low income Mission District, where the 62 percent Latino population fights to preserve its ethnic heritage.

A film of ambitious scope, *Boom* incorporates interviews, archival clips of '60s tourist movies and '50s educational films, footage of street protests, and analysis by experts and community members who cover the social and historical causes of the current economic situation. The filmmakers challenge dot-com workers, real estate developers, and Mayor Willie Brown himself to answer their questions about what is happening to the city.

Many of the economic and development problems addressed in the documentary are not exclusive to San Francisco. They are, in fact, reminiscent of a similar shift in wealth throughout the nation, and right here in Seattle. America suffers from a growing economic gap between rich and poor, which some call economic apartheid. This puts a major strain



FRUSTRATED TENANTS TAKE TO THE STREET IN *BOOM*.
PHOTO COURTESY OF WHISPERED MEDIA.

on our economy. Because of the prospects of upward mobility, we tend to be more tolerant of inequality. Yet the more money that accumulates at the top, in the hands of the rich, the more expensive the cost of living becomes for everyone else.

San Franciscans know this all too well. The median price of residential real estate in the city in 2000 was \$465,000, which was up about 30 percent from the prior year. This is due to the presence of dot-commers coming to the city for its cultural eccentricities and at the same time stamping them out by raising prices for everyone. An example of this is the case of live-work lofts that provided affordable housing for the city's artists. In the late '90s, however, many became reduced-cost locations for dot-com companies that used them solely for work space.

Commercial real estate in San Francisco more than tripled between 1995 and 2000. The Mission District has been one of the hardest hit, with below city average income and a major price hike for renters. Yet, they are not taking this sitting down, with antigentrification groups such as Artists Eviction Defense Coalition and the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition forming to challenge the new economy.

Boom, *The Sound of Eviction* covers the many aspects of economic displacement that are at work in San Francisco, and the people who are fighting against it. It is a subject that is poignant in Seattle, where we are experiencing a very similar situation. ■

— Jeanne Ryan

Shelter vs. showers

On October 18, City Councilmember Nick Licata convened a public forum entitled "A civil approach to helping homeless people." The focus of the panel discussion was on the question, "Should the city of Seattle have a downtown (daytime) community center to serve those who are homeless?"

Interestingly, a viable example exists some 200 miles north of Seattle, in Vancouver, B.C. The Evelyn Sallers Centre opened in 1976 to meet the needs of the city's growing low-income and homeless populations. The facility offers health care, food, and hygiene programs, along with storage and recreational activity areas, life assistance programs, and skills development for those seeking employment.

Here in Seattle, we obviously have a similar need. But are the problems of Seattle the same as the problems of a city like Vancouver?

The homeless population there is estimated to be a comparatively meager total of 300 to 600 persons per night. The newest figure tallied last week for Seattle (courtesy of the Seattle/King County Coalition for the Homeless) was a staggering six thousand per night.

There are other differences. Percentagewise, Vancouver enjoys a much higher number of SROs than does Seattle, which means most of the people the center serves actually have a place to call home. Also, 60 percent of the center's clientele are age 40-65 or over. Our focus here is 25 to 45 years old, an entirely different segment of the population.

Furthermore, from its inception, the Vancouver project has enjoyed a veritable stampede of support from all phases of government, including a direct subsidy from what is Canada's equivalent to the state Department of Social and Health Services. In creating proactive programs and incurring an initial financial burden, Canada has effectively reduced the "price tag" to society by virtually eliminating the need for emergent/shelter care, as well as the spiraling cost of health care.

But is a daytime hygiene and support facility the top priority for Seattle's homeless? Bill Hobson, director of Seattle's Downtown Emergency Service Center, is not so sure. "We need to be absolutely certain that it [nighttime shelter] is a key priority," he says. "Open a library 24 hours a day, seven days a week and see how many shelter consumers vs. hygiene consumers you'll have." ■

— Bruce Lofton

CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

This week, we at Classics Corner wrestle with one of the great literary controversies of all time: When Hecuba blinded the King of Thrace and murdered his children in cold blood, did she have God on her side, or was she just being a total bitch? A related issue posed by Euripides' *Hecuba* has to do with the nature of God himself. Do we live in a just, well-ordered universe, or is life more like an unending episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* — violent, tedious, both beautiful and horrible, and without any point whatsoever?

As you no doubt recall, Hecuba is the Queen of Troy, a city that has seen better days. With the aid of a highly improbable Trojan Horse, the Greeks have reduced the city to rubble and Hecuba to slavery. Her husband, Priam, is dead. Her son Hector has been killed and mutilated by Achilles. Her daughter Cassandra has become Agamemnon's sex slave, and her other daughter, Polyxena, has been sacrificed to appease a ghost. Just when things seem like they couldn't get worse, her last son, Polydorus, washes up dead on the beach.

Young Polydorus had been sent to Thrace to live with King Polymestor for the duration of the war. This arrangement worked well until Troy fell, at which point Polymestor had the kid hacked to death so he could steal his gold.

Hecuba, who should be visualized as Katherine Hepburn in Michael Cacoyannis' 1971 production of the *Trojan Women*, wet-eyed and head shaking like she's in the late stages of Parkinson's, decides she's had just about enough. She asks Agamemnon to allow her to take revenge. Motivated in equal parts by a sense of justice and the hope of getting into Cassandra's pants, the King agrees.

Hecuba lures Polymestor and his two small sons into a tent full of pissed off Trojan Women. A tender scene of maternal affection turns murderous when they suddenly bury him in flesh, gouge out his eyes, and kill his sons. When Polymestor, empty eye sockets and all, demands revenge, Agamemnon says he had it coming.

Classicists generally interpret *Hecuba* as a commentary on the degradation of war. As misfortune upon misfortune assails the Queen, they say, she is reduced to an animal. We at Classics Corner see this as anti-feminist, and prefer to view Hecuba as a powerful woman who summoned up the strength to stop being a victim and kick Polymestor's ass.

In *Hecuba*, two opposing views of the universe are offered. "Do we, holding that the gods exist, deceive ourselves with unsubstantial dreams and lies while random chance and change alone control the world?" Or is there an "absolute moral order" that even the gods obey, through which "we live, defining good and evil"?

Agamemnon and Hecuba opt for moral order, but it isn't pretty. Euripides leaves open the possibility that what passes for justice is a thin veneer of purpose laid over an essentially random and violent universe. We make up our meaning as we go along. This, we suppose, beats the alternative. ■

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November Notables

Thursday, 11/1

Meeting to help create a grassroots organization to **End Hate Crimes** in our neighborhoods. 6 – 8 p.m. at Vita Bar Veggie Deli and Wellness Center, 8334 Rainier Ave. S. between Rose and Cloverdale; info habib@thegarden.net.

Women in Black are sponsoring a **Peace Vigil** and leafletting to stop the war on Afghanistan, this and subsequent Thursdays, 5 – 6 p.m., near the Westlake Park arch at 4th Ave. and Pine.

General **Radical Women** meeting. Learn more about their current activities and campaigns, 7:30 p.m. Dinner, with vegetarian option, available at 6:30 p.m. for a \$6.50 donation. New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle; info 206-722-6057. Everyone welcome. Wheelchair accessible.

University of Washington Jackson School of International Studies offers free classes on Islam and the Middle East. Visiting Lecturer Paula Holmes Eber will speak on **"Concepts and Misconceptions of Women in the Middle East."** 7 - 9:20 p.m., at University of Washington, Kane Hall, room 210, free and open to all; info 206-543-4372, advance tickets must be

obtained at UW Bookstore outlets, available one week in advance.

Saturday 11/3

Regular meeting of the Interfaith Network of Concern for the People of Iraq with major focus on joining others nationwide in **challenging the U.S. embargo against Iraq**, 4 p.m., this and subsequent 1st Saturdays, at the Keystone Congregational Church, 5019 Keystone Place N., just north of N. 50th and Sunnyside N.; info co-chairs Dick Blakney 206-522-4934 or Kathleen Williamson joka@worldnet.att.net or <http://www.endiraqsanctions.org>.

Washington Coalition to **Abolish the Death Penalty** hosts statewide conference, 16300 112th Ave. NE in Bothell, \$15 donation, includes light lunch, advanced RSVP appreciated, info at 206-622-8952 or www.scn.org/wcadp.

Facts and fiction about Arab Women, including film clips showing the Hollywood portrayal of Middle Eastern women and profiles of politically active Arab women, benefit for Palestinian Women's Organization, 7 - 9 p.m., Independent Media Center, 1415 3rd Ave., info 206-325-4061.

Monday 11/5

Jubilee 2000 NW Coalition meeting, working for **debt relief for world's poorest nations**, this and subsequent first Mondays, 5:30 p.m., at St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave E., 2nd floor conference room; info Betsy Bell, 206-933-1889.

Tuesday 11/6

General Election Day, remember to vote, 7 a.m. – 8 p.m., at a polling place near you.

First of a **Class on Islam** in six parts by Richard Ater, this session on "The State of the World at the Time of Islam's Birth," 7 p.m., at Interfaith Community Church, 1763 NW 62nd St. in Ballard. Admission free, donations welcome; info Karen Lindquist 206-297-8651 or Rich Ater rvwa@seanet.com.

Wednesday 11/7

Jobs with Justice Seattle Organizing Committee meeting, this and subsequent 1st Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m., at Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave; info 206-441-4969.

Meeting of Latino Workers to discuss activism to achieve better wages, medical insurance, pensions; in Spanish with translations to English, this and subsequent 1st Wednesdays, 7 p.m., at Labor Temple, Hall 8, 2800 1st Ave; info Jose 800-202-1433.

Nobel Laureate Dr. Oscar Arias will speak on **"Peace and Justice: A Long-Term Vision for the World."** Dr. Arias won the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize for the "Arias Peace Plan" that addressed the regional and domestic conflicts in war-torn Central America. 7 p.m., at University of Washington, Kane Hall, room 120, free and open to all; info 206-685-3435 or lasuw@u.washington.edu.

Thursday 11/8

University of Washington Jackson School of International Studies offers free classes on Islam and the Middle East. This session is on **"Response to Terrorism: Military Force and International Law"** by Frederick M. Lorenz, visiting lecturer. 7 – 9:20 p.m. at University of Washington, Kane Hall, room 210, free and open to the public; info 206-543-4372, advance tickets must be obtained at UW Bookstore outlets, available one week in advance.

Global Economy Working Group of the Church Council of Greater Seattle meeting, 7 p.m. at St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 19th Ave E.; info 206-382-3785.

Saturday 11/10

Criminal Justice Reform Summit held by community organizations and individuals who are concerned about our unjust criminal justice system. Open to the general public with the goal to increase public awareness and undo racism, classism, and other forms of oppression within the criminal justice system. Saturday and Sunday, Nov 10 – 11 at Seattle University; info 206-695-

3176 or <http://www.reformnetwork.org>.

World Without Weapons, a workshop about vision and hope led by Lynn Fitz-Hugh of Sustainable Globe, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at a NE Seattle location, \$40 or bring a friend for \$30 each; info 206-317-0497.

Dept of Neighborhoods Community Power Series workshop, **"Grassroots in City Hall: Using Community Power in Local Government,"** 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Miller Community Center, 330 19th Ave E.; info Randy Wiger, Dept of Neighborhoods, 206-684-0719.

"A Hair Affair." What are you saying with your hair? What is your hair saying about you? Author Trisha Thomas examines these and other questions as she reads from her debut novel, *Nappily Ever After*, moderated open mike for hair-related poetry, \$5 at Richard Hugo House, 1634 11th Ave., info at Central District Forum for Arts and Ideas, 206-323-4032.

Monday 11/12

Cohousing Salon sponsored by Northwest Cohousing, this and subsequent 2nd Mondays, 6 – 8 p.m. at Delfino's Restaurant in University Village, no reservations required; info 206-763-2623.

Wednesday 11/14

The Nonprofit Assistance Center will hold a **Technical Assistance Resource Fair** for nonprofits, consult with local experts about your organizations issues and needs, 8 a.m. – Noon at Emerald City Outreach Ministry Facility, 7728 Rainier Ave. S., between S. Kenyon and S. Othello; info 206-324-5850.

University of Washington Graduate School presents **"Unhealthy Societies: The Politics of Human Social Needs,"** by Richard Wilkinson, Professor of Social Epidemiology, focusing on why poor people have poorer health. 6 p.m. at University of Washington, Kane Hall, room 130, free; info 206-616-1825.

Thursday 11/15

University of Washington Jackson School of International Studies offers free classes on Islam and the Middle East. This session is on **"Why Some Wars Become Genocidal and Others Don't,"** by Daniel Chirot, Director, International Studies Center and Professor of International Studies. 7 – 9:20 p.m. at University of Washington, Kane Hall, room 210, free and open to the public; info 206-543-4372, advance tickets must be obtained at UW Bookstore outlets, available one week in advance.

Thursday 11/22

Dinner will be served on Thanksgiving Day from 12 – 3 p.m. at the Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 4142 Brooklyn Ave NE (corner of Brooklyn and 42nd in the University District), everyone is invited. Please join us for some home-cooked turkey and pie! Call the church for further information at 206-547-4354.

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First things First is the organizing project of *Real Change* that works to preserve low-income housing and put a roof over every bed. **You can help by pledging to take action when First things First alerts you to critical decisions affecting the poor and homeless.** When you join our action alert list we will contact you by your preferred method when your voice needs to be heard. **You will not get a lot of junk mail. You will be part of creating real change for the poor and homeless.**

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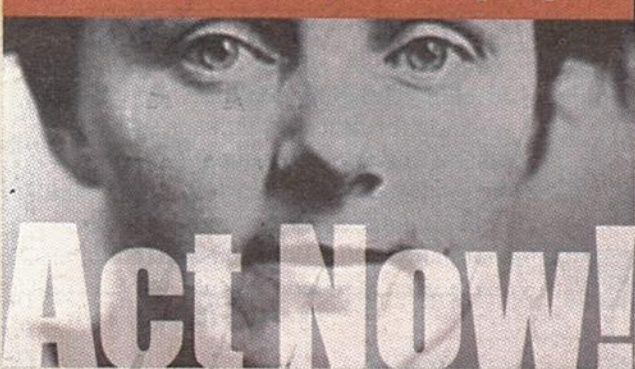
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Seattle, WA 98121.
Call (206) 441-3247 for more info.

citizens participation project



Vote Yes on I-775, No on I-747

Issue: Two initiatives on the November 6 ballot need to be carefully examined to protect basic services. One Initiative, 747, would slash services through an unrealistic tax cut. The other, 775, would provide elderly and disabled adults with the kind of quality home care they need and deserve.

Background: You should vote no on state initiative 747, a Tim Eyman creation to limit property tax increases from the current 6 percent a year down to only 1 percent. These taxes that would be lost currently support hospitals, fire protection, emergency medical services, libraries, and ports in local districts. If I-747 passes, the state's lost revenue will peak at \$226.9 in the 2005-07 biennium alone. Tax losses to local districts would be a staggering \$571.5 million for the same period.

I-747 is not about reducing taxes for the working people — it's about wrecking public services so they can be privatized. Eyman's previous initiative, 695, ruled unconstitutional by the state court, reduced the cost of car license tabs but precipitated higher sales taxes and widespread cuts in vital services.

I-747 is opposed by the Washington State Labor Council, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Democratic Party, and city and county governments. There are also no proposed alternative funding sources should the tax-limiting initiative pass.

You should vote yes on I-775, which creates a home care quality authority to establish qualifications, standards, accountability, training and referral for state-funded individual providers of in-home care to elderly and disabled adults. Individual providers would have the right to organize and collectively bargain. The Service Employees International Union helped craft the initiative in order to unionize a widely dispersed workforce, many of whom are immigrant women.

I-775 is not a perfect initiative — it does not provide any funding for the authority, nor does it make homecare workers eligible for pensions or other benefits, or able to strike. However, it is a step in the right direction, and if it passes, healthcare workers will be able to fight for better wages and working conditions, and thereby provide better in-home care.

Action: Go to the polls on November 6 and show your support for Initiative 775 and your opposition to Initiative 747.

For information on where you can vote and on other initiatives and candidates up for election, contact the King County Records and Elections department, (206) 296-1565, or online at www.metrokc.gov/elections. ■

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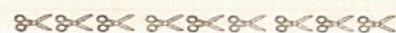
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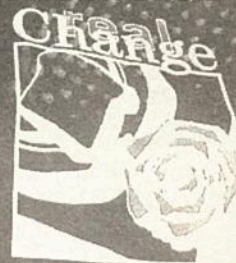
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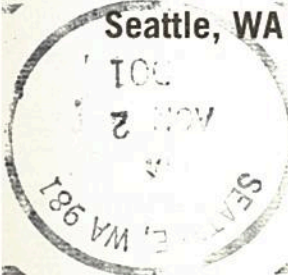
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Mockingbird Times

Washington State Foster Care
and Homeless Youth Speak Out

NOVEMBER 1, 2001

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VOLUME I, ISSUE 4

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Struggles and Costs of Sibling Separation

By JULIA HIGUERA

The Problem

ACCORDING TO the American Psychological Association, more than 500,000 children enter the foster-care system each year, and most of these children have at least one sibling. Yet 75 percent of siblings end up apart once they enter foster care.

The system is simply overloaded. The number of children needing foster care by far outnumbers the foster homes available. Even more children are at risk of neglect or abuse because of rising poverty, increased homelessness, community violence, and substance abuse.

Another large factor is foster-care "board rates." This is the amount paid to foster parents who provide basic care for a child. Often, two wage earners are needed to make ends meet. It is often times too expensive for a foster-care family to take on more than one child.

Effects of Separation

There are several ways in which a kid who has been separated from his/her sibling may be affected.

1. Emotionally — A child that has experienced separation may feel rejection and guilt. This can often interfere with their sense of trust in others and themselves.

2. Adoption — Children that are separated in foster care are less likely to be adopted together.

3. Attachments — Being separated from family members makes it very difficult to bond to others. While growing up, kids have trouble trusting and talking to people. Then they find they'll be separated from the only connections they've now made with their new family.

Later Problems

There are also problems that often occur later in children who are separated.

1. Separation teaches children to walk away and not deal with conflict, rather than to work it out.

2. When a child is moved because of a specific behavior, the other children around see this. It builds a fear that if they act out, or have certain behaviors that the foster parents don't like, they too may be removed from the home. This is one of the main reasons that children often times have difficulty in trusting adult figures.

Sibling Bonding

In adulthood, sibling ties are much stronger. As adults, siblings often share struggles and triumphs with each other. Siblings who remain together learn to resolve their problems and differences, to develop a stronger and healthier relationship. The bond between brothers and sisters is unique and is often the longest relationship which people have. It can surpass any husband and wife or parent and child relationship.



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Mockingbird and nest logo by Julia Higuera
Mockingbird Times is special insert in Real Change

Interview with a Mom

By JULIA HIGUERA

Editor's Note: Names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the family involved.

A MOTHER'S POINT OF VIEW on the effects of sibling separation, when her two very young daughters were taken from the home and placed into care.

Now she tells all, 15 years later.

How many children do you have?

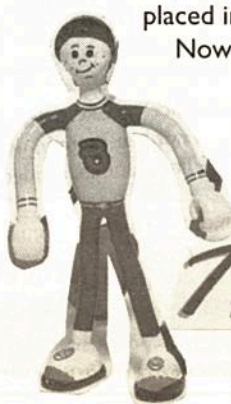
I have three children.

How old were your children when they were separated?

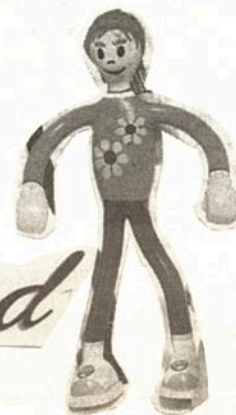
I only had 2 at the time, Rachel was 7 and Sara was 4.

What did the caseworker say would take place when they were taken from the home?

MOM CONT. ON PAGE 3



The ties that bind



Letter from the Editor

WE AT THE MOCKINGBIRD TIMES are proud to present to you our fourth edition of the only youth-driven, statewide newspaper designed and produced by youth who are or have been in the Washington state foster care system. As part of our mission, we strive to educate the general public to the critical issues that must be addressed in order to "...improve the safety, quality of life and future of the children and adolescents who rely on the Washington state foster care system." Toward that end, this edition's focus of maintaining sibling connections is of paramount concern.

Every effort must be made to increase the opportunities that children placed in the foster care/group care system can remain together. Special focus on recruitment, training, and compensation should be offered to the foster parents who agree to accept sibling sets and keep them together. When it is not possible to put siblings in the same foster home, there needs to be an urgent effort to ensure regular, even daily contact via telephone, mail, and face-to-face visits.

If you have a story of being separated from siblings or maintained together at a foster home, please take time to share it with the *Mockingbird Times*. Likewise, if you are a family member, friend, or foster parent, and have some experience with this issue, please let us know. As one youth recently told me, "When they took me away from my mom and step dad, that was horrible,



Quirky Bird Quote

"If you cut a blade of grass, you shake the universe"

— Chinese Proverb

Meet Our Staff

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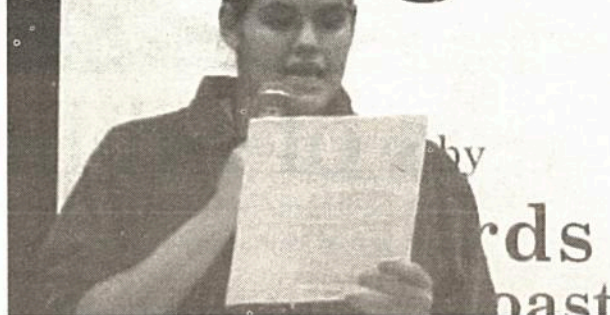
Nicole O'Shaughnessy

THANK YOUS

Richard Hugo House, *Real Change*, Children's Home Society, YWCA, Casey Family Program, Northwest Bookfest, Suzette Higuera, Textura

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www.mockingbirdsociety.org

Word (of mouth) Sage



Julia Higuera shares her poetry at the Northwest Bookfest.
Photo by Suzette Higuera.

but he was a jerk. But when we moved to the third foster home and they put me in a different home than my older sister, I was lost. No matter how bad things were at home, my older sister was always there."

The Mockingbird Society is proposing a model of care that is designed to decrease the number of multiple placements, increase the number of siblings who stay together, and increase the cultural competency of out-of-home services that children in Washington receive. If you would like to learn more about this proposed model you may contact me at www.mockingbird.society.org.

On another note, I want to thank those of you who have donated to the Mockingbird Society. We are working very hard to grow into an organization that has the capacity and determination to make a positive difference for kids living in foster care. I hope more of you will consider supporting our work.

Jim Theofelis

Letter to the Editor

To the editor,

Having been a foster child myself, I'm pleased to see a paper like the *Mockingbird Times* being published, as I believe that all too often issues having to do with kids in the system are overlooked.

Upon reading Jim Theofelis' article on ways to change the foster care system so it can better serve the children therein ("Teaching the Birds How to Sing," Aug. 9), I began thinking that it would be beneficial to foster children and parents alike if the state Department of Social and Health Services had a department within the department geared toward conflict resolution and/or mediation. I realize that not all conflicts can be resolved, but in some cases having someone whose job it is to listen to their problems or concerns would be helpful to both parties, because parents and children alike would get a chance to be heard by someone impartial to the situation.

Having a resource like this available may decrease the number of placements that are lost due to irreconcilable differences.

SINCERELY,
MEGHAN IN SHORELINE

If there's an issue you want to see *Mockingbird Times* cover, we want to know about it.

We are also interested in any contributions you may have: artwork, poetry, essays, photography, reviews or article ideas. If we decide to use your work, we will pay up to \$25. Please email or write us with any questions regarding submissions:



Valerie@mockingbirdsociety.org or

Mockingbird Times, Submissions Dept., 3302 Fuhrman Ave. E, Seattle, WA 98102. We want to hearing from all over Washington state.

What they should ask you at an intake: What's Up?

Join the Mockingbird Society: make a difference in the lives of Washington's most vulnerable youth

THE MOCKINGBIRD SOCIETY is an independent, non-profit organization that is dedicated to improving the safety, quality of life and future of the children and adolescents living in the Washington State foster care/group home system. The *Mockingbird Times* is a job-training program sponsored by the Mockingbird Society.

All members of the Mockingbird Society will receive the *Mockingbird Times* monthly.

I want to support The Mockingbird Society

Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of:

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MOM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

They said they were going to take them to a safe place 'til it was safe at home, but it was already safe at home, so I didn't know why they took them.

Do you know now why they were taken away?

They said they had to be removed from our home until they had physicals because they were physically abused by their father. Sara got her physical first and Rachel had to stay 'til she got her physical, I think it was a couple of weeks later.

Were you concerned once you found they were separated?

Yeah, I didn't like Rachel being alone in her foster home. I did not like it.

Were there certain concerns you had about Rachel's specific foster home, or just the fact that she was away from her family?

I was worried about her being scared because she was so young and she really didn't understand what was going on. I knew Sara didn't know either but she got to come home a lot sooner.

Did you notice any change in behavior between the sisters once they got home?

I think Rachel and Sara were much closer before Child Protective Services took them, much closer. They greeted and showed love for awhile and then held resentments or blamed each other somehow. They might have resented each other or held it against each other for it happening, but they have had sibling rivalry pretty much ever since. They don't get along very well now.

Neighbor to Neighbor

THERE ARE PROGRAMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY designed to keep siblings together when their family falls apart. One of these is the Neighbor to Neighbor program, started by the Jane Addams Hull House Association in Chicago in 1994.

The Neighbor to Neighbor program is based on four guiding principles:

1. Providing care that is child-centered and family-focused;
2. Placing brothers and sisters together with one foster family in their own community;
3. Professionalizing the role of foster caregivers, who are salaried employees. Foster caregivers play as important a role as caseworkers, and should be trained to support birth family connections;
4. Working with birth parents toward family reunification — wherever possible — or alternative, long-term, stable placement plans such as adoption.

Through following these basic principles, Neighbor to Neighbor continues to out-perform national averages in areas such as keeping siblings together, keep foster parents motivated and involved, and getting foster kids back with their birth families.

Even among those children who cannot get back together with their birth families, 85 percent of them find other families that give them a stable home with



their siblings. Almost all of those who find families or are reunited with their birth family don't have problems later.

Although the program began in Chicago — and currently serves 190 children there — it can be successful in other cities. In Florida, for example, a similar program currently serves 150 children.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Neighbor to Neighbor program and how you can start one in your own town, contact:

Jane Addams Hull House Association
Neighbor to Neighbor National Training Program
Stephanie Beiser, Project Director
10 South Riverside Drive Plaza, Suite 1700
Chicago, Illinois 60606
1(800) 448-0083, ext. 228
Fax, (312) 906-8822

Sibling Separation I

By ELI WILSON

AT SEVENEARS OLD, I was separated from my whole family. I was placed in emergency housing by the state Department of Social and Health Services. I felt lost in the world and hated by the world. I was jumbled through so many foster homes and group homes, it was confusing.

I always wondered where my brother and sisters were. There were five siblings that were in my family with all of the drinking and our abusive parents. We were living in a messed-up home, because we lived in a neighborhood where we were discriminated against because of our color.

I don't see three of my siblings any more, but I wish I could. One of my brothers and my two sisters — Lynn Wilson, Tammy Wilson, and Crystal Wilson — are the siblings I have yet to get in touch with. I don't know where Lynn is or what happened to him. My sisters are in a closed adoption so the new parents in charge of my sisters don't let my sisters see me if they want. In other words, I think my sisters have been brain-washed to fit other people's households and to forget their brothers and their family. That sounds great: just get two girls in the same adoptive home so there are two fewer Wilsons to worry about.

The YMCA brought me and one of my brothers together. The YMCA searched for my brother, Steven, and got him in the same foster home as me. Even though it was nice to have my brother in the same foster home as me, we still had problems every now and then. I got out of the foster care system at 18 and had no money. I was on the street for three weeks until I got involved with Young Adults in Transition, a program for former foster care youth at YMCA.

I just saw my brother, Steven, after a year getting my life together. Imagine if you did not know your brothers or sisters very well and you were taken from the only family you know. I think that keeping the family together without the parents is the best to do in my situation or anyone's, if it's possible keep the kids together in the same foster home or living close to each other. 🐦

Sibling Separation II

By J.W.

EVEN THOUGH I'VE NEVER been in foster care, I know what it's like to be separated from a brother or sister. I remember my sister leaving Seattle after living with us for about six years. She went back to Texas in the late '80s to take care of my grandmother. My grandmother had asthma, and my mother couldn't take her of her since she had us to raise us.

In the summer of 1991, I went down to Texas to visit my grandmother and sister, which lasted for about three weeks. What I didn't know was that would be the last time I would ever see them alive again. When my grandmother died in June of 1995, my sister took it very hard. Friends and family stopped hearing from her because she didn't want to hear from nobody.

But in the late '90s, she started coming around and talking again. I heard from her one week before her own demise. We talked about everything, and I was glad I got the chance to talk to her again. I didn't say everything I wanted to say, but I said just enough that I don't feel too bad about it. My sister died on April 4, 1999 of an aneurysm at the age of 38.

I still have memories of my sister laughing and joking with everyone and making people feel comfortable in her company. I wish I had been able to go to her and my grandmother's funeral, but my mom couldn't afford to take me down there. I was closer to my oldest sister than my other sister, which is sad but true. There is years difference in our ages — my oldest sister is 21 years older and my other sister is 12 years older than me.

Im glad to have known and have had my older sister as my sibling. Even though I really miss her more than ever, she is still around me and she gives me signs to let me know that she is here. That doesn't happen to most people everyday, and I love her for that. 🐦

GIVE THEM WHAT THEY LOVE A RELATIVE A special relationship exists

'O' Takes a Look Inside Hate, Insecurity, and Revenge

By JULIA HIGUERA

O, BASED ON SHAKESPEARE'S OTHELLO, takes place in Palmetto Grove Academy, a prep school in Charleston, South Carolina.

Othello and Desdemona have now become Odin (Mekhi Phifer) and Desi (Julia Stiles). Odin is the school's star basketball player and the only African-American on campus. Iago is rendered as Odin's best friend and teammate, Hugo (Josh Hartnett). Hugo's father, Coach Goulding (Martin Sheen), presents an MVP award to Odin and tells the school that Odin is like his own son. Odin decides to share the award with another teammate. When he chooses Mike (Andrew Keegan), Hugo becomes livid and devises an elaborate plot to destroy Odin by making him doubt his love for his girlfriend, Desi.

The interracial romance between Odin and Desi

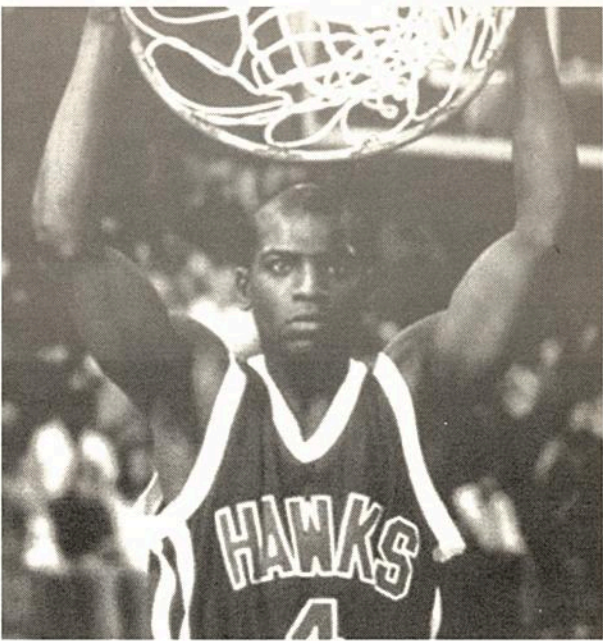
briefly shows how easily a relationship between two people, who unexpectedly find themselves to be soulmates, can be undermined by the baggage they can't help but carrying with them.

Hugo makes Odin crazy by telling him that he doesn't understand the duplicity of white girls. This definitely plays into something Odin has heard before in black society. Hugo continues to egg Odin on by telling him that he thinks that Mike and Desi are sleeping together.

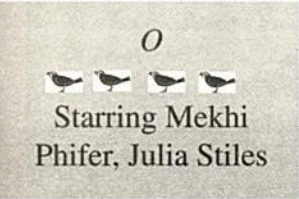
When Odin's insecurities overwhelm him in a moment of intimacy with Desi, her trust in him is broken.

Hugo begins to use everyone and everything to get what he wants, including his girlfriend, Emily (Rain Phoenix), drugs, alcohol, and manipulation. In the end, Hugo's plot and Odin's insecurities lead to a series of tragic events.

If you are looking for a good drama and an intriguing movie, this movie is for you. I really enjoyed this movie and give it four birds. I would not recommend this movie to young children under 17; it is rated R for language content, sexual content, and violence. 🐦



Odin (Mekhi Phifer) finds himself fighting against more than just the other basketball team.



Acoustic Soul

By J.W.



Acoustic Soul, Indie Arie

INDIE ARIE IS A FRESH and exciting new artist who has recently arrived on the scene with her debut album, *Acoustic Soul*. Arie expresses a lot of depth and charisma in this CD. It's like a mixture of Tracy Chapman's soul and Bob Dylan-like lyrics, with some grounded rhythm, which puts it over the top for me.

Her hit single, "Video," is a woman's anthem that tells women everywhere that they don't have to look like a Barbie doll model. Instead she's telling women that they look good as God intended them to be.

There is another song that I like on here, called "Love, Courage and Wisdom," which speaks for itself. It tells us what we need in this world, especially now, knowing what has been going on.

I could go on and on about this record, but I would rather have you check it out for yourself and see what you think. It's a great album and a fair value. 🐦



Poetry Corner

Please Look a Little Deeper

Please don't judge me by my face, by my religion, or my race!
Please don't laugh at what I wear or how I look or do my hair!
"PLEASE LOOK A LITTLE DEEPER"
Way down inside and although you may not see it I have a lot to hide
Behind my clothes secrets lie a smile or a soft cry!
"PLEASE LOOK A LITTLE DEEPER"
And maybe you'll see the lonely little girl that lives inside of me.
Please listen carefully to her, she'll show that she's insecure!
Please try to be her friend and show her you care
Please just get to know her and maybe you'll see that if you look just
Deep enough you'll find the real me.

NICOLE O'SHAUGHNESSY

My Family

Life has brought me down into a dark hall of misery.
When all your family has gone who is there to help you along?
No one, no one.
You are left in the dark alone.
There is no one left to love no reason to live without family.
I have lost all my family but my brothers
The only reason to live in this messed up world.
I wish my life could be normal like yours.
I can't change my life for me I have to change for you.
Please let me live, love and have my family in pieces
But I hope it's not too late.

ELI WILSON

Are you a young poet? Do you live in Washington State?
Then Mockingbird Times wants your poems, and will pay to publish them, too!
Visit us online at www.mockingbirdsociety.org to find out more about how to send us your work