

FREE - donations accepted.

# Carnegie

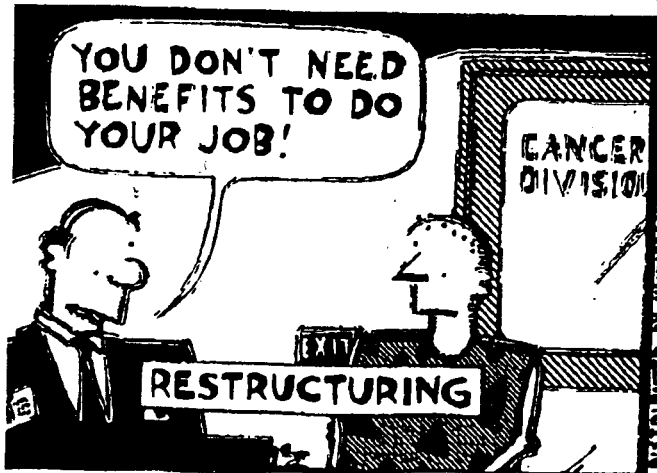
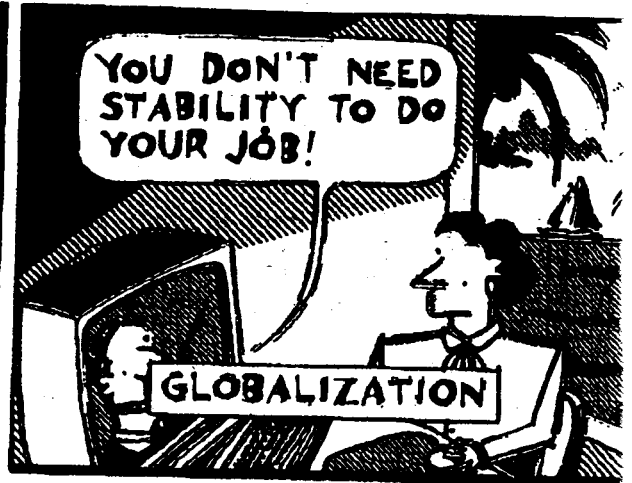
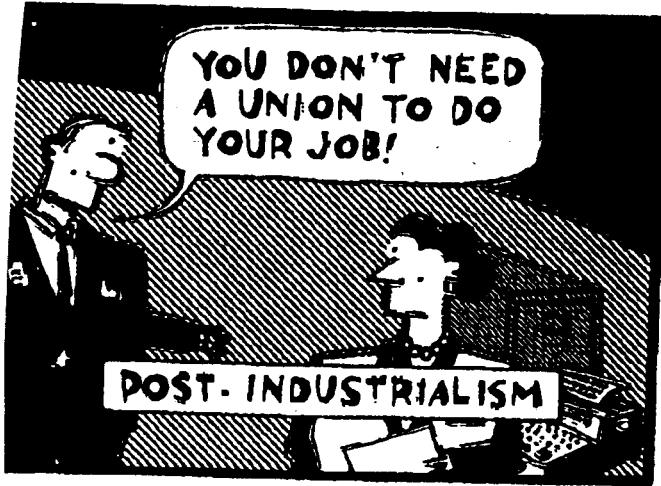


NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 15, 1997.

401 Main Street, Vancouver V6A 2T7, (604) 665-2220

## expose & oppose





## THE MYTH OF A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

The myth that Canada is a classless society helps to make working class people invisible. It also helps to make the very richest Canadians invisible - the Canadian Establishment - the richest one percent of Canadians who own 25% of the wealth of Canada, as compared to the poorest twenty percent of Canadians who own minus 0.3 percent of wealth. Establishment writer Peter Newman says that the economy of Canada is controlled by a junta of 1000 business barons.

The myth that Canada is a classless society helps to maintain the illusion that equality of opportunity exists in our country. There is as much equality of opportunity in Canada as there is compassion in a transnational boardroom, because laissez-faire (free enterprise) economics has no place for

human values.

The myth that Canada is a classless society also makes it difficult for poor unemployed people and working people to join together to act on their own behalf. Their interest in a decent life and the employers' interest in maximum profit are not the same.

Ordinary Canadians are citizens who do not own the factories, financial institutions, media, and so on. If they are lucky enough to have a job in these times of high unemployment, they work for an hourly wage or a modest salary. Today they are frightened. The bills keep coming, and the decent jobs and wages keep diminishing. Frightened families mean angry people, but because Canadians have so little sense of class conflict (between the owners of Canada and the rest of us), this anger is directed at those below rather than those above.

In other words, although ordinary Canadians have become increasingly vulnerable, class consciousness has not increased. Instead of class anger we see racial anger, and random anger against the unemployed, people on welfare (many Canadians are only one job away from welfare), gays, immigrants, and women.

A central problem for working/middle class families today is government and an economy that long ago stopped working for all but the most privileged citizens. Take APEC for example. An international economic and political elite is forcing the global economy on the world's people, and it has to use an army of guns to make sure its conferences go smoothly.

In this global economy, transnational corporations are constantly pitting working people against each other in a downward spiral of competitive impoverishment. That's what APEC is about - the rights of money over the human rights of citizens for which working people have fought for two hundred years.

By SANDY CAMERON

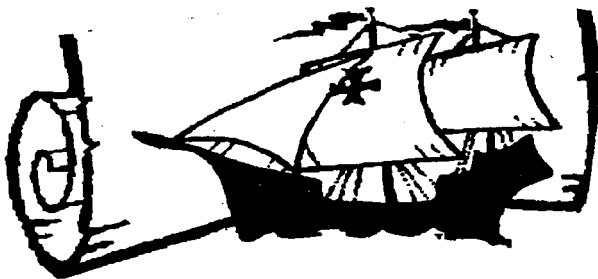
with help from "*Families On The Fault Line - America's Working Class Speaks Out About The Family, The Economy, Race, and Ethnicity*," by Lillian Rubin., published by Harper Collins, 1994.

## what the heck is APEC?

It is an organising body working to impose a free trade zone within the Pacific Rim. It is a way for multinationals to increase their power and profits, to free big business from any obstacles to this.

They call it "free trade". We call it..

- massive job loss
- environmental degradation
- slash & burning of social programs
- sweatshop production
- attacks on wages and working conditions
- dispossession of indigenous lands
- increase in migrant workers
- increased militarization
- conversion of agricultural & indigenous peoples' land to industrial estates
- displacement of peasants
- sex tourism
- trafficking of women and children
- increased concentration of wealth
- repression of people's movements
- corruption
- forced underdevelopment
- cultural robbery
- child labour and child prostitution
- commodification of culture



It is not a harmless initiative - nine years into the "free" trade experiment, Canadians have first-hand experience of massive job losses, cuts to our social security system, intensified destruction of the environment and natural resources, and a general decline of working and living conditions.

We have seen who really benefits from "free" trade - the big banks and big business who continue to lay-off workers and cut wages despite making record profits. "Free" Trade is about the freedom of big business - especially the U.S. and Japanese multinationals - to operate wherever and however they want for the sake of profits.

Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Canada, Thailand, China, Chile,  
Philippines, USA, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong,  
South Korea, Brunei, Taiwan, Mexico, Papua New Guinea  
[APEC members]



Only 5 more shopping days left 'til APEC folks. This is it, as you probably well know.

The APEC leaders are set to hit Vancouver starting November 19, along with their court of 9000 people. Remember Expo? With APEC, people may be facing more evictions. All the upscale hotels in downtown Vancouver are being turned over to host the gaggle popping into town for the 'Leaders' meeting. Other tourists in Vancouver will be trying to find rooms and guess where they'll be looking...

Last year, the APEC leaders' meeting was held in the Philippines. Twenty thousand urban poor people were dispossessed of their homes so that these leaders wouldn't have to be unavoidably confronted with poverty. (Those who were not evicted were hidden from the highway by a high wall built just before the APEC '96 Summit.)

Security this year will be a top notch affair. The RCMP are expecting this to be their biggest operation ever. We are told to expect snipers and riot police at the APEC meeting spots - UBC and downtown Vancouver.

You know about the tripled number of cops in the Downtown Eastside since January. It's part of a "clean up" of our notoriously unclean neighbourhood, in preparation for this meeting. They want to sell Vancouver as a "beautiful, international city"... which means there is no poverty. People have been getting arrested for jaywalking in the DE, but is that happening anywhere else in the city?

We are being told, even by bus drivers, to carry warm coats and umbrellas with us if we go to the downtown core. For the week of November 19-26

no cars will be able to park downtown, buses will be rerouted, and streets will be shut off to cars and pedestrians intermittently throughout the week so that the 'leaders' can pass through the streets of Vancouver safely.

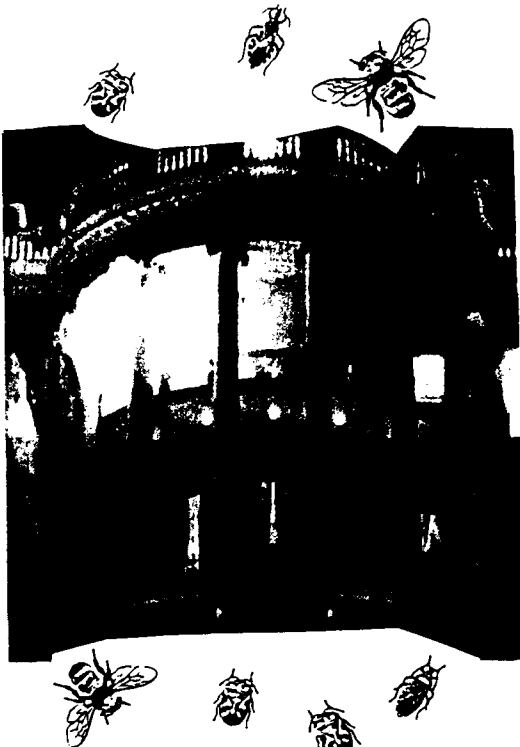
Who are they being protected from? Us, the people. Why shouldn't they hear what people have to say? Police say that security will not be an issue in the Downtown Eastside during these meetings because the 'leaders' and accompanying mobs of media will be kept away from the area. Sound familiar? It's a re-run of what happened in the Philippines last year.

The APEC government officials and their families, journalists, business people and security forces will be wined and dined to the tune of \$1.4 million from the City of Vancouver, \$5 million from the Provincial government and \$50 million from the Feds. Did someone say there was no money for welfare, EI and social housing?

For a year the government has tried to prepare us. Now the Summit is upon us, but what will APEC bring after this snazzy affair? APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation), or as we call it anti-people economic control, basically makes it easier for big business to make more profit. Canada's six major chartered banks, convinced that their \$5.18 billion in net profit in 1996 just isn't enough, are big business too, boys and girls

APEC pushes for three main things:

**Privatization** For example, this puts hospitals in the hands of corporations. It takes health care away from the people and provides it only for the select few who can afford to pay. The rest of us can wait and wait and wait.



5. drugs can be tested will be lessened. What type of new and unpredictable drugs will poor people be the guinea pigs for next?

**Trade and investment liberalization** Goods and money can move from country to country, in any industry, without any barriers. Tourism is a scary example of this. It makes it easier for companies to convert SRO hotels into tourist hotels. It means that more expensive new hotels, tourist services, and yuppie developments will have priority over people needing affordable housing in the Downtown Eastside.

The pushers of APEC and this type of globalization would have us think it is inevitable. It is not. We need to build grassroots resistance and alternatives.

We can take action on November 25 at the NO! to APEC demo: Continuing the Resistance. It starts in Oppenheimer Park at 3:30 p.m. Join with other marginalized people to voice our opposition to APEC and advance our common struggle.

NO! to APEC events are many and varied, and include the People's Conference Against Imperialist Globalization from Nov. 21-24. Call 215-9190 for more information or to register.

**Deregulation** This means the removal of any government rules or restrictions. Through APEC, guidelines for when and on whom medicines and



### ANDREW CARNEGIE (1835-1919)

Need an example for arguing the merits of immigration? Look no further than Mr. Carnegie, who was born in Scotland and moved to this country in 1848. With no formal education, Carnegie built a successful career that was truly staggering: at one point, his plants were responsible for nearly 25 percent of iron and steel production *for the entire country*. He retired in 1901 after having sold his company to the United States Steel Corp. for \$250 million. It was here that Carnegie achieved his greatest success, however. Carnegie was a true

philanthropist, and he used his vast fortune to benefit millions.

PBS is currently running a detailed biography of Mr. Carnegie; be sure to check your local listings!

## Andrew Carnegie



Andrew Carnegie was born on November 25, 1835 in Dunfermline, Scotland. He grew to become one of the wealthiest men in the world. He was and is a complex and controversial figure. Some see him as an exploiter of labour and unscrupulous businessman. Others see him as a person who transformed the steel industry and whose philanthropy is still having a major impact today, seventy eight years after his death.

In 1892 the workers at Carnegie's Homestead steel mill (located in Homestead, Pennsylvania) went on strike in reaction to a pay cut. Carnegie was vacationing in Scotland at the time. Henry Clay Frick, the Chairman and Chief Manager of the Carnegie Steel Corporation, refused to bargain with union leaders. Frick reopened the mill by force, using guards from the Pinkerton Detective Agency to protect non-union workers. Fighting broke out between the Pinkertons and the strikers, and several people were killed. Eventually the strike ended in failure for the unionized workers.

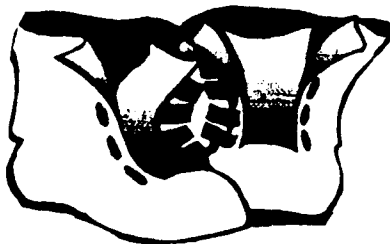
During the Homestead strike Carnegie remained in Scotland. Before the strike he claimed to support labour unions and to be against the use of force to end a strike. To this day many see his silence during the strike as approval for Frick's actions. His reputation as an employer was forever damaged.

Carnegie gave away much of his wealth during his life. By the end of his life he had given away over \$350,000,000. The agencies that he established are still giving away millions of dollars every year.

Carnegie gave the City of Vancouver \$50,000 to build a new Library. The Library, now known as the Carnegie Centre, was opened in 1903. The land for the library was donated by the Grand Lodge of B.C. (Masons) and Carnegie asked that the City spend \$5,000 per year for maintenance and expansion of the facility. Over 33 years Carnegie gave money for the building of 2,811 libraries around the world. The majority were built in the United States.

The Carnegie Reading Room has recently put up a portrait of Andrew Carnegie. It is located behind the Circulation Desk. If you would like to see the portrait or would like more information on this complex figure please drop into the Reading Room. We have one biography of Carnegie (Andrew Carnegie by Joseph Frazier Wall), access to material about him at the Main Library and web sites devoted to him on the Internet.

Andrew Martin, Librarian  
Carnegie Reading Room



### NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS

\* The Vancouver/Richmond Health Board passed "Bud Osborn's Motion", as an agreed-upon media event. Bud has been in a depressed rage over an unknown level of politics being behind, on top of and seeping out from under almost everything to do with the Downtown Eastside and the local community vs. concerted efforts of members of this board and staff to obstruct or otherwise defeat any efforts to providing affordable housing, detoxes, harm reduction strategies, counselling, any model that includes users/addicts in its decision or service-provision efforts, and vehemently (violently?!) against anything have an ounce of impact on property values. This little

secret came via a 4-minute tidbit squeezed from the innards of emergency burn-out therapy. More -----

\* This isn't supposed to be public or acted upon by anyone thinking Capilano College needs a swift kick in its collective crotch, BUT Sarah has earned the respect and even admiration of virtually all students/tutors/staff in Carnegie's Learning Centre for her creativity and willingness to raise (!) herself and Cap College staff (specifically) to the level of L.C. users and even act "unprofessionally". It was this last that Diana, a two-month wonder from CC, felt she had to be vicious about in her 'report.' Okay, save the questions; give Sarah a well-deserved pat on the back, ask Jeff what his problem is, and sharpen your toenails for the well-deserved "kick-in-the-...."

PRT

Living light  
 Living love  
 All that ever was  
 All that ever will be

Living light  
 Living love  
 Wrapped in all the colours  
 of life

Living light  
 Living love  
 Spirit expressing the word  
 Life being it

Living light  
 Living love  
 Allowing the ego  
 a little while  
 to be in thought.

Where does it go  
 when it disappears?

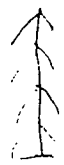
Living light  
 Living love  
 Eternally

Dreamweaver

## *Ricky Lavallie and the Eagle Feathers*



**COUNTRY  
 MUSIC  
 DANCE**



*Saturday Night*



November 22 at 7:30 p.m.

*!dance!*

COFFEE

*in the Theatre*

\*\*\*To voice your opinions regarding the Gateway Casino and its new slot machines, phone Co-op

Radio's Main & Hastings show. Co-op Radio is 102.7 FM and its number is 684-8494.

\*\*\*If you're thinking of robbing Four Corners Community Savings at 390 Main St., think again. Last Friday morning there was an attempted robbery with a note. Two men were apprehended in the building and, subsequently, a third robber was found next door in the Empress having a beer. Funny - when I say "This is a holdup! Give me all your money or I'll marry you".. they break into laughter and gesture towards an alarm that each teller has that notifies the manager and the police next door at 312 Main Street.

Anita Stevens



asylum

(to rené and georgette magritte)

a single star

clinging to the spectrum  
of the moon

protecting  
from blazing asteroids  
those sparks

that singed, seared  
then penetrated that  
that once sparkled,  
radiated

then slowly started fading  
losing the glow  
of  
free abandon

anita stevens

DIABETIC SUPPORT  
GROUP

NEXT MEETING

TO BE HELD

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21  
7 P.M.

CLASSROOM 2 THIRD FLOOR  
CARNEGIE COMMUNITY  
CENTER

INFORMATIVE VIDEOS  
TO BE PRESENTED  
FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT CHRIS LAIRD  
AT 6652220



# Can the country's poorest neighbourhoo save Vancouver?

BY SABITRI GHOSH

VANCOUVER—Did the Vancouver Public Library not have *any* file on the Downtown Eastside? There was one on the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association and back issues of the neighbourhood's unofficial bulletin, *Carnegie Newsletter*. But nothing on the 16,000 people identified as being among the poorest and least healthy citizens in Canada.

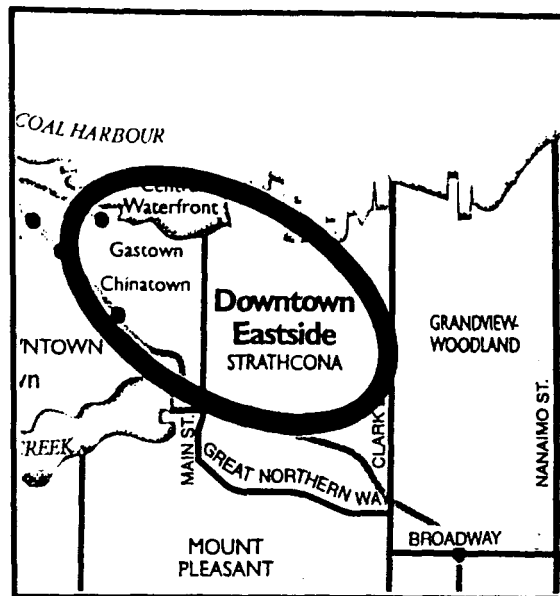
It turned out to be a question of semantics. A librarian found the file—under the heading "Skid Row." It was only in the early '90s that the *Vancouver Sun* began referring to the area bounded by Gastown to the northwest and Chinatown to the south as the Downtown Eastside.

More recently, the debate about gentrification—the shift from lower- to upper-middle class, fuelled by development and an increase in land values—has been in the papers. Many consider it to be the greatest threat yet to the survival of the community as land in the area is owned increasingly by outside interests.

"By devaluing the people of the area, it somehow is made OK to come here and take it (the land)," says Sandy Cameron, an educator and anti-poverty activist with his own collection of clippings. In an article on the rise of condos, a professor is asked about the area's "down-and-outers."

"Poor buggers" are used to getting kicked out, he says.

Cameron, well-read and thoughtful, is emphatic when describing his love for the Downtown Eastside. It is an unusually tolerant place, he explains,



and unusually close-knit. As the poorest community in Canada, it has the attendant problems of drugs and prostitution, and their companion problems of crime and disease. But there is also a concern for others and a determination to make things right that puts the socially conscious and the rest of Vancouver to shame. "The history of the Downtown Eastside," he says, "is a history of the struggle for human rights."

The First Nations peoples who settled the area, the immigrants who arrived and built B.C.'s resource industries, the labour movement which sprang from its docksides and warehouses, are chronicled by Cameron in a 1996 volume, *Fighting for Community: Stories from the Carnegie Centre and the Downtown Eastside*.

It explains the term "Skid Row" as originating from the road where logs were "skidded" from the water to the mill back when the Downtown Eastside was not the Downtown Eastside at all

but Vancouver proper.

Then, the handsome structure on Hastings and Main was the city's public library, a donation from Andrew Carnegie. Now it's the community's centre—its meeting place and "living room," replete with comfy chairs and hubs of conversation.

On the first floor is a special branch of the Vancouver Public Library allowing people without ID or a fixed place of residence to sign out books. It is always full, yet circumspetly quiet. Speakers can address groups in the conference room on such topics as gentrification and displacement.

Upstairs is a cafeteria selling economically priced meals. To its left is the shared office of the Carnegie Community Action Project—advocating in issues of urban planning—and the *Carnegie Newsletter*.

The third floor has computer and meeting rooms. For the 7,500 on the Downtown Eastside staying alone and without a telephone in low-rent hotels, subsidized housing or temporary shelters, stepping into the Carnegie is like coming back home.

"The Sanctuary" is how Shawn Millar described it in a poem which appeared last fall in the *Carnegie Newsletter*.

*I barely drag myself out  
into the street ...  
honking horns, car alarms  
and people seem so angry inside  
tied to jobs they live to hate  
and I feel shame being unemployed ...  
I could die screaming  
I make my way to the Carnegie Centre  
"how are you?" someone asks  
I'm okay I say  
unsure  
I sit and see familiar faces*

*people hangin' out  
reading, chatting, eating ...  
and the atmosphere is calm ...  
as I begin  
breathing normally again.*

A mere street separates the hotels and non-profit groups of the Downtown Eastside from Gastown's well-scrubbed brick walkways, gift shops and restaurant patios. An expensive new condo marking their side is called "The Edge."

To simply take a glance-by-glance inventory of the neighbourhood doesn't work. On the Downtown Eastside, there are indeed people on drugs sitting on park benches and people passing by with apparent mental illnesses. What's ultimately most impressive takes longer to see, as profound things do. It's not tolerance: it's compassion.

Headed by John Turvey, himself a former addict, the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society "was created to provide outreach services to the street-involved people of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The agency's priority is youth but in addition it runs some programs that serve adults." Of these, a needle exchange program is only the most controversial.

The Lookout Shelter "was founded in 1971, having street patrols which picked up shelterless people off the street. ... Mandated to respond to the needs of the community, Lookout developed into the 'safety net' under all other services, catering to a wide variety of needs. When a person has nowhere else to go, they turn to Lookout." The Portland Hotel, featured on David Suzuki's *The Nature of Things*, has a similar mandate but is more long-term.

Crabtree Corner Family Support and Emergency Child Care Centre is "a resource centre for families living on the Downtown Eastside. ... We are here for you when you have a medical/legal appointment, are job/house



hunting, experience a family crisis, are attending a workshop or if you just need a break.”

The Pride Centre, operating out of the same building as the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association (DERA), is “dedicated to training and supporting low-income residents in search of employment.” Its latest program is desktop publishing.

Written materials of the area have historically looked low-budget. That suits Paul Taylor just fine, though. The editor of the *Carnegie Newsletter* has decided not to use the new technology and his standard-bearing publication looks quite stylish in its dissent.

It is published by the Carnegie Community Centre Association and put out by a group of volunteers including Shawn Millar and Sandy Cameron. Twice a month, the volunteers cut, paste, photocopy, fold and staple 900 free copies, with each edition drawn as inclusively as possible from people's submissions.

The result, in poetry, commentary, tips and pilfered graphics, is a serial of Downtown Eastside life and thought that's both entertaining and provocative—literally, provocative. Taylor sends copies to developers routinely castigated in its pages, hoping to be sued. “Imagine how it would look,” he says: “A little volunteer-run publication with no money up against a million-dollar corporation.”

The *Newsletter* tells the community's side of every story. Whether offering a tribute after a tragic death or putting the lie to the notion of massive welfare fraud, it has insights to be found nowhere else. The literary geniuses in stained glass by the staircase—Dickens and Keats perhaps especially—would be proud. “Just because you're poor doesn't mean you're stupid,” says Taylor.

The making of the *Newsletter* is nearly as interesting as the end product. People drop things off, stop to talk or

get exercised in ongoing debates. Politics are taken more seriously here, Taylor explains, because the stakes are so much greater. Yet the issues of the Downtown Eastside are far from parochial, he argues: “People don't realize how close they are to poverty—often just a paycheque away.”

Last fall, the big debate concerned DERA, for 24 years the community's leading agency, which insurgents claimed had become stultified and unaccountable. In the midst of the *Newsletter's* reportage, Sandy Cameron had a reminder from a Downtown Eastside resident and reader. “People are becoming poorer in the Downtown Eastside. More people are homeless. Hurt people, especially those with addictions, do not have the services they need.

“We are in desperate need of decent, affordable housing in the Downtown Eastside, and the federal government has cut off all money for housing. Also, City Hall is promoting gentification—the building of condos—without guaranteeing homes for the residents who will be displaced. We need a healthy space in which to live, yet we fear that our community will be destroyed by profit-driven development, and we are resentful and angry. We take our frustration out on each other.”

Signing “A Member of the Downtown Eastside,” another letter-writer described moving to the neighbourhood—broke, in a wheelchair and without a place to live. Through DERA, the writer found housing, while the Carnegie offered affordable meals and free learning programs. “Between the Learning Centre and the *Newsletter* I learned how to use my voice.”

Eventually, the writer served on the board of the Carnegie Community Centre Association and campaigned for better wheelchair access to area sidewalks.

"The purpose of this story is to let you know that in the beginning I had no hope—but then I was given another chance. I had and have a lot to give back to my community for what it and you have given to me."

On the walls outside of DERA is a quote by Anatole France: "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges,



Editor, *Vancouver Sun*:

I am writing to complain about the derogatory language Ian Mulgrew used to describe my neighbourhood in the Nov. 4th issue of your paper. I was immediately offended when I saw the words "skid road" used in the headline of his article. The correct name for the neighbourhood that includes Main & Hastings is the Downtown Eastside.

I am insulted by the picture that Mulgrew paints of the "typical" Downtown Eastside resident. I have a job. I pay taxes. I vote. I obey the law. I do volunteer work in my community. I do not have a substance abuse problem (alcohol, cigarettes or drugs). I am not a prostitute. I am not a psychiatric outpatient. I do not have HIV/AIDS/hepatitis/TB. I am not a panhandler. I am not homeless. I have genuinely nice neighbours. I chose to live in this community. I live in The Downtown Eastside.

Educate your staff. Demonstrate an enlightened editorial policy to match the Sun's new appearance. Erase the moniker "skid road" from the newspaper's vocabulary. Call my neighbourhood The Downtown Eastside.

Sincerely,  
Lisa David

beg in the street and to steal bread."

For Sandy Cameron, it comes down to this: "As Canadians we are known by how we treat those who have the least power in our society. It is not just Vancouver's oldest neighbourhood that is at stake—it is Vancouver's soul."

**Sabitri Ghosh is a freelance writer who lives in Kelowna.**

## ANITA AT NIGHT

Tall tight angel in a white hood,  
Eyes averted, quick, alert and clean.  
Nobody knows you.. Who you are..  
Where you've been.

They pull you by your black wing and put you out  
for all your crazy ways, night and days.

There's a fallen angel in your corner  
sister of mercy , angel of revenge

You said you saw a jellyfish dancing  
in the cold, black harbour

You said your father was an Aryan prince, your  
mother, a beautiful Jew and men were always after  
you, your pack of dogs, prescription drugs and  
endless days to run them through.

Surely you saw those amethyst windows in the  
pavement and the snake-like neon signs during  
your lonely walks at night.

Then, you woke up. Your island of fire in scorpio  
and you knew that women are warriors too.

Tall tight angel in a white hood. Eyes averted.  
Quick, alert and clean.

Nobody knows you.  
Who you are.  
Where you've been.

Tora  
(a.k.a. Richard Pooley)  
((submitted by Anita))

# Guidelines for Legal Aid

The Legal Services Society changed its financial and other eligibility guidelines for legal aid. When you go in, workers will calculate your net income. You are allowed to deduct:

- daycare expenses
- child or spousal maintenance you or your partner pay (if it is court ordered or agreed to in a separation agreement)
- court fines if you or your partner will go to jail for not paying
- medication that a doctor says is necessary for you or your dependents, and that you must personally pay for
- the cost of an interpreter's services if you don't speak English and need one to prepare for court

Household size	Criminal cases (includes Appeals)	All other cases (includes Appeals)
1	\$ 833	\$ 941
2	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,412
3	\$ 1,458	\$ 1,647
4	\$ 1,612	\$ 1,821
5	\$ 1,778	\$ 2,008
6	\$ 1,932	\$ 2,183
7 or more	\$ 2,065	\$ 2,333

Effective April 7, 1997, this table applies to all offices.

Questions dealt with include:

- How do I know if I'm eligible?
- What if I have assets?
- Is my legal problem covered?
- What if I have a family law or poverty law or immigration case?
- What if I don't agree with the LSS decision? Reprinting everything here is not an option, and the info-sheets are scrunched. The tables here are helpful, but worse-case scenarios have single parents on welfare having to pay legal costs...

Household size	Monthly income after deductions				
1 person	\$ 0 - 644	\$ 645 - 678	\$ 679 - 775	\$ 776 - 872	Over \$ 872
2 people	\$ 0 - 923	924 - 972	973 - 1,111	1,112 - 1,250	Over 1,250
3 people	\$ 0 - 1,129	1,130 - 1,189	1,190 - 1,359	1,360 - 1,529	Over 1,529
4 people	\$ 0 - 1,283	1,284 - 1,350	1,351 - 1,543	1,544 - 1,736	Over 1,736
5 people	\$ 0 - 1,396	1,397 - 1,469	1,470 - 1,679	1,680 - 1,889	Over 1,889
6 people	\$ 0 - 1,489	1,490 - 1,567	1,568 - 1,791	1,792 - 2,015	Over 2,015
7 or more people	\$ 0 - 1,584	1,585 - 1,665	1,666 - 1,903	1,904 - 2,141	Over 2,141
Contribution	None	\$25.00	\$50.00	\$75.00	\$100.00

Effective August 1, 1997, this table applies to all offices and to all applicants who qualify financially for legal aid.

not just for the musically inclined

everyone  
welcome

self expression

Come join a  
weekly

# SONG CIRCLE

Fridays  
11:00-12:00  
Carnegie Theatre  
starting November 7



See Wendy for more info ...

Editor, Carnegie Newsletter

I felt I had to respond to Michael Boulton's letter printed in the November 1, 1997 issue.

I have a hard time believing Mr. Boulton does not see anyone but the addicts he describes. I live in the neighbourhood. My spouse works security just outside Vancouver and neither of us are small enough to be overlooked.

Yes, Mr. Boulton, the people you describe are here, and so are many others. The poor, the disabled, the single parents, the many who suffer from mental illness; But, you forgot the other 95% of the people who live or work here. No, they are not on the corners. They ring up your bill at A & N. They serve you coffee in the shops. They take your order at "The Only" and the "Ovaltine". They help people with housing and Income Assistance issues at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre and the Downtown Eastside Residents Association. They are people who are invisible because they are trying to make a difference in lives and the waste of human beings in this area of town.

They are people who are talking about the 'systemic genocide' that is happening...here...where we live because humans cannot remember to care about others. They care about the poor and disenfranchised.

They are people who work and volunteer at Carnegie and the Sally Ann and First United.

They are also the young under-age sex trade workers who earn money by going with men from other areas of the Lower Mainland who will pay the price for sex with children.

They are also the young, well-dressed kids who come down here on the week-end to frequent the cabarets and bars and do a lot of loud, high-spirited partying... in my community and keep my neighbours awake.

They include the men who have given up looking for work in a 10% unemployment era.. if they had the education or skills to get more than a \$7.00-an-hour job that doesn't get a family off welfare.

They include the women who have left abusive partners and are trying to raise their children under very difficult circumstances.

They include the new refugees who live here because it's cheaper than other areas.. if they can get housing.

Drug use is not confined to here.. it's everywhere,

Others defecate here too, especially the party crowd.

Mill around? In some cultures it is a very normal thing to do. It is how people get information, socialize,

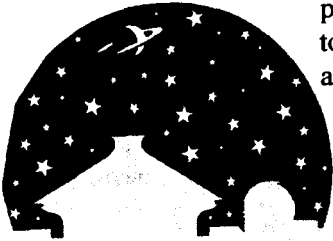
## THE UNIVERSAL TRUTH

(to Joe Rosenblath)

I want to walk to the edge of the universe and jump  
I want Atlas to drop that sphere and let it bounce  
so high no one will ever catch it.

I want to walk to the edge of the universe and  
jump, jack-knife life, like a Downtown Eastside  
wingnut, twirling, spinning, sorting, sifting, falling  
into a cracuum singing a swan's song all the way  
from an Afro-American's ruby-red lips spewing  
pearls of wisdom rising like yeast in an inferno on  
to the oatmeal eddies of the Milky Way through  
an intergalactic time warp.

*Anita Stevens*



plan a day and shop.

Panhandle? Yes they do, especially those who are broke and really can't get or hold a job! The healthy ones also "dive", "busk" or do odd jobs or just work at poor-paying jobs.

Yes, we have our problems! What are you doing to make a difference? Are you speaking out against poverty? Are you trying to find solutions? Are you volunteering somewhere?

Yes, I used to come down here to Woodward's too, many moons ago. I came here shopping on \$1.49 day.

And before that, 35 years ago, I was here as an under-age sex-trade worker and junkie. This area has only gotten bigger, maybe somewhat worse. The problems are still here!! After 35 years! I remember it; why don't you?

But what do you know about why people use drugs or sell their bodies? Did you ever stop to consider that no one gets up one morning and decides to be a prostitute or addict. You cannot take Prostitution 101 in college. Did you ever consider the reasons why kids sell their bodies? Did you ever stop to consider the number of addicts or sex-trade workers who were sexually abused as children? ..or the native children who were abused in Residential schools? ..or the women beaten by partners or murdered by persons unknown?

Do you not realize that sexual abuse knows no boundaries, that spousal abuse happens in the "best" neighbourhoods, addictions are a medical matter and unemployment is only a stone's throw away from your door?

Do you know anything about where you live? You are in a prison; you can't see the beauty that abounds in this area. Artists sell pictures, musicians play at Carnegie, there are funky little shops and some of the greatest places to eat in Vancouver! Walk around from Oppenheimer Park to the Sun Yat Sen Gardens to CRAB Park to take in the fascinating cultural diversity here.

Perhaps you and Mr. Woodward should hold a vigil - how many jobs were lost when he closed down?

It's not as clear cut as you or I can summarize in a letter, but neither is it as bad as you paint it to be. Where are the rest of us?

Well, I guess we are all just trying to be ordinary people.

Yours Truly,  
Carole

**DOWNTOWN  
EASTSIDE  
YOUTH  
ACTIVITIES  
SOCIETY**

**STD CLINIC - 219 Main; Monday-Friday, 10a.m. - 6p.m.  
NEEDLE EXCHANGE - 221 Main; 8:30a.m. - 8p.m. every  
NEEDLE EXCHANGE VAN 3 Routes day**

**City - 5:45p.m. - 11:45 p.m.  
Overnight - 12:30a.m. - 8:30a.m.  
Downtown Eastside - 5:30p.m.  
- 1:30a.m.**

**1997 DONATIONS**

Paula R.-\$30  
Wm. B.-\$20  
Lillian H.-\$25  
Joy T.-\$20  
Frances -\$25  
Charley B.-\$15  
Libby D.-\$40  
Guy M.-\$10 Tom -\$20 Rene -\$30  
Sam R.-\$20 Amy -\$10 Neil N.-\$10  
Rick Y.-\$63 Sharon J.-\$50  
BCCW -\$60 Holden Htl -\$5  
Joan D.-\$5 Mike -\$15 Bill G.-\$20  
Ray-Cam -\$40 Harold D.-\$19.10  
Sonya Sommers -\$100 Anita S.-\$10  
Census Wkrs -\$200  
B.C. PLURA -\$1000  
VanCity Chinatown -\$200  
Legal Services Society -\$1230

Nancy H.-\$40  
Jennifer M.-\$20  
Nathan E.-\$20  
Rocking Guys-\$30  
Diane M.-\$15  
Lorne T.-\$20  
Mel L.-\$20  
Sara D.-\$20  
CEEDS -\$10  
Susan S.-\$30  
DEYAS -\$75

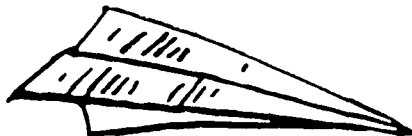
**Carnegie**  
NEWSLETTER

THE NEWSLETTER IS A PUBLICATION OF THE  
CARNEGIE COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATION

Articles represent the views of individual  
contributors and not of the Association.

**Submission Deadline  
for the next issue:**

**26 November  
Wednesday**



**NEED HELP?**

**The Downtown Eastside Residents Association  
can help you with:**

- **Welfare problems;**
- **Landlords disputes;**
- **Housing problems;**
- **Unsafe living conditions;**

Come into the Dera office at 425 Carrall Street or  
phone us at 682 - 0921.



**DERA HAS BEEN SERVING THE DOWNTOWN  
EASTSIDE FOR 24 YEARS.**





## IN THE DUMPSTER

binner@vcn.bc.ca  
mcbinner@hotmail.com  
Fax: 684-8442

Dear fellow binners and binnerettes:

Vancouver isn't the only city to feel the greed of its shitty hall. The mayor of Langley, Scholtens, says there should be no more treatment centres in his district. Maybe he makes his side money on booze and dope. I wonder where he stands on women's shelters. Maybe he is also a member of APEC (the Almost Perfect Economic Conspiracy). Remember Robbie Robertson from The Band: "I just spend 6 months in the jailhouse, for the crime of havin' no dough. Now here I am, back here on the streets, for the crime of having no place to go." When all else fails, there is always moon power. Just drop yer drawers and moon da goofs.

With all the visitors on the list, they forgot the Dalai Lama. But then maybe he's a penny payin' bus ridin' mooner too. Time will tell. I think the best mooning spot would be the Main St. Overpass, but to each their own. Where is the Downtown Eastside Pope when you need him?

I just read in the Sun Paper where the powers that be are going to 86 the Challenger Relief Map: it's graced the BC Pavilion at the PNE since 1954. The Shitty Parks Board wants to store it til March 2000 and then destroy it if no home is found for it. George Challenger spent 252 thousand of his own hard-earned logger's pay building the map and worked full time on it before selling it to the

thankless, ungrateful PNE. As a child, I was on the tour as a student and as a patron of the PNE. I can still remember my amazement.

This Province does not appreciate or deserve any gifts or legacies. To add insult, the ashes of Mr. Challenger are buried under the map. Makes me wonder what will happen to the totem poles once the Barfs Board gets tired of them. Hey, here's an idea. Why don't they put a rifle range complete with a Rogue's Gallery in Stanley Park? Between the lead and car pollution, they could really rule. Woe Canaduh.

## Challengers met

The Challenger Map may have found a new home after park board officials and the map maker's family members agreed to try and locate the famous structure in a new convention center planned for the Vancouver waterfront.

The deal avoids further legal wrangling and solves a conflict for both family members and park board politicians.

George Challenger's gigantic relief map of B.C. measures 76-feet by 80-feet. Thousands upon thousands of Pacific National Exhibition goers have visited the map since it was put on display in the annual fair in 1954.



But I digress. Help is on the way soon. A Downtown Eastside guru has been appointed - the **Unworthy One** has many followers. Unlike Clark or Mayor McCheese, he has a soul and a brain.

Good Luck to Chris Laird and his new Diabetic Support Group that meets every other week.

And now a few words to Michael Boulton, if that is your real name. In the last issue you wrote you were born and raised in the Downtown Eastside. I was 6-8 years old and lived on Rupert St. I was very fortunate if my poor, ailing grandmother would take me on the tram to

Woodwards or the grocery store.

Hey you snotty piece of turd: I

- (1) Don't use drugs
- (2) Don't defecate in public
- (3) Don't "mill around with no purpose or direction"
- (4) Don't "panhandle, steal and participate in illegal activities"!!!

Don't tell me there is no crime, drug sales or prostitution in Shaughnessy or British Properties. You make me want to puke. If you live here you are an EASTENDER! Why don't you run for Barf Board Trustee? Better yet, run off a one way cliff. End of Story.

PS. Never mind, it's not worth the lost ink.

Thanks Jeff for your input. He sounds like a FIEND of DERA fan.

Remember our own fallen soldiers in the DE when you buy your poppy. Don't forget to feed pennies to the buses. Hope to see some dark moons during APEC.

Bin Safe and May The Bins Be With You. And hey, let's be careful out there.

By MR. McBINNER



# Andy Alexander

Born September 3, 1943  
in Vermillion, Alberta

Died November 11, 1997  
at 2 pm  
in Vancouver, BC

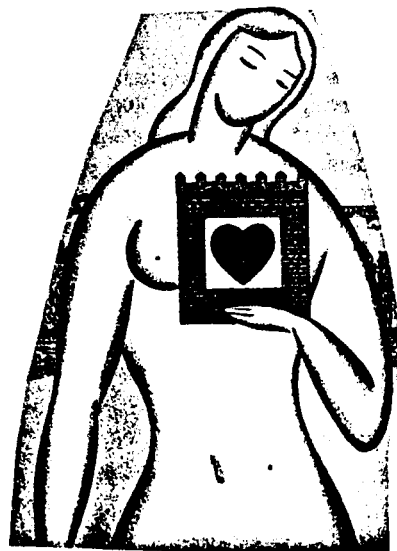
...A soft breath, world-wide, of  
night and day, rising, falling..

*Gary Snyder*



Friends, gather to remember  
and celebrate his life

Carnegie Community Centre  
Saturday, November 22, 1997  
2:00 pm  
in the Theatre



Anton Mesmer, 1799

*Describing the Heightened Senses of Mental Patients:*

“... It is this same person, who, in complete darkness, perceived all the poles of the human body clearly, as luminous vapour. Not that it was like fire, but the impression which it made upon her organs gave her an idea akin to fire, which she could express only by the word ‘light’.”



which experience brings us in a state of sanity. Thus it is a mistake for us to ascribe to fantasies all the peculiarities which we observe in the behaviour of these individuals. What motivates and determines their actions is as real a cause as those which determine the actions of more rational men. There exists a difference only in the motivation of these creatures which renders them sensitive to a multitude of impressions of which we are unaware.”

“... Until now, human intelligence has not dreamed of increasing the external scope of our senses by increasing the condition of sensations -- that is, by increasing the internality of the action which these senses exert upon us.”

TORA

“... On my face she perceived my eyes and nose. The luminous rays which emanated from the eye proceeded to join with the rays from the nose, reinforcing them... If I wished to observe objects off to one side, without turning my head, then the rays from the eyes separated from the end of my nose in order to proceed in the direction that I wished them to go.”

“... One of my patients perceived the pores of the skin as of a considerable size. She described the structure in conformity with what the microscope has taught us but she went further. The skin appeared as a sieve to her. Through it she saw the texture of the muscles, all at the correct locations, and the junction of the bones. . . . All this she explained in an ingenious way and sometimes was impatient at the sterility of our expressions while she was communicating her ideas.”

“The quality of impressions of which they have knowledge thereby is absolutely new to them - at first they are astonished, frightened, but soon, through habit, they become familiar with them and in time succeed in availing themselves of their utility, just as we avail ourselves of knowledge

The Gnostics considered the fact that some humans are aware instinctively of an unevolved lack of spiritual understanding and sensitivity in the human race. And others will refuse to see or admit to it even when confronted with the proof.

The spiritually aware they called *pneumatikoi* (“spirituals”) and the spiritually unaware, who have no interest in knowing the truth, they called *hylikoi* (literally, “wooden men”).

Their position on this is that those without spirit are descendents created by Yaweh when he made a material world without the agreement of the Father (Bel, Belos, Belinos, Amen) who is the invisible spirit behind light, i.e., a material (non-spiritual) reality is a mistake which causes wisdom

(the Goddess Sophia, Barbelos).\*

Throughout humanity, weak spirits (those with less wisdom or gnosis -- inborn knowledge of the spirit) were completely taken over by materialism. As a result, their souls died and they became "hylikoi," wooden men. Those whose portion in Sophia was large -- whose Gnosis was strong, retained and often evolved their spiritual understanding of even the harshest conditions of denial of the spirit.

The Gnostics felt that their ability to recognize the spiritual condition of the world as a mistake was an unmistakable sign that they (the Gnostics) did not belong to it. . . . Thus, the Gnostics conceived that they were not part of the mistake created by Yahweh, and that they would return to or regain that world beyond matter from which they were ultimately derived.

{\* In the Gnostic Gospel of John, Barbelos, the First created being is described as forethought seeking foreknowledge, to be scattered unevenly.]

TORA



southpaw@vcn.bc.ca

Dear Gary Groove,

Do you know the Code of the West?

Asshole from El Paso

Dear Asshole,

The Code of the West is: Always drink upstream from the herd and never squat with your spurs on.



## Green home honored by CMHC

An environmentally-friendly building in Strathcona Garden has helped the Environmental Youth Alliance win a Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation award.

The eco-pavilion in the East Vancouver community garden is the first public building within Vancouver to receive

### News BRIEFS

a permit for its environmental systems, which features recycled paper insulation, recycled wood, solar energy, gray water recycling and a composting toilet. The only city service

used is water. The structure was built by 15 young women, members of the EYA.

"The whole idea is to create systems that make the urban environment more healthy," said project manager Susan Kurbis, adding her team was "so excited" about winning.

Kurbis and three builders traveled to Montreal to accept the award in the Technology and Production category.

The EYA's latest project is an eco-friendly roof-top garden at VanCity Place for Youth.

# A STORY FOR THE CHILDREN

By Eric Erickson

*(With thanks to the Brothers Grimm)*

Once upon a time, in the land of the Sweetie-Poos, there lived a beautiful princess. Now, alas, this marvellously beautiful Princess of All the Sweetie-Poos had been captured by a great ogre and imprisoned in a high castle tower that had a window.

The ogre was not all bad.. in fact he had been commissioned by the Great Ruler of the Land of the Sweetie-Poos to restore order and bring the country to its former exalted state. But, it is sad to say, the ogre had gone astray in this mission and one of his mistakes had been the imprisoning of the beautiful Princess.

Each day the Princess, whose name was Rapinzel, would divide her time between looking after her pet rabbit (a Belgian Hare named Sam) and gazing out the high window, while she combed her long tresses.

As she gazed she would dream of the day when her rescuer, her Knight in Shining armour would ride into view on his magnificent steed and rescue her from the clutches of the large and hairy ogre.

One day, she was so engaged in gazing out the window when she saw Earthquake McGoon walking. Earthquake McGoon wasn't all that big or that great-looking but he had so much hair it was difficult to see exactly what the real Earthquake looked like. It was that hair, indeed, hanging over his eyeballs, that caused McGoon to crash into the base of the tower in which Rapinzel was imprisoned.

McGoon brushed the hair out of his eyes and looked up at the high window where sat the Princess of the Land of the Sweetie-Poos. It should be mentioned that McGoon was followed everywhere by a giant blue gorilla. McGoon and the blue gorilla loved and treasured each other and neither would do anything without the other's approval.

Seeing the Princess, McGoon called out, "Rapinzel, Rapinzel, let down your hare!"

Hearing this, Princess Rapinzel placed her pet,



the Belgian Hare named Sam, in a basket and lowered it with a rope.

Earthquake McGoon received the hare and, stroking its ears, told the Blue Gorilla, "Any broad with a rabbit like this is worth checking out." And so they searched for the front door of the castle and they knocked.

"We wish to see the beautiful Princess of the Sweetie-Poos, who is your prisoner," McGoon told the ogre, whose name, by the way, was Herring.

Herring stroked his beard for a minute and eyed the Blue Gorilla and then he made his decision. "Sure, man, no problem," he said and threw open the door into the castle.

And so Earthquake McGoon carried the beautiful Princess of the Sweetie-Poos off to a fair country where they, together with the Blue Gorilla and the Belgian Hare named Sam, lived happily forever and ever after.

As for Herring, he did a lot of good stuff when he didn't have to sit and guard the castle any more. He made the people happy.

The End.

Poem-speech spoken at the police station for the "March Against Racist Police Violence"

8 November 1997

we are right now  
in the heart  
in the vulnerable and naked and wounded heart  
of the downtown eastside  
a community of 10,000 human beings  
who have  
the lowest per capita income in canada  
the highest suicide rate  
the lowest life expectancy  
the most homeless people  
the fewest jobs  
of anywhere in british columbia  
and the downtown eastside is experiencing  
the worst hiv/aids epidemic  
among drug addicts  
in the western world



the downtown eastside struggles to survive  
as a community for all who live here  
amidst third world poverty conditions  
amidst the most wretched housing in north america  
according to experts from the united states  
and the human beings of the downtown eastside  
comprise the most traumatized community  
the most disabled community  
the most besieged bylaw-breaking noise levels  
of upscale construction developments  
which are displacing and scattering  
this community of poor people

and what has been the most significant response  
by our public servants  
by the political will  
to the cries of fear and pain and rage we hear  
in the screaming of sirens upon sirens upon sirens?

this summer  
vancouver mayor philip owen  
attended a meeting of the urban development institute  
which is composed of business and real estate people  
and owen was told  
that condominium sales are holding steady  
throughout vancouver  
except in gastown and the downtown eastside





where sales are low  
because of the people on the streets  
because of the residents  
because of the drug situation  
and owen left that meeting  
singing an old discredited tune  
singing

*"war on drugs"*

and the cops came out swinging  
dehumanizing the downtown eastside in the province newspaper  
and beating people  
on the streets and in the parks and alleys  
beating  
the afflicted people of the downtown eastside

I myself attended a meeting  
with the new chief of police  
chambers  
who said the police were unleashed  
in a clean-up campaign  
on downtown eastside streets  
for the sake

of tourists and business  
tourists and business  
and the chief inspector of this area  
gary greer

said in a public meeting that the police are going to  
aggressively enforce  
laws they do not enforce anywhere else in the city  
and recently greer was quoted as saying  
street level drug dealers are responsible  
fore creating the hiv/aids epidemic  
he's a liar

the abandonment and betrayal  
of the people of the downtown eastside  
by elected leaders from all three levels of government  
is what has created  
the western world's worst hiv/aids epidemic  
among drug addicts

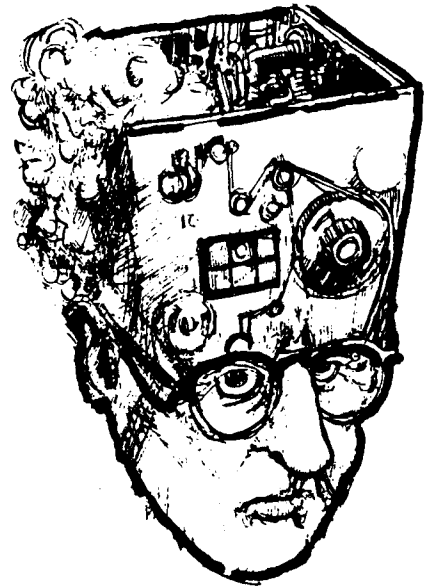
the war against drugs  
is a war against the poor  
but not against all of the poor people in the downtown eastside  
the war on drugs  
discriminately assaults  
latino and aboriginal and black people  
and those who look like white trash

the war against drugs  
is a euphemism for a war against refugees  
from global economic warfare  
whether they are from alberta or el salvador  
the war on drugs is an excuse  
for police to beat the shit out of people who are  
ill and abandoned and deemed expendable and powerless and  
who have nowhere else to go than down here

I am personally sickened and enraged  
from hearing on a daily basis  
stories of more beatings and harassment and brutality  
committed by police on downtown eastside streets  
the war on drugs  
is a war on this community  
the war on drugs  
is a war against hope and compassion and care  
the war against drugs itself spreads  
the hiv/aids epidemic  
by driving addicts into hotel shooting galleries  
john blatherwick  
the chief medical officer of the city of vancouver  
says the safest place to shoot drugs in the downtown eastside  
is in the alleys  
because there only one or two people use a needle  
but when the police drive addicts  
off the streets and out of the alleys  
and back into the hotels  
several people crowd into a single unsanitary room  
and share needles  
and the epidemic spreads

and as I am a member of the vancouver/richmond health board  
representing the downtown eastside  
I hereby voice a complaint and an accusation  
against the vancouver police  
and demand they charge themselves  
with the crime  
of spreading an epidemic and aggravating a  
public health emergency

but I have met police officers in the downtown eastside  
who are not terrorists  
but are ashamed of the shameless actions of fellow officers  
and I call on them  
to step forward now  
I call on those cops who privately express

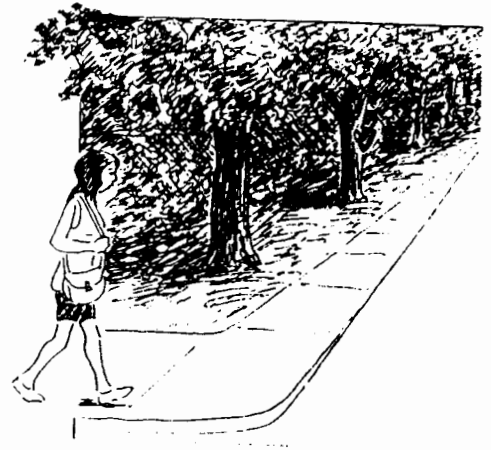




their support for our struggles to survive here  
those cops who understand the pressures  
bearing down on us  
I call on them to publicly renounce this insane war  
and announce their distance  
from this increasing brutality  
and become leaders in this community  
instead of being tarred with the same brush  
as the sociopaths in their department

I call on those authentic officers of the law  
to be real community police  
and serve and protect  
this entire community

*Bud Osborn*



## More Oppression

So you think the oppression you are suffering from won't increase. Well, the worst is yet to come under the MAI and APEC agreements.

I learned a great deal attending the Women's Conference at Johnston Heights Secondary School in Surrey. The workshop done by Marjorie Cohen was most informative. Marjorie is a professor of

Political Science and Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University.

Step by step, privatization serves fewer people - people who have reason to get rid of public services altogether. In the past fifty years, hardship has been seen as temporary. The justification for economic change is only so the corporate sector can be competitive (ie make more profit) internationally.

The two main issues changing our society for the worst are:

- Society has shifted to the right as the result of carefully planned campaigns.
- Global security frees corporations to exploit anyone they wish.

The Fraser Institute accompanies the Prime Minister everywhere he goes, which explains why he never listens to the average Canadian.

Our initial concern with "Free" Trade was the loss of jobs, but it's obviously much more than that. The biggest corporations, about 6,000 of them, control all of the exports in the world. Only 50 companies in Canada control 50% of the exports. The trade agreements mean that foreign countries do not have to abide by our standards, including environmental standards.

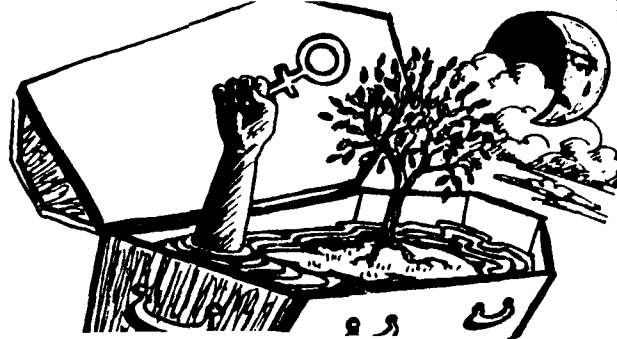
## HOW HAS THIS HAPPENED?

### MAI -- the Multilateral Agreement on Investment

The 29 richest countries in the world belong to the organization that is negotiating this treaty. It is a super think tank called the OECD - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development -- much like the Fraser Institute. MAI will go much further than NAFTA - corporations will have more control and virtually no responsibilities. Local people and elected governments would have no control over water or any of our natural resources.

### APEC - Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation

This organization, formed in 1989, consists of 18 countries. It represents economies, not nations or countries. It serves the needs of capitalists and corporations and is extremely influenced by big business. There is no dispute process and in some ways is more powerful than MAI. As a member of APEC, you have to allow any profits made in your country to leave it. It ignores human rights and allows a great deal of abuse by corporations wanting to avoid legislation regarding wages and working conditions. The following quote was in the October 24 issue of *The Globe and Mail* :



"I believe prosperity will come when the poor become consumers."

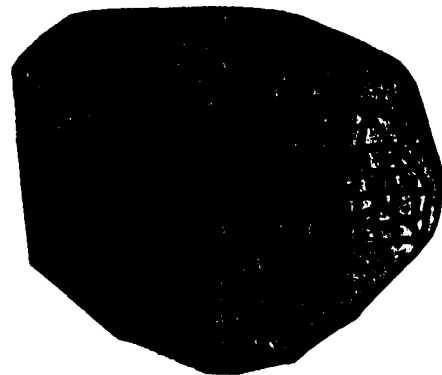
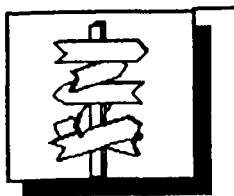
Economic fundamentalism is very dangerous to society in general. Women have been trying to establish controls in the market but gains made are in jeopardy. The attack on marketing boards, for example, is part of this fundamentalist strategy.

"There are many of us opposed to "free" trade right from the start but we have been completely ignored," said Marjorie. By imposing these trade policies, the federal government has changed the fabric of our country forever. Government **interference** is incompatible with globalization, according to politicians.

Opposing the MAI and APEC is great but purists make Marjorie feel uneasy. There is a difference between fighting against the causes of economic despair and opposing nations. The corporations are trying to have complete control. Our focus must change from nations to corporations.

There are enormous disparities world wide.. so there needs to be a way of tolerating economic instability.

Resisting the dismantling of social programs has been mostly successful., but as everything becomes more global there is more fragmentation of countries. The policies of the previous and present federal governments will make Canada a third world country. We should not allow the provincial governments to escape criticism as they are following the same trend. People are sick and tired of politicians with the pass-the-buck attitude. They must start to take responsibility for their heartless actions. The ways we care about each other are extremely important.



CITY EDITOR (*Vancouver Sun*) JOHN DRABBLE

Dear John,

10 November 1997

...an endearing beginning, or at least appropriate, given the subject matter of what follows...

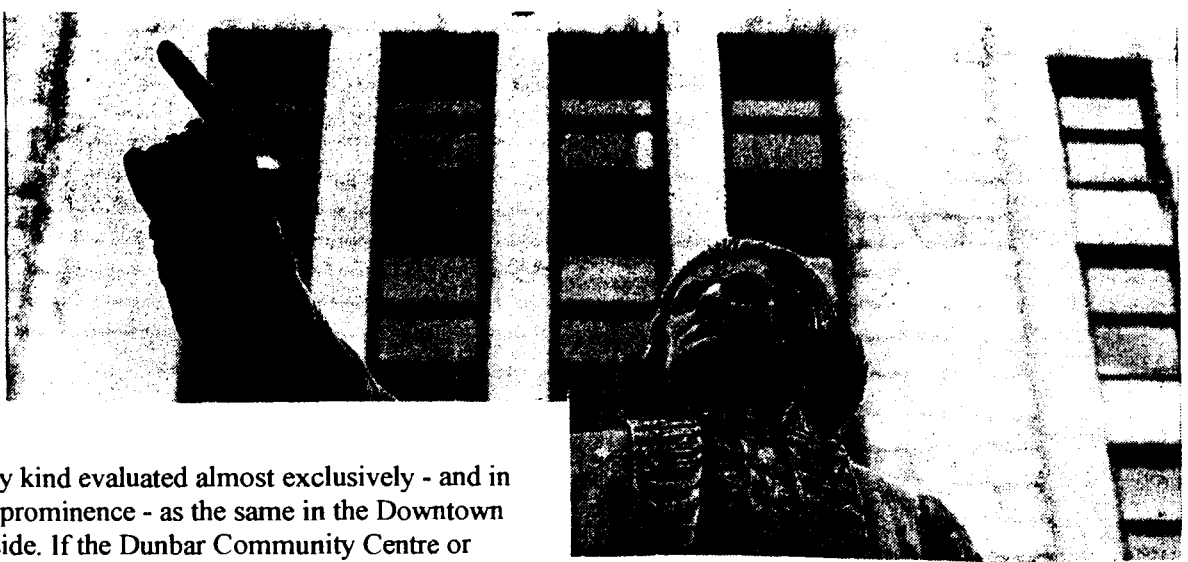
On Nov. 4 the LOWER MAINLAND section has the headline 'Cash infusion into Skid Road fails to stop the bleeding'; prominently pictured is a female addict and, less prominently, a staff person staring at a bottle of rice wine. Immediate reactions amongst community residents/activists/ordinary people were predictably unanimous: outrage. The author has taken a very narrow view, used the stereotyping common to much of the *Vancouver Sun's* coverage of our neighbourhood, and warped a plethora of issues into a swan song for the "tried and failed" scenario played out in the minds of those hoping to decimate Vancouver's oldest community.

Denigration of residents has been an ongoing pastime for those intent on promoting (the one correct point in the article) gentrification. Epithets of "urban wilderness".. "locals are an eyesore".. "wasted and pathetic scum".. "revitalise/clean up/better people needed to set an example..." ring out in the squinted gazes of people now laying claim to their community-their neighbourhood after putting in almost 6 Months in the trenches. Condos are playing to buyers as the cutting edge of this wave, and prospective residents are told plainly that conditions on the streets (specifically these disgusting people) will both and all be gone in 2,3,4,... years so just sign here... Brad Holme, that charming originator of the condo-buyer's favourite exclamation - "How can I get my hands on that sorry s.o.b.!?!?" - endeared himself once again to City Council, squeezing and squirreling

every concession possible to construct the Van Horne (named, appropriately enough, after the blank who tried vehemently to privatise Stanley Park around the turn of the century) and it's clone across the street at the corners of Cordova and Carrall.. then had to buy 35 of the unsold units himself (and his mom got stuck with another 5 units) before disappearing (sorry, re-locating) again in Toronto. Unfortunately for many of these colonizers, the people of the DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE can't overcome being a major inconvenience to their fantasies. You see, that mythical Valhalla known universally as "somewhere else" is still just a figment of the imagination. All the better people, seeing the futility of showing residents how to be nice poor people, are still using "somewhere else" as a mantra to answer questions pertaining to the disposal of current locals; politicians spinning bureaucratic crud (a synonym for the word used to describe the product of a bull's bowel movement) keep their relation to "somewhere else" relatively secret while talking of property rights and the non impact of two and a half thousand more condos in a three-block area. This last, incidentally, is part of the doublespeak being phased in as the Victory Square "neighbourhood", one of about five neighbourhoods never heard of before in the annals of recorded history.

Okay, the cynicism is getting worn.

The difficulties inherent in Ian Mulgrew's piece start with him talking of everything in terms of money. Community centres cost so much, medical aid costs so much, income assistance costs so much, etcetera. It is sad that nowhere else in the Lower Mainland are programs, centres, assistance



of any kind evaluated almost exclusively - and in such prominence - as the same in the Downtown Eastside. If the Dunbar Community Centre or (*gasp*) the West End Community Centre or (*gasp in spades*) the new Roundhouse thing have programs and services, they are explicitly not shredded on the basis of the dollars spent. Rather, each is evaluated in terms of its clientele, the effort/research/individuals involved in delivery and numerous other criteria just to get an idea of "what is this thing doing?" Mulgrew, on the other hand, is edited in such a way (if at all) to give credence to a purely political stance: "This area, this Skid Road, is sucking up money better spent on anything else." And all those who, by default, are among the Best and the Brightest - who have a few thousand/hundred thousand/million/hundred million - can then feel righteously justified in treating local residents as they would treat a fungus in their Jacuzzi.

The problems of this neighbourhood are real, but not that different from problems in inner cities throughout the world. Money is not being thrown away but it can be better directed into affordable housing, drug and alcohol treatment programs, detoxes, counselling and safe houses for the youth coming here by the hundreds and finding literally nothing but the dregs. Everything we do have here is the result of years of fighting - with landlords, petty bureaucrats, politicians sitting to the far right of Genghis Khan, and the stifling inertia of our beloved society. The Downtown Eastside Residents Association - DERA - began in 1973 to

force landlords to install sprinklers, to rent rooms with doors that closed and windows that opened, to take out the trash now and then... Successes, strangely not mentioned in Mulgrew's tirade (not sexy enough?) include the Carnegie Community Centre (the most successful community centre in Canada), the Evelyne Saller Centre, Oppenheimer Park, CRAB Park, the Four Sisters Housing Co-operative (an international model), the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society and its Needle Exchange, the Women's Centre, CrabTree Corner, ... enclosed is a booklet called *Help in the Downtown Eastside* that runs 20 pages and just lists what's been achieved here in the past 25 years. It's just a beginning, but it is the work of a community, a small town in Vancouver.

There is little hope that this will see print - as just alluded to, it's hardly sexy enough to warrant a place in the new lean mean *Vancouver Sun*. You speak of questioning everything. Try turning that spotlight on yourself and see how brightly the parts labelled "journalistic integrity" and "fairness" shine out. Here in the Downtown Eastside, questioning the conclusions of unending and dubious analyses is as natural as breathing.

Respectfully submitted,

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