



MINIMUM SUGGESTED DONATION TWO DOLLARS.

STREET SHEET IS SOLD BY HOMELESS AND LOW-INCOME VENDORS WHO KEEP 100% OF THE PROCEEDS.

VENDORS RECEIVE UP TO 75 PAPERS PER DAY FOR FREE.

STREET SHEET IS READER SUPPORTED, ADVERTISING FREE, AND AIMS TO LIFT UP THE VOICES OF THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY IN SAN FRANCISCO.

STREET

NEWFLASH STORIES YOU MAY HAVE MISSED 2

BART HAS FAILED PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES 3

ELECTION RESULTS AN ANALYSIS 4

POLICE AT PRIDE ARE A PROBLEM 6

TREATED LIKE AN "ADDICT" 7



PRIDE ISSUE

Cover image by Oliver Northwood @allofthenorth image description: Two figures, one standing in front flexing biceps, the other standing behind with hands on the other's shoulders. Image reads "UNBURY YOUR GAYS"

SHELTER WAITLIST UPDATE:

As of April 15 there are 1,014 people on the shelter waitlist in San Francisco.

NEWSFLASH

HOMELESSNESS HEADLINES YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

AMAZON FLEXES MUSCLES, SEATTLE BACKS DOWN ON BUSINESS TAX
(New York Times)

The city of Seattle, after resistance from Amazon and other companies, will end a tax on companies making at least \$20 million. The tax had been proposed to raise funds to fight homelessness.

HUD PROPOSAL TO RAISE RENTS ON POOR COULD INCREASE HOMELESSNESS, ADVOCATES SAY
(NBC News)

The Trump administration proposal will raise rents on households receiving subsidies from the government by 20%, putting many renters at risk of eviction.

NYC TO OPEN FIRST EVER YOUTH SHELTER TO ADDRESS LGBTQ HOMELESSNESS
(Curbed)

The city also plans to increase the number of services at youth shelters, with the goal of eventually having a 24/7 drop-in center for youth open in each borough.

HOMELESSNESS SPENDING GETS BOOST IN BUDGET DEAL REACHED BY GOVERNOR, LEGISLATIVE LEADERS
(LA Times)

The \$500 million to fund local homeless programs is substantially less than the \$1.5 billion mayors had asked for.

'WE DON'T HAVE NOWHERE TO GO': CONFUSION PERSISTS AFTER DELAYED EVICTIONS OF LOWER WACKER HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT
(Chicago Tribune)

Homeless advocates say the city's plan to erect a fence around the encampment is discriminatory and that eviction timelines have not been clearly communicated.

#JOGGERJOE ARRESTED AFTER THROWING HOMELESS MAN'S BELONGINGS IN LAKE: SECOND RECENT INCIDENT AT LAKE MERRITT SETTING OFF DEBATES ON RACE, HOMELESSNESS AND GENTRIFICATION
(Mercury News)

The man who set off a social media firestorm last weekend when he was videoed throwing a homeless man's belongings into Lake Merritt while out for a jog was arrested Monday on robbery charges. He was being held on \$100,000 bail at the Santa Rita Jail in Dublin.

FOOD IS MURDER

ERIC YOUNG

I woke up on a bed of rice
Don't know how I got there but it was nice
Though I soon figured out that I was doomed
To be somebody's dinner that afternoon
So I tried to jump up and say catch you later
But I was pinned down by a baked potato
With two pieces of garlic bread
Like pillows underneath my head
Then I asked myself what kind of chef
Would have made an entrée of my death
And why I'd never thought about the cost
'Til I was being complemented by applesauce
Food is murder.

ASK US ANYTHING

HAVE A QUESTION YOU WANT US TO ANSWER ABOUT HOMELESSNESS OR HOUSING

IN THE BAY AREA? ASK US AT
STREETSHEET@COHSF.ORG

OR (415) 346-3740 AND IT COULD BE ANSWERED IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

PHOTOGRAPHERS
VIDEOGRAPHERS
TRANSLATORS
COMIC ARTISTS
NEWSPAPER LAYOUT
WEBSITE
MAINTENANCE
GRAPHIC
DESIGNERS
INTERNS
WRITERS

DONATE EQUIPMENT!

LAPTOPS
DIGITAL CAMERAS
AUDIO RECORDERS
SOUND EQUIPMENT

CONTACT:

STREETSHEET@COHSF.ORG

COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS

The STREET SHEET is a project of the Coalition on Homelessness. The Coalition on Homelessness organizes poor and homeless people to create permanent solutions to poverty while protecting the civil and human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

Our organizing is based on extensive peer outreach, and the information gathered directly drives the Coalition's work. We do not bring our agenda to poor and homeless people: They bring their agenda to us.

STREET SHEET STAFF

The Street Sheet is a publication of the Coalition on Homelessness. Some stories are collectively written, and some stories have individual authors. But whoever sets fingers to keyboard, all stories are formed by the collective work of dozens of volunteers, and our outreach to hundreds of homeless people.

Editor, Quiver Watts

Assistant Editor, TJ Johnston

Vendor Coordinator, Emmett House

Our contributors include:

Jennifer Friedenbach, Sam Lew, Jason Law, Jesus Perez, Miguel Carrera, Vlad K., Mike Russo, Scott Nelson, Julia D'Antonio, Chance Martin, Nicholas Kimura, Jim Beller, Robert Gumpert, Art Hazelwood, the Ghostlines Collective, Leo Schwartz, Dayton Andrews, Kelley Cutler, Raúl Fernández-Berriozabel, Jacquelyn Evans, Roni Diamant-Wilson, Julia Barzizza

WORKGROUP MEETINGS

AT 468 TURK STREET

HOUSING JUSTICE WORK GROUP

Every Tuesday at noon

The Housing Justice Workgroup is working toward a San Francisco in which every human being can have and maintain decent, habitable, safe, and secure housing. This meeting is in English and Spanish and open to everyone!

HUMAN RIGHTS WORK GROUP

Every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.

The Human Rights Workgroup has been doing some serious heavy lifting on these issues: conducting direct research, outreach to people on the streets, running multiple campaigns, developing policy, staging direct actions, capturing media attention, and so much more. All those down for the cause are welcome to join!

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO OUR WORK GROUP

MEETINGS. Unfortunately our space is not wheelchair accessible, but we will move our meeting location to accommodate people who cannot make it up the stairs. For access needs contact development@cohsf.org

To learn more about COH workgroup meetings, contact us at : 415-346-3740, or go at : www.cohsf.org

NEW BART DISABILITY POLICY MAY TARGET POOR AND HOMELESS PEOPLE

AN OPEN LETTER

DEAR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND CONCERNED CITIZENS,

I am writing you as a concerned disabled resident of San Francisco in regards to the new \$1.2 million proposal to "improve" the MUNI/BART Elevators at Powell and Civic Center Stations. This item proposal was presented by Tim Chan yesterday (5/18/18) at the Mayor's Office on Disability meeting at City Hall, which I attended remotely. I am specifically concerned that this project has absolutely nothing to do with helping the disabled and everything to do with further prosecuting and criminalizing the poor and communities of color in the Tenderloin area for fare evasion.

As a long time wheelchair user I have always hoped for better improvements in BART's services, especially their elevators. For decades BART has routinely neglected ADA access and left numerous elevators out of service on a regular basis. These elevators are filthy, poorly indicated, often narrow and hard to navigate. Many of the doors close very rapidly requiring fast reflexes and extra waiting time as well. Broken elevators are indicated by a neglected white board posted inside, often illegibly written on with a marker and rarely up-to-date. For decades these elevators have been in a deplorable state, always in disrepair and in dire need of technicians and janitorial services.

BART has also neglected to provide bathrooms for its customers, including the disabled. Many of the stations have no option for people traveling up to 1-2 hours on transit to relieve themselves. Many

disabled people have difficulty with IBS and other challenges that make this incredibly problematic.

Another concern is BART's lack of providing one-time disability use passes. I sometimes need to just make one trip across to the East Bay and I cannot buy a BART disabled pass at any station. Instead, the disabled are forced to travel by some other means to wait in lines and buy our tickets beforehand at the Civic Center station, only during specified business hours. These tickets can only be purchased in very specific amounts and I always have an unused (wasted) portion at the end. This is a noticeable barrier, especially for me, since I don't live near Civic Center. Spending another hour long painful commute to buy a pass that is supposed to help me is completely illogical. MUNI is far ahead of this of course, and does not force disabled people into this situation.

I mention these examples as a reference for BART's incredibly bad track record serving the disabled. Years back many disabled activists had to protest for our right to access transportation. We are still engaged in that struggle today. BART has never gone out of its way to support us and has only responded in times of protest or pending litigation. This proposal is no different, and is a response to an ongoing lawsuit brought on by local disability organizations. See: <https://www.mercurynews.com/2017/04/05/lawsuit-barts-filthy-broken-elevators-violate-civil-rights-for-people-with-disabilities/>

This recent shift in elevator policy is alarming to me because it does not seem to be a break with that trend. Instead of hiring new repair people and janitorial staff, BART will be including new personal to attend the elevators at all times, at a cost of \$1.2 million. Acting Group Manager Tim Chan said in yesterday's meeting that these personnel will not be union (they found a loophole so as to hire people at a

pitiful \$15/hour), and they will be quick to call BART police for any issues. Tim Chan did not respond to my concern as to whether or not this new employee would carry weapons (gun, Taser, or baton).

Both Civic Center and Powell Stations are high-traffic areas for the disabled poor of the Tenderloin, the African-American community that lives there, and for nearby China Town. I am extremely concerned as to how these populations will be treated by this new elevator gate keeper.

It is no secret that the BART Police has a shameful history of brutalizing and murdering unarmed people of color under dubious circumstances. Only with modern cell phones has the full extent of BART police violence been able to be widely acknowledged. The most infamous incident, which became the subject of the critically-acclaimed movie Fruitvale Station (2013), was the murder of Oscar Grant: an unarmed father who was shot in the back by BART police while begging for his life. After the shooting, BART police tried to confiscate all passenger cell phones while leaving Mr. Grant bleeding to death on the Fruitvale BART platform. For more details on this incident, see: <https://policeviolence.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/oscargrantfinal.pdf>

I do not want BART's new elevator improvement program to come at the cost of the safety and respect of communities of color. I am extremely concerned that this will be the case, and that the disabled community is being used to further the agenda of prosecution for fare evasion by means of an increased police presence. It makes perfect sense for BART to prosecute and prevent fare evasion. They should not however, do so under the guise of pretending to serve the disabled community.

Having a BART elevator gate keeper, underpaid and under-trained, who will be quick to dial the police, does not make me

feel safe as a paying BART customer. As a wheelchair user I see this as a potential access barrier for myself, not to mention those with non-visible disabilities.

Of course, I want BART to improve services for the disabled. If BART really cares about the disabled community, I would support them in doing any of the following:

1. Provide bathrooms at all stations in San Francisco so that the disabled and weary travelers can relieve themselves. This will undoubtedly improve the elevators which are currently being used as a public bathroom by some people.
2. Increase janitorial staff and pay a union-based living-wage to routinely clean elevators.
3. Increase elevator repair staff and pay a union-based living-wage to improve elevator maintenance. Commit to keeping all elevators functioning.
4. Provide single-use disabled passes at all BART stations. Let disabled people buy passes that match the cost of fare for travel with the disability discount.
5. Provide modern electronic audio / visual notifications for elevator updates at all stations. These can be updated remotely with today's technology to be 100% accurate.
6. Construct new elevators for stations that are 20 or 30 years old. Improve elevator access to better match modern ADA guidelines and community safety standards.
7. Provide a phone number for disabled people to call that need assistance, clearly displayed inside and outside of all elevators.
8. Provide and train BART staff to assist the disabled at stations if requested.
9. Provide a clear grievance number and email outside of elevators for people to submit concerns to.

While I usually encourage any help with access on public transportation, I find this proposal to be divisive while avoiding the more crucial issues that face disabled BART customers like myself. It shifts the conversation away from BART's responsibility and fosters an antagonistic dialogue between the disabled, the poor, and communities of color.

This proposal comes across as a half-baked attempt by BART to settle the current ADA litigation without fully resolving issues around equal access, restrooms, functioning elevators, and livable wages. If BART is serious about improving access for the disabled, I should hope that they try any of the above suggestions, none of which include prosecution and possible violence against the disenfranchised or communities of color.

Thank you so much for your time,
-ZACHARY K.
SF RESIDENT /
WHEELCHAIR USER / BART
PASSENGER

COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS | SAN FRANCISCO

SAVE

EIGHTEENTH
ANNUAL
TRANSFORMING
ART
INTO ACTION

THE

DATE

AUCTION | DINNER | RAFFLE | **& MORE**
MUSIC
 OPEN BEER AND WINE BAR

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER
13TH
 5:30 PM TO 10:00 PM



Hero
Jeffrey Cheung
2018

ELECTION RECAP

FINN COLLUM

Street Sheet: June 5th Election Recap (SF City-County Propositions)
Finn Collum

A hectic election cycle has come and gone in San Francisco. The dust is settling as Mark Leno is making a concession speech and London Breed is preparing to take office, and San Franciscans are grappling with the implications of propositions passing or failing. Proposition F passed this cycle, meaning that the city will now provide legal representation for tenants facing eviction, while Propositions D and H were defeated, which would have respectively taxed the lease of commercial properties for low- and medium-income housing and homeless services and permitted SFPD to develop a policy governing Taser use without the established oversight of the Police Commission. San Francisco voters showed their commitment to needed early education and tenants' rights, and affirmed their opposition to a proposition designed to allow the police to dodge accountability. But the defeat of Proposition D, a disappointing piece of legislation aimed at expanding housing in San Francisco across all income levels, shows that there is still more organizing to be done in order to pass policy which ensures the expansion of truly affordable housing in the city.

Proposition F was introduced by a citizen-led petition that collected over 21,000 signatures in order to qualify the proposition for the June ballot. During the campaign, the proposition attracted a wide array of support from elected officials and activist communities alike, securing endorsements from members of the SF Board of Supervisors (including mayoral candidates Jane Kim and Mark Leno), as well as organizations such as the San Francisco Sierra Club, the California Nurses Association, and the SF Tenants Union. As emphasized by the Yes on F campaign's official press release following their victory, the San Francisco chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America played a major role in mobilizing support for

the measure, conducting citywide canvasses and other organizing efforts. The San Francisco Republican Party opposed the measure, with the San Francisco Chronicle editorial board citing concerns that the measure would grant legal protection to all tenants being evicted, even those who were "abusive to others or destructive to property." But with 55.11 percent of voters supporting the measure and 44.89 percent against, Proposition F is nothing less than a monumental triumph for the rights of tenants living in San Francisco. According to the City of San Francisco's 2017 point-in-time homeless count, 69 percent of homeless people in San Francisco resided in the city prior to their loss of housing, with 33 percent having directly rented or owned housing. According to the Eviction Defense Collaborative's 2016 report on San Francisco evictions, over 75 percent of EDC clients possessed incomes at 15-30 percent of Area Median Income, or between \$17,760 and \$35,500 annually for a family of four. There is clear-cut inequality in legal power between tenant and landlord, and organizations which provide legal assistance cannot provide sufficient resources to all those affected by the threat of eviction. The passage of Prop F shows that San Francisco's voters have identified this power dynamic and feel it is necessary that the City take a more radical step towards taking accountability for protection of low-income residents against gentrification and displacement.

Proposition H, which made it to the ballot through a citizen initiative petition circulated by the San Francisco Police Officers' Association was soundly defeated by voters, with 37.93 percent for and 62.07 percent against. Contrary to much of the confusing messaging used by the Yes on H campaign, the vote was not a referendum on police's ability to carry and use Tasers, but instead would have replaced the current Police Commission's policy on SFPD's use of Tasers with language included in the proposition.

The Police Commission finalized its policy on Taser use in March, permitting police to use the weapons when there is "reasonable belief" that an individual poses a reasonable threat of exacting harm on the officer or others. Prop H's language would have expanded the scope of legitimate Taser use to include all behavior which is considered "active resistance," even if the person in question was unarmed and which includes verbal ques. Moreover, the text of the Proposition stated that either another direct referendum with voters or a four-fifths majority of the Board of Supervisors would be required in order to get H's wording overturned or modified once passed, effectively bypassing the Police Commission and the community input which had significant impact on its Taser policy. We are enthusiastic that a clear majority of San Francisco voters saw through this attempt by the POA to pass deceptive legislation, but still more dedicated organizing is needed beyond H to check the power of SFPD. Mayor Farrell's proposed 2018-2019 Budget, which is currently slated for public comment on June 18, expands funding to bring 250 new officers to the San Francisco Police Department in the next four years, while also offering over \$10 million for the purchase of new police vehicles and Tasers. It has long been established by community activists, homeless folks and people of color that an increase in the size of San Francisco's police force does not make us safer, nor do the purchase of Tasers. We must continue to put pressure on Mayor Farrell and his successor, Mayor-elect Breed, to reconsider funding the police where more lasting investments in housing, public health, and education would better ensure safety for all San Franciscans.

Finally, Proposition D, a piece of legislation that would have increased the gross receipts tax by 1.7 percent to fund the construc-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

POLICE AT P

At the Christopher Street Pride Parade in 1973, Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera marched with their group STAR and were invited to speak as leaders of gay liberation. However when Sylvia Rivera was introduced to speak, she was met with protest that left her with only one choice - yell over their outcry. "Y'all better quiet down. I've been tryin' to get up here all day, for your gay brothers, and your gay sisters, in jail! They write me, every motherfuckin' week! And ask! For your help!" screamed Sylvia Rivera to an audience of gays swearing at her to get off the stage, "And y'all don't do a goddamn thing for them. Have you ever been beaten up? Or raped? In jail? Now think about it."

Four years prior, the cops outside Stonewall Inn were interrupted with a rain of pennies, nickels, and dimes. "The payoff. That was the payoff," Sylvia Rivera spoke of how excited the crowd felt to put their foot down against the police in an interview in 1989.

Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, Rivera's colleague and confidant, set an example of resistance not only during the Stonewall Riots of June 1969, but led lifetimes of activism. They were transgender women of color, sex workers, community organizers, and they demanded rights in the name of Gay Power. Their group Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries had a mission of providing food and shelter to homeless queer youth. The political consciousness of these women was necessary for survival; transgender women of color, especially sex workers, have been particularly vulnerable to bigoted violence and murder throughout American history. Prior to the 1960s, anti-sodomy laws in every state made sexual relationships between same-sex people a felony nationwide. These laws essentially made being gay or transgender illegal, indicated in the rampant policing of LGBTQ+ communities. This especially affected queer people of color, who were already targeted by the police. Although states started to adjust their legal classification of illicit sex in 1962, anti-sodomy laws were not fully overturned until 2003.

The marginalized queer people of Greenwich Village were no strangers to harassment when the cops showed up at Stonewall on the night of June 27, 1969. The raid of the Inn was routine, but not accepted as activists like Rivera or Johnson had begun to show signs of resistance all over the country. Many call Stonewall the start of the gay liberation movement, but members of the community see Stonewall as an example of decades of queer struggle and resilience. One participant in the protests, Raymond Castro, said he never "thought of [Stonewall] being a turning point. All I know is enough was enough. You had to fight for your rights. And I'm happy to say whatever happened that night, I was part of it."

PRIDE : A PARADOX

KATE CHALOENTARANA

It was past midnight, and police arrived outside Stonewall Inn, blocking the gay and trans customers inside. One protestor called it “a hostage situation,” as many were carted off to police vans in handcuffs - the charges unclear, but the intention crystal. Sylvia Rivera recounted that once the nickels started flying, the true demonstration began. “It was so beautiful...” she said. Many remember Marsha P. Johnson as throwing the first (and the image seems to vary) brick, or bottle, or a handbag full of bricks, at the police, which amped up the protest into a full riot. Regardless of what was physically in her hands, Marsha’s resistance that night was against racism, transphobia, and the criminalization of the LGBTQ+ community and sex workers. Ultimately, the Stonewall Riots were a protest of police brutality, an issue still faced daily by marginalized people in places like San Francisco.

So how is it that the same women trying to save their community from such routine police harassment would be booed off the stage at an event birthed of their movement? The answer is in the absence of people of color in shows about gay people, the absence of transgender actors in movies about transgender people, the controversial 2015 movie “Stonewall” that starred a white gay man; a deep white washed psychology had already been embedded into gay pride that excluded nearly everyone. Those imprisoned following Stonewall had been forgotten in the dialogue of gay rights. A movement started by trans-

gender women and people of color had dissolved into an exclusionary definition of how to be gay and successful in society. “I have been beaten, I have had my nose broken, I have been thrown in jail, I have lost my job, I have lost my apartment for gay liberation, and you all treat me this way?” Sylvia tells the audience she believes in gay power, but not only for the white upper class. The white queer community however, wanted to advance without people like Rivera.

Now Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera are the godmothers of Pride; their faces appear most at this time of year. But there is little dialogue about the reality of the struggle these women had to go through for liberation. Somehow, we see Stonewall as the first Pride, but is the Pride Parade at all reflective of the riots and what their leaders intended? To act as though the Stonewall Riots bear any resemblance to the festival outside of City Hall attended by over a million is to ignore the resilience displayed by marginalized people prior, in the decades since, and the decades to come. If the origin of Pride is in the actions of people harassed by police and jailed for their sexualities, genders, and occupations, then the heightened police presence at Pride is contrary to the reality of gay liberation and the story of Pride is not complete.

I spoke to someone who used to volunteer for public safety at the Pride parade, maintaining three teams that were responsible for crowd control and emergency response; they wished to

be anonymous. They informed me that although it may seem like there is a larger police presence in recent years, it is only the visibility of officers that has increased, not necessarily quantity or safety. After a series of shootings and other “threats” recently, security policy has been changing yearly. Following the devastating massacre at Pulse in Orlando in 2016, the city placed metal detectors at entrances to most of the Pride festivities for the first time. Multiple lawsuits resulting from shootings near or in San Francisco Pride events have been flowing in and out of Pride’s inbox: In 2014, a man from LA who was shot attempted to sue SF Pride for \$10 million. They reached an undisclosed settlement but this was just one of many lawsuits pending. In 2016, a Beverly-Hills based law firm sued SF Pride and asked the block party portion be cancelled on behalf of those who were injured in 2013. When I asked my contact about SF Pride’s response, they claimed they were replaced with a paid security team, even though the volunteer safety team felt fully equipped and trained to handle emergencies. My contact said that these changes in security were over liability issues, and when asked if this increased safety at all, they responded, “Not in any specific sense.” So, while threats increase along with police visibility, Pride is becoming more of an uncontainable block party in rainbow, no longer a display of resistance.

Police activity at Pride parades has been put up to question over the years.

In 2016, Black Lives Matter Toronto halted their parade to demand in part that police not march in uniform at Pride. The city agreed, and the Toronto police force’s applications to Pride have been rejected two years in a row. However, in 2017, the New York Police Department invited the Toronto PD to march in their parade. This was seen as a slap to the face by much of the black or brown LGBTQ+ community, and articulated the divide over what Pride and the police really represent.

Queer and transgender Americans have historically been mistreated by the police, particularly if they are black or brown. When the history of people of color is erased from LGBTQ+ history, we are left with a Pride Parade stuffed with cops, corporations, and dominant narrative. Stonewall was a beautiful demonstration against hate and privilege, but it did not give us permission to ignore the homophobia and cissexism ingrained into our culture. So although dangerous things may happen at Pride that call for police interaction, there should be a way we can celebrate heroes like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera where the cops don’t have a say. ■

Sylvia Rivera (holding banner) and Marsha P. Johnson (carrying cooler) representing their organization, the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), at the Christopher Street Liberation Day Gay Pride Parade, New York City, June 24, 1973.



HOW I WAS A JUNKIE

OR: DUDE, YOU HAVE TO LOVE YOUR FOLKS

VLAD K

I heard too many times from people struggling with addiction about their challenges getting any help, including even medical services. Nobody is taking their needs seriously. As we know from the American mental health manuals, junkies “always complain and they always lie”.

Recently though several authors came forward with a completely different approach, protesting the dehumanization of those who are self-medicating to the point of losing control over substances which initially helped them to tolerate otherwise unbearable challenges of life. One of the strongest groundbreaking works is “Unbroken Mind”, a book by Maia Szalavitz in which the author successfully compensates for some lack of scientific methodology by the depth of her own personal experiences and those of her close friends.

Without unnecessary dramatization, but with true bitterness of emotions Maia Szalavitz describes countless situations when even those who chose to help those in need professionally failed to humanize those struggling with addiction: “That approach [trust] would have required them to see me as a fellow human being who was ill, not just junkie, and that would have require genuinely individualized therapy, not mechanical following the rules. It was supposedly “professional help” for addiction: a system which calls you “dirty”, assumes that you are a liar, a thief, or something even worse and responds to increasing symptoms by punishment”

After thinking about new appearing trends in understanding addiction, and while listening to the countless complaints even from the people who are capable of taking good care of themselves, I finally decided to explore the situation myself. I had to wait for almost a year until I got an opportunity to experiment in a legally and morally acceptable way,

but the result was SO shocking that I honestly believe that it was totally justified.

Several days ago I experienced high blood pressure, feelings of dizziness, some stomach aches and nausea so that I had to call 911. I have experienced similar symptoms pretty frequently in the past, only this time it was much more serious, testing the limits of my physical tolerance. I called 911 in similar situations in the past and doctors considered it totally justified, so the only thing I wanted to modify is to invent a brief history of drug abuse, which I assumed should not have much impact on either the diagnosis nor the actions of the medical professionals. How deadly wrong I was!!

Not having any history of drug abuse, dependencies, or continuous and repeated intake of any drugs, but being familiar with the effect of some of them I decided to claim short-term use of methamphetamine. First, I was treated many years with Adderall which is chemically very similar to meth. Second, meth is considered to be the most dangerous street drug second only to heroine (which I was afraid to claim thinking that nobody would believe me). Third, meth in its pure form, without any additional substances, didn't have OD, so I believed that it should not become a reason for the excessive worry.

After hearing the word “meth”, the paramedics didn't want to listen anything else, even though I was talking about occasional use of it during last few months. “Yes, it is exactly what meth does to you” (does it?) - claimed paramedics, and started loudly blaming me, predicting an imminent death from meth, all while we were in my building, which was a gross violation of the HIPAA confidentiality laws. They put me into the EMS truck and, after measuring temperature and blood pressure, demonstratively lost any interest in me.

Hospital personnel did not pay to me any attention either. The only one attempted medical intervention was an ECG, after which somebody who presented herself as a doctor from about 6-7 meters distance told me ‘I see you are doing well’, and then distanced herself even further. Nobody paid any attention to my words no matter what kind of medical complaints I made. Staff didn't react even when I asked to go to the restroom. Finally, after trying in vain all the possible ways of attracting human attention, I just stood from the gurney and walked away. When I was passing the nursing desk somebody handed me discharge papers, which could have been ready from the beginning. I tossed them to the garbage bin where they belong, thinking that if this is how doctors treat addicts in San Francisco, California, what are the actions of the medical professionals in such cases in places like Alabama or Tennessee?

A member of the San Francisco unhoused community known by her street name Tree once told me: “nobody wants to help addicts. They just want to get rid of us. Sometimes I think that they're even open to the idea of killing us”. At the time I didn't take her words seriously. After all, what should you expect from junkies: they lie and complain. Now, after this shocking result of my personal experience, I do not find her thoughts groundless anymore, and if you do not believe me, I suggest you try such experiment yourself. I am pretty sure that the result will be about the same.

We use the phrase opioid epidemic too casually, but it is much more troubling than it appears on first glance, writes the popular blogger Umair Haque. In many countries in the world—most of Asia and Africa—one can buy all the opioids one wants from any local pharmacy, without a prescription. Yet we don't see opioid epidemics anywhere but America. So the “opioid epidemic”—mass self-medication with the

hardest of hard drugs—is again a social pathology of collapse unique to American life. It is not quite captured in the numbers, but only through comparison—and when we see it in global perspective, we get a sense of just how singularly troubled American life really is.

Why would people abuse opioids en masse unlike anywhere else in the world and why is the country with the most advanced science and technology unable to find a way to approach to homelessness and addiction while many poorer and less developed societies are doing significantly better? With all the energy and resources the USA puts into resolving the issues, we should not have even words for homelessness and addiction in American English.

Imagine a person who hates cars, but tries to impress everyone in his life with an immaculate looking vehicle. He does not bother to change oil in time, always hits other cars while parking and keeps spilling ketchup and olive oil all over the seats. He brainstorms the most effective scientific solutions, frequently changing cars, reads the books about car industry and still his car always looks like a piece of junk. You don't have to be super smart to tell this idiot: “Dude, you have to love your car!” That is the silver bullet, the main secret of Finland, New Zealand, Israel or even poorest countries like Cuba who are doing much better in resolving problems of homelessness and addiction than the leading in every possible field the United States of America.

If you don't want to see homeless people on the streets, if you want to protect your kids from seeing people taking drugs on the streets, then dude, you have to love your compatriots the way Finns or New Zealanders do. An average Cuban or Israeli will not even think about about calling police right after seeing an emaciated person in their district. As long as you see in homeless people problems you want to get rid of, not Human Beings in desperate need of help, they will remain a problem. Two major things so desperately needed in struggling with homelessness and addiction are dignity and self-respect, and the American society currently takes every opportunity to destroy it. As long as this is so, no wisest governor no most advanced scientific approach will help. ■

Since 1989, the STREET SHEET has been an independent media organization that provides a powerful platform to homeless people to reclaim and shift narratives about homelessness in San Francisco. visit www.cohsf.org and click “Donate Now” to help keep it that way!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO GET INVOLVED, CONTACT QUIVER WATTS AT QWATTS@COHSF.ORG

STREET SHEET THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US!

SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR

JUNE 16	JUNE 16	JUNE 18	JUNE 19
<p>PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY ON THE HOUSING CRISIS</p> <p>WHERE: LAKE MERRITT AMPHITHEATER</p> <p>Cat Brooks for Mayor is hosting a People's Assembly that will focus on housing, and the crisis of affordability that is displacing Black communities and forcing thousands of long-time Oakland residents into the streets.</p> <p>ACCESS: The amphitheater is ADA accessible</p>	<p>68TH ANNUAL JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL</p> <p>WHERE: 762 FULTON ST @9AM-6PM FREE EVENT!</p> <p>The Juneteenth festival offers a Parade, Health Fair, Classic Car and Motorcycle show, Petting Zoo, Pony Rides, 3 on 3 Basketball, and of course live entertainment, food vendors, Arts & Craft vendors, and Community Information booths.</p>	<p>BUDGET JUSTICE RALLY</p> <p>WHERE: CITY HALL, RALLY @9AM</p> <p>Come join Budget Justice to fight for increased funding to serve the city's poorest residents, while calling for a reduction in city spending that is wasteful or harmful, such as excessive spending on weapons and bullets, and jailing youth.</p> <p>ACCESS: City Hall is ADA wheelchair accessible. For info email kate@cjjc.org</p>	<p>SAVE MISSION ST</p> <p>WHERE: CITY HALL, SECOND FLOOR @3PM</p> <p>Fight back against a luxury development at 2918 Mission Street and instead push for affordable housing for poor and working people!</p> <p>ACCESS: City Hall is ADA wheelchair accessible.</p>
JUNE 22	JUNE 23	JUNE 27	JUNE 28
<p>TRANS MARCH</p> <p>WHERE: MISSION DOLORES PARK 19TH & DOLORES ST @11AM-8PM</p> <p>Our existence has been more intensely under attack since the election so it's even more critical that we gather this year to fight back, resist, celebrate and create community.</p> <p>ACCESS: The street march is approx. a 45 minute walk. The Trans March rents a classic street car that leads the march and provides seating for our elders and person's who may need assistance. Sorry, our trolley is not wheelchair accessible. To request a seat please email info@transmarch.org</p>	<p>DYKE MARCH</p> <p>WHERE: MISSION DOLORES PARK @11:00 AM RALLY & 5:00 PM MARCH</p> <p>The San Francisco Dyke March is a call to action. Marching reminds us that complacency is not an option. We cannot be divided – we must raise our voices!</p> <p>ACCESS: We will have trained counselors at the Emotional Security Tent who are also dykes who will be available for your needs. Porta-potties are all gender neutral & some are wheelchair accessible. Folks using mobility devices are encouraged to march in the front to set the pace. There is a trolley exclusively for pwd's that begins loading an hour before March time (4pm), that has 4 stairs to board.</p>	<p>FIGHTING BACK: QUEERS & SEX WORK</p> <p>WHERE: THE GLBT HISTORY MUSEUM 4127 18TH ST @7-9PM</p> <p>This event will address LGBTQ people's past and present associations with commercially mediated sex as workers, clients or pro-sex activists and how the state has historically criminalized the intersections of sex work, queer sex, and queer sexual speech.</p> <p>ACCESS: The museum is wheelchair accessible.</p>	<p>WE RENT! WE FIGHT! WE VOTE!</p> <p>WHERE: VERDI CLUB, 2424 MARIPOSA ST @6-9PM</p> <p>The San Francisco Tenants Union is having our second annual fundraiser. We hope you can come, and please spread the word!</p> <p>ACCESS: There is a wheelchair accessible restroom on the main floor but there are 6 steps up to the only entrance. Event is \$45 but no one will be turned away for lack of funds.</p>

LOOKING AT ELECTION RESULTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

tion of medium- and low-income housing and homeless services, was defeated on June 5 with 44.59 percent of voters for and 55.41 percent against. The legislation was forwarded not as a citizen petition initiative, but instead by Supervisors Ahsha Safai, Jeff Sheehy, Katy Tang, Malia Cohen and now-Mayor Mark Farrell, which meant that the Proposition would have needed a two-thirds majority to pass. The Proposition was designed to compete with Proposition C, which proposed a similar gross receipts tax which would have instead been allocated towards the provision of childcare and early education programs, so that if D and C had passed, D's language would have nixed C. Forcing voters to choose between the expansion of either educational or housing resources available to children and their families was a totally unnecessary move by the initiative's sponsors. As of this article's publication, Proposition C's passage is still too

close to call, but Proposition D's defeat should not halt progress on the pursuance of more housing for homeless and housing insecure people in San Francisco, with solutions borne by and from communities most affected by the housing crisis. The Coalition on Homelessness, in partnership with activists, homeless service providers, and homeless communities throughout the City, are petitioning San Francisco voters to get a new proposition on the ballot for the November election. Titled "Our City, Our Home," the measure would institute an additional 0.5 percent gross receipts tax on businesses in San Francisco which are making than \$50 million. This tax would generate an estimated \$300 million annually, 50 percent of which would go towards building housing, 25 percent of which would go to developing public health resources for homeless people, and 22 percent of which would bolster existing homeless

prevention and shelter services; besides a 3 percent deduction for administrative costs, the remainder of funding would be reserved for housing and services dedicated to homeless people. In contrast, the revenue generated by the Proposition D tax would have been split between homeless and non-homeless residents of San Francisco, with only 45 percent of D's funding dedicated to getting homeless individuals and families into shelters and permanent housing, with the remaining 55 percent going towards a series of provisions which would affect people making up to 80 percent of area median income, which represents a yearly income as high as \$94,700 for a family of four. Housing is desperately needed in San Francisco, but we should not be indiscriminate about who has access to that housing, lest we exacerbate region-wide trends of displacement. YIMBY (Yes in My Backyard) activists have advocated for a policy of generating more housing, at all income levels, but their advocacy for mixed-income development neglects the provision of sufficient resources for homeless people who are compelled to fight for a fraction of new housing units while the vast majority remain

dedicated to new City residents who are able to pay higher rents. It is time for legislation that focuses entirely on people living on the streets and shelters who need housing now, rather than those with the income-based privilege of shopping around for housing. No single ballot initiative will end homelessness in San Francisco, but Our City, Our Home as legislation aims at making a more concrete impact for unhoused populations. If you are interested in volunteering with the Coalition to collect signatures to get Our City, Our Home on the November ballot, or would like to read the full language of the initiative, go to <https://www.ourcityourhomesf.org/>.

Note: All vote counts come from the Unofficial Summary Report #10, published by the SF Department of Elections on June 11th, 2018, available here: <https://sfelections.org/results/20180605/data/20180611/summary.pdf>. While these counts are representative of the most recent tallies, they are not final as of publication and are subject to change. ■



FREE EXPRESSION

LUIS REYES, CCSF Grad
Army Vet, Client Service
Administrator, Siemens



FREE City What will you do with free tuition?

City College believes education is a pillar of our democracy, helping to create more opportunities for everyone. That's why we're offering tuition-free college for residents of our city.

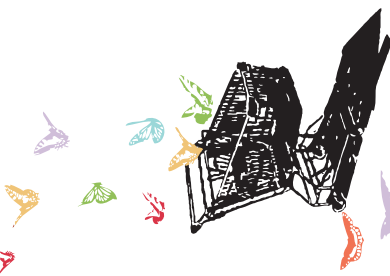
Register today. CCSF.edu/FreeCity | (415) 452-7774

Free City is a partnership between City College and the City & County of San Francisco, backed by the voters of San Francisco.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 3481
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94188

Coalition on Homelessness
468 Turk Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
415-346.3740
www.cohsf.org
streetsheetsf@cohsf.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Coalition on
Homelessness
San Francisco

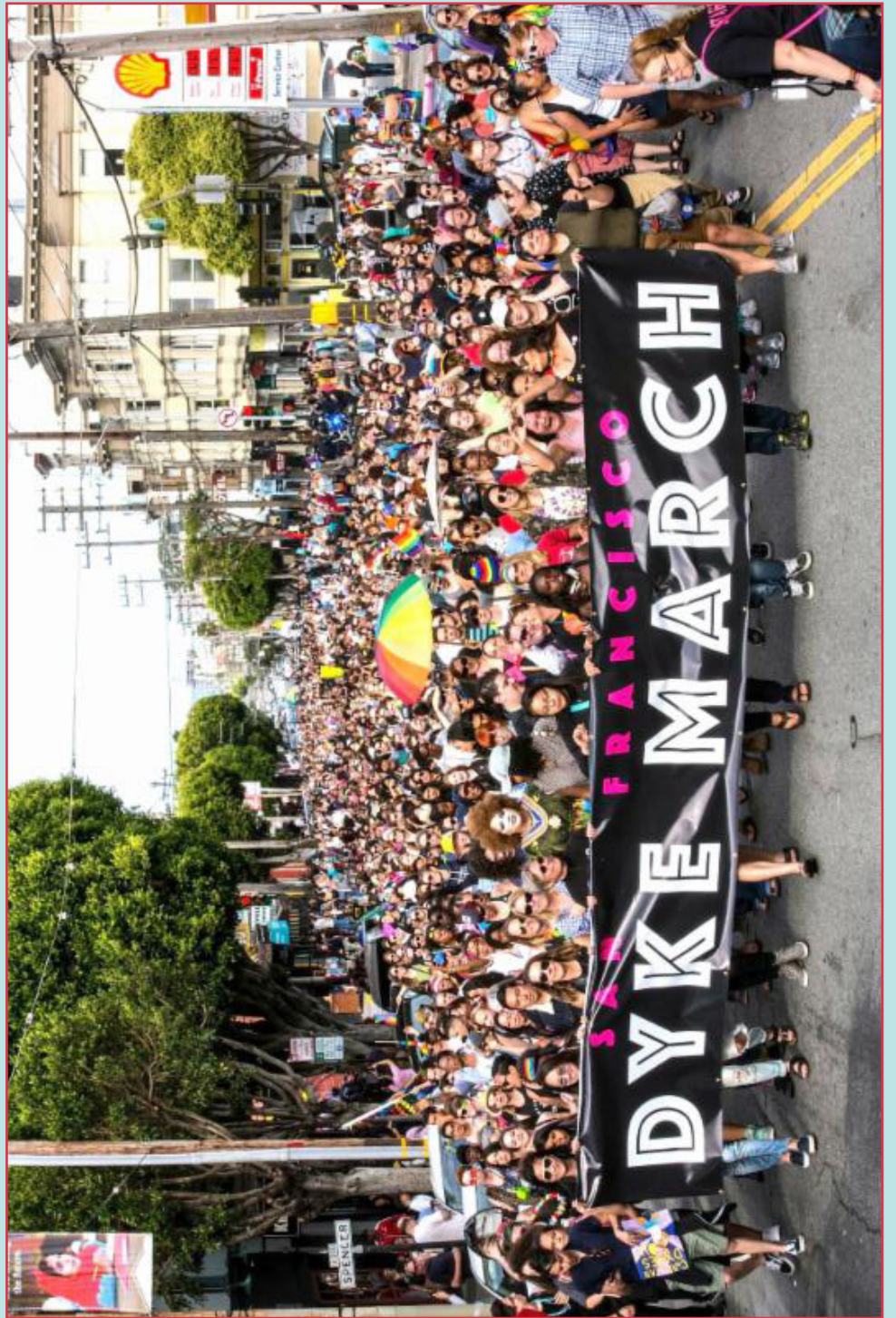


Photo credit: Deanna Bendall

Dyke March 2018 is June 23rd MISSION DOLORES PARK @11:00 AM RALLY & 5:00 PM MARCH