

STREET SHEET

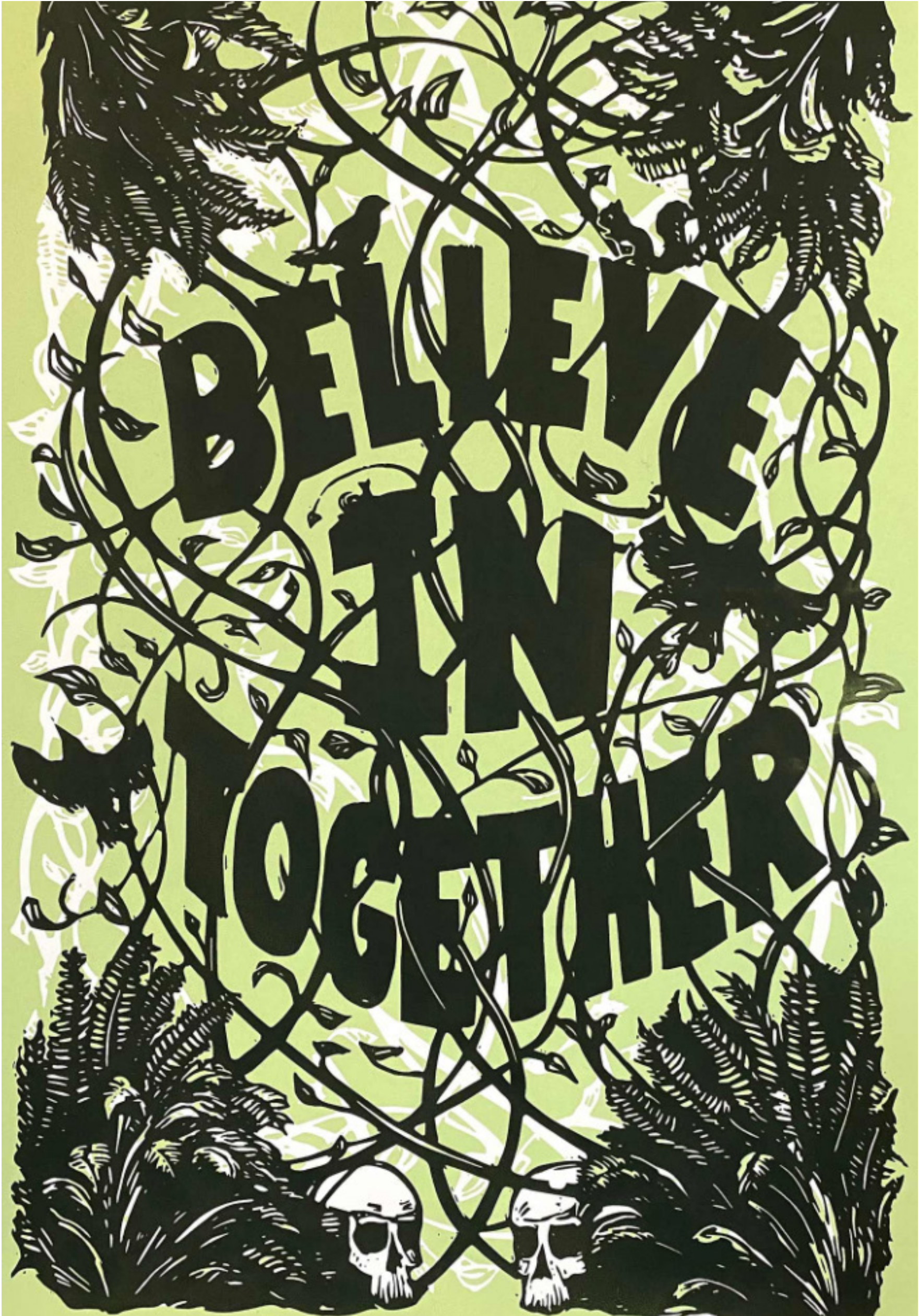


MINIMUM SUGGESTED DONATION TWO DOLLARS.

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

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

CURRENTLY ALSO DISTRIBUTED BY HOMEWARD STREET JOURNAL VENDORS IN SACRAMENTO



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Experiencing homelessness in SF? You can still vote!

Register online at registertovote.ca.gov

- If you don't have a fixed address, provide the location of where you spend the most time (e.g. cross streets, a public park, or a shelter) in the HOME ADDRESS field on the form
- If you can't receive mail where you live, but have a separate mailing address, you can provide it in the MAILING ADDRESS field, and you'll receive your ballot there
- VOTE ON OR BEFORE NOV. 5



ORGANIZE WITH US

HOUSING JUSTICE WORKING GROUP TUESDAYS @ 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! Email mcarrera@cohfsf.org to get involved!

HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP WEDNESDAYS @12:30

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! Email lpierce@cohfsf.org

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO JOIN OUR WORKING GROUP MEETINGS!

HELP
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STREET
SHEET IN
PRINT!



coalition.networkforgood.com

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 agendas 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.

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Street Sheet is published and distributed on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples. We recognize and honor the ongoing presence and stewardship of the original people of this land. We recognize that homelessness can not truly be ended until this land is returned to its original stewards.

SOMETIMES, CHAOS ENSUES IN AWARDING CITY CONTRACTS TO HOUSING NONPROFITS

JORDAN DAVIS

Within the past year, there have been several scandals involving nonprofits who contract with the city. Kyra Worthy is facing federal charges for misusing over \$700,000 in funds from the public safety nonprofit SF SAFE. More recently, Sheryl Davis, the head of the Human Rights Commission and the Dream Keeper Initiative, had to resign her post over allegations of fiscal improprieties.

Why does this matter, particularly for homelessness and permanent supportive housing? Unlike most City departments, the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) contracts out a vast majority of its functions to nonprofit organizations. Last year, I had a conversation with a current member of the Homelessness Oversight Commission, which oversees HSH, about contracting. That person, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal, said that HSH contracts with over 80 nonprofit entities, large and small, but “bigger hasn’t always meant better.” This creates challenges for oversight and

rooting out waste, ensuring that rules meant to protect permanent supportive housing tenants and shelter residents are adhered to, and getting the most value of the City’s funding.

The Tenderloin Housing Clinic (THC) is a textbook example of how bigger is not always better. THC was the focus of the San Francisco Chronicle’s investigation concerning its buildings’ substandard conditions, and has been under fire for frivolous evictions or threats of eviction. Not only is that organization awarded contracts from HSH to run permanent supportive housing, it is also tapped by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) to run the Central City SRO Collaborative, which is supposed to help SRO tenants advocate for better living conditions. Full disclosure: I am a tenant in a THC building.

There are other examples where greater oversight is needed. For one, a DBI-sponsored program weighs in on issues clearly

outside of its focus, such as street conditions and public safety. Or tenant organizing positions left vacant for months because they can’t find someone who is willing to toe the line with Tenderloin Housing Clinic director Randy Shaw.

It should also be pointed out that race figures heavily in Worthy and Davis’ cases. Both are Black women: While that does not excuse fiscal malfeasance, such wrongdoing could harm the same community that could benefit from these programs. At the same time, white nonprofit leaders don’t face the same level of scrutiny..

There also have been calls for getting tough on nonprofits from various right-wing influencers, who favor cracking down on nonprofits in the name of accountability. I’m concerned that they are not making these calls in good faith. These crackdowns could lead to housing and service cuts. Furthermore, if impropriety is proven, and if the contract is severed, we need to ensure that it wouldn’t adversely affect people

who depend on nonprofit housing and supportive services. .

Furthermore, when several tenants and I presented to the Homelessness Oversight Commission in August 2023 on solutions to the PSH eviction crisis, one of the challenges commissioners cited was a possibility that provisions in contracts would need to be amended so they could take effect.

I’d like to know why 80 nonprofits are involved in providing services under HSH, and whether the department could eliminate redundancies without cutting services. Also, any audit of a nonprofit must be done in good faith, not for political purposes, and any cutting ties with nonprofits must be accompanied by a just transition for tenants and clients must follow if the nonprofit is separated from a City contract. We need to make sure when the City funds nonprofits that the money is used wisely and not for nefarious purposes. ■

DESIGN A STREET SHEET COVER

We are always looking for artists to
design our cover! Contact
tjohnston@cohssf.org

**BECOME A
VENDOR**
MAKE MONEY AND HELP END
HOMELESSNESS!

STREET SHEET is currently recruiting vendors to sell the newspaper around San Francisco.

Vendors pick up the papers for free at our office in the Tenderloin and sell them for \$2 apiece at locations across the City. You get to keep all the money you make from sales! Sign up to earn extra income while also helping elevate the voices of the homeless writers who make this paper so unique, and promoting the vision of a San Francisco where every human being has a home.

TO SIGN UP, VISIT OUR OFFICE AT 280 TURK ST FROM 10AM-4PM ON MONDAY-THURSDAY AND 10AM-NOON ON FRIDAY

MAYOR CANDIDATE WEBSITES PROMISE MORE SHELTER BEDS



AARON PESKIN

Aaron Peskin (aaron2024.com) says he'll add 2,000 shelter beds and will aim to end student and child homelessness. He's also promising a policy of treatment, not arrests, for drug users. Peskin wants to use state money from Proposition 1 to open new treatment beds regionally. He also is promising to make loans to affordable housing developers to speed up the new acquisition of affordable housing.

As mayor, Aaron will immediately act to expand shelter capacity by at least 2,000 shelter beds that connect homeless people with mental and behavioral health services. (campaign website)



AHSHA SAFAI

Ahsha Safai (ahshaformayor.com) also promises to add a total of 2,600 shelter beds including 1,000 hotel rooms, 600 tiny homes, 500 safe parking spots and 500 private rooms for families. He also wants to change the way people are counted on the street so that as specific areas are swept, that people are counted and tracked as the City makes contact with each person.

"We have the resources right now. Residents of San Francisco want us to use those resources efficiently." (SF Chronicle interview 6/30/24)



LONDON BREED

London Breed (londonbreed.com) for her part, says the City will exceed her original goal of 1,000 shelter beds and to add close to 400 more by June 2025. She has said that she wants to implement overnight parking ban for large vehicles. She says she is moving forward with the more she started in late July. She says she will stop arrests for illegal lodging and other infractions generated by people without a home.

"Now that changes in we are going to get everything people refer to make sure we understand the only option to accept our accept our (mayoral de

From October 7 through November 5, polls in San Francisco will be open for voting. When the ballots are tallied, Mayor London Breed might be out of a job. There are several candidates—including the incumbent and four major challengers—vying for the Mayor’s office and to run City Hall. Each lists plans to address homelessness on their website. Here are the “solutions” to homelessness they’ve promised to deliver—notably, there’s a lot of talk about shelter beds, and not much about affordable housing.

CHRISTIN EVANS



DANIEL LURIE

Daniel Lurie (daniellurie.com), who previously ran Tipping Point Community, a nonprofit that built new housing for homeless folks, says that he will also focus first on adding shelter beds. His commitment is to add 1,500 more shelter beds. He also says he’ll add treatment beds, though he didn’t specify how many.

“We will put out 1,500 shelter beds in the first six months of my administration. They will be safe, they will be dignified. People will no longer resort to nor will they be allowed to sleep on our streets.”
(mayoral debate 6/12/24)

MARK FARRELL

Mark Farrell (markfarrell.com) is the only candidate who makes no commitment to open new shelter beds on his website. He says he’d open a 24/7 intake center, enforce a tent ban, and focus on abstinence-based and recovery-based programs.

Shift from a narrow-minded housing-first approach to a shelter-first approach because San Francisco just can’t build itself out of the homelessness crisis
(campaign website)

ON
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(formayor.com), City is on track to al to add more than that she still plans ore beds by the end also announced eplement a citywide for RVs and other s she will continue e aggressive sweeps y, which has included ing and sit/lie among rally only applied to e.

t we’ve had n our laws, oing to do we can when use service re that they nd that the a they have is r help and to r support.”
(bate 9/19/24)

SFMTA DON'T TAKE MY HOME

LUKAS ILLA

“SFMTA don’t take my home,” read the signs of protestors at a September 17 rally put on by the End Poverty Tows Coalition. The rally opposed an upcoming RV ban, which the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Board of Directors will vote on October 1.

This proposal, drafted by Mayor London Breed’s office and SFMTA, would authorize the agency’s director to designate city streets as off limits to “oversized vehicles” between 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. While the City of San Francisco already bans oversized vehicles—like RVs—from parking overnight on its streets, the proposal would create an enforcement mechanism to tow and impound vehicles that park overnight.

During a contentious mayoral election in which public safety is the leading issue, the City is pointing its proverbial finger at the people experiencing local government’s failures to provide adequate housing referrals. Thus far, elected officials failed to open an additional safe parking site. San Francisco has only one safe parking site— the Bayview Vehicle Triage Center—which holds 35 vehicles, or about one-fifth of its capacity.

For many vehicularly housed residents and homeless advocacy organizations, this proposed ban represents a serious backslide into the criminalization of poverty.

Hope Kamer, director of public policy and external affairs at the anti-homelessness nonprofit Compass Family Services, spoke to the significant and negative impact on families that would come with the proposal’s passage.

“If a child is sleeping in an RV, they are not sleeping on the street,” she said. “If a child is sleeping in a car, they are not sleeping on the street. This decision will push them onto the street.”

The resolution would require the Healthy Street Operations Center (HSOC),

the City team charged with conducting “encampment resolution,” or sweeps, to offer those living in oversized vehicles an offer of shelter prior to towing the vehicle.

However, shelter waitlists are long. The waitlist for single-adult shelters is currently 12 days long. The family shelter waitlist has 530 families on it. By carving out available shelter options in order to enforce this proposed ban, the City will force families without shelter or a vehicle to wait longer on the streets.

At the rally, Lucas Chamberlain, a vehicularly housed resident near Lake Merced, said that the City—specifically, District 7 Supervisor Myrna Melgar’s office—failed to deliver on its promise to provide a safe parking site..

“Why did you lie to us?” he said.

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing has \$5 million allocated in its budget to erect a safe parking site for oversized vehicles, but Mayor Breed has yet to spend the money. Plans to establish a safe parking site on the west side have stalled, largely due to neighborhood pushback.

For a city that saw a 37% increase in vehicularly housed people in the last two years, with 90% of unsheltered families living in vehicles, San Francisco will soon criminalize the only shelter of its vehicularly housed residents.

But the City still has yet to answer the question plastered on the signs outside City Hall: “Mayor Breed, where do we go?” ■



LOCKED UP AND LOCKED OUT: HOW SOCIETY SEGREGATES PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITIES

JACK BRAGEN

Most psychiatrists might agree that if you have a “psychiatric impairment” you could be locked out of the use of your own perceptual and mental faculties. Some would argue that those faculties are absent, while others could say we have potential of mind that is blocked by an impairment.

Psychiatrists tend to medicate; they believe that’s what works. I can’t argue with that. When I was started on medication, I got better. But getting better from a psychiatric condition shoves us into a barbed and thorny reality.

Coming back to reality from psychosis is arguably a very good thing. When someone is psychotic, it can be a living hell both for the psychotic person and for anyone trying to help that person. When we come back, it can be initially quite horrible, because we are forced in a state of clarity to face some very hard facts. We exit the internally generated world created by being psychotic, and we enter a very difficult reality, a reality that some would rather not come back to. And that’s one reason that some patients find it very hard to come back.

Neurodivergent people, those who are presumed by appearance to be mentally ill, and those who do not have a residence address all have fewer rights in California than other citizens. “Equal protection under the law” is not being assigned. This brings us back to ancient history, prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We have traveled backwards in evolution to the tune of 60 years.

When you are disabled, and if you are on the edge, many other people are reluctant to help. They could be afraid of going down the wormhole with you. People will distance

themselves. And this seems to be by instinct.

Also, your rights are automatically diminished.

It becomes easier for us to be locked up without due process. It becomes harder for us to get in the front door of opportunity. Many if not most companies will not hire a person who has a mental health history to do intellectual tasks. And often we won’t be tasked with responsibility.

I have struggled to be hired with my history of mental health issues. Generally, doors have been slammed shut in my face. A mentally ill man with a history like mine and no college will face sharp limits of opportunity. Companies want glitzy people, people accustomed to privilege, people with college degrees and no specs of dirt on their records. Being hired for a satisfying job seems like a hopeless prospect.

Absence of income and absence of college are further limitations on our legal stance. Trying to go to court against a reputable party or against a false accusation could seem futile.

The state government in California has recently passed numerous laws painted as getting mentally ill people into treatment. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), a group of mostly parents and funded by drug companies, has substantial political power and has

a policy of rubber stamp approval of any new, more restrictive laws that proclaim help for mentally ill people.

As a 60-year-old neurodivergent man living in a difficult situation, it feels like I felt when I was looking down the barrels of guns in two separate incidents in my young adulthood—no space here to talk about that. In short, I’m terrified. I’m close to being a victim of these laws.

In effect, neurodivergent people do not have constitutional rights, we are locked out of money and out of society, and we are subject to public disapproving perception. If we want our lives to be better, we have a steep hill to climb and a path that is not clearly marked.

If I compare the outpatient mental health care system of today to what it looked like in the 1980s, it is shocking to see how our government has let us down. Mentally ill people, at all costs, must remain stabilized or suffer dire consequences. If a psychiatric practitioner wants to tweak your meds, watch out—if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!

If we see any possible opportunity, such as sweeping floors with a job coach instructing us on the intricacies of sweeping, we should grab at that in spite of hesitation and ignore the insult to our intelligence.

Our information age makes it much harder to be closeted concerning a mental disability. Furthermore, social tolerance about us is much lower than before.

While it is not socially acceptable to discriminate and/or dislike based on skin color, it is common and perfectly acceptable to hate,

despise, and exclude people with a psych disability. And it is very hard for us to defend ourselves.

Today’s “second-generation” antipsychotics such as Olanzapine and Risperdal, I was told by a psychiatrist, block more mental function than the predecessors, such as Thorazine and Haldol. This takes a toll on physical energy. And when we don’t have physical energy, we won’t be able to get out of bed and go do a job or go to school. The chance of bettering ourselves is that much harder.

The street next to my building where I park my car has a lot of foot traffic. I park there because I am physically impaired due to arthritis in my knees. I also smoke in my car. I’ll go there at all hours and light up my tobacco. Police seem to know who I am, and they don’t bother me.

I often overhear conversations of those walking by. People believe mentally ill people are dangerous. They believe we are “the other” and speak of us as “those people.”

Mentally ill people seem resigned to the collective fate of going nowhere. Many seem to accept this, and don’t expect more.

In effect, neurodivergent people do not have constitutional rights, we are locked out of money and out of society, and we are subject to public disapproving perception. If we want our lives to be better, we have a steep hill to climb and a path that is not clearly marked. We have to figure something out on our own, even if it involves risk. ■

Jack Bragen is author of “Instructions for Dealing with Schizophrenia: A Self-Help Manual,” and of three short story collections, all available on Amazon.

CONTRIBUTE TO
STREET
SHEETS

WRITING: Write about your experience of homelessness in San Francisco, about policies you think the City should put in place or change, your opinion on local issues, or about something newsworthy happening in your neighborhood!

ARTWORK: Help transform ART into ACTION by designing artwork for STREET SHEET! We especially love art that uplifts homeless people, celebrates the power of community organizing, or calls out abuses of power!

PHOTOGRAPHY: Have a keen eye for beauty? Love capturing powerful moments at events? Have a photo of a Street Sheet vendor you’d like to share? We would love to run your photos in Street Sheet!

VISIT WWW.STREETSHEET.ORG/SUBMIT-YOUR-WRITING/

OR BRING SUBMISSIONS TO 280 TURK STREET TO BE CONSIDERED
PIECES ASSIGNED BY THE EDITOR MAY OFFER PAYMENT, ASK FOR DETAILS!

FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA PALESTINE WILL BE FREE

We are witnessing an ongoing genocide in Palestine and carried out by the settler state of Israel with the financial and political support of the US government. Israel has an organized military, an iron dome, and has dropped 70,000 tons of explosives on Gaza since Oct 7th, killing at least 40,000 people. For decades Israel has controlled access to electricity, movement, water, food, and internet to Palestinians, which now puts the people of Gaza in a perilous humanitarian crisis. The Israeli Defense Force is openly committing war crimes, including bombing hospitals, mosques, evacuation routes and dropping white phosphorus on Palestinians.

CEASEFIRE & ARMS EMBARGO NOW! Here are some ways to take action!

1. CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AND DEMAND THEY SUPPORT AN IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE IN GAZA!

FIND YOUR REP HERE ---->



SCAN ME

2. AMPLIFY THE VOICES OF PALESTINIANS AND NAME THIS AS GENOCIDE TO EVERYONE YOU KNOW

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@GAZANGIRL
@JENANMATARI
@WAEELAHDOUH

3. BOYCOTT ISRAELI PRODUCTS

The Boycott-Divest-Sanction (BDS) movement is a great way to support the ongoing work toward peace in Palestine! The main targets of this movement right now are Starbucks, McDonald's, and Disney. Scan here to learn what to boycott.

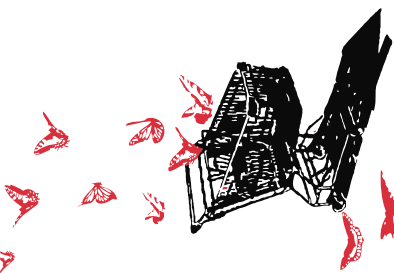


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