

SEPTEMBER 16TH - OCTOBER 6TH, 2011

# STREET SPEECH

THE VOICE FROM THE STREETS OF COLUMBUS

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**THE WAR ON DRUGS:**

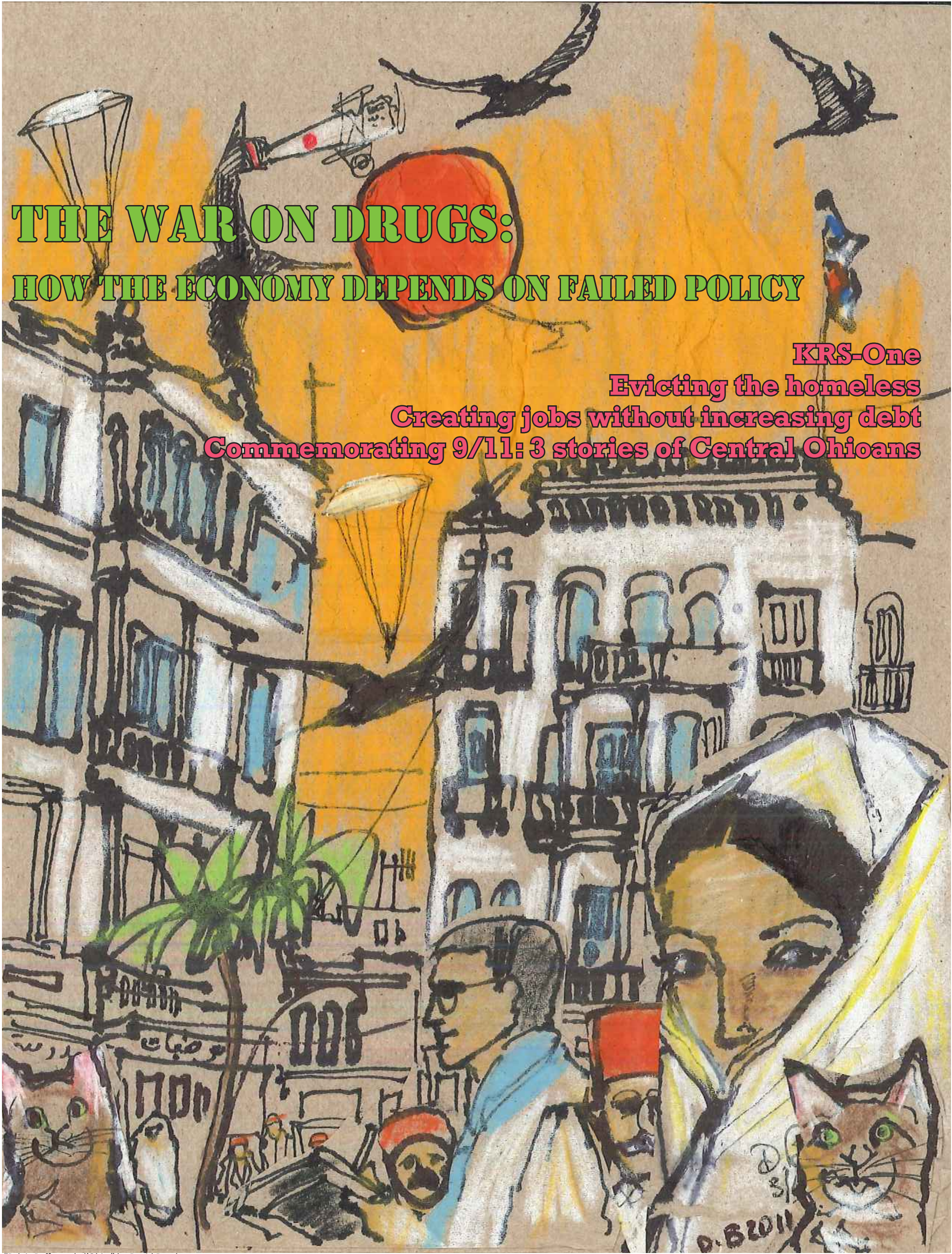
**HOW THE ECONOMY DEPENDS ON FAILED POLICY**

**KRS-One**

**Evicting the homeless**

**Creating jobs without increasing debt**

**Commemorating 9/11: 3 stories of Central Ohioans**



"Palais Raffa vu de l'Ohio," by David Bond.

COLUMBUS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS



## STREET SPEECH

## WHO WE ARE

The purpose of Street Speech is to empower low-income individuals through skill development, social interaction, and economic opportunity. The goals of Street Speech are:

1. To act as a voice for the most vulnerable of the community while advocating for issues of social and economic justice.

2. To foster self-sufficiency by providing a source of income to people living in poverty.

3. To create awareness of the issues of poverty and homelessness through newspaper content and positive interaction between vendors and community members.

Street Speech provides a tool for advocacy and education on a bimonthly basis for the Columbus Coalition for the Homeless. The paper offers a unique perspective on the issues of homelessness and poverty at a local, state, and national level. Currently and formerly homeless individuals in the central Ohio community are directly involved in creating the content of the paper as well as its distribution.

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Editorials and features in *Street Speech* are the perspectives of the authors. We welcome submissions of news, opinion, fiction, art, poetry, and letters to the editor. Letters to the editor should be kept to 300 words or less. *Street Speech* reserves the right to edit any submissions.

## 9/11 10 years later: a retrospect

By Eileen Hiltbrand, *Street Speech* vendor

Sunday, 9/11/11 marked the 10th anniversary of the infamous 911 terrorist attack on the world trade centers.

By the time this article goes to print, we will all have had the opportunity to view the commemorative coverage of 9/11. The one and only thing that we all in common relative to that day was that at some point we all became glued to our televisions to watch the infamy unfold.

At the outset, my intent was to interview and scribe the experiences relative to 9/11 amongst those family, friends, colleagues of the central Ohioans that we all interact with on a daily basis. I merely wanted to encompass the notion “Where were you on 9/11?” The results of our local neighbors, friends, and family brought home how deeply and widely were all affected by this tragic event.

Although I collected numerous stories, I selected three. These personal accounts come from Leslee, a retail consultant; David, a local bodega manager and immigrant from India; and Mary, an 80 year old patriotic woman. These people represent experiences that are common to many of us, and have all lived in central Ohio for a minimum of thirty years.

Leslee.

I have known Leslee for several years. Her account of her memories stands out because of how deeply all of us had a connection to the events of 9/11. At that time, Leslee lived in Clintonville, and worked for a small insurance company in Westerville. She learned of the “accident” to the first World Trade Center while driving to work. Leslee, an avid fan of Howard Stern, was listening to his program in her car when the second plane hit the next World Trade Center building. Her account of Howard Stern’s coverage was notable because she remembers a Howard Stern that she had never heard before; rather than being his normal eclectic, effervescent and animated self, he was subdued, serious, and incredulous. She only spent a small amount of time at the insurance office before they closed business for the day. She drove home where she found her husband Andy already at home. Together they remained glued to the television. Though her husband’s family was not exceedingly close, they did keep in touch. Andy got a call from his father. By this point it was clear that the dual planes hitting the World Trade Center buildings were no “accident.” Andy’s father called him to let them know that Andy’s brother, a successful businessman, and his wife were on their way to New York for a meeting at the New York Stock Exchange that day, and they were on flight 93. Though the details were sketchy at that point, passengers on flight 93 had apparently become aware of what had already occurred at the World Trade Center through in-flight phone calls. Leslee told me that her brother-in-law related to his father that several people on board had decided that they were going to charge the cockpit. According to Leslee, Andy never referred to those heroic words declared by a passenger on that fatal flight 93 “let’s roll”. He was simply a hero upon that fateful flight who banned together with strangers and charged the cockpit, possibly saving thousands of American lives.

David.

David was born in 1974 in India. He immigrated to the United States in 1989 to join his parents. In addition to being exceedingly intelligent, David is fluent in English and has a beautiful wife. He is now a manager for C-Town, a local, downtown Columbus deli/bodega.

David was living in Edison, NJ on that fateful September day in 2001. His brother and a friend were working as brokers at the NYSE on Wall Street in Manhattan at that time. As soon as David learned of the bombings, he tried to contact his brother. As was the experience of many of those who tried to contact their loved ones that day, he could not get through; all of the phone lines and cell towers were jammed. David immediately began driving to the City. Traffic was jammed – “it was like a parking lot”, David said -- and no one could get in or out of Manhattan at that point. David walked 8 miles to Hoboken while his friend waited in the car. Hours later, David’s brother and their mutual friend arrived on the ferry. In the aftermath of the attacks, their friend walked to the WTC site to see if he could find any of his investor friends. Instead, his friend witnessed that which they did not show on TV - people, with nowhere to go, no rescue in sight, and no other options, sacrificing their lives by jumping off of the trade center towers. Those choices can be no less than unspeakable. David’s friend was in shock for a long time thereafter. David, his brother, and friends, walked miles back to their car and squeezed all seven people in. They were able to return to their home in Edison, where the community came together and lit candles in a vigil to commemorate the more than 3000 people that died that day. David experienced a range of emotions that day; from fear and sadness, to happiness and excitement upon finding his brother and friend. He noted that terrorism can happen anywhere. David is a very proud American, and I am proud to be his neighbor.

Mary B.

Finally, I chose my last story from the accounts of an almost 80 year old woman, Mary B. Mary B is the ultimate patriotic woman, and the most avid Pittsburgh Steelers fan I know.

Mary B. was born in December of 1931. She grew up during the Great Depression. During WWII and while in elementary school, her teachers instructed each student to bring a sheet or pillow case to school so that the teachers could instruct the students to construct tourniquets, slings, and bandages in the event of a direct attack. She vividly remembers the attack on Pearl Harbor, but unlike today where we were glued to our TVs on 9/11, she and her family were glued to their radio. Her brother Tom immediately thereafter enlisted in the Navy and lost his life. Enough of Mary B.’s past; here’s her recount of 9/11.

Mary B. woke up early. She had her computer system, which would be the envy of any 20 year old, she has a mirror mounted on the adjacent closet door so that she can view TV at the same time. She was online when she saw in her mirror the reflection of the first plane hitting the World



9/11 Memorial in Bayonne, NJ, overlooking Manhattan.

Trade Center. As most of us presumed, she thought it was a terrible accident. She turned to the TV. When the second plane hit, she realized it was no accident. Her coverage was provided by the Today Show, with anchors Katie Curic and Matt Lauer in the studio reporting on the unfolding events. What made a lasting impression upon Mary B. was that neither Matt nor Katie shed a tear. What made this astonishing to her was that she remembered that upon covering the shooting and subsequent death of President John F. Kennedy, Walter Cronkite could not keep his composure and was literally reduced to tears.

Mary B. called two of her children, Kevin and Jenny, who were not yet apprised of the unfolding events. Jenny immediately went to Mary B.’s house. It was still only 8:00 - 9:00 am; thereafter both brother and sister went to remove their children from school. NBC then reported that the United States of America was under a terrorist attack. Leaving his school-site schedule, the President and Vice-president were quickly whisked into the air and in separate locations to preserve their safety.

Mary B. has lived through the Great Depression, WWII, the Cold War, Vietnam, and Kent State. She remembers Neil Armstrong, the building and fall of the Berlin wall, and Perestroika. She grew up by steel factories in Pennsylvania in the early 30’s. I remember her telling me that by the time she walked home from grade school, she would be exhaling so much ash through her mouth and nose that streaks of black soot ran everyday down her white shirts.

It should be obvious that Mary B. is a survivor. I forgot, however to mention a couple of other pertinent facts. As her brother fought in WWII, her father before him fought in WWI. While she was in high school her father died as a result of mustard gas poisoning that he sustained while defending this country. The other fact is that Mary B. is my mother.

Despite the hardships that my (almost - upon her insistence) 80-year-old mother endured during her life she states that 9/11/01 was the worst, most heart-wrenching, debilitating experience she has ever witnessed and endured. I wish that I could say that 10 years have brought closure, meaning, and relief to her, but like the millions of many of us other Americans, September 11, 2001 will always be “a day of infamy.”

Street Speech is a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA) and the International Network of Street Papers (INSP).



# Contribute to STREET SPEECH

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Columbus, Ohio 43215

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**The Columbus Coalition for the Homeless is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization. All donations are tax deductible.**

## Specific donations for Street Speech needs:

**\$10 for vendor training supplies**  
**\$20 for free newspapers for new vendors**  
**\$65 for a vendor to print a job advertisement**  
**\$540 for the printing of one issue**



# Accessing shelter remains a struggle for many

By Don Strasser

It’s a Friday morning at 6 am when a few Outreach workers have assembled in the Faith Mission parking lot. They are about to begin their day counting homeless persons sleeping outside. Sunlight has just begun to seep through the spaces between the downtown buildings and the air is filled with sticky moisture forecasting a very hot day in Columbus, Ohio. It is still quiet outside. Businesses have yet to open and the cars from suburbia have not yet started flooding onto the city streets.

We begin our travels on 6th Street. Dotted along a chain link fence are rounded humps of piled blankets. “Hello,” we say. “We are from Outreach.” There is no movement and there is no response. We move on and try again, “Hello, we are from Outreach. Can we talk to you?” A body moves and a young face emerges from a sleeping bag. “We would like to talk to you so we can understand why you are sleeping outside and not in the shelter.” With an accent, which is unfamiliar I meet Oscar. I learn that he is 24 years old and originally from Nigeria, but he has been here since the age of 7. He is on the street because he missed a curfew and cannot apply to return to the shelter until he has been out of it for 30 days. Oscar told me he and his friend missed the “last bus”, causing them be “kicked-out.” Oscar has no money and does not know how he will find a job. His family members are all deceased except an uncle, who has 4 children and thus has no resources to help Oscar.

Further onward, we find Dee, a 52 year-old African American woman. She is on the street tonight and for another 27 nights because she got into a fistfight with another resident at the shelter. Dee reports that sometimes “I cannot keep my mouth shut,” and her inciting words started the altercation. No one was hurt, but the rule is firm that if someone at the shelter becomes involved in a fight, expulsion is the immediate consequence. Dee tells us that she has been homeless on and off for 10 years. She has children and she has a sister, but they are not in any position to help her. She even has an income from Social Security, but someone else manages her money because “I have bi-polar.” Dee goes to Southeast and has a Case Manager there, whom she plans to visit today to see if she can get any help with housing.

Our last stop is with Kate and Howard. Kate is a fragile-looking young woman with glasses and a whispering voice that can hardly be heard. Howard is also young, but much more confident and self-assured than his partner. It seems that both

of them continue to attend high school in an effort to finish their senior year. Neither of them can go home because Howard is black and Kate is white and neither family approve of their relationship. They are both 17 and are hoping to get into a shelter. However, they have been on a waiting list and are ambivalent about leaving one another, when a bed does become available. One of the Outreach workers tells them that Howard should wait until Kate gets a bed, as there are many more spaces available for men than women. The idea is that once Kate has a safe place, Howard should not have too much trouble being accepted for admission.

During our search we encountered several other people who refused to talk to us. Some were clearly psychotic and simply made no sense when they spoke. Others were fearful that we might somehow harm them, and then others probably preferred sleeping than talking to us.

When the general public thinks about homelessness, they typically conjure up the image of a man who probably stays in a shelter. And in this community our shelters are certainly filled with hundreds of men as well as women and families.

But there is also another group of homeless persons who can be found in almost any large metropolitan area. These are the people like Oscar, Dee, Howard and Kate. They are often vilified and viewed as troublemakers, drug addicts, welfare dependents and other unsavory names. This group also includes those designated as sex offenders, arsonists and other criminals. The truth is that some of these people should not be roaming the streets, but held in a secure environment. However, most of the folks whom we met on the streets today are pretty ordinary; they are individuals who had encountered bad breaks and family dysfunction and their judgment was frequently unsound.

There had been a time when these people were welcomed into Columbus’ shelters. Mel Schottenstein founded the Community Shelter Board in 1986 with a vision for homeless persons which was inclusive and generous. As CSB writes in its promotional material about Schottenstein “his bottom line inability to accept any situation that left a man, woman or child without food or shelter motivated Columbus to provide for all citizens in need of assistance.” Today that vision has been significantly eroded and resources for all homeless persons are becoming increasingly scarce.

Continued on page 6...

# Words of Power

By Shirley Taylor, *Street Speech* vendor

In this issue I would like to focus on the law of attraction. So I don’t take up a lot of space we will shorten that to L.O.A. The law of attraction as put by Rhonda Byrne has no sense of time, only the present.

“There is no past or future for the law of attraction, only the present, so stop referring to your life in the past as very difficult, or full of hardship and pain, or in any other negative way.

Remember that the law only operates in the present, so when you speak of your past life negatively the law is receiving your words and sending those things back to you NOW.” ~ Rhonda Byrne ~ The Secret

Allow me to elaborate on this for a moment if you will. Say you have the desire to be on a beach where the sun is shining, the birds can be heard singing, the waves are rolling in lazily, the breeze is warm and light, and you are sipping on a nice tall refreshing drink while basking in the glow of the sun.

You can feel the warm sand between your toes as you get up to go take a dip in the ocean water to cool your skin. The breeze catches your hair, or in the event you have no hair, the breeze gently caresses your brow and you can smell the sea salts in the air which are pleasing to the senses.

Do you recognize this? This is called “daydreaming”. We do it all the time. It is also called visualization. We also do this all the time.

Ever wonder why some people get everything they want and others get the worst of things? It’s simple. Their thoughts. Their thoughts attract what they think about. The L.O.A. responds to your thoughts and when you keep “daydreaming” of the same things over and over, you keep getting the same things, over and over and over.

My dad once told me this: “If you always do what you always did then you will always get what you always got.”

I didn’t understand this concept until a few years ago and more so just recently.

Do you want your life to change? It’s simple. Just change your thoughts. And I don’t mean just for today. It becomes a way of life as with anything else, such as dieting. If you want to have a healthy body, you start adding healthier foods to your diet, replacing the unhealthy foods, one step at a time.

There are no overnight miracles when it comes to stuff like this. It is a process that is to be repeated daily until it becomes a belief. As a child, you were taught what to believe, now as an adult, take responsibility for yourself and create new and better beliefs.

Don’t limit yourself to what others believe. Create your own reality! Remember, you are what you think so make your thoughts good ones!

I bid you a good and prosperous day until we meet here again next issue.

God created us with love, to love, and to be loved...

If you would like to send comments, or would like to see a topic on a situation you are going through, please send an email to wordsof-power2011@yahoo.com.



# Let’s Celebrate Recovery

By Christy Murphy, Consumer and Family Advocate (CFAC) President and Volunteer

Mental illness and addiction is like a natural disaster. You are living your life and suddenly a big hole opens up in front of you; engulfing your whole life. Recovery is not only about getting out of that hole, but staying out of it.

Every September is National Recovery Month and it is a chance for those who have made it out of the grasp of mental illness or broken the cycle of addiction to serve as an inspiration to those still struggling. There is great power in the story of a person who meets the definition of successful, and reveals their history of addiction or a mental illness.

Locally, Franklin County joined in the celebration of Recovery Month on September 1 at an event hosted by the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County (ADAMH) at the King Arts Complex. ADAMH is Franklin County’s authority for planning, funding and evaluating mental health, alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment services. ADAMH does not provide any direct service, but con-tracts with more than 35 local agencies to provide quality mental health and alcohol and other drug ad-diction treatment services.

The morning of the event, approximately 120 guests took their seats after enjoying a light breakfast of muffins, fresh fruit and juice. The attendees included those who work in the alcohol and addiction treat-ment field, along with many clients, family members and volunteers.

This event is an excellent affirmation for everyone involved in the recovery community that treatment works and recovery does happen. Ajamu’ Brown, recovery advocate and recently retired employee of ADAMH, started off the morning with a welcome.

“Recovery is near and dear to my heart and I am proud to be able to continue to serve as an advocate for those of us in recovery. It is a lifelong journey,” said Brown. After Brown’s opening comments, Rev. Dr. Brenda Buckwell from Westgate United Methodist Church offered the invocation. Other guest speakers included David Royer,

ADAMH CEO; Orman Hall, Ohio De-partment of Alco-hol and Other Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) Direc-tor and Paul Coleman, Mary-haven CEO.

“Mr. Royer, Director Hall and Mr. Coleman have gone above and beyond to ensure that the most vul-nerable population in our community continues to receive quality services and for that, I am very appre-ciative,” said Laura Thielbar, ADAMH Board of Trustee member and Consumer and Family Advocacy Council (CFAC) member.

Guests also had the opportunity to hear from Creola Huston, who shared her perspective on her daugh-ter’s drug addiction. Huston had custody of her grandchildren while her daughter spent many years of her life in and out of jail and treatment facilities.

When Huston lost her adult son, she remembers her daughter coming to the funeral in hand cuffs. “When she came up to the give her brother a final hug, she had to do it with her handcuffs on.”

After years of struggling with her addiction, her daughter found her way to Amethyst, an ADAMH-funded agency. Now, her daughter is celebrating 13 years of sobriety, and Huston recalls her proudest moment when she speaks of her daughter’s current work as a case manager, helping others who suffer from addiction.

It takes courage to go through all Huston went through, and it was wonderful to see that a restored family is possible even after all of the challenges. It is so difficult to see a family member struggle and know that you cannot “fix” him or her.

The struggles of family members, experiences of powerlessness, betrayal, sorrow and loss are universal. Addiction does not discriminate; it affects families in the same way regardless of culture, socio-economic status or race. After the formal program, guests had the chance to visit with individuals in the recovery community and receive information about programs and services offered by ADAMH-funded agencies. Some of the agencies in attendance were Maryhaven, Amethyst, COVA, Columbus Area, Inc., Netcare, North Central Mental Health Services

and Direction for Youth and Families.

As author James A. W o r s h a m once said, “One of the biggest factors in success is the courage to u n d e r - t a k e something.”

Recovery is not only about addictions. For me, suffering from agoraphobia made it hard for me to leave my apartment. Staying in my apartment all day every day was not the life I wanted. Today, I feel empowered to leave my apartment, and I am glad I had the courage to get the help and support I needed to live a more healthy and productive life.

I decided to take on my agoraphobia to improve my quality of life. I live each day knowing, as my favor-ite Chinese proverb says, “The journey is the reward.” This is my inspiration as I face the many ups and downs that come along with the journey of recovery.

As our community celebrates recovery this month and the entire year, let us celebrate all those who had the courage to undertake their journey of recovery, and inspire others to embark on their own journeys.

Happy Recovery Month!



Laura Thielbar, ADAMH Board of Trustee member and CFAC member; ODADAS Director Orman Hall and Christy Murphy, CFAC President and Volunteer



Ajamu’ Brown, Recovery Advocate; Creola Huston and Rev-erend Dr. Brenda Buckwell, Westgate United Methodist

Till the next issue,  
Peace & Love,  
Shirley



# Drugs, The Two Sides of America's Biggest Industries

By Andrew C. Culp

Law enforcement and pharmaceuticals represent the two sides of the ever-growing drug industry in America. One works to stem the tide of illegal drugs. The other spreads drugs through cutting-edge business plans. Budgets and profits are up, way up, for both. But at what cost for the rest of us?

## Inside Law Enforcement's Big Business

I met Jeremy in 2004. A few years earlier, Jeremy had found himself in a small town in Kansas that was big enough for two things: a Tyson plant and a small university. He came from a modest background and had bounced around between a few schools until he landed in Kansas. Jeremy secured himself a scholarship to attend school, but kept running low on money. He was no stranger to work, as most of his time in high school was spent working in fast food drive-throughs, but Tyson was the only place hiring in town. And the plant's slaughter operation reeked. Townspeople said that it was the smell of money, but Jeremy found something else green to forget about Tyson and focus on school. So when a friend offered him a chance to turn his hobby into a job, it was impossible to turn it down. That is how Jeremy started selling pot.

The university was full of buyers. Jeremy's best business came from fraternities. He returned from every fraternity party a little buzzed, pockets stuffed full of cash. Success created an unanticipated problem, however. Jeremy did not know what to do with all the money he started collecting. For a while he thought it was convenient to always have cash on hand, but it kept accumulating. He knew that taking thousands of dollars in cash to the bank in crumpled up ones and fives would raise suspicion. So the single shoebox under his bed turned into two, and kept multiplying until he had a stash of over \$10,000. This was his downfall.

Early one December morning, Jeremy awoke to a gun in his face. He was being raided by the police. He was dragged out of bed and was sat on his couch, naked, to watch the cops turn his apartment upside down. The operation did not take long, probably a sign of good planning, because they only left with three important things: the quarter-pound of weed that had been delivered a couple nights before, his contact book, and the stash of money from under his bed. He was then dragged off to jail. After the initial shock wore off, Jeremy started piecing it together. No doubt Jeremy was doing something illegal and jail was always a risk, but he thought he was a small fish in a small pond. So when his lawyer told him that a friend had set him up and had even worn a wire, Jeremy was even more confused. In the land of meth, why had the police put together such an extensive bust on a small-time pot dealer like him? Even more surprising, the prosecutor let him off with diversion and a fine. It all came together when he remembered the money under his bed.

'Asset forfeiture' laws allows police to keep property seized in a raid. Some states require proceeds to go toward education or other programs, but many local law enforcement agencies have found ways to keep a substantial cut for themselves. It is impossible to tell if Jeremy's money went to the local police, the feds, or to Kansas schools. But one thing is for certain: \$10,000 is pretty good for a couple days work.

## Drugs, What are They Good For?

Drugs exist in nearly every human society. While drugs are used in various ways, they are traditionally tied to social rituals like a coming of age ceremony or a religious experience. This society is no different, considering that the most profitable industry in America is pharmaceuticals. One reason is that, irrespective of the diversity of religions practiced here, nearly all Americans share a religious devotion to productivity. In America, drugs are no



Photo by Ed Wohlfahrt.

longer used primarily for spiritual growth or social bonding; their use is increasingly tied to economics. The motivations for drug sales, drug use, and drug policy are increasingly driven by work and profit.

Americans use a whole set of drugs to enable their commitment to work. Three-fourths of Americans drink at least one caffeinated beverage daily. One in 11 kids are prescribed a psychiatric medication at some point in their childhood, most of them stimulants. Two-thirds of Americans hate their jobs, but now that antidepressants are now the most prescribed drugs in the U.S., more of them at least find going to work tolerable. When they get home, alcohol and painkillers help to relieve work-related troubles.

Not all drugs are related to productivity. In fact, the definition of a drug is anything that disrupts a person's normal functioning. According to the federal government, among the most dangerous drugs are those that most radically change consciousness, and are traditionally connected to religious experience like peyote, hashish, and sacred mushrooms. The U.S. DEA and FDA rank the riskiness of drugs according to a scheduling system from one to five. Other Schedule-One drugs include highly addictive drugs like heroin, and many other opiates. While those drugs all pose a higher public health or public safety threat than other drugs, what is it about marijuana and hallucinogens that drug authorities find dangerous?

According to recent findings published in *The Lancet*, a British medical journal, many hallucinogens pose the lowest public health threat, even lower than tobacco and alcohol. A recent psychedelic mushrooms study by the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine found that more than half of the participants experienced a "complete mystical experience," and two months later, 79% reported moderately to greatly increased life satisfaction and sense of well-being.



Soft drug paraphernalia. Photo by dutchamsterdam.nl.

In the 1960s, gurus thought that hallucinogens would spark a counter-cultural revolution in global consciousness. In part, they did. LSD was first developed and tested by the CIA as a weapon of war. Its effects proved to be powerful but unreliable so it was abandoned. Subsequent clinical trials in Canada showed that LSD could have over a 50% success rate in rehabilitating alcoholics when paired with therapy. But as recreational use of counter-cultural drugs spread, the fear of abnormal youths – or the associated social and political agenda of peace, experimentation, and free love – quickly led to criminalization.

Flash forward to today: Baby boomers have left behind hippy politics and now fill the management ranks of major corporations. Their kids are the ones experimenting with drugs, but regardless of the surging popularity of peace-sign merchandise on college campuses, it is clear that youth

experimentation has lost the social agenda that inspired their parents. Together, baby boomers and their children seem to have settled on an essential truth -- peace, love, and drug-use in youth need not hold one back from being a pill-popping workaholic. The spirit of freedom and change has been replaced by the daily grind of scraping by or making it big.

## Criminalization and Public Health

Advocates say it is time for America to reorient its drug policy away from criminalization to public health. Some states have taken steps to pursue both aspects -- decriminalization and medicinal use -- but they are way behind successful drug policies found in Europe.

Americans think that Holland, with their cannabis coffee-shops and magic mushroom stores, is the capital of European de-criminalization. But while the Dutch ditched the prohibition model they did not de-criminalize drugs. Prohibitionists believe that drug use is best combated by outlawing all facets of drugs from cultivation, distribution, to consumption. The Dutch tolerate some drug use as an overall plan to reduce the negative aspects of drugs. Their pioneering heroin-assisted treatment has helped many participants land stable jobs, or even start families after years of living on the margins. But their permissiveness has come to end over the last five years, culminating in the ban of cannabis sale to tourists by the end of the year.

Portugal de-criminalized personal drug use in 2001 to the surprise of many. The move was to reduce Portugal's high incidence of HIV/AIDS, which was being fueled by injected drug use. People found in possession of a personal supply of drugs have the drugs confiscated and receive administrative punishments of treatment or community service, but not criminal punishments like jail time. The results show a combination of changes. In Portugal's drug users there is an increase in treatment, a 71% decrease in HIV diagnoses, and a reduction in drug-related deaths. But lifetime illicit drug use is up. Ultimately, Portugal raises the hope that routine drug use can be brought into harmony with society.

The criminalization of drugs is one of America's most profitable businesses. Political, social, and economic factor make up criminalization's 'business model.'

The so-called "War on Drugs" has been a simple way for politicians to score easy points while scaring voters into funding a war in their backyard. War metaphors have helped politicians whip up enough public support to fund a failing drug policy. While law enforcement points to a rising number of arrests or amount of drugs seized in a raid, the rest of the facts show few victories for drug warriors. Prohibition has fueled organized crime, ruined millions of lives through criminalization, and costs the world a trillion dollars per year. Yet some of the biggest factors driving the war on drugs are a result of American history.

Prisons began to spring up in rural America in the 1970s as industrial jobs started being shipped overseas. Jobs in plants or mills were replaced by jobs in prisons. Since then, the U.S. jail and prison population has expanded from 330,000 to over 2,000,000, over a quarter of them incarcerated for non-violent drug offenses, far out. Prison corporations and other groups have started pushing stricter 'law and order' legislation to drive this number even higher, like "three strikes" laws, and have even bribed judges to send children to for-profit detention centers. And now that states like Ohio have begun to privatize their prison

industry, the opportunity for profit-seeking manipulation of public policy is even greater.

Current drug policy is a 'war' aimed disproportionately at black and brown urban poor. It plays consciously and subconsciously on American racial prejudice. Education and job discrimination have created a permanent underclass that is unable to find work, leaving the criminal industry is able to profit off of them through criminalization. Studies confirm that while African Americans use drugs at the same or lower rates than whites, they are four times more likely to be arrested on drug charges, and account for nearly half of all drug charges in the country, despite being only 12 percent of the U.S. population. Evidence also shows that African Americans in the federal prison system receive sentences 20 percent longer than whites who committed the same crimes.

## Next Steps

Drugs are here to stay. And from the public health perspective, most drugs are both good and bad. Addiction is a major problem, but forces behind the drug war keep drugs from holding a less exploitative



A closed pharmacy during prohibition.

role in society. Without a major commitment to rehabilitation, criminalization only leaves individuals and communities worse off; children without parents, and parents without jobs. Serious money and power are spent to keep the pharmaceutical and security industries the shining stars of America's failing economy. So, as long as tough on crime politicians, racial prejudice, and prison profits feed off condemning non-medicinal drug use, more and more people will find themselves in Jeremy's shoes, or worse.

The policy path is clear. Drugs should be de-criminalized and treated as a public health issue. State and local authorities have taken small steps, like the "weed ticket" and medical marijuana. Bigger changes, like moving the funds used for the drug war to addiction and support-services are necessary for a full transition. But those substantial changes lie with Congress and the President.

These changes are impossible without a cultural shift. There are two easy ways to start:

First, challenge the 'law and order' mentality behind prohibition. It begins with ditching the prohibitionist double-standard that legally condones some drugs and criminalizes others. Most drug use is a victimless crime. Calling the cops on a drug user will not get them treatment, just trouble.

Second, help kick our harmful addiction to productivity. Drugs formerly enabled essential religious and social experiences. Americans are working more, making less, less happy, and more depressed, yet most pharmaceuticals just put us to work. Entertain the idea that drugs might enhance other parts of the human experience like love, joy, or even grief, and not just 'make you normal.'

**Andrew C Culp** is a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at the Ohio State University. He has worked as a social and community activist in Kansas City, Southern California, and Central Ohio. His current work focuses on power, politics, and social change.



# Hip Hop and Homelessness: An Interview with KRS-One

By Nakia Hill

As the “Teacha” of hip hop, KRS-One prepares to travel to New England for his Teach Hip-Hop tour. Kris Parker, the person behind the artist, reminisces about the ironic connection between homelessness and hip-hop and how he lived on the streets for over 10 years.

“Hip-hop is homeless. Hip-hop doesn’t have a home. People take from it. Gospel loves taking from hip-hop, but loves calling it the devil’s music. Rock’n’roll takes elements from it. Where is the hip-hop museum? Zulu Nation Community Center?”

The late 1970s witnessed the confluence of the unfamiliar cultural elements of scratching records, DJing, MCing, unique forms of dance movements using different parts of the body, breaking, graffiti etched and painted on trains and street corners, and powerful voices engaging crowds at block parties with traditional African call-and-response practices—all of which Afrika Bambaataa identified as hip-hop.

“Hip-hop, the jam, and block parties were unheard of,” KRS-One said.

This rich, pungent, and colorful culture was something that spread within urban communities and has expanded throughout the world today, but the heartbeat of its existence lies dormant in the gritty streets of New York City, the same streets where hip-hop icon Kris “KRS-One” Parker found himself sleeping. “I used to sleep at the World Trade Center.”

The World Trade Center was not the only place Parker slept after leaving home in his



KRS-One publicity photos.

early teens. He also found himself sleeping in some of the most dangerous places in the Big Apple, including the Bowery in Manhattan, benches at Wingate Park in Brooklyn, and local shelters in the city.

Unlike people who find themselves homeless because of job loss, foreclosed homes, mental illnesses, or a struggle with drug addiction, Parker ran away from home willingly after he refused to pursue his education in a traditional school setting.

“I had an epiphany. I told my mother, ‘When I grow up I want to be an MC,’” he said.

Parker identified his single mother as a scholar who allowed him and his brother to rhyme over her Earth Wind & Fire records, but she wanted her children to pursue higher education. Her son had other thoughts, “School and college for me was a waste of time. I knew I wanted to be an MC.”

When Parker ran away from home

he would find a haven at different friends’ houses, shelters, and NYC’s infamous ‘MTA’ transit system, where he found himself on the path of homelessness. “I realized I was homeless when I went to a friend’s house and I smelled like the shelter. My hair was messed up, and his mom brought out a plate of food for me. It was Mac and Cheese and greens. It was weird because I couldn’t pick the fork up. It was awkward in my hand.”

Parker spent his teenage years on the streets honing his craft as an MC. His lyrical content did not focus on spending an excessive amount of money, driving luxurious cars, and dating attractive women. Instead he wrote and rhymed about uplifting the black community, ending the urbanite genocide, and spreading the ideologies of Marcus Garvey. KRS-One, Knowledge Reigns Supreme Over Nearly Everyone, is a tag name he adopted as a graffiti artist.

Being homeless and an MC went hand in hand for KRS-One. It was in a shelter where his artistry as an MC began to develop, and where he decided to change his name to Krishna as a result of his interest in the Hare Krishna spiritual movement.

“I took a vow of poverty when I was 18 or 19 where I don’t seek to own. My existence is for the benefit of other people.”

The shelter also played a pivotal role in connecting KRS-One with Scott Sterling, a.k.a. Scott La Rock, a social worker

who dedicated his life to service and hip-hop. Scott La Rock took the homeless MC under his wing and they formed the group, Boogie Down Productions (BDP).

In 1987, BDP released its first album, Criminal Minded. Unfortunately, shortly after the release KRS-One’s DJ and friend La Rock was fatally shot in the neck after trying to defuse a fight between Derrick “D-Nice” Jones, a former BDP member, and a rival neighborhood gang.

“He was like the ultimate guidance counselor because in the end he gave his life. What a life of a social worker, to give of yourself to help these clowns, but then you lose your life.”

During the early days of KRS-One’s career as an MC, websites such as YouTube, MySpace, and Reverbnation were nonexistent. Music lovers would have to come out of their homes to see a live performance. KRS-One being a locally well-known artist, his fans would run into him after shows, sometimes just sleeping on the subway.

“I would be sleeping on the train and they would see me and put money in my hand,” KRS-One said.

Today, KRS-One is on the Teach For Hip-Hop tour, but Kris Parker but still feels detached from his tour home.

“I personally live a comfortable life not owning, and I credit that to my homeless days.”

[www.streetnewsservice.org/Spare Change News](http://www.streetnewsservice.org/SpareChangeNews)

## Tunisia, revisited

By David Bond

Tunis, August 2011. I am reading the Tunis press from the 1930s which describes protests against French rule. Suddenly, on the boulevard below the National Library I hear the sound of contemporary dissent as police break up a demonstration using batons and tear gas. Only faint cries drift up to the fitfully air-conditioned reading room but, as one looks over the old city of Tunis and the colonial city spilling down to the Mediterranean, other echoes of Tunis’ recent history seem close, trembling on the summer sirocco, just for a moment or two...

The initial enthusiasm of January 2011 which saw the ousting of former president Zin el ‘Abidin Ben Ali had faded by the time I arrived in early last summer. However things had changed since the January revolution. At Rome airport Tunisair apologized that a ‘social movement’ – a strike – had perturbed catering arrangements for the flight to Tunis. Once in Tunis, there was no sign of the tour operators usually waiting for European tourists. I noticed numerous Libyan four wheel drive vehicles: an influx of affluent refugees from the war in Libya, who have driven up rents in Tunis. Miniature plastic anti-Gaddafi rebel flags were on sale in newspaper kiosks.

The King of Spain bar on Lenin Street had closed for only four days during the revolution, and had resumed serving locally-brewed Celtia beer accompanied by broad beans sprinkled with cumin. The picture of the ousted president had disappeared from the King of Spain and from every other public space, replaced by notices calling on Tunisians to register for the elections due to be held in October. By early August only a quarter of the 7.5 million eligible voters had registered, while the interim government is seen by some as having exerted little effort to ensuring that expatriate Tunisians will be able to take part in the historic vote.

Voters were not exactly jostling for elbow room to register at the municipal buildings in Rue de la Zitouna yet signs of change were apparent in other ways. The police squads had disappeared from the Sea-Gate at the entrance to the old city, effectively handing over the esplanade around the gate to scores of hawkers and hucksters. ‘It’s chaos’, I grumbled, threading my way between piles of imported clothes from

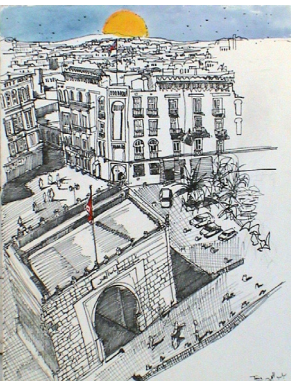


Porte de France, by David Bond.

China and prayer-rugs, some integrating compasses indicating the direction of Mecca. ‘Chaos for you, work for us’ a vendor retorted: Tunisia’s unemployment rate is around 14%, possibly as high as 30% in the interior of the country. Meanwhile work was continuing on transforming the former British embassy at the Sea Gate into a hotel, cluttering the austere Moorish façade with pastiche classical features. Hopes earlier in the year for a revival of tourism in the summer have been disappointed.

This area of Tunis had once been the European diplomatic quarter, before French colonial rule when France, Britain, and Italy engaged in diplomatic rivalry. The French ruled Tunisia from 1881 to 1956, when Habib Bourguiba led the country to independence. I first visited Tunis in the early 1980s: by then an increasingly-authoritarian Bourguiba was facing the challenge of restive trade unions and a nascent Islamic movement. In 1987 Bourguiba’s prime minister, Zin el ‘Abidin Ben Ali, ousted Bourguiba in a bloodless coup d’état. By the early 1990s Ben Ali seemed firmly entrenched and in public spaces banners proclaimed ‘we’re all with Ben Ali, the architect of change.’

The Avenue de France and the Avenue Bourguiba were refurbished by Presidential decree in 2000: in January 2011 these same streets were the scene of mass protests which swept Ben Ali from power. The 7 November 1987 Square (the date



Porte de France, aerial view.

of Ben Ali’s ousting of Bourguiba) has been renamed the 14 January Square, the date of Ben Ali’s flight to Saudi Arabia. In France, the former colonial power and ally of Ben Ali, a Parisian square has been named after Mohamed Bouazizi, the fruit vendor whose tragic self-immolation in December 2010 was the catalyst for revolutions throughout the Middle East. I was struck by the way in which conversation, previously dominated by nostalgia and self-censorship, was now turned towards the future, with its possibilities and uncertainties. The colonial past, whose vestiges I had sometimes depicted in my art, had now receded further into history, and the Ben Ali years, which seemed to hold both present and the future in their grip, had themselves become a ‘before’. Tunisian artists are preparing ‘Dream City 2012’ on the theme of ‘The artist and freedom,’ with the old city (the Medina) of Tunis and the city centre becoming an open-air gallery, a ‘space for creation.’ Tensions surrounding artistic creativity remain: the Africa Cinema was the scene of public disorder last June when a hostile crowd protested violently against a film by the Tunisian director Nadia el Fani entitled ‘without God or master.’

While representatives of the Islamist Ennahda movement have said that banning alcohol is not on their agenda, supermarkets in central Tunis have limited their sale of locally-produced wine. Opinion polls have shown that one-third of Tunisians are undecided on how to vote, while Ennahda’s support is around 20%. I recently received an e-mail from a Tunisian scholar of English literature asking me for advice on how to vote in the coming elections this October, as she had no clear idea of what programs the various parties were proposing. Under the Ben Ali régime there was little room for free speech or expression, and while certain small opposition groups were recognized they were largely powerless in what was effectively a one-party state. Trade unions and NGOs have given Tunisians some experience in organization and lobbying. Old solidarities sometimes re-emerge: some Tunisians belonging to traditional urban elite groups believe that they may be able to re-occupy posi-



“Avenue Bourguiba and Parachutes,” by David Bond.

tions in public life hitherto occupied by members of the ousted governing party.

Indecision and opacity undeniably exist: political parties complain about their difficulties in putting forward their program in the light of a new ban on political advertising and opinion polls while in some of the poor cities of the Tunisian interior where protests began last December curfews have been put in place to counter unrest. Tourism has virtually collapsed while editors and booksellers note that no real post-revolutionary novel has yet appeared. The bloggers and internet activists who mobilized against Ben Ali have struggled to find a place in the post-revolutionary political landscape. The foreign press corps has moved on from Tunis to Tripoli and Benghazi. Yet Tunisia retains its capacity to surprise the outside world. In the United States who would have imagined, a year or two ago, that President Obama would have applauded the courage and dignity of the Tunisian people as he did on 14 January 2011? These qualities will be tested once again in the coming months. Let us prepare to be surprised.



“Regards, Tunis”

**David Bond** is an itinerant scholar and artist from Glasgow, Scotland. Has lived in France, Tunisia, Algeria and Mali. Currently a teaching assistant in the Dept of Near Eastern Languages, OSU. Second-last in the Tunis Marathon 2006.



# Homeless and Evicted

By Jeff Heath, *Street Speech* vendor

Homeless people have few places that they can go to sleep. A place that feels like home is a hard place to find. This I found, along with those that I could call friends. This place, some would call it Italian Gardens. I simply called it home.

I was in Columbus a few months at the most, I had arrived in August of 2010. I came here from Rising Sun, MD, and I was homeless.

When I first arrived in Columbus I went to the Faith Mission. My experience there was terrible. We were woken up at 6 in the morning and fed terrible food. We had to be in by a certain time, like kids. The people didn't make it much better; their insults always got to me and Street Speech papers were stolen from my bag. I soon left. I had no place to go and I was scared.

A little before October my luck finally came to me in the form of a man. His name was Dwayne. Before I knew his name, before I even knew his face, I knew he wanted to help me. He took me to his campsite, and this is where everything started to get better for me.

Soon, this place felt like a home to me as it has been home to the others for a long time. I loved the people, the area and just everything. I loved sitting by the fire and talking with everyone, listening to the radio. This campsite was more than a place to sleep; it was a place to be, to be ourselves. We had freedom there.

Our camp was near Italian Village, which I loved. Being close to downtown and the Short North was convenient for us all. We could to the main library or eat downtown.

Italian Gardens was around for upwards two years. It was started by a man that everyone loved and could get along with, Jack. He was the go-to guy when there was a problem, he would give us what we needed if he had it, and was a friend to all the campers.

As Fernwood Buckthorn said, "this is my family." We were a family, we were there to back each other up and we helped each other when one was in need. Some would come and go and we would be there for them. Anyone who stayed in the camp was seen as family.

We had animals around the camp, since we lived in the woods. I have seen raccoons, deer, a snake and we even had three cats. There has been a rumor of coyotes, but none of us had ever seen one. Fernwood believed that the

cats were proof that there were no coyotes because they eat cats, and our cats were unharmed. This note should have been given to the police.

The police believed there were coyotes, or so they said. We don't know what to believe.

I was told the next day about the police showing up. The police came twice that day: Once about midday, and again around ten at night. The second time they came into the campsite, as Fernwood said, "loaded for a bear." They were in riot gear and holding automatic weapons. There were said to be 13 police officers there that night. They told the campers to get out of their tents and pointed guns at them.

The police told the campers that the reason for the heavy weapons and the riot gear was they heard there were coyotes in the woods. They also told us that we had a few days to leave the camp. They took names, and said that if anyone on the list of names was found at another campsite they would be arrested for criminal trespassing.

I could not believe it, and that was when I knew that it was the end of my home. I did not want to believe people would do this to other people who have nowhere to go. I was mad and sad that my home would be gone.

The police showed up more times in the next two weeks. One time they were looking for somebody, a child molester. None of us knew the guy, though we do sympathize for the victim/s. The other times were to get more names of those in the campsites. They did not get my name.

Nobody at the camp is a criminal, especially not a violent criminal. None of us go out and steal, most would work for what they get. I want to work, but cannot. I don't have an ID, though I am working to get my birth certificate.

I heard about the camp being on the news, I heard it was said that they would demolish the camp with bulldozers the next day. This is when I knew it was the end.

On the day my camp was to be demolished, my friend and I went to the campsite to see if the bulldozers were there. The only one there was Fernwood. He was waiting for the police.

Fernwood described leaving as thus, "my family, were all being scattered like the wind."

Homeless people are always being treated like dirt, it seems: Downtown, people seen sleeping on benches

would be told to move. It is illegal to sleep in Goodale Park. I have been picked on by police for being homeless a few times. People who have nowhere to go are told to move somewhere else. I have been picked on by the police, as being asked directly if I am breaking into cars while I am going through dumpsters.

I believe Fernwood said it better than I could when he said, "most days, what I really want is to be treated like a human being."

A man I know, of times past to me (I am 20), told me that he was asked by a city official if he knew where any camps were located. This, I believe, is evidence of the city wanting us homeless people in the shelters or on the streets. In both places we have no safe place for our things. In the camp nobody bothered our things, or us.

I continue to hear of campsites being told they have to leave and them being torn down. Even in out of the way places, if they are found by the city they cannot stay. Even still, I do not hear of them bringing in heavy weapons or riot gear. I also never heard of so many officers coming in.

I remember being Jack telling us that the owner of the property had said we could stay back there. He knew we did not have anywhere else to go.

In the end, no matter what the property owner said, we had to go. Jack, one of the best people to have as a friend, he went with the others to Maryhaven, and then to the YMCA. I did not wish to go there due to the fact that I have heard many bad things about it.

My experience at the camp; it was home to me. I loved the camp. The freedom, not being told where to be at a certain time, being allowed to be myself. My friends there; I have come to know them all since I have been there. I would stay awake just to be around them. I did not want to go, yet we were forced to leave.

Nobody at the camp wanted their name mentioned, for fear of being harassed by the police. This is a risk I am taking to get the word out. Though the police have treated us badly, I have much respect for them for doing their jobs when they are protecting us.

Everything, while not looking like blue skies in our lives, is going smoothly. We are no longer in the camp but it is in our hearts. As Fernwood said, "I am not angry, I am sad. I loved everybody at this camp."

## Shelter Access

continued from page 3

V	C	O	E	C	N	A	V	D	A	Q	I
Q	J	P	R	O	M	O	T	E	D	W	S
U	U	Y	A	W	D	A	E	H	C	S	B
A	C	C	E	L	E	R	A	T	E	M	D
R	I	M	P	R	O	V	E	D	I	S	K
I	E	L	E	V	A	T	E	L	B	S	T
S	L	E	P	O	R	P	C	G	C	E	R
E	E	N	C	O	U	R	A	G	E	R	O
G	Z	M	T	S	O	O	B	A	F	G	P
E	G	A	N	O	R	T	A	P	C	O	P
E	T	A	C	O	V	D	A	Q	W	R	U
G	U	P	L	I	F	T	Q	X	S	P	S

As resources shrink, rules grow, and more are pushed out or turned away. One of the rules with which many people find difficult to live is the imposed curfew. In most shelters residents must return by 8 PM to retain their bed. Accomodations are made for those whose work schedule prevents them from arriving back at this time. If however someone misses the curfew time, they must vacate the shelter immediately and may not return for 30 days, though an individual can appeal the decision and occasionally be reinstated if the shelter agrees that the curfew violation was for legitimate reasons. Persons who are evicted from shelters may also seek a bed at another community shelter, however at current capacity levels, simply getting in has become more and difficult.

A more challenging rule for some people who use shelter is the time limitations, which have been imposed. Shelter residents are expected to stay no more than 30 days. While there is some flexibility in this number most shelters will be

requiring people to leave after one month. Exceptions to this rule might be for people who have a job starting soon or an apartment, which will be ready within a reasonably brief time period. The intent is to keep people out of shelters and get them into housing as quickly as possible, and to deal with increasing homelessness and demands on shelters. This is an appropriate goal for those individuals who have resources to rent an apartment. However there are many who do not have the money available for housing or a job to sustain the cost of an apartment. And there are those who face additional barriers such as a criminal record or sex offense, which keep them from accessing many programs and government subsidized housing.

We believe that rules and regulations governing shelter admission and length of stay will continue to become more and more restrictive. This trend is only the beginning of a period when resources for all those in poverty will continue to shrink. Cutbacks have only just begun and funding predictions for the future spell doom and gloom.

## VENDOR CLASSIFIEDS

Puzzle by William Crandell, Street Speech vendor

ACCELERATE  
ADVANCE  
ADVOCATE  
BOOST  
CLIMB  
ELEVATE  
ENCOURAGE  
HEADWAY

IMPROVE  
PATRONAGE  
PROGRESS  
PROMOTE  
PROPEL  
RISE  
SUPPORT  
UPLIFT

Many of our vendors are seeking full-time and reliable employment. There's more to many of our vendors than meets the eye. To help match vendors with potential employers, we'll be featuring their skills here. Do you know of a job or gig that would help one of our vendors? Call our office to get in touch with a vendor if you see skills you could use, at (614) 228-1342 or email us at street.speech.columbus@gmail.com!

Vendor: William

Good communication skills; able to analyze data and other information; problem solver able to envision alternative solutions; creative with a sense of design; technically inclined; able to design custom widgets, themes, plugins and applications for mobile and desktop systems.

Vendor: Richard

Home-improvement

work (both exterior and interior), landscaping and lawn care, demolition. References available upon request.

Vendor: Mark

Home repairs, no job too small. Drywall installations and repair, carpentry, plumbing, landscaping, painting. References available upon request.

Vendor: Victoria

Cleaning, laundry, gen-

eral labor, cashiering. Excellent people skills and positive attitude.

Vendor: Lester

Skills in hotel work such as housekeeping and houseman, warehouse work, factory work, grill cook, asbestos and paint removal, loading and unlaoding trucks, banquet set up, dishwashing, laundry work, taxi driving.



# CREATING JOBS WITHOUT DEBT

## Domestic spending creates more jobs

By Robert Naiman

Here’s a plan that would likely save at least 400,000 jobs over the next ten years, without increasing the deficit or raising a dollar of additional revenue: bring the troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan as previously scheduled, and use the savings to reduce the debt in place of proposed cuts to Social Security and Medicare benefits - or other cuts in domestic spending.

The total savings to the federal budget of using the chained Consumer Price Index (CPI) as a measure of inflation (effectively cutting Social Security benefits) and raising the Medicare retirement age appear to be on the order of \$200 billion over 2012-2021. This proposal was a key feature of the deal that President Obama and Speaker Boehner agreed to in the debt ceiling negotiations. The deal collapsed, since it also included revenue increases which Republicans rejected. Judging from press reports, the president and others would like to revive this deal. So - unfortunately, from the point of view of the values and interests of the overwhelming majority of Americans - this proposal appears to still be on the table.

As good fortune would have it, \$200 billion is a very conservative estimate of the savings to the federal budget from 2012-2021 of withdrawing all US troops from Iraq this December (as previously agreed) and withdrawing all US troops from Afghanistan after 2014 (as previously announced). It’s a conservative estimate because it assumes that the Pentagon’s plan is to keep 25,000 troops in Afghanistan after 2014, and because it is only based on current appropriations, not future implied costs of current action, like veterans’ health care. In addition to the direct benefit to the overwhelming majority of Americans of protecting Social Security and Medicare benefits from any cuts, taking the money from the military rather than Social Security and Medicare would have the effect of protecting US employment. This is because spending money in the domestic economy creates more US employment than military spending in general and war spending in particular.

Here is a rough estimate of the effect this proposal would have on saving jobs. In a 2007 paper, Robert Pollin and Heidi Garrett-Peltier of the University of Massachusetts estimated the impact of an additional billion dollars in military spending on employment compared to other uses, using a standard input-output model of the US economy.

They found that an additional billion dollars in military spending would create 8,555 jobs. In contrast, an additional billion in tax cuts for personal consumption would create 10,779 jobs. Other categories of federal spending examined - education, health, mass transit - created more jobs than tax cuts for personal consumption. (See table 1, page 6.)

Thus, the net effect of moving one billion dollars from the domestic economy to military

spending would be to destroy at least 2,224 jobs; moving \$200 billion from the domestic economy to military spending would destroy at least 444,800 jobs. Conversely, saving \$200 billion by ending the wars as previously scheduled, rather than saving it from the federal budget by using the chained CPI and raising the Medicare retirement age, would save more than 400,000 jobs.

What does saving 444,800 jobs mean in the context of the US economy? The US labor force is about 150 million people, so 400,000 jobs represents about 0.3 percent of the labor force. If those jobs were added to the economy today, the unemployment rate would be 8.8 percent instead of 9.1 percent. Not at all where we want to be, but still a significant improvement - for hundreds of thousands of people - from where we are now.

Of course, there are much more savings to be had by cutting the military budget. We could draw troops down in Afghanistan between now and 2015 faster than the Pentagon wants. Every year we have 25,000 fewer troops in Afghanistan, we save more than \$17 billion. As David Ignatius notes in The Washington Post, according to CIA analysts, we’re currently spending \$100 billion a year in Afghanistan for “stalemate.”

And then there is the question of cutting the “base,” nonwar, Pentagon budget. Under the automatic trigger proposed by the Obama Administration, currently projected Pentagon spending would be cut by roughly \$600 billion over ten years, in addition to the \$350 billion reduction that the administration and press reports say was implied by the previous debt reduction agreement. Pentagon chief Leon Panetta has said this additional reduction in projected Pentagon spending would be unacceptable and the money should come from “entitlements” - the Social Security and Medicare benefits we have already paid for through our payroll taxes - instead.

But if taking \$200 billion out of the military instead of domestic spending would save 444,800 jobs, then taking \$600 billion out of the military instead of domestic spending would save 1,334,400 jobs. If you added 1,334,400 jobs to the economy today, the unemployment rate would be 8.2 percent, rather than 9.1 percent. If we end the wars as scheduled and cut projected Pentagon spending by an additional \$600 billion, instead of taking money out of the domestic economy, that would save 1,779,200 jobs, an effect akin to reducing the unemployment rate today from 9.1 percent to 7.9 percent.

Ending the wars and cutting the base military budget by \$600 billion will not by itself solve our unemployment problem. But failing to end the wars and failing to cut the military budget, and cutting domestic spending instead will make our unemployment problem significantly worse, while ending the wars and cutting the Pentagon budget would have the effect of significantly lowering unemployment relative to taking cuts from the domestic economy.

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## How Much More Work Do Humans Really Need?

By Jeffrey J. Smith

While honest toil is honorable, a day to honor labor does make it easy to overlook certain realities, such as: Why do both left and right clamor for more jobs? Would those who get to opine for a living be willing to perform the jobs they would impose upon others? And why jobs? If work is the only way one can be worthy of an income, why not also clamor for self-employment and start-ups? Must the jobless look forward to having a boss their entire lives? And are more jobs needed, or even possible?

Instead of clamor for jobs, why not clamor for a shorter workweek and divide the necessary work among more people? How did 40 hours a week get to be some sort of magic number? Why aren’t automation and globalization whittling that down to 30, 20, 10, going, going, gone? Juliet Schor in her “Overworked American” (1991) calculated that if increases in productivity (more output from less labor input) over the course of a baby boomer’s career were applied not to things like fatter CEO salaries, but to shrinking the workweek, it’d now be 6.5 hours. Why isn’t it?

It has been drastically shorter in the past. In his “Stone Age Economics” (1974), Marshall Sahlins calculated some aborigines worked 15 hours per week. In his “Six Centuries of Work and Wages” (1884), James E. Thorold Rogers, Member of Parliament, calculated that after a plague, peasants worked 14 hours per week. (Those were the Dark Ages, and now at 40 hours we’re the enlightened ones?) What happened was plagues left fewer people to work prime land so, for a while, surviving aristocrats could not exploit farmers. The key in both instances was access to bountiful land which let humans choose to work as much or as little as they liked.

Nowadays, with billions of humans on the globe, land is not quite as accessible, but it could be made more affordable. When that happens, jobs sprout and wages climb, as has happened several times: In the 1960s and 1970s, New Zealand’s employment rate averaged 99 percent for ten years. In the late 1950s, Danish workers received the biggest one-time raise in wages in Dansk history. And in the 1920s, New York City spurred the construction of numerous apartment buildings that provided jobs and slashed unemployment to negligible.

What was the one thing those places did in common? Their governments levied land. Taxing land value rather than buildings promotes development and increases density, especially in desirable locations. Meanwhile, land becomes more affordable in other locations, and there is incentive to build on it. Whenever landowners must pay a heavier land tax, they eschew speculation and put their parcels to good use. The new construction puts people to work as do the resultant shops, offices and factories, as does the spending of wages by the gratefully employed workers.

Why is such a powerful tool for useful employment at decent wages left on the shelf by jobists? Perhaps because today there’s a huge disconnect between labor and land. At college, economics students still learn Ricardo’s Law, and how wasting prime sites where wages are high, and falling back on marginal sites, where wages are low, forces down overall wages, but they’re required to forget that by the time they become the practicing economists whose opinions you see in the media.

But forgetting the laws of economics does not make them go away. Idle land still makes idle hands, as the old reformers used to say. Drive around your city’s slums; vacant lots - invisible to contemporary urbanites - are still the best indicator of joblessness, poverty and crime. And shifting the property tax off buildings and improvements, onto land and locations, is still the most effective way to harness both prime land and willing labor. A close second must be detaxing wages. If you want jobs so badly, why make them so costly?

This shift of taxes, this powerful reform, awaits implementation even as the left begs for jobs - anything to get money into the pockets of the poor - and the right pays jobs lip service - what better way to keep the poor busily subservient? But given the resultant rush hours, shriveled family time and sterile communities, it’s a Faustian bargain at best. J.W. Smith in his “World’s Wasted Wealth” (1994) suggested that if all the people now producing illth - everything from war toys to planned obsolescence - were to instead help produce wealth, we could cut the workweek in half.

The levy on land generates truly useful jobs organically. It’s always worked wherever tried, to the degree tried.

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## Sudoku Challenge

By William Crandell, Street Speech vendor

Easy

		7	2	4			3	
	2			9			8	6
1							4	
5		4			3	6		
	7		8				2	5
2				6		8		
				3			5	8
			9			1	6	
			4		7			3

Hard

		2		7		4		8
				9	2	7	5	
8					3		1	9
	2				6			
1							8	7
4						6		5
5	8							2
		3	9					1
	4	9		3			7	

# PICNIC OF H.O.P.E

**Saturday, September 24**  
**(Rain or Shine)**  
**11am to 3pm**  
**Veteran's Memorial**  
**(East Lawn)**  
**300 West Broad St.**



**\*FREE:**

- Picnic lunch
- Haircuts [provided by Ohio Barber School, Cala Luna Salon & local stylists]
- Foot washing
- Diabetes screening
- Blood pressure Screening
- Flu Shots
- Sex Health Program, Sex, Health Ed to Include HIV and Syphilis Testing
- Eye Glasses—One Sight/Pearl Vision

**O.S.U. MOBILE DENTAL UNIT**  
**MOUNT CARMEL MEDICAL COACH**  
-Glaucoma testing

**\*MEET WITH:**

- Social Security—
- Veterans Administration
- LSS / Faith Mission

**\*VISIT:**

- Free Stores for basic provisions
- Nationwide Children's Hospital F.A.C.E.S. Program
- Fun'L Frenzy (free funnel cakes)
- OSU—Star House (16-24 yrs; special help)

**\*LIVE MUSIC:**

- Pass the Peace* (featuring members of the Chad Greenwald Trio)

**\*FREE BUS SHUTTLE SERVICE**

- provided by Nth Degree Bus Svc

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