

GOOD WORK NEWS

The Working Centre, 58 Queen St. S. Kitchener, ON N2G 1V6

Issue 151

December 2022

Subscription: A Donation Towards our Work

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Thinking like Dorothy Day, 40 years later



All volunteers and workers, who contribute in the work of service, have felt the satisfaction of the manual labor of serving food, of cleaning up garbage, of changing sheets, of cleaning washrooms, of hauling prepared meals into the kitchen.

This work of service is a recognition of the reality of doing without, of sharing with others, and it also instills a more intense desire to change the social order that leaves many hungry and homeless.

This work is like serving bread or making a bed available. It is the work of community and growth. It is a real action as well as symbolic action that teaches us a new way forward.

Adapted from Dorothy Day (1897 - 1980), the founder of The Catholic Worker movement, who made a life time commitment to serving the homeless in New York through houses of hospitality.

Disconnection, Synthetic Drugs, and Homelessness

By Joe Mancini

The homelessness crisis can be seen in any Canadian city. Every municipal council is struggling to open or expand shelter beds. Tent encampments show up in public parks, a concept that would have been unthinkable ten years ago. In Kitchener, since the spring, there have been large encampments of 50 people or more at Victoria/Weber and Victoria Park.

In large cities like Toronto, Vancouver, Tampa Bay, Seattle, San Francisco, or Los Angeles, the homeless population exceeds 10,000 people.

Why Are New Housing Options Not Emerging?

The question often asked is, what is behind the homelessness camps that are affecting every city in North America? There is no question that in Waterloo Region, the high cost of rent and the lack of affordable rental housing is a root cause. But this part of the story needs to be unraveled

Homelessness, drug use and lack of housing options are interrelated societal issues. Understanding how society effects drug use and how drug use is a reflection on society, demonstrates how interrelated these issues are.

further. The market for housing is almost always under pressure but for the most part alternative housing options evolve. For example, in the 1960's old houses were turned into rooming houses to accommodate the baby boomers searching for cheap housing when they left home to go to university or take their first jobs. For 20 years now, the potential for new low-to-the-ground housing has not emerged. Rather, rooming houses have shut down in the face of enforced regulations, building code restrictions and higher tenant

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Responding On the Ground

By Stephanie Mancini

It snowed today. And along with the snow came reminders of the November 11, 2019 snowstorms that brought The Working Centre into the work of providing shelter. "Waterloo region is digging out of its worst winter storm in years after more than 25 centimetres of snow fell Monday", said a report from CTV News.

Those of us responding directly to the day-to-day survival needs of increasing numbers of people experiencing homelessness in our Region knew that we needed immediate action. A phone call

to Fr. Toby Collins at St. Mary's Church in downtown Kitchener led us to hosting a month-long people-sleeping-on-the-floor pop-up shelter for 200 individuals in November of 2019.

Since then there have been many positive changes.

- St. Mary's Church continues to lean creatively into the issues of homelessness with their deep sponsorship of A Better Tent City, with 50 cabins that support around 50+ people to have a place to call home. Tiny Home Takeout continues to

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Building Community for 40 Years



The Working Centre's 25th Anniversary in 2007

The Working Centre community has grown substantially since our founding in 1982. See a timeline on page 4.

Read our annual fundraising letter outlining the extensive work we are doing in response to important issues in our community

Read the letter on page 8

Thirty Eighth Year

Issue 151

December 2022

Good Work News

Good Work News was first produced in September 1984. It is published four times a year by The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen as a forum of opinions and ideas on work and unemployment. Four issues of Good Work News constitutes our annual report. There is a circulation of 13,000 copies. Subscription: a donation towards our work.

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The 34th Mayors' Dinner

The Working Centre is pleased to
announce the 34th Mayors' Dinner
Saturday, April 15th, 2023

The Mayors' Dinner draws together an interesting and
diverse group of friends and community members to
celebrate outstanding community contributions

We invite you to become involved by purchasing
tickets, sponsorships, a community table for your
group, company or church

For more details, please contact Kara at:
519.743.1151 x119 | mayorsdinner@theworkingcentre.org

Alternative Gift Giving

Your donation to The Working Centre can be turned into a
creative gift giving idea. Each donation card details the work
supported through your donation. *As the donor, you will
receive a tax receipt, plus the card to give as a recognition of
your gift. Also available through our online catalogue.*

Lunch for 400 people using
St. John's Kitchen each day
A \$50 donation will help to
cover food costs for providing
the daily meal

Laundry and Clean Clothes
Each day, 5 to 10 people do
laundry, take a shower, and access
clean clothing. A \$50 donation will
go towards laundry costs per month

Winter Items
A \$10 donation will help
purchase gloves, hats, scarfs,
and socks for someone in need

Cab Fare
A \$20 donation will help someone
in crisis pay for their ride to the
hospital or to an appointment.

An Alternative Christmas Gift Idea

For donations made in the name of family and friends, we
will gladly send a Christmas card acknowledging your gift.

Please direct my gift to:

☐ St. John's Kitchen ☐ The Working Centre

Please send a Christmas card to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Your name, email, and address:

(So we can send you an Income Tax receipt).

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____

For credit card payment please visit online at:
donate.theworkingcentre.org or call 519.743.1151 x111

Would you like to donate through e-transfer?
Please call us at 519.743.1151 x111 to set it up.

The Food Bank of
Waterloo Region Donated
700,000 Pounds of Food



Since the pandemic, the work
of food distribution has evolved
into a large scale operation.
Previously, meals were cooked
at St. John's Kitchen and at
Maurita's Kitchen (on Queen
Street) which prepared the wide
variety of items for the Queen Street Commons Café.

In September 2020, we created a commissary kitchen in Maurita's
Kitchen as the meals for St. John's Kitchen were required to be
cooked offsite. This meant adding
freezer/cooler capacity, an 80
gallon steam kettle and a double
convection steam oven. The plan
has enabled us to almost triple
capacity. Presently the commissary
kitchen cooks and prepares about
700 meals per day which are distributed at St. John's Kitchen,
the St. John's Kitchen Garage, University Avenue Dorms and
the Emergency Temporary Shelter.



All this is possible because of
the weekly food deliveries from
The Foodbank of Waterloo
Region. This year they donated
an astounding 700,000 pounds
of food.

We use most of the vegetables, meats and grains for the 700
meals that are prepared and distributed each day.

A further group of items like cereals, crackers, canned goods,
cookies, desserts, bread, condiments, juices etc. are distributed
to all locations plus a weekly distribution for people staying in
motels.

A Giant Thank You to the
Waterloo Region Foodbank!

Responding On the Ground

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offer engagement and food in downtown Kitchener.

- St. Andrew's Church leaned into the challenge for the winter of 2021, where we hosted a shelter in their church that served 60 people a night.
- The Region of Waterloo has strategically leaned into the issues through their August 2022 motion to add a Hybrid Encampment model (like the space at A Better Tent City), new shelter space, and new Interim Housing spaces. The work on this strategy continues and will have a positive impact over the next few months.
- We saw new supportive housing open at OneRoof and YWCA Block Line Road.
- As people at University Ave found housing (21 people have found ongoing supportive housing), we have welcomed new people in from the encampments and the motels.
- We welcome the re-opening of the YW shelter space hosted by SHIP (48 spots by the end of November), and the completion of the House of Friendship shelter on Weber St. in Waterloo (adding 74 new spaces projected for January).
- The east end of Kitchener has been adjusting with us to the new shelter space at the old Schwaben Club on King St. E., where we host 70+ people a night, and see 15-20 people a night on a wait-list.

All of these efforts are significant, but somehow are just not enough. We have invested in a region that is a hub of innovation, which attracts people to work and thrive in this community. Now the time has come to continue to invest in the people that are left out of this reality. There are those who are experiencing homelessness, and those facing extreme financial hardship to maintain their housing.

In our daily work we often find community development goals are pushed aside as we focus on basic survival, one person at a time. We visit encampments all over the city, welcome 250-300 people a day at St. John's Kitchen, support people in motels and interim housing and shelter, and help family households find work and access to benefits to make ends meet. Through all of this we are overwhelmed by the numbers of people who are desperate to meet basic needs, as we work to help each person feel known, recognized and loved.

Every religious tradition has a parable based on welcoming the stranger, of making room for one more. Given the complexities of deep dislocation, of mental health issues, of the impact of deep

addiction to mind-bending drugs, this hospitality is happening most often in government supported and organized services.

This work we are doing is a skill, a calling, a work of mercy, a work of love. We as a wider community are called to lean in:

- To contribute blankets, gloves, hats, and boots
- To know that if we are to support everyone, then all of our neighbourhoods will be effected by homelessness as we search for suitable locations for housing and shelter – how do we adapt thoughtfully to this reality?
- To know that an ambulance arriving at a shelter isn't a problem, but is a life-saving moment for a group of people growing increasingly unwell who do not have adequate access to healthcare.
- To influence our political representatives to spend precious resources on supporting people who are most left out.
- To call for increased health, mental health and addictions supports.

How do we support one another to develop the emotional and community resilience to make change happen? We know we have to dig deeper to find the ways to influence this reality so that some of us are not sitting inside our homes warm and housed, while others remain outside growing increasingly disenfranchised and desperate for the money that feeds an addiction. How do we reconcile this reality?

We know that a welcoming community and access to resources is a key antidote to the issues before us. If we put all our work into providing for basic needs, where is the capacity to create community that helps to shift the balance of despair? If we are strategic and intentional we can still make a difference.

One of our outreach workers reached out recently – "someone else needs to hear about this". Increasingly we are seeing untenable moments, people living in extreme situations that do not match the ethics we hold as a community. These moments are becoming more and more frequent as the weather gets colder. With hearts broken open we respond with every possibility we can muster.

All we can do is to stand in the place that says this is an unacceptable reality, where we continue to stand in love and solidarity, acting-in a moment at a time, to a reality that should not be happening. So many people work together to make the work of caring kindness possible. We have such gratitude for the generosity, for the solidarity, while also calling for more definitive actions to shift these realities. We choose to stand together in hope.

Louisa House to Welcome Refugees

The Working Centre was gifted a house on Louisa Street in the 2000's.

- It had previously been a house welcoming women involved in the justice system, under the auspices of the Elizabeth Fry Society.
- When The Working Centre first hosted the house, it became a place of transitional housing for women, many of whom were seeking respite as they re-established their lives after incarceration, abuse, and homelessness.
- Louisa Street house then transitioned to become home for Threshold's Extraordinary Needs Program, providing after-hospital care for people with severe mental health needs, to stabilize after a hospital stay. Thresholds has now relocated this service to their Lawrence Ave facilities.

Now, this house will welcome refugee claimants who are often ending up in the shelter system due to the lack of safe affordable landing spots for people who are new to our community.

This house will offer hospitality, and a short term stay as people apply for Ontario Works, find hosts who welcome them as they stabilize in

our community, and connect them to refugee serving organizations offering practical supports.

This project joins a long tradition of refugee supports offered by The Working Centre:

- For 20 years we supported the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support, now Compass Refugee Centre
- We actively hosted the Lancaster House as a place of landing in the 1990's for hundreds of people who crossed the border and claimed refugee status in Canada
- We consistently help refugees and New Canadians to find work, and access income supports as they become eligible for financial support in Canada

Isaiah Ritzmann, a long-term TWC worker will serve as host for the house, bridging people to community resources and connecting people with available housing opportunities or shared housing through Open Homes. Open Homes is a grass-roots network of families in Waterloo Region who offer medium-term housing for refugees.

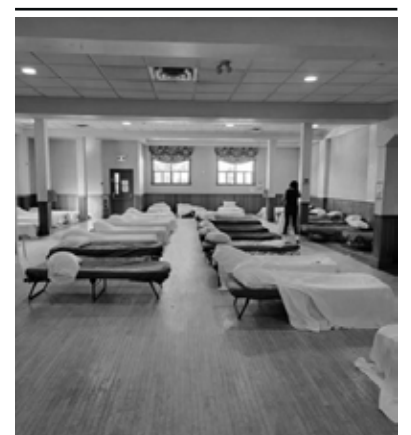
Host families open up their homes and live in community with refugees, offering a place of safety, warmth, and relationships for people newly arrived in Canada.

King Street Shelter Welcomes Over 70 People Each Night

Our King Street shelter welcomes 70+ people a night. We have now been operating out of this new emergency shelter at 1668 King Street East for almost two months now. We are renting the space from Stephen Litt of Vive and Woodhouse Properties who plan to start construction on two rental apartment towers in June of 2024.

This shelter is part of the Region of Waterloo's plan to address growing homelessness. Each night when we open the doors there are over 70 people who are waiting to come in to get a warm meal, access washrooms, a cot in a shared space, and a place of welcome and rest. We fill up quickly and there easily 20 others who gather outside, who wait for a bed to become available as some people sleep for a while and then leave, who come in to warm up as they wait for a bed to become available.

The work of this Emergency Shelter, as basic as it is, is very important. Many come into the shelter and go right to sleep, some nights there is music, the mood is often governed by the weather. This work is appreciated because the people doing the work are



constantly working to create a place of welcome and respect that people feel when they come to the space.

"They have a heart bigger than what I can make panhandling, but their decisions are life changing. ... How do they feel when they go home?"

"Here we are a person, not an addiction or a mental health issue. That's why we come here – you care."

This is a work of love and hospitality each night. A small gesture of support and solidarity in the face of the high numbers of people looking for housing.

The Working Centre: Building Community for 40 Years



May 1982

The Working Centre is established in a second floor office space at 94A Queen St. S in Kitchener



September 1984

The first issue of Good Work News is published

January 1985

The first meals at St. John's Kitchen are served at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church on Duke St.

January 1986

Following renovations, The Job Search Resource Centre opens in a rented space at 58 Queen St. S



February 1988

The first fundraising event takes place in recognition of local community builders. The first honoree is Mayor Dom Cardillo; in 1989, the annual event is renamed The Mayors' Dinner

November 1994

Purchase of 58 Queen St S building; apartments are added to third floor; renovations occur over the following years to expand into 66 Queen St. S



February 1998

Purchase of 43 Queen St. S; renovations begin to create community project spaces that are completed in October 2000

May 2006

Queen Street Commons Cafe and the Commons Studio open at 43 Queen St. S



July 2006

St. John's Kitchen moves to the second floor of the newly renovated 97 Victoria St. N location; Worth A Second Look Thrift Shop operates on the ground floor

May 2011

Hacienda Sarria Market Garden opens on Union St.; Recycle Cycles and The Green Door open at the new Market Lane location



June 2017

Fresh Ground opens at 256 King St. E; includes a cafe, an events space, the Commons Studio, and housing units on the upper floor

Fall 2021

Purchase of 44 Queen St. S; renovations begin on the 2nd and 3rd floors of the "Bricker Block" to add 21 units of affordable housing



2022

Plans are made to re-envision the 97 Victoria St. N location to add 44 interim housing units and build a new modern building for St. John's Kitchen

Volunteer Inspired and Community Focused

The Working Centre started from humble beginnings in May 1982 as a response to unemployment and poverty in downtown Kitchener. 40-plus years later we have survived as an independent instrument of self-help community development.

St. John's Kitchen

St. John's Kitchen started in January 1985 as a downtown initiative when the Core Area Ministry Committee invited The Working Centre to coordinate a project to create a place of shelter that would cook a hot daily meal in the downtown each day. We quickly had the support of St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church at Duke and Water where we were located for 22 years.

SJK now welcomes 400 people a day to access meals, both inside and outside at the garage. St. John's Kitchen serves all day as a place of shelter and meals, along with public washrooms, showers, laundry, outreach supports, medical and dental care. It is especially a place of belonging. Other supports include St. John's Clinic, Hospitality House, and Community Dental Clinic.

Employment & Financial Supports

The first project of The Working Centre was an independent Job Search Help Centre where resumes could be typed (before computers became widely available), where phone messages could be taken (before answering machines), job counselling was offered along with connections to job openings, help with Unemployment Insurance, assistance with food and housing and any other kind of support to help those without work in a labour market where there were over 20,000 people just on Unemployment Insurance.

The JSRC now helps support 2000+ job seekers annually through Job postings, resume support, employment counselling, links to employers, programs for New Canadians, and connections to community resources. Our Money Matters Hub connects people with a Financial Inclusion Outreach Worker for assistance with income tax, budgeting, community resources, government support programs, and problem solving.

Housing

In 1995, The Working Centre realized that large housing projects were beyond our capacity, but small housing projects fit our style. We proceeded to purchase old houses and buildings over the next 20 years with the goal of establishing apartment units with a mixed use approach. By the end of that era, after a great deal of renovations, we had 70 tenants living in our buildings and houses.

In recent years we have expanded our approach. Our projects are getting larger and the supports we offer are more intense. For example the 80 dorm units on University Avenue have allowed a group who were tenting to be part of a community where meals are served and supports are offered. The 22 units that are being built on Queen Street is the largest housing renovation project we have taken on with funding from Rapid Housing Initiative. The Making Home project at 97 Victoria will add 44 bachelor units, a project with an even larger scale.

Access to Community Tools

Our first Community Tool projects in the mid 1990's used an access to tools approach to assist those with low incomes to use less money by providing projects that fixed/repared bikes, fixed/repared computers, collected and sold used furniture, developed access to sewing machines and crafts, and set up community gardens.

Our community tools projects continue to do this same work. They offer great ways to save money, along with building skills, getting work experience, connecting with others, and promoting sustainability. All projects are open inclusive spaces that welcome anyone wanting to work, volunteer, shop, or visit.

Ideas & Engagement

The Waterloo School for Local Democracy has described a wide range of initiatives that engage the public with ideas and issues that affect The Working Centre. These include projects such as The Summer Institute, Community Engagement Option with WLU, book publishing, the Diploma in Local Democracy, Ecological Economics course, Good Work News, Fermented Thoughts and countless workshops and public events on a wide range of topics.

Grateful to Our Community of Support

Thank You to all the volunteers, donors, community partners, patrons, and staff that have contributed to the success of The Working Centre's projects and community building efforts over 40 years.

Disconnection, Synthetic Drugs, and Homelessness

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controls. While single family houses are often only half utilized, there is little demand and minimal scope within the building code and zoning to allow new creative housing options. While this is a very important aspect of the story there is more to it.

Underneath the rising impact of homelessness is a growing dependence on synthetic drugs. While these drugs have found their way into significant niches of the wider population, they are especially impactful on people who are homeless. Heavy use of these drugs over time reduces the ability to find or seek out housing opportunities. Drug use and apartment living do not mix well, particularly as we begin to understand the full story of the effects of Meth and Fentanyl.

Homelessness, drug use and lack of housing options are interrelated societal issues. Understanding how society effects drug use and how drug use is a reflection on society, demonstrates how interrelated these issues are.

Understanding the Roots of Addiction

Drug use grows out of disconnections from family, work and community. When as a society, individuals start to choose less for the common good, by sharing less and focusing more on individual/personal needs, then society loses its core strength of cohesiveness. When work and family are not anchors that hold people in community then the culture starts to fray. When a win-at-all-cost mentality seeps into business and social culture, then the outsiders feel rejected and abandoned. When a significant portion of the population no longer participates in work or the opportunity to make their community better through real opportunities, then this disconnection opens the door to negative perceptions, drained hope and minimized opportunity.

This negative interpretation of society directly takes into account the question of why a significant proportion of the homeless

Drug use grows out of disconnections from family, work and community. When as a society, individuals start to choose less for the common good, by sharing less and focusing more on individual/personal needs, then society loses its core strength of cohesiveness. When work and family are not anchors that hold people in community then the culture starts to fray.

population have turned to powerful synthetic drugs as a substitute for meaningful relationships. The drugs flood the neuro pathways with pleasurable dopamine. The drug seeker continually seeks these drugs to stroke an uptick in dopamine while unconsciously the conditions for depression are setting in, the result of the drugs overwhelming and disrupting brain chemistry. Individuals caught in this cycle are increasingly less fit to live in regular, unsupported housing. The drugs are so addictive, that their body hurts and aches if they are not able to feed their habit daily.

We have watched this drug epidemic take hold in Waterloo Region over the last 20 years. At first it was small and barely noticeable. 10 years ago it was starting to be significant. 5 years later, St. John's Kitchen dramatically changed as the drugs started to overwhelm the street culture.

Sam Quinones' Investigative Journalism

We have found in Sam Quinones a fully engaged journalist who has sought out and investigated this story of how drugs are undermining civic cultures throughout North America. His two books *Dreamland, The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic*, published in 2015, and *The Least of Us, True Tales of America in the Time of Fentanyl and Meth*, published in 2021, documents North America's debilitating drug problem and how homelessness is just one of the symptoms

Quinones' books document how these drugs have overpowered communities. In summary, cartels have learned to produce Fentanyl which is a hundred times more powerful than morphine. They are able to lace microscopic amounts of Fentanyl into other drug products while also creating efficient and economic distribution networks. A further innovation was learning how to make Methamphetamine more potent and cheaper. Often Fentanyl and Meth are mixed together. This combination has resulted in 1000's of deaths and many more dependent people.

In the 1960's, recreational drug use was limited to a small minority of people who were heroin and cocaine users. These substances were difficult to obtain, thrived in

isolated communities and resulted in harsh prison sentences when people were convicted of possession and trafficking. Slowly other drugs and drug derivatives started to gain a wider foothold in society. In the 1990's a crack cocaine epidemic in American inner cities led to increased violent crime. By the late 1990's there were already crack houses in Kitchener. But still drug use was limited and so were the drugs which were derived from plants which caused constant supply constraints.

Industrial Production of Synthetic Drugs

For most products, industrial production and efficient distribution is a laudable goal for

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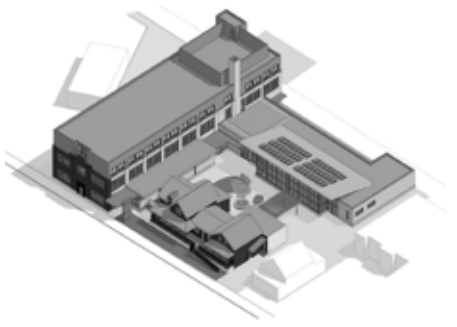
Making Home Update: 97 Victoria Street North

While things might not look much different at 97 Victoria Street, there is a lot going on behind the scenes. In consultation with The Working Centre and Perimeter Development, BNKC - the project architect - and their team of engineers are busy finalizing the design for the new St. John's Kitchen and for the 44 new units of affordable housing.

A major focus of their work is designing for a zero carbon building. This includes planning for the use of electrical appliances rather than natural gas (fossil fuel) appliances, selecting energy efficient systems and materials, and designing for minimal heat loss through thermal bridging. We are also planning to maximize the number of solar panels that our building will accommodate on the roof of the third floor and the new St. John's Kitchen building.

During this design phase, Govan Brown, our Construction Management team, is working closely with the whole project team to review and refine our construction costs to ensure that any cost efficiencies are found and that our projected expenses are as accurate as possible.

The next steps are completing the site plan application and final architectural and engineering drawings for the building permit process. Our hope is that construction will begin around March 2023 with occupancy one year later.



The fundraising goal of our local Capital Campaign is \$6 million. Perimeter Development kicked-off our campaign last spring with a very generous contribution of \$1 million. We are now pleased to confirm that the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation has donated \$2 million to our Capital Campaign, as part of their response to the housing crisis. We have confirmed an additional \$900,000 from local citizens and other community organizations and have many other donors considering contributions. We are confident that we are on the right track towards meeting our goal of \$6 million.

We have also had great support from Vidyard to help us plan our community engagement work including enhanced use of videos, support for designing our campaign website, and support on developing our social media approach. Vidyard has also helped us develop our Fundraising BINGO Kit as an engagement tool for local groups. The kit makes it easy for you to get involved, make a difference, and have a little fun while raising money for a critical cause in your community. We're also looking to spotlight organizations that are running this kit on our social media platforms, so please get in touch if you're interested.

To learn more about the project or make a contribution, visit: www.97victoria.theworkingcentre.org



Disconnection, Synthetic Drugs, and Homelessness

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business organizations. The ability of industrial society to produce potent and addictive products is often praised for creativity and effort. The dark side is when these productive powers are unleashed to create destructive products.

The process of industrial production unleashes a great competition for products that have the highest use value and the lowest cost. In a recent podcast, Quinones described the process of Chicken McNuggets that contain 50% fat, which are cheap to produce because of the amalgamated ingredients, that are then fried to add more fat and then served with a sugar laced dipping sauce. This kind of product development is praised even though the product is addictive and horrendously bad for one's health. But as Quinones notes, no one loses their house over eating Chicken McNuggets. But that is exactly what happens when this same process is used to produce Meth and Fentanyl.

By 2010, Ephedrine Meth was widely used throughout North America. When cooked with corn starch it is turned into crystal meth. An underground meth cooking spree from over the counter Sudafed resulted in a Meth crisis. This led to strict import laws for handling ephedrine in Canada, US and Mexico. In order to get around this blockade, Meth producers have devised a different cooking method called P2P Meth that uses toxic and easily available industrial chemicals like lye, hydrochloric acid, acetone, racing fuel or cyanide to produce Meth in industrial quantities. Ephedrine Meth seemed like a social drug causing the user to stay awake for long periods. P2P Meth is completely different, its side effects are psychosis, hallucinations and delusions all leading towards greater mental health degradation.

In both of Quinones books he documents the full story behind Purdue Pharma's OxyContin, and how, through legal pain prescriptions, this drug was issued in quantities of hundreds of millions per year. The long term result was a massive number of deaths by opioid overdoses. The high dosage of opioids in each OxyContin set the stage for greater levels of addictions. In essence the legal pharmaceutical drug market has helped to stimulate wider drug addiction issues.

Fentanyl and Meth Overwhelm the Market

All these drugs seem to be piling on top of each other – who can keep track of the heroin, the crystal meth, the opioids? Underneath all of this, the drug cartels have been experimenting and competing against each other to broaden their



Sam Quinones is an independent journalist, photographer, and author who has investigated and chronicled all aspects of the opioid crisis in the United States and Mexico.

market share.

Quinones demonstrates that the process has crowned Fentanyl and P2P Meth as overwhelming market leaders. In five short years these two chemical drug derivatives have substantially displaced other drugs by having the lowest cost, the highest use value, the best high and are equally highly addictive substances. This market triumph has left livelihoods in shambles, minds broken, families torn apart, physical and mental distress and a subculture of despair. Communities and cities are worse off because of this scourge.

The real image of Meth and Fentanyl is of abandoned homeless encampments that are strewn with garbage, clothing, bike parts, cans, bottles, wood, packaging, tarps and scattered food products. In these encampments people struggle to meet basic needs while they do not have water or washrooms, where they must deal with the weather each day and where survival means a constant search for food. In this context the final result is that the drugs create a desert of human disconnection.

At the same time they are symbolic of our cultures greatest vices – our belief in the winner-take-all mentality – finding its worst expression in Meth and Fentanyl, leaving the people defenseless.

Homelessness, drug use and the lack of housing options are interrelated societal issues. Each problem is related to the other, as our communities find themselves in the middle of a drug and homelessness epidemic. There is no easy path out at this point. More housing can help but it will not lessen the level of drug infiltration. When people find meaning in work and relationships, this will lessen homelessness and drug use. What will it take to get our society focused on pathways that integrate work, family and community? These are steps that are essential to comprehend and understand in order to see change in the current crisis.

Available Now

Making Home

Douglas MacLellan

Making Home is a visual journey depicted through portraits, daily life, graffiti, writings on the walls, and inanimate objects to shed light on housing and opioid use over a two-year period in Kitchener and Waterloo, Ontario. The photography is inspired by street people and the people who help them.

Places and locations depicted in the text and photographs relate to programs and community tools created by

The Working Centre, a community based, socially active non-profit organization based in Kitchener. Joe Mancini, co-founder of The Working Centre, has written the introduction, adding context to MacLellan's words and photographs.

\$30.00 | Published by Black Moss Press

Available for purchase at: catalogue.theworkingcentre.org



The Diploma in Local Democracy

Begins January 4th, 2023

"Democratic relationships in everyday life form the roots of a democratic society."



Together we reflect on our own experiences of democracy and think about what it means to include people in the decisions that affect their lives, what practicing reciprocity looks like, and why everyday equality is necessary for a democratic future.

Come participate in a dynamic and diverse discussion with the engaged community members.

We welcome you to join us!

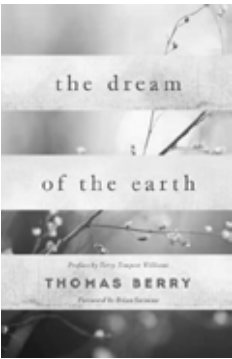
The class runs Wednesdays 7pm - 9pm from January until the end of April.

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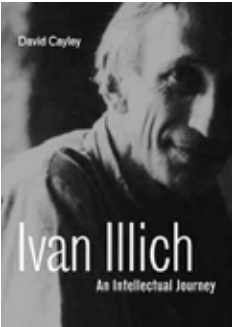


The Dream of the Earth

Thomas Berry

Noted cultural historian Thomas Berry provides nothing less than a new intellectual–ethical framework for the human community by positing planetary well-being as the measure of all human activity. Drawing on the wisdom of Western philosophy, Asian thought, and Native American traditions, as well as contemporary physics and evolutionary biology, Berry offers a new perspective that recasts our understanding of science, technology, politics, religion, ecology, and education. He shows us why it is important for us to respond to the Earth’s need for planetary renewal, and what we must do to break free of the “technological trance” that drives a misguided dream of progress. Only then, he suggests, can we foster mutually enhancing human–Earth relationships that can heal our traumatized global biosystem.

264 pages | \$25.50 softcover

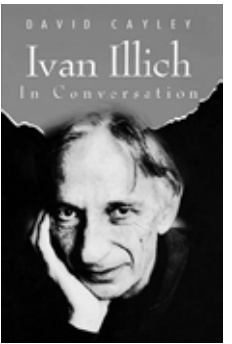


Ivan Illich: An Intellectual Journey

David Cayley

In the years since Ivan Illich’s death, David Cayley has been reflecting on the meaning of his friend and teacher’s life and work. Now, in *Ivan Illich: An Intellectual Journey*, he presents Illich’s body of thought, locating it in its own time and retrieving its relevance for ours. Ranging over every phase of Illich’s career and meditating on each of his books, Cayley finds Illich to be as relevant today as ever and more likely to be understood, now that the many convergent crises he foresaw are in full public view and the church that rejected him is paralyzed in its “folkloric” shell.

560 pages | \$63.95 hardcover

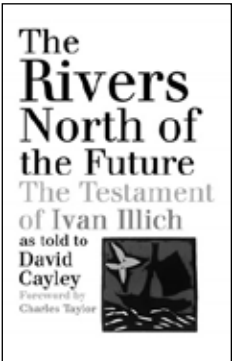


Ivan Illich: In Conversation

David Cayley

In the late 1980’s, David Cayley started interviewing Ivan Illich and these fascinating conversations for radio are gathered in *Ivan Illich in Conversation* and range over a wide selection of the celebrated thinker’s published work and public career. Illich’s brilliant mind alights on topics of great contemporary interest, including education, history, language, politics, and the church.

320 pages | \$21.95 softcover



The Rivers North of the Future

The Testament of Ivan Illich

as told to David Cayley

“Ivan Illich was an iconoclast who urged a fundamental rethinking of modern institutions. He believed that Western civilization can only be understood properly as a corruption of the New Testament” This book is based on a series of interviews during which Illich explores how ‘the corruption of the best is the worst.’ As Charles Taylor notes in his foreword, ‘from within [Illich’s] perspective, the significance of the Good Samaritan story appears obvious: it is a stage on the road to a universal morality of rules.’ Illich’s analysis of contemporary society is both a bold historical hypothesis and an invitation to believers to revise and renew their understanding of Christian faith.”

256 pages | \$24.95 softcover



The Working Centre

Experiment in Social Change

Ken Westhues

Published in 1995, this book offers an understanding of The Working Centre’s founding concepts and how it produces knowledge and action in an effort to improve the community in which it belongs. Westhues draws a portrait of The Working Centre through a wide angle lens and demonstrates how it is doing authentic sociology. The second section consists of articles from Joe and Stephanie Mancini, Arleen Macpherson and Dave Conzani. Section three offers descriptions of earlier experiments in community-based work in the words of activist intellectuals Dorothy Day, Moses Coady and Jane Addams.

127 pages, \$20.00 softcover



Transition to Common Work

Building Community at The Working Centre

Joe and Stephanie Mancini

The Working Centre in downtown Kitchener, Ontario, is a widely recognized and successful model for community development. Begun from scratch in 1982, it is now a vast network of practical supports for the unemployed, the underemployed, the temporarily employed, and the homeless, populations that collectively constitute up to 30 percent of the labour market both locally and across North America. This essential text is about The Working Centre—its beginnings thirty years ago, the lessons learned, and the myriad ways in which its strategies and innovations can be adapted by those who share its goals.

212 pages | \$20.00 softcover



Dreamland

The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic

Sam Quinones

With a great reporter’s narrative skill and the storytelling ability of a novelist, acclaimed journalist Sam Quinones weaves together two classic tales of capitalism run amok whose unintentional collision has been catastrophic. The unfettered prescribing of pain medications during the 1990s reached its peak in Purdue Pharma’s campaign to market OxyContin, its new, expensive—extremely addictive—miracle painkiller. Meanwhile, a massive influx of black tar heroin—cheap, potent, and originating from one small county on Mexico’s west coast, independent of any drug cartel-assaulted small town and mid-sized cities across the country, driven by a brilliant, almost unbeatable marketing and distribution system. Together these phenomena continue to lay waste to communities from across the United States.

400 pages | \$22.00 softcover



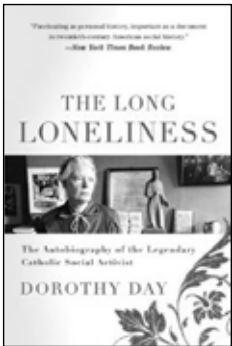
The Least of Us

True Tales of America and Hope in the Time of Fentanyl and Meth

Sam Quinones

From the New York Times bestselling author of *Dreamland*, a searing follow-up that explores the terrifying next stages of the opioid epidemic and the quiet yet ardent stories of community repair. Quinones hit the road to investigate these new threats, discovering how addiction is exacerbated by consumer-product corporations. “In a time when drug traffickers act like corporations and corporations like traffickers,” he writes, “our best defense, perhaps our only defense, lies in bolstering community.” Amid a landscape of despair, Quinones found hope in those embracing the forgotten and ignored, illuminating the striking truth that we are only as strong as our most vulnerable.

432 pages | \$24.00 softcover



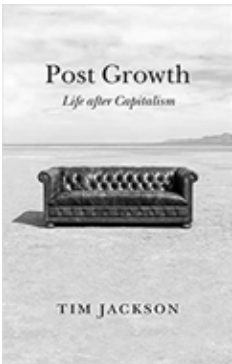
The Long Loneliness

Autobiography of the Legendary Catholic Social Activist

Dorothy Day

Here, in her own words, Dorothy Day tells of her early life as a young journalist in the crucible of Greenwich Village political and literary thought in the 1920s, and of her momentous conversion to Catholicism that meant the end of a Bohemian lifestyle and a common-law marriage. The Long Loneliness chronicles Dorothy Day’s lifelong association with Peter Maurin and the genesis of the Catholic Worker Movement. In her commitment to peace, nonviolence, racial justice, and the cause of the poor, she became an inspiration to many other activists.

304 pages | \$21.00 softcover



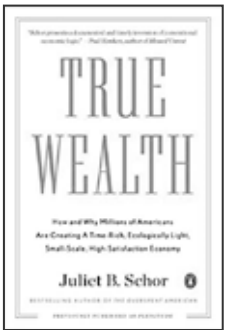
Post Growth: Life after Capitalism

Tim Jackson

Capitalism is broken. The relentless pursuit of more has delivered climate catastrophe, social inequality and financial instability – and left us ill-prepared for life in a global pandemic. Tim Jackson’s passionate and provocative book dares us to imagine a world beyond capitalism – a place where relationship and meaning take precedence over profits and power. Post Growth is both a manifesto for system change and an invitation to rekindle a deeper conversation about the nature of the human condition.

Tim Jackson is Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP) and Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey in the UK. For over three decades, he has pioneered research on the moral, economic and social dimensions of prosperity on a finite planet.

256 pages | \$23.95 softcover



True Wealth

A Time-Rich, Ecologically Light, Small Scale Economy

Juliet B. Schor

In True Wealth, economist Juliet B. Schor rejects the sacrifice message, with the insight that social innovations and new technology can simultaneously enhance our lives and protect the planet. Schor shares examples of urban farmers, DIY renovators, and others working outside the conventional market to illuminate the path away from the work-and-spend cycle and toward a new world rich in time, creativity, information, and community.

272 pages | \$24.00 softcover



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Building Community for 40 Years

Housing & Shelter at The Working Centre



60+ People

currently with housing at Working Centre properties



21 Affordable Units

added after renovations at 54 Queen St. South



80 People

supported at motel rooms



80 People

supported at University Avenue (UA) Dorms



60+ Beds

available at the Emergency Shelter



44 Interim Units

to be built as part of the renovation project at 97 Victoria St. North

Dear Friends,

The Working Centre has been on a journey to address growing homelessness as the numbers of people who are homeless, unwell, and vulnerable to a toxic drug supply are growing. In November 2019, it became clear that over 250 people were without shelter and action was needed to address this reality. For three years now, our focus has been to prioritize those unsheltered through community projects.

St. John's Kitchen continues to be a vital response, having remained open throughout the pandemic. St. John's Kitchen is a primary place for the unsheltered, providing access to meals, showers, laundry, public washrooms, outreach and medical supports. From the garage at St. John's Kitchen we distribute take-out meals and items from the pantry. Each day, St. John's Kitchen welcomes 400+ people to access meals and multiple services.

Back in August 2020, we converted our kitchen on Queen Street into a commissary kitchen where, with the help of food donations and volunteers, we produce over 700 meals each day that are served at St. John's Kitchen, the University Avenue Dorms and the Emergency Shelter.

The Shelter work now comprises three projects that support up to 230 people each night.

The University Avenue Dorms ensures 80 people have had housing and a place to build on new opportunities. The supports, meals and housing have made tremendous differences in the lives of many residents.

Since December 2021, we have supported a nightly emergency shelter of about 60 beds first at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, then at the former EdithMac daycare and now at King East. Every night there are up to twenty more people waiting outside than we can accommodate because of capacity limits. The new shelter will allow for more beds as the need is greater than ever.


The Working Centre, through the Region of Waterloo has also provided 60 motel rooms, supporting 80 people who were unsheltered with medical needs.

This year, we started construction at 54 Queen South to build 21 loft units for new Canadian single parents. We also announced the Making Home project that will be a major renovation of the 97 Victoria North property to build 44 single units of housing for the long-term homeless.

On Queen Street, the Job Search Resource Centre continues to be a support over 100 different people per day who are job searching or navigating income support. Our Job Café projects in downtown Kitchener have continued street sweeping, evening garbage pickup, and downtown Outreach. Our Community Tool projects provide important supports at Recycle Cycles Community Bike Shop, Computer Recycling and Worth A Second Look Furniture and Housewares thrift store.

Your donations have helped us resource and act on creative projects to serve the growing homelessness issues. Supporters of The Working Centre have proven, year after year, that community donations are vital to respond to local issues. We are grateful for your ongoing support in building our community of support.

Sincerely,



Joe Mancini,
Director

We share our quarterly newspaper Good Work News with our contributors. Learn more about our community-based initiatives by visiting our website at www.theworkingcentre.org

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