

Regina PhotoVoice Project 2007

Public Showing

**CATALOGUE, DECEMBER 3, 2008
Part 5 of 5**

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Contact Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence, Regina, Saskatchewan
pwhce@uregina.ca, (306) 585-5727, or 535-9570 regarding use of photos.

Notes to Display

All photos were taken in Regina.

People in the photos signed a consent form.

For some photos the person being photographed posed for the photo to illustrate the situation.

Social Change



Bureaucratic Lies

At the legislature our setting is so beautiful, like the flowers and plants. We are hidden behind the beauty of the garden, pushed aside like a “dirty little secret”.

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The Legislative Building

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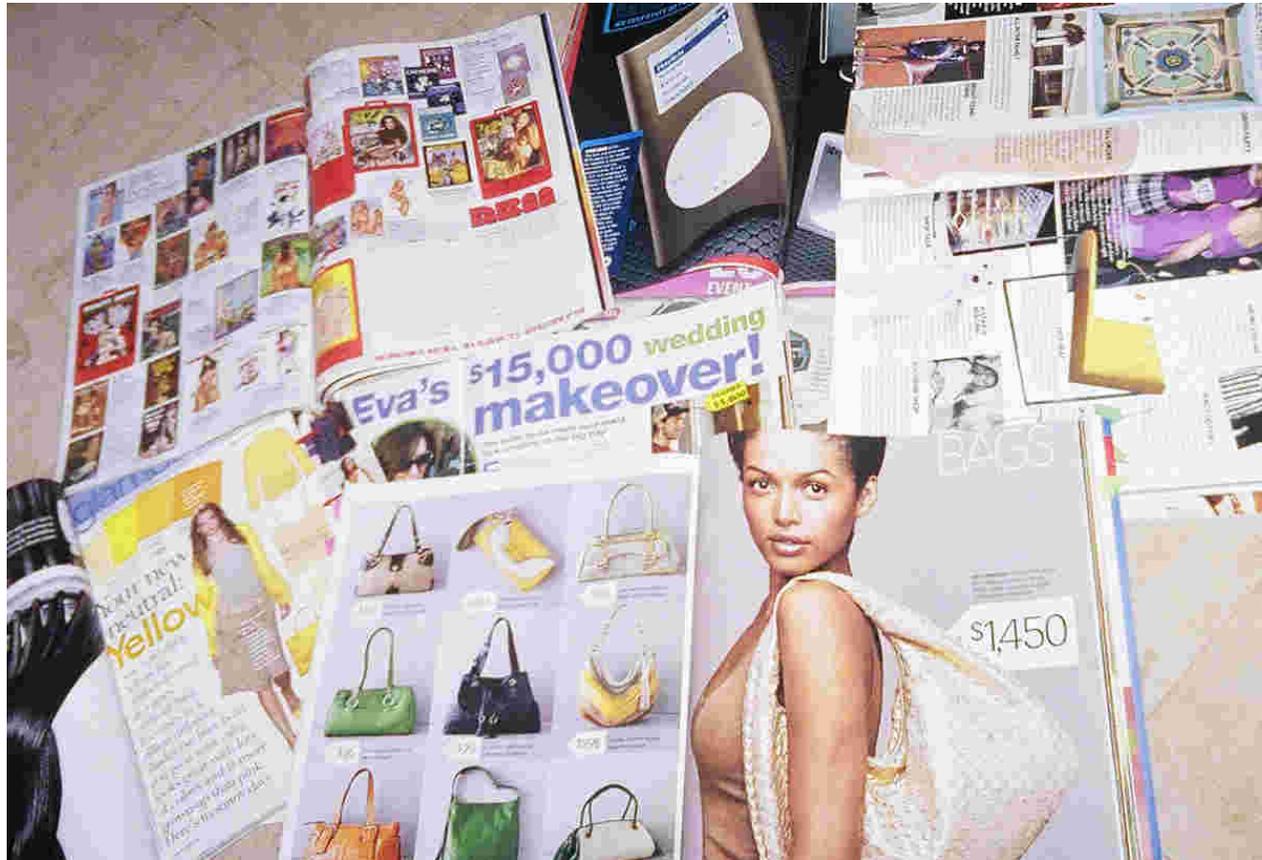
This is a place where the laws and the rules are passed. But the lawmakers really don't know the true needs of the people who are on Assistance and Disability. They should consult the people who are in these situations and make laws according to their needs.



Freedom?

Our grandparents fought for our freedom, signed treaties for our education and health in trade for the land and we are still subject to oppression.

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They Are the Ones Who Should Be Ashamed

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It's wrong to consume more than you contribute. But the fashion and entertainment industry puts us down to make us insecure, greedy, spoiled, and jealous. The media and equality do not coincide. We contribute more than them. They are the ones who deserve the shame and the poverty.

**The Poor:
Deserving Citizens or
Charity Cases?**



Looking at these overflowing bins, I asked myself, what is in those bins? Then I took a closer look at the contents and found that there are so many items, some well used and others over-used. I believe there are people that would see these items as treasures, but I also believe this is so because they do not have the means to afford better. Being poor forces one to take whatever life throws at you. Surely the poor citizens of this country are deserving citizens too; with rights to better basic needs such as what is provided by these charity bins. This is where the role of government comes in to ensure equitable distribution of wealth.



Deserted Due to Dollars

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To a regular passerby, between Monday-Friday the group of people congregated and smoking in the front of this building appears to be loitering. No one knows, or understands the circumstances in their lives or the journey it takes them to get there. Some are agoraphobics and scared to go out of their homes, but yet they make this trip to this place where they are among friends and are understood. They are treated as family; they don't have to hide their current conditions. There are too many barriers in society and they feel forced out through no fault of their own. (cont'd)

Deserted Due to Dollars (Continued)

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If there was more funding, the CMHA could stay open for more hours and the front of the building would not be so deserted as it was when this photo was taken.

The food at CMHA is \$5 for 20 meals and available to all those who come there. Some of them don't go to restaurants where the smell of food entices them because they are hungry but they can't afford to buy it. Most of them cannot work or hold a job for long, due to their disabilities.

Some of the people who come to visit have very long hair because they cannot afford haircuts. At least the haircuts are free at CMHA.

All of them have interesting stories to tell and most of them were happy to share them with us. The stories were about the lack of supports that the provincial government provides for people with either visible or invisible disabilities. Some of the horror stories brought tears to my eyes because human beings do not deserve to be treated this way in Canada.



Pillars of Our Community

We say the world is multicultural, shared, everyone's and belongs to all. The world is your oyster? In reality, the world is some people's oyster; low income people's abyss. Due to stingy cuts to social and community programs such as health care and libraries, the worst off of us find ourselves in an increasingly deep abyss. Where are you?

Why was this library once upon a time slated to be cut, rather than, for instance, a library that is located outside the core? Why this library rather than...

.. How's your health care these days? How will our health care be if we continue to buy and use more machinery instead of staffing more nurses to care for those who could be put in the now empty beds? People not profit! Health for all individuals before wealth for a few investors!

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Keeping in Touch

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Often people on Assistance aren't able to buy gifts to attend birthday parties and other occasions, and consequently lose touch with friends and family. Communication is important.



Folk Songs of Poverty

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Here's a picture of Regina's own singing group "Reel Anti-Suppressants". We happened to catch their performance in the Regina City Hall Courtyard. The six-member group was performing one of their many songs which pretty well sums up the situation as "This land was made for you not me". After all, a charade in sheep's clothing is still a charade. Poverty produces advocacy and apparently music and song. Under the slavery and oppression of their lives, these people raise their voices.

Lack of Necessity



This to me represents so much of what I deal with - emptiness, depression, being alone - the unknown - what will take place - poverty is that place - desolate, alone, no team work, nor is there support for those that need it - being disabled this is true - disabled and poor - Hmmm - not good - things need to change and change they must for all - I personally detest this state - we help/support in disasters with team work - yet the poor cannot get the same as we give to others, what is wrong - poverty - loneliness, isolation, uncertainty - "this needs to stop" - being human it is nice to help others in an unselfish way - yet the poor in this country and others are ignored due to lack of compassion or is it greed?? We all have the support all of us or we fade away like the paint on the benches. My life represents this yet I know I can try and repaint, however, supports are needed. Being poor and disabled not good - we are all in this together - we as humans can make a difference - - - can't we???

Legal and Tax



Federal Democracy Axed

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The basic theme of a commonwealth nation is the voice of its many peoples. Therefore in political terms we call that a democracy. From the dawn of the conception of our country, we were governed by the British North America Act. This began with Lord Durham's report, which included the voices of everyone within the conception of a nation. At this point in time the indigenous North American peoples also held councils in a democratic practice, which supported the nations becoming unified, prosperous and more powerful.

(cont'd)

Federal Democracy Axed

(Continued)

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Regulatory and review panels provide the self-healing process in order for a democratic system to run effectively. Simply by changing one word in the Child and Family Services Act, the word 'will' have a review, to 'may', this process doesn't necessarily happen. As a result, you can now have a child removed from your home on a hearsay basis, without a review.

This lack of review takes away from your democratic rights. This unconstitutional Child and Family Services Act can lead to inappropriate apprehension on the one hand and on the other hand the premature return of children to unsuitable situations. In order for a proper decision to be made we need these democratic elements to be reinstated as required by Canadian Constitution.

by "Willa-May Shell"



System with Cracks

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When my friend's son was four years old he went to a new babysitter. After a couple of weeks he started having problems with wetting his pants. He had been potty trained early and never before this had any accidents, so the Mom became concerned about the possibility of him being molested. Upon speaking to the babysitter she talked about an incident involving her seven-year-old daughter and the neighbour boys who had been playing "doctor-style" games. The suspected kids ranged in age from 5 to 12 years.

(cont'd)

System with Cracks

(Continued)

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First thing the following Monday she contacted the Regina City Police and was given a number to the counseling centre. The Mom wanted to get the boy to a proper environment so with the help of authorities they could determine what happened. When she called this number a woman gave her a hostile reception and asked where she got the number from and then gave her another number. Upon calling this number the Mom got the run around again. She then went to see an RCMP friend who was told by her supervisors to give out the first number in this incident.

To this day my friend has got no resolution for her son or the babysitter's child. And who knows if the other children who were engaging in this activity were doing so because they were experiencing some kind of problems that needed attention. We are so poorly structured that you can't even report the abuse of a child.

by "Living in Darkness"



Child Abuse on the Loose

My friend's children were apprehended by child protection workers. Word was that she had allowed an unsupervised visit with her ex-spouse who had been charged with a 151 offence for sexual interference with a child. But in reality she had been required to allow the visit by a social worker that did not realize the father had charges against him. This should not have happened.

On January 1, 1988 changes were made to the Criminal Code of Canada and the Canada Evidence Act requiring the police and social services to investigate child abuse and neglect cases within 24 hours, and to communicate with each other about these cases. But these links are not being made between the Regina City Police and the Regina Children's Justice Centre.

Also the lack of regulatory and review panels prevent this area of government from investigating and coming up with the correct information. This prevents an informed decision regarding apprehension cases.

by "Hear - Speak - See No Justice"

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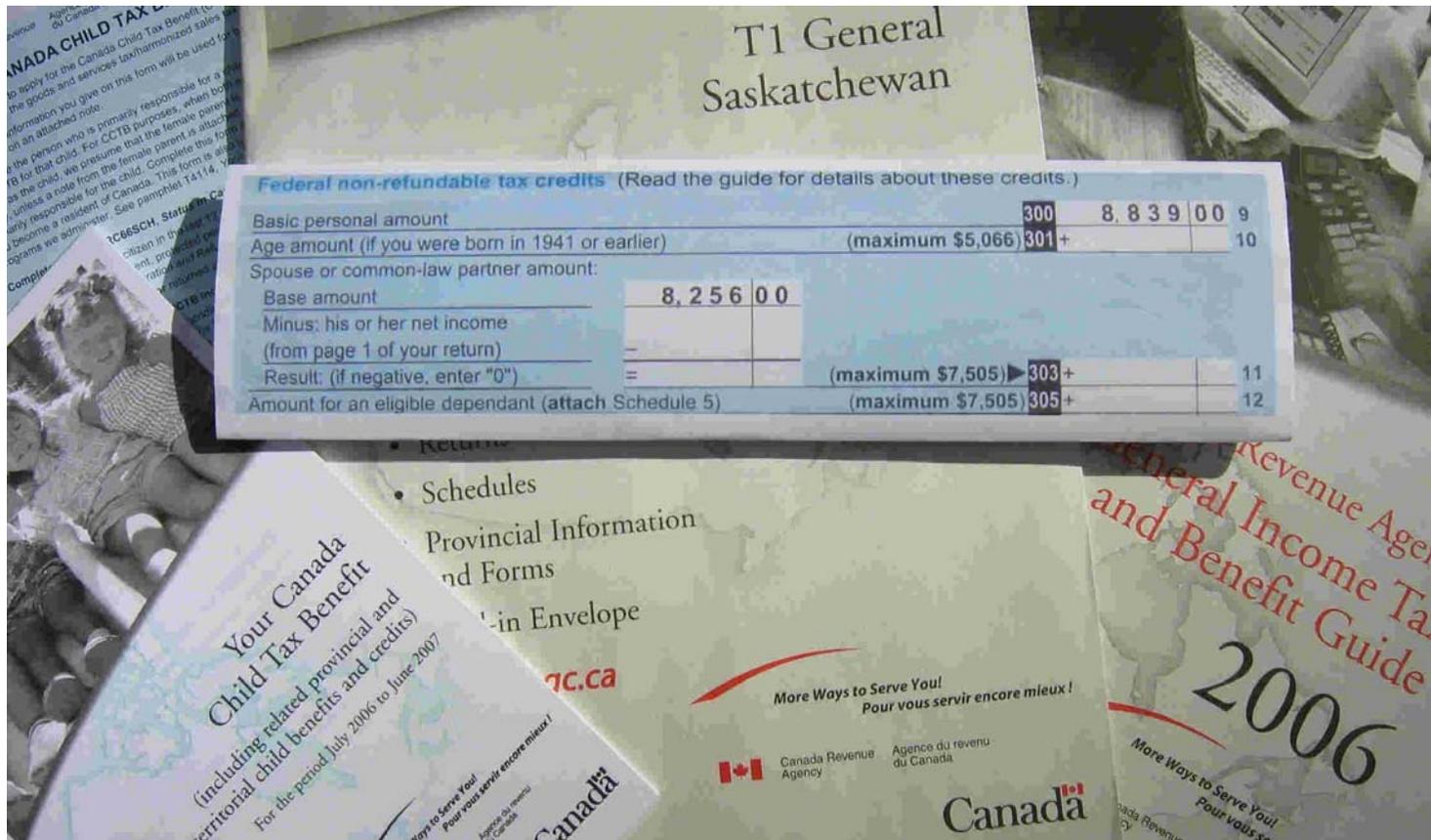


Systematic Corruption

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I recently had a warrant issued for a fine for a cat that was picked up by the humane society - but this fine was paid already years ago. This originated through city hall that had misinterpreted documentation and passed this to the Regina City Police who issued a warrant for my arrest. I was absolutely amazed at the stupidity in this. I also found it quite peculiar that something backdated would be pushed forward. In my work they sweep your name every year to make sure you have no outstanding fines. However this warrant showed up back dated from 2004.

by "Wowed in Regina"



Discrimination Against the Poor

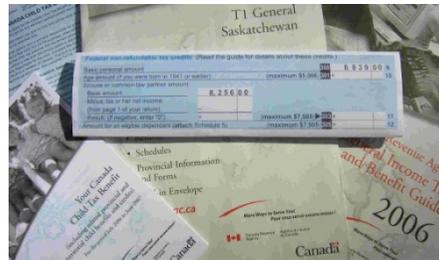
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Child poverty could be easily eradicated by addressing the funding that is essential to survive.

The amount given by social assistance is below the level of the federal basic personal exemption amount. This amount is established by the Federal government through research and should be considered a basic level of income. A person on assistance should be allowed to keep maintenance payments, earnings and other monies until they exceed personal exemption amount. Also they should not have their assistance cut by the amount of the Child Tax Benefit. (cont'd)

Discrimination Against the Poor (Continued)

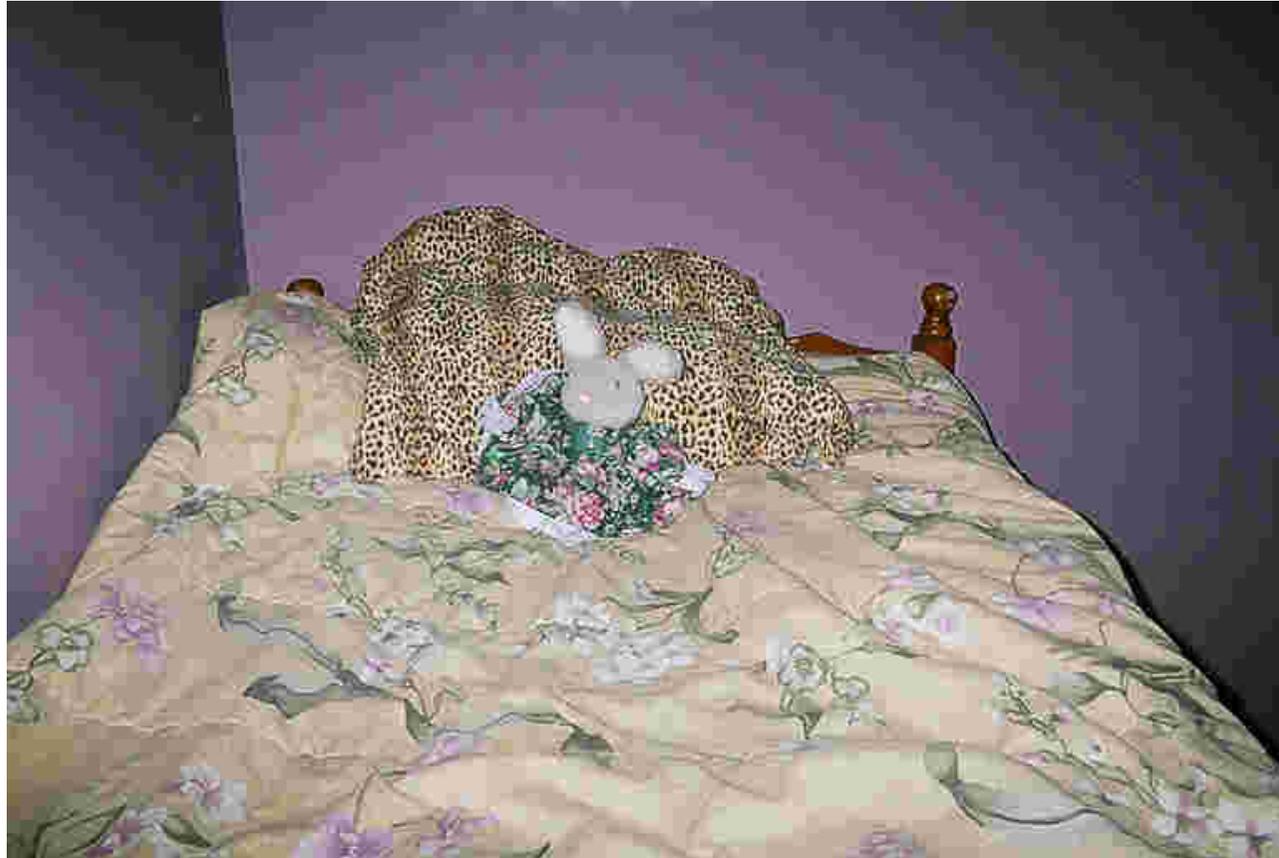
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It is really important that mothers and children should be allowed to keep every dime of child support they get until their income reaches the personal exemption amounts allowed on your federal income tax. If someone is on social assistance all of the child support shouldn't go to the government, leaving the family to live on the same welfare rate as if the child support hadn't been collected. The child support money only benefits the provincial government.

Saskatchewan has one of the lowest personal tax exemption rates in the country, so people must pay taxes when they are at a lower income than other places. Why must Saskatchewan always undercut our families? No wonder people don't stay here. It means starving.

by "Starving in Saskatchewan"



Child Tax Rip-off

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Everyone who receives the child tax credit knows all about the cost increase that is observed city--wide at the grocery stores on the day of the month these checks are received. It seems the grocery merchants target a major federal money supply in the marketplace on the 20th of each month. We also see a sharp increase on the 15th and at month-end. This is designed to literally rape the poor in order to satisfy the grocery stores' lagging market, due to population and socio-economic decline. The people who shop with system supplied funds are being over charged and therefore their money does not go as far. In the end the children are going without.

by "Parents in Saskatchewan"

Child Tax Rip-off
(Continued)

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THE CANADA CHILD TAX BENEFIT (CCTB)

The CCTB is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help them with the cost of raising children under age 18. The CCTB may include the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS), a monthly benefit for low-income families with children, and the Child Disability Benefit (CDB), a monthly benefit providing financial assistance for qualified families caring for children with severe and prolonged mental or physical impairments.



Lack of Federal Support Guidelines

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In Saskatchewan, the Court of Queen's Bench will not go back past six months to grant child support, because of the complexity of the calculations for each case file. Therefore waiting to go to court longer than 6 months means lost funds for the family. "Why would you wait?" one might ask. Because saving up for the lawyer's retaining fee takes longer than months for low-income families. Plus with this system the legal bills always exceed the amount of pay awards to the family.



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Lack of Federal Support Guidelines
(Continued)

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Another problem is that here in Saskatchewan we use a complicated expensive endeavour in which the money for maintenance support is collected by cheques. When a child support cheque bounces, which frequently happens, it creates a nightmare for the family.

In other provinces rather than get caught up in the legal wrangling you simply visit a web site, enter the social insurance number of both parents and the computer calculates the amount owing. Then the provincial government issues a cheque for the money that is owed and the amount of arrears is put against the owner's federal tax. Such a simple solution, just next door.

by "Blind Baby - Fat Cheeks"

Who Am I?

**The Entrepreneur /
The Opportunist /
The Recycler /
The Artist**

WHO AM I?



The grasshopper
or
... the ant?



**Who do you think you are
To judge me?**



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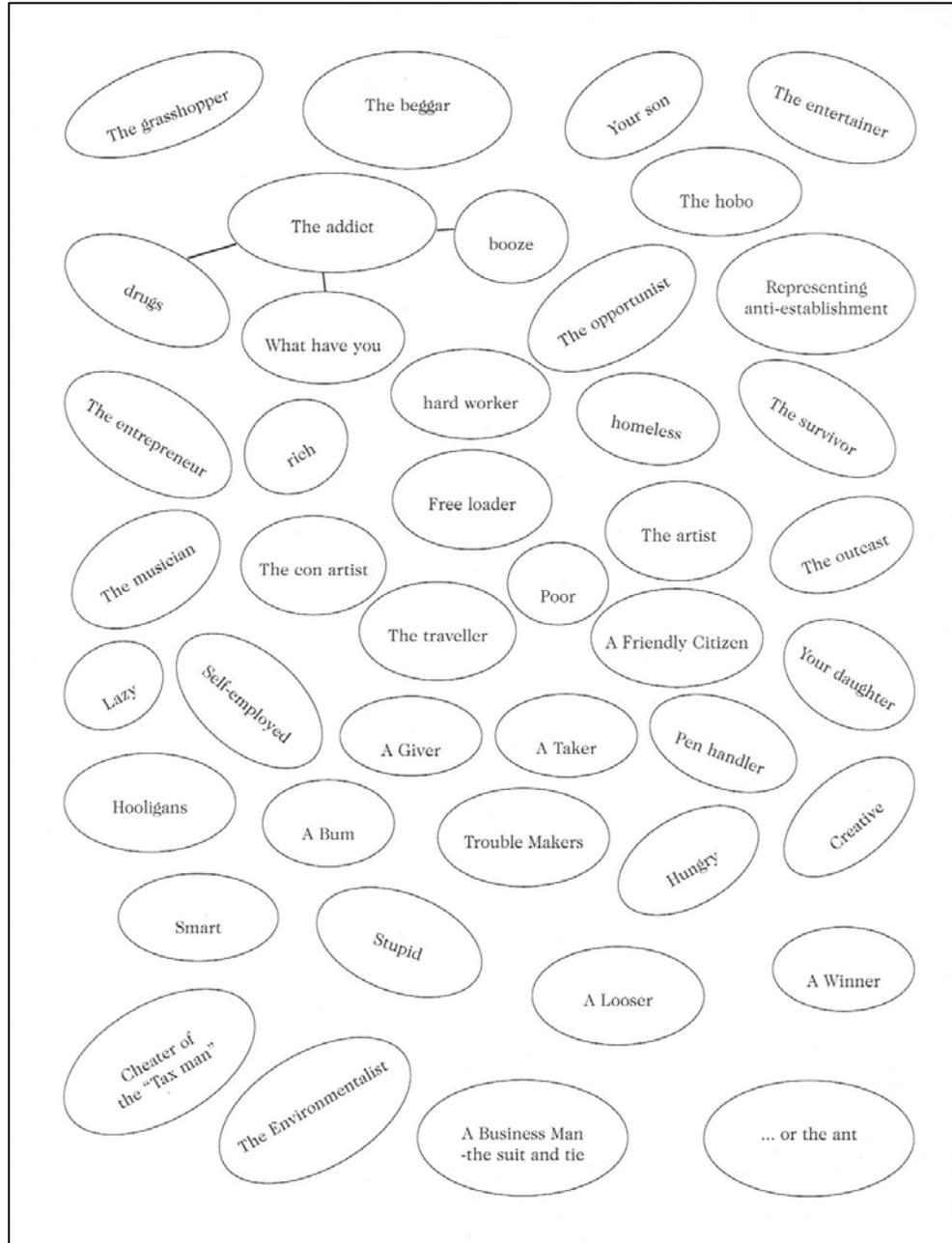
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THE GRASSHOPPER ... OR THE ANT ?

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THE GRASSHOPPER ... OR THE ANT ?

- The grasshopper
- The beggar
- Your son
- The entertainer
- The hobo
- Drugs - The addict - booze - What have you
- The opportunist
- Representing anti-establishment
- The entrepreneur
- rich
- hard worker
- homeless
- The survivor
- The musician
- The con artist
- Free loader
- The artist
- The outcast
- The traveller
- Poor.
- A Friendly Citizen
- Your daughter
- Lazy
- Self-employed
- A Giver
- A Taker
- Pen handler (should be pan handler?)
- Hooligans
- A Bum
- Trouble Makers
- Hungry
- Creative
- Smart
- Stupid
- A Loser (should be Loser?)
- A Winner
- Cheater of the "Tax man"
- The Environmentalist
- A Business Man - the suit and tie
- ... or the ant

Words that appear in circles on the middle square of "Who Am I?"

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