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News from Pivot Legal Society

Issue 4, Summer 2006



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Lucky Lodge uncertainty

The Lucky Lodge hotel's future became uncertain again when the new management was locked out on May 29.

The lockout comes only four days after a new license was issued by a City of Vancouver (the "City") business license panel, to a new agency called the Downtown Eastside Abilities Link Society (DEALS). The condition of granting the license was that the original owners, who transferred ownership to their son earlier this year, not attend the property. They have now broken these conditions and it is not clear what will happen next, according to David Eby from Pivot Legal Society.

The license panel, made up of councillors Chow, Ladner and Lee, were convinced by the submission presented by Eby, the tenants of the Lucky Lodge, and George Metrakos, the executive director of DEALS. The City issued a 2006 operating license to Metrakos, saving the housing of 63 people who live in the 54 rooms of the hotel, on May 25.

"This decision was a great victory for the tenants," says Eby, who represented the tenants of the building at the license hearing. "There was nowhere else for these people to live if the Lucky Lodge, substandard as it is, was closed. By considering alternative proposals and not acting to close the building immediately, the City helped to keep the residents of this building off of the streets. Unfortunately now, we're back where we started."

The Lucky Lodge was referred to a City business license panel months ago due to allegations of welfare fraud and the purchase of stolen property by the former managers coming

"Lucky Lodge" continued on page 6



On the street. See "Close call after Burns Block shut" on page 3.

More low-income housing closures

Pivot Legal Society lawyer David Eby reports on Vancouver's low-income Single Room Occupancy (SRO) closures.

Many people have been forced out of SROs recently closed or converted in the Downtown Eastside – with almost 300 low-income people losing their homes since June 2005.

Vancouver's downtown core had already lost 514 low-income housing units between June 2003 to June 2005. This number closely matched the increase in homelessness over roughly the same period: an increase of 663 people living on the streets and in shelters in Vancouver. Almost 300 rooms lost since June 2005 came from SRO closures, including the Pender Hotel (36) and the Burns Block (18).

"SRO Losses" continued on page 6

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Welcome

Message from **John Richardson, Executive Director**

This summer will see the launch of several new Pivot initiatives that have been under development for some time. In June, we will be releasing **Beyond Decriminalization**, a report based on two years of research and consultation with sex workers. The report explores the legal and regulatory reforms that would need to accompany decriminalization of prostitution. Later in the summer we will be releasing our first housing report, which examines the barriers to housing for low-income people and the legal issues and challenges that surround the right to housing. This summer will also see us expand our public outreach. In June we will be launching our new website at www.pivotlegal.org. Soon after that the website for new Pivot Legal Cooperative, at www.pivotlegal.com will be launched. To house the new co-op (and a growing Pivot), we will be moving our offices to 600 block East Hastings this summer, (at Hastings and Heatley). We are all very much looking forward to the move. Additionally, this summer will see the return of the Downtown Eastside photography contest, the fourth year running for the contest. In short, it's a busy and exciting summer. Thanks for your support, and if you have thoughts on any of our work, please let us know!

Granville Island success

This year's Granville Island Public Market Pivot table was a success, bringing in over \$500 in donations from the public. Volunteers staffed the table from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from May 22 to 28. The main questions from the public were about Pivot's housing campaign.

Pivot Legal Cooperative to start

The new Pivot Legal Cooperative (PLC) will begin soon after Pivot Legal Society moves to its new premises on East Hastings Street in July, says Pivot's executive director, John Richardson. "Pivot Legal Cooperative is a radically new approach to providing legal services and access to justice," said Richardson, soon after PLC was awarded second prize in Small Business BC's annual Small Business Plan Contest in January. "This recognition shows that it's also a viable and practical business proposal that can succeed in the marketplace."

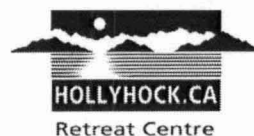


Visitors to Pivot. John Richardson and David Eby gave visitors from Thailand a tour of the Downtown Eastside during the 17th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm held in Vancouver in early May.

The Pivot Post sponsors:



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Close call after Burns Block shut

While helping a 60-year-old First Nations' woman move to a new apartment with a team of Pivot staff and volunteers, I had a "moment of truth." It was a realization that Veronica Crow-Eagle was literally dumped on the street and left to her own devices following the sudden closure of her apartment block by City of Vancouver staff on March 30.

It was now four days after the closure and Pivot rented a van to help people returning to pick up their belongings.

A privately-run single room occupancy (SRO) rental building, the Burns Block had closed down after it failed a fire safety inspection and amazingly residents were given one hour to get out of their apartments. (see "Burns Block: no notice" on page 7)

Some of the residents ended up on the streets that night. Others disappeared, no doubt to sleep on some friend or family member's sofa. Those who had no where else to go, including Crow Eagle, were directed by City officials to Harbour Light, the Salvation Army shelter for drug and alcohol rehabilitation a few blocks away in the Downtown Eastside.

Crow Eagle, from the Blackfoot First Nation in Alberta, had lived in the Burns Block for eight years. She said that the hotel had gradually run down after the previous owner died about five years ago and the building was sold. The closure came without warning – her \$375 monthly rent cheque was only given to landlord Nick Bahrami the day before and it was cashed the afternoon they were evicted. She is still trying to get her deposit and the rent back from Bahrami who is now trying to sell the building for \$2.5 million, up from the \$550,000 he paid for it in 2003.

Following the eviction on March 30, Crow Eagle said she had a hard night in the emergency shelter. Scared of people recently released from "penitentiaries," she moved to the Haven Salvation Army emergency hostel in the Downtown Eastside the next night. Staying in the emergency shelters does not guarantee a bed and on Satur-

day night Veronica was told she was out of luck – the shelter was full.

With no place to go, Veronica spent the night walking the streets of the Downtown Eastside to keep awake and warm, ending up in

the Health Contact Centre off East Hastings Street, a community centre for drug users. When that closed she moved on to the bus station, and when the trains started running early on Sunday morning she rode on the Skytrain to Surrey to keep warm and to "kill time."

Later on Sunday Crow Eagle went to the Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA) where she was given a contact at the City-owned and operated Granville Residence. She was pleased to be offered a room for only \$325 per month, but she was told that she could only move in on Monday. That night she managed to find a room in a hostel.

While City officials provided a list of 18 rooms available in Vancouver for Burns Block residents to DERA, the availability of a room does not guarantee the hotels actually rent to people. Several of the residents of the Burns Block have joined the hundreds of homeless people already on Vancouver's streets and in the parks.

We arrived at the Granville Residence and parked outside and helped Veronica with her stuff. Her new room, on the second floor, was small and clean, with its own washroom, but no bed. "Where are you going to sleep?" I asked. She said that they would be able to give her a bed tomorrow – but that was the least of her worries, "I haven't slept for four nights." Sleeping on her bags would have to do. • By Paul Ryan.



City staff gave Veronica Crow Eagle (60) directions to the emergency shelter. Two nights later she was walking the streets without a bed.

Veronica Crow Eagle was hoping to move permanently to a Native Housing residence at the end of May.

Decriminalization and beyond...

Pivot Legal Society President Katrina Pacey previews the June 13 release of *Beyond Decriminalization: Sex Work, Human Rights and a New Framework for Law Reform*.

Sex workers are entitled to the same human rights standards that are afforded to other members of Canadian society. However, as a result of the current criminal laws relating to adult prostitution, sex workers are forced to live and work in conditions where they experience systemic discrimination, exploitation and violence, and where their constitutional rights are infringed.

Pivot's 2004 report, *Voices for Dignity: A Call to End the Harms Caused by Canada's Sex Trade Laws*, argued that sex workers' right to expression, life, liberty, security of the person, and equality, as enshrined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, are routinely violated.

Significant improvements to the working and living conditions of sex workers are not possible without the repeal of sections 210, 211, 212(1), 212(3) and 213 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*. In anticipation that Canada will one day recognize and carry out this important legislative reform, this report moves beyond the issue of criminal law reform to examine areas of law that become relevant and applicable in a decriminalized context. The analyses and findings set out in *Beyond Decriminalization* are intended to encourage Canadians to consider how reform of

other areas of law and policy can be used to end the violence, discrimination and other human rights violations faced by sex workers.

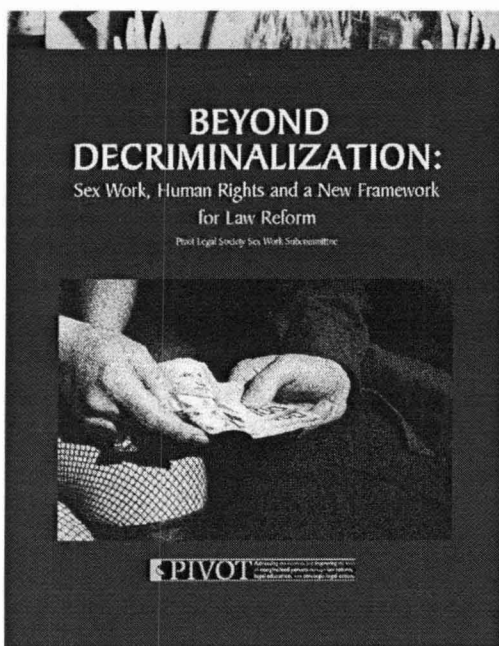
One example of an area of legislation that will be highly relevant if sex work is decriminalized is employment and labour law. This report examines how employment and labour standards can be used to provide rights and protections for workers in the sex industry. In addition to this key topic, this report considers other relevant areas of law, including: occupational health and safety, municipal, tax, immigration, human rights, family, company, and social welfare law.

The findings and analyses presented are grounded in the expert opinions and experiences of sex workers from various areas of the sex industry. Through individual and group discussions with workers and business owners from escort agencies, massage parlours, sole proprietorships and at the street level, this report provides a comprehensive analysis of the ways in which many areas of law can be used to improve the safety and protect the rights of sex workers.

Beyond Decriminalization presents a wide-ranging list of recommendations proposed by sex workers in the course of this research. The following selection illustrates some key aspects of sex workers' call to action:

- Provide sex workers with full access to the rights and protections found in the *Employment Standards Act*, and ensure the legislation explicitly protects an individual sex worker's decision to provide sexual services and maintain control over her or his contract for the provision of sexual services.
- Respect the right of sex workers to unionize

The report was the result of two years of research by the Pivot Legal Society sex work subcommittee and was sponsored by The Law Foundation of British Columbia, Law for the Future Fund and the Law Commission of Canada.



and provide resources and support to them throughout the process.

- Involve sex workers in a meaningful way in municipal governance issues, such as business licensing and city zoning, in order to meet the diverse needs of sex workers from various aspects of the industry as well as the interests of communities.
- Respect the right of sex workers to have fair and equal access to Workers' Compensation, Employment Insurance as well as other employment benefits.
- Enact a provision in all relevant legislation to ensure that refusal to work in the sex industry does not affect a person's entitlements to Employment Insurance or Income Assistance.
- Ensure the freedom of sex workers to choose from a range of business structures.
- Ensure that income earned through sex work is subject to fair and non-discriminatory taxation and that sex workers are not retroactively taxed once their work becomes recognized as a legal activity.
- Recognize that a parent's involvement in sex work does not automatically create grounds for the apprehension of a child or loss of custody, and take steps to ensure that sex workers are not subject to discrimination by the Courts or government in family law matters.
- Ensure the right of sex workers to access the human rights complaint process and equal opportunities for social citizenship.
- Ensure that migrant sex workers are afforded the rights and protections found in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

This report is the beginning of an important social dialogue about the role that the law will play in governing the sex industry in Canada. Pivot has argued that criminal law reform is the first step towards a shift from the status quo, where sex workers are subject to extreme levels of violence and social marginalization, to a society where sex workers are empowered to create safe and dignified working conditions.

Danica Piche photo.



This report illustrates why sex workers must be provided with a prominent role in the process of law, policy and social reform.

Criminal law reform will be most effectively carried out if all levels of government consider the findings of this research and contemplate how areas of law that fall within their jurisdiction will play a role in creating a safe and legitimate sex industry.

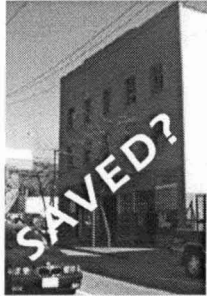
This report also illustrates why sex workers must be provided with a prominent role in the process of law, policy and social reform. Sex workers have a unique insight and expertise regarding their industry, the role it plays in Canadian society, and the ways in which regulatory schemes will impact their business.

Above all, law and policy makers should listen to sex workers in order to understand how the laws affect them. This is a necessary step in ensuring that Canada's laws comply with the guarantees and protections enshrined in the *Charter* and other human rights instruments. •

This article is the Executive Summary from *Beyond Decriminalization: Sex Work, Human Rights and a New Framework for Law Reform*.

The Abridged Version of the report can be ordered from Pivot Society for \$20. For more information go to the Pivot website: www.pivotlegal.org/publications

Thank you: The report was produced by many people, including 19 authors, 18 contributors, three editors and eight legal reviewers. It was coordinated by Danica Piche, Cristen Gleeson and Katrina Pacey, with editing by John Lowman. The design and layout of the report was given at a subsidized rate by long-time Pivot supporter Brad Hornick.

Lucky Lodge continued from page 1

The Lucky Lodge has 54 rooms with 63 tenants.

out of a Vancouver police undercover investigation called Project Haven. City staff were recommending to the panel that the business license not be granted.

Pivot represented tenants at this hearing in an attempt to keep the Lucky Lodge open, but also to ensure that if it was not kept open, that the city would find the tenants alternative housing. Pivot applied for standing for the tenants at the hearing, and as a result of Pivot's application, the panel granted the tenants the opportunity to make submissions at the hearing. The granting of leave to the tenants to make submissions through Pivot marked the first time a third party has ever been granted standing at a business license hearing in Vancouver.

At the last hearing, Metrakos, who had no involvement with the building prior to the referral to the business license panel, told the panel that he had entered into an agreement with the owner and assumed management of the building. He then put the application for the license in his name. As a result, under pressure from

Pivot to keep this low-income housing open, City staff supported his application. However Metrakos was fired four days later.

The City had placed two conditions on the new licensee. The first condition was that the previous owners, Anna and Mario Laudisio were barred from attending at the property (they have transferred ownership to their son). The second condition was that the operating agreement that was presented to council by Metrakos must not be breached by the any of the parties to the agreement. Violation of either of the conditions would result in the license immediately being referred back to the City. Both conditions have now been breached and the tenants are expecting city council to react unfavourably.

"If you're going to close a building like this, you need to make sure you've got something better to put in its place," says Eby. "The business license panel was clearly relieved that Metrakos was there to assume control of the building. He got the City out of a sticky situation. Now nobody knows what's going on." •

SRO closures continued from page 1

Included in this total is the Marble Arch Hotel (148) which is converting to student housing and the St. Helen's, on Granville Street (93) which has upgraded to a more expensive rate.

Vancouver City Council ("the City") has only three projects underway to replace these lost SROs, and the total number of rooms in these initiatives will, in the best-case scenario, be only 172 by 2007. The Woodward's building will add 125 low-income single spaces in 2009, 100 of which are to be for those in deep core need.

As a result of this crisis, Pivot Legal Society has dedicated significant resources to ensuring that as many of the remaining SRO rooms are saved as is possible.

Generally, SROs are sub-standard housing but they are safer than the street for most people. While Pivot continues to pressure our three levels of government to build sufficient social

housing, we will also put pressure on them to preserve what few, sub-standard housing options are left for the most vulnerable members of our society and to ensure that the residents of these buildings are treated with the respect they deserve.

Business license hearings decide residents' fate

In Vancouver, a business license hearing is heard before three city councillors who decide whether or not to issue a business license. If no license is issued, the City will issue an order to cease operations. In the case of a residential hotel or lodging house, this order results in the eviction of the residents and the closure of the building, unless another license applicant makes an application to operate the business. The Marr Hotel in Vancouver, which has been vacant

since the City pulled that location's operating license in 2005, is a good example of what happens when licenses are refused.

New precedent set as tenants have say

Residents of the Lucky Lodge asked Pivot to represent them in an attempt to get "standing" or the opportunity to present evidence and arguments at the license hearing.

In April, Pivot successfully convinced the business license panel to grant the residents standing. This was the first time ever that anyone other than a business license holder has been granted standing at one of these hearings, and set an important precedent. The tenants were granted "partial standing" which will allow Pivot, on behalf of the tenants, to present arguments about what conditions, if any, should be placed on the license, and why these conditions should be placed.

The hearings were held on May 2 and May 25. While the tenants recognized that the Lucky Lodge has serious problems, they presented arguments that the City can deal with these problems without closing the hotel. However, the tenants also argued that if the City did close the hotel, it must make provisions for the tenants to ensure they have somewhere to live.

Guest fees

Pivot achieved a victory in a related issue of the Lucky Lodge Hotel charging \$10-per-visit guest fees, on May 17. In March tenant Michael Whitehead had applied for an order that the landlord stop restricting access to guests, and stop charging guest fees, to which they responded with threats of eviction.

Whitehead went ahead with his case, won it, and was then served with two notices of eviction in April. Whitehead came to Pivot at this stage and David Eby helped him put together a defense against both evictions. Once DEALS, who represent the landlord, saw the preparations for the case they withdrew their evictions. "They still have not complied with the arbitration order and have imposed a new set of

IN NUMBERS

Net losses 2003-2006:

514 low-income housing units in Vancouver's downtown core lost from June 2003 to June 2005

295 low-income housing units lost since June 2005

Projected gains 2006-2009 (not including losses)

172 new low-income housing units created by 2007

125 new low-income single housing units for people in the Woodward's building, available in 2009. 100 units will accommodate singles in "deep core need" (on welfare)

The official City of Vancouver target for creation of low-income housing is 800 units per year.

draconian edicts for their tenants to obey," said Whitehead.

While Whitehead won his case, he couldn't get his guest fees back because the fees' receipts had been made out to his guests. "Their defence was they rented my room twice."

The arbitration decision said the landlord was not entitled to restrict access and charge a fee for a guest or for a service of facility for that guest (such as a shower or toilet).

Burns Block: no notice

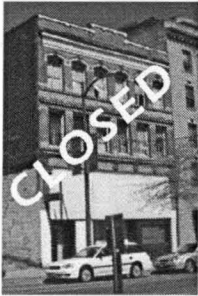
On the morning of Thursday March 30 the Burns Block at 18 West Hastings, was subject to what was supposed to be a regular Neighbourhood Integrated Service Team (NIST) inspection, including inspectors and officials from the Department of Health, the City, the provincial welfare department, and the police.

The fire department didn't like what it found. Allegedly, the building sprinkler system hadn't been tested as frequently as was required by by-law (although it was found to be functional). Residents also reported that their windows, that exited out to the fire escape, were screwed shut and had been that way for years. The inspectors were also allegedly concerned about blocked emergency exits.

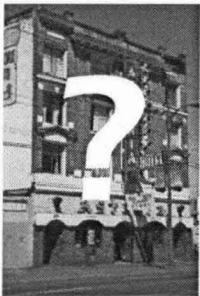
"SRO Losses" continued on page 8



Burns Block: residents given one hour notice on March 30.



The Pender Hotel closed in April.



The Astoria Hotel will face a business license hearing this summer.

SRO closures *continued*

By 3 p.m., the fire department had decided to close the building as a fire hazard. The tenants were told, some as early as 3 p.m., some as late as 4 p.m. that the building was closing at 5 p.m. and that they had to gather their stuff together.

City officials on the scene from the Tenant Relocation Assistance Program instructed the tenants to go to the Salvation Army Harbour Light shelter on Cordova Street. Only three of 18 tenants went to the shelter. The remainder disappeared. A couple stayed with the Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA) in their lobby because they couldn't stay in the shelter because they had pets, or were families with both male and female members who didn't want to be separated.

The main concern is about the way the City did the eviction. While the tenants had only one to two hours' notice, the public relations official from the fire department said that they had had problems with this building for the past three years and nothing had been done to deal with the issues in that time.

Since the Burns Block building was emptied by the City, the owner Nick Bahrami has put it up for sale and appears to have no intention of remedying the fire violations so that the tenants may return home.

Pivot is representing clients from the Burns Block hotel in a claim under the *Residential Tenancies Act* against the landlord. The tenants are seeking damages of \$5,000 plus \$1,000 in moving expenses from the landlord, as well as an order that the Burns Block building be repaired so that it is available again as housing.

The tenants are also considering action against the City for the very short notice given to vacate the hotel, given that the fire hazards that existed had been in the building for years, were minor in nature and easily remedied.

Pender Hotel closes

In another case of fire inspections going out of control, the Pender Hotel small claims court cases against the City's fire inspection that

resulted in every tenant's door being kicked in despite keys being available and the tenants being detained for seven hours in a parking lot beside the building without access to water or washrooms, are scheduled for settlement conferences in September.

A settlement conference is where the defendant and the claimant sit down with the judge and explain what evidence they have and the judge makes recommendations about an appropriate settlement.

In the meantime, Pivot has represented the Pender Hotel tenants in a residential tenancy claim against the administrator of the hotel for failing to maintain the building and repair the doors, as required by the City. The landlord settled the claim with the tenants and the tenants agreed to vacate the building, which had become dangerous due to maintenance issues, lack of security, and lack of management. The Pender Hotel closed in April.

Since the Pender has closed, it has been sold by the administrator to a condominium developer who also owns the lot next door and is developing that lot into a condominium development called "33." Media reports indicate that the condominium developer wishes to develop the hotel into a "boutique hotel." In order to convert it to tourist use, the owner must go through the *Single Room Accommodation By-Law* which protects buildings like the Pender Hotel. The *SRA By-Law* is supposed to protect affordable housing, so the new owner would have to pay \$5,000 for each room that was converted if the City gives permission to convert the Pender Hotel from affordable housing into some other use. Pivot will be arguing strongly against the conversion of the hotel to any use other than low-income housing.

Astoria Hotel next to close?

The Astoria Hotel, also part of Project Haven like the Lucky Lodge, has also been referred to a business license hearing. Pivot will be representing some of the more than 70 people who call the Astoria home at that hearing, which has yet to be scheduled. ●

Rookie cops shouldn't work together: coroner's jury

[Article courtesy cbc.ca British Columbia, March 8. Reproduced with permission. To view this article and other issue-related external news links go to Pivot's new website www.pivotlegal.org/News/news.htm]

A coroner's inquest jury has recommended that Vancouver police no longer allow rookie officers to be partnered, because the jurors believe inexperience figured into the shooting death of a man more than 14 months ago.

Gerald Chenery, 29, was shot dead in a confrontation with two junior police officers in the Downtown Eastside on Boxing Day 2004. The jury heard testimony that Chenery was shot 12 times – twice in the front and 10 times in the back – after attacking one of the officers with two knives. Both constables had just finished training and had only two months experience each.

Pivot Legal Society spokesperson David Eby says it's important that the jury recognized that inexperience was a factor in the shooting. "They made a recommendation that junior officers with less than 18 months of combined experience just shouldn't be paired together, and that just seems like common sense to us," he said. "But on Boxing Day of 2004, these officers just out of their training were sent into the most difficult policing area in Vancouver."

Rookie pairings unavoidable, says senior officer

Vancouver Deputy Police Chief Jim Chu says the department tries to pair rookies with more experienced officers, but says that's not always possible. "We try to deploy senior officers with less experienced officers as much as we can. We try to do that. However sometimes, officers that are recently graduated from the police academy have to work alone or perhaps have to work with another partner. That's a fact of our deployment situation."

The jury also recommended that new recruits be trained in the use of non-lethal weapons like bean-bag guns and Tasers.

Chenery's sister, Theresa, also welcomed a recommendation that more correctional release facilities be opened outside the Lower Mainland. She believes her brother's death might have been avoided if he could have returned to his hometown of Prince Rupert after his release from jail. "There was resources available in Prince Rupert for Gerald, and we think that they could have been checked into more, because we have a huge amount of family up there."

Correctional Service Canada has yet to respond to the jury's recommendations. ●

Illegal police searches stopped

Before it closed in April, tenants at the Pender Hotel complained to the Police Complaints Commissioner with the help of Pivot concerning illegal police searches of their rooms.

The investigation of the tenants' complaints revealed that police were relying on bylaws that hadn't existed since the 1970s to enter and search tenants' rooms throughout the downtown, not just at the Pender Hotel, without a warrant.

As a result of the complaint, the Vancouver Police Board has changed the VPD's rooming house/residential hotel room search policy.

The involved officers have not been disciplined, and one complainant has requested a public hearing to investigate why these illegal searches have been going on for so long, and to ensure that the new policy conforms with the VPD's obligations under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. ●

10 reasons why everyone benefits

TEN REASONS why everyone benefits from Pivot's legal efforts to improve the lives of marginalized persons:

1. **Causes, not symptoms** By using the law to address marginalization and disenfranchisement, it is possible to address the root causes of inequity rather than just the symptoms. This allows for systemic impacts that ripple through society, affecting many people both now and in the future.
2. **Insurance for Everyone** Anyone can fall victim to ill fortune, regardless of their social or economic standing. A bump to the head, a run of bad luck, one's own error. There are a hundred ways that an individual can lose hold of their dreams and drift to the edges of society. Ensuring that those on the margins have a good quality of life is like taking out an insurance policy for everyone in society.
3. **Indirect Costs** Everyone is touched directly or indirectly by the hardship of impoverishment or marginalization. Perhaps someone that you know and care for has become addicted; perhaps your car has been stolen. Perhaps it is the fear of walking the streets alone at night, or tax increases to pay for increased policing. The indirect costs of social marginalization must be measured along with the direct costs to those affected, and together they far outweigh the costs of social inclusion and empowerment.
4. **Trickle-up** Advancing the interests of those on the margins creates a "trickle-up" affect of increased respect, empowerment and participation for everyone. Positive and negative actions release an energy that conserved within the closed system of our society. We may be once or five times removed from a positive or negative act; but we feel its impacts even if we are not aware of the original source. Investing legal efforts where the need is greatest creates ripples throughout society to the direct and indirect benefit of all.
5. **First Alert** The most vulnerable and marginalized persons in society are like canaries in a mineshaft. They provide the "first alert" if something threatens the community; they will be the first to suffer from economic, social or environmental problems that could spread to impact everyone. Ensuring that their rights are respected and upheld is a way of reinforcing the rights of everyone in the face of economic, social or environmental crises.
6. **Social Psyche** The process of personal growth involves learning to accept our darkest places and address the challenges there with courage and compassion. For a society to grow, it must undergo the same process. Ignoring or disengaging from poverty and inequality creates an emotional curtain which closes us off from ourselves both personally and as a community. It creates a win/lose scenario which requires validation through judgment, fear and distance. It undermines the most positive outcomes, which involve mutual benefit. Until we overcome the "block" within our social psyche represented by neighbourhoods like the Downtown Eastside, we will never achieve the utopian ideal that is within our grasp as a community.
7. **Rising Tide** "A rising tide raises all boats." Equality raises the floor on quality of life for everyone in society. Equality also creates closer social integration, which in turn increases the positive impact of energy spent in relationships between various individuals and groups. This increases the efficiency and wealth of the community.
8. **Investing in Abundance** Maximizing the potential abundance of our community means realizing the full potential contribution of each individual. Everyone has the potential to provide a net benefit to the community. Investing in abundance requires the removal of legal and structural impediments to the full empowerment and participation of everyone. By deepening equality, we deepen opportunities for people to actualize their potential and enrich community through their contribution.
9. **Sustainability** Our society is driven by a need to consume and accumulate. This drive must be curbed if environmental sustainability is to be achieved. The stigma and fear of poverty is a major social pressure behind excessive consumption and runaway growth. Improvements to the baseline quality of life for impoverished and marginalized persons will reduce the pressure behind consumption, and create the conditions for a higher quality of life for future generations.
10. **Shared Happiness** Everyone is healthier and happier if they can live in a healthy and happy community.

Help Pivot find a new slogan!

We need your help in developing a new slogan, or “strapline,” for Pivot. Legal Society.

The current strapline in Pivot’s logo is also its mission statement: “Advancing the interests and improving the lives of marginalized persons through legal education, law reform, and strategic legal action.” While this phrase is accurate, over the years it has become clear that it is far too long for a strapline, and moreover it fails in key ways to connect with people. It is more about *what* we do rather than *why* we do it, and *people need first to understand why* before they will pay attention. Moreover, it fails to communicate how Pivot’s work is of benefit to ALL people in society, which is core to the vision behind the organization. The name “Pivot” partially captures it: there is a strategic pressure point at the intersection of legal and social boundaries where focused efforts yield widespread positive impacts. However, that idea is somewhat abstract and not all that can be said about the vision underlying Pivot.

What is the best, simplest, and most accessible way to communicate Pivot’s underlying vision to the largest number of people? On page 10, we have listed the 10 most popular ways we have,

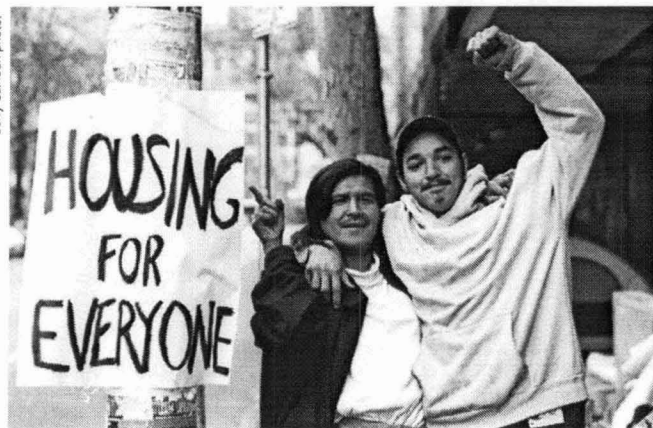


over the years, tried to explain the multi-level impact of Pivot. We want to take all these ideas and boil them down to a simple message that people can understand and agree with no matter what their income, background or social class.

Once the strapline is chosen, it will become the launch point for a “rebranding” of Pivot, and a new public outreach campaign. It will set the direction for our website, our publications, our fundraising, and how our spokespeople talk to the media. This strapline, just a few words, will be a critically important message as Pivot moves to the next level in its social impact. ●

The first stage of creating a new strapline is getting feedback from you, who know us well. What do you think? You can help us by donating some of your insight and creativity. **Please give some thought to the following questions, and send your responses to: strapline@pivotlegal.org.** What draws you to Pivot Legal Society? What do you support about it? What is your sense of people’s impressions of Pivot? What’s the key point or points in explaining the importance of Pivot to people new to the organization? What suggestions would you make for Pivot new slogan? (3 to 12 words – shorter is better).

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Barry Calhoun photo.

Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside — the poorest neighbourhood in Canada — is a window into extreme problems of homelessness and housing, addiction, prostitution and police oversight. Pivot’s high-impact social justice advocacy uses the law to advance the interests and protect the rights of marginalized people. Campaigns focus on law reform, legal education and strategic legal action. Pivot aims for systemic change to improve the quality of life of those most in need, and as a consequence, the quality of life of everyone in society.”

“Pivot is doing the work for all of us, tackling the toughest issues and needs of our time... they deserve all of the support that we can give them.” Joel Solomon, Endswell Foundation

Donation form online: www.pivotlegal.org

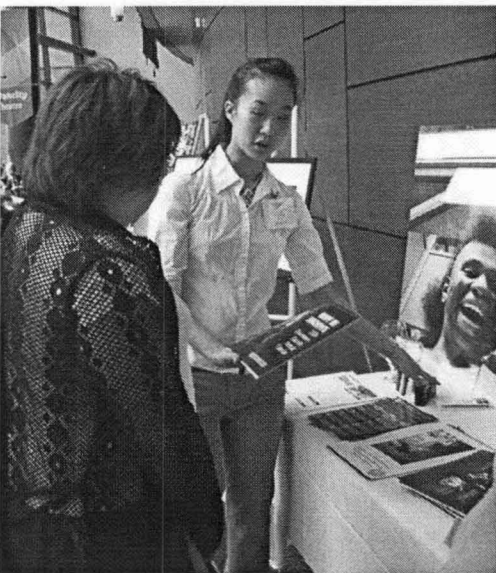
Our people. Sandy Mackeigan from Oppenheimer Park Community Centre is presented with an enlargement of an image of four local First Nations men who use the park. The photo, taken by Julie Rogers, was presented by Pivot Hope in Shadows street-sale trainer Thomas Cleough.



Capital visit. Wilfred Chan and Peter Wrinch outside Parliament Buildings. Right: Local MLA Jenny Kwan was presented with a calendar by Paul Ryan while meeting with the group in March.



"Have you heard of Pivot?" Pivot volunteer Rebecca Tay staffs a Pivot display in the foyer of the Vancouver International Film Centre, April 30. "Keeping the Door Open," a series of films and speeches, was part of the 19th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm.



Victoria visit

A team from Pivot loaded the Pivot Volvo stationwagon with *Hope in Shadows* calendars and went to Victoria in March. After dropping off the calendars with B.C. Members of the Legislative Assembly, the group was met by local Vancouver East MLA Jenny Kwan who offered to use an up-coming two-minute speech in the Legislature promoting Pivot and its activities. Calendars were also given to federal MPs, UBC staff, *The Georgia Straight* staff and City of Vancouver staff.

UBC law students and Pivot

Pivot has regained a considerable presence at the UBC Law School. After the September UBC Law's Clubs Day, around 50 students expressed an interest in volunteering their time and legal skills for Pivot, leading to the rebirth of the UBC Law Social Justice Action Network (SJAN). SJAN was established by Pivot president Katrina Pacey when she was a UBC law student.

A recent project UBC students have helped with is the new *How to Sue the Police in Small Claims Court* guide. Students also regularly assist affidavits-taking and legal research for the housing project, and this summer will help with the creation of the new housing rights cards, legal research and preparation of reports.

Pivot representatives were invited by SJAN to speak at the law school several times this year, including John Richardson who was invited by the Articling Committee to speak at a panel on careers in social justice, where he introduced the Pivot Legal Cooperative. John Conroy, Q.C. spoke on another occasion about his experiences as a private practitioner and his role as a Pivot director.

The new relationship has proven to be mutually beneficial both for Pivot and for law students says Roanna Tay, a Pivot volunteer and law student. "Through their involvement, law students are able to learn about current issues, gain practical skills and experience, and participate in meaningful legal work. Pivot gains an important resource for its current work, while developing a strong connection with future members of the legal community."