

Help, Do Not Hate

We all know that the victim is never at fault. Why does this axiom not apply to homeless people? The sufferers of poverty are not to blame for their situation. Shunning homeless people lowers the likelihood of them receiving help. When we blame homeless people or ignore homeless people, we dehumanize them and worsen their lives.

Often, we blame homeless people to alleviate our guilt. Instead of helping them, we say things like "She wouldn't be there if she hadn't..." or "He shouldn't have...". But for whatever reason a homeless person is homeless, he or she did not choose his or her lifestyle. We say these things because it is hard for people like us to understand what causes homeless people to be homeless. Our lives are so different from theirs, many times we cannot comprehend the circumstances that led to others' homelessness. But no matter what, our ignorance should not be at the expense of hundreds of people countywide. We need to realize that homeless people never choose to be homeless. Our empathy should always outweigh our stinginess. As a nation, we need to stop the condemnation of the sufferers of homelessness.

When you pass a homeless person on the street, you might look away, or walk faster, or feign interest in something across the street, all to avoid looking at the homeless person. You might do this because you feel awkward with your riches next to a person with nothing, but this deliberate negligence is what harms homeless people the most. Maybe a woman walking behind you sees you ignore the homeless person, or maybe a little boy looks out of a car window. These actions tell people that they are allowed to neglect homeless people. This careless attitude has spread everywhere, making it so that people can not be bothered to care about homeless people. As a community, we need to open our eyes to the people who need our attention and care. Instead of walking past a homeless woman, we should walk her to a store and buy her lunch. Because you do not just affect one person when you choose to disregard homeless people, it is everyone around you.

Homeless people are victims, and never responsible for their situations. No matter what led to not having a home, we can not blame them for something that was clearly out of their control. As a county, we need to stop blaming homeless people and to start seeing them, to truly change the minds of people. We all need to be responsible for homeless people who can not help themselves. Homeless people are people, no matter where they live or what they did.