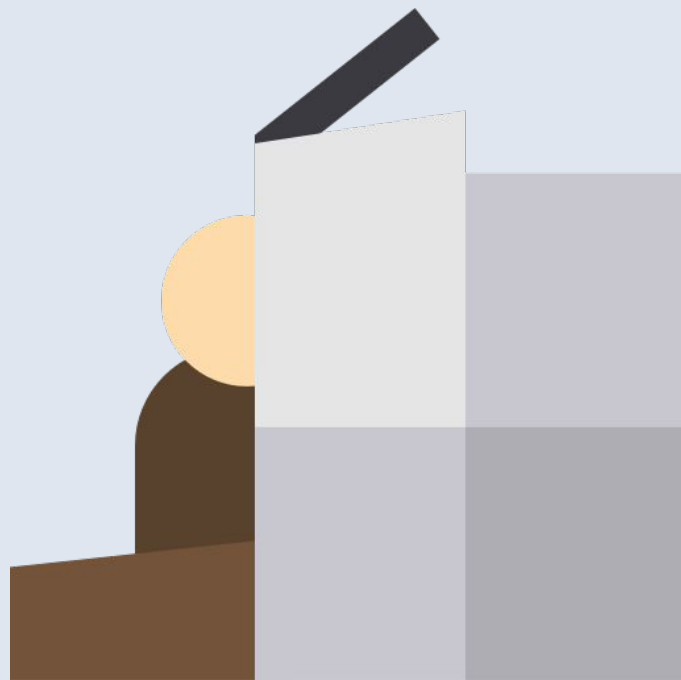# The Awakening Project

Monday, February 1st, 2021

Today's Discussion:

Homelessness

an article by Marco Hidalgo Romero

Quick Summary

In his article titled *Homelessness*, Marco Hidalgo Romero brings awareness to Homelessness in Canada and provides readers with basic information on the state of homeless people in the nation. He gives the readers insight as to what causes homelessness other than the most well-known reasons and debunks some minor stereotypes using facts and evidence. Finally, he sorts homeless Canadians into 3 categories: "street" type, homeless families with children and homeless youth.

Discussion Questions

1. Romero states that some causes for homelessness include poor physical/mental health, family breakups, and abuse at home. With the increase in help we receive in today's society around these issues, why do you think we've seen a recent spike in the amount of homeless Canadian youth?

2. Marco debunks some stereotypes about homelessness, like thinking homelessness is a choice and believing that the homeless are usually unemployed. Where do you think these stereotypes were formed from and how do they contribute to the state of homeless Canadians today?

3. How are homeless Canadians usually perceived and how does it relate to the treatment they receive?

4. Why do you think the author uses Toronto as a representation for homelessness in Canada, and is it an effective example?

5. How do the decisions of municipal governments affect the rate of poverty and homelessness in a city?

Discussion: Your Comments

- Abraar: I think that even though light is brought to these issues more often nowadays, they're still occurring behind the scenes. We're getting the awareness we need but we aren't getting enough of the support we need to stop it.
  - David added: It also ties into technology and how it impacts the increase of abuse, poor mental health, etc.
- Trisha: These stereotypes, they come from the internalized stigma that people have passed down and it's like, it's kind of engraved into your mind.
  - Adina agreed and added: It's like when most people see a person on the streets, they judge by appearance without even thinking about it. It's like society normalized standards of what "homeless" looks like and that's where these stereotypes come from.
  - David joined in to say: They surely aren't helping the state of homeless Canadians, it just separates communities even further.

Discussion: Your Comments

- Adina: They're perceived as humans who are addicted or have some sort of problem with them, and it creates a barrier between their treatment and the people who treat them.
    - Abraar: When people look at others on the street, they often feel pitiful. There's a certain image that people get when you think 'homeless person'. It's like ragged clothes, unkempt hair, and I think we need to get rid of that image to further develop support and treatment for these individuals.
- David: So we all know Toronto's a big city, one of the most important cities in Canada. It's filled with all types of people, including the homeless, which makes it an effective example.
- Trisha: Every decision municipal governments make from the fire department and sewer services to the garbage collection and community services impact the rates of poverty and homelessness in a city.
    - Abraar agreed and stated: The decisions of a municipal government can impact the amount of people in poverty, the causes, and the aftermath of how these people are treated.

Thank You

Special Thanks to Abraar Alam, Adina Imran, David Lee and Trisha Saha for taking part in the discussion