

OPINION EDITORIAL

THE SLIPPERY SLOPE OF ENTITLEMENT

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**Everything I got
I earned,
And everything
I'm gonna get
I deserve.**

A troubling mantra?

The birthplace of delusion?

You're born white. In Canada. You've come from wealthy stock.

Doors open, regardless of whether you complete higher education. You think you opened them yourself.

You rebel. You lash out because of a broken home. Drink. Drugs. Your parents bail you out. They hide your mistakes. They don't want to be judged.

A home is broken, not because of addiction or poverty – it may be broken because of the unhappiness of being able to have anything you want, whenever you want, so those who instill HOW-TO-BE in you resist being anything but cloaked in greed, of being able to have. To be able to fix things with money and then feel superior by disparaging others. You grow up believing you deserve more. You hurt. You're given a Mercedes, a boat, a house. You hurt differently. You don't have to sit on the sidewalk begging for change.

You work hard, an undeniable fact. You think you work harder than others. You believe the Mercedes, the boat, the house are products of your hard work. You discount your advantage. You tell others if only they worked harder, like you, they could have what you have. You need to convince yourself of this to be able to function and to be able to *lord* over your perceived success over others. You begin to believe your own propaganda.

I stroll home one night. On the street, I pass the familiar characters: a young guy who asks each time you pass him, "Any advice?" Is he giving or asking? The young lady sitting on the sidewalk, begging for change, and when she hears no, she barks out "Faggot" to everyone passing by. The man with the Jesus Jacket, shouting, "Asshole. Asshole. Asshole."



I pass them most days. Over time, like the beauty of Vancouver, they blend into daily life.

I pose a question: *Does the struggling people of our city become invisible to the point where we only notice suffering when we travel?*

I post my query on social media. It is met with vitriol.

GB, who lives somewhere in the States, screams out: *being homeless is hard work – they've all chosen their plight*. He says he tries to help, but they don't want the socks he's giving them, so, don't feel empathy for them |look at me, I've done my part|, they've chosen their path. I don't believe his story is one of kindness.

A quick profile view, he thinks Biden is destroying America.

CS chimes in; *I talk to all the homeless in my neighbourhood; they don't like authority. They don't want to be helped.*

As soon as he typed, *they*, everything else, is him, patting himself on the back in an attempt to justify covering his eyes.

I don't believe anything he typed—a quick search: anti-vaxxer.

AT jumps into the fray; *your question is political. Did AT even read the question?*

How can we have civil discussions when some people refuse to look at themselves—when they feel the need to believe their own hype.

I hurt inside when my friends discuss subjects, they are not a part of, such as racism, cultural issues, life's they've never lived—as if it is their right—as if the boogeyman is coming for them. As if by my being appalled amounts to, I need to lighten up. I will never lighten up.

The problem with entitlement is the refusal to accept your advantages. Sure, life can suck from time to time, even yours. Sure, you may work hard. But before you hop onto your high horse and try to sell, *those suffering chose to be that way. Could you please take a deep breath, cherish the advantage life has gifted you? Nobody is telling you to give it back—all the rest of us are asking is for you to understand; for many others, life isn't easy, even if they tell you, they've chosen their own path.*

There is not a single five-year-old on the planet who, when asked what they want to be when they grow up? Said: I want to be sitting on the sidewalk begging for change, calling people faggots while chanting "Asshole, Asshole, Asshole."
