

CORB LUND, from page 10

You're asking all the hard questions. I don't want to dwell on this and alienate all of the cowboys in Oregon.

S.Z.: *You come from a seemingly conservative, rural background, but your songwriting makes social commentary on a number of topics. What is that like? To walk that line?*

C.L.: My dad is a kind of renaissance cowboy. He's very open-minded. I try to be practical. I don't really have a bedrock ideology that I operate from. I try to think about individual issues rather than trying to apply a liberal or conservative model to anything. I tend to look at a problem and think, what would be the most commonsense way to solve this?

S.Z.: *What are your thoughts about gun control?*

C.L.: Oh god, this is for sure going to get me into trouble, right? Another misconception about Canadians is that we don't have guns. We've actually got lots and lots and lots of guns. We just don't shoot each other very much. That's not a criticism, that's just a fact.

I've thought a lot about the reasons for this. There are other countries besides Canada. The Swiss, for example. It's actually a requirement, from what I understand, for the bulk of their male citizens to be in the militia. And not only are they allowed to have assault rifles, it's actually required that most male citizens in Switzerland have an assault rifle in their home that they qualify on regularly. And the murder rate there is quite low.

The question is, why is the violence rate so high in the States? I have a couple of theories.

S.Z.: *What are they?*

C.L.: One of them is that it has to do with your history. The armed revolution aspect, the founding of America. I think it is woven into your culture that way, maybe.

Secondly, I wonder sometimes if it has something to do with diversity. America is made up of a whole melting pot of people. A place like Switzerland is pretty homogeneous. So I think America lends itself to an "us and them" kind of a mentality. I've thought about it a lot — wondering why the level of violence (in America) is what it is. What do you think?

S.Z.: *I grew up with a grandfather who had enough handguns and rifles to arm a militia. He made sure that I understood how guns worked, how to clean them and care for them and how to shoot them. Whenever we would see one another, we always made a trip to the range. That was a fascinating experience.*

Having said that, I have made it to this point in my life and I have never needed a gun.

C.L.: What if someone breaks into your house though?

S.Z.: *Yes, that would be horrible. I would hate for my last thought to be, "Damn, I wish I had a gun." I try not to live my life in fear.*

C.L.: It's like buying insurance. I buy car insurance and I don't think I'm going to get in a car accident, but if I do. You can outlaw guns all you want, but if there are maniacs out there who want to hurt people, they are going to do it. If they can't get a gun, then they will do it with an ax or a baseball bat. I'm skeptical that guns laws would work. If it's not the access to guns that is the issue, but it's the people that's the issue, I don't know how in the hell you legislate that.

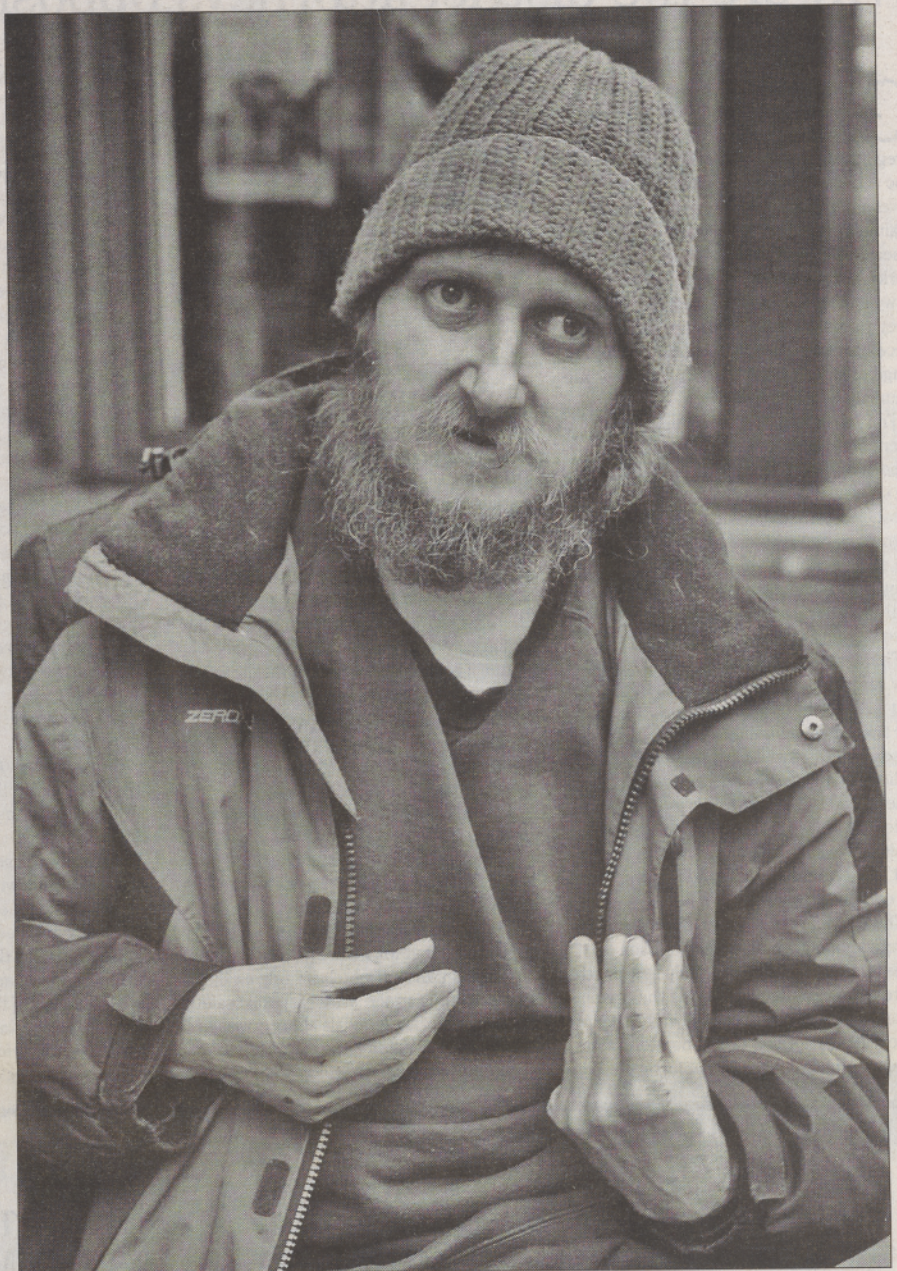


PHOTO BY KENDALL

Street Biography

Dennis
BY KENDALL

Dennis was hit by a car at about 2 p.m. on Friday, March 22, while he was in a legal crosswalk. He was thrown to the pavement but not run over by the car, and while he was trying to get up off the ground, the car sped away and ran through a traffic light at the next intersection. He wasn't able to see the license plate on the car. No one stopped to help him, and no one came forward as a witness.

He made his way to a nearby bicycle shop, where they allowed him to wash his hands and get some paper towels to stanch the blood on his hands and knees.

He explains:

"I was shook up. I was like, what happened? Did that just happen? I couldn't stop shaking. So I thanked them and made my way to the Mission for dinner. I told my friends, and one of them said I should call 9-1-1, so I used the pay phone at the Mission. About 45 minutes later, the cops showed up and took notes and told me they would file a report. But they didn't give me anything to sign, so I was feeling like it was a waste of time. They didn't say a thing about me getting any medical treatment. I was still bleeding, but they didn't care. Saturday I went to the police office to check on the incident, and there was no report at all. They just blew me off, like, 'He's homeless, he's worthless. Forget it.' So I was shaken up all weekend, couldn't seem to get my head around what

happened. I tried to get a bus ride to the hospital, but the bus driver said no, not without a ticket.

"I didn't get to the hospital till Monday, when I got a bus ticket from a friend of mine at the Mission. I went to the Emergency at Providence Hospital. I told them I'm homeless, I don't have any health care or anything, and they took real good care of me, treated me like a real person. They took some of the green-painted cross-walk stones out of my hand where they were embedded in there, and they put ointment and bandages on me and gave me a scan, where they put you in a tube and check you out. CAT scan I guess they call it. They said I didn't have any broken bones. I was lucky. Then they gave me some antibiotic, gave me some antibiotics to take home and swallow every eight hours, and they called the Mission to get me a bed for the night. Then they called a cab and sent me to the Mission. I'm just coming from there right now."

Kendall is a photographer, writer, listener, and retired college professor. She was on the Occupy Portland media team. Her work includes "Singing Away the Hunger," by Mpho Ntshunya, and many stories of people on the margins of society who prevail against impossible circumstances.

