

**TALESE, from page 12**

either because they have their own shame, and their own secrets, and their own willingness or their own eagerness to be divorced from others."

"They are in the shadows of our vision," Talese added. "And because they don't offer us any reward for caring, they don't increase our sales, they don't increase our ratings or give us hits... they represent nothing that's desirable. And so, they go from generation to generation, generally, unrecognized in any meaningful way."

Talese believes homelessness should be a bipartisan issue.

"I don't care whether it's an Obama world, or a Trump world, or George Bush, or whoever the president is," he said. "There's no excuse for how little regard and humanity is shown to people who have lost their way."

Especially in a city as wealthy as New York.

"I have seen how sad the city is in the shadows of some of its churches and some of its stores along main avenues in the afterhours from 6, or 7, or 8 o'clock at night — especially in the warmer months," Talese said.

"The city of New York, with all of its money, shouldn't have those sights. They're the result of our own greedy capitalism and our lack of heart as a democracy."

As for the person he wrote about in "The Homeless Woman with Two Homes", Talese called several salon owners he knew and

hoped to get her a job, but he never heard from her again.

"She said she'd call me, I gave her my phone number, and I then called these people before she was supposed to call me back, and they said yes, they'd be glad to see her [and] offer her a job if she was as qualified as I thought she probably was," Talese said. "She never called me back."

Homelessness has skyrocketed in New York City in the years since Talese wrote about the homeless woman. Over the past two decades, the homeless population living in the city's shelter system has increased 115 percent, from 23,868 in 1994 to 60,000 in 2016, according to the New York City Department of Homeless Services shelter system census.

For most New Yorkers, Talese said, homeless people "are considered an inconvenience." It's an observation he made nearly 30 years ago, after he took the time to get to know a homeless woman at Lexington Avenue and 59th Street.

"These mysterious people live among us each day, sleep at our door, walk shoulder-to-shoulder with us on the street," Talese wrote in "The Homeless Woman with Two Homes." "Yet, regrettably, we do not know them, and too many New Yorkers, with the donation of a few quarters daily, are able to buy their way out of whatever momentary concern or discomfort is caused by the presence of the homeless."

*Courtesy of Street Sense / INSP.ngo*

**Hank Aaron's Pen**

by Avendor

I rummage through thoughts  
Like a raccoon through garbage  
I quietly dream  
Like a slow moving snail  
I don old clothes  
Like a tree wears moss  
These bones clink and clatter  
In the wintertime gales  
I see a beautiful girl  
Six ways from Sunday  
I believe a showdown  
Is surely coming soon  
I believe Spring's returning  
It hasn't failed me yet  
I need room to grow  
And my own safe room  
I've been on vision quests  
Like indigenous shamans  
I loved Magic Johnson  
When I was a kid  
I never grew out of  
My love for Greek Mythology  
I've tried to make sense  
Of this crazy Id  
So I'm going to make my heart  
Pure as white chocolate  
And I'll seek to make my mind  
A fountain for the Gods  
This mouth of mine I will continuously varnish  
And this pen will bud, like Aaron's rod.

LOVE

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