

To Serve the People

Levison-Brentz

1970

Since its inception, Open City has served young people. Open City is now asking that members of the community return the favor.

In the past three years they have supplied the Wayne State area street people with free medical and legal aid, free clothing, rent-free crash pads and free job-placement for long-haired freaks.

For three dollars per week, the Open City food co-op offers eggs, milk, cheese, bread and fresh fruit and vegetables. Recently they have opened a coffee house in the Unitarian Church on Cass on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. The admission charge is 75 cents the first two nights and free on Sundays though no one is ever turned away for lack of bread.

A 240-acre farm, 80 miles from Detroit, has been donated to Open City which they plan to use as a farming coop. Instead of being ripped-off by Eastern Market every week, they eventually plan to grow their own food and distribute it throughout the community. They intend on renting freezers to store food during the winter.

On Third and Prentis they have opened a community store named the Blood Bank. Hand-made art and clothing, made by community people, are sold there. D.J. copies of records, donated by WABX and WKNR are sold at a half a buck each.

Open City is in desperate need of financial aid in order to continue these services. They have installed containers in head shops and boutiques around Detroit and have been fairly successful, but are around \$600 in the hole. They also need transportation to take them to speaking engagements at high schools and city organizations. Only two hours a day would be sufficient. If you can help, call and leave your name and place where you can be contacted.

They also need farming equipment in order to make the farm co-op a reality. Housing within the immediate community is necessary for kids and staff members to be able to crash at.

But most important, is the need for people to work at Open City, people realizing the imperative of establishing an alternate, viable culture which serves the people without cost. Open City is turning to the people for aid and not to capitalist institutions which only fuck people over.

The only question remaining is who are the people being served by Open City? Within the Warren-Forest area resides working-class blacks and Southern whites. The lack of response from this community may have resulted because Open City has either not extended their services to these people or the residents have not been aware of the existence of Open City and those services.

Open City has primarily concerned itself with white, middle-class, run-away kids, and street people who hang out in the area. Run-aways take advantage of local communes supplied to them by Open City by crashing there but rarely return the favor to the commune or Open City by helping out at either place.

Suburban kids who have the clap and are scared shitless to tell their folks flee down to Open City for anonymous treatment. Unlike these bourgeois kids, the street people's and local resident's material conditions dictate their real need for Open City's services. Street people and other community residents cannot afford legal fees and medical aid. Because of their financial situation, they are also in need of the free clothing and weekly food program.

Much like WSU which caters to a transient community of students which have nothing to do with the contiguous community which surrounds the university, Open City deals with a community consisting of white street people and outer-city freeks. Open City makes the same mistake as the university by neglecting the real needs of the community people who live within their reaches in favor of serving those who flock down to the city from the suburbs. In opposition to the university, which corporately decides to ignore the community, Open City has a radical potential in serving the community. In order for it to be an effective organization, it must act with the community and in only this way will the people reciprocate and move on the needs of Open City. To help them with their debts, their services or their politics, call Open City at 831-2770.

fifth Estate

Levison-Brentz
To Serve the People
1970

<https://www.fiftheestate.org/archive/100-march-5-18-1970/to-serve-the-people>
Fifth Estate #100, March 5-18, 1970

[fiftheestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://www.fiftheestate.org)