

What's New?



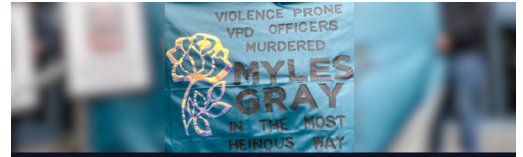
Nina Taghaddosi, Anti-Stigma Campaigner

Pivot Legal Society's Recommendations to the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction's 5-Year Review of the BC Poverty Reduction Strategy.



Simone Akyianu, Staff Lawyer & Campaigner

Situating Pivot's sex workers' rights campaign within its colonial roots and possibilities for new directions



Meenakshi Mannoe, Criminalization and Policing Campaigner

Members of a Violence-Prone Department brutally killed Myles Gray



PIVOT & PACE

Joint Written Brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women



Meenakshi Mannoe, Criminalization and Policing Campaigner

Confronting Ableism & Sanism in Policing: An Interview with Vesper Moore



Guest Blog by Odette Auger

"You Can Not Keep Killing Us"



Press Release September 26, 2023 (UPDATED: Oct 4, 2023)

Sarah Runyon and Caitlin Shane file Charter challenge to drug possession at BC Provincial Court

What's New?



Our Homes Can't Wait
Coalition
&
Pivot Legal Society



Presents:

Housing Justice: A 3 part blog series.



PIVOT & Our Homes Can't Wait Coalition

Fighting for Tenancy
Rights and Housing
Justice Through
Coalition-Building -
Part 1



PIVOT & Our Homes Can't Wait Coalition

Tenancy Rights Amidst
BC's Housing Crisis -
Part 2



PIVOT & Our Homes Can't Wait Coalition

Building Community
Power for Housing as a
Human Right - Part 3

Did You Know?

Pivot's Annual Report 2022 is out!



275
Short
Referral
Requests



90
Legal & Policy
Advice, and
Advocacy with
Government Agencies



74
Keynotes,
Panels, &
Webinar Presentations



2,225
Workshop &
Presentation Attendees



2,730
Online Legal
Information
Resources Accessed



98
News
Headlines
& Mentions



16
Legal interventions,
Human Rights &
Policing Cases



This report highlights all the incredible movement work our staff is engaged in alongside community.

The strength of our work speaks for itself, but we could not achieve our goals without your supports.

[We hope you enjoy this labour of love and continue to support our efforts.](#)

[Help power Pivot's work today!](#)



Call To Action



CHRISSY BRETT



We have just passed the 2nd Memorial Walk for Justice honouring Chrissy Brett, a Nuxalk woman, mother, grandmother. Chrissy Brett was a fierce advocate for the unhoused in so-called Canada.

Pivot staff worked alongside Chrissy Brett at three tent cities. Chrissy is survived by 3 children and we are calling on our supporters to extend their generosity to help lift up Chrissy's children.

People are encouraged to sign up as monthly donors for at least a year as a way to provide the family with ongoing support.

Thank you and we hope you are able to contribute.

**Lift up
Chrissy Brett's
children**



TALKING BACK TO THE CITY

A MANUAL FOR WINNING
AND RESISTING
LOCAL DRUG POLICY

Authors

Caitlin Shane, Pivot Legal Society
VANDU Boards, 2022 + 2023

Report Design/Layout
AmyWu.ca



PIVOT
LEGAL SOCIETY

Published on May 25, 2023, Talking Back to the City explains what local governments can do (and stop doing) to better serve people who use drugs in their communities, plus insights for democratic organizing at the grassroots level.

Be sure to check out this report as well as the accompanying poster "VANDU's Golden Rules" for top tips & tricks for: direct action and grassroots organizing; working with government; & working with researchers.

Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users'
GOLDEN RULES
FOR GETTING SHIT DONE



- 1** We never changed the law without breaking it
- 2** Ask for forgiveness, not permission
- 3** Know your enemies, find your friends
- 4** You can't change everything overnight. Get ready for the long haul
- 5** Look at your community: find out your basis of unity, your strategy and goals
- 6** Evolve: weed out bias and stigma in your own group
- 7** You can't rely on government. Rely on each other!
- 8** It's a war on the poor. It was designed this way
- 9** If you're pissing people off, you're doing something right!
- 10** No matter what they try to swing at you, don't give up

I can be a rose in your pocket or a thorn in your side

~ Tracey Morrison, Rest in Power

On Working with Government

Beware invitations to work with government: they'll water down your goals, take credit for your work, and divide your solidarity.

"They'll try and buy you to divide and conquer you. Keep your wits about you"
~ Flora Munroe (Rest in Power)

"Most governments will trick you into being an ally, and then puppet you"
~ Elder Marge (Heiltsuk)

Before accepting invitations, create your own terms of reference, goals, and non-negotiables. Don't be afraid to walk away if you're being compromised.

And when it comes to police?

"Sometimes you have to cut your losses. If history shows us anything, it's that police cannot be our allies"
~ VANDU Board member Dave Hamm

Do your research:

"Figure out government's ulterior motive. Anticipate their arguments and strategize your response"
~ Elder Clint (Anishinaabe)

Demand compensation and credit: our time and energy is valuable! We are expert contractors who deserve fair payment and credit.

Remember: they need you more than you need them.

On Direct Action & Grassroots Organizing

Build from the bottom up: success comes from below. Always be democratic in your structures and your principles. Create a grassroots organization with an elected and accountable leadership. Create transparent structures so that people know exactly how they can be involved, how to access the benefits of membership, how to move into leadership positions, and how to exercise their democratic rights as members.

Doing it yourself is sometimes the best option:

"When you agree to work with authorities, you're forced to compromise, and then they take credit for it even if it was your idea"
~ VANDU Board member Dave Hamm

So many "drug policies" started with the **direct action of PWUD.** For instance, VANDU ran illegal injection rooms before government ever came on board.

"We're not gonna let people die just because they said no to us"
~ Flora Munroe, late VANDU member

On Working with Researchers

"In the past, researchers would use our expertise and we'd never hear from them again. They'd publish an article in some journal, but we'd still have the same problems on the street"
~ VANDU Board member Kevin Yake

We've been researched to death: misrepresented, stigmatized, traumatized. We need them to do research with us and not about us. That means getting something useful in turn, like a community resource or teach-in.

"Researchers should leave the community in better shape than they found it"
~ VANDU Board member Hugh Lampkin

"If we can't have self-determination and autonomy, we don't wanna be involved!"
~ VANDU Board member Delilah Gregg

Build relationships first: before committing to working together, ask them to explain their research. Listen to your gut—if it feels like a bad fit, it probably is.

Demand follow-through: ask researchers to keep you involved throughout.

"Before the paper is published, make sure they bring it back to you for review. What you say can be taken out of context"
~ VANDU Board member Dave Hamm.

Credit, credit, credit: if you're contributing, you should be a named author.

Make sure they've read *Research 101: A Manifesto for Ethical Research in the Downtown Eastside*: or create your own research guide for your community. Many of us helped draft this set of expectations to guide researchers' process.

Safety first: always have a safety plan—ask everyone what they need to safely participate.

"Different people have different abilities. Figure out what people's risks are: are they more likely to be arrested? To lose custody? To experience police violence?"
~ VANDU Board member Hugh Lampkin

Building a movement takes time: we're in this for the long haul and we won't win everything overnight.

Find your friends: in media, on city council, in the community. It helps to have allies with different skills.

"Sometimes you have to learn to work with people you don't like"
~ VANDU member Elli Taylor

2023 Design: sozzan.ca

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