

12-2018

Signs of Humanity: A Qualitative Exploration of Panhandling in Philadelphia

Alyssa Tate

Thomas Jefferson University, alyssa.tate@jefferson.edu

Rosemary Frasso, PhD, MSc, CPH

Thomas Jefferson University, Rosemary.Frasso@Jefferson.edu

Willie Baronet, MFA

Southern Methodist University

Katherine Brierly

Thomas Jefferson University, katherine.brierley@jefferson.edu

Steven Buffer

*Thomas Jefferson University, steven.buffer@jefferson.edu**See next page for additional authors*

[Let us know how access to this document benefits you](#)

Follow this and additional works at: https://jdc.jefferson.edu/si_phr_2021_phase1Part of the [Medical Education Commons](#), and the [Public Health Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Tate, Alyssa; Frasso, Rosemary; Baronet, Willie; Brierly, Katherine; Buffer, Steven; Edwards, Kaela; Fusfeld, Zach; Garret, Jenna; George, Nisha; Holmes, Nichole; and Wei, Emily, "Signs of Humanity: A Qualitative Exploration of Panhandling in Philadelphia" (2018). SKMC JeffMD Scholarly Inquiry, Phase 1, Project 1.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Jefferson Digital Commons. The Jefferson Digital Commons is a service of Thomas Jefferson University's [Center for Teaching and Learning \(CTL\)](#). The Commons is a showcase for Jefferson books and journals, peer-reviewed scholarly publications, unique historical collections from the University archives, and teaching tools. The Jefferson Digital Commons allows researchers and interested readers anywhere in the world to learn about and keep up to date with Jefferson scholarship. This article has been accepted for inclusion in Phase 1 by an authorized administrator of the Jefferson Digital Commons. For more information, please contact: JeffersonDigitalCommons@jefferson.edu.

Authors

Alyssa Tate; Rosemary Frasso, PhD, MSc, CPH; Willie Baronet, MFA; Katherine Brierly; Steven Buffer; Kaela Edwards; Zach Fusfeld; Jenna Garret; Nisha George; Nichole Holmes; and Emily Wei

Alyssa Tate
12/10/18
PH Track Abstract

People who participate in panhandling are those who ask for financial or other assistance on the street. In Philadelphia, it is known that a large portion of people who panhandle also experience housing insecurity or other hardship. Panhandlers are a very visible fraction of a city's homeless population and their experiences are of particular interest because their cardboard signs can give insight into common hardships such as housing and food insecurity and substance abuse disorders. While panhandlers in Philadelphia have been surveyed in the past, there is not recent literature on their lived experiences and perspectives and information was not collected and analyzed in a qualitative manner. The purpose of this study was to shed light on the experiences and needs of those who panhandle in Philadelphia. This was a qualitative study that utilized open-ended and freelisting questions. The results of the open ended questions will be analyzed via thematic coding. This approach will highlight major themes in responses to allow summary and organization of the major findings. Analysis of the freelisting question specifically will give information about the ways that those who participate in panhandling spend the money they receive. Formal results are pending, but preliminary findings reveal appreciation of social interaction with passersby, explanations for IV drug use, and lack of family and social support among study participants. The final results will guide recommendations on initiatives benefiting Philadelphia's homeless population.