

ON VIRTUE

A poem by Rolf Auer

Tribute to Sandy Cameron

May 22, 2011

Of everyone I know personally
very few were more community-minded
than social justice activist and writer
Sandy Cameron.

“Without equality,
there can be no democracy.”
he once told me.

His far-ranging, versatile mind
explored numerous social advocacy possibilities
for corporatism, gentrification, globalization,
the free markets, free trade, and social democracy,
to name a few examples.

I think his writings promoted
equality, compassion, companionship,
cooperation, mutual responsibility, and much more.

(In my opinion,
our current economic ideology—
competition-based neo-liberal capitalism—
is unsustainable, leading us
toward the death of our civilization.
Our economic and political systems will probably mutate
before neo-liberal capitalism dies
into either neo-fascism
or social democratic capitalism—
a crucial choice depending entirely on the will of the people.)

Sandy’s love for the Downtown Eastside
was boundless; he always had time
to talk with anyone who
snagged him on a point of interest.

I never heard him speak
of totalitarianism or autocracy—
it was as if these ideologies
were beneath his consideration,
as if they were only
worthy of contempt.

He fought endlessly for the rights
of the people of the Downtown Eastside.
He wrote numerous articles for
The Carnegie Newsletter
which were inspirational to all who read them;
I know become many people told me so.

He had a number of books
of poetry published—
very adept and very beautiful poems.
His voice was deceptively mild
allowing his poems to penetrate
one's consciousness
with more thought and more depth
than most poetry.

From Sandy's poem
"Being True to Ourselves":

"It was Gandi who said
that we can only
be true to ourselves,
and true to others,
when we are able
to commit ourselves,
on selected occasions,
to the death."