

**"Grand Jct, time to shit
can Caton!" FB Post**



**Amos Counseling's
Drop in Center**
●Coffee
●Laundry
●Respite
**Open all Night! 1pm to
7am.
1111 Ute Ave.**

Re-Open Whitman Park!

The pressure is building on the City to do the right thing. Keep it up!

Contact City Council
council@gjcity.org
970-244-1504

Contact City Manager
Greg Caton
citymanager@gjcity.org
970-244-1502

Submit a letter or 'You
said it' to the Sentinel:
letters@gjsentinel.com
yousaidit@gjsentinel.com

Businesses pushing this
closure include:

Scotty's Mufflers
Bud's Signs
EM Tech

Don't give them your
Money!

City Council Meetings
are held the 1st and 3rd
Wednesdays of every
month at 530pm at GJ
City Hall, 250 North 5th
Street, There is always a
public comment period.
You have three minutes
to make your voice heard,
use it.

THE REVOLUTIONIST.

"Revolution is simply the culminating point of Evolution."

Homes Now!

GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO, APRIL 10, 1903.

Fall 2023

Parks, Poverty, Protest and Police: A Brief History of Whitman Park and Dispossession



Whitman Park and the
unhoused have been apart of
Grand Junction's story from the
very earliest frontier years.
Whitman was then called Maple
Park, later Cottonwood, and finally
Whitman, when the Whitman
School stood across the street. The
un-housed were then known as
tramps, and criminalized as
vagrants. The first vagrancy laws
(laws that made it a crime to broke
and/or unemployed) were put on
the books in 1884.

At that time the Town Marshall
was not only tasked with keeping
law and order but also with the
maintenance of roads and
sidewalks. The chain-gang, as
common on the frontier as a horse
and carriage, was a tool to drive the
unhoused from town and free slave
labor keeping GJ presentable. In
1891, the *Grand Junction News*
opined: "several days at hard labor
on the streets is about the only
punishment that will give a tramp
an earnest desire to avoid our city."

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The Revolutionist? Some History

What is The Revolutionist?

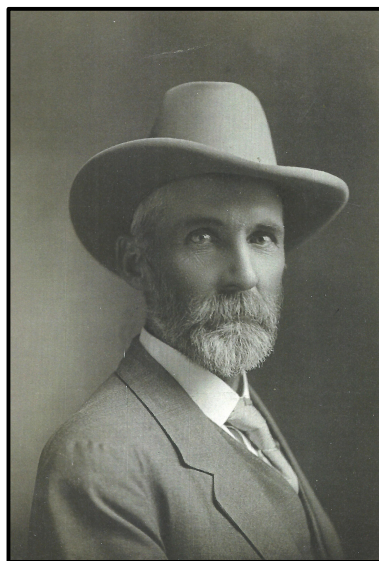
The Revolutionist was published in Grand Junction 1901-1904? by the Socialist Party of Mesa County. There is only one known surviving copy at History Colorado's archive in Denver.

Why The Revolutionist? We

have resurrected this publication after over a hundred years, because there is a need for a publication, in these days of mass houselessness, low wages, and rampant greed and gentrification, that speaks for people not profit.

Who was behind The

Revolutionist? S.B Hutchinson, was the original publisher of The Revolutionist, and the first socialist Chief of Police in America. Hutchinson was serving as Alderman (equivalent to city council member) while publishing The Revolutionists.



“the only real difference between us is this: You love and support the system that produces the tramp, yet you despise the tramp the system produces, while I despise the system that produces the tramp, yet I pity the tramp”

*S.B. Hutchinson
Daily Sentinel Aug. 8, 1912*

Solidarity Not Charity's Schedule

Saturday's • Emerson Park
Collective Meeting—3pm
The 'Feed' and Street Distro—4pm
Sunday's • Columbine Park
The People's DIY BBQ—12:30pm
Tuesday's • U.U. Church
Distro—11-1pm.

Get Involved! www.solidaritynotcharity.org/

In July of 2009, activist and unhoused folx began organizing Housing First! No More Deaths! Holding weekly meetings in Whitman Park. GJPD sent undercover officers (pictured), arrested organizers mid-meeting, and aggressively intimidated the democratic process.

HF! NMD! won some battles and lost others. In 2009, the City of GJ attempted to ban panhandling. The measure failed but came back as a proposal to ban “remaining in a median.” Then one night in 2010, the sign, bench and trash can disappeared, at the little known Colorado West Park—overnight it became a median. Like Whitman, the park was mostly used by the unhoused. “The Red Pill” called it “a little battle in a war the city has been waging to push the poor and homeless out of sight and out of the city.”

Another 'little battle' was also taking place in 2010, at a well established encampment at the very confluence of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers.

In May, three GJPD officers entered the un-occupied camp, slashing tents and bike tires, smashing food with their batons, and peeing on peoples



Undercover GJPD Officers “Vic”(shirtless) and his safety buddy. July 2009

sleeping bags. HF! NMD! filed a complaint with the victims and three GJPD officers were eventually fired. The Point, as the camp was known, was ultimately bulldozed and high fenced by the railroad. The GJPD formed the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). They used a 'Hearts and Minds' policing method to gain the trust and location of many encampments, only to have those camps evicted in due time.

The recent closure of Whitman Park is a major escalation in this unwinnable war. One that has been waged for 140 years—and has failed. The unhoused, the poor have always lived at the edges of our history, yet have shaped it since the beginning, often reflecting our communities own humanity, or lack thereof, back to itself.

We can and must do better!

Join The Revolutionist!

Send us stories, leads, pictures, events, poetry, and dank memes.
Print and distro in your communities.
Email Us: therevolutionistGJ@gmail.com

speaking, and was arrested, then Miss May Saunders began speaking and was arrested. In total 7 local socialist were arrested, and found guilty by Bunting in his role at mayor/city judge. They appealed to the county court and were all found, not guilty. Free speech was saved for a while....

In 1909, GJ adopted a new town charter, one of the most progressive and democratic in the nation, including ranked choice voting. The first election under this form of voting brought Thomas Todd to office. Todd a socialist along with Hutchinson, acting as Chief of Police, instituted a number of more human approaches to dealing with extreme poverty and dispossession. Under their guidance the city opened a woodlot, where anyone could earn a days pay for splitting wood—wood for low income Junctionites to heat their homes. They also tried to open a city owned coal mine that would guarantee a days work to anyone who wanted to work. It never came to fruition, though.

The Daily Sentinel, now under Walter Walkers control, opposed all of these measures vehemently. In 1912, when 140 unemployed members of the radical Industrial Workers of the World hopped freight trains into Grand Junction, Todd and Hutchinson and the rest of City Council voted to feed the Wobblies, they prepared and ate their 'mulligan' in Whitman. This was too much for Walter Walker.

He organized a re-call effort against Todd, ultimately forced Hutchinson to resign and got the sheriff to deputize an armed mob to drive the men from the city.

Oral histories recall Whitman Park as a park frequented by the unhoused going back to at least the 1920s.

Efforts to 'reclaim' Whitman began back in 1958. When a proposed Jail/Police building was planned near Whitman park a "prevailing location for transients to loiter."

Fifty years later, Mayor Jim Doody was quoted as saying in reference to the new Police/Fire building, "I think its a great opportunity to reclaim [Whitman]."

In 2008, Solidarity Not Charity began it weekly Saturday 'Feed.' During that time the city regularly closed the bathrooms, and in December of 2008 cut down the rose bushes, lilacs, and smaller trees to further spy on the unhoused.

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Julie, 2010, "GJ Police Vandalized my TENT. Anything helps."

The south side of Grand Junction has always been home to the poor, the marginalized, and the dispossessed. Dalton Trumbo delinted this divide in *Eclipse*, "no nice woman walks down the South Side of Main...because of the proximity of barber shops, cigar rooms, and pool halls ..."

Even in those early decades the city tried to drive the undesirables from Whitman Park.

In 1905, I.N. Bunting, owner/publisher of *The Daily Sentinel*, and also mayor, and city

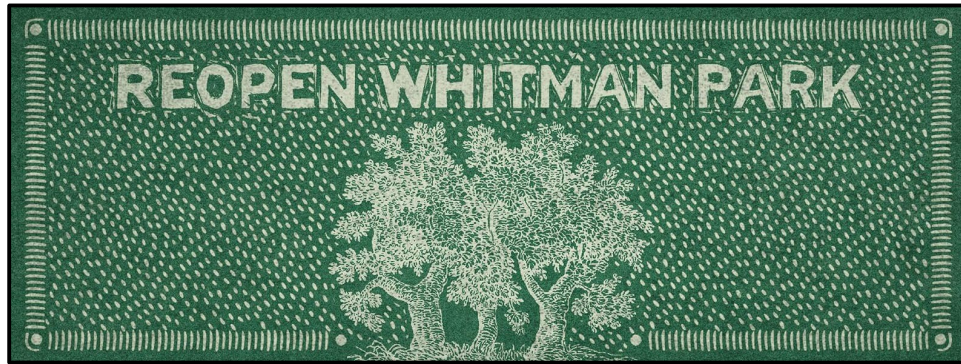
Judge, unilaterally decide that the Socialist Party's weekly Sunday afternoon meetings in Whitman were violating the 'peace of the sabbath.' The Socialist stood their ground and held another event the next Sunday and J.W. Sawyer was arrested and found guilty. The next week the socialist were back. J.W. Sawyer again spoke. He was arrested. Alderman Hutchinson (see page 2) began

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"Hitler's lead followed by Grand Junction officials. The "Concentration" camp where transients are scheduled to be penned in.....The plan is for the city to arrest all transients, fine them, and put the to work." *Daily Sentinel* July 4th 1939

GJ Closes Park and the Internet Strikes Back



"Maybe the extra boxes from Costco could provide housing." FB comment on Mayor Stout's profile.

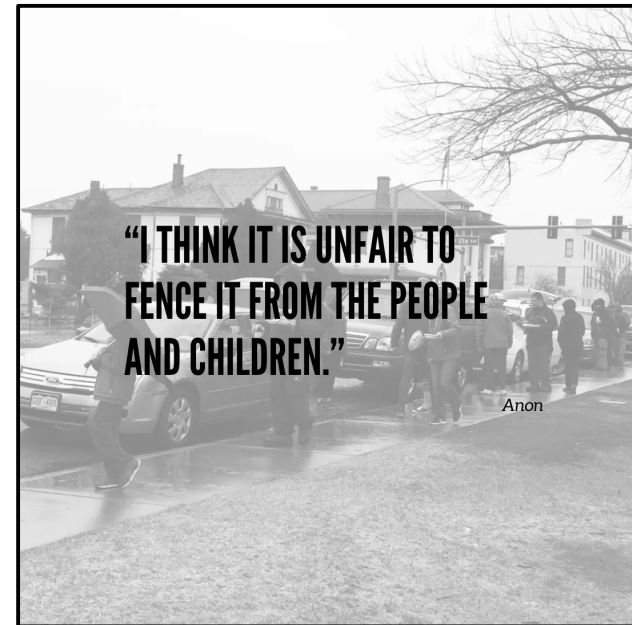
"Ppl are lacking housing not places to shop." FB Comment Mayor Stout's Profile



"These steel beams will destroy Anna Stout's dreams" Protest Sign 9/13

"WE AS A COMMUNITY NEED TO STICK TOGETHER. OUR PRICES FO RENT ARE ALREADY AT AN ALL TIME HIGH. WE NEED TO FUND THE LOWER INCOME WITH AFFORDABLE HOUSING."

Anon



"I THINK IT IS UNFAIR TO FENCE IT FROM THE PEOPLE AND CHILDREN."

Anon



If a policy decision were to be made, such as to prohibit camping in all public parks at all times, that would have to be a council decision.

-Anna Stout



"LGBTQ people are twice as likely to be unhoused as straight and cis folks. How about showing your commitment to LGBTQ freedom by re-opening Whitman Park?" FB Comment Anna Stout for Congress