

○ *Make a pictorial collage
that represents the
meaning of “greed”.*

****BUT you can't use any
pictures of money or gold coins-
-too obvious.**

Think about what greed looks like.
How do you know someone is excessive
or greedy?

Use pictures. Limit words to VERY few.

Be thoughtful—everyone can go to
google images and type in greed—do
more than that. Have at least 10
arranged pictures. It is a collage, not a
line. Can be digital or on paper.

(Magazines encouraged)

○ *Find greed represented
in media/pop culture and
analyze*

****This means a book, a song, a
movie, or a video game**

**Answer the questions & use
complete sentences whenever
possible**

- 1. Where is this from?**
- 2. Explain in detail how greed is represented.**
- 3. What does it mean?**
- 4. How is this message about greed meant to influence people?**

Greed is good??

Excerpted mostly from <http://public.wsu.edu/~taflinge/socgreed.html>

The desire for wealth is especially apparent in those cultures descended from or adhering to the Western European tradition of "progress" and "growth", a legacy of the eras of scientific discovery and world exploration. The former led people to believe that they could know everything, the latter increased what they knew and opened the world to trade.

Trade became a major factor in European life after the Black Death, a plague that killed three-fourths of Europe's population in the 14th Century. This massive decrease in the work force had three results. First, the end of the feudal system, since the serfs, their numbers now low and thus their value as a workforce now high, could now demand wages for their labor. Second, a surplus of goods and food since the number of consumers was so low. And third, a sudden increase in personal wealth as people inherited the belongings of all their relatives that had died. These three factors led to a greater sense of individualism and a decline in spiritual and intellectual interests in favor of material interests. (Burke, 1985)

With the new high-demand products, such as spices, tea and silk, made available by world exploration, trade and exploitation of markets became the goals of European societies and individuals in those societies. This continues to this day. The standard of living for the members of societies practicing such materialism gives them a major advantage over those people and societies that don't. They can gather more resources, live longer, raise more children in better conditions that can pass on their parents' and ancestors' genes, and generally outstrip any competition that doesn't practice greed.

Today, because of the standard of living materialism provides those who follow the idea that some is good, more is better, too much is just right, much of the world "goes for the gold". Thus, although legal and religious proscriptions against greed have been in effect and given at least lip service for millennia, the fact remains that deep down inside people believe "greed is good". It might be disguised as capitalism, expanding the range of possibilities, or enlightened self-interest, but deep down inside it's greed.⁽¹⁾

Why then, if greed is not only biologically desirable but socially and societally desirable as well, does greed have such a bad name? It goes back to the fact that humans are social and cultural animals, not just individuals.

Remember that greed is a valuable trait for the individual. It makes us fight for a larger piece of the pie, a good idea from a biological point of view. However, since humans are social creatures, and greed says that an individual should take more than his or her own share, greed creates social conflict, as those who lose out resent those who win more than an even share. Those that are particularly greedy (read, particularly good at getting larger pieces of pies) are particularly resented. The very wealthy may be described as successful, rich, competent, and capable or also manipulative, vain, egotistical, and arrogant. However,

how many people would, if they were honest change places with the super wealthy in a second.

Why are lotteries and sweepstakes so successful? Why do Reno and Las Vegas attract millions of people to their casinos? Because, no matter how much it is decried, people are greedy: they all want more than they have, the more the better.

The thing to bear in mind is that "greed is good." That is, it's good for the individual, but perhaps not for the society in which that individual lives. Unrestrained greed in an individual can lead to callousness, arrogance, and even megalomania. A person dominated by greed will often ignore the harm their actions can cause others. Sweat shops, unsafe working conditions and destruction of livelihoods are all consequences of people whose personal greed overcame their social consciences.

However, even a society that bans individual greed can suffer. It is greed that makes people want to do things, since they will be rewarded for their efforts. Remove that reward, and you remove the incentive to work. The former Soviet Union provides an example of this: the collective farms provided no individual incentive to strive, and thus produced an insufficient supply of food. The individually owned and run family farms, however, with the possibility of selling the produce and keeping the proceeds, grew a far greater harvest per acre than the collective farms. The "greed" of American farmers has allowed them to grow food for the world, since the more they produce the more money they make.

Nonetheless, however you regard it, unrestrained greed is detrimental to society; unrestrained disapproval of greed is detrimental to society. People attempt to find a balance between biological imperative and social necessity.

Blackberry-Picking

BY SEAMUS HEANEY

for Philip Hobsbaum

Late August, given heavy rain and sun
For a full week, the blackberries would ripen.
At first, just one, a glossy purple clot
Among others, red, green, hard as a knot.
You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet
Like thickened wine: summer's blood was in it
Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for
Picking. Then red ones inked up and that hunger
Sent us out with milk cans, pea tins, jam-pots
Where briars scratched and wet grass bleached our boots.
Round hayfields, cornfields and potato-drills
We trekked and picked until the cans were full,
Until the tinkling bottom had been covered
With green ones, and on top big dark blobs burned
Like a plate of eyes. Our hands were peppered
With thorn pricks, our palms sticky as Bluebeard's.

We hoarded the fresh berries in the byre.
But when the bath was filled we found a fur,
A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache.
The juice was stinking too. Once off the bush
The fruit fermented, the sweet flesh would turn sour.
I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair
That all the lovely canfuls smelt of rot.
Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not.

Let America be America Again

Langston Hughes

Let America be America again.
Let it be the dream it used to be.
Let it be the pioneer on the plain
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed--
Let it be that great strong land of love
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme
That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,
But opportunity is real, and life is free,
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,
Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.")

Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?
And who are you that draws your veil across the stars?

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,
I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.
I am the red man driven from the land,
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek--
And finding only the same old stupid plan
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,
Tangled in that ancient endless chain
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfying need!
Of work the men! Of take the pay!
Of owning everything for one's own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.
I am the worker sold to the machine.
I am the Negro, servant to you all.
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean--
Hungry yet today despite the dream.
Beaten yet today--O, Pioneers!
I am the man who never got ahead,
The poorest worker bartered through the years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,
That even yet its mighty daring sings
In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned
That's made America the land it has become.
O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas
In search of what I meant to be my home--
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came
To build a "homeland of the free."

The free?

Who said the free? Not me?
Surely not me? The millions on relief today?
The millions shot down when we strike?
The millions who have nothing for our pay?
For all the dreams we've dreamed
And all the songs we've sung
And all the hopes we've held
And all the flags we've hung,
The millions who have nothing for our pay--
Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again--
The land that never has been yet--
And yet must be--the land where every man is free.
The land that's mine--the poor man's, Indian's, Negro's, ME--

Who made America,
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the rain,
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose--
The steel of freedom does not stain.
From those who live like leeches on the people's lives,
We must take back our land again,
America!

O, yes,
I say it plain,
America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath--
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,
We, the people, must redeem
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.
The mountains and the endless plain--
All, all the stretch of these great green states--
And make America again!

[Langston Hughes](#)

For the Love of Money

By SAM POLKJAN. 18, 2014

IN my last year on Wall Street my bonus was \$3.6 million — and I was angry because it wasn't big enough. I was 30 years old, had no children to raise, no debts to pay, no philanthropic goal in mind. I wanted more money for exactly the same reason an alcoholic needs another drink: I was addicted.

Eight years earlier, I'd walked onto the trading floor at Credit Suisse First Boston to begin my summer internship. I already knew I wanted to be rich, but when I started out I had a different idea about what wealth meant. I'd come to Wall Street after reading in the book "Liar's Poker" how Michael Lewis earned a \$225,000 bonus after just two years of work on a trading floor. That seemed like a fortune. Every January and February, I think about that time, because these are the months when bonuses are decided and distributed, when fortunes are made.

I'd learned about the importance of being rich from my dad. He was a modern-day Willy Loman, a salesman with huge dreams that never seemed to materialize. "Imagine what life will be like," he'd say, "when I make a million dollars." While he dreamed of selling a screenplay, in reality he sold kitchen cabinets. And not that well. We sometimes lived paycheck to paycheck off my mom's nurse-practitioner salary.

Dad believed money would solve all his problems. At 22, so did I. When I walked onto that trading floor for the first time and saw the glowing flat-screen TVs, high-tech computer monitors and phone turrets with enough dials, knobs and buttons to make it seem like the cockpit of a fighter plane, I knew exactly what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. It looked as if the traders were playing a video game inside a spaceship; if you won this video game, you became what I most wanted to be — rich.

IT was a miracle I'd made it to Wall Street at all. While I was competitive and ambitious — a wrestler at Columbia University — I was also a daily drinker and pot smoker and a regular user of cocaine, Ritalin and ecstasy. I had a propensity for self-destruction that had resulted in my getting suspended from Columbia for burglary, arrested twice and fired from an Internet company for fistfighting. I learned about rage from my dad, too. I can still see his red, contorted face as he charged toward me. I'd lied my way into the C.S.F.B. internship by omitting my transgressions from my résumé and was determined not to blow what seemed a final chance. The only thing as important to me as that internship was my girlfriend, a starter on the Columbia volleyball team. But even though I was in love with her, when I got drunk I'd sometimes end up with other women.

Three weeks into my internship she wisely dumped me. I don't like who you've become, she said. I couldn't blame her, but I was so devastated that

I couldn't get out of bed. In desperation, I called a counselor whom I had reluctantly seen a few times before and asked for help.

She helped me see that I was using alcohol and drugs to blunt the powerlessness I felt as a kid and suggested I give them up. That began some of the hardest months of my life. Without the alcohol and drugs in my system, I felt like my chest had been cracked open, exposing my heart to air. The counselor said that my abuse of drugs and alcohol was a symptom of an underlying problem — a “spiritual malady,” she called it. C.S.F.B. didn't offer me a full-time job, and I returned, distraught, to Columbia for senior year.

After graduation, I got a job at Bank of America, by the grace of a managing director willing to take a chance on a kid who had called him every day for three weeks. With a year of sobriety under my belt, I was sharp, cleareyed and hard-working. At the end of my first year I was thrilled to receive a \$40,000 bonus. For the first time in my life, I didn't have to check my balance before I withdrew money. But a week later, a trader who was only four years my senior got hired away by C.S.F.B. for \$900,000. After my initial envious shock — his haul was 22 times the size of my bonus — I grew excited at how much money was available.

Over the next few years I worked like a maniac and began to move up the Wall Street ladder. I became a bond and credit default swap trader, one of the more lucrative roles in the business. Just four years after I started at Bank of America, Citibank offered me a “1.75 by 2” which means \$1.75 million per year for two years, and I used it to get a promotion. I started dating a pretty blonde and rented a loft apartment on Bond Street for \$6,000 a month.

I felt so important. At 25, I could go to any restaurant in Manhattan — Per Se, Le Bernardin — just by picking up the phone and calling one of my brokers, who ingratiate themselves to traders by entertaining with unlimited expense accounts. I could be second row at the Knicks-Lakers game just by hinting to a broker I might be interested in going. The satisfaction wasn't just about the money. It was about the power. Because of how smart and successful I was, it was someone else's job to make me happy.

Still, I was nagged by envy. On a trading desk everyone sits together, from interns to managing directors. When the guy next to you makes \$10 million, \$1 million or \$2 million doesn't look so sweet. Nonetheless, I was thrilled with my progress.

My counselor didn't share my elation. She said I might be using money the same way I'd used drugs and alcohol — to make myself feel powerful — and that maybe it would benefit me to stop focusing on accumulating more and instead focus on healing my inner wound. “Inner wound”? I thought that was going a little far and went to work for a hedge fund.

Now, working elbow to elbow with billionaires, I was a giant fireball of greed. I'd think about how my colleagues could buy Micronesia if they

wanted to, or become mayor of New York City. They didn't just have money; they had power — power beyond getting a table at Le Bernardin. Senators came to their offices. They were royalty.

I wanted a billion dollars. It's staggering to think that in the course of five years, I'd gone from being thrilled at my first bonus — \$40,000 — to being disappointed when, my second year at the hedge fund, I was paid “only” \$1.5 million.



But in the end, it was actually my absurdly wealthy bosses who helped me see the limitations of unlimited wealth. I was in a meeting with one of them, and a few other traders, and they were talking about the new hedge-fund regulations. Most everyone on Wall Street thought they were a bad idea. “But isn't it better for the system as a whole?” I asked. The room went quiet, and my boss shot me a withering look. I remember his saying, “I don't have the brain capacity to think about the system as a whole. All

I felt as if I'd been punched in the gut. He was afraid of losing money, despite all that he had.

From that moment on, I started to see Wall Street with new eyes. I noticed the vitriol that traders directed at the government for limiting bonuses after the crash. I heard the fury in their voices at the mention of higher taxes. These traders despised anything or anyone that threatened their bonuses. Ever see what a drug addict is like when he's used up his junk? He'll do anything — walk 20 miles in the snow, rob a grandma — to get a fix. Wall Street was like that. In the months before bonuses were handed out, the trading floor started to feel like a neighborhood in “The Wire” when the heroin runs out.

I'd always looked enviously at the people who earned more than I did; now, for the first time, I was embarrassed for them, and for me. I made in a single year more than my mom made her whole life. I knew that wasn't fair; that wasn't right. Yes, I was sharp, good with numbers. I had marketable talents. But in the end I didn't really do anything. I was a derivatives trader, and it occurred to me the world would hardly change at all if credit derivatives ceased to exist. Not so nurse practitioners. What had seemed normal now seemed deeply distorted.

I had recently finished Taylor Branch's three-volume series on the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement, and the image of the Freedom Riders stepping out of their bus into an infuriated mob had seared itself into my mind. I'd told myself that if I'd been alive in the '60s, I would have been on that bus.

But I was lying to myself. There were plenty of injustices out there — rampant poverty, swelling prison populations, a sexual-assault epidemic, an obesity crisis. Not only was I not helping to fix any problems in the world, but I was profiting from them. During the market crash in 2008, I'd made a ton of money by shorting the derivatives of risky companies. As the world crumbled, I profited. I'd seen the crash coming, but instead of trying to help the people it would hurt the most — people who didn't have a million dollars in the bank — I'd made money off it. I don't like who you've become, my girlfriend had said years earlier. She was right then, and she was still right. Only now, I didn't like who I'd become either.

Wealth addiction was described by the late sociologist and playwright Philip Slater in a 1980 book, but addiction researchers have paid the concept little attention. Like alcoholics driving drunk, wealth addiction imperils everyone. Wealth addicts are, more than anybody, specifically responsible for the ever widening rift that is tearing apart our once great country. Wealth addicts are responsible for the vast and toxic disparity between the rich and the poor and the annihilation of the middle class. Only a wealth addict would feel justified in receiving \$14 million in compensation — including an \$8.5 million bonus — as the McDonald's C.E.O., Don Thompson, did in 2012, while his company then published a brochure for its work force on how to survive on their low wages. Only a wealth addict would earn hundreds of millions as a hedge-fund manager, and then lobby to maintain a tax loophole that gave him a lower tax rate than his secretary.

DESPITE my realizations, it was incredibly difficult to leave. I was terrified of running out of money and of forgoing future bonuses. More than anything, I was afraid that five or 10 years down the road, I'd feel like an idiot for walking away from my one chance to be really important. What made it harder was that people thought I was crazy for thinking about leaving. In 2010, in a final paroxysm of my withering addiction, I demanded \$8 million instead of \$3.6 million. My bosses said they'd raise my bonus if I agreed to stay several more years. Instead, I walked away.

The first year was really hard. I went through what I can only describe as withdrawal — waking up at nights panicked about running out of money, scouring the headlines to see which of my old co-workers had gotten promoted. Over time it got easier — I started to realize that I had enough money, and if I needed to make more, I could. But my wealth addiction still hasn't gone completely away. Sometimes I still buy lottery tickets.

In the three years since I left, I've married, spoken in jails and juvenile detention centers about getting sober, taught a writing class to girls in the

foster system, and started a nonprofit called Groceryships to help poor families struggling with obesity and food addiction. I am much happier. I feel as if I'm making a real contribution. And as time passes, the distortion lessens. I see Wall Street's mantra — "We're smarter and work harder than everyone else, so we deserve all this money" — for what it is: the rationalization of addicts. From a distance I can see what I couldn't see then — that Wall Street is a toxic culture that encourages the grandiosity of people who are desperately trying to feel powerful.

I was lucky. My experience with drugs and alcohol allowed me to recognize my pursuit of wealth as an addiction. The years of work I did with my counselor helped me heal the parts of myself that felt damaged and inadequate, so that I had enough of a core sense of self to walk away.

Dozens of different types of 12-step support groups — including Clutterers Anonymous and On-Line Gamers Anonymous — exist to help addicts of various types, yet there is no Wealth Addicts Anonymous. Why not? Because our culture supports and even lauds the addiction. Look at the magazine covers in any newsstand, plastered with the faces of celebrities and C.E.O.'s; the superrich are our cultural gods. I hope we all confront our part in enabling wealth addicts to exert so much influence over our country.

I generally think that if one is rich and believes they have "enough," they are not a wealth addict. On Wall Street, in my experience, that sense of "enough" is rare. The money guy doing a job he complains about for yet another year so he can add \$2 million to his \$20 million bank account seems like an addict.

I recently got an email from a hedge-fund trader who said that though he was making millions every year, he felt trapped and empty, but couldn't summon the courage to leave. I believe there are others out there. Maybe we can form a group and confront our addiction together. And if you identify with what I've written, but are reticent to leave, then take a small step in the right direction. Let's create a fund, where everyone agrees to put, say, 25 percent of their annual bonuses into it, and we'll use that to help some of the people who actually need the money that we've been so rabidly chasing. Together, maybe we can make a real contribution to the world.

Sam Polk is a former hedge-fund trader and the founder of the nonprofit Groceryships.

What is Poverty?

Jo Goodwin Parker

You ask me what is poverty? Listen to me. Here I am, dirty, smelly, and with no "proper" underwear on and with the stench of my rotting teeth near you. I will tell you. Listen to me. Listen without pity. I cannot use your pity. Listen with understanding. Put yourself in my dirty, worn out, ill-fitting shoes, and hear me.

Poverty is getting up every morning from a dirt- and illness-stained mattress. The sheets have long since been used for diapers. Poverty is living in a smell that never leaves. This is a smell of urine, sour milk, and spoiling food sometimes joined with the strong smell of long-cooked onions. Onions are cheap. If you have smelled this smell, you did not know how it came. It is the smell of the outdoor privy. It is the smell of young children who cannot walk the long dark way in the night. It is the smell of the mattresses where years of "accidents" have happened. It is the smell of the milk which has gone sour because the refrigerator long has not worked, and it costs money to get it fixed. It is the smell of rotting garbage. I could bury it, but where is the shovel? Shovels cost money.

Poverty is being tired. I have always been tired. They told me at the hospital when the last baby came that I had chronic anemia caused from poor diet, a bad case of worms, and that I needed a corrective operation. I listened politely - the poor are always polite. The poor always listen. They don't say that there is no money for iron pills, or better food, or worm medicine. The idea of an operation is frightening and costs so much that, if I had dared, I would have laughed. Who takes care of my children? Recovery from an operation takes a long time. I have three children. When I left them with "Granny" the last time I had a job, I came home to find the baby covered with fly specks, and a diaper that had not been changed since I left. When the dried diaper came off, bits of my baby's flesh came with it. My other child was playing with a sharp bit of broken glass, and my oldest was playing alone at the edge of a lake. I made twenty-two dollars a week, and a good nursery school costs twenty dollars a week for three children. I quit my job.

Poverty is dirt. You can say in your clean clothes coming from your clean house, "Anybody can be clean." Let me explain about housekeeping with no money. For breakfast I give my children grits with no oleo or cornbread without eggs and oleo. This does not use up many dishes. What dishes there are, I wash in cold water and with no soap. Even the cheapest soap has to be saved for the baby's diapers. Look at my hands, so cracked and red. Once I saved for two months to buy a jar of Vaseline for my hands and the baby's diaper rash. When I had saved enough, I went to buy it and the price had gone up two cents. The baby and I suffered on. I have to decide every day if I can bear to put my cracked sore hands into the cold water and strong soap. But you ask, why not hot water? Fuel costs money. If you have a wood fire it costs money. If you burn electricity, it costs money. Hot water is a luxury. I do not have luxuries. I know you will be surprised when I tell you how young I am. I look so much older. My back has been bent over the wash tubs every day for so long, I cannot remember when I ever did anything else. Every night I wash every stitch my school age child has on and just hope her clothes will be dry by morning.

Poverty is staying up all night on' cold nights to watch the fire knowing one spark on the newspaper covering the walls means your sleeping child dies in flames. In summer poverty is watching gnats and flies devour your baby's tears when he cries. The screens are torn and you pay so little rent you know they will never be fixed. Poverty means insects in your food, in your nose, in your eyes, and crawling over you when you sleep. Poverty is hoping it never rains because diapers won't dry when it rains and soon you are using newspapers. Poverty is seeing your children forever with runny noses. Paper handkerchiefs cost money and all your rags you need for other things. Even more costly are antihistamines. Poverty is cooking without food and cleaning without soap.

Poverty is asking for help. Have you ever had to ask for help, knowing 6 your children will suffer unless you get it? Think about asking for a loan from a relative, if this is the only way you can imagine

asking for help. I will tell you how it feels. You find out where the office is that you are supposed to visit. You circle that block four or five times. Thinking of your children, you go in. Everyone is very busy. Finally, someone comes out and you tell her that you need help. That never is the person you need to see. You go see another person, and after spilling the whole shame of your poverty all over the desk between you, you find that this isn't the right office after all-you must repeat the whole process, and it never is any easier at the next place.

You have asked for help, and after all it has a cost. You are again told to wait. You are told why, but you don't really hear because of the red cloud of shame and the rising cloud of despair.

Poverty is remembering. It is remembering quitting school in junior high because "nice" children had been so cruel about my clothes and my smell. The attendance officer came. My mother told him I was pregnant. I wasn't, but she thought that I could get a job and help out. I had jobs off and on, but never long enough to learn anything. Mostly I remember being married. I was so young then. I am still young. For a time, we had all the things you have. There was a little house in another town, with hot water and everything. Then my husband lost his job. There was unemployment insurance for a while and what few jobs I could get. Soon, all our nice things were repossessed and we moved back here. I was pregnant then. This house didn't look so bad when we first moved in. Every week it gets worse. Nothing is ever fixed. We now had no money. There were a few odd jobs for my husband, but everything went for food then, as it does now. I don't know how we lived through three years and three babies, but we did. I'll tell you something, after the last baby I destroyed my marriage. It had been a good one, but could you keep on bringing children in this dirt? Did you ever think how much it costs for any kind of birth control? I knew my husband was leaving the day he left, but there were no goodbye between us. I hope he has been able to climb out of this mess somewhere. He never could hope with us to drag him down.

That's when I asked for help. When I got it, you know how much it was? It was, and is, seventy-eight dollars a month for the four of us; that is all I ever can get. Now you know why there is no soap, no needles and thread, no hot water, no aspirin, no worm medicine, no hand cream, no shampoo. None of these things forever and ever and ever. So that you can see clearly, I pay twenty dollars a month rent, and most of the rest goes for food. For grits and cornmeal, and rice and milk and beans. I try my best to use only the minimum electricity. If I use more, there is that much less for food.

Poverty is looking into a black future. Your children won't play with my boys. They will turn to other boys who steal to get what they want. I can already see them behind the bars of their prison instead of behind the bars of my poverty. Or they will turn to the freedom of alcohol or drugs, and find themselves enslaved. And my daughter? At best, there is for her a life like mine.

But you say to me, there are schools. Yes, there are schools. My children have no extra books, no magazines, no extra pencils, or crayons, or paper and most important of all, they do not have health. They have worms, they have infections, they have pink-eye all summer. They do not sleep well on the floor, or with me in my one bed. They do not suffer from hunger, my seventy-eight dollars keeps us alive, but they do suffer from malnutrition. Oh yes, I do remember what I was taught about health in school. It doesn't do much good.

In some places there is a surplus commodities program. Not here. The country said it cost too much. There is a school lunch program. But I have two children who will already be damaged by the time they get to school.

But, you say to me, there are health clinics. Yes, there are health clinics and they are in the towns. I live out here eight miles from town. I can walk that far (even if it is sixteen miles both ways), but can my little children? My neighbor will take me when he goes; but he expects to get paid, one way or another. I bet you know my neighbor. He is that large man who spends his time at the gas station, the barbershop, and the corner store complaining about the government spending money on the immoral mothers of illegitimate children.

Poverty is an acid that drips on pride until all pride is worn away. Poverty is a chisel that chips on honor until honor is worn away. Some of you say that you would do something in my situation, and maybe you would, for the first week or the first month, but for year after year after year?

Even the poor can dream. A dream of a time when there is money. Money for the right kinds of food, for worm medicine, for iron pills, for toothbrushes, for hand cream, for a hammer and nails and a bit of screening, for a shovel, for a bit of paint, for some sheeting, for needles and thread. Money to pay in money for a trip to town. And, oh, money for hot water and money for soap. A dream of when asking for help does not eat away the last bit of pride. When the office you visit is as nice as the offices of other governmental agencies, when there are enough workers to help you quickly, when workers do not quit in defeat and despair. When you have to tell your story to only one person, and that person can send you for other help and you don't have to prove your poverty over and over and over again.

I have come out of my despair to tell you this. Remember I did not come from another place or another time. Others like me are all around you. Look at us with an angry heart, anger that will help

Wallet

Allen Woodman

Tired of losing his wallet to pickpockets, my father, at seventy, makes a phony one. He stuffs the phony wallet with expired food coupons and losing Florida Lottery tickets and a fortune cookie fortune that reads, "Life is the same old story told over and over."

In a full-length mirror, he tries the wallet in the back pocket of his pants. It hangs out fat with desire. "All oyster," he says to me, "no pearl."

We drive to the mall where he says he lost the last one. I am the wheelman, left behind in the car, while my father cases a department store.

He is an old man trying to act feeble and childlike, and he overdoes it like stage makeup on a community-theater actor. He has even brought a walking stick for special effect. Packages of stretch socks clumsily slip from his fingers. He bends over further than he has bent in years to retrieve them, allowing the false billfold to rise like a dark wish and be grappled by the passing shadow of a hand.

Then the unexpected happens. The thief is chased by an attentive salesclerk. Others join in. The thief subdued, the clerk holds up the reclaimed item. "Your wallet, sir. Your wallet." As she begins opening it searching for identification, my father runs toward an exit. The worthless articles float to the floor.

Now my father is in the car, shouting for me to drive away. There will be time enough for silence and rest. We are both stupid with smiles and he is shouting, "Drive fast, drive fast."