

PORT REPORT

Olympia Port Commissioners rely on lobbyists for a key financial commitment

Denis Langhans

The Port of Olympia in July approved a proposal to develop almost 200 acres of land on its New Market Industrial Campus (NMIC). The new Panattoni Lease Option Agreement (Panattoni Agreement) is fraught with potential negative impacts on the community. There are financial, environmental, public health, school safety, and other quality of life issues at stake. However, in light of the tremendous financial strains that will be experienced by public agencies due to the Covid pandemic, financial considerations, including the level of public subsidies to private interests, are of paramount importance.

Taxpayers assigned a big bill

With respect to the Panattoni Lease Option Agreement, the chief public financial exposure lies in the area of Habitat Mitigation costs with estimates ranging from \$70,000 to \$100,000 per acre. The who and how these expenses were to be borne was of critical importance to the public interest, but ultimately did not play a significant role in consideration of the proposal. Without due diligence and consideration, Commissioners Bill McGregor and Joe Downing decided that the public, not the developer, should pick up the entire bill of up to \$20 million. Given the operating ethos at the Port, and its dismal record, it appears that the public has taken on Panattoni Development as its newest financial dependent.

How did we get here?

It appears that the fast-tracked Panattoni Agreement hurtled like a runaway train to approval at the Port of Olympia's July 13 meeting. Despite the numerous public comments outlining its flaws, two commissioners decided to throw caution to the wind and approve the lease. Contrary to statements that the agreement represents only an option, the Commissioners' approval pulled a trigger that will tie the Port and the public to this financial arrangement for decades.

Instead of taking time to fully understand the financial and environmental implications of the draft contract, especially in light of concerns raised by Tumwater Mayor Pete Kmet, Commissioners, with the exception of Commissioner Zita, chose to ignore all considerations other than cash flow.

A civic Tale of Two Letters—community-based values vs lobbyist's influence

The community values approach.

A letter by Mayor Kmet clearly set out the issues, values and concerns of the Tumwater community. His letter

truck traffic, offer lower job density, and generate less tax revenue per acre than other higher value uses."

As the City of Tumwater is the part of Thurston County that will be most affected by the Port's decision, the Commission should have been very

...it appears that the Economic Development Council is a nexus of conflicts of interest.

serves as an exemplar of community-focused governance. It is practical in that it recognizes needs for the economic future of Tumwater. However, it places quality-of-life in the forefront of importance.

Kmet succinctly expresses concerns about large warehouse developments: "Large distribution warehouse uses consume large parcels of land, typically generate a lot of semi-



deliberate by using a high degree of due diligence to protect the quality of life for those residents. They deserve nothing less.

The lobbyist-influenced approach.

At the Commission's June 22 meeting, Michael Cade, Executive Director of the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC), spoke strongly in favor of the proposed

Panattoni Agreement. He also submitted a letter of that date putting forth an economic rationale for the warehouse deal. [See box on page 11] Unlike other written public comments, Cade's letter is not shown on the Port's website but was made available only via a public records request.

Cade's letter asserts that the Panattoni large warehouse development would create 942.5 full-time jobs. Contrasted with this rosy, pie-in-the-sky picture is economic data that suggests large warehouses produce on average two jobs per acre at \$16 per hour. Therefore, the validity of Cade's assertions must be viewed with extreme skepticism—as is shown by a disturbing chain of circumstances involved in this economic claim.

A nexus of conflicts of interest

Based on information, both in plain sight and from a public records search, it appears that EDC is, in ef-

► Port of Olympia, continued on page 11

"Strike for Black Lives" action wins a victory for Seattle transit workers

Steve Beck and Linda Averill

Rallying in sync with the July 20 "Strike for Blacks Lives," over 250 union and community activists picketed King County Executive Dow Constantine's offices in the heart of downtown Seattle. They called for immediate action in response to racist incidents at Metro transit bases and other county worksites. They demanded a roll-back of layoffs and wage freezes that hit hardest a workforce made up overwhelmingly of people of color, immigrants and women.

An immediate victory

The action, called by Organized Workers for Labor Solidarity (OWLS), chalked up a victory the very next day. The County Council voted 8-1 to fund promised raises recently negotiated by Amalgamated Transit Union 587. Constantine had announced plans to renege on the agreement and asked the Council to vote down the raises.

OWLS mobilized broad support on this national day of action to ramp up the heat and demand that officials "Root Out Racism at King

County and Beyond!" Numerous local unions endorsed the rally. Black Lives Matter activists joined unionists and youth organizations in powerful, multiracial labor and community solidarity.

Washington Youth for Climate Justice joined the OWLS picket, swelling the rally into the street. Loud chants of "black workers' lives matter," and "Union-busting, that's disgusting," sprang upwards to Constantine's office.

Public workers unite with communities they serve

The July 20 picket was part of an escalating campaign by OWLS to force Constantine, who oversees the transit authority, to address ongoing racist incidents. The aim was also to expose his anti-union plans to freeze wages, cut bus service and lay off more than 400 part-time bus drivers—a majority of them people of color. Such budget cuts diminish services that are the very lifeline for poor people.

Previous OWLS actions included an April news conference where transit workers launched a petition drive demanding Covid-19 protections

on the job. They followed in May with a "Salute to Frontline Workers: Emergency Motorcade for Workers' Rights." In June, OWLS protested at a Metro public transit base to condemn a KKK-style death threat there, part of a pattern of racist harassment and bigotry aimed especially at black workers.

The July 20 rally was endorsed by Amalgamated Transit Union 587, representing Metro employees. Members spoke out against the King County layoff plan, its refusal to finalize their contract, its toothless "diversity" committees dominated by management and inadequate personal protections against the COVID-19 pandemic, which has claimed the lives of two Metro drivers.

Concrete demands for changes

Cheryl Jones, a Metro bus driver and one of the July 20 organizers, addressed the call to stop racist threats and harassment at county worksites. She pressed Constantine: "Dow, your role in this toxic culture needs to be examined. Everyone responsible needs to be held accountable, including you! The healing

► Strike, continued on page 14

Works in Progress (WIP), is a community newspaper based in Olympia WA, that has been published monthly since 1990.

WIP's mission is to contribute to the struggle for justice across economic, social, environmental and political realms, and to expand participatory democracy across classes, races, and genders.

Editorial policy

Our priority is to focus on stories that are ignored or misrepresented in the media, especially those that relate directly to our mission. We seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and account of personal experiences or reflections by local writers. We encourage articles that relate to the monthly theme, but material on other topics is also welcome.

Informed opinion pieces are accepted when accompanied by facts, examples, and sources. We discourage writing where a key point is stated as fact when it's unproven or in serious dispute. Writing that stereotypes groups or categories of people won't be accepted.

Once we receive a submission, we may choose to publish it or not. While the views expressed in the material we print are those of the author alone, WIP aims to print material that is consistent with our mission. WIP reserves the right to edit all submissions for accuracy, length, and clarity of expression. We will work with authors if there is a need for editing that extends beyond those areas.

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Thoughts on the theme

The theme of this month's issue, "Hoping, coping, doping, and shopping" comes from a phrase in the book, *How Will Capitalism End* by Wolfgang Streeck. Streeck argues that we are witnessing the tail end of the uneasy alliance between democracy and capitalism. As he writes, "Democracy was always a problem in a capitalist society. There's an enormous inherent tension between the two. Democracy is inherently egalitarian because every citizen has one vote. And the rich also have one vote but the rich are only five percent. Whereas in the market, every dollar has a vote."

THINKING OUT LOUD

What's at stake in this moment is whether our collective present and future will be determined by votes or by dollars. The struggle is visible in the Trump administration's attack on the US postal service and our ability to vote by mail, and the massive protests across the country in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. Capitalism, and capitalists, has an interest in promoting hoping, coping, doping, and shopping as strategies for averting our attention from voting. The articles and graphics in this issue show us some alternatives.

Dennis Langhans writes about the Olympia Port Commissioners' (2-1, with Commission EJ Zita voting no) decision to accept the Panatoni Agreement for port development. Langhans' discussion of community-based vs. lobbyist influenced approaches to decision making locally shows that at least in this context, dollars are beating votes. We can't act on what we don't know, however, and Langhans' reporting helps bring these dynamics to light.

Cecilia Pérez's article in this issue illustrates an instance where people who organized and fought together won. As COVID cases were rising in early May in the Yakima Valley, Pérez stated, farmworkers tapped into the "labor activism spirit of earlier decades" and organized. Farmworkers in fruit packing warehouses joined in solidarity with field pickers, going on labor strikes together. As a result of these strikes, employers conceded and were forced to provide masks, hand sanitizer and increased safety measures. Proof that when we the people organize and fight together, we win.

Streeck cautions that because environmental deterioration happens more slowly than the human life span, we can ignore it. Lee First's article challenges us to notice what's happening in our rivers and estuaries by focusing on green sturgeon. She presents the need to advocate for establishing aquatic reserves. As she writes, "there is a process for tribes, stakeholders, individuals and government agencies to nominate sites to become Aquatic Reserves. The process takes about two and a half years, but new nominations are delayed until 2021." Whether we can alter that timeline is up to us.

As Enrique Quintero writes, "The transition from acknowledging "it is what it is "to "it doesn't have

to be this way" is not easy. Shifting from interpreting the world to changing it requires political fortitude, resilience, determination, endurance, and an imagination not trapped in the cultural sterility of mainstream society."

For thirty years, with the support of countless community members, WIP's project has been to give voice to the possibilities of changing this world.
—EL

Upcoming themes

October: The struggle for justice. WIP's mission is to contribute to the struggle for justice across economic, social, political and environmental realms and to the expansion of participatory democracy across classes, races and genders. October 2020 marks the 30th year that *Works in Progress* has been trying to live up to that mission, as a publication produced and distributed by volunteers. The paper has shaped and reshaped itself across the years, depending on who puts in the time and energy to make it happen. We invite anyone who has read, contributed to or helped produce the paper to send their memories, critiques, old copies, artifacts etc. that have been part of WIP on its journey. *Be sure to save the date for an anniversary celebration Nov. 21.* **Copy deadline for October issue: September 13**

November/December: What is political? Some of us are looking forward to the November elections as the biggest opportunity we have to shift public policies at the federal, state and local levels so that we address systemic racism and inequality, made more visible than ever by the COVID-19 pandemic. But the concept of "political" is bigger than voting. What does "political" mean to you? **Copy deadline for November/December issue: October 15**

January: What we can't face. The end of the year often prompts reflection about the year that is ending and the one that lies before us. Naming our fears—admitting the existence of difficult problems—might make us happier and healthier in the long run. We invite your thoughts about this. Perhaps, as they say, what we resist, persists.

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To learn more, drop us a line at
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Beirut explosion underscores risks of abandoned vessels

Chatham Strait

The *Rhosus* was only supposed to be in Beirut's harbor for a short time. The 284-foot cargo vessel had been en route to Mozambique with her cargo of ammonium nitrate when she made an unscheduled detour to Lebanon to pick up additional cargo.

When she arrived, either due to failing a Port State Control inspection, or as a result of a failure to pay port fees, the vessel was forbidden by authorities to depart. In the years that followed, the ship owners, flag state, owners of the cargo, the crew and the local port authorities all failed to figure out a way to safely deal with the vessel and cargo.

The vessel ultimately flooded and sank in the port in 2018. Her cargo—offloaded years earlier and sitting abandoned in a warehouse—produced an enormous and deadly explosion in August.

Down at the Port of Olympia, the former Washington state ferry *Ever-*

green State does not contain a cargo of deadly explosives, but her future is as uncertain as that of the *Rhosus* when it first tied up in Beirut back in 2013.

Sold to the owner of a broadcasting company back in 2017, the 310-foot

Providing moorage to vessels nearing the end of their life span is a risky business.

ferry, which has a fuel capacity of 30,000 gallons, has languished at the dock in the Port of Olympia ever since. The initial plan for the vessel to stay alongside only briefly, in preparation for a transit to the Caribbean via the Panama Canal, has long since been set aside.

Now with \$32,000 in unpaid moorage fees as of June 2020, and a lapse in insurance coverage, the vessel has been seized by the Port.

Plans are apparently in the works to auction off the vessel.

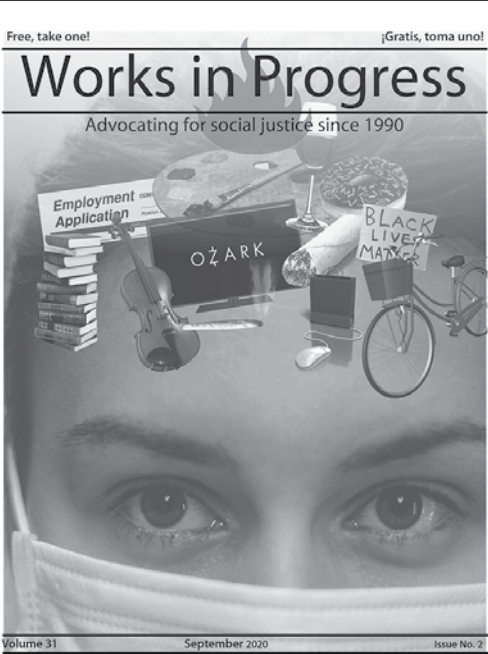
It remains to be seen if a successful auction will result in the vessel departing Budd Inlet. Providing

moorage to vessels nearing the end of their life span—the *Evergreen State* was built in 1954—is a risky business. It was easy for officials at the Port of Olympia to welcome this vessel to Budd Inlet, but they will need to pay much closer attention if they want to avoid a financially disastrous outcome.

Chatham Strait is the pen name of a professional mariner who lives in the Puget Sound area.



Two years after the Port celebrated offering moorage to this aging ferry, the Port is suing in Federal District Court for \$66,000 in unpaid fees and asking for permission to “arrest” the vessel. In the meantime, it’s listed for sale with a broker in Seattle for \$350,000. Photo by Ricky Osborne



About the cover:

How are you coping with extended pandemic protocols? Does living under late stage capitalism help or make it worse? Are you reading more? Drinking more? Walking more? What gives you hope, if anything?

Then this happened...

...material from the Olympia police investigation of the 2018 death of **Yvonne McDonald** will soon appear in the Police Accountability and Transparency section of the City's website. Black Leaders in Action & Solidarity—Thurston Co (BLAST) had requested the release of records in a July 24 press conference. City Manager Jay Burney also announced the hiring of an outside investigator to review the police investigation, simultaneously asserting his belief that the OPD had exhausted all leads and thoroughly examined all evidence relating to McDonald's death..

...there is no “there” there. After taking office, Trump set up a fancy commission to study “voter fraud.” The commission met twice before Trump disbanded it when they failed to find any evidence of voter fraud! Never mind! Turns out Trump and his Republicans are fine shouting “Fraud!” without any evidence. They’re suing in Pennsylvania to prevent use of secure ballot drop boxes. When a judge said they had to submit evidence of the fraud they were claiming, the only instances they found were at in-person polling places...

...Steve Hall takes a fall. Remember the initiative last November to reduce car tabs to \$30? Well, former City Manager Steve Hall was reminded of it when he paid a \$5000 fine for illegal use of City funds. At issue was a flyer from the City urging voters to “vote no!” on the initiative and mailed it to all Olympia registered voters. That's a no-no: cities can't use public funds to advocate for or against an election issue. The Public Disclosure Commission tried to determine who authorized the “vote no” wording—but gee, no one could really recall... Except that the Public Works director told PDC investigators that the “vote no” wording had been discussed in a meeting with Steve Hall and City Attorney Mark Barber. Before he could say more, another City attorney cut off that line of inquiry by asserting “attorney client privilege.”

As one PDC commissioner observed: “There is a general perception among us that there is culpability to be shared both up and down the line in the city of Olympia.”

Admitting nothing, Hall volunteered to “accept responsibility.” The actual fine was \$10,000, with

Pandemic-related job loss?
Federal support payments run out?
The City of Olympia has a plan for your recovery!

*Buy a bunch of houses
and rent them out by the night!**



*Stave off eviction with our Short Term Rental plan:
buy up to three additional single family homes and
turn them into short term rental units!*



*I think I'll take the
City's advice and buy
up to three houses,
rent 'em by the night,
and become the absentee
landlord I always dreamed
of being!*

*You fool, that plan is for
investors, not people like us!!
You can't even
afford the
mortgage you
have now!*



*Yes, house prices will rise and home ownership will be even more difficult for working families to attain but that's not your problem (or ours!).

\$5,000 suspended unless Hall breaks the law again—meaningless as a deterrent as Hall had retired. Current City Manager Jay Burney (salary \$194,000) said the City would “redouble our efforts to follow PDC guidelines.” Is it really that hard?



Corrections

In the July issue, in the chart on page 12, the figure for the Tumwater police budget should be: \$7,860,304, which is an annual budget amount comparable to the figures for Lacey and Olympia.

In our June issue, Aristides Pappides was responsible for contrasting Donald Trump's order to open up churches as essential for worship, with Jesus' reminder that people should pray in their room with the door closed: “do not be like the hypocrites who love to stand in the churches and in street to be seen by others...” (Matthew 6:5-6)

Chase Patton created July's back page infographic showing racial disparities in the US system of mass incarceration, and illustrating the magnitude of our prison population compared to the rest of the world.

Green sturgeon for tomorrow and beyond

Lee First

Sturgeon are living icons of estuaries. These ancient fish who have survived unchanged for 200 million years, are now heading towards extinction due to habitat change and overfishing. Two of the 26 living species of sturgeon inhabit the west coast of North America, the white and the green.

Before colonizers moved into the Chehalis River valley, plentiful sturgeon were a staple food of the Chehalis people. White sturgeon in the lower Chehalis were called *sp̓anw 1* in the Chehalis language. Above the Satsop River, they were called *sp̓a nułtn*. Another word, *wā*, referred to the power of sturgeon—so intense that most young men could not endure the ordeal of encountering it in order to receive the gift of success at fishing.

With the colonizers came commerce and overfishing. In 1888, the year before Washington became a state, 94 tons of Columbia River sturgeon were “salted and pickled and the first car of frozen sturgeon shipped east,” according to a 1973 Marine Fisheries Review article. In 1892, 5.5 million pounds of sturgeon were harvested from the Columbia River. Five years after that, the catch was below 100,000 pounds, a decline of over 98% in less than 10 years. Today, demand is focused on sturgeon roe, reportedly worth over \$200 an ounce. A mature female can carry up to \$300,000 worth of roe.

Southern green sturgeon

In this article, I focus on the southern green sturgeon (Southern Distinct Population Segment or sDPS). Green sturgeon need about 17 years to mature, can reach lengths up to 7 feet, live as long as 70 years and weight 350 pounds. Adults are known to inhabit Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor estuaries and waterways where I work.

Jeff Miller, a Senior Conservation Advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) describes sturgeon as “living fossils that have successfully survived unchanged since the Jurassic era, but they are now more endangered than any other group of species. The fate of green sturgeon reflects the dramatic changes to our West Coast rivers and estuaries, which have been degraded by loss of habitat, excessive water diversions and reduced river flows, pollutants, dredging, invasive species, and climate change.”

A plan for recovery

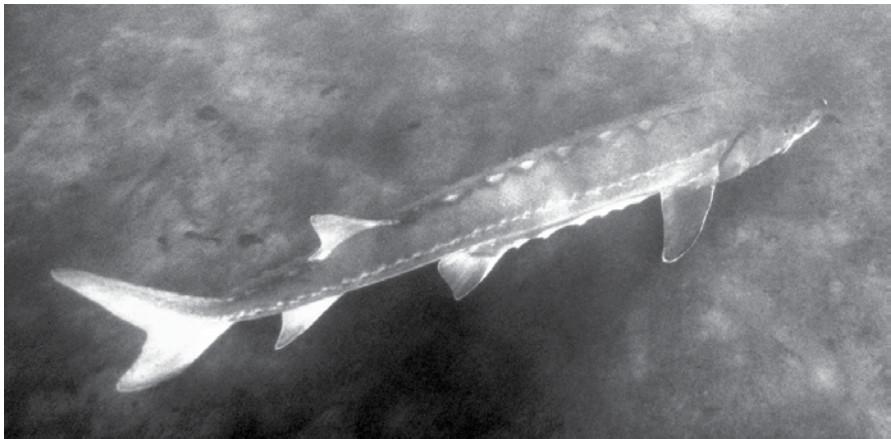
Over the past two decades, actions by the CBD and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) listed the sturgeon under the Endangered Species Act. Then, in 2018, the National Marine Fisheries Service finalized a recovery plan for the Southern Distinct Population Segment of the North American green sturgeon, designating 8.6 million acres of critical habitat including the estuaries of Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay.

Threats from declining estuarine habitat

Estuaries are complex ecosystems found along the coastline where freshwater and saltwater mix, where over time many different creatures have been able to survive in relative harmony. Long ago, native Olympia oysters proliferated

on these tide flats. Overharvesting ended this abundance in the 1870s and today commercial oyster farmers almost exclusively farm non-native Pacific oysters, which grow faster and tolerate a more extensive tidal range. In recent years, these non-native oysters faced a new threat—an explosion of ghost shrimp populations. This unexpectedly gave commercial growers a new interest in recovery of the green sturgeon.

Ghost shrimp burrow deep into the tidal flats where commercial oysters are farmed, and disturb the flats to such an extent that the sediment becomes soft. In these soft sediments, oysters sink and drown. Insecticides that were once available to control the shrimp are



no longer allowed.

It appears that, along with other factors, the decline of the green sturgeon might be one of the reasons that burrowing shrimp populations increased. Green sturgeon hang out in deep areas when the tide is out, and when it comes in, they rush into tidal flats to feed on the burrowing shrimp. The more sturgeon, the fewer shrimp.

The threat from navigation improvement projects

The Chehalis is a big, meandering river that delivers massive loads of sediment downstream into Grays Harbor, an important shipping port. Huge tankers transit in and out, picking up or discharging loads of soybean meal, logs, wood chips, cars, and more. In order

for deep-draft vessels to navigate efficiently, large portions of the 27-mile long channel require frequent dredging by the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps): a lot of dredging, over 1.2 million cubic yards a year. The Port of Grays Harbor has requested to deepen the channel an additional two feet to accommodate current and future vessel traffic.

Green sturgeon typically frequent deep areas of the Grays Harbor estuary, showing up in mid-June and clearing out by mid-September. Dredging is likely to disturb prey, release harmful contaminants, degrade water quality and disturb bottom substrate refugia. If this occurs in summer when sturgeon are present, it could result in entrain-

ment of southern green sturgeon.

As part of the process of the Endangered Species Act, NOAA required the Corps of Engineers to monitor to limit the danger to entrapped green sturgeon during any hopper dredge operation in outer Grays Harbor. But recently the Corps announced that they were opting out of the required monitoring due to safety concerns brought on by COVID-19.

Along with the CBD, Waterkeepers wrote to the Corps requesting that dredging be postponed until monitors could be safely used in order to prevent any risk of entraining green salmon above the limits set by NOAA. Our request was not heeded, and the dredging occurred without the required monitoring.

Aquatic Reserves and the future outlook

Another option for future protection of the greens could be establishment of an Aquatic Reserve. In 2002, a program was started to establish Aquatic Reserves on state-owned lands. The purpose was to conserve high quality native ecosystems in both freshwater and marine environments. There are only eight such reserves in the state and the last one was created in 2016.

There is a process for tribes, stakeholders, individuals and government agencies to nominate sites to become Aquatic Reserves. The process takes about two and a half years but new nominations are delayed until 2021.

In addition to green sturgeon there are significant salmon and forage fish habitat protection opportunities, potential for eelgrass preservation and restoration. Rising sea levels are already impacting Grays Harbor and climate resiliency will depend on decisions that we make today. In February 2020, the DNR published its “DNR Climate Resilience Plan” that envisions establishment of additional reserves to maintain and enhance climate resilience related ecosystem services.

It's time to get moving.

Lee First is a Twin Harbors Waterkeeper.

Sources can be found at olywip.org

Sources: WA Dept. of Natural Resources, Center for Biological Diversity, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Historic Preservation Office, National Marine Fisheries Service. 2018. *Recovery Plan for the Southern Distinct Population Segment of North American Green Sturgeon, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Historic Preservation Office; Oysters, Crabs, and Burrowing Shrimp: Review of an Environmental Conflict over Aquatic Resources and Pesticide Use in Washington State's (USA) Coastal Estuaries, US Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District website*

Great leapin’ sturgeon!

White sturgeon, *Acipenser transmontanus*, is a true giant. They can be up to 20 feet long and tip the scales at 1,500 pounds. It is generally believed that white sturgeon live up to 100 years. They are pseudo-anadromous; spending most of their lives in large rivers from Baja California to the Gulf of Alaska, often lurking in deep, soft estuary bottoms. Some studies have shown that they are sedentary in winter months, moving around in spring and fall. In the Pacific Northwest, many have been landlocked by dams in the Columbia River drainage, with more than 250 reservoirs and over 60 dams. And they jump! (There's even a study that tried to determine why.)

The last time I paddled the Chehalis River, a huge white sturgeon jumped about 5 feet straight up right in front of me. I almost fainted, which is not advisable when paddling solo in a big river. My acquaintance with sturgeon dates back to my first

Waterkeeper Alliance conference, about 15 years ago. Sturgeon is the symbol of the Alliance, a group of over 350 water protectors around the globe. At the start of the conference, they invited anyone wanting a sturgeon tattoo to board a bus—several hours later, 25 brand new Waterkeepers proudly brandished the image of a sturgeon on arms or legs.



I'm not the only Waterkeeper with a sturgeon obsession. Sturgeon is the iconic fish of New York's Hudson River, where Riverkeeper, the first Waterkeeper Organization, began more than 50 years ago. Sturgeon have the strength to swim against the current and, clearly from their age, are amazing

in their adaptability to survive hard times. Of the 26 species of sturgeon throughout the world, most, in spite of their strength and longevity, are presently threatened or endangered—much like our clean water resources. For all these reasons, the sturgeon is the Waterkeeper movement's mascot, and at almost every Conference, Waterkeepers show their pride by getting the sturgeon logo tattoo.

As far as jumping goes, results from video images of sturgeon jumps, and sonograms of sturgeon jumping sounds were compared and found to be distinct and different from sounds of other fish jumping. Some think that the sound made by jumping sturgeon is their form of communication. Although this has not been confirmed, these fish are social and travel in groups, so they likely have some form of communication.

—LF.

Citizen group demands Thurston County drop toxic algae treatments at Black Lake

Esther Kronenberg and
Jerry Dierker

Prompted by the Black Lake Special District's (BLSD) recent request to the Thurston County Commissioners that they back a bond for \$1.4 million to apply alum as a measure to counter toxic algae overgrowth, a group of citizens who live around the lake and other environmental advocates formed Citizens for a Clean Black Lake (CCBL), writing the Commission to urgently request that a full environmental review be done before any treatments of alum, glyphosate or diquat occur.

Contradicting the District's understanding of the lake's environmental health, the group points to several studies, one of which the County participated in which links Black Lake's continuing pollution problems to ongoing damage from prior spraying, faulty septic systems, stormwater runoff, and agricultural practices that cause excess phosphorus levels in the lake.

Commissioner Tye Menser's response to the group's first letter provoked a second, more pointed response (all three letters appear in full at www.olywip.org), questioning the District's jurisdiction over Black Lake and the hidden costs to taxpayers if the bond goes into default.

Who has the legal authority to do this project on Black Lake?

The BLSD was formed under RCW 83.58.010, which sets up flood control districts, but BLSD's stated aim for this project is for recreational purposes for boaters and swimmers and has nothing to do with flood control under this law. The group notes that DNR (Department of Natural Resources) owns the lake, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) operates a public boat launch and stocks the lake with fish, the County owns 2 parks on the lake, and the area is within Tumwater's Urban Growth Area and the City of Olympia.

In 1986 the Department of Ecology (ECY) established a groundwater reservation under RCW 90.54.050 that encompasses Black Lake which requires the County to coordinate with other jurisdictions in the area to "protect the quality of the groundwaters of the state." Clearly, any actions taken must include coordination with these state agencies and municipalities. The group notes "Thurston County does not have the discretion to abrogate its authority and choose not to enforce this law...It must complete an environmental review in coordination with DNR, ECY and WDFW before any further actions are taken."

CCBL notes extra jurisdictional impacts there also call for an environmental review (citing *Save a Valuable Environment vs. Bothell*, a Washington Supreme Court finding).

Who ultimately pays?

In his reply to their first letter, Commissioner Menser states that public funds will not be used to pay for the treatment. In their reply, Citizens for a Clean Black Lake says the public will, indeed, be responsible:

"In fact, the County will be lending its credit by guaranteeing a bond for \$1.4 million. Will the County condemn the property on the lake if the bond is not repaid? Using public credit is no different than using public funds. The County cannot back a project undertaken without the proper authority. They cannot back this project because it is not a flood control project. Doing so would be a theft of public resources."



Die-off, degradation, deterioration

The group is particularly opposed to the BLSD Board's unlawful plan to apply herbicides and alum to the lake and challenges the authority of BLSD to do so, noting its impact on other state wildlife initiatives:

"... As noted above, Black Lake belongs to DNR. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) operates a year-round boat launch and stocks the lake with Rainbow Trout in addition to the naturally reproducing Coastal Cutthroat Trout, and other species in the lake, all of which could be killed by an alum treatment."

The letter continues by questioning the safety of the proposed alum treatment, noting that Wapato Lake, Green Lake and Heart Lake "all experienced notable fish kills as a result of their alum treatments." Using findings from these treatments, they note that the general ECY permit guidelines for safety do not adequately protect aquatic life and that by increasing water alkalinity over time, alum ultimately increases phosphorus levels, compounding the problem.

Alum treatment, the group asserts, is a temporary fix, at best, for a problem that's been decades in the making. And because Black Lake receives continuing septic system effluent and nutrient polluted ground and surface water, the alum treatments would have to be repeated frequently. Ultimately, they write, "this treatment will do absolutely nothing to restore the

health of the ecosystem basin, the quality of surface and groundwaters flowing from the lake, the viability of its habitat, or its beneficial use for recreation as required by provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act, State enacted RCWs and approved WAC (laws). On the contrary, chasing one chemical treatment after another will undoubtedly degrade the life and integrity of the ecosystem and will continue to create a compost pile of nutrient load from the deteriorating vegetation caused by these chemical treatments.

"Besides the poisons glyphosate, diquat dibromide, endothall dipotassium salts and others, regularly applied by the BLSD to control aquatic weeds which pose their own serious risks, we

do not know how much and what other chemicals are entering the lake from leaking septic, agricultural practices and stormwater runoff... Within this bubble of ignorance, it would be foolhardy to go forward with this short-sighted proposal without a full environmental review."

A plea for saving a beloved lake

The letter ends with a plea to commissioners to act immediately to establish an on-site septic monitoring system similar to one in Henderson Inlet and a warning against using public money to poison a public waterway.

"We question your Staff's assertion that they believe the alum treatment is a reasonable short-term strategy to buy time while the County addresses the longer-term phosphorus loading issues... Hundreds of thousands of dollars have already been wasted on short-lived 'solutions'. Is it rational or fiscally responsible for the County to use its credit to back an assessment bond that throw millions more at a temporary, risky dead-end 'treatment' when that money could be spent to help residents upgrade their septic or connect to sewers? Absolutely not! This is 2020. The time to deal with this is NOW."

Signed,

Citizens for a Clean Black Lake

To volunteer with Citizens for a Clean Black Lake, contact Suzanne Kline at suzannedkline@gmail.com.

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An election is coming: the rich vs. everyone else

Emily Lardner

I came across economist Heather Boushey's work first by stumbling on her article, "The coronavirus recession and economic inequality: A roadmap to recovery and long-term structural change." I don't bump into that many women writing about structural inequality, so I checked her out. That led me to read her 2019 book, *Unbound: How Inequality Constricts Our Economy and What We Can Do About It*, published by Harvard University Press.

Established economists influence our lives

Unbound is written to help ordinary people—not economists—understand three big ideas. First, unlike any of the other social sciences, economics has an elevated status when it comes to influencing public policy in the US. There is no Council of Sociologist Advisors, just the Council of Economic Advisors. The first big idea is that economists have more influence on our lives than we might imagine.

Attacks on findings that contradict embedded ideas

The second big idea is that a sea change is happening within the discipline of economics. The newcomers who use empirical data to test out theories were initially shunned—their work considered improper.

Boushey points to an example from the 1990s when David Card and Alan Krueger developed empirical methods that showed that when policy makers in New Jersey raised the minimum wage, employment in fast food restaurants did not decline relative to neighboring states.

This study, based on what actually happened, contradicted a basic tenet in the field of economics, which is that when prices rise, demand falls. In response to this unsettling challenge to established wisdom, Card reported to Boushey that he was professionally shunned. His sense of why that happened was that the American Economic Association didn't want to get labeled as "a bunch of left-wing nuts."

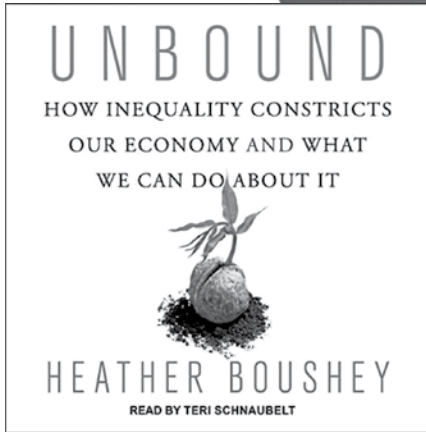
The economy is a political animal

The third big idea Boushey explains is not new, but like a good song, it's worth hearing again. The economy is not a system unto itself, governed by natural laws separate from society. Yet that idea of a free-standing economy, acting according to its own logic, permeates popular discourse.

The economy is healthy, or flagging. The market, synonymous with the economy, is described as if it has a life or logic of its own. Boushey disabuses readers of that notion, and argues instead, backed by pages of evidence, that the economy influences and is influenced by political and social institutions.

Wealth captures political and social power

Another line from the familiar song comes when Boushey provides evidence showing how economic power translates into political and social power. This is the force driving our increasing economic inequality.



Boushey cites a Vanderbilt University political scientist whose research shows that policies supported by the rich are two and a half times more likely to be passed into law compared to policies not supported by the rich. When senators vote, they are likely to align



taxes—a government burden—individuals will become more productive and thus will contribute to overall economic growth. That growth will benefit everyone. Therefore, reducing taxes, including those of the very wealthy, is in all of our interests. This has no ba-

If a politician advocates cutting taxes, don't vote for them unless you are already very wealthy.

with the rich rather than the poor.

Republicans overwhelmingly respond to policy preferences of the rich, but so too do Democrats, though to a lesser degree. Senators from both parties are similar in their unresponsiveness to low and middle income constituents.

In other words, economic inequality is behind the growing imbalance between what people want and what policymakers decide about government revenue and public investment. Less is getting done, and what does what get done aligns with the interests of the wealthy.

An election is coming

So, if economic power buys political power, and political power is used to generate policies that protect and advance the interests of the wealthy, driving us towards greater inequality, what are we to do? Pay attention to what candidates say they will do. If a politician advocates cutting taxes, don't vote for them unless you are already very wealthy. If they advocate for massive public investments in social institutions, especially education, infrastructure, and health care, vote for them.

The enduring myth that tax cuts help

Boushey explains that for the past 60 years or so, US public policies have been grounded in a series of linked propositions. By reducing

sis in reality. Boushay makes clear that there is no data anywhere that shows that when the wealthy pay lower taxes, the economy grows and everyone else prospers.

Tax cuts make only the rich richer

What actually happens with tax cuts, particularly tax cuts for the wealthy as has occurred under Trump and Reagan? Revenue streams for the government shrink, and public institutions and critical support services that actually allow people to contribute to the economy are decimated. Tax cuts for the rich make the rich richer. That's all they do. And as the rich get richer, they buy more political and social influence, and thus increase their ability to influence policies that allow them to accrue even more wealth.

Markets don't do the work of government

What's needed, Boushey argues, is a new set of priorities. We have to recognize that markets cannot perform the work of government. The role of government is to create mechanisms for distributing resources in order to foster economic gains more generally.

This means taxing the rich, and using that revenue to invest in education, health care, and infrastructure, like transportation. For example, Boushey documents the economic benefits of investments in early childhood education and quality child care. The evidence is clear that those investments have long term benefits for individuals who in turn contribute to economic growth. But you can't make such investments and also cut taxes.

Get wise to the tax cut fiction

Consequently, more of us need to assert our view that the role of government is to serve people—including black and brown people and middle and low income people. Candidates who speak to the need for investing in our well-being — through education, healthcare, and infrastructure — deserve to be taken seriously. Candidates who promise to cut taxes, as if to liberate us from some mythical monster, don't deserve the time of day.

Emily Lardner has been a teacher and administrator in Washington schools for many years.

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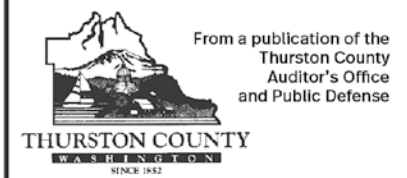
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Collective action—the secret to empowering the people who do the work

Get busy organizing your workplace

[Note: Amazon official Tim Bray resigned from his position after Amazon leaders responded to safety complaints by warehouse workers with firings and derogatory statements about the workers, even while the company made changes to increase safety. In this excerpt from a posting by Bray, he describes the situation and shows that we already have remedies to redress the power balance between those who do the work and those who own the means of production. What are these? Unions!]

What about [Amazon's] warehouses? It's a matter of fact that workers are saying they're at risk in the warehouses. I don't think the media's done a terribly good job of telling their stories. I went to the video chat that got Maren and Emily fired, and found listening to them moving. You can listen too if you'd like. Up on YouTube is another full-day videochat; it's nine hours long, but there's a table of contents, you can decide whether you want to hear people from Poland, Germany, France, or multiple places in the USA. Here's more reportage from the *NY Times*.

It's not just workers who are upset. Here are Attorneys-general from 14 states speaking out. Here's the New York State Attorney-general with more detailed complaints. Here's Amazon losing in French courts, twice.

On the other hand, Amazon's messaging has been urgent that they are prioritizing this issue and putting massive efforts into warehouse safety. I actually believe this: I have heard detailed descriptions from people I trust of the intense work and huge investments. Good for them; and let's grant that you don't turn a supertanker on a dime.

But I believe the worker testimony too. And at the end of the day, the big problem isn't the specifics of Covid-19 response. It's that Amazon treats the humans in the warehouses as fungible units of



In 2018, Amazon released an official response to the dangers of “organizing.”



pick-and-pack potential. Only that's not just Amazon, it's how 21st-century capitalism is done.

Amazon is exceptionally well-managed and has demonstrated great skill at spotting opportunities and building repeatable processes for exploiting them. It has a corresponding lack of vision about the human costs of the relentless growth and accumulation of wealth and power. If we don't like certain things Amazon is doing, we need to put legal guardrails in place to stop those things. We don't need to invent anything new; a combination of antitrust and living-wage and worker-empowerment legislation, rigorously enforced, offers a clear path forward.

Poison. Firing whistleblowers isn't just a side-effect of macroeconomic forces, nor is it intrinsic to the function of free markets. It's evidence of a vein of toxicity running through the company culture. I choose neither to serve nor drink that poison.

What about Amazon Web Services? AWS (the “Cloud Computing” arm of the company), where I worked, is a different story. It treats its workers humanely, strives for work/life balance, struggles to move the diversity needle (and mostly fails, but so does everyone else), and is by and large an ethical organization. I genuinely admire its leadership.

Of course, its workers have power. The average pay is very high, and anyone who's unhappy can walk

across the street and get another job paying the same or better.

Spot a pattern? At the end of the day, it's all about power balances. The warehouse workers are weak and getting weaker, what with mass unemployment and (in the US) job-linked health insurance. So they're gonna get treated like crap, because of capitalism. Any plausible solution has to start with increasing their collective strength.

Bosses worry that workers will organize

Writing on the corporate media website JDSupra, attorney Beverly Alfon warns clients that another symptom of COVID-19 is union organizing: “As businesses begin to reopen (and essential businesses begin to move forward), they will be forced to deal with employee concerns and demands over personal protective equipment, wages, hazard pay, paid sick leave, disability accommodations, and the status of laid off employees. These very matters—job insecurity, safety concerns, and benefits—are what unions rely upon to organize workers.” How to respond, asks Alfon? “Get your union avoidance plan in place.” Her article outlines the essential steps in such a plan.

Trump is doing his best for the bosses

The way Trump has taken aim at unions is through the National Labor Relations Board, or NLRB, which is the federal agency tasked with protecting the rights of private-sector workers and encouraging collective bargaining. Private-sector workers are barred from bringing workplace grievances through the courts themselves, so filing complaints with the NLRB—which has more than two dozen regional offices spread across the country—is how employees can seek redress if they feel their rights have been violated. If an issue can't get settled at the regional level, it gets kicked up to the agency's five-person panel in DC, which issues a decision.

Trump's NLRB has handed down a spate of decisions that align with employer interests and overturn Obama-era decisions. In early 2017 the Chamber of Commerce, a powerful business lobby, published a wish list of 10 policies it wanted to see changed under the Trump administration.

In less than three years, the NLRB addressed all ten items on the list, even going beyond what the lobby requested in some instances. For example, new NLRB decisions make it harder for workers and union representatives to discuss issues on employer property, and give employers more power to unilaterally change collective bargaining agreements. Decisions like these may seem to have modest impact but become far more consequential as they have more time to take effect. [*Washington Monthly*]

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A few words about THAZ—the Tumwater Hill Automobile Zone

Timothy Murphy

On the ninth of August, I saw a sign. It was not a metaphorical sign, but a mundane handwritten sign duct-taped to a traffic cone. It was in the Tumwater Hill area, at the northern intersection of 5th Avenue and Bates Street, and it read: “Tumwater Hill Automobile Zone: Welcome to THAZ.”

Adjacent was another sign that read: “OCM PROTEST VEHICLES ONLY.” Stretched across the entrance to 5th was a row of traffic cones. Behind the traffic cones, a bevy of vintage automobiles were on display, hoods popped and engines idling. Amid this exhibition of chrome and exhaust fumes, a veritable throng of people milled about in unmasked defiance. They appeared to be largely white and male. Judging by their vintage automobile hobby, they were presumably well-to-do.

So what is the message here? And what were they protesting?

To my mind, the message reveals attitudes that are common in the United States, and it is precisely that commonality which makes these attitudes worth looking at.

First, the individuals who put this car show/protest together chose to appropriate rhetoric that arose out of the Black Lives Matter protests in Seattle. They applied it to an event that was an unabashed celebration of high-end private property. Far too many incidents have shown that even a suspected or fabricated infringement on private property can result in the murder of a black person with no significant consequences for the murderer.

Invoking rhetoric that originated from Black Lives Matter protests in service of a lavish display of wealth and power is grotesque. It signals the privileging of private property over black lives. This is not an unusual message, but a terribly common and very American message. Consider this possibility as among the reasons why private property may get defaced or damaged during Black Lives



Photos by Timothy Murphy

organizers have chosen to de-nominate it, was not about rights. Rather, it was a refusal to do what is right because it is inconvenient and interferes with the personal desires of individuals. And if those desires endanger public health, then that is the public's problem, and not any individual's responsibility.

This conduct occurs not in isolation from but in relation to our capacity to act as moral agents whose actions have profound consequences for other living beings. That the individuals in question were refusing to wear a mask, rather than unable to do so, is obvious from their decision to mingle in close quarters while holding a completely unnecessary event solely to glorify their property at the expense of public health.

To protest is to make a declaration; to declare is to clear up, to make evident. And what do these protesters make evident in their messaging? That it is not for civil rights nor human rights that they will protest, but for their privilege.

If you are going to protest during a pandemic, protest for something that is actually worth dying for. Black Lives Matter. Your automobiles do not.

Timothy Murphy lives in Tumwater, where he is daily lacerated by savage indignation. He employs a bicycle and a pair of legs for his outings and has never owned a motorcar.

Nature and Art

Sheriff Snaza was eaten by a bear
I should know: I was there.
Seeing the Spreader, the bear was intent on this task
And, responsible. Unlike Snaza, the bear wore a mask.

Was the bear simply in need of a meal
or was it about some other deal?
Snaza is like his brother down in Lewis county
Perhaps the bear was just collecting a bounty?

Then again we all know Snaza overspent
a half a million that he claims “just went.”
The Commissioners let his crime slide,
but the bear may have been taking the taxpayers' side.

Or, maybe it was Snaza's choice of a quiet residential street
As a place for his SWAT team to deploy their heat.
The notice read: Don't be alarmed. It's just a boom you'll hear
But the bear wasn't afraid of Snaza's gear.

Sheriff Snaza was eaten by a bear
I should know: I was there.
Along with 100 neighbors at the station
We gave the bear a standing ovation.

Dan Leahy



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In response to defacement of the Olympia-Rafah solidarity mural

Last month, we were made aware of the targeted defacement of a section of the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural in Olympia. The defacement targeted one of the leaves making up the mural's central olive tree, a leaf that was designed by artist Gail Tremblay of the Onondaga and Mi'kmaq nations in collaboration with geographer Zoltán Grossman, both of whom

facement do not want us to see, internalize, and build solidarity around these erasures, but their act of desecration reinforces why we must.

Settler-colonial states are predicated on the erasure of Indigenous populations and cultures. Settler colonialism takes place first and foremost on a structural level. Unlike other forms



have taught at The Evergreen State College. The leaf depicted four maps comparing the settler colonization of Native American nations by the United States to the settler colonization of Palestinian land by Israel. This image exhibits the importance of global solidarity against settler-colonial annexation of Indigenous lands, and the targeted defacement of this leaf is an egregious act intended to silence and disrupt Indigenous solidarities. [Links to artist and geographer statements: rachelcorrie.org/artiststatement. rachelcorrie.org/geographerstatement]

Though we do not know the exact date the defacement occurred, we estimate it was done in early May 2020, and we suspect it to be related to the Israeli government's proposals to annex even more Palestinian territory from the West Bank. The nature of the defacement itself symbolizes the intent of the perpetrators.

The comparative maps were painted over with a grey paint almost identical to the background of the leaf. This is not the sort of defacement that violently destroys or is meant to be noticed. Rather, it is a more insidious type of violence meant to erase the artistic representation into its surroundings. The violence of erasure is compounded by the fact that this specific work of art depicts the erasure of Indigenous peoples through land theft. The perpetrators of this de-

of imperialism, where one group extracts labor and exercises power over another, settler-colonialism involves erasing and rewriting the systems, hierarchies, and maps of the people who inhabited the pre-colonized land. The act of settler colonialism is one of violent extraction and displacement. The settler-colonial state must continually disavow its violent history in order to naturalize the structure in which it operates.

The mural's desecration must also be contextualized within our local history and the mural's history itself. This sister city project was first the vision of Rachel Corrie, who often wrote about the idea while she was living in Gaza in 2003 where she joined Palestinians in non-violent direct action to end the Israeli policy of demolishing Palestinian homes. When Rachel was killed by an Israeli bulldozer in March of that year, her community carried her vision forward through the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project and officially petitioned the city of Olympia to officially recognize a sister city relationship with Rafah.

The Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural was, in many ways, a response to the failure of local government. In April 2007, the city council voted against the sister city proposal, siding with a disingenuous yet influential minority. During public meetings, racist anti-Arab and anti-Muslim stereotypes littered public testimony

offered by opponents of the sister city proposal. This was thirteen years ago, but opposition to forging a sister city relationship and desecration of the solidarity mural are connected, and they are based in the same unwillingness to accept and confront the settler-colonial present.

The defaced leaf itself has long been a focus of public attention. In 2010, the creators of the leaf and other mural artists, along with other supporters, engaged in a facilitated dialogue with community members who expressed their opposition to the message of the leaf. The mural committee stood then, as it does now, in support of the artist and the message of the leaf. Both in the dialogue and the defacement, it is clear that the primary opposition to the leaf stems from an unwillingness to confront the realities of settler-colonial erasure and personal responsibility in perpetuating violent erasure as settlers, be it here or in Palestine.

The disavowal of founding violence is deeply embedded in the settler mindset in both the U.S. and Israel. Descendants of settlers strive to maintain this disavowal, laboring daily to forget that their/our presence in the place they/we call home is predicated on genocide, dispossession, and structural violence. For American settlers who support Israel, this disavowal is doubled. They run from their complicity in the U.S. colonial project while simultaneously perpetuating a false narrative of Israel as acting on redemption instead of displacement, on return instead of ethnic cleansing.

It is difficult to ignore connections between the settler violence of the U.S. and Israel when these states openly collaborate to build identical surveillance systems and border walls, when Israeli settlers draw explicit comparison between their settler project and the U.S.'s genocidal concept of "Manifest Destiny," or when one sees a map that directly ties the confiscation of land in one settler state to the confiscation of land in the other. The inability to reconcile one's own role in settler violence, in either or both places, produces the kind of emotion that might



induce someone to vandalize a solidarity mural near the top of its thirty-foot tall frame. In sum, this emotion also likely drove the perpetrator to act in honor of the hallmark of the settler mindset: simultaneous erasure and disavowal.

As a community, we must continue to support Indigenous solidarities around the globe and actively organize against the erasure of history.

This leaf, which in itself is just a small part of recognizing that history, will be restored by our community and will continue to stand as a reminder that both the U.S. and Israel are states predicated on settler-colonial violence.

In the face of threats of continued annexation of Palestinian land, and continuing assaults on Native sovereignty, we can look to these maps to teach us that annexation is not a one-time event, but rather a deadly, ongoing structure. The defaced leaf exemplifies the necessity of collaboration between Indigenous liberation movements and foreshadows the sort of backlash we can expect from the continuation of this important work.

As Gail Tremblay concluded in her artist's statement on the defacement, "[W]e must learn to move carefully, to live lightly on the planet and to share so everything stays in balance. Looking at the maps, think about O:hən:tən Karihwatēhkwēn (the Words that Come Before All Else) and how we all must learn to care for one another and the Earth. Without that, there is too much greed and too much grief. I want history to stop breaking everyone's heart, and caring to become our best way of working."

*The Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice
The Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project
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Hope without denial

Coping with life under capitalism

Enrique Quintero

Capitalism: "It is what it is ..."

Like it or not, we all live in a capitalist society, and THAT is hard to deny. The implications of this are multiple, and vary according to the class location of the individuals within the system. If you are Lisa T. Su, the CEO of Advance Micro Devices, your salary for 2020 would have been \$58.5 million.

It would have been \$40.3 million if you were NBA player Stephen Curry, and so on, until we get to the laundry and dry-cleaning workers who make \$432 per week on average, or \$22,464 per year, the lowest paid salary in the nation. Add to this the 16 million unemployed people (up from 10 million in February) and it's easy to see that capitalism affects everybody but not on equal terms.

Capitalism, as we know, is ruled by the profit imperative and is unconcerned with equity or the redistribution of wealth. From an economic perspective, capitalism is anything but a democracy, yet all of us participate in it. We might then say that capitalism, while not at all democratic, is democratically distributed among all of us.

It took capitalism close to four hundred years to permeate the economies of most nations around the planet, alter some of the laws of nature, and also to infiltrate our minds. Capitalism's expansion has 'globalized' the economy but also the way we think about the world. In the words of social critic Fredric Jameson, sometimes it seems "easier to imagine the end of the planet than the end of capitalism."

Nonetheless, this inability to imagine the end of the system is just that, a temporary failure of our imagination. This does not mean that we necessarily have to agree with the reality created as demonstrated by the recent struggles of the Black Lives Matter movement against racism and government brutality. Nor with the massive resistance against the federal handling of the pandemic, which now registers close to six million Covid-19 cases and the deaths of two hundred thousand Americans.

The recent sharp increase in organized protest suggests that the problematic manner in which capitalism organizes the way we live, work (or don't) and die in America, has come into focus again. The material circumstances of peoples' lives in the US reveal the struggles and differences between the privileged and the dispossessed, the exploiters and the exploited, the rulers and the ruled.

Wrapped in the two-sided coat of racism and white supremacy, these social dichotomies characterize the lives of most American citizens. To borrow a phrase recently popularized in the oppositional voices



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of Donald Trump and Michelle Obama: "It is what it is . . ." (Different as they are, neither Trump nor Obama has gone on record as being able to imagine the end of capitalism.)

Denial as a personal way of coping

The transition from acknowledging “it is what it is” to “it doesn’t have to be this way “ is not easy. Shifting from interpreting the world to changing it requires political fortitude, resilience, determination, endurance, and an imagination not trapped in the cultural sterility

in the practices of the dominant institutions in society, whose main purpose is to legitimize the current order and maintain maximum control with minimal conflict.

This is possible through specific forms of economic organization and financial institutions that make the existing division of labor between owners of the means of production and workers selling their labor “official,” and normal. Schools, churches, family, media, trade unions, political institutions, the legal system, political parties—all part of the ideological state

economic arrangements are presented without history, occluding the conditions that made possible their creation (i.e., slavery in the US), as if they exist according to “the natural order of things.”

Because we can't see the root cause of social injustice, we end up limiting or even denying possibilities of genuine change. Capitalism would prefer that we limit ourselves to the role of perpetual consumers of commodities and apathetic spectators of our own lamentations. The ideology of capital has taught us how to lie to ourselves and how to cover our eyes and ears, or as Marx wrote:

“Perseus wore a magic cap so that the monsters he hunted down might not see him. We draw the magic cap down over our own eyes and ears so as to deny that there are any monsters”

Hope without denial

The Bernie Sanders movement; the growing number of progressive women elected to office; the vitality of the Black Lives Matter movement with its ability to generate multi-ethnic and multi-class support against racism and police brutality; the growing popular discontent with the Trump administration; the increasing awareness among Americans of the importance of protecting the planet and the essential workers' strikes at Amazon, Instacart, Target, Walmart, and Whole Foods, signal widespread public dissatisfaction.

In this moment, it seems that the “monsters” of American capitalism have been identified and Americans are finding hope not in the denial of capitalism and its effects, but in the struggle to overcome it. In this incredibly complicated moment, the magic cap has been lifted and we don’t know what will come next. Ironically, hope without denial is our best source of hope.

Enrique Quintero serves on the WIP Publishing Committee.

of mainstream society. Imagining a better world and fighting for it is difficult, often thankless, often seemingly futile work.

It's no wonder that many of us choose, at least on occasion, to find solace in denying the conflicting forms in our existence. Our human unconscious acts as a basic instinctual drive that demands satisfaction in terms of security and permanence, not only in our personal lives, but also in our social and natural worlds.

Our mechanisms of defense lead our minds to negate a reality that we perceive as unpleasant. The following quote illustrates this dynamic at play in reference to climate change:

“... in this case, what I am saying, OK, what do I want to believe now? Do I want to worry about global warming — no, I don’t want to worry about global warming, me as an average person who doesn’t have ... like a person who feels powerless in front of what big corporations are saying.

I am saying OK, I don't want to bother with this, and I probably choose the point of view that entails me to believe that, OK, I can't do much about global warming, so I take my thoughts away from this story" (From a research paper submitted to Canadian Sociological Association by M. Sarbu, 2013)

The author also points out that these feelings of powerlessness can lead to “a path of avoidance and disengagement,” even in cases when there is scientific recognition of global warming. In another study, *The Truth About Denial: Bias and Self-Deception in Science, Politics, and Religion* (2020), Alan Barton defines denial as the “emotionally motivated rejection (or embrace) of a factual claim in the face of strong evidence to the contrary.”

Denial, from a psychological perspective, provides us with a way to navigate through situations that we may experience as farcical, perverse, cruel or absurd, without changing those situations. Simultaneously, capitalism functions to enhance our own self-deception through the use of ideology and the apparatuses put in place for its dissemination.

Denial as a socially imposed mode of thinking

Ideology is not magical and it doesn't exist in abstract. It lives

apparatus (ISA)—help to maintain order in society and reproduce the existing capitalist relations of production. So too does the repressive state apparatus (RSA) including the army, police, national security organizations, and organized surveillance. These aspects may appear relatively autonomous, but they have one thing in common: they “materialize” the dominant ideology. That is, “the ideology of the dominant class, the class that holds state power and directly or imperiously commands the Repressive State Apparatus” (Althusser).

The convergence of these elements in the hands of capitalism conditions not only the actual conditions of our lives, but also the ways we think about our own and other people's material conditions. For example, in the US, the very concept of capitalism is not taught explicitly as it is in other countries, often in the context of comparing the ways that societies organize themselves. Our current social and

Elections  *2020*

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Port of Olympia

From page 1

fect, a nexus of apparent conflicts of interest:

- Port of Olympia Legal Counsel Heather Burgess is a Board member and President-Elect of EDC. As port counsel, she has oversight for Port contracts. Her law firm, Phillips Burgess Law, PLLC is the named attorney representing the Port of Olympia on the Panattoni Agreement.
- Port Commissioner Bill McGregor is a Board member of EDC. He was one of the two deciding votes on the lease option contract.
- Evan Parker of Kidder Mathews is a Board member of EDC. He and Amy Evans served as the lead real estate brokers on this project. Per sec. 25.1 of the contract as proposed, Kidder Mathews will represent the Port upon the execution of the Agreement, and subsequent Ground Leases, and be entitled to all commissions.

A separate agreement between the Port and Kidder Mathews is to be signed upon execution of the Panattoni Agreement. Thus, Mr. Parker has a significant vested interest in the string of commissions payable to Kidder contingent on the deal being consummated.

The proponents of the lease option based their case in large part on EDC Cade's letter of June 22, 2020. At first blush, it is apparent that his letter contains an overly optimistic assessment of benefits. A closer look, based on a public records search, produces a more disturbing picture. These questions arise: What was the basis of evaluation in Cade's letter, and what were the circumstances leading up to it?

- Amy Evans of Kidder Mathews at the June 22 Commission meeting expressed strong support for the Panattoni Agreement. What she failed to disclose in that comment was her material financial interest. This

failure to disclose shows a disturbing lack of candor.

Ms. Evans, who has a material interest, was instrumental in the construction of the economic benefit claims cited in Cade's letter. Ms. Evans set up the valuation process by connecting Mr. Cade with David Toyer of Toyer Strategic Advisors. On June 12, 2020, she sent an email with the subject line "Panattoni" to both Michael Cade and David Toyer stating: "Michael [Cade]: David [Toyer] will be a good one to work on economic impact analysis of the Tumwater Panattoni project."

- The question then became: Who is David Toyer, and what financial interests does he have

with any of the material parties to this deal? It appears that Toyer has a close financial tie to Panattoni Development.

On the website of Toyer Strategic Advisors, the only client listed and showcased is Panattoni Development. Thus, it appears that an agent of Panattoni was given the job of setting the rationale for economic development benefits for the Tumwater project. It would appear that any valuation opinion from Toyer would fail the test for arm's-length objectivity.

The public on the hook for decades?

The economic benefits asserted by EDC clearly are based upon data from a biased source. Arguably, the input from EDC should have been entirely discounted and rejected from consideration. In turn, that the benefits claimed were based on questionable assertions cast a shadow over other representations, and raised the question of lease rate adequacy especially in the face of a potential \$20 million in mitigation costs. If those provisions should prove inadequate, the public will be on the hook for decades.

Denis Langhans is a retired corporate executive who holds a PhD in the humanities. He has been observing governance and accounting practices at the Port of Olympia for several years.

New Market Industrial Campus:
the players



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PORT of OLYMPIA



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CITY OF TUMWATER



PANATTONI



km Kidder Mathews

The story behind the “rad” benefits of a warehouse project

In a document addressing questions about the Panattoni Lease Option, the Port used findings by the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC) to present the lease as a highly attractive economic opportunity:

any potential future development is estimated to have an economic impact of 942 jobs, \$142 million in labor income, \$365 million in total economic production for Thurston Co. and \$12.7 million in state and local taxes.

When Kidder-Matthews VP Amy Evans first saw these astonishing numbers, she sent an enthusiastic email to the Port's Development Director: "Pretty rad!"

Maybe a little too rad. The EDC staffer who prepared the figures got his data from Panattoni's agent. (In fact, it was Amy Evans who suggested they work together.) The EDC researcher plugged the data into an input/output model that measures only benefits, and in one day he was able to report the "impacts." Finally, while the EDC staffer

	Jobs	Labor income	Economic output
Direct	250	\$104,795,323	\$250,000,000
“Indirect”	264	\$ 16,017,770	48,568,289
“Induced”	428	\$ 21,384,912	66,759,630
Rad Totals!	942	\$142,198,005	\$365,327,920

stressed that his numbers did not represent impacts beyond the construction period, the Port and the EDC presented them as applying to “any potential future development...”

All of this is beside the point. It would take only two Port Commissioners to approve the project and they were on board from the first. “Economic impact” estimates are not meant to be scrutinized. The purpose of such figures is to eliminate debate and reinforce the idea that development brings only benefits.

Yet there is much about this proposed development and the terms of the lease that deserved a lot more objective scrutiny. An attempt by Port Commissioner EJ Zita to present key questions

for discussion was rejected. The mayor of Tumwater, where the project would be sited, wanted time to investigate environmental issues and other higher value options. The Port dismissed concerns raised in more than 38 pages of public testimony by saying that the developer would comply with regulations. Pro-commissioners claimed that as an “option agreement” the Port's commitment was limited – ignoring the fact that the “10-year option” was at the sole discretion of Panattoni, who could unilaterally extend the terms of the lease and commit the Port for 55 years.

A further word on the “rad” economic impacts

The favorite models to predict the impact of developments don't

measure total economic impact but only benefits—expanded by various multipliers. And it's all about the multipliers. A criticism of the IMPLAN model, for example, says that the most disturbing thing about it is “the wildly unreasonable values it allows for multiplier effects.”

Those “rad” numbers cited by the Port for jobs, labor income, and total economic output for the Panattoni project construction phase? They were created by multipliers:

The beauty of this process is that no one knows how it works, nor how valid any of the estimates are – even if they were correctly treated as lasting only as long as the construction phase of this project. No one will ever be able to verify what actual impacts this warehouse development had – and whether benefits of another use of the land would have been greater.

—MJD

Jacobin Reading Group

Protectors of the Salish Sea

La Resistencia

Stream Team

Thurston County Democrats

Women in Black

Thurston Conserv

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T

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Log on to view events for more than 50 local groups ~

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REFLECTION

The need for farmworker justice yesterday and today

Cecilia Pérez

[Note: This is part of a speech given by Cecilia Pérez on Saturday, August 22 on the streets of downtown Olympia as part of the March Against Farmworker Exploitation. Cecilia is a Chicana and the proud daughter of immigrant farm workers from the Yakima Valley in Central WA. She currently lives and works as an RN in Olympia. Her story touches on farmworker justice and the long history of US economic imperialism in Mexico.]

For those who are unfamiliar with “Chicano/Chicana” these terms were popularized during the civil rights and Chicano movements of the 1960s. Simply put, a *chicano* or *chicana* is someone of Mexican descent and typically first generation born in the US.

To be *Chicana* is to reject cultural assimilation and the homogenization of my Latinx community through terms like Hispanic. These terms were made up by the racist US government as a way to white-wash us and discredit our indigenuous roots.

The *Chicano* movement of the 1960s undoubtedly influenced labor activism especially in farmworker communities during the 1970s and beyond. For me, *Chicana* is an assertion of my cultural pride and a reclaiming of my agency and love for my brown body—which in a culture of white supremacy—is nothing short of radical and transformative in itself.

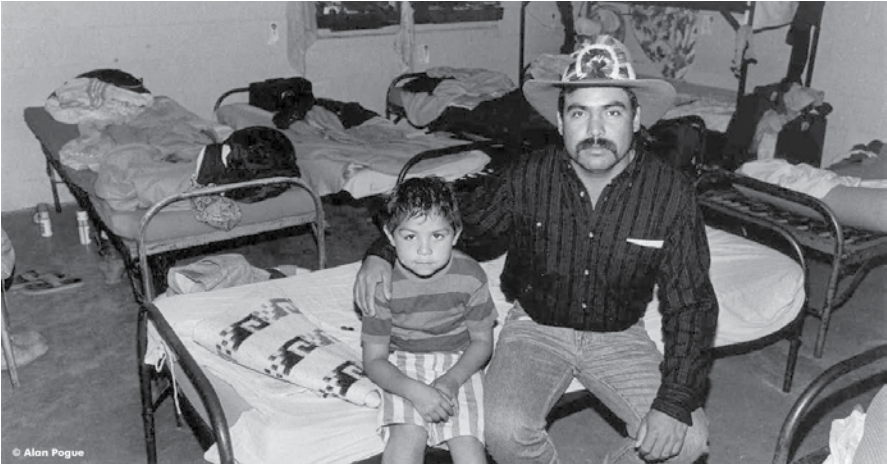
My story begins in the late 1950s with my *abuelito* Delfin. My *abuelito* was among the millions of men contracted to work in the US between 1942 and 1964 through what was known as the Mexican Farm Labor Supply Program, or the *Bracero* Program.

The *Bracero* Program was a series of bilateral agreements between Mexico and the US. In 1942, war-time efforts in the US meant a productive boom of labor supply was desperately needed in the agricultural economy as well as on the railroads. The US looked to Mexico for a constant supply of cheap and vulnerable laborers. The program brought in close to 5 million workers from Mexico.

These workers were among Mexico's healthiest and strongest men, carefully selected only after having passed extensive screening and physical exams. Despite this, it was common for *Braceros* to develop illnesses while working—arthritis, tuberculosis and serious injuries.

Even though my *abuelito* Delfin despised his work as a *Bracero*, he

renewed his contract four times, working in Texas, Idaho, Oregon, and California. At the time, the economic situation in Mexico was dire. Massive poverty in Mexico



Farmworkers are subject to crowded housing conditions.

then and now is a direct result of US intervention. The start can be traced back to the construction of a US national railroad network in Mexico in the late 1800s. A present-day example of US economic imperialism would be the failed 2001 NAFTA. In both instances, there was a displacement of people from their land, prompting an economic migration to “El Norte.”

The *Braceros* of the mid-20th century faced cruel and inhumane work hazards: exposure to cancer-causing pesticides, poor housing conditions, frequently withheld wages, and inadequate medical

the Yakima Valley often to organize farm workers and make demands for better working conditions. It was also during this time that

the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic was established to make desperately needed medical care more accessible. The clinic has grown to become the largest community-based health center in the entire Pacific Northwest!

It's also important to note that this rich labor history of my hometown was never once shared or taught to me in my 13 years of public school there. This is an example of white supremacy and epistemic violence, denying communities the right to know our own history, and silencing us.

My abuelito was among the millions of men contracted to work in the US between 1942 and 1964 through what was known as...the Bracero program.

care. *Braceros* were regarded as commodities and exploited for their labor. Ultimately the program worked to serve the economic interest of US corporations and the US government.

Fresh fruit; broken bodies

Washington state has a unique history of utilizing *Braceros* and attracting farmworkers in general. The Yakima Valley is a huge agricultural hub in Washington, and it's also where I grew up.

After making their migration journey to *El Norte*, my parents moved to the lower Yakima Valley in the 1980s. My *apa* worked as a farmworker for 20+ years, picking asparagus, blueberries, apples and everything in between. It was a lively time for farmworker activism. Cesar Chavez, co-founder of the United Farm Workers visited

Despite this historical labor activism, living conditions for farmworkers haven't improved much—not even during the time of coronavirus. Farmworkers are once again deemed essential, yet are treated as disposable.



Unsurprisingly, COVID outbreaks are far too high in farmworker communities. In late April, the Yakima Valley had the highest number of cases per capita in the entire West Coast. This is no coincidence given that farmworkers work in close contact with one another and often are subject to tight and crowded migrant housing conditions. Until very recently, many were forced to work with or

without personal protective equipment.

In early May of this year, COVID cases were approaching an all-time high in the Yakima Valley. This prompted farmworkers to tap into the labor activism spirit of earlier decades. Farmworkers in fruit packing warehouses joined in solidarity with field pickers, going on labor strikes together. As a result of these strikes, employers conceded and were forced to provide masks, hand sanitizer and increased safety measures. Proof that when we the people organize and fight together, we win.

It's also important to acknowledge that this health burden is an example of racialized class exploitation and oppression. In general, farmworkers in the Yakima Valley and Washington are almost exclusively Latinx, though with notable exceptions across different communities.

The estimated average individual wage for a farmworker is between \$15,000 -\$17,499 annually. About 1 in 4 farmworkers currently fall below the federal poverty line which is already egregiously low.

Consider how we are able to have food on our tables

Community members are living in poverty, breaking their backs day in and day out so that we're able to have food on our table. Largely without access to health care. During a deadly global pandemic.

One demand we all need to support is healthcare for every single person living in our communities. Health care is a right that we as humans with inherent dignity and worth are entitled to. The push towards universal health coverage in the US means supporting Medicare for All. Full stop.

COVID humbly reminds us all how interconnected we are. When one person in our community is sick the individual suffers and the community as a whole suffers as well. Medicare for All (M4A) acknowledges that a community is only as strong as our sickest and most vulnerable community member. We need to demand comprehensive quality care for every person in the community, so that our communities can be more equitable and healthier.

M4A ensures that no one is left behind because of their inability to pay for care. No one is left behind because of employment status. No one is left behind because of their citizenship status. No one is left behind, period.

Finally, let us not forget that we are living through a special moment in history, a time of global uprising. At the forefront are demands for black liberation and for the abolition of racist policing and all other forms of the prison industrial complex here in the US including the NW Detention Center in Tacoma.

All our struggles for liberation are interconnected: Continue showing up in the streets supporting Black Lives Matter. Continue showing up for Farmworkers. Support workers on strikes. Follow organizations doing amazing work like Familias Unidas por Justicia.

A better world is possible but it won't happen without persistence and solidarity.

Cecilia Pérez is a community organizer involved with Economics 4 Everyone and Olympia DSA.

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Right on Pearl
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Call of Action to the City of Olympia

We celebrate the collective effort of our Olympia community to grow and continue the Black Lives Matter Movement locally. From participating in protests and demonstrations, to donating money and supplies to those on the ground, to the hundreds of meetings and conversations happening to build lasting safety, belonging, and well-being for Black and People of Color, Indigenous, Latinx, Transgender, LGBTQIA, Disabled, and other marginalized community members - Olympians are ready for real change, now.

Anti-racism is a multifaceted process, but the time is upon us to move boldly. We must collaborate to build policies that will transform Olympia into the integrated, anti-racist community we aspire to be. Together, we can generate homegrown and transformative strategies that build trust across our city. The ideas put forward by the Black Lives Matter Movement entail justice for African Americans and People of Color, but they also assure a framework for the support and protection of all marginalized members of society. Balance and inclusion will come when we focus on policies built on such a framework as it is voiced by the people.

To this end, we demand the City of Olympia:

1. **Acknowledge All Black Lives Matter** as an entity standing to uplift politically, economically, and socially marginalized people.
2. **Declare Systemic Racism** a public health concern.
Develop an anti-racism strategy for the

City of Olympia that actively dismantles white supremacy within its departments and all operations/contracting.

Engage in public activities and dialogue to foster trust and community healing, on the terms of those who experience racism and anti-Blackness as well all marginalized communities in Olympia.

3. **Decriminalize BLM demonstrations/rallies/assemblies** and immediately stop arresting BLM protestors. Drop charges for all who are being held, as well as for those who have been released.
4. **Immediately halt the use of chemical weapons**, including those banned by the Geneva Convention, during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. These weapons threaten the health and lives of those with respiratory conditions and chronic illness and, alongside other harsh tactics, contribute to the spread of COVID-19 while cases skyrocket.
5. **Defund, demilitarize, and abolish the Olympia Police Department. Redirect resources toward a new model of public safety responsive to the history of policing and the failures of incremental reform.** We propose the following framework for a transition:

Halt the police union collective bargaining and contract negotiation process until participatory boards are in place.

Immediately begin developing and implementing a plan that removes lethal force from officers responding to all nonviolent crime service

calls.

Place OPD under the control of an elected **Community Control Management Board (CCMB)**, fully staffed with its own employees and budget. The CCMB will also work alongside a **Reconciliation and Equity Oversight Board (REOB)** to advise the council on all matters related to public safety and criminal justice. The REOB, comprised of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Transgender, LGBTQIA, Disabled, and other marginalized community members, would have the power to:

- ♦ Immediately cut OPD's budget by 50% for redistribution under the oversight of the REOB.
- ♦ Freeze police force hiring, including the hiring of a new Police Chief.
- ♦ Reallocate OPD funds and law enforcement functions to community-based safety programs, especially those that secure people's basic needs like housing, food, health care, education, childcare, etc., again under the oversight of REOB.

While we realize this reorganization will take time, there is much that can be done immediately.

Our communities of color are ready to lead. We call on the City Council to act: to take good faith measures toward these five demands and engage community partners without unwarranted delays.

Signed by: Amplified Voices of Olympia

Mercy Kariuki-McGee
Owner, Shirro's Plate
Olympia, WA

Kylen Ellwood Clayton
Owner, Unicorn Gardens
Olympia, WA

Brighida deVargas
Owner, Eastside Urban Farm & Garden Center
Olympia, WA

Amber Markland
Owner, Sift and Gather
Olympia, WA

Nellie and Joe Riehle
Owners, Color My World Childcare
Olympia, WA

Jazmine Fox-Stern
Owner, Olympia Rolfing Center
Olympia, WA

Christina Lagdameo
Co-owner, True Self Yoga
Olympia, WA

Jessica Ryan
Owner, Wisteria Moon Massage & Yoga
Olympia, WA

Jennifer Shafer
Licensed Mental Health Counselor
Olympia, WA

Paris McClusky
Executive Director of environmental non-profit
Olympia, WA

John Kersting
Teacher
Olympia, WA

Lea Finnell Townsend
Mental Health Counselor
Olympia, WA

Eleanor Steinhagen
Communications Specialist
Olympia, WA

Susan Stack
Olympia, WA

Syd Locke
State employee
Olympia, WA

Keoki Kauanoe
Olympia, WA

Arisa Nogler
Nurse
Olympia, WA

Ashly Elstrom
Mother
Olympia, WA

Audrey Schissell
Computer Programmer
Olympia, WA

August Waldron
Student Teacher
Olympia, WA

Cory Miller
Customer service representative
Tumwater, WA

Patrick Bruen
Olympia, WA

Fred Medlicott
Co-op Developer
Olympia, WA

Erich Brown
Director retail and attractions
Olympia, WA

Debra Peri
Olympia, WA

Kenny Farver
Olympia, WA

Miguel Louis
Economics for Everyone
Olympia, WA

Chelsea Gustafson
Olympia, WA

Martha Eden
Business Owner
Olympia, WA

Zoltan Grossman
Olympia, WA

Lauren Janda
Olympia, WA

Mel Bilodeau
Mel O'Soup Board of Directors
Olympia Food Coop
Olympia, WA

Tela Hogle
Tela Hogle Music Studio
Music Instructor
Olympia, WA

Jamie Brayshaw
Co-owner, Octapas Cafe
Olympia, WA

Meave Short
Bar owner/ tender, The Crypt, LLC
Olympia, WA

Dan Leahy
Olympia, WA

Laurie Armstrong
Student

Olympia, WA
Talitha Thalya
Owner, Raventree Designs
Olympia, WA

Sofie Landis
Owner, Sofie's Scoops
Olympia, WA

Tamara Smith
Moms Against Police Brutality
Olympia, WA

Kirsten Harris
Voter, Business Owner
Olympia, WA

Gabrielle Perez
Therapist
Olympia, WA

Joseph Andreotti
Olympia, WA

Robyn Sowers
Mental Health Counselor
Olympia, WA

Christopher Stegman
Owner, Puget Painting & Home Repair
Olympia, WA

Lenore Miller
Retired state employee
Facilities Planning & Management
Olympia, WA

Jeff Sowers
High School Teacher
Olympia, WA

Joshua Chambers
Olympia, WA

Pat Holm
Retired Researcher
Olympia, WA

Suzanne Kline
Citizens for a Clean Black Lake
Olympia, WA

Mike Pelly
Para Educator, Olympia School District
Thurston County

Endorsed by Olympia Democratic Socialists of America (Oly DSA)

To add your name to the Call to Action, go to the Works in Progress website —www.olywip.org—and click on the link provided.

Bureaucracy, it hardly needs to be said, is not inherently creative. And despite its self-image as an engine of innovation, the education-reform movement backed by Wall Street tends to recoil at anything that reeks of bohemianism. No hedge-funder, obsessed with metrics, achievement gaps and free Apple products has ever sat down and asked himself, “Hey, I wonder how they do it in Norway?”

The New York Times

The undoing of illusions

Caitlyn Johnstone

Governments have obscenely well-funded intelligence agencies that are literally dedicated to orchestrating secret conspiracies around the world, but if you say they might be conspiring in some part of the world people call you a mentally ill conspiracy theorist.

The fact that the **Phoenix Program** existed is by itself an unsailable argument for permanently dismantling the entire CIA.



A political establishment which thinks it's crazy and extremist to reduce a \$740 billion military budget by 10 percent is a political establishment that should not exist.

A political establishment which thinks it's crazy and extremist to reduce a \$740 billion military budget by 10 percent can never and will never lead to a sane world.

A political establishment which thinks it's crazy and extremist to reduce a \$740 billion military budget by 10 percent has no business calling its members “moderate” or “centrist”.

A political establishment which thinks it's crazy and extremist to reduce a \$740 billion military budget by 10 percent is a crazy and extremist political establishment.

A political establishment which thinks it's crazy and extremist to reduce a \$740 billion military budget by 10 percent is too crazy and extremist to be permitted to exist.



Democrats and Republicans are like male and female starfish; it's hard to tell them apart unless you're one of them.

The modern US imperial war machine kills more like a python than a tiger, placing less emphasis on the full-scale ground invasions of the Bush era and more on slowly suffocating the life out of targeted nations using sanctions, blockades, coups, psyops and CIA-backed uprisings.

This is one reason to be dismissive of Trump supporters who say he “hasn't started any new wars”. What they mean is he hasn't done any old school ground invasions. He's still attacking and killing with sanctions and blockades and imperiling the world with cold war escalations.



From 2021 until nuclear armageddon Biden will be sitting off to the side mumbling to himself as his brain turns to chowder while hold-overs from the Obama administration orchestrate cold war escalations against China in retaliation for its 2020 “election meddling”.



You will never, ever hate China enough to bring manufacturing jobs back to the US. Playing along with bullshit narrative spin hoping it will bring your jobs back will never work. You're just helping opaque government agencies advance their new cold war.



The dumbest thing about believing foreign countries attacked American democracy is believing America has any democracy to attack.

Thought experiment: If you looked out the window right now and saw a mushroom cloud growing on the horizon, how would you feel about the way you've been spending your mental energy lately? Be honest with yourself.



If we win this thing it won't be because conspiracy analysts showed everyone a bunch of complex financial connections or because Marxists put a bunch of theory in everyone's heads, it will be because clear, simple pointing helped everyone notice the fact that they've been duped.

This fight isn't a game of addition, it's a game of subtraction. You're not trying to get the mainstream rank-and-file public to understand a bunch of complicated new information, you're trying to remove the blindfold so they can see something for themselves that they kind of already suspected was the case.

Cripple public trust in the establishment narrative control apparatus and you remove the only obstacle that's been stopping the people from using the power of their numbers to force real change. They don't need anything new, they need to exorcise the lies that have blinded them and stop trusting in the words of liars.



All I'm ever writing about here is the undoing of illusions. The undoing of illusions about what's happening in the world, the undoing of illusions about the media, the undoing of illusions about society, the undoing of illusions about ourselves. If you're a lover of truth, it's all the same to you.



The world isn't happening the way most people think it is happening. Maturity is learning and understanding the multifaceted, multi-leveled ways in which this is the case.

Caitlyn Johnston is author of Rogue Nation: Psychonautical Adventures With Caitlin Johnstone and Woke: A Field Guide for Utopia Preppers. Everyone, racist platforms excluded, has her permission to republish, use or translate any part of this work (or anything else I've written) in any way they like free of charge.

Enough is enough

The Milwaukee Bucks, along with NBA players from Orlando, Houston, Oklahoma, Los Angeles and Portland refused to take the floor for their playoff games last month in protest against the latest police shooting in Kenosha, Wisconsin. A white police officer shot a black man named Jacob Blake 7 times in the back. The players were backed by coaches and NBA officials: .

“We’re the ones getting killed,” Los Angeles Clippers coach Doc Rivers, who is Black, said in an emotional postgame speech Tuesday night. “We’re the ones getting shot. We’re the ones that we’re denied to live in certain communities. We’ve been hung. We’ve been shot. And all you do is keep hearing about fear. It’s amazing why we keep loving this country and this country does not love us back. And it’s just, it’s really so sad.”

Strike

From page 1

cannot begin until this happens.”

Gil Veyna, a member of American Federation of Government Employees Local 3197, brought greetings from his union president Beverly Anderson, who sent an endorsement from their Local wholeheartedly backing the demands of the rally.

Workers acted together through their unions

Other labor endorsers included Communication Workers 7800 and President Loretta Gutierrez of Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) Local 304, Paula Lukaszek and Salvador Castillo, President and Vice President of WFSE 1488, and Kevin Allen of Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Eveline Graff-Mueller, a part-time

bus driver at risk of losing her job, spoke to the call to “Stop budget cuts, lay-offs and austerity at city, county, and state levels.” She warned that layoffs at the public transit agency will impact “a lot of single women and minorities worst.”

Workers from Whole Foods carried a banner to support racial justice. They took the mic to tell of harassment and retaliation by management of the Amazon-owned grocery giant for speaking up and wearing face masks in support of Black Lives Matter. Employer retaliation, including firings, is common across workplaces and motivated OWLS' demand of restitution for all who have filed complaints on racism without satisfactory resolution.

Naming the attack on lives and livelihoods

Other demands called for affir-

mative action in hiring, training, promotion, and an end to nepotism as well as healthy worksites and protective equipment for frontline workers. Several speakers addressed the call to stop union-busting and honor workers' rights.

Anna Hackman, member of American Federation of Teachers Local 1789, who works at Seattle Central College, opposed “attacks on our lives and livelihoods.” Christina Lopez, representing the Comrades of Color Caucus of the Freedom Socialist Party and Radical Women, lambasted the Democrat-controlled city and county administrations, saying “Budget cuts? Layoffs? That's your solution?” Lopez, a member of Teamsters 763 and a city worker, met with cheers from the crowd when she said that “solutions go beyond the county—these are systemic problems of capitalism.”

The need is urgent—for action and for solidarity

Several people spoke at the open mic, speaking to the need for urgent action, and to keep the movement going. Trae Holiday of King County Equity Now emphasized the need for solidarity. “That's what the ‘New Normal’ is all about, you guys!”

The upbeat rally ended with a photo of all the picketers gathered under the day's banners. Their final message to Constantine: “Root out Racism at King County and Beyond!”

Steve Beck is a retired union representative for American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees (AFSCME) 375 and Linda Averill is a King County/Metro transit worker. Both are members of Organized Workers for Labor Solidarity. They can be reached at OrganizedWorkersLS@gmail.com.

Community Spotlight



Black Leaders in Action and Solidarity in Thurston Co (BLAST)

BLAST is a new collective effort to elevate voices for justice, transparency and respect for marginalized people. Their mission is to dismantle systemic and institutionalized racism in justice and law enforcement, and correctional institution's and local governments, as well as in public safety and educational institutions, and in housing and health and human service services. They aim to ensure that all officials are held accountable in fostering true safety and trust in the community. You can find their list of eight demands, presented and explained on their website at <https://blastthurston.org>

BLAST



"Glen's Parallax Perspectives"

This month the program examines our nation's persistent failure to provide healthcare for everybody, to control costs and to prevent injustices in billing. The US spends twice as much per capita as other nations, yet achieves worse health outcomes.

Two guests will explain the issues and propose a cost-effective way to cover everybody with high quality care. Lynnette Vehrs, from Spokane is a registered nurse and president of Washington State Nurses Association. Sarah Weinberg is a medical doctor from the Seattle area and president of the Western Washington Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program—www.pnhp.westernwashington.org

Both guests are active in a statewide organization working for Universal Single-Payer Healthcare: Health Care for All—Washington.

The interview airs on cable channel 22 of Thurston Community Media (www.tcmmedia.org) at **1:30 pm Mondays, 5:00 pm Wednesdays, 9:00 pm Thursdays**. Watch the interview and get a summary of the program plus more information at www.parallaxperspectives.org, in the "TV Programs" and "Health Care Reform" categories.

Questions? Contact Glen Anderson, producer/host at (360) 491-9093 glenanderson@integra.net

Support GRuB at Harvest Soirée: Homegrown in 2020

September 8th - 12th: Silent Auction.

September 12, 5pm-6pm: Live Auction.

Register here: <https://www.goodgrub.org/event/harvest-soiree-home-grown-in-2020>

With all the challenges that have come with the COVID-19 pandemic, we're replacing our in-person fundraising event with a free, virtual gathering that promises to be inspiring, relevant, and just plain fun.

GRuB grows healthy food, people & community! With roots in the land, we create opportunities for people to learn, lead, & thrive. goodgrub.org

Soirée features: local collectibles, wild foods and medicine, prizes for vets, matched meals for the houseless, musical surprises, and more!



Writer's Tea at the Olympia Lamplighters

Tuesday, Sept 22, 5pm - 6pm.

The Lamplighters at 211 4th Ave. E. Orca Books has a new partnership with the Olympia Lamplighters on their ongoing Writer's Tea series of freeform workshops. The Lamplighters will open their doors every fourth Tuesday for writers and would-be writers to meet and chat over tea. Bring your own mug, mask and thoughts. The Lamplighters is a creative work space dedicated to providing a productive, quiet, and inspiring environment.



Meet and Greet for Potential Foster Parents

September 23, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

In Thurston County, there are children who have been separated from their families and need support and protection to continue to grow and develop. That's where foster parenting comes in. You can learn about foster care on line at www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting—or you could just Join staff from Community Youth Services for their next virtual meet and greet with CYS staff and a foster parent recruiter. They offer a fun and educational live broadcast to answer questions on foster care, the process, how to set up your home, first placement, and more.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1606015162901131/>

<http://communityyouthservices.org>

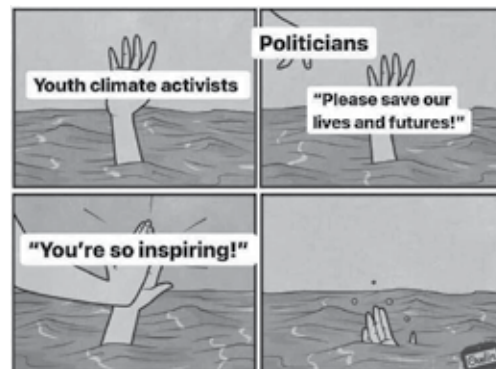


Listen Up! Youth Voices on Climate Justice

September 26, 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm.

Thurston County Youth Climate Activists tell it like it is in this inspiring webinar focused on taking action! Come listen into the world of young activists and connect through generations on climate change—a problem we must fight together! | Register here: www.tinyurl.com/Youthwebinar | Have questions for the youth panelists? Submit them here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf5loM2E0lFCgOLfqv7t8ruFfyYK7bDYZZZjTVWDJ6KCCMxYg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1399827633540149/>



<http://www.thurstonclimateaction.org>

Close Reading and Long Distance Writing Workshop

This is an intensive virtual writing workshop on **October 1st 2020**, facilitated by the Orca Books Co-op and conducted by Socorro de Luca. Students will study the technical skills of contemporary authors, and learn to apply these skills to their own writing. Students will participate in generative creative writing exercises. This is an inclusive workshop and all genres are welcome. de Luca is a writer working with hybrid form, a Pushcart Prize nominee, a current Goddard College MFA student, and Editor-in-Chief for The Pitkin Review. Interested writers should email socorro.deluca@goddard.edu for more information and to inquire about one of the limited thirteen slots for the class.



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Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front

Love the quick profit, the annual raise,
vacation with pay. Want more
of everything ready-made. Be afraid
to know your neighbors and to die.
And you will have a window in your head.
Not even your future will be a mystery
any more. Your mind will be punched in a card
and shut away in a little drawer.
When they want you to buy something
they will call you. When they want you
to die for profit they will let you know.

So, friends, every day do something
that won't compute. Love the Lord.
Love the world. Work for nothing.
Take all that you have and be poor.
Love someone who does not deserve it.
Denounce the government and embrace
the flag. Hope to live in that free
republic for which it stands.

Give your approval to all you cannot
understand. Praise ignorance, for what man
has not encountered he has not destroyed.

Ask the questions that have no answers.
Invest in the millennium. Plant sequoias.
Say that your main crop is the forest
that you did not plant,
that you will not live to harvest.

Say that the leaves are harvested
when they have rotted into the mold.
Call that profit. Prophesy such returns.

Put your faith in the two inches of humus
that will build under the trees
every thousand years.
Listen to carrion — put your ear
close, and hear the faint chattering
of the songs that are to come.
Expect the end of the world. Laugh.
Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful
though you have considered all the facts.
So long as women do not go cheap
for power, please women more than men.
Ask yourself: Will this satisfy
a woman satisfied to bear a child?
Will this disturb the sleep
of a woman near to giving birth?

Go with your love to the fields.
Lie down in the shade. Rest your head
in her lap. Swear allegiance
to what is highest your thoughts.

As soon as the generals and the politicians
can predict the motions of your mind,
lose it. Leave it as a sign
to mark the false trail, the way
you didn't go. Be like the fox
who makes more tracks than necessary,
some in the wrong direction.
Practice resurrection.

*Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front" from
The Country of Marriage, copyright © 1973 by Wendell Berry*



Works in Progress

Advocating for social justice since 1990