

Works in Progress

Advocating for social justice since 1990

Olympia’s PPP bank roll: Following the money

Dan Leahy

“Keeping American Workers Paid and Employed” is the name of Title I of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) that Congress passed at the end of March, 2020. Section 1102 of Title 1 authorized \$340 billion for a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and laid out the terms for lenders to give loans to “small businesses” starting February 15 and ending June 30, 2020.

In Olympia, the program provided somewhere between \$92.5 million and \$232.6 million in bank-facilitated, forgivable loans to 322 corporate addresses. The data covers only loans of at least \$150,000 up to \$5 million, and doesn’t show the actual amount but a range, as in “Company A received a loan between \$350,000 and \$1 million dollars.” (1)

Based on a review of data provided by the Small Business Administration for Olympia, Section 1102 might have been more accurately titled the Mortgage Protection Program, the Lease Protection Program or even the Utility Protection Program. Of the 322 loan recipients in Olympia, 103 have a “0” in the “jobs retained” column and 28 recipients have a blank. column. Combine those two figures and you have a solid 40% of loan recipients who indicated no jobs were retained.

Who was eligible?

The criteria were expansive. Small businesses were defined as less than 500 employees “per physical location.” If a business had more than 500 employees, but they were in different locations of 500 or less, the business was eligible.

Nonprofit, veteran, tribal, sole proprietors, self-employed and independent contractors could also qualify as small businesses. “Employees” could also mean full time, part time “or other basis.”

Eligibility for a loan required the business to make a “good faith certification” that economic “uncertainty” made the request necessary for continued operation, and that the funds would be used to “retain workers and maintain payroll **or** make mortgage payments, lease payments and utility payments.” (my bold).

Turning the loan into a grant

A key aspect of these loans is their forgiveness. The loan is for 8 weeks beginning on the date of origination. The amount to be forgiven would be equal to the sum of costs during this loan period for payroll, interest on a mortgage, rent obligation or utility payments. There is some indication that “due to expected high subscription” 60% of the loan must have been used for payroll—otherwise the interest rate is 1 %.

At the end of the loan period, the business supplies its forgivable cost information to the lender and states that it is “true and correct.” Within 90 days after the amount of forgiveness has been determined, the Small Business Administration sends this amount plus interest to the lender. Who are the lenders?

Of the 322 loans made to Olympia addresses, almost half, 155, were made by three banks: Olympia’s Heritage Bank (71), Hoquiam’s Timberland Bank (52) and Tulsa’s Bank of Oklahoma Financial (32). The remaining top ten loan-originating banks were Columbia State Bank (21), Commencement Bank (17), Twin Star CU (13), Key Bank (11), Washington Business Bank (8), First-Citizens Bank and Trust (8) and Umpqua Bank (7).

Unlike other banks, the Oklahoma Bank made its 32 loans to one group of inter-connected corporate entities and LLCs, all located at 111 Market Street across from the Olympia Farmers Market. This is the address of Koelsch Construction, Inc and inter-related LLCs consisting primarily of memory care facilities owned by Aaron Koelsch. The Tulsa bank

facilitated loans between \$8.6 million and \$23.5 million to these 32 entities.

Jobs retained—or not

One of the columns in the PPP report is “Jobs Retained.” For example, number of jobs retained by Koelsch’s corporate entities is given as 2,146. Although the jobs may not be in Olympia, this is by far the highest number of jobs retained associated with one Olympia address.

There are 12 other loan recipients who state they have retained more than 100 jobs: Mud Bay Inc (495), Olympia Orthopedic Associates PLLC (291), Nisqually Markets—Government Corporation (236), Behavioral Health Resources (188), HBO Enterprises Inc (173), Evergreen Christian Community (169), Rotter’s Inc (145), Hawks Prairie Casino LLC (136), Stormans Inc (121), Hanson Motors, Inc (103), Mullinax Ford of Olympia LLC (100) and Dairy Fresh Farms, Inc (100).

You would imagine with the title “Payroll Protection” anyone who received one of these loans would retain jobs. For whatever reason, this is not the case.

For example, of the six Olympia addresses with loans between \$2 and \$5 million dollars, one Forma Construction Company, has a “0” in the jobs retained column, and for another, Life Therapeutic Works LLC, the column is blank.

As noted at the outset, 103 loan recipients out of the 322 in Olympia

► PPP, continued on page 12



From The Olympian, July 26

A new invitation to investors

Turning residential neighborhoods into commercial zones

Bethany Weidner

Olympia’s planners have a new proposal that promises to worsen the city’s housing shortage and escalate costs beyond existing levels. Their new initiative focuses on “short term rentals,” (STRs), where a room or a house is rented for stays of less than 30 days. Airbnb is a familiar example.

The planners are recommending that a property owner be allowed to convert up to three entire residences to be offered as short-term “vacation rentals.” These could be single-family homes, duplexes, or triplexes, or condos. They would be allowed in every residential neighborhood in the city.

The housing market in Olympia is notoriously tight. The possibility of adding just 474-946 new housing units over the next 20 years was cited last year by Community Planning Dept. Deputy Director Leonard Bauer as the reason for urgent adoption of new infill zoning rules. Under the Department’s “vacation rental” proposal, conversion of a mere 500 units would more than wipe out the alleged benefits of the “missing middle” rezone plan. In San Francisco, entire homes on Airbnb alone removed 14% of housing units that would otherwise have been available to long-term renters.

Olympia council members are said to be attracted to the proposal because a person could own three separate “vacation rentals” as a way to supply income that might be lost due to continuing effects of the pandemic. In Olympia where many working people realistically can’t afford to buy one house, it’s clear that no working person would be buying a second house (or third or fourth) house as a way to preserve income.

In an extensive inquiry into the rising phenomenon, the Sustainable Economies Law Center found that allowing “vacation rentals” promotes the following:

- Takes long-term rental units off the market, adding to the scarcity of housing options and pushing up prices.
- Incentivizes property owners to keep units vacant or even evict tenants in order to make higher profit per night from short term rentals
- Adversely affects community cohesion—vacation rentals serve a revolving circuit of transient occupants (“guests”) who are neither connected to nor invested in the neighborhood.
- Reinforces class, gender and racial inequities because online platforms make it easy for people to

act on biases when selecting a guest (or a host) and because the opportunity to rent living-space to short term guests like many other economic opportunities disproportionately privileges the privileged.

The original rationale for Airbnb and similar arrangements (the “sharing economy”) was that this would allow people a means to make use of excess space and earn some extra income. The proposed regulations for Olympia do provide for this as a “homestay” where someone would offer a room or area in their primary residence to travelers for short stays.

Regulations that allow investors to purchase and rent entire housing units by the night departs entirely from the “home sharing” concept, instead promoting speculative business opportunities in neighborhoods previously free from the vagaries of commerce.

In the absence of protections for housing affordability, creating a category of “vacation rentals” promises to escalate housing costs and ultimately drive out lower-income and even middle-income residents.

Bethany Weidner lives on Olympia's Westside and writes often for Works in Progress.

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

What kind of country is produced when money is the measure?

The theme of this month's issue, *When Money is the Measure*, resonates with a concept that Karl Marx identified a hundred fifty years ago—the accumulation of social power in money-form. The correlation between money and social power is examined in this issue in several articles by writers who approach the question in a variety of ways.

“Turning residential neighborhoods into commercial zones” raises the question of whose interests are being served if many residential homes are allowed to be rezoned as short term rentals, like Airbnb. This speaks to the interests of those who can afford to buy two or even more homes. What does that do to the prospects of those who rent or are attempting to purchase their first home? Who has power, and whose interests will prevail?

In an article from Just Housing Olympia, critical questions are raised about linkages between the economy and housing: “With an uncertain economic future ahead of us and the state's eviction moratorium ending in August, we have every reason to expect the number of people experiencing homelessness in our community to rise. “

Pete Bohmer provides a counter argument to the concept that money is the measure. In “Raise the Social Cost: An Important Strategic Concept,” Bohmer illustrates how social movements, including the current Black Lives Matter-led movement, are acting on the belief that “there is a liberatory alternative to racial capitalism” and raising the social costs of maintaining the status quo is key.

In “At least pass the HEROES Act”, Hamilton Nolan describes how the initial federal response to the economic suffering caused by the pandemic included meeting some of the needs of ordinary people. By the time this paper goes to press, we will all know whether Congress has agreed to continue

its support for ordinary people, or whether those measures have been replaced with lesser and worse measures benefiting fewer people even, as Nolan writes, “the scale of our calamity grows.”

The cover and other graphic images in this issue also speak to the theme, problematizing the current distribution of money in this society as anything other than a measure of the success of the elite at the expense of everyone else.

—EL

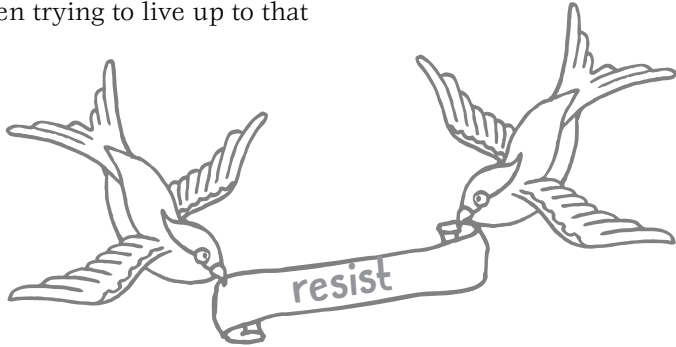
UPCOMING THEMES

September: Hoping, coping, coping & shopping. A recent book says that people are reaching for one of these strategies to survive in today's economy. That public institutions are falling apart; bosses are overwhelmed or incompetent; businesses are dysfunctional. Others argue that the best strategy is to critically examine the ideologies that have been driving our economic and social policy decisions for the past 40 years at least, namely, that an unregulated market is better at distributing resources to all of us than collective governance. Do you find any of this to be true? What's your strategy? **Deadline: August 15.**

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: 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 issue: October 15**



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75 years after bombing Japanese people

Billboards remind us of nuclear weapons deployed in Kitsap County

From news releases.

Accept Responsibility, displayed on billboards through August 9, is a plea for citizens of Puget Sound to accept their role and responsibility—as taxpayers, as members of a democratic society, and as neighbors to the Trident nuclear submarine base in Hood Canal—to work to prevent the use of nuclear weapons.

The four Seattle billboards are an effort by Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, a grassroots organization in Poulsbo, Washington, to reawaken public awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons in the Puget Sound region.

The ad refers to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, on August 6 and August 9, 1945, seventy-five years ago. It is estimated that more than 210,000 people died from the two atomic bombs by the end of 1945 - about 140,000 in Hiroshima and 74,000 in Nagasaki. Many more were sickened with cancer and chronic diseases.

Nuclear warheads deployed just 20 miles away

The ad also seeks to inform citi-



Photo courtesy of GZ Center for Nonviolent Action

zens in the Puget Sound region of our relationship to Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor with the largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the U.S.

Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor is home-port to the largest concentration of deployed nuclear warheads in the US. The nuclear warheads are deployed on Trident D-5 missiles on SSBN submarines and are

stored in an underground nuclear weapons storage facility on the base.

Trillions for nukes, not one cent for peace

The US is spending more on nuclear weapons programs than during the height of the Cold War.

Our elected leaders plan to spend an estimated \$1.7 trillion over 30 years for rebuilding the nation's nuclear facilities and “modernizing” nuclear weapons.

In the 1970s and 1980s there was widespread organized opposition to the continued deployment of nuclear weapons. It was a major public issue. In Seattle, thousands demonstrated against nuclear weapons at the Bangor base and hundreds were arrested.

Where are we today?

Citizens in a democracy have the task of choosing leaders and staying informed about what our government is doing. The submarine base at Bangor is 20 miles from downtown Seattle, yet only a small percentage of citizens in our region know that it exists.

In Washington State we continually elect government officials who promote nuclear weapons. In the 1970s, Senator Henry Jackson convinced the Pentagon to locate the Trident submarine base on the Hood Canal, while Senator Warren Magnuson got tax funds for roads and other impacts of the Trident base.

In 2012, Washington State established the Washington Military Alliance (WMA), strongly promoted by both Governors Gregoire and Jay Inslee. The purpose of this alliance is to strengthen the role of Washington State as a “...Power Projection Platform (Strategic Ports, Rail, Roads, and Airports) [with] the complementary air, land, and sea units with which to accomplish the mission.

Read vivid accounts of incidents and personalities in the history of opposition to nuclear weapons at www.gzcenter.org/

Save the date!

Join us in celebrating
30 years of
Works in Progress
Saturday, November 21
at the South Bay Grange!

Back from the brink

Since May 2017 the Olympia Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (OCANW) has worked in strategically smart grassroots ways to build a local movement to abolish nuclear weapons. We hold a giant banner one hour a week over I-5. We devised an informative four-session course (“Nuclear Weapons Nowadays: What You Can Know and Do”) and have been offering the course to four different audiences. We conduct speaking

engagements for various audiences, and we lobby our members of Congress. Now we are preparing to urge local governments to support a package of proposals as part of a nationwide effort called “Back from the Brink” (www.preventnuclearwar.org). We have been doing much more, and we keep generating new activities. We meet every month. *Contact Glen Anderson (360) 491-9093 glenanderson@integra.net*

Then this happened

“...best ever quarter” (yes, best EVER) for Washington Business Bank profits. The bank profited from its handling of PPP loans—which recipients then deposited in the bank! While our elected leaders worry that a \$600 unemployment bump pays some people more than they would make at their job, no one is worried about the bank making from the pandemic-driven second quarter of 2020 more profit than they made in any quarter from their regular activities.

...it’s official—the proposed “Green Cove Park” project site contains “confirmed and suspected contamination.” In May, we wrote that the city required Jerry Mahan to test his project at the Sundberg Sand & Gravel Pit on Cooper Pt. Road for contaminants, even though his lawyer Heather Burgess declared that no more testing was needed and accused the City of unfairly holding Mahan to higher standards in the Model Toxics Control Act.

Using key research by citizens, the Dept. of Ecology determined that

the site belonged on its Confirmed and Suspected Contaminated Sites List, making it clear that the site is subject to the Model Toxics Control Act. Mahan has the opportunity to apply to the Voluntary Cleanup Program to clean up the site before he can go forward with development plans.

Police said it...but it wasn’t true! An assistant police chief said that protesters in Seattle’s CHOP occupation were extorting local businesses for money. The chief repeated the claim the next day and

it made news around the world. It didn’t happen. The chief said calls for police service in CHOP more than tripled during the occupation. Calls there actually dropped 31%. Police tweeted that “improvised explosives” were thrown at officers. The “device” in the accompanying photo...was a candle. Gosh!

5.4 million American workers lost their healthcare coverage simply because their job disappeared. That’s more workers uninsured in a few months than in any year on record. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that if you include dependents the total rises to 27 million. Any of them who gets Covid 19 and ends up in a hospital is in deep trouble. Given the obvious

nightmarishness of the situation, you might assume that Congress would step up with an emergency expansion of Medicare. Not.

Correction: An article in the June *Works in Progress* about how real estate interests influence housing policy in Washington communities described one of the 2020 candidates for the 22nd Legislative District as having substantial corporate funding. Sam Hunt, a long-time Democratic legislator, wrote that in three past campaigns, Jessica Bateman has received less than 1% of her financial support from corporate donations, and this year, she has received no corporate money.

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Educating in and being educated by the pandemic

Emily Lardner

On Thursday, July 23, the largest representative of public school employees, Washington Education Association (WEA), issued the following statement on safety first:

As the number of new COVID-19 cases continues to grow across Washington, we are sadly faced with a choice between two bad options—either her return to schools and put our educators, students, and community at risk or return to a distance learning and virtual instruction model.

We know that in-person teaching and learning is best for both students and educators, and educators want nothing more than to get back into schools with our students. The reality is that, with very few exceptions, we are nowhere close to containing the spread of this virus and nowhere close to being able to guarantee the health and safety of our students, educators, families, and communities.

Therefore, we cannot responsibly support a return to school buildings for in-person learning this fall. We call on Governor Inslee to continue leading with science and safety and declare that schools will open remotely this fall.

Both bad options—putting educators, students, and communities at greater risk for contracting COVID-19, or resorting to distance learning and virtual instruction—could have been much less bad had we made different choices about where to invest public resources leading into this moment.

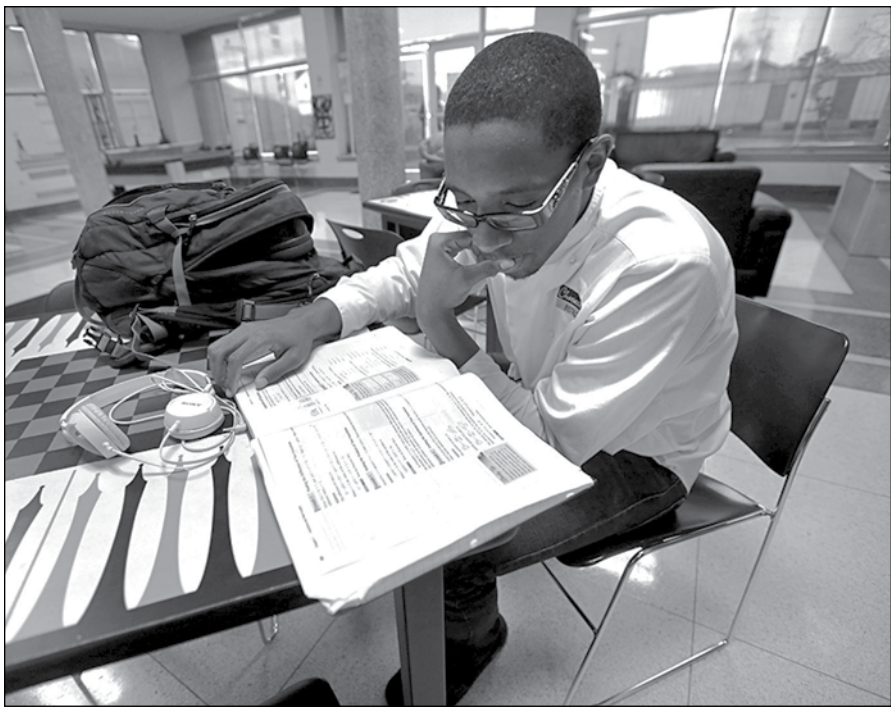
We can't address systemic underfunding of education, housing, broadband access, food security, and health care before school starts. But as we try to cope with whichever bad option is chosen, we need to remember how we got here and imagine how it can be different.

How did we get here?

One important function of government—local, state, and federal—is to organize the economy, determining how money flows between the private and the public sectors. Historically, the US has chosen to organize itself so money flows most freely into the private sector, specifically into the hands of the owning class.

The US was the only industrialized country that went into the Great Depression of the 1930s with no social insurance. We are currently the only industrialized country that doesn't have universal health coverage for all citizens. Income inequity is greater here than in any of our economic peers: the UK, Italy, Japan, Canada, Germany, and France. The black-white income gap persists.

We find ourselves trying to address the acute crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic with insufficient tools and resources because of the policy choices we've made. In the 2012 McCleary decision, Judge John Erlick ruled that WA State was failing to meet its constitutional duty to provide basic education because school funding was neither "ample, stable, nor sustainable."



A third bad option is that while we are coping with whichever choice is made, we fail to identify the systemic changes needed so we don't find ourselves here again.

Between 2005 and 2017, public schools in the U.S. were under-funded by \$580 billion in federal dollars alone—money that was specifically targeted to support 30 million of our most vulnerable students.

Over that same period, the personal net worth of the nation's 400 wealthiest individuals grew by \$1.57 trillion.

Learn more:
educationdebt.reclaimourschools.org

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THE ALLIANCE TO RECLAIM OUR SCHOOLS

In response, the State Legislature was compelled to increase funding for K-12 education. However, Washington State's revenue depends more heavily on sales tax than any other state in the nation. In this pandemic-induced recession, state revenues are down. When the Legislature convenes in January, current projections are that they will have to reduce spending for this year, and in the next two-year budget cycle, by at least 8.8 billion dollars.

Evidence-based plans are expensive

Unlike many states, Washington State's response to the pandemic has been informed by evidence. Early on, Governor Inslee worked with epidemiologists to figure out how to curb infection rates and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Consequently, educators have relatively clear guidance about how to open schools. For example, the current "Safe Back to School" guidelines for higher education require health checks, education on

preventing the spread of COVID-19 infections, distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE), the use of plexiglass or face shields in areas where social distancing isn't possible, and contact tracing.

Safety plans need to demonstrate how students or teachers who prefer not to learn in person will be given access to learning remotely. They also need to indicate what happens if someone in the class becomes infected and in contact with classmates, requiring quarantine and deep cleaning of the spaces occupied by the infected individual.

Planning for infection prevention and implementing the necessary strategies represents a new layer of unanticipated tasks and expenses. Putting the safety plan together takes time. Purchasing adequate PPE, plexiglass, face shields, and additional cleaning supplies costs money. In K-12, bus routes have to be altered and augmented.

New ways to provide meals to students during school days have to be developed. Everyone involved is adding new tasks to their existing jobs, and everything required to prevent infection costs additional funds. Simultaneously, while a significant percentage of the funding for K-12 in our state is protected by the state constitution, higher education institutions have been told to prepare for 15% cuts at minimum because revenue projections have fallen so significantly.

Preventing a third bad option

The WEA statement identifies a choice between two bad options: remote schooling or exposure to COVID-19. A third bad option is that while we are coping with whichever choice is made, we fail to identify the systemic changes needed so we don't find ourselves here again. The pandemic is revealing systemic inequities and gaping holes in our infrastructure. We need to elect people at the local, state and national level who are committed to addressing those issues.

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

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Face Coverings Required

Black activists organize to demand an end to police brutality and systemic racism

Katie Hayes

Some activists wince at the word “protest.” It doesn’t convey the magnitude of public outcry that has taken place in Olympia.

For the last couple of months, multiple people and organizations have held demonstrations across Thurston County, mostly in Olympia. But because organizers face violent threats, leaders are difficult to find. Washington Community Action Network (CAN), Olympia SURJ: Showing up for Racial Justice, Justice for Yvonne McDonald and Olympia Black Lives Matter Community Council are a few of the organizations that have held or been affiliated with demonstrations and rallies since George Floyd’s murder.

“It’s a movement, uprising, it’s a revolution,” said Ty Brown, a community organizer with Washington CAN. “Call it what it is. In the beginning it was a protest, but movements last longer than 20 days and this has been lasting longer than 20 days. A protest is something that dies out quickly.”

In Olympia, the city council banned the Olympia Police Department from using chemical munitions, except when three or more people are committing “criminal mischief.” City council members and the mayor signed onto a letter that opposes the presence of armed vigilantes in Thurston County. The city council is also working to create a Human Rights Commission to advise the council on policy issues.

These actions are the result of more public pressure and input than ever before, as Olympians demonstrate in the streets, demanding large structural changes, more police accountability and an end to police brutality and systemic racism.

It’s these changes that Brown and others hope to fight for with their new organization Black Leaders in Action & Solidarity in Thurston County, or BLAST. Brown and other activists formed the organization in June, when they reached out to “every Black leader” they knew in Olympia.

“The purpose of BLAST is to give space for Black voices to be heard, lifted up and elevated to come together and work on the same fight toward justice,” Brown said. “There is injustice in every instance in our Black lives—in our housing, in our policing, in our jobs, in everything. It’s all tied together. So bringing everyone from different backgrounds and different organizations together at a Black leaders’ table—nothing could be more powerful than that.”

On Sunday, June 7, BLAST met with a group of about 25 elected officials from city, county and state levels to read and discuss a list of demands the group had developed.

The list is nine pages long, with seven main asks. There is an outline of how BLAST wants to accomplish each, including calls for multiple Olympia Police Department officers to be fired.

The goals of the demands are for the city and county governments to divest from the criminal justice system, to provide for more city and police accountability, to increase tenant rights by enacting a Good Cause Eviction Bill and Non Possessory Bill, to investigate ties between public officials and armed militias and to create a “Reconciliation and Oversight Board” in the City of Olympia (what the Olympia City Council calls a “Human Rights Commission”).

When asked if there was a specific demand BLAST wanted elected officials to focus on first, Brown and another BLAST member, Talauna Reed, said there wasn’t one facet that took priority.

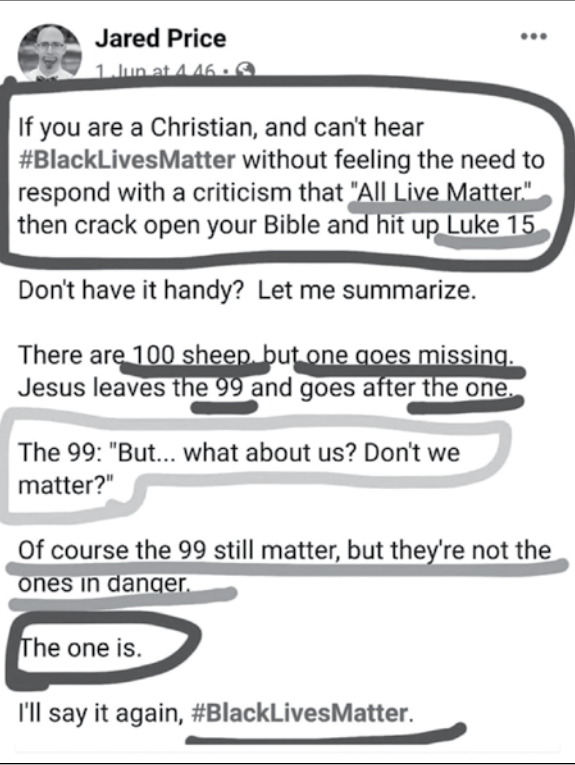
“People are like ‘you guys are all over the place,’ but that’s our reality,” Reed said. “Racism is all over the place. We’re coming from all these different angles and not giving them a choice. You have to address it. It all centers around the decision makers and their ability to make changes and not pass the buck.”

Reed acknowledged that the demands are wide-reaching, but neither she nor Brown believe public pressure will let up until all their demands are met.

“You can’t have a conversation about the police without having a conversation about housing...”

“You can’t have a conversation about the police without having a conversation about housing,” Brown said. “The police have been set up to be a part of every system and situation in our worlds. You can’t get evicted without the police coming to your door.”

Olympia has been so “white washed,” Brown said, that there isn’t a space for Black people to



comfortably fit in. This is part of what BLAST activists want to change.

“You always feel like you’re a ‘black person’ when you go somewhere, whether it’s intended or unintentional,” Brown said. “I like to call Olympia a place that has underlying racism. It’s so quiet you have to question yourself, like ‘Wait, was that there?’ ... Olympia is always a place that’s so progressive. ‘We fight racism!’ They say it so loudly and proudly, but how could you fight for something that you don’t even acknowledge exists in your own town?”

“The clearest message in Olympia right now is that no one is going to back down,” Brown said.

A longer version of this article was posted on olympiapoliceaccountabilityproject.com. It was edited for Works in Progress and reprinted with permission. Beat: Olympia Police Accountability Project aims to clarify the demands of protesters, examine current allegations against officers and explore how the city can increase police accountability.

Three Olympia city council members attended the meeting with BLAST, including Renata Rollins. Rollins was the first councilmember to release a statement calling to demilitarize, disarm and defund the Olympia Police Department. Rollins told Beat: Olympia Police Accountability Project that this is the main call-to-action she has heard both locally and nationally.

The first step, she said, is examining the city’s contract with the Olympia Police Guild, the union that represents the Olympia police officers.

The city’s current contract with the Olympia Police Guild expired in December 2019. City Manager Jay Burney confirmed that the city continues to operate under the old contract while negotiating a new one.

RETHINKING EVERYTHING: Police officer or social worker?

Excerpt from “Confessions of a former bastard cop” at www.medium.com

... well over 90% of the calls for service I handled were reactive, showing up well after a crime had taken place. We would arrive, take a statement, collect evidence (if any), file the report, and onto the next caper. Most “active” crimes we stopped were someone harmless possessing or selling a small amount of drugs. Very, very rarely would we stop something dangerous in progress or stop something from happening entirely. The closest we could usually get was seeing someone running away from the scene of a crime, but the damage was still done.

And consider this: my job as a police officer required me to be a marriage counselor, a mental health crisis professional, a conflict negotiator, a social worker, a child advocate, a traffic safety expert, a sexual assault specialist, and, every once in a while, a public safety officer authorized to use force, all after only a 1000 hours of training at a police academy. Does the person we send to catch a robber also need to be the person we send to interview a rape victim or document a fender bender? Should one profession be expected to do all that important community care (with very little training) all at the same time?

To put this another way: I made double the salary most social workers made to do a fraction of what they could do to mitigate the causes of crimes and desperation. I can count very few times my monopoly on state violence actually made our citizens safer, and even then, it’s hard to say better-funded social safety nets and dozens of other community care specialists wouldn’t have prevented a problem before it started.

“No justice, No peace”

Raise the social cost: an important strategic concept

Peter Bohmer

In the late 1960s, McGeorge Bundy, who had been the national security adviser to Presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, in a debate at MIT, said he had turned against the Vietnam War. Bundy said he now favored US withdrawal from Vietnam not because the US war was immoral or wrong or not in US “interests,” but because college students, including at elite schools, were becoming radicalized.

Rather than becoming government officials and administrators or corporate managers, students were rejecting these future possibilities. Instead they were becoming revolutionaries who wanted to overthrow and transform the US economic and social system. McGeorge Bundy, a faithful servant of the ruling class, was in essence admitting that the social costs of pursuing the Vietnam War had become too high—it was weakening the stability and reproduction of the US empire and domestic rule.



Bundy’s fear was that the war was causing the growth of a radical and activist left in the United States. This group’s commitment to ending the Vietnam War, to ending racism and capitalism by any means necessary, posed a social cost greater than continuing the war.

This is the essence of the concept of raising the social cost and the belief by many from the 1960s to the present of the value of militant actions that go beyond what is legal and peaceful. The politics of “No business as usual” or interrupting the normal day-to-day functioning of capitalism is consistent with this idea of raising the social cost.

Today in the Black Lives Matter-led movement, there are examples of various militant tactics. These include but are not limited to: fighting back against police and right-wing militias, painting graffiti, taking down or destroying racist monuments, constructing barricades and occupying public spaces including streets and freeways. Breaking windows of financial institutions and major corporations and stores such as Starbucks and Amazon have also been frequent. The reasonable belief is that this will raise the social cost by increasingly legitimizing these actions, grow the number of participants involved and lead to the spread of these actions throughout the US and beyond.

The hope is that others previously uninvolved will support and get involved in social movements and actions that go beyond asking for very limited reforms; that the boldness and commitment demonstrated will appeal to growing numbers, especially young people. Individuals and movements that have bro-

ken with the ideology that “there is no alternative to neoliberalism” (TINA) are acting on the belief that there is a liberatory alternative to racial capitalism and raising social

the government of repression and infiltration.

Direct action that goes beyond what is legal is only one part of a strategy in this period to win key

Raising the social cost is an important aspect of a strategy of building power from below and winning demands.

cost is central to that belief.

I’ve observed that the concept of raising the social cost has motivated, sometimes consciously and more often, less explicitly, acts of resistance from the Occupy Wall Street Movement of 2011 to the Black Lives Matter Movement today. This is often expressed by the slogan, “No Justice, No Peace”.

Raising the social cost is an important aspect of a strategy of building power from below and winning demands. One danger is that partly as a result of more militant actions, there can be increased government infiltration and public support for “law and order” and repression. An

demands. These range from demilitarizing, disarming and defunding the police to single payer health care for all, including undocumented immigrants, abolishing ICE, a Green New Deal, reparations and releasing prisoners, etc.

Popular education, rallies, demonstrations, building organizations and institutions, and ongoing campaigns are central to a many-pronged strategy. We definitely need more political-economic analysis, more organization with wide-spread and ongoing campaigns around these demands.

Actions that go beyond what is legal will always alienate those who

example of ongoing federal government response is the Trump Administration’s recent dispatch of Homeland Security and other paramilitary type forces to Portland, OR, without any identification.

They violently attacked demonstrators with tear gas, rubber bullets and pepper spray, causing a few serious injuries. They snatched demonstrators off the streets and forced them into unmarked vans. So far this police-state tactic has backfired as thousands of all ages have joined nightly protests in solidarity with those being attacked. Rather than being intimidated, people are taking a strong stand in the streets against Trump’s overtly authoritarian behavior. Gaining support from less militant people and those concerned about civil liberties provides some protection and also raises the social cost to

are opposed to significant and positive changes in the system of racial capitalism, but also some allies. This cannot be avoided. However, if our actions are not clearly understandable to those who sincerely want major reforms and our targets are not seen to be complicit in major ways with ongoing police violence, we do not raise the social cost and well-intentioned actions can even be counterproductive.

We should aim to minimize disruption in the lives of people we are trying to win over and focus on disrupting major institutions that uphold a racist capitalist society. There is more public support for occupation of public space or blocking entry to a police station

or a major corporation or doing political art on business and government property, or direct action such as wildcat strikes by essential workers than there is for damaging property—breaking windows in banks, corporations or city hall,

In downtown Olympia, WA, the city closed and fenced off the Artesian Well park, a place where street people and the houseless gathered, as part of a plan for gentrification. Since the murder of George Floyd, people participating in daily actions in Olympia cut the chains and fences to temporarily reopen the park. Many non-protestors supported this action and considered it legitimate, even though city property was damaged.

When rocks are thrown through the windows of a police station, city hall or major bank, it has often evoked a similar reaction. Relevant graffiti is usually supported by our potential base. So are loud demonstrations at jails or immigrant detention centers, often called noise demonstrations, even if protesters are trespassing.

On the other hand, breaking the windows of small businesses, even if they indirectly contribute to gentrification, legitimizes the police to many and does not help grow the movement to defund or abolish the police. Such actions do not raise the social cost to those in power. Social cost is sometimes understood as the economic cost—the dollars and cents cost of replacing windows, but this is a mistake.

At same time, although I disagree with breaking windows of businesses, especially small and local businesses, I oppose condemning protesters who break a few windows. Many are young and angry, multiracial and of many genders, poor and working class. They are rebelling against racist police violence and an economic and social system where they see no future for themselves and their friends because of climate change and the limited possibility of decent jobs.

We should reach out and listen before we criticize some of their actions. These direct-action resisters have the potential to become—or they already are—an important part of social movements and organizations that demand a better world.

Peter Bohmer has been an activist for economic, racial and global justice since the late 1960s. He is a member of the community educational group, Economics for Everyone, and taught

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Where are our elected leaders?

Just Housing Olympia

After over ten months of an encampment bordering Deschutes Parkway on the privately-owned greenbelt next to the 5th Avenue bridge, the property owners notified the residents that they could not stay past July 23.

But that didn't happen. The Olympia Police Department didn't show up to enforce the notices, so the owners had no way to legally make people move. As one result, residents and supporters decided to redirect the days' efforts from moving/eviction to a camp clean up. Just Housing, volunteers and one of the land owners worked with residents to clear out 4 dumpster loads of garbage. No new date has been set to remove the camp.

While Just Housing Olympia opposes a policy of displacement and

"whack-a-mole" sweeps as both immoral and ineffective, that little strip of greenbelt could never be expected to accommodate the unmet need for safe shelter

because we still live in a climate of denial and deflection regarding the crisis of homelessness.

As a region, we still regard evidence-based solutions to homelessness as

As a region, we still regard evidence-based solutions to homelessness as politically risky instead of politically necessary.

and housing in our community. The decision to sweep this camp rested with the property owners only because we as a region, have failed to take responsibility for our collective issues.

The burden of these issues falls again and again on private property owners, faith communities, camp residents, social workers and community advocates

politically risky instead of politically necessary. As a region, we still deny that this is our problem to solve and we still deflect responsibility endlessly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Like the anti-maskers, our ability to rationalize has overpowered our ability to reason—we deny that we must act together to save lives, and we ignore evidence that challenges our

decision to evade responsibility for the wellbeing of others. This pandemic has caused many of us to reflect more and more on the collective nature of our wellbeing. The need to respond with urgency and action extends beyond this specific situation. With an uncertain economic future ahead of us and the state's eviction moratorium ending in August, we have every reason to expect the number of people experiencing homelessness in our community to rise.

We are going into this upcoming winter with more homeless people and less shelter beds than we had last year, and no place for homeless individuals to find shelter off the streets during the day. We know that people of color in our community are most at risk, both in terms of eviction and access to housing and shelter.

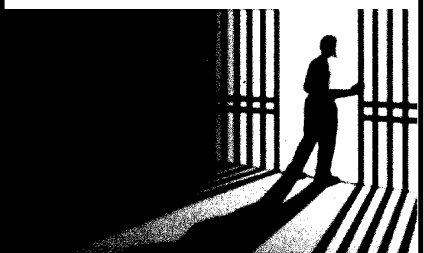
We live in a community that has turned out in numbers to reject police brutality and racism, but has been shamefully indifferent as people of color are quietly displaced or fall into poverty and homelessness due to gentrification, out-of-control rents, and regressive policies that criminalize the poor.

Just Housing Olympia is a nonprofit group that advocates for people who are houseless, and for renters, as well as finding innovative ways to make up for the absence of effective public housing policy. To learn more, go to Just Housing on Facebook.

In April, Governor Jay Inslee called in National Guard troops to assist at food banks, due to increased need among food insecure families and fewer volunteers.



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Thurston County Auditor



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thurstonvotes.org/voting-rights

From a publication of the
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To forestall a looming crisis for renters and landlords

An open letter to city officials in Thurston County

Pass an ordinance so that rental debt accrued during the COVID-19 crisis is not a basis for evictions during this time or thereafter.

In order to prevent an eviction crisis and not push people into homelessness, it is increasingly necessary for cities and counties to put into place policies that make debt accrued during this time not a reason to evict at any point in the future.

Before this pandemic shut cities down, and sent unemployment skyrocketing, renters already had few protections against abusive practices, and were overburdened with rent. Housing was the most important issue to voters before the pandemic, and additional polling found it remained top of mind for voters even as the virus spread. Now in the midst of this pandemic, the rental housing crisis has become more urgent for more households than ever before.

Even after COVID is no longer a threat, many will be coping with a housing crisis even more dire than anything our region has seen before. Evictions have devastating and long-lasting effects on families and society. They are a leading cause of homelessness. In 2019, Thurston County counted 800 homeless living on the street (the number is higher now, but the results of the 2020

count are not posted, and in any case it didn't account for the pandemic).

Our county does not have resources to handle the massive influx of folks that will enter the homelessness system if these protections are not in place.

Without protection from eviction for nonpayment of rent during the pandemic, payment plans will neither help those who have fallen so far behind that they cannot catch up nor help those who still do not have any means to pay rent.

Prohibiting evictions in perpetuity on debt accrued during this period is something city council members have clear legal powers to pass. A renter would still owe the underlying debt, but a failure to pay would not result in an eviction. Instead, a landlord could seek the money in small claims or through a debt collector. So while it does not cure the debt, it does ensure that renters who cannot pay due to the toll COVID has had on our economy are not forced out of their homes.

With August 1, the ending of Governor Inslee's moratorium, approaching, many no longer wonder what the impact will be; rather, how can we overcome them? Without the city taking action, the burden will fall not only on renters, but their landlords too; not only on civil legal aid, but on our justice system too. Agencies across the state are seeking Statewide and Federal assistance to prepare

to assist tenants when the time comes, but funds are exhausted as quickly as they come. This will force agencies to use a lottery system to distribute limited funds. To ensure these efforts are successful and have the strongest impact on renters in your community, it is your job to enact policies that will ensure that the debt forcefully accrued upon renters, during COVID-19 is not a basis for eviction.

The decisions and policies you make from this point forward will have a great impact on the economic recovery.

By way of enacting such policies, you can keep families stably housed, while preventing our social services and judicial systems from being overburdened and stretched ever more thinly. Health professionals anticipate a second wave of COVID in the fall. If you do not act now to protect renters, we will see an increase in homelessness that will worsen the spread of COVID and further endanger the health and safety of our community.

This letter was drafted and circulated by Washington Community Action Network as part of a call to elected leaders to prevent the use of rent payments missed during the COVID-19 shutdown as a cause for eviction. An invitation to sign the letter is on the Just Housing Facebook page.

Sentenced at age 18 to 42 years

A “time bar” that denies people even the opportunity to have their case reviewed

Eric Michael Bacolod #760310

If you look at criminal laws passed toward the end of the 1990s, most were passed under the guise of stringent punishment and keeping the community safe. They were designed to produce prolonged sentences that would keep people in jail for most of their lives, if not all.

For example the “three strikes” laws, where a third conviction no matter what the circumstances (even stealing a pizza) would land someone in prison for the rest of their natural life. In Washington state, the “hard time for armed crime” laws added up to five years of flat time (every day must be served) to an underlying sentence for each count that carried an enhancement. These enhancements ran consecutively to every other sentence—including other enhancements. They added so many years that it is not uncommon to see a person serving more time for enhancements alone than for the underlying crime itself.

I was sentenced under these laws. I was 18 at the time. Nineteen days after being arrested, I passed a polygraph test stating that I was not the shooter. I was offered a sentence of 42 months (3-½ years) if I would plead guilty, but I refused to accept this “plea bargain” because I was innocent.

I have been incarcerated since April 24, 1996 (24 years), after being wrongfully convicted of three counts of assault in the first degree, with three “firearm enhancements,” and sentenced to 500 months, nearly 42 years. The federal definition of a life sentence is 470 months.

I know what injustice feels like from many aspects. No one sustained any bodily injuries in the incident. The actual shooter confessed on numerous occasions—even during my trial—but was never charged. The victims gave inconsistent descriptions of who they witnessed as the shooter (it was dark, about 100 feet away). The driver of the vehicle has never been questioned about the incident, although she has made statements to several of her close friends that I was not the shooter.

The only way for me and the majority of those held in prison with these astronomical sentences to ever receive relief or be released, is through an appeal or post conviction relief. One form is known as “collateral attack” in which a prisoner may present arguments in the form of writing a brief, pointing out issues that have impacted their convictions and sentencing. This is usually done via a method titled a, “personal restraint petition” or “PRP,” which is Washington state’s alternative to a writ of habeas corpus. (Better yet it is a replacement for dismantling the Great Writ, and circumventing the Washington state and US constitutions. That would be a subject for another day.)

The PRP is the vessel in which to bring claims and issues that a petitioner has either failed to raise or could not have raised during a direct appeal. Some examples would be changes in law that were not

in effect at the time of the crime, issues that are not supported by the trial record, or showing evidence of one’s innocence or lack of culpability.

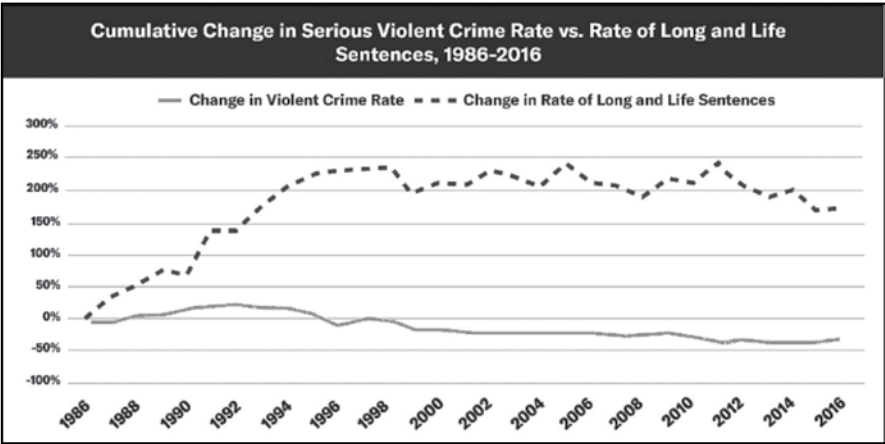
However, there is a major caveat: the PRP must be filed within a year after a conviction becomes final. For most, that year starts from the day the Appeals Court is done with a person’s case and issues a mandate certifying the finality of a direct appeal.

training. If the petitioner cannot complete all this within the one year time limit, any claims will be precluded from further chances to be heard or reviewed.

Naturally most petitioners will miss the one-year deadline. The ones whose petition may be timely are often unable to properly articulate their arguments and 999 times out of a thousand their PRPs are rubber stamped and denied. This occurs no matter how grave the

entirety for 30 days. This was due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Obviously, the governor understood the dire consequences of the collateral attack time bar rule as it applied to criminal cases. He understood that courts and lawyers would not be able function because of an abnormality in operations. Why can’t this same sense of understanding be applied to *pro se* litigants? There is nothing normal about their situation.

Eric Michael Bacolod is self taught in some legal matters and is directly affected by the time bar. He is passionate about criminal justice reform for everyone similarly situated as well as for those who may face similar injustices in the future, and hopes to play a part as a catalyst for change.



Source: It’s About Time: Long and life sentences fuel Washington’s mass incarceration. ACLU Report, February 2020

This prohibition is known as a “time bar.” It’s codified in Washington state law as RCW 10.73.090(1). This law was implemented in 1989 as part of a continuing drive to keep people in prison for longer and longer periods of time. The time bar was implemented under the guise of, “not disturbing the finality of a court decision...” meaning courts and the public did not want to be bothered with a case at a later date.

This applies no matter how bad the injustice may have been. The legislature made six exceptions that are so narrow they are almost insurmountable. It is very rare that a petitioner would likely meet these exceptions, let alone be granted relief. An example of cases where the petitioner had a valid claim yet was time barred are cases where a petitioner (the majority) could not afford to pay an attorney. Without

injustice may be, even when one can show actual innocence.

Another exception is when a new interpretation in case law reflects a change in law or a scientific breakthrough. A prime instance is youthful brain science in which recent studies have shown that adolescence does not all of a sudden cease at the age of 18, but continues in some cases all the way to age 21 and even 25. This means that punishing someone under these circumstances could be cruel and unusual.

When the Washington State Supreme Court made such a ruling in *State v. O’Dell*, 183 an.2d 680, 683, 358 p.3d 359 (2018), petitioners who were within the one year PRP time limit faced less of a hurdle when raising a claim in which O’Dell applied. However for those beyond the one year limit, any

Without [legal] assistance the petitioner... either gives up, or undertakes the daunting task of litigating his claims in a PRP on his own (*pro se*).

such assistance the petitioner—often uneducated, and certainly untrained in the law—either gives up, or undertakes the daunting task of litigating his claims in a PRP on his own (*pro se*).

A petitioner who tries to litigate his own claim still faces the one-year time limit. The petitioner must learn how to conduct research, understand holdings in case law, figure out how to interpret statutes, find out court rules and procedures, learn how to marshal facts and analyze and formulate arguments. Then apply the laws to the facts and put it all on paper in a brief. All the while being incarcerated in a prison with very limited resources and hardly any guidance. Most practicing attorneys with vast resources have difficulty doing this even after years of college and

consideration of such relief was immediately deemed time barred.

This demonstrates again how unfair and unjust the time bar is. It is a hypertechnicality used to deny justice regardless of how deserving it may be. All in the name of not disturbing the finality of a conviction and sentence. A case with significant ramifications for a petitioner’s case may be decided one day after the petitioner’s year has elapsed—which would preclude any relief that petitioner may have received just one day before. It’s time to repeal or abolish the time bar under RCW 10.73.090(1).

In terms of how arbitrary and unreasonable the time bar is, it is interesting to note that on April 14, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee suspended RCW 10.73.090 in its

Long sentences are arbitrary, discriminatory and unrelated to crime rates

In 1984 Washington passed the Sentencing Reform Act to become one of the first states to abolish parole and adopt a “fixed” sentencing grid sold as promoting “truth-in-sentencing” while reducing sentencing disparities. It has done neither. Coupled with punitive laws like “three strikes” and “hard time for armed crime” it simply transferred power to prosecutors who have overseen a 300% increase in our prison population and locked away thousands of people for decades of their lives—or their entire life. Not surprisingly these sentences disproportionately fall on persons of color. Over the 30 years since 1986, the violent crime rate fell by 31 percent, while imposition of long and life sentences increased by 175 percent.

The enactment of tough sentencing laws gave prosecutors more leverage in plea negotiations and facilitated a dramatic increase in sentences imposed on defendants who exercise their constitutional right to a trial. In 1986 the average sentence imposed at trial was 64 months longer than the average sentence imposed via a plea deal in cases involving violent crime. By 2016, this “trial penalty” had risen to 174 months (more than 14 years). At the same time options for release even after many years are almost nonexistent.

A new Sentencing Guidelines Commission has recommended that some sentencing discretion be returned to judges, but in fact the whole system needs radical overhaul. Read the eye-opening report on Washington’s draconian sentencing practices, “It’s About Time” published this February and written by two UW professors, and the source of data here www.aclu-wa.org/docs/executive-summary

How to be a cycling lady legend

Carl Eugene Stroud

The romantic image of the solo cyclist first began when cars in our money-driven world supplanted cycling and the clubs that sustained the riders. While today the bicycle seems ready-made for individual characters, if you look beyond the media focus on pros and record holders, you can see that it actually takes a lifetime to achieve the status of a cycling character.

My home town had its own protagonist. A “convincingly non-fictitious” lady on a bike. She wasn’t a sports hero; she was a legend. We told stories about seeing her here or there, this time and that time...

Becoming a cycling character takes many interactions. Some riders salute you every single time you see them. Or they tip their hat. Some are stern and never wave; they ignore you. Some are always crabby and ready to express how they feel, maybe with the most vulgar of hand gestures, maybe directed at bystanders too young to understand the eternal nature of this rusty cyclist’s daily slog, or the gravity of an interruption by an errant basketball or an aggressive driver.

Only after years of these encounters do you realize exactly what you’re seeing: an authentic giant. You know that this character is not only in your story. You know you aren’t the first to make eye contact with a living legend. These same characters come up in the stories of other motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.

This is due to the fact that cycling characters are always out on the street—public streets. Engaging those streets, mounted on a bicycle. And the bicycle, again, in the traditional sense of the word, is a machine to be seen.

In becoming legendary, these characters establish a long-term relationship between their routes and their public appearances. Their paths are etched in concrete. Their chronicles are layered. Seen so often, following the same line through town. One day on top of the next,

seemingly never-ending, tracing and retracing. Even as a witness, you get the feeling you are one of many, that you’ve stumbled onto the story line, that you yourself are a character, an extra in the cycling lore of this stereotypical but concretely material “cycling lady.”

Of course, there are also “cycling guys,” but the character in the cycling legend of my youth was a woman. She was everywhere, reoccurring to the point that I can’t think of a single story without her in it. She seemed to pop up all over town, in the most far-off places, at the most random times, without the slightest coincidence of another significant event.

Over time, her appearances became the event. I can picture her on her single-speed beach cruiser, riding in the turning lane, down the



Chad Leahy

middle of the road, straight into a headwind. Every interaction with her, even in the moment, seemed like something that must have happened to her every day for decades. She was historic in her presence, and she made us feel that way too, like we were witnessing the passing-by of something great. She made bicycles feel historic, and that’s the most important part of her story.

Discipline and determination. Regularity and absurdity. She was more active than your dad. She was outside more. She battled the wind more. She was more alone. She was more exposed. Not a hundred pounds sopping wet. Character as far the eye can see. She inspired the stereotype we strive to be. It’s because cycling ladies can convey, in a single encounter—the grandeur of their passing-by—that bicycling is a classical art.

To see one of them is like watching a superhero streak across the sky, except by the time you’re old enough to start recognizing them around town, they look like your grandma. But time still stops. Even your parents say, “Hey!” There she is. Again, way on this side of town. Haven’t seen her in a while. Riding in this weather.

It makes you wonder where they live: the cycling ladies. To be seen all over town. Where are they going? Like slug bugs or fire trucks, with groceries, in the rain, on the coldest of days. On the street, riding every day. I am not a cycling character. Maybe if I take the same route to work for the next thirty or forty years, I can wear a groove in the road and put my name on it. Except it doesn’t work like that. Real cycling characters appear in other people’s stories.

They don’t all sing, but this one did. I think she got bored. “I’m pedaling; I’m pedaling, even if you kids don’t get out of my way!” Wow, her lungs must have been strong to belt out lyrics so clearly, at her age, in winds that strong. “I’m pedaling; I’m pedaling. You won’t be the first that I flipped off today!” You could hear her coming from a block away. “I’m pedaling; I’m pedaling. I hope I’m singing loud enough for you to hear what I say!”

Her approach had the effect of freezing you in place. None of us could move. We were awe-struck. The basketball falls and rolls out into the road. Nobody moves. It’s more important to watch her. “I’m pedaling; I’m pedaling. A hundred years of bicycling every single day. I said a hundred years of bicycling every single day!”

Carl Eugene Stroud is an online language teacher, with a background in French existentialism and anarchist pedagogy.

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When money is the measure

A French banker freaks out about bicycling

From our Moroccan correspondent

Le PDG d'Euro Exim Bank Ltd. A fait réfléchir les économistes lorsqu'il a déclaré:

Un cyclist est un désastre pour l'économie du pays—il n'achète pas de voiture et ne prend pas de prêt automobile—N'achète pas d'assurance automobile—n'achète pas de carburant—n'envoie pas sa voiture pour l'entretien et les réparations, N'utilise pas de parking payant, ne cause pas d'accidents majeurs, ne nécessite pas d'autoroutes a plusieurs voies, ne déviant pas obese, oui...et bien, on sang! Des gens en bonne santé ne sont pas nécessaires à l'économie, ils n'achètent pas de médicaments, Ils ne vont pas dans les hôpitaux et les médecins, Ils n'ajoutent rien au PIB du pays.

*La marche à pied est encore pire.
Ils n'achètent même pas de vélo.*

Au contraire, chaque nouveau point de vent McDonald crée au moins 30 emplois, 10 cardiologues, 10 dentistes, `10 experts en perte de poids en dehors de personnes travaillant dans le point de vent McDonald. Choisissez judicieusement : un cyclist ou un McDonald? Ca vaut le coup d'y penser.

The CEO of Europe’s Ex-Im Bank made economists think when he said this:

A bicycle rider is a disaster for the economy of a country—she doesn’t buy a car, nor rent one either. Doesn’t buy auto insurance nor gasoline. Doesn’t take the car in for maintenance or repairs. Doesn’t use parking meters or pay for parking; doesn’t cause big accidents, nor have any use for multilane highways—doesn’t even gain a lot of weight. We’re bleeding here! Healthy people don’t contribute to the economy—they don’t need hospitals or doctors. They add nothing to the GDP of the country.

Walking is worse—a walker doesn’t even buy a bicycle!

But every new McDonald’s creates at least 30 jobs: 10 heart specialists, 10 dentists, 10 weight loss counsellors, in addition to the people working at McDonald’s. Choose carefully which to support: a McDonald’s or a cyclist? It’s worth thinking about.

WIP received this from a local math teacher whose Moroccan friend has to call on his sense of humor when it comes to how countries calculate value.

A socialist feminist response to COVID-19

Free, universal healthcare

Nationalize the medical system with workers' control over decision-making and management. Make the industry nonprofit, including pharmaceuticals, hospitals, supply companies, and nursing homes. Guarantee a living wage for healthcare and homecare workers.

Protect lives.

Distribute free personal protection equipment to providers of essential services, including childcare. Require employers to provide safe conditions on the job. Ramp up production of testing materials and research into treatment and a vaccine, using funds taken from the military and border wall operation. Make COVID-19 services free, including testing, treatment and vaccines once developed.

Guarantee livelihoods.

Launch an immediate, multimillion-person public jobs program to train people and put them safely to work producing medical supplies, testing for the virus, carrying out privacy-protected contact tracing, and supporting research.

Reduce hours of work with no cut in pay to employ more people while reducing their potential exposure. Expand unemployment insurance to provide a guaranteed living wage for everyone who is jobless until full employment is reached. Include gig workers, the self-employed, farmworkers, and workers in the informal economy, without regard to immigration status. Provide hazard pay for frontline workers.

To fund programs for workers and assistance for small businesses, rescind the past decades' tax cuts for the rich and reinstate the higher corporate and income tax rates of the past.

Aid parents and children.

Provide childcare at no cost for parents who work. Offer free laptops, home Wi-Fi, and lunch programs for students whose schools have closed. Free, nutritious, quality food aid for low-income households as needed.

Support the most oppressed and the hardest-hit.

Prioritize help for people without

shelter, immigrants, people of color including Native communities, women, seniors, and LGBTQ+ people. Cancel student debt. Suspend debt payments for working-class consumers and small businesses.

Ban profiteering.

Prohibit corporate patenting of a COVID-19 vaccine; no profiting from its use and distribution. Rescind the bailouts of Wall Street, the banks, and multinational corporations.

Preserve human rights and political freedoms.

Honor the rights to protest, strike, and refuse to do unsafe work. Guarantee housing for all. No evictions, foreclosures, or utility shut-offs. Cancel rent and mortgage payments for those in need. End the attack on abortion rights under cover of the pandemic.

Release all detained immigrants and nonviolent prisoners. Full precautions and care for those who remain incarcerated. Shut down ICE. End the scapegoating of Chinese immigrants and Asian American

communities. Stop police abuse under the guise of enforcing social distancing. End the militarization of the neighborhoods of people of color and the poor.

Extend international solidarity.

Place a moratorium on all payments of foreign debt by poorer countries. Distribute food aid and medical supplies to countries in need at no charge. Collaborate internationally on virus treatment and vaccine research without profit-based competition or restrictions. End U.S. sanctions. Open the borders; artificial boundaries offer no defense against the virus.

For a socialist society.

Make human needs the driver of production and distribution of goods and services. Eliminate the profit motive underlying systemic sexism and racism and the destruction of a habitable planet. Give workers decision-making power over how society is run. Shared abundance for all.

Reprinted with permission from Freedom Socialist, June 2020

Washington State—the poster girl for voting by mail

“There is tremendous evidence of fraud whenever you have mail-in ballots,” Mr. Trump claimed during an appearance in Arizona, a statement that has no basis in the experience of the states that give voters the option of voting by mail.

Since 2011, Washington voters have marked ballots at home and sent them to the county auditor (or dropped them off at the courthouse), with every confidence that their votes—and no others—would determine the outcome of an election. Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, and Utah are all vote-by-mail states.

With all mail ballots, voting is easy though it might have lost an important contribution to civic life represented by meeting your neighbors at the polls. In a major study of voting during Washington's 2016 General Election, investigators turned up only 74 potential cases of individuals who were ineligible to vote, or otherwise committed electoral fraud in the state, out of 3.36 million votes cast.

In fact, the protections against ineligible people voting are so strong that the more likely problem is that eligible voters might find themselves without a ballot unless they make an effort to ensure their registration is accurate and current. In years past, the concern was with making voting easier, because for a democracy to function, every eligible voter MUST vote.

With the 2020 election being profoundly important to our future, and with legitimate concerns about voting during a pandemic, our state can show the way to a voter turnout that is both politically and personally healthy.

Maintaining accurate rolls of voters

If an election-related piece of mail is returned by the post office as undeliverable to a registered voter, the county puts that registration on “inactive” status. In order to get back to status as a registered voter,

you have to contact the county to update an address, request a ballot or submit a new registration application.

The problem is that you don't know that the election notice was returned because you're not at that address! So, check your registration or if you don't get a ballot at election time, contact the county.

Uh oh. Can your registration be cancelled if you just don't vote?

If you're at the same address and choose not to vote, your registration can't be cancelled. If you move however, and election-related mail is returned to the county elections office as undeliverable, your registration will be placed on inactive status. An inactive registration can be cancelled if you don't vote in two federal general elections.

How valid voter rolls are verified

How do they know the ballot you mailed in was yours to vote—and wasn't sent as one of thousands prepared by Russians or ...whoever it is that Donald Trump thinks is going to mail in fake ballots? There are two provisions in state law that

provide the answer:

RCW 29A.60.050 requires that when the people who count the ballots have a question about validity, they make a record of the issue and send it with the ballot to the “canvassing board.” The ballot is rejected finally only if it's been rejected individually by the board. and then it has to be preserved just in case.



RCW 29A.60.300. Statewide survey of voted ballot rejection rates and reasons for rejections. Every odd-numbered year, the secretary of state must conduct and publish a statewide survey of voted ballot rejection rates and the reasons for those rejections by county auditors and canvassing boards.

RCW 29A.60.300 requires the Secretary of State to make a study every 2 years of rejection rates (and reasons) for ballots having been rejected across all counties. They're supposed to analyze auditors' practices and recommend improvements to minimize rejections—among other things. The report has to be available to the public.

Other protections

You should register to vote if

you've had a felony conviction and are no longer under the supervision of the DOC because your right to vote is restored. Three times a year, the Secretary of State uses information provided by the Department of Corrections and the state court system to screen the list of registered voters for felons who are ineligible. If you are registered to vote, but are ineligible because of a felony conviction, they will send you a letter explaining that your registration will be cancelled in 30 days. The letter provides information on how to dispute the cancellation. Assuming you got the letter...

And... the Secretary of State's office routinely compares its voter registration database to lists of deaths and new felony convictions. They look for duplicates every night!

A note of caution and confidence: An Olympia resident a few years ago called his daughter to fill out her ballot while she was away at school, then carefully copied her signature and sent her ballot in. Imagine his surprise when the ballot came back a couple of weeks after the election because the signature did not match his daughter's signature on file. Not so easy to fool the auditor.

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At least pass the HEROES Act

The good and useful measures that were put in place are running out

Hamilton Nolan

Millions of people are about to experience the falling dominoes of economic disaster that will engulf their lives, destroy their wealth, and leave them with nothing.

It's why we have a federal government

None of this had to happen. There is one, and only one, entity that has the capability to prevent this horrific chain reaction of social collapse: the federal government. With the stroke of a pen, the federal government can appropriate money to everyone to tide them through their unemployment. It can stop evictions everywhere. It can expand health insurance, stop businesses from going bankrupt, bail out city and state governments so they are not forced to cut services, and take the public health steps necessary to push infection rates low enough to make it possible to reopen schools, and free parents to work for a living.

All of these things are possible for the federal government. The leaders of the federal government have chosen not to do any of them. (Democrats passed the HEROES Act through the House in May which would provide some meaningful relief, but Senate Republicans have refused to take it up.)

Hope - but look the truth in the face

Millions of people are about to experience the falling dominoes of economic disaster that will engulf their lives, destroy their wealth, and leave them with nothing. It is impossible to avoid that outcome now. The only question is how bad it will get. And it is important to understand that this outcome has been chosen for us by the people who are running the country.

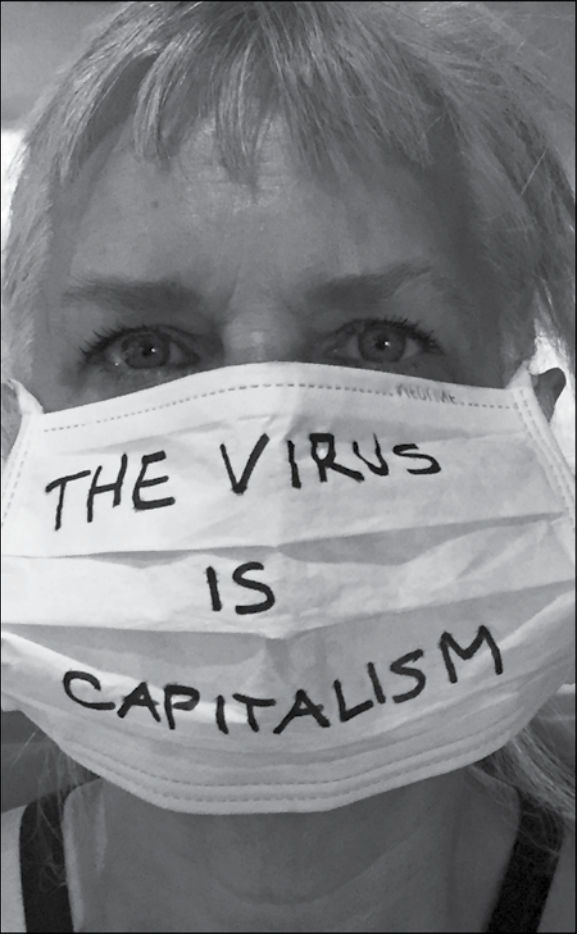
Hope is an important emotion, and one that's necessary to carry us through hard times. But it can stand in the way of our ability to analyze situations truthfully. Consider the astounding confluence of social and economic crises that are all barreling towards the American people at this moment.

What happens when the modest supports end?

In the midst of an enormous, unavoidable increase in national unemployment, the \$600 per week unemployment benefit increase that has sustained millions is set to run out at the end of this month, and is unlikely to be renewed at its current level, if at all. Eviction moratoriums are expiring, and more than 20 million Americans

could be in danger of eviction in the next four months.

Many small businesses, their resources exhausted, are closing for good, and bankruptcies of large businesses are accelerating. Millions have already lost their employer-based health insurance, and millions more will. At the same time



that schools will be unable to reopen safely, a huge portion of private child care facilities are going out of business. And city and state governments will face plummeting tax revenue at the same time as they face a need for increased crisis spending, leaving the future of mass transit and other public services in doubt.

Millions of people, through no fault of their own, are now facing long-term unemployment. They will, through no fault of their own, lose their health insurance during a public health emergency. Unable to pay rent, through no fault of their own, they will be evicted and put out on the streets.

The businesses that employed them, which also provided the jobs to which they hoped to return, will, through no fault of their own, be forced to close permanently. They will be unable to find child care, through no fault of their own, and that will prevent them from seeking out new income.

The cities where they live will, through no fault of their own, be forced to slash the services that could have helped them during their time of need. They will be lost.

A realistic assessment of our prospects

This is the nightmarish future that we are all walking towards. And it is coming very soon.

This was a choice. Let's be honest about our prospects right now. Does anyone really believe that restaurants, bars, sports, all forms of live entertainment, many retail establishments, airlines, hotels, travel, tourism, or commercial real estate—to name a few—are going to resume their baseline level of business operations at any time in the next 6-12 months? They will not likely.

The states that tried that a month ago are now facing the worst coronavirus outbreaks in the entire world. A portion of the jobs in these industries, and in the associated industries that depend on them, are going to evaporate. Fifty million unemployment claims have been filed. Forty percent of people earning less than \$40,000 lost their jobs in March. Some millions of people are, as we speak, seeing their jobs disappear for good.

Other countries took a different approach

Despite the fact that this was entirely predictable months ago, there has not been any serious attempt to prevent it from happening. (A serious attempt, as many intelligent people pointed out in March, would mean the federal government giving citizens enough money not to work and businesses enough money not to go bankrupt for the amount of time that it took to take the public health steps necessary to resume a careful version of normal life. Many other developed countries did this, but we did not.)

Not only have we failed to prevent this first-order economic crisis, but we are also failing to even enable the existence of a social safety net to catch the people who are going to fall into the pit of economic despair. Our leaders just do not care. They know that people have lost jobs, and will not be able to find new ones, and will not be able to pay their rent. But the people occupying positions of power in the federal government do not care enough to take the steps to save those citizens from the abyss. These facts do not move them.

How government responds to the pandemic is the test

Nobody can be blamed for the existence of a pandemic. The federal government can very much be blamed for what it has done in response to the pandemic. And blame it we must. We must blame, specifically the Republican Party, which controls the White House and the Senate.

There is no plan (for you)

If you are not in the class of citizens wealthy enough to be Republican donors, you have seen a response to this natural disaster that has been geared entirely towards the interests of people who are not you. The handful of good and useful measures that were put in place at the beginning of the outbreak are running out, and they will be replaced, if at all, with lesser and worse measures, even as the scale of our calamity grows.


The stock market, however, has recovered almost all of its losses. The plan has always been to save capital and let the people die. Everything is going according to plan.

This article is reprinted from the web with permission. Hamilton Nolan has written for many publications and is now a labor reporter for In These Times. His In These Times article on April 9, 2020 pinpointed what the government could have done to save the country—and showed what they did instead to save capital. You can reach him at Hamilton@InTheseTimes.com.

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Reading black women

Emily Lardner

In a brilliant take-down of the so-called “public intellectuals” in the US, specifically those writers who are paid to write personal essays or “op ed” columns, Tressie McMillan Cottom points out that for the most part, Black women are ignored. Completely. She writes, “A Professional Smart Person can be one without ever reading black women, ever interviewing a black woman, ever following a black woman, or ever thinking about a black woman’s existence.”

Cottom’s book, *Thick and Other Essays* (2019) is a great read and re-read. Cottom is a sociology professor and co-host of a podcast called *Hear to Slay*. Her writing is funny and fierce. As she puts it, because she’s not a “professional smart person”—a paid pundit or columnist—she has to appeal to “every form of authority simultaneously in every single thing I have ever written.” Read her to get her perspective and to witness wonderful writing.

Beverly Tatum’s classic book, *Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria and Other Conversations About Race* is in its 20th anniversary edition. Tatum, president emerita of Spelman College, is a psychologist by training and wrote this book in response to parents’ questions. First published in 1997, the book provides an accessible introduction to racial identity development, highly recommended now for people wanting a framework

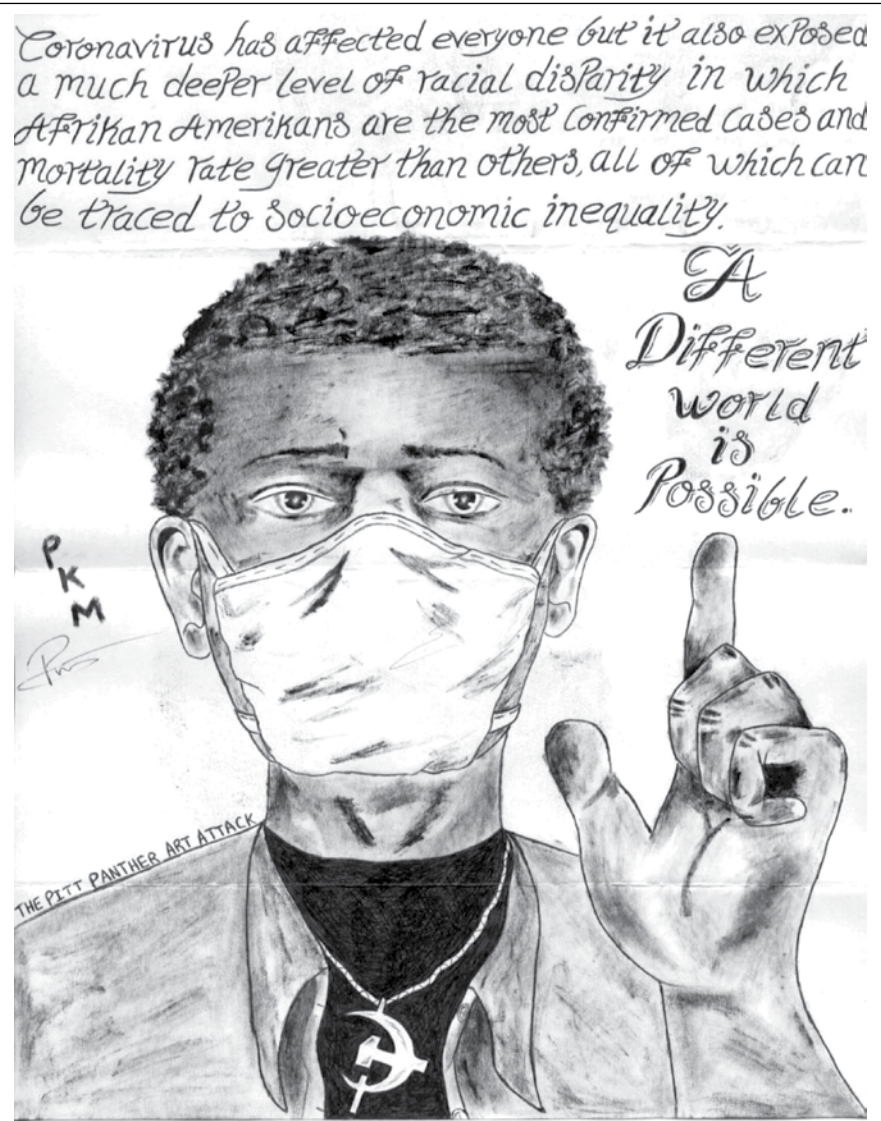


Illustration by Kamau Makia, aka Comrade Pitts. Makia is incarcerated at Red Onion Prison, a “supermax” facility in Wise County, VA. Around 55% of Red Onion’s prisoners have sentences of 15 years or longer and 12% are serving life sentences. According to Wikipedia, more than 2/3 of the largely black prisoners are detained in solitary confinement, confined to 8’ x 10’ cells for 20 hours per day.

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for talking about what it means to be white in the US.

Michelle Alexander’s book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, is an essential read if you haven’t already. In the forward to the 2012 edition, Cornel West describes the book as “the secular bible for a new social movement” because it exposes the shifts in our attention from the achievement of electing a Black president to the “systemic breakdown of black and poor communities devastated by mass unemployment, social neglect, economic abandonment, and police

surveillance.” Read it to put this moment of outrage into its historical context, and to understand how to orient ongoing demands for systemic reform.

The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race, edited by Jesmyn Ward (2016) is dedicated to Trayvon Martin and “the many other black men, women, and children who have died and been denied justice for these last four hundred years.” In her introduction, Ward, a creative writing professor, acknowledges the critical influence of James Baldwin’s *The Fire Next Time* on this generation of writers. The purpose of this collection, she writes, is to help the effort to create a new consciousness wherein “black lives carry worth, wherein black boys can walk to the store and buy candy without thinking they will die, wherein black girls can have a bad day and be mouthy without being physically assaulted by a police officer, wherein cops see twelve-year old black boys playing with fake guns as silly kids and not homicidal maniacs, wherein black women can stop to ask for directions without being shot in the face by paranoid white homeowners.”

PPP

From page 1

have a “0” in this column, while for 28 recipients there’s a blank. The absence of jobs retained is readily apparent in the bank column: in 71 loans made by Heritage Bank, not one job was retained and only 17 of 52 loans by Timberland bank showed jobs retained (a total of 514). By contrast, jobs were retained by every loan made by Commencement Bank (17), Twin Star CU (13), Key Bank (11) and Umpqua (7). The loans from these four banks show 2,587 jobs retained.

How did downtown Olympia fare?

Addresses in downtown Olympia don’t necessarily mean the business is located downtown. Still, it’s possible to identify some known entities that received loans.

Several non-profits and cooperatives received forgivable loans: Community Youth Services, Senior Services South Sound, the Washington Association for Community Health, the Washington State Coalition against Domestic Violence, Working Systems Cooperative, South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity, Washington Center for the Performing Arts and the Hands on Children’s Museum.

Several well-known downtown businesses also received forgivable loans: Stormans Inc, Cascadia Research Collective, Olympia Fireplace Supply, Olympia Oyster House LLC, Well 80 Brewing Company, Acme Fuel Company, Budd Bay Cafe LLC, Mud Bay Inc, Meconi’s Italian Subs LLC, Chelsea Farms Oyster Bar, Hung Right Doors LLC, Thomas Architecture Studio, Treinen Associates Inc, Wagners Bakery LLC, Three Magnets Brewing Co and Sea Level Coffee Inc. (Did any of these claim to have retained jobs?)

Some downtown law firms also got loans: Bauer Pitman Snyder Huff Lifetime Legal, Connolly Tacon & Meserve PS, Phillips Burgess PLLC, and Freimund Jackson & Tardif PLLC.

End times

The Paycheck Protection Program ended on June 30, 2020. Now the recipients must document their costs and submit documentation to their lender that is “true and correct” in order to have these costs paid for by the Small Business Administration. After that, the SBA reimburses the lenders for those costs, adding to our Nation’s debt load.

Dan Leahy lives on Olympia’s Westside and likes making charts.

- (1) There were Paycheck Protection Program loans for less than \$150,000, but the SBA did not identify recipients of these loans and they’re not included in this article.

The “Paycheck Protection” program

of loans to businesses to retain workers (or pay the mortgage, or utilities, or other expenses) hasn’t stemmed the tide of unemployed Americans. Infection in “opened” economies, millions more are out of work. Was this inevitable? The situation in Europe suggests that it was not. There, the government subsidized jobs directly, instead of giving “Paycheck Protection” loans to businesses for everything from retaining jobs to paying the mortgage, utilities or other expenses.

In Germany, for example, employees had their hours scaled back, and the government pays them up to two-thirds of their normal salary, while the employer pays little or nothing. Once the employer is ready to pay full wages again, everything returns to normal—there are no layoffs.

The partial unemployment safety net is helping Europeans weather the storm by sustaining the employee-employer relationship and keeping the economy temporarily running. Additionally, workers have income to spend and should return to work faster once pandemic dangers diminish.

Is President Trump leading us into fascism?

To consider this question, it is necessary to understand the role fascism plays in a capitalist society, and why the capitalist class has an interest in facilitating the rise of fascism. Such understanding is provided in the essays in *Radical Perspectives on the Rise of Fascism in Germany, 1919-1945*.

LOOKING FORWARD

Dave Jette

In the aftermath of World War I, a democratic parliamentary political system was set up in defeated Germany as the “Weimar Republic.” Capitalists were divided into three major factions: heavy industry (iron, steel, mining) focused on domestic economic development; export industry (dynamic, technologically more advanced and prosperous) led by machine, electric, and chemical industries as well as textiles and commercial interests; and agriculture (the landed aristocracy, particularly the “Junkers” of Prussia). The “middle class” consisted of shopkeepers, commodity producers and salaried employees, as well as the peasantry. The working class had strong labor unions, a strong political party (the Social Democratic Party of Germany, or “SPD”), and a German Communist Party (“KPD”)—greatly weakened by abortive revolutionary uprisings following World War I.

At first the export-industry faction of the bourgeoisie dominated in representing capital. For some time, labor unions and the SPD were able to work with this faction to improve workers’ lives. In the early 1930s heavy industry achieved hegemony over the export industry and refused to collaborate with workers’ organizations. Simultaneously, the political system had become so dysfunctional that the Weimar parliament lost most of its popular support in spite of efforts by heavy industry interests to revive it.

The strongest political parties at that point were the fascist NSDAP (Hitler’s National Socialist German Workers Party, whose strength was in the “middle class”) and the SPD (with some help from the KPD). The capitalists tried to use the NSDAP as a junior partner in parliament—a substitute for their lack of mass following—but Hitler refused any deal other than one making him Chancellor. The capitalists capitulated: the NSDAP appeared to be in decline and they feared that it could fade away.

On January 30, 1933, Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany. He moved quickly to destroy labor unions, and banned other political parties, relying on a huge army of streetfighters (the SA, or “storm-troopers”) which the NSDAP had built up. He created a special referendum to declare himself the sole ruler of Germany and by 1938 he had replaced the old state bureaucracy with his own followers. Anti-Semitism was eagerly implemented in Germany, with Jews deprived of political and social influence and even of their livelihood. This was a prelude to

the Holocaust which the Germans carried out in eastern Europe after Germany invaded Poland in September 1939.

Understanding authoritarianism in the United States is critical to comprehending the possibilities for implementing fascism here. A comrade has kindly provided the following analysis of authoritarianism in our history, with the key reference points being slavery, the Civil War, the rollback of Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and changing demographics in the contemporary period.

In the pre-Civil-War period and the Civil War, a whole section of society, anchored in the slaveowners but extending to a cross-class white bloc, viewed their civilization and “way of life” as dependent on slavery. Consequently, they used “any means necessary” to try to defend and expand that way of life. The pro-slavery bloc officially lost the Civil War, but they came back in force via racist terrorism and an assault on black voting rights. This rolled back Reconstruction and put in place Jim Crow for a hundred years. This was essentially apartheid. Blacks in the South “had no rights the white man needed to respect” and the system was enforced through lynching—i.e. through open terror.

Now we are living through a rollback of the gains of the 1960s (and the ‘30s as well). Because of demographic changes, the US population in 30-40 years will have a majority of people of color. For the first time since the Civil War, a whole layer of society—again rooted in the most reactionary sectors of capital and encompassing a broader white bloc—believes that if democracy and majority rule exist in the US their whole way of life (white Christian American civilization) will go under.

They are prepared and even enthusiastic to put in place a system for long-term rule by a minority of the population via authoritarian means. Big sectors of capital—not all, but highly important ones such as energy corporations and the military-industrial complex—are behind this because they know their ecologic and energy policies (climate change denialism) are unpopular not just with communities of color but also with young whites.

There is a massive force moving toward what could be called neo-apartheid, a racialized authoritarian state, “illiberal democracy” or something which while not quite classical European fascism is still essentially a form of fascism. This is what Trumpism is about: the absolute determination of roughly 30% of the US population to organize for and resort to explicit authoritarianism in which immigrants and Blacks are not “real Americans” and have no rights that “real Americans” need to respect. My next column will consider the question of to what extent Trump is implementing fascism in the United States.

Dave Jette is the author of A Reformation of Dialectical Materialism, which incorporates feminist theory into a traditional Marxist framework.

On the collapse of Confederate monuments Humpty Dumpty had a great fall

Enrique Quintero

Missing the daily roll call

One of the consequences of the popular (multi-ethnic, anti-racist, anti-police brutality, and pro Black Lives Matter) movement that emerged after the death George Floyd and other black people killed by the police was the altering of urban public spaces.

Dozens of streets, plazas, parks, and high human traffic areas that until now were relatively quiet homes to monuments erected to colonialists, slave traffickers, slave owners, and high-ranking southern military traitors to the Union suddenly came under public scrutiny.

In many of these places, long-familiar residents in the national guesthouse of statues were no longer able to respond to the roll call of white supremacy. TV cameras depicted many of these absentee figures as contemporary Humpty Dumpties, collapsed on the ground, surrounded by multicolored graffiti of anonymous avengers and combatants in a new battle of cultural symbols (sometimes history needs a little push).

A second group of figures—the lucky ones—were given last minute asylum in nearby museums. The rest, given their limited floating skills, sleep with the fishes at the bottom of oceans and rivers.

A new discourse on monuments

Currently, there are approximately 1,500 to 2,000 Confederate statues and monuments still standing around the US. The debate surrounding them, along with other symbols like the public display of the Confederate Flag, has begun to take a new shape in the public discourse.

The battlefield is occupied by two main forces: those who proclaim the need to unmask and come to terms with the long history of racism and economic inequality that has marked and still prevails in American history. The second force includes those who through numerous methods (economic, social, political, and/or ideological) have benefited from racist and inequitable conditions and continue to do so.

The first group is well-represented in the massive number of protesters over the past eight weeks. The second group consists primarily of devout members of ultra-right organizations and pro-Trump Republicans. The Presidential signing of the “Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials and Statues,” in which Trump criminalizes civilian dissent and cynically accuses protesters of dishonoring “the American past” and ignoring, or erasing history is part of this context. (Never mind that Trump didn’t hesitate to shrink the size of approximately 30 national monuments located in indigenous lands in order to facilitate non-indigenous owned business enterprises.)

Because monuments are, well, silent for the most part, they often pass unremarked. The following observations are offered as one way to interpret those silent

monuments, particularly the ones erected to celebrate Confederate themes.

Evading meaning: An impossibility, even for the Irish

Monuments, statues, and memorials are not meaningless. Nor they are unintentional, or socially irrelevant. They have meaning at all stages of their existence, from the moment they are conceived, to the moments when they are built, displayed, and interpreted, long after that initial conception.

Monuments symbolize something specific like an idea, a real or mythological character, an historical event, or a vision of the future. There is no escape from meaning, even in the curious case of those witty Irish who, a hundred and twenty plus years ago, resolved to erect a Monument to Nothing, stating specifically: “On this site in 1897 nothing happened.”

Despite their aim for it to mean nothing, the monument (which still stands in Galway City) represented, or referred to, the dullness of life in the area, coupled with an implicit assumption that more interesting things happened elsewhere. Monuments cannot avoid being affected by the social reality that makes them possible.

They are the product of the intellectual and physical labor of social human beings and necessarily carry the marks of the reality that exists at the time of their construction. Monuments are doomed to be social rather than ethereal in nature. To be social means being interconnected with life, social classes and institutions existing and acting in a given society. Put another way, both in form and meaning, monuments are products of their social histories.

Monuments as a form

If we look at monuments strictly as structures in the shape of a statue or a memorial, the monument’s specific form tells us about the conscious or unconscious intentionality behind what is represented. In the case of the Irish men and women, notice they did not go to the beach and write their caustic message about Galway City on the sand. No, they chose to raise a monument because they wanted their message to withstand the passing of time in a specific medium—a lasting monumental structure—with a much longer life span than ephemeral writing on the beach, or a message on the wall of an Irish pub.

Monuments seek to make a point not only in reference to the message conveyed in the identity of the monument, but the form itself becomes part of the message since it requires physical prominence. To use an analogy, think of monuments displayed inside churches, like saints and icons. They are strategically located, and most important, they are carefully chosen to be seen. This means that other monuments have been chosen not to be seen—they have been excluded, and thus robbed of historical significance in that particular church.

► **Monuments**, continued on next page

Monuments

From previous page

Monuments as ideology

In the case of Confederate monuments, the list of individuals carefully chosen to be seen includes slave traffickers, slave owners and high ranking southern military traitors to the Union. Perhaps no other Confederate 'bad hombre' illustrates better the racist and white supremacy ideology of monuments than that of slave trader, Confederate officer and Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, Nathan Bedford Forrest. He was a notorious war criminal who conducted the Fort Pillow massacre of 1864, slaughtering over 300 hundred unarmed Union soldiers who had surrendered. According to the blog Working Class History: "They murdered most of the Black soldiers and roughly one third of the whites: burning some alive, crucifying others and hacking people to death."

Today there are statues of Forrest in Georgia and Tennessee: schools, streets, and buildings bear his name. What's more, in an act of racist nostalgia, Forrest's 199th birthday was officially celebrated by the state of Tennessee (July 13, 2020). Many on the right would argue that Forrest and other characters represented in Confederate monuments are part of American history. They would be accurate, as many half-truths are, in a superficial but misleading way.

Generating a false history

These monuments represent a unilateral version of history, a version that has been edited, distorted, glamorized, and romanticized by the beneficiaries of such distortions, that is to say, white hegemonic political, economic, and social institutions. A crass example of this notorious proclivity to generate and ingest falsification is found in some inscriptions on Forrest's monuments: "He fought like a titan and struck like a god. And his dust is our ashes of glory."

lice brutality experienced by black people in the US today traces its roots back to this economic, political and ideological model.

Confederate monuments exclude representation of black people's experiences, erasing by their silence the systematic exploitation of black people, robbing them of their historical significance.

It is not accidental that there are no confederate, or right-wing monuments celebrating black people's lives, their suffering and struggles and the human cost of their sur-

by right-wing Republicans and the Trump administration in an effort simultaneously to contain the forces of popular discontent and to preserve the monumental fetishes of white supremacy. The other form of moral indignation recognizes the existing infamies of American racism. And yet as Lenin put it, moral indignation alone "does not tell us one word as to how these institutions arose, why they existed, and what role they played in history."

The last statue standing

To unearth one of the deepest taproots of systemic racism in the US, an additional monument needs to come down. The Wall Street Bull, representing the optimism that befits the beneficiaries of capitalism and everyone else who hopes one day to be such a beneficiary in spite of centuries of evidence to the contrary.

It provides no visual reference to the suffering experienced by the large majority of American people. Especially now, when lack of access to health care, food, affordable housing, quality child care, quality education and meaningful work affects more people than ever before in US history. Yet the Wall Street Bull remains standing, a quiet testament to the deep ideological roots of capitalism within this country as the only conceivable way of life. It, too, needs to come down.

Enrique Quintero serves on the WIP Publishing Committee.

These monuments represent a unilateral version of history, a version that has been edited, distorted, glamorized, and romanticized by the beneficiaries of such distortions

If the Confederate mind attributes divine characteristics to slave traffickers and war criminals, and has no problem erecting monuments to such individuals, it is not surprising that the rest of their narrative about American history comes as a pastiche of self-serving voices, whose origins can be traced back to the beginnings of the black slave-labor based economy.

The other missing monuments

This economy was perpetuated through the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Jim Crow period with some mutations. As Michelle Alexander notes in *The New Jim Crow*, the systemic racism and po-

vival. Black people simply did not matter except as cheap generators of surplus value and profits. Any accurate representation of the real material conditions of black people would have required pointing an incriminating finger at the historical delusions of American democracy. Monuments, thus, must be understood as interrelated parts of a system of ideas displayed in a specific structural form, precisely in order to reinforce ideological systems.

The limits of moral indignation

Empty pedestals and images of dismounted equestrian figures have given place to two kinds of moral indignation. One is represented

When will housing “Action Plans” shift from “plan” to “action?”

Thurston County has faced a housing and homeless crisis for a decade. But our government officials are still researching it and working on plans to fix it. Reproduced below are Olympia’s “Housing Action Plan” from its 2020 Operating Budget plus the County Plan plus the “Regional Housing Action Plan” being planned by Thurston Regional Planning Council. Read ‘em and weep.

Olympia’s Housing Action Plan

In 2020, the City of Olympia will join with the cities of Tumwater and Lacey to develop a Housing Action Plan. The plan will identify current and specific information on the local housing market, especially the barriers and challenges to constructing housing, and targeted approaches to getting housing that can serve a wide variety of income levels.

Thurston County Plans to end homelessness

- 2020 HUD Annual Action Plan
- Thurston County Homeless Crisis Response Plan 2019-2024
- Thurston County 2019 HUD Annual Action Plan
- Thurston County 5-Year Homeless Housing Plan 2017-2022
- 2018-2022 Citizens Summary - Draft
- 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan - Full Version
- Regional Consolidated Plan Appendices
- Thurston County 2018 Annual Action Plan
- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Report
 - o Citizen Overview
 - o Federal IDIS Report
 - o Legal Notice
 - o Summary of Recommendations

2017 HUD Action Plan *DRAFT*

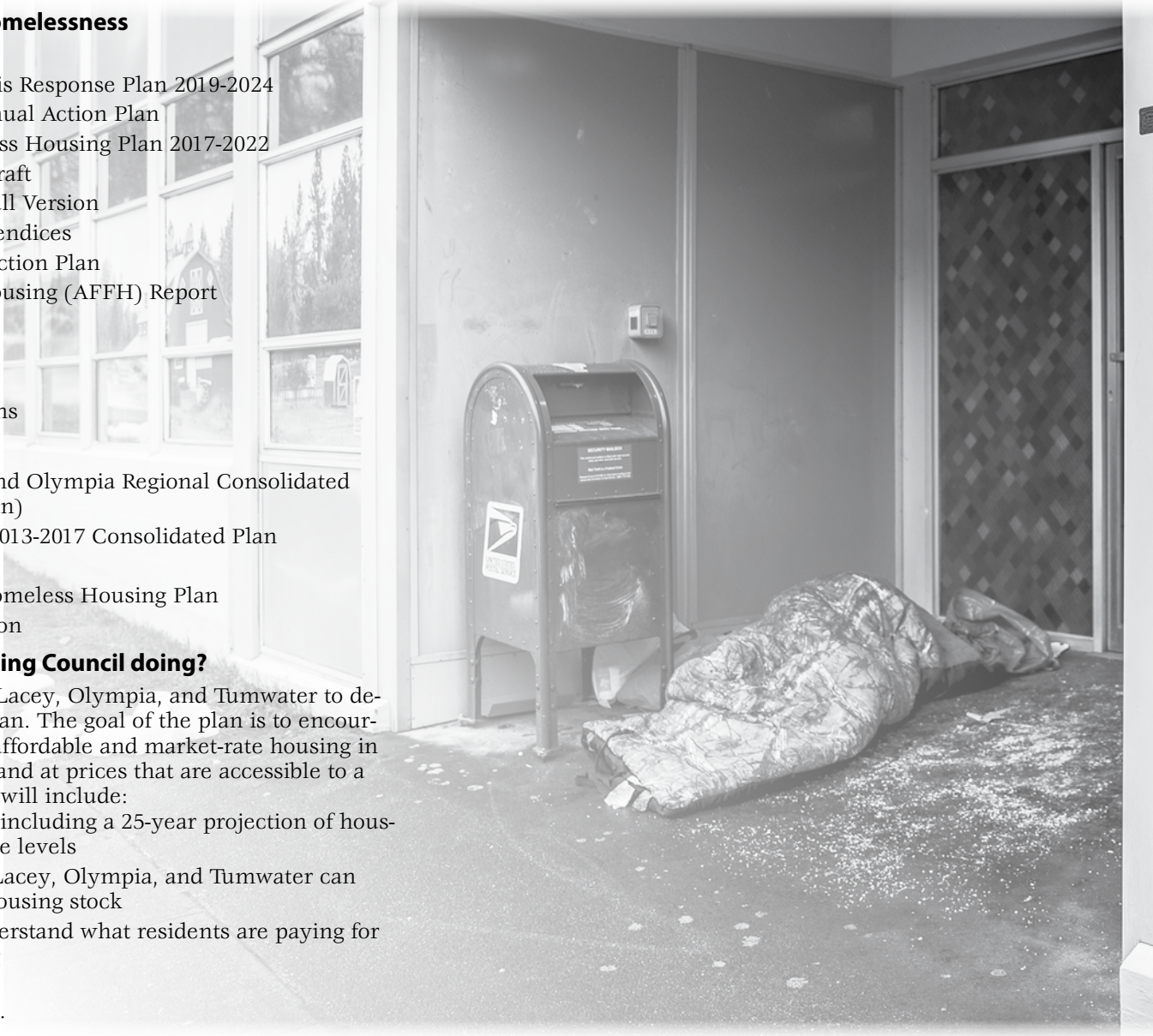
- 2013-2017 Thurston County and Olympia Regional Consolidated Plan (FY 2015 Annual Action Plan)
 - Citizen's Summary of the 2013-2017 Consolidated Plan
 - Appendices
- Thurston County Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan
 - Ten-Year Plan—2010 Revision

What is Thurston Regional Planning Council doing?

TRPC is working with the cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater to develop a Regional Housing Action Plan. The goal of the plan is to encourage the construction of additional affordable and market-rate housing in a greater variety of housing types, and at prices that are accessible to a greater variety of incomes. The plan will include:

- A housing needs assessment, including a 25-year projection of housing affordable at different income levels
- A list of specific actions that Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater can take to increase the affordable housing stock
- A rental survey, to better understand what residents are paying for rent and how rents are changing

The plan will be completed in 2021.



Community Spotlight



The Puget Sound Estuarium

The Estuarium has entered into partnership with TOGETHER! and two federal agencies to extend the watershed STEM education program to underserved youth in Thurston County. In 2020, the Puget Sound Estuarium is offering virtual trainings for teachers from TOGETHER!'s 21st Century Community Learning Centers along with socially distant field trips as a part of a virtual summer Club House including a day at Inspiring Kids Preserve on Henderson Inlet. TOGETHER! enhances educational equity by investing in schools with the highest percentage of struggling families. Its Club House programs run Sept. through June in partnership with North Thurston Public Schools.



75th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

August 6 and 9. OlyFOR traditionally has a picnic at Priest Point Park at this time, while From Hiroshima to Hope in Seattle has a commemoration at Green Lake with floating lanterns. This year because of the pandemic, The group in Seattle is instead having a video presentation of performances, and encouraging people to make lanterns to put in the windows of your homes in commemoration of the anniversary. See their website, <https://fromhirosimatohope.org>



Democracy Happy Hour

August 5, 5 pm - 6 pm PDT. Fix Democracy First is hosting a weekly Democracy Happy Hour on **Wednesdays @ 5-6pm PT.** Grab a drink and join us and learn about the latest democracy efforts, challenges, solutions and more. Fix Democracy First works to get big money out of politics and on other reforms to fix our broken democracy. Our mission is to achieve fair elections and government policies that reflect the will of the people, not the power of money. Find details at <http://www.fixdemocracyfirst.org/>



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Food Drive for Thurston County Food Bank

Saturday, August 8, 10 am - 12 noon.

You are invited to help support the Thurston County Food Bank. The Food Bank has been overwhelmed with needs from our community and is working with reduced volunteers and staff. They are focusing on emergency food boxes. Volunteers are also needed for all shifts at both the Warehouse Distribution Center [WDC] – in Tumwater, and the Client Service Center [CSC] – in Downtown Olympia. For more information contact Allison Email: gleaning@thurstoncountyfoodbank.org Phone: (360) 352-8597 x 105



Votes for Women Centennial Festival

Saturday, August 22, 10:00 am - 4 pm,
State Capitol Grounds in Olympia.

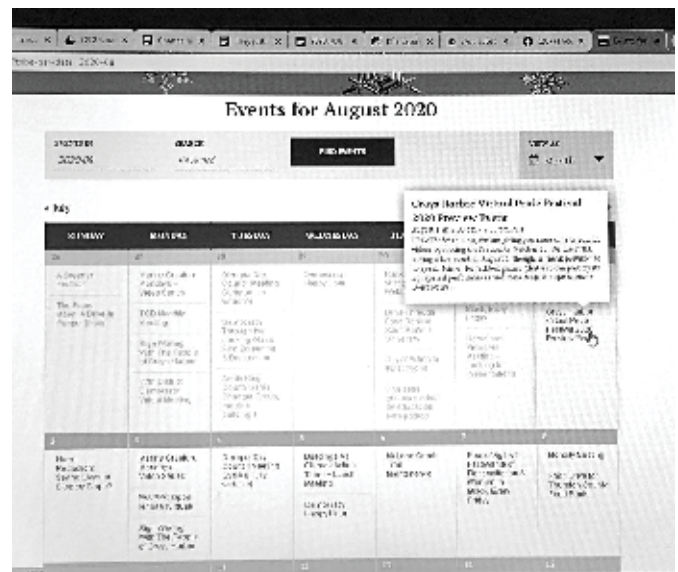
Celebrate 100 years of women change makers and mark the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. There will be live music, performances, speakers, panels, women owned and operated food trucks, exhibits, kids activities and more! <https://www.suffrage100wa.com/>



Expanded reach, less work!

Introducing WIP's enhanced Community Calendar

Social, racial, environmental and economic justice planners: you can now link your digital calendar with WIP's and join the 50+ organizations already listing their events there!

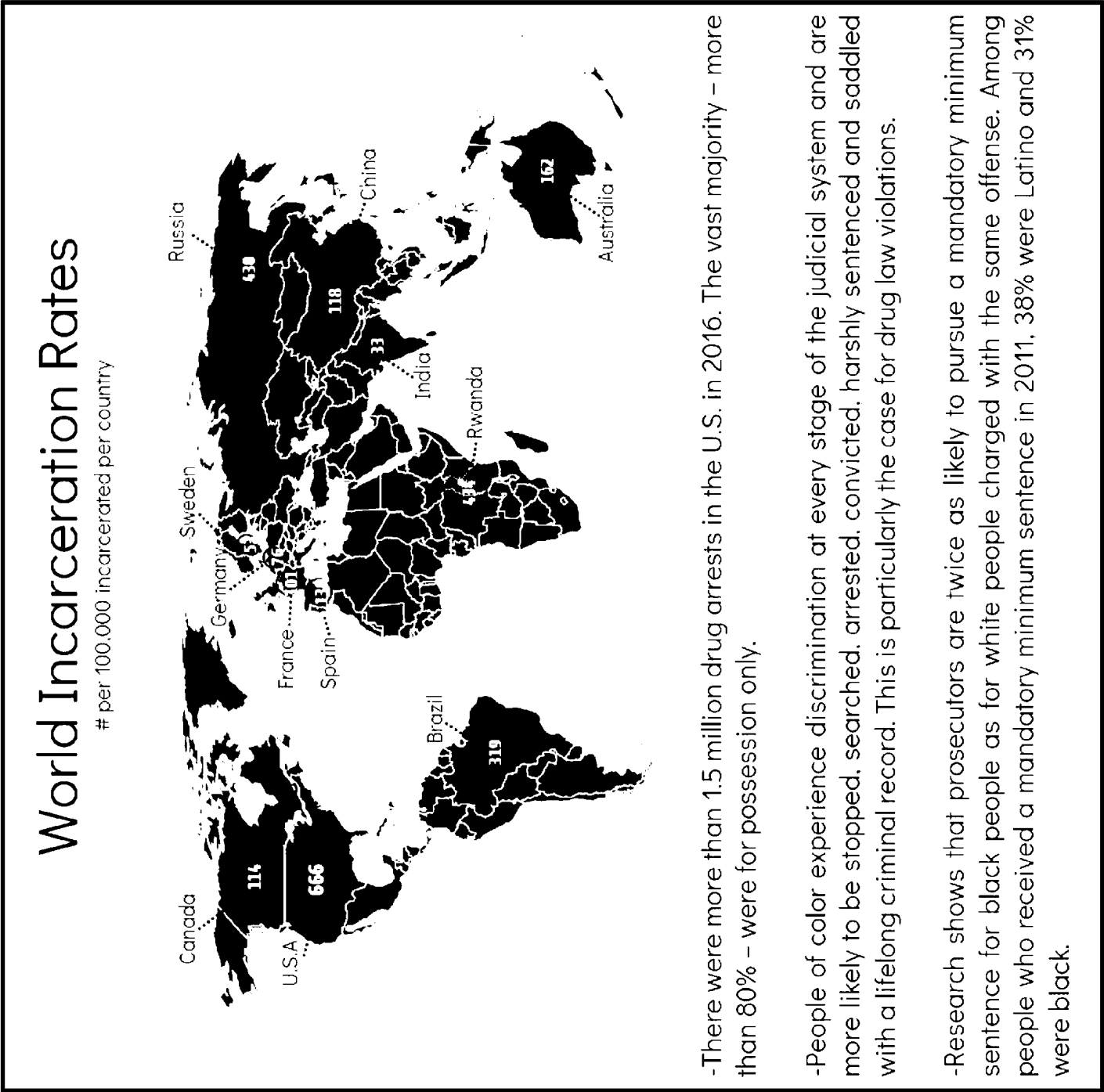


Send us your "ical" link to establish the connection (visit olywip.org/calendar to view instructions using Google calendar). Once the link is created, simply maintain your own calendar and ours will automatically import your entries. Cool, right?

To get started, switch to creating events on a Google calendar and then import to Facebook using an app such as Zapier. This means you enter your event details only once to share the information with Facebook and WIP's Community Calendar. Need help? Read more online or email us and we'll help you get started!

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www.olywip.org

The Drug War Drives Mass Incarceration and Racial Disparities in U.S. Judicial Systems



To learn more about rates of incarceration, sentencing, and the plight of prisoners of color, see *Sentenced at 18 to 42 years on page 8*.

Works in Progress

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Mass
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Looming
EVICTIONS

and special guest
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2020: FREEFALL

*The ride no
one wanted
to take.*