



# WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 23, No. 9

SERVING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY OF OLYMPIA SINCE 1990.

JANUARY 2013

## Another Olympia activist imprisoned

### Olympia trio faces the possibility of criminal contempt charges

Marissa Luck

For many Americans, the day after Christmas is spent recovering from over-indulgent holiday feasts, returning ill-fitting sweaters or relaxing with family. But for local activist Matthew “Maddy” Pfeiffer that day was anything but festive: on December 26, 2012 they were taken into custody at the SeaTac Federal Detention Center for refusing to testify before grand jury.

Maddy is the latest in a string of activists imprisoned on charges of civil contempt for not complying with the grand jury. Matt Duran and Katherine “Kteeo” Olejnik have been in prison since September on the same charges. All three have stated publicly that they won’t comply with a grand jury that they argue is targeting them for their political beliefs. (See side panel on page 10 for more background information).

Under civil contempt charges, all three activists can only be held in custody for the life of the grand jury (typically 18 months with a possibility of an extension). That means that without actually being charged with a crime, they could be in prison until March 2014. And once it becomes clear that the sheer passing of time won’t wither their resolve, their jail time could be extended even further if the court makes moves to change their charges from civil to criminal contempt.

“We’re getting word that they’re going after criminal contempt,” Lauren Regan of the Civil Liberties Defense Center said at a panel discussion on political witch hunts held in Seattle at the Black Coffee Co-op in November. “Criminal contempt is a crime, and the only thing they have to prove is that you refused to testify,” she pointed out, noting that there have been other activists charged with criminal contempt for refusing to comply with grand juries in recent years. (More on this later).

#### What is the difference between criminal and civil contempt?

In legal jargon, civil contempt is “coercive” rather than “punitive” because the court is attempting to “coerce” the witnesses into testifying. To repeat an oft-cited phrase, all three witnesses “hold the keys to their own freedom” since they could end their imprisonment simply by testifying. On the other hand, criminal contempt is intended to punish a person for violating a court order

(in this case refusing to testify).

The legal distinction between “coercive” and “punitive” may not make much of a difference when you’re lying in a jail cell, but it does serve important purposes: first, it allows the government to claim they aren’t punishing

Under civil contempt, all three activists can only be held for the life of the grand jury, but their jail time could be extended if the court changes the charge from civil to criminal contempt.

witnesses by holding them in custody, and second, when it becomes clear that witnesses won’t testify before the grand jury, it creates an opening for the wit-

nesses’ attorneys to argue that being held in custody is crossing the line from coercion to punishment.

“With some cases, it becomes clear as time goes on that confinement has no coercive effect, that this person isn’t going to testify regardless of how long you hold them. Under those circumstances it really becomes punishment,” argued Matt Duran’s attorney Kim Gordon. She continued, “So I think a real question is, will there be a point during Matt’s confinement where the court decides that’s the case? I can’t tell you if, or even when they’ll ask.”

Although criminal contempt charges could lengthen their jail time, the potential penalty is still unclear. Since



criminal contempt has no maximum sentence, people indicted of this crime could theoretically face life in prison. **► IMPRISONED,** continued on page 10

## Climate crisis is more imminent and more severe than predicted

Bourtai Hargrove

Climate change is happening with a rapidity scientists did not predict—the Arctic is melting faster, sea level is rising faster, and CO<sub>2</sub> levels are fast approaching the point where the world will not be able to restrict global warming to the 2 degrees Celsius (C) that scientists warn is the threshold above which we face catastrophic consequences. Public consciousness of the climate crisis, although reawakened by the unprecedented droughts, fires and storms of 2012, is not rising fast enough. Most governments, locked in their games of power and profit, give climate change little priority—shoving it aside as a problem to be dealt with sometime in the future. The UN climate talks in Doha, Qatar ended with an abysmally weak agreement by the EU member states, and a few others, to extend the Kyoto Protocol for an additional seven years. The United States, Japan, Canada, Russia, and China are not taking part. But our time

for action is running out. For years, Jim Hansen, the world’s foremost climate scientist, has warned that we have a narrow window of opportunity—ten years or less—to drastically reduce our use of fossil fuels and halt anthropogenic climate change before dangerous tipping points are reached.

#### Arctic Warming

Arctic sea ice extent shrank 18% to a new low this year from the previous low set in 2007. Along with the record loss of sea ice, the thickness, or volume of the remaining ice has been significantly decreasing. Scientists from the National Snow and Ice Data Center in Boulder, Colorado said the data suggests the Arctic sea ice cover is fundamentally changing. “We are now in uncharted territory,” said NSIDC director Mark Serreze. “While we’ve long known that as the planet warms up, changes would be seen first and most pronounced in the Arctic, few of us were prepared for how rapidly the changes would actually occur.” Ice scientist Prof Peter Wadhams

of Cambridge University predicts that the collapse of the Arctic ice sheet has begun and will probably be complete by 2015, 2016. Sea ice in the Arctic is an important indicator of global warming, because of its role in amplifying

Vast areas of permafrost in Russia, Canada, and Alaska are beginning to thaw, releasing carbon dioxide and methane that has been locked in the subsoil for thousands of years.

climate change. When the ice collapses, the sun is no longer reflected from the surface, but is absorbed into the ocean, causing more warming and more sea ice collapse (a positive feedback loop). The resulting decrease in temperature gradient between the equator and the Arctic

**► CLIMATE CRISIS,** continued on page 10



WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Works In Progress is a free, all volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of Works In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions

Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

Works In Progress is committed to stories misrepresented or ignored by the mainstream media. We value local, well-researched news stories, accounts of personal experience and reflections by local authors. Opinion pieces, also valued, are often best supported by facts, examples, and sources, and we encourage writers to include these elements to submissions. We're also looking for graphics, poetry, cartoons, and articles that push the boundaries of conventional journalism.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite sources.

If your issue isn't being covered in Works In Progress, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or haven't found someone else to cover it!)

Send submissions to [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com) or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool

The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.

Mission Statement

Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed.

Anti-Discrimination Clause

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues

WIP is archived on microfilm by the University of Washington Library. Some issues are held in the Timberland Library system. The last five years are online at [www.olywip.org](http://www.olywip.org)

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On the front cover — Winter bouquet.

Photographer: WIP News Service

Submission Deadline:

Friday, January 18  
[olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com)

Proofreading Meeting

Saturday, January 26 ♦ Noon  
Lacey Timberland Library in the Group Study Area  
(Be there for the first read!)

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Facing Race

2012 legislative report card on racial equity

Washington CAN!

The following is the executive summary—a short synopsis of the much longer report by Washington Community Action Network. The full report can be viewed at: [http://washingtoncan.org/reports/Facing\\_Race.pdf](http://washingtoncan.org/reports/Facing_Race.pdf)

Race matters in Washington. People of color represent nearly 30 percent of Washington residents, and the population of people of color is growing. Equal opportunity and racial equity are more crucial to our collective well-being than ever before.

On any measure of equity, whether it is health, wealth, education, or political representation, wide gaps persist between communities of color and white communities. These disparities are not merely vestiges of historical inequality that will diminish over time. On the contrary, many of the gaps are widening, such as the wealth gap between African Americans and whites that has quadrupled since the mid-1980s.

Facing Race grades the Washington Legislature during the 2011 and 2012 regular sessions on issues that affect racial and economic equity. While the bills included in the report affect all Washingtonians, they have a particular impact on disparities between white residents and African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Arab Americans, and Pacific Islanders.

Report on legislators in the 22<sup>nd</sup> and nearby districts

On December 10, 2012 members from WA CAN, Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights (POWER), Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE), Casa Latino and Statewide Poverty Action Network (SPAN) gathered to speak out about the effects that state policies have on racial minorities in Washington State. Speakers April Sims, Gilda, Carmen Lamm, Pam Bailey and Zahid Chaudhry eloquently described the hardships and barriers that racial minorities still face in many areas of their lives.

Our own legislators in District 22 here in Olympia all were reported favorably with Representative Sam Hunt receiving an 80% positive voting record, Representative Chris Reykdal receiving 85%, and Senator Karen Fraser receiving a 75%.

However the surrounding areas of greater Olympia legislators did not make as high of marks. The 20<sup>th</sup> district around Chehalis and Centralia all three legislators Senator Dan Swecker, Representative Richard DeBolt and Representative Gary Alexander all received F's for their voting records. In the Yelm area all three of their legislators also received an F, which includes Senator Randi Becker, Representative Jim McCune, and Representative J.T. Wilcox.

District 35 in the Shelton area did better with only Senator Tim Sheldon receiving an "F" while Representative Fred Finn earned a C and Representative Kathy Haigh came in highest by earning a B.

Please join us in thanking our legislators who have voted to end discriminatory policies and urge our other legislators to understand the impact their votes have on racial equality in the US.

—Sarah LaGrange of POWER

Each of the 25 bills included in this report card met at least one of six criteria:

- Does the legislation explicitly address racial outcomes and work to eliminate racial inequities?
- Will the legislation increase access to public benefits and institutions for communities of color?
- Does the legislation advance enfranchisement and full civic participation for everyone in the state?
- Will the legislation protect against racial violence, racial profiling, and discrimination?
- Is the legislation enforceable? Are adequately funded mechanisms in place to ensure accountability?
- Will the legislation exacerbate existing racial inequities or have unintended consequences on communities of color?

Report Findings

- **Racial inequities are largely a result of policy decisions** that are made every year by policymakers on issues such as education, housing, taxation, health care, civil rights, and tribal sovereignty.

- **The Legislature overall earned a "D"** for its votes on bills that advanced racial equity.

- **Many legislators are not making the grade.** Sixty legislators (40 Representatives and 20 Senators), or 41 percent of the Legislature, received failing grades. Nineteen legislators who received failing grades live in a district with over 30 percent constituents of color.

- **Six Representatives received "A's"** for their efforts to advance racial equity.

They include:

- Billig 3<sup>rd</sup> District
- Cody 34<sup>th</sup> District
- Hansen 23<sup>rd</sup> District
- Kenney 46<sup>th</sup> District (100%)
- Liias 21<sup>st</sup> District
- Pollet 46<sup>th</sup> District

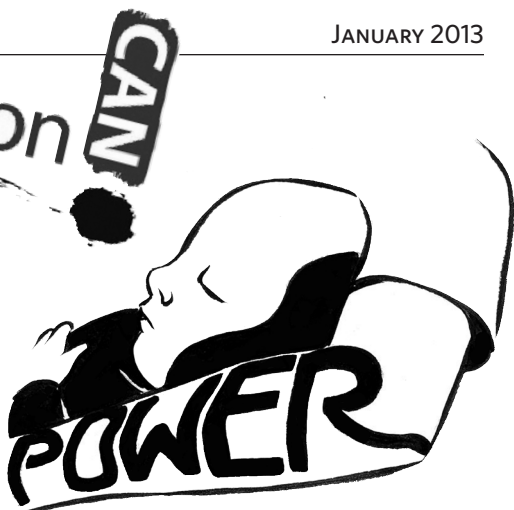
- **Just one Senator received an "A".** Senator Kohl-Welles (36<sup>th</sup> District) received the only A, with a 90 percent score. Only five other Senators received an 85 percent or better - Frockt (46<sup>th</sup> District), Harper (38<sup>th</sup> District), Murray (43<sup>rd</sup> District), Prentice (11<sup>th</sup> District), and Regala (27<sup>th</sup> District).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The 51 organizations endorsing this report are calling on legislators to do the right thing and support legislation that advances racial and economic equity in Washington.

The report includes missed opportunities—policies that advance racial equity, but never received a vote in the Legislature. These bills would lessen disparities in health care, education, criminal justice, voting rights, and employment:

- Implementing the Medicaid



Expansion and the Basic Health Option through health care reform

- Expanding access to dental care
- The Washington Voting Rights Act
- Abolishing the death penalty
- Broadening access to early learning
- Prohibiting mandatory e-verify [to determine immigration status]
- Ensuring workforce stability and safety

These missed opportunities offer a path forward for the Legislature in 2013.

Finally, to advance racial and economic equity, it is critical that the Legislature raises new revenue and ensures that everyone pays their fair share. Legislators must address our state's regressive tax structure, in which low income residents pay a disproportionate share of state taxes. Raising new revenue from corporations and our state's wealthiest residents will bring equity to the system and enable the state to maintain investments in health care, education and other programs that are proven to provide opportunity and create prosperity for all Washingtonians.

Endorsing organizations include:

Allyship, American Friends Service Committee, Arab American Community Coalition, Children's Alliance, El Centro de La Raza, Entre Hermanos, Got Green?, Para Los Ninos, Latinos for Community Transformation, Faith Action Network, Minority Executive Directors Coalition, Seattle King County NAACP, National Association of Social Workers - Washington Chapter, Washington State National Organization for Women (NOW), Alliance for a Just Society, OneAmerica Votes, People's Institute Northwest, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS), Parents Organizing for Welfare &, Economic Rights (POWER), Real Change, Seattle Office of Civil Rights, Race and Social Justice Initiative, Senior Services, Skagit Immigrant Rights Council, Statewide Poverty Action Network, UFCW Local 21, Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, Washington State Labor Council, WFSE/AFSCME Council 28, Race and Social Justice Community Roundtable, SEIU Healthcare 775NW, Washington Christian Leadership Coalition (WCLC), United Black Clergy of Washington, Greater Mt. Baker Church, The Lands Council, Northwest Fair Housing Alliance, Community Building Foundation, APICAT for Healthy Communities, Center for Multicultural Health, Asian Pacific Americans for Civic Empowerment (APACE), WIN/WIN Coalition, Seattle Human Rights Commission, SEIU 1199NW, Tacoma NAACP, Washington Defender Association, Washington

Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Spokane Ministers' Fellowship, M.E.Ch.A. of Eastern Washington University, Casa Latina, Seattle Indian Health Board, UAW #4121

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# Nicaragua

## Surviving the legacy of United States policy

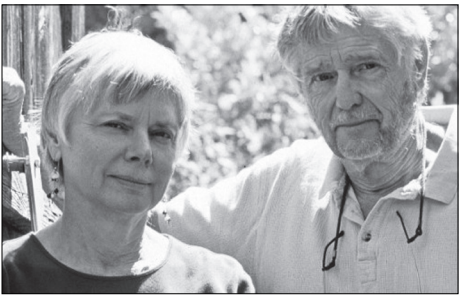
Paul Dix and Pamela Fitzpatrick will present their experiences, now 25 years later, of the people of Nicaragua in photographs and testimonies from the Contra war, at 7:00 pm on Wednesday January 30 at Traditions Café, 5th and Water, in downtown Olympia.

The Thurston-Santo Tomás Sister County Association (TSTSCA) invites the public to attend for free, and will gratefully accept tax-deductible donations for its ambitious work, which includes providing partial scholarships helping people in Santo Tomás attend college.

During the late 1970s and the 1980s popular movements in Central America attempted to democratize their societies politically and economically to serve the poor majorities. The US government opposed these efforts with massive violence in most Central American

countries. Under President Reagan, the CIA created a terrorist group (the contras) that intimidated, attacked, and killed thousands of civilians as well as soldiers in Nicaragua in its attempts to violently overthrow the government of the progressive Sandinista party. Decades later, the poor of Central America continue to experience the effects of these wars and many US citizens still do not understand the US government's role in trying to stop these popular movements towards democracy.

Here is a great opportunity to learn about this important history with ongoing fallout, through Paul's and Pamela's first-hand experiences, powerful images, and the testimonies of Nicaraguans. This is also a great opportunity to help TSTSCA's solidarity efforts and practical support for our sister community in Santo Tomás.



**Meet Paul Dix and Pamela Fitzpatrick**  
**Wednesday, January 30, 7pm**  
**Traditions Café in Olympia**

They will share proceeds from the evening's book sales with TSTSCA for our scholarship program.

Info: Jean Eberhardt (360) 943-8642 or [tstsc@gmail.com](mailto:tstsc@gmail.com)

## An interview with Paul Dix

*William Grigsby Vergara, a young Nicaraguan poet and painter, interviewed Paul Dix and other internationalistas from the US, and published the "Memories of a Generation of Internationalists" in the September 2012 issue of revista envio.*

Here is Paul Dix in his own words:

"I'm a photographer and I live in Eugene, OR. I came to Nicaragua in 1985 as a volunteer with Witness for Peace. I did photojournalism there for five years, between 1985 and 1990, traveling in the war zones documenting contra atrocities from Jalapa to the Río San Juan, in Chontales, and other places where there were ambushes, attacks, shoot-outs... The real war heroes were the peasants. We internationalists were only witnesses, but they had to live with fear of the contras 24 hours a day.

"I was an independent photographer and my task was to make society aware with my graphic work. There was a big demand for graphic documenting of the war. I sent my photographs to the alternative media.

"I was always well received by Nicaraguans even though I came from their enemy country. This never stopped surprising me. Nicaraguans always accepted me and were completely confident that I was here to give testimony, witness, and report the reality while fighting alongside the people. I've traveled all over the world and I've never seen such warm people as in Nicaragua.

"I was about 50 years old in the eighties but it wasn't until I came to Nicaragua that I learned what I wanted to do with my life: work on social justice and human rights issues.

"What I learned most from Nicaraguans is that, in spite of the poverty and pain they've experienced, they always have faith and hope in tomorrow. Their joy and optimism were contagious.

"In 2002 I came back to Nicaragua with my partner, Pamela Fitzpatrick, whom I met in 1985 through Witness for Peace. We returned to write a book: Nicaragua: Surviving the Legacy of US Policy. It took us ten years to do – from 2001 to 2011.

"We made five trips; four to photograph the peasants we met in the eighties and find out how they were twenty years later. We found most of them, photographed them, and recorded their testimonies as victims of war who survived.

"Our book is in Managua's supermarkets and bookstores, including a bilingual edition in the Managua airport. The book has a prologue by Gioconda Belli and an endorsement by Eduardo Galeano. In October 2011, we presented it at the Central American University's Institute of History. It was very well received. The 18 months of work with my partner was worth it. It has over 200 pages with more than 100 black-and-white photographs of Nicaraguans, then and now."

On our book tours all around the US, we're educating the youth. It's very interesting, since many of those we meet were born after 1990 (when the Sandinista National Liberation Front was voted out of the presidency, until re-elected in 2006 and again in 2011) and have no idea of the Sandinistan history. In fact, the majority of them don't even have any idea where Nicaragua is. We're very happy to be able to rescue a bit of forgotten history.

<http://nicaraguaphototestimony.org/>

## Special Events

**Klezmer Workshop with Yale Strom and Elizabeth Schwartz**  
**Friday, January 4, 3 pm - 5 pm**  
**Olympia Ballroom**  
**116 Legion Way SE, Olympia**

Participants choose either Yale or Elizabeth, and then the two groups will come together for the final half hour.

Yale Strom will teach musicians the fundamentals of playing Klezmer based upon his 30 years of extensive ethnographic field research and musical study among the Jewish and Roma musicians in Eastern Europe.

Elizabeth Schwartz will teach the singers a brief history of Yiddish song and how Yiddish pronunciation is vital, but only as vital as the interpretation and performance of the song.

Workshop fee: \$25

**Yale Strom and HOT PSTROMI with guests Erev Rav**  
**Friday, January 4, 8 pm**  
**The Olympia Ballroom, Olympia**

KAOS 89.3FM and The Olympia Ballroom present: An Evening of Live Klezmer

On Vocalist Elizabeth Schwartz:

"It is her voice that captivated the audience. Schwartz's smoky tones could single-handedly revive the magic of Yiddish songs. Like the pied-piper, she draws you in to the nuances and beauty of the music."

—San Diego Jewish Journal

Tickets \$12.

**Apetite for Awesome 5**  
**Friday, January 4, 8 pm - 2 am**  
**El Corazon**  
**109 Eastlake Avenue East, Seattle**

Full cover sets of: Ramones, Jawbreaker, Descendents (finally), Saves The Day (first 2 records only), and Vanilla Muffins and other assorted Oi! classics.

All done by dudes in awesome bands like Devotion, The Loss, Theories, Trash Fire, Breag Naofa, Shook Ones, Heiress, Hollowpoints, Cover-age, and many many many more.

Doors at 8 and show around 9:30. Show is free and we will be collecting donations for Coffee Strong. <http://www.coffeestrong.org/>

**Meet and Greet the Washington State Legislators 2013**  
**Monday, January 14, 8 am - 6 pm**  
**Washington State Capitol, Olympia**

Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation is hosting an all day event and invites the citizens of Washington to gather at the Capitol to present the returning legislature with a set of legislative requests. Olympia FOR will be hosting a Climate Crisis Rally from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. We have more time available for other progressives groups and causes to join us and take a turn at the microphone. The people's legislative agenda is likely to include a Carbon Tax, GMO Safe Food legislation, a State Bank, a Coal Free WA Bill, and much more. Help us deliver the legislation to our elected representatives.

**Love our Local Winter edition**  
**Saturday, February 9**  
**Olympia Ballroom**  
**116 Legion Way SE, Olympia**

In the dark of winter come brighten your heart in the light of our radiant community as we remember the fun we shared in the streets last August and start to build energy for next summer.

1 pm-6pm: Open mic stage, skill sharing, service tabling, kids activities, and talented local crafter vending. This is a great opportunity to show your love of local and find some delightful Valentine's gifts for your sweetie.

7 pm - midnight: Evening will shift focus to local bands and a dance party. Vendors stay open as long they choose.

We need help to make this great. Please contact Marie Poland to see how you can participate, beforehand and/or day of. [buylocalss@gmail.com](mailto:buylocalss@gmail.com)

**Garage Sale—raises funds for Thurston-Santo Tomas Sister County Association**  
**Saturday, February 9, 9 am - 2 pm**  
**Lincoln Options**  
**213 21st Ave SE, Olympia**

Supports Thurston-Santo Tomas Sister County Association and Escuela Ruben Dario (Lincoln's Sister School).

### Charles Komanoff

*Talks About the Carbon Tax*

**Wed, February 13, 6 to 8 pm**  
**Traditions Fair Trade Café**

Charles Komanoff is director of the Carbon Tax Center in Washington, DC. He will join us via Skype, which gives us the opportunity to personally interact with him.

- Will it cut carbon emissions, or will people just pay extra to keep on emitting?
- Can the tax be structured so that it doesn't hit low-income people hard?
- Why do you think it will ever be adopted here in the US?

**Join us in a lively conversation!**

This event is sponsored by the Green Party of South Puget Sound. For questions, contact Janet at 360-232-6165 or [janetjordan@fastmail.fm](mailto:janetjordan@fastmail.fm).

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# The nightmare before Christmas

## Scenes from Black Friday at Walmart

Joseph Bullllington

The parking lot at Walmart is jammed with cars when we arrive. So are the side streets nearby and so are the grassy vacant lots between the streets out here in the industrial eastern fringes of Helena, Montana. It's around 8pm on the fourth Thursday in November, and the occasion is the opening of an annual sale called, now somewhat inaccurately, Black Friday.

"I can't believe it, but you were right about this," says my brother, shaking his head, as we pass under big banks of surveillance cameras and approach the front door. "You'll just be wandering around freezing your ass off in an empty parking lot," he said a couple hours ago, but he came with me anyway to see.

There's an ambulance idling by the curb out front, waiting to aid those injured in the plastic feeding frenzy. Seem insane yet, or maybe terrifying? No? Let's continue on inside....

"I'm not sure I can handle this right now," he mutters as we pass through the automatic doors and the entranceway which forces us into closer quarters with the herd of shoppers—the chute into the slaughterhouse.

2008: "Worker dies at Long Island Wal-Mart after being trampled in Black Friday Stampede." (New York Daily News, 11/28/2008)

2011: "LOS ANGELES (AP)—A woman trying to improve her chance to buy cheap electronics at a Walmart in a wealthy suburb spewed pepper spray on a crowd of shoppers and 20 people suffered minor injuries..."

(YahooNews, 11/25/2011)

2012: "2 shot at Florida Walmart over

parking space, police say."

(Fox News, 11/23/2012)

News clips from Black Fridays past and present....

The store is completely packed with people moving as fast in one direction as possible amid the chaotic clusters of other shoppers. The scene here isn't quite what I'd built up in my mind over years of hearing about "Black Friday," usually from a distance of at least 80 miles from the nearest Walmart or mall. It's not quite what I had patched together from internet headlines, rumors, and my mom's disgusted polemics: mile long lines outside the doors at midnight, shattered glass, and fatally trampled shoppers. No, this year Walmart and the other Black Friday hotspots—Target, Best Buy, etc.—have made some changes that reduce the risk of such inconveniences. After all, deaths and broken glass, fights and shootings, just aren't good PR for the busiest shopping day of the year—a day that many retailers count on to produce enough profits to make up for any losses in other quarters. A trampled body just brings the sick absurdity and the deranged logic of the event right out front for everyone to see. Apparently not enough to stop a surging human herd, a trampled body just might be enough to raise troubling questions to be pondered in dark hours in the days and months following the death. And these questions just aren't the type that it is profitable or safe, for places like Walmart, to have people contemplating.

So this year, Walmart has staggered sales out at two-hour intervals, as-

sumedly to reduce the number of people in the store at one time. From the panicked climax of the midnight sale, Walmart has sought to create several, more contained climaxes.

Perhaps the most significant change this year, though, is Walmart's decision to kick off its first "Black Friday" sale at 8pm on Thanksgiving Day.

Beginning "Black Friday" on Thanksgiving Thursday is not completely new. In 2010, Toys 'R' Us began its Black Friday sales at 10pm on Thanksgiving, and

Slowly and gently, they're sticking this thing deeper and deeper, toward the heart of the holidays as a killer doctor might ease the poison-bearing needle into the vein of a sleeping patient.

Walmart and many other stores did the same in 2011. Really, the 8pm sales, which were adopted by many other retailers, are just the next logical step towards the conclusion that Black Friday has always aimed at: that Thanksgiving and Black Friday become the same event, that Black Friday become an accepted and celebrated day in the long list of holidays that begins with Thanksgiving and marches through Christmas toward New Years, that a family shopping spree become as normal and expected as a big family dinner...

...It's a shopping shit show for the whole family! Bring Grandma and Grandpa, husband and wife! Bring the kids, boyfriend, girlfriend! It's a family activity, a chance to spend some quality time together...

...Slowly and gently, they're sticking this thing deeper and deeper, toward the heart of the holidays (if they ever had one, which is easy to doubt these days), as a killer doctor might ease the poison-bearing needle into the vein of a sleeping patient—with any luck, the victim will never even wake up. At any rate, it will be too late.

My brother and I split up, and I wander up and down the aisles of the vast store, overwhelmed, scribbling wild notes in my notebook, but too confused to know what I'm looking for.

The electronics department is mobbed, particularly around the iPod/iPad section—the volume increases exponentially as I approach the area. "I want a Nook for ninety bucks," says a middle-aged woman to explain why she is spending her night waiting in line in the electronics department at Walmart. She shrugs. "I'm with my daughter and my son-in-law," the woman says. "We had dinner and came down together... It's something you can do as a family. Why not get the best deals you can?"

A wall of flat screen TVs booms out in creepy unison: "Find the perfect gift for everyone on your list...sales on electronics starting at 10 o'clock. And don't forget to come back tomorrow at 5am for even more great prices!" I am jostled from my trance by a woman pushing through the crowd to get her sick friend into some open air.

The crowd the two women have just forced their way out of is the line for a particular flat screen TV, the name of which I have failed to note and don't remember. It is probably the most popular sale item in the store, and the line for this TV stretches hundreds of yards. It wraps itself up and down the aisles of the electronics department, around racks of clothes and past shelves of socks, and keeps going. These women were nearing the end of the long gauntlet when one was overwhelmed by dizziness.

Another woman in the tv line is here looking for Christmas presents. She came down with her family, she says,

gesturing widely with her hands to indicate that they are spread out around the store. I ask her if this shopping night makes the holiday better. "By buying presents they want, yeah" she says, but "we had to hurry dinner..."

Another woman waiting in line next to us interjects: "Next year we won't even have Thanksgiving...just go shopping," she says bitterly.

"Makes Thanksgiving almost not a real holiday," says the first woman, "just a shopping day."

I head toward the food section of the store but can't seem to escape the hysteria that has grown up around the electronics department: the line for that certain tv stretches back past a wall of cereal and cans of diced tomatoes, almost to the coolers of giant turkeys

wrapped in white plastic that line the eastern wall. Tonight, there were no crowds waiting in the icy parking lot for the doors to open—not here, where the doors never close and the bright fluorescent lights never turn off. Instead lines have formed around particular sale items and the counters that sell them.

Purchasing the most popular Black Friday products is not as easy as it may sound. It takes endurance, patience, and planning. And taking advantage of multiple deals at once takes complicated family coordination.

First of all, you've got to know where the product you want is located, so don't forget your special Walmart "map to Black Friday Savings!" Print out a copy at walmart.com or download it to your smart phone for on-the-go access! Or, if you forget, you can pick up a copy at the door when you arrive, but, let's be honest, by that point you've lost your competitive edge.

Next, you've got to commit yourself to the waiting. Better show up several hours early, stake out your spot. The really serious sale shoppers are impressively dedicated; they are in it for the long haul. Tonight at Walmart, many have brought folding chairs, bottles of water, pillows, and set up camp in the aisles. Who knows how long some of them have been here? Hours? All day?

I can't help but wonder to what other causes would people commit such effort and thought?

Walmart's plan to open its first sale at 8pm on Thanksgiving—a plan that insured that many employees would be forced to work through the holiday—sparked widespread calls for a Black Friday strike. The union-backed group OUR Walmart hoped a strike on this critical shopping day would draw attention to the low wages and benefits, bad working conditions, and bad schedules at Walmart. In several cities across the country, Walmart workers walked off the job at 8pm and set up picket lines outside. But not here, not in Helena, Montana. Here, the grapes of wrath have not yet ripened to a dangerous weight, and whatever anger resulted from being forced to work through Thanksgiving was expressed only as a kind of hidden resentment: as complaints exchanged in angry whispers between disgruntled employees behind the managers back; as unauthorized, anonymous comments to a kid-journalist stumbling bleary-eyed through the crowded aisles doing off-the-cuff interviews; as a general silent or quiet-grumbling surliness toward customers...

"If I didn't work here I'd be nowhere near here," a worker at the sporting goods counter mutters at a customer as I walk by.

"They asked everyone who possibly could to work tonight," says a young employee named Josh; "some people are complaining about it." He looks bored too—bored and tired, standing guard, arms folded, at the end on an aisle. "You know, it's pretty shitty. I'd rather be home with my newborn baby. It's my normal day off." He pauses. "But, hey, I like the extra pay."

That seems to be the common sentiment. **► BLACK FRIDAY**, continued on page 5

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# How a few West Olympia neighbors defeated the Bing Street Apartment project

## A how-to article on protecting your neighborhood from bad development

Carolyn Roos

On October 18 2012, Olympia city staff denied approval for the proposed “Bing Street Apartments”—a six-story 119-unit apartment building located in a neighborhood of one- and two-story single family homes and duplexes. Just six months before, approval of this car-spewing, shadow-casting behemoth seemed likely. We were a small group of neighbors who knew very little about community activism, city zoning, or the city planning and development process. Over several months, we have learned a lot and in retrospect it has been very interesting and rewarding. The biggest lesson is that codes and standards were written to protect citizens and the livability of our neighborhoods, but city staff may need “encouragement” in seeing that they are implemented as intended.

We offer the following tips and resources if you and your neighbors find yourself confronted with a proposed development that seems detrimental to your neighborhood.

### Connect with your neighbors and encourage action.

If you have information or see a sign posted about a land-use application, spread the news. Most of us found out about the proposal, not by the public notice, but through neighbors. City code requires that only property owners, and not tenants, within 300’ of the development site be notified and so many effected neighbors may not be informed. If Susan’s neighbor Brian, to whom she had spoken only once, hadn’t knocked on her door, she wouldn’t have known about the public meeting for this project. If I hadn’t received an email that came by way of another neighbor, I wouldn’t have known to write the city for more information.

But action is more important than number. Whether accompanied by others or not, each person who takes action matters. Our effort showed that even a small group of active people can make a difference.

### Interact with city staff for information about the project and to share your findings with them.

Question everything about the project: the land use approval process, and codes and standards in both email

and in-person meetings over the entire course of the process. Think of these meetings as informational, rather than confrontational. Besides the information exchange, it is important to show that citizens are concerned and paying attention. Be sure to keep managers and members of the City Council in the loop, even if you don’t receive responses from them.

Don’t be dissuaded if your concerns about issues that “don’t make sense” are dismissed. As an example from our case, the city planner initially assured us that the easements for ingress/egress (entrance/exit) to the site had been checked carefully and were found to be satisfactory. Yet it turned out there were incurable problems with the easements. Would these problems have been revealed if we hadn’t persisted with our questions? I, for one, doubt it.

- Connect with the Community Planning and Development (CP&D) planner assigned to the project and with the Public Works traffic engineer, the Public Works’ water resources engineer, and their managers. CP&D contact information is found at <http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/departments/community-planning-and-development>

### To gain tips, learn about previous citizen efforts.

We learned about the effectiveness of speaking at the City Council from Dan in his effort against the 7-11. When we started writing a draft appeal, we used the 7-11 appeal as a starting point.

- Learn about Dan Leahy’s successful effort against the Westside 7-11 proposal at Harrison and Division, <http://stop7eleven.wordpress.com/>
- Contact us for more information on our effort against the Bing Street Apartments: BuildGoodNeighbors@nwlink.com
- Contact your neighborhood association to find others. (<https://sites.google.com/a/olympianneighborhoods.org/www/about>)

### Start your investigation at the beginning.

Start your investigation of a land use proposal by examining the Design Review Application submitted by the developer. Make sure it includes everything it should and that all drawings and documents conform to city requirements. If the application is lacking, insist it be resubmitted. If not corrected before the land use decision, the first issue of appeal may be that the application is incomplete and should not even have been considered.

- Find city forms and brochures at <http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/departments/community-planning-and-development/forms-and-brochures-cpd#Land>.
- Checklists detailing requirements are available at <http://olympiawa.gov/city-services/building-permits-and-inspections/commercial-permits>

In our case, the design submitted for the Bing Street Apartments did not include all drawings required for the “Context Plan” and those that were submitted did not meet city requirements. Had a correct Context Plan been submitted, the Design Review Committee might have seen that the proposal did not meet code requirements regarding neighborhood scale and character. So

much time and effort could have been saved if we had just known to start here!

### Take advantage of public records requests.

Olympia’s city clerks are very helpful, thorough and diligent.

- Find instructions [on how to request public records] at <http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/public-records-requests>.
- Examples of documents that may be useful include:
  - list of parties of record,
  - email between the city and the developer and others,
  - studies and design documents submitted by the developer (e.g. traffic impact analysis, soils studies, storm water studies, SEPA Environmental Checklist),
  - the developer’s applications and all supporting documents and drawings,
  - the short plat of the property and the preliminary short plat approval, land surveys,
  - and easements.

As an example the usefulness of project documents, while pouring through old email between city staff and the developer we discovered an issue regarding the street standards that might have been “swept under the rug” if the developer himself hadn’t asked about it.

### Talk to the authors of the studies the developer submits.

The author of the soil study submitted for the Bing Street Apartment stated, when we asked, that he didn’t believe it was valid for this project. (It had been prepared for a different building on a different site.) We also compared the author’s version of the study to the version submitted by the developer and discovered an important map was missing in the developer’s version. Its absence proved revealing.

### Become familiar with codes, standards and the city’s comprehensive plan.

- National, state, and local construction codes in force in Olympia are summarized at <http://olympiawa.gov/city-services/building-permits-and-inspections/commercial-codes-2009>.
- Local codes and standards include Engineering Design and Development Standards, Olympia Municipal Code, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, Olympia’s Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines.

### Make sure you are a “party of record”.

If you communicate with the city by phone, email, or in person regarding a proposed development, your name [is supposed to] be added to a list of folks the city is required to keep informed. Only parties of record have the right to appeal a land use approval.

Make sure you are on that list. Write to the city with a request to be made a party of record and to be kept informed about the project. Your letter or email must include your address. Afterward do a public records request with the

city clerk asking for the list of parties of record for the project to ensure you are in fact on the list.

I requested to be party of record three times before I was successful—despite assurances that I was. Hence, initially I was not kept informed by the city and missed an important public meeting. Had I not spoken to a neighbor, I would not have learned that the project was proceeding and I might not have become involved in the effort to defeat it.

### Speak to the City Council and the City Manager at their Tuesday evening meetings.

- The “Procedure for Public Communication” is summarized at <http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/city-council-and-mayor/council-guidebook-and-procedures>
- Ask the City Council to direct the City Manager to ensure your issues are taken seriously by CP&D and that managers of CP&D exercise oversight.
- Take the opportunity to provide hand-outs—such as photographs, drawings or summaries—for both City Council members and the City Manager.

### Begin working on an appeal of a possible land use approval early.

You have only two weeks after the land use decision is made to submit an appeal, which is not [long] considering how detailed it needs to be. [To counter that limitation], you can use an early draft strategically prior to the decision.

- Deliver a draft to CP&D staff after you have developed good arguments, but well in advance of the Site Plan Review Committee decision
- Present your draft to the City Manager at a City Council meeting
- You can find the application outlining the requirements of an appeal at <http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/departments/community-planning-and-development/forms-and-brochures-cpd#Land>

WIP note: Too often people are unprepared to deal with the bureaucracy of government and expend a great deal of energy trying to learn the ins and outs. And then, when it’s all over, what they have learned is knowledge they may never need again.

Carolyn Roos has given us a great gift in writing what she and her neighbors experienced. Maybe you will never need this knowledge, but if you do, you’ll be ready (but only if you save this article). Tear it out and put it in a safe place, especially if you live in Olympia!

► **Black Friday**, cont. from page 4

ment of the night among both shoppers and employees: it’s pretty shitty but I like the extra money, the extra savings, the extra pay.

It turns out, though, that even talking to me at all is a small act of defiance because employees have been instructed not to talk to any kind of media. Most are willing to do an interview anyway, but the way they glance around before they talk is an indication that they aren’t supposed to. Others are more obedient:

“Hi, I’m a journalist...could I ask you a couple questions?”

“Well, hold on, I think you have to talk to a manager.”

“No, no I want to talk to you—”

“No. I have to ask...”

She ignores me and waits for a blue-vest to arrive. He shows up soon; his nametag says “Myles” and he introduces himself as a manager or supervisor or something like that. Combed

► **BLACK FRIDAY**, continued on page 11

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# Asking an atheist

## An interview with secular activist Sam Mulvey

Marco Rosaire Rossi

*Sam Mulvey is one of the producers and hosts for the radio show “Ask An Athiest” (KLAY 1180 AM or <http://askanatheist.tv/cast/>) and a secular activist in Washington state. He recently came to Olympia to do a presentation at Last Word Books on blasphemy laws and the Atheism Visibility Movement. Between his time as a radio host and board member for Humanists of Washington, Sam managed to answer a few questions I had for him about blasphemy laws, atheism, and the secular movement internationally.*

**Q:** You came to Olympia to talk about blasphemy laws. What are blasphemy laws, which countries have them, and why should we see them as threatening?

**A:** Blasphemy laws are censorship laws with a religious flavor. In secular countries, they are an attempt to restrict freedom of speech and impose a religious ideology on secular life. In theocratic countries, they are the tools of the trade for real and imagined thought police. There are obvious blasphemy laws, such as in Saudi Arabia, where Sharia law is *the* law and torture is used to obtain convictions, to more ecumenical implementations in places like Sweden, which attempts to avoid blasphemy of all kinds. But even closer to home, a number of U.S. states have blasphemy laws on the books, with the Pennsylvania law being used most recently in 2009.

**Q:** How do you address the argument that the purpose of blasphemy laws is to discourage religious intolerance? Defenders say such laws may be unnecessary in the secularized western world, but in other areas—where religious hatred is heighten—they are needed to keep the peace between different sects.

**A:** When religious ideology is used to perpetuate abuses of human rights, the proper response is intolerance. Invariably, when blasphemy laws are widely enforced, such laws protect the sensibilities of the abuser and nullify the rights of the abused. People who like to talk about the “secularized western world” forget how it came to be in the first place. The Enlightenment, which leads directly to our present age of secularism and scientific understanding, would not have occurred had the Catholic Church maintained its control over scientific and philosophical thinking. Modern enforcement of blasphemy, even under an ecumenical basis, will have chilling effects on free inquiry and

impede our ability to improve, both scientifically and morally. Also the west is often not all that secular: Up until 1978, the Church of Latter Day Saints claimed that black-skinned people suffered from the “Curse of Ham,” and were essentially flawed in the eyes of their god. In 1977, speaking against this would be blasphemous and risk ex-communication, even though they reversed course a year later. In Scientology, thinking or speaking against L. Ron Hubbard is considered tantamount to blasphemy and is punishable by assignment to the Rehabilitation Project Force, which is a very complex way of saying “illegal prison.” For many Americans, the world is 6000 years old and humans were created for the Garden of Eden. Contradiction of this narrative is considered blasphemous by many otherwise liberal Christians.

**Q:** Blasphemy laws have been receiving more attention in the news since the attack of the American embassy in Libya.

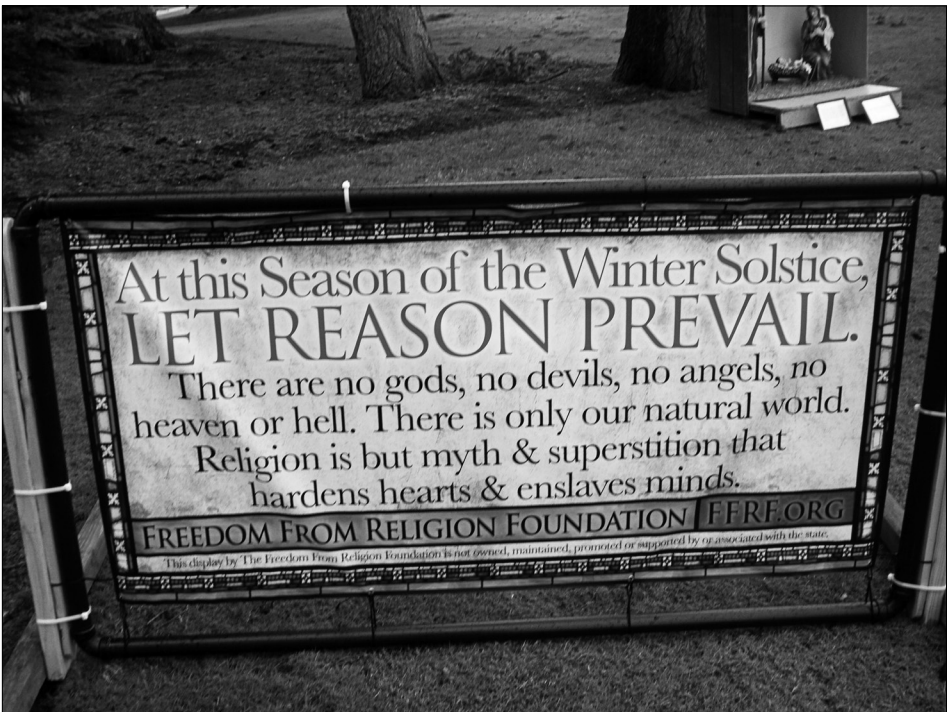
The Atheism Visibility Movement seeks to prove that atheists exist and aren’t inherently evil...we seek recognition and equal treatment, not conversion.

*What type of solidarity work do you think atheists and secularists can have for people in the Middle East?*

**A:** When we heard about “The Innocence of Muslims” and decided to talk about it on the show, we decided to do some research generally, and we were very surprised by what we saw. Around the world, human rights abuses in the name of stamping out blasphemy are not rare. They are endemic. Personally, I seek to keep the stories alive and in people’s minds. Right now, there is an Egyptian atheist by the name of Alber Saber in prison healing from a neck wound from someone trying to slit his throat. He is in prison because he did something on Facebook that I do every day as an atheism activist. The difference between Alber Saber and me is that I live in a country with the first amendment, and he lives in a country with well-defined and enforced blasphemy laws. If we can get people thinking and talking about the plight of Alber Saber and people like him, that will turn into purposeful action on the geopolitical stage.

**Q:** What do you see as the major difference between the atheist and secularist movement in the United States to the rest of the world? Is the situation in the United States at all unique?

**A:** In the US, we are lucky to have well established and liberally interpreted free speech and an intentionally secular government. On the other hand, we have a population that widely ignores the “secular government” part and scientific knowledge in general. There are a lot of things that we have trouble talking about in the US that are



Freedom From Religion Foundation banner at the state Capitol. Photo: Marco Rosaire Rossi

accepted without comment in other parts of the world. For every Ask an Atheist radio show there are a thousand religious radio shows that would claim that Charles Darwin was in league with the devil. In the UK, they put Charles Darwin on the money.

**Q:** Do you think that atheists and secularists need to form a more international movement to be more effective in their work?

**A:** I think the movement is very strong here, and it has to be if it’s going to thrive. The Atheism Visibility Movement is one of the first movements that grew on the internet as it grew in reality, and as a result it has a strong international

flavor. My show, which is essentially a regional show about atheism, has a 30% international listenership rate. As a result, I think the movement has a really strong international flavor to it—at least among Anglophone communities. I think we do very well on that score, but I think we could be doing a lot more to reach communities that don’t speak English. To that end, Ask an Atheist has episodes in Spanish, and we’ve had several episodes produced with an American Sign Language interpreter.

**Q:** You also came to Olympia to discuss the Atheism Visibility Movement. What is the Atheism Visibility Movement and why do you think it is important?

**A:** The Atheism Visibility Movement seeks to prove that atheists exist and aren’t inherently evil. We call it the Atheism Visibility Movement to accentuate the fact that we seek recognition and equal treatment, not conversion. Washington State is among the most secular regions of the nation, with the religiously unaffiliated approaching 20% of the population. Yet nearly every politician, liberal or conservative, will take any opportunity to slander us in order to court the religious vote. Traditionally, we’re a very safe group to castigate or ignore. We hope to change that.

**Q:** There is a lot of discrimination against atheists in the United States, but there is also a lot of discrimination against Muslims. Some have even accused the atheist movement of Islamophobia. Do you think that this accusation is fair?

**A:** The modern

phase of the movement began for many of us as a response to the 9/11 terror attacks, perpetrated by Muslim extremists. But the response of atheists driven to activism wasn’t to decry Islam for the sake of some other religion, but was to recognize that the extremist attack was a manifestation of religious extremism. It was inherently recognized that Islam is not the sole purveyor of extremists and religiously motivated violence. I think that when you’re Muslim living in a Christian substrate, you’re liable to view any critique of your religion as an attack from a privileged position, which would obviously lead to accusations of Islamophobia. It’s a sort of siege mentality that we sometimes share with Muslims. But to use blasphemy law to quell free speech is a way to perpetrate hate, not end it.

**Q:** Do you think it is possible for atheists and moderate Muslims to join forces on some issues? For example, could both groups join together to encourage greater tolerance for everyone?

**A:** It happens every day. Any time there’s a challenge to constitutional free speech rights in the United States the response will be diverse. The ACLU is a great example of that—one doesn’t need to be an atheist or a religionist in order to be a member of that organization. Only Christian conservatives, with a position of religious privilege, feel the need to set up a

► **SECULAR ACTIVIST**, continued on page 7

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► **Secular activist**, cont. from page 6  
counter organization in order to preserve their religious and political dominance. And while some well-meaning, liberally minded citizens like to think blasphemy laws protect the weak against the strong, blasphemy laws are more often penned and enforced by organizations like the ACLA (American Catholic Lawyers Association), not the ACLU.

*Q: An alliance between atheists and religious liberals does bring up some interesting questions. What do you see as the relationship between freedom of religion and freedom from religion, and why is this distinction important?*

A: We only have to talk about the distinction between “of” and “from” due to people looking to enforce a level of belief in the ridiculous. Hair style freedom includes bald. Economic freedom includes not buying. Freedom of assembly includes the right to be alone. Sexual freedom includes not having sex. Only in religion is this distinction considered valid by otherwise moral people.

*Q: A lot of websites and blogs have been busy the past few months discussing atheism plus (A+). What is the difference between regular atheism and atheism plus?*

A: Atheism doesn’t say much about us politically or philosophically. Atheism means, quite directly, “no god.” Lack of god or gods might say something about how we think about the tax status of churches or nativity scenes on public lands, but it doesn’t say anything about healthcare or civil rights generally. “Atheism +” is a name chosen by people who are atheists but who also hold a very pro-human-rights, relatively liberal worldview.

*Q: Is there really a difference between atheism plus and secular humanism—another rationalist movement that has attempted to deal with issues of social justice?*

A: Honestly, none I particularly care

## Working in WIP

*Works In Progress* depends on its community and its volunteer members. From articles written and advertisement bought to the final copy printed and delivered, it can’t be done without you.

**WRITERS’ GROUP:** WIP’s new group meets monthly to collaborate and provide mutual support.

**WEBSITE MANAGER:** WIP really needs a permanent website manager. Experience is desired but not necessary. We are willing to train. Commitment of no more than 2-3 hours each month.

**LAYOUT:** Looking for computer lit-

erate individuals with basic skills in InDesign. Commitment is during the week before the last Monday of the month. Take on as little or as much as you like.

*Q: Speaking of the movement’s political orientation, I know that the atheist movement has always worked against the pseudoscience of the religious right by battling things like creationism, the pro-life movement, climate change denial, etc... However, these days it seems that an equal amount of pseudoscience is coming from the left—irrational fears around GMOs, a belief that 9/11 was an inside job, a fetish for alternative medicine and organic agriculture, etc... Do you see the atheist movement as more orientated to one wing of the political spectrum over another—and how does it deal with pseudoscience from either end of the political spectrum?*

A: There are a lot of people in the movement who call themselves liberal, but there’s also a vibrant and active Libertarian arm. Atheism is one of a million subjects that the American political duality doesn’t really describe particularly well. Since politically

erate individuals with basic skills in InDesign. Commitment is during the week before the last Monday of the month. Take on as little or as much as you like.

**PROOFREADING:** Relax in the Lacey Timberland Library while you read the latest issue of WIP. This is an important role that only requires a two-hour monthly commitment.

**GRAPHICS/PHOTOGRAPH:** WIP can always use one more. Please consider submitting your work.

**PHOTO WRANGLER:** WIP is looking for someone to collect photos and prepare them for publication.

For those interested, please contact us at [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com).

-oriented pseudoscience tends to come from the same kinds of thinking, regardless of affiliation, we have to deal with it in the same way: rhetoric backed by clear scientific proof, and honesty about the quality of the proof. As you’ve noticed, the modern atheism movement is largely rationalist and largely skeptical. And by skeptical, I don’t mean the confirmation bias disguised as skepticism in the anti-vaccination and anti-GMO movements.

*Q: I was listening to some of your past podcasts and I was really intrigued by the debate between Greg Epstein and PZ Meyers about the merits of militant atheism versus a more accommodating atheism. Do you think that this is a serious debate or merely a difference in tactics?*

A: I think using the word “militant” when we talk about atheism is really dishonest and misleading. Militant Christians murder doctors for performing necessary

surgical procedures. Militant Muslims murder ambassadors working to bring peace to war torn areas. Militant animal rights activists bomb labs. Militant atheists talk about how they feel. I’ve had a real hard time finding a place in this debate, but it’s mostly a tactical difference. I’m in the unfortunate position of favoring a middle path. I’m not only an atheist. I’m what we call an anti-theist. I think religious dogma is the favored armor of bigotry and terror, and the sooner we’re without it the better we’ll be. However, I’m not so blind that I think we’ll enter a magical utopia the moment religion ends, but it will be a huge step on the way towards honesty with ourselves and the kind of free world most of us want to live in. But does that make every Catholic a crusading barbarian? Of course not! The Christian bible condones slavery, rape, and pretty much everything else listed in the Geneva Conventions, as long as said acts are committed under the auspices of their god. But most people who believe in that book will be intolerant of such behavior, and sometimes actively fight against it. As far as I’m concerned, that makes them fine people, worthy of my time and my respect, and they’re much better than their religions. Religions don’t earn my respect, but religious people do. It’s a difficult path to forge.

*Q: What do you think is the most important thing the atheist movement can do today?*

A: It is getting the previous statement across. In the United States, I think we need to become more politically active as well.

*Marco Rosaire Rossi is a graduate of the University for Peace in Costa Rica, and a former resident of Olympia.*

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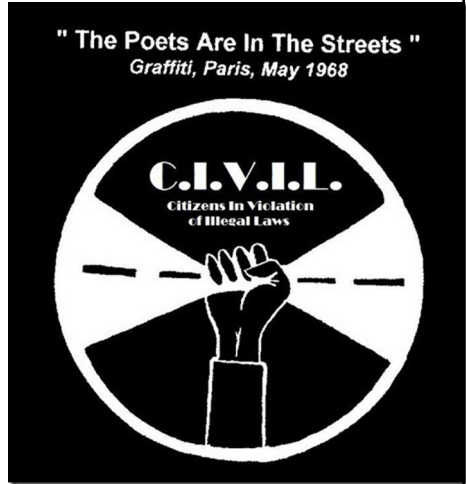
## A C.I.V.I.L. call to action

Last Tuesday I suffered through the disgusting experience of listening to several disgusting Olympia City Council members cry disgusting crocodile tears over their concern for the homeless even as they were passing a disgusting and reprehensible law further criminalizing, degrading, and endangering our homeless population.

Especially disgusting was the city manager Steve Hall, infamous for his quote in the Olympian, “It makes people uncomfortable to have to step over people who are sleeping on the sidewalk.”

Mr. Hall expressed no concern over the discomfort experienced by those who are sleeping on the sidewalk.

CIVIL has taken note and plans action. If you would like to participate



in direct action to counter these disgusting people, contact CIVIL on Facebook.

—Dana Walker



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**Chained Consumer Price Index cuts Social Security benefits and raises taxes on the middle class**

Washington, DC – A leading deficit reduction proposal is to “tweak” the official inflation measure used to annually adjust Social Security benefits, other government programs, and income tax brackets. Proponents of this proposal argue that a relatively new inflation measure, the Chained CPI, is more accurate than the current index and the decrease in benefits to the programs affected would be balanced by increased tax revenue from the wealthy. A new issue brief from the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) examines these issues and finds the opposite to be true.

The issue brief, “The Chained CPI: A Painful Cut in Social Security Benefits and a Stealth Tax Hike,” points out that switching to the Chained CPI would result in cuts to already modest Social Security benefits. As well, the Chained CPI is likely not an accurate measure of the inflation rate seen by seniors. Finally, the brief shows that the Chained CPI would result in a proportionately larger increase in income taxes for lower- and middle-income Americans than for those in the top tax brackets.

As a measure of inflation, the Chained CPI has shown a rate of inflation 0.3 percentage points lower than the current index used to calculate Social Security annual cost-of-living adjustments. This slower rate would add up over time: 10 years after switching to the Chained CPI, Social Security benefits would be 3 percent less; after 20 years there would be a 6 percent cut; and after 30 years the cut would be 9 percent. The change to the Chained CPI would also cut benefits for veterans, low-income children, people with disabilities and many others who rely on government programs.

Since seniors’ expenses differ from those of the general population, the Chained CPI is not a more accurate measure of inflation for retirees, as is often claimed by proponents of switching indexes. An experimental elderly index constructed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics tracks seniors’ actual costs and shows a more rapid rate of inflation than the currently-used index. A main factor is that seniors spend significantly more on housing and medical care, whose costs are rising faster than those of other goods and services.

“The Bureau of Labor Statistics’ experimental elderly index more accurately tracks the consumption patterns of the elderly, and it shows that inflation for seniors is actually higher, not lower, than the current measure,” said Nicole Woo, Director of Domestic Policy at CEPR. “If accuracy is indeed a concern, the BLS could construct a full elderly index for annual Social Security cost-of-living adjustments.”

The argument that a reduction in benefits would be offset by an increase in tax revenue from high-income earners also falls short. Switching to the Chained CPI to adjust annual income tax brackets would lead to incomes jumping to higher brackets faster, or in other words, tax increases. Congress’ bi-partisan Joint Committee on Taxation showed that if income taxes were indexed to the Chained CPI starting in January of 2013, by 2021, 69 percent of the gains in revenue would come from taxpayers with incomes below \$100,000. Those taxpayers with incomes between \$10,000 and \$20,000 would see an increased tax burden of 14.5 percent while those with incomes over \$1,000,000 would only see their taxes go up by 0.1 percent.

—CEPR

*The Center for Economic and Policy Research is committed to presenting issues in an accurate and understandable manner so the public is better prepared to choose among various policy options.*

# Revolutionary Lessons: A look back at some of our founding fathers

Dana Walker

To quote George Orwell: “He who controls the past controls the present.”

The story that we tell ourselves about who we are is very important. Telling the American Story is somewhat problematic due to the fact that basically our ancestors stole an entire continent by conducting a ruthless genocidal slaughter upon the native inhabitants and then enslaving millions of other people to do most of the hard work. The fact that this has been turned into a noble and glorious accomplishment is a great credit to American propagandists.

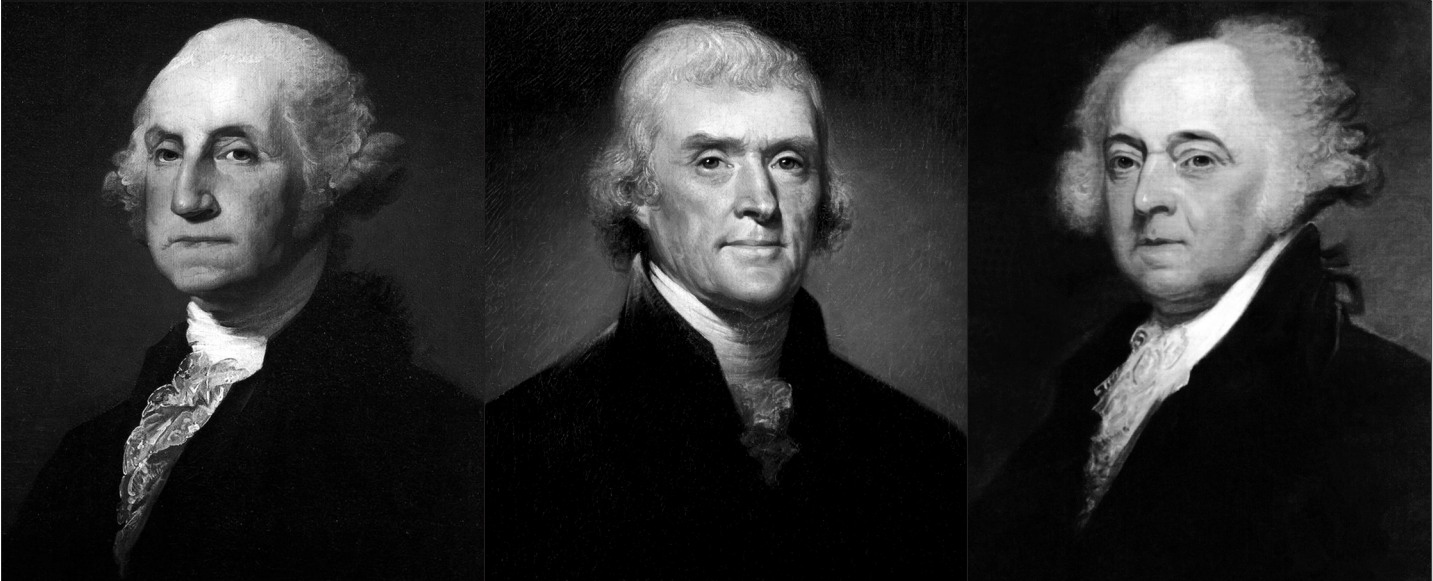
I think that in order to become what we can be we need to be honest about where we have been. I think we should

luxury meals while his troops starved. He often yelled at and beat enlisted men and he executed all deserters. After the war the government ripped off all the soldiers and when they returned home they discovered that while they had been freezing the front of their backsides at Valley Forge, Hamilton’s bankster buddies had been stealing all their homes and throwing their families out onto the streets. These outrages culminated in Shay’s Rebellion, which was brutally suppressed.

During the Whiskey Rebellion Washington personally led American troops not only against American citizens but against veterans who had endured insanity to win Washington’s revolution for him. This was the only instance in our history wherein a president person-

However: Once the United States was up and running it turned out that their visions of what the country should be were utterly and diametrically opposed: Jefferson was an anarchist whilst Adams was a fascist; Jefferson was the pastoral farmer whilst Adams was a capitalist industrialist; Jefferson was the utopian dreamer whilst Adams was the practical Realpolitik guy; Jefferson believed humanity was good at heart and able to take care of themselves whilst Adams thought they were evil and needed an iron fist lest they get out of hand. During his administration Adams actually made it illegal to criticize him and then threw numerous newspaper editors into prison for doing so. Boo.

Adams and Jefferson became near-mortal enemies during the election of



George Washington (Rembrandt Peale), Thomas Jefferson (Rembrandt Peale), and John Adams (Asher B. Durand)

acknowledge the good *and* the bad. This theory may be wrong but I think honesty is usually the best policy. This is why I am an iconoclast. This is why I gut sacred cows with such enthusiasm.

The American Revolution was indeed quite revolutionary for its time; those people took serious risks and they created not only a political revolution but they radically altered the very philosophy underlying the relations between government and the people.

As brilliant and as radical as the Founding Fathers were, though, their hypocrisy was also astonishing. The creator of the phrase “all men are created equal” owned human slaves. Jefferson constantly prattled on about how he didn’t have political ambitions and that he would much rather be at Monticello pursuing knowledge and that he served only at the insistence of his peers and that he served strictly for the good of the country.

Thomas Jefferson said and wrote some of the coolest shite that has ever been said and written in all human history and he possessed a genius that was *sui generis*—but Jefferson was also one of the most effective cutthroat back stabbers (i.e., one of the most accomplished politicians) in all human history. To be fair, at that time and place all the politicians said similar such poodlia and most of them were almost equally cutthroat and almost equally hypocritical, so evidently it was just standard practice at the time—but whatever. The American Revolution was largely American aristocrats hiring American rabble to fight hired British rabble so American aristocrats could stop being ripped off by the East India Company. The horrific treatment meted out to the “Loyalists” (i.e. the 30% of the population who thought that splitting from England might not be such a hot idea) was unforgivable. During the Revolution George Washington lived in decadent comfort while his troops froze. He ate catered

ally led troops in the field—and it was against American veterans.

One prop I will give to George Washington: As far as I can figure, George Washington was the first head-of-state to ever voluntarily give up power. When Washington had announced he would be voluntarily relinquishing power by retiring as President his nemesis King George III stated that Washington was “placed in a light the most distinguished of any man living,” and was “the greatest character of the age.”

After a bruising down-and-dirty mud-slinging election in 1800 that makes

**Most people know that shortly after assuming the vice-presidency Aaron Burr shot and killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel—which means Dick Cheney was not the first sitting vice-president to shoot somebody.**

our modern elections seem gentile and modest by comparison, Thomas Jefferson and his acolytes James Madison and James Monroe used their velvet-covered iron Virginia fists to grasp control of the executive branch of the American government for the next 24 years. At the time it seemed as if the Jeffersonian Anarchist/Farmer/Agrarian Vision of America had won out over the Hamiltonian Fascist/ Industrial/ Banking Vision of America.

Dream on.

One of the most fascinating exchanges between public officials that I have ever checked out was the correspondence that occurred betwixt Thomas Jefferson and John Adams during the waning years of their lives.

Back story: During the Revolution Adams and Jefferson had been friends. Adams was something of a mentor to Jefferson; it was Adams who had drafted Jefferson to write the Declaration of Independence.

1800—possibly the dirtiest and foulest election in our history—and when Jefferson won Adams didn’t even stick around long enough to attend Jefferson’s inaugural and swearing in ceremony.

They didn’t speak for over 12 years.

In yet another irony the Virginia Junta was not dislodged until the election of 1824—and the victor in that contest was John Adams’ son: John Quincy Adams.

Anyway, in 1812 Adams contacted Jefferson and thus began an historic correspondence between the two that is very illuminating. They mostly discussed their mutual invention, the United States. Both men obviously had the ulterior motive of putting the American Revolution “on the record” so to speak—but it is also obvious that they both felt a very powerful personal desire to justify each to the other, for Adams and Jefferson were almost literally the Odd Couple. However, one conclusion they both readily acknowledged was that each of them was incomplete without the other and that they were two faces of the same coin. One observer had called them “the North and South Poles of the American Revolution.” Both Jefferson and Adams were off-the-hook in their various, very different manners but they actually balanced each other very nicely—and in the end they were both smart enough to realize it.

But whatever else you want to say about them just remember this: More than anyone else it was John Adams and Thomas Jefferson who were the central driving force behind the writing of the Declaration of Independence and signing that document was a very serious thing. An alarmingly large number of the signers ended up losing everything they had as a result of their act. Seventeen of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration, for instance, were financially wiped out by the war that they had declared and they ended up

► **REVOLUTIONARY**, continued on page 9



► **Revolutionary**, cont. from page 8  
dying in poverty. Four of them lost all of their children as a result. Every single one of them eventually had to flee their homes at one point or another, and after the war twelve of them returned to find only rubble.  
And so on.

Had England won all of the survivors would very likely have faced execution. These guys were placing very large bets and taking a very large risk and they deserve props for that.

Anyway, of all the Founding Fathers and of all the signers of the Declaration of Independence Jefferson and Adams were also destined to become the last two survivors.

Then—incredibly—they not only both died on the same day, but—incredibly—the day they both died was July 4th 1826, which was—incredibly—the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Incredible.  
(Who says that magic doesn’t happen?)

As foul as I consider such a large portion of the American Experiment to be even I must admit that there was some pretty radical magic going on in those days. At the time the Constitution was *sui generis*; this was as radical as it got.

And at least, until recently, it has more-or-less survived.

~~~~~  
And one more little observation: It is rumored that Adam’s dying words were, “Jefferson yet lives!”

If so, then that meant this was Adams’ very last concern. If so, then that meant it was very likely it seriously bugged Adams that Jefferson was surviving him.

Keep in mind: For the rest of their adult lives, the United States had been ruled by the Jeffersonian Vision. (John Quincy had been in office only just over a year at the time of their deaths.) Jefferson was considered to be a hero while Adams was considered something of an embarrassment.

Now—even in the Great Final Gameit appeared as if Jefferson had even beaten him on that ground.

And the “joke” in all of this of course is the fact that—in yet another example of pure and magical irony—Jefferson had actually ended up dying a few hours before Adams did. Thus, in the end Adams did achieve his final concern: He did survive Jefferson.

He just never knew it.  
Jefferson’s dying concern was whether or not it was the Fourth of July yet. When informed that it was indeed the Fourth of July he then promptly died.

On his way out I can imagine Mr. Jefferson smiling to himself and saying, “Cool. I did good. I’m done. Good bye.”  
~~~~~

Another player in this game was Aaron Burr. Mr. Burr was one of Washington’s soldiers at Valley Forge and Mr. Burr was probably involved in the Conway Cabal, which was an effort to replace Washington as commanding general; for in addition to being an arrogant classist asshole Washington was also probably one of the worst generals to ever win a war—and actually the French won the American Revolution anyway so saying that Washington won it isn’t even accurate to begin with. During the few instances where Washington actually stopped running away from the British long enough to stand and fight then he got his ass kicked nearly every time—or rather his troops got their ass kicked nearly every time. The troops of other American generals such as Horatio Gates and Charles Lee actually won most of their battles—but, while they were accomplished generals, Gates and Lee were lousy politicians; they called two-faced jerks two-faced jerks and since most politicians were two-faced jerks, Gates and Lee suffered in the public relations department as a result. Washington, on the other hand, had the politics down; he flattered and kissed all the proper rear-ends and made all the proper “friends” and thus came out on top in the end.



Alexander Hamilton (John Trumbull), Theodosia Burr (John Vanderlyn), and Aaron Burr (John Vanderlyn)

John Adams and Alexander Hamilton were political allies but they loathed each other personally. Both of those things can also be said about Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. Political enemies Jefferson and Hamilton often commiserated with each other over their mutual loathing of Aaron Burr as did political enemies Jefferson and Adams over their mutual nemesis Hamilton.

After months of vicious vile mudslinging, the incredibly foul election of 1800 resulted in ostensible allies Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr tied with 73 electoral votes each. Ironically, this left the decision of who would be the next president to the House of Representatives, which was, at this point, still under the control of the now lame-duck Federalist Party, who were thus tasked with choosing which Democratic-Republican enemy would assume the presidency. Both candidates were utterly loathsome to the Federalists. For almost a week—from February 11th to the 17th 1801—the House cast a total of 35 ballots with both Jefferson and Burr receiving just shy the number of the votes needed to win.

During the contest Hamilton recommended to his fellow Federalists that they support Jefferson as he was “by far not so dangerous a man” as Burr was.

Hamilton was destined to find out just how dangerous Burr was.

Then Jefferson and Burr engaged in some sort of deal whereby Burr would whisper in the proper New England ears to allow Jefferson to win in exchange for some unknown future consideration; most think that Jefferson promised some kind of support for something at some future time but no one ever really kissed or told on that one so it is murky.  
~~~~~

Aaron Burr was an ambitious politician, not much better and not much worse than any of the others, but his name became shrouded in controversy. Of all the rogues who gave us our country, Burr has always been one of my favourites due partly to his controversial nature and also due to several other things. He was a feminist for one thing.

Most people know that shortly after assuming the vice-presidency, Aaron Burr shot and killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel—which means Dick Cheney was not the first sitting vice-president to shoot somebody.

However, most don’t know that the reason Burr called Hamilton out was because Hamilton had publicly conjectured that Burr was having sex with his daughter, Theodosia Burr.

Burr’s beloved wife had died in 1793 and he never remarried until much later in life. During the period in question his daughter Theodosia became Burr’s social secretary, hostess, and confidante. Burr had educated his daughter in a manner almost completely unprecedented at the time and she could keep up with even the likes of Jefferson on many topics. Theodosia was always at Burr’s side and he trusted her with every aspect of everything that was happening during these very intense and exciting times. The one comment that everyone who knew them made was that Aaron and Theodosia Burr very obviously

adored each other.

It seems probable that this situation was at least partly responsible for Hamilton’s erroneous and fatal conjecture about the nature of their relationship; at that time and place and under the Code of Honour by which these men lived, calling out Hamilton for his egregious slander was Burr’s only possible recourse. Burr won the duel but he lost his career; Hamilton became a martyr while Burr was condemned lied about and vilified. The reason for the duel was not widely known, and Burr didn’t want it widely known, so the Hamilton/Burr duel was widely considered to be the simple elimination of a political rival by foul means.

After the duel, Jefferson not only squelched on whatever deal he had made with Burr, but he later had Burr railroaded on a totally fabricated, bullpucky charge of ‘treason’ because after his ostracism Burr had gone to Tennessee whereupon he planned to act upon a plan to raise an army whereupon he planned to invade Mexico whereupon he planned to make himself the Emperor of Mexico whereupon he planned to ally himself with the United States. He figured that the good guys (i.e. English white people) would then have dominion over a goodly chunk of the entire continent.

This plan was squelched when Jefferson suborned perjury and manufactured evidence in an effort to prosecute Burr for treason by alleging that Burr

was raising this army in order to invade the United States. It was completely preposterous and everyone who knew Burr understood that he was not stupid enough to do such a thing even if he had any such inclination in the first place—which he didn’t—and, even though Burr was eventually acquitted of all charges, Jefferson’s move utterly destroyed any political ambitions that ambitious rival Aaron Burr might still possess.

Badda BOOM!  
In 1801 Theodosia married and became Theodosia Burr Alston and in 1812 a ship that she was on disappeared at sea without a trace. Many legends grew up around this happenstance and this is an interesting story in and of itself.

Aaron Burr ended up surviving until 1836—thus outliving all of his rivals by a goodly amount—and he spent his waning years living as something of a gigolo, hustling rich widows, and enjoying the life of a celebrity bon vivant.

Thus, after his fall from grace and after recovering from the loss of his beloved daughter, Aaron Burr, at least, seemed to enjoy the rest of his life.

*Dana Walker spent 28 years traveling all over North America, 6 years in a federal prison (ostensibly for marijuana; in actuality for refusing to sell his friends to the feds), and 3 1/2 years in Olympia hurling verbal barrages of sarcasm at the Machine. He is currently a Real Change vendor and a caretaker at Media Island. He is also the author of numerous novels and a radical bi-weekly political newsletter.*

## OLYMPIA POLICE CONTINUES BATTLE AGAINST “WILD” MUTE MAN’S RIGHT TO COMMUNICATE

Thanks to the sage judgments of our (elected) County Prosecutor, John Tunheim, and his sidekick Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, J. Andrew Toynbee, the long-winded saga of State of Washington vs. Scott Andrew Yoos *continues* to slog-on through the courts!

Scott, (as you may remember from previous episodes), is a harmless WIPworker, who helps edit and distribute this fine paper (as well as volunteering with several other worthy causes in the Olympia community). He is also mute.

On the night of June 1, 2011, Scott was cycling home to his humble trailer in Lacey. He briefly stopped to dispose of a small bag of paper napkins at an open Dumpster en route, and was promptly stopped and challenged by an officer of the OPD. When Yoos responded to his inquiries with sign language, Officer Wilson called for reinforcements. Three other cops swiftly sped to the scene (in three different vehicles). It was swiftly determined that Scott represented some grave danger, so the “boys in blue” roughly tore his bicycle from him, and tackled him to the ground. Utilizing a sadistic assortment of “pain compliance holds”, Mr. Yoos was

violently arrested and brought to the city jail, where he was held for a couple of hours, then released and told to return to court later that same morning. With the vital help of friends and supporters within this community (and nationwide), Scott has been fighting this travesty of justice for approaching two years now. Most recently, a Motion Hearing was held on December 19, at the Thurston County Courthouse.

The pre-trial motion to dismiss was heard by Judge Christine Pomeroy, retired, pro-tem. Scott took the stand for nearly two hours of the hearing’s more than 3 hours, which has been continued to February 2013. (The exact date has yet to be determined.) The defense will then have a chance to re-direct and then the prosecution will have an opportunity to call its witnesses from the scene.

Please take an occasional look at: <http://www.scottysupport.blogspot.com> and/or “Scott Yoos Ldf” on Facebook, for the latest news and updates in this long-struggle towards civil/disability rights.

May 2013 be a year of new-found, long-deserved JUSTICE!  
—Scott Yoos Legal Defense Fund

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► **Climate Crisis**, cont. from page 1  
slows the jet stream winds and increases their waviness in the north/south direction. This may shift weather patterns across the Northern Hemisphere. Less ice may weaken and shift the jet stream, causing it to hold storms, dry spells and heat waves in place so that they pound a single location for days, weeks, or months. According to Sam Carana, from the Arctic Methane Emergency Group, warming in the Arctic changed the jet stream, and the altered jet stream was what forced Hurricane Sandy to move inland, to spread out and to hang around for a long time.

Arctic warming is also melting permafrost across Alaska and Siberia faster than models had predicted. Vast areas of permanently frozen ground in Russia, Canada, and Alaska are beginning to thaw, releasing carbon dioxide and methane that has been locked in the subsoil for thousands of years. A report from the UN Environment Programme released for the conference in Doha, warns that warming permafrost could release the equivalent of between 43 and 135 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2100. Thawing permafrost also releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas, which, in the short term, has twenty-five (25) times more impact on temperature than CO<sub>2</sub>. The release of greenhouse gases from the permafrost is another positive feedback loop, since they increase warming, which in turn, melts more permafrost and releases more CO<sub>2</sub> and methane. Scientists worry that if the Arctic con-

tinues warming, methane will escape, not only from thawing terrestrial permafrost but from methane hydrates on shelf margins in the ocean.

Sea Levels

Sea levels worldwide are now about a foot higher than a century ago largely because of global warming. But no one anticipated the rapidity with which sea level has continued to rise. In 2002, the

The cumulative level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere reached a new record high in 2011, as reported in WMO’s Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. “These billions of tons of additional carbon dioxide in our atmosphere will remain there for centuries, causing our planet to warm further and impacting on all aspects of life on earth.”

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicted an annual sea-level rise of less than 2 millimeters per year. But from 1993 through 2006, the oceans actually rose 3.3 millimeters per year, more than 50 percent above that projection. Using satellite imaging, a large group of polar research teams recently concluded that melting of the polar ice sheets has contributed about one-fifth of the overall global sea level rise since 1992; the other major contributor to sea level rise is seawater expansion due to global warming. Supported by

US and European space agencies, the research brought together data from satellites measuring the surface altitude, the flow of the glaciers and the gravitational effect of the ice mass to produce the first joint assessment of how the ice sheets are changing. Although East Antarctica has gained mass over the study period of 1992-2011 as increased snow fall has added to its volume, Greenland, West Antarctica and the Antarctic Peninsula have lost mass—and on a scale that more than compensates for East Antarctica’s gain.

After Hurricane Sandy, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) warned that sea levels will continue to rise. NOAA sees a greater than 90% chance that global mean sea level will rise at least 8 inches (0.2meters) but less than 6.6 feet (2.0 meters) by 2100. Most climate scientists, including Rahmstorf and Caldeira, have been convinced for several years that the increase in sea level by the end of the century will be more than 3 feet (assuming

that no serious measures are taken to reduce heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions.) James Hansen is the leading spokesperson for the view that the ice sheets in Greenland and parts of Antarctica are unstable and may break down in a rapid non-linear manner in global warming conditions, causing very large levels of twenty-first century sea level rise. Rapid non-linear ice sheet disintegration has happened in past warming periods. About 14,000 years ago, sea level rose about 20 m in approximately 400 years—an average of 1 m of sea level rise

► **Imprisoned**, cont. from page 1  
This is unlikely however since US attorneys are still required to follow sentencing guidelines which direct them to use a penalty most analogous to the crime in question.

Gordon elaborated, “My understanding is that the penalty for Matt could also depend upon the length of the potential sentence for the crime(s) that are being investigated. The more severe the penalty for the crime he is refusing to help them investigate, the more severe the penalty for criminal contempt.”

The sentencing time for criminal contempt can vary widely based on these guidelines: In 2010, animal-rights activists Jordan Halliday was sentenced for 10 months in prison with 3 years probation for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating the release of mink from farms by the Animal Liberation Front. But in another instance in 2007, Palestinian activist Abdelhaleem Ashqar was sentenced for 11 years and 3 months for not complying with a grand jury. Ashqar’s penalty was magnified because the government argued that his refusal to supply information aided terrorism by inhibiting a federal investigation into the activities of Hamas. On the other hand, Halliday was indicted with less severe charges of obstruction of justice and “substantial interference with the function of the judicial system.”

What’s next for the Pacific Northwest grand-jury resisters?

Although criminal contempt charges are a possibility for the Pacific Northwest grand-jury resisters, the likelihood that this will occur is still unclear.

“I can’t read the tea leaves about whether the government will pursue criminal contempt charges,” Jenn Kaplan, attorney for Kteeo wrote in an email. Although the judge warned Kteeo of the prospect of criminal contempt, Kaplan says the government “hasn’t overtly threatened it.”

Emily Langlie, a spokesperson for the US Attorney’s Office in Seattle, refused

to comment about the potential of criminal contempt charges.

“I would not be in a position to comment on what’s happening in that case,” Langlie said with a twinge of annoyance, and directed me to official statements about how the US Attorney’s Office cannot comment on grand jury proceedings



since they are by law, secret.

Adding to the uncertainty, the three witnesses are being held in custody despite the fact that someone has already pled guilty to the crime allegedly being investigated.

In June, Cody Ingram, a 23-year old homeless man, was sentenced with time served and \$500 in restitution after pleading guilty to damaging the federal courthouse at the May Day protest. He was imprisoned for six weeks; by now, both Kteeo and Matt have served double that time. If charged with criminal contempt, that prison time would not necessarily count towards their final penalty. (Case in point: animal-rights activist Jordan Halliday was sentenced time for criminal contempt after he already had been in custody for four months for civil

contempt.)

Meanwhile, Larry Hildes, attorney for another grand-jury resister Dennison Williams, worried that his client could be the target of the grand-jury investigation. Williams is another Portland activist who served with a subpoena that was later withdrawn for unknown reasons.

“Either they’ve decided there is no reason to have him appear, because they don’t think he’s got anything that’s useful to them... or he’s the target of the investigation. We know that Kteeo was asked about him.”

Given the secrecy of grand juries, the government isn’t obliged to provide Hildes or any of the attorneys with information about why their client was subpoenaed or how long they could be held in custody.

“It’s hard to tell what [the grand jury] is up to. I mean it’s never good,” Hildes laughed sarcastically, “but it’s hard to tell what it is.” Hildes, along with several supporters I spoke with, are worried that there will be a new round of subpoenas.

Whatever happens next in the grand jury cases, supporters say they’ll continue to stand in solidarity with the grand-jury resisters. And despite the palpable sense of fear within the local activist community, there’s a parallel current of defiance and solidarity.

“Our movements are just growing stronger,” Matt’s partner Max Fernandez argued when I asked her how the grand jury was affecting the activist community. “When political repression is heightened, that’s a sign that we’re doing something right...their goal is to get us to stop organizing, to stop resisting, and we don’t intend on doing that.”

*Marissa Luck is a freelance journalist and regular contributor to Works in Progress. When not reporting on local issues, she works as a content director at a web-design firm. Marissa graduated from Evergreen with an emphasis in political economy and international studies. Contact her via Twitter @marissaluck7 or email marissaluck7@gmail.com.*

Photos of Maddy Pfeiffer courtesy of No Political Repression.

every 20 years. Hansen describes the glacier disintegration required for delivery of that much water from the ice sheets as “explosive.” Although Hansen’s view is the minority view at this time, there is not enough data to disprove it.

Future sea-level rise, like the recent rise, is not expected to be globally uniform—some regions will have a sea-level rise substantially more than the global average (in many cases more than twice the average), and others a sea level fall. Whatever the rate of sea level rise, it could cause catastrophic difficulties for shore-based communities, including major cities, like London, New Orleans and New York. A sea level rise of just 200 mm could create 740,000 homeless people in Nigeria, the Maldives, Tuvalu and other low-lying countries. The UN’s environmental panel has warned that, at current rates, sea level would be high enough to make the Maldives uninhabitable by 2100.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

By far the most troubling data to be released recently though, comes from several studies which show continued

► **CLIMATE CRISIS**, continued on page 11

A little background on the grand jury

Since grand juries are secret by law, the government cannot disclose information about their proceedings. According to statements from the US Attorney’s Office however, this grand jury is investigating damage of the William Kenzo Nakamura U.S. Courthouse that occurred at the May Day protests in Seattle earlier this year by a group of “black bloc” protesters. But temporarily unsealed documents obtained by The Seattle Times have revealed that the FBI and Joint Terrorism Task Force were monitoring a group of activists prior to the May Day rally. And when Portland activists were subpoenaed to appear before the grand jury, the search warrant included instructions to look for “anti-government and anarchist literature or material.” This has lead many observers to argue that the grand-jury investigation is politically motivated with the intent to gather information and intimidate local leftist groups rather than charge someone with a specific crime. Subpoenaed activists Matt Duran and Katherine “Kteeo” Olejnik have refused to cooperate with the grand jury based on these arguments.

“For me choosing to resist a grand jury is about freedom of speech and association—I cannot and will not be a party to a McCarthyist policy that is asking individuals to condemn each other based on political beliefs,” Kteeo wrote in a statement published on the website of a support group called the Committee Against Political Repression.

The government rejects characterizations that the grand jury is politically motivated. “We do not investigate or seek to silence lawful free speech, or dissent,” reads a statement from the US Attorney’s Office. “We do, however, investigate and enforce the law where speech crosses the line and becomes threats or acts of violence. In other words, no one is investigated for what they believe; investigations focus on actions that constitute a crime.” (It’s important to note that neither Kteeo or Matt were present at the May Day rally when the alleged crime occurred.)

Although Kteeo and Matt have continued to resist the grand jury, another activist from Portland, Leah Plante was released from custody in October, although it’s unclear whether or to what extent she may have complied with the grand jury. —Marissa Luck



► **Climate Crisis**, cont. from page 10

increases in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, and cumulative greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere that makes it very likely the world will go past the 2 degree C warming threshold into dangerous climate chaos. According to a study published Dec. 2, 2012 in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, carbon dioxide emissions will rise by 2.6 percent this year, fueled by major increases in China and India. Global emissions jumped 58% between 1990 and 2012. If our current emissions trajectory is not halted, the world faces warming between 4C and 6C by the end of the century. “The risks of dangerous climate change are too high on our current emissions trajectory. We need a radical plan,” said co-author Corinne Le Quere, director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in Britain.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) takes accurate measurements in more than fifty countries of the greenhouse gas concentrations now in the atmosphere. The measurements show the levels of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide remaining in the atmosphere after about half of the CO<sub>2</sub> is absorbed by the oceans and stored in tropical forests. Methane emissions only remain in the atmosphere for an average of 8.4 years, in contrast to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which remain in the atmosphere for hundreds of years. The cumulative level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere reached a new record high in 2011, as reported in WMO’s Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. “These billions of tons of additional carbon dioxide in our atmosphere will remain there for centuries, causing our planet to warm further and impacting on all aspects of life on earth,” said WMO Secretary-General Michel Jarraud. “Future emissions will only compound the situation.”

The fact that we are on course for a 4-degree world was recently emphasized by the World Bank, a relatively recent convert to the urgency of climate change, that still needs to match its actions with its words. The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and Climate Analytics wrote the report for the World Bank, concluding that the climate could warm from the current global mean temperature of 0.8C above pre-industrial levels, to as high as 4C by 2100, even if countries fulfill current emissions-reduction pledges. If we hit 4 degrees Celsius warming we will have “extreme heat-waves, declining global food stocks, loss of ecosystems and biodiversity, and life-threatening sea level rise.”

The bleakest assessment, the brutal climate facts, comes from Kevin Anderson, a leading scientist with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research and a climate advisor to the British Government. In a 2011 paper co-authored with Alice Bows, Anderson shows that climate scientists themselves are underplaying the consequences of climate change. Anderson says that the commonly accepted threshold of climate “safety,” 2 degrees C [3.6 degrees F] temperature rise over pre-industrial levels, is now properly considered extremely dangerous and even 2 degrees C is drifting out of reach, absent efforts of a scale and speed beyond anything currently proposed. Yet the climate scenarios and plans offered to policymakers do not actually reflect that threshold. For example, most popular climate scenarios include an implausibly early peak in global emissions- 2015-16 in the Stern Report, the ADAM project and the UK’s Committee on Climate Change. Why do climate scientists present plans that contain such wildly optimistic assumptions? According to Anderson, it is because emissions reductions of 3 to 4 percent a year are the maximum compatible with continued economic growth, —so that’s the level many climate scientists use in their scenarios. Yet reductions at that pace offer little

practical hope of avoiding a temperature rise below 2 degrees C.

There is a widespread view that a 4 degree future is incompatible with an organized global community, is likely to go beyond “adaptation”, is devastating to the majority of ecosystems, and has a high probability of being unstable. Said Anderson, “Our current trajectory is leading us toward 4 or 6 (or 8 or 10) degrees C, which we now know to be

“Our current trajectory is leading us toward 4 or 6 (or 8 or 10) degrees C, which we now know to be a potentially civilization-threatening disaster. For humanity, it’s a matter of life or death,” he continued, “We will not make all human beings extinct as a few people with the right sort of resources may put themselves in the right parts of the world and survive.”

a potentially civilization-threatening disaster. For humanity, it’s a matter of life or death.” He continued, “We will not make all human beings extinct as a few people with the right sort of resources may put themselves in the right parts of the world and survive. But I think it’s extremely unlikely that we wouldn’t have mass death at 4C. If you have got a population of nine billion by 2050 and you hit 4C, 5C, or 6C, you might have half a billion people surviving.”

**What Can We Do?**

James Hansen suggests that we put a price on carbon. The cost of fossil fuels is artificially low because it does not include the price they incur on society, through air and water pollution and the effects of global warming. His solution is a gradually rising fee attached to all fossil fuels at their mine or port of entry. The fee would then be redistributed to the public. A rising cost on greenhouse gas-producing fossil fuels would spur investment in clean alternatives.

Bill McKibben has made it clear that we must leave most of the world’s remaining inventory of fossil fuels in the ground. In an important article published in Rolling Stone last summer, he sets out the terrifying new math. The first number is 2 degrees C, the number scientists warn we must stay under to avoid climate catastrophe, the second number is 565 gigatons—the amount of carbon we can still burn and have a chance of staying below two degrees. At current rates of emission, it would take us about 15 years to get there. Much worse is the third number: 2,800 gigatons, - that is how much the fossil fuel industry and the countries that operate

like fossil fuel companies already have in their reserves. To have any hope of avoiding climate chaos, we must leave four-fifths of that in the ground. The current campaigns—to prevent coal export in the Pacific Northwest, to stop mountaintop removal in Appalachia, and to halt the Keystone XL pipeline—are attempts to keep dirty coal and dirty tar sands oil out of the market.

But what would it take, Anderson asks, to target 2 degrees C realistically? We would have to stop lumping together the changes that the developed nations and still developing countries need to make. Although China currently emits more than the US on an absolute basis, historically the developed countries have emitted far, far more carbon. And they’ve benefited by becoming extraordinarily wealthy. Developing countries, by contrast, have spent far less and are still busy bringing millions of people out of abject poverty. So the developing countries should get more of the world’s carbon budget for the century.

Anderson offers the following example: if global emissions must peak by 2020 to have any chance of avoiding dangerous climate change, there is no way China and the other developing countries will be able to peak their emissions by then. We need to give them until 2025 to peak (which is at the very outer edge of the realm of the possible). If that is true, developed countries must compensate by peaking before 2015 (a mere two years from now). What would it mean for the US and other developed countries to peak their emissions in 2015 and decline them by 10 percent a year thereafter? “No carbon tax is going to do that. We won’t get there through innovation or new technology, even if we spend a trillion a year for the next few years. The only conceivable way to produce that level of reductions,” says Anderson, “is a full-scale, all-hands-on deck mobilization, what William James called ‘the moral equivalent of war.’”

This is the stark conclusion drawn by Anderson and Bows: “The logic of such studies suggests extremely dangerous climate change can only be avoided if economic growth is exchanged, at least temporarily, for a period of planned austerity within the developed nations and a rapid transition away from fossil-fueled development within the developing nations.” David Roberts has written three articles in Grist about the Anderson-Bows paper. All three are worth reading. The first can be found at [grist.org/climate.../2011-12-05-the-brutal-logic-of-climate-change/](http://grist.org/climate.../2011-12-05-the-brutal-logic-of-climate-change/).

*Bourtai Hargrove is a grandmother, a retired lawyer, and an activist with Olympia FOR’s climate group, Confronting the Climate Crisis.*

► **Walmart**, cont. from page 6.

hair and glasses, mild-mannered Myles is all smiles and exaggerated politeness—the grinning PR face of Walmart, here to throw me out of the store.

He shakes my hand; “What can I do for you?” he asks.

“Well, I was just trying to do some interviews with these employees—”

He’s got his response prepared and jumps in as I finish my sentence: “We actually can’t allow you to be in here doing interviews with employees or customers.”

“Why’s that?” I ask.

“It’s a distraction.”

“A distraction from what? From buying—” I start to ask, but he cuts in.

“As you can see, our employees are all very busy helping customers.”

“Right, uh, but what about those back there who are just kinda hanging out?” I ask.

“Well, even they are busy...guarding stuff.” He glances down at my notebook, trying to maintain his phony flashing smile, but my constant scribbling is beginning to make him nervous.

“We can’t make exceptions, not even for nice guys like you,” he says, “so if you don’t stop, I’m afraid we’re going to have to escort you out.” I nod, give him a nice stupid smile, and walk away.

On my way home, I laugh at myself for letting Black Friday drag me away from my Thanksgiving night; just like everyone else, I spent the evening at Walmart, no matter what I intended. Back at home in the living room, my brother and I get into an argument about my project.

“I saw people I know in there,” he says. “I think it’s pretentious to walk around laughing at people.”

I won’t get into it here, how I defended myself and all. But what he said made me think: what am I trying to get out of this? What’s my point? Either he misunderstands my project or I do. I was never intending to go out and mock people, as if I’ve risen above it all or something; the point was to observe the Black Friday spectacle, to toss myself into the most manic heart of American consumerism. It was supposed to be about observing a social phenomenon, trying to understand it, and, yes, denouncing it with as much fire as I decided was necessary. Has my piece, in the end, descended into snobbish mockery or is it getting at something more than that? Well, now that I’ve muddled the waters with a thousand questions, I’ll offer nothing helpful...

Through the late ‘60s, the ‘70s, the ‘80s—through most of his life, I guess—Hunter S. Thompson obsessed himself with the death of the “American Dream.” He wrote about it at length, and on numerous occasions declared that the American Dream was “totally fucked.” He’s six or seven years dead now; it’s 2012, and here I am, hunched and unable to write, staring down at pages of barely legible notes, interviews, and Walmart sale brochures as the countdown to Christmas creeps into single digits. So what the hell am I sitting here looking at? Something goes marching on, year after year, dead-eyed and clueless; like a zombie, it moves through the motions because it knows nothing else... What but a people lost in pursuit of a lifestyle the frills of which they can no longer afford? Which wouldn’t, they don’t realize, bring fulfillment even if they could afford them. And which they sense, I think, they will never be able to afford again. Lacking any other vision, they search for happiness in the same place as their parents and grandparents: the well-stocked aisles of a retail store.

Of course, there’s more to it than that, more angles to explore...but it’s time to kill this monstrous piece of writing before it grows any more and loses any more of its clarity.

*Joseph Bullington is a student of political economy and journalism at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. He grew up in Montana where he became interested in radical politics, rebellion, and writing, and he fled to Olympia in 2011 to pursue these interests.*



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# The untold story of military academies past

Amicus Curia

A military career was once viewed as an honorable path out of poverty for millions of destitute farmers’ sons and ghetto children. After the “good” war (WWII), a thankful nation was eager to offer every opportunity to our surviving veterans on their return. After all, casualty rates for the two million Allied troops during Operation Overlord alone exceeded 10% of that number. The US had paid a heavy price. But the vision of a respected career wrought from bearing arms for the nation preceded WWII by many decades.

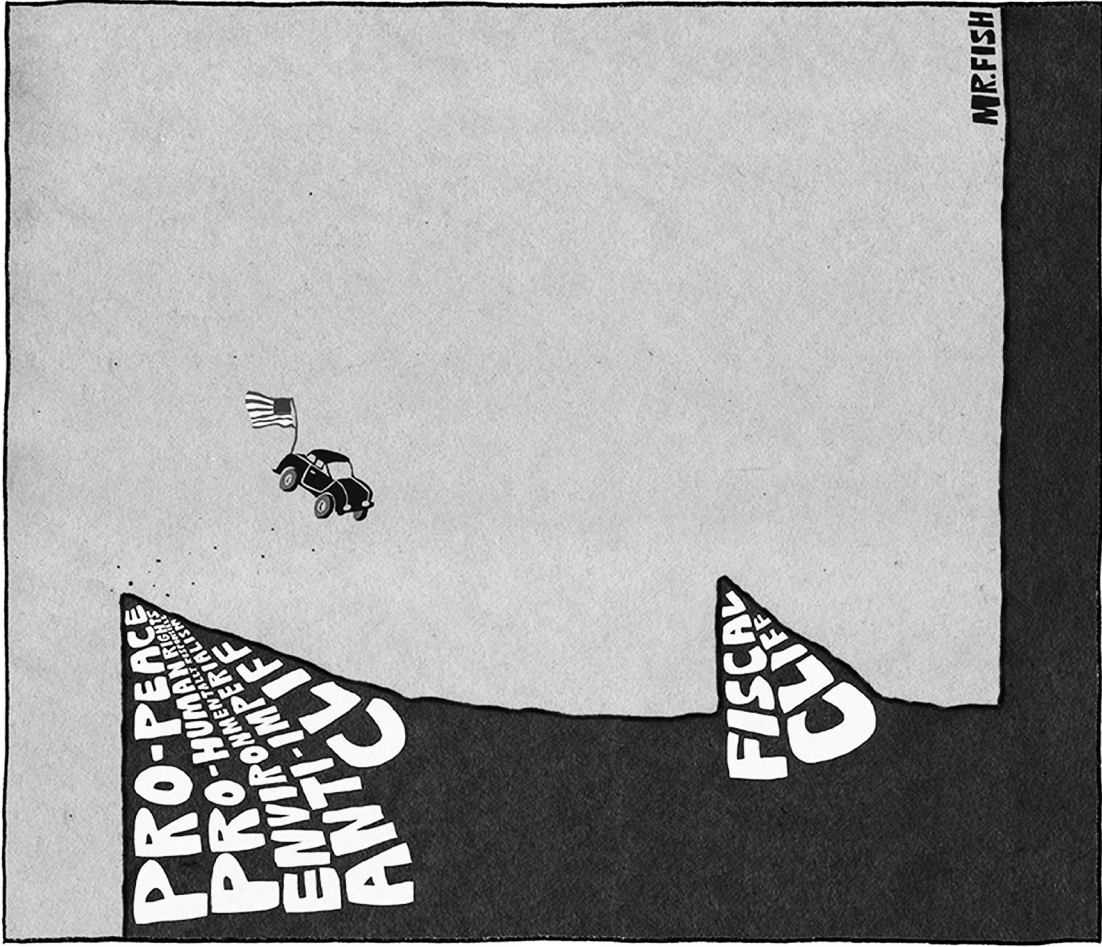
Like today’s prep schools for prestigious universities, it was thought children who attended “military academies” (for-profit boarding schools) would give them a leg up upon enlistment as an adult. All those uniforms, monthly parade ground performances, and “character building” seemed like just the ticket as disciplinary benevolence before Dr. Spock’s book on parenting became a best seller. Mercifully, few such institutions exist in the US today, other than in the South, given changing social attitudes and a weak economy. The slippery slope to financial perdition began during the Reagan administration.

Today, only an eyesore of what was once the largest such US “military academy” (private boarding school for children) remains as ancient, dirty, cracked, weed-infested asphalt on a hill (Signal Hill), once bristling with oil derricks and oil-saturated dirt. Established in 1924 (along with the incorporation of the City

of Signal Hill completely surrounded by the City of Long Beach, California), the school thrived until the 1980’s, changing ownership several times until its demolition in 1987. The Alvarado Elementary School stands in its place today. A perusal of Google’s satellite view of the grounds reveals faint outlines of where the Academy’s buildings had been and its faint parade ground markings. The huge wheeled cannons that once graced its front laws are long gone, undoubtedly sold as it lapsed into insolvency.

For an institution that had so many boys transit its halls over the years, there’s a curious lack of communication/reminiscing by grades 1-9 alumni according to those from its sister institutions alumni associations. It’s as if it suffered the Biblical fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, obliterated by the asphalt, weeds, and dirt almost without a trace or historical account. Then again, perhaps it’s not so curious after all. Despite the fancy uni-

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