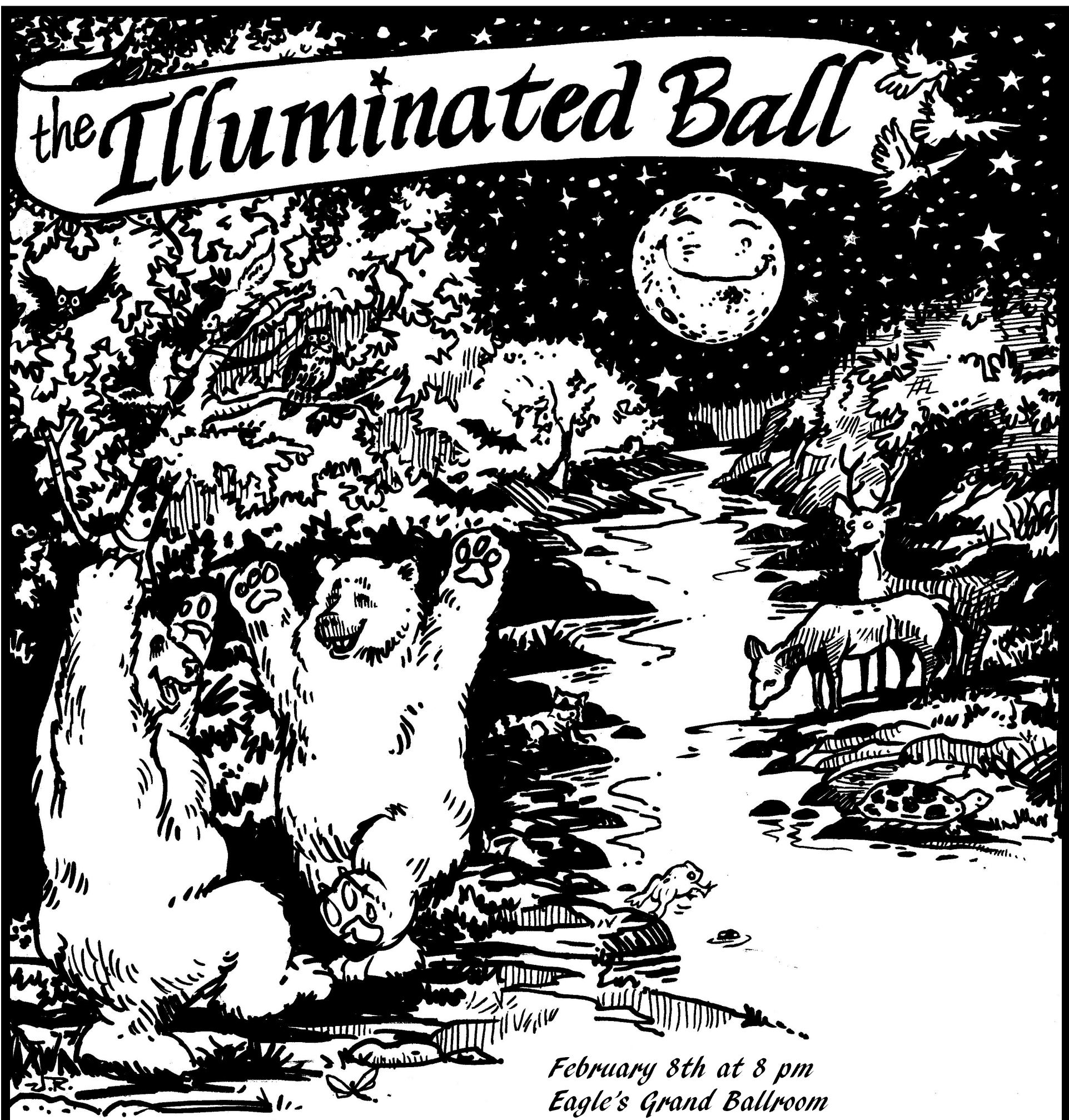


WORKS IN PROGRESS



*February 8th at 8 pm
Eagle's Grand Ballroom*

Page 2	<i>Food and Chemical Toxicology's retraction of Séralini toxicity study on genetically-modified corn appears to be a bow to agribusiness</i>
	<i>County Commissioners are urged to reconsider the decision to contract out of their custodial staff — scheduled to begin in July</i>
Page 3	<i>OPD lawsuit exposes political profiling: Olympia resident shares his story of blatant police misconduct and persecution</i>
	<i>Rats in the cheese: More important than what was put into the Murray-Ryan budget deal, is what was left out</i>
Page 4	<i>With the intention of being arrested to warn the world of nuclear danger, the American Gandhi shares his thoughts</i>
Page 6	<i>Napping as the world goes by: The Evergreen College and the disparity in representation and retentions rates of Latino students</i>
Page 8	<i>"I want to tell you the story of the Cascadia Freedom Caravan" — Poet Nora Mahto Knutson shares her experience</i>
Page 9	<i>In support of the use of power: It's messy. It's incremental. It's what we have. (An opportunity to work the system.)</i>
Page 11	<i>For the Community Sustaining Fund, it's important to say, "Round up, please." An Olympia institution needs your support.</i>

WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Works In Progress is a free, all volunteer-operated progressive community publication 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 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

WORKERS IN PROGRESS

Editing: Bethany Weidner, Scott Yoos, and Sylvia Smith

Layout: Sylvia Smith

Proofreading: April Adams, Fred Bridges, Russell Frizzell, Scott Yoos, Stephanie Frizzell, Sylvia Smith, T. Belle, and T. Magster

Writers' Group: Desdra Dawning, Enrique Quintero, Erin Palmer, Jordan Beaudry, Sylvia Smith, and Vince Ryland

Graphics: Vince Ryland

Mailings: Jeff Sowers

Finances: Pat Tassoni

Website: Robert Whitlock

Distribution: Creighton Rose, T. Magster, Marylea Coday, Sandia Slaby, Scott Yoos, and Teresa Jennings with room for more!

Submission Deadline

Friday, January 17
olywip@gmail.com

Proofreading Meeting

Saturday ♦ January 25 ♦ 1 pm

Lacey Timberland Library in
the Group Study Area

(Be there for the first read!)

ADVERTISING RATES

7.25" x 4.90" . . . \$125
4.75" x 4.90" . . . \$83
3" x 4.90" . . . \$52
4" x 2.40" . . . \$34
3.5" x 2.40" . . . \$30
2.25" x 2.25" . . . \$20

*Special microbusiness deal!

4 months for the price of 3
Ask for nonprofit rates*

olywip@gmail.com

*Not available with alternative financing

On the front cover —

"In Our Wildest Streams"

Graphic Artist: Vince Ryland

Journal's retraction of Séralini study appears to be a bow to agribusiness

ENSSER

Editorial note: *The following is the response of the European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility to Food and Chemical Toxicology's retraction of the Séralini 2012 paper last November.*

Elsevier's journal *Food and Chemical Toxicology* retracted the paper by Prof. Gilles-Eric Séralini's group, which found severe toxic effects (including liver congestions and necrosis and kidney nephropathies), increased tumor rates and higher mortality in rats fed Monsanto's genetically modified NK603 maize and/or the associated herbicide Roundup. The arguments of the journal's editor for the retraction, however, violate not only the criteria for retraction to which the journal itself subscribes, but any standards of good science. Worse, the names of the reviewers who came to the conclusion that the paper should be retracted, have not been published. Since the retraction is a wish of many people with links to the GM industry, the suspicion arises that it is a bow of science to industry. This retraction is a severe blow to the credibility and independence of science, indeed a travesty of science.

Inconclusive results claimed as reason for withdrawal

Elsevier, publisher of *Food and Chemical Toxicology*, has published a statement saying the journal's editor-in-chief, Dr. A. Wallace Hayes, "found no evidence of fraud or intentional misrepresentation of the data." The statement mentions only a single reason for the retraction—"the results presented (while not incorrect) are inconclusive." According to Hayes, the low number of rats

and the tumour susceptibility of the rat strain used do not allow definitive conclusions. There are guidelines for retractions in scientific publishing, set out by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Inconclusiveness of research results is not one of the grounds for retraction contained in these guidelines. The journal *Food and Chemical Toxicology* is a member of COPE. 'Conclusive' results are rare in science, and certainly not to be decided by one editor and a secret team of persons using undisclosed criteria and methods. Independent science would cease to exist if this were to be an accepted mode of procedure.

Séralini paper is a chronic toxicity study, not a carcinogenicity study

Most notably, Séralini and his co-authors did not draw any definitive conclusions in the paper in the first place; they simply reported their observations and phrased their conclusions carefully, cognizant of their uncertainties. This is because the paper is a chronic toxicity study and not a full-scale carcinogenicity study, which would require a higher number of rats. The authors did not intend to look specifically for tumors, but still found increased tumour rates. Secondly, both of Hayes's arguments (the number of rats and their tumour susceptibility) were considered by the peer reviewers of the journal, who decided they formed no objection to publication. Thirdly, these two arguments have been discussed at length in the journal following the publication of the paper and have

been refuted by the authors of the paper and other experts. Higher numbers of animals are only required in this type of safety studies to avoid missing toxic effects (a 'false negative' result), but the study found pronounced toxic effects and a first indication of possible carcinogenic effects. The Sprague-Dawley strain of rat which was

used, is the commonly used standard for this type of research. For these reasons, the statistical significance of the biochemical data was endorsed by statistics experts. The biochemical data confirm the toxic effects such as those on liver and kidney, which are serious enough by themselves. The tumors and mortality rates are observations, which need to be confirmed by a specific carcinogenicity study with higher numbers of rats; in view of public food safety, it is not wise to simply ignore them. Unpleasant results should be checked, not ignored. And the toxic effects other than tumors and mortality are well-founded.

Who did the reevaluation?

Even more worrying than the lack of good grounds for the retraction is the fact that the journal's editor-in-chief has not revealed who the reviewers were who helped him to come to the conclusion the paper should be retracted; nor has he revealed the criteria and methodology of their reevaluation, which overruled the earlier conclusion of the original peer-review that supported publication. In a case like this, where many of those who denounced the study have long-standing

► SÉRALINI, continued on page 4.

Thurston County commissioners urged to reconsider contracting out custodial staff

David Groves

OLYMPIA (Dec. 5, 2013)— Democratic Thurston County Commissioners Karen Valenzuela and Cathy Wolfe voted last month to contract out jobs of the lowest-paid employees on their payroll—their custodial staff—to a private contractor that is likely to pay minimum wage and offer no health care or retirement benefits. Unless the commissioners reconsider the move, the 12 custodians' jobs will be eliminated beginning in July 2014.

The decision by Valenzuela and Wolfe to contract out the jobs has earned scorn not only from county employees and their union, but also from the Thurston County Democratic Party. Citing their party platform that supports "the right of everyone to earn a living wage for a hard day's work," the Democrats approved a resolution last week opposing the move and urging the commissioners to negotiate an alternative solution with the custodians and their union, the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSCME.

"It's hard to fathom why, at a time when progressive elected officials are embracing raising minimum wages, that the county would target custodians and their families," said J. Pat Thompson, the union's deputy director. "It is equally perplexing that the county is spending

considerable resources to assist those in need only to create more need by exploiting its own workforce. It makes no sense for the county to build a social safety net at the same time it's throwing its own employees into it."

On a 2-1 vote held Nov. 15, with Democratic Commissioner Sandra Romero

Romero proposed a last-minute amendment to save the custodial services instead of outsourcing the work. It failed when neither Valenzuela or Wolfe seconded the motion.

voting "no," the board adopted a 2014 budget with \$5.4 million in cuts, including the suspension of cost-of-living increases for all county employees and requiring them to pay more for dependents' health care coverage. Romero proposed a last-minute amendment to save the custodial services, instead of

outsourcing the work, but it failed when neither Valenzuela or Wolfe seconded the motion.

"I believe we've not looked at all the factors in this shift," Romero said. "We've not worked with our employees to help find the savings. Let's do it right."

Thompson said the union tried to cooperate in achieving a sustainable budget, but their efforts were rebuffed.

Our union is fully aware of the county's financial situation and has offered to partner with the county to address the 2014 budget shortfall. We repeatedly asked to make up the shortfall with overall concessions but Karen Valenzuela, led by biased management staff, has insisted that the one and only option was to turn over the entire custodial department to a for-profit contractor.

If you live or work in Thurston County, please consider sending a message to all three urging them to reconsider contracting out the county's custodial staff.

Tell them to work with the union to find an alternative budget solution.

[Editorial note: Thurston County commissioners serve four-year terms. Sandra Romero and Cathy Wolfe were re-elected in 2012, and Karen Valenzuela in 2010.]

David Groves is the editor of *The Stand*, a publication of the Washington State Labor Council. This article is reprinted with permission.

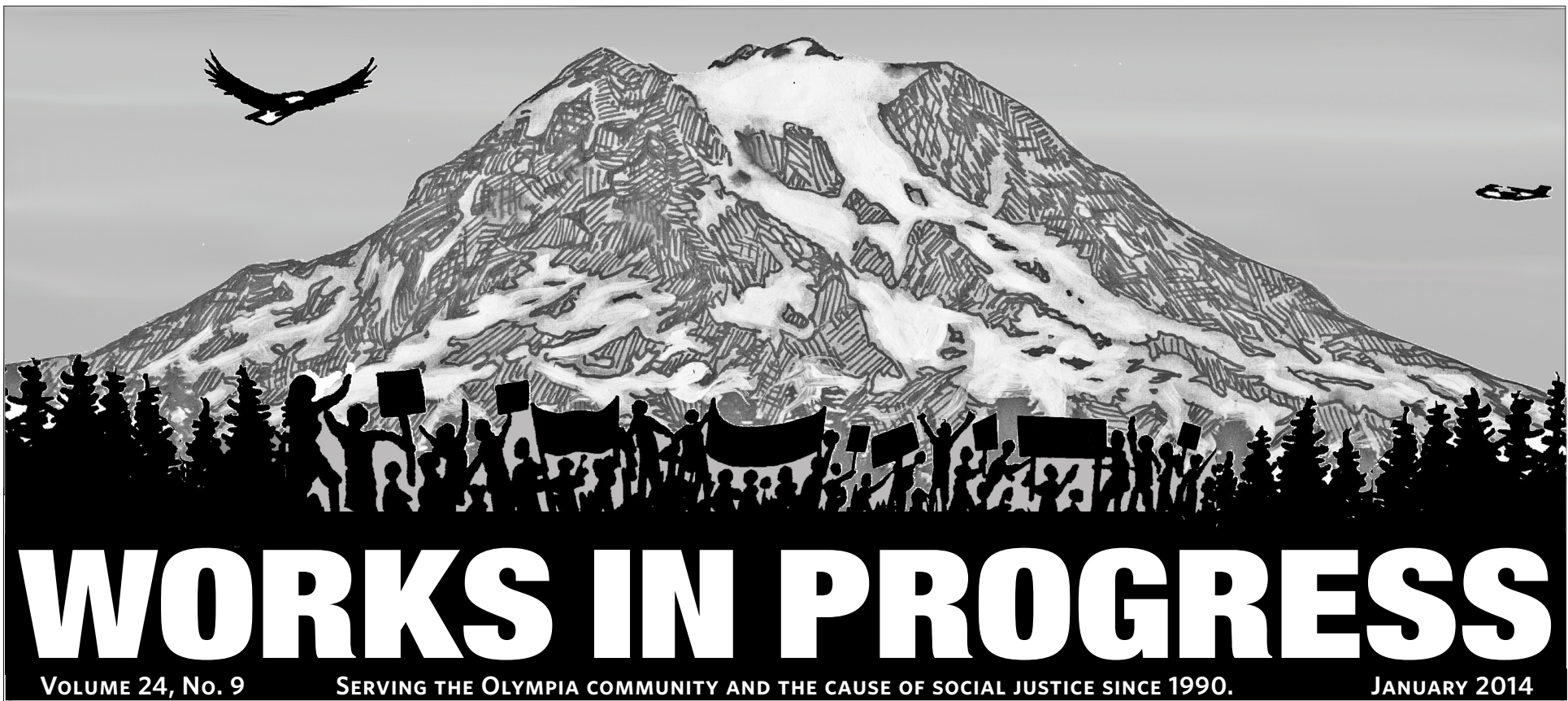


THURSTON COUNTY PROGRESSIVE NETWORK



to **YOUR** progressive community!

Sign-up for the TC Pro-Net Picks events newsletter
www.tcpronet.org



WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 24, No. 9 SERVING THE OLYMPIA COMMUNITY AND THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE SINCE 1990. JANUARY 2014

OPD lawsuit exposes political profiling

Olympia resident shares his story of blatant police misconduct and persecution

Paul French (aka Strife)

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

Martin Luther King, Jr

I still remember where I was when Oscar Grant, an unarmed black man was shot at point blank range by a transit cop while he was lying face down on the cement of an Oakland, California Subway. It was New Year's Day 2009, two months shy of Grant's twenty-third birthday, when he was pronounced dead. I was working on my first album, "Love & Rage," when a member of my hip-hop crew, Thought Crime Collective, rushed over to tell me the news. This extra-judicial murder ignited my growing anger at a justice system that professes equality under the law but prioritizes people according to race, class, sexuality, gender, and politics. In the following months as the death toll escalated at the hands of police, I realized I had a responsibility to rally others even at the risk of my own comfort and convenience. If I didn't stand in solidarity with the slain, publicize the causes of structural violence, and fight for accountability, then society whose technological advancement was fast outstripping its conscience would eclipse any hope for social and economic justice.

So on April 8, 2010, I took to the streets of downtown Olympia as part of a protest called the "West Coast Days of Action Against Police Violence." We marched downtown chanting and handing out flyers about the dangers of unchecked power, white privilege, and the prison industrial complex. Eventually we were surrounded on all sides by a heavily armed phalanx of Olympia Police and arrested in a coordinated takedown. Amidst shouted orders to "get on the ground" we locked arms on State Street and were kettled in a darkened parking lot, greeted by baton blows and pepper ball guns fired inches from our faces. It was during this lightning-quick takedown that Officer Sean Lindros (now a detective) lied and stated I had punched him in the face. He made this claim without a single witness to the alleged assault and without another officer on the scene corroborating his story. The Olympia Police Department (OPD) seized all cameras and recording

equipment, and refused to return the cameras until three years later in the summer of 2013, when my lawyer, Larry Hildes, won a settlement against the city.

In 2012, Sean Lindros lost a wrongful arrest lawsuit that my attorney brought against him on behalf of Evergreen student, Loren Klyne. According to court documents, Lindros has been referred to by his superiors as a "cops' cop, who manages to make an above average amount of arrests and criminal referrals." He has received a total of eight citizen complaints and two disciplinary actions in the past five years, engaging in "threatening or intimidating behavior towards the public" on multiple occasions, even "brandishing a gun on a traffic stop." Lindros has

three excessive force complaints including a well-known encounter where he slammed Ms. Peralta's (a.k.a. Pony Black's) face into the ground in downtown Olympia in 2010. Most recently in 2013, Lindros used a "lateral vascular neck restraint" on a suspect, a maneu-

a banner in my lap several feet away from where Sean Lindros claimed he was standing when he was allegedly struck in the face. In his police report, Lindros misidentified the color of my bandana, and in the pictures he took of his "injuries" after the protest, his face showed no visible marks or bruises. I was charged with assault, even though I was simply engaging in my first amendment right to protest and in spite of the fact that I was not in a location where I could have physically struck Lindros. As we were turning onto

The Olympia Police Department seized all cameras and recording equipment, and refused to return the cameras until three years later in the summer of 2013, when my lawyer, Larry Hildes, won a settlement against the city.

ver that restricts the flow of blood to the brain and is linked to so many deaths, its use is restricted by the Los Angeles Police Department and was banned by Bay Area Rapid Transit Police in 2011.

In the short video clip used as evidence of my alleged crime, I am in the center of a group, surrounded by twenty-nine people, on my knees with

State Street, I was handed the march banner by a stranger who was not arrested, but had shown up at my house a few weeks prior to the protest. After the takedown, Sean Lindros identified me as "the kid with the banner," and I was arrested for felony "assault on an officer."

► OPD LAWSUIT, continued on page 12.

Rats in the cheese: a closer look at the bi-partisan budget deal

More important than what was put into the Murray-Ryan deal, is what was left out

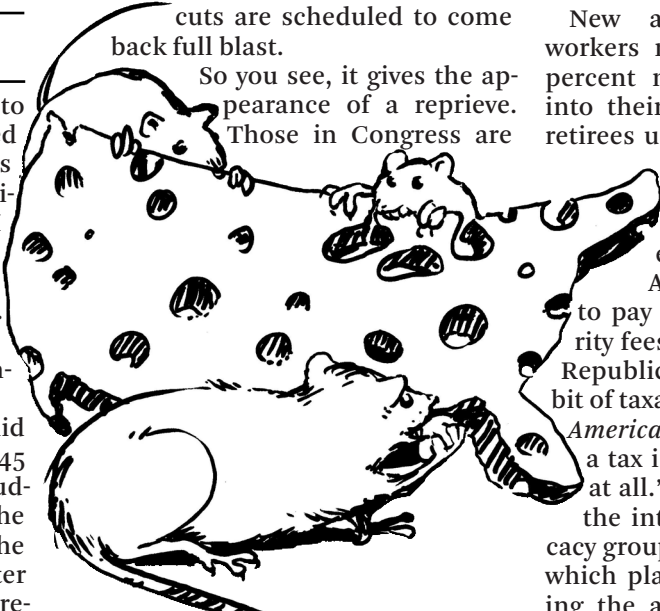
Sylvia Smith

In mid-December I went online to find out what the highly celebrated Murray-Ryan (or as the Republicans like to call it, the Ryan-Murray) bi-partisan budget deal involved. I ended up spending hours day after day, locating bits and pieces; no one article told it all or even came close. For brevity's sake, neither can I, but I think this piece hits many of the important aspects.

The Murray-Ryan budget deal is said to be all about \$83 billion. It puts \$45 billion dollars back into the 2014 budget, which replaces just half of what the sequester cut. For the 2015 budget, the "deal" returns \$18 billion, or a quarter of the sequestration cuts. Money returned to the 2014 and 2015 budgets will be divided between the financially-bloated Pentagon and everything else. The rest of the \$83 billion, about \$20 billion, is to go directly toward reducing the deficit. In 2016, the sequester

cuts are scheduled to come back full blast.

So you see, it gives the appearance of a reprieve. Those in Congress are



simply easing us into the idea of "sequestration," which they also extended to 2023. The hoopla about reaching "any deal at all" is just sleight of hand. Think frog in a pot of water. They're letting us think they've

turned down the flame, but we're already cooked.

Who gets screwed to pay Paul?

New and recently-hired federal workers now have to contribute 1.3 percent more from their paychecks into their retirement funds. Military retirees under the age of 62 have had their COLAs reduced by 1 percentage point. (They're just another type of federal employee after all.)

Airline passengers will have to pay a few more dollars for security fees per ticket each way, but the Republicans can live with this little bit of taxation. As Peter Ferrara of *The American Spectator* states, "It is not a tax increase worth stressing over at all." He continues by describing the intensions of the flat tax advocacy group, Americans for Tax Reform, which plans to work toward eliminating the airline ticket tax entirely by simply "privatizing the Transportation Safety Administration."

Oh, yeah, federal law will now only allow pay up to \$487,000 in salary for any single federal contract employee, ► BUDGET BILL, continued on page 10.

With the intention of being arrested to warn the world of nuclear danger

Bernie Meyer

On May 11, 2013, as part of the Mother's Day action organized by Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, I entered Sub Base Bangor, home of the Trident submarines on the West Coast of the United States, by crossing the blue line. My entering the roadway was to risk arrest.

I was carrying a peace flag and reading Julia Ward Howe's Mother's Day Declaration. My purpose was to cry out about the deaths being caused by nuclear radiation even before a nuclear bomb from the Trident subs is detonated.

Nuclear weapons and the total nuclear system are directly related to catastrophic climate change which is drastically close to being completely out of control. These lethal creations are totally due to human inventions.

I was taken to the ground, arrested, and charged with "trespassing." I decided not to plea bargain, but to go to trial to attempt to make my message heard. After months of my ignoring a plea offer, the charges were dismissed on December 6. The following is my prepared statement for the Court, intended for the Navy, the United States government, and each U.S. citizen.

We must do all we can to live as true human beings as a loving part of Mother Earth.

Testimony at "Trespassing" Trial

Your Honor, I come as Bernie Meyer, called "American Gandhi" in India and the United States. Gandhi has been one of my teachers since the 1960s. I have been portraying Gandhi for almost 12 years, including the last eight in India. I present the historic Gandhi and I apply his principles and insights to today's realities. The reason I come to court today as Gandhi is that his last words have been prescient and I see them as fulfilled now. It is a message I tried to communicate on May 11 at Sub Base Bangor.

I was immediately impelled to communicate that message by the death of my mother on May 2 in Cleveland, Ohio. Mom was a most loving and nurturing stay-at-home woman raising five children to love wholesome family life and to be good citizens. I honor her by this action.

On the day before he was assassinated on January 30, 1948, Margaret Burke-White, journalist for *Life* magazine, asked Gandhi, "How would you answer the atom bomb with nonviolence." For Gandhi nonviolence is ahimsa in Hindi, "unwillingness to do harm," love every person. Gandhi replied, "Nonviolence is the only thing the atom bomb cannot destroy. I did not move a muscle when I heard that the atom bomb destroyed Hiroshima. I said, 'Unless humanity adopts nonviolence and ends the atom bomb, it will be suicide for mankind.'"

Your honor, this observation by Gandhi has been fulfilled today in ways even Gandhi did not fully see. With nuclear radiation unleashed in the world coupled with extreme climate change, humanity may be approaching its last days. All we can do is face the reality in its fullness and change ourselves and our way of life to preserve whatever life will remain.

Nuclear radiation cannot be seen, cannot be smelled, and cannot be tasted. Nuclear radiation can only be experienced in its lethal effects. All the releases of radiation over the last 70 years—culminating with the most horrendous devastation of Daiiachi Nuclear Power Plant in Fukushima— have killed and are killing humans, animals, and eco systems. These releases of radiation result in slower death processes than a nuclear war or one nuclear bomb exploding. Either Chernopbyl or worse still Fukushima releases are killing far more people than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I will give you examples of my experiences and references to documentations.



Photo: Larry Kerschner

I began my experience with nuclear radiation while living in Denver, Colorado from 1973 to 1978. Rocky Flats is the name given to the industry that produced

the triggers for nuclear bombs. I participated in the Rocky Flats Action Group. Last year Kirsten Iversen produced the book, *Full Body Burden: Growing up in the Nuclear Shadow of Rocky Flats*, which lays out the personal experiences of people and extensive analysis of Rocky Flats radiation effects, including its closure due to the environmental and human suffering caused by its operation in 1989.

In 1978 I moved to Seattle, which is across the mountains from the Hanford Nuclear reactors that produced the plutonium for the first nuclear bomb and many more over the years. Hanford is the source of much radiation still affecting the environment and humans. Hanford has a twofold source of radiation: wastes are leaking into the ground heading for the Columbia River and the nuclear power plant, Columbia Generating Station, is set on earthquake faults putting us at great risk.

In 1978 I also began participating in the actions resisting nuclear bombs at Sub Base Bangor, which bases Trident Submarines, each capable of destroying

196 cities, possibly ending life on earth. Hanford, Rocky Flats, and Sub Base Bangor are directly connected.

In 2007 I walked as Gandhi from Faslane Scotland, the location of the UK's Trident base, to London, England. While walking along the English coast I became conscious of Sellafield Nuclear Power and Processing Plant, which has made the Irish Sea one of the most radiated bodies of water on earth. We walked

through areas marked "Danger" due to the radiation. It has caused increased cancer rates along the England and Ireland coasts. The danger of low level radiation is summed up in this reference from *Science Daily*:

"A major 2012 scientific study proves that low-level radiation can cause huge health problems. Science Daily reports:

Even the very lowest levels of radiation are harmful to life, scientists have concluded in the Cambridge Philosophical Society's journal Biological Reviews. Reporting the results of a wide-ranging analysis of 46 peer-reviewed studies published over the past 40 years, researchers from the University of South Carolina and the University of Paris-Sud found that variation in low-level, natural background radiation was found to have small, but highly statistically significant, negative effects on DNA as well as several

No citizen of any country can be assured that he or she can be protected from radioactive contamination. One nuclear reactor can pollute half the globe.

► **Séralini**, cont. from page 2. ing, well-documented links to the GM industry and, therefore, a clear interest in having the results of the study discredited, such lack of transparency about how this potential decision was reached is inexcusable, unscientific and unacceptable. It raises the suspicion that the retraction is a favor to the interested industry, notably Monsanto.

ENSSER promotes independent critical discourse

It is part of ENSSER's mission to promote the critical discourse, particularly in Europe, on new technologies and their impacts. As scientific and technological advances are increasingly driven by private interest, disinterested independent health and environmental safety information often lags behind. Uncertainty is inherent to science, as is the debate between conflicting explanations of findings. Openness of this debate and independent research to find the truth are crucial prerequisites for the survival of independent science. This holds true in particular for the technology of genetically-modified crops, where the safety studies done by the producers for authorisation of the crops are all too often not published at all because of business confidentiality of the data and may not hold up to an independent peer-review. These studies, not only the independent ones like Séralini's, should be subject to debate. The public has a right to be informed of anything related to the safety of their food.

The decision to retract Séralini's paper is a flagrant abuse of science and a blow to its credibility and independence. It is damaging for the reputation of both the journal *Food and Chemical Toxicology* and its publisher Elsevier. It will decrease public trust in science. And it will not succeed in eliminating critical independent science from public view and scrutiny. Such days and times are definitively over. Prof. Séralini's findings stand today more than before, as even this secret review found there is nothing wrong with either technicalities, conduct or transparency of the data—the foundations on which independent science rests. The conclusiveness of their data will be decided by future independent science, not by a secret circle of people.

The European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility brings together independent scientific expertise to develop public knowledge for the critical assessment of existing and emerging technologies.

measures of health." ("Even Miniscule Amounts of Radiation Can Be Dangerous, Scientists Conclude")

Last year, I received a book, *Chernobyl*, ► **ARRESTED**, continued on page 14.

Chelsea Manning's attorney on West Coast tour



In 2010 PFC Chelsea Elizabeth (Bradley) Manning, a 26-year-old whistleblower, provided Wikileaks 260,000 documents on war crimes—illegal surveillance, mass killings, tortures, and corruption. Her reasons for being a whistleblower were transparency, world-wide debates, and world-wide reforms.

Her willingness to expose the government caused an end to the Iraq War. What did she receive for being a person of integrity? After Guantanamo Bay prison (112 days of torture) she was sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for 35 years. The soldiers that did the killing of innocent civilians, unpunished.

What does that mean to rely on whistleblowers and non-biased journalists who keep the public informed of wrong doing? Why is the public not allowed to know what goes on behind the closed doors of government? What can be done to push for transparency and keep leaders honest?

On December 11, Chelsea Manning's attorney, David Coombs, spoke to 110 people at the Common Good Café in Seattle. His West Coast tour was organized by Courage to Resist and cosponsored by Veterans for Peace and other organizations. If you missed him, you can listen to his speech on youtube (David Coombs, atty for Chelsea Manning, in Seattle Dec 11, 2013).

—April Adams

Artwork: April Adams

You can write to Chelsea. The outside of the envelope must be addressed to Bradley E. Manning 89289, 1300 N Warehouse Rd, Ft Leavenworth KS 66027-2304, USA. Ms. Manning will be happy to accept letters that refer to her with her chosen name Chelsea on the inside.

Stories of women and girls choosing to change themselves and the world

Playback Theatre Performance in collaboration with the YWCA of Olympia

Each month Playback Theatre invites a guest artist, community organization, arts program or social service agency to be a part of our performance. This month we are collaborating with the YWCA of Olympia.

Founded in 1945, the YWCA of Olympia strives to eliminate racism and empower women, girls, and families through education, advocacy, service, and leadership opportunities. The agency has evolved into a strong force representing and educating women and families in politics, health care, education, and employment. Local organizations such as SafePlace, the Rape Relief Center, the Refugee Center, and the Crisis Clinic all began as YWCA of Olympia programs. Many of these programs are still operating today and provide crucial services for our community that advance women's health and social well-being. The YWCA serves all women, girls, and families in Thurston County, with an emphasis on serving low-income individuals.

Girls Without Limits!

Girls Without Limits! (GWOL!) is a low-cost summer camp program that encourages girls ages 10-14 to develop skills in science, technology, engineering, math, art, service learning, and build self-esteem in a positive and fun learning environment. Girls may face many inequities in life, but GWOL! empowers them to believe in themselves, no matter their gender, sexuality, cul-

Friday, January 10, 7:30 pm
Traditions Cafe
300 5th Ave SW, Olympia

ture, personal history, ethnicity or socioeconomic background.

Girls Circle

Girls Circle is a free after-school, peer-support program for girls in most



middle schools throughout Thurston County. The research-based Girls Circle model creates a safe space for girls to learn about social and emotional development, self-image, authentic relationships, self-expression, and making good decisions. Girls Circle promotes academic achievement, improves the ability of girls to form healthier bonds with others, increases protective factors, and reduces risk-taking behaviors.

The Other Bank

The Other Bank provides toiletries and other necessities of daily living such as dish soap, laundry detergent, and hand soap. Products distributed by The Other

Bank cannot be purchased with food stamps and are not available at food banks; yet they are essential for maintaining health and personal dignity. The Other Bank offers assistance to over 100 families each week, representing 350-450 individuals. One-third of our clients are younger than 13 and half of these children are under the age of 5. Our clients are also elderly, disabled, homeless, unemployed, or are just struggling the make ends meet.

Girls for a Change

This girl empowerment program is popping up in cities around the United States. Teams of 10 girls and one adult coach meet weekly to identify an issue in their community and work together to design and implement a social change project. Girls For A Change helps young wom-

en gain confidence and self-efficacy by practicing social change skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving with the guidance of an adult.

The YWCA is inspiring a new generation to become strong leaders and advocates for opportunity and equity for all women.

Playback Theatre is a spontaneous collaboration between performers and audience. People tell moments from their lives, then watch them re-created with movement, music and dialogue.

For more info on YWCA programs, contact Cherie Reeves Sperr, Communication and Special Events Director, at (360) 352-0593 or crsperr@ywcawoofolympia.org.

Special Events

Toilet Training: Addressing Discrimination against Trans* and Gender Non-conforming individuals
Monday, January 13, 6:30pm
4th Floor in Co-Lab
317 4th Ave E, Olympia

This is one of the most controversial and important fronts in the struggle to end gender identify discrimination, and we strongly believe that community education is key to dispelling cultural myths and fears and establishing understanding about the struggles faced by those who do not fit easily into existing norms of binary gender. Presentation includes a screening of "Toilet Training" video from the Sylvia Rivera Law Project followed by a presentation and Q&A from the Washington Human Right's Commission about discrimination cases the Commission has investigated regarding bathroom issues faced by trans people.

Strife's Court Date
Tuesday, March 11, 9 am
U.S. District Court
Federal Courthouse
Union Station
1717 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma

Please join me for the first day of my trial. For news and updates on my case and the upcoming trial of John Towery please visit my support blog, "We Are All Suspects Now" at <http://strife-101-life.tumblr.com/>

Cannabis Patients United Two Days of Direct Lobbying in Olympia
Tuesday, January 14
Washington State Capitol

We did it for two days in November, so let's do it again in January when the legislators are back in session.

Help to save medical cannabis from out of control state bureaucrats and the legislators that have listened to them when they admit no knowledge of cannabis and the patients and collectives.

Clean & Cozy Drive
Monday, January 20, 9 am - 5 pm
Family Support Center
201 Capitol Way N, Olympia
(right across from the Bread Peddler)

As part of our service to the community, we are hosting "Clean & Cozy," a clothing and hygiene drive to commemorate Martin Luther King Day. We will be collecting items and distributing them at the Family Support Center, a community resource center offering a variety of services and programs for children and families in downtown Olympia.

Show the Love! Open House
The Community Sustaining Fund
Sunday, February 16, 2-5 pm

Save the date! The Community Sustaining Fund invites you to 'Show the Love' at our Open House. Music! Dessert! More details to follow. Please like our Facebook page!

Become a citizen journalist.

FIRST THURSDAY
5:30 PM
TRADITIONS CAFE

- Camaraderie
 - Collaboration
 - Editing support
- (olywip@gmail.com)



SHOWING AT THE OLYMPIA FILM SOCIETY

Wadjda
January 10 - 16

The first feature-length movie made in Saudi Arabia—all the more notable is it was made by a woman, about a young girl chafing against the religious and social strictures of a kingdom literally shrouded in sexual anxiety, misogyny and severe repression.

—Ann Hornaday, Washington Post

Who knew, in a country that famously frowns on women driving cars, some are allowed to make movies?

—John Hartl, The Seattle Times

12 Years a Slave
January 31 - February 13

"12 Years a Slave" isn't easy to watch, and it shouldn't be; it's one man's tragedy, but it's also the tragedy of countless thousands of souls beaten down, literally and metaphorically.

—Moira MacDonald, The Seattle Times

Solomon Northup lives comfortably with his wife and children in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., in the early 1800s... when two white men offer him a job... But after sharing a meal with them... he wakes up in chains.

—Calvin Wilson, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Nebraska
January 24 - 30

Shot in rustic black-and-white, "Nebraska" follows an old alcoholic named Woody Grant (a finely grizzled Bruce Dern) who receives a sweepstakes letter in the mail and believes he has won \$1 million.

—Tom Long, The Detroit News

Payne loves people no matter their flaws, and he once again conveys that sympathy through a beautiful, haunting film that... grows large in your memory.

—Rene Rodriguez, Miami Herald

Sweet Dreams
February 7 - February 13

An uplifting tale from Rwanda? ...but here it is...a documentary about a group of Rwandan women trying to put the nation's horrific recent past behind.

—Walter V. Addiego, San Francisco Chronicle

The struggles and successes of a small business may be familiar...But then the individual past horrors endured by these women are revealed in subtle and dramatic ways, until we realize the weight of trauma in this nation.

—Miriam Bale, New York Times

CAPITOL THEATER ON FIFTH AVENUE IN DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA



360.943.8044
233 Division St NW

Like us on
Facebook!
WORKS IN PROGRESS

Napping as the world goes by

The Evergreen State College and Latino students

Enrique Quintero

A brief demographic profile of Hispanics

The US Census Bureau places Latinos as the largest and fastest growing demographic group with a total of 53 million or 17 percent of the total population. Between the years 2000 and 2010 Latinos accounted for more than half of the total population growth in the country.

The profile for the State of Washington in the year 2011 indicates that 12 percent of the population was Latino, with a total of 790,000 inhabitants. The median age for Latinos in the state is 23 years of age. The percentage of K-12 students in Washington who are Latino is 19 percent. The number of Latinos by the year 2022 will have increased by 19.1 percent.

In 2013, according to the Pew Research Center, 69 percent of Hispanic high school graduates enrolled in college, surpassing their white counterparts by two percent. Two facts make this event significant: it represents a 20 percent increase in Hispanic college enrollment since the year 2000, and enrollment rose in spite of the fact that Hispanics were the group most affected by the economic crisis of 2008. Ironically, 2008 was the year in which the most gains in Hispanic enrollment were made. According to the same report, potential reasons for the rise of college enrollment may be the decline in the job market for Latinos ages 16 to 24 during the recession, and the importance Latino families attribute to college education.

Nevertheless, Latino college enrollment in the State of Washington one year after high school graduation lags behind national trends by 17.4 percent.

Can the subaltern go to college?

Representational equity is generally understood as the “proportional participation of historically underrepresented student populations at all levels of an institution.” This definition suggests a correspondence between the percentage of a population in a given area, and the percentage of students of the same group in the public educational institutions serving the same area.

The Latino population in the five counties surrounding Evergreen State College is as follows:

Grays Harbor	9.2 percent
Lewis	9.2 percent
Mason	8.4 percent
Pierce	9.6 percent
Thurston	7.7 percent

On the other hand, Latino enrollment at Evergreen State College appears significantly low, *short almost by half* of the desired proportional representational

equity. According to the official figures of the Evergreen State College Office of Institutional Research, since 1994 the rate of Hispanic undergraduate students remained at *four percent* for eleven years, rising to *five percent* in the last six years.

The African American and Native American population for the five counties are as follows:

	African American	Native American
Grays Harbor	1.3 percent	5.3 percent
Lewis	0.7 percent	1.8 percent
Mason	1.3 percent	4.3 percent
Pierce	7.2 percent	1.7 percent
Thurston	3.1 percent	4.3 percent

The disparity of representation, although still present, is less evident when it comes to these two groups. For African Americans, the enrollment rate has fluctuated between two percent and three percent since 1994 with a one percent increase from 2009 to 2011. Native American students have had an enrollment rate of three percent for sixteen years since 1994 and four percent in the last two years.

The figures are hardly encouraging

Equally important are structural institutional indicators such as internal academic policies and student support offered to the target groups. The effectiveness of these indicators is usually reflected in retention and graduation rates.

for Latinos at Evergreen, but the demographic landscape gets even gloomier when contrasted with an institution serving the same geographical area such as South Puget Sound Community College, which with a 9 percent enrollment rate for Latinos almost doubles the one at Evergreen.

It is difficult to believe that Evergreen’s mostly white, monochromatic ethnic representation is due to some ephemeral statistical aberration isolated from the social policies of enrollment put in place by the senior administration. Eighteen consistent years of Hispanic underrepresentation indicate a systemic modus operandi. We don’t have data for the years prior to 1994, but informal interviews with older alumni corroborate the image that the Evergreen State College has, in practice, never been a place for the ethnic subaltern, unless of course, if they are to remain as such.

It would be a mistake to limit the scope of equity exclusively to the disproportionality of representation for minority groups. Equally important are structural institutional indicators such as internal academic policies and student support offered to the target groups. The effectiveness of these indicators is usually reflected in retention

and graduation rates.

Here is what the Evergreen Office of Institutional Research has to say regarding Latino and American Indian retention rate:

“While the average persistence rate to the second year has improved overall by 2% in the most recent five year period, two groups saw 10% declines in their average retention: Hispanic/Latino and American Indian. This does not bode well for the six year graduation rates for the Hispanics and American Indian cohorts of 2007-2011, since they are already running behind in terms of retention.”

Finally, there are perceptual indicators of equity, related to the student’s perception of levels of welcoming and successful participation in a given educational institution. In a conversation with Bryan Gould, Director of Admissions at Evergreen, he attributed the low Latino enrollment to the “unconventional format of how education is delivered at Evergreen” which is “unattractive” to Latinos due to their “risk adverse” cultural traits, and their desire for a “better economic value” for their academic career. The ambidextrous clumsiness of these remarks stereotyping Latino students is hard to explain. Is he telling us that due to some mysterious cultural condition Latinos resist, or are unable to grasp progressive education? Is he telling us that Evergreen cannot offer Latinos a “good economic value” in their academic career? Is he telling us that low Latino enrollment at Evergreen is their fault and has nothing to do with the enrollment policies at Evergreen? Maybe he is telling us all of the above and more, but suffice to say that his comments offer a glimpse of not particularly democratic values alive in the institution, and an effort to avoid institutional responsibility.

The sedative laurel wreaths of discourse

Education institutions (along with religious organizations, the legal system, the political system, the media, and cultural institutions) belong to what the French philosopher Althusser calls the State Ideological Apparatus, whose basic function is reproducing the dominant ideology of the society in which the institution exists. Althusser highlights the importance of these institutions by saying *“To my knowledge, no class can hold state power over a long period of time without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the State Ideological Apparatuses.”* This highlights the importance for progressive forces to occupy those ideological spaces as part of the political struggle of the left.

It is no secret that Evergreen State College has a well-deserved progressive

reputation. The college is well known for public service centers such as the Longhouse Educational and Cultural Center, which provides cultural and academic support to Native American students, and the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education, a national resource center for learning communities as an effective interdisciplinary tool for better teaching practices. In fact, Evergreen’s liberal and progressive reputation has been in place since it first opened in the early 1970’s mostly due to the implementation of critical curriculum, experimental pedagogy, alternative evaluation methods, and an interdisciplinary approach both for teaching and learning.

However, if we concede that progressivism and liberalism are hegemonic in the academic field, and rightly so, it may be worth asking ourselves, what is the real social significance of these gains if they rest upon institutional policies that by intent, neglect, or incompetence, clearly exclude minority groups in the community?

There is an old Spanish proverb: *“Date Fama y Echate a la Cama”* which loosely translated means “if you give yourself a good reputation then all you have to do afterward is take naps.” It would appear that the reputation of unconventional progressiveness has allowed Evergreen State College to navigate undetected escaping scrutiny regarding enrollment policies and equity. If we have rhetoric and appearances, reality becomes superfluous.

Educational attainment for all

“Educational Attainment for All / Diversity and Equity in Washington State Higher Education, July 2013”, a report sponsored by Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) and prepared by the University of Washington and Washington State University states in its foreword:

“...Demographic and economic forces have produced significant education and employment gaps, particularly for Washingtonians of color, and if no changes are made, these gaps will likely become greater overtime.”

Optimistically, we expect in the near future to see an increase in the rate of enrollment for Latino and all students of color. There is no reason why Hispanic families in our particular case, would deny themselves the benefits of the good quality, critical education The Evergreen State College offers. What is needed are some concrete material measures to broaden the pathways of access to college for the underrepresented. At a minimum, we would expect Evergreen, in the name of progressive education, to keep pace with the WSAC recommendations to reduce education gaps for Washingtonians of color. Doing otherwise puts Evergreen in the position of Rip Van Winkle, who fell asleep only to awake years later to a world that had changed beyond recognition, but was real nonetheless.

Enrique Quintero, a political activist in Latin America during the 70’s, taught ESL and Second Language Acquisition in the Anchorage School District, and Spanish at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He currently lives and writes in Olympia.



Centralia Square Antique Mall

3 floors to explore ▪ Restaurant ▪ Bookstore

Directions from Olympia
South on Interstate 5
Off at Exit 82 (Factory Outlets)
East on Harrison
Right on Pearl
201 S Pearl & Locust

Open 7 days
10 to 5

Reading Olympia since 2002

Publishing, screenprinting,
full-service printing, & more!
books-zines-t-shirts-stickers

211 4th Ave E, Olympia, WA
360-786-9673
www.lastwordbooks.org

Last Word Books & Press

De siesta mientras el mundo gira

The Evergreen State College y los estudiantes Latinos

Enrique Quintero

Una breve reseña demográfica de los Hispanos

La Oficina de Censos de Los USA señala a los Latinos como el grupo demográfico con el mas rápido crecimiento. Existen mas de 53 millones de Latinos lo que representa 17 por ciento del total de la población. Entre los años 2000 y 2010 Latinos representaron mas de la mitad del crecimiento total de la población en el país.

El perfil para el Estado de Washington en el año 2011 indica que el 12 por ciento de la población fue Latina, con un total de 790.000 habitantes. La edad promedio de los Latinos en el estado es de 23 años. El porcentaje de estudiantes desde Kindergaden hasta el final de la secundaria en Washington es de 19 por ciento. Para el año 2022 el porcentaje de Latinos habrá crecido en un 19 por ciento.

En 2013, según el Centro de Investigaciones Pew, 69 por ciento de los estudiantes latinos graduados de la escuela secundaria (High School) se matricularon en la universidad (College), superando a sus contrapartes blancos por un 2 por ciento. Este hecho es significativo por dos razones: representa un incremento del 20 por ciento en el numero de hispanos matriculados en la universidad desde el año 2000; y este crecimiento crece a pesar de que los Hispanos fue el grupo mas afectado por la crisis de 2008. Irónicamente el año 2008 fue el año en el que se dio un mayor crecimiento. De acuerdo a la misma fuente, las razones potenciales de este crecimiento pueden haber sido un descenso en el mercado de trabajo para Latinos entre las edades de 16 a 24 durante la recesión, y la importancia que las familias latinas atribuyen a la educación superior.

A pesar de todo lo anterior, en el estado de Washington, la tasa de latinos matriculados en la universidad después de un año de su graduación en la secundaria es de 17 por ciento, lo cual esta por debajo del promedio a nivel nacional.

Es la universidad posible para grupos minoritarios?

Equidad en la Representación, es generalmente entendida como “la participación proporcional de grupos estudiantiles históricamente sub-representados a todos los niveles de la institución.” Esta definición sugiere una correspondencia entre el porcentaje de un grupo poblacional en una área determinada, y el porcentaje de estudiantes de ese grupo en una institución de educación publica en la misma área.

La población Latina en los cinco condados alrededor de Evergreen State

College esta distribuida de la siguiente manera:

Grays Harbor	9.2 por ciento
Lewis	9.2 por ciento
Mason	8.4 por ciento
Pierce	9.6 por ciento
Thurston	7.7 por ciento

Por otro lado, el numero de estudiantes latinos en Evergreen es significativamente bajo, casi la mitad de los niveles deseados y aceptables en una representación justa. De acuerdo a las cifras oficiales de la Oficina de Investigación Institucional de Evergreen State College, desde 1994 el promedio de representación de estudiantes latinos en Evegreen a permanecido en el cuatro por ciento y subido al cinco por ciento en los últimos seis años.

La distribución de la población Afro-Americana y Nativa es la siguiente:

	Afro Americanos	Nativos
Grays Harbor	1.3 por ciento	5.3 por ciento
Lewis	0.7 por ciento	1.8 por ciento
Mason	1.3 por ciento	4.3 por ciento
Pierce	7.2 por ciento	1.7 por ciento
Thurston	3.1 por ciento	4.3 por ciento

Esta disparidad de representación, aunque todavía presente, es menos evidente cundo se refiere a otros grupos en Evergreen. Para Afro-Americanos, desde 1994 la tasa de representación ha fluctuado entre el dos por ciento y tres por ciento con uno por ciento de incremento desde 2009 a 2011. Estudiantes Nativos han tenido una tasa de representación de tres por ciento por diez y seis años consecutivos y cuatro por ciento en los dos últimos años.

Esta cifras poco alentadoras para latinos en Evergreen, pero este panorama demográfico se torna aun mas deprimente cuando lo comparamos con una institución como South Puget Sound Community College, la cual tiene un índice de representación de Latinos de nueve por ciento, es decir casi el doble que Evergreen.

Es difícil creer que la representación monocromática, mayoritariamente blanca de Evergreen, se deba a una aberración estadística efimera, sin ser parte de las políticas de reclutamiento implementadas por administradores ejecutivos de la institución. Diez y ocho años consecutivos de sub-representación indican un modus operandi sistémico y no circunstancial. No tenemos información de los años anteriores a 1994, pero entrevistas informales con estudi-

antes de esos años corroboran la imagen que Evergreen State College en la practica nunca ha sido una institución para grupos de minorías subalternas, a menos que, continúen permaneciendo como tales.

Seria equivocado limitar el alcance de una representación equitativa, solamente a la desproporción numérica de los grupos de minoría. Son igualmente importantes indicadores como las políticas académicas internas y el apoyo institucional ofrecido a los grupos en mención. La efectividad de estos indicadores generalmente se refleja en los índices de retención (permanencia en la universidad) y graduación de los estudiantes.

Con respecto a la retención de Latinos y de estudiantes Nativos, la Oficina de Investigación Institucional de Evergreen nos dice lo siguiente:

“Mientras que la tasa de persistencia promedio ha mejorado en el segundo

Son igualmente importantes indicadores como las políticas académicas internas y el apoyo institucional ofrecido a los grupos en mención. La efectividad de estos indicadores generalmente se refleja en los índices de retención (permanencia en la universidad) y graduación de los estudiantes.

año en dos por ciento en los últimos cinco años, dos grupos han visto una reducción de diez por ciento en la tasa de retención: Hispano/Latinos y Nativos. Esto no es un buen presagio para la tasa de graduación de seis años para los grupos de Hispanos y Nativos en las levas desde 2007 a 2011 dado que al momento sus tasas de retención son ya de por si bajas”.

Finalmente, hay indicadores perceptuales de equidad, estos se relacionan con la percepción que el estudiante tiene de los niveles de aceptación y participación exitosa en una institución. En una conversación con Bryan Gould, Director de Admisiones en Evergreen, el atribuye la baja representación Latina debido “al formato no-convencional de cómo la educación es impartida a Evergreen,” la cual es “no atractiva” para latinos debido su cultural “adversidad a los riesgos” y su deseo por “un mejor valor económico” para sus carreras. La torpeza a ambidextra de estas frases en la caracterización estereotípica de los estudiantes latinos es difícil de explicar. Acaso nos trata el de decir que debido a alguna condición cultural misteriosa los Latinos resisten, o son incapaces de asimilar una educación progresista? Nos esta diciendo que Evergreen no puede ofrecer a Latinos un “buen valor económico” en su carrera académica? O quizás que la baja representación de Latinos en Evergreen es culpa de ellos mismo y no tiene nada que ver con las políticas de reclutamiento de Evergreen? Tal ves nos esta diciendo todo esto y mucho mas, pero basta con señalar que este tipo de comentarios pone al descubierto la existencia de valores no particularmente democráticos en la institución, y un esfuerzo por evitar toda responsabilidad institucional.

Los Sedativos Laureles del Discurso

Las instituciones educativas (junto con las organizaciones religiosas, el sistema legal, el sistema político, los medios de comunicación, y las instituciones culturales) pertenecen a lo que el filosofo francés Althusser llama Los Aparatos ideológicos del Estado, cuya función básica es la de reproducir la ideología dominante en la cual dicha institución existe. Althusser enfatiza la importancia de estas instituciones al decir “De lo que yo se, ninguna clase puede sostener el poder estatal por un periodo largo de tiempo sin ejercer al mismo tiempo su hegemonía sobre los Aparatos Ideológicos del Estado”. Esto a sus ves pone de relieve la importancia para las fuerzas progresistas de ocupar

los espacios ideológicos como parte de la lucha política de la izquierda.

No es ningún secreto que Evergreen State College tiene una bien merecida reputación de ser una institución progresista. Evergreen es muy conocido por sus centros de servicio publico tales como el Longhouse Educational Center, que provee apoyo cultural y académico a estudiantes Nativos; y el Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education, un centro de recursos a nivel nacional para Comunidades de Aprendizaje como un instrumento interdisciplinario eficaz para mejores practicas de enseñanza. En efecto, Evergreen, la reputación progresista y liberal existe desde su apertura al inicio de los años 70's principalmente debido a la implementación de un currículo critico, pedagogía experimental, métodos de evaluación alternativos, y enfoques interdisciplinarios para enseñar y aprender.

Sin embargo, si aceptamos que un pensamiento progresista es hegemónico en el campo académico en Evergreen—y justificadamente—vale la pena preguntarnos, cual es el verdadero significado social de estos beneficios si ellos descansan en políticas institucionales, que bien sea intencionalmente, por negligencia, o incompetencia, claramente excluyen grupos minoritarios en la comunidad?

Hay un antiguo proverbio español que dice “Date Fama y Échate a la Cama”, sin equivalente textual en Ingles, que traducido a la ligera seria algo así como “ si te das a ti mismo una buena reputación, después todo lo que tienes que hacer es tomar siestas.” Parecería que la reputación de un progresismo poco convencional ha permitido que Evergreen navegue sin detección ni escrutinio de sus políticas de retención y reclutamiento. Si se cuenta con retorica y con apariencias, la realidad es superflua.

Logros Educativos para Todos

El documento “Logros Educativos para Todos / Diversidad y Equidad en la Educación Universitaria del Estado de Washington”, preparado por El Consejo para el Exito de los estudiantes de Washington (WSAC) y por las universidades University of Washington y Washington State University, dice lo siguiente en su introducción:

“...Fuerzas demográficas y económicas han generado desigualdades educativas y de empleo significativas, particularmente para poblaciones de color residentes en Washington, si no se implementan cambios, estas desigualdades serán mucho mas grandes con el pasar del tiempo.”

Optimistamente, esperamos ver el futuro cercano un incremento en las índices de matriculación de Latinos y estudiantes de color. No hay razón para que las familias Hispanas, en nuestro caso particular, se nieguen a si mismas los beneficios de una educación critica y de buena calidad como la que ofrece Evergreen College. Lo que se necesita son medidas materiales concretas que amplíen los caminos de acceso a la universidad para grupos sub-representados. Lo menos que podemos esperar de Evergreen, a nombre de una educación progresista, es estar a la par con las recomendaciones del WSAC para reducir las desigualdades de la población de color residente en Washington. No hacerlo así, coloca a Evergreen en la posición de Rip Van Winkle, quien después de dormir por muchos años se despertó en un mundo al cual no podía reconocer, pero real a pesar de todo.

Enrique Quintero fue un activista político en America Latina durante los años 70. Luego trabajó como profesor de ESL y Adquisición de Segunda Lengua en el Distrito Escolar de Anchorage y Profesor de Español en la Universidad de Alaska. Actualmente vive y escribe en Olympia.

Cartridge Care Inc.

THE PRINTER EXPERTS since 1990

TONER - FILM - INK JETS

Remanufactured and new - Hundreds in stock

REPAIR - SERVICE - SALES for

Printers - Fax - Copiers - Plotters

Free Pick Up & Delivery

1314 Lebanon St. SE - Lacey

360-459-8845

I want to tell you the story of the Cascadia Freedom Caravan



The Cascadia Freedom Caravan brought people from Olympia, Portland, and Las Vegas to the Tear Down the Walls National Activist Gathering in Tucson, Arizona, where over four hundred people came together to strategize on building a more unified, powerful movement for transformational change in the United States.

Nora Mahto Knutson

When I first stepped on the bus,
it smelled of fresh wood
and potential.

As soon as the striped curtains went up,
the engine began to rumble, and
this caravan-spaceship-earthship
began flying at (no more than) 65 miles per hour,
moving (no more than) 8 miles for every gallon of fos-
sil fuel burned

And all of a sudden each person on the bus
is no longer a stranger.

You see there’s something about this bus
It’s not just any old bus
though it began that way
It’s a boat full of revolutionaries sailing down the
West coast
on the winds of change
It’s a beatnik boomerang
unearthed from the dust
of several decades

It’s a tin can full of belly laughs and flower power
Sleeping bag hippie nest
Transient traveller travellin’ fest
Though, perhaps we best
not ascribe too many titles
to what might just be
a bunch of folks on a bus who haven’t taken showers
in a while

Well, it’s a band of lucky hearts and smiling faces
on a mission South to Tucson (C uk’s on)
to tear down walls

put our heads and hands together
build a movement
for us all

Yet, there’s something more about this bus
It’s clearly not just any old bus
though it began that way
It’s a journey through time and space
Synthesis of chance and grace
watching the land roll on through the windows
days and days moving bodies
changing beings
sitting still
still the same
in and of the moment living
hour is *now*, but what time is it? day is it?
and where are we anyways?

Yeah, there’s something about this bus
It’s not just any old bus
though it began that way
What other vehicle sports
spontaneous acrobatic yoga
Carries old souls with young spirits
Generates living breathing hip hop beatbox
Folky string tunes on green leather bus seats
Or freestyle jams on the freeways?

Radical radiowave broadcasting expedition
documenting history in the making
making history
as we know it

We got blues in our coffee cups,
Fire in our hearts
Left some riders, gained some riders,
wheels keep moving
stop,
keep moving

and though it’s parked they’re moving, still

Truck stop smoke pot
In the middle of nowhere
Cartwheels, handstands, feet in the air
Cigarette breaks at every gas fill
Sound waves, brain waves bounce off the window
sills
Some nights a bit too much booze
Sometimes soundless, in our heads, we cruise

Yes there’s this thing about the bus
It’s not just any old bus
Embodied voyage to our future
Subtle trip to the past
Remembering the road on which we travel is encom-
passed by the land
Living breathing spirit of the Cascadia Freedom flag

Internal rhymes mesh with
External vibrations
Like a Heart beats
Truth speaks
language of love in the air we breathe
Minds blown,
Mind blown, once again

Infinite dreams
Nomadic, it seems
Yet, true warriors fated
to come back to where we originated

See, there’s something about this bus
It’s not just any old bus
It’s a freewheeling convoy of truth seekers
whispering visions through desert whirlwinds
heads high, spirits strong with intentionality
philosophies interweaving in material reality

Insurmountable amounts of dirty socks and pbj
sandwiches
Crowded with beings of sweat, blood, and dust
And the clown crown, it travels from head to head
Bus cushions, floor corners, our makeshift beds
We sleep and wake on this bus
Our destination we carry with us

No rules, we follow our own expectations
Share everything we have with no hesitations
Fearless of raw primordial expression
We listen to our instincts; learn to trust
We all suffer and dance together
In this day and age it’s consensus or bust,
man

See there’s something about this bus
It’s not just any old bus
Now, taste of freedom on our tongues
Inhaling and exhaling the love in the air in our lungs

Singing songs for none but our own souls
as we stoke these emerging hot rebel coals
and add kindling to this passionate fire we fan
in the Cascadia Freedom Caravan...

Nora Mahto Knutson is a radical free spirit from South Minneapolis with roots settling into the earth of this town called Olympia, She is a writer, spoken word artist, activist, and much more...

Review of the documentary: *Inequality for All*

Robert Whitlock

It was another enjoyable screening at the Olympia Film Society Capitol Theater. I wish Robert Reich’s film, *Inequality for All*, had addressed the problem of biological carrying capacity. Industrial society has grown to exceed planetary biological carrying capacity. This is one of the downsides of the growth-based industrialized economic paradigm. Maybe it would be good to include the biological environment in future conversations about economic justice.

Secondly, I had an issue with the scene about the union showdown at the California Geo-thermal electrical generating plant scene. Please, the next time a union-buster describes themselves as a “good” Christian,” or Jew, or Muslim, or whatever religion, maybe, just maybe, question them on it? After all, unions are designed to stand up to the greed of the owners and Judeo-Christian-Islamic

as well as most other religious/spiritual stories are most definitely and decidedly, firmly and squarely opposed to greed and all anti-humanitarian wealth generating activities.



The man at the California geo-thermal plant also defended capitalism based on the merits of the intelligence of its owners and entrepreneurs. The reality is that intelligence only plays a part in people’s rise to materialistic fortune; the critical part that needs to be continually mentioned is the role of clubs. All fortunes are the product of the use of clubs, whether they be clubs to beat people down, or insiders’ connections.

Then there is the Seattle industrialist and Amazon investor who boasted of a \$10-\$30 million salary—I wonder what his thoughts are about possible solutions to the problem of socio-political-economic corruption. And Warren Buffet, too. Really, I do. Warren Buffet says, “please tax my wealth.” So what has he done to make that happen besides talk and write about it? How much of his wealth has he used in effort to promote equitable taxation?

Also included in the film’s discussion is how mechanization and robotics have

affected labor. With rapidly increasing rates of technological development, will machines outpace and replace more and more people, in more and more workplace sectors?

The film *was* entertaining and good for highlighting the scourge of economic inequality, but for people who really want to see changes in the world, there is a much bigger story out there about how people treat each other. Maybe it’s not so much that the problems are new but more that, as a result of industrialization, the scope of impacts have been greatly increased.

Thanks to the Olympia Film Society for putting on such great thought-provoking cinema. And thanks to Robert Reich for sharing his life and working to expose the story of the tremendous economic inequality we have been experiencing in this day and age. Is consumerism the answer for saving humanity and life on earth? What do you think?

Robert lives and works in Olympia Washington. You can learn more about him at his blogspot: www.peacepotential.blogspot.com.

In support of the use of power

It's messy. It's incremental. It's what we have.

Emily Lardner

The naïve hope of a democratic system is that elected officials work on behalf of those who elect them. We've devolved from that as Susan Clark and Woden Teachout suggest in their book *Slow Democracy*. They argue that the dominant conception of democracy—voting—is analogous to the use of a public bathroom: an individual matter, done discretely. We enter the stall, close the door, do our private business, and exit. We might linger to wash our hands, but the whole experience is profoundly private even though it takes place in public space.

We are suffering, collectively, from this impoverished conception of democracy. In *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*, Benjamin Barber argues that liberal conceptions of democracy have led at best to “dog-biscuit laws”—laws initiated by presidents (or governors or mayors) that play well to public sentiment without resulting in any structural change. Moreover, dog-biscuit laws, like those requiring labeling calories in fast food items, play into our over-developed sense of individualism and mask the growing erosion of the public sphere.

Overall, we are missing clear and compelling appeals to reclaim our shared lives, our public, and our future—the collective identity that the Occupy Movement tried to foster.

We need to reclaim citizenship as a concept that means active involvement in local politics including, Barber notes, neighborhood politics. Local politics are critical.

Polarized politics

Meanwhile, as Jill Lepore documents in a recent (12/2/13) *New Yorker* article, American politics at a federal level have never been more polarized. She cites different kinds of evidence to show that the more polarized members of Congress are, the less productive it is. The less Congress gets done, historically speaking, the greater the gap grows between rich and poor and, conversely, the greater the gap between the rich and poor, the greater the disagreement between liberals and conservatives. We are caught, she says, in a situation akin to being in a kitchen when it's on fire and the only thing we have are matches.

Weak democracy. Low public participation at even a minimal level. Polarization in Congress at record levels. Ditto the income gap. Enter climate change. The likelihood of business-as-usual politics in the US being equal to the task of mitigating and adapting to climate change must be close to zero. No smart bookie would place odds on a bet like this.

John Podesta at the federal level

The Obama administration recently announced the appointment of John Podesta, an advisor expected to play a central role helping agencies and departments implement the president's Climate Action Plan. The plan was announced in July 2013, and the White House created a great infographic that captures the key concepts: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/share/climate-action-plan>.

Podesta's appointment matters. In November 2010, the nonpartisan think tank he founded, Center for American Progress, published “The Power of the President: Recommendations to Advance Progressive Change” describing actions a president can take through the use of executive powers, rather than fo-

cusing on trying to get agreement from a divided Congress. Action areas include energy and environment, domestic economic policy, education policy, federal government reforms, and foreign policy and national security actions. [The report can be viewed on the Center for American Progress website.]

Now Podesta is in the White House, tasked with helping implement Obama's climate action plan, and fully prepared to do what he can do without having to work through the historically polarized Congress. He will exercise power.

Opportunity at the local level

On December 13, 2013, the Climate Legislative and Executive Task Force (CLEW) was charged with examining policies to help Washington State meet 2007 goals for reducing green house gas emissions. Predictably, the Democrats took one position; the Republicans took another.

It's not that Democrats predictably take a clear position on the matter of climate change. Like their Republican colleagues, they are for the most part overly responsive to the needs of private capital and too insensitive to the needs of people.

However, in this case, Governor Inslee, Senator Ranker and Representative Fitzgibbon took the right tack. They opted to put the future—“our children, our grandchildren and all those generations

who will be lucky enough to call Washington state home”—first.

We live in a time when public comments on the plan for a Sustainable Thurston include concerns of creeping socialism. A sharp critique of capitalism is not forthcoming from our elected of-

With Governor Inslee's commitment to doing something for the future—including his willingness to exercise the power he has—we have a chance to enact policies that prioritize the envelope, rather than the economy.

ficials. Within the more circumscribed space of regulating capitalism, we may follow the lead of Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, and L. Hunter Lovins in *Natural Capitalism*, who advocate not an end to capitalism, but a clearer accounting which includes the function of natural capital—the resources, living systems and ecosystem services that everything else depends on. They argue that the environment is an “an envelope containing, provisioning, and sustaining the entire economy.” The more tattered the envelope, the worse the economy.

The Republican position articulated by Representative Short and Senator Ericksen represents the antithesis of the envelope theory. They write: “Our concern is that policies which limit the emissions of greenhouse gasses, such as a cap-and-trade system, a carbon tax, and a low carbon fuel standard, would inevitably raise the price of gasoline, home heating, and all consumer goods relied upon by the people of Washington State, while potentially driving business-

es, such as Boeing, to relocate to states which do not impose such costs.”

With Governor Inslee's commitment to doing something for the future, including his willingness to exercise the power he has (e.g. signing the West Coast Climate Agreement along with the governors of Oregon and California and British Columbia's environment minister) we have a chance to enact policies that prioritize the envelope, rather than the economy. It's messy. It's not revolutionary. It's incremental. It's what we have though—grassroots activists and a handful of

elected and appointed leaders, trying to find a productive space for action.

Two projects close to home bear watching—and supporting. First, keep your eyes open for news about the CLEW final report, which is due to the 2014 Washington state legislature. Governor Inslee needs to find what he describes as the “Teddy Roosevelt” of this generation—the Republican legislator who is also a conservationist. It's not clear yet what happens if CLEW can't come up with a final report. Second, Sustainable Thurston has finalized its proposal to make our county sustainable. Those recommendations need to be validated by local jurisdictions, a vetting process that is beginning now.

Emily Lardner teaches at Evergreen and co-directs one of Evergreen's public service centers. She served on LOTT's groundwater scoping study committee and on Olympia's Utility Advisory Committee. Emily currently serves on the Thurston County's Storm and Surface Water Advisory Committee.

He`gem`o`ny (noun): leadership or dominance, esp. by one Country or social group over others.

Dis`man`tle (verb): to take (a machine or structure) to pieces



Dismantling Christian Hegemony

Forum Theatre Workshop & Community Performance

Friday-Sunday, February 7-9

Participate in exploratory theatre! No prior dramatic experience necessary, just a genuine interest. We will use games and exercises inspired by Theatre of the Oppressed to examine questions such as:

- What are connections between Christian norms and the prejudice toward Muslims/Arab Americans?
- What does anti-Semitism look like in our community?
- What healthcare repercussions arise from an increasingly Catholic run-hospital system?
- How do dominant Christian norms shape our societal views on gender roles, and sexual orientation?
- What does Christian hegemony mean for those seeking office?
- What does Christianity 'as normalcy' mean for all of us on a day to day basis?
- What is Christian privilege?
- How truly separate are Church and State?
- How does Christian influence impact our schools?

Friday (10 am-4 pm) Group building, solidarity, stories, and theatrical exercises.

Saturday (10 am-4 pm) Creation of small scenes based on real moments of struggle and oppression.

Sunday (10 am-3 pm) Scene rehearsals and preparation for the evening 'forum.'

Sunday evening performance (7 pm) The greater community is invited to witness scenes and help provide solutions to the struggles through forum theatre.

Olympia Family Theater

112 State Ave NE, Olympia

The Forum Performance
Sunday, February 9, 7-9 pm
Olympia Family Theater

There is no cost to attend the 3 day workshop but participants must pre-register.

*It is important to note that this workshop and performance are open to anyone, regardless of their religious identity. This is NOT a call for Christian bashing. We are examining the faults of a system, not targeting people.

Sponsored by Triumph of the Commons Theatre.
For more info: triumphofthecommons@gmail.com

► **Budget Deal**, cont. from page 1.
which is a reduction from \$952,308. Boohoo. (Daring to show my working class roots, I have never been able to figure out what someone does to actually *earn* that much. Even if one were to work 80 hour weeks without a vacation or holidays, that's still \$117 an hour!)

And for the few well-to-do, this little bill is a big plus. Doctors and health-care providers won a boost in Medicaid fees. The oil and gas companies also did well. Screwing the environment, the Murray-Ryan budget deal “includes a provision for implementation of the 2012 US-Mexico Transboundary Hydrocarbons Agreement (ratified by Mexico in April 2012) that would allow oil and gas exploration in the western Gulf of Mexico.” The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management estimates the deep-water area contains as much as 172 million barrels of oil and 304 billion cubic feet of natural gas.

Is it any surprise that at the same time the Murray-Ryan deal was being discussed in the U.S., the *Associated Press* reported the Mexican senate passed a bill December 12 that allows foreign oil companies to drill in Mexican territory for the first time since 1938. The next step for the Mexican “energy package” is “approval by the legislatures of 17 of Mexico’s 31 states, because of its changes to the Mexican constitution.”

On a side note, National Geographic reported in December on a study, published in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*, of bottle-nosed dolphins in an area “heavily impacted by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.” The researchers found that “many of the dolphins suffered from moderate to severe lung disease associated with oil contamination. Almost half had ‘a guarded or worse prognosis, and 17 percent were considered poor or grave, indicating they weren’t expected to live.’” Predictably, BP criticized the findings, blaming the dolphin’s health, or lack of it, on “PCBs, DDT and pesticides, unusual cold stun events, and toxins from harmful algal blooms.” According to the BP spokesman, dolphin mortality events happen all the time. Hmm.

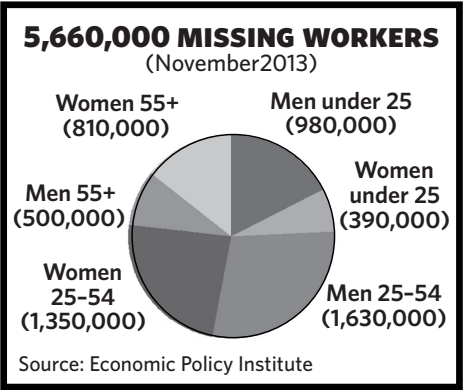
Unemployment benefits not included

Conveniently excluded from the Murray-Ryan bill are the federal unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed—Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation Program (EUC). Last month, the program was providing for 1.3 million workers who were no longer covered by state unemployment programs. The EUC was allowed to expire December 28, 2013.

According to a CNBC report, an additional “850,000 people will run out of state unemployment benefits in the first quarter of 2014.... About one million more without work will lose state benefits by June.” (In Washington

state, 24,400 lost their unemployment benefits with an additional 37,600 expected by June.)

That means, nationwide, potentially three million long-term unemployed workers will no longer have unemployment benefits. Add to that all those workers who have given up or—because of the poor economy—have never been able to enter the job market in the first place to gain the right to unemployment benefits. The Economic



Policy Institute (EPI) calls those not included in the official unemployment rate “missing workers.”

After those long-term unemployed workers are thrown off the unemployment rolls, the “official” unemployment rate will drop 30%. (See how well the economy is doing, Thomas Herndon, nitpicky kid at Amherst. Austerity really does work!) Of course, following this drop, there will be a slight bump from another 310,000 layoffs in 2014 resulting from the reduction in worker spending caused by the elimination the EUC program. The good news for corporate spin doctors is the unemployment rate will drop back down in 26 weeks.

The Pentagon bulks up, again

Looking back to last year, the Pentagon received a budget of \$613.9 billion, which included \$88 billion in overseas contingency funds—mostly for the war in Afghanistan. For this year the Pentagon’s budget received only \$80 billion in contingency funds, but ended up with a 2014 budget totaling \$630 billion. (Scratch, scratch.) And this to

a federal agency that the Government Accounting Office describes as having “significant financial and related business management systems and control weaknesses that have adversely affected DOD’s ability to control costs; ensure basic accountability; anticipate future costs and claims on the budget; measure performance; maintain funds control; prevent and detect fraud, waste and abuse; address pressing management issues; and prepare auditable financial statements...DOD is one of the few federal entities that cannot accurately account for its spending or assets.”

According to Laura Matthews of the *International Business Times*, the Pentagon has actually wanted to “trim the fat. It has proposed that Congress shutter, for example, some low-priority weapons programs such as the Global Hawk Block 30 drone and the C-27J Spartan cargo aircraft. However, such requests have been denied.”

It reminds me of the dysfunctional family in the fictional Cinderella tale—biological children spoiled and the step-child horribly neglected. Contrast the Pentagon to the food stamp

year, this should be a scandal. And needless to say—but I’ll say it anyway—the USDA estimate will certainly worsen with the elimination of long-term federal unemployment benefits.

By not including the elimination of long-term unemployment benefits (\$25 billion) and the likely February reduction in the food stamp program (\$8-10 billion), the Murray and Ryan budget deal hides the full impact on the American public “while pundits debate whether Republicans or Democrats won the negotiations.” As Katrina Vanden Heuvel, says in the *Washington Post*, “the real losers are the American people, on whose backs the deal was brokered. Never mind that it makes none of the crucial investments in education, infrastructure and research that will secure our future. This budget is a lousy deal for the millions of Americans still out of work, for the one in five children growing up in poverty, for the countless families still struggling to make ends meet.”

How does the future look?

Not so good. Remember the Fiscal Cliff that was avoided a year ago? It’s the one in which most of the Bush-era tax cuts for the rich, worth \$4 trillion, were made permanent, but the federal long-term unemployment benefits were extended for only one year. This year’s agreement reflects the same intentions. John Cassidy in *The New Yorker* wrote, “the most stark reminder of how things have changed in Washington

over the past few years is to look at the revised spending figure for discretionary spending in fiscal 2014. It’s \$1.012 trillion. That’s slightly more than the Republican negotiators wanted, but it’s twenty-seven billion dollars less than Ryan proposed in his 2011 budget, which, at the time, was widely agreed to be so draconian it was unrealistic.”

Sylvia Smith is a long-time WIPster and Evergreen graduate, who would really appreciate someone coming forward with a background in economics to write about these crappy economic times.

By not including the elimination of long-term unemployment benefits (\$25 billion) and the likely February reduction in the food stamp program (\$8-10 billion), the Murray and Ryan budget deal hides the full impact on the American public.

program, which is another federal program purposely left out in the Murray-Ryan budget deal. Jack Rasmus, in his *Counterpunch* article, states that besides the cuts to the program that happened in November of last year, “further reductions are being negotiated that will conclude by February 2014 and will likely reduce food stamp spending by \$8-\$10 billion over the two year period of the recent budget deal.” At a time when the US Department of Agriculture estimates that 49 million Americans (17.6 million U.S. households) experience food insecurity each

TRADITIONS
CAFE & WORLD FOLK ART

Brass and Bead Necklace
Women's fistula rehabilitation project, Ghana
Ojoba Collective

Earrings
India
Mata Traders

Handbag from recycled grocery bags
Women's group, India
Asha Imports

Cotton batik dress
Women's coop, Ghana
Global Mamas
Ojoba Collective

Fair Trade & Sweatshop-free
300 5th Ave. SW, Olympia 705-2819
Concerts of international and local performers.
www.traditionsfairtrade.com

STYLING · CUTS · COLOR · PERMS

FREE CONSULTATIONS · FREE BANG TRIMS

"We'll trim it, rub it, or read it"

JAMIE LEE & COMPANY

309 E. 4TH AVE.
OLYMPIA, WA 98501

360-786-6027
JAMIELEEANDCOMPANY.COM

KAOS patron business.

DEEP CONDITIONING · MANICURES · PEDICURES · MASSAGE · ASTROLOGY · TAROT

BOTANICAL HAIR CARE PRODUCTS

Mixx
96fm
KXXO
www.mixx96.com

Thanks to MIXX 96 for its generous support in providing much needed space for Works In Progress production meetings.

FRESH.
organic
LOCAL

Everybody welcome!

Two locations to serve you!

WEST SIDE
921 Rogers Street NW
Olympia, WA 98502

EAST SIDE
3111 Pacific Avenue SE
Olympia, WA 98501

Olympia
FOOD
CO-OP

For the Community Sustaining Fund

It’s important to say, “Round up, please.”

Sylvia Smith

Besides being the state capitol of Washington, what is so special about Olympia? Easy. It’s our cohesive and dynamic progressive community. Its foundations laid in the creation of The Evergreen State College and in the subsequent establishment of the Olympia Food Co-op by Greeners in the early 1980s, which was an odd time. Ronald Raygun and George Bush, Sr were in the White House. Pinochet ruled Chile. Apartheid was law in South Africa. People were entertained by dysfunctional rich people and their wannabes in Dallas and smartly dressed undercover narcs in Miami. Looking back, it makes the bile rise just a little.

Surprisingly, it was also during this time that an obscure, little-known (but important) community organization was birthed—the Community Sustaining Fund of Thurston County. It began in conversations about the lack of funding in Olympia for progressive groups and ideas. Tom Nogler, a current member of the Sustaining Fund’s Board of Directors, remembers “private talks with Paul Cienfuegos about gaps in offerings in the community.” They talked “about a local granting organization” that could receive financial “support from alternative businesses to fund radical projects. The definition of ‘radical projects’ was a key discussion initially,” recalled Tom, “my memory is of projects that help community understanding of oppression issues.” In particular, they were concerned about projects that “may have difficulty gaining financial support because of their controversial nature.” Tom and Paul would go on to name the organization and “solicit interest in the community.”

The first Community Sustaining Fund grant was awarded in 1989. “Paul is in Portland now, and Peter Moulton and Russell Fox were early participants who were able to help maintain

the whole affair over the years,” Tom added, “and there have been countless others over the last 26 years, just like with any organization.”

Present day Sustaining Fund

Last month, I spent a pleasant hour speaking with two more members of CSF’s Board of Directors, Keith Dublanica and Vic Colman, at a table in Traditions Café located in downtown Olympia. While today’s CSF mission statement does not mention the word “radical,” they both talked about the new ideas and broad connections to the progressive community involvement in the CSF provides. Vic is inspired by “hearing from the activist side of the Olympia Community. You’re hearing some ideas that are very cutting edge.” Keith agreed, “People bring in their grant proposals, their enthusiasm, and their ideas—it’s one of the most gratifying parts” of CSF.

They shared that the Community Sustaining Fund has paid out more than \$70,000 in approximately 250 grants in the last 26 years. The funds are to be “aimed at creating and sustaining a democratic, just, nonviolent, and ecologically sound society.” What is unique about the fund is that a grantee need not be a federal registered nonprofit. The CSF just asks that you let them know how you spent the money.

According to Vic, “the purpose of the Fund is to provide seed money to jump start a group or activity” and that “CSF focuses on what piece in the grant application will accelerate the project along.” Keith added, “We don’t have hard and fast rules.” He described their guidelines as having “a little bit of latitude” depending on the amount of money available and how well the request fits within the mission statement. “We do it on a case by case basis.”

Another quality Vic says is unusual for grant organizations is that CSF does personal interviews. “When you talk to people and hear their ideas come to life in

a conversation rather than just on paper, people do an amazing job of telling their stories in a way that can’t be captured in writing. We love that aspect of getting one-on-one time with each of the applicants that pass our threshold criteria.”

Sometimes they have a difficult time in evaluating applications. It’s not always easy to turn down a worthy project that does not fit the grant guidelines.

“We struggle with that when people ask for operational dollars,” Vic explains. “There’s not quite a bright line between an enhancement of a current program or a new branch or idea of an organization. We also struggle with not doing human services straight up. What is the social justice aspect of that, and that is not a bright line either.” Vic chuckles briefly. “So when the free clinic asks us for a portable sink because a portable sink is critical and we were a little more flush that cycle, we did fund them. But that was kind of edgy and outside of our core work, yet a social justice argument around that sink was provided.” The sink allowed doctors and triage nurses to help more people.

One wish

Toward the end of our meeting, I asked Vic and Keith what they would put on a wish list. Without hesitation, they both stated they would like more people to be involved with the Community Sustaining Fund. Traditionally, there are 6-12 members, but lately it is on the low end of those numbers. Keith also mentioned they would like more diversity on the board. For a while there were younger members who brought more energy to the group and they miss that. And they encourage people from all parts of the County to consider joining them.

I asked them what is required of members and was told there are 90-minute meetings held on Saturday mornings once a month. And, of course, there are the two grant cycle interviews held in May and November. Interviews are held on a Saturday morning from 9 am to noon with the decisions made in the afternoon. This, they said, is best part of being a part of CSF—the interviews. It’s like getting a front seat glimpse of what different groups are doing in the community. Vic also shared, “What jazzes me is after those interviews, is that we make decisions and throw money around the community. How rewarding that feels!”

CSF funding

The Community Sustaining Fund is not a trust as some funding agencies are. No large amount of money sitting in a bank somewhere earning interest to be used to award grantees. As Vic says, “It’s all hand-to-mouth.” CSF funding comes directly from the community and goes directly back to the community in grants. The organization has a very low overhead and no longer rents a post office box nor even keeps a supply of stationary. The Fund is primarily financed by the ‘round up process’ at the Olympia Food Co-op stores. When a person pays for groceries, all one has to do is say, “Round up, please,” and the cashier rounds the price up to the next dollar. It doesn’t sound like much, but when enough people “round up,” it has in the past provided the Sustaining Fund with \$4-6,000 a year to fund progressive community projects.

In the last year and a half though, funding has dropped significantly, but

they didn’t think the economy had much to do with it. One likely reason is that the Olympia Food Co-op has added another worthy organization, the Farmland Trust, to the ‘round up process’ and the two organizations are now sharing that income.

Another probable reason is CSF’s obscurity. Vic said, “We need to be doing a better job of PR and marketing...We were on autopilot with the Co-op funding, which was very steady for so many years. Things have changed, but that’s okay. It’s pushed us into social media so we do Facebook. We have an electric mailing system and a website was set up by Scott Bishop.” Keith also mentioned the group is “re-branding and trying to provide more opportunities for folks to help support CSF support the community.”

Doing my part

I confess. I had never “rounded up” at the Food Co-op up until last month. It was a process I vaguely knew about it, but I didn’t realize how important it was. And it felt great! The first two times I rounded up, I asked the cashiers if many people did. Both times they said “a few”—in other words, not many. This is *not right*. We all need to be rounding up! It’s painless folks; just pennies a shopping trip for an organization that does so much good.

The Community Sustaining Fund of Thurston County is crucial to the quality of our lives, especially in these harsh economy times when money is so tight. When our neighbors and friends see an issue that needs to be addressed or communicated, it is essential that the Sustaining Fund be able to support their work. Rounding up is a simple process by which collectively we can provide the financial backing the Sustaining Fund needs to help keep our progressive community vibrant.

Sylvia Smith is a WIPster and a Thurston County resident.

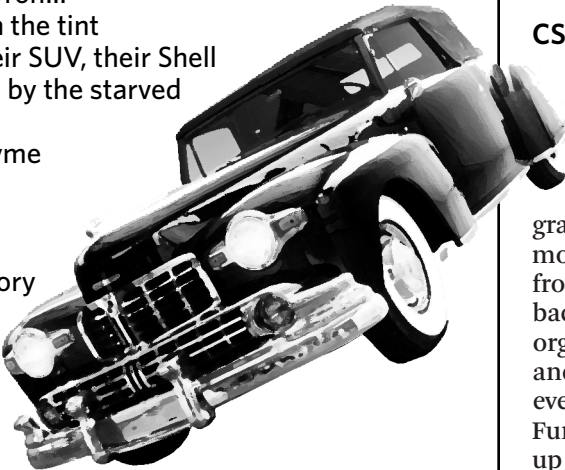
[Community Sustaining Fund can be reached at thurstoncsf@comcast.net]

Global Warming

broKEN

This is the dawning of the Age of Precarious
Is it getting hot in here or is it just me?
Tantamount to suicide, I'd say
To people pulling into Texaco, Chevron...
Were they able to hear me through the tint
But they have silenced me with their SUV, their Shell
It reminds me of what was created by the starved
minds of previous generations
In fairy tale, myth, religion, and rhyme
Where we're headed
Hell, where we are now
What we have created
Hell. Not a story or legend or allegory
But reality
Ours. Hell.
It IS getting hot in here
And it's not just me
But there is a positive aspect
The silver lining in the cloud
That will strike me down or drop rain 'til I drown
Have you guessed it, sussed it out?
Can you not see?
The product of our self-destruction and suffering?
Finally the focus is not "I"
But "we"

broKEN is an Evergreen grad struggling to make ends meet stocking food and beer at The Lucky Seven. Hobbies: writing, collage, painting, collecting records and watching DVDs with my cat Jezebel.



COMMUNITY SUSTAINING FUND

Fall 2013 Grants

Friends of Public Power (\$200)

Community education program regarding the importance of public power and our collective energy future.

Peace Scouts (\$120)

Expansion of its activities to children and families attending a field day to study honey bees and monarch butterflies this spring and summer.

Olympia Star Courier (\$200)

Start-up costs to grow the infrastructure of this worker-owned bicycle courier cooperative.

Interfaith Works (\$200)

Support intentional community conversations on issues relating to food & hunger, shelter and justice.

Cain Road Area Neighborhood Association (CRANA) (\$325)

Expand the Thurston County Food Project to include more residents within the neighborhood association.

Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team (\$200)

Education, outreach and art with schools to better imagine the Deschutes Estuary.

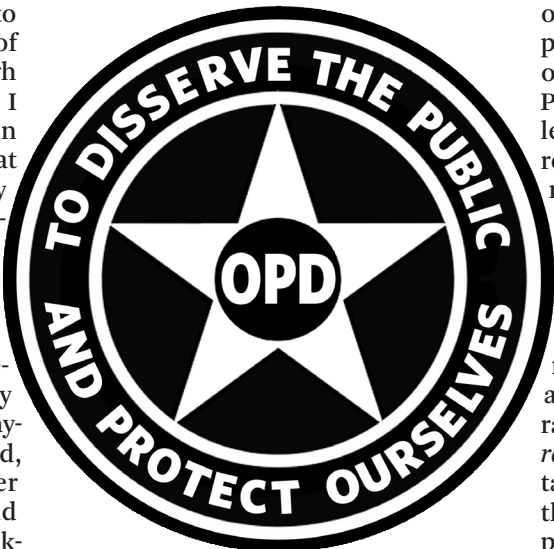
► **OPD lawsuit**, cont. from page 3.

The details of my criminal case were unfortunate but not uncommon. I was railroaded by my public defender into taking an Alford plea (which asserts innocence but still counts as a guilty plea) and served a two-month sentence in Thurston County Jail for a crime I did not commit. Lacking proof at the time that I had been targeted in retaliation for my activism and music, I was smeared in the media and unable to convince people of my innocence. All of this became too much to bear. Although I have no prior history of depression, I was severely traumatized by this chain of events. Combined with the fear that I would be unable to participate in my graduation at the Evergreen State College, I had my first and only nervous breakdown. Shocked by the ease with which the authorities framed me, and convinced that I would become the victim of an “accident” once I reported to jail, I attempted to take my own life. At my wits end, I isolated myself from the only support system I had, my friends and community. Now after years of committed direct action and much reflection and growth, I am taking the struggle to the next level by suing the Olympia Police Department for false arrest, false imprisonment, excessive force, harassment, and violations of my first, fourth, fifth, and fourteenth amendment rights.

Those who have followed protests closely in the United States for a span of time can confirm that charges ranging from “assault on an officer” to “obstruction of justice” or “resisting arrest” are often fabricated as a way for law enforcement to cover up their own brutality and wrongdoing. Alleging false charges allows the police to spin news coverage, siphon-off public sympathy from protesters, and pre-empt questions about police overreach. Even if the charges are never brought before a judge, the police can garner sympathy in the court of public opinion and deny responsibility for escalating or mishandling a situation. Unless there is video evidence to contradict an officer’s allegations, or multiple witnesses who attest to a person’s innocence, the blame is shifted to the victim because of the inherently unequal power dynamics. Courtroom battles in these scenarios often deteriorate into a “he said/she said” stalemate, where law enforcement has home team advantage.

For example, on March 5, 2013, Evergreen professor Peter Bohmer was charged with “assault on an officer” while defending a homeless encampment in downtown Olympia. Only after video footage confirmed that Washington State Patrol had lied about Bohmer’s actions were the assault charges dropped. [The video may be viewed on youtube: “Peter Bohmer Arrested as WSP Removes Homeless Youth and Activists”] In 2007, a veteran community organizer named Pat Tassoni settled with Washington State Patrol for an un-

disclosed sum after he was handcuffed, searched, and cited on June 3, 2004 for “failing to produce a license while operating a motor vehicle.” His criminal charges were dropped because he was distributing flyers on foot, walking home from a rally against the Patriot Act at the time he was stopped by a State Trooper. Similar treatment was meted out to local legend Long Hair David (Fawver), founder of the Emma



Goldman Youth & Homeless Outreach Project (EGYHOP), who was accosted in 2004 by members of the Washington State Patrol and erroneously charged with assault after lighting sage incense in Sylvester Park.

Then there is the case of Scott Yoos, whose shocking treatment at the hands of the Olympia Police Department made this pattern of mendacity explicit. On June 1, 2011 he was throwing paper towels away in a public dumpster when four officers arrived, he was thrown to the ground, placed in painful compliance holds, and arrested for “trespass”. When publicity about his brutal treatment provoked a groundswell of support, the Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office charged him retroactively with felony “assault on an officer” and “resisting arrest” two months after the original charges were filed.

When cops, who are sworn to impartially uphold the law, enforce it in a discriminatory manner that tramples people’s civil rights, protests become a minefield wrought with unspoken threats and lasting danger. This was demonstrated in the dwindling participation rates in the aftermath of a mass-arrest during anti-war protests organized by a group called Port Militarization Resistance (PMR) in Olympia, Washington. On November 13, 2007, forty-one women, who planned to engage in a non-violent blockade of a military convoy, were charged with “attempted disorderly conduct,” by officers who insisted they knew the groups intentions based on spying. Julianne Panagacos, Andrea Robbins, Julia Garfield, and others arrested at the Port, are now suing the United States Military. Their civil suit alleges that John Towery, a man who the Army paid to infiltrate their anti-war group, supplied

law enforcement with intelligence that lead to their pre-emptive arrests, civil rights violations, cruel and demeaning treatment in the jail, and a campaign of harassment that continued long after the protests were over.

Jeff Berryhill, a former PMR organizer and member of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), is another plaintiff in the civil suit against John Towery. He was subjected to a similar pattern of police profiling, false charges, and pre-emptive arrest. Jeff was singled out at the March 2007 Port of Tacoma Protests, shot by a rubber bullet in the leg at point blank range, and then arrested for assault. In July of 2007, Berryhill was hanging out in downtown Olympia when four cops detained him because he “fit the profile” of someone they claimed had committed a burglary in the area. That night, the cops showed up at his house and arrested him for “disorderly conduct” after he demanded that they cease harassing him. Long-time *Works In Progress* contributor Wally Cuddeford was tased three times and dragged across the pavement during the same anti-war port protests in Tacoma in 2007. He also received fabricated assault charges after being assaulted by the police. Two years later in January of 2009, Wally was accused of “riot” even though he had merely brought anti-police brutality signs to a march in Olympia. His case was dismissed when the state withheld exculpatory evidence during discovery and Wally argued eloquently in his own defense against the specious notion of “associative culpability.”

This deliberate pattern of targeting those considered “high profile” and influential members of social movements was also carried out against Brendan Dunn, a founding member of the Evergreen Chapter of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), a member of Port Militarization Resistance (PMR), and the Olympia Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Dunn settled out of court after assault charges were fabricated against him at a “World Can’t Wait” Rally in Seattle in 2006. Dunn and two associates became known as

the “Flag 3” after they refused to hand over an anarchist flag that an officer claimed was a symbol of violence.

It’s difficult to understand the coordinated nature of this campaign of repression without discussing the escalating tension between members of law enforcement, the military, and the local anti-war movement. In order to get a better grasp of why certain individuals were targeted and singled out by officers, it is crucial to discuss the role of John Towery in more depth. In 2009, through independent research done by Drew Hendricks and public records gained by Brendan Dunn, it was revealed that a man who posed as an ally to the anti-war movement in Olympia was actually a member of the Army’s Force Protection Intelligence Unit at Fort Lewis under the Directorate of Emergency Services (DES). From March 2007 until July of 2009, when John Towery’s real identity was revealed, he mapped associations and provided detailed information about protest groups to the United States Military and the Washington State Fusion Center (an intelligence sharing network between local and state law enforcement like OPD and the Washington State Patrol, as well as federal agencies like the FBI, NSA, Department of Homeland Security, and the military).

John Towery’s job was to specifically target Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and other groups at Evergreen State College as well as infiltrate the Port Militarization Resistance (PMR) movement. Towery befriended people under false pretenses, attended meetings and potlucks, and gained administrator access to the movement’s list-serves. He conducted this activity regardless of the fact that these groups were engaged in non-violent direct action against illegal and unjust wars, and despite the fact that his spying was in violation of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which states “it shall not be lawful to employ any part of the army of the United States...to execute the state’s laws.” In 2007, according to public records, Lt. General Charles H. Jacobson

► **OPD LAWSUIT** continued on page 13.

Eastside Smoke Company

Affordable local glass and much more.



eastsidesmokecompany.com

2008 State Avenue NE in Olympia ■ 360-350-0385



WORKS IN PROGRESS

SUPPORT COMMUNITY JOURNALISM. SUBSCRIBE!

☐ INDIVIDUAL -- \$35 ☐ LOW-INCOME -- \$15 ☐ DONATION -- _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____



SERVING THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE.
PO Box 295, OLYMPIA WA 98507



An alternative for your delivery
and distribution needs.



contact us:

olystarcourier@gmail.com
starcourier.wordpress.com

► **OPD lawsuit**, cont. from page 12.
by Jr. gave John Towery a “Certificate of Achievement” for:
...exceptionally meritorious achievement while providing crucial police intelligence during the Third Striker Brigade redeployment from the Port of Olympia to Fort Lewis... Mr. Towery demonstrated outstanding professionalism and devotion to duty by rendering up to the minute reports that clearly stated the intentions of anti-war protesters at the Port of Olympia. This vital information was relayed to the local law enforcement agencies which assisted them in ensuring that the convoys were conducted safely and without injury to soldiers or damage to military equipment.

Larry Hildes, a member of the National Lawyers Guild, who is bringing my suit against the Olympia Police Department, is also suing John Towery and the US Army over these revelations. Towery’s trial is set for June of 2014 and will raise important questions in regards to the Army’s campaign of illegal spying and the trampling of civil liberties by a deliberate pattern of false arrests, citations, imprisonment, excessive force, and harassment.
The case against John Towery was strengthened in 2010, when Hildes secured a \$417,000 dollar settlement on behalf of Phil Chinn, a graduate of Evergreen State College, and another member of SDS and PMR. Though he was driving three miles under the speed limit, Chinn was pulled over by Washington State Patrol on his way to an anti-war protest at the Port of Aberdeen. He was falsely charged with DUI, and, as he was led over to the patrol vehicle, he noticed a picture of his parent’s car that he had driven the day before sitting on the trooper’s dashboard. After criminal charges were dropped for lack of evidence, it was revealed through radio traffic that Detectives with the Aberdeen Police and Washington State Patrol had been watching

Chinn’s movements and put out an “attempt to locate” code on his vehicle because there were “three identified anarchists” in the car who were considered “the biggest threat.” (*Seattle Weekly*, “Watching the Protesters: These spies may have known too much.”)
This is where the plot thickens. Even after John Towery was forced out of the movement in July 2009, e-mail exchanges reveal that Towery’s supervisor, Thomas Rudd of the Force Protec-

Before the Olympia Port Protests, Commander Bjornstad met with Thomas Rudd, John Towery, and Cliff Colvin (a Coast Guard informant) to discuss strategies to neutralize the local anti-war movement—pre-emptive arrests, illegal surveillance, the use of chemical agents.

tion Division at Fort Lewis, continued to send memoranda and “threat assessments” to individuals in multiple law enforcement agencies. This included members of Washington State Patrol as well as then Police Chief Gary Michel, Commander Steve Nelson, and Commander Tor Bjornstad of the Olympia Police Department. According to these public records, before the November 2007 Olympia Port Protests, Commander Bjornstad met with Thomas Rudd, John Towery, and Cliff Colvin (an informant hired by the Coast Guard) to discuss strategies to neutralize the local anti-war movement. Tactics planned at these meetings included the use of pre-emptive arrests, illegal surveillance, the deployment of chemical agents against peaceful demonstrators as well as other forms of excessive force and brutality.
This strategy was put into effect at the citywide level by Olympia City Manager Steve Hall, who directed City Communications Manager Cathie Butler to infiltrate PMR list-serves, relaying confidential information as well as

facilitating false mediation sessions designed to gather intelligence on protesters. Under Steve Hall’s supervision, the Olympia Police Department and the Prosecutor’s Office engaged in harassment, false arrests, and malicious prosecution of selected activists, particularly focusing on women and other protected classes who participated in the Olympia Port Protests. Furthermore, Steve Hall acted with others to deliberately conceal and destroy evidence of this illegal conduct and withheld exculpatory evidence that could have resulted in dismissals and acquittals in numerous cases the city brought against anti-war protesters.
Scarcely a month after the army concluded its second internal investigation into John Towery’s spying, the details of my case demonstrate how this pattern of profiling and repression continued even after Towery had left in July 2009.

Two days before the protest I attended on April 8, 2010, Towery’s supervisor at Fort Lewis, Thomas Rudd, sent intelligence about the Anti-Police Brutality March to then OPD Commander Tor Bjornstad, who was on scene for the arrests, and forwarded the Army’s intelligence to Commander Steve Nelson, Lieutenant Ray Holmes, and Police Chief Gary Michel. The arrests of twenty-nine people at a protest on public streets for “pedestrian interference,” an unconstitutional charge used to justify this pre-emptive mass-arrest model, fits the pattern that law enforcement used to neutralize the anti-war movement in years prior. This tactic was seen as late as May 2, 2009 when the last protest against military shipments was effectively prevented by soldiers of the 504th Military Police Battalion, who mass-arrested protesters on civilian territory in Lakewood after I performed at a hip hop show at Coffee Strong, an anti-war café near Fort Lewis.
In an age of capitalist crisis and homeland insecurity, where cops are armed to the teeth with military grade weaponry supplied by federal grants, and fusion centers partner with the private sector achieving power so inconceivable that George Orwell would get nightmares, how do we fight back? How can we rein in these Frankenstein’s monsters before they pre-empt our dreams of a better world or drown future generations in martial law? Refusing to be terrified into silence or overwhelmed by the odds is a start. Educate yourself and others, take the streets, and increase the pressure through dedicated direct action campaigns. Build community solidarity organizations, nurturing a culture of art and music, creativity and resistance. Defend dissidents, whistle-blowers, and journalists with integrity, supporting those who take risks and are

targeted for standing up for all of our rights. Demand transparency through public records requests to understand how the system operates, unravel abuse and prevent future Kafkaesque designs. Finally, spread the word through media publicity and wage court battles that reveal the full extent and nature of illegitimate programs, setting legal precedents against unaccountable institutions that hold freedom hostage. In this late stage of our history, these are some of the most effective tools we have left to reverse the rising tide of repression.
My upcoming trial will raise the profile of these matters, and spark dialogue about the draconian violations of our civil rights. I believe that the long shadow cast over Olympia, Washington by this official criminality is just the tip of the iceberg and it’s time to break the ice. Winning this case will bring personal closure for me as well as setting a legal precedent that will hopefully thaw the chill surrounding free speech and embolden others, who have experienced similar abuse, to seek justice. If I can contribute in any way to rebuild the trust that has been shattered in our community, repair the damage done by years of false arrests, frame-ups, police violence, federal intimidation, and military infiltration, then this civil case will have been well worth it.
Please join me on March 11, 2014 at the Federal Courthouse in Tacoma at 9 am for the first day of my trial. For news and updates on my case and the upcoming trial of John Towery please visit my support blog, “We Are All Suspects Now” at <http://strife-101-life.tumblr.com/>.
Paul French, well-known as Strife, is an Olympia resident, a musician, and a member of the area’s vibrant activist community.

A message from Strife

Hello, My name is Strife (aka Paul French). I’m an Olympia hip-hop emcee and activist that’s organized along a spectrum of diverse issues. I’ve done benefit shows for E.G.Y.H.O.P. (Emma Goldman Youth and Homeless Outreach Project), and co-founded C.I.V.I.L. (Citizens In Violation of Illegal Laws) to promote buskers’ rights downtown. I helped organize Occupy Olympia and marched with the SMASH I.C.E. Movement in Tacoma (Immigration Customs Enforcement) against the Wells-Fargo-built detention center. I’ve lent support to US Uncut to protest tax-dodging banks and in 2010, I was framed for “assault on an officer,” at a police brutality march. In 2011, I performed against the budget cuts at the Washington State Capitol Occupation. Stemming from my performance at this event, I received a deluge of citations and harassment from OPD and WSP, and public records revealed extensive surveillance of my person, car, home, and online activities (Aug 2011 interview: <http://www.olywip.org/archive/page/article/2011/08/04.html>).
Regardless, I continued evolving, organizing, and recording music. I am currently working on a retrospective multi-media project to memorialize the Port Militarization Resistance Movement in time for the upcoming trial of the military spy John Towery in June 2014. If you are interested in being interviewed or have media you would like to share, contact me here: pmr.project.13@riseup.net
In 2012 I finished my first solo album “No Honor Among Kings,” and went on a West Coast Tour later that year. I’m currently finishing a new hip-hop album entitled, “Metamorphosis” set to drop in Summer 2014.
To book shows, contact: anarcho.mutual.aid@gmail.com.
For free downloads: <https://thoughtcrimecollective.bandcamp.com/> and <https://soundcloud.com/thought-crime-collective>.



**CELEBRATING
40 YEARS OF
LISTENER-SUPPORTED
VOLUNTEER-POWERED
SERVICE TO YOU!!
1973-2013**

www.kaosradio.org



INKLIFE
Tattoos Body Piercing Art Gallery

\$10 off
Any piercing above the waist over \$40

15% Student Special

15% off any TATTOO \$115 & up with Valid Student ID Appt or Walk-in!
.We display Local art! Inquire at shop.

307 4th Ave East Downtown OLY 360-754-5623

► **Arrested**, cont. from page 4.
Consequences of the Catastrophe for People and the Environment, by Alexey V. Yabokov, Vassily B. Nesterenko, and Alexey V. Nesterenko. Over one million people have died because of Chernobyl. That number grows with time. Here is one quote:
"For the past 23 years it has been clear that there is a danger greater than nuclear weapons concealed within nuclear power. Estimates from this one reactor exceeded a hundredfold the radioactive contamination of the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No citizen of any country can be assured that he or she can be protected from radioactive contamination. One nuclear reactor can pollute half the globe. Chernobyl fallout covered the entire Northern Hemisphere.
A tsunami devastated Japan's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plants on March 11, 2011. The disaster far exceeds that of Chernobyl and continues with exponential results and has more real potential increases. No one statement can identify all the consequences.

The entire Pacific Ocean is radiated with continuous daily releases in the millions of tons of radiated water. The air above us contains radiation, which is brought to the ground in rain. One study, cited in washingtonsblog.com May 22, 2013, includes cities from Jacksonville, Florida, Des Moines, Iowa to Olympia, Washington—"Already 14,000 U.S. Deaths From Fukushima?" *International Journal of Health Services* alleges that 14,000 people have already died in the United States due to Fukushima.

The authors of the study claim:
An estimated 14,000 excess deaths in the United States are linked to the radioactive fallout from the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear reactors in Japan, according to a major new article in the December 2011 edition of the International Journal of Health Services. This is the first peer-reviewed study published in a medical journal documenting the health hazards of Fukushima. [The authors] note that their estimate of 14,000 excess U.S. deaths in the 14 weeks after the Fukushima meltdowns is comparable to the 16,500 excess deaths in the 17 weeks after the Chernobyl meltdown in 1986. The rise in reported deaths after Fukushima was largest among U.S. infants under age one. The 2010-2011 increase for infant deaths in the spring was 1.8 percent, compared to a decrease of 8.37 percent in the preceding 14 weeks.

The authors seem—at first glance—to have pretty solid credentials. Janette Sherman, M.D. worked for the Atomic Energy Commission (forerunner of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission) at the University of California in Berkeley, and for the U.S. Navy Radiation Defense Laboratory in San Francisco. She served on the EPA's advisory board for 6 years, and has been an advisor to the National Cancer Institute on breast cancer. Dr. Sherman specializes in internal medicine and toxicology with an emphasis on chemicals and nuclear radiation.

Japan is radiated and its people are consuming food produced from radiated soil and the sea. If one of the 1,565 spent fuel rods, which are now being removed, is exposed to air, it will mean the end of Japan and potentially significant life on earth. If Reactor No. 4 collapses or

incinerates, the results are the same.
We are dealing with end times for life as we know it. It's time to face truth and to get real by loving. Add this to the reality of extreme climate change, which the science I study indicates we have passed the possibility of return. The only question is the degree of severity. People rationalize that nuclear power is needed to produce energy for our way of life. As Gandhi implied, it is suicide for humanity.
The absurdity of denying this situation is illustrated by the statement by Edward Teller, the father of the hydrogen bomb:
"Radiation from test fallout is very small. Its effect on human beings is so little that if it exists at all, it cannot be measured. Radiation from test fallout might be slightly harmful to humans. It might be slightly beneficial. It might have no effect at all."
Contrast Teller's 1950's statement with Noble Laureate lecture by Herman J. Muller's warning: "With the coming increasing use of atomic energy, even for peace-time purposes, the problem

I entered the road on May 11 at Sub Base Bangor to say the flames are invisible... Beginning with the whole process of nuclear development from ground extraction to ground waste deposits, we need to face the reality of human extinction potential—to face our mortality.

will become very important of insuring that the human germ plasm—the all-important material of which we are the temporary custodians—is effectively protected from this additional and potent source of permanent contamination."
People deny the effects of radiation from nuclear power. People deny the possibility of nuclear war. People deny climate change.
The reason I entered the road on May 11 at Sub Base Bangor is to say the flames are invisible. Life on earth is being destroyed. Beginning with the whole process of nuclear development from ground extraction to ground waste deposits, we need to face the reality of human extinction potential—to face our mortality. Nuclear weapons are the tap root of mental images creating denial. The Trident missile is the most visible representative of nuclear destruction.
Albert Einstein said that "the invention of nuclear weapons have changed everything, except man's thinking."
Man's thinking is centered in the images the ego creates. When humans place themselves as God instead of creatures of nature, human thinking is based on illusion. In the case of radiation, as Gandhi said, it is suicide.

End of court statement
Anticipating the Court's denying me the opportunity to make my statement, I prepared the following sentencing statement to the judge:
Your Honor, my concern is that humans are self-destructing and taking living creatures, as we know and experience them, along with us. This is most graphically expressed by the actual explosion of nuclear weapons. There exist numerous evidences to this, along with analysis of their use in

war scenarios. What we don't see is the radiation poisoning from all phases of nuclear development and waste, except when a Chernobyl or a Fukushima occurs. Even then, most of the destructive effects are hidden due to the invisibility, the tastelessness, and the soundlessness of radiation. My actions are meant to throw light to turn humanity away from suicide.
I have been working with others since 1974 to educate and act to turn us from this course. Now after all these years I add catastrophic climate change to my efforts. We are well along the course of self-destruction by polluting the atmosphere, the soil, and the water. With radiation and climate pollution, we can only do damage control to a certain degree, even by putting all our energies into the effort.
Why are we hell bent on our own suicide? I have studied this issue for many years and have excellent sources. Here is a simple explanation:
To think of the bombing of a city, like Hiroshima with weapons much more powerful, is most unnerving, beyond

breathtaking when images of people, children, women, old, strong and weak, are considered in all their agonies and their deaths. Considering ones-self among these causes the images to unhinge us from all rational experience, from all previous understanding. To protect themselves, humans abstract their minds from these images along with their emotions. Humans flee to other thoughts to calm themselves, often without intention, unconsciously.
This process is called numbing. Humans in this state function without allowing passions of catastrophic events into their own awareness. People go along doing "business as usual" in this state. Persons at all levels just "do their jobs."
My intended statements to the Court were meant to elaborate on this simple summary. I have hoped and continue to hope that the needed light be let in by the court, as well as by the personnel at Sub Base Bangor, and, yes, by the public. I have worked since 1974 on abolishing nuclear weapons and for the last ten or so years on alerting the public, the legislative, the executive, and the judicial branches of government to catastrophic climate change. Where is one to go who has allowed him/her self to think of the horrors of nuclear radiation releases, whether by the bomb itself or through the work of the whole system? I will not give up.

Your Honor, my desire in appearing here, was that you would allow the court to open itself to the truth of these testimonies and send the message out. If you do not agree, I am ready to pay whatever fine you impose, bear whatever sentence you choose.
Bernie Meyer, known in India as "The American Gandhi, resides in Tacoma.

Inter-Continental Day of Action

AGAINST THE TPP AND CORPORATE GLOBALIZATION

Friday, January 31 Across North America

January 2014 marks the twenty-year anniversary of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a pact that has had devastating consequences for working families, small farmers, indigenous peoples, small business and the environment in all three countries and beyond. The pending Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has been described as "NAFTA on Steroids." Four years into the TPP negotiations, this new corporate power grab threatens to:

- Destroy livelihoods and accelerate the global race to the bottom in wages and working conditions
- Further commodify agriculture, trample food sovereignty, hurt small farmers and contribute to forced migration
- Enable new corporate attacks on democratically-enacted environmental and consumer protections
- Undermine global economic stability by prohibiting effective regulation of financial markets
- Reduce access to life-saving generic medications, increase the costs of prescriptions, and restrict freedom on the Internet

The harm that NAFTA has already cost our communities, and the new threats that the TPP poses, must be both acknowledged and resisted. We also need to spread the word that since NAFTA, when people have come together across issue areas and across geographic borders, we have defeated similar corporate power grabs like the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), the Millennium Round of the World Trade Organization, and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). We will do so again with the TPP.

We are calling on you to attend, and ideally help organize, a demonstration against NAFTA and the TPP in your community.

January31@citizenstrade.org.

PUGET PAINTING & HOME REPAIRS

CHRIS STEGMAN, OWNER

40+ years combined experience
Satisfaction Guaranteed on every job!
home office: 360-705-3528
Cell: 360-451-8838
email: cstegman007@gmail.com
Licensed, Bonded and Insured

www.pugetpaintingandhomerepairs.vpweb.com



Follow Eric J Garcia at [garciaink@twitter](https://twitter.com/garciaink) or friend Eric J Garcia on facebook.

Hillel International faces crisis as Swarthmore chapter rebels against its Israel guidelines

Abraham Greenhouse

In a move that sent shockwaves through the American Jewish community, the Hillel chapter at Philadelphia’s Swarthmore College declared in an open letter last week that it would not comply with its parent organization’s policy of censoring speech critical of Israeli policy.

Hillel International, the world’s largest Jewish campus organization, acts as an umbrella group for more than 550 chapters around the world — but mainly within the United States.

Hillel’s Israel Guidelines forbid chapters from hosting individuals or organizations that oppose Israel’s status as

a “Jewish and democratic state” (i.e., its right to discriminate against non-Jews).

The guidelines further ban those who “delegitimize, demonize, or apply a double-standard to Israel” (a catch-all for virtually all other forms of criticism). They also rule out any speaker who supports boycotts, divestment or sanctions against Israel (i.e. the use of nonviolent pressure to encourage Israel to comply with international law).

Citing the fact that Hillel’s own namesake was a rabbi known for his steadfast pluralism, Swarthmore Hillel’s student board stated in its open letter published in The Beacon that:

Hillel, billing itself as the “Foundation for Jewish Campus Life,” is seen by many as the face of the American Jewish college population. And due to these policies, it is a face that is often seen to be monolithically Zionist, increasingly uncooperative, and completely uninterested in real pluralistic, open dialogue and discussion. We do not believe this is the true face of young American Jews...

Therefore, we choose to depart from the Israel guidelines of Hillel International. We believe these guidelines, and the actions that have stemmed from them, are antithetical to the Jewish values that the name “Hillel” should invoke. We seek to reclaim this name.

Hillel International responds

Swarthmore Hillel was rebuked almost immediately in a sharply-worded letter from Hillel International President Eric Fingerhut.

Fingerhut insisted that “no campus organization that uses the Hillel name” may decline to comply with the umbrella group’s censorship policy. The letter goes on to state that “‘anti-Zionists’ will not be permitted to speak using the Hillel name or under the Hillel roof, under any circumstances.”

Hillel International told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Fingerhut would meet with representatives of Swarthmore Hillel in January, but declined to say if any punitive measures would be taken.

Although Hillel’s campus chapters are autonomous entities, Swarthmore Hillel is particularly well-positioned to challenge the policies of the umbrella group. It receives little funding from Hillel International, and unlike most chapters, it doesn’t have a non-student board of directors.

The Swarthmore move is a major leap forward for the broader Open Hillel movement, which was launched at Harvard last year. Open Hillel has started a petition in support of Swarthmore Hillel’s declaration that has already gained more than 1,000 signatures.

Mixing culture and religion with political advocacy

When Fingerhut was hired earlier this year, he said in an interview with JNS.org that the Hillel board’s commitment to its Israel Guidelines was “an important thing” that persuaded him to take the job.

In a recent op-ed authored with Jonathan Kessler, Fingerhut boasted of the way Hillel works alongside lobbying group AIPAC to “develop better and more effective strategies for minimizing the impact of anti-Israel activities on campus.” Kessler is the longtime leader of AIPAC’s campus programs.

Its partnership with AIPAC is only one feature of Hillel’s role in coordinat-

...we choose to depart from the Israel guidelines of Hillel International. We believe these guidelines...are antithetical to the Jewish values that the name “Hillel” should invoke. We seek to reclaim this name.

ing anti-Palestinian advocacy on college campuses. Seventy Hillel chapters across the United States host “Israel Fellows” employed by the Jewish Agency for Israel, working to increase Jewish students’ “engagement” with Israel, in large part through anti-Palestinian advocacy. Hillel chapters also work closely with “Campus Coordinators” from the David Project, a Boston-based nonprofit which trains students to weave personal net-

works that can be activated to advance anti-Palestinian initiatives or respond to criticism of Israel on their campuses.

Implications for anti-Palestinian advocacy

In recent years, mainstream US anti-Palestinian groups, led by the Israel Action Network (IAN), have sought to reduce the extent to which they are with identified with overt efforts at censorship, such as attempts to block Judith Butler and Omar Barghouti from speaking at Brooklyn College. This is part of a broader strategy aimed at crafting a “Big Tent” that can leverage voices seen as being on the left to “drive a wedge” between Palestinian rights

advocates and potential progressive supporters.

With the Swarthmore declaration, and a growing perception that Hillel and associated institutions are out of touch with their communities and enforce a false consensus through the use of bullying, that strategy faces a serious crisis.

Andy Bachman, a rabbi known for working with IAN to aggressively pressure Brooklyn’s Park Slope Food Co-op

Study: Strong nutrition education can lead to healthier food choices among low-income

Research Triangle Park, NC (Dec 9) – Well-designed nutrition education programs can lead to healthier food choices among low-income families who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), according to a study conducted by Altarum Institute and RTI International.

The study, SNAP Education and Evaluation Study (Wave II), was funded by the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). It evaluated the impact of several nutrition education programs on fruit and vegetable consumption among low-income elementary school children and seniors.

"One of the most important findings from this study is that families want to

eat healthy foods, even if they have limited resources," said Altarum Institute's Loren Bell, the study's project director. "Education efforts that help individuals and families make healthy food choices are clearly an important part of our overall health, and can make a big difference for families with young children all the way to our senior citizens."

The study evaluated three SNAP programs in three different states and found that children participating in certain nutrition education programs increased their daily fruit and vegetable consumption at home by a quarter- to a third-cup, and were more likely to choose low-fat or fat-free milk. Participating seniors consumed about a half-cup more fruits and

to continue stocking Israeli products, including settlement-made SodaStream beverage devices, was quick to leap to Swarthmore Hillel’s defense in the pages of the *Forward*.

“My sense is that the dynamism of young Jews, Jewish identity and Israeli politics is shifting more quickly than any of us realize. All indications point to a new reality in Jewish life where openness is the preeminent value, where horizontal leadership structures challenge national or international hierarchies, and where democracy and a fearlessness to ask difficult questions is privileged over policy guidelines that demand allegiance to Israel without reasonable, diverse, and even at times risky, debate.”

While known astroturfer Bachman’s op-ed may be part of a deliberate communications strategy developed by key institutional stakeholders, it’s far too early to predict how this will play out.

Should other Hillels find inspiration in Swarthmore’s bold decision, or should the ideals behind the Open Hillel movement spread to other Jewish communal institutions, the anti-Palestinian leadership of groups like Hillel International may face a crisis larger than they thought.

Abraham Greenhouse is a longtime Palestine solidarity and BDS activist based in New York City. His article was originally published in the Electric Intifada and is reprinted with permission.

vegetables daily.

“The findings from this study demonstrate the important role that evidence-based, outcome-driven interventions play in helping consumers improve their dietary intake,” said Sheryl Cates, the RTI project director.

Two of the programs studied for this report provided nutrition education lessons in schools, take-home materials and activities to low-income elementary-aged children. Researchers found that the design, content, and messages of the programs were well-received by school staff members. The most successful intervention used a variety of methods to educate students while engaging parents and caregivers through take-home materials that helped to address concerns about providing healthy foods on a tight budget.

The third program provided direct nutrition education, take-home materials and other materials to low-income adults aged 60 to 80 at senior sites and other gathering centers. Researchers found that participants that completed take-home activities adopted healthier behaviors and were more engaged in discussions about overcoming the challenges and barriers to purchasing, preparing and consuming fruits and vegetables.

The study demonstrates that effective nutrition education programs, like those supported by the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program, or SNAP-Ed, can impact SNAP participants’ willingness to try, buy and eat more healthy foods. The program, which was recently updated through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, emphasizes evidence-based, outcome-driven interventions, with a focus on preventing obesity and coordinating with other programs for maximum impact and cost-effectiveness.

“The results of this study reiterate the critical role of nutrition education and promotion in improving the healthfulness of SNAP purchases,” said USDA Under Secretary Kevin Concannon. “USDA and our partners continue to explore a wide-ranging set of strategies that support families as they purchase, prepare and eat more healthy foods.”

RTI International is one of the world’s leading research institutes, dedicated to improving the human condition by turning knowledge into practice.

Illicit financial flows pushing billions away from Africa

DAKAR, Senegal (Dec 3) – Economies in Africa have lost between \$597 billion and \$1.4 trillion in net resource transfers in the past three decades, despite the growth in integrity institutions on the continent, according to a recent study conducted by Global Financial Integrity (GFI). Illicit financial flows are the topic of a two-day forum organized by the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and TrustAfrica on December 9th and 10th, at Terrou Bi Hotel in Dakar, Senegal.

“While most development observers acknowledged that Africa is rising, at the same time, there is a growing challenge to retain the wealth created within the continent and to benefit to its citizens,” says Abdul Tejan-Cole, Executive Director of OSIWA.

The resource drain in Africa is coming in the form of both licit flows – such as investment, foreign aid, debt relief, and remittances moving in and out of the county – and illicit flows – such as the proceeds of crime, corruption, and tax evasion. According to GFI researchers, some of these illicit flows are attributed to oil price rises (minerals and other natural resources) and many of these leakages occur through corruption.

“While research has proven that Af-

rica is a net creditor in the world, we are yet to see a concerted effort on the part of African governmental regional bodies and multilateral agencies to address the scourge of illicit financial flows from Africa,” says Akwasi Aidoo, Executive Director of TrustAfrica.

The looting of wealth in Africa over the past 30 years is nearly equal to Africa’s current Growth Domestic Product (GDP) and has seriously deprived Africans of much needed financial stimulus. Though Africa has experienced unprecedented economic growth in many countries, this leap forward has failed to translate into better lives for its people and continues to dwarf the efforts of donor countries to help.

The OSIWA, TrustAfrica, and GFI forum will bring together a host of stakeholders, including regional bodies, government representatives, anti-corruption agencies, International Financial institutions, and civil society to discuss key findings of the report with the intent of creating a strong public action to collaborate and fight against illicit flows.

Global Financial Integrity (GFI) promotes national and multilateral policies, safeguards, and agreements aimed at curtailing cross-border flow of illegal money.

Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class

Campaigning Campaigning for president in 1980, Ronald Reagan told stories of Cadillac-driving “welfare queens” and “strapping young bucks” buying T-bone steaks with food stamps. In trumpeting these tales of welfare run amok, Reagan never needed to mention race, because he was blowing a dog whistle: sending a message about racial minorities inaudible on one level, but clearly heard on another. In doing so, he tapped into a long political tradition that started with George Wallace and Richard Nixon, and is more relevant than ever in the age of the Tea Party and the first black president.

In Dog Whistle Politics, Demos’ new Senior Fellow Ian Haney López offers a sweeping account of how politicians and plutocrats deploy veiled racial appeals to persuade white voters to support policies that favor the extremely rich yet threaten their own interests. Dog whistle appeals generate middle-class enthusiasm for political candidates who promise to crack down on crime, curb undocumented immigration, and protect the heartland against Islamic infiltration, but ultimately vote to slash taxes for the rich, give corporations regulatory control over industry and financial markets, and aggressively curtail social services. White voters, convinced by powerful interests that minorities are their true enemies, fail to see the connection between the political agendas they support and the surging wealth inequality that takes an increasing toll on their lives. The tactic continues at full force, with the Republican Party using racial provocations to drum up enthusiasm for weakening unions and public pensions, defunding public schools, and opposing health care reform.

Rejecting any simple story of malevolent and obvious racism, Haney López links as never before the two central themes that dominate American politics today: the decline of the middle class and the Republican Party’s increasing reliance on white voters. Dog Whistle Politics will generate a lively and much-needed debate about how racial politics has destabilized the American middle class—white and nonwhite members alike. for president in 1980, Ronald Reagan told stories of Cadillac-driving “welfare queens” and “strapping young bucks” buying T-bone steaks with food stamps. In trumpeting these tales of welfare run amok, Reagan never needed to mention race, because he was blowing a dog whistle: sending a message about racial minorities inaudible on one level, but clearly heard on another. In doing so, he tapped into a long political tradition that started with George Wallace and Richard Nixon, and is more relevant than ever in the age of the Tea Party and the first black president.

In Dog Whistle Politics, Demos’ new Senior Fellow Ian Haney López offers a sweeping account of how politicians and plutocrats deploy veiled racial appeals to persuade white voters to support policies that favor the extremely rich yet threaten their own interests. Dog whistle appeals generate middle-class enthusiasm for political candidates who promise to crack down on crime, curb undocumented immigration, and protect the heartland against Islamic infiltration, but ultimately vote to slash taxes for the rich, give corporations regulatory control over industry and financial markets, and aggressively curtail social services. White voters, convinced by powerful interests that minorities are their true enemies, fail to see the connection between the political agendas they support and the surging wealth inequality that takes an increasing toll on their lives. The tactic continues at full force,

with the Republican Party using racial provocations to drum up enthusiasm for weakening unions and public pensions, defunding public schools, and opposing health care reform.

Rejecting any simple story of malevolent and obvious racism, Haney López links as never before the two central themes that dominate American politics today: the decline of the middle class and the Republican Party’s increasing reliance on white voters. Dog Whistle Politics will generate a lively and much-needed debate about how racial politics has destabilized the American middle class—white and nonwhite members alike. —Demos

Real factors behind Detroit crisis: Revenue decline, Wall Street deals

Modest pension benefits play little role in financial crisis

DETROIT (Nov 22)— In their push for bankruptcy, Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr and other public figures are incorrectly looking at Detroit’s long-term debt—figures generated using aggressive and in some cases inaccurate assumptions—to the detriment of solving the city’s immediate cash-flow crisis and its long-term structural challenges, according to a report by Demos.

Detroit is not a corporation, it’s a city, and its bankruptcy proceedings have been focused on the wrong numbers.

The Detroit Bankruptcy shows how the current bankruptcy filing is the result of a severe decline in revenue, caused by the 2008 financial crisis, and cuts in annual state revenue sharing starting in 2011. Risky Wall Street deals further jeopardized the city’s public finances by threatening immediate payments that the city could not afford. The report also details how the pension benefits of teachers, firefighters, police officers, and the thousands of other public servants had little to do with the crisis.

“Detroit is not a corporation, it’s a city, and its bankruptcy proceedings have been focused on the wrong numbers,” said Wallace Turbeville, Senior Fellow at Demos, who authored the report. A lawyer, former Goldman Sachs investment banker, and founder of the Kensington Group, Turbeville is a leading expert in infrastructure finance and public private partnerships. “Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr is blaming workers, but this mistaken focus on pensions obscures the real cause of Detroit’s crisis. It will prevent local leaders from fixing the underlying problems that got Detroit into this mess to begin with.”

Municipal bankruptcies differ from corporate bankruptcies because cities cannot be liquidated; therefore cash flow, as opposed to long-term debt, is the issue that leaders must resolve. The headline figure of “\$18 billion in debt” is not only beside the point, it is downright misleading. To overcome its immediate cash flow shortfall, Detroit must bridge its cash flow gap of \$198 million.

Detroit’s crisis was caused by multiple factors:

- Depleted tax base: Detroit’s population has declined by 1.25 million residents since the 1950s. Critically important, the number of employed Detroit residents fell by 53 percent between 2000 and 2012, with half of that decline occurring in a single year—2008. Detroit was uniquely vulnerable to the effects of the financial crash, precipitated by reckless and greedy Wall Street bankers. It cut deeply into Detroit’s key revenue sources, including property taxes, income taxes, and fee revenues from utilities.
- Skyrocketing financial costs: Detroit’s financial expenses have increased dramatically, a direct result of large, complex and risky financings promoted by Wall Street banks for questionable public purposes. Those banks, having already been paid \$300 million to

terminate interest rate swaps, are now poised to collect another \$300 million simply to terminate unconscionably risky swaps that were embedded in bond deals that exposed the city to market bets that it could not afford to lose.

- Corporate subsidies and tax loopholes: Detroit gave away millions of public money in tax loopholes and subsidies to big corporations. A wealth of research finds that tax breaks like these are ineffective and it is apparent they have done little to create good jobs for Detroit residents. These tax breaks should be on the table, just like other obligations of the city in resolving the cash flow crisis.
- Slashed state revenue sharing: In 2011, the state legislature exacerbated Detroit’s revenue crisis when it slashed \$67 million in state revenue sharing. While the drop in Detroit’s population accounted for some revenue loss, 64 percent of the total cuts were at the discretion of the State Legislature. Coming on the heels of the decimation of the city’s tax base from the Great Recession, this tipped Detroit into the cash flow crisis that precipitated its insolvency.

City spending and pensions are not the culprit. After the crash, the city reduced its operating expenses by 38 percent—or \$356.3 million—by laying off public workers and cutting their benefits and salaries. The city’s pension contribution expenses remained relatively flat, rising only \$2 million during this time.

While Orr has declared his intentions to pay banks hundreds of millions in projected but uncertain future profits outside of the bankruptcy process, the modest pensions of firefighters, police officers and thousands of other public workers could be all but drained.

“What allows us to charge into burning buildings is the promise that when something happens to us, the city will help take care of our families,” said David Allen, a 50-year old firefighter and father of two, who retired in 2012 due to a spinal injury sustained when the wall of a burning building collapsed on his head. “We’ve been steadily paying into our pension fund for decades—it’s our own money that we set aside. Now we’re told that the retirement security we were promised could be gone in the bankruptcy, yet somehow there’s still enough money to pay off Wall Street banks.”

Following the immediate cash-flow crisis, the report suggests elected officials at the city and state level should implement structural programs to grow Detroit’s tax base, allowing the city to return to prosperity over time, a task accomplishable by coordinating revenue sharing with the state, closing corporate tax loopholes, reclaiming corporate subsidies, and abandoning swap termination fees.

“Misguided and irresponsible decisions by politicians over the years, often at the urging of Wall Street, have funneled wealth out of Detroit’s neighborhoods, and enriched financial institutions and corporations in the process,” said Turbeville. “If Detroit wants to come back from this and rebuild a strong economy, it needs to reverse that trend and start prioritizing the people who live here over the interests of Wall Street bankers.” —Demos

Judge Rhodes’ order to renegotiate Detroit’s swaps deal settlement with big banks

NEW YORK (Dec 19) — Yesterday, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Steven Rhodes grilled Jones Day lawyers representing the city of Detroit and the city’s Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr over a settlement reached outside of the bankruptcy process between the city and Bank of America and UBS to pay the termination fees of a complex financial deal that the City took on in 2005. Judge Rhodes

ordered the city and the banks to renegotiate their settlement which would have paid the banks 75 cents on the dollar. Despite a unanimous city council vote against it, the Emergency Manager is currently pushing the city to enter into another financial deal with Barclays to pay off the swaps termination fees.

Demos Senior Fellow and former Goldman Sachs investment banker Wallace C. Turbeville, published The Detroit Bankruptcy in November, which took a critical look at the bankruptcy filing produced by the Emergency Manager. Turbeville, who was scheduled to testify yesterday as an expert witness in the case, examined the 2005 swaps deal and raised questions that were echoed by Judge Rhodes:

“The law recognizes special duties that sophisticated financial institutions owe to special entities like cities in providing complex financial products,” Turbeville wrote in The Detroit Bankruptcy. “These swap deals were particularly ill-suited for a city like Detroit, which had been hovering on the edge of a credit rating downgrade for years...A strong case can be made that the banks that sold these swaps may have breached their ethical, and possibly legal, obligations to the city in executing these deals.”

“Judge Rhodes deserves praise for challenging the banks, something neither the city under its emergency manager nor the state has shown any interest in doing,” Turbeville said. “Rhodes was right when he said ‘every transaction that the city has entered into in connection with these swaps has been with a gun to its head.’ The people of Detroit deserve answers to the legal questions around the original swaps deal before any settlement is reached.”

—Demos
Demos, a public policy organization, works to reduce political and economic inequality.

Jamie Dimon says American businesses suffer from skills gap at the top levels

Dean Baker

That is not exactly what he said, but that is what his comments in a Washington Post interview mean. Dimon said that the United States is suffering from a skills gap where firms can't find workers with the skills they need. Dimon claimed that this skills shortage could be raising the unemployment rate by 1-2 percentage points.

In a market economy when there is a shortage of particular item, in this case skilled workers, the price is supposed to rise. There is no substantial sector of labor market seeing wages that are even keeping pace with overall productivity growth, much less rising due to shortages.

If firms really have slots going open because they can't find workers with the skills they need then the problem is that we have employers who don't understand how markets work. If they raised wages firms could attract skilled workers away from their competitors and more workers would try to acquire the necessary skills for their open positions. Perhaps if CEOs were required to take introductory economics courses we could solve this problem.

As a practical matter, we see no evidence to support Dimon's assertion. There are no major occupational groupings with high ratios of vacancies to unemployed workers, nor do we see increases in the length of workweeks, which is another way that employers would deal with a shortage of skilled workers.

Dean Baker is a macroeconomist and co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research.