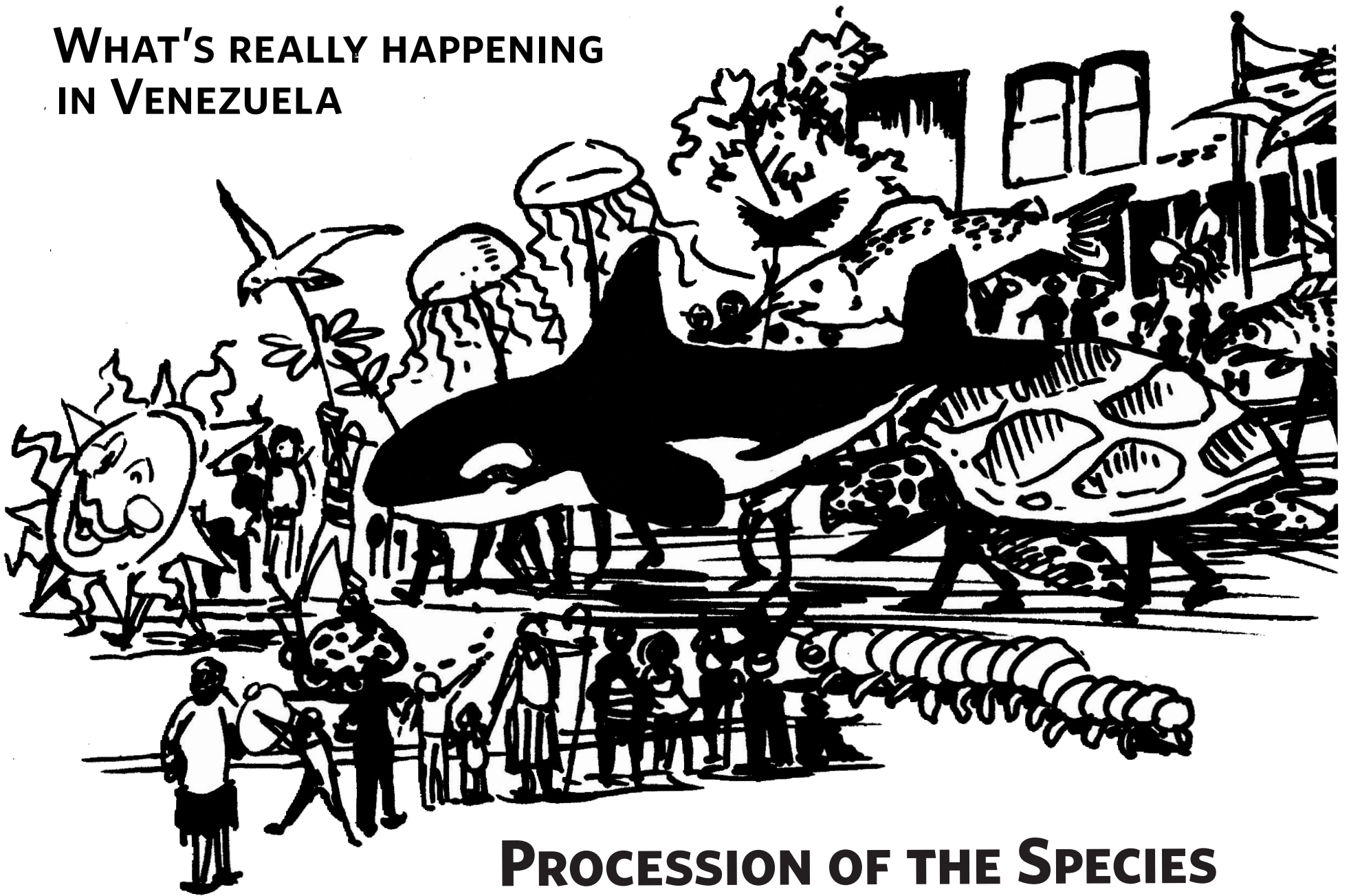


WORKS IN PROGRESS

**WA LEGISLATORS COME UP EMPTY-
HANDED ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

**STRIFE EXPLAINS WHY HE SETTLED
HIS LAWSUIT OUT OF COURT**

**WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING
IN VENEZUELA**



PROCESSION OF THE SPECIES

APRIL 26 ♦ 4:30 PM ♦ OLYMPIA

CONGRATULATIONS ON 20 AMAZING YEARS!

- Page 3 Legislature goes nowhere with climate change. What must be done to motivate legislators to take action at the state level?
Why the lawsuit against the OPD was settled out of court. The art of long distance running...
- Page 6 Making waves: Our trip to Hanford, WA. *Russ and his wife, Stephanie, visit the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory.*
- Page 7 Two years later we are still Troy Davis. The ACLU interviews Troy's sister, Kimberly Davis, and attorney Jen Marlowe.
- Page 8 Class struggle and the Venezuelan Revolution: Toilet paper and its discontents
- Page 10 Operation Uphold Democracy (part 2) *Water, water, everywhere...*
- Page 14 Ukraine: The enemy of your enemy is not always your friend. Zoltan Grossman on the complexities not mentioned in the US media.
- Page 16 Rioting in the streets: What's happening in Venezuela. Excerpts from a talk at an Evergreen forum on Venezuela and the Ukraine.

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

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Submission Deadline

Friday, April 18
olywip@gmail.com

Proofreading Meeting

Saturday ♦ April 26 ♦ 1 pm
Olympia Timberland Library
in the back tables
(Be there for the first read!)

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On the front cover —

"The Procession"

Graphic Artist: Vince Ryland

Lawsuit challenges retaliation against hunger strikers at NW Detention Center

Motion seeks to prohibit ICE from retaliating against detainees for peaceful protest

TACOMA - April 4 - The ACLU of Washington (ACLU-WA) and Columbia Legal Services (CLS) are seeking a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) to prohibit U.S. Immigration and Enforcement (ICE) from retaliating against detainees who engage in First Amendment-protected activities by placing them in solitary confinement. A hearing on the motion for a TRO will be held on Friday, April 4 at 9:30 am before U.S. District Court Judge Robert Bryan in Tacoma.

“Like other forms of peaceful protest, participation in a hunger strike is a protected First Amendment activity, and detainees should not be punished for it,” said Melissa Lee, Attorney and Institutions Project Coordinator with CLS.

“Retaliating against and punishing immigrant detainees engaged in peaceful protests is an unlawful attempt to chill free speech rights. Like all civil detainees, they have free speech rights

protected by the Bill of Rights,” said ACLU-WA Legal Director Sarah Dunne.

Several hundred detainees at the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) in Tacoma, Washington initiated a hunger strike on March 7, 2014 to express concerns with national immigration

“Retaliating against and punishing immigrant detainees engaged in peaceful protests is an unlawful attempt to chill free speech rights. Like all civil detainees, they have free speech rights protected by the Bill of Rights.”

policy and to raise awareness about the conditions of their confinement. On March 24 some detainees initiated a new hunger strike. Beginning on March 27, ICE began placing individuals in solitary confinement in retaliation for their support of the hunger strikes. These individuals have been put in solitary confinement where they are kept in cells for 23 hours a day and are deprived of meaningful interactions with others.

The Plaintiffs represented by ACLU-WA and CLS were placed in solitary confinement after corrections officers entered their living area and invited approximately 20 detainees to meet with an assistant warden to discuss their reasons for engaging in a hunger strike. The Plaintiffs and other detainees who volunteered to attend the meeting were immediately placed in handcuffs and taken to individual isolation cells. Plaintiffs were not told why they were placed in solitary confinement nor how long they would have to live in isolation.

The form of solitary confinement used by ICE, administrative segregation, does not require due process because it is supposed to be non-punitive. However, it appears that ICE’s placement of Plaintiffs and other detainees in administrative segregation is in fact punishment and retaliation for engaging in constitutionally protected free speech activities.

Handling the case are ACLU-WA staff attorneys Sarah Dunne, La Rond Baker and Margaret Chen; Columbia Legal Services staff attorneys Melissa Lee, Nick Straley, and Andrea Schmitt; and ACLU-WA cooperating attorney Sal Mungia of the firm Gordon Thomas Honeywell, LLP.

—American Civil Liberties Union

Rachel Corrie Foundation
April day-long conference to feature Angela Davis



Andrew Meyer

Rachel Corrie Foundation -- Since the start of the “War on Drugs” in the early 1970s, the number of Americans incarcerated in the United States has jumped from 350,000 to over 2 million. Today, the United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, surpassing regimes like Russia, China and Iran.

Yet it is the racial dimension of mass incarceration that is its most striking feature. No other country in the world imprisons so many of its racial or ethnic minorities. The U.S. imprisons a larger percentage of its black population than South Africa did at the height of Apartheid. More than 60% of the people in prison today are people of color. As Michelle Alexander has documented in her recent book, *The New Jim Crow*, mass incarceration in the United States is a “comprehensive and well-disguised system of racialized social control that functions in a manner strikingly similar to Jim Crow.”

The rise of this racialized system of social control in the United States finds a striking parallel in the rise of a system of mass incarceration of Palestinian civilians by Israeli military occupation forces in the Israeli-occupied West Bank

Yet Again As Captives:
Mass Incarceration in the US and Palestine
April 19th, 2014

The Evergreen State College 9:00 - 4:30 pm

Keynote Event 7:00 pm

A conversation featuring Angela Davis and Noura Erakat
Washington Center for the Performing Arts

and Gaza Strip. Since Israel occupied the remaining lands of Palestine by military force in 1967, more than 726,000 Palestinian men, women and children have been detained by Israel, representing 20 percent of the total population and 40 percent of all males in the occupied territories.

Much like in the United States, the Palestinian Arab population of the West Bank and Gaza is subject to constant policing, harassment and racially discriminatory laws that criminalize Palestinian lives and resistance

activities, while leaving Israeli Jewish settlers and soldiers, who often engage in brutal actions, free from any legal accountability. At the heart of Israel’s mass incarceration of Palestinians is the relentless dispossession of Palestinian land for continued Israeli settlement. As Professor Laleh Khalili of the University of London notes, in Israel/Palestine mass incarceration of Palestinians by Israeli military occupation authorities “has become an inseparable part of the Israeli system of control, discipline, and violence” against Palestinians and central to Israeli colonization of their land.

While there are a number of obvious linkages between American and Israeli systems of mass incarceration, not to mention the massive support the United States gives to Israel to maintain its military occupation, it is the use of mass incarceration as a system to preserve racial privilege and hierarchy that is its most striking element.

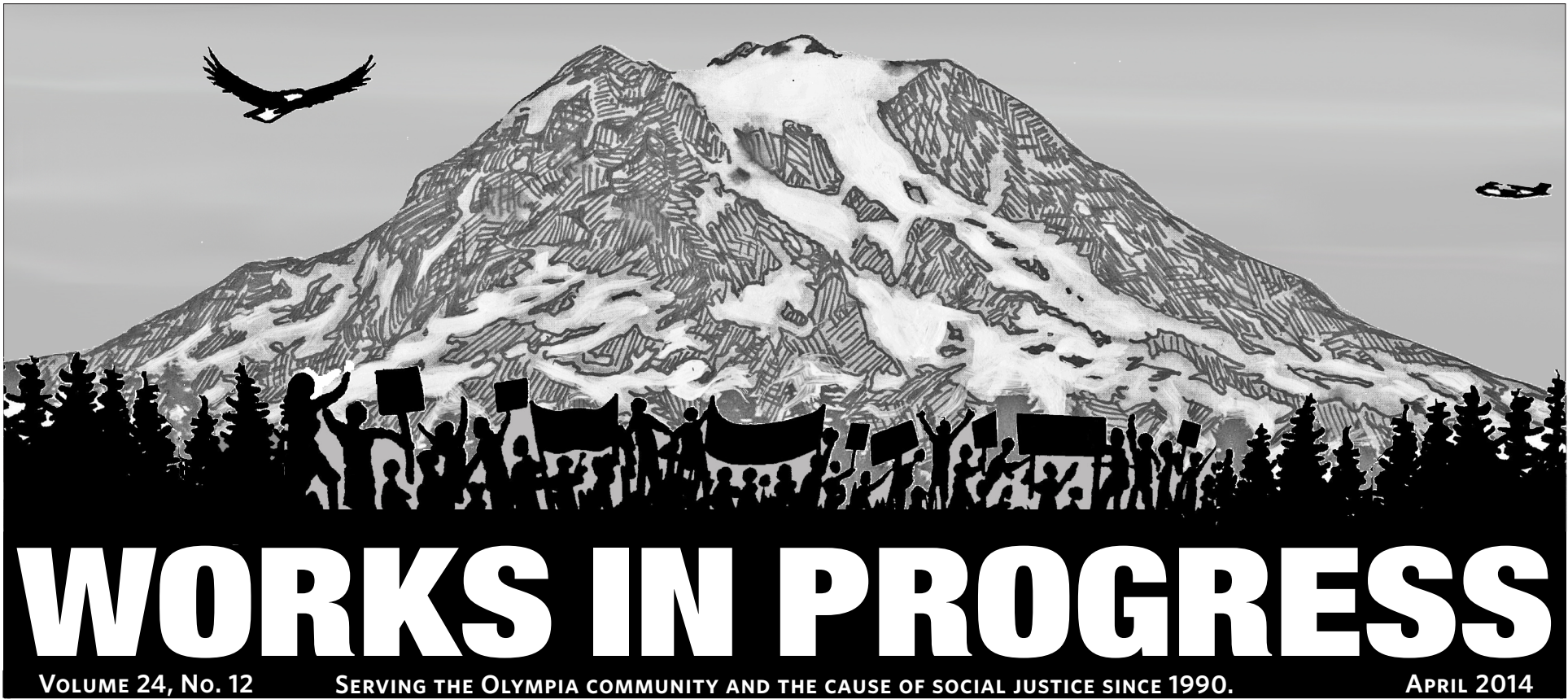
On April 19, the Rachel Corrie Foundation (RCF), in partnership with local and national co-sponsors, will present *Yet Again As Captives: Mass Incarceration in the U.S. & Palestine*. This day-long conference, held at The Evergreen State College, will feature workshops and plenaries that seek to identify the intersection between the two systems of mass incarceration, and will also provide opportunities for

attendees to develop skills and connect with organizations that work to dismantle them. The event culminates with a keynote presentation at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts, featuring world-renowned scholar and activist Angela Davis in conversation with

human rights attorney and activist Noura Erakat.

Conference registration with keynote ticket is available through RCF at rachelcorriefoundation.org. Individual keynote tickets are available through the Washington Center for the Performing Arts at washingtoncenter.org or at the Washington Center box office.

For more information, please write to info@rachelcorriefoundation.org or call (360) 754-3998.



Legislature goes nowhere with climate change

What must be done to motivate legislators to take action at the state level?

Emily Lardner

Maybe next year...

It's hard not to feel discouraged. In December 2013, Washington State's Climate Legislative and Executive Workgroup (CLEW), created by the 2013 Washington State Legislature to develop "a state program of actions and policies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions," presented their opposing sets of recommendations—and now that the session has ended, we can only hope that they will continue their agreement to keep talking. Maybe next session something will happen.

Meanwhile, *The Olympian* reports that gas-powered leaf blowers will be banned from the Capitol Campus because they are noisy and because of their emissions. That's sensible—no one likes to be around leaf-blowers, and it's never clear where the leaves that get blown go anyway—but we need more from our state government. Climate change threatens everything and everyone. Action is required.

The tough question is—action by whom?

Fortunately, the Congressional Progressive Caucus just released its new budget, the Better Off Budget. Reading the Progressive Caucus budget proposal is like reading a primer on what effective government can do. Two of the environmental policy aims represented in the Progressive Caucus budget are putting a price on carbon pollution by instituting a carbon tax and repealing subsidies for fossil fuel companies.

Both ideas were discussed in the Washington State legislature. The expert's report delivered to the CLEW workgroup last October examined both a carbon tax and a cap and trade option. The carbon tax option made more sense and resulted in a bigger impact in terms of reducing green house gases, particularly since the transportation sector is the largest GHG polluter in WA state. That idea went nowhere this session. Nor did a bill re-introduced from last year's session (HB 2038) to close the "big oil loophole" our state's own fossil fuel company subsidy program.

Better government responses elsewhere

Some counties have made significant progress. Take King County. In his State of the County Address in February 2014, King County Executive Dow Constantine reviewed the effects of climate change

on the county—80% of surveyed streams and rivers in King County exceeded the state temperature standard to protect salmon habitat; snowpack in the Cascade Range has decreased by 25% since the 1950's; all major rivers in King County have shown higher flow and increased flood risk during fall and significantly lower flow in summer; Puget Sound has risen over 8 inches in the last century and local waters are becoming more acidic.

"We can no longer wait," Constantine said. The related policy brief, "Confronting Climate Change," lists what King County is doing—greening commutes, promoting smart growth, saving energy and reducing climate pollution, collaborating with others and building resilient communities. How can Constantine be so outspoken, so clear in his leadership? He won the last election handily, 78% to 21% for his Republican contender.

The county council is predominantly Democratic, too.

States other than Washington are acting. Hawaii, for instance. In January 2014, Democrats, who control the Hawaiian House and the Senate, introduced a joint package bill that included the creation of an interagency advisory board to help the state

addition to flooding, we can expect to see beach erosion, and saltwater intrusion into wetlands and groundwater. Homes, critical infrastructure such as roads and bridges, and other facilities will be threatened in increasing numbers." Besides preparing for these events, Pap suggests that readers become involved in Hawaii's smart growth initiatives to reduce automobile use.

Shifting public perception, driving political change

Given the scope of climate change and the need for systemic action, how can we compel our governments to act? If we wait until the sea level rises enough to wet the feet of major decision makers, it will be too late. Somehow, a case has to be made that current evidence and current

understanding of what the evidence means for the future is enough to act upon. It has to become normal to talk about climate change and what we can do with and about it.

In February 2014, political activist Jim Hightower addressed the Progressive

► **GOING NOWHERE**, continued on page 12.

The Olympian reports gas-powered leaf blowers will be banned from the Capitol Campus. That's sensible, but we need more from our state government. Climate change threatens everything and everyone. Action is required.

prepare for climate change. Talking about climate change is normal. In the March 2014 edition of For Kaua'i, a free newsmagazine, Ruby Pap, a Coastal Land Use Extension Agent from the University of Hawai'i, focused her science column on the consequences of climate change for Hawaiians: "in

Why the lawsuit against the OPD was settled out of court

The art of long distance running

Paul French (aka Strife)

"Awareness is two steps ahead. Paranoia is two steps behind." —Kim Marks, forest activist; *Beyond Bullets: The Suppression of Dissent in the United States* by Jules Boykoff (2007)

In 2011, after years of activism led to a fabricated assault charge at a police brutality protest and relentless harassment, I filed a federal civil suit for false arrest against the Olympia Police Department. I wanted to set the record straight and expose a pattern of abuse that not only hindered my efforts, but which has haunted the Olympia community for over a decade. Days before the trial, Larry Hildes, my attorney who works with the National Lawyer's Guild told me the City of Olympia agreed to settle my suit out of court. After careful deliberation I decided to accept the offer. Here is why.

We had witnesses lined up to testify that I was in no physical location to have struck anyone. We had enhanced frame-by-frame video evidence that proved that Officer Sean Lindros was not where he claimed to be when he was supposedly

Judge Settle refused to allow mention of Officer Sean Lindros' history of deceit and excessive force, including an incident where he used a deadly sleeper hold on a man after punching and tasing him repeatedly.

struck. I even had the black bandana I was wearing during the protest that Lindros claimed was blue. Unfortunately, despite the overwhelming evidence of my innocence, I was assigned a reactionary judge who issued pre-trial rul-

ings that cut the legs out from under my case. Judge Settle refused to allow mention of Officer Sean Lindros' history of deceit and excessive force, including an incident where he used a deadly sleeper hold on a man after punching and tasing him repeatedly, in addition to a wrongful arrest suit settled in 2012. Conversely, the judge empowered the defense to bring up irrelevant aspects of my past and politics to try to defame my character and avoid dealing with the facts of the case.

As a student organizer during the Port Protests of 2006-2007, I saw first-hand the animosity that those in power held for people who dared to oppose the machinery of war and aggression. My friends and I put our lives on the line to block military stryker vehicles in the streets of Olympia to send a message that we refuse to allow Olympia's public port to be used as a revolving door for war crimes committed in our name. In return, we got a street educa-

► **LAWSUIT**, continued on page 11.

New law saddles Kentuckians with big electricity bill, aims to block benefits of fighting climate change

April 3 - A new Kentucky law approved late yesterday will raise Kentuckians' electricity bills. This bill mirrors efforts that big polluters and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) have unsuccessfully pushed in other states to undermine upcoming federal standards reducing carbon pollution from dirty power plants—the key driver of climate change.

David Doniger, director of the Climate and Clean Air Program at the Natural Resources Defense Council, issued this statement:

“This misguided measure will saddle Kentuckians with higher electricity bills while padding the profits of the state's biggest polluters. It will also make it harder for the state to increase energy efficiency and switch to cleaner, lower cost energy.

“Coal companies and their political backers want to lock Kentucky into the most expensive way of curbing power plants' dangerous carbon pollution. Their ultimate agenda is to block every effort to cut the pollution driving the worst impacts of climate change.

“Luckily for consumers elsewhere, ALEC and big polluters haven't been successful: Lawmakers in Virginia and Florida blocked the polluters' bills. And cooler heads prevailed in Kansas and even in coal-dominated West Virginia, where legislatures instead passed bills that allow state officials to write carbon reduction plans that will meet the nation's clean air laws.”

—Natural Resources Defense Council

Federal court rejects industry lawsuit to stop landmark endangered species agreement

April 1 - A federal district court Monday dismissed a lawsuit challenging the historic 2011 settlement agreement between the Center for Biological Diversity and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requiring the agency to decide whether to protect 757 imperiled species under the Endangered Species Act. All 757 species had been languishing in bureaucratic limbo without a decision on their fate—many of them for more than two decades. The agreement requires that all receive decisions between 2011 and 2018. So far 138 species have been protected or formally proposed for protection.

The National Association of Home Builders and other industry groups filed suit to overturn the agreement, arguing that they would be harmed if the Fish and Wildlife Service completed its legally required scientific review of the species' status. Federal Judge Emmet G. Sullivan concluded that fear of the results of a required decision-making process is not a legal basis to stop the process.

“The Endangered Species Act provides ample opportunity for the Home Builders and any other citizen, state or group to participate, comment and even challenge the result of protection decisions,” said Noah Greenwald, director of the Center's Endangered Species program. “What they can't do is trample democracy by insisting that the government make no decision at all.”

The ruling comes just days after the state of Oklahoma and an oil and gas industry lobby group filed a similar lawsuit.

“The state of Oklahoma should withdraw its hopeless, copycat lawsuit and stop wasting taxpayer money on frivolous grandstanding,” said Greenwald. “The people of Oklahoma deserve leadership and respect for law from their politicians, not expensive, futile gestures to stop legally required scientific reviews.”

—Center for Biological Diversity

Karen Valenzuela joins girl program participants to speak at YWCA luncheon

The YWCA of Olympia will hold its annual Spring Into Action Benefit Luncheon, presented by Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel, next month to celebrate its programs for girls (Girls Without Limits!, Girls For A Change, and Girls Circle). Participants from each program will be in attendance at and will be an active part of the luncheon activities.

Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel will once again serve as a Presenting Sponsor and new this year is Olympia Federal as the

Playback Theatre Performance Stories of Boundaries & Consent in collaboration with PIPE (Partners in Prevention Education)

Friday, April 11, 7:30 pm
Traditions in Olympia

Each month we invite a guest artist(s), community organization, arts program or social service agency to be a part of our performance. This month we are collaborating with PIPE (Partners in Prevention Education). The mission of Partners in Prevention Education is to engage homeless and at-risk youth and adult allies in the elimination of sexual violence, bias and hate crimes as they contribute to homelessness and as they exists in street culture.

We achieve this though social change work, violence prevention education, and survivor support services including advocacy, therapy and support groups.

Background of Playback Theatre:

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.

Sustaining Sponsor. Tickets are on sale and can be purchased by contacting the YWCA of Olympia at (360) 352-0593 or online at www.ywcaofolympia.org, under the Events page. Tickets are \$35 and tables of eight are available for \$280. Event organizers expect the event to sell out.

This year's featured speaker is Thurston County Commissioner Karen Valenzuela. Karen has been a Thurston County Commissioner since January 2009. Prior to that, she served as a Tumwater City Councilmember for nine years. Her Commission work focuses on preservation of agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas, climate change and sustainability, and working to end homelessness. Commissioner Valenzuela was also a public health worker for twenty years. She has two daughters—one a clinical psychologist and the other an attorney—and three grandchildren ages 6 to 21. She is a former teacher-trainer with the University YWCA in Seattle. Karen's motto is “lead where you land” and we look forward to her presentation!

As the premier girls empowerment agency serving South Puget Sound, the YWCA of Olympia is proud to present Spring Into Action in support of their three gender-responsive programs for middle school girls. Girls Circle is a free afterschool program that meets weekly at schools in Thurston County. A trained facilitator leads topics at each school that focus on finding female role models, self-care, positive body image, self-esteem building, reducing stress and cultivating productive relationships. Girls

Without Limits! (GWOL!) is a spring and summer break and monthly Saturday camp program for girls ages 10 to 14. GWOL! focuses on science, technology, engineering and math (S.T.E.M.), as well as leadership, self-esteem, career awareness, and art. Finally, Girls For A Change, the agency's newest program, is a free afterschool program that invites young women to design, lead, fund and implement social change projects that tackle issues girls face like bullying, animal neglect, confidence & self-esteem, and environmental degradation. Girls For A Change empowers girls to develop the voice, ability and problem solving capacity to speak up, be decision makers, and


create visionary change.

For more information about Spring Into Action, contact Cherie Reeves Sperr, Director of Special Events & Communications at (360) 352-0593 or crsperr@ywcaofolympia.org

—YWCA of Olympia

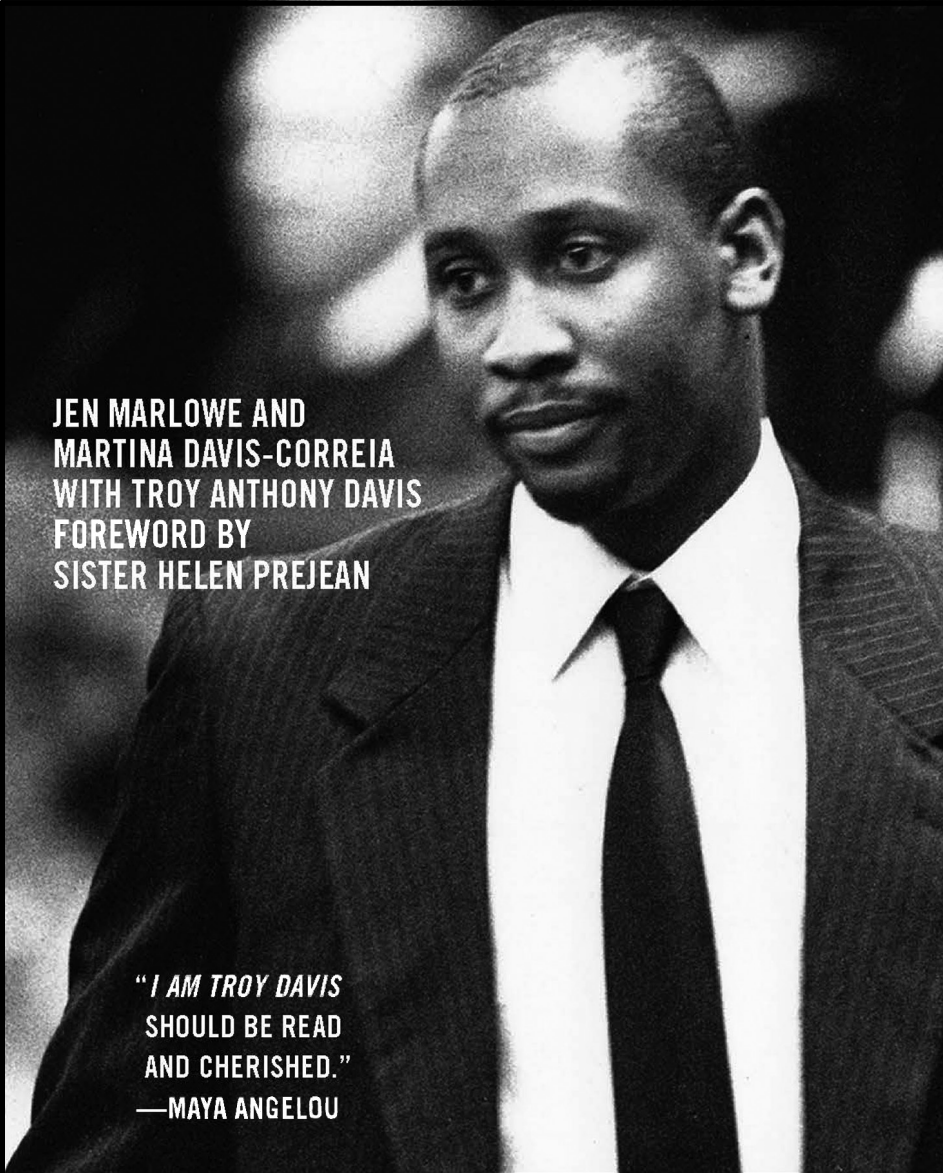
Become a citizen journalist.

Works In Progress
Writers' Group
Write left.



FIRST THURSDAY, 5:30 PM
TRADITIONS CAFE

olywip@gmail.com



JEN MARLOWE AND
MARTINA DAVIS-CORREIA
WITH TROY ANTHONY DAVIS
FOREWORD BY
SISTER HELEN PREJEAN

“I AM TROY DAVIS
SHOULD BE READ
AND CHERISHED.”
—MAYA ANGELOU

I AM TROY DAVIS

Related article on page 5.

I am Troy Davis authors Jen Marlowe and Martina Davis-Correia

THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE
WED APRIL 9, 3:00-4:30PM
RECITAL HALL, COM BLDG

ORCA BOOKS
WED APRIL 9, 7:00-8:30PM
509 E. 4TH AVE. OLYMPIA

On September 21, 2011 Troy Anthony Davis was put to death by the State of Georgia. Davis' execution was protested by hundreds of thousands of people across the globe, and Pope Benedict XVI, President Jimmy Carter, and 51 members of Congress all appealed for clemency. How did one man capture the world's imagination, and become the iconic face for the campaign to end the death penalty?

I Am Troy Davis, coauthored by Jen Marlowe and Davis' sister Martina Davis-Correia, tells the intimate story of an ordinary man caught up in an inexorable tragedy. From his childhood in racially-charged Savannah; to the confused events that led to the 1989 shooting of a police officer; to Davis' sudden arrest, conviction, and two-decade fight to prove his innocence; *I Am Troy Davis* takes us inside a broken legal system where life and death hang in the balance.

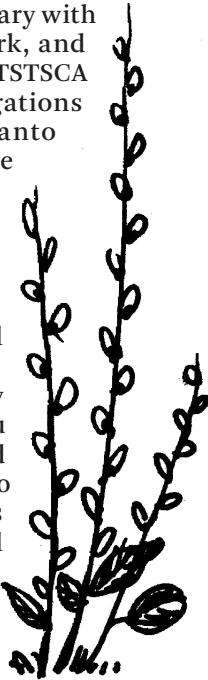
Perennial plant sale to benefit our sister community in Santo Tomás, Nicaragua

Saturday, May 3 ♦ 9 am to 3 pm ♦ 117 Thomas St NW

TSTSCA -- Large, healthy starts of fifty varieties of perennial plants will be on sale at very modest prices to benefit the Thurston-Santo Tomás Sister County Association (TSTSCA) from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday May 3 at 117 Thomas St NW (between Harrison and 4th) in West Olympia.

TSTSCA is a genuine grassroots effort founded in 1988 in Olympia, Washington, and Santo Tomás, Chontales, Nicaragua. TSTSCA supports a number of projects there, including a children's free lunch program, a small library with support for homework, and college scholarships. TSTSCA also organizes delegations from Olympia to Santo Tomás and from there to here.

The group works actively year round and needs a constant flow of financial support to keep it all running. Now you can simultaneously help TSTSCA while you make your own yard look better for years to come! Visit TSTSCA's benefit perennial plant sale at a convenient West Olympia location, 117 Thomas Street



NW (just south of W Harrison, west of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church's parking lot) from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on Saturday May 3.

TSTSCA volunteer George Hartwell raises an amazing variety of perennial plants and is donating many in decent-

sized pots (along with starts of a few shrubs) so you can take them home and plant them with confidence. Many more than 100 plants of about fifty varieties will be available for sale, including a few exotic ones. If you want to ask about a particular species of perennial plant, call George Hartwell at 459-1079.

For information about the plant sale or about TSTSCA, contact Jean Eberhardt at (360) 943-8642 or tstsc@gmail.com. More information about TSTSCA is at www.oly-wa.us/tstsc.

Time to apply for Queer Rock Camp!

Queer Rock Camp is now accepting camper and volunteer applications for this summer's camp! Founded in 2011 by a small organizing collective in Olympia, Queer Rock Camp now annually serves approximately 50 youth ages 12 - 21 during a week long intensive music day camp held in the summer.

Through instrument instruction, band practice, and workshops Q.R.C. empowers youth and builds community through music. QRC is open to campers and volunteers who identify as queer, gender-variant, gender non-conforming, and allies.

Camp tuition runs on a sliding scale and no one is turned away for lack of funds. This summer's camp runs Monday July 7th - Friday July 11th, with the culminating showcase of camper bands taking place at the Capitol Theater on the evening on Saturday, July 12th.

Learn more about Queer Rock Camp and apply online at our website: www.queerrockcamp.org.



Virtual Pipelines: New Oil and the Pacific Northwest

Evergreen Summer Offering - Second Session

The Tar Sands of Alberta's oil fields and the gasoline-like crude from North Dakota's Bakken region are headed this way in 100 car unit trains called "virtual pipelines."

Plans call for expanded rail receiving facilities at all five refineries in Washington state, as well as new oil train-to-marine transfer terminals at the Ports of Vancouver and Grays Harbor.

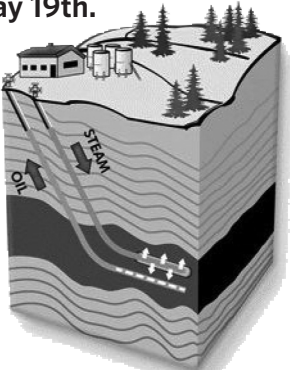
These plans are the subject of major controversy in this state. Recent derailments and disastrous explosions have caught the public eye and mobilized labor and environmental communities.

We will look at what this new oil is; how it's changing the dynamics of US oil dependency as well as the nature of rail transportation in the Northwest. We'll visit ports and refineries, read primary documents, chart train traffic, talk to proponents, opponents and regulators, and develop our own analysis of what should be done.

Evergreen registration begins May 19th.

8 credits. Second Session.
July 28 to August 29, 2014
M,W,F 10 am - 4 pm

For more information, contact
Dan Leahy, (360) 402-0441
Danleahy43@yahoo.com



Special Events

Stories of Healing and Transformations—Rwanda 20 years after the Genocide
Monday, April 7, 7-8 pm
Traditions Cafe
300 5th Ave. SW, Olympia

A community lecture by Dr. Christian Ntizi-mira, a palliative care physician and educator from Kigali, Rwanda.

Sponsors: Hospice Without Borders and Amahoro House.

Robert H. King Speaks on solitary confinement & the Angola 3
Tuesday, April 8, 5 - 7 pm
Lecture Hall 1
The Evergreen State College

Robert H. King is a freed member of the Angola 3. Along with his comrades Albert Woodfox and Herman Wallace (who recently passed away), they were targeted for their activism as members of the Black Panther Party inside Angola prison in the 1970s. After 31 years in Angola prison in Louisiana, 29 spent years in solitary confinement, Robert King was released on February 2001 after proving his innocence.

Since his release, Robert H. King has spoken across the country demanding the release of Albert Woodfox along with the end of solitary confinement. King will speak about his own experience in Angola Prison as a Black Panther, the case of the Angola 3, and will explain how the prison system refuses to free Albert Woodfox even after his conviction has been overturned three times!

Sponsor: Abolish Cops and Prisons

"Policing and Counter-Insurgency" with Kristian Williams
Thursday, April 10, 5 - 7 pm
Lecture Hall 2
Evergreen State College Longhouse

Kristian Williams (author, *Our Enemies in Blue*; contributing editor, *Life During Wartime: Resisting Counterinsurgency*) will briefly outline the principles of counterinsurgency warfare and illustrate how they have both shaped and been shaped by police operations in the United States. Public discussion to follow.

Sponsor: Abolish Cops and Prisons

Capitalism and Racism: Implications for an anti-racist agenda
Wednesday, April 16, 7 - 9 pm
Room 200, Olympia Community Center, 222 Columbia St, NW, Olympia

Final part of the January 8th workshop—"The ABCs of Capitalism"—in a series promoting economic literacy and inviting dialogue and discussion on inequality and the on-going crises of capitalism.

No economic background required!

Facilitated by Savvina Chowdhury & Peter Bohmer (members of the economic faculty at The Evergreen State College)

Tai Hicks Debut Exhibition
Friday, April 25, 11 am
Inklife Tattoos Body Piercing & Art Gallery
307 4th Ave East, Olympia

Come and see the amazing Apis Cosmonauts on it's journey through the cosmos in my very first exhibition for Olympia's Spring Arts Walk. I will be showing this series as well as some older work at Inklife Tattoos Body Piercing & Art Gallery, est. 1971 beginning on Friday April 25th. Bee lovers, star gazers, art enthusiasts all come check it out and support your local businesses and artists!

African Music Fest Music Instrument Drive
Saturday, April 26, 6 pm
Breathe Olympia
601 Capitol Way S, Olympia

The Mazigazi Band and guests will be performing for One Vibe Africa's Musical Instrument Drive. This will be an African music fest where donations of used musical instruments, accessories, and strings are encouraged to benefit a Youth Arts Mentorship program in Kenya. This is an Olympia Arts Walk event where all are welcome to come and enjoy dancing and story telling. See you there!

Making waves: Our trip to Hanford, WA

Russ Frizzell

That's right, friends, like all of our troubles, gravity comes in waves. For us earthlings they are so subtle that we don't feel them and so on Earth gravity seems comfortably stable. Far out in space though, black holes and neutron stars spiraling out of control produce waves in the gravitational field which astrophysicists believe we will soon be able to detect. In the fantastic realms of the universe, orbiting bodies and cataclysmic supernovae are causing the rubbery fabric of space-time to quivering.

My wife, Stephanie, and I traveled to the LIGO Hanford Observatory on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation for the February 28 public drop-in tour and March 1 Family Science Day. These events to promote science education remind us that the scientists are reaching out in the spirit of learning. Our Plowshare friends hope to change nuclear weapons for peaceful use of resources. Notice! This is what has begun to happen at Hanford!

One of the world's great scientific experiments is right here in Washington state. LIGO stands for Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory. Their website says, "[LIGO] is an instrument for sensing the presence of matter, whether shining or dark, in the distant reaches of the cosmos." The project, funded by the National Science Foundation, is jointly operated by the California Institute of Technology and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Gravity is so familiar that we rarely think about it. "Down" means toward the center of the Earth, "up" is directly away from the center. The Moon and other satellites orbit Earth in the same way that Earth orbits the Sun. When I throw a baseball up, guess what it will end up doing? As the Earth makes its way around the orbit, the gravity field changes with the Earth's changing position. Scientists speculate that the changing gravity field sends waves

outward from here at the blazing speed of light. However, LIGO won't measure waves from mild processes such as planetary orbits; only high mass, high acceleration events like black hole mergers. Only high frequency waves will register on LIGO machines.

High frequency waves are so delicate and subtle that no experiment has yet to measure them. We can infer the effect of a gravitational wave will cause because of the tides on Earth, which is so familiar to us here in Olympia. The tide results from the Earth spinning under the alternating pull of gravity from the Moon and Sun. But other stars and planets are so far away that we would need a very sensitive detector. A great collaboration

One of the world's great scientific experiments is right here in Washington state. The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory is an instrument for sensing the presence of matter in the distant reaches of the cosmos."

among scientists have built the device called LIGO at the Hanford site, and a twin facility at Livingston, Louisiana, which is on the brink of making this long sought measurement. If you have surplus computing power you may even participate in this adventure with the Einstein@home project where volunteers help analyze the collected data.

There are a few other detectors and teams around the world that form a (sort of) network. The European Space Agency is making a gravitational wave detector for outer space that will cover lower frequency wave events and is expected to be more sensitive and certain to get that measurement.

The best sources of gravitational waves are massive objects in rapid orbits.

Astronomers are confident that neutron stars and perhaps black holes in close orbit create strong gravitational waves. In addition, supernova explosions, thought to emit a pulse may actually produce some type of gravitational wave. The Nobel Prize in physics in 1993 was awarded to Russell Hulse and Joe Tyler for finding a pair of neutron stars, one of which is a pulsar in close orbit which are spiraling inward toward eventual collision. Using Albert Einstein's equations of Relativity, scientists have calculated the energy of these waves and they expect that LIGO is close to sensing them.

Dale Ingram was our tour guide of this wonderful facility and he is a great spokesperson for the project. With a small group (six other visitors) we were shown around the entire place. Because LIGO is nearing the end of a tremendous upgrade, some components left from the initial science run are displayed around the visitor center for guests to study. Magnificent isolation tables steady the apparatus from earthly vibration and some extraordinary mirrors are there to see. We toured the clean room where instruments are being prepared at a fantastic degree of cleanliness. And we spent time in the brilliant control headquarters (like being aboard the bridge of the Starship Enterprise) where myriad of scientists were busy at testing the upgrade status. Even the lunch room was full of science demos and the air of professionalism of the whole place was the best I've ever seen—the Washington LIGO is a hub of astronomy at its finest.

At my request a veteran LIGO scientist made time for an interview and he enthusiastically described the project to Stephanie and me. Micheal R. Landry, Ph.D., explained the project from a knowledgeable perspective. Though the science of gravitational wave astronomy is well explained on the LIGO website, to meet a lead scientist who has dedicated his career to making sense of the world was a great honor (he even helped edit this copy and drew on his chalk board for us!) I paraphrase some of his answers here:

What is the economic value of this experiment?
"The manufacture of the finest quality instruments in the world creates work for an engineering industry that is a worldwide collaboration. The Hanford site—once a production area for nuclear weapons—now serves as one of the production areas for LIGO's quest for new knowledge. This work is primarily driven by curiosity and physics so we may understand the universe better. This additional window into the cosmos makes for better astronomy."

Isn't University of Washington involved?
"There is an excellent gravity group at University of Washington which is working on its own short range gravity measurement experiment. That device is testing the universal constant of

gravity to refine its known value and for modifications to Newtonian gravity. Their work compliments ours but is a separate operation."

Has India recently joined the LIGO group?

"Here at Washington LIGO we are building an additional set of devices for the nation of India which is planning to set up the detector and join the network. Having another detector at

a distant location will help triangulate the signals so we can better pinpoint wave sources in the sky. The distance also helps us separate seismic and other local noise sources from actual gravitational waves."

How certain are we of detecting waves soon?

"Our upgrade is nearing completion; the new device, called Advanced LIGO is ten times more sensitive and as we continue to refine the device our detection power continues to improve. Depending on the mass and distance to some in-spiraling neutron stars the theory predicts wave strength close to our ability. As they are about to collide the signal strength increases to a chirp. When we will detect these chirps we can inform optical astronomers where to look in the sky to observe exciting events. Later this year we expect to begin test operations of the Advanced LIGO. These experiments are valuable tests of our

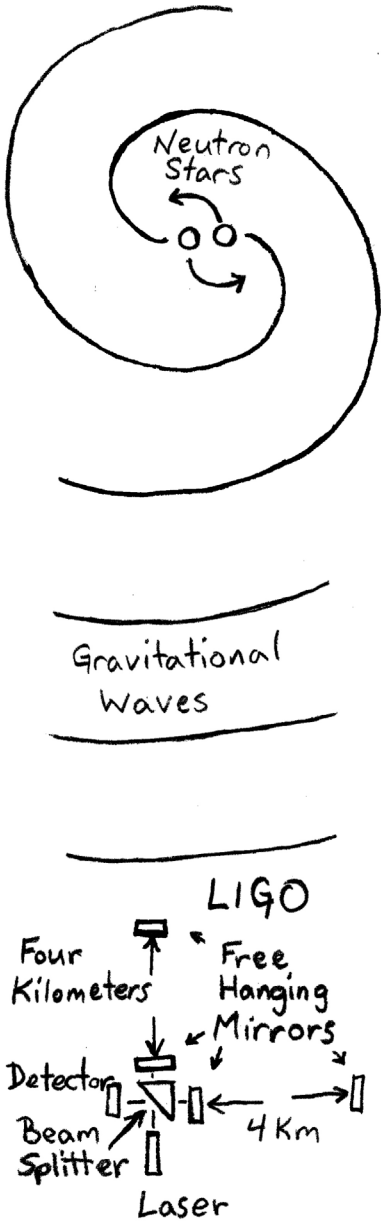
understanding of nature according to General Relativity."

Thank you, Mike and Dale and all the staff at the LIGO Hanford, for the hospitality and time. Saturday, March 1, we returned to attend the special event, Family Science Day. Some twenty volunteers gave demonstrations around the facility of the scientific principles being tested. I was excited to see many of these volunteers were local high school students. The crowds of visitors (two to four hundred guests) were local families with children of all ages enjoying the hands-on exhibits and interaction with science enthusiasts. It was a festive learning experience of the highest order. The sincere researchers at LIGO are trying to make a difference in the lives of people.

The specter of nuclear history and background radiation did not deter these brave people. The LIGO Hanford holds accessible, free public tours one Friday and one Saturday each month, several special public events throughout the year, and additional group tours available by appointment. The scenic drive from Olympia is around 250 miles and the considerate professionalism of the staff made this tour a memorable learning experience. We wish the scientists the best of luck in their upcoming science run. Lee Smolin in his latest book *Time Reborn* claims "Unprecedented measurements [may] not be governed by any prior law." The folks at LIGO have done their homework, I'd bet they are on the brink of finding out.

And, extra special thanks to *Works in Progress* for supporting science learning and citizen journalism in our community.

Russ Frizzell is an activist living in Olympia since 2010 and a graduate of The Evergreen State College where he studied Physics and Cosmology.



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Two years later... We are still Troy Davis

ACLU of Southern California

An interview with Kimberly Davis and Jen Marlowe

In 2011, the ACLU stood in solidarity with millions of people across the country in demanding clemency for Troy Davis. But despite our appeal, on September 21, 2011, Troy was executed.

Two years later, our collective efforts to challenge the death penalty in the name of Troy Davis and others like him have been anything but futile. Since Troy's execution, nine states have taken

The ACLU of Southern California recently interviewed Kimberly Davis and Jen Marlowe for its blog, about Troy's case, how it helped galvanize the movement to abolish the death penalty, and what work lies ahead.

ACLU: *Where are we two years after Troy's execution?*

Jen Marlowe: Troy's case really sparked an awareness about why the death penalty is so problematic in this country, and I think in the two years since there's been a lot of really concrete steps that have happened that have moved our country progressively away from use of

The nature of the crime is rarely what determines whether the death sentence is sought. Race, geography, and poverty are much more indicative factors.

steps to repeal the death penalty, including two in the Pacific Northwest. Here in Washington State, Gov. Jay Inslee announced on February 11 that he was imposing a moratorium on executions as long as he was governor of the state of Washington.

"Equal justice under the law is the state's primary responsibility," Inslee said during his press conference. "And in death penalty cases, I'm not convinced equal justice is being served."

On Wednesday, April 9 the ACLU of Washington will co-sponsor "I Am Troy Davis: The Human Face of the Death Penalty," two events hosted by The Evergreen State College (TESC) at 3pm and at Orca Books at 7pm.

The events, which are also co-sponsored by Fellowship of Reconciliation-Olympia, the Washington Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (as well as multiple academic programs and student organizations at TESC, and the President's Diversity Fund) will feature a discussion with Troy's younger sister, Kimberly Davis, as well as Jen Marlowe, author of the recently released book, *I Am Troy Davis*, which Marlowe wrote with Troy's older sister Martina, with Troy's direct participation.

the death penalty—and certainly, I can't say that that's only because of Troy, it's obviously not, but I absolutely think it was one of the galvanizing events in the abolition movement. That was one of the things he called on his supporters to do in his final words—he asked us to continue to fight this fight, and I think that he would

find that we have, and that we've been very successful in it.

Kimberly Davis: I feel really good knowing that my brother's case is continuing to change the world today. Troy told the family if the State of Georgia did succeed in executing him they would only take his physical body because he gave his soul to God along time ago.

ACLU: *How have people responded to your brother's story?*

KD: My brother's story has opened the eyes of many people across the world and has brought people of all origins together to work for one cause: to end the death penalty. It doesn't matter the color of someone's skin—we all came together to stand for one cause and continue to stand for that cause. People all over the world had their eyes on Troy's case and if they didn't understand the importance on ending the death penalty then, their eyes are opened wide now.

ACLU: *How does the death penalty affect minorities and people of color?*

JM: The death penalty disproportionately affects minorities and people of color. Every study that's been done in every state has affirmed that. It has to



Jen Marlowe and Kimberly Davis after an *I Am Troy Davis* book reading at Busboys and Poets in Washington, DC. Photo credit:

do with both the race of the perpetrator and the victim, as people of color are far more likely to be prosecuted with a capital charge than people not of color.

The race of the victim particularly impacts whether a death penalty is sought for an offender. If the victim is white, it is far more likely than if the victim was non-white. These are some really troubling indicators in this day and age of whose lives are considered more valuable and whose lives are more dispensable. Race and the death penalty have very troubling overlays, as do economics and whether or not someone has the opportunity to hire decent defense or has a public defender, who might be very good but nevertheless overworked and underfunded.

The nature of the crime is rarely what

determines whether the death sentence is sought. Race, geography, and poverty are much more indicative factors, and that's really troubling in the country that is supposed to stand by the central edict 'equal justice under the law.' The death penalty seems to be the sharp edge of a much larger, broken system, and it certainly does not provide equal justice.

ACLU: *So in terms of concrete policy, what are we building up to?*

JM: I think we're building up to a repeal of the death penalty in the United States.

It's been happening step-by-step and state-by-state—momentum is growing and I think we'll reach a tipping point, where as we continue to move, there will be a point where the rest of the country will follow—whether that will ultimately come from the U.S. Supreme Court or another way, we're trending very clearly in that direction. In terms of repeal on different state levels, I live in Seattle—of course, the governor of Washington just did the moratorium—and then also if you just look at trends about the death penalty: prosecutors are seeking the death penalty less often, there's fewer death sentences being imposed, there's fewer executions, public opinion of the death penalty is at an all-time low according to Gallup—every single indicator is moving towards repeal, which is not to underestimate the amount of work that we have ahead of us.

ACLU: Kimberly, what changes do you hope to see?

KD: I hope to see the death penalty end all around the world and that we can come together to make sure there is not another innocent man executed. Not in my name.

Additional question: *What do you think of the moratorium on executions instituted by Gov. Jay Inslee here in Washington State?*

JM: I'm proud of our governor for making the right decision, and standing on the right side of history. Now we have to make sure that the state legislature also stands on the right side of history, and repeals the death penalty altogether. We will need to make sure that we let our state representatives know—loudly, clearly and unequivocally—that this is what we expect them to do.

Interview adapted with permission from the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California

Jen Marlowe's website is www.donkeysaddle.org, she blogs at View from the donkey's saddle, and you can follow her on Twitter at @donkeysaddleorg.

Continue the discussion with Kimberly Davis and Jen Marlowe at one of the two Olympia I Am Troy Davis talks and book signings on Wednesday, April 9! See announcement on page 2 for locations and times.

SHOWING AT THE OLYMPIA FILM SOCIETY

Wrenched April 18 - West Coast Premiere

*Abbey, who argued that environment destruction is "terrorism against life," laid down the philosophical foundation and ground rules for eco-activism: "If I see something out there, I f*** with it." While he believed it was a moral obligation to defend the land, Abbey drew the line at hurting another human. The film also explores the reluctance of environmentalists to take individual action. Monkey-wrenching, the film argues, is "the symbol of refusal to compromise—especially on wilderness,"*

—Glen Warchol, Salt Lake Magazine

It felt like love April 27 - May 1

Rarely has the zone between girlhood and womanhood been captured with such urgent honesty. Eliza Hittman's superb teen drama debut is an important landmark in the oft-ignored subgenre of realistic movies about female adolescence.

—Inkoo Kang, Los Angeles Times

In her pitch-perfect feature film debut, writer-director Eliza Hittman explores the terrible uncertainties of adolescence, and in the process reclaims the word "girls" for its rightful owners.

—Chuck Wilson, Village Voice

The Past April 21 - April 24

Farhadi loosens the valve on a drip-feed of revelations, each one changing any assumptions prompted by the last...Infusing his simple story with subtle complexities.

—Elliott Noble, Sky Movies

The most poignant moments are of kids in doorways looking on in bafflement at the behaviour of their parents or the adults themselves gazing at one another, trying forlornly to work out why everything in their lives seems so unresolved and chaotic.

—Vanessa Martinez, Shadow and Act

Finding Vivian Maier May 2 - May 8

A self-styled outsider artist comes into focus in Finding Vivian Maier, a striking documentary undertaken after one of its directors bought a nondescript box of photo negatives at a garage sale.

—Adam Nayman, Globe and Mail

Most revealing are the interviews with the now-grown kids who were in Maier's care, who accompanied her as she made trips to often-dodgy areas of Chicago so she could take photos.

—Bill Goodykoontz, Arizona Republic

CAPITOL THEATER ON FIFTH AVENUE IN DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA

(Class struggle and the Venezuelan Revolution)

Toilet paper and its discontents

Enrique Quintero

The power of symbols

A society without toilet paper is a society in trouble, we all agree with that. Not having access to such a basic commodity of modern life suggests an uncomfortable place where scarcity reigns, futile long lines at supermarkets with empty shelves, wide spread poverty, unhappiness on citizens' faces, and that third world "je ne sais quoi" not recommended by Condé Nast Travel standards. But equally important, if we believe that a society doesn't have toilet paper, the actual relationship between our beliefs and material reality becomes irrelevant.

Iconic symbols, as we know, have the power to construct immediate meaning in our brain. But as Nietzsche noted long ago, symbolic constructions (and access to toilet paper is high in the chart of the contemporary mind) generate relations of things to one another, and to us, but not necessarily with the absolute truth. It is not accidental, as we'll see below, the broad news coverage in mainstream media given to the shortage of toilet paper in Venezuela, and the supposed popular discontent against the government. For those without voluntary amnesia about moments of Latin American history, the current campaign—first against Chavez and now against the new democratically elected Maduro—resembles in both tactics and content the campaigns against Allende in Chile prior to the establishment of the dictatorship of Pinochet.

The ubiquitous class struggle

Very few things in life can be placed outside the correlations of power and class interests in a given society. This is particularly true if we analyze the process of production, distribution, and consumption of commodities. Needless to say, TP is part of this economic cycle; tracking the “toilet paper blues” will help us unveil the real political content behind the current Venezuelan situation.

It is worth noticing that the nationalization effort initiated by Chavez has only affected a limited number of com-

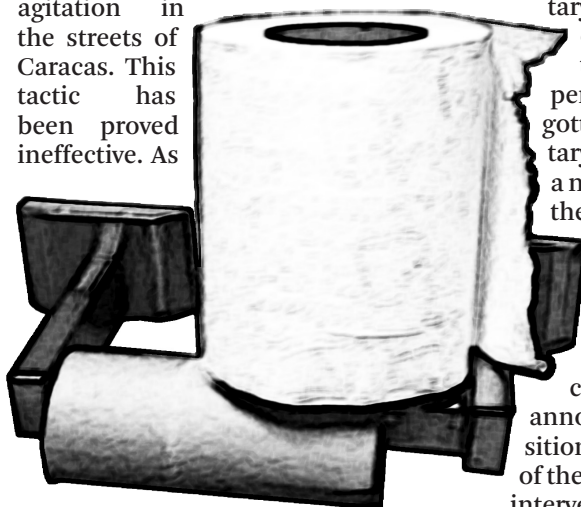
panies, mostly big companies such as the oil and other energy related industries. Most of Venezuela's industry continues to be in the hands of private capitalist entrepreneurs. The paper, and more specifically the TP industry is in hands of private capitalists; so are the means of transportation such as trucks, etc.; and most of the centers of distribution such as large supermarkets, are owned by private companies.

Yes, there was a scarcity of TP in Caracas, but the shortage was artificially created with the political purpose of destabilizing a legitimate government. Similar tactics were used with other basic staples creating shortages of soap, flour, etc. The same political maneuvers were used in the early 70's in Chile to project the image of a socialist government incapable of running the economy. It is not accidental that president Maduro responded by denouncing the shortage as right wing scheme, and proceeded to temporarily occupy the largest TP manufacturer in the nation, the Paper Manufacturing Company's plant in the state of Aragua. Along with these measures the Venezuelan government or-

dispossessed)?

The media, as the new battle field

It would be mistaken to believe that the main battlefield of the conservative and reactionary forces of Venezuela is through financing violence and agitation in the streets of Caracas. This tactic has been proved ineffective. As



noted by Ciccariello-Maher in the March 24 issue of *The Nation*, “ Even the ferociously anti-Chavista blogger Francisco Toro of *Caracas Chronicles* has argued “middle class protests in middle class areas on middle class themes by middle class people are not a challenge to the Chavista power system.” Equally ineffective have been the recent attacks of extreme right groups against universities, libraries, and cultural centers trying to antagonize the student movement that favors Chavismo.

Nonetheless, the extreme-right and conservative forces have been successful in the orchestration of an international campaign of vilification and demonization of the Venezuelan leaders, first of Chavez and now of Maduro. Latin American and Miami based news and entertainment corporations such as ANDIARIOS, GDA, and PAL along with the conservative Spanish journal *El Pais* have launched a well-coordinated, vicious and continuous crusade of misinformation against the Venezuelan revolutionary project. Their tactics include the mis-use and alteration of photographic and video material and unilateral and distorted news coverage about Venezuela. Not to be left behind,

the American media has been holding hands with the Venezuelan political right against Chavez since the beginnings of the Bolivarian revolution. Nothing new here, except that this amounts to a political aggression by conscious misrepresentation with the aim to destabilize Venezuela and prepare the ground for a violent military solution.

Arrogant hypocrisy the American way

There is something repugnant in Secretary of State John Kerry's statements condemning the Russian occupation/annexation of Crimea. At a personal level he seems to have forgotten his role as invader in the military occupation of Viet Nam, and at a national level he also has forgotten the U.S. recent invasion of Iraq. Both countries located thousand of miles away from the U.S.

Equally offensive was his arrogant public declaration of March 12, 2014 when he practically threatened Venezuela and announced his support for the opposition and his willingness to make use of the “democratic clause” (i.e. military intervention) of the OAS (Organization of American States) against the democratically elected president of that country. Kerry’s proposal was put to shame by 29 Latin American and Caribbean governments declaring their solidarity with Venezuela. Only the U.S., Canada, and Panama were against the declaration. When it comes to international politics Canada seems unable to think or act without the script prepared by its powerful neighbor, and Panama’s President Martinelli seems to wish for Latin America the same misfortune of being invaded by the U.S, as was his country in 1989.

Compliance no more

The American position against Venezuela is understandable, though unacceptable. U.S. power and influence in Latin America has become weaker due in large part to progressive-pro-socialist governments like Venezuela, Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay. From a global perspective, these countries represent, with the exception of the Nordic countries, the only existing forms of government on the planet willing to challenge capitalism and globalization.

In the particular case of Venezuela, the progressive experience initiated by Chavez has meant among other things the following:

- Intentional government policies designed to improve the well being of its people. Significant gains have been made in the areas of re-distribution of the national wealth, reduction of poverty, education, health, and civil rights for minorities.
- Expansion of democracy with the creation of more than 40,000 “Communal Councils” which according to the same article in *The Nation* by Ciccariello-Maher incorporate “Afro and indigenous movements, women’s, gender-diverse and students groups” —in other words, groups without previous political agency or representation.
- Radical changes in the conceptualization of the role of the state, which is understood as an active instrument for the benefit of the majority of the population, and not as a tool to benefit a small group of wealthy people, which was the case prior Chavismo.
- Radical changes in the conceptualization of the role of the armed forces of Venezuela (Chavez was in the military), which now play an integral part in the transformation of the country and defense of democracy via participation in economic development and social projects.
- Active participation in creating a new type of solidarity among Latin American countries as a practice of resistance to U.S. economic and political control.

► **TOILET PAPER**, continued on page 9.

Friends of Public Power

BENEFIT BRUNCH

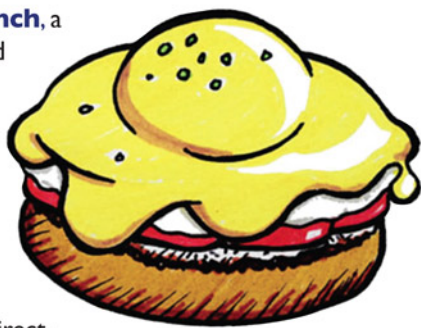
Good eats, Big ideas, Community values

You're invited to April's **Media Island brunch**, a monthly get-together to build community and benefit a worthy organization. This month we honor **Friends of Public Power**, dedicated to increasing public understanding and support for public power in our community.

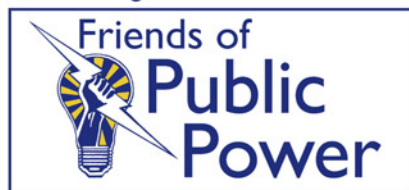
Join us **Sunday, April 6th, 11:00-2:30**, for a fine meal, prepared by renowned local chef **Brian McDonald**. Brian emphasizes direct-sourced, local foods, and is an acknowledged “eggs benedict expert.”

Our get-together will also feature a talk by noted energy expert **Jim Lazar:**

“Shifting Energy Paradigms: Focus On Communities”



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media island
international

Sunday, April 6th, 11:00 to 2:30
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\$10 to \$20 sliding scale

(Lucha de Clases y la Revolución Venezolana)

Papel Higiénico y Sus Descontentos

Enrique Quintero

El poder de los símbolos

Una sociedad sin papel higiénico es una sociedad con problemas, todos estamos de acuerdo con eso. No tener

acceso a una comodidad tan básica de la vida moderna sugiere un lugar inconfortable donde reina la escases, vanas y largas filas en supermercados de estantes vacíos, amplia pobreza, infelicidad en los rostros ciudadanos, y un “je ne sais quoi” tercer mundista no recomendado por los estándares para viajeros de Condé Nast Travel. Pero igualmente importante, si creemos que una sociedad carece de papel higiénico, la relación existente entre nuestras creencias y la realidad material se torna irrelevante.

Símbolos icónicos, como sabemos, tienen el poder de construir representaciones inmediatas en nuestro cerebro. Pero como notara Nietzsche hace ya algún tiempo, construcciones simbólicas (acceso a papel higiénico ocupa un lugar importante en la lista de prioridades de la mente contemporánea) generan relaciones entre cosas entre sí, y con nosotros, pero no necesariamente con la verdad absoluta. No es accidental, como veremos mas adelante, la amplia cobertura en los medios de comunicación comerciales dominantes dada a la escases de papel higiénico en Venezuela, y al supuesto descontento popular en contra del gobierno. Para aquellos sin amnesia sobre ciertos momentos de la historia latino-americana, la actual campaña, primero contra Chávez, y ahora contra el democráticamente electo Maduro, tiene semejanzas peligrosas tanto en tácticas como en contenido con las campañas en contra de Allende en Chile que antecedieron el establecimiento de la dictadura de Pinochet.

La ubicua presencia de la lucha de clases

Muy pocas cosas existen en la vida que pueden ser localizadas fuera de las cor-

► Toilet paper, cont. from page 9.

Class struggle, again

Ironically, Maduro has confronted the multiple acts of violence, provocation, and ideological warfare organized by internal and external reactionary forces against the government with a policy of dialogue and within the parameters of the democratic institutions in place. A survey conducted last week gives him a 57% approval rate, which added to his significant victory in the municipal elections (surpassing the previous margin by over a million votes) shows the real correlation of strength within the country.

There is a poster circulating in Caracas that shows thousands of housing projects in neighborhoods located in the foothills of the city. The poster creates the image of the latent power of the multitude that has been the main beneficiaries of Chavismo: the common people of Venezuela. At the bottom of the poster there is a legend addressed to the right wing opposition. It says: “If you keep bothering us, we may have to come down.”

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.

relaciones de poder e intereses de clase de una sociedad dada. Esto es particularmente cierto si analizamos el proceso de producción, distribución y con sumo de mercancías. No es necesario decir que el PH es parte de este ciclo económico. Seguir la pista a la ruta de lamentos del papel higiénico nos ayudara a escla-

Sin embargo, la extrema derecha y las fuerzas conservadoras han tenido éxito orquestando una campaña internacional de vilipendios y demonización de los lideres Venezolanos, primero contra Chaves, y ahora contra Maduro.

recer el verdadero contenido político de lo sucede en Venezuela.

Vale la pena aclarar que los esfuerzos de nacionalización iniciados por Chaves ha afectado solamente a un numero reducido de empresas, en su mayoría de la industria petrolera y otras relacionadas con energía. La mayoría de las industrias venezolanas continúan en manos de empresas capitalistas privadas. La industria del papel, y mas específicamente el PH es propiedad de capitalistas privados, cosa igual sucede con los medios de transporte (camiones, etc.); así como los centros de distribución como son los grandes supermercados.

Desde luego que existió escases de PH en Caracas, pero esta escases fue creada artificialmente con el propósito político de desestabilizar a un gobierno legítimo. Tácticas similares son utilizadas con otros productos básicos como jabón, harina, etc.

Las mismas manobras políticas fueron utilizadas en Chile de Allende en los años 70, para proyectar la imagen de un gobierno socialista incapaz de dirigir la economía. No es accidental que el Presidente Maduro respondiera denunciando la escases como una maniobra de la derecha, y procediera a ocupar temporalmente la mas grande Planta de Manufacturación de papel en el estado de Aragua. Paralelamente a estas medidas el gobierno Venezolano ordenó la compra de 50 millones de rollos a ser distribuidos sin costo entre la población. La decisión de Maduro no solo que destruyo el argumento de la escases, pero al mismo tiempo los planes especulativos de las compañías productoras y distribuidoras de PH. Efectivamente, muy pocas cosas pueden ser entendidas, incluso la escases de PH, si las separamos de un análisis político de lucha de clases.

La lucha de clases no es mala ni buena por si mismo. La respuesta depende de por cuales intereses de clases estamos luchando. Estamos por los intereses de un grupo reducido (las multinacionales, los terratenientes, la burguesía financiera industrial); o por los intereses de la mayoría de la población (campesinos, trabajadores, y los desposeídos en general)?

Los medios de comunicación, nuevo campo de batalla

Sería un error el creer que el principal campo de batalla de las fuerzas conservadoras y reaccionarias de Venezuela se da a través de la financiación de la violencia y agitación en las calles de Caracas. Esta táctica se ha demostrado ineficaz. Como nota Ciccariello-Maher en The Nation del 24 de Marzo, “ Incluso el feroz blogger anti-Chavista Francisco Toro de la Crónica de Caracas declara -protestas de clase media, en barrios de clase media sobre temas de clase media, por gente de clase media no constituyen ningún desafío para el sistema de poder Chavista”. Igualmente inefectivos han

sido los ataques recientes de grupos de extrema derecha contra universidades, bibliotecas, y centros culturales tratando de antagonizar al movimiento estudiantil que favorece al Chavismo.

Sin embargo, la extrema derecha y las fuerzas conservadoras han tenido éxito orquestando una campaña internacional de vilipendios y demonización de los lideres Venezolanos, primero contra Chaves, y ahora contra Maduro. Diarios y corporaciones de noticias y entretenimiento con bases en Latino-América o Miami tales como ANDIARIOS, GDA, y PAL, sumadas al conservador periódico español El País han lanzado una muy bien coordinada y continua cruzada de des-información contra el proyecto revolucionario Venezolano. Sin querer quedarse atrás, la prensa y televisión norteamericana mantiene un largo romance con la oposición a Chávez desde los inicios de la Revolución Bolivariana. Nada nuevo, desde

luego, excepto que esto significa un acto de agresión política y de consiente falsificación de hechos con el objetivo de desestabilizar Venezuela y preparar el terreno para una posible solución militar.

Arrogante hipocresía estilo Americano

Hay algo repugnante en las declaraciones del Secretario de Estado John Kerry al condenar la ocupación/anexión Rusa de Crimea. A nivel personal parece haberse olvidado de su papel como invasor en la ocupación militar de Viet Nam, y a nivel nacional el tampoco parece recordar la reciente invasión de los U.S.A a Iraq. Ambos países localizados a miles de millas de distancia de los Estados Unidos.

Igualmente ofensiva fue su arrogante declaración publica en Marzo, 12, 2014 en la cual prácticamente amenazo a Venezuela y anuncio su apoyo a la oposición y sus deseos de hacer uso de la “cláusula democrática” (i.e. intervención militar) de la OEA (Organización de Estados Americanos) contra el presidente democráticamente elegido de Venezuela. La propuesta de Kerry recibió el rotundo rechazo de 29 gobiernos latino-americanos y caribeños quienes declararon su solidaridad con Venezuela. Solamente los U.S.A, Canadá y Panamá se opusieron a la declaración. Cuando se trata de política internacional Canadá parece incapaz de pensar o actuar sin el guion preparado por su poderoso vecino, y el Presidente Martinelli de Panamá parece desear para el resto de América Latina la misma mala fortuna de ser invadidos por los U.S. como fue su país en 1989.

No mas servilismo

La posición de los USA contra Venezuela es comprensible, pero no justificada. El poder e influencia de los USA en América Latina se ha debilitado debido en gran parte a gobiernos progresistas-pro-socialistas como en Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Brasil, y Uruguay. Desde una perspectiva global, estos países representan, con excepción de los países nórdicos, las únicas formas de gobierno en el planeta dispuestos a desafiar al capitalismo y la globalización.

En el caso particular de

Venezuela, la experiencia progresista iniciada por Chávez ha significado entre otras cosas lo siguiente:

- Políticas gubernamentales con la clara intención de mejorar el estado de vida del pueblo. Logros significativos han sido implementados en áreas como la redistribución de la riqueza nacional, reducción de la pobreza, educación, salud, y derechos civiles para minorías.
- Expansión de la democracia con la creación de mas de 40,000 Consejos Comunales que de acuerdo al mismo articulo en The Nation por Ciccariello-Maher, han incorporado “movimientos indígenas y Afros, de mujeres, de genero diverso, y grupos estudiantiles”, en otra palabras grupos sin previa agencia o representación política.
- Cambios radicales en la contextualización del rol del estado, que es entendido como un instrumento activo para el beneficio de la mayoría de la población, y no como herramienta para beneficiar a un pequeño grupo de privilegiados como fue el caso antes del Chavismo.
- Cambios radicales en la conceptualización del rol de las fuerzas armadas de Venezuela (Chávez fue un militar), que ahora juega una parte integrante en la transformación del país y la defensa de la democracia a través de las participación en planes de desarrollo económico y social.
- Participación activa en la creación de un nuevo tipo de solidaridad entre los países latino-americanos , como practica de resistencia al control económico y político de los U.S.

Nuevamente, la lucha de clases

Irónicamente, Maduro ha enfrentado los múltiples actos de violencia , la provocación, y la guerra ideológica organizada por fuerzas reaccionarias internas y externas en contra del gobierno, con una política de dialogo dentro de los parámetros de las organizaciones democráticas existentes.

Una encuesta de opinión conducida la semana pasada le da un 57% de aprobación, lo que añadido a sus significativa victoria en las elecciones municipales (que superaron el margen anterior por un millón de votos) muestra la verdadera correlación de fuerzas en el país.

Hay un poster que circula actualmente en Caracas, en el se muestra miles de casas en proyectos populares de vivienda localizados en las colinas que rodean la ciudad. El poster crea la imagen del poder latente y potencial de la multitud quien ha sido el principal beneficiario del Chavismo: el pueblo de Venezuela. Al pie del poster se lee un mensaje dirigido a la oposición: “Si siguen jodiendo, vamos a tener que bajar!”

Enrique Quintero fue un activista politico 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.



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Water, Water, Everywhere....

April Adams

[Editorial note: Operation Uphold Democracy, lasting from September 1994 to March 1995, was a military mission authorized by the United Nations Security Council to return elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. Aristide had been overthrown by a military coup in 1991.]

Operation Uphold Democracy (part 2)

It had been three days of not being able to shower. This usually would not have bothered most of us, but because of high humidity and dust, it was causing some irritation.

Then the eve started to slowly come upon us and the rain began.

A sergeant and I started to discuss how to use the water to clean ourselves.

I noticed the water coming out of the corners of the bay across from us, and we decided to see this as an opportunity.

Keeping our PT (physical training) tops and shorts on, we went with our shower gear and started cleaning up under the falling water spouts. This caused others to do the same at various locations at the corners of the buildings.

The morale boost led to talk about creating make-shift showers in our "new" bay.

Another situation was the latrines. I found a sergeant from another company building a simple toilet. I asked if I could use it. He responded, "I am making it for 'our people'." I nodded and turned to my buddy and said, "Well, it looks like you are standing guard while I take a sh*t by the wall down there," pointing to the bottom of the hill. Which, I unfortunately did.

The realization that being on the same team though does not, for some, mean we take care of each other caused sadness and anger within me. I set the feelings aside.

Shaking it off, we moved on to go check on our parked equipment at the front gates of Port-au-Prince.

Later on that day, a colonel came by to speak with us troops. We had just come back from chow and were chilling out in our bay playing scrabble.

He asked us how we were and I quipped up about the latrine incident. He looked solemn.

We talked more about good and bad issues and he left eager to get to work on fixing what he could.

That evening, an announcement was made: "No one will say no to another soldier for their basic needs--latrine, food, bed, shower or water."

The sergeant who turned me away was dealt with.

The experience was good in a place of bare necessities, which we take for granted in a rich country like the United States.

By the end of the week, the make-shift showers were ready. Simple wood boards with 5 gallon drums up top of each stall and a shower head coming off of the drums.

We each grabbed a water jug and filled it up with treated water (the ocean area was full of human and animal feces). That was disheartening, no hope where that resides, frightening, the cause of the sickness and no one educating the masses how to keep themselves healthy.

We climbed to the top of the open wood planks, picked a stall, filled up a drum, climbed down and took a cold refreshing shower.

What was interesting to note, there was not a covered wall. No one cared. We just wanted to be clean and were thankful for the opportunity to have water, clean water.

April Adams, an Evergreen alumna, is a member of the Inter-Tribal Warrior Society, the secretary for Veterans For Peace Rachel Corrie Chapter 109 Olympia, journalist, photographer, artist, and political activist.

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► **Lawsuit**, cont. from page 1.
tion in what being on the receiving end of repression was like. For some of us, from relatively privileged backgrounds, this was the first taste of tear-gas, truncheons, and rubber bullets in our brief sheltered lives. During this transformational process, our bodies became bloodied and bruised testaments to the lengths the state would go to eradicate dissent to preserve a bankrupt system of endless war and maximized profit.

When it was revealed that a military spy, John Towery, had infiltrated social movements and student groups from 2007-2009 there was massive fallout. Many chose to keep a low profile, some retreated from activist work entirely, while others were so traumatized they left Olympia altogether. Coming on the heels of protests that were as exhilarating as they were terrifying, this bombshell revelation was further compounded by the grim knowledge that the military was targeting our peaceful movement like it was an opposing enemy force, essentially converting the quiet downtown streets into a battlefield of brutality and repression. When further proof came to light that fusion centers were sharing the information that the Army had compiled on those engaged in first amendment activity at state, local, and federal levels, folks were justifiably concerned. Then when it was made clear that there was a pattern of fabricating violent charges against protesters in order to place certain individuals in a national domestic terrorist database, this wake up call lead to many a sleepless night.

For better or worse, I was one of the folks who kept organizing regardless of these unconstitutional attacks on our rights to speak out, associate and protest. Those who soldiered on in the face of overwhelming odds reasoned that if we gave in to fear and silenced ourselves, the establishment had already won. Initially, there was hope that exposing the system's designs with smart detective work and press coverage could postpone the continuing retaliatory action by the state. Instead, in 2010 roughly a year after John Towery was exposed and warned of other spies still in our midst, the authorities gave me the "special treatment" they had meted out to countless others in the preceding years.

What began with my license plate being flagged and tagged by Washington State Patrol during a "routine traffic

stop" coming back from the Tacoma Port Protests in 2007, escalated to my movements being traced, my facebook watched, and my residence infiltrated. In the proceeding years as multiple officers continued to call me out by name and gave me a flood of tickets on bogus pretexts that nearly bankrupted me, I knew something was awry. Then on April 6, 2010, Thomas Rudd, John Towery's boss at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, sent an e-mail to then Police Chief Tor Bjornstad at the Olympia Police Department warning him of the protest where I was framed for assault on an officer. As my attorney noted, "It has now become clear that Rudd kept right on gathering information on activists in Olympia," even after Towery was unmasked. Furthermore, Rudd was giving information about Olympia activists to the Olympia Police Department for the them to act on, either alone or in conjunction with the Army. This contradicted Rudd's testimony three weeks prior to the protest at the Third Internal Review of the Force Protection Intelligence Group he had headed where Towery had played an integral role.

The frame-up by Olympia Police and an ensuing illegal eviction by my landlord under pressure from the city made me decide to hire a lawyer and turn the tables on a system that was purposefully destroying my chances of long-term survival.

In 2009, a handful of brave souls, tired of being caught in the cross-hairs of men who wanted to suppress their rights because they disagreed with the content of their speech, had taken the only course of action left: they filed suit to take John Towery and his accomplices to court. The thousands of pages of documents received in discovery in the Panagacos v. Towery case reveal a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency counter-intelligence program that make COINTELPRO look like a game of hop-scotch.

It was finding out that others had decided to fight back in the courts that encouraged me to file suit against OPD to stem the tide of repression aimed at me, which I hope in turn will inspire others to speak out and refuse to suffer silently. Nearly three years after filing mountains of paperwork and reliving the traumatic experiences from that night, I accepted the City of Olympia's proposal to settle my case and now I can move on to bigger battles. Although the settlement was not ideal compensation for the suffering



Sink Hole

Sink hole.
The toothed smile of privilege - gleaning and glaring glances through restaurant windows.
Glasses of clear liquid - at their table.
Hot tub myths. Vacation gluttony. Over another sea.
The beneficiaries carry mallets, axes, mauls tattooed at the back of the eye.
Sink hole.

Patty Imani

I experienced, my intention was never to bankrupt the City of Olympia but merely to force the authorities to acknowledge the merits of my case, paving the way for expungement of the felony I was given under false pretenses. While winning a courtroom battle would have been satisfying, I am also thankful that I will no longer have to endure the ridiculous sight of Lindros perjuring himself on the stand about the supposed "assault" he experienced that night.

It is unfortunate that I didn't get my day in court this time, but from the start

my case involved questions that could only be resolved as more evidence came to light through public records research and further legal action. The larger questions that loom about my arrest were never simply whether Officer Lindros lied about being struck, but who Officer Lindros lied for and why. With enough dedicated action and persistent pressure we may finally get an answer to those questions.

When all is said and done, the settlement and the surrounding press has already helped put the upcoming Towery trial on June 2 on people's radars and if nothing else, that historic trial will certainly make the authorities think twice before stripping other activists of their fundamental rights.

Paul French, aka Strife, is an Olympia resident, a musician, and a member of the area's vibrant activist community.

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► **Goin nowhere**, cont. from page 1.

Congress, an organization founded by the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and told them to be bolder: “don’t forget that cultural shifts produce political change, not the other way around...The great progressive movements... have advanced not only by good organizing, but by a steady altering of the public’s perception.”

The world’s largest general science society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), came out this month with a new strategy to make talking about climate change normal. It launched its “What We Know” public information campaign. The campaign stresses three messages: climate change is real; climate can change abruptly; and we need to act swiftly to reduce both the cost and the risk of inaction. The AAAS’s move is important. More of us need to be clear about how climate change is going to affect us, and what we need to do to slow it. It can’t be a problem for experts only anymore.

The clearer we are about what climate change means, the more compelling our stories will be. The more of us who tell them, the more likely it is that we can compel the state legislature to act—next year.

Emily Lardner teaches at Evergreen State College and co-directs The Washington Center for Improving Undergraduate Education, a public service of the college.

Dow Constantine on climate change

The following is an excerpt from King County Executive Dow Constantine’s 2014 State of the County address at the White Center Heights Elementary School.

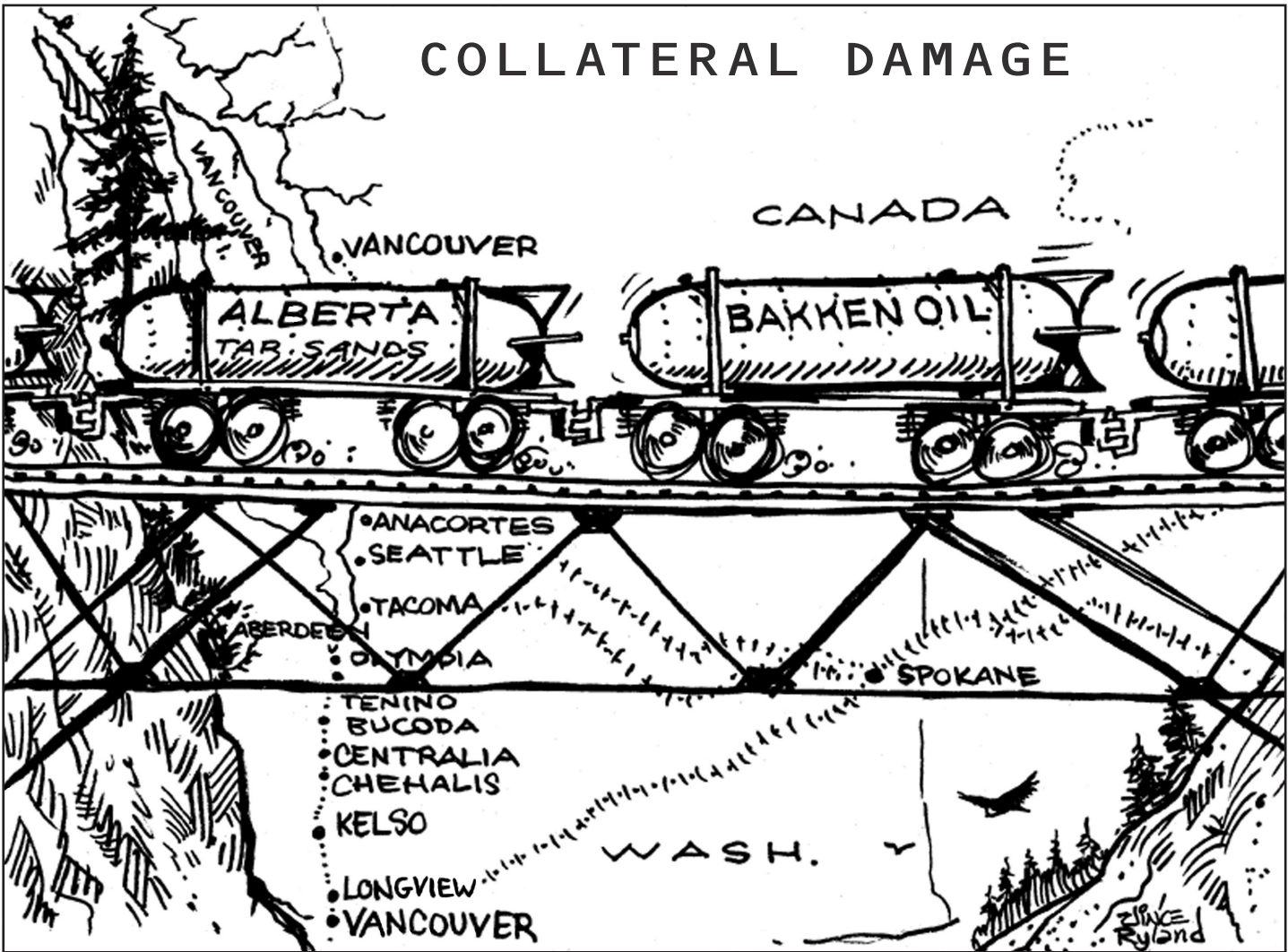
As it happens, April 22 is Earth Day. And our resolve on equity must be matched by our willingness to protect the environment, and to confront the changes in climate that already threaten our planet and our community.

To the west, Puget Sound has risen 8 inches over the last century. To the east, the Cascade snowpack has shrunk 25 percent since the baby boomers were kids. In summer, low flows and warmer water in our streams imperil our treasured salmon. In winter, storms of growing severity threaten catastrophic flooding.

We can no longer wait for international consensus or a dysfunctional Congress. It’s on us, and we’ve shown that this region can set the pace.

King County government has surpassed the goal of using or producing renewable energy to meet half our energy needs. We replaced half of our diesel buses with cleaner hybrid-electric vehicles, and we plan to go all-hybrid by 2018. We protected more than 200,000 acres of working forest that will limit sprawl and capture carbon. We’ve shortened vehicle trips by ensuring that 95 percent of new growth is in already-compact urban areas. And we are fighting to save our Metro Transit system, which removes 175,000 cars from the road every day.

In my second term, King County will expand on our climate change agenda with specific commitments to reducing



greenhouse gas emissions—countywide. Cities are an essential part of this puzzle. This Thursday, in partnership with our cities, I will convene the first of two meetings to chart a specific package of joint commitments that will meet state and local climate targets. Thank you, Mayor Larson of Snoqualmie, for joining us.

Our local reputation for climate-friendly business practices is an asset that draws innovative companies. We are a region of adventurers and entrepreneurs. Building on the model of our successful Aerospace Alliance I will bring together clean-tech businesses, non-profits, and universities to elevate King County as a center for clean technology.

I am pleased to announce that during my second term, our Department of Natural Resources and Parks will become King County’s first carbon-neutral agency. And I will bring together cities and concerned people from throughout the Northwest to stop the export of coal to Asia.

Climate change is not an idle threat: even our supply of safe food and clean water—once viewed as an endless resource—is no longer a given. We need look no further than the severe drought now afflicting California. We must act now to protect ourselves and secure our local food supply.

To address both equity and climate concerns, I am launching a Local Food Initiative to expand our supply of healthy foods, and expand access to them, while helping make farmlands profitable and protecting them from development. To lead this work, I am naming the County’s first food economy manager. Lilly Simmering has impressive credentials with the USDA and The Boeing Company. But what’s special is she is also the daughter of Hmong farmers who grew strawberries and owned a restaurant, so she knows what it means to think “farm-to-table.”

The NLG urges U.S. to respect Venezuelan sovereignty

Feb. 19 -- The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) calls on Congress and the Secretary of State John Kerry to oppose U.S. intervention in the ongoing conflict in Venezuela, as a violent campaign brought by Venezuela’s extreme right-wing opposition seeks to topple the recently elected government. Certain opposition leaders have called these anti-government demonstrations “La Salida” (the Ousting), revealing their intention to violently and forcibly remove the democratically elected government. This was the same agenda put forth by the opposition prior to the municipal elections in December 2013, when opposition rhetoric attempted to turn democratic elections into a referendum to overthrow the government.

For the last seven years, the NLG has observed Venezuelan elections – most recently, that of President Maduro in April 2013. NLG observers and other human rights groups (notably the Carter Center) found these elections to be free, fair, and exemplary of a democratic process. Despite this, the U.S. initially refused to recognize Maduro as the legitimately elected president of Venezuela. It wasn’t until receiving strong criticism from South American governments that Secretary Kerry backpedaled and quietly acknowledged the legitimacy of the election results.

Citing the failed coup of 2002, NLG President Azadeh Shahshahani said, “Considering previous attempts by the U.S. (and its allies) to violently overthrow a legitimately elected government raises concern that this is the case once more. The NLG opposes any U.S. interference in Venezuela’s internal affairs – including, but not limited to, such actions by the CIA, the International Republican Institute, and the National Democratic Institute.”

The NLG urges Congress and Secretary

Kerry to pledge that no U.S. funds will be used to support violent, anti-democratic agendas, such as the one in 2002. International law demands this under the UN Charter Principle of Sovereign Equality, Art. 2(2); and the Organization of America’s (OAS) Charter Principle, Art. 3(b). Furthermore, OAS Art. 18 prohibits indirect intervention in the internal affairs of another American state. The NLG urges the U.S. government to rightfully respect Venezuelan self-determination and sovereignty.

—The National Lawyers Guild

Court filings for marijuana possession drop dramatically

ACLU -- Passed by Washington voters on November 6, 2012, Initiative 502 legalized marijuana possession for adults age 21 and over when it went into effect 30 days later. New data show the law is having a dramatic effect on prosecutions for misdemeanor marijuana possession offenses in Washington courts. The ACLU of Washington’s analysis of court data, provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts, reveals that filings for low-level marijuana offenses have precipitously decreased from 2009 to 2013:

- 2009 – 7964
- 2010 – 6743
- 2011 – 6879
- 2012 – 5531
- 2013 – 120

“The data strongly suggest that I-502 has achieved one of its primary goals – to free up limited police and prosecutorial resources. These resources can now be

► **MARIJUANA**, continued on page 11.

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► **Marijauna**, cont. from page 10.
used for other important public safety concerns,” says Mark Cooke, Criminal Justice Policy Counsel for the ACLU of Washington.

The data also show that the number of court filings for other drug offenses (including felony marijuana charges like growing, selling, and possession of large quantities) have stayed relatively constant. Court filings for both marijuana and other drug offenses by individuals under age 21 have dropped to a lesser degree in recent years, indicating that I-502 is likely not the main driver of those decreases.

Although the overall number of low-level marijuana offenses for people age 21 and over has decreased significantly, it appears that racial bias still exists in the system. An African American adult is still about three times more likely to have a low-level marijuana offense filed against him or her than a white adult.

Initiative 502 legalized possession of up to one ounce of marijuana for adults 21 and over. However, possession of more than an ounce, but no more than 40 grams, remains a misdemeanor. Exceeding the one-ounce threshold is a likely explanation for the presence of 120 misdemeanor filings against adults in 2013.

The ACLU of Washington analysis is based on data provided by the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts via a public records request. The bar charts below illustrate the court filings data and racial disparity trends. To learn more about I-502 visit: www.aclu-wa.org/initiative-502.

Detailed account of proposed coup against Préval; Overturning of Haitian elections

February 25 -- In 2010, a secret “core group” of foreign dignitaries sought to force the president of Haiti out of office in a coup. They also engineered an intervention in Haiti’s presidential elections that year that ensured that the governing party’s candidate would not proceed to a runoff. These are the revelations being made by the Organiza-

tion of American States’ (OAS) Special Representative to Haiti at the time, Ricardo Seitenfus. In an exclusive interview published by Dissent Magazine, Seitenfus – who was present at some of these meetings - describes these and other bombshells detailed in his new book being published in his native Brazil, titled International Crossroads and Failures in Haiti.

Seitenfus provides new details regarding threats against then-president of Haiti René Préval.

“[W]hen it comes to Haiti, the international community does not have limits for the actions it takes,” Seitenfus writes.

The OAS “Expert” Mission, most of its members coming from the U.S., Canada and France, recommended changing the result of the first round of the election after findings that CEPR’s analysis determined to be “methodologically and statistically flawed, and arbitrary.”

The international community – especially the U.S. government – then exerted strong pressure for the Haitian government to accept the mission’s recommendations, which would remove governing party candidate Jude Célestin from the runoff, to be replaced by Michel Martelly. Martelly went on to win the second round of an election versus another conservative opponent, Mirlande Manigat, with less than 17 percent of the vote from the eligible electorate.

Seitenfus names names in a blow-by-blow account of a secret discussion on whether Préval should be removed from office, which he says would have been “a moral disgrace and a gross political error.” In his account, Seitenfus says that then-head of the U.N. Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) Edmond Mulet told Préval he would have to “leave the presidency and abandon Haiti.” Seitenfus also suggests that the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti at the time, Kenneth Merten, supported forcing Préval out of office. Ultimately, the ambassadors of Brazil and Argentina – and Seitenfus himself – opposed the plan, he says, and it was dropped.

—CEPR.org

Earth Day to May Day!
The Global Climate Convergence schedule for this spring

The Global Climate Convergence for People, Planet and Peace over Profit is an education and direct action campaign beginning this spring with “10 Days to Change Course” running from Earth Day to May Day.

Together we can harness the transformative power we already possess as a thousand separate movements for justice, rising up against the global assault on our shared economy, ecology, peace and democracy. The accelerating climate disaster, which threatens to unravel civilization as soon as 2050, intensifies all of these struggles and creates new urgency for collaboration.

The Convergence creates a unifying call for a solution as big as the crisis barreling down on us—an emergency Green Economic Transformation through a Global Green New Deal including universal jobs, health care, education, food and housing security, economic and political democracy, demilitarization, an end to deportations, and 100% clean renewable energy by 2030.

Clearly the time for unified action is NOW.

April 22, Tuesday, EARTH DAY

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (Media Island International, MII)
- 12-2 pm Seed Bombs and Guerrilla Gardening (MII)
- 1:30 pm Port Plaza Earth Day Rally!
- 2-5 pm Bee at the Procession Studio!
- 5-6:30 pm Oly Community Media Convergence (MII)
- 6:45-7:15 pm Rally at City Hall for a Carfree City!
- 7:30 pm Kickoff Earth Day to May Day! (MII)
- 9 pm KOWA show (MII)

April 23, Wednesday

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (MII)

Evergreen Earth Fest 2014

- 4-6 pm Banner Making (MII)
- 6:30-8pm OMJP Spokes Meeting on Global Climate Convergence, POWER Office

April 24, Thursday

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (MII)
- 4-6 pm Street Theater Rehearsal (MII)
- 6-10 pm Grand Strategies (MII)
- 5-8 pm Climate Solutions Event at their office

April 25, Friday, ARTSWALK

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (MII)
- 3-10 pm Bil Fleming art opening (MII)
- 5:30 pm Critical Mass, converge at the West Side Park
- 7 pm Revolutionary Street Theater and Spoken Word at the Rafah Mural

April 26, Saturday, ARTSWALK

- 10-Noon Solar Power 101, S. Sound Solar, Tumwater
- 11-4 pm Anti-oppression workshops (MII)
- 1 pm Food Not Bombs (Library)
- 4:30 pm Procession of the Species
- 8 pm Potluck Celebration of the Species! (MII)

April 27, Sunday

- 11-2 pm Global Climate Convergence Benefit Brunch/ Media Island Past, Present and Future (MII)
- 2-4 pm Green Party presents “Climate Chaos and the Need for a 3rd Party” (MII)
- 4-6 pm Earth Day to May Day Mural Painting (MII)

April 28, Monday

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (MII)
- 10 am Energy healing (MII)
- 5:30 pm Port Commissioner Meeting, Tumwater
- 5-7 pm Womyns Tea Circle (MII)
- 7 pm Traditions, 6th Extinction potluck, movie and discussion

April 2, Tuesday

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (MII)
- 3-5 pm Good Meetings Training (MII)
- 5-7 pm Banner Making (MII)
- 7 pm Reflections and Art on Occupy Olympia & OWS (Sylvester Park)

April 30, Wednesday

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (MII)
- Noon Free Yoga (MII)
- 4 pm Chalking Dissent, Bank of America
- 5-6 pm Anarchist Art Market: Zines, Buttons, Patches and More (MII)
- 7 pm Traditions, “Fighting for a Living Wage”

May 1, MAY DAY

- 9-11 am Coffee and CommuniTEA (MII)
- 12-3 pm May Day Festival
- 3 pm Bus to Seattle (MII)
- 7 pm Traditions, IWW Movie, potluck and discussion
- 9 pm KOWA, IWW sing-along (MII)

For more information regarding the Global Climate Convergence, please contact Nora Knutson, Media Island Community Artist in residence, 352-8526.



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Ukraine

The enemy of your enemy is not always your friend

Zoltán Grossman

To progressives who have been celebrating the revolution in Ukraine: Be careful what you wish for. Ukraine now has the first European government in decades in which outright fascist parties have gained a significant role in the executive branch. In other European countries, far-right parties have won seats in the parliament, but not secured real power in the cabinet. Of course, not all Ukrainian revolutionaries are fascists or Nazis, as asserted in recent Russian propaganda. But it is equally wrong and irresponsible to assert that the presence of fascists and Nazis in the new government is merely Russian propaganda.

When the far-right Freedom Party became part of Austria’s cabinet in 2000, the European Union issued sanctions against Vienna, and the *New York Times* was full of exposes of party leader Jörg Haider. But when the far-right Latvian National Alliance joined a conservative government in 2011, it was barely noticed in the Western media. And because the fascist party Svoboda (Freedom) and the Nazi shock troops of Pravy Sektor (Right Sector) played a

vanguard role in Ukraine’s anti-Russian revolution, their role in the new revolutionary government has been glossed over in the Western media, with no serious exposes so far.

So it may be controversial for far-right parties to join governments in the West, but it is permissible in the East if they are mainly opposing Russia. These same Western media commentators take any hint of criticisms of Israel as “anti-Semitic,” and then support a new government with parties that use World War II-era imagery, such as the Wolfsangel logo of Svoboda, and the White Power symbol of Odin’s Cross used by Pravy Sektor (ditto the Aryan Nations). The phrase “Never Again” takes on a hollow ring when the entry of real fascists into a government is minimized and excused.

Maidan Revolution

Certainly the majority of protesters in Kiev’s Independence Square, or Maidan, were motivated to join by the massive corruption and oligarchical rule of Viktor Yanukovych, and particularly his unleashing of the brutal Berkut riot police. The Maidan protesters included backers of European Union integration, leftists (who question both Russia and the EU), ecologists, LGBT activists, and ethnic and religious minorities (including Jews and ethnic Russians). But Anti-Fascist Action Ukraine estimated that 30 percent of the protesters in Kiev were far-right ultranationalists, and that was before the shooting began, when more of them joined the street battles.

Although the Maidan protests have been depicted as “Pro-EU,” Svoboda has joined forces with far-right parties that are actually Anti-EU. It holds Observer status in the Alliance of European National Movements, which vehemently opposes the EU (including Jobbik in Hungary and the British National Party). Pravy Sektor’s key slogan has been “Against the Regime

and [EU] integration.” Perhaps they both want to join the EU so they can later oppose it?

Much like Al Assad and Al Qaeda in Syria, Yanukovych and Ukrainian ultraright nationalists fed off each other, and actually needed each other to buttress their own legitimacy. Yanukovych’s brutality polarized the country, and reinforced the farthest right-wing factions of the nationalist opposition. Also like in Syria, moderate democratic groups were caught in the middle of the polarization, and lost significant ground to the better-trained militants. So you’d think that the toppling of Yanukovych would reduce the power of the fascists who had gained support by fighting him. But even before Vladimir Putin’s seizure of Crimea gave the ultranationalists new grist for the mill, their representatives were named to the new government in Kiev, led by the U.S.-backed Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

Svoboda

Svoboda leader Oleh Tyahnybok is well known for his comments that

The historically well-off Venezuelans have done well economically since the 1998 election of Hugo Chávez but have lost much of their political power and fear any direction towards a democratic socialist society.

Ukraine is victimized by a “Muscovite/Jewish mafia,” and references to Jews as “Zhydam” (Kikes). One of his deputies established a “Joseph Goebbels Political Research Center” in 2005. The Centre for Eastern Studies in Warsaw commented in 2011 that “Svoboda’s success illustrates the growing demand of Ukrainian society for a new right-wing party with anti-democratic, xenophobic, pro-social and pro-family views.” http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/commentary_56.pdf Svoboda won only 10 percent in the October 2012 parliamentary election, and about 40 percent in parts of the heavily Ukrainian far-west. Yet last December, Tyahnybok was one of two opposition leaders visited and extolled by visiting Senator John McCain.

Since the revolution, Svoboda



14/88 on shield. (Photo from i.imgur.com)

parliamentarian Oleksandr Sych has been named to the post of Vice Premier for Economic Affairs, and Svoboda has taken control of the ministries of education, agriculture, and the environment. Svoboda co-founder Andriy Parubiy was named Secretary of the Security and National Defense Committee, a significant post with



Confederate, White Power, and Svoboda flags in Kiev City Hall occupation. (Screen shot from YouTube.)

control over police and military forces. Playing to a western audience, both Pravy Sektor and Svoboda have tried to reassure the Israeli ambassador that they are not anti-Semitic, and defenders of the Ukrainian Revolution have highlighted the very real anti-Semitism in Russian nationalist groups.

Two years ago, Svoboda led violent protests in Kiev against a new language law in Parliament, which allowed bilingualism in regions with more than a 10 percent non-Ukrainian population. Its first order of business in the new revolutionary parliament was to roll back the bilingualism law, which gave Putin one of his justifications to “defend” Crimea, where Russian-speakers make up a majority. A similar 2003 “democratic” revolution in Georgia installed a strongly nationalist government, which five years later moved militarily against ethnic secessionist enclaves, provoking a successful Russian invasion. But few such aggressive signs were seen in Crimea before Putin moved in.

Putin’s invasion of Crimea has relegitimized the ultraright in the eyes of many Ukrainian nationalists, and (not insignificantly) prevents about a million Crimean Russians from voting against Ukrainian nationalist parties in the next election. A pro-Putin biker gang that has supported his Crimea invasion, and pro-Russian rioters in eastern Ukraine, play as Russian “young tough” counterparts to the Ukrainian nationalists. Just as Svoboda uses Putin’s actions to frighten

Ukrainians, Putin needs Svoboda to frighten Russians, and the polarization intensifies.

Pravy Sektor

Pravy Sektor is even to the right of Svoboda, but that has not stopped its leader Dmytro Yarosh from being named as Paruby’s Deputy Secretary of National Security. Since the revolution, Pravy Sektor militants have begun tearing down statues of Soviet soldiers who liberated the republic from the Nazis. That’s because they are themselves Nazis, with a view of the world influenced not only by Ukrainian nationalism and German national-socialism, but by the global white supremacist movement.

Like Svoboda, Pravy Sektor looks back with fondness to the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), led by Stepan Bandera, who backed the 1941 German invasion of Ukraine. It soon became

clear that Germany did not back his vision of a pro-Nazi Ukrainian puppet state--because Hitler viewed Slavs as subhuman, and coveted their fertile land for German settlers-- so the UPA had to later defend itself from the Germans. But somehow you don’t really count as a resistance movement if you wanted to join the Nazis, but the other Nazis wouldn’t let you play.

In the meantime, the UPA was involved in massacres of Jews in parts of Nazi-occupied Poland now within western Ukraine. It also slaughtered at least 50,000 Catholic Poles who stood in the way of Bandera’s vision of a purely Ukrainian state. Far-right groups have recently backed the reburial (with honors) of members of the Galician Division of the Waffen SS, which also used the Wolfsangel symbol later adopted by Svoboda.

Last January, Svoboda led a huge Kiev rally marking Bandera’s birthday, and his portrait and uniforms were common sights in the Maidan protests. On one Nazi’s shield in Maidan could be seen the White Power symbol “14/88,” standing

for the “14 Words” by David Lane of the U.S. terrorist group The Order (“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”), and “88” for “HH” (“Heil Hitler”). Like other fascist groups in the region, the Ukrainian ultraright has also violently opposed LGBT rights, forcing the cancellation of the 2012 Kiev Gay Pride march.

In the Pravy Sektor video “The Great Ukrainian Reconquista,” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Inu_-odeSU) Yarosh highlights many common Nazi themes, “against corrupt marginal democracy, against degeneration and totalitarian liberalism, for traditional national morality and family values, for large Ukrainian family, physically and spiritually healthy young people, against the cult of illicit gain and debauch[ery].” The video counterposes images of masked street fighters (with “Vikings” shields), and beautiful heterosexual couples, with Berkut riot police, Russian civilians, EU bureaucrats, and multiracial dancers. Another Pravy Sektor video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJmHIXVK95Y>) shows different far-right factions marching, training, and fighting. These videos aren’t Russian propaganda about alleged fascists—they are the fascists’ own propaganda.

And by “fascist” I don’t loosely mean authoritarian conservatives, such as George W. Bush or the Koch Brothers. They may be right-wingers, but they uphold a global capitalist *status quo* with the U.S. at its center. Real fascists are extreme right-wing populist revolutionaries who want to overthrow the present system, and replace it with a dictatorship guaranteeing absolute rule by their own ethnic, racial, or religious group.

Fascists often sound like leftists in their opposition to corporate globalization and banks, NATO militarism, and environmental destruction, but have opposite motivations, usually revolving around racist and anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. (Some elements of the Tea Party--such as Glenn Beck and Rand Paul--do seem to straddle conservative and fascist ideologies.) Having experienced World War II, Europeans understand better that fascism is a specific political movement, and not just another way to say “meanie.” They are less likely to ignore a growing fascist threat when they see one.

Good guys vs. bad guys?

U.S. media coverage of the Ukrainian Revolution tends to place it only in a West vs. East context, with the EU and NATO inherently good and Russia inherently evil. In this simplistic framing, the Ukrainian far-right is an inconvenient reminder that evil can

► ENEMIES, continued on page 15.

► **Enemies**, cont. from page 14

emerge from the West as well, so it has to be minimized as Russian hyperbole.


Why is it that Americans of all political stripes--including progressives--can only see “good guys” and “bad guys” in a conflict, even in a situation that pits “bad guys” against “bad guys”? Maybe it’s our binary good vs. evil religious tradition, our “white hat” vs. “black hat” Hollywood films, or our two-party electoral system, which suppresses nuances and ignores other third-party alternatives. We want to view all protesters against oppressive regimes as “people power” heroes, without understand that today’s oppressed can (and do) become tomorrow’s oppressors.

As Yugoslavia broke up, all Western media attention was on ethnic cleansing by the Serbs, but almost never on the ethnic cleansing by the (U.S.-allied) Croats or Kosovar Albanians. In Afghanistan, the Taliban oppressed Afghan women, but the U.S.-backed mujahedin warlords who had earlier ousted the pro-Soviet government were the first Afghan government to restrict women’s rights. In Libya and Syria, revolutions against secular Russian-backed dictators have likewise strengthened Islamist militias. The West’s double standards eventually work against its own interests, by generating “blowback” from the very monsters it helped to create.

The revolutions in Libya, Syria, and now Ukraine should show us that the enemy of your enemy is not always your friend. In a contest between Ukrainian and Russian ultranationalists, we do not need to pick sides. We can defend peace and the democratic rights of civilians, and all minorities on both sides of the divide, without contributing to the polarization and strengthening the rise of fascism. Two wrongs don’t make a right.

The next time you’re influenced by a facebook meme or a heart-wrenching youtube video about human rights violations by an “enemy” of the West, think about the atrocities by the pro-Western side that we are not seeing. Study the history of country, to learn that parts of the so-called “democratic” opposition today might draw their lineage to militant groups (such as the Ukrainian Insurgent Army or Venezuelan right-wing parties) that have massacred ethnic, religious, or political minorities in past decades. If the U.S. continues to back these crazies just because of they attack the West’s enemies, some kind of blowback is again going to be inevitable.

Dr. Zoltán Grossman is a political-cultural geographer who teaches at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin, focusing on topics of interethnic conflict and cooperation. He has taught courses on Central and Eastern Europe, and is a son of Hungarian immigrants. His faculty website is <http://academic.evergreen.edu/g/grossmaz> and email is grossmaz@evergreen.edu.



Procession Wing Workshop

Saturday, April 12, noon - 2 pm

The second two-hour workshop led by John Kersting on how to make wings with wire and batik to wear during the Procession.

A demonstration will go through all the steps and the workshop will assist those who want to get started. Wire bending is challenging; the whole process takes about 2-3 hours total or longer depending on size and how nice you want the design on the batik.

Plan to come back to finish as batik must dry. Staff will be available on Sundays in the stdio from 3-6 to lead you through the process.

\$5.00 suggested donation. Call 970-5550 for more information.

Inadequate demand is driving unemployment in manufacturing industry

March 26 -- Persistent unemployment in the manufacturing sector is more likely driven by inadequate demand, not by a shortage of skilled workers, a new Economic Policy Institute report finds. In *Why Claims of Skills Shortages in Manufacturing Are Overblown*, Paul Osterman (professor, MIT Sloan School of Management) and Andrew Weaver (PhD candidate, MIT Sloan School of Management) examine whether high unemployment in the U.S. manufacturing industry is due to a shortage of skilled workers, as is commonly held to be the case. Using an original, nationally representative survey of manufacturing establishments that directly and concretely measures skills needs as well as the level of employee vacancies, they show the reality is considerably more complex. In fact, while the skills required of the manufacturing workforce have increased over time, they are well within the reach of most Americans.

“The claim that a shortage of skilled workers is exacerbating inequality and high unemployment is a stock talking point, but it’s not supported by the data,” said Osterman. “Similar to the broader U.S. economy, the manufacturing industry is experiencing a shortfall of demand for workers; as such, available workers far outnumber job openings.”

While skills requirements are real, the skills manufacturers seek are well within the reach of the vast majority of Americans. For instance, while 38.0 percent of manufacturing firms require math beyond simple addition, subtraction, and multiplication, the level of extended math that is expected is at the level of a good high school or at most community college education.

Further, only a minority of manufacturers report difficulty recruiting the employees they need. Nearly 65 percent of establishments report they have no vacancies whatsoever, and 76.3 percent report they have no long-term vacancies (jobs that have remained unfilled for three months or more). Only 16.1 percent of survey respondents—typically plant managers—responded affirmatively when asked whether lack of access to skilled workers is a major obstacle to increasing financial success.

—Economic Policy Institute

UN panel calls into question U.S. corn ethanol mandate

March 31 -- A new report by the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change highlights the risks biofuels present to food security and the environment and questions the ability of U.S. biofuels policy to slow climate change, Environmental Working Group said in a statement today.

Emily Cassidy, EWG biofuels research analyst, said: *Risks to food security are only going to get worse, with water shortages and temperature changes. The UN panel’s findings should alert U.S. policymakers that mandating the production and use of corn ethanol threatens food security, intensifies competition for land and water and fails to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.*

—Environmental Working Group

3 Steps to Funding Washington’s Education System

March 28 --Providing for the education of our children is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society. Washington is failing, however, in funding an educational system that will fully equip our children for opportunity and success.

Washington’s state constitution declares it is “the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders.” In January 2012, the Washington State Supreme Court ruled in the McCleary decision that the state

was failing in this constitutional duty and must achieve complete funding by 2018.

Washington has established goals aimed at increasing student achievement, including funding full-day kindergarten, reducing class size in the lower grades, and increasing hours and requirements in grades 7-12. The legislature allocated \$1 billion towards those reforms in the 2013-15 two-year budget, but that was after four years of recession-driven cuts, when school funding was slashed along with everything else. The Supreme Court deemed that down payment insufficient progress toward ample funding. Fully implementing K-12 improvements will require at least \$5 billion in additional funding for the 2017-18 budget –an increase of one-third over the state’s current spending on public schools.[iv]

Washington began ratcheting down the level of spending on public education well before the Great Recession. In the 1991-92 school year, Washington ranked 17 among states in per pupil allocation. By 2010-11, that ranking had slipped to 30th. Relative to the income of state residents, Washington ranked 24th in 1991-92 and 44th in the most recent tally. Washington’s average student to teacher ratio is the fourth highest in the nation.

In addition to beefing up the K-12 system, providing educational opportunity to every child in Washington requires strong early learning programs and more investment in higher education. Many of our children enter kindergarten unprepared for school success.

Restoring accessibility and affordability to higher education also is important. An increasing share of future jobs will require an associate or college degree. Since the 1970’s when the state covered 90% of the cost of instruction for higher education, Washington has been shifting the cost of college to students and their families. By 2008, the state only covered 65% of instructional cost. Budget cuts and tuition hikes since then have reduced the state’s share to just

35%. Washington ranks 47 among the states in the percentage of young adults enrolled in college and 33 in funding higher education.

—Economic Opportunity Institute

2013 saw nine more extreme weather events with huge damage, fatalities

In the Center for American Progress analysis of the most severe domestic extreme weather events in 2013, there were nine storms, floods, and wildfires that each caused at least \$1 billion in damage. These nine severe events led to 114 fatalities, and caused \$20 billion in damages. The severe extreme weather impacts for 2011 to 2013 is 34 events with at least \$1 billion in damage, resulting in 1,221 fatalities and \$208 billion in destruction.

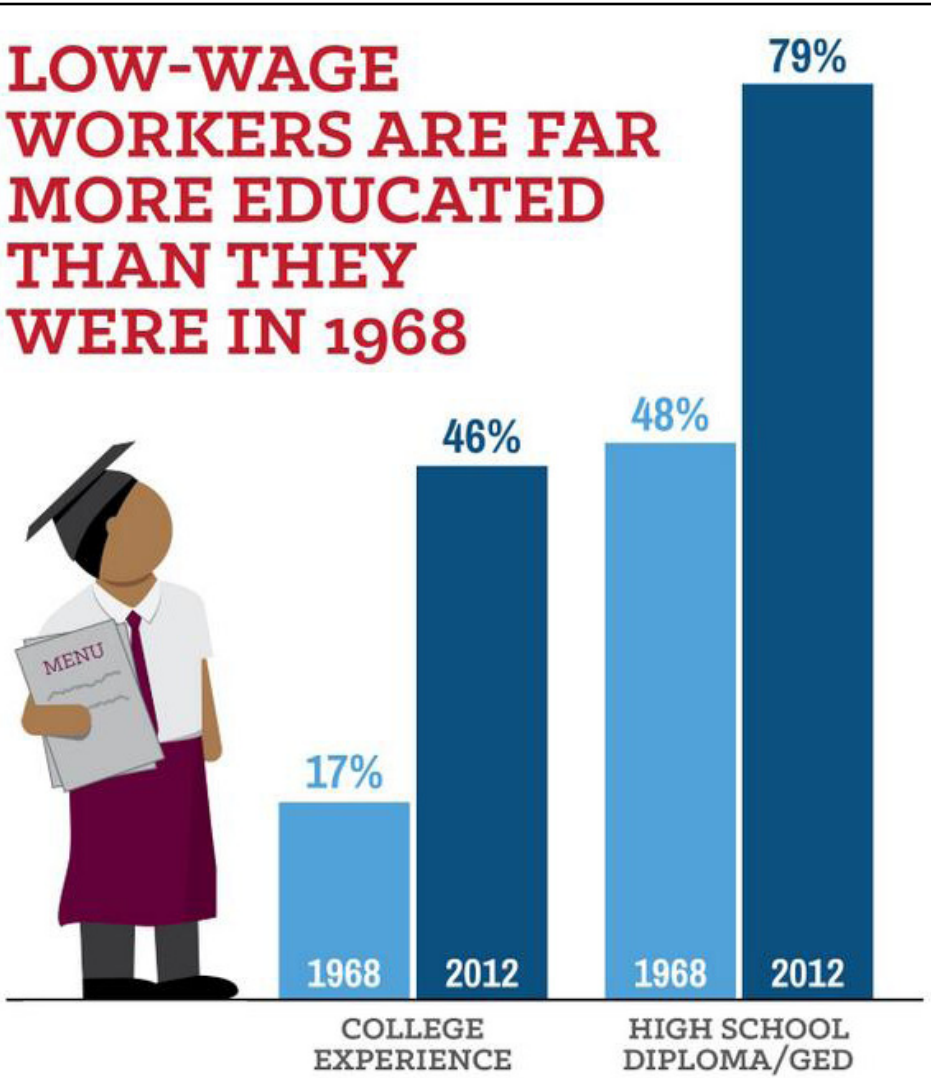
Scientific analyses repeatedly highlight the link between the release of carbon and other climate pollution, climate change, and extreme weather. In addition to slashing the emissions from power plants and other major sources responsible for climate change, it is imperative that the federal government assist with communities’ efforts to better withstand future storms, floods, drought, heat waves, and wildfires.

President Barack Obama proposed a \$1 billion Climate Resilience Fund that would help communities avoid the lost lives and economic damage spurred by extreme weather.

“The billions of dollars in damage from these climate-charged events are essentially an unfunded mandate on communities that must prepare for more frequent and ferocious weather,” said Daniel J. Weiss, Senior Fellow and Director of Climate Strategy at the Center. “It is essential that Congress fund the \$1 billion Climate Resilience Fund to help our cities prepare for a future of destructive weather.”

—Center for American Progress

LOW-WAGE WORKERS ARE FAR MORE EDUCATED THAN THEY WERE IN 1968



Category	1968	2012
COLLEGE EXPERIENCE	17%	46%
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA/GED	48%	79%

BUT WE’RE PAYING THEM LESS

From 1968 to 2013, the federal minimum wage has decreased: **↓23%**

Source: EPI analysis of education attainment from March CPS for 1968 and 2012.
Note: Data for bottom fifth of wage earners. “College experience” means went to “some college” or had college or advanced degree.

ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

Rioting in the streets

What’s going on in Venezuela?

Peter Bohmer

Excerpts from a talk March 5th, 2014 at Forum on Venezuela and the Ukraine at the Evergreen State College. Olympia, Washington.

One year ago today on March 5th, 2013, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez died of cancer. It is wrong to attribute all of the changes in Venezuela since 1998 to Chavez, whether pro or con, but he played an important and positive role in what has happened there. Hugo Chávez’s death was a major loss for Venezuelans and all people around world who are concerned about economic justice and a world not dominated by global capitalism. I am sure many people in Venezuela will express their support for him today. Hugo Chávez presente!

Changes to Venezuelan society

The popular classes in Venezuela, 80% of the population, have gained not just economically but also by their inclusion in society. There has been a drop in poverty by over ½ and extreme poverty by 70% since the 1998 electoral victory of Chávez. The access to education and healthcare has been huge. This is also true in terms of access to food and food security. There has been a major increase in caloric intake, from 2000 to 3000 calories per capita per day, while both the quality and quantity of food has increased.

An Olympia, Washington resident who recently spent two years in a low-income barrio in Barquisimeto, Venezuela recently mentioned to me that he sees more hunger in a nearby Washington state community, Shelton, where he works, than he did in the Barquisimeto barrio where he lived.

There are 40,000 communal councils in Venezuela. These communities democratically decide how to spend and manage a significant amount of public revenues. The formerly excluded are now involved in controlling their community and public resources. There has also been major land distribution in the countryside via the availability of affordable credit and also access to education and health in rural areas as well as in the cities.

The Venezuelan economy is still dependent on oil, but unlike earlier periods of Venezuelan history the oil money is now being used to meet people’s needs; and to a limited extent to build infrastructure and increase new production—agriculture, clothing, communication, aluminum, transportation, oil, and farm equipment, etc. Venezuela has gone from being one of the most unequal countries in the world in the 1990s (in terms of wealth distribution) to the most equal country in the Americas. Its Gini coefficient, which measures social inequality, is around 40. This is the significantly better than the United States coefficient of 57. (see [CEPR.net](#))

The next stage

Nicolás Maduro was elected President of Venezuela in October, 2013 in a very close election. Previously, he was a labor organizer, foreign minister and Vice President after the 2012 election. His politics, perspectives and vision for Venezuela seem similar to Chavez—“Socialism for the 21st Century”, the synthesis of socialism and democracy with a strong anti-imperialist politics. Maduro is taking crime seriously and for the most part, demonizes the op-

position less than Chávez did. He has majority support but not the same love from the people that Chávez had.

There are some serious problems in Venezuela. The problems that the U.S. mainstream media focuses on are real but overstated. They are:

- Inflation—this is a real problem; it is not new. Inflation was 56% last year yet poverty has still continued to decline in spite of high inflation. Poverty averaged about 25% since 1998 but was even higher in the 1990’s. Most, but not everyone’s wages increase at the same rate as inflation. This means that the real wage is maintained. This is certainly true of the minimum wage. Most people in the informal sector, still about 40% of the labor force although much less than the pre-1998 percentage of the labor force, can raise prices of goods they sell as prices rise, thus maintaining their real income.

Fundamentally, inflation in Venezuela is caused by an economy organized around oil; where oil generates significant income both for workers in oil and related sectors and also funds social programs. This general spending of oil revenues is inflationary because production in other sectors has not grown sufficiently to match increased demand so prices rise. This leads to a constant overvaluation of the Venezuelan currency which the government has tried to control.

The government just decided to make more dollars available at a close-to-market determined exchange rate. This action may break the speculation against the Bolívar and substantially lower the black market price. Someone recently back from Venezuela told me that if one uses the official rate of 6 Bolivars to 1, when buying local currency. Venezu-

All three of these social and economic problems cannot be blamed solely on the destabilization caused by the Venezuelan elites and by U.S. intervention and encouragement. Certainly the United States has done this type of destabilization in the past. For example, Chile in the early 1970s and Nicaragua in the 1980s. A partial cause of the problem of shortages and inflation stems from holding back supplies of consumer goods by suppli-



ers and retailers, either waiting for the price to rise further or to further dissatisfaction with a government they bitterly oppose. This is also likely true of some of the violent crime, including those crimes related to drug dealing.

Causes of the protests

The street protests in Venezuela began about a month ago, in early February, 2014. There are some legitimate grievances of many of the protesters (see above). There are also the continuing problems of nepotism, corruption, bureaucracy, and government inefficiency. The university students, who are protesting and are getting so much attention in US social and mainstream media, are not from the universities where the popular classes and their children attend, but from those that draw primarily from middle income and upper class Venezuelans and there are strong student movements there opposing the ongoing social changes in Venezuela. Their grievances are primarily about the society although most of the protesters also oppose opening their universities to the popular classes.

Students have been part of the anti-government protests including the more violent ones. The leadership is the right-wing of Venezuela; even to the right of Henrique Capriles, the governor of Miranda, who was the 2012 and 2013 opposition candidate for President. They include Maria Corina Machado and Leopoldo Lopez, both active in the failed April 2002 coup against Chávez. Machado and Lopez and the new party he leads, the Popular Will Party, have made it clear their intent is to overthrow the government and move Venezuela far to the right, to an authoritarian neoliberalism. A February 12, 2014 protest that Lopez spoke at turned violent. He was arrested a few days later and has been held in prison since. His arrest and detention are understandable, although charges should be filed

against him and he should be released to face trial.

The protests and the barricades are in the better off, wealthier parts of Caracas and in other cities such as Mérida and San Cristóbal that is in the State of Táchira. They are in all the major cities of Venezuela but almost all are in the middle income and richer communities, not in the barrios.

U.S. role in unrest

The U.S. is definitely playing a role in supporting the anti-government protests. The National Endowment for Democracy (which does not promote democracy nor respect self-determination for other societies) contributes at least five million a year to student and other right-wing groups that called for the overthrow of Chávez and now call for the overthrow of Maduro and the PSUV. The NED supported the groups involved in the April, 2002 military coup against Chávez.

It is possible that the right-wing in Venezuela decided to organize militant street protests, including the use of Molotov cocktails against government buildings and public centers such as health clinics because of their weak showing in the December 2013 municipal and governor’s elections. They realized they were not going to win and retake power through the electoral path. From my reading of Chilean history, the decision to overthrow Salvador Allende was made after the Allende’s party Unidad Popular (UP), increased support in the 1972 municipal elections from their 1970 showing. The Chilean right-wing and Chilean military decided elections were not going to return them to power so they decided on a coup. Machado, Lopez and the right-wing may have reached a similar conclusion for Venezuela.

The class divide

The central issue in Venezuela is that there is a fundamental divide over the nature of Venezuelan society. For the most part, as has been clear since 2002, the large majority of middle income and wealthy Venezuelan do not accept a society where they no longer call the shots, culturally and politically; where they no longer are at the center of Venezuelan society. Racism is also connected. Those who do not accept this move towards a more socially and economically society are disproportionately “white” in a country where the large majority of people are of indigenous, African or mixed European, African and indigenous origin. The historically well-off have done well economically since the 1998 election of Hugo Chávez but have lost much of their political power and fear any direction towards a democratic socialist society—although Venezuela is still a capitalist society. Of course, many poor or near poor people oppose Chavismo, and there are people who were wealthy before 1998 or have become wealthy and powerful since 1998, who support the PSUV led government or are part of it. My point is that class and the class divide is the key; the issue of class is essential to understand Venezuela today and the current anti-government protests and barricades. Currently, there are few protests or even signs of mass protest against the Venezuelan government in the barrios, in low-income and working class communities, and rural areas of Venezuela.

Media

The U.S. and Venezuelan mainstream media have painted a picture of Venezuela as a place of massive popular protest with government suppression of the media and murderous repression.

The majority of the media in today’s Venezuela are private. Many of the TV ► **VENEZUELA**, continued on page 17.

► **Venezuela**, cont. from page 16
stations were actively involved in 2002 coup attempt. Today, the majority of Venezuelans still watch TV stations owned by private corporations. The majority of these stations and most of the main newspapers, although a little bit more diverse politically than in 2002, are anti-government and anti-Chavista. They have not been taken off the air or prevented from printing, and the social media has not been shut down. Social media like Facebook and Twitter have been particularly active and inaccurate in portraying Venezuela as a repressive police state with total suppression of the media.

The mainstream U.S. media (e.g., CNN, *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, NBC, etc.) have a very strong anti-Chávez bias and a continued hostility to the building of 21st century socialism in Venezuela. For example, pictures that supposedly showed violent police brutality and repression in Venezuela were actually old photos from police repression in Bulgaria, Egypt and Chile. *The New York Times*, while generally hostile to the Venezuelan revolution with very biased reporting, has been slightly more balanced recently, even admitting that in the poorer areas of Caracas, there are no signs of protest,

Repression

As far as I have been able to research, 18 deaths over the last month have been linked to the protests. Of these, four anti-government protesters were killed by government security forces. Of the others killed, some have been pro-Chavista and a few have been accidents, not directly tied to protests. There has been some over use of force by police and other government security forces. The government has arrested some police and National Guard for use of excessive force and violence, thereby indicating that murderous repression is not government policy.

President Nicolás Maduro called for a national day long dialogue on Feb 27, 2014. Community organizations, government officials, the main business associations, Fedecamaras attended. So did the owners of Polar, the largest food corporation in Venezuela and some opposition groups. The meeting was televised. It was also boycotted by the main opposition coalition, the MUD, Mesa de la Union Democratica and its Presidential candidate in 2012 and 2013, Henrique Capriles. He has supported the protests but not the violent ones. Not much came from this dialog but it may have been a start towards an ongoing discussion of important issues even the divide is huge. I think it would be a mistake to move the economics and politics in Venezuela in a more conservative direction to appease the right. The opposition is divided between those like Leopoldo Lopez and his Popular Will party who want to overthrow Maduro via escalating protests, and those such as Capriles, the 2013 opposition candidate for President, who is calling for a 2016 recall referendum that, if passed, would force Maduro to step down as President.

The future of Venezuela

A national dialogue about some serious problems in Venezuela is needed. However, the solution is not to bring the rightwing into the government in order to rule as a unity government. Rather, what is needed is the opposite of what the right-wing leadership of the protests wants. What is needed is a deepening of the revolution– the growth of the social economy and the growth and deepening of participatory democracy.

What Should We Do Here?

We should demand the end of U.S. funding of the opposition in Venezuela and an end to all forms of U.S. intervention in Venezuela. Imagine if China, Iran or Russia openly supported the overthrow of the U.S. government. Ker-

ry and Obama have been open about their support for the opposition to Chávez and Maduro. The U.S. supported the attempted 2002 military coup in Venezuela. Demand that the United States government not intervene in any way; oppose U.S. government resolutions that condemn the Venezuelan government!

Learn more what is going on in Venezuela and write letters to the editor; post alternatives views to the mainstream portrayal of Venezuela on Facebook, social media, etc.

I suggest we, as people, activists, and concerned human beings critically support the Venezuelan government against the attacks on it. Alternatives to capitalism and current global capitalism are urgently needed; let us support and be in solidarity with radical social movements but also more than that. Venezuela is a positive example of a society where the lives of the majority are improving and of a government that is supporting with its resources and pol-

United Nations special rapporteur urges nations to democratically redesign food systems

After a six-year term as Special Rapporteur to the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, recently published his final report to the UN Human Rights Council supporting the need that the world’s food systems need to be “radically and democratically redesigned.” On a local level, De Schutter advised regions to build their agricultural systems around smallholder farmers and called on cities to also reconnect with local food producers. “Attempts by developing countries to improve their food security will only be successful if there are parallel reforms in the global north. Wealthy countries must restrain their expanding claims on global farmland by reigning in the demand for animal feed and agrofuels and by reducing food waste,” stated the Special Rapporteur.

Furthermore, as in the press release, “In addition to his report, the expert presented a summary of recommendations issued over the

course of his mandate as Special Rapporteur (2008-2014), covering food price volatility, trade and investment in agriculture, regulating agribusiness, agrofuels, food aid and development cooperation, nutrition, social protection, women’s rights, Human Rights Impact Assessments, national strategies, agricultural workers, contract farming, small-holder farmers, agroecology, and the reinvestment in agriculture.”

—Agra Watch

We should learn about Venezuela and be humble and modest in our criticisms. Let us not idealize and romanticize Chávez and the Venezuelan government but don’t let cynicism dominate our understanding and actions.

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World Bank accused of destroying traditional farming to support corporate land grabs

OAKLAND, Calif. (March 31) The Oakland Institute and other NGOs, farmer and consumer organizations from around the world have launched a campaign, Our Land Our Business, to hold the World Bank accountable for its role in the rampant theft of land and resources from some of the world’s poorest people--farmers, pastoralists,

Also very significant has been Venezuela’s role in Latin America and internationally. By playing a major role in the formation of group such as The Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), Venezuela has challenged and is challenging United States and transnational capital’s domination of Latin America and the world. That and “the threat of a good example” is Venezuela’s “crime “to the rulers of the United States and the global capitalist class in Venezuela. Don’t fall for the CNN perspective on what is going on in Venezuela.

Peter Bohmer is a longtime antiracist, antiwar and solidarity activist. He teaches political economy at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington and has spent several months in Venezuela including taking Evergreen students with another faculty member, Anne Fischel, to study there for two months in 2009 and two months in 2012.

and indigenous communities, many of whom are essential food producers for the entire planet.

“The World Bank is facilitating land grabs and sowing poverty by putting the interests of foreign investors before those of locals,” said Anuradha Mittal, Executive Director of the Oakland Institute.

“Smallholder farmers and herders are currently feeding 80 percent of the developing world. Casting them aside in favor of industrial farming corporations from the West betrays the World Bank’s reckless and short term approach to development,” said Alnoor Ladha, Executive Director of /The Rules.

The Bank’s “Doing Business” rankings, which score countries according to how Washington officials perceive the “ease of doing business” there, have caused many developing-country leaders to deregulate their economies in hopes of attracting foreign investment. But what the World Bank considers beneficial for foreign business is very often the exact opposite for existing farmers and herders.

In the agricultural sector, the rankings encourage governments to commoditize their land--and to sell or lease it to foreign investors, regardless of environmental or social impact. Smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and indigenous people are casualties of this approach, as governments and foreign corporations work hand-in-hand to dispossess them of their land--and gain World Bank approval in the process.

The results have already been devastating. Thanks to reforms and policies guided by the Bank, Sierra Leone has taken 20 percent of its arable land from rural populations and leased it to foreign sugar cane and palm oil producers. And in Liberia, British, Malaysian, and Indonesian palm-oil giants have secured long-term leases for over 1.5 million acres of land formerly held by local communities.

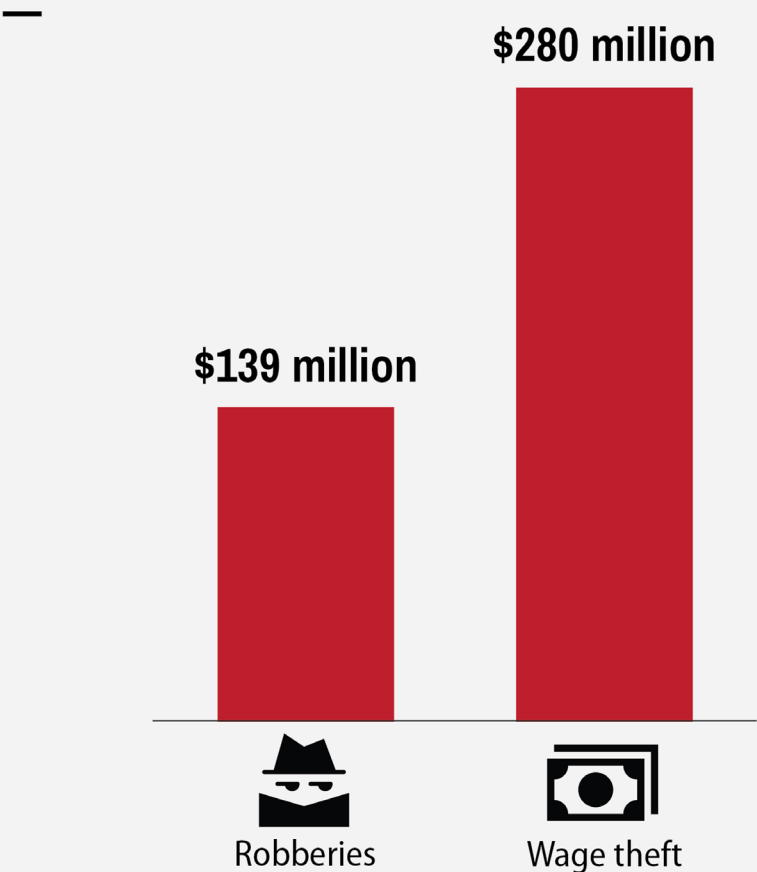
Now the land grab problem is about to get worse. Under pressure from the G8 and with funding from the Gates Foundation, the Bank is doubling down on its rankings fetish by introducing a new program called “Benchmarking the Business of Agriculture” (BBA). The BBA’s explicit goal is to promote “the emergence of a stronger commercial agriculture sector.” Its rankings will prize deregulation of the agriculture sector and is expected to enable further land grabbing around the world.

“We’re standing up with farmers, herders, and indigenous peoples of the developing world who are being steamrolled by the World Bank’s pro-corporate agenda,” added Mittal. “Initiatives like the World Bank’s ‘Doing Business’ rankings encourage governments to steal from the poor in order to give to the rich. That must end.”

—The Oakland Institute

Widespread wage theft needs a stronger government response

Value of wage theft* compared with value of combined street, bank, gas station, and convenience store robberies, 2012



*Value of back wages illegally withheld by employers recovered by U.S. Department of Labor in 2012

Source: U.S. Department of Labor FY 2014 Budget in Brief, Wage and Hour Division; U.S. Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reports, Crime in the United States: Table 23, 2012.

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