



Limits and possibilities of healthcare in rural areas

Emily Lardner

The national discussion about reforming our health care system is all about ending Obamacare (or not), adopting a “single payer” approach, or leaving things to the “marketplace.” No part of that discussion addresses the reality that we hardly have a healthcare “system” at all.

Instead, we have big insurance companies, private and non-profit hospitals, doctors and nurses in local practices, variously pursuing their own interests. When it comes to rural areas, those interests present an impediment to health care that won’t be solved even if we do come up with a feasible plan to finance health insurance.

I’m pretty healthy, but this fall, I injured my arm. It’s been getting steadily worse, probably because I keep using it to dig up the yard and plant perennials. When pain in my upper arm and shoulder woke me up, I decided to see a doctor.

Fortunately, I spotted an ad in *The Daily World* (our Aberdeen newspaper) saying that a nurse-practitioner at Grays Harbor Family Medicine was taking new patients. I called, was asked my name, birthdate and insurance, and then was told they would call me back “if I was accepted.”

Two weeks later, I received a phone message. I had been “accepted” as a patient. I called back to schedule an appointment, only to find that, while I was accepted as a patient, the provider wasn’t cleared yet to take my insurance. I was told to call back in two weeks.

I did. The provider hadn’t been cleared by the insurance company. I was told to call back in a couple more weeks. I did. Same thing. No luck. Call back in two weeks.

Finally, I asked whether anyone else in the practice could see me since my arm was quite sore and waking me up. The office person said she would check and call me back. After two and half weeks, I called, only to be told that no one else would see me. I would have to wait to for the insurance company to approve the provider who had accepted me, and no one could predict when that might happen. I gave up, and called my former primary care person in Olympia. I got an appointment for one week later.

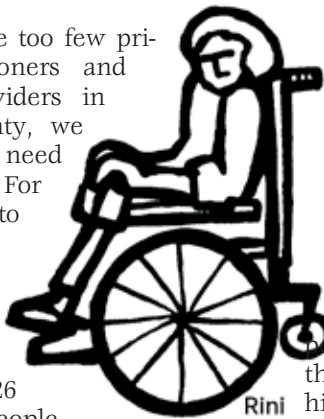
Why is it so hard to find primary care in Aberdeen?

In terms of clinical care, Grays Harbor ranks near the bottom—34 out of 39 counties in Washington. The average

ratio of primary care physicians to residents in Washington State is 1:1200. In Grays Harbor County, it’s 1:2740. In Washington State, the average ratio of mental health providers to residents is 1:330. In Grays Harbor County, it’s 1:680.

Not only do we have too few primary care practitioners and mental health providers in Grays Harbor County, we also have a greater need for those services. For example, according to 2018 county health rankings, Grays Harbor County has the highest drug overdose mortality rate in the state—26 deaths per 100,000 people. For contrast, the mortality rate from drug overdoses in King County was 14 deaths per 100,000. In Thurston County, the equivalent figure is 11 deaths per 100,000. According to a 2016, the incidence of Grays Harbor County teen deaths from alcohol and drugs is about twice the state average.

Across the country, access to health care for people living in rural areas is



a problem. According to the National Rural Health Association, the average number of physicians per 10,000 people in rural areas is 13.1. The average number of physicians per 10,000 people in urban areas is 31.2. The percentage of adults describing their health status as fair/poor is higher in rural areas than in urban areas, 19.5% vs. 15.6%. The percentage of people covered by Medicaid is also higher: 16% vs. 13%.

The relationship between Medicaid and rural health care (or the lack thereof) is clear in states that chose not to expand their Medicaid coverage. In Georgia, for instance, Stacey Abrams, a candidate for governor, is running on a platform that calls for Medicaid expansion. With 19% of the

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people in George uninsured, many of them in rural areas, Medicaid expansion would provide better access to healthcare for low-income people living in rural counties.

States that chose not to expand Medicaid during the Obama administration have experienced significant declines in access to care in rural communities. For example, six rural hospitals in Georgia have closed since 2010. As Mark Holmes, a researcher at the University of North Carolina writes, the consequences of hospital closures go far beyond cutting off access to health care. In an interview with PBS, Holmes said, “Losing an employer of 150 people with good jobs is like losing a manufacturing plant. Hospitals are usually the largest, or the second-largest, employer in a community. That’s something that’s easy to lose sight of because we think of this from a health standpoint. But the effects are wide-ranging when a hospital closes.”

Yet Medicaid expansion alone isn’t enough to insure access to health care in rural areas. Washington State chose to expand Medicaid, but we still have a

► **Health**, continued on page 11

1.5 degrees celsius is the new threshold for climate catastrophe

Bourtai Hargrove

Many of us are still reeling from the UN Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report published early in October. It confirms the dire predictions we read in Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene (Trajectories). The IPCC report reflects the consensus view of top climate scientists in a report that differs from past reports in that it openly rings alarm bells.

A new level of alarm

Hundreds of millions of lives are at stake should the world warm more than 1.5 Celsius above pre-industrial levels. “Nearly all coral reefs will die out, wildfires and heat waves would sweep across the planet annually, and the interplay between drought and flooding and temperature would mean the world’s food supply would become dramatically less secure,” reports David Wallace Wells, New York Magazine writer. Elisabeth Kolbert puts it succinctly, “Perhaps the most important takeaway from the report is that every

extra half a degree is world altering.”

This is not news to many climate scientists. The news is that the conservative IPCC is abandoning calm understatement and issuing an alarm. The main changes from past reports are (1) warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels has now replaced 2 degrees C as the threshold triggering catastrophic climate chaos and (2) our window of time to prevent such warming has shrunk to twelve years.

An effort like no other

Although the report makes clear that it is still possible under the laws of physics to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C, doing so would require drastic cuts in greenhouse gas emissions at an unprecedented speed. Currently, even with cuts pledged under the Paris Climate Agreement, the world is on

track to warm 3 - 4 degrees C.

David Roberts, a Seattle-based climate reporter, warns, “Basically, stopping warming at 1.5 C would involve an immediate, coordinated crash program of re-industrialization, involving every major country in the world. It would be like the US mobilizing for WWII, only across the globe, sustained for the rest of the century. Nothing like this has ever happened. There are currently no indications that any such effort is getting underway, and indeed the US is vigorously moving the other direction.”

12 years is overly optimistic

The IPCC gives us twelve years to cut carbon emissions sufficiently to keep warming from breaching the 1.5 C threshold. Yet *Trajectories* shows that

► **1.5 degrees**, continued on page 6



See photo essay, page 6

Works In Progress

Works in Progress (WIP) is a community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington and published monthly. The paper was established by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition which published the first issue in May 1990.

Our mission. The aim of WIP is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on justice in the economic, political, environmental and social realms and across classes, races and genders.

How WIP is produced. WIP depends on a volunteer managing editor, supported by the Publishing Committee, to see to the accomplishment of nearly all organizational, administrative and editorial tasks.

How WIP is supported. First and foremost, WIP depends for survival on the contributions and participation of writers, activists, students, organizers, and other members of the community, broadly defined. We also receive support from the Workers' Defense Fund whose purpose is to strengthen organizations that engage in struggle against the powerful for the empowerment of the powerless.

Guidelines for writing for WIP. Our priority is to focus on stories that are ignored or misrepresented in the mainstream media, especially those that relate directly to our mission.

To this end, we seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and accounts of personal experiences or reflections by local writers. We also consider poetry, graphics, cartoons and articles that challenge the boundaries of conventional journalism.

Submitting your writing: Send an email to olywip@gmail.com with the word SUBMISSION on the subject line. Attach your submission as a word document. Include your name, a brief bio and contact information. WIP volunteer editors will contact you if there is significant editing needed. Send pictures etc as attachments. Pictures should be high resolution with dimensions in relation to the content. Generally 300 pixels is one inch.

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Subscription rates. Annual subscription is \$35/year. Purchase one for yourself or an incarcerated person mailed first class each month.

Contact WIP. Online at olywip@gmail.com or via snail mail to: *Works in Progress*, P.O. Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

Submission deadline next issue
Sunday, November 18
olywip@gmail.com
Proofreading Meeting
Sunday, November 25, 1pm
location TBD
About the cover:

Olympia's Carnegie Library was started by the Womens' Club in 1896. It was closed in 1978 when the Olympia Timberland Library opened.



Attention WIP readers old and new (and young)

Want to get your name in the paper? There's an easy way: contribute to Works in Progress! There are lots of ways, big or small, we need them all. (Even poetry is welcome, you see.) Since *Works in Progress* (WIP) is a free, all-volunteer community newspaper with a mission to publish news that is ignored or misrepresented, we rely on submissions from you, as well as articles we solicit.

Just now, WIP is looking for help in a number of areas. Writing, of course, is the big one. If you look at the column on the left side of this page, you'll see what our publishing mission is and how to submit your writing, along with some indications of the kind of writing we hope for. We also need people to help with the myriad tasks that don't involve writing.

You could sign up for a job, either "on-call" or as a regular part of the team:

- we are in serious need of graphics, photographs & doodles
- we're always in the market for poetry
- if you are adept at Photoshop, we need you
- have an idea for the cover? Tell us. it needs to print at 7.5 x 8"
- we need detail-oriented proofreaders - one Sunday a month - willing to learn
- take responsibility for our regular feature - "then this happened"
- contact us about doing a book review
- liaison with an advertiser - bring in a new advertiser
- distribute the paper or hand it out to groups you're part of

WIP is just about the last print medium standing in Thurston County and surrounding area. We print and distribute 3000 copies every month, and post the paper on line at olywip.org.

We can help you edit your work—especially if you send it in timely. Deadline is the Sunday before the last Sunday each month. If you're an experienced editor, we need those, too. Not just copy-editing, but serious good old-fashioned structural work.

If you're interested and want to find out more, email us at olywip@gmail.com, or with a little bit about yourself,

your skills, your interests. Or write us a letter and send it to WIP, PO Box 295, Olympia 98507.

Bethany Weidner, Managing Editor

This month: The public sector and the common good

The concept of a common good offers the possibility that politics can be about more than building an institutional framework a for the narrow pursuit of individual self-interest - i.e., making America work for business.

When you think about it coldly, isn't this purpose becoming the whole rationale of our government? What are "trickle down economics" and "deregulation" but justifications for increasing corporate control of ... everything?

In the past, there was an understanding that certain goods—security, justice, informed democracy, a healthy environment - could be achieved only through citizenship, collective action, and active participation in the public realm of politics and public service.

This concept of the common good points to the way in which freedom, autonomy, and self-government can be realized through collective action and active participation of individuals, not as consumers but as active citizens in the public domain. It also rests on the fact that political participation can have a value, in its own right, as described in Jacob James's article, Can there be too much politics? The issue is also explored in several other articles inside.

Theme for December: Religion and the law

Look around you for evidence of the role of religious institutions in public life and how that role -- and those institutions themselves -- may have changed in recent years. Everything from National Prayer Breakfasts, to churches and synagogues caring for the homeless and offering sanctuary to the vulnerable. Some states have laws that incorporate Bible strictures and we now have legal decisions giving religious rights to corporations. What does this mean for you and for the US and others? The December issue deadline is November 18. Check www.olywip.org for details about submitting.



And then this happened...

No more executions by the state of Washington

In the February 2018 WIP, Glen Anderson argued that the death penalty makes problems worse, and called for its abolition. On October 11 our Supreme Court ruled the state death penalty statute unconstitutional on the grounds of racial bias. Thus Washington became the 20th state in the US to abolish executions

A decision upholding treaty rights

In our June issue, we described a challenge by tribes to Washington state's practice of closing off upstream salmon runs in the course of road-building. Did the practice violate long-standing treaties? In June, the US Supreme Court let stand a lower court decision in favor of the tribes. Now the state must begin removing culverts that block access to habitat. King County is undertaking its own strategy to open

culverts on county roads, trails and other infrastructure that blocks access. Upholding treaty agreements that protect salmon—an all-around victory.

More immigrant children held by the Trump Administration

A story in July prompted by the Trump Administration policy of separating children from their families described lifelong harm that results. Now new policies have driven up the number of children in government custody from about 3,000 in 2016 to more than 12,000 today. The Administration is expanding a "tent city" in Tornillo, TX to hold about 4000 children. Once the Tornillo center is built out to its new capacity, it will cost about \$100 million a month to operate.

Correction: The photo on p. 15 of the October *WIP* was taken by Lenée Reid.

Special events

Exciting films, plays, live musician and book events in October.
Go to <https://olyarts.org/calendar/> for listings.

2-day Planting Party

November 2 and 3, 10 am to 2 pm, at Darlin Creek Preserve
Spend 2 days planting native shrubs and trees in an area that was once overtaken by Scotch broom. To register, go to CapitalLandTrust.org and search for the event.

Jubilee Authors, Artists & Crafts Bazaar

Saturday, November 3, 9 to 1, at The Woodlands Golf Club, 4550 Meriwood Dr NE, Lacey
Handmade artwork and crafts.

Tumwater Holiday Bazaar

Saturday, November 3, 9 to 3 at Pellegrino's Event Center, 5757 Littlerock Rd SW, Tumwater.
Old favorites and new vendors with a variety of crafts. Food & beverages available.

Day of the Dead celebration & fundraiser

Saturday, November 3, 5:30 - 11 pm at Centro Integral Educativo Latino de Olympia, 1601 North Street SE in Olympia.
Dance, dinner, fundraiser. \$20 dance/\$75 dinner. Contact Mary Ferris at 360-709-0931.

Vote!

Tuesday, November 6, 8 PM, is the last minute to mail in your ballot. Or drop off at City Hall or the County Courthouse.

A community forum on public electricity

Saturday, November 10th, 1 – 5 PM, Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 2315 Division Street NW
Speakers: Randal Samstag, designer of utilities; Jim Lazar, economist; Stephen Johnson, Director of the WA Public Utility Association; and Barney Burke, Jefferson PUD commissioner at the time of that county's switch-over. Q and A to follow. Sponsored by the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation. Contact Bourtai Hargrove, Bourtai31@gmail.com.

Green Party of Washington Fall Gathering

Saturday, November 10, 12 to 4 pm at 600 N Main St., Ellensburg
Reviewing the midterm elections and GP-WA's new projects for the future. Hearing from FairVote about IRV. \$10-25 sliding scale fee. For details, go to <https://greenpartywashington.org/events/>.

Free day at all National Parks

Sunday, November 11

35th Annual Film Festival at the Olympia Film Society

November 9 through 17
Go to <http://olympiafilmsociety.org/olympia-film-festival/> for details

Master of Environmental Studies Info Session

Tuesday, November 13, 5 to 6 pm, at The Evergreen State College, SEM2, E2107
Meet staff, learn about the program, and ask questions.

Let's Talk About It! Election Digest

Thursday, November 15, 6 to 8 pm at Olympia Education Office, 402 Legion Way SE

Life and Loss in Puget Sound

Thursday, November 15, 7 - 8 pm at WET Science Center (LOTT), 500 Adams St. NE, Olympia
Speaker will present how the Coast Guard does search and rescue.

Master of Public Administration Info Session

Thursday, November 15, 5:30 to 6:30 pm, Olympia Timberland Library
Learn about the program, curriculum, admissions requirements, & financial aid. Q & A to follow.

For a comprehensive listing of events and activities of interest to the South Sound's politically active community and friends, go to the Community Calendar at LocalMotive.org. For WIP listings visit our FB page.

With apologies to the Apostle John and Boots Riley

Enrique Quintero and
Bethany Weidner

I. The common good, and what happened to it?

In the beginning there was the world, and nobody owned the world, and the world was with humanity, and humans lived in the world under egalitarian social relations based on common interests—common good. Now, a few thousand years later, were we to describe the world we inhabit, we would have to acknowledge that the world is not the same. It belongs mostly to capitalists and corporations, and consequently humans live under social conditions of such stark inequity that the common good is nothing but a fading image in the euphemistic political discourse of our democracy.

To illustrate this condition, let's consider an Oxfam report—a non-profit organization based in Oxford, England—which in 2017 concluded that eight (yes, you read it right, EIGHT) super-wealthy people in the world, six of whom are Americans, owned the same amount of wealth as half (yes, you read it right again, HALF) the human race combined, that is to say 3.8 billion people. Convergently, at a national level, Nicholas Kristoff, writing for the New York Times in an article titled “An Idiot's Guide to Inequality” (July 22, 2014) reported that the richest 1% in the United States now own more than the bottom 90%. Within this framework, it is either ironic or delusional to ask where the common good of society is located. Also, given this context, the fact that millions of

people in the US still take pride in the idea that ours is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people as envisioned by Abraham Lincoln, highlights the depth of the political incongruity in which we live.

What is the Common Good?

From a general political perspective, the common good should be the goal of every true democratic government. The concept refers to what is beneficial to most members of a given society. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy includes some partial (it leaves out a public health care system) canonical examples of “common good” in a liberal democracy, such as: the road system, public parks, police protection and public safety, courts and the judicial system (Kavanaugh comes to mind), public schools, museums and cultural institutions, public transportation, civil liberties, clean air, and clean water (Flint, Michigan comes to mind), etc. That is to say, the common good is the sum of the material, cultural or institutional facilities directly provided or made possible by the government for the wellbeing of the citizens.

Within this general definition of the common good lies a third rail—the track in the subway that delivers the electricity that makes the trains run: money. The resources available to a government with which to provide material, cultural or institutional facilities for the wellbeing of people are a function of choices made about how much money to collect from individuals and corporations through taxes and fees, and choices about how those funds should be distributed (e.g. what to spend on the military vs. what to spend on healthcare or education). The common good, in other words, depends on policy choices.

We live in a time when choices about how to collect revenue increasingly protect corporations and wealthy individuals while choices made about how to distribute revenue privilege those same corporations and wealthy individuals. Yet, the wider the range of accessibility to facilities associated with the common good, the stronger the possibilities of societal wellbeing.

Shrinkage of the common good and expansion of capital

It is not news that the material and cultural facilities in place for the wellbeing of people have decreased, which in turn has generated a sense of apprehension about the future in America. Things seem to have deteriorated: from road infrastructure, to public urban and rural spaces; from general services such as health care, to education.

From gerrymandered elections (the recent Republican directed removal of more than 340,000 Georgia residents from voting rolls comes to mind) to the increased partisan character of the judiciary system.

From the tacit official tolerance and encouragement of neo-Nazi organizations and white supremacist ideology, to the public and quasi-official diminishing of women (the case of Christine Blasely Ford and the rabid behavior of the Republican senators at Kavanaugh's hearing comes to mind).

From the accelerated rollback of environmental antipollution legislation (e.g. the new EPA regulations and the US withdrawal of the Paris climate agreement), to the proliferation of nuclear weapons within our military budget. The possibility of human annihilation via nuclear war or via anthropogenics induced changes in the biosphere also add a new sense of emergency and anxiety about everyday life.

Within this context it's worth noticing that the portrait above, depicting the deterioration of the common good, is not the result of history's capricious spirit, but the end result of choices made by the dominant class, ruthlessly focused on capitalist expansion and deregulation policies. The hegemonic, wholly coordinated and aligned orchestration of the production, distribution, and consumption of material and ideological goods for the benefit of this class is everywhere visible. The opioid “epidemic” is just one example, as Purdue Pharma raked in tens of billions in revenue. After their wildly effective and deliberately misleading advertising, they are now poised to rake in even more as they sell a medication designed to treat the very epidemic they promoted.

Against this background, it is not surprising that more and more facilities previously considered part of the public good have now been privatized and turned into for profit enterprises. This is particularly noticeable in areas such as education, health care, infrastructure, national security, and the environment. A recent and particularly crass example of this move towards privatizing everything, contradicting any hope of maintaining a common good, occurred in April 2018 when the US House of Representatives passed The American Space Commerce Free-Enterprise Act, which states that “outer space should not be considered a global-commons” and makes explicit that the intention of the Act is to “insure that the United States remains the world leader in commercial space activities”. Capitalism is no longer limited to telluric planetary restrictions; the commercialization of space has officially begun.

“There is no such thing as society”

It was Margaret Thatcher who best summarized neoliberal ideology when she stated, “there is no such thing as society.” Ever since, her ideological guards and backers have been performing complicated acts of verbiage to justify the dominant class-based political unconscious revealed in her remark. Individuals have no right to

expect anything from the government; there is no common good in the social agenda of capital. More specifically, as Thatcher articulated it, the existing common goods (public services, natural resources, etc.) were to be privatized or unleashed from any regulatory limits in order to shift control from public/government to private hands. Inebriated by the defeat of the Soviet Bloc, this became the karma of the political economy during the Reagan and Thatcher administrations. It continues to be the political lighthouse for capitalism and the dominant class today.

In *Dream Land*, a book about the opiate epidemic, journalist Sam Quinones describes the national Zeitgeist at the time:

“By the time I began research for this book in 2012, we had, I believe, spent decades destroying communities in America, mocking and clawing at the girdings of government that provide the public assets and infrastructure that we took for granted and that make communal public life possible.

Meanwhile we exalted the private sector. We beat Communism and thus we came to believe the free market was some infallible God. Accepting this economic dogma, we allowed, encouraged jobs to go overseas. We lavishly rewarded our priests of finance for pushing those jobs offshore. We demanded perfection from government and forgave the private sector its trespasses”

II. And how do we get it back?

Remember, money never sleeps

Think of a vault of greenbacks heaving, breathing, desperate to get out to consume land, goods, hopes and dreams. Capital dies when it's still. It demands to expand into new spheres and to amass an ever greater share of value produced. The dynamic is that every inch of land should be privately owned and exploited for profit. That every need and desire should be satisfied in the marketplace – nothing would qualify as a free good - you would have to buy everything: water and shelter, education; justice, peace of mind; a child... (oh, wait: we're there already).

Capital has many ways to pursue these ends

Tax laws that favor or exempt their property, their expenses, their profits, so they can avoid contributing anything to goods we use in common. Financial mobility that allows them to hide the money they can't otherwise preserve from taxes. To invest across boundaries where labor can be most readily exploited. Demanding concessions that starve towns and cities of essential revenue. Taking over public services and stealing the commons itself (privatizing, “developing”). Contracting to perform for a profit tasks that were once the province of city employees. Destroying land, water and lives and then selling products to repair the destruction. And not least, the commodification of money itself—financialization is ever available. Then there are the standard mecha-

► **Common good**, continued on page 7

Special events

from previous column

Oly on Ice

November 16 - January 6th except Thanksgiving Day, at the new Isthmus Park (529 4th Ave W) in Downtown Olympia

Oly on Ice is Olympia's first ice rink. \$12 general admission. Go to <http://olympiawa.gov/city-services/parks/recreation/oly-on-ice.aspx> for a full list of prices and hours.

Birding Workshop

Saturday, November 17, 1- 4 at WET Science Center (LOTT), 500 Adams St. NE, Olympia

Bird identification/natural history; observation of stuffed birds; bird workshop 1-2 pm followed by a birding walk. Great for ages 8 and up. Contact (360) 664-2333 for questions.

FOR Fall Retreat

Saturday, November 17, 9 to 5, at the Gwinwood Conference Center, 6015 30th Ave SE in Lacey

Theme: Displacement, Resilience, and Healing. Coffee, tea and lunch provided. Contact FOR at 360-701-5980 to arrange car-pooling. Download flyer at <http://www.wwfor.org/fall-retreat-2/> to pre-register, or just come.

Homeless Housing Hub Meeting

Monday, Nov 19 from 12 to 1:30, at Olympia City Hall, Room 207.

Hosted by Thurston Asset Building Coalition, a network of nonprofits, businesses, government agencies, community groups, coalitions, and individuals working on low-income issues.

Free day at Washington State Parks

Friday, November 23

Hawks Holiday Happening Gift and Craft Fair

Saturday, December 1, 9 to 4 at River Ridge High School, 350 River Ridge Dr SE, Lacey. Largest craft fair in Thurston County.

Centralia Square Antique Mall

Antiques • Restaurant • Hotel

Directions from Olympia

South on Interstate 5
Off at Exit 82 (Factory Outlets)
East on Harrison
Right on Pearl

201 S Pearl & Locust

Open 7 days
10am–5pm



Reviving civility and civic life

Kathy Harrigan

Eric Klinenberg is an optimist. His book, *Palaces for the People* is dense with stories about communities that have managed to be resilient in times of stress and disaster. Klinenberg weaves occasionally complex background information together with narrative, explaining context and theories such as the histories of a demographic shift, spirals of disorder and decay, “Broken Windows” theory, and health statistics.

His sometimes informal tone makes the reading flow easily, yet at the end of the final chapter there are detailed notes and an index. *Palaces for the People* is written not only for the community-minded reader or social activist, but also for an array of professionals—sociologists, architects, urban designers, emergency planners and elected officials.

A city’s design is political

Klinenberg advocates for the revival of a flourishing civil life in America. His message is that well-designed public structures invite social connections that foster democracy, address inequalities, and help heal divisions across social divides. Even climate change disasters can be mitigated through design that takes civic life into consideration. The American Society of Civil Engineers has repeatedly assigned America’s overall infrastructure the grade of D+, most recently in 2017. For Klinenberg, this is a call to action; fixing the American physical infrastructure is an opportunity to simultaneously fix social infrastructure.

How does Klinenberg define “social infrastructure” his book’s theme? It’s “not social capital—a concept commonly used to measure people’s relationships and interpersonal networks—but the physical conditions that determine whether social capital develops; [it’s] public institutions such as libraries, schools, playgrounds, parks, athletic fields, and swimming pools... sidewalks, courtyards, community gardens, and other green spaces that invite people into the public realm.”

He includes private establishments like cafés, diners, barbershops, and bookstores. But, because commercial use can be exclusive and unaffordable, it ultimately falls upon the government, perhaps in collaboration with nonprofits or businesses, to take responsibility for providing social infrastructure.

Resisting the spread of anti-social infrastructure

Design Klinenberg finds the current administration “short sighted” and insular.” He calls the proposed border wall between Mexico and the US “quintessentially anti-social infrastructure.” He is similarly critical of gated communities, campus fraternities, and the gentrification of cities like San Francisco and Seattle by software companies that displace impoverished though middle-class citizenry. Facebook’s CEO Mark Zuckerberg, in particular, peeves Klinenberg because of his profit-driven and therefore flawed vision of a new form of democracy he imagines possible through social media.

Blighted urban neighborhoods and impoverished American cities without green spaces are the geographic focus of Klinenberg’s book. For example, he compares two demographically similar low-income, African-American communities in Chicago where extreme record temperatures killed 700+ people in 1995. Close connection saved lives: where residents knew their neighbors, far fewer died, simply because they checked on one another.

Libraries as places that preserve civility

Klinenberg reviews social infrastructure projects in other countries, as well. Icelandic “hot-pots,” geothermal pools built by the government



Woodcut by Carl Smool

throughout Iceland (where class tensions ran high after massive bank failures in 2008) are heavily used by all ages and classes. Hot-pots facilitate relaxed community conversation and even civic meetings. The universal rule that everyone must strip naked in a public area before entering makes the experience a social equalizer.

Libraries are Klinenberg’s premier example of a critical and undervalued form of social infrastructure. They provide the perfect setting for inclusive social interaction. He loves librarians as committed, nonjudgmental public servants. Libraries and librarians provide dignity and refuge while promoting tolerance and equality. Both buffer social problems including loneliness, isolation, and illiteracy. He also admires the “robber-baron” Andrew Carnegie, for his philanthropy – despite his infamous violent suppression of railroad-union workers. Carnegie built 2800 palatial libraries in the early twentieth century for “boys and girls who have good within them and ability and ambition to develop it.” Klinenberg wonders why so few of the modern ultra-wealthy information technology moguls have not supported libraries. He suggests that libraries need defending because philanthropists are not forthcoming and their funding is under siege.

Close to home, three Timberline Regional Library branches could close next year based on budget deficit projections. Tenino, Montesano, and Hoquiam—where the town has completed a million dollar renovation to its historic Carnegie Library—could close. Citizens at the September TRL budget meeting were upset. None supported these closures. One woman called her Tenino library “the center of the town,” and said that “rural people need it and appreciate it, get value out of it.”

The TRL Board was moved to reconsider, but they say the system will be \$700,000 in the hole next year without cuts. Klinenberg would not be surprised hear this. To him libraries are sacred institutions which politicians don’t like to defend, instead looking to replace them with new technologies without realizing what would be lost. For example Timberland has floated the idea of “library trucks” as one element of a solution to the financial problem. I think Klineberg would encourage TRL users to come together at local libraries to strategize for fund-raising and protection of the critical social infrastructure that libraries provide.

Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization and the Decline of Civic Life (Crown, 2018) by Eric Klinenberg

Kathy Harrigan grew up in Seattle and lives in Olympia. She has taught courses including adult education, English and theater; special ed and GED/ESL/literacy in highschools, community colleges and jails. She has supervised and designed programs for community centers. She holds a BA in Education from the UW and an MA in Humanities from Cal State, Dominguez Hills.



SW Olympia: Where neighbors defend and create priceless social spaces

Olympia has a number of active neighborhood groups that bring residents together. Perhaps because it is my home, I am struck by the uniquely strong bonds within the Southwest Olympia neighborhood as a model of Klinenberg’s positive social infrastructure. The persistent activism of neighbors has kept this community from being bisected by a threatened new route via Decatur Street.

Their efforts prevented a daily stream of thousands of vehicles from the auto-mall and freeway through this family residential area. Appalled neighbors, renters and owners alike, took action with their registered neighborhood association—and recreated the Decatur Raiders. For the past twenty years they wrote letters, toured political candidates, and made presentations at city council meetings, eventually succeeding in removing the route from Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan.

Today the strip of land over which traffic would have poured is a park with a dedicated bike and pedestrian path. Members of the neighborhood association, SWONMA (which has the resilient possum for its logo) landscaped and planted a ragged, empty lot converting it into a “Welcome Park” and funded a mural to greet pedestrians and cars at one entrance to the neighborhood. Signage, a bulletin board, a poetry post, and benches provide a sense of place, as do sidewalks that lead to the kitchens, churches, and cafes where meetings are held.

Southwest neighbors also legally challenged the city’s approval of a third convenience store at a key intersection, opening the way for a neighborhood park that serves as a gathering space, public market, music venue, and pedestrian respite area. Residents have carved out pocket parks and published a neighborhood map. They exchange garden produce and welcome new residents. Each summer they throw a big public picnic. Sometimes on New Year’s Eve, in the middle of an intersection, they share cider and laughs. They might have someone juggling fire, talking to the cop who drops in, or marching with a neighborhood kids in a band to celebrate the kind of bonds that Klinenberg has determined “can help fight inequality, polarization, and the decline of civic life.”



KH



Transforming Olympia’s established neighborhoods

An infill plan sure to make developers happy

Jay Elder

If you live in one of the older, near-town Olympia neighborhoods, big changes are looming for your neighborhood. The same goes for your neighborhood if it's zoned R6-12 (six to 12 housing units per acre) or R4-8 within two blocks of a Neighborhood Center, commercial business, Bethel Street, Division Street, 18th Ave SE, 22nd Avenue SE or Boulevard Road.

Before covering the looming changes, let's look at what's allowed now in these neighborhoods. In addition to single-family homes there can be tiny houses, single cottages, ADUs (accessory dwelling units), manufactured homes and townhouse buildings with four or fewer units.

And what is a Neighborhood Center anyway? A designated area with smaller retail stores near transit, like the San Francisco Bakery, Handy Pantry, Frog Pond, Westside Co-op, etc.

What’s changing?

In the areas mentioned above, triplexes, fourplexes and 12-unit courtyard apartments will be allowed. Duplexes and 9 to 14-unit townhouse buildings will be allowed in those areas and everywhere else. There can be two-story accessory dwelling units, with no off-street parking and no owner living on site. ADUs won’t count as housing for

calculating density. Generally, off-street parking requirements in new rules—deemed “Missing Middle” or MM—are significantly reduced.

Most startling, all buildings can now be 5 feet from side property lines and almost all can be 35 feet tall (typical two-story house height is 25 feet). MM cuts lot sizes and widths for multifamily structures. For example, the minimum lot width a duplexe goes from 80 ft to 40-45 feet. Triplexes and fourplexes can also have a lot width of 40 - 45 feet: long, skinny buildings.

Separate from, but integral to, the MM proposal is a proposal to reduce the amount of a lot that has to be in green space. New green space standards for R4-8 neighborhoods reduce minimum green space from 45% of a lot to 25% (a 44% reduction) and in R6-12, from 35% of the lot to 15% (57% reduction).

Why is the City doing this?

The “Missing Middle” project has no stated goals, and isn't specifically pre-

scribed by the Comprehensive Plan. Certainly MM would increase housing density dramatically, which is a general goal for increased efficiency. We know that opening residential neighborhoods to large multifamily buildings, which generate larger income, will benefit outside investors. These investors will pay higher prices for properties in our neighborhoods, benefitting whoever sells their house or property to them. Those who don't sell will be left with a radically-changed landscape.

The Olympia 2014 Comprehensive Plan, created with exhaustive public input, guides Olympia's laws and codes for the next 20 years. While directing housing densification, it also acknowledges that Olympia has enough buildable land to easily handle the next 20 years of population growth. It recommends densifying existing neighborhoods, as well as commercial areas and vacant land, but in ways that don't degrade the residential quality of life there.

For instance, Comprehensive Plan PL 14.3 says to “disallow medium or high-

and developers. A revealing quote from the 2015 Downtown Strategy Toolbox (not the Comprehensive Plan) says: “Move forward with the “missing middle” and evaluate opportunities to increase density in areas where neighborhood resistance is low and services and infrastructure are in place to support higher density.” Large MM housing is proposed mainly for older, lower-income neighborhoods near downtown. Those least able to resist seem to have been deliberately targeted. Of the three designated high-density nodes, the City has started building only in the Downtown Olympia neighborhood.

MM has been sold as a way to increase affordable housing by increasing inventory, and controlling suburban sprawl, while staying within housing density limits. Instead, while it has no way to monitor zoning density, it has six ways to boost density above zone limits. It has no mechanism to control sprawl. It will encourage tear-downs of older, inexpensive homes, to be replaced by investor-owned multifamily structures, where each unit will rent for more than what

was destroyed. Without MM, our neighborhoods can still densify to their per acre unit limits, using compatible, currently-allowed housing, including ADUs.

2008 to 2015 was the worst “recession” in 80 years. During that time, very little housing was built. In the last 3 years, the economy has improved dramatically. Everyone who waited to buy or rent a house wants one now. Hence the rapid increase in demand and price. Hence also an explosion in housing construction, which will increase inventory rapidly.

A Zillow study of west-coast renters and buyers in 2016, found that 83% of buyers and 47% of renters were looking for single-family homes. Olympia already has these homes in healthy, thriving neighborhoods near-downtown, with 20% of owners over 65, soon to be made available to younger people. These can eliminate the need for the next ring of suburbs, unless MM housing erodes the sunlight, space, quiet, and views that make these neighborhoods livable.

Basically, the City is saying to older neighborhood residents, “sorry, your neighborhood has now been reclassified as urban, with medium to high density”.

If you think MM ignores the Comprehensive Plan, skipped public input during its creation, unnecessarily converts low-density residential neighborhoods to higher densities, inequitably brings incompatible, large buildings to lower-income neighborhoods, favors developers and absentee landlords over existing residents, then sign the petition found at <https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/stop-the-missing-middle-engage-the-public-start-over.html>. Attend the next few Council meetings, and write to Council members.

Jay Elder is a resident of the Bigelow Neighborhood and was the Chair of the Council of Neighborhood Associations and was a member of the board of the Olympia Northeast Neighborhoods Alliance.

More detail on the MM proposal is at <http://noolyupzone.yolasite.com> or go to (<http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/codes-plans-and-standards/missing-middle.aspx>) and download “Summary of City Council final draft code changes.” To see maps that show places where large MM housing is allowed, “click here” on the same page under “LUEC recommendation.” Not simple.



Fourplex next door.

density development in existing low-density neighborhoods. PL 14.2 says to “concentrate housing into three high-density neighborhoods: Downtown Olympia, Pacific/Martin Way/Lilly triangle, and Capital Mall” (nodes). PL 3.8 tells the city to “discourage demolitions or partial demolitions of intact historical structures.” PL 20.1 requires that “development in established neighborhoods be of a type, scale, orientation and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality and livability of the neighborhood.”

There is no mention of the large “missing middle” housing in low-density residential areas in the Comprehensive Plan. MM should require an Environmental Impact Statement, but the City made a Determination of Non-Significance - meaning there will be no environmental effects of these extensive changes on humans or the natural environment.

The MM took shape in a non-public process involving the Olympia Planning Department, local density advocates

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1.5 degrees

From page 1

we risk triggering an irreversible cascade of amplifying feedback loops that will lead us to Hothouse Earth even before we reach 2C and that may happen as early as 2018.

Even the IPCC engages in wishful thinking, relying on carbon dioxide removal technologies like direct air capture and BCCS to keep warming at 1.5 C, or to remove extra CO2 in scenarios that “overshoot” the 1.5 C goal. There are only a handful of small and experimental sites attempting direct air capture and Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Sequestration (BCCS) is currently nonexistent and could require the sacrifice of good agricultural

and forest land to produce biomass. Relying on BCCS is like relying on science fiction.

It may be even worse than this. Michael Mann, director of the Earth System Science Center at Pennsylvania State says that the IPCC underestimated the amount of warming that has already occurred, “We are closer to the 1.5 and the 2C thresholds than they indicate and our available carbon budget for avoiding those critical thresholds is considerably smaller than they imply.”

We must depend on ordinary people everywhere

Everything depends on whether world governments take this report seriously and begin immediate action commensurate with the threat we face. I have

been surfing the internet for comments on the IPCC report, looking for a world leader who is mobilizing her nation's citizens and economy with the force and speed necessary. I've been looking in the wrong place.

Citizens, ordinary people like us, are mobilizing by the thousands around the world. The following reports of demonstrations are taken from the 350.org website: Across Australia, people have been delivering copies of the IPCC report to local governments with the message, *1.5 degrees C means zero fossil fuels*. On a recent Saturday, 7,000 people in Switzerland marched to their banks, targeting the major funders of fossil fuels. They taped the IPCC report to the banks' walls. In Bangladesh, women formed a human chain

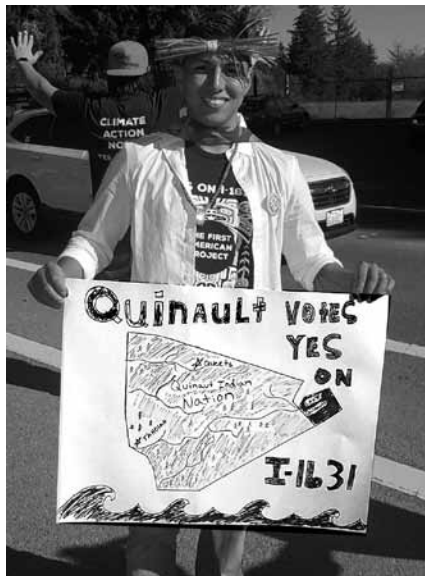
in the Sundarbans, an area threatened by coal. And on the Buriganga River in Dhaka, men demonstrated in their boats, each printed with messages on 1.5C. Just over a month after 150, 000 people came out for the record-breaking March for the Climate in France, over 100,000 were out again pushing the need for climate action.

We must force our governments to act. The actions we force our governments to take in the next few years will determine the future of our climate for hundreds of years, if not millennia.

Bourtai Hargrove is a retired lawyer, a climate change activist, a Socialist and a grandmother.



Tribes rally to support Initiative 1631



Leaders from several tribes appeared at a rally in Lacey in support of Initiative 1631 last month—another instance of the people taking on the task of addressing climate change themselves. President Fawn Sharp (photo, right) of the Quinault Nation and other tribal leaders joined together to create the First American Project to advocate for equality life-affirming policies. Passing Initiative 1631 offers “an opportunity to make the large-scale carbon polluters who are damaging our state and damaging our communities and our children pay the cost for the wrongdoings they have committed...,” said Matthew Randazzo, the executive director for the First American Project.



35th Annual Film Festival at OFS Storytellers, movie makers, panels and workshops, oh my!

The Olympia Film Society presents its 35th Annual Film Festival November 9-17, 2018. The theme this year revolves around “Inclusion, Independence, Discovery.” OFS has curated over 50 features and shorts created by a diverse range of filmmakers and artists, with fresh new voices to expand everyone's' horizons.

“We had a wonderful group of festival programmers this year,” said film programmer Robert Patrick. “Everyone from Violet Lucca of the New York Film Critics Circle to Christopher Day of the Northwest Film Forum chipped in.”

“We're thrilled to have doubled our guest list for this year's festival. Academy Award-nominated director Whit Stillman will be at the Capitol Theater, presenting a three film retrospective (The Last Days of Disco, Metropolitan, Damself in Distress). We're also excited to have filmmaker Sophy Romvari, fresh off of her appearance at this year's Toronto International Film Festival, presenting her acclaimed short, Norman Norman. We also want to spotlight celebrated storyteller Avery Trufelman of 99% Invisible,” said Patrick. In all, 40 guests are slated to appear at this year's

festival. Arrangements to interview a guest can be made with OFS marketing director Jonah Barrett.

The festival will also expand to a satellite location, Octapas Café at 414 4th Ave E. Octapas will host panels and workshops that are free and open to the public, as well as a late-night disco party. There's also a benefit comedy show for Sidewalk -- a nonprofit organization serving vulnerable people in downtown Olympia.

The Olympia Film Festival began its run in 1984. The historic Capitol Theater serves as a space where the Olympia community gathers to connect, empower and support the arts.

What: 35th Annual Olympia Film Festival

When: November 9-17, 2018

Where: Capitol Theater—206 5th Ave SE – Olympia

Info, digital program & tickets: <http://olympiafilmfestival.org>

Press Contact: Jonah Barrett, Marketing Director Jonah@olympiafilmsociety.org 360-754-6670 ext. 11

Climate Solutions announces jobs reducing carbon emissions

Greg Small, Executive Director, Climate Solutions

There is a lot on all of our minds leading up to the election, with important clean energy initiatives on the ballot. In Washington, we have Initiative 1631 that will lead to more clean air and clean energy through a fee on the state's worst polluters. In Oregon, the groundbreaking Portland Clean Energy Initiative is on the ballot in the City of Portland.

One thing is clear: Global warming is a wicked problem that needs many solutions at the same time. We need to account for the cost of carbon pollution and accelerate the solutions far faster than what is happening now.

As part of Climate Solutions' efforts to rapidly transition the Pacific Northwest to 100% Clean, we are thrilled to announce that we are **hiring for three new positions** this fall.

We are looking for two new staff to work on reducing carbon emissions from the transportation sector and accelerate equitable solutions with transit and electrification. These positions are Transportation Policy Managers to work in both our Seattle and Portland offices.

For more information about all of these jobs, please visit our employment page: <https://www.climatesolutions.org/employment>



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Common good

From page 3

nisms—bribing officials, bankrolling politicians, drafting laws, and so on.

An awakened and organized citizenry

Money never sleeps, but an awakened and organized citizenry has at times been able to prevent our capitalists from turning everything into a profit center. The labor movement succeeded in giving workers some measure of power over the conditions of employment. Demands by environmentalists secured some of nature's bounty for common enjoyment, protected certain threatened species, forced the clean-up of our air and water. The civil rights movement challenged racist practices and the persistence of poverty in the midst of wealth. From that came the Voting Rights Act, Medicare and Medicaid, legislation providing new funding in support of public education from grade school to university. The anti-war movement ended a war and defied the authority of the defense establishment. Disability activists forced Congress to pass legislation that required accommodation so they could access facilities both public and private.

Still, money never sleeps—so gains hard-won by organized movements and backed by democratic majorities can be eroded as conditions change and vigilance falters. That's what's happening now—here's a tiny sample.

Tax laws that starve government

In Oregon, a long chain of alterations to tax law resulted in corporate payments for timberland falling from \$119 million per year in the in the 1990s to \$18 million a year from 2007-12. Timber tax revenue to the state fell from \$41 million a year from 1995-99 to about \$4 million/year in 2003-04, while logging volumes remained steady. For all legislative revisions to the tax law, the Oregon Forest and Industries Council was at the table. Today, all over rural Oregon, libraries are closing, public safety services are curtailed, hospitals are in crisis and communities are at a breaking point.

“Privatizing” common goods

Corporations consider water an “asset class,” and they have converted municipal systems to a for-profit status in dozens of states. Food & Water Watch has documented abuses by the new purveyors in California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana and many other states. A notorious example is the Nestle corpo-

ration which buys water for less than a penny per gallon and sells it back for \$10. After polluting water, companies like Dow and Monsanto invest in purification technologies.

Seizing new areas for profit

Twenty years ago Lehman Brothers identified the education sector as offering investment opportunities amounting to \$600 billion – positing “education maintenance organizations” like HMOs...! Since then, for-profit elementary and secondary schools have proliferated and funding for public universities has dropped steeply. Students in 2017 owed money to corporations in the range of \$1.5 trillion dollars. The promise of public education as an opportunity for all children to achieve their potential has all but disappeared.

Ransacking the commons

The Trump administration has proposed to open great portions of the parks and the ocean to oil exploration and drilling; and to mining. They would expand offshore drilling in the

Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and Arctic Ocean, putting coastal communities, beaches and marine ecosystems at risk. In terms of national parks, the Interior Department has proposed to eliminate rules meant to ensure clean and safe development in order to reduce “burdens” on globe-straddling corporations..

Transforming public space into commercial space

The Apple Corporation is proposing to surround its Apple stores with its own “town squares” that will create an enticing atmosphere—and lead to more buying... Of course, like other private “public” spaces, it will have its own security to remove people who aren’t compatible with commercial interests (poor, tired, homeless), or those deemed undesirable, say, protesters. Or something else – because it will be the creature of a private company with its own goals and practices that have nothing to do with community or the notion you and I might have of the “town square.”

The urgency for vigilance and organization

There's a reason that democracy was considered the enemy of capitalism. Democratic majorities, organized and voting, threaten the ability of capital to define and defile our lives. (There's a reason the Right is hell-bent on shutting out voters.) But there's more than voting.

Let's let Boots Riley, director of the film *Sorry to Bother You* have the last word: “Electoral politics is the easy way out. If everybody's putting their time into the electoral side, we're going to get caught in this loop where you get an elected official and they're not able to do much because there's not the movement to do things.

The biggest reforms under capitalism in the 20th Century might be the New Deal and the civil rights bill. And how did we get either of them? Was it by electing the right person? Or was it by having a movement that was able to disrupt?”

Who was “anonymous” in the NY Times?

[Ed note: Last September 5, the New York Times published an anonymous column by someone claiming to be “part of the resistance” in the White House, saving democracy from Donald Trump's worst inclinations. (But not all of them—anonymous saw bright spots in the Trump agenda: deregulation, lowering corporate tax, a robust military.) This was big news: an insider confessing to working with other “senior officials” to frustrate the President's aims. Dominated the news for a day or two! Everyone suspected someone in the Administration—but no one was fingered. Then this “big news” faded like all of the other momentary preoccupations with Trivial Things Trump.

So imagine our surprise when WIP received copies of three emails from Administration figures anxious to clear their names—just their first name, you'll have to guess the surname. We reprint them here for the record—and encourage other Wipster tipsters to stay on their toes for more.]

Hey, I didn’t write it!

Can you imagine any “adult in the room” writing such a trivial piece of self serving pomp?

Whoever wrote this was upset that Trump hasn't declared war on Russia. Obviously from the language used it was written by some simple minded militarist.

President Trump's greatest asset is what this guy criticizes. Trump is in fact “impetuous, adversarial and petty” but NOT “ineffective.” Flip-Flopping is one of his talents.

While the *NY Times* can't see past Trump's antics, we're out there opening up national parks, fracking gas, drilling for oil and purifying this country's democracy by ridding the homeland of illegal immigrants, their sneaky children, Muslim invaders, as well as jailing all those protestors that want to disrupt our Supreme Court or impeach this duly elected President.

Steve (Yes. I'm still here!)



I didn’t write the damn thing

I'm busy making America safe for Coal Companies.

Does anyone really want to remove Trump and get Pence?

Jesus, that would be like exchanging Caligula for Ayatollah Khomeini.

What's funny about this arrogant twit is that he apparently listens to Trump.

Hell, my hearing is so bad, I couldn't listen to him if I wanted to and, anyway, it's beside the point.

The point is my bottom line and, in case you haven't noticed, it's doing great.

So, no, I didn't write the damn thing.

Wilbur

It wasn’t me!

I'm not a traitor masquerading as a unsung hero in the failing *New York Times*. Besides, I'm having fun tearing up all the international treaties I've hated for years. Trump likes Putin and Kim for good reason. They know what nationalism is and so does Trump. In case you haven't been paying attention, I'm busy working on Donald for WWII—as Smedley said, “War is such a racket!” There's so much money to be made.

Sincerely,

John

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In collaboration with Enterprise for Equity

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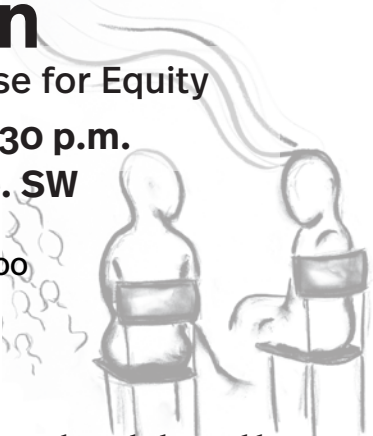
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"The Mob"

Gary Murrell

President Trump [how it pains me to use those two words in conjunction], Republican leaders in Congress—Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell particularly—and sycophants in the media, have latched onto a concept that they believe, perhaps correctly, will energize Trump’s base: Democrats, and by implication the left in general, are an “angry mob.”

“You don’t hand matches to an arsonist, and you don’t give power to an angry, left-wing mob. And that’s what the Democrats have become,” Trump declared at a campaign rally in Topeka, Kansas. They point to Antifa—a group that views the Democratic party with contempt—as their prime example.

In the early 1950s, the United States’ government arrested, jailed, tried, and convicted leaders of the Communist Party. The charge? Conspiracy “to advocate or organize” a political party that would attempt “sometime in the future, to overthrow the government of the United States through force and violence.”

Throughout the period of the trials, the historian Herbert Aptheker, a leading Communist Party intellectual, consistently maintained that it was not the Communist Party that instigated violence. Aptheker asserted that not only did the Party constitution provide for expulsion from the Party of any member advocating violence, it was invariably reactionaries who instigated violence, to which Party members sometimes responded.

“They’re plotting fascism,” Aptheker warned, presciently, “and fascists are not finicky when it comes to persecution and to torture. Every decent human being will have his turn; every decent human being did in every fascist country that has ever existed But the beasts are at work, here and now. . . . Fascism is being brewed in our land.”

Fascism was something that Aptheker knew, something he had experienced, something he had fought since the 1930s. He had studied the actions carried out by the Nazis in Germany in the 1920s and early 1930s, actions that now have an echo in alt-right, white-

supremacist movements here and abroad. Like the Nazis, the reactionary and revolutionary right in this country have recognized a moment of weakness in our democracy. They have set out to to take advantage of that weakness, and make it worse.

They use the charge of “mob violence” to stoke fear in their already fearful supporters, and organize rallies to inflame their opponents. Their chants of “blood and soil” (an old Nazi slogan)reverberate through torch-light parades,

“The Nazis often held rallies right where their enemies lived, to provoke them...”

and culminate in actions like the shooting of a counter-protester in Seattle or the murder of a young woman at the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville.

Well-meaning opponents, people genuinely outraged by the open display of hatred, gather to resist, to challenge. “But they’re fighting at a disadvantage against a ruthless foe that does not observe their limits,” commented University of Washington historian, Laurie Marhoefer, “and at least some of the opposition,” as in the case of Antifa, “undertakes more drastic action”—fighting violence with violence.

After the shooting at the University of Washington by an alt-right supporter, UW student Republicans posted

a comment on Facebook: “You have been seen on national television very clearly being the cause of increased division in our society and it’s time your flame is put out. . . . If you keep prodding the right,” they wrote chillingly, “you may be unpleasantly surprised what the outcome will be.”

Professor Marhoefer characterized the white supremacists’ actions in Charlottesville as “right out of the Nazi playbook.” She described a Nazi Party rally in 1927 scheduled in the Wedding district of Berlin, “a decidedly hostile location.” “The Nazis often held rallies right where their enemies lived, to provoke them,” she

wrote.

Hundreds of Nazis were met by hundreds of opponents organized by the Communist Party. When anti-fascists disrupted the rally, a “massive brawl” ensued, with “almost 100 people” injured. The anti-fascists had “sent a clear message: Fascism was not welcome.” Even though anti-fascists believed they had won the confrontation, “violent confrontations with anti-fascists gave the Nazis a chance to paint themselves as the victims of a pugnacious, lawless left. They seized it.” Many Germans, fearful of street violence, supported the Nazis because they believed the left was responsible. “Dictatorship grew attractive,” Marhoefer asserted. “The fact that the Nazis themselves were fomenting the violence didn’t seem to matter.”

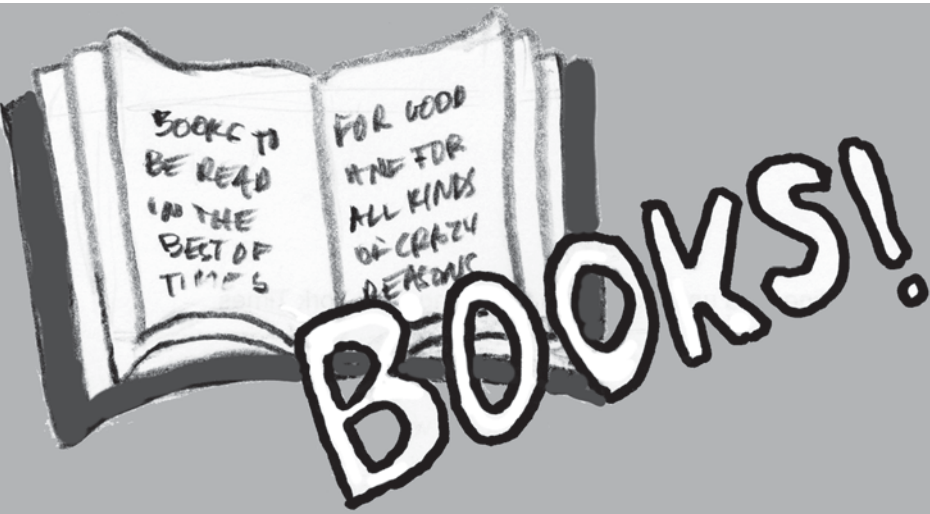
If the Charlottesville actions were right out of the Nazi playbook, so too is the current reaction by Republicans, in cahoots with their alt-right and white supremacist supporters. The Republican playbook calls for stoking fear and racism: fear of Mexicans, fear of Muslims, fear of women, fear of black people, fear of Democrats, fear of “The Mob.” And it’s working.

A majority of Trump supporters believe Trump should be given emergency powers, and Trump has shown a disdain for long-established constitutional protections. He has labeled the press “the enemy of the people.” He has toyed with the idea of being President for life. He has praised and encouraged violence among his supporters. He has emboldened Nazis and white supremacists. He is a pathological liar. If he defines “the mob” as a threat, arsonists ready to burn the country down, he, like Hitler, could claim for himself emergency police powers to suppress leftist violence and save the country.

If history has anything to tell us, Trump and the reactionaries have laid out a roadmap for future assaults—they are telling us what they plan. We must listen. We, of course, can’t let a concern about what Donald Trump or his supporters will do interfere with our resistance to his odious, abominable presidency. But we can plan our actions in a smart way. One of the lessons of history is, surely, to protest, to confront fascism.

But we don’t have to occupy the same physical space. If the alt-right and white supremacists plan a march, then, fine, plan a countermarch, but somewhere else. Let them yell their heads off to no audience while we gather elsewhere to oppose fascism and celebrate resistance. With little or no press coverage, without a “mob” to exploit, they’ll soon grow tired of shouting into the wind. They’ll go home empty handed. They’ll soon stop trying to provoke.

Gary Murrell is Professor Emeritus of History at Grays Harbor College. He writes and tends his garden in Grays Harbor.



Past, present and future all at once

Baxter Lee

Sing, Unburied, Sing (Charles Scribner & Sons, 2018), by Jessamyn Ward.

Jesmyn Ward pens an account of the living and the dead in her latest novel, *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, set in the heart of what was once home to slavery, Jim Crow and sharecropping.

The story takes place in the small town of Bois Sauvage, near the Gulf of Mexico. Here a road trip journey begins as Leonie, the daughter of River and Philomène, traverse the Mississippi landscape with her two children Jojo and Micheala, and Leonie’s best friend, Misty. The volatile group makes its way to Parchman Penitentiary, the current holding place of Michael, Leonie’s boyfriend. Michael is white, a sharp contrast in more than

just color to Leonie’s family.

Accompanying the small band are two ghosts that only Leonie and Jojo can see. One, Richie, was River’s cellmate at Parchman Penitentiary many years ago. Given was Leonies brother.

Another historical narrative plays itself out in the current timeline between dialogues and snapshots re-playing into characters’ pasts. The past is split open as the ghosts reach out to connect once again with the living, trying to make sense of their own weird worlds. Richie reflects on his twilight-like existence. “In that day that never ended, I watched the tops of the trees toss, and I tried to remember how I got there.”

The book was unique in that it had no real plot to be pointed to. Instead,

Ward focuses on the brokenness of the family. No real plot made for confusing reading and a recurrent question: “What is this family trying to overcome?”

However, I began to understand how purposeful this was on Ward’s part -- to understand the deep-seated pain the South has endured, one has to look beyond any one problem. It’s too numerous and vast to pinpoint. One has to understand Parchman as a microcosm of the time the South has been surviving:

“How could I conceive that Parchman was past, present, and future all at once? That the history and sentiment that carved the place out of the wilderness would show me that time is a vast ocean, and that everything is happening at once?”

The book was difficult to read. Lacking an internal plot that would have otherwise given the characters great initiative, we are met with a lethargic cast simply stuck in the throes of pain and addiction. Extended dialogue and hurried references jumbled together failed to give the characters roots they needed to reveal development. The story moves from one long chronic heartbreak to the next.

The intended effect was felt, however. Pain often times cannot be made sense of. Flashback by flashback a picture begins to take form. The picture is of a family trying to make sense of a world of brokenness. The past and its pain are oftentimes one and the same. This is one family’s navigation through a story that cannot be made into sense.

I would strongly recommend this book to readers looking for an anecdotal story of the South, mining veins of shattered hope and pain, with gems of hope found sparingly in-between.



Baxter Lee is a recent graduate of The Evergreen State College. He focuses on incorporating fiction and non-fiction, how the two can blend, and even work together.

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Olympia Carpenters and The New School for Union Organizers: getting started

Mark Bean

It was 1988 and I was working out of the Carpenters' Hall in Olympia after clearing my book into Olympia Local 1148 from Tacoma Local 470. I was proud to be working out of the Olympia Carpenters' Hall not only because it was my hometown, but also because I understood the protection a union contract provided. My mother's side of the family were devoted unionists. I saw my uncle on a picket line; my grandpa had been a Wobbly, and the Brewery Workers' Local President before Dave Beck and the Teamsters out-maneuvered them at the Olympia Brewery.

Building bonds and knowledge

Working out of the Hall brought the benefit of association on the job and in union meetings. As union members, we built strong bonds of mutual interest working side-by-side, in good weather and bad, eating lunch together in the job shack, solving work problems - and the country's problems...

It was common to have inexperienced apprentices receive trade knowledge from older, more experienced hands. I enjoyed the satisfaction of cutting rafters properly for a building's roof and other precise tasks critical for building. I was proud of my trade and my ability to create with my hands. I shared in the specialized knowledge that, historically, a carpenter only revealed to an apprentice committed to learning the trade, or talked about with another journeyman. This knowledge added to our negotiating power as carpenters. Who was going to build the structure, if not a carpenter? The stealing of this knowledge led to the erosion of carpenters' power. I learned of this from job experience.

A history of cooperation

Olympia Union Carpenters controlled a large share of the residential and commercial construction market prior to the 1970s. Thompson Place and Panorama City in Lacey are examples of our residential work. However, our primary signatory contractors, many of whom were local families like Phillips, Johnson, Jones and Roberts, were in the commercial market. Contractors had their own union -- the Associ-

ation of General Contractors, or AGC. Every three years, the Union (Western Washington Carpenters) and the AGC would negotiate a new contract.

A contractor was called "signatory" by virtue of signing this contract and becoming one of the contractors we provided our labor for. These contracts included an apprenticeship

program paid by employers and the Carpenters' Trust. This arrangement assured carpenters that any job they worked on paid the same wage and benefits. A union carpenter didn't have to negotiate at each new job as non-union carpenters did. Contractors were guaranteed a skilled workforce without labor upheavals.

The union's position is eroding

Over time, the existence of plenty of good, commercial work out of the Carpenters' Hall led to neglect of our residential market. Better-paying commercial jobs drew the majority of carpenters and we began to pay less attention to our residential market. Non-union contractors started to gain a foothold in the area's residential work, and even took work away from our signatory contractors as residential contractors began leaching into the commercial work. Out-of-town non-signatory contractors began bidding and winning commercial projects in our area. The entry of non-union companies threatened to lower standards and erode our livelihoods.

Older members share their experience

Eventually, this threat became a discussion at the union's monthly meeting. What to do with the dilemma of ratty (non-signatory) contractors winning job bids in Olympia and hiring unorganized carpenters? Our retired members related how they had met earlier labor conflicts. They walked

job sites to speak with carpenters and invite them to become part of the union. They explained how much better it is to be together when you have to meet the boss.

How to address the threat

We took their words as a guide and decided to embark on an organizing effort. Only, we had no organizing experience. Our local, like most Carpenters' locals at the time, was mostly white men who never considered our position in the socio-political economy of Olympia, Washington state, or the US. I believe the only group consciousness we had was an expectation to keep working under a union contract until retirement. But an expectation doesn't tell you how to address threats to that expected future. And collectively, at least at this moment, we recognized that there was a threat.

Evergreen as a resource

We found out that there was a class for union organizers at The Evergreen

understood basic economic principles, but hands-on working together had educated us far better. Still, our idea of the system was that there were those who gave orders and those who executed orders. We executed orders. bosses gave orders. Yet the Carpenters' Union had protected us from the worst intentions of the contractors. This reality motivated us to do what we could to protect the working standards we had built over many years; since 1917 in fact. But I'm getting ahead of the story.

A New School education for workers

So it was that in the fall of 1988 I became part of the New School for Union Organizers. The state legislature had authorized the Labor Center in 1987 to offer non-credit educational programs for union members. Dan Leahy, who was instrumental in creating the Center, was the first director. Our class consisted of about 16 people from unions, community organizations, and a couple of Evergreen students. I hadn't been in a classroom for years; the first thing I had to learn was how to learn again.

Our class of strangers eventually became a tight-knit group, learning from Dan, Labor Center staff, faculty of the college, and organizers from around the country. My New School education became the bedrock of who I was to become in the following

years.

Over the next few months I will tell the story of how a group of Olympia carpenters learned to get organized and act as a community of carpenters. It's the story of building a community not only of carpenters, but finding allies to create something fairer for all working people. We were fortunate to have in Evergreen's Labor Center, and the New School for Union Organizers, a space and framework from which to analyze our position—and change it.

Mark Bean was born and raised in Olympia and has written the Months of Labor column for WIP.

Non-union contractors started to gain a foothold in the area's residential work, and even took work away from our signatory contractors...

State College. Maybe there we could figure out how to combat the threat to the standards, wages and conditions of work for which our union had fought. The union decided to pay for two carpenters to enroll in the New School for Union Organizers, a 9-month course offered by the TESC Labor Center. I was one of those carpenters.

Bosses, workers and...Capital?

In hindsight, the notion of our getting into a fight with Capital was as far away as Pluto. Capital? What the hell, who or what was that? The idea of "capital" as a component of production was completely unknown to us. Some of us had been to college and

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Privatized violence against women: from Zeus to Kavanaugh

Michael Vavrus

Ancient Greeks revered Zeus as their supreme deity. Greek politicians publicly sanctified and naturalized the patriarchal practice of misogyny as an aspect of their democracy. The dictionary definition of misogyny is “dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women” from the Greek root “hatred [of] women.”

Centuries later this conception found full-throated expression in the recent Senate hearings and eventual confirmation of misogynist Bret Kavanaugh of lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court. Despite a majority of the nation opposed to Kavanaugh's appointment, a majority of Republicans supported Kavanaugh—even if sexual assault charges were true.

Trump, Kavanaugh, Clarence Thomas, Harvey Weinstein—and the list goes on—represent a legacy that dates to the ancient Greeks. The Founders were fond of evoking the Greeks as an example of a democracy – one built on slavery and misogyny. Through Zeus, male dominance and violence were divinely ordained. Justification for misogyny and violence against women rests on the long debate over the role of the state in publicly providing safety and protecting individual rights.

Historically, patriarchal rule-of-law has constructed male control of girls and women as the domain of the private sphere of life not subject to public scrutiny. Feminist political economist Nancy Folbre compares the condition of females to that of slaves. Like slaves, married women had no right to the product of their labor. Both slaves and women under patriarchy were unable to make a lawful claim to their own children. White male slave owners could legally separate children from their mothers. A double standard existed for White married men who raped slave women or sought sex through prostitution whereas a woman adulteress faced punishment.

In regard to the care of slaves and wives, Folbre notes that legally “slave owners and patriarchs were required only to meet the subsistence needs of their dependents and could administer physical punishment without the close supervision of the law.” Whereas male children could anticipate someday becoming independent of their families of origin, female children were forever constructed as male property. A daughter transitioned from the status of her father's property to her husband's literally upon being

given away. Restricted from the public sphere of life under patriarchal arrangements, a woman was to submit to her husband's sexual demands and not attempt to avoid conception.

Despite John Locke's influential advocacy of individual liberty and equality, he made an exception for women. Writing about a century before the ratification of the US Constitution, Locke intellectually separated the public domain from the private sphere of marriage: “the power that every husband hath to order the things of private concernment to his family, as proprietor of the goods and lands there, and to have his will take place before that of his wife in all things of their common concernment.” Women who deviated from such patriarchal norms often faced psychological and physical abuse.

Like racism, the political economy of misogyny within the pervasive culture of patriarchy is revealed as a core principle throughout US history. At the time of the Declaration of Independence, Abigail Adams, the wife of future President John Adams, sought incorporation of her full rights as a woman into the revolutionary principles of liberty and gender equality.

In 1776 Abigail wrote her husband, “I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors.” Abigail may have been recalling the previous two centuries when women were tortured and murdered as “witches” by ruling church and secular leaders in Europe and the British colonies of North America.

Abigail Adams continued in her letter: “Do not put such unlimited power in the hands of the Husbands...Remember all men would be tyrants if they could.” Historian Jill Lepore explains that Abigail was calling on her husband to provide freedom of “representation” to women, in line with the ideals colonists expressed. Abigail foresaw a future in which women would be a political force if ignored: “If perticular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.”

Abigail's patriarchal husband John Adams responded as if his wife's concerns were just a joke: “As to your extraordinary Code of Laws, I cannot but

laugh...We know better than to repeal our Masculine system.” Resting smugly in a smog of patriarchal certainties that placed women as inferiors, Adams and his elitist cronies made sure that their basis of social order was premised on male superiority and female submission to male authority.

After decades of battle against male dominance in nearly all aspects of the public sphere the US Constitution was amended so that by 1920 women in the US could vote in all elections. Yet women remained second-class citizens in this newly enlarged public

If perticular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.”

sphere, especially in regard to personal safety, employment, and property rights. For example, labor historian Alice Kessler-Harris notes that in the US from the 1890s into the 1980s “special considerations of all kinds could prevent women from being persons under the law.” Although statutes might use the word “person,” the legal interpretation was “man.” Courts deferred to states to determine personhood on the basis of patriarchal custom that in practice excluded women from participating in the public sphere through, for example, serving on juries and qualifying for traditional male careers and jobs.

An Equal Right Amendment (ERA) for women has never been passed by the required number of states. From 1972 to 1982 advocates for the ERA were simply seeking Constitutional codification for full political and civil rights of women in the public sphere: “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.” It was during this era that second-wave feminism faced extreme patriarchal resistance. To bring light to the tyranny the patriarchy imposed on women in the private sphere, feminists insisted that “the personal is political.” In other words, a woman's personal experience of domestic assault in a dorm room, hotel, or bedroom is not a private act. Instead, protection from such violence needs public protection. Nevertheless, legal repercussions for assaulting women rarely exist as evident in the Kavanaugh nomination process by an openly misogynist President who relishes denigrating women.

Decades prior to the contemporary #metoo movement, feminists were organizing to protect women through

the development of undisclosed shelters for battered women—shelters and protection unavailable to Greek women, to Abigail Adams' generation, nor to many women today. In the 1970s when shelters for victims of domestic assault were just appearing, laws and police practices allowed men – just like Zeus – to brutalize their wives and children as a private act beyond the scrutiny of the public sphere.

While I was living in Michigan during this era, it was young feminist activists who helped me better understand the political tensions and ramifications for women between the private and public sphere. Under the auspices of the Council Against Domestic Assault (CADA), these courageous women were part of a cadre that, against all odds, organized shelters for women seeking to escape misogynistic violence.

Nearly 40 years ago in 1979 as a humble “friend of CADA,” I wrote an invited piece for their newsletter in which I included references to the Roman deity Jupiter aka Zeus:

“Indeed, today's public and its civil servants, living amidst the problem of domestic violence, often behave as if they were operating under the rule of Jupiter and Juno, mythical Roman deities. As the story goes, the god Jupiter raped a young wood nymph. This ‘nymph,’ a woman, was then not only rejected by her female companions, but also became the object of the terrible rage of Juno, Jupiter's wife. The young woman was transformed into a hunted forest animal. Comfort and support were nowhere in sight. A ‘she-got-what she deserved’ attitude prevailed.”

Juno's example tells us that women, too, can enable patriarchy. Think of Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) and the 67% of Republican women who supported Kavanaugh. Political ambiguity swirls around whether it is in the state's interest to protect the mental and physical health and overall well-being of all of those who live within its borders. This uncertainty raises several questions:

- Should all people have public access to healthcare, including protection from psychological and physical violence, as a basic right?
- Is the well-being of individuals a private matter beyond the scope of the state?
- Are some aspects an individual's overall health a matter that needs public intervention?

The well-being of women falls in the middle of these issues. At one extreme, patriarchal politicians and right-wing religious groups contend that public laws should limit women's control of decisions about their own bodies. On the other hand, the violence girls and women experience generally occurs in the patriarchal shadows of society, where it is constructed as a private

► Zeus, continued on next page

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Health

From page 1

health care shortage. What's going on?

Geography meets health care on the Chehalis River

Ask anyone in Aberdeen why we don't have enough doctors and they will say there aren't enough places to live, and we need better schools. Drive around Aberdeen and you see lots of empty houses. What's keeping people from investing in the community—for themselves or for a profit?

It turns out that Aberdeen's scenic location along the banks of the wide Chehalis River not only makes for convenient fishing and the designation as the northernmost deep-water port in the US, but also puts the town in danger of flooding. According to several sources, residents in Aberdeen pay over \$1 million per year in premiums to the National Flood Insurance program.

Homeowners in the flood plain pay flood insurance on top of mortgage payments. Cassie Lentz, Housing Resource Coordinator for Grays Harbor County Public Health and Social Services, estimated that a person with an \$800/month mortgage payment could easily be required to pay an additional \$600/month in flood insurance. Not

only that, but making improvements to a house can trigger additional costs if you spend more than 60% of the cost of the house on improvements. That's an easy limit to exceed when you have to elevate a house that's on the market for \$70-80,000 plus bring it up to code.

Then, another factor kicks in. Banks won't loan you more than the market value of your new home, no matter how good your rehab plans are. So, even though you could buy one of the dilapidated houses in downtown Aberdeen and start to fix it up, until the whole neighborhood gets rehabbed, your house won't be worth much. And then there's the flood insurance. A coordinated plan to design and build a levy along the north shore of the Chehalis River between the Wishkah and Hoquiam Rivers is underway. The planned 2019-21 construction is dependent upon a state budget request.

Local politics


Meanwhile, a struggle between the relatively old, established Grays Harbor Community Hospital in Aberdeen and the relatively new Summit Pacific Medical Center in Elma has ensued. At the center is Montesano mayor Vini Samuels, who wants to partner with Summit Pacific and Providence St. Peter Family Medicine of Olympia to run something like what Providence is doing in Chehalis—a Family Medi-

cine Rural Training Track program, or residency clinic. The clinic would be in Montesano.

For Montesano to partner with Providence, they would need to stop paying hospital district dues to Grays Harbor Community Hospital. GHCH says the loss of \$150,000 per year would put them at further financial risk. They have already laid off employees. Health care experts say a clinic in

Montesano would likely pull private pay insurance patients out of GHCH, leaving it even more reliant on Medicaid reimbursements. Samuels argues that something has to give. "This type of clinic and what it can bring to the Harbor, it shifts everything," she said in an interview with the *Daily World*.

Emily Lardner lives in Grays Harbor County but goes to Olympia for primary care.



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“YWCA is using the “label” womxn (with an x) to encompass a broader range of identities than woman. YWCA Olympia programs welcome women, girls, Two-Spirit, gender non-binary, and queer folks who are compelled to participate in a femme centered space.

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Zeus to Kavanaugh

From previous page

matter supposedly lacking “proof” or legitimacy.

Yet, in some cases the state does make health decisions that affects its populace. Most notable is access to affordable vaccinations, long been considered necessary for the health of the country and, hence, recognized as a public good. Most recently, Congress has deemed eliminating opioid addiction within the private sphere as a public good that requires public funding. Yet, violence against women is cast by ruling elites and their evangelical supporters as still existing primarily in the private sphere. Hence, women too often remain excluded from the public good of governmental safety and health protection due to practices and policies that enable misogyny. Meanwhile, patriarchs continue to equivocate about the extent to which having a healthy citizenry is in the state's public interest.

In our current historical moment women remain our most significant leaders of social movements for liberty and justice for all. For example, we have the historical and contemporary leadership of Black women, including Tarana Burke, founder of the #metoo movement. In western states during the 19th century “Colored Women's Clubs” formed to create supportive environments in hostile societies, especially in response to lynchings. The Civil Rights Movement was propelled by the nearly invisible and tireless work of African-American women in the relative freedom of Black church-

es. And most recently, Susan Burton, a formerly incarcerated 66-year old Black woman, has become a leading advocate for incarcerated women.

In these continuing misogynistic times, allies will need to gravitate toward progressive women and their leadership against patriarchy, if we ever expect to build a viable movement to unravel a system built around patriarchal supremacy.

Michael Vavrus is co-editor of the 2018 book Intersectionality of Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender in Teaching and Teacher Education: Movement Toward Equity in Education (Brill Publishers, Netherlands).

Choose a better worldview to build a better world

This month's TV program and blog post for “Glen's Parallax Perspectives” contrasts the worldview (greed, corruption, cruelty, oppression, etc.) that currently dominates the U.S.'s public policies with the opposite worldview that would be humane, compassionate, fair to everyone, peaceful, honest, supportive of democracy, and environmentally sustainable. Most Americans want this positive worldview instead of the cruel, oppressive ones that Trump, the Republicans, and some mainstream Democrats impose upon us.

The November 2018 program is Part 1 of this topic and focuses mostly on the problems. In December you can watch Part 2 of this topic, which will focus more on the solutions—how to achieve the worldview we want instead of the horrible one that is hurting people, democracy, truth and the environment now.

Instead of interviewing guests, Glen Anderson has been working a long time gathering information and sequencing it into a well-organized flow that builds a solid case. The program and blog post explain what “worldviews” are and how they drive public policy. Glen clearly contrasts the currently dominant worldview with the positive alternative that most Americans would want instead.

The dominant worldview assumes that it's OK for powerful people to dominate and exploit everyone else. It relies upon violence at the domestic and international levels. It serves cruel and greedy elites and destruction of the environment instead of social and economic justice and environmental sustainability.

The bad worldview was already dominating the US, and it has escalated horribly since Trump and Republicans grabbed power over all

three branches of the federal government and many state and local governments. Trump and the Republicans are vigorously destroying the parts of the government that serve the public and protect the environment. They are imposing Orwellian lies and abuses, appointing extremely incompetent and corrupt people who are vigorously hostile to the missions of the agencies they have been appointed to run.

The Trumpian and Republican escalation includes blatant lying and outright contempt for truth and honest journalism. They rig processes so they can win at any cost and hurt anybody who stands in their way. We saw this with their war on women and contempt for truth and democracy when they steamrolled Brett Kavanaugh onto the Supreme Court.

November's Part 1 focuses mostly on the problems. December's Part 2 will focus mostly on solutions.

Watch TV programs through your computer or on TCTV Everyone everywhere can watch this interview—and/or read a thorough summary of what we said – through the “TV Programs” part of my blog, www.parallaxperspectives.org. Each program is also posted to one or more categories listed on the blog.

Cable TV subscribers in Thurston County can watch this interview on Thurston Community Television (TCTV) three times a week throughout the entire month: every Monday at 1:30 pm, every Wednesday at 5:00 pm, and every Thursday at 9:00 pm.

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

Glen's Parallax Perspectives



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Why “Abolish ICE” doesn’t go far enough for migrant families

Oscar Chacon

“Abolish ICE” has become a rallying cry for people who have watched in horror as thousands of migrant families have been separated and detained at our southern border in recent weeks. It has been characterized as “bold” and “radical” by some, but I argue that it doesn’t go far enough.

Indeed, the US government’s recent actions—ripping babies from their parents’ arms and caging toddlers—mark a heartbreaking new low in a decades-long downward spiral of our immigration laws, and demand a swift and decisive response. Yet the call to dismantle ICE, established in the post-9/11 push for national security, represents only the most initial of steps in addressing the deep-seated racism, xenophobia and criminalization of immigrants that are baked right in to US immigration policy.

Restructure immigration policy

As an immigrant from El Salvador who has worked on the front lines of immigration policy and advocacy for more than 30 years, I have had a front-row seat in observing the repeated failures of US immigration policy, especially for the beleaguered people of Central

America. I join my fellow concerned citizens in demanding a radical response to what is happening at the border, but I encourage them to adopt a deeper, more historical view of the issue. Calls to “Abolish ICE” do not go far enough. To begin to get to the root of the problem, we still need to “Fix ‘96.”

Twenty-two years since its inception, 1996’s Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) stands as the most draconian change ever enacted to US immigration policy. IIRIRA embraced a restrictive, exclusionary and punitive policy approach without precedent in previous policy. In short, it laid the groundwork for the heartbreak on our border today.

The IIRIRA framework allows the government to turn its back on today’s Central American asylum seekers

Engineered in response to the growing numbers of immigrants entering the United States to escape civil unrest, violence, and poverty plaguing Latin American in the 1980s and 1990s, IIRIRA created a wide range of legal grounds to make people—including spouses of US citizens—inadmissible

to the United States, even if an immigrant visa was available to them. Today, the US government continues to follow the IIRIRA playbook in narrowing asylum options for Central Americans fleeing gang violence.

IIRIRA set a legal precedent for the large-scale separation of migrant families

The policy re-classified many minor offenses to the law—such as non-violent drug offenses or tax evasion—into aggravated crimes punishable with deportation. Applied retroactively, the new law prompted the deportation of people who had already paid the consequences for these past misdemeanors. IIRIRA also introduced new punishment measures, known as 3- and 10-year bars, to keep deportees from returning to the United States. The law has splintered more than two million migrant families over the past two decades. At least 500,000 US-born children have a parent who has been detained or deported.

IIRIRA birthed ICE and the dysfunction in our immigration courts

The 1996 law laid the groundwork for

the creation of the \$7.6 billion agency today known as ICE, along with its sister agency the \$13.5 billion Customs and Border Protection (CBP), whose agents today carry out the dirty work at the border. IIRIRA gave immigration officers and immigration judges an unprecedented level of discretionary power to push people into deportation proceedings. Today this has devolved into clogged immigration courts and the routine denial of due process to immigrants, including the Central American families in the crosshairs of the current family separation policy.

IIRIRA was a complex piece of legislation, and most legislators who voted for it did so without reading its contents or understanding its profound and far-reaching implications. The bill cleared Congress with support from both parties and was signed into law by President Bill Clinton. That reality is uncomfortable for legislators who now wish to distance themselves from inhumane immigration policy, but illustrative of the fact that deeply flawed US immigration system has had bipartisan engineers.

Criminalization became the norm

Complicating matters further is the fact that many policymakers and even advocates have become resigned to IIRIRA as a not-so-new “normal.” Initial resistance to IIRIRA—manifested in the form of a national campaign called “Fix ‘96”—has since dissolved. Today’s legislators, even those sympathetic to the plight of migrants, cannot recall a time when the criminalization of immigrants was not the central tenet of immigration policy. Contemporary attempts at immigration reform reflect this reality.

Today, truly “radical” thinking on immigration law involves thinking outside of IIRIRA’S punitive framework: Those committed to bold solutions to families separated at the border must bolster calls to “Abolish ICE” with a real commitment to “Fix ‘96.” Basic principles of humane immigration policy—a visa system that reflects our country’s humanitarian responsibilities, a true commitment to family unity, and a respect for due process and human rights—must replace IIRIRA’s draconian framework for future policy reforms.

Calls to “Abolish ICE” aren’t nearly as radical as the audacity to re-imagine an immigration system based on an unequivocal recognition of immigrants and refugees as a blessing for the nation, and that subsequently supports and protects migrants instead of criminalizing them.

Oscar Chacón is executive director of Alianza Americas, a transnational network of 50 immigrant-serving organizations.

A reflection on work/life balance: can there be room for me in my life?

Amy Shull

“Do what you love and you’ll never work a day in your life,” they say. That has proven to be a challenging rule of thumb to implement, in my opinion. Since the time I was young, I’ve wanted to be a singer/songwriter. As I aged, I pursued the craft in a variety of ways. I performed in county fairs, I participated in after school productions, I joined chorus and musical theatre in high school, and I competed at county and state level competitions. It was the only thing I felt successful in—the only thing that truly felt like my calling.

After graduation, the application of the craft became more difficult. It seemed as though outlets were less commonplace, and there certainly weren’t any positions I could find/was qualified for in terms of earning a living with it. I had to find a way to support myself and make music in my downtime.

At first it was easy. I held an extremely part time position and I lived at home. As time progressed, though, I moved out and my day jobs became increasingly demanding—understandably so, as the pay was proportionate to the amount of effort the position required of me, and being financially independent isn’t cheap.

Every choice felt like an exchange. Longer hours meant more economic

freedom, but less time to pursue personal interests; more responsibility meant more opportunity for future growth in the field, but more stress and less mental energy to give to my loved ones at home; and the more satisfied I decided to become at work, the more I felt my old self and her dreams fading away.

I know I can’t blame the job that puts food on my table and a roof over my head for the decimation of a dream; my own lack of initiative is the cause of that. Contrary to what it may sound like in this article, I am very grateful for my work and the opportunities it has given me.

To play devil’s advocate, I must also acknowledge that personal motivation can be a difficult thing to muster with how much time I spend in my work role—waking up early, getting ready, commuting, being “on” for the next ten hours of the day, commuting home, preparing dinner and cleaning up, decompressing for an hour or so, then getting ready for bed so I can rinse and repeat the following day. I spend more time with my coworkers

than I do my family. There’s barely any room for me in my life because of the time I spend affording to live it.

I feel that my life is at somewhat of a crossroads, and I have to choose between who I thought I’d be and who life has shaped me into. It’s much easier to choose the life I already have, but most of us know that the easy choice isn’t always the right one. Additionally, the right choice can morph over time. If my dreams and I change together, I’m ok with that. I’m privileged to be able to customize my occupational pursuits.

It is a great hope of mine, though, that one day our consumer-based economy will shift into something more sustainable for its workers. Something with a more substantial work/home life balance. Something where it’s easier to be both the singer and the businessperson.

An economy in which more skills and trades are celebrated so that maybe, just maybe, we can do what we love after all.

Amy Shull lives in Lacey and has contributed photographs for Works in Progress.

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Writing the truth: Bertholt Brecht’s five difficulties

[Ed note: Bertholt Brecht was a playwright and poet. He originally created this list of difficulties that a writer would face in telling the truth, for an essay contest. This is the summary that accompanied the final version, published in 1935 in the context of rising Fascism.]

Anyone who wishes to combat lies and ignorance and to write the truth must overcome at least five difficulties. He or she must have the courage to write the truth when truth is everywhere opposed; the keenness to recognize it, although it is everywhere concealed; the skill to manipulate it as a weapon; the judgment to select those in whose

hands it will be effective; and the cunning to spread the truth among such persons. These are formidable problems for writers living under Fascism, but they exist also for those writers who have fled or been exiled; they exist even for writers working in countries where civil liberty prevails

First, recognize this truth

The great truth of our time is that our continent is giving way to barbarism because private ownership of the means of production is maintained by violence. Merely to recognize this truth is not sufficient, but should it not be recognized, no other truth of importance can be discovered.

What is required of a writer asked to write the truth?

Of what use is it to write something courageous which shows that the condition into which we are falling is barbarous (which is true) if it is not clear why we are falling into this condition? We must say that torture is used in order to preserve property relations. To be sure, when we say this we lose a great many friends who are against torture only because they think prop-

erty relations can be upheld without torture, which is untrue.

We must tell the truth about the barbarous conditions in our country in order that the thing should be done which will put an end to them—the thing, namely, which will change property relations.

Furthermore, we must tell this truth to those who suffer most from existing property relations and who have the greatest interest in their being changed—the workers and those whom we can induce to be their allies because they too have really no control of the means of production even if they do share in the profits.

The five difficulties

There are five difficulties with writing the truth that must be overcome at one and the same time:

We cannot discover the truth about barbarous conditions without thinking of those who suffer from them; we cannot proceed unless we shake off every trace of cowardice; when we seek to discern the true state of affairs in regard to those who are ready to use the knowledge we give them, we must also consider the necessity of offering them the truth in such a manner that it will be a weapon in their hands. Finally, at the same time we must write the truth so cunningly that the enemy will not discover and hinder our offer of the truth.

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—Mary Hall

Thurston County Auditor

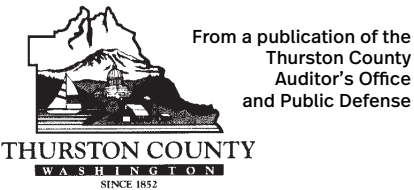


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Victory in Minnesota: Valve turners acquitted of all charges

Climate Defense Project

October 9, 2018

The climate movement secured a major victory today after a judge dismissed all charges against the Valve Turner activists who shut down a tar sands pipeline in northern Minnesota nearly two years ago.

The activists — who were represented by Lauren Regan of the Civil Liberties Defense Center, local counsel Tim Phillips, and Kelsey Skaggs of Climate Defense Project — were prepared to present a climate necessity defense featuring expert testimony on the dangers of climate change and the effectiveness of civil disobedience.

After the prosecution closed its case on the second day of trial, however, the judge agreed with the defense that there was insufficient evidence that the activists — Emily Johnston, Annette Klapstein, and Benjamin Joldersma — had damaged or helped to damage the pipeline, and tossed out all remaining charges.

"This victory is an important rebuke to government efforts to punish activists while letting harmful industries off the hook. At the same time, we need to keep fighting to make sure that activists' voices and rights are respected in the courtroom, particularly for those who are less privileged," said Kelsey Skaggs.

Although the defendants were disappointed that they were unable to present their case to a jury, the acquittal is a significant step forward for activists who have increasingly turned to the court system to press their demands for action on climate change.

In three cases involving Valve Turners in other states who coordinated their actions with the Minnesota activists,

defendants were convicted after being denied the opportunity to present a necessity defense. In Minnesota, today's courtroom victory follows a lengthy effort to defend the activists' right to argue climate necessity, a battle which went all the way to the state supreme court.

today's courtroom victory follows a lengthy effort to defend the activists' right to argue climate necessity

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Among the experts who had been slated to testify in the case were former NASA scientist James Hansen, 350.org co-founder Bill McKibben, Harvard Law professor Lawrence Lessig, and experts on political science, the history of social movements, pipeline safety, and other topics.

Climate Defense Project continues to work with climate activists across the country and to promote the climate necessity defense in various jurisdictions.

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Can there be “too much politics”?

A reflection on collective action needed to solve a problem that affects us in common

Jacob James

I see the effects of climate change first hand. My people, who've lived next to the mouth of the Quinault River for many generations, are now having to relocate the entire lower village to higher ground. The first time the seawall was breached, in 2014, it was a shock. Subsequent times, it was shocking of course, but no longer was it so surprising. The ocean is rising, and thankfully the tribe is moving the village to higher ground. But that is just a reaction to the problem. What we need from our governments is to be proactive, not just reactive.

The temperature of happiness

It's not just rising oceans that we must worry about affecting our happiness. Temperatures continue to rise year after year. I think we've all noticed it. In Chapter 2 of *Essays on the Quality of Life*, they discuss ways to measure “sustainable human well-being”, and in doing so they also discuss a lot about how the environment can affect happiness. Most interestingly to me, they discuss the temperature-aggression hypothesis, which states that as temperatures rise to uncomfortable levels, people are more prone to aggression. And if our global average temperatures keep rising, it follows that collective happiness will likewise decrease as a result of increased aggression and the things that go along with that, like violence and verbal abuse.

I am just one person. I can't do much about climate change or its effects. Sure, I could recycle more, try to use less plastic, or maybe buy a bicycle. Maybe I'll install LEDs instead of fluorescents. You get the idea. But that is nowhere near enough, and we'd all have to start making some drastic changes for there to be an impact. Clearly, as individuals, we are almost powerless to solve this problem on our own.

Our government isn't responding to our collective need

But our government does nothing. They pretend that the problem doesn't exist. They pulled out of the Paris Climate Agreement, which wasn't a solution on its own, but at least it was a step in the right direction. According to a New York Times article written by Nadja Popovich et al., the US government, since the beginning of the new administration, has overturned at least 33 environmental regulations, with more on the way.

Rules like the one that prohibited coal companies from dumping waste into streams, or the Obama-era order that directed the National Park Service to consider climate change when managing the natural resources in our parks. Why the hell would they be getting rid of such rules when the threat is finally starting to show its face, right on our shores?

Climate change is a collective problem

This problem is real and present, and some are starting to see it firsthand... but the government does nothing. That tells me that our government doesn't feel enough pressure. They are not hearing the people. The problem of climate change seems like an abstract one. No individual is solely responsible for it, yet in some way, we

all are responsible for it. At least, we are all partly responsible for the fact that nothing is being done. It's a collective problem that will hurt everybody in some way. So, if it's a collective problem, it will require a collective solution.

Governments do not typically act from the goodness of their hearts. Governments have all kinds of interests and motivations – diplomatic interests, economic interests, foreign policy interests, and all kinds of other things that I would not presume to know about. They are pressured by many other things besides just the goodwill and wellbeing of the people they are meant to lead. And sometimes, when the pressure from other sources outweighs pressure from citizens, priorities change. Governments take action that is not foremost in the best interests of the people.

Sometimes we the people need to act

Sometimes, things become too serious that things can no longer be ignored. Sometimes, the people need to stand up and make their voices heard. Sometimes, they need to be present, loud, and engaged with those who can make a difference. Sometimes, that means voting and encouraging others to do so. Sometimes, you got to call your representatives and let them know what you're thinking. Sometimes, people got to take to the streets. And sometimes, the stakes are even higher. People literally died fighting for the 40-hour work week. But we are all happier because of it.

I don't think the barriers we face are the same as back then. I don't think we need to have violent and life-ending protests to achieve what we must achieve. I think we face a different kind of roadblock – one of apathy. People don't, for whatever reason, feel the need to care so much. Like, I'm sure they care, if you were to ask them. The problem is that we are all individuals, and we see big societal problems as so distant to us that we don't feel we can do anything anyway.

Surely, there are scientists and even some lawmakers who are taking the problems seriously. But as a collective body of government, there is a lack of pressure to do anything meaningful about the problem of climate change, and the other problems we face. Many in our government have other motives, besides to help the average person. I don't really feel the need to quantify that statement, because I think the results show that loud and clear. I should point out, though, that the latest Congressional approval rating, posted in May 2018 by Gallup, is only 17%. 79% disapprove of the way Congress is handling things overall.

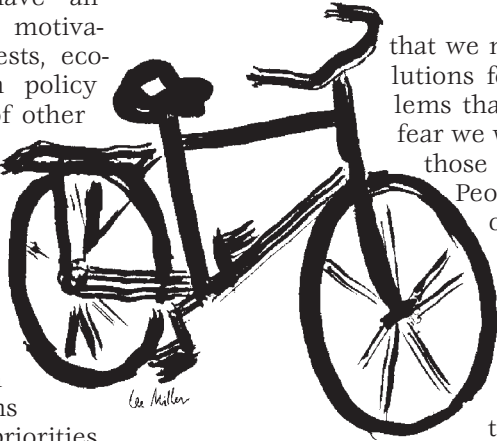
The planet is warming but we need to turn up the heat

I think it's our job, as citizens and as people who wish to pursue happiness, to pressure those politicians who think they can focus on other things besides the wellbeing of the people. Turn the heat up on them, just as the heat continues to rise on the planet.

Make them feel the weight that we can put on them. Make them worried for their jobs, as there is almost no bigger motivator than the fear of losing your job. Many of the average people know that all too well.

I think it's natural that our government is doing nothing. Our government, after all, is meant to be representative of its people. They do nothing because there aren't enough people in this country standing up and making their voices heard. Why should they act if we cannot even speak up? If people do not rise and say that enough is enough, that action must be taken,

...as temperatures rise to uncomfortable levels, people are more prone to aggression.



that we need real solutions for the problems that we face, I fear we will not find those solutions. People may continue to be distracted, and apathetic about the state of our country and our world. And so too may our government.

People need to care about the issues—care enough to make others care. Talk about the issues with others around you. Collective action first requires collective awareness and knowledge. We must share this mindset with others—that we can make a difference. That by acknowledging the problems, and coming together to solve them,

that we can solve them. Because the alternative is not acceptable; collective ignorance leads to collective misery. And if we ignore our problems, especially climate change, they will not get better. They will get worse, and our collective happiness will decrease. Do you want to find out by how much? I sure as hell don't. And I don't want my future children to, either.

Participating in political decisions can make us happier

But there's good news. According to a report by Chris Barker and Brian Martin, participation in the political (decision-making) process can actually increase happiness for the person who participates, not only because outcomes may be achieved, but also because when you participate, you're interacting with others. You're helping people. But they also found that happier people are more likely to participate than those who aren't. As you can see, this can potentially create a positive feedback loop, which the authors also discuss. If participating makes people happier, somehow, and happier people participate more, you can see how it may be possible to create such a loop.

I think more people need to be aware of and educated about their government. To bring positive change, it takes advocacy, action, and informed consent by the people. When people stop caring and governments are left to their own devices, history has shown us that things get worse for the people. Participation can make a difference, however. So, with that in mind, I really don't think we can be discussing too much politics.

Jacob James is a Quinault tribal member and lifelong resident of Taholah, WA. He is currently studying at South Puget Sound Community College.

Car Alarum

In *Aesop's Fables*, when the shepherd-boy
Cried “wolf,” at first he lied. He laughed at all
The neighbors who came running to his call;
His purpose was to pester and annoy.
But as we know, there really was a wolf,
Lying in wait and scheming to engulf
The sheep—and when that predator slunk in,
The villagers ignored their shepherd's din.
So now we have the wolf as president.
When vocal citizens in prior times
Have cried “impeach” and made the argument
That Clinton, Bush, Obama for their crimes
Must go, they weren't exactly telling lies—
Or didn't think they were—at least not all
The time. And yet the outcome is the same,
If current voters see this as a game;
For even Nixon, who deserved to fall
For masking the abuses of his spies,
Resigned before impeachment could play out.
But here's the even weirder turnabout:
The Democratic Party is afraid
To look as if a game is being played,
As if they might be trying to annoy
The populace, just like the shepherd-boy.
So here we are at last. The threat is real:
His name is Trump. And if we fail to use
Our Constitution's only remedy
For high crimes under presidential seal—
To cry “impeach” and mean it—then we choose
The slaughter of the sheep we'll surely be.

—Bonnie Jo Jones

How the US undermines the economy of Venezuela in search of regime change

Tim Young

[Ed. note: Starting after the election of Socialist Hugo Chavez in 1998 and continuing under Nicholas Maduro, his recently re-elected successor, the aim of US policy toward Venezuela has been regime change. Reference to military intervention appears periodically, but mainly the US strategy has been to cripple the country economically in hopes of fomenting rebellion. As the following article outlines, the consequences of racheting US sanctions fall directly on the people of the country.]

There has been scant US media reporting on economic damage provoked by the Trump administration's financial sanctions, announced in late August last year (shortly after Trump's statement about a "military option" for Venezuela). Following President Donald Trump's renewal of the 2015 executive order declaring Venezuela a threat to US national security, several rounds of sanctions have been imposed against Venezuela.

The most recent sanctions were imposed the day after Venezuelans voted Maduro in for a second term in the May 20 election as what can only be seen as punishment for doing so.

Trump's unilateral and illegal financial embargo – which cuts Venezuela off from most financial markets – has had two major consequences, both of which entail increased economic

hardship for the Venezuelan people. First, it causes even greater shortages of essential goods, including food and medicine. Second, it makes economic recovery nearly impossible, since the government cannot borrow or restructure its foreign debt, and in some cases cannot even carry out normal import transactions, including for medicines.

Aside from fomenting greater economic havoc in Venezuela, Trump and his coterie of advisors on Venezuela, including Republican Senator Marco Rubio, have supported opposition hardliners in their efforts to scuttle attempts at dialogue and undermine elections, even when these offer the possibility of a peaceful political transition.

Sanctions threaten the basic health of Venezuela's people
Revealing examples are emerging of the cumulative impact that US sanctions against Venezuela are having on the Venezuelan people in the field of health, one of the key priorities of the Bolivarian revolution.

These illustrative examples and similar ones about the blocking of food imports put the lie to the US claim that it is concerned about the well-being of the Venezuelan people.

In July 2017, the US bank Citibank refused to handle Venezuela's payment for the import of 300,000 insulin doses to meet the needs of 450,000 registered patients. Three months later, the US blockade prevented Venezuela

from depositing funds with the UBS Swiss bank, delaying a purchase of vaccines for months and disrupting the country's vaccination schedules.

In November 2017, transnational pharmaceutical companies Baster, Abbot and Pfizer refused to issue export certificates for cancer drugs, making it impossible for Venezuela to buy them. And in 2018, a \$9 million payment through an international account for dialysis supplies for treating 15,000 patients, free of charge, was similarly blocked under threat of US sanctions.

A goal of "regime change"
It is clear that the US sanctions – illegal under international law – are part of an overall strategy to bring about what the US calls "regime change." Its aim is to undermine and topple the elected government of President Nicolas Maduro and secure control of Venezuela's vast oil reserves and other natural resources and wealth.

In so doing it would reassert its domination over the region against the challenges to its control posed by an independent sovereign Venezuelan state committed to social justice and regional unity.

US sanctions date from April 2016 following president Barack Obama's executive order a month earlier, permitting them on the bizarre grounds that Venezuela is a "rare and extraordinary threat to US national security and foreign policy."

Covert attempts to destabilize since 2002

But in effect this move simply made overt what was previously an undisclosed strategy of "regime change" through destabilizing Venezuela, dating back to the early years of Hugo Chavez's presidency. This had led George W. Bush's administration to support the failed coup d'etat against Chavez in 2002 and the right-wing management lockout in the oil industry which caused billions of dollars of lost revenue and a catastrophic impact on the government's social projects.

Declassified US government documents and WikiLeaks material have shown that the US subsequently used covert financial, political, media and diplomatic activities in pursuit of its goal.

But with the repeated failure of US-financed efforts by Venezuela's right-wing opposition to overthrow the government, the US seems to have decided to take a much more central role in the strategy of "regime change." As part of this shift, the US has increased the use of unilateral illegal sanctions against Venezuela.

The effect of sanctions is far-reaching.
They interfere with international trade, blocking access to medicines as the earlier cited examples show, but also food and other essential goods. They block financial transactions, both payments and remittances, freeze Venezuela's financial assets held externally and delay buying and selling operations, not only of the Venezuelan government and companies but also foreign business partners.

Sanctions now form a key part of what is a strategic plan by the US to ruin the Venezuelan economy, pushing the population towards mass migration or internal civil conflict and thus creating the conditions for a so-called "humanitarian intervention."

Following the Cuba and Chile models
This strategy clearly draws on both the longstanding US blockade of Cuba and its destabilizing of Allende's Chile in the 1970s. Not only has the Trump administration levied four rounds of sanctions against Venezuela less than half way through its term but, in August 2017, Trump stated he would not "rule out the military option" against the country.

Neighboring Colombia's recent decision to join NATO also increases US military reach and capabilities, prompting the Venezuelan government to call it "a serious threat to regional peace and stability."

The US has also been ramping up pressure on Venezuela by internationalizing its sanctions campaign. . A major effort to persuade other countries, by one means or another, to join in has led Canada, the EU, Panama and even Switzerland to apply sanctions. US courting of the so-called Lima Group of right-wing Latin American governments has further sought to isolate Venezuela diplomatically in the region.

In these circumstances, the response must be to internationalize the support for the elected government of Venezuela and defend its right to sovereignty. Solidarity is needed more than ever.

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Congress should end US military participation in the Saudis' war in Yemen

There are currently bipartisan bills in both Houses of Congress to cut off US participation in the war

Mark Weisbrot

Each day since Oct. 2, new evidence has emerged that the killing of *Washington Post* journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a resident of Virginia, was a premeditated murder.

At the same time, it is also increasingly clear that the murder was approved at the highest levels of the Saudi Arabian government, most likely including the current ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman.

The Saudis at first maintained that Khashoggi had left the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, alive; they then claimed, incredulously, that he was killed there in the course of a fist fight. But we also know that a team of 15 Saudis, including "an autopsy expert" and others with links to Saudi high officials and intelligence, was flown in at dawn on Oct. 2.

In the past four years, the United States has supplied 60 percent of Saudi arms purchases many of which are used to kill civilians in Yemen.

Should the U.S. government cut off weapons sales to Saudi Arabia in response to this atrocity? Of course it should. But President Donald Trump has opposed this measure, and The Washington Post reports that Congress might not even have a chance to vote on it.

However, there is something vastly more important and obvious that the U.S. Congress can do regardless of what Trump wants about Saudi atrocities. The Congress can stop U.S. participation in the Saudis' genocidal war in Yemen.

Since 2015, the U.S. military has been

providing mid-air refueling to Saudi and UAE planes conducting airstrikes that have killed thousands of civilians in Yemen including a school bus with 40 children that was hit by a U.S.-supplied bomb in August.

These bombing raids also have hit water, sewage, and other vital infrastructure, causing thousands more deaths and a million people infected with cholera.

But most catastrophically, the air strikes and the Saudi blockade and siege of Yemen's major port city have caused the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today, with 14 million people on the brink of starvation, ac-

Congress can stop these horrific crimes, because the Saudi and UAE bombers are dependent on mid-air refueling from U.S. planes.

cording to the UN.

The *New York Times* editorial board has noted that the Saudis were trying to "starve Yemen into submission," a strategy that constituted "war crimes."

Congress can stop these horrific crimes, because the Saudi and UAE bombers are dependent on mid-air refueling from U.S. planes. The U.S. also provides assistance with targeting and intelligence and logistics.

There are currently bipartisan bills in both Houses of Congress to cut off US participation in the war.

House Concurrent Resolution 138, introduced by Ro Khanna (D-Calif.), has 56 co-sponsors. These include high-level leadership, such as the ranking Democratic members of the Foreign Affairs, Armed Services, Appropria-

tions, and Judiciary Committees.

The Senate bill, led by Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), and Mike Lee (R-Utah), got 44 votes in February and is likely to get a majority in the wake of the Khashoggi murder.

These bills have been introduced under the 1973 War Powers Resolution, a law that reinforced the Constitution's provision that Congress should decide whether or not the US military should be deployed in war.

Under the two resolutions, if the Congress votes to end U.S. military participation in the Saudi war, the president will have 30 days to withdraw.

In the coming months, tens of thousands of people across the country will be contacting their representatives and senators to persuade them to vote to end this war that has nothing to do with U.S. national security.

They will be up against some of the most powerful interests in the world: the military-industrial complex including the weapons manufacturers that Trump has expressed concerns about as well as the national security state. But if enough people participate in this effort, the war will end.

Mark Weisbrot is Co-Director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), in Washington, DC. He is also president of Just Foreign Policy. He is co-author, with Dean Baker, of Social Security: The Phony Crisis.

This article appeared on October 26 in the Chicago Tribune and is reprinted from Common Dreams under a Creative Commons license.

Help rebuild our jail library

The Thurston County Public Defense Office and the Thurston County Jail are collaborating on a project to replace the depleted accumulation of worn and torn books now stored in the jail library. A jail without a library is like a bookshelf without books!

From now through December 10, 2018 you can contribute to their goal of collecting 2000 books! Help create a real library at the jail!

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Also welcome: sudoku, crossword, coloring books to be distributed by case managers

There are currently 255 individuals in the jail, 65 women and 190 men. Throughout the year you can also donate books through **Books to Prisoners**, www.olympiabtp.org for details.



Many public libraries in the US were initiated by local Womens’ Clubs, using contributions from Andrew Carnegie. Forty-three were built in Washington; 14 still serve as places to gather and read. Carnegie libraries had to provide free service and use public (not private) funds for operating costs. The libraries were not racially integrated; a few were funded for “colored” people. (Carnegie owed his immense wealth to having destroyed the steelworkers’ union in bloody battles in 1892.)

Works In Progress