When rumors circulated that Olympia would install an ice rink on the site of the old stadium, some downtown businesses were concerned. One Councilmember, who brought it to the City Council this past May, said that Rink Events would charge $200,000 to provide and install the facility, and $82,000 to operate it.

A memo from Park Department listed the variety of funds to pay Ice Rink Events and cover $67,000 in additional costs, including a donation to the YMCA and the cost of skate rentals. The Olympia Park Plan was created in 2016 with input across the community, to set priorities and guide expenditures. The park department believes that it will make up the difference; and $92,000 to operate it.

There was in fact no process involved in the decision to approve the staff’s succinct presentation. The city purchased the land that the rink occupies in 2013 for about $3 million. It was bare for some years, and a few people found the lots a safe place to live in their vehicles. They were swiftly removed when the city cleaned up the property and built a fence, with the ice rink in mind.

The proposal for Ice Rink Events was brought to the City Council this past May, and a 90-minute turn is $10-$12 (including skates). On “cheap” Tuesdays, the charge is $8 for 90 minutes.

As for offering recreation to people in Olympia, Oly Ice’s fees could end up limiting its use mainly to those with means. A 9:00-minute turn is $10-$12 (including skates). On “cheap” Tuesdays, the charge is $8 for 90 minutes. At a recent City Council meeting, Parks Department Director Paul Simmons announced that they will be giving 120 free passes to organizations that will allow low-income people to skate. That’s $1200-1400 worth. May- be, since Olympia taxpayers are kicking in a couple hundred thousand dollars, and the goal is to offer something fun for all Olympians, they could dou- ble or triple the number of free passes. Maybe they will have some questions for the staff.

This is an important story that didn’t make our three-year contract with Ice Events, that means they will have a chance to evaluate whether to go ahead in 2019 for another season. At that point, maybe they will have some questions for the Parks Department.

Ricky Osborne is a photographer and multimedia contributor to Works in Progress.
Sharia Law vs Bible Law and the American experiment

Quite a lot of Americans seem to be bewitched by the sound of ‘Sharia Law’—at least 14 states have adopted statutes that prohibit recourse to foreign law. That makes sense to many of their citizens that Sharia Law will not be allowed to encroach on America’s freedoms. In any case, the absence of foreign-influence means that these states are wasting their time and money, because of course their purpose isn’t to repress their population but to rile them up. Talk shows have still tellers that we already have ‘creeping Sharia Law’ in this country.

On the other hand, Bible law has a much higher likelihood of inroads into the freedoms Americans enjoy. Despite the First Amendment guarantee that ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ the elements of a conservative Christian ideology has found their way into state and municipal laws and practices, and is increasingly into federal administrative agencies. And conservative christians have increasingly found their way into governing circles at both the state and federal level.

The courts have found that no federal or state government may adopt a law that aids or forbids anyone, or aids all religions. Any law subject to challenge on those grounds must pass a three-part test: 1) it must have a clearly secular purpose; 2) its primary effect must neither advance nor inhibit religion, and 3) it must avoid excessive entanglement with religion.

Whether those criteria are sufficient to preserve this country from seeing beliefs espoused by others becomes clearer. Of public policy seems open to question. This, not Sharia, is the danger.

Three articles in this talk address the good that can come when churches or other religious groupings take positions on public policy or perform social services. However, when they have taken step beyond a discussion of church, State, and Church, and beyond a discussion of church and State, and beyond the role of church in society that should alarm us. We cannot avoid the questions and expectations with public dollars or codified law to strengthen protections against them.

The power of Christian groups in the political sphere in the US reflected in the term ‘Christian right.’ Dozens of organizations including Christian Voice, Moral Majority, Religious Roundtable have focused on the primary effect must neither advance nor inhibit religion, and that it must avoid excessive entanglement with religion.

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Many officials in the current administration are veterans of the Chris- tian Right. One, who is apparently responsible as Director of the Office for Refugee Resettlement, for intervening and preventing a young girl from having a legal abortion. Another, Roger Severino, as director of the Office of Civil Rights in the Health and Human Services department cre- ated a new Division Conscience and Religious Freedom. Division. Donald Trump soon after his election, con- verted Bush’s ‘faith-based’ office into the White House Faith and Opportu- nity Initiative, with officials in 13 fed- eral agencies. The 1993 Religious Freedom Restora- tion Act (RFRA) has turned into a tool that allows businesses to avoid obeying laws that are said to conflict with their supposed religious beliefs. This has enabled businesses to ex- clude coverage for abortion and con- ceptual disorders, and for some—like insurance plans. Some officials in the administration seem to measure in finding ways to avoid regulations that are motivated by re- ligious aims. A new proposed rule would require ACAs to offer consumers an ‘abortion bill’ each month, representing the share of their premium going towards coverage of abortion services. Consumers would be re- quired to pay this bill separately.

One way to look at such forays is as marketing’ for opportunities to carve out ever larger space into intro- duce religious demands and prohibi- tions into the laws that govern all of us. Our secular space won’t disappear suddenly in a democracy. It’s not easy to get people to give up their ideas of freedom and tolerance. And here I’ll quote the Irish journalist Finian O’Toole: “You have to create a ‘trauma’ in them if they are done well, serve two pur- poses. They get people used to something the may initially recoil from; and they allow you to refine and cali- brate. This is what is happening now and we would be fools not to see...

—BW

Theme for Political work in the context of the midterm elections: "Don’t vote for Max Elbaum to stimulate thinking about salamms for next month’s theme. There you are. Max is an election.

Elections are about power. They are a harner of relative strength of different social and political forces, and within certain constraints, they can shift that power. Those con- straints vary, sometimes the outcome of elections can shift things only in the tinest of ways, other times they have big consequences. This just-completed election, and likely even more the one in 2020, the stakes are quite high. Politics is about Power. One of positive things this moment is that the question of power has moved central to dis- cussion on the left. Not just how to speak truth to power, or how to protect those in power, or pressure to exercise power. Power is a thing. Max Elbaum’s book should be an introduction to how to talk about this.

We’ve come a long way since John Kennedy said, “I do not speak for my church on public matters and my church does not speak for me.” From the President on down, politicians trumpet their religious positions. For a comprehensive listing of events and activities of interest to the South Sound politically active community and friends, go to the Community Calendar at LocalMotive.org. For WIP listings visit our FB page.
The role of faith in our nation’s politics and governance has long been contested, even though the separation between church and state is a founding principle. In practice, the two, religion and governance, have always been intertwined. We might explore what that means by asking what we would be doing if we were a “pro-government” nation. And then to contrast that with the direction that religion has prescribed for us.

Frederick Douglass wrestled with this question in 1852, in an eloquent address entitled “What to a Slave is the Fourth of July?” In that speech, Douglass identified the accomplishments and values of the founders of the country, and then posed his challenge: how can we promote anything when the very principles and practices that are being celebrated have been designed to rob him and other African Americans of their rights.

Douglass makes clear the complicity of the Christian church in maintaining unjust and racist structures. Douglass was speaking two years after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act. That act obliterated the Mason-Dixon line, which had given Fredrick Douglass reason to believe that he and his people could reach freedom. The passage of the Fugitive Slave Act obliterated the Mason-Dixon line, particularly but not exclusively for African Americans.

Slaves remained no longer a mere commodity, but men, women, and children, and the very name of the Fugitive Slave Act served as an opiate of the people. Too often the churches talk about a future good over yonder and not concerned about the present evil over here. But I’m torn between telling me about the hereafter and they don’t tell me about the here. (Yeah) You can’t say hereafter (Yeah) without saying here... It’s all right to talk about streets flowing with milk and honey over yonder. But I want to see men living in decent homes right here in this world. (Amen) It’s all right to talk about all of these things in terms of a new Jerusalem, but I want to see a new Atlanta, a new New York, a new middle class, and that a new world right here. (Amen)

Or as Douglass put it over 150 years ago:

In 1862, Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech called “Can a Christian be a Communist?” In the first half of the speech, King explained why communism and Christianity are incompatible. In essence, King said, “Karl Marx was a materialist, and he believed that the whole of human history moved on, driven by economic forces. This was his idea. There was no place in that system for God, and so from that moment on, communism became an atheistic system.”

And yet, King continues, there is something akin to a communism, which challenges us all because it emphasizes essential truths.

According to King, communism should challenge Christians to become more concerned about social justice. He explained to his listeners that the Communist Manifesto, published in 1847 by Marx and Engels, emphasized the exploitation of the lower class by the middle class, and that communism sought to transcend the superficialities of race and color. King also suggested Marx drew on religious teachings to inform his thinking about civil rights.

Karl Marx was born a Jew in a rabbinic family. Somewhere along the way, he must have heard his parents reading the words of Amos: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.” Then, when he was six years old, his parents became Christians, and somewhere along the way he must have heard them reading over the New Testament. “Ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me.”

King reminds his audience that “Christians are always to begin with a bias in favor of a movement which pro- tests against unfair treatment of the poor” and in that way, Communism is not compatible with Christianity. But if Christianity fails to accomplish its mission, communism may be the nec-

You can’t say ‘hereafter’ without saying ‘here’!

Can the church become a force for justice in this world?

Emily Lardner

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identifying as an individual naturally
pits us against other individuals
to satisfy our narrow self-interest

Tolstoy’s work exposes thefallacy of violence as a motivation.
Similar to the makeup of our coun-
try, Tolstoy’s Russia consisted of a very wealthy class, an educated
elite and the masses of peasants and
working class people. In the last chap-
ter of his book, The Kingdom of God Is
Within You—which was the inspiration for Gandhi in his non-violent indepen-
dence movement—Tolstoy describes a scene in which government officials
conscript peasants. The officials rip
the peasants of one town to send them
to a neighboring town to kill and tor-
ture peasants who are resisting the
rich landowner’s effort to divert water
from the fields on which their lives
depend. Complicity in these immoral actions
is rational in a world where people
identify with their social position of
governor, policeman, officer, soldier,
and so they themselves bound to not
their conscience or human duties, but
their social duties. Tolstoy exposes the
entireity of the Church and State, is based on violence or the threat of violence.

This law of violence, what Rabbi Le-
viner would call the worldview of fear
and domination, causes us to divide the
world into “us” and “them” where be-
cause they will try to take ad-
vantage of us.” Tolstoy saw
that violence is a vicious cycle, whether by the ruling class or the revolutionaries, could
never unify people or lead to peace.
Only one path exists because it profits some
and deceives the rest.

The worldview of love
The way out of this world, writes Tol-
sto, is through the law of love as ex-
pressed in the Gospels. He saw reli-
gion as the only true tie to man to the
universe, and morality as the guide
to life that follows from this relationship.
All religions are part of the chain of
the Infinite, our conduct towards each
other necessarily follows the Golden
Rule. “Do unto others as you would
have them do unto you.” Rabbi Lerner
would call this the worldview of love,
and generosity, and with God and the
force that makes possible the trans-
formation of “that which is” to “that
which can and ought to be”—the force
of possibility.

Reverend Monroe’s permit was to visit
this encampment was denied by the city
on the grounds that she did not pro-
vide enough detail, or a schedule, or
a clear list of what she intended to do
during her visits. Reverend Monroe
stated in response that she is a priest:
“I consider it my duty as an American
and the hungry. The city’s actions
do not happen on a schedule, as any
other necessarily follows the Golden
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A view based on love and justice
But that isn’t the only story. There is
another view, a view based on love and justice.
A view that is inspired by the Abdi-
lution movement, Gandhi and the Rev.
Martin Luther King, Jr. Abolitionists, phil-
thropists, and April Obi Boling,
founder of Birthing Roots Midwifery,
who have continued to visit people, even
those encampment residents can
come and go as they please.
Combat veterans living with acute ag-
aphobia cannot easily come and go as
they please. Disabled people living
with severe chronic pain, amputations,
and post-traumatic stress can
not easily come and go as they please.
People who look visibly poor in this
city, often cannot come and go as they
please. They only have frequent inci-
dents of harassment and violence that
weaken that way as One.

Resources to guide your thinking
This isn’t easy, especially in our soci-
ety where TV and computers peddle sadistic violence, egotistical pitting
and a barrage of consumer appeals to
greed, selfishness, pride, gluttony
and vanity. Yet there are plenty of examples of the law of love and gen-
erosity in the political arena. Check
out some of the progressive lobby-
atives. Look up ideas for a Global Mar-
shall Plan (www.tikkun.org/gmp) as
to how to make low-cost clean water
technologies in rural areas possible.
For instance, the Faith League of
Women Voters and the Faith
Environmental and Social Responsibil-
ity Amendment to the US Constitution
(www.tikkun.org/eco) that enacts to
encourage corporate power be subject to demo-
cratic restraints.

locally, there are several groups work-
ing in our communities issues
motivated by the progressive spiritual worldview.

Spiritual progressives at work in our area
FaithWorks consists of 32 faith communities who are politically ac-
ctive in social justice and peace issues
in the name of God. No wonder that
million of people have been slaughtered and
ghastly acts of cruelty committed in the
name of God. No wonder that
to greed, selfishness, pride, gluttony
and vanity. Yet there are plenty of examples of the law of love and gen-
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cratic restraints.

A yearning we all may share
In the coming year, we may
sacrifice our own individualism
and think this is the way it has to be.
As John Lennon sang,
"Imagine all the people living life in peace.
You may say I'm a dreamer, but
I'm not the only one.
I hope some day you'll join us, and the world will live as One.

Esther Kronenberg is a member of the League of Women Voters and the Faith
Action Network
Growing up Irish Catholic on Queen Anne Hill

Dan Leahy

"Dig that man with the crazy tan; he's our Dan from the Irish clan." Frankie Warner made that up. It was a poster of a big-caged Frederick Douglas high-grader running for class president. It hung at the back of the classroom in St. Anne's Parish School in Seattle's Queen Anne neighborhood.

The nuns, like today's electronic vot- ing systems, never let us use paper ballots. We all put our break-down on the desk and raised our hand for our candidate. It was hard for the nuns to choose because the race was so close, one a vote difference. I can't remember who won, or if Kip Toner, but the loser got to be Vice President. Queen Anne Hill was my neighborhood from 2nd grade on. We lived on Crockett Street (a grown-up cricket, my Dad said) just below John F. Ele- mentary. John Jay was a public school, out of bounds for an Irish-Catholic kid like me, just like the public library. But we had our stash of cigarettes at John Jay in a cigar box under the portables, me and Johnnie Sweet who lived on Newton, my main buddy.

I'd ride my bicycle to school most days. Up past McCauliff's house, turn right into a back road where you could get into the wading pool full of polio possibilities from peering children, down past A's basketball court where you could get a cheeseburger and a green river float for 75 cents, to the school to park my bike between the nuns' convent and the back of the school.

Sister Rachel Ann, my second grade teacher said; I had the hands of the practiced pros. Even though I was in love with her, she headed me in the oppo- site direction.

Then there was George Vanni, the Italian boy, who would always wear orange on St. Pat's day. Even though he was kind and didn't want to fight me, I would have to challenge him. That lead to a few brushes and a "D" in deportment. Frankie Warner tried to give me a pass, I mean, that one time I could get a cheeseburger and a green river float for 75 cents, to the school to park my bike between the nuns' convent and the back of the school.

Yes, my temper. In the 7th grade, I was tripped by a girl on my way to my truck and I yelled out. The sister got mad at me! "When will you learn to control that temper, Danny?" she said. Thoughts of revenge went to the wrong person. How about the girl who tripped me?

Temper or not, I headed for the Semi- nary right after 8th grade. What else would one want to be but a priest? There were no professionals in our immediate family. My Dad ran a gas station up on Capitol Hill and he nev- er let me be around cars or the gas sta- tion. I was not supposed to be him.

I guess I couldn't be my Mom. My Mom was a church lady, one of a cadre of women, like Mrs. Dalton and Mrs. Salladay, who ran the altar society and helped keep the priests happy and the church clean.

Plus, my Dad had a younger brother who was a priest. Pastor of Christ the King parish in Seattle, the largest in the diocese. Father Lester Leo Leahy. Father Leo lived his V-4 Cherry sedan like a madman. He would pass long lines of cars on Stevens Pass while we wined in the back seat too frightened even to pray. I wanted to drive just like him.

I had cousins who were either priests or in the seminary—Terry, Whalen and Pat. Of course, if a son becomes a priest, his mom gets a straight, no stops, passage direct to the pearly gates. Plus St. Edward's tuition was free. (It was only later that I found out parents had to pay tuition if their son left without becoming a priest.)

Off to St. Edward's seminary I went. The entrance to St. Edwards was a long single-lane road through the woods, past the soggy football field he left, curve around to a circle drive with a statue in it. There was a grayash, brick, three-story building, facing west, then an open space, then the woods and further down the hill, Lake Washing- ton. After four years there and then roll out to build the gym and salt the grounds — a plan, years later, I reserved for the Rockefeller Estates in upstate New York.

The seminary was a place made to break all the rules. Our freshmen year we were in a barracks away from the main building. Lights out at 9:00 pm. One kid would play taps through a noise he had found and then roll out the window and into the woods. An- other young recruit knelt in front of his Alar tag and slapped himself so hard with the sign of the cross I couldn't get to sleep.

By sophomore year we were in the normal building. The morning was harsh and, as in the rest of my life, we went by the bell. Obeseification training, my friend Rick Fellows would have said.

The seminarians made up and en- forced, I'd get "taunched out." Some times the others higher up the food chain would be nice and send down chocolate ice cream laced with ex-lax. The third Sunday of every month was visiting day. My family could come and they always did. It was human contact and it was great. The whole area in front of the main building would fill up with cars and families. Soon, of course, we were looking out for sisters, the real kind, the ones with breasts, but not only had breasts, but wore dresses with zippers right down the front! Always a main attraction if you could fool a priest's look.

Returning to the building after visiting Sunday was hard, from a loving family to a cruel institution.

My Dad taught me a rule. Say your goodbyes once, walk toward the building and don't look back. I did that and still do.

There was another touch of home dur- ing those years—my laundry bag. My mom would do my laundry and drop it off at the seminary. I'd rush down, grab it and put it in my clothes when I was after. My Mom was a rule-break- er, a co-conspirator. She'd stash treats in the bag—date-filled cookies and other delectables.

The seminary authorities did weird things. I had to leave my letters home unsealed so they could read them. One of the cruellest things they would do was to "disappear" my friends. Where is Jimmy? He wasn't at early mass, nor at breakfast. Is he sick? Let's find him. No luck. No explanation. Gone in the night. Gone. Never seen again. No word on anything.

I can't say I had a hard life at the semi- nary. We were boys. We went to class. Made jokes about our teachers. Played zone runs. Played hard at six-man, flag football, tennis, basketball, bas- ketball, sold our rosaries, walked the halls, had a pique game, made friends, snuck out to Kenmore to read Playboy magazines, drank altar wine, hung out in St. Anne's back yard. One day our hockey coach heard some band music from Seattle, tormented those who broke our rules—and learned Lake Washington Greek. By the end of the year only 4 of 43 freshmen who entered with me were still there. Years later, the other 40 would call me to wish I knew exactly why I left. Deci- sions never seem to be clear cut, rational and well thought out. Maybe it was Marilyn Dalton, Jimmy's sister, who I went wa- ter-skiing with on Lake Wash- ington during summer break. I didn't know what to do with Marilyn, but I liked being with her. That was a no-no for semi- narians.

Maybe it was the Seminary's Rector, Father O'Neill calling me on the carpet about my late night "trolling" episode, telling me that I was a "rascal" and that he would "boot me out of here". I think Father Leo was experiencing the smoke-bombing of the priests cars and outfitted them with high pitched squawkers that blew when they took off for a Sunday mass. But it wasn't me. Either way, Father Leo reportedly said, "No, you are not. Not my nephew.

Maybe it was the Guv. Hey, you young guys, my friends, disappeared over the years or not coming back and wonder- ing why? Maybe it was coming to the conclusion that the only criterion to priesthood was answering the bell.

Maybe it was that all we learned we were being taught by priests who them- selves could not be what we wanted to be. All the priests at the seminary were, for various reasons, priests who couldn't do what the world really wanted.

What I think really did it, though, was a conversation I had with my uncle. When I told my mother I didn't want to be a priest, he sent my Father Les before I made my final deci- sion. I went to his big office in Christ Church where my father and a long list of his friends were, for various reasons, priests who couldn't do what the world really wanted.

What I ended up doing was hating Father Les for the rest of his life and leaving the seminary because being like my father was okay by me, even though he didn't have a new car, a big office or a prestige job like Father Les. My Dad worked hard every day, often for 12 hours. He went to mass every morning and every night saying his rosary. He did right by his family and never complained. I wasn't going to be like my Dad. My brother had no business putting him down in front of his son.

My sister, Sister Daniel Maureen, a Hospitaller for more than fourteen months my senior, along with her fellow conspirators at Seattle University, submitted an application to the top of the pile and I entered Seattle University as a fresh- man that fall of 1960.

This reflection is excerpted from an upcoming autobiography entitled When the Mayonnaise Ran Red. Dan is the grandson of Eastern Washington pioneers.
This is our lane: Famous docs explain they're not anti-gun but anti-bullet hole

Abby Zimet.

Last week, hours before the slaughter of 12 people at a country music bar in Thousand Oaks, CA, our 90/7 mass shooting this year, the ever-judicious NRA denounced doctors and other health care professionals—those steadfast public health heroes who daily labor to pick up the shattered pieces from NRA-funded carnage universe-wide. From public health trash who for years have seen and heard things that cannot be unseen and unheard. Fighting to save lives. Fighting to reduce gun violence.

Citing a recent paper on the epidemic from the American College of Physicians titled, “Marking Firearm Injuries and Death in the United States,” the ghouls at the NRA snarled, “Some one’s lane. The gun-suited’s anti-gun doctors to stay in their lane.”

This, from a grotesque group that has years behind himculpability for so many of them who are doing so. Perhaps the problem isn’t that many people are troubled — there are lots of reasons to be troubled, both crazy and legitimate — but that so many of them have embraced a simplistic, life-devaluing solution to the trouble. It’s the same solution the country itself has embraced.

“Mass shootings and mass burnings,” said Stephen Paddock, a former doctor at Arizona State University, quoted by Wired magazine. “Welcome to the new America.”

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We are not robots

Amazon workers across Europe walk out on black Friday over low wages and ‘inhuman conditions’

Jessica Corbett

Amazon workers across Europe staged a walkout on Black Friday—when retailers across Europe and the US pull in 20% of their annual sales—protesting low wages and poor working conditions. In Madrid, Spain—where about 90 percent of staff walked off the job—told Business Insider in a statement that Amazon’s profits—and those of companies in the world that expects cities to buy them the people who will make their profits. New York will offer $48,000 per job (did they specify humans rather than robots?) in tax credits if the company creates 25,000 positions by 2028. Virginia is paying only $22,000 per position in tax credits.

New Yorkers will also be building Amazon’s new facilities, spending up to a half-billion dollars to build the company’s offices. Instead of property taxes, the company will be able to take advantage of a city program called PILOT to pay mostly for improvements—to its own new neighborhood.

Virginia made out a little better, offering to invest only a couple hundred million in the company’s facility in Woodbridge.

We discovered that our local represented only 20% of the working carpenters in our area. This came as a shock!

General Motors (community strategy), Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paolo Freire (critical pedagogy using personal knowledge to examine the dominating power in one’s life), and Labor Notes’ A Troublemaker’s Handbook (a how to manual for organizers).
A few weeks later, on September 22, The spuriousness of such a claim is in- when muggings, public intoxication ers had been directed against city staff. erly explosive social conflict over questions of homelessness and public space in the city. This essay seeks both to ana- lyze homelessness and public space under capitalism gener- ally and in Olympia in particu- lar, and to provide an historical account of the criminalization of homelessness and struggles for homeless rights. Through this analysis it is hoped that readers will be able to see that conflicts be- tween the homeless and municipal governments and business owners are an analytically and practically ne- glected but potent dimension of class struggle found throughout urban capi- talism.

Moreover, contingent upon that hope is the idea that radicals and leftists will support or join movements in soli- darity with the homeless. Despite the fact that homeless individuals com- prise a fraction of the general popula- tion, the class dynamics of homeless- ness fundamentally characterize the nature of municipal governance and gentrification, and thus have implica- tions for society at large.

Gentrification and the politics of public space Gentrification is a process of urban and neighborhood change character- ized by displacements of established, lower-income residents and (usually) infusers of newer, wealthier residents, with accompanying changes in racial demographics, economic composition and physical infrastructure. From this definition political conclusions are frequently forged that individu- al consumer behavior or entire lifestyle categories such as that of "yuppie" or "yuccie". While understandable, these assumptions are analytically shallow. Fundamentally, gentrification must be understood as a process inherent to capitalism. Under capitalism, the dictates of profit determine all eco- nomic decisions, including within the realm of housing. How much housing is built, where it is built, and who it shelters are all decisions made in the interest of profit.

Distortions in the local economy Gentrification, as its core, involves fluctuations in levels of capital invest- ments in housing markets in varying areas. This causes some neighborhoods or cities to experience increas- ing property values and the attendant rise in property prices, rents and other basic living expenses, i.e. to "gratify." Increasing investment levels in cer- tain regions occurs simultaneously with disinvestment in other regions, causing some areas to experience un- derdevelopment. This inverted relation- ship between gentrification and underdevelopment occurs at a range of geographical scales, from that of the metropolitan area to the global level.

Demands of a profit-driven community Property investment flows are mediat- ed and facilitated by states that encour- age gentrification in the respective territories they govern as a means to grow economies, increase profit rates and secure sources of taxation and revenue. Governments offer tax cred- its and subsidies to developers and, as discussed below, actively criminalize marginalized residents and certain be- haviors while enclosing and policing public space in an effort to make areas more attractive to investors.

The role of public space in a capitalist economy "Public space" refers to places relative- ly open and accessible such as parks, public bathrooms, public libraries, sidewalks or squares. Public spaces are usually owned and managed by municipal governments, although some are "privately-owned public space." While rarely owned by private enter- prises as utilized as a profit-proof re- alization, public space is governed according to the interests of the state, which in turn represents itself by pro- tecting the interests of capital within particular geographic territories.

Embedded in the private economy and the state is the proposition that public space exists to ensure consumption in the formal economy. This proposition is in sharp tension with the reality of public space's uses, which are varied and contradictory. Along with formal workers and consumers utilizing pub- lic space to access their respective workplaces and sources of goods and services, public space is also utilized as living space, locations for subsis- tence in informal economies and sites of subcultural expression. Homeless people use public spaces, such as benches and parks as dwelling space, skaters, punks and others use squares as sites of recreation and lifestyle ex- perimentation, and street vendors, sex workers and drug traffickers and others in the informal economy use sidewalks as sites to procure an income.

Proscribing some community members In the context of gentrification, with increased investment and commerce in formerly underdeveloped areas, an ever-increasing emphasis is placed on polic- ing certain behaviors and activities and the people who exhibit them in public space. Municipalities increas- ingly enact and enforce ordinances and regulations that criminalize pub- lic camping, loitering, sleeping on benches or in cars, skateboarding, or smoking in public. Moreover, public spaces are increasingly inaccessible or being removed entirely, from the shuttering of public bathrooms to park curfews and removal of benches.

Olympia and its downtown core Olympia is currently experiencing waves of gentrification and new in- vestment in real property. As proper- ty values increase, area rents and home prices skyrocket, and with them come gentrification and eviction. While this phenomenon is increasingly geo- graphically widespread throughout the country, real property invest- ment remains particularly concentrat- ed in the downtown core. In Olympia, gentrification has been concentrated mainly in the downtown
Along with market-rate developers, property value increases in a given region seeks to encourage development. Increasing dominance by businesses to criminalize and displace homeless individuals through the enforcement of a number of ordinances and codes. A No Sit/Lie ordinance prohibits sitting or lying down in public spaces are neglected. The business front group, Olympia Downtown Alliance (ODA), hosts “Third Thursdays” monthly business booster events, lobbies for pro-business policies and provides technical assistance to member businesses.

The component of gentrification that is primarily driving conflict in Olympia has been the right to use public space with the intimately related efforts by government and businesses to criminalize and displace homeless individuals.

Stern economic realities. As noted earlier, downtown is home to a visible and concentrated population of hundreds of homeless people. The homeless presence downtown is an obstacle to gentrification in Olympia and has been the right to use public space with the intimately related efforts by government and businesses to criminalize and displace homeless individuals.

A policy of making life unlivable. The City of Olympia actively criminalizes homelessness through the enforcement of a number of ordinances and codes. A No Sit/Lie ordinance prohibits sitting or lying down in public spaces are neglected. The business front group, Olympia Downtown Alliance (ODA), hosts “Third Thursdays” monthly business booster events, lobbies for pro-business policies and provides technical assistance to member businesses.

The component of gentrification that is primarily driving conflict in Olympia has been the right to use public space with the intimately related efforts by government and businesses to criminalize and displace homeless individuals.

Gentrification is amidst a market-rate development boom, most construction is occurring on previously vacant lots. Thus these developments are not directly displac- ing lower-income renters through the redevelopment of low-cost housing. Nonetheless, they contribute to displacement indirectly because such large influxes of investment in property markets leads to near universal increase in the value of a given region. Like elsewhere, the city government seeks to encourage development through a range of financial incentives.

Increasing dominance by commercial interests. Along with market-rate developers, business owners, their political front groups and the municipal government are also agents of gentrification in Olympia. These actors seek to boost commerce in the downtown core through a series of initiatives. There is a push to orient Olympia’s economy towards tourism through various marketing campaigns, such as the bi-annual ArtWalk events and promotion of cultural activities at Percival Landing Park, while other parks and public spaces are neglected. The business front group, Olympia Downtown Alliance (ODA), hosts “Third Thursdays” monthly business booster events, lobbies for pro-business policies and provides technical assistance to member businesses.

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Extinction rebellion takes to London streets to stand for the planet over polluter profits

Jake Johnson

[Ed note: Here in the US, the Oregon-based nonprofit, Our Children’s Trust is suing to force states and the federal government to take action on climate change. In that lawsuit, 21 actors aged 8 to 20 argue that the federal government’s actions violate their constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property, and the government has violated its obligation to hold certain natural resources in trust for future generations. In Washington State, petitioners aged 12 to 16 years old asked a judge to require the state Department of Ecology to come up with science-based numeric emissions reductions. That case awaits a ruling by King County Superior Court Judge Hollis Hill.]

Business as usual equals extinction. As scientists warn that the “window of opportunity for action” to prevent catastrophic and irreversible planetary harm from the climate crisis “is almost closed,” members of the Extinction Rebellion movement took to the streets of London on November 24 to demand an urgent response to the world’s ecological emergency and mourn the lives that human-caused climate change has already taken—and will take in the near future in the absence of radical change.

“Last Saturday we celebrated all the life we wanted to save. This Saturday we mourn all the life we’ve lost, are losing, and are still to lose,” Extinction Rebellion said in a statement. “We rebel because we love this world, it breaks our hearts to see it ravaged, to watch so many people and animals all over this world already dying, to know that this will soon happen to our children: nothing changes. There is no way forward without giving credence to our grief.”

Demonstrations across the globe

After kicking off last weekend, Extinction Rebellion’s demonstrations spread to over a dozen countries, bringing thousands into the streets to disrupt the everyday workings of major cities and demand the attention of governments that have either ignored taking bold climate action or attempted to move in the opposite direction to appease the destructive fossil fuel industry.

“We will continue to disrupt the everyday workings of the streets of “in city streets,” states Extinction Rebellion’s website. “Only through daily economic disruption will the government recognize the gravity of the crisis we all face and agree to meet with us to address our demand for radical action.”

The climate crisis has already caused devastation. The Extinction Rebellion’s direct action over the past week has attempted to highlight the dire need for immediate action to remedy the devastation the climate crisis has already caused and prevent the horrific harm that is coming in the very near future due to continued burning of fossil fuels.

“This is a climate emergency,” the movement, which aims to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025, wrote on Twitter. “It is not just our right to rebel. It is our duty.”

Jake Johnson is a staff writer at Common Dreams. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License.

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Choose a better worldview to build a better world

Part 2

Each month’s episode of the TV series “Glen’s Parallax Perspectives” explores issues from fresh perspectives. The November and December 2018 programs deal with how we see the world, and therefore how we govern our society. Specifically, I contrast the nasty worldview that has been dominating the U.S. with a much more ethical and humane worldview that should be guiding public policy.

November’s PART 1 focused mostly on the problem, and now December’s PART 2 focuses on the solutions and proposes how we can access these choices.

A “worldview” is the overall perspective from which a person, a group of persons, or a society as a whole sees and interprets the world. A “worldview” reflects beliefs and assumptions about what is real and good — and therefore assumptions about what we should do.

The way you see the world will largely drive how you INTERACT with the world. Your understanding of reality will largely determine whether you act to reinforce a bad status quo or to create positive changes.

For many years — and especially recently — the U.S. has been dominated by a worldview whose assumptions foster greed, corruption, cruelty, oppression, war, and other bad things. But most Americans want the opposite. We want our nation to be guided by a worldview that is humane, compassionate, peaceful, fair to everyone, and environmentally sustainable.

The November 2018 program focused mostly on the problems in the nasty worldview that has been existing. Now the December 2018 program focuses more on solutions — the worldview that we want to replace, the one that exists now.

The program also explains how we could help our society move into that better future.

The bad worldview was already dominating the U.S., and it has exacerbated 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.

Cable TV subscribers in Thurston County can watch this interview on Thurston Community Television (TCTV) three times a week throughout the entire month: 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 glander@integra.net

Glen’s Parallax Perspectives
Religion's truths—a found poem

Taoism: Shit happens

Buddhism: If shit happens, it really isn't shit

Catholicism: Shit happens because you deserve it

Islam: If shit happens, it is the will of Allah

Protestantism: Work harder, or shit will happen

Materialist: Whoever dies with the most shit wins!

Judaism: Why does shit always happen to us?

Atheist: I can't believe this shit.

Agnostic: I don't know shit.

Eco-spiritual: Compost happens. It's all good shit!

Rastafarianism: Let's smoke this shit!

A mystery for the Millenials

Darlingtonia, Alba Roja

Left Bank Books, 2017

Darlingtonia is a mystery reimagined for the 21st Century. There's a classic opening with a dead body and a person who doesn't figure in the story. The main character, Dylan, is a graphic artist in the advertising department of OingoBoingo, a company with a suspicious product—electronic mind games. In place of continuously lighting up a “smoke” (though there is some of that), Dylan constantly scrolls down her twitter account, her facebook account, her instagram account—not to mention her phone, her gmail and other media. The Bay Area setting, a favorite for many mystery novels, has new opportunities as Dylan navigates through landmarks of the tech world.

Dylan's colleague Ricky has gone missing. Ricky's job at OingoBoingo involved working on data for special images and when he doesn't turn up one morning, things start getting weird. Dylan hooks up with a funny—maybe homeless—friend of Ricky's and embarks on a search that's interrupted by migraine headaches, immigrants, gentrification, police brutality, hacking, tracking with eventual excursions into the secrets of the internet and the possibilities of algorithms. But as the bookseller informed this reader—the heroine does not suffer violent indignities, and that's a plus.

It turns out that this book was written by “an anonymous collective of individuals strewn along the west coast.” That might explain why some of Dylan's actions are described in a detail that contributes to the flavor but might seem a little too much. Dylan opens the freezer and starts eating ice cream out of a container. She removes her makeup with an apricot-scented wipe while holding a plastic jar of pistachio gelato. Nonetheless, it's a fun read.

Help rebuild our jail library

Thurston County Public Defense Office and the Thurston County Jail are working to replace the depleted collection of torn and worn books at the jail. Their goal is to collect 2000 books by December 10. You can help by bringing your paperbacks in good condition to Last Word Books or the Public Defense Office.

Only paperbacks—classics, nonfiction, and good fiction—mysteries, westerns, sci-fi, graphic novels

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Thurston Co Public Defender, 926th - 24th Way SW

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Please bring items to YWCA Olympia
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We also accept cash donations

All items will be donated to Advocates for immigrants in Detention Northwest
For any questions, contact coco cchang6@ywcaofolympia.org