

SYRACUSE

PEACE COUNCIL'S

# Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace and Social Justice

May 2012 #814

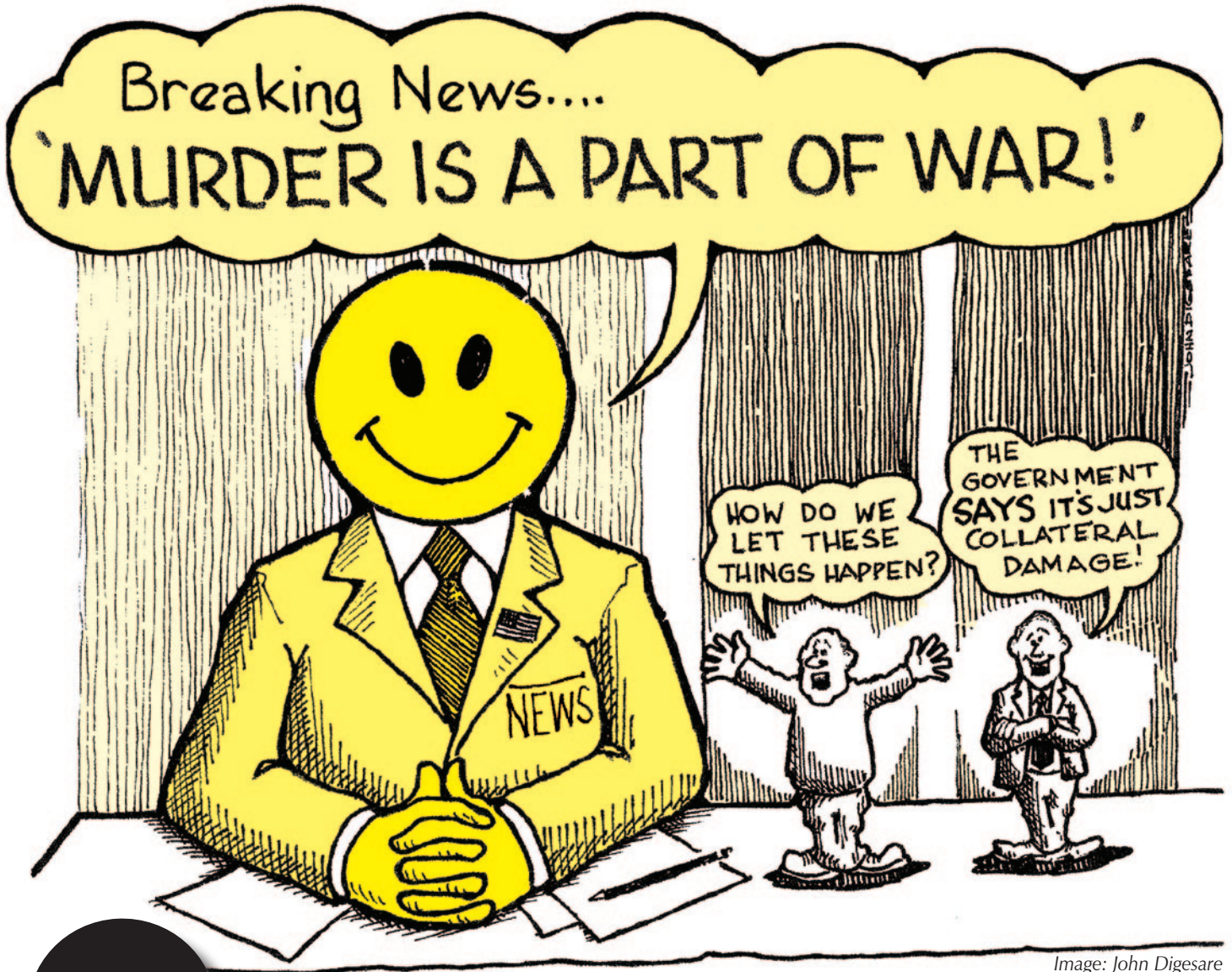


Image: John Digesare

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# SPC INFO

## SPC Steering Committee 2012

Susan Adair, Jessica Azulay, Carol Baum, Jack Brown, Saptarshi Lahiri, Andy Mager, Jessica Maxwell, Kimberley McCoy, Julianne Oldfield, Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre, Carole Resnick, Ursula Rozum, Richard Vallejo, Rose Viviano, Wendy Yost.

## SPC's Peace Newsletter

**Editorial Committee:** Saptarshi Lahiri, Andy Mager, Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre, Christina Sterbenz, Aly Wane. **Layout & Calendar:** Jessica Maxwell. **Proofing:** Rae Kramer, Andy Molloy.

## peacecouncil.net

Read the *PNL* online (issues dating to 1936!), learn about projects and upcoming events, get involved, and subscribe to our e-announcements list.

## SPC Committees & Projects

**Bikes 4 Peace:** fixing bikes and working cooperatively with youth  
**Bring Our War Money Home:** education, outreach, advocacy, demos  
**CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine & Israel:** education, action  
**Ground the Drones:** education, demonstrations, outreach  
**Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation:** education, hydrofracking ban  
**Youth & Militarism:** counter-recruitment and youth empowerment  
**Fundraising:** overall planning to raise funds to support SPC's work  
*Event Committees:* Birthday, Bowlathon, Plowshares  
**Finance:** analysis, reports, budget, general oversight  
**Peace Newsletter:** produce SPC's monthly newsletter

## Affiliated Projects & Coalitions

**Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse:** faith & secular groups  
**Caribbean Latin America Coalition:** sister communities, solidarity, SOA  
**Public Power Coalition:** working for municipal power in Syracuse

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## Peace Newsletter

**Submissions:** pnl@peacecouncil.net or 472-5478.

**Advertising:** Call 472-5478 or visit our website for rates and sizes.

**Calendar:** Submit items for the June *PNL* calendar by May 18.

# Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace & Social Justice

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## The Syracuse Peace Council (SPC)

founded in 1936, is an antiwar/social justice organization. We are community-based, autonomous and funded by the contributions of our supporters.

SPC educates, agitates and organizes for a world where war, violence and exploitation in any form will no longer exist. We challenge the existing unjust power relationships among nations, among people and between ourselves and the environment. As members, we work to replace inequality, hierarchy, domination and powerlessness with mutual respect, personal empowerment, cooperation and a sense of community.

Present social injustices cannot be understood in isolation from each other nor can they be overcome without recognizing their economic and militaristic roots. SPC stresses a strategy that makes these connections clear. We initiate and support activities that help build this sense of community and help tear down the walls of oppression. A fundamental basis for peace and justice is an economic system that places human need above monetary profit. We establish relationships among people based on cooperation rather than competition or the threat of destruction.

Our political values and personal lives shape and reflect each other. In both we are committed to nonviolent means of conflict resolution and to a process of decision-making that responds to the needs of us all.



# Educate, Agitate, Organize: SPC IN ACTION

compiled by Carol Baum

## Stop Drone War Crimes: Education & Arrests

Over April 21-22, SPC hosted the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars' weekend of resistance to US war making.

On Saturday, April 21, activists from across Upstate NY attended workshops and a talk by CodePink co-founder Medea Benjamin.

The plan for Sunday, April 22, was to walk to Hancock Air Base to present a War Crimes Indictment. What happened was that three people successfully read the Indictment at the base (arriving there independently of the peace walk), while the walkers were greeted by the Sheriff's Department—two blocks before the base's entrance. Arrests began without warning; however, after discussion, the police changed their minds about arresting everyone.

Thirty-three people were arrested, most charged with violating a De Witt Town ordinance requiring a permit to march.

How ironic that the real criminals—who plan and perpetrate drone strikes—go free while citizens who are upholding international law are arrested.

Contact Carol.

## War Is Not Green!

SPC participated in a lively Earth Day celebration at Thornden Park on Sunday, April 22. Organized by NYPIRG, the ESF Earth Week Committee and the ESF Green Campus Initiative, it was a fun way to connect with college students and environmentally-minded community members. SPC highlighted the threat of war and militarism to a sustainable future. The Pentagon is the largest consumer of petroleum (and energy in general) on the planet and yet is exempt from all interna-



The Peace Walk to Hancock Air Base steps off. Walkers were halted by police two blocks from the base. Photo: Carol Baum. Inset: Medea Benjamin of CodePink spoke at the Stop Drone War Crimes weekend in Syracuse. Photo: Ray Trudell



tional climate agreements; it produces more hazardous waste than the five largest US chemical companies combined; military bases top the list of US superfund sites; and US overseas wars have contaminated massive areas with land mines, defoliants, and radiological contamination. Despite this damning evidence, little mainstream reporting has been done on the subject, prompting Project Censored to rank this story number two on their list of the top censored stories of 2011.

## NOON Goes International

SPC's Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation project will speak, along with the Doctrine

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## SPC Monthly Program

### Report Back from El Salvador: Stories of International Solidarity

Thursday, May 17, 6:30 pm  
La Casita Cultural Ctr. (109 Otisco St.)

Central New Yorkers have recently visited El Salvador: Shirley Novak led a group to the sister community of La Estancia and Ursula Rozum observed elections with the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). Join a special report back from both delegations and help continue the rich history of solidarity between CNY and El Salvador.

Raffle. Refreshments served. Free and open to the public.

2013 East Genesee St., Syracuse, NY 13210 • (315) 472-5478 • [spc@peacecouncil.net](mailto:spc@peacecouncil.net)  
[www.peacecouncil.net](http://www.peacecouncil.net) • OFFICE HOURS: M-Th, 10 am–5 pm; F, 10 am–2 pm

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Over 40 people came out in Dewitt to join the international call of "Justice for Palestine" on March 30. CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel organized the demonstration in conjunction with Palestinian Land Day and the Global March to Jerusalem. Photo: Kristin Mosher

of Discovery Study Group and Onondaga leaders, at an event in conjunction with the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. "Working As Allies to Indigenous Peoples" offers an opportunity for NOON to share our work with an international audience and connect with people from other parts of the country and world. If you're close to NYC, consider joining us on **Wednesday, May 16** at 6:15 at The Church Center for the United Nations, 777 First Ave. Contact Andy.

### Renewing the Two Row

NOON's Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign continues to actively organize for its major statewide effort in 2013. An initial regional organizing meeting drew 25 people to Albany on April 15. Initial response has been quite positive to a fund appeal mailing sent to individuals (read it at [peacecouncil.net/noon/2row/donate.html](http://peacecouncil.net/noon/2row/donate.html)). In addition to the ongoing work of committees focused on education, outreach, fundraising and enactment planning, additional meetings will be held in coming months at Ganondagan (Victor, NY), with the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, in the Hudson Valley and in New York City. Invitations are out to a variety of

well known people to join Oren Lyons, Tonya Gonnella Frichner, Pete Seeger and Nancy Cantor on the campaign's Honorary Advisory Committee. Contact Andy.

### Marking the Continuing Nakba

The *Nakba* (Catastrophe) refers to the dispossession of 750,000 Palestinians in 1947-48 connected with the creation of the state of Israel. This is the third year that CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel has organized a Central New York commemoration. This year's focus will be on the continuing nature of the *Nakba*. Our event, on **Sunday, May 20 at 4 pm** at ArtRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave., will feature a Skype discussion with Palestinian activist and intellectual Mazin Qumsiyeh from Bethlehem, Palestine. Contact Andy.



Onondaga Chief Jake Edwards displays a replica of the Two Row Wampum Belt as he shares its meaning at a Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign meeting in Albany, April 15, 2012. Photo: Lindsay Speer

## PEACE OUTREACH

Want to spur conversations and let thousands know you oppose war and the reaper drone? Please join us! Bring a sign or use one of ours.

*Note:* To avoid conflicts with May Day activities, Tues., May 1 Outreach is moved to **May 2** (Hancock Air Base)

### Tuesdays: 4:15-5 pm

- May 8** E. Genesee & Erie Blvd. (Dewitt).
- May 15** Hancock Air Base Entrance (E. Molloy Rd., b/w Thompson & Townline Rd.)
- May 22** E. Genesee & Erie Blvd.
- May 29** E. Genesee & Erie Blvd.
- June 5** Hancock Air Base Entrance

*Saturdays 9-10 am on Park St. across from the Regional Market main entrance.*

Contact Ed or Ann, 315-478-4571

### Radical Reading: The New Jim Crow

After wrapping up discussions on *The S-Word* (did you know that Abraham Lincoln corresponded with Karl Marx?) the Radical Reading group is moving on to *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander. Please join us, beginning on **May 9 at 7:30 pm**. As part of SPC's commitment to challenging racism, we all need to better understand how the prison-industrial system has devastated communities of color across the country. Contact Ursula.

### Catch the PeaceSongs Vibe

Don't miss the *PeaceSongs* CNY CD release party on **Sunday, May 6**, from 5-8 pm at Metro Lounge, 505 Westcott St. This family-friendly musical celebration of peace and social justice will celebrate the conclusion of the final part of our 75th anniversary. Many of the 19 musicians on the CD will perform their selections, including Brown Fox Fabric, Van Cleary-Hammarstedt, Dan Cleveland, Gavan Duffy, Kanjira, Colleen Kattau, Jamie Notarthomas, One Black Voice, Dave Robertson, Chuck Schiele, Sophistafunk, Laura Sue (Wilansky) the Silver Nightingale and Jane Zell. Entrance is \$5-10 sliding scale. CDs will be available

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# Black, White, and Beyond: A Personal Reflection on Trayvon Martin

Aly Wane

The basic facts of the case are clear: George Zimmerman, a man of half-Jewish, half-Peruvian ethnicity, approached a young African American teenager, Trayvon Martin. A struggle ensued, and Zimmerman shot Trayvon Martin dead. George is usually described as “White” in the media, or at least “White Latino.” This occurred in Sanford, Florida. The Sanford Police Department made a cursory investigation which relied primarily on Zimmerman’s testimony, and let him go.

Martin’s parents, however, spearheaded a campaign that finally resulted in the re-opening of the case, and Zimmerman was charged with Second Degree Murder. If it weren’t for a month of sustained grassroots protests, this would have been another case of “just another dead Black teenager.”

## Black Boogeymen

I hesitated to write about the Trayvon Martin killing because, frankly, it’s too painful. This issue hits too close to home. But I thought this deserved more than silence; this is a moment ripe for dialogue about the issue of Black masculinity in the US.

I was not born in this country. I am from Senegal. Nonetheless, I had to “learn” how to be a Black man in the US, a country deeply marked by a legacy of racism and white supremacy. I remember vividly “the shift:” the transition that occurs in every Black man’s life when he moves from being a cute kid to a kind of societal boogeyman. By the time I was around 11, I started to notice that people would look at me with more wariness and distrust. I started to get followed in stores, watched by security guards, etc. By the time I was



Over 1,000 people gathered in Clinton Square on March 30 to call for justice for Trayvon Martin. Photo: Nicola Tenaglia

a late teen and an early adult, I got used to being stopped by the cops on a regular basis for “fitting the description” of a criminal.

The worst incident happened in Chicago a few years ago. I was walking back home in the Rogers Park area of the city when a police car screeched to a halt in front of me like a scene from an action movie. The cop got out of the car, pointed a gun at me and yelled at me to “get on the f-ing ground.” Of course, I complied, and he proceeded to search my bag, whereupon he found my copy of Gandhi’s autobiography which I was reading at the time. Quizzically, he asked, “What the hell is this?” Apparently, the idea of my reading a book about nonviolence didn’t square with his image of me. He did release me, but he spat out the words: “I’ll get you next time.” Later on during my walk, I saw two African American men in handcuffs next to a police car, and I presumed they were the ones the cop was after. Both of them were much taller than I was, and neither wore glasses, as I do.

This incident is typical; I have learned to live with the state of affairs, but it illustrates why the Trayvon Martin case was so emotional for many people of color, especially Black men. We are so accustomed to being profiled, interrogated, and harassed by cops for little to no reason that

we cannot fathom having the privilege of a George Zimmerman: being able to gun down another human being and then being let go without a charge by police officers. As Black men, we are conditioned to know that we are seen as dangerous criminals and that we are the face of fear. Oftentimes, we even fear each other.

On the other side of the coin, many “whites,” especially older white males, tend to become very defensive about George Zimmerman. The claim of “justifiable self-defense” is often made, usually accompanied by a desire to point out that Trayvon Martin was far from a “perfect angel.” In fact, there was a not-too-subtle campaign in conservative media outlets to make Trayvon out to be yet another “dangerous Black male.” Glenn Beck’s *The Blaze*, a conservative Internet site, revealed that Trayvon Martin had been suspended from school and then proceeded to speculate about all of the things Trayvon could have hypothetically been suspended for. It was actually for possession of a small quantity marijuana, hardly an atypical teenage “crime.” Conservative author Michelle Malkin’s site was one of the first to feature purported pictures of Trayvon

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*Aly Wane is an immigration reform activist and a member of the Peace Newsletter Editorial Committee.*

continued on next page

**Black, White, and Beyond / from previous page**

flashing gang signs from his Facebook account. It turns out that those pictures were of another Black teenager. Here, the need to create a boogeyman image of Trayvon Martin was necessary to defend Zimmerman's actions. After all, who would feel guilty about slaying a monster?

**The Illusion of Race**

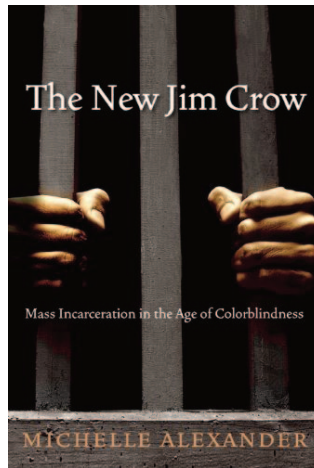
The most interesting aspect of this case, however, is that George Zimmerman is indeed of mixed race. Half Latino, half "white." Yet, we know now that race is simply a sociological construction, rather than a biological reality. The terms "Black," "white," "brown," etc. are much more rooted in socioeconomic power and assumptions than in genetic reality. In fact, at the turn of the 20th century, many Jews (as well as Irish-Americans and Italian-Americans) were not considered "white" because they did not belong to the dominant white Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) group. Back then, George Zimmerman would not even have been considered "white." Even more interesting is the fact that most of Zimmerman's defenders are rushing to emphasize the fact that he is Latino. In this particular case, his "Latino" identity is used to counter claims that he could be racist, which illustrates clearly how race is a malleable concept used to denote power and/or lack of privilege.

My hope is that we try to strike a balance in our analysis. The idea of a "post-racial" society is absurd. These sociological

definitions still affect us in our daily lives and feed our biases, both positive and negative. The only way to increase racial harmony is to have the types of painful dialogues that opportunities like this offer. We should try our best to truly hear each others' stories, to unpack how these racial categories affect us.

We can't, however, let the illusion of race keep us from solidarity in fighting the socioeconomic structures that oppress us all. In this case, the growth of a racist prison industrial complex that feeds on the bodies of people of color in a disproportionate manner (as shown in Michel Alexander's 2011 book, *The New Jim Crow*). This same system seduces many white rural communities into opening their struggling economies to for-profit prisons. How would we begin to fight this system through a lens of mutual support instead of racial division? One laudable example would be "Milk Not Jails" ([www.milknotjails.wordpress.com](http://www.milknotjails.wordpress.com)), a grassroots project which makes the link between the decline of NY state dairy farms and the growth of the unsustainable and toxic prison industry in rural communities. Efforts like this help us build cross-racial solidarity which addresses the economic pressures both urban and rural communities face.

Solidarity requires patience, mutual understanding, and deep structural analysis that go beyond individual tragic cases like Trayvon Martin's. Let's hope that the tragic death of Trayvon Martin pushes all of us to check our biases, listen to each other and learn how to recognize the systems that oppress us all. ♻️



See page 4 for details on the SPC Radical Reading Group's plans to discuss *The New Jim Crow*.

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# Murder Is Part of War

Chris Hedges

The war in Afghanistan—where the enemy is elusive and rarely seen, where the cultural and linguistic disconnect makes every trip outside the wire a visit to hostile territory, where it is clear that you are losing despite the vast industrial killing machine at your disposal—feeds the culture of atrocity. The fear and stress, the anger and hatred, reduce all Afghans to the enemy, and this includes women, children and the elderly. Civilians and combatants merge into one detested nameless, faceless mass. The psychological leap to murder is short. And murder happens every day in Afghanistan. It happens in drone strikes, artillery bombardments, airstrikes, missile attacks and the withering suppressing fire unleashed in villages from belt-fed machine guns.

Military attacks like these in civilian areas make discussions of human rights an absurdity. Robert Bales, a US Army staff sergeant who allegedly killed 16 civilians in two Afghan villages, including nine children, is not an anomaly. To decry the butchery of this case and to defend the wars of occupation we wage is to know nothing about combat. We kill children nearly every day in Afghanistan. We do not usually kill them outside the structure of a military unit.

If a US soldier had killed or wounded

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*Chris, a Central New York native, was a New York Times foreign correspondent for nearly two decades. He is the author of many books, most recently Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle. This article was originally published on TruthDig.com.*



scores of civilians after the ignition of an improvised explosive device against his convoy, it would not have made the news. Units do not stick around to count their “collateral damage.” But the Afghans know. They hate us for the murderous rampages. They hate us for our hypocrisy.

## Murder Usually Hidden

The scale of our state-sponsored murder is masked from public view. Reporters who travel with military units and become psychologically part of the team spin out what the public and their military handlers want: mythic tales of heroism and valor. War is seen only through the lens of the occupiers. It is defended as a national virtue. This myth allows us to make sense of mayhem and death. It justifies what is usually nothing more than gross human cruelty, brutality and stupidity. It allows us to believe we have achieved our place in human society because of a long chain of heroic endeavors, rather than accept the sad reality that we stumble along a dimly lit corridor of disasters. It disguises our powerlessness. It hides from view the impotence and ordinariness of our leaders.

But in turning history into myth we transform random events into a sequence of events directed by a will greater than our

own, one that is determined and preordained. We are elevated above the multitude. We march to nobility. But it is a lie. And it is a lie that combat veterans carry within them. It is why so many commit suicide.

“I, too, belong to this species,” J. Glenn Gray wrote of his experience in World War II. “I am ashamed not only of my own deeds, not only of my nation’s deeds, but of human deeds as well. I am ashamed to be a man.”

When Ernie Pyle, the famous World War II correspondent, was killed on the Pacific island of Ie Shima in 1945, a rough draft of a column was found on his body. He was preparing it for release upon the end of the war in Europe. He had done much to promote the myth of the warrior and the nobility of soldiering, but by the end he seemed to have tired of it all:

But there are many of the living who have burned into their brains forever the unnatural sight of cold dead men scattered over the hillsides and in the ditches along the high rows of hedges throughout the world.

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## Murder Is Part of War / from page 7

Dead men by mass production—in one country after another—month after month and year after year. Dead men in winter and dead men in summer.

Dead men in such familiar promiscuity that they become monotonous.

Dead men in such monstrous infinity that you come almost to hate them.

These are the things that you at home need not even try to understand. To you at home they are columns of figures, or he is a near one who went away and just didn't come back. You didn't see him lying so grotesque and pasty beside the gravel road in France.

We saw him, saw him by the multiple thousands. That's the difference.

There is a constant search in all wars to find new perversities, new forms of death when the initial flush fades, a rear-guard and finally futile effort to ward off the boredom of routine death. This is why during the war in El Salvador the death squads and soldiers would cut off the genitals of those they killed and stuff them in the mouths of the corpses. This is why we reporters in Bosnia would find bodies crucified on the sides of barns or decapitated. This is why US Marines have urinated on dead Taliban fighters. Those slain in combat are treated as trophies by their killers, turned into grotesque pieces of performance art. It happened in every war I covered.

### Loss of Conscience

"Force," Simone Weil wrote, "is as pitiless to the man who possesses it, or thinks he does, as it is to its victims; the second it crushes, the first it intoxicates."

War perverts and destroys you. It pushes you closer and closer to your own annihilation—spiritual, emotional and finally physical. It destroys the continuity of life, tearing apart all systems—economic, social, environmental and political—that sustain us as human beings. In war, we deform ourselves, our essence. We give up individual conscience—maybe even consciousness—for contagion of the crowd,

the rush of patriotism, the belief that we must stand together as a nation in moments of extremity. To make a moral choice, to defy war's enticement, can in the culture of war be self-destructive. The essence of war is death. Taste enough of war and you come to believe that the stoics were right: *We will, in the end, all consume ourselves in a vast conflagration.*

A World War II study determined that, after 60 days of continuous combat, 98 percent of all surviving soldiers will have become psychiatric casualties. A common trait among the remaining two percent was a predisposition toward having "aggressive psychopathic personalities." Lt. Col. Dave Grossman in his book *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, notes: "It is not too far from the mark to observe that there is something about continuous, inescapable combat which will drive 98 percent of all men insane, and the other two percent were crazy when they got there."

During the war in El Salvador, many soldiers served for three or four years or longer, as in the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, until they psychologically or

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To decry the butchery of this case and to defend the wars of occupation we wage is to know nothing about combat. We kill children nearly every day in Afghanistan.

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physically collapsed. In garrison towns, commanders banned the sale of sedatives because those drugs were abused by the troops. In that war, as in the wars in the Middle East, the emotionally and psychologically maimed were common. I once interviewed a 19-year-old Salvadoran army sergeant who had spent five years fighting and then suddenly lost his vision after his unit walked into a rebel ambush. The rebels killed 11 of his fellow soldiers in the firefight, including his closest friend. He was unable to see again until he was placed in an army hospital. "I have these horrible headaches," he told me as he sat on the edge of his bed. "There is shrapnel in my head. I keep telling the doctors to take it out." But the doctors told me that he had no head wounds.

I saw other soldiers in other conflicts go deaf or mute or shake without being able to stop.

War is necrophilia (sexual attraction to corpses). This necrophilia is central to soldiering just as it is central to the makeup of suicide bombers and terrorists. The necrophilia is hidden under platitudes about duty or comradeship. It is unleashed especially in moments when we seem to have little to live for and no hope, or in moments when the intoxication of war is at its highest pitch. When we spend long enough in war, it comes to us as a kind of release, a fatal and seductive embrace that can consummate the long flirtation with our own destruction.

### Fatal Attraction

In his memoir *Wartime*, about the partisan war in Yugoslavia, Milovan Djilas wrote of the enticement that death held for the combatants. He stood over the body of his comrade, the commander Sava Kovacevic, and found:

"... dying did not seem terrible or unjust. This was the most extraordinary, the most exalted moment of my life. Death did not seem strange or undesirable. That I restrained myself from charging blindly into the fray and death was perhaps due to my sense of obligation to the troops or to some comrade's reminder concerning the tasks at hand. In my memory, I returned to those moments many times with the same feeling of intimacy with death and desire for it while I was in prison, especially during my first incarceration."

War ascendant wipes out Eros. It wipes out delicacy and tenderness. Its communal power seeks to render the individual obsolete, to hand all passions, all choice, all voice to the crowd.

"The most important part of the individual life, which cannot be subsumed in communal life, is love," Sebastian Haffner wrote in *Defying Hitler*. "So comradeship has its special weapons against love: smut. Every evening in bed, after the last patrol round, there was the ritual reciting of lewd

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**Murder Is Part of War / from page 8**

songs and jokes. That is the hard and fast rule of male comradeship, and nothing is more mistaken than the widely held opinion that this is a safety valve for frustrated erotic or sexual feelings. These songs and jokes do not have an erotic, arousing effect. On the contrary, they make the act of love appear as unappetizing as possible. They treat it like digestion and defecation, and make it an object of ridicule. The men who recited rude songs and used coarse words for female body parts were in effect denying that they ever had tender feelings or had been in love, that they had ever made themselves attractive, behaved gently....”

**Addicted to War**

When we see this, when we see our addiction for what it is, when we understand ourselves and how war has perverted us, life becomes hard to bear. Jon Steele, a cameraman who spent years in war zones, had a nervous breakdown in a crowded Heathrow Airport after returning from Sarajevo.

Steele had come to understand the reality of his work, a reality that stripped away the self-righteous, high-octane gloss. When he was in Sarajevo he was “in a place called Sniper’s Alley, and I filmed a girl there who had been hit in the neck by a sniper’s bullet,” he wrote. “I filmed her in the ambulance, and only after she was dead, I suddenly understood that the last thing she had seen was the reflection of the lens of the camera I was holding in front of her. This wiped me out. I grabbed the camera, and started running down Sniper’s Alley, filming at knee level the Bosnians running from place to place.”

A year after the end of the war in Sarajevo, I sat with Bosnian friends who had suffered horribly. A young woman, Ljiljana, had lost her father, a Serb, who refused to join the besieging Serb forces around the city. A few days earlier she had to identify his corpse. The body was lifted, water running out of the sides of a rotting coffin, from a small park for reburial in the central cemetery. Soon she would emigrate to Australia—where, she told me, “I will marry a man who has never heard of this war and raise children that will be told nothing about it, nothing about the

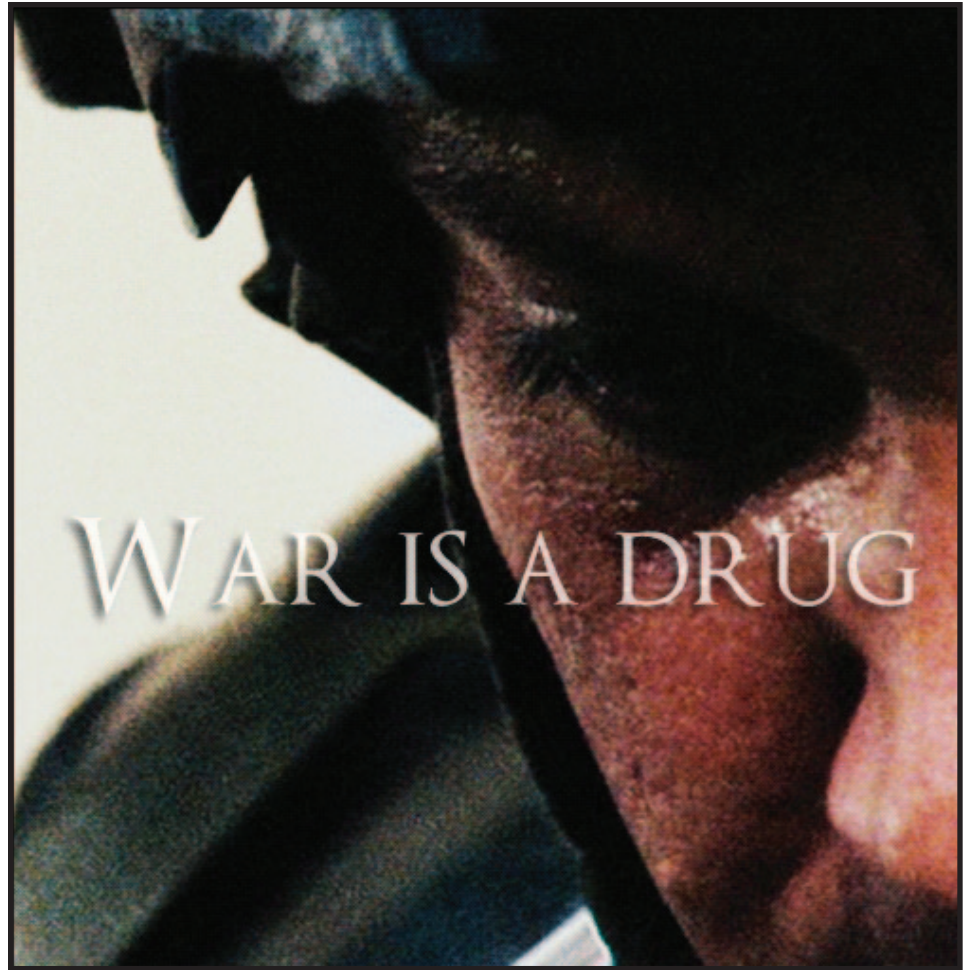


Image: <http://phytochemical.tumblr.com>

country I am from.”

Ljiljana was young. But the war had exacted a toll. Her cheeks were hollow, her hair dry and brittle. Her teeth were decayed and some had broken into jagged bits. She had no money for a dentist; she hoped to have them fixed in Australia. Yet all she and her friends did that afternoon was lament the days when they lived in fear and hunger, emaciated, targeted by Serb gunners on the heights above. They did not wish back the suffering. And yet, they admitted, those may have been the fullest days of their lives. They looked at me in despair. I had known them when hundreds of shells a day fell nearby, when they had no water to bathe in or wash their clothes, when they huddled in unheated flats as sniper bullets hit the walls outside.

What they expressed was disillusionment with a sterile, futile and empty present. Peace had again exposed the void that the rush of war, of battle, had filled. Once again they were as perhaps we all are—alone, no longer bound by a common struggle, no longer given the opportunity to be noble, heroic, no longer sure of what

life was about or what it meant. The old comradeship, however false, had vanished with the last shot.

Moreover, they had seen that all the sacrifice had been for naught. They had been, as we all are in war, betrayed. The corrupt old Communist Party bosses, who became nationalists overnight and got them into the mess in the first place, had grown rich off their suffering and were still in power. Ljiljana and the others faced a 70 percent unemployment rate. They depended on handouts from the international community. They understood that their cause, once as fashionable in certain intellectual circles as they were themselves, lay forgotten. No longer did actors, politicians and artists scramble to visit during the cease-fires—acts that were almost always ones of gross self-promotion. They knew the lie of war, the mockery of their idealism, and struggled with their shattered illusions. And yet, they wished it all back, and I did, too.

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continued on next page

### The Dance of Death

Later, I received a Christmas card. It was signed "Ljiljana from Australia." It had no return address. I never heard from her again. But many of those I worked with as war correspondents did not escape. They could not break free from the dance with death. They wandered from conflict to conflict, seeking always one more hit.

By then, I was back in Gaza and at one point found myself pinned down in still another ambush. A young Palestinian 15 feet away was fatally shot through the chest. I had been lured back but now felt none of the old rush, just fear. It was time to break free, to let go. I knew it was over for me. I was lucky to get out alive.

Kurt Schork—brilliant, courageous and driven—could not let go. He died in an ambush in Sierra Leone along with another friend of mine, Miguel Gil Moreno. His entrapment—his embrace of Thanatos, of the death instinct—was never mentioned in the sterile and antiseptic memorial service held for him in Washington, DC. Everyone tiptoed around the issue. But those of us who had known him understood he had been consumed.

I had worked with Kurt for 10 years, starting in northern Iraq. Literate, funny—it seems the brave are often funny. He and I passed books back and forth in our struggle to make sense of the madness around us. His loss is a hole that will never be filled. His ashes were placed in Sarajevo's Lion Cemetery, for the victims of the war. I flew to Sarajevo and met the British filmmaker Dan Reed. It was an overcast November day. We

stood over the grave and downed a pint of whiskey. Dan lit a candle. I recited a poem the Roman lyric poet Catullus had written to honor his dead brother.

*By strangers' costs and waters, many days at sea,  
I come here for the rites of your unworlding,  
Bringing for you, the dead, these last gifts of the living  
And my words—vain sounds for the man of dust.  
Alas, my brother;  
You have been taken from me. You have been taken from me,  
By cold chance turned a shadow, and my pain.  
Here are the foods of the old ceremony, appointed  
Long ago for the starvelings under the earth:  
Take them: your brother's tears have made them wet: and take  
Into eternity my hail and my farewell.*


It was there, among 4,000 war dead, that Kurt belonged. He died because he could not free himself from war. He had been trying to replicate what he had found in Sarajevo, but he could not. War could never be new again. Kurt had been in East Timor and Chechnya. Sierra Leone, I was sure, meant nothing to him.

Kurt and Miguel could not let go. They would have been the first to admit it. Spend long enough at war, and you cannot fit in anywhere else. It finally kills you. It is not a new story. It starts out like love, but it is death.

War is the beautiful young nymph in the fairy tale that, when kissed, exhales the vapors of the underworld.

The ancient Greeks had a word for such a fate: *ekpyrosis*.

It means to be consumed by a ball of fire. They used it to describe heroes. ♣



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# Memorial Day 2012: A Day to Ask Why

Arnold Stieber

The parades. The flags. The proud men in uniform carrying their weapons like beacons—these will guide us, these will bring us “freedom,” these are what make us strong. There will be cookouts and sales. Eat. Buy. Talk of sports, kids and the weather. Nothing serious. Don’t spoil the day. Don’t upset anyone.

As children we naturally asked “why?” Why is the sky blue? Why do ants live in holes? As we move along the path that turns into a trail, that turns into a street, that turns into a highway, we learn to not ask. Easier to go along with the flow, learn what is taught, repeat it to the young. Work. Pay the bills. Count your blessings. Don’t ask why. Not enough time.

## Questioning, Again

In January of 2003 I began to ask why. It was late at night and I was home alone. I turned on the TV. The movie *Platoon* was on. I had never watched violent shows nor read anything about war or Viet Nam since I left there in March of 1971. Now, all these years later, I figured it was time and I could handle it. The scene was a US patrol entering a village. I saw the kids with their big, dark eyes, skinny bodies and ragged clothes—and it all came back—the sights, the sounds, the smells. I turned off the TV and sat in a darkened room.

It was like a lightning bolt followed by thunder. It hit me ... and then proceeded to roll through my mind. “Now what?” I asked myself.

The next day was a frenzy of activity. Answers. Answers. I needed answers. The internet became my life. Unstructured for the first few months, I consumed a new world of information. At age 57 with an MBA,

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*Arnold is a husband, father, grandfather, retired business owner and military veteran (Army, infantry, Viet Nam). He’s a member of Veterans For Peace and Vietnam Veterans Against the War. He blogs at: [WarisSlavery.blogspot.com](http://WarisSlavery.blogspot.com).*

it seemed like I should have known these things. But I was almost totally ignorant. Information on war, peace, politics, world

present message that violence is the solution to conflict. Go into any park in any town and you’ll probably see a military statue or a cannon. Veterans’ memorials are everywhere. Veterans and the military lead parades. The military carries the flag into sporting events. POW-MIA flags fly. Highways are named after wars, war veterans, and generals. Battleships are named after presidents. We have civil war reenactments. We call the military, “service.” Violence is in our language—“I could just kill my kids,” “bullet points,” and sports announcers inject “kill,” “beat,” “destroyed” into their descriptions. The more overt influences are easy—violent video games, TV violence, toy weapons, paintball parks. It’s there. Every day. All of these lower the barriers to hurting others.



Arnold holding his new grandson (born in March). Photo: Stieber family

affairs, religion, organizations—the list grew each day. I needed structure. After several months I formulated two questions: “Why war?” and “Why do we so proudly send our children to kill other children?”

My research revealed that the main causes of war are money and markets. There is always plenty of flag-waving and bluster about the “evil ones,” but every war I’ve studied, once you begin peeling back the layers, has money and markets as a common core.

## War Is Everywhere

Why do we send our kids to kill? Because that’s how we raise them. There is an ever-

## Make It a Special Day

Memorial Day 1946 is my birthday. Memorial Day 1970, I was in Nam. Memorial Day 2003, I was waking up to my military experience. I’d like to see Memorial Day 2012 be a day for dialogue on issues that really matter.

There are many things to discuss. Why are weapons our number one export product? Why do we have over 700 military bases in over 140 countries? Why do almost half of our tax dollars go to the war industry?

Why do we cheer when the government assassinates someone? Why do we allow those in power to demonize entire nations, cultures or religions? Why do we ignore the Geneva Convention and use torture? Why do we think we are better than the rest of the world’s people? Why are we so afraid? Why do we read so little and watch TV so much? Why don’t we know our history? Why don’t we talk about “difficult” things?

So, while you’re grilling your hot dogs or standing at the parade, bring up an issue, get other viewpoints, engage in dialogue. The children and this country are depending on it. Make Memorial Day a day to ask—Why? ♣

# Liberation Learnings: Thoughts from Activist-Scholar Micere Mugo

*Dr. Micere Mugo is a playwright, activist and poet. She is a Professor of African American Studies at Syracuse University and a co-founder of the Pan African Community of Central New York. Born in the central highlands of Kenya, she has been an instrumental figure in the shaping of that country: the East African Standard Century listed her as one of the top 100 people who have influenced Kenya in the 20th century. Her knowledge of African liberation struggles is rooted in her lifelong political activism. This is an excerpt from a longer interview which is posted on the Peace Newsletter page of the SPC website ([www.peacecouncil.net/pnl](http://www.peacecouncil.net/pnl)).*

**SPC: What do you see is the role of violence or nonviolence in our social justice struggles?**

**MM:** It's a tough debate. There was a moment historically when not responding to violence through liberation wars and movements would actually have meant annihilation of people, so we have to have a historical perspective that people took up arms to fight not because they chose to but because they were in a position where they knew they were being annihilated and there was no way out. I have always supported liberation movements and their use of armed force (cases on the African Continent, Palestine, South Africa, Latin American countries...), but at some point, when it became clear that there were other means of struggle that we could use without having as much cost to ourselves and other people, when it became clear that some countries even had the power of the [atomic] Bomb, it became necessary to consider the possibility of using conscientization, organization in order to show that there are other ways of fighting for these [liberated] spaces. Of course, the best examples are people like Martin Luther King, Jr.; Gandhi; Mother Teresa; and so on, and it worked. So I'm clear: I don't believe in war, I don't think it solves anything, but I don't judge people who find



*Dr. Mugo speaking as a part Africa Week 2008 at Cornell University. Photo: [www.Cornellsun.com](http://www.Cornellsun.com)*

themselves placed in a position where they have to fight back. I would have to look at the situation, case by case; where is there a case for true liberation self-defense, and where is it a question of war-mongering and creating warlords to fight over spoils? I think that debate should continue even now.

**SPC: You talk a lot about the concept of amnesia in your political analysis. Why do you think that concept is so important in our analysis of the way the world is right now?**

**MM:** It is very important because an individual or a culture without a memory stands in danger of being ahistorical, and you lose the history that stands before you, which is very important because it defines our identity; it tells us where we have come from; it shows us who the people are who have been there in the struggle before us. Actively remembering in an optimistic

manner and with a determination to use history to learn and create continuity and to affirm that which is good, positive, liberating that has happened before us is very important particularly for colonized and dominated people. This is because the history of domination comes into a space and tries to wipe out that space. It is a history of erasure, whether you are talking culturally, or talking about identity, language, etc. This is the history of imperialism and colonization for black people and others who have been dominated.

**SPC: What are some of the lessons that we can learn from the African colonial struggles in terms of how to resist systems of domination?**

**MM:** The most important is: However

*The interview was conducted and transcribed by PNL editorial committee stalwarts Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre and Aly Wane.*

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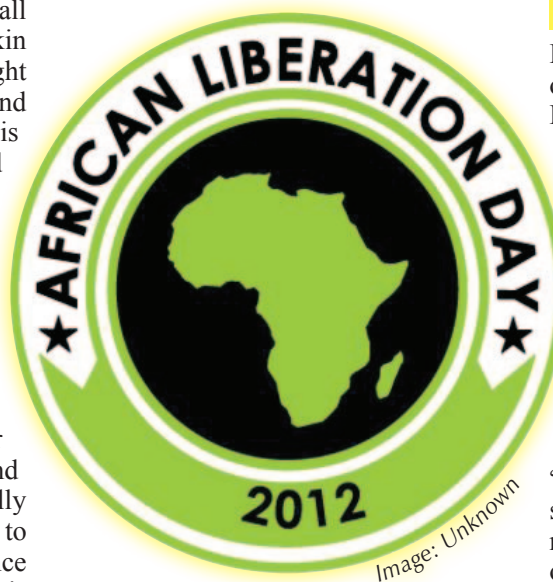
## Liberation Learnings / from previous page

powerful the system of oppression is we must always resist, resist, resist, and never give up. There was a time in Kenya when it looked like it was not possible. How do you fight the British Empire? It is very easy to cower, but it is always better to resist. Secondly, unless the struggle involves the collective group—and specifically, unless the struggle involves working class people—it will go nowhere. Once that struggle is over, if you forget ordinary people and you make it out as if independence is to be led by a few, then that is the biggest mistake you can make because you deify the leaders. You authorize and license them to walk all over you. Then what happens is the skin color of the rulers will change, or might change, but the systems of oppression and the institutions continue. Another lesson is that the African liberation struggle raised our consciousness towards women, especially after independence, as in Zimbabwe and Kenya. When women came to those spaces, they found that they were still marginalized. They didn't get leadership roles. They didn't have roles that made them visible. It's as if they serviced the revolutions. In Nigeria, in Kenya, even the Black Power movement here with Angela Davis and Assata Shakur. In Africa, women really started questioning this. It's amazing to see how much women have moved since independence. The only problem we have is that, as feminists, unless we have styles of leading and participation that are different from the patriarchal notion of having "the big people" and "the little people," we will have failed. This is what women leaders should think about: "How different is what we are doing than what the patriarchal systems have done?" And I'm sorry to say that a lot of women also abuse power. Gender representation is important, but we have to continue to find new, liberating, feminist, non-patriarchal, non-colonial or neocolonial ways of defining our existence. The same methods will not work.

**SPC: Could you explain what neo-colonialism is and its impact on the continent right now?**

**MM:** The term came from Kwame Nkrumah at the moment when he was seeing a Socialist arrangement of society as the alternative to Capitalism. He really challenged the independence project to ask itself how different are we from those who

colonized us? Has the colonial condition really changed? Can we argue that we are in a post-colonial space and post-racial space? Nkrumah's answer was no. What we have done is perpetrated systems that still tie us, like an umbilical cord, to the colonizers, and it's a continuation of the educational systems of the elite. It's the prison system and the criminalization of the poor; it's the same system of capitalism. [Nkrumah] said we are in a new colonial state. The new leadership that took over never really cut off from the metropolitan neocolonialists. We had new leaders with different colors sometimes, but it was the same system.



**SPC: You've been informed by your feminist perspective. How has it impacted you as a scholar and activist, and how can that perspective help other activists?**

**MM:** I can say decidedly this started from the moment I was born. I was so lucky. I grew up among the Kikuyu people, which is a very patriarchal society. But, paradoxically, it's also a society where women are very strong. Very often, before anything happens in a household, the mother will have the last say. I'm very conscious in my feminism about dialogue and to work with the understanding that we also need men to be feminists as well because within colonialism and patriarchy women can be socialized to be just as patriarchal as men. So really, it's the mentality and the practice that we need to be working on. As an intellectual I'm conscious that many of us are theorizing, but when it comes to life and "walking the talk," we don't. I think it's a movement where progres-

sive feminists have to say, "We are doing things differently. We define power, power structures, and relationships differently as mothers and daughters, fathers and children, workers and bosses, etc." This is why I like progressive feminism because it has an eye on systems of oppression and recognizing those as what creates that patriarchal mentality. It's our work as men and women to liberate ourselves from that to create new spaces. I think feminism has gone really quite far in challenging some of these comfortable places.

**SPC: We've heard you use the proverb: "To hold dialogue is to love." Could you expand on that?**

**MM:** This proverb is from the Kikuyu people of Kenya where I was born. Among the Kikuyu, there are so many proverbs which say you should never silence somebody. Under colonialism, you were not allowed to say anything; you just accepted. But there was always a resistance culture coming from the orature (oral tradition), the indigenous knowledge that said "No, in our culture we always ask questions because if you don't ask questions, then you're a fool. You don't grow." So, "to hold dialogue is to love" means you must never silence people. "To hold dialogue is to love" means you should not live next door to a neighbor and not know them and understand what goes on there. It's your business to know. This is the notion that a community happens because there are open spaces. There is dialogue, verbally as well as through self expression. And you definitely don't pass people and just greet them. I used to find it very difficult when I first came to this country because sometimes people don't want you to bother them. And then there is the Shona greeting... When people come in, you clap for people to welcome them. You actually begin when they are at the gate, when they get closer you are still greeting them, "How are you?" And you continue when they sit down: "Are you really well?" It becomes a communal thing, and once you do that the other person asks you "How are you?" and the response is "I am only well if you too are well." In other words, you cannot assert your humanity alone. Once you assert your humanity, you need to assert the other person's humanity. Otherwise, you are not whole. ♣

**Hear Dr. Mugo speak at 7pm at SPC's May 1 program, Liberation Learnings at ArtRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave.**

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# Nonviolent Revolution

Jorgen Johansen

The nonviolent revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt dominated international news in early 2011. Given their adherence to the principles of nonviolence and massive public participation, the international media tells us these revolutionary movements are unique and extraordinary. They are in fact continued examples of the successful nonviolent revolutions that have taken place in recent decades.

In the past 30 years, almost every successful revolution that forced the old regime to step down has used nonviolent means. They used massive mobilization of ordinary people on the streets, strikes, and demonstrations to remove unpopular authoritarian governments in country after country, while the many armed and violent guerrilla movements of the time remained unsuccessful. The wide-ranging coverage of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions misses this crucial fact.

I have analyzed these nonviolent movements and divided them into six groups, based on the types of international support received from a wide array of foreign actors. While each of these cases is unique and has its own background and context, they have a level of kinship that makes it reasonable to group them.

## Beginning with Solidarity

The first wave of popular nonviolent uprisings started with Poland and the trade union Solidarity. The fight against the one-party communist system started in 1980 and ended in a victory in 1989. Bolivia, Uruguay and the Philippines followed in 1982, 1984 and 1986, respectively. For those movements

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*Jørgen Johansen is an academic, writer, and peace activist. This article was condensed and updated from a longer piece published in Seeds of New Hope: Pan-African Peace Studies for the Twenty-First Century. Check out a video of his recent presentation at Syracuse University on SPC's YouTube channel.*

to succeed, support from the international network of trade unions and the Catholic Church was crucial.

From 1989-1991, we saw the next wave of peaceful revolutions in former Soviet republics and Eastern Europe. The fall of the Berlin wall became the symbol



*The man who owned this house in Beijing, China refused to move when the government wanted to build the "Bird Nest-sport stadium" for the 2008 Olympic games. It takes true courage for an individual to stand up against the Chinese Government! Photo: Unknown*

of those success stories. Relatively strong civil societies, access to Western media, and economic problems of the crumbling states enabled the dismantling of one-party communist systems.

During the same period (1989-1991), a number of countries in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa went through similar processes of nonviolent regime change. It started with Benin and then spread to a handful of other countries: Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal, Mali, and Malawi.

A crucial element in these cases was the presence of broad-based coalitions in national assemblies to discuss and formulate the future of the states. Most former French colonies celebrated the 300-year anniversary of the French revolution. Conferences, books, and special editions of journals had the anniversary as a key topic. Strong civil societies that cherished the ideals of the 1789 French revolution were key actors in those movements of change.

From 2000 onwards the "colored revolutions" took place—starting in Serbia and then spreading to Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan,

and Lebanon, sparked by fraudulent national elections. Foreign support—monetary, strategic, and technical—played noteworthy roles in those revolutions.

## The Arab Spring

The most recent wave of revolutions against authoritarian regimes started in Tunisia and then Egypt. The old regimes had to step down in the first months of 2011 and the complex and difficult processes of building of new states are continuing. Opposition movements call for regime change in Iran, Morocco, Bahrain, Djibouti, Qatar, Algeria, Syria, Jordan, Yemen, Oman, and Kuwait while Al Jazeera plays an important role as a source of information both inside and outside these countries. In most of these cases, little external support has been offered to opposition groups.

In Tunisia and Egypt, public anger and frustration reached a level where ordinary people had enough of poverty, emergency laws, censorship, police brutality and corruption. That was when they decided to confront the regime. In both these countries, Western support for the civil society and opposition groups was too little or none. It might well be the case that the lack of support from the outside world actually pushed the people to take desperate actions on the streets of Cairo and Tunis.

Revolutions take time. And when repressive regimes are successfully removed, serious problems arise as soon as the celebrations are over. The difficult task of replacing the old system is a crucial one. There are enormous differences between being in the opposition and being in power. That is why those who toppled the old regime may not be best prepared to run the country.

In the long run, a revolution is judged not on how the people celebrated the departure of the despots, but on how the new society functions months and years after the takeover. That is why we will have to wait for some time for a full-blown analysis on Tunisia and Egypt. ♣

# US Pushes War on Drugs in El Salvador

Ursula Rozum

Against the odds, after a decade of civil war, the *Frente Faribundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN) forced the Salvadoran government to sign a peace treaty in 1992. Today, as a political party, the FMLN champions the same issues that inspired the guerrillas to take up arms: protecting workers' rights to organize and providing education and healthcare to all Salvadorans. In 2009, the group achieved its greatest political victory when its candidate Mauricio Funes won the presidency.

Recently, there have been alarming changes in Funes' Public Security Ministry. According to anonymous sources in the Ministry of Public Security, the US insisted Minister Manuel Melgar be removed as a condition for the US to sign the "Partnership for Growth with El Salvador" agreement. He was replaced by a David Munguia Payés, a graduate of the notorious School of the Americas. Such military involvement in public security violates both El Salvador's Constitution and the 1992 Peace Accords.

Now El Salvador will once again see the growth of police and military forces—paid for by the US' own regional anti-drug and anti-gang initiative, the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). The US has pledged \$300 million to this new initiative that includes the US-funded International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Santa Tecla, El Salvador. These militaristic programs fail to address El Salvador's real security problems: the economic inequality and social exclusion that compel people to turn to gangs and crime to survive.

This US approach uses supply-side interdiction to stop drug flow from Latin America to the United States. Such an approach has proven ineffective at removing

illegal drugs from US markets. For example, the US-designed "Wide Receiver" and "Fast and Furious" schemes in Mexico were supposed to battle organized crime by tracking small-time gun buyers up the chain to locate major weapons traffickers. Both operations failed, and US federal agents notoriously lost track of many of the more than 2000 guns linked to the operations.

## The War on the US Poor

The drug war also takes its toll on US society. The US has waged its drug war almost exclusively in poor communities of color, even though studies consistently show that people of all colors use and sell illegal drugs at similar rates. According to Michelle Alexander, author of the best-

corporations are eager to expand their profits in the remilitarization process. The private security industry is booming, with US "defense" contractors who receive 80 percent of the millions of dollars in US security aid to produce weapons, supplies and training for the war on drugs. Even former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice publicly stated that the ILEA was making Latin America "safe for foreign investment" and free trade.

The Central American right wing has also capitalized on security problems for political gain. For months leading up to the recent municipal and legislative election in El Salvador, the right wing-owned media bombarded the public with sensationalized images of murder and violence, preying on

people's fears and criticizing the FMLN for failing to address these problems. Meanwhile, the National Republican Alliance (ARENA) campaigned on "iron fist" security policies aligned with the US drug war agenda and won the elections.

## Alternative Solutions

Leaders across Latin America are finally talking about the real root of the problem—the US demand for drugs. The right wing president of Guatemala is leading the call for decriminalization of drugs to

help reduce drug violence. In El Salvador, the FMLN and other sectors of civil society propose comprehensive plans for violence prevention and rehabilitation for adults and youth. In the US, among the groups leading the effort to reform drug laws is the Drug Policy Alliance. The Alliance supports Rep. Barney Frank's Marijuana Legalization Bill and is battling mandatory drug testing for those receiving public benefit payments.

More and more people recognize that the justifications for the US war on drugs are based on our own country's enormous demand for illegal drugs and for the military-prison-industrial complex's addiction to profit. We must resist these racist policies. We must challenge US militarization internationally and the drug laws that have destroyed communities of color across the US. Drugs aren't illegal because they are dangerous, they are dangerous because they are illegal.



Ursula translating for a delegation visit to the community health team of El Paisnal. Photo: Alison Aguilar

selling *The New Jim Crow*, more African American adults are under "correctional control" today—in prison or jail, on probation or parole—than were enslaved in 1850, a decade before the US Civil War. In the US, the Corrections Corporation of America and their ilk lobby Congress for stiffer sentencing laws to generate more prisoners—and more profits.

Pulitzer-prize winning investigative journalist Gary Webb chronicled the sinister roots of the crack cocaine explosion and the drug war in his "Dark Alliance" series for the *San Jose Mercury News*. Webb discovered the CIA's involvement in smuggling and distributing crack cocaine in Los Angeles to fund the Nicaraguan Contras in the 1980s. Webb charged that the Reagan administration shielded inner-city drug dealers from prosecution to raise money for the Contras.

With the global economic crisis

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*Ursula, an SPC staff organizer, travelled to El Salvador in March 2012 with the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) to serve as an elections observer and to learn about the current political context in El Salvador. The full article is available online at [www.peacecouncil.net/pnl](http://www.peacecouncil.net/pnl).*



# Challenging the Link Between Economic and Military Domination: NATO and the G8

Bob Bossie

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military bloc of 28 countries, the largest such bloc in human history. The five most influential members of NATO are the US, Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy. NATO has partnerships and agreements with over a third of the nations in the world.

The NATO summit in Chicago on May 20-21 is their 25<sup>th</sup> general meeting. NATO summit meetings are this alliance's principal political decision-making

the Germans down and the Americans in," according to William Pfaff, author of *The Irony of Manifest Destiny*.

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, NATO had to revamp its public image to ensure its real existence as the unchallenged guarantor of the dominance by western elites. Conveniently, ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia during the 90s provided that opportunity. This was to be the perfect war. "It could make war popular... [and] necessary to justify the ongoing existence of this huge... military industrial complex that is now the center of American life."



body—and involve government leaders at the highest level.

NATO was founded in 1949 by 12 countries to thwart, it was said, the expansion of the Soviet Union. This is code for NATO's real purpose: to ensure worldwide domination by "1%" of the population in the Western empire, including transnational corporations and financial institutions. To put it another way, "Keep the Russians out,

*Bob has been a staff person at the 8th Day Center for Justice in Chicago since 1980 and works on issues of peace, human rights, economics and nonviolence. The full leaflet, from which this is drawn, is available at the CANg8 website.*

(Diana Johnston, author *Fools' Crusade: Yugoslavia, NATO, and Western Delusions*)

Henceforth, NATO marketed itself as the defender of human rights and supporter of democracy. At the 2010 NATO summit, President Obama took it a step further when he said, "We came to Lisbon with a clear task and that is to revitalize our alliance to face... threats such as cyber attacks, Afghanistan, counter-narcotics, and a range of 21st century security challenges." Thus, everything is deemed a threat in order to justify NATO's goal of advancing the interests of the 1%.

Libya is a perfect example. Many supported NATO's bombing campaign to overthrow Gaddafi in the interests of

## Taking Back Control of our Future

Protestors and other members of the 99% will "speak out against the generals and bankers who are responsible for most of the human misery on the planet," said Joe Iosbaker, an organizer with the Coalition Against the NATO and G8 War & Poverty Agenda (CANGATE).

Protestors will flock to Chicago in May to protect our common heritage—the lands, natural resources and biodiversity—from destructive and exploitative development and military policies. They will demand that resources be used in a sustainable manner to serve human needs in Chicago and around the world. Plans include:

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MAY 12-13:**  
*People's Summit in Chicago:  
A Better World is Possible.*

**SUNDAY, MAY 20:** Legally permitted, family-friendly march to the NATO summit (which will include leaders from six G8 countries) at McCormick Place, gather at 12 noon at Petrillo Bandshell at Jackson Blvd. and Congress Dr.

CANGATE: [www.CANg8.org](http://www.CANg8.org)

G8 and NATO Protest: [www.g8protest.org](http://www.g8protest.org)

liberation and human rights. But NATO's real long-term goal was to prepare for its collaboration with the "liberation" forces in controlling Libya's massive energy resources. The campaign involved over 20 ships, over 250 aircraft and 26,000 NATO air missions over Libya. These strikes included the massive use of toxic and radioactive depleted uranium (DU) munitions.

Since 1999, NATO has waged war on nations on three continents: Yugoslavia, Libya and Afghanistan, none of which have relevance to defending the "North Atlantic." At a NATO seminar on February 28, 2012, Secretary General Secretary Anders Fogh Rasmussen said that Afghanistan remains NATO's top operational priority.

These attacks killed tens if not hundreds

continued on page 20



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2012-2013

**Bill McKibben**

ENVIRONMENTALIST, AUTHOR AND FOUNDER OF 350.ORG

***350: THE MOST IMPORTANT NUMBER IN THE WORLD***

Wednesday, Oct. 10, 2012

**Ron Brownstein**

POLITICAL DIRECTOR OF ATLANTIC MEDIA COMPANY; EDITORIAL DIRECTOR AND COLUMNIST FOR THE NATIONAL JOURNAL

***AMERICAN POLITICS, TODAY AND TOMORROW***

Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2012

**Marion Nestle**

PAULETTE GODDARD PROFESSOR OF NUTRITION AND PUBLIC HEALTH AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY AND AUTHOR OF "FOOD POLITICS" AND "WHAT TO EAT"

***FOOD POLITICS FROM FARM TO TABLE: A RECIPE FOR CHANGE***

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2012

**David Henry Hwang**

TONY AWARD-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT AND SCREENWRITER, AUTHOR OF "M. BUTTERFLY"

***THE FLUIDITY OF IDENTITY: THEATRE AND THE SEARCH FOR SELF***

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

**Jim Richardson**

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER

***OUR VANISHING NIGHT: LIGHT POLLUTION***

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

**Conor Grennan**

FOUNDER OF NEXT GENERATION NEPAL, AUTHOR OF "LITTLE PRINCES"

***LITTLE PRINCES: CHANGING THE WORLD THROUGH VOLUNTEERING AND STORYTELLING***

Thursday, April 4, 2013



# The Rights of Mother Earth

Lindsay Speer

When Jake Edwards, of the Onondaga Nation Council of Chiefs, explains the significance of the Two Row Wampum, he always ends with the same point.

“We agreed that we would travel down the river of life together, in peace and friendship, forever, obeying natural law,” he states.

While many Haudenosaunee ideas were adopted by the fledgling United States, natural law was not among them. A growing movement seeks to change this.

On April 4-7, “The Rights of Mother Earth” conference was held at the Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas. It was sponsored by the Indigenous Environmental Network, the Pachamama Alliance, the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature, and the Community Environmental Defense Legal Foundation, among others.

Many of these groups have been working for years for the incorporation of the rights of nature (or Mother Earth) into law.

## Why Recognize the Rights of Mother Earth?

It’s an old story. People in a community suddenly find that their way of life will change drastically because some big new industry is coming to town. It’s the story of hydrofracking; it’s the story of industrial agriculture; it’s the story of climate change. It’s the story of corporations getting their way over the objections of communities.

The same story occurs for ecosystems. Any ecologist can tell you that we are a part of a complex web of life. Yet our current patterns of development destroy the very web of life upon which we depend. Onondaga Nation Faithkeeper Oren Lyons often warns, “Do not challenge the laws of nature. You will not prevail.”

At the heart of the struggle is the inherent right of people and ecosystems to healthy lives vs. the “property rights” codified in US law.

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*Lindsay is active with NOON and works as an organizer on environmental issues for the Onondaga Nation.*



Attendees gather for a traditional Pawnee dinner, prepared by Haskell Indian Nations University students. Photo: Lindsay Speer

Under the current system, “a few people can control parts of the planet,” noted Ben Price, of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, adding that this concept is not native to our hemisphere. He traced the origins of protecting the privileges of the elite, property “rights,” to a papal bull written by Pope Alexander VI in 1493.

In 1977, the Haudenosaunee delegation to the UN wrote, “The European legal systems had, and apparently have developed, no machinery to recognize the rights of peoples, other than dictators or sovereigns, to land.”

They pointed out that this carried over to the Americas with colonization: “[Modern multinational corporations] obtain a charter, or some form of sanction from a Western government, and they send what amounts to a colonizing force into the area.”

If you’ve been thinking that the land grab by the gas industry and their landmen seems reminiscent of “what happened to the Native Americans” (as I’ve heard some say), you are in fact, correct.

US environmental law accepts this framework of property rights and dominion. Many establish systems of *permitting* environmental harm. States grant permits for corporations to pollute, so long as they’ve done the right paperwork. Many laws are written by the “regulated” industries themselves, particularly since the *Citizens United* case gave corporations unparalleled access to US lawmakers.

Our ship sailed off our side of the Two Row long ago. Would incorporating the rights of Mother Earth into local, state, and federal laws steer it back?

## Indigenous Perspectives

On the first day of the conference, we split into groups to discuss our thoughts. The report-back from the indigenous groups conveyed skepticism and concern, but also agreement.

“‘Rights’ is a very European idea,” one elder explained, “we talk about responsibilities.”

A consensus existed that Indigenous peoples already have the rights of Mother Earth in their traditional laws.

“What would this look like in practice?” another group asked. “Could this be used against native peoples and their traditional practices by environmentalists?”

There was an equally strong consensus that the Western legal system is broken and needs to be fixed if humanity is to survive.

“We have to challenge this model that depends on the commodification of nature and human domination,” explained Tom Goldtooth, Executive Director of the Indigenous Environmental Network.

Steve Newcomb, Shawnee/Lenape scholar on the Doctrine of Discovery, questioned whether it was worthwhile to adopt such laws within the US justice system. “If we can’t address the framework of domination, we haven’t done much,” he said, and advocated instead for recognition of Indigenous laws by the US.

The issue is complicated for one short article and deserves more thought and discussion. Could developing such laws locally be a way to enact the vision for healing between peoples and the earth as laid out in the opening of the Onondaga Nation’s Land Rights Action?

## Rio+20

Many conference participants will travel to Rio de Janeiro in June, for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development—or “Rio+20,” referring to the Earth Summit in 1992. They all expressed concern that Rio+20 is shaping



Video of this event is available at [www.earthcycles.net](http://www.earthcycles.net).

continued on next page

of thousands of men, women and children and left widespread destruction of all that it takes to sustain human life. NATO has now deployed its forces, bases and ballistic missile defense, especially those of the US, in many of NATO's new member states in Central and Eastern Europe as a hedge against Iran and Russia. Interestingly, in 1966, President De Gaulle pulled France out of NATO due to US and British dominance. France's current president, Sarkozy, reversed that decision in 2009.

The following disproportions indicate the level of NATO's world domination. The 28 NATO countries spent 70% (\$1.6 trillion) of all world military expenditures in 2010. The US alone spent 40%.

The population of all NATO countries is slightly more than 885 million, or 13% of the world population. Many of us in NATO countries have materially benefited from NATO's military might, but more and more such benefits accrue particularly to the 1%.

During the May 2012 NATO summit there, Chicagoans will get a small taste of this violence as the city is turned into an occupied military zone. As past summits have shown, NATO helicopter gunships and AWACS aircraft will hover overhead and armies of "security" personnel, including snipers and other military personnel will comb Chicago. Under the cloak of supporting democracy, the autocratic government of Mayor Rahm Emmanuel is hosting the world's foremost war-making force.

### The NATO-G8 Link

Plans originally included a summit of the G8 in Chicago, alongside the NATO meeting. However, the G8 meeting was

shifted to Camp David, Maryland on May 18-19, likely because of concerns about impending protests.

G8 stands for the Group of 8 industrialized nations: US, UK, Germany, Italy, France, Japan, Canada and Russia. Like NATO, the G8 partners with numerous other countries and international organizations. For example, the "G8+5" include the five largest emerging economies: Brazil, China, Mexico, India, and South Africa. Leaders of the following major international organizations have also been invited to attend previous summit meetings: African Union, Commonwealth of Independent States, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Energy Agency, UN, UNESCO, World Bank, World Health Organization, World Trade Organization.

The G8 nations produce over 60% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (\$63 trillion in 2010) but make up only 14% of the world's population. Meanwhile, over half of the world's population lives on less than \$2.50 a day—lacking adequate drinking water, food and shelter—and witness the further destruction of their ecosystems.

NATO is the military arm of the G8's efforts to enrich the 1%. Despite the G8 summit's move to Camp David, the link between the G8 and NATO is evident in the remarks of Caitlin Hayden, a spokeswoman for Obama's National Security Council: "There are a lot of political, economic and security issues that come together at the G8." The interlocking network between the two entities is reflected in the fact that six of the G8 countries are also highly influential within NATO. This concentration of economic, military and political power is catastrophic for the rest of the world under the best of circumstances, especially since the very same 1% increasingly control the corporate media. ♣

### Rights of Mother Earth / from previous page

up to be less an earth summit and more about perpetuating the commodification of nature under the guise of a "green economy." They go with the intention of shifting that paradigm.

"Indigenous peoples will unite at Rio+20 to oppose the use of the 'green economy' and its oppression of indigenous peoples," explained Marlon Santi, [former] President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador. "This is the time for the condor and the eagle to unite."

There is a goal to get over one million signatures in support of the Rights of Mother Earth prior to Rio+20. Add your name at [RightsOfMotherEarth.com](http://RightsOfMotherEarth.com). ♣

*A timeline of the Rights of Mother Earth is available with the online version of this article.*

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for only \$10 at the show and afterward at SPC's office. They're also available as a thank you gift for donations of \$60 or more in response to our spring fund appeal.

### Ground the Drones Committee Out and About

The Ground the Drones Committee has been doing local and regional outreach. Recently we have been at two conferences—the United National Antiwar Coalition meeting in Connecticut, where we presented a workshop on organizing against the drones, and most recently the “Drone Summit: Killing and Spying by Remote Control” organized by CodePink in DC. Closer to home, we presented a staged reading of the play “The Predator” at Pebble Hill Church and will perform it again at Syracuse University’s Conference on Activism, Rhetoric and Research in early May.

If you would like a presentation of “The Predator” or a speaker for your group, contact Carol.

### Orientations, Trainings and Outreach!

Summer is prime time for SPC to reach new people and grow our local peace movement – and we could use more help! Our Spring Activist Orientation is **May 9, 6 pm**. Come learn specific ways to get involved with the Peace Council’s organizing and outreach this spring and summer. If you’d like to sharpen your outreach skills, come to our special Outreach Training on **May 30, 6 pm**.

Consider joining SPC’s Tabling Team and attend this summer’s big outreach events. Contact Ursula.

### Bikes4Peace

Bike fixing started early for Bikes4Peace this year, with Bike Kitchens on the Center’s ground floor in April. We’ll continue these bike repair skillshares and learning sessions on **May 8**. Then, on **May 29 from 6-7 pm**, also at the Center, we’ll have an orientation for people who want to volunteer at our summer bike repair clinics. To

get involved or support our work with a donation of bicycles, please contact Jessica.

### Youth Outreach: SPC in the Schools

SPC continued its presence in high schools this spring thanks to help from Jack Brown, Amber Coon, Chris Jamison, Arny Steiber and Greg Wright, along with SPC staffers Jessica Maxwell and Andy Mager. Dozens of Syracuse youth got connected to SPC and learned about social justice careers as alternatives to military service. In addition to informational flyers and brochures, we distributed hundreds of peace buttons and stickers. As the school year comes to a close, SPC is ramping up our summer bike program and will restock our high school outreach materials in preparation for fall tabling. To get involved, contact Jessica.



Jim Weidman (far left) marching in the Hiroshima Day Procession, 2006. Photo: SPC Archives

### Activist Appreciation: Jim Weidman

If you’ve ever helped at a *Peace Newsletter* mailing party, then you’ve probably met Jim. A retired high school English teacher, Jim has a knack for keeping the conversation flowing, and he always makes the extra effort to help new volunteers feel welcome. Whether it’s helping at events, staffing outreach tables, marching in the streets, or lending a hand in the office, Jim helps keeps the Peace Council moving forward. Thank you, Jim, for your kind spirit, dedication and humor.

### Freeze Our Fukushimas

Through our membership in the Alliance for a Green Economy, SPC has continued to support efforts to close US Mark I Boiling Water Reactors. Their design flaws were dramatically demonstrated by the Fukushima nuclear tragedy, which saw containment failures and full meltdowns of all three Mark I’s at that site. Two of the three Oswego reactors are Mark I’s, and Oswego’s Fitzpatrick reactor is the only Mark I in the US operating without the additional venting system recommended by the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

We have little faith in the regulatory capacity of the NRC, as they have continuously failed to shut down dangerous reactors or adequately hold operators accountable for repeated safety violations. The expected NRC dismissal of our petitions will provide more evidence that the NRC is abdicating its responsibility to protect public safety. With NYS already challenging the NRC over the relicensing of the Indian Point reactors downstate, we hope to push for expanding the state’s role in regulating the nuclear reactors in our communities. To learn more, visit [allianceforagreenconomy.org](http://allianceforagreenconomy.org).

### Keeping the Money Coming

Subscribers should receive SPC’s spring fund appeal soon. Please read the appeal for support from Col. Ann Wright (ret.) and respond as generously as you are able. If you don’t receive the mailing, see [peacecouncil.net/donate](http://peacecouncil.net/donate) or contact the office for a copy.

SPC prides ourselves on making our work and events accessible to all people, regardless of ability to pay. That requires those who are able to contribute more to do so! This appeal is more important now because we’ve learned that SummerCrafts will not happen at JazzFest this year due to complications of finding a new venue. SPC appreciates the past collaboration with JazzFest and looks forward to future opportunities to work together.

continued on page 23

# Gandhi's List of Social Sins: Lessons in Truth

## Book Review

Dave Pasinski

St. Lucy's Church had rarely seen a funeral like it. Over 500 people spilled out onto the sidewalk on the scorching morning of July 9, 2011, to commend Frank Woolever, beloved justice-seeker and peacemaker, to God and to the ages. Frank had accomplished much in his vocations as priest, husband, and father. All the while he was involved in countless struggles (inner city and interracial justice issues, the Citizen Review Board, nonviolent protests, pastoral counseling, working at L'Arche, etc.), and he wrote faith-filled reflections that touched thousands. His untimely death left this book as a work in progress and its final editing was completed by his wife, Meme, and his daughter, Heidi Woolever Daly, with assistance from all of the family.

Frank had read Gandhi throughout his life and been profoundly influenced by him. He notes that it was during his months-long incarceration at Canaan Federal Prison camp for his "crossing the line" at Fort Benning during the School of the Americas (a.k.a. WHISC, a US military school notorious for its ties to right wing dictatorships in Central and Latin America) protest in November, 2005, that he wished to saturate himself in the writings of this iconic leader who had spent over six years of his life imprisoned for nonviolent protest. While there are many excellent books on Gandhi, what makes Frank's unique is not just that he is Syracuse's own, but that a systematic reflection on the notion of the "social sins" has rarely been as thoroughly treated.

Gandhi's "ahimsa"—freedom from every form of domination and aggression—and "satyagraha"—a Gandhian neologism best translated as "truth force" or "soul force"—was the basis in virtue to which this list of vices or sins is the antithesis. According to Frank, Gandhi recognized his struggle with these "sins" as a fellow journeyman and did not present these

concepts judgmentally about others as if he himself were without fault. Likewise, *and politics without principle*—his meditations increased my knowledge of Gandhi

and, paradoxically, made him both less saintly and more remarkable at the same time. Frank captures that tension with personal and homey stories that invite the reader to ponder, "How would I deal with that?", and we are seduced by these ageless but very contemporary challenges. Frank particularly highlights Gandhi's emphasis on the value of the written word and his numerous writings as he straddled both an activist and contemplative lifestyle. This is complemented by Frank's referencing some of his over 100 letters to the editor of local newspapers throughout his life on many interrelated subjects. These both celebrated the

good done by the many and presented challenges to address these social temptations with which Gandhi grappled.

In his "Forward," Jerry Berrigan quotes Gandhi's admonition, "If you want something important to be done, you must not just satisfy the reason. You

must satisfy the heart also. The penetration of the heart comes from suffering, which opens the inner understanding of men and women..." This is what I believe Frank hoped for in his book as well—to speak not only to our intellectual appreciation of Gandhi, but to let our hearts be inspired for appropriate actions in the face of our encounters with these social sins. This book serves as a fine catalyst for head, heart, and action in the example of both Gandhi and Frank Woolever.

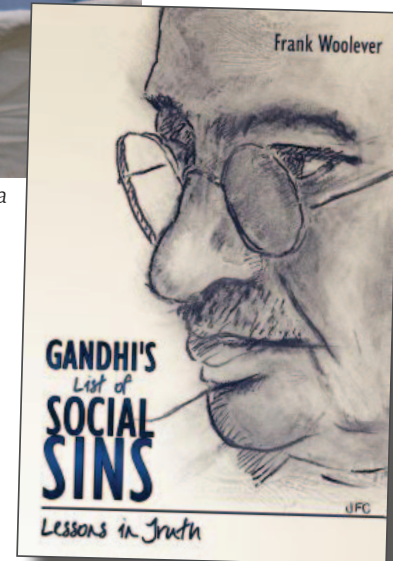


Longtime activist Frank Woolever at the Hiroshima procession, August 6, 2004. Photo: Paul Pearce

the value of this book is not only in its explanation of Gandhi's thought and history, but in Frank's integration of his own story and illustrations relating to each of these seven areas.

For example, in the first cited entry, "wealth without work," not only is there a valuable presentation of Gandhi's reasoning and an appreciation of his own commitment to spin cotton to keep himself centered in the manual labor aspects of life, but Frank also reflects on his own work, including his work in the prison setting. He cites in the next chapter, "pleasure without conscience", Gandhi's own struggles around his self-imposed celibacy and his admitted insensitivity—and sometimes worse—to his wife, Kasturba. Frank's inclusion of his time with Cesar Chavez, the great labor and civil rights leader, provides a personal illustration of this struggle.

Throughout the other reflections on "social sins"—*conscience without morality, science without humanity, knowledge without character, worship without sacrifice,*



Get a copy of the book at Syracuse Cultural Workers or attend the reading at ArtRage Gallery on May 6 (see calendar for details).

David E. Pasinski is one of Frank's many friends.



## An SPC Staffer in Congress?

You may have already heard that SPC staff organizer and Green Party activist Ursula Rozum has announced a run for the 24<sup>th</sup> Congressional District seat on the Green Party line. Ursula will continue her paid work with SPC during the election season. As an organization, SPC has a long history of not endorsing candidates. We see election year as an opportunity to share our analysis, gain broader attention for the issues on which we work, and strategically apply pressure on candidates to further our issue campaigns (see our statement on elections: [peacecouncil.net/statements/SPCelections.htm](http://peacecouncil.net/statements/SPCelections.htm)).

We hope SPC activists will find their own ways to use this election year to further an agenda of peace and social justice.

## Corporate Dodge Ball

To focus attention on corporate tax dodgers, SPC joined unions and other community groups in co-sponsoring a public “99% Against the 1% Dodge Ball Game” on April 17 in Clinton Square. Thanks to loopholes such as offshore tax havens, teams of tax experts, and billions of dollars spent on lobbying and campaign contributions, many of the most profitable US corporations paid an effective tax rate that was zero or negative. We delivered the signed game balls as “Corporate Tax Dodger” trophies to local offices of some of the most egregious offenders, including Bank of America and Verizon.

As part of the “We Are NY” coalition, SPC is also co-sponsoring a screening of *The Heist* on **June 21** at the Palace Theatre. A documentary that explores the history of the US economy and how it’s been rigged to serve wealthy corporate interests, the film is a call to action, stating, “There are only two kinds of power in America: organized money and organized people.”

## Tax Day Organizing

SPC intern Elyse Irvins organized a Penny Poll at college campuses to give students a say in where they want their income tax money to go. We teamed up with Syra-

cuse University’s College Democrats and Onondaga Community College students to put the word out on the importance of knowing how the government is spending *our* money. Students were surprised that 48% of our tax dollars has gone to military funding in past years, and they were more inclined to fund “Health” and “Education.”

On Tax Day itself, SPC presented the Penny Poll in Perseverance Park in downtown Syracuse. Check SPC’s website for the final results of the polls.

— Elyse Irvins



SPC’s Tax Day Penny Poll downtown—members of the 99% make choices about how their tax dollars should be spent. Photo: Ursula Rozum

## Thanks to Spring Interns

Soon we’ll say goodbye to our five spring interns. They have been exceptional, and we’ll miss their energy and enthusiasm. Here’s a sample of what they’ve accomplished in a few short months:

- SU student Elyse Irvins was the primary organizer for the Tax Day Penny Polls during the week of April 16; she also did much of the publicity and outreach for the Hancock 38 final court appearance and speaking engagements, and the April 21-22 Ground the Drones weekend.
- *PNL* readers are likely already familiar with Christina Sterbenz from her frequent contributions during (and even before) her internship. Christina’s significant experience as an editor with SU’s *Jerk Magazine* enabled her to bring new ideas and insights to the *PNL*. She also compiled SPC’s weekly e-newsletter.

- Brianna Carrier played a major role in early fundraising efforts for NOON’s Two Row Wampum Campaign. Her presentation about the campaign at a SUNY Buffalo conference led conference organizers to consider focusing next year’s conference on the Two Row!
- ESF student Amelia Marple provided various forms of administrative support to NOON projects.
- Matt Harmer had a campus organizing internship. He staffed information tables at SUNY Oswego weekly and organized a talk by Kathy Kelly there.

We encourage people—of all ages and experience—to apply for SPC internships this summer. Contact Ursula.

## Consensus 101

As part of SPC’s series of activist skillshares, we held a consensus training on April 4. We were thrilled to have over 20 people from a variety of SPC committees and community groups, including Occupy Syracuse and Veterans for Peace, attend the training. Thanks to SPC activists Jessica Azulay and Rae Kramer who facilitated. Our discussion was greatly enriched by the participation of five Middle Eastern/North African activists currently in the US as Leaders in Democracy Fellows at SU’s Maxwell School. Their experiences in countries like Tunisia

and Libya added a unique element to our discussion on democratic decision making.

## From an SPC Intern

Interning with the Syracuse Peace Council has been a remarkable learning experience for me. Working in the office with such a happy and friendly staff, I have been introduced to what seems like a whole new world of activists and organizations from Syracuse to D.C. I think the SPC internship is ideal for young students like myself who care to give back in some way, whether as a career or as a volunteer. Networking, expanding my writing, professional skills, and knowledge about an array of issues that are affecting our communities are all a part of what I have gained, and I am so thankful for this opportunity.

— Elyse Irvins ♡

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THURS

FRI

SAT

# Syracuse Peace Council Community Calendar

## MAY 2012

**6** Ganahl & Curie: The Courage to Change History. Book reading, 2pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711, arrragegallery.org. Free.

**BIWallaier and Kristin Mosler:** Benefit for WCC & Jane Goodall Institute, 3pm. Westcott Community Center, 826 Euclid Ave. \$10/adult, \$5/student, free 12+under. 478-8634.

**May 6: PeaceSongsNY CD Release Party!** 5:30pm. Metro Lounge, 505 Westcott St. \$5-10. See page 4.



**7** Peace Action Forum: Question the Candidates. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711.

**13** Mothers Day, begun in 1872 as an anti-war holiday!

**14** Onondaga County Green Party Convention, 7pm. 2013 E. Genesee St., 1st Floor, Howe, 474-7055, syracusegreens@yahoo.com.



**EVERY MON: GED classes,** 9am-12pm. Westcott Community Center, RSP/P to Paul Harvey at 241-4420 or WCC at 478-8634.

**EVERY MON: Westside Residents Coalition,** 6:30-8pm. Spanish Action League, 700 Oswego St. facebook.com/westside-residents-coalition

**20** Marking the Continuing Nakota, 4pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. Andy, 472-5478. See page 3.

**27** Gay and Lesbian Catholics: First and third Sun, monthly, 5pm. All Saints Church, 1304 Lancaster Ave. 770-2155.

**21** SUN Westside Coalition, 7pm. Brown Memorial, 228 Davis St. 476-7475.



**28** Memorial Day, see page 11.

**EVERY SUN:** "Top of the World" music, 10pm-12am. 88.3 FM.

**MAY 1** May Day Call to Action. All Day. Persistence Park, Fayette & Salina Sts. mayday.org.

Partnership for Onondaga Creek Mtg. 6pm. Brady/Faith Center, 404 South Ave. Agge 478-4571. Call to confirm.

**Liberation! Learnings: Lessons from Africa's Anti-Colonial Struggles.** 7pm. ArrRage Gallery. See page 12.

**8** Peace Outreach, 4:15-5pm. E. Genesee St. & Erie Blvd (Dewitt), 478-4571. See page 4.

**Bikes&Peace Bike Kirchen,** 5-7pm. 2013 E. Genesee St. Ursula 472-5478.

**SUN Southside Coal,** 6:30pm. Beardcamp Library, 211 S Salina St. 478-7475.

**NOON Steering Comm. Mtg.,** 7pm. 2013 E. Genesee St. Andy, 472-5478.

**15** Ground the Drones Peace Outreach, 4:15-5pm. Hancock Air Base entrance, 478-4571.

**SPC Steering Committee Meeting,** 6:30-9pm. Jessica, 472-5478.

**Six Indigenous Short Films from Sundance,** 7pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711. \$5.

**22** Peace Outreach, 4:15-5pm. E. Genesee St. & Erie Blvd (Dewitt), 478-4571. See page 4.

**29** Growing Urban Sustainability, 7pm. Women's Information Center, 601 Allen St.

**Peace Outreach,** 4:15-5pm. E. Genesee St. & Erie Blvd (Dewitt), 478-4571. See page 4.

**Bikes&Peace Orientation,** 6-7pm. 2013 E. Genesee St. Ursula 472-5478.

**Two Row Wampum Renewal Committee,** 7pm. 2013 E. Genesee St., 2nd Floor. Andy, 472-5478.

**2** Ground the Drones Peace Outreach, 4:15-5pm. Hancock Air Base entrance (E. Molloy Rd., Matnydale), 478-4571.

**EVERY WED: Syr. Community Choir Rehearsals,** 7pm. Westcott Comm. Center, Karen, 428-8151.

**Postpartum Support Group, 1st & 3rd Wed,** 7pm. Women's Information Center, 601 Allen St. Christine, 546-5075.

**9** SPC Activist Orientation, 6pm. Ursula, 472-5478. See page 21.

**Radical Reading Group, The New Jim Crow,** 7:30pm. SPC, 2013 E. Genesee St. Ursula, 472-5478. See page 4.

**EVERY WED: Figure Drawing,** 7-10pm. Westcott Comm. Center, 478-8634. Fee.

**Crooked Arrows (Lacrosse Movie) Premiere,** 8pm. Civic Center, \$15 and up.

**16** Shakeshock CNY Meeting, 6pm. Onondaga Free Library, 4840 W. Seneca Trk. Jack, 424-1454 or ransnickd29@gmail.com.

**NOON A UN event: "Working as Allies to Indigenous Peoples,"** 6:15pm. Church Center @ the UN, 777 Erie Ave., NYC. Andy, 472-5478. See page 4.

**Skunk City Nighthd Assoc,** 6:30pm. Win-dy Library, 1204 S. Geddes St. 478-7475.

**Postpartum Support Group, 1st & 3rd Wed,** 7pm. Women's Information Center, 601 Allen St. Christine, 546-5075.



**23** Friends of Dorothy dinner, 5:30-7pm. St. Vincent's Parish Center, Burnet Ave. & Winston St. (entrance on Winston). Donation. www.friendsofdorothy.org/syracuse.com.

**SPC Skillbuilding: Outreach and Tabling** 6:7-30pm. Ursula 472-5478. See page 21.

**3** CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel meeting, 11-11:30am. SPC Office, 2nd Floor. Andy, 472-5478.

**EVERY THURS: Talk to a lawyer,** 6-8pm. Westcott Community Center, 826 Euclid Ave. Steve, 478-8634. Free.

**Postpartum Support Group,** 1st & 3rd Wed, 7pm. Women's Information Center, 601 Allen St. Christine, 546-5075.

**10** EVERY THURS: Moving for Better Balance. Exercise for seniors, 11-11:45am. Westcott Community Center. Transportation available. 478-8634.

**CNY Energy Challenge: Facilitator Training,** 6:30-9pm. 2013 E. Genesee St., 2nd Flr. Jessica, 472-5478. Visit cnyenergychallenge.org.

**No Frackin' Fundraiser/CD Release Party,** 7:30-10pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711, arrragegallery.org.

**17** SPC MONTHLY PROGRAM

**Reporting Back from El Salvador: Stories of International Solidarity,** 6:30pm. La Casita, 108 Olisao St. Ursula, 472-5478.

**Southwest Action Committee,** 7pm. Brady Faith, 404 South Ave. 476-7475.

**Crude: The Real Price of Oil,** 7pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711. \$5.

**24** Syracuse Salt City SLAM #2 - Open Mik. 7pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711, arrragegallery.org. Free.

**PWL Mailing Party,** 4pm. SPC office, 2013 E. Genesee St., 2nd floor. Free pizza. Jessica, 472-5478.

**Boxed Items are Syracuse Peace Council related events.** info: peace-council@ny. 315-472-5478.

**4** First Friday Vigil for Jobs, 12:30pm. Federal Bldg. Corner of Washington & Clinton Sts.

**Land of Destiny, Film,** 7pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711, arrragegallery.org. Free.

**Folkus Project: Mary Gauthier Concert,** 8pm. May Memorial, 3800 E. Genesee. folkus.org. \$18.



**18** Live Comedy Improv, 8pm. Red House, 201 S. West St. theredhouse.org. \$10.

**Folkus Project: Ebony Hillbillies,** 8pm. May Memorial, 3800 E. Genesee. folkus.org. Concert, \$15.

**25** Palestine Dinner: A Benefit for Palestinian Mission Schools and The Gay Bargh Scholarship, 5pm. Prince of Peace Church, 317 E. Jefferson St. \$15. Linda, 492-8807.



**26** Pax Christi monthly meeting, 9:30pm. 208 Stourton Ave.

**Folkus Project: Tony Trischka,** 8pm. Westcott Community Center, 826 Euclid Ave. folkus.org. Concert, entry charge.

**EVERY SAT: Democracy Now!** 9-11pm. Time Warner Cable Ch. 98.

**12** The Great Law of Peace with Tom Porter. Kanastota/rahe Traditional Teaching Series, 10am-3pm. Kanastota/rahe Mohawk Community, 4934 Rt. 5, Fonda, NY. \$25 includes light lunch.

**Long Distance and Unakukik, Dear Little One,** Film, 8pm. ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711. \$5.

**The Westcott Jugstuckers with Collin Aberdeen,** Concert, 8pm. Westcott Community Center. 478-8634. Fee.

**19** EVERY SAT: Peace Outreach, 9-10am. Regional Market (Park St.), Ann or Ed, 478-4571.

**EVERY SAT: Democracy Now!** 9-11pm. Time Warner Cable Ch. 98.

**RESOURCED/Response Closing Day,** ArrRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. 218-5711, arrragegallery.org.

**EVERY SAT: Sharing the Earth (P&R),** 10pm. Time Warner 98.

**26** Pax Christi monthly meeting, 9:30pm. 208 Stourton Ave.

**Folkus Project: Tony Trischka,** 8pm. Westcott Community Center, 826 Euclid Ave. folkus.org. Concert, entry charge.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 3**

**Syracuse Community Choir Ice Cream Social & Summer Solstice Concert.**

3pm Social, 4-6 Concert Honoring/remembering Audrey Shenandoah with songs of the earth, peace, justice and connector! \$12-25 sliding scale, less of you need to, Place T8A. 315-478-8634.

