

SYRACUSE PEACE COUNCIL'S

# Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace and Social Justice

June 2015 #843



Sticker found on Westcott Street. Photo: Amelia LeFevre

## Founders Say: This Is Not a Moment, but a Movement

#BlackLivesMatter was created in 2012 after Trayvon Martin's murderer, George Zimmerman, was acquitted for his crime, and dead 17-year-old Trayvon was posthumously placed on trial for his own murder. Rooted in the experiences of Black people in this country who actively resist our dehumanization, #BlackLivesMatter is a call to action and a response to the virulent anti-Black racism that permeates our society. Black Lives Matter is a unique contribution that goes beyond

extrajudicial killings of Black people by police and vigilantes.

It goes beyond the narrow nationalism that can be prevalent within Black communities, which merely call on Black people to love Black, live Black and buy Black, keeping straight cis [gender-normative] Black men in the front of the movement while our sisters, queer, trans and disabled folk take up roles in the background or not at all. Black Lives Matter affirms the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled

folks, black-undocumented folks, folks with records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. It centers those that have been marginalized within Black liberation movements. It is a tactic to (re) build the Black liberation movement.

When we say Black Lives Matter, we are broadening the conversation around state violence to include all of the ways in

continued on page 6

### ALSO INSIDE

IMF Alternatives?  
page 7

Summer Reading  
page 8

Eduardo Galeano  
page 9

Yemen  
page 11

## SPC INFO

### SPC Steering Committee 2015

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### SPC's Peace Newsletter

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### peacecouncil.net

Read the PNL online (issues dating back to 1936!). See all our projects and events.

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**Fundraising and Finances:** Ursula Rozum and Carol Baum  
**Peace Newsletter:** Amelia Lefevre

### Affiliated Projects & Coalitions

**Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse:** faith & secular groups  
**United as One:** working for justice in the local justice system  
**New Yorkers Against Fracking:** statewide coalition opposing hydrofracking  
**Move to Amend:** works against corporate control of the democratic system  
**Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars**

## 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.

## PEACE NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

<b>This Is Not a Moment, but a Movement</b> by Black Lives Matter movement .....	cover
<b>SPC in Action</b> compiled by Carol Baum .....	3
<b>The Three Women Behind the Black Lives Matter Movement</b> by Deron Dalton .....	5
<b>Are New International Banks True Alternatives?</b> by Brian Escobar .....	7
<b>Activist Summer Reading List</b> compiled by PNL Editorial Committee .....	8
<b>Eduardo Galeano: Writing the People's Story of the Americas</b> compiled by Ben Kuebrich .....	9
<b>No More Nuclear Pork</b> by Simone Richmond .....	10
<b>War on Yemen: Where Oil and Geopolitics Meet</b> by Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya .....	11
<b>SPC Community Calendar</b> .....	16

### Peace Newsletter

**Sponsored by the Syracuse Center for Peace & Social Justice**

**Article submission criteria:** Contact pnl@peacecouncil.net or 472-5478.

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

**Calendar:** Submit items for the Jul-Aug PNL calendar by July 6.

## Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace & Social Justice

(make checks to: Syracuse Peace Council)

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 Syracuse, NY 13210

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# Educate, Agitate, Organize: SPC IN ACTION

compiled by Carol Baum

## No More Hiroshimas

The Nuclear Free World committee is busy planning a procession to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. The next organizing meeting will take place at **4:45 pm on June 11** at The Center (2013 E. Genesee St.). The annual procession to mark the horrific crime perpetrated on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will take place on August 6, meeting place to be determined. We need many volunteers and activists to help prepare for the procession and to create a visually stunning, artistic anti-war action—we will be carrying 70 peace doves to mark 70 years of work for peace and disarmament. In the lead up to the procession, we are planning educational presentations with local faith groups—if you would like to host a presentation and discussion about the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with your faith or community group, contact Ursula.

## Downtown Summer Tabling

June starts SPC's summer outreach tabling in Syracuse's downtown on Tuesdays. Positioned just outside the Downtown Farmers' Market, we provide information and action opportunities to people going to the market. Each week the focus is on a different issue. It's a great way to interact with people and go beyond "preaching to the choir." Enjoy the summer in a new way—help gather materials, bring them there and back, or staff the table. Contact Carol.

## Films for Peace

Films play a significant role in creating our shared conception of history, culture and politics. This summer, SPC is hosting "Anti-War Intervention Films," a film series to engage the wider Syracuse community in discussions about war and militarism and



SPC activists show off some of the 70 paper doves created for this year's Annual Dramatic Procession (see left) commemorating 70 years since the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Photo: Ursula Rozum

how we can organize to resist. On **June 19**, we will screen the classic film *The War Game*, a mockumentary about nuclear war which was banned from screening by the BBC. On **July 17**, we present *The War You Don't See*. This noteworthy film is a timely investigation into the media's role in war. Both films will be presented at **8 pm** at ArtRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. Free admission with \$5 suggested donation. We welcome volunteers to help with promotion and event organizing. Contact Ursula.

corporate political, social, and environmental news and commentary. Recent programs include sessions from the Interfaith Conference on Drone Warfare and public comments from Reforming the Energy Vision. We expect to see broadcasts from the United National Antiwar Coalition's National Conference. Thanks to Wilton Vought, the show's creator, for approaching us about sponsorship. See [www.othervoicesotherchoices.blogspot.com](http://www.othervoicesotherchoices.blogspot.com) for programming information.

## New Public Access Cable TV Show for Syracuse

SPC is sponsoring *Other Voices, Other Choices* on the Time Warner Cable Public Access channel. The show promotes non-

## No Drones, No Wars

SPC's Ground the Drones and End the Wars Committee works locally and as part of the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars. The focus of both is Syracuse's Hancock Air Base, where military personnel pilot drones over Afghanistan. It is also a training site for drone pilots, sensor operators and maintenance technicians. What we're up to:

continued on next page

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[www.peacecouncil.net](http://www.peacecouncil.net) • OFFICE HOURS: M-F, 11 am-5 pm



### STAFF ORGANIZERS

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Amelia Lefevre: [amelia@peacecouncil.net](mailto:amelia@peacecouncil.net)

**Anti drone ad showing in Syracuse area.** Activists with KnowDrones.com have created a 15-second anti-drone ad to be shown in areas near drone bases. It just started a three week run on Time Warner Cable in the Syracuse area the week of May 25. They hope to run it in Buffalo (Niagara Falls Air National Guard Base) and other places. To help with funding the ad, go to KnowDrones.com. To see the ad, go to SPC's website.

**Protesting the US Base in Ramstein, Germany.** A US military base in Ramstein, Germany is the site of a satellite relay station that plays a key role in the communication between US drone operators and their drones in the Middle East and Africa. For example, signals from Hancock drone operators are sent via transatlantic fiber optic cables to Ramstein, where they are relayed to the drones over Afghanistan. Ramstein's importance in the global drone war can't be overstated (see [www.firstlook.org/theintercept](http://www.firstlook.org/theintercept)).

On May 21, SPC held a gathering outside Hancock in support of the German call to "Stop US Drone Warfare Via Ramstein." May 27 was a hearing in German court in which the bin Ali Jaber family of Yemen (who lost two family members to US drone strikes) demanded that Germany stop allowing Ramstein to be used in US drone warfare. For more details contact Carol or



Aly Wane speaks on behalf of the Peace Council at a Black Lives Matter rally and march organized by THE General Body (SU student group) on April 30. Photo: Ursula Rozum

see SPC's website.

**Drone Resisters in Court.** It is important to continue to support the Hancock drone resisters—some of whom were arrested for nonviolent actions over two years ago—in court. Upcoming dates are **June 24-26** (trial of four resisters from the NYC area) and **July 9** (when many motions will be heard). As usual, dates and times are subject to change. Check [www.upstatedroneaction.org](http://www.upstatedroneaction.org) or contact Carol.

**Staged readings of *The Predator*,** a play in which four characters—a Senator, peace activist, drone pilot and college student—first explore the use of weaponized drones from their different perspectives and then, still in character, dialog with the audience. Upcoming performances are:

- **Thursday, June 4 at 6:45**—Baldwinsville Library (33 E Genesee St., Baldwinsville)
  - **Sunday, June 7 at noon**—Syracuse Friends Meeting (821 Euclid Ave.)
  - **Tuesday, July 14 at 7 pm**—Liverpool Library (310 Tulip St., Liverpool)
- To join us, contact Carol. We need your imagination, commitment and activism.

## June 19 – Benefit for Mohawk Community

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation is organizing a concert to benefit the traditional Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community (4934 SH Rt 5, Fonda). Hear Tom Porter speak and listen to music performed by Joanne Bakeman and Mark Hoffman, with Sandy Bigtree and Ahnas Porter on **June 19** starting at **7 pm**. Admission is on a sliding scale from \$10-100, and the event will also feature

a silent auction and 50/50 raffle to benefit Kanatsiohareke. Contact Andy Mager for more information, 315-559-7058.

## Peace Council Calling

Expect a phone call from SPC in July. Our annual Phonathon is an important fundraiser, raising about \$4200 last year. It's also an opportunity for SPC supporters to share their thoughts about our work. The 2015 Phonathon will be on **July 7, 9 and 15 from 6-9 pm**. We will have dinner and then hit the phones! To help with calling or cooking, contact Amelia.

## CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine & Israel

On May 17, we offered our 6th annual community event to commemorate the Nakba. Translated into English, al Nakba is "the Catastrophe," marking the establishment of Israel in 1947-1948 and the expulsion of 700,000 Palestinian Arabs from their homes and their land. Today, it is against Israeli law to commemorate the Nakba.

The event began with very powerful poetry read by Sabreen Mere, including her piece, "Past the Olive Tree." The documentary film, *On the Side of the Road* was shown, investigating the Nakba through the eyes and memory of Israeli veterans of the '48 war. Excellent food and conversation followed. Please join us if you're interested in this issue, as we continue to work towards more effective community

continued on page 15

## STREET HEAT

Get back out in the streets every week speaking out against war and Reaper drones. Bring your own sign or use one of ours.

### Tuesdays 4:15-5 pm

- June 2** Hancock Airbase Entrance  
(E. Molloy Rd., between  
Thompson & Townline Rds.)
- June 9** Seneca Tpk. & S. Salina St.
- June 16** Hancock Airbase Entrance
- June 23** Seneca Tpk. & S. Salina St.
- June 30** Seneca Tpk. & S. Salina St.

### Every Saturday 9-10am

Regional Market, Park St. entrance

**Questions? Contact Ed or Ann,**  
315-478-4571

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# The Three Women Behind the Black Lives Matter Movement

Deron Dalton

Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi co-founded the Black Lives Matter Movement when George Zimmerman was acquitted in 2013 for fatally shooting Trayvon Martin. They created the hashtag, which spread like wildfire.

"This isn't the beginning of a movement, this is the continuation of a struggle that's been happening for at least 400 years," said Garza, 34, who works as the special projects director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. Cullors, 31, director of Dignity and Power Now, an organization focused on helping incarcerated people and their families, "went off" when she found out about Zimmerman's acquittal.

"I was hopeful—and probably naïve—that Zimmerman was going to be convicted, and when he wasn't convicted I sort of went ballistic," said Cullors. "And this generation goes ballistic in public, on social media."

Garza wrote the words Black Lives Matter on social media, and Cullors followed with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. Later that day, they decided to start a movement, on the streets and online. Tometi, 30, executive director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, an organization focused on Black and Latino immigrant rights, joined them. She built the movement's social media presence, helping to engage and connect people. Tometi was at a screening of *Fruitvale Station* in 2013, a film based on the events leading up to the shooting of Oscar Grant, when she found out that Zimmerman was acquitted. She said her community was hoping for a guilty verdict.

"At the same time knowing that a guilty verdict wasn't going to mean justice. It wasn't going to bring Trayvon Martin back." Garza said she, Patrisse, and Opal



From Left to Right: Patrisse Cullors, Opal Tometi, and Alicia Garza. Source: Black Alliance for Just Immigration

wanted to connect Black people because their lives depended on it. They wanted to reach Black people in a society that doesn't try to do that.

"We each deeply believe that Twitter is not going to save us," Garza said. "Twitter can be a vehicle that connects us and helps bring us together to strategize around how we're going to build the kind of power that we need to transform the world that we live in."

Mark-Anthony Johnson, 31, director of health and wellness at Dignity and Power Now, worked closely with Cullors for more than 15 years and has known Garza for about a decade. Johnson has organized for the movement since it started as "Justice for Trayvon Martin, Los Angeles." He became the California coordinator for the freedom ride to Ferguson after Darren Wilson shot unarmed Black teenager, Michael Brown. According to Johnson, protesters from 16 different states and Canada witnessed how Garza, Cullors, and Tometi brought

600 different people together in Ferguson.

"I think they're central," he said. "The character of the folks that we were bringing out I think was really important in terms of having a group that was significantly women, significantly queer, having Black transgender people in the space. And that's possible because of them and the national team that they built up around them."

Cullors said that organizing the movement hasn't been easy, as women in leadership are still looked at skeptically. Garza said women aren't often seen as leaders, and dealing with patriarchy is a challenge.

"I believe if Black Lives Matter was created by three Black men, Opal, Alicia and myself wouldn't have to fight so hard to remind people we are the co-founders," Cullors said.

Tia Oso, 33, national coordinator of the Black Immigration Network and organizer

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continued on next page

which Black people are intentionally left powerless at the hands of the state. We are talking about the ways in which Black lives are deprived of our basic human rights and dignity. How Black poverty and genocide are state violence. How 2.8 million Black people are locked in cages in this country is state violence. How Black women bearing the burden of a relentless assault on our children and our families is state violence. How Black queer and trans folks bear a unique burden from a hetero-patriarchal society that disposes of us like garbage and simultaneously fetishizes us and profits off of us, and that is state violence. How 500,000 Black people in the US are undocumented immigrants and relegated to the shadows. How Black girls are used as negotiating chips during times of conflict and war. How Black folks living with disabilities and different abilities bear the burden of state-sponsored Darwinian experiments that attempt to squeeze us into boxes of normality defined by white supremacy, and that is state violence.

#BlackLivesMatter is working for a world where Black lives are no longer systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. We affirm our contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression. We have put our sweat equity and love for Black people into creating a political project-taking the hashtag off of social media and into the streets. The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation.

*This statement came from BlackLivesMatter.com.*



of BAJI Arizona, copyedited content for Tometi and Black Lives Matter's social platforms in 2013. She said prominent figures and media would talk about the movement, but not the people behind it. She and others used social media to remind people of Garza, Cullors, and Tometi's work.

"Twitter and other social media outlets are where we purposefully lifted the three of them up," said Oso. "It was like, 'Hey, if you're going to have a conversation about Black Lives Matter and what it means as an idea, as a rally and cry... at least acknowledge who the creators are.'"

Tometi said despite such road blocks, leaders like herself, Cullors and Garza are needed.

"Our people and our movement largely are ready for the type of leadership that we embody, and we are who we are as the two of them being queer Black women unapologetically, and me being Nigerian," said Tometi.

According to Cullors, Black women have always led Black movements. Ella Baker, Diane Nash, and Fannie Lou Hamer are Black women leaders who were critical in developing movements, and their names aren't heard often. Cullors said women are on the front lines, strategizing, organizing and developing policy in Ferguson and around the country. "We're leading the movement; we're the architects of the movement."

*This article was originally published at MadameNoire.com.*



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## SYRACUSE COMMUNITY CHOIR SUMMER SOLSTICE CONCERT



# DREAMING ON A WORLD

Saturday, June 13, 2015 ~ 7pm  
**St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral**  
**220 East Fayette Street**  
Directed by Karen Mihalyi  
and Danan Tsan

**\$15-25 At The Door**  
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Interpreted for the Deaf: Kelly Lann



**1985-2015 Thirty Years of Singing for Peace and Justice**

[syracusecommunitychoir.org](http://syracusecommunitychoir.org) 315.428.8151



# Are New International Banks True Alternatives?

Brian Escobar

Established after WWII, the World Bank's mission is to finance capitalist development in so-called developing countries through infrastructure and creating conditions to attract foreign investment. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was created to prevent another worldwide Great Depression by providing funds to prevent a chain reaction of unpaid loans that could make banks unwilling to lend, causing the economic system to spiral into depression.

Latin American governments faced a debt crisis in the late 1970s. It was sparked by the US Federal Reserve raising interest rates, making debts to US bankers increase rapidly, and governments were forced to rely on the IMF to make payments. Debt and the fear of losing access to credit became a basis for control over borrowing countries, as lenders demanded reforms in exchange for continued access to credit and debt restructuring. The debts were so large as to be impossible to repay, yet countries trying to develop required more credit to stay afloat.

The US used its control of the IMF and World Bank to force neoliberal austerity policies, including privatization of state programs and industries, cutting social services, reducing wages and eliminating the right to collective bargaining, and increasing openness to foreign investment to enter and be withdrawn at the whim of overseas markets. Reforms benefited North Atlantic bankers, at the expense of the welfare of the people and environment of the indebted countries.

The poorest who rely on social safety nets suffered the most. Infrastructure crumbled. Diseases spread as public health policies were cut. The Asian financial crisis of the 1990s is widely thought to be the result of these reforms. Latin American, East Asian and many African states rebelled and rejected World Bank and IMF loans, some defaulting on IMF loans. Soon after, many saw economic benefits and rapid growth.

## Genuine Alternative or Same System, New Masters?

The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), a group of countries known for rapid GDP growth and quickly catching up to the advanced capitalist countries, recently established their own equivalents to the World Bank and IMF, called the New Development Bank (or BRICS Bank) and the Contingent Reserve Fund, respectively.

China is also spearheading the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a World Bank-like institution in which China will have controlling shares, but which includes among its founding members the UK, France, Germany, Aus-

tralia, all of the BRICS, Israel, and dozens more. The US and Japan have opted out while the US unsuccessfully pressured its close allies like the UK to keep out as well.

The AIIB will make and coordinate loans for infrastructure projects like railways and gas pipelines between Asian countries, fiber optic cables, and electrical grids. China wants to build infrastructure, currently oriented around ports that ship to the US, to facilitate trade with its neighbors. This is in part a hedge in case exports to the US are threatened.

In his article, "China's Bank and Waning USA Hegemony," political economist Jack Rasmus argues that these new institutions will counter US power and create space beyond North Atlantic imperialism because they will offer developing countries the potential for financial independence from the US. Competition



Riot police at protests against the IMF in Athens, Greece in 2010. Photo: unknown

for projects among development banks like Japan- and US-controlled Asian Development Bank and China-dominated AIIB may result in borrowers receiving better terms for their loans and greater freedom. Furthermore, the AIIB will likely see projects in southeast and central Asia succeed more than previous lending because China stands to benefit from the development of its neighboring markets more than Japan or the US does.

Rasmus is not alone in seeing a threat to US dominance. In the *Washington Post*, former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers said the establishment of the AIIB "may be remembered as the moment the United States lost its role as the underwriter of the global economic system." Rasmus suggests these challenges to Washington herald a new Grand Game, à la the European empires of the 19<sup>th</sup> century vying for control of the rest of the world, but this time between the US and China. Those resist-

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*Brian is an activist and game designer from Liverpool, NY. He studied anthropology at Binghamton University, focusing on economics and complex systems engineering. He organizes the Syracuse Jacobin Reading Group.*

continued on page 12

# Activist Summer Reading List

## Drug War Capitalism

Dawn Paley, AK Press  
reviewed by Ursula Rozum

To anyone paying attention, the US war on drugs is a categorical failure. During the implementation of drug war policies, violence against teachers, labor leaders, journalists, and human rights advocates increased dramatically. Dawn Paley makes a strong case that the US-funded drug war is about terrorizing civilian populations to create conditions that attract investment. *Drug War Capitalism* combines history and telling statistics with the stories of activists on the ground in Colombia, Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala.

Paley also explores violence intended to intimidate environmental defenders. Paley tells the stories of anti-mining activists such as Dante Véldez Jimenez, a teacher who was severely beaten in his classroom by armed men linked to Vancouver-based Pan American Silver Corp. Another activist had his feet cut off. I was surprised to read about the discovery of shale oil in northern Mexico, an area known for endemic violence, which will undoubtedly impact residents' ability to organize against thousands of oil wells planned in the region.

As drug war funding and training increases, so does the body count. When the Merida Initiative was signed in 2007, there were 2000 drug-related homicides annually. By 2012 the number was more than 12,000 and now includes the 43 Mexican students who were disappeared in Iguala, Guerrero, Mexico in September 2014. The Ayotzinapa 43 incident sparked protests throughout Mexico and at Mexican embassies around the world, bringing attention to the corrupt relationship between drug cartels and the government of President Peña Nieto and the role of the US drug war in fueling violence. Paley's book could not be more timely in explaining why this horrific violence occurs.

## Expect Resistance: A Field Manual

CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective  
reviewed by Amelia Lefevre

"Long ago, we embarked on the greatest adventure of our lives: the total rejection



of hierarchy, submission, and tedium, of status and status quo. Seceding from an entirely colonized world, we cast ourselves as crash-test dummies in a life-or-death mission to smash through the walls of capitalism..."

An inspiring and deep-thought provoking work of art, *Expect Resistance* weaves first-person fictional narrative, political essay, and visual art to challenge the reader's acceptance of the status quo.

The narrative follows characters who leave behind lives full of banality to take up the art of resistance. We are right beside them as they take a leap of faith away from everything they know, into a world of adventure and possibility. We're in the room as they organize and in the streets when they confront riot police. And their heartbreak is ours too.

Between each chapter, an earthquake of an essay jostles the foundations of our most deeply held assumptions about society. Such questions are addressed as: What is the real disaster—the storm shown on television or our servitude in a wage economy? How do the concepts of "failure" and "success" serve to keep people trapped in this exploitative society? How does the capitalist concept of scarcity relate to the social rule of monogamy? How can we get to a world full of enrichment and connection with one another? Can we change the world with our hope?

You will come away from reading the *Field Manual* with at least a slightly

different approach to living, and you will be glad for it.

## Humans Rights in Syracuse: Two Memorable Decades, a Selected History from 1963 to 1983

Zoe Cornwall, Human Rights Commission of Syracuse and Onondaga County  
reviewed by Brian Escobar

Having grown up in CNY, I was unaware of the history of bold direct action that took place here during the Civil Rights Movement. For example, Niagara Mohawk (NiMo) was resisting hiring blacks into its workforce of 1500. Blacks were only hired for janitorial positions. Two volunteers from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) chained themselves under a Hertz car parked at the entrance to NiMo's parking lot at 8:15 am. The police called a tow truck but the driver wouldn't remove the car with people underneath. It took the police a long time to figure out what to do while NiMo workers couldn't get in, causing a traffic jam. The police eventually climbed under the car and cut the chain with bolt cutters. Charges were dismissed since the action was not against the law on public property. The action brought NiMo back to the negotiating table and led to integration of the workforce.

Many other stories from this important period fill the book. This book will change the way you see Syracuse. Onondaga County Library System has six copies. ♡

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# Eduardo Galeano (1940-2015)

## Writing the People's Story of the Americas

*After Eduardo Galeano's passing, the PNL editorial team asked for reflections on his work from local activists and organizers. Galeano was an Uruguayan writer, best known for his Open Veins of Latin America.*

When I read Eduardo Galeano's books I started to understand how come my mother was working at a *maquiladora* manufacturing Mattel toys that would end up going back to the US. The work was hard, 6 am to 5 pm, and she would come home with headaches from inhaling the fumes that came out of the melting plastic that would end up being Barbies and superheroes, the toys she couldn't afford for her kids. Galeano explained our reality, the Mexico of 1993, the America of 1492: imperialism, exploitation, but also our resistance.

Galeano's gift was his desire to make us not forget, to remember history, the history of the people of the Americas. I went on to study history. I wanted to know more of those details, the truth, as much as possible. I think reading him has helped me to resist. His work has helped so many to feel proud of who we are, to not forget.

From *Open Veins*: "*En las venas, el pasado aparece siempre convocado por el presente, como memoria viva del tiempo nuestro. Este libro es una búsqueda de claves de la historia pasada que contribuyen a explicar el tiempo presente, que también hace historia, a partir de la base de que la primera condición para cambiar la realidad consiste en conocerla.*"

-Rebecca Fuentes

"Days and Nights of Love and War" has had a profound impact on how I've come to understand the inter-relation of the personal and political. Galeano writes in a way that both indicts state violence and simultaneously provides a flicker of light by which we might find our way. His attention to seemingly small moments in relation to larger forces make for a kind of insurgent poetics that challenge more conventional/linear forms of storytelling.

The following is one of my favorite passages, about a group of men who cross from Uruguay to Argentina in order to buy a copy of a magazine of which Galeano was founding editor: "They all chip in and buy an issue of *Crisis* and then go to a cafe. One of them reads aloud, page by page. They all listen and discuss the material. The reading lasts all day. When it ends, they leave the magazine at the cafe as a present for the owner, and return to my country, where it is banned."

"Even if it were just for this," I think, "it would be worthwhile."

-Brian Pickett



Eduardo Galeano at Librarsi Bookstore in Italy. Photo: Mariela De Marchi Moyano

In an interview on *Democracy Now!*, Galeano told Amy Goodman that "each minute three million dollars are spent on militaries around the world. Each minute fifteen children die of starvation and curable diseases. Another world is possible." Galeano names the contradictions of this world with a sharp clarity, with the human costs in view, and with the possibility to change social conditions.

In its opening pages, *Open Veins* describes over 500 years of exploitation through which Latin America has become the "open veins" of Europe and the United States: "The division of labor among nations is that some specialize in winning and others in losing. Our part of the world, known today as Latin America, was precocious: it has specialized in losing ever since those remote times when Renaissance Europeans ventured across the ocean and buried their teeth in the throats of the Indian civilizations."

Galeano makes the connection to today: "Our region still works as a menial. It continues to exist at the service of others' needs, as a source and reserve of oil and iron, of copper and meat, of fruit and coffee, the raw materials and foods destined for rich countries which profit more from consuming them than Latin America does from producing them." Galeano responds to a present that "pretends to be destiny and would like to be thought eternal." His sort of history leads to new possibilities.

-Ben Kuebrich

I first read Galeano's *Open Veins of Latin America* in high school. It was recommended to me by an activist mentor of mine. The book was formative in the shaping of my world outlook and guides my organizing to this day. From the book I got an understanding of the ongoing legacy of colonialism in Latin America, and this helps to situate current US imperial policy. Most importantly, as an activist and organizer, the book provided me with absolutely crucial context for understanding the inspiring resistance movements in the region, from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia to the Cuban Revolution and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation.

-Derek Ford

# No More Nuclear Pork

Federal budget cuts to Medicare, Social Security, and disabled care have deeply affected many Syracusans' lives in recent years. Yet Syracuse put \$2.98 million of our taxes into nuclear weapons in 2014 alone. Are you surprised that we are still bankrupting our communities to pay for the weapons of the Cold War 25 years after its end? Despite the absence of a Soviet foe, presidential administrations have continued to build these costly and destructive weapons. The US currently maintains an arsenal of over 4,700 nuclear weapons, and hundreds of those are on hair-trigger alert, staffed by round-the-clock crews and able to be launched in under 15 minutes. Under the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the cornerstone of international disarmament, nuclear nations have pledged to make a good-faith effort to disarm.

At this April's NPT conference at the UN, Obama said, "We are prepared to go further in meeting our obligations under the Treaty. We continue to lead efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons and reduce the role and number of our own." But his nuclear weapons budget tells another story: literally a trillion dollars over the next thirty years, and \$350 billion in the next decade. Obama is committed to overhauling and rebuilding all three legs of our nuclear triad: bombers, missiles, and submarines.

At a time when the world is concerned about North Korea's nuclear weapons program, Iran's possible one, and Israel, India and Pakistan, nuclear nations who are non-parties to the treaty, the US' actions seem hypocritical. Iran's representative spoke

out at the same NPT conference, calling on the nuclear nations, specifically the US and Israel, to disarm.

The faith I have in people's movements stems from my knowledge of the nuclear non-proliferation movement, which from the 1950s into the 1980s engaged the world's superpowers—and won. Under the banner of Citizens for the Nuclear Freeze, US and Soviet citizens managed to go beyond their respective governments' propaganda and threats to connect with other humans on the ground, building an international movement for a nuclear-free future. Both Gorbachev and Reagan cited the powerful influence of the movement when they signed landmark legislation in the disarmament process.

What can we do to get these funds back into our communities? We can call on our representatives to co-sponsor and promote the Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act of 2015. Sponsored by Earl Blumenthauer in the House and Ed Markey in the Senate, the bill would save \$100 billion over the next 10 years by cutting wasteful nuclear pork. Please call the local offices of Senator Schumer at 315-423-5471, Senator Gillibrand at 315-448-0470, and Rep. Katko at 315-423-5657.

—Simone Richmond



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# War on Yemen: Where Oil and Geopolitics Mix

Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya

Everything about the war on Yemen is a smokescreen. Concealed behind the smoke is a tale of geopolitics and petro-politics that aims to control the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden.

The House of Saud and a military coalition that consists mostly of anachronistic monarchies are claiming to bomb Yemen as a means of saving the Yemenite people and their transition to democracy. The irony should not be lost on observers that recognize that the Saudi-led coalition—consisting of the Kingdom of Morocco, the UAE, Kuwait, Kingdom of Bahrain, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Qatar, Pakistan, Egypt, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia itself—is comprised of an unhealthy mixture of backward family dictatorships and corrupt governments that essentially are the antithesis of democracy.

Just as important to note, the Saudi-led war on Yemen is a criminal act. The military attack on Yemen was not authorized by the UN Security Council. Nor can the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia justify its bombing campaign under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations because Yemen and Ansarullah (the Houthi movement) pose no threat of war to Riyadh and never had any intentions of igniting a war in the Arabian Peninsula. Thus the Kingdom's war on Yemen is categorically a violation of the Charter of the UN and international law.

Instead of opposing the illegal war on Yemen, Washington and its allies, including Britain, have thrown their political support behind the bombing of Yemen by the malfeasant Royal Saudi Air Force, which has committed war crimes by intentionally bombing civilian infrastructure, including refugee camps and children's schools.

It is no coincidence that most of the victims in Yemen are civilians. This is part of a Saudi strategy of establishing rapid military dominance, which is colloquially called “shock and awe.” Ring any bells? This is a strategy taken right out of Uncle Sam's playbook that intends to demoralize resistance and scare the opponent into surrendering.

## Pentagon's bloody hands

Not eager to reveal its role in another illegal war on another sovereign country, the US has decided to keep a low profile in the attack on Yemen. This is why Washington has opted to publicly present itself as only providing logistical and intelligence support to the Saudis for the war on Yemen.

The war on Yemen, however, would not be possible without the US. Not only have countries like the US and Britain provided military hardware to Saudi Arabia, but they are providing it with bombs for the attacks, refueling its warplanes, providing intelligence, and giving the Kingdom logistical support.

Does this sound like non-involvement? Can the US really be considered a non-combatant in the war?

History—and very recent history at that too—is repeating itself in Yemen.



Observers should recall how Washington deceptively claimed that it did not want to go to war with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in 2011. The US publicly let the British and French take the lead in the NATO war on Tripoli while the Pentagon was actually the main force behind the war. US President Barack Obama called this a strategy of “leading from behind.”

The US strategy in Yemen is not too different from that of the NATO war on Libya. It is another case of cloak and dagger where the US does not want to be seen pulling the strings behind the aggression and violation of international law.

The Saudis would never have dared attack Yemen without Washington's green light or help. The Pentagon is even selecting the bombing targets in Yemen for the Kingdom. “American military planners are using live intelligence feeds from surveillance flights over Yemen to help Saudi Arabia decide what and where to bomb,” the *Wall Street Journal* casually reported when the war began. National Security Council spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan, even stated that the US had established “a joint planning cell with Saudi Arabia to coordinate” the attack on Yemen.

## Bab-el-Mandeb Strait

The geopolitical significance of Yemen has weighed heavily in the equation... Alongside Djibouti, Yemen forms part of an important maritime chokepoint, called the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait (also known as the Gateway of Tears/Anguish), which connects the Indian Ocean's Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.

It is no exaggeration to call the Mandeb Strait one of the

ing imperialism are tempted to view the creation of these new financial institutions as a victory.

### Facing Crisis

But US decline is often overestimated. As Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin observe in *The Making of Global Capitalism*, it is remarkable that in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis, countries like China, India and Brazil welcomed US leadership and economic primacy in stabilizing global capitalism. The US position seems to have strengthened as the “emerging markets” like China are growing more slowly than they have in decades, while US growth is speeding up (with most growth going to the upper class). While the IMF will be adding the Chinese yuan to its reserve currency basket, a status reserved for the most stable currencies in the world (the dollar, the euro, the pound and the yen), the dollar is stronger than ever (currently exchangeable for 0.89 euros) and remains the reserve currency of choice around the world.

But given the almost total agreement among states around the world on how to respond to the economic crisis of 2008, it seems doubtful whether alternatives to the World Bank or IMF controlled by China or the other BRICS would implement substantially different policies than those lenders. Since 2011, the European Commission, European Central Bank, and IMF have imposed austerity on advanced capitalist states like Greece no less harsh than the structural adjustments imposed on Latin

America in the 1980s. In any case, China and the other BRICS are certainly not challenging the overarching development model promoted by the World Bank. With the usual suspects like the UK, France and Germany joining for a piece of AIIB projects and a share in decision making, the prospect of this bank posing a threat to North Atlantic interests seems unlikely.

AIIB investment in Asia represents the intensification of global capitalism, with once peripheral states like Kyrgyzstan becoming further woven into global commerce. Additionally, the BRICS Bank and AIIB are small compared to the World Bank, which is in turn dwarfed by the massive national development banks of countries like China and Brazil. It's easy to overstate the impact of the BRICS Bank and AIIB will have in the foreseeable future.

### Integrated Global Capitalism

The idea of a world where the US and Chinese empires rival each other in a Grand Game is popular, but doesn't bear scrutiny. The US and Chinese economies are so codependent now that either economy risks devastation should the other falter. Military tensions have been easing for decades.

With harsh austerity policies once imposed on poor and middle-income countries being forced on the people of the US and Europe, Panitch and Gindin argue that conflicts *within* states, between classes, are increasing as conflicts *between* states are decreasing. As residents of the sole superpower, struggle within the US may be the greatest hope for a more free and democratic world. ♀



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## War on Yemen / from page 11

world's arteries. As a maritime chokepoint, the strait is just as important as Egypt's Suez Canal—which connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea—and the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, because Bab-el-Mandeb overlooks one of the most strategic and important global corridors for the transportation of energy and international commerce.

Preventing US and Saudi rivals from gaining a strategic foothold over the Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden is a major objective of the war on Yemen. The US and the House of Saud see control over the Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden as strategically important in the scenario of a conflict with Iran where Tehran closes the Strait of Hormuz to oil shipments and international shipping. As the *New York Times* points out, "Nearly all Saudi commerce is via sea, and direct access to the Arabian Sea would diminish dependence on the Persian Gulf—and fears of Iran's ability to cut off the Strait of Hormuz." Plan B in such a scenario for the Kingdom includes using Aden and other Yemeni ports.

Support for the balkanization of Yemen chimes with this, and ideas about dividing Yemen have been floating around since the Arab Spring. In 2013, the *New York Times* had this to propose about a Saudi takeover and annexation of southern Yemen: "Arabs are abuzz about part of South Yemen's eventually merging with Saudi Arabia. Most southerners are Sunni, as is most of Saudi Arabia; many have family in the kingdom. The poorest Arabs, Yemenis could benefit from Saudi riches. In turn, Saudis would gain access to the Arabian Sea for trade, diminishing dependence on the Persian Gulf and fear of Iran's virtual control over the Strait of Hormuz."

Houthi control over Yemen, however, complicates and obscures US and Saudi plans.

### Mandeb Strait

As Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah has rightly pointed out, the Houthis and the Yemeni military are

capable of closing the Mandeb Strait. One of the reasons that Saudi Ambassador to Washington Adel Al-Jubeir stressed that the Houthis should not have control over ballistic missiles, heavy military hardware, and Yemeni bases is because the US and Saudi Arabia want to neutralize the potential of Yemen to close the Mandeb Strait, especially if Yemen should coordinate with Tehran as an Iranian ally in the future. In this regard, the Saudis have attacked Yemen's missile depots. The aim of the



air strikes includes not only preventing Yemen's missile arsenal from being used to retaliate against any exertions of Saudi force, but to also prevent them from being on hand to a Yemen government aligned with Tehran or other US rivals.

Moreover, it has to be remembered that control over Yemen is not only important for mitigating the effects from a scenario where the Strait of Hormuz is closed by Tehran. Control over Mandeb Strait is also important for tightening the noose around the Iranians and in the scenario of a war with Iran. The same can be argued about a US strategy in the Indian Ocean against the Chinese.

Back in 2011, when Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin was serving in Brussels as Moscow's envoy to NATO, he noted that Washington was not only planning on taking over Syria as a beachhead for a war with Iran, but that the US and its allies would later try to control Yemen as the next step in preparing the grounds

for an attack on Iran. At the time, RIA Novosti (now renamed Sputnik) reported that "Rogozin agreed with the opinion expressed by some experts that Syria and later Yemen could be NATO's last steps on the way to launch an attack on Iran."

### Iran and the Houthis

The Saudis are falsely depicting the Houthis as Iranian proxies or allies, because the movement is composed of Zaidi (Fiver) Shiites. The Houthis, however, are independent from Tehran and have agency as political actors; they are not Iranian proxies whatsoever. A common faith has not brought the Houthis and the Iranians, who are predominately Jaffari (Twelver) Shiites, together. Politics is what has brought the two together.

The sectarian language that falsely depicts Yemen as a battleground between Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims is ill informed or intended to mislead people by design about the actual politics and history of Yemen.

Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah is very accurate when he points out that different regional players are turning to Tehran for help, because

either Saudi Arabia will not help them or is pushing them in the direction of Iran through its foolish policies. This has been precisely the case for the Houthis.

Ground operations will not be a walk in the park for Saudi Arabia. Any invasion and occupation of Yemen will prove to be a disaster for the Kingdom. There are also complex tribal links between southern Saudi Arabia and Yemen. In the chaos a Pandora's Box could be ignited that would result in rebellions inside the Kingdom itself.

The House of Saud seems to be cognizant of the dangers. This may be why it is pushing Pakistan and Egypt to send their troops.

Someone should tell the House of Saud that according to the Chinese general Sun Tzu, "*The best war is the one that never has to be fought.*"

*This article was published on rt.com (April 9, 2015). Read the full article with citations online at [www.peacecouncil.net/pnl](http://www.peacecouncil.net/pnl). 🌐*



**Leon Fleisher**



**Cheryl Strayed**



**Charles Blow**



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**Leon Fleisher**

*AN EVENING WITH LEON FLEISHER*  
September 29, 2015, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

**Cheryl Strayed**

*A WILD LIFE*  
October 7, 2015, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

**Charles Blow and Ross Doutha**

*SOCIAL INEQUALITY: THE HOW, WHY AND WHAT TO DO?*  
October 13, 2015, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

**Naomi Klein**

*THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING: CAPITALISM VS. THE CLIMATE*  
November 3, 2015, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

**Dacher Keltner**

*SURVIVAL OF THE KINDEST:  
TOWARD A COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY*  
March 8, 2016, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

**Don Garber**

*"AN EVENING WITH DON GARBER"*  
March 22, 2016, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

**Mary Roach**

*GULP: ADVENTURES ON THE ALIMENTARY CANAL*  
March 29, 2016, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

**Sarah Koenig and Julie Snyder**

*BINGE-WORTHY JOURNALISM:  
BACKSTAGE WITH THE CREATORS OF 'SERIAL'*  
April 12, 2016, 7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

education and stronger campaigns in support of the international BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) movement. Contact Ursula.

### Be a Summer SPC Activist

We're excited to welcome two enthusiastic interns this summer. Kate Mouradian is a Corcoran High School graduate and will enter her junior year at Wells College this fall. Kate is managing our social media campaigns and doing anti-war outreach and education. Spring intern Brian Escobar is staying on and will increase his hours and receive a small stipend for the summer.

As much as we love having interns, SPC can't do all we want and need to do without YOU. Please join us—summer is a great time for building our movement.

### CNY Veterans for Peace Chapter on the Rise

A small group has committed to reach out to veterans, their families and loved ones to join us at our next meeting on **June 17 at 7 pm** in the Center's ground floor Community Room (2013 E. Genesee St., enter from parking lot). We are making connections with other veterans' groups, and we plan to be in SPC's Hiroshima Day procession on August 6. Please join us. Contact Barb Humphrey, behumphrey@gmail.com.

SPC encourages everyone to support the reorganization of the CNY Veterans for Peace Chapter.

### Powerful Antiwar Conference

A carful of SPC and Upstate Drone Action activists headed to the United National Antiwar Coalition's (UNAC) National Conference in Secaucus, NJ from May 8-10. Titled "Stop the Wars at Home and Abroad," the conference examined the connections between US wars and domestic issues. Diverse groups of panelists addressed topics such as the militarization of the police and structural racism, endless imperial war and its costs, political prisoners, and challenging the warfare state.

You can still register for the next conferences—the Left Forum (May 29-31, New York City) and the US Social Forum (June 25-28, Philadelphia). Contact Carol.



SPC activists demonstrate outside of Hancock Airbase on May 21 to demand that a US drone base in Germany be closed. Photo: Ursula Rozum

### Parading Peace Council

SPC will be out in the streets in support of the annual Juneteenth and Pride celebrations. The Juneteenth parade will line up at State & Castle Sts. at **11:15 am on June 13**, ending at Clinton Square. The Pride parade will line up at Belden & W. Genesee Sts. at **10:15 am on June 20**, ending at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater. It's important for allies to show solidarity by showing up at these events. Please contact Amelia if you would like to join the SPC contingent at either parade.

### Activist Appreciation: Sharon Dellinger

Sharon Dellinger is a rare gem. A former navy lieutenant turned anti-war activist, she first came to SPC as a summer intern and has since jumped into organizing with the Ground the Drones, End the Wars Committee. Sharon's organizational skills are unparalleled, and she is quick, smart, funny, knows her way around technology, and has an amazing personal style (when the committee met with Senator Gillibrand's aide, Sharon's hair color matched the shade of the blue scarves we wore in support of the Afghan Peace Volunteers). Recently Sharon went to Washington, DC to lobby for the Global Marshall Plan, which proposes that the US dedicate 1-2% of its gross domestic product for the next 20 years toward eliminating poverty, homelessness, hunger, etc. She is fearless in her advocacy and has

the energy to help make change happen. Thanks, Sharon!

### Win a Bike!

It's time again for SPC's Bike Raffle fundraiser. This year's bike is from Mello Velo Bike Shop (550 Westcott St.). Tickets are \$2 for 1, \$5 for 3 and \$10 for 7, and are available at SPC, Mello Velo, and from SPC volunteers. The drawing is September 27 at the Westcott Street Fair. To help with selling raffle tickets, contact Ursula.

### NYS Parole System Troubled

NYC-based activists with Milk Not Jails will be visiting Syracuse on **Sunday, June 7** to share a new video that sheds light on our state's flawed parole system and offer training for families interacting with that system. The event will go from **4-6 pm** at ArtRage Gallery (505 Hawley Ave). SPC is a co-sponsor of this event, along with the Center for Community Alternatives and the Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse. Contact Amelia.

### United as One

The United as One Coalition's quarterly meeting will be **Tuesday, July 21 at 6 pm**. The Coalition works on justice system issues in Onondaga County. Contact Amelia if you are interested in representing the Peace Council in this group. ♻️

