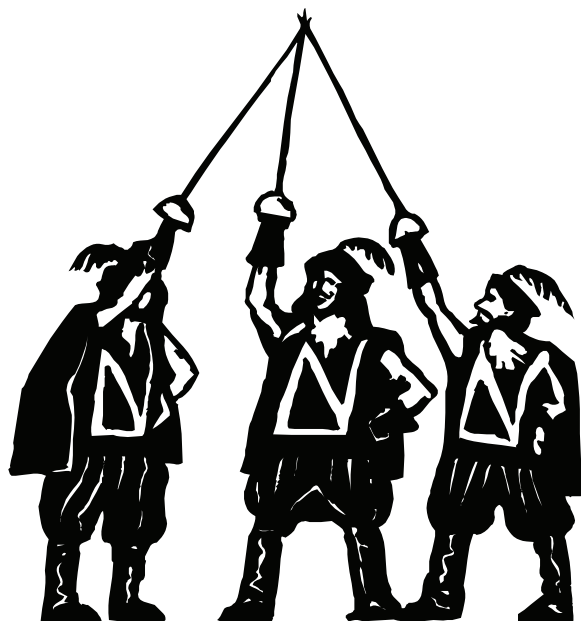




TIME TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM GUNS



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MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

Three years after the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre in Newtown, Connecticut, where a lone 20-year-old gunman wielding an assault weapon snuffed out 26 child and teacher lives, our nation has done *shamefully* little to protect children instead of guns. This week more than ten thousand people attended over 100 Orange Walks in 43 states to stand up and deliver a rallying cry that we must and can end gun violence in America, according to Moms Demand Action – a cry that must continue and get louder and louder until our tone deaf political leaders hear or are retired from office.

New data this month from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show 2,525 children and teens died by gunfire in our nation in 2014; one child or teen death every 3 hours and 28 minutes, nearly 7 a day, 48 a week. What is this moral perversity in our midst that values guns more than children and human life?

In the three years since Sandy Hook's nightmare we have not passed even one common sense federal gun law to reduce gun violence and deaths and protect children from our out-of-control scourge of violence. Universal background checks work. The evidence is clear. The overwhelming majority of gun owners and non-gun owners support stricter background checks, yet the Congress has done nothing. How do we change this?

Seventy-eight children under 5 died by guns last year – 30 more than the 48 law enforcement officers killed by guns in the line of duty. Is there no shame in the shooters or in the lawmakers who protect the shooters or in the industry who makes profits off the blood of children? Shouldn't Republicans, Democrats, and Independents of every race, income, color and faith be able to agree that child gun deaths are a moral blight on our nation which we have the means but not the will to prevent and change course?

CDF began our antiviolenace campaign in 1994 after Peter Hart Research Associates conducted intergenerational focus groups of Black youths and adults. We were shocked to learn their number one concern was gun violence: Black male youths didn't believe they'd live to adulthood and Black parents saw gun violence as the number one threat to their children.

Children are certainly not the only ones in danger in our gun-saturated nation which accounts for less than 5 percent of the global population but owns between 35 to 50 percent of all civilian-owned guns in the world. Recent estimates of U.S. civilian gun ownership are as high as 310 million – about one gun for each person. U.S. military and law enforcement agencies possess approximately 4 million guns. Isn't there something horribly wrong with this picture? A gun in the home makes the likelihood of homicide three times higher, suicide three to five times higher, and accidental death four

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Feb 21, 4–7pm

Annual peace and justice potluck

Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County invites you to our Annual Meeting at the John Morearty Peace Center, 231 Bedford Rd. in Stockton. Of course, it's a potluck - so bring something to share and your own plate and fork if you can, to start the year eco friendly. This is a chance to meet with old friends, become acquainted with new ones and to plan for the new year. Our agenda is:

4:00 – 4:30 Review the year and share introductions

4:30 DINNER!

5:00 – 6:30 Activist talk: What can we do for peace and justice?

6:30 – 7:00 Election of officers

WHAT CAN WE DO?

It is an election year, so many of you will be working on campaigns large and small. As an educational non-profit organization, the Peace and Justice Network cannot advocate for any candidate or party. What we can do is educate on issues that are of vital importance - issues our representatives will work on once in office. Your Peace and Justice Network can offer tools for education: we have the bi-monthly newspaper Connections, use of the Peace Center, our internet radio station Stone Soup Radio, the Talking It Through cable talk show, various events and an informed membership that can get things done.

Now, for this afternoon, we invite those who are working for peace and justice throughout the year to come, eat and strategize on how we can use all our resources more efficiently and effectively. As we enter 2016, we need to effect change. Please help us to help each other. We look forward to seeing you at the potluck. For more information call 467-4455 or email bgiudici@caltel.com.



SAVE THE DATES

March 12 CA Fracking report (p 18)
April 2 Magnificent Stockton (p 18)
April 24 Earth Day Festival, Victory Park, 11-4

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BRUCE GIUDICI

Editors Letter

We enter this year in a struggle for control over our common future. Elections have consequences - and who wins controls the agenda. And for once, income inequality is a front and center issue - more important than any, because it illustrates how our population is effectively controlled by our economic system.

Debt is about control. Compound interest and the amortized loan gives control to those who control money - mostly banks. While military

incursions get all the press on US power, the real and more subtle power wielded by Americans is through the power of the purse. Most less developed countries have debts that will never be paid, even though they have paid the principal on the loans many times over. The magic of compound interest. Same goes for students and their college loans. Most of these people are lower-income and disproportionately minority - just the type of people who need controlling in a democracy. Add to this an incarceration system

Questioning the conventional

rigged against low-income and people of color and it's not difficult to see why the United States has tolerated the power system we currently enjoy. Crimes committed by the well-off are seldom punished; in fact, smart criminals (white and rich) are rewarded for their cleverness and adeptness in using the system (Trump, Blankfein, Milken, etc) while those less deserving serve life for stealing a loaf of bread.

And while everyone acknowledges that the world is unfair, Americans faithfully march through life as if they have no choice but to swallow whatever is fed to them; to rationalize that they as individuals were not meant

to rise above a certain level; to accept their fate as losers, at fault for not succeeding in a system that has offered them every opportunity for success - acting as if the system in which we live is as unchangeable as the weather or the stars above. Social security must surely fail - not if we will not do anything to change it in the next 50 years, but because we can't do anything to change it in the next 50 years. Our national debt rises not because we will not raise taxes, but because we cannot raise taxes. We suffer continued gun violence not because we will not change gun laws, but because we cannot change gun laws. Or so says conventional

mainstream wisdom.

Fortunately the reason Obama was elected (and why Sanders is surging) is because - in spite of the conventional wisdom - we all hold an optimism that these things will change - that the dismal future Republicans offer for us 99% is not inevitable - that our democracy still has meaning and that we can rise up to create a better world. Since Occupy, we have witnessed a deeper questioning of the conventional. This is an election year - another chance to vote our hopes over our fears. Slowly, we are moving forward to a better world. Keep that hope alive. Happy winter.

The future is bright: millennial voters resoundingly support climate action

LAUREN MCCAULEY

Young folks, arguably, have the most at stake in the upcoming U.S. presidential election, and could potentially hold significant sway over who gets elected. Given that, a new USA TODAY/ Rock the Vote poll out Monday revealed what the so-called "Millennial Agenda" might look like.

People between ages 18 and 34 overwhelmingly (80 percent) favor a rapid transition to clean or renewable energy by 2030 and by a ratio of more than 2-1 say the government should invest in more public transportation.

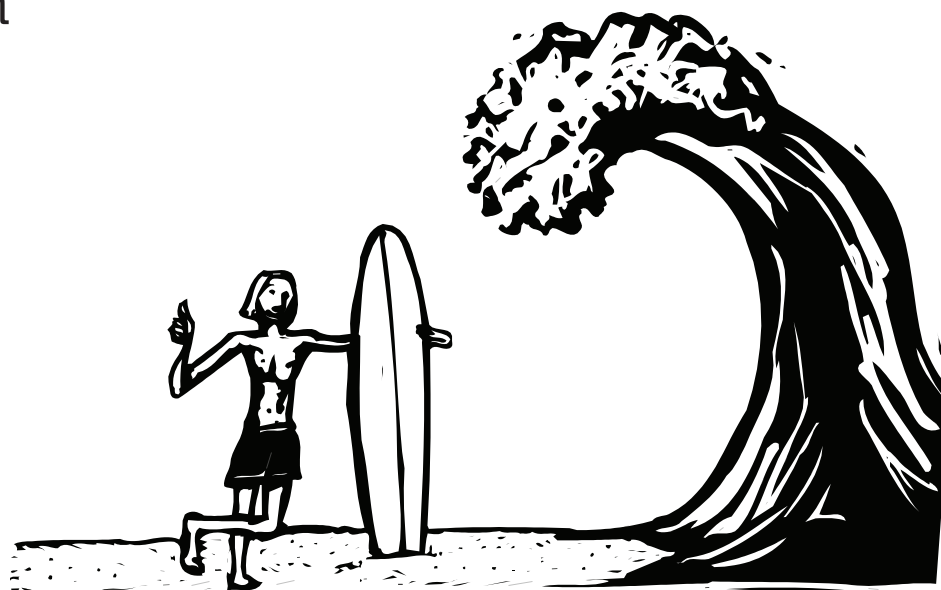
When asked to rank their top issues, the combined votes for "climate change" and "energy" placed first and foremost along with economic concerns, including jobs, minimum wage, and paid leave. "If we don't have a place to live, then it doesn't really make sense to worry about anything else," said 34-year-old Scott McGeary of Seattle.

Millennials also widely (2-1) see police violence against Black people as a problem and 76 percent want the government to require police officers to wear body cameras while on duty. More than two-thirds agree that prison sentences for people convicted of non-violent crimes should be reduced. What's more, 82 percent of

millennials want background checks for all gun purchases. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2015 the millennial generation, now numbering 75.3 million, surpassed baby boomers as the largest living generation.

Yet despite the enormous potential of this voting bloc, the survey found that only 60 percent are planning to vote in the November presidential election, while only 30 and 40 percent say they're likely to vote in the respective Republican and Democratic primaries. If they do find their way to the polls, the survey found that young people are responding to Bernie Sanders' call for "political revolution" with 46 percent of millennial Democrats and independents backing the Vermont senator compared with 35 percent for his chief rival Hillary Clinton.

Donald Trump, with



26 percent support from millennial Republicans and independents, has the lead among young conservatives, but those numbers are lower than national polls of GOP voters. The poll was released in conjunction with the launch of One Nation, a content and event series

organized by USA TODAY and Rock the Vote to inform young voters and encourage voter registration for 2016. The survey is the first of four that will be conducted in the months leading up to the presidential election. "As the largest generation in our nation's history, we

have the power to be the most influential force in electing our next president and our voices deserve to be an integral part of the conversation this election," said Ashley Spillane, president of Rock the Vote.

Source: Common Dreams 1/11/16
<http://www.commondreams.org/>

PJN donations – THANK YOU!

Thank you to our donors of 2015! Over 140 PJN members contributed to support the publication of Connections, the support of the John Morearty Peace Center, the development of Stone Soup -Stockton Community radio and the ability to support other organizations and their activities. Many responded to our funding request letters, others sent in their donation throughout the year in the form of checks, through Network for Good and by cash. Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.

CHRISTIE KELLEY

Continue to tell your friends and family about the good work our peaceful, liberal community is involved in, pass your copy of Connections to others and continue to support us with whatever donation you can make, whether it be monetary or active community organizing with PJN.

Volunteer Needed!

A great opportunity to spread the progressive words of Connections! Every other month, we need someone to deliver 600 copies to two locations in Lodi. Please call Deane Savage, 209-242-2254

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Editor: Bruce Giudici, 786-3109; bgiudici@caltel.com

Layout: Luis Gonzalez, lrg.lxxxvii@gmail.com

Proofreader: Debbie Cousyn

Ad Rep: Vacant

Distribution Coordinators: Deane and Marcia Savage, 209-242-2254

Distribution Site: Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton

Distributors: Suzy Arnett, Harold Bell, Vic Berncorff, Antoinette Celle, Caly Chin, Lee Christensen, Daniel Fong, Catherine Hourcade, Christie Kelley, Catherine Mathis, John Minnehan, Heather Ryan, Deane and Marcia Savage, Richard Slezak, Julie Vaughn, Patrick Wall,

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"The Peace and Justice Network is a nonprofit educational organization committed to the vision of a world in which the equality of all persons is achieved, basic needs are met, conflict is resolved nonviolently, and the earth's resources are shared responsibly for the well-being of all her inhabitants and all future generations."



The corporate-friendly trade deals threatening ordinary people in 2016

DEIRDRE FULTON

Corporate media failed to cover the dangers of business-friendly trade deals in 2015, despite growing grassroots opposition to such pacts—and increasing public awareness about their contents. Will 2016 be the year looming toxic trade policies catapult into the mainstream? Sierra Club trade representative Ilana Solomon hopes so. "If we continue this work and build our movement we will build a new model of trade that puts the interests of communities and the environment before the interests of multinational corporations," Solomon wrote this month. "Our short-term work is to stop harmful trade agreements," she said. "Our long-term work is to continue to build our movement so strong and fierce that it becomes unthinkable for governments to allow trade rules to undermine environmental and public interest policies because the backlash would be too severe." Here are the deals you need to know to be part of the fight in the coming year:

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP (TPP) — U.S. AND 11 PACIFIC RIM COUNTRIES

It was a "great day for corporate America" when the U.S. Senate passed Fast Track, or Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), in June, effectively surrendering legislators' ability to fully debate or even amend trade agreements like the TPP that have been negotiated entirely in secret. And when the text of the deal was finally released this fall, it confirmed the worst fears of environmentalists, public health advocates, and digital rights activists: the TPP, they said, was "worse than anything we could've imagined." Thanks to Fast Track, President Barack Obama will be able to unilaterally sign the TPP for the U.S. after February 4, 2016. But it's not a done deal yet.

As Electronic Frontier Foundation's Maira Sutton explained earlier this month: "Both congressional houses must ratify the agreement in the form of approving 'implementing legislation' that the White House will submit to lawmakers. This submission will happen after the President's

signature, likely sometime in April or May. Once that happens, the House has 60 days from the bill's introduction to hold a vote on it and the Senate gets another 30 days, so 90 days in total, to approve or reject it. Since this second timeline only begins when the White House decides that they're ready for it, it all rests on whether the executive branch believes that it has the votes to get it through both houses. That's why it's critical that we call on our lawmakers to come out against this agreement: because that's how we can stop it."

"If we want to ensure that laws don't just uphold powerful private interests, but are designed and implemented with the public's best interests in mind," Sutton wrote, "then we must stop the TPP—for the sake of the Internet, our rights, and our future." And the 2016 elections could prove helpful to those who oppose the corporate-friendly pact. The *Japan Times* reported Thursday that the pact "looks increasingly unlikely to be implemented before U.S. President Barack Obama's tenure ends due to opposition among leading presidential candidates and some industries."

TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP (TTIP) — U.S. AND EUROPEAN UNION

October saw hundreds of thousands of Europeans pour into the streets of Brussels to voice their opposition to the TTIP, which would cover more than 40 percent of global GDP. And push back against the so-called trade deal, which would have negative implications for everything from human rights and global climate goals to democracy and food safety, goes much deeper than that. As of October, more than three million people had signed a petition demanding an end to the TTIP negotiations—showing, as Global Justice Now director Nick Dearden said, "that the EU does not have the public mandate to continue this deal."

Indeed, there appears to be brewing discontent across the continent, with the

president of the German Bundestag, or parliament, in late-October threatening to vote against the TTIP due to its lack of transparency and democratic legitimacy. That statement came on the heels of remarks made by a French trade minister in September, who said "France is considering all options including an outright termination of negotiations" due to TTIP talks appearing to favor American interests. As *American Prospect* co-founder and editor Robert Kuttner posited in an op-ed earlier this year, both the TTIP and TPP could be "on the verge of collapse from their own contradictory goals and incoherent logic."

TRADE IN SERVICES AGREEMENT (TISA) — 32 COUNTRIES IN EUROPE; 7 IN ASIA; 5 IN NORTH AMERICA (INCLUDING U.S.); 3 IN SOUTH AMERICA; 2 IN OCEANIA; AND 1 IN AFRICA

TISA may be the least well-known of the so-called Big Three "strategic neoliberal trade deals being advanced by the Obama administration," as WikiLeaks puts it—but its dangers loom just as large. Leaks in 2015 exposed how the pact "favors privatization over public services, limits governmental action on issues ranging from safety to the environment using trade as a smokescreen to limit citizen rights," Larry Cohen, president of Communications Workers of America, said in June. Our World is Not For Sale, a group that has been working against TISA since 2013, described the deal in July as "a developed countries' corporate wish lists for services which seeks to bypass resistance from the global South to this agenda inside the WTO, and to secure an agreement on services without confronting the continued inequities on agriculture, intellectual property, cotton subsidies, and many other issues."

In 2016, we can only hope that people power will pressure more countries to follow the lead of Uruguay, which in September decided to end its involvement in TISA negotiations. In doing so, Friends of the Earth activists Viviana Barreto and Sam Cossar-Gilbert wrote at *Common Dreams*, "Uruguay



has created a blueprint of how to beat these corporate-driven agreements. A strong coalition of trade unions, environmentalists and farmers working together on an effective public campaign were able to take on the interests of the world's biggest companies and win."

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT (CETA) — CANADA AND EUROPE

"What's exciting about CETA," Council of Canadians trade campaigner Sujata Dey wrote earlier this month, "is that Europeans actually have the power to defeat it." As *Common Dreams* reported in October, the Canada-EU deal would create "a parallel legal system for corporations" that could make "regulations in sensitive public service sectors such as education, water, health, social welfare, and pensions prone to all kinds of investor attacks."

"What is at stake in trade agreements such as TTIP and CETA is our right to vital services, and more, it is about our ability to steer services of all kinds to the benefit of society at large," the Brussels-based Corporate Europe Observatory declared at the time. "If left to their own course, trade negotiations will eventually make it impossible to implement decisions for the common good." According to Council of Canadians, it is expected that CETA will go before the European Parliament for ratification votes either in late 2016 or early 2017. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has already instructed trade minister Chrystia Freeland "to implement" CETA.

Source: *Common Dreams* 12/31/15 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

TransCanada's pathetic Keystone XL lawsuit

JAMIE HENN

Talk about sore losers. The Canadian pipeline company TransCanada announced this afternoon that it is suing the Obama Administration over its decision to reject the Keystone XL pipeline. The lawsuit won't do anything to help get the pipeline built, it's too late for that. The only purpose is for TransCanada to get compensated for the billions of dollars it wasted on this boondoggle in the first place. It's a greedy and pathetic move, but I guess that's what we've come to expect from the fossil fuel industry.

TransCanada is bringing their lawsuit under NAFTA, otherwise known as the North American Free Trade Agreement. More specifically, they're using a complex and opaque process known as the investor-state dispute system, which allows corporations to bring lawsuits against countries that they feel are unfairly blocking the free flow of trade. TransCanada's accusation is that the Obama Administration rejected Keystone XL for purely symbolic reasons, rather than its impact on the climate, and therefore the company

has been discriminated against.

The accusation normally be absurd (you can't build an 800,000 barrel a day pipeline that would carry the dirtiest fuel on the planet without having a climate impact), except for the fact that during the State Department's review process for the pipeline they hired an industry contractor that botched the job and made some roundabout arguments that because tar sands development was "inevitable" therefore the pipeline didn't matter. Nearly all other independent analysts disagreed, as did the Environmental Protection Agency, and ultimately the White House. But the process created enough confusion that TransCanada may now actually have a case.

TransCanada's lawsuit is another important reminder of how terrible trade agreements like NAFTA can be for our environment, and the ability of local and national governments to keep fossil fuels in the ground. The timing is particularly ironic. At this very moment, the Obama Administration is pressuring Congress and other nations to sign off on a new NAFTA-like agreement, the Trans Pacific Partnership, which would give corporations even more power to bring forward

cases like TransCanada's.

What would this mean in practice? Things like: if your province wanted to ban fracking, an oil company could file a lawsuit against you to say that you're unfairly blocking them from getting at the natural gas under your land. Or that if a country decided that it wanted to keep its oil in the soil rather than pollute the atmosphere, Exxon or Chevron could sue because they feel like they have the right to drill, baby, drill.

Ultimately, TransCanada's lawsuit won't do much to change the outcome of the fight against Keystone XL, we already won that battle. But it could help fuel new fights against trade agreements like the TPP, and it will certainly help galvanize more opposition to the fossil fuel industry. They say they have the right to mine, drill and burn at all costs? We say: keep it in the ground.

JAMIE HENN IS THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CAMPAIGN 350.ORG <[HTTP://WWW.350.ORG/](http://WWW.350.ORG/)>.

Source: *350.org* 1/7/16 <http://www.350.org/>



Ten good things about the not-so-great year 2015

MEDEA BENJAMIN

It would certainly be easy to do a piece about 10 horrible events from 2015 - from the ongoing war in Syria and the refugee crisis to the terrorist attacks in Beirut, Paris, and San Bernardino and the rise of Donald Trump and Islamophobia. But that wouldn't be a very inspiring way to bid farewell to last year and usher in a new one. So let's look at 10 reasons to feel better about 2015.

1. THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL HELD UP

Despite significant political opposition and millions of dollars spent to try to quash the deal, the nuclear agreement with Iran was passed and the possibility of another US military entanglement was narrowly avoided. The powerful lobby AIPAC had its wings clipped, as did Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (except that the deal unfortunately came with a payoff of even more US tax dollars going to the Israeli military).

2. RELATIONS ARE THAWING WITH CUBA

It's official! The US and Cuba now have embassies in each other's territory for the first time in over half a century. The year has been marked by a UN meeting between Cuban President Raul Castro and US President Barack Obama, more travelers to Cuba, and more trade between both countries. But Congress still needs to lift the trade embargo, fully lift the travel ban, and return the Guantanamo naval base to the Cubans.

3. THE KEYSTONE PIPELINE AIN'T HAPPENIN'

After years of stellar grassroots activism against the Keystone pipeline (and years of lobbying by the oil companies), President Obama finally took the side of the activists - and the planet - by shutting down the project. And while the Paris climate talks didn't result in the dramatic commitments we need to stop global climate chaos, they did raise consciousness and move the global community in the right direction.

4. THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT IS GETTING RESULTS

This incredible uprising has forced issues of racial injustice into the national spotlight and created real reforms in communities across the country. The movement for black lives got its momentum in the streets of Ferguson, Missouri and spread throughout the nation. Cops have been convicted, police chiefs have been ousted, citizen review boards have been empowered, confederate flags have come

down, buildings named after racists have been renamed, and presidential candidates have been forced to talk about race. Kudos to the many young black activists leading the way.

5. CANADA'S WELCOMING REFUGEES.

While Donald Trump was threatening to ban Muslims from the United States, the newly elected Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau showed the rest of the world how a country can open its doors - and hearts - to Syrian refugees. Trudeau and other smiling officials personally welcomed Canada's first batch of Syrian refugees with flowers, toys, clothing, goodwill, and the heartfelt declaration, "You are home." Trudeau proclaimed: "We get to show the world how to open our hearts and welcome in people who are fleeing extraordinarily difficult situations...because we define a Canadian not by a skin color or a language or a religion or a background, but by a shared set of values, aspirations, hopes, and dreams."

6. JEREMY CORBYN NOW LEADS THE UK LABOR PARTY.

Running on an anti-war, anti-austerity, and pro-refugee platform, longtime progressive parliamentarian Jeremy Corbyn earned a whopping 59 percent of his party's votes. In an interview with Democracy Now's Amy Goodman, Corbyn voiced his support for diplomacy and his aversion to airstrikes in the Middle East: "I want a world of peace. I'm not interested in bombs. I'm not interested in wars. I'm interested in peace." Wouldn't that be nice to hear from Democratic Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi?

7. SAME-SEX MARRIAGE WAS LEGALIZED IN THE UNITED STATES.

In a landmark and long-awaited decision, the Supreme Court declared same-sex marriage a federal right. On June 26, the LGBTQ community and its allies rejoiced and took the streets to celebrate the Obergefell v. Hodges. While there have been some minor setbacks since then (primarily due to bigots like Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis), there is no turning back now.

8. THE BDS MOVEMENT MARKED 10 YEARS OF WINS.

The non-violent, non-sectarian, Palestinian-led movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel has seen a decade of victories. Key this year was the decision by the European Union that goods produced on land seized in the 1967 war must be labeled "Made in Settlements" (not "Made in Israel"), which will deprive Israel of the corresponding tax benefits. The former Israeli intelligence chief Shabtai Shavit is convinced that BDS has

become a "critical" challenge to Israel, while former Prime Minister Ehud Barak admits it is reaching a "tipping point." In a desperate attempt to counter the momentum of BDS, Israeli Embassy officials in DC sent holiday gifts exclusively made in settlements to the White House this year.

9. MARIJUANA'S BECOMING MAINSTREAM.

What a year of momentum to end our country's disastrous war on drugs and mass incarceration. Marijuana is now legal in Colorado, Washington State, Alaska, Oregon, and Washington, DC. Californians and others will hit the ballot box in 2016 to hopefully push us past the national tipping point on marijuana legalization. Elsewhere, President Obama - the first president to visit a prison - spoke out forcefully against mass incarceration and for criminal justice reform, and is helping formerly incarcerated people re-enter society by "banning the box" for those applying for federal jobs.

10. BERNIE SANDERS' PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN IS ENERGIZING PROGRESSIVES.

The energy that Bernie has mobilized, especially among young progressives, has been phenomenal. While the media is obsessed with Donald Trump, droves of people have been flocking to hear Bernie talk about breaking up big banks, a financial transaction tax to make college education free, single-payer healthcare, and other ideas to make our society more just. Wouldn't it be great if this movement could continue after the race is over?

So while this holiday season the nation is obsessed with Star Wars and Donald Trump, may we ring in the new year by truly striking back at the injustices of the empire. May the force be with the grassroots activists trying to build a more peaceful world.

MEDEA BENJAMIN IS A COFOUNDER OF GLOBAL EXCHANGE AND CODEPINK: WOMEN FOR PEACE, AND IS AUTHOR OF THE BOOK, /DRONE WARFARE: KILLING BY REMOTE CONTROL/.

Source: Truthout 1/4/16 <http://www.truth-out.org>



TIME TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM GUNS

CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE

times higher. For each time a gun in the home injures or kills in self-defense, there are 11 completed and attempted gun suicides, seven gun criminal assaults and homicides, and four unintentional shooting deaths or injuries. Black, American Indian, and Alaska Native children and teens are disproportionately likely to die from a gun.

These horrendous facts are not acts of God. They are our indefensible choices as Americans. We must urgently push policymakers to confront and end our national gun violence epidemic as the huge public health crisis it is and there are some steps we can all take now:

END THE FEDERAL BAN ON GUN RESEARCH AND FUND RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGIES.

Why is the National Rifle Association (NRA) so afraid of the truth and why do our lawmakers and voters capitulate to NRA bullying? Almost 20 years ago Congress blocked the CDC's gun research funding by 95 percent. The agency's budget that year was cut by the exact amount provided the previous year to study prevention of gun injuries and fatalities. Similar restrictions were put on research by the

National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 2011. Public health professionals continue to believe studying our epidemic gun violence crisis will lead to new understandings of its root causes and possible breakthroughs in new approaches to reduce the daily death toll caused by guns. This is the same process that occurred after focused research on automobile deaths in the 20th century. In 2013, President Obama signed an executive order clarifying that the CDC and NIH are not prohibited from studying gun violence and included \$10 million in funding to study prevention of gun injuries and fatalities. That funding was never approved by Congress. Over the years, some academic institutions and organizations have stepped in to fund some excellent research but a much more coordinated and concentrated research effort is crucial to make gun violence reduction one of the first major public health goals of the 21st century. It is time to fire the NRA as our head of national security and of our national public health research agenda. Even former Representative Jay Dickey (R-AR), author of the current language banning gun violence research recently noted that "doing nothing is no longer an acceptable solution."

CONTINUE TO BROADEN THE RANGE OF SUPPORTERS FOR EFFECTIVE GUN PREVENTION ACTION AT THE FEDERAL,

STATE, AND LOCAL LEVELS.

Transforming change is slow and very very hard. It requires dogged, sustained effort from a critical mass of determined citizens. /We cannot stay numb, cowed or intimidated by bullies who value profits over human life./ Do not let your passion for stopping relentless gun violence wane however long it takes. Insist political leaders support common sense universal background checks including checks on private and internet sales. Restore the assault weapon ban and limit the size of ammunition clips. Require that gun owners carry liability insurance. Promote the development of smart guns; and require guns be stored unloaded and locked in the home. And we must stop guns being the only unregulated consumer product in our nation while killing tens of thousands of children and adults every year.

PLEDGE TO ASK ABOUT GUNS IN THE HOME WHERE YOUR CHILDREN VISIT.

Make clear that you will not let your child play in a house with unlocked guns just as you would not let your child ride in a car without a seatbelt. One in three homes with children in the United States has a gun. If you don't own a gun, one of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Taking action to reduce gun violence

Common sense gun laws

As a nation we need to protect our children and other citizens by supporting common-sense gun safety measures, and pass stronger federal, state, and local laws that would save many lives. Common sense gun laws are not the same as “gun control” or “banning guns”, they are laws that help to reduce mass shootings, gang violence, rage violence, and gun accidents. We could implement these common-sense gun laws by:

CLOSING THE GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE

The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act requires federally licensed gun dealers to conduct background checks on every gun sale, but a loophole in the law allows private dealers to sell guns without a license and avoid the required background checks. This loophole accounts for a large share of all gun sales. It’s estimated that over 40 percent of all guns in our country are sold by unlicensed private sellers to buyers who did not have to pass a background check. *Congress must require criminal background checks on anyone who attempts to purchase a gun.*

BAN ASSAULT WEAPONS

The federal Assault Weapons Ban, signed into law in 1994, prohibited the manufacture and sale of 19 types of semi-automatic military style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines that contained more than 10 rounds of ammunition, but it expired in 2004. These deadly assault

weapons that cause multiple deaths at a time have nothing to do with the ability to hunt animals. *Congress must restore the ban on both high-capacity clips and assault weapons.*

Strengthen gun restrictions on people convicted of a violent misdemeanor or a violent act as a juvenile.

Under current law, a conviction for a violent misdemeanor doesn’t prohibit a person from purchasing or possessing a gun, and a related loophole exists for people adjudicated for violent offenses as juveniles. A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that a person convicted of a violent misdemeanor was eight times more likely to be charged with a subsequent gun and/or violent crime. *Congress must close these loopholes and prohibit gun possession by individuals who have been convicted of violent misdemeanors or have been found delinquent for violent acts.*

REQUIRE CONSUMER SAFETY STANDARDS AND CHILDPROOF SAFETY FEATURES FOR ALL GUNS.

This would help protect children and adults, and every gun in this country should be childproofed. *Congress must subject guns to the same consumer product safety regulations that cover virtually every other consumer product. Congress also must require childproof safety features on all guns.*

Source: Cleveland School Remembers release 2014
<http://clevelandschoolremembers.org/>

1/17/89 – Remembering the Cleveland School shooting

The Cleveland School massacre (also known as the Stockton Schoolyard Shooting) occurred on January 17, 1989. The gunman, who had a long criminal history, shot and killed five schoolchildren, and wounded 29 other children and one teacher, before committing suicide.

On the morning of January 17, 1989, an anonymous person phoned the Stockton Police Department regarding a death threat against Cleveland Elementary School. At noon that day, the gunman, a disturbed drifter and former Stockton resident, began his attack by setting his van on fire with a Molotov Cocktail after parking it behind the school, later causing the car to explode. He then moved to the school playground and began firing with his Type 56 Assault Rifle from behind a portable building. He fired 106 rounds in three minutes. All of the fatally shot victims and many of the wounded were Cambodian and Vietnamese immigrants. The gunman then committed suicide by shooting himself in the head with a pistol.

Cleveland School Remembers honors the young victims who lost their lives:

- * Rathonar Or, 9 years old
- * Ram Chun, 8 years old

- * Sokim An, 6 years old
- * Oeun Lim, 8 years old
- * Thuy Tran, 8 Years old

The multiple murders at the Cleveland School in Stockton received national news coverage and spurred calls for regulation of semi-automatic weapons. “Why could Purdy, an alcoholic who had been arrested for such offenses as selling weapons and attempted robbery, walk into a gun shop in Sandy, Oregon, and leave with an AK-47 under his arm?” *Time* magazine asked.

They continued, “The easy availability of weapons like this, which have no purpose other than killing human beings, can all too readily turn the delusions of sick gunmen into tragic nightmares.” The gunman was able to purchase the weapons because the judicial system had not convicted him of any crime that prevented him from purchasing firearms. Neither had he been adjudicated mentally ill, another disqualifying factor.

In California, measures were taken to first define and then ban assault weapons, resulting in the Roberti-Roos Assault Weapons Control Act of 1989. On the Federal level,

TIME TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM GUNS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

your child’s friends’ families likely does. It may be awkward to ask about guns in the home but it may help save a child’s life. More than 19 million parents and grandparents have taken the Asking Saves Kids (ASK) pledge promoted by the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence and the American Academy of Pediatrics to ask about guns in the homes where their children play. Join them today and promote this important message in your community and on social media.

DIVEST IN GUN COMPANIES. DON’T INVEST IN VIOLENCE AND DEATH.

Are you one of the many Americans whose retirement plans include gun manufacturers’ stock? There are tens of millions of Americans with 401Ks. Let’s ask and check now to see whether our 401K retirement funds are invested in gun and ammunition companies and make a change if they are. Let’s ask if our religious, philanthropic, nonprofit organizations and universities with endowments are supporting gun violence through investments. Learn more at

March 1- March 31, 2016 Art Against Violence 2016

Exhibit dates: March 1- March 31, 2016

Exhibit cost: The Exhibit & All Events are free

Exhibit location: Plant and Flower Building – San Joaquin County Fairgrounds

Mark your calendar for the “Not One More” – Art Against Violence 2016 Art Exhibit: The “*Not one More*” exhibit dates are March 1 – March 31, 2016. *Draw It Out* seeks to initiate conversations on violence that lead to action. Artists will provide pieces that explore and comment on:

How violence tears us apart – internally, in families and in other groups, and in our community.

How we change a culture of violence to one of communication and tolerance.

Also, Draw It Out’s traveling exhibit of Wish Flags will be on display.

EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS:

Artists’ Reception Sunday, March 6, 3-5 pm

Spoken Word Event Friday, March 11, 6-8 pm

An Afternoon of Music and Dance Sunday, March 20, 3-5 pm

Panel on Art Activism Thursday, March 31, 6-8 pm

Artists – Sign up to exhibit in the “Not One More” - Art Against Violence 2016 Art Exhibit (March 1, 2016 – March 31, 2016). Original artwork in any media (including garden art, flags, banners, videos, fabric arts (quilts, banners and wearable art) music, dance and spoken word) will be accepted. There are no age restrictions. Visit <http://clevelandschoolremembers.org/artists> for more information.

Source: Cleveland School Remembers 2016 <http://clevelandschoolremembers.org/>

Congress struggled with a way to ban weapons like the gunman’s military-style rifle without being viewed as banning sporting rifles.

Later in 1989, President G.W. Bush signed an executive order (the Semi-Automatic Assault Rifle Ban) banning importation of assault weapons. The Federal assault weapons ban was enacted in 1994, and expired in 2004. President Bill Clinton signed another executive order in 1994 which banned importation of most firearms and ammunition from China.

Source: Cleveland School Remembers release <http://clevelandschoolremembers.org/>

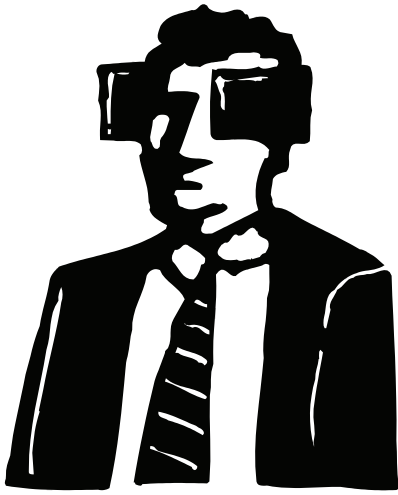
<http://www.campaign2unload.org/>.

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN IS PRESIDENT OF THE CHILDREN’S DEFENSE FUND WHOSE /LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND/ MISSION IS TO ENSURE EVERY CHILD A HEALTHY START, A HEAD START, A FAIR START, A SAFE START AND A MORAL START IN LIFE AND SUCCESSFUL PASSAGE TO ADULTHOOD WITH THE HELP OF CARING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES. FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO WWW.CHILDRENSDEFENSE.ORG.

Source: Children’s Defense Fund 12/18/15 <http://www.childrensdefense.org>



Noam Chomsky: Electing the President of the Empire



ABBY MARTIN

At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Mass., Abby Martin interviews world-renowned philosopher and linguist Professor Noam Chomsky.

ABBY MARTIN: This week we're here at MIT in Cambridge, MA to interview world renowned linguist and philosopher Noam Chomsky, someone who's authored over 100 books on everything from war to propaganda. I wanted to get his take on democracy and elections in the context of American empire. As extreme as the political spectrum is right now in the US, there is still almost complete uniformity on the war on terror, the stance toward Latin America, sanctions on Iran. And there's really no anti-war candidate despite popular opinion agreeing on that. Why can no candidate touch that?

NOAM CHOMSKY: The spectrum is broad but in an odd sense. The spectrum is basically centre to extreme right. Extreme right. Way off the spectrum. The Republican Party about 20 years ago basically abandoned any pretense of being a normal political party. In fact, the distinguished, respected conservative commentators, from the American Enterprise Institute, a right-wing think tank, like Norman Ornstein, described the Republican Party as a radical insurgency which has abandoned parliamentary politics. They just don't want anything to happen. Their only policies are "don't do anything" or bomb. That's not a political party.

What happened is that the party, during the whole neoliberal period, both parties shifted to the right, as did everywhere in the world. And the Republicans went off the spectrum. They became so dedicated to the interests of the extreme wealthy and powerful that they couldn't get votes. So they had to turn to other constituencies which are there, but were never politically mobilized: the Christian evangelicals, the nativists who are afraid that "they're taking our country away from us." People who are so terrified that they're going to carry a gun into a coffee shop. And that's their base essentially. And when you look at...take a look at the primaries: when any candidate who has a semblance of rationality is not even competing.

So that's the Republicans. The Democrats have shifted to the right as well. Today's mainstream democrats are pretty much what used to be called moderate Republicans. Somebody like Eisenhower, for example, would be considered way out on the left. So for example Eisenhower strongly made it clear that anyone who questions the programs of the New Deal is just not part of American political life. Well, by now, that's a left-wing program. It's basically Bernie Sanders' program. It's Eisenhower.

So the spectrum, it's true that it's broad, but in a very strange sense. As far as anti-war candidates are concerned: you have to ask what it means. So for example Obama is considered an anti-war candidate. He described the Iraq war as a mistake, a "strategic blunder" as he put it. That's like Russian generals in Afghanistan in the early 1980s who criticized the invasion as a strategic blunder. That's not criticism of the war. That's saying that you're making a mistake. The debate about the Obama's [administration] is running a global terror program of a kind that has never been envisioned before the drone program, is now being discussed to an extent because of recent leaks.

But the questions that are being raised, overwhelmingly, not by Jeremy Scahill or Glenn Greenwald, but by most of those who are talking about it is: "are you killing too many civilians?" What about just assassinating people because you think that someday they might want to harm you?

Suppose for example that Iran was murdering people in the US because they think, with some reason, that they might want to harm them? For example the editors of /The New York Times/ and /The Washington Post /, who publish articles, op-eds, calling for the bombing of Iran. So suppose they said that "this is a given threat, let's kill them." Would we accept that?

The idea that we have the right to use force and violence at will is accepted pretty much across the spectrum. Take say the Iran negotiations. Virtually everyone, President, political leaders, commentators in the press, dove-ish commentators, almost universally say that if we unilaterally detect, think we detect, some Iranian violation of the agreements, that we have the right to use military force to attack them. I mean, that's just outlandish in

terms of international law and practice. But it's universal, virtually universal. You have to go way to the margins to find somebody that will question that.

ABBY MARTIN: And there's not even a mild critique of the assassination program or even the war on terror, the premise, from any of these candidates. Every four years we're made to feel like we're playing this great role, this great democratic practice in decision making where we celebrate electing these leaders who rule over us. How does power really function in our society?

NOAM CHOMSKY: There's very good studies of this from mainstream political science. Nothing on the edges. So one of the main topics that's studied in academic political science is the relation between peoples' attitudes and public policy. And it's a pretty straightforward study, you see public policy. There's very good polling evidence on what people think about things. So for example for about 40 years, a considerable majority of the public has thought that taxes should go up on the rich. Taxes go down on the rich. A substantial part of the public, often a big majority, thinks that we ought to have a national healthcare program. Nothing. Impossible. In fact when the press discusses this they call it "politically impossible." Meaning the pharmaceutical companies won't accept it, the insurance companies won't accept it, and so on. So it basically doesn't matter what the public thinks.

About 70% of the public, the lowest 70% on the income scale, are pretty much disenfranchised. Their attitudes have no detectable influence on the policies of their own representatives. As you move up the scale you get a bit more influence. When you get to the top, policy is made.

Now the top can mean a fraction of 1%, so it's kind of a plutocracy with democratic forms. And the elections, I mean by now it's almost become a joke but it's always been true that campaign financing plays a very substantial role in not only who's elected but what the policies are. That goes back 100 years. Great campaign manager 100 years ago, Mark Hanna, was asked once: "What are the important things that you have to have to run a campaign. He said: "There are three things. First one's money. The second one is money. And I forget what the third one is." Pretty much that's true. With the current reactionary Supreme Court, it's just gone out of sight. Campaign spending is billions and billions of dollars.

ABBY MARTIN: And people have argued that it's just because of too much government interference. We need to widen the market. We need capitalism to be more free. You've argued that in any scenario of capitalism working, it's incongruous, it's incompatible with democracy.

NOAM CHOMSKY: There was recently an IMF study, International

Monetary Fund, study of the profits of big banks in the United States. The financial sector has become enormous during the neoliberal periods. Almost half the profit of corporate profit.

Now where does their profit come from? Turns out it comes from the taxpayer, largely through the- there's an implicit government guarantee against failure. It's not state, it's not the law, but it's understood that if a major financial institution gets into trouble that the government will bail it out, which happened repeatedly. Only during the neoliberal period, incidentally. There were no major failures during the 50's and 60's. When the neoliberal policies began to be instituted, deregulations and so on, then you start getting a series of financial crises, and every time the public bails them out.

Well that has consequences. For one thing it means the credit agencies understand that these corporations are high-valued beyond the level of what they actually do because they're going to be bailed out. So they're going to get good credit ratings, which means they can get cheap credit. They can get cheap loans from the government, they can of course get the bailouts. They can undertake risky transactions which are profitable, and if they're wrong the taxpayer will take care of it. Net result is that it amounts to practically all their profits. Is that capitalism?

Energy. There's another IMF study of government subsidies to energy subsidies around the world, not just the U.S. They estimated that I think \$5 trillion a year, which includes the U.S. of course. Plenty of subsidies. Agrobusiness is subsidies.

ABBY MARTIN: But isn't that what the whole new libertarian movement would tell you is that precisely? That the government is being used as an extension of the market to protect this kind of irregular form of capitalism that is hand in glove with the government and we just kind of have to free up government regulation and let capitalism work on its own.

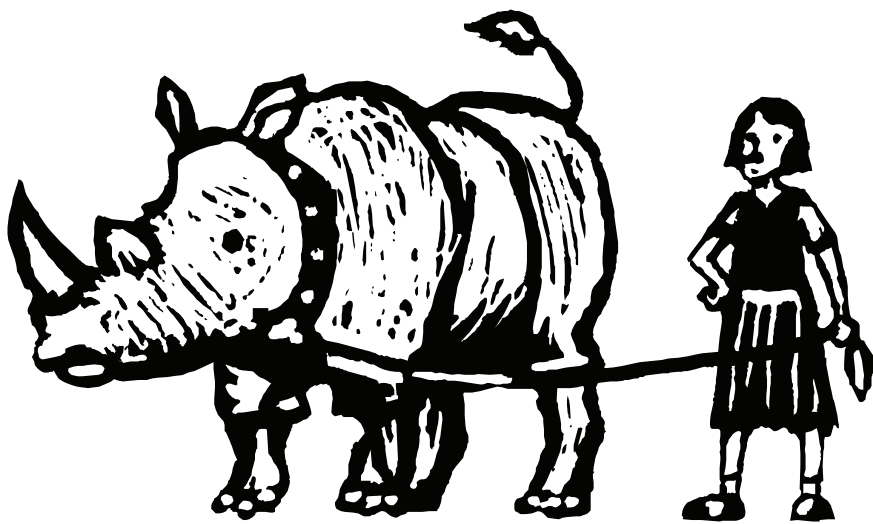
NOAM CHOMSKY: First of all, the business world would never tolerate that because they rely heavily on government. But if you did follow the libertarian- what are called libertarian. Remember: What is called libertarian in the United States has nothing to do with traditional libertarianism. It's a kind of ultra-right capitalist- a narco-capitalism, they call it.

If that was allowed to function, the whole society would collapse. And we turn to total tyranny. We would have tyranny of unaccountable private institutions. Private concentration of capital is totally unaccountable to the public is absolute tyranny. The only thing that protects the public from predatory capitalism is some degree of state intervention.

So it's true that state intervention does support the capitalist institutions. It also protects the society from total destruction. A predatory capitalism

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Defense industry revenue forecast gushes over global turmoil



LEE FANG

The global aerospace and defense industry is out of its doldrums. According to a new report by the accounting firm Deloitte, “the resurgence of global security threats” promises a lucrative “rebound” in defense spending. The report alerts investors that “revenue growth” is “expected to take a positive turn” due to the terrorism and war in the Middle East and the tensions in Eastern Europe and the South China Sea.

Many analysts predicted declining revenue for the weapons industry as the U.S. scaled down military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. After all, no other country even comes close to spending as much as the U.S. does. But now governments around the world have moved swiftly to hike defense budgets to “combat terrorism and address sovereign security matters.”

The Deloitte report is almost giddy: “2015 was a pivotal year that saw heightened tensions between China, its neighbors

and the US over “island building” in the South and East China Seas, and the related claims of sovereign ocean territory rights by China. In addition, Russia and the Ukraine are at odds related to Russia’s takeover of Crimea and their military actions in Eastern Ukraine. North Korea continues to threaten its neighbors with its nuclear ambitions and aggressive rocket launches. The Islamic State (ISIS) has become a key threat in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan and is involved in exporting terrorism to Europe, Africa, and elsewhere. The recent tragic bombings in Paris, Beirut, Mali, the Sinai Peninsula, and other places have emboldened nations to join in the fight against terrorism.”

Several governments affected by these threats are increasing their defense budgets to combat terrorism and address sovereign security matters, including cyber-threats. For defense contractors, this represents an opportunity to sell more equipment and military weapons systems. Products, which are expected to experience renewed interest from buyers, include armored ground vehicles, ground attack munitions, light air support aircraft, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance electronic sensors, cyber protections, maritime patrol ships and aircraft, as well as provision for equipment maintenance and sustainment, as the military

operations tempo is likely to increase and more missions are executed.

It is expected that a return to growth for defense subsector companies will likely occur, due to the increased interest by several involved nations as described above. In addition, many large, mainly US DoD defense programs representing billions of US dollars, are likely to start soon, enter the engineering manufacturing design phase, and reach low-rate or full-scale production over the next few years. These programs include Ohio Class Submarine replacement, F-35 fighter jet, KC-46A aerial refueling tanker, Long Range Strike Bomber, USAF T-X trainer, and Rafale fighter programs.

As for factors that might slow the global arms race, the report says little about diplomacy or peace movements. It does note that the fall in oil prices might eventually blunt the weapons-buying trend in the Persian Gulf, although not anytime soon.

In the U.S., as we’ve reported, defense contractors have bragged about pushing candidates toward adopting more militaristic policies. The libertarian trend in the Republican Party, for instance, has largely reversed itself and most candidates have adopted increasingly hawkish views.

Source: The Intercept 1/10/16 <https://theintercept.com>

US approves Saudi military millions; days later pro-democracy executions follow

PAUL GOTTINGER

Just days before Saudi Arabia performed a mass execution of 47 people, including four pro-democracy protesters, the US approved tens of millions in military contracts to the Saudi government. The contracts include \$24 million to Raytheon for equipment relating to Patriot missiles, \$12 million to Advanced Electronics for electronics updates to F-15 fighter jets, and tens of millions of dollars to Boeing for implementation of a laser guided, air-to-ground weapons system.

The Pentagon announced the contracts three days before the execution of four non-violent Shia protesters. The majority of the executions were carried out in the form of beheadings – the same form of execution favored by ISIS.

The weapons contracts draw attention to the US government’s continued arming of the Saudi government, which regularly engages in human rights abuses at home and abroad. Despite recent allegations of war crimes against Saudi Arabia for its war in Yemen, the US continues to replenish the Saudi arsenal with billions in weapons.

As a result, Amnesty International has accused the US of violating the Arms Trade Treaty. The treaty prohibits the sale of arms if there is knowledge the weapons will be used against

civilians. The International Committee of the Red Cross has documented 100 instances of the Saudi-led coalition attacking hospitals in Yemen.

Among those executed earlier this week was Sheik Nimr al-Nimr, who was well known to Shia Muslims around the world. Al-Nimr was a leader of the 2011 Arab Spring protest in Saudi Arabia’s Shia region. His execution sparked protests in multiple countries including Iran, where protesters set the Saudi embassy ablaze. In response to the embassy fire, Saudi Arabia cut diplomatic relations with Iran.

Human Rights Watch reported that al-Nimr “supported only peaceful protests and eschewed all violent opposition to the government.” In US cables released by Wikileaks, al-Nimr stated his support for “American ideals” like peace and justice. He also said acts of violence “directly contradict the spirit of Shi’ism” and as a result, Shia Muslims such as himself “are natural allies for America.”

The three other protesters set to death were teenagers at the time of their arrest. These young men participated in peaceful pro-democracy protests during Saudi Arabia’s Arab Spring. Yet Saudi Arabia, fearing a democratic movement that could challenge the royal family’s complete control over the country, has accused the protesters of terrorism.

The executions of these four Shia protesters have been

met with widespread condemnation. Amnesty International escribed the executions as a demonstration of Saudi Arabia’s “utter disregard for human rights.”

Brian Dooley, of Human Rights First, criticized Washington’s support for Saudi Arabia. He wrote, “Washington’s muted response to mounting Saudi violations – 2015 saw at least 157 executions after unfair trials, the most for two decades, and a continuing clamp down on non-violent critics of the government – only enables the repression.”

These executions have already had wide-ranging political impacts and may further destabilize the Middle East. This is likely to be the case in Iraq, where the US is hoping to minimize sectarian tensions, which force Sunni Muslims to support ISIS. Iraqi prime minister Haider al-Abadi stated that the execution of Sheik al-Nimr “would lead to nothing but more destruction.” He continued, “Violating human rights ... leads to repercussions on the security, stability and the social fabric of the peoples of the region.”

PAUL GOTTINGER IS A STAFF REPORTER AT RSN WHOSE WORK FOCUSES ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE ARMS INDUSTRY.

Source: Reader Supported News 1/4/16 <http://readersupportednews.org/>

Noam Chomsky: Electing the President of the Empire

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

system simply couldn’t survive. I mean, for perfectly obvious reasons. For one thing: it wouldn’t care about externalities, effects on others. So in no time it would destroy the environment simply by destroying resources and pouring CO2 into the atmosphere and “Who cares?”

Furthermore, there would be no

public goods. The markets, there’s an ideology, which claims that markets provide freedom of choice. Some may find it democratic. That’s not true and we all know it’s not true. So suppose I want to get home this evening. The market does offer choices. Ford or a Toyota. It doesn’t offer the choice I want, which is a public transportation system. That’s not part of the market. The market focuses you

on individual consumption of consumer goods. Period. Is that what you want in life? Just more and more gadgets around? There are lots of other things in life which the market doesn’t even offer.

So what’s called libertarianism is a prescription for complete disaster. I don’t think the people advocating this understand this. I’m not criticizing them but: just think it through. And

I should say it’s very anti-libertarian. Traditional libertarianism, which was always on the left, was opposed to the master-servant relation. People giving orders and people taking them. That’s libertarianism, not in this version.

Source: Institute for Public Accuracy 1/9/16 <http://www.accuracy.org>



Why Sanders' economic plan is best for the 99 percent



ROGER HICKEY

The Democratic presidential campaign— unlike the Republican circus— has actually produced a debate in which each candidate's economic agenda has gotten better and more populist. But as you can see at CandidateScorecard.net, there are also big differences.

Both Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders agree that America's long period of stagnant wages and growing inequality has been due to chronic slow growth and high unemployment. In Clinton's words, "getting closer to full employment is crucial to raising wages." Both are committed to some amount of increased public spending on infrastructure and investments in "green industries." But the differences between the two candidates on public investment are a matter of scale.

Clinton wants \$275 billion more in infrastructure investment over the next five years. Sanders would increase the public investments in jobs-creating infrastructure by \$1 trillion over the same five-year period— creating one million new jobs, while helping to retool the U.S. economy to reduce carbon emissions.

LIMITED TAXES, LIMITED AMBITIONS

One explanation for the size difference in their spending plans may be found in Sanders' willingness to tax the wealthy and corporations. While Clinton has outlined some plans for higher capital gains taxes, she still has not rolled out detailed plans that would show us whether she would ask corporations pay a larger share of taxes to pay for growth-producing public investments— or whether her corporate tax plans would be "revenue-neutral." Clinton's reluctance to raise taxes on corporations limits her ambitions on public investment.

Clinton has also drawn a line that is limiting her ability to help create programs to support the incomes of middle-class and poor Americans. She has declared she will not raise taxes on anyone making under \$250,000 per year. Other Democrats have locked themselves into similar pledges— notably Barack Obama in 2008— but Hillary has now pivoted to attacks on Bernie that are more typical of Republicans than Democrats.

This is unfortunate. If Democrats of earlier eras had adopted the Clinton approach, there would be no Medicare or Social Security— and no publicly funded elementary schools or high schools. Here's how the debate has turned

ugly: Clinton is attacking Sanders' Medicare For All proposal because she says it will raise taxes on the middle class. What she doesn't say is that the Sanders plan would allow Americans to stop paying health insurance premiums, that their deductibles and copayments would be dramatically reduced, and that insurance executives would no longer interfere with their care.

The Sanders Medicare For All proposal would save the average family more than \$5,000 per year. It also would increase, not lower, incomes for 95 percent of Americans, according to Professor Gerald Friedman, professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Friedman writes that if Medicare for All was enacted, "we would, as a country, save nearly \$5 trillion over ten years in reduced administrative waste, lower pharmaceutical and device prices, and by lowering the rate of medical inflation."

Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich notes that: "Bernie's proposals would cost less than what we'd spend without them. Most of the 'cost' . . . would pay for opening Medicare to everyone. This would be cheaper than relying on our current system of for-profit private health insurers that charge you and me huge administrative costs, advertising, marketing, bloated executive salaries, and high pharmaceutical prices."

Paul Waldman recently wrote in *The Washington Post*, "Every single-payer system in the world, and there are many of them of varying flavors, is cheaper than the American health care system. Every single one. So ... you can't say (Sanders' proposal) represents some kind of profligate, free-spending idea that would cost us all terrible amounts of money."

READ HER LIPS

But rather than argue the case on its merits, Clinton has chosen to use the anti-government framing of the right by pledging that she will never "raise taxes" on the middle class (a group which, by her definition, includes people making \$250,000 per year.) Social Security would never have been created if Democrats had taken this position in the 1930s, since it is funded by payroll taxes. But that funding is one of its sources of political and fiscal strength, since it is forbidden by law from contributing to the federal deficit.

And if Democrats had taken Clinton's tax position in the 1960s, we wouldn't have Medicare today, since that program is also partially funded through a payroll tax. Both Social Security and Medicare have provided enormous

benefits and savings for the middle class. They provide better service than private corporations could provide, at a much lower cost. Medicare For All would do the same.

Sanders has proposed to increase Social Security benefits for all recipients, a move which would increase the income of a typical senior by roughly \$1,300 per year. He would fund his proposal by having the wealthiest 1.5 percent of Americans pay into the program at the same rate as everyone else.

That happens to conform to Clinton's pledge not to raise taxes for households with less than \$250,000 in income. Nevertheless, she has refused to support the Sanders proposal and has not ruled out a Social Security benefit cut.

Then there's college education. Sanders proposed to make public colleges and universities tuition-free, as many were in the past (and as they are in a number of other countries today). Vice President Joe Biden supports this concept. But Clinton opposes it, even though it would save middle-class families more than \$9,400 on average for each child they send to public college.

Sanders would pay for his college tuition plan with a tax on Wall Street speculation, so there's no middle-class tax involved. But Clinton has rejected it for a much more limited plan that would cost middle-class families much more. She says she is "not in favor of making college free for Donald Trump's kids." But how likely are billionaires' children to attend a public college? And you could use that logic to oppose free high schools or elementary schools, too. In reality, it won't be Donald Trump's kids who lose out if Sanders' plan is blocked. The sons and daughters of the middle class will pay the price instead.

THE \$6,000 DIFFERENCE

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Nine numbers: any pres candidate response?

PAUL BUCHHEIT

No one individual can solve all our problems, especially with a contrarian and confrontational Congress. But greed, poverty, and inequality are some of the main targets of one candidate's campaign, and the matter of terrorism is likely to be addressed in a much more sensible way. Here are some of the numbers that should shock us into rejecting every other candidate:

1. TERRORISM: YOU'RE ABOUT AS LIKELY TO BE KILLED BY A TODDLER AS A TERRORIST

The candidates and the news outlets have driven us into a frenzy of fear, even though the number of Americans killed by toddlers is about the same per year as the number of violent jihadist attacks in the U.S. since 9/11. There are more terrorist attacks if the actions of white supremacists and non-Muslim extremists are included. But there are also more toddler killings that go unreported. Sanders understands that "the disastrous invasion of Iraq...has unraveled the region completely and led to the rise of al-Qaeda and to ISIS." And that the United States should be "trying to use diplomacy before war."

2. BIG BUSINESS: \$296,000 IS SPENT ON STOCK BUYBACKS FOR EVERY JOB CREATED

Buybacks are employed to boost stock prices for investors and management. Corporations that have benefited from

our public research money, infrastructure, security, and patent law for a half-century are giving up on the American people, failing to create the jobs necessary to sustain a middle class.

3. BIG BUSINESS: A 4-CENT ANTIBIOTIC TABLET SURGES TO \$3.70 IN ONE YEAR

We've heard about Shkreli's \$13.50 to \$750.00 drug price increase, and about Gilead Science's \$10 to \$1,000 increase, but on a more day-to-day level, we find even generic drug makers taking advantage of consumers, imposing, for example, an 8,000% increase on a common antibiotic and a 4,000% increase on asthma pills.

4. INEQUALITY: UNREGULATED CAPITALISM ALLOWS ONE PERSON OR FAMILY TO OWN NEARLY 1/1,000 OF OUR ENTIRE NATIONAL WEALTH

A combination of financial chicanery and tax avoidance has flushed our national wealth toward the few people who know how to work the system, or who were in position to benefit from the "winner-take-all" attitude that has prevailed since Reagan. Thus individuals or families including Bill Gates and the Koch brothers and the Walton siblings each own approximately one-thousandth of our nation's \$86 trillion total wealth.

No one is worth one-thousandth of our nation's total wealth. No matter what their claimed accomplishments, they have been subsidized in great measure not only by years of public support, but also by a financial

system that inflates investment wealth well beyond the earnings of most Americans. It's a massive failure of government that no measures are in place to prevent the "winner-take-all" skewing of our national wealth.

5. INEQUALITY: A POOR MAN LIVES 13 YEARS LESS THAN A RICH MAN

This is one of the deadly effects of inequality. According to a national study on the effects of aging, an upper-income 50-year-old man can expect to live to the age of 89, while a lower-income 50-year-old man will only make it to the age of 76.

6. POVERTY: MIDDLE-CLASS HOUSING WAS 15% OF AMERICAN WEALTH IN 1985. NOW IT'S 5%.

The stunning collapse of housing (for 90% of us) from 15 percent to 5 percent of total U.S. wealth is mirrored in reverse by a surge in investment wealth among the richest .01% (just 12,000 households), who now have TWICE the value of that middle-class housing in their investment portfolios.

7. POVERTY: THERE ARE 29 AVAILABLE HOMES FOR EVERY HOMELESS AMERICAN

The values of wealthy American decision-makers are so distorted that a half-million people are forced to live on the streets on a January night, even though it is estimated that up to 29 homes or apartments are sitting vacant around the country, waiting to fetch a big profit for their owners and landlords.

8. POVERTY: THE MEDIAN WEALTH OF YOUNG ADULTS DROPPED 68% IN 25 YEARS

From 1984 to 2009 the net worth of an American under 35 dropped from \$11,521 to \$3,662. For Americans over 65, it went up 42 percent.

9. POVERTY: FOR EVERY 2 HOMELESS AND HUNGRY KIDS TEN YEARS AGO, THERE ARE NOW 3

When Congress cuts social programs, children suffer. Since 2007 over 6 million kids have been added to the recently cut food stamp program. And over approximately the same time 1 million more kids have been forced into the streets or shelters. Bernie Sanders is the only candidate to show genuine empathy with the middle and lower classes, and to demand changes in the tradition of Wall Street greed that has ripped our nation apart. And he's the only one to understand the true meaning of 'terror' for destitute and homeless Americans.

PAUL BUCHHEIT IS A COLLEGE TEACHER, AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF US UNCUT CHICAGO, FOUNDER AND DEVELOPER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES (USAGAINSTGREED.ORG, PAYUPNOW.ORG, RAPPINGHISTORY.ORG), AND THE EDITOR AND MAIN AUTHOR OF "AMERICAN WARS: ILLUSIONS AND REALITIES" (CLARITY PRESS).

Source: Common Dreams 12/21/15 <http://www.commondreams.org>

Why Sanders' economic plan is best for the 99 percent

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

What about the minimum wage? Bernie Sanders has called for a gradual increase to \$15 per hour by 2020. For her part, Clinton has called for a \$12-per-hour minimum wage. Under the Sanders plan, full-time minimum wage workers would receive an additional \$6,240 more per year than under Clinton's proposal.

Together these wage and jobs proposals would help the middle class by increasing demand for workers while at the same time raising the floor on their income. By contrast, Clinton has offered a weaker minimum wage proposal and has not proposed a major jobs plan.

The middle class bore the brunt of the 2008 financial crisis, which cost the U.S. economy at least \$6 trillion. Sanders predicted that Wall Street deregulation could lead to a taxpayer bailout and a financial crisis, and he has a plan for preventing the next one—by reinstating the Glass-Steagall rule and breaking up commercial banks, investments banks, hedge funds and insurance companies which now threaten the global economy. Clinton opposes both measures.

"Bernie Sanders offers the best economic plan for the middle class. And he has shown that he is willing to challenge the Republican Party's rhetoric, rather than offer a pale reflection of it."

Clinton's use of anti-government, anti-tax rhetoric is counterproductive at best. It prevents her from supporting excellent proposals like New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand's FAMILY Act, which Sanders supports. It would provide American families with at least three months of paid leave to care for a newborn baby or seriously ill or injured family members. This would particularly benefit working women, and it would only cost the average worker just \$1.61 per week.

What's more important—another Grover Norquist "no taxes" pledge, or a comprehensive plan for caregivers that costs less per week than a cup of coffee? Framing like Clinton's paints government as inherently bad, even when it can deliver urgently needed programs more fairly and cost-effectively than the private sector. It closes the door on important proposals like the FAMILY Act and Medicare For All, and it undermines successful programs like Social Security and Medicare.

TINKERING VS. FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE

Here's the bottom line: The middle class is in crisis, and Clinton's proposals merely tinker at the margins of that crisis. They would not shift the fundamental direction of an economy that is growing more unequal every day. Nor would they offer greater security for the millions of Americans who live in fear of the future and wonder how they'll make it through today.

What's more, Clinton's agenda has been presented with a framing that threatens to undermine her own party's greatest achievements and make future advances for the middle class more difficult to achieve. The leader of the Democratic Party should fight for better government, not reinforce the anti-government tropes of the right. That sort of talk may have had an audience in the 1990s, but it is politically unwise today.

Bernie Sanders offers the best economic plan for the middle class. And he has shown that he is willing to challenge the Republican Party's rhetoric, rather than offer a pale reflection of it.

ROGER HICKEY IS CO-DIRECTOR OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE. HE WAS A LEADER OF THE CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE PRIVATIZATION OF SOCIAL

SECURITY, AND HE IS A FOUNDER AND MEMBER OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA NOW. IN THE LATE 1980S HE AND JEFF FAUX CREATED THE ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

Source: Campaign for America's Future Blog 1/5/16 <https://ourfuture.org/>



LAW OFFICES OF ANN M. CERNEY SHELLIE LOTT LANGLEY KREUZE

Attorneys at Law
42 N. Sutter Street, Suite 40, Stockton
104 N. School St. #205, Lodi
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LELA NELSON REALTY
2222 Pacific Avenue • Stockton, CA 95204

(209) 467-1200
(209) 942-5673 Fax
(209) 466-6243 Res.
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Website: www.lelanelson.com

E. Lela Nelson
BROKER





Ten powerful reasons why Bernie Sanders scares Wall Street

STEVEN ROSENFELD

Bernie Sanders has declared war on the biggest players in Wall Street's financial sector, saying they are overrun with "greed, fraud, dishonesty and arrogance," and criticizing his top rival for the Democratic nomination, Hillary Clinton, as being naïve about what needs to happen to create a financial system that "works for all Americans."

"To those on Wall Street who may be listening today, let me be very clear," Sanders said in a midtown Manhattan speech on Tuesday. "Greed is not good. In fact, the greed of Wall Street and corporate America is destroying the fabric of our nation. And here is a New Year's resolution that I will keep if elected president: If you do not end your greed, we will end it for you."

Sanders laid out a 10-point program to deeply change the nature of the financial sector, while occasionally digressing to emphasize how much more sweeping his proposals are compared to Clinton's. As always, he started by recounting how the "20 richest people own more wealth than the bottom 150 million Americans"—and said the finance industry has spent "billions" to get Congress and federal agencies to deregulate almost all areas of the financial industry while weakening consumer protection laws.

"They spent this money in order to get the government off their backs and to show the American people what they could do with that new-won freedom," he said. "They sure showed the American people. In 2008, the greed, recklessness and illegal behavior on Wall Street nearly destroyed the U.S. and global economy. Millions of Americans lost their jobs, their homes and their life savings." Sanders continued, "While Wall Street received the largest taxpayer bailout in the history of the world with no strings attached, the American middle class continues to disappear, poverty is increasing and the gap between the very rich and everyone else is growing wider and wider."

Here are the 10 major components to Sanders' Wall Street reforms.

1. END TOO-BIG-TO-FAIL

The underlying logic of this federal policy is that the biggest banks cannot fail and shut down, even if they make terrible investments or wreak great harm to the economy, because the U.S. economy and millions of ordinary people would become financially destitute. Sanders said this "scheme...is nothing more than a free insurance policy for Wall Street." Compared to before the crash of 2008, the biggest banks in the country are larger than ever, he said, adding, "if a bank is too big to fail, it is too big to exist."

"In 2008, the taxpayers of this country bailed out Wall Street because we were told they were 'too big to fail,'" Sanders said. "Yet, today, three out of the four largest financial institutions [JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America and Wells Fargo] are nearly 80 percent bigger than before we bailed them out. Incredibly, the six largest banks in this country issue more than two-thirds of all credit cards and more than 35 percent of all mortgages. They control more than 95 percent of all financial derivatives and hold more than 40 percent of all bank deposits. Their assets are equivalent to nearly 60 percent of our GDP. Enough is enough!"

Sanders concluded, "A handful of huge financial institutions simply have too much economic and political power over this country. If Teddy Roosevelt, the Republican trust-buster, were alive today, he would say, break 'em up. And he would be right."

2. BREAK UP THE BIGGEST BANKS

If elected, Sanders said he would direct the Treasury Department to compile a list of the institutions "whose failure would pose a catastrophic risk to the United States economy without a taxpayer bailout." Using the power of executive authority, he would break up these institutions. "Within one

year, my administration will break these institutions up so that they no longer pose a grave threat to the economy as authorized under Section 121 of the Dodd-Frank Act."

3. PASS A 21ST-CENTURY GLASS-STEAGALL ACT

This Depression-era law, which was repealed by Congress under President Bill Clinton, prevented commercial banks from investing in risky and arcane financial instruments, such as bundled home loans during the housing market bubble that predated the 2008 financial market collapse.

"Secretary Clinton says that Glass-Steagall would not have prevented the financial crisis because shadow banks like AIG and Lehman Brothers, not big commercial banks, were the real culprits," Sanders said. "Secretary Clinton is wrong. Shadow banks did gamble recklessly, but where did that money come from? It came from the federally insured bank deposits of big commercial banks—something that would have been banned under the Glass-Steagall Act."

Moreover, Sanders said his work as a senator revealed that the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department "provided more than \$16 trillion in short-term, low-interest loans to every major financial institution in the country" to stop the global economy from imploding after the 2008 crash. "Secretary Clinton says we just need to impose a few more fees and regulations on the financial industry. I disagree."

4. END TOO-BIG-TO-JAIL

Sanders said that the government needs to run Wall Street, not the other way around, which he said is the reality today. He said that "equal justice under the law" means that banking and finance executives whose reckless gambles damaged people's lives must face real criminal penalties including prison.

"The average American sees kids being arrested and sometimes even jailed for possessing marijuana or other minor crimes," Sanders said. "But when it comes to Wall Street executives, some of the wealthiest and most powerful people in this country, whose illegal behavior caused pain and suffering for millions—somehow, nothing happens to them. No police record. No jail time. No justice." He noted that "not one major Wall Street executive has been prosecuted for causing the near collapse of our entire economy," and that "will change under my administration."

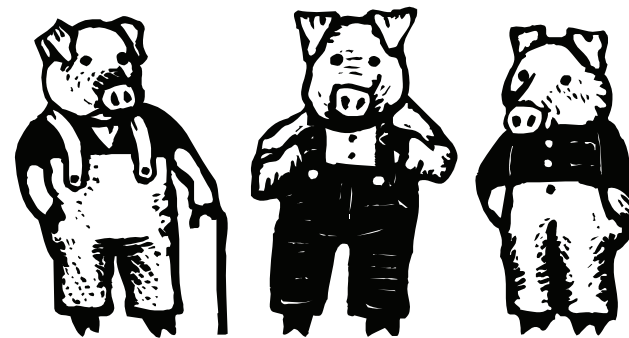
5. CRIMINALIZE WALL STREET'S BUSINESS MODEL

One of Sanders' most incisive comments concerned Wall Street's ways of doing business, which he said are based on intentionally ripping off average Americans and engaging in all kinds of unethical and illegal behaviors. He said the government must do more to penalize companies that routinely rip off the public and richly reward the executives overseeing that process.

"The reality is that fraud is the business model on Wall Street," Sanders said. "It is not the exception to the rule. It is the rule. And in a weak regulatory climate the likelihood is that Wall Street gets away with a lot more illegal behavior than we know of. How many times have we heard the myth that what Wall Street did may have been wrong but it wasn't illegal? Let me help shatter that myth today."

Sanders read from a dozen business page headlines to underscore that the banks most Americans use have been fined \$204 billion since 2009 for malfeasance. "And that takes place in a weak regulatory climate," he said. "And, when I say that the business model of Wall Street is fraud, that is not just Bernie Sanders talking. That is what financial executives told the University of Notre Dame in a study on the ethics of the financial services industry last year."

He continued, "According to this study, 51 percent of Wall Street executives making more than \$500,000 a year found it likely that their competitors have engaged in unethical or illegal activity in order to gain an edge in the market. More than one-third of financial executives have either witnessed or have firsthand knowledge of wrongdoing in the workplace.



Nearly one in five financial service professionals believe they must engage in illegal or unethical activity to be successful."

Sanders said he would appoint regulators who are not afraid to tackle this caldron of corruption. "I will nominate and appoint people with a track record of standing up to power, rather than those who have made millions defending Wall Street CEOs. Goldman Sachs and other Wall Street banks will not be represented in my administration."

6. TAX THE CASINO CULTURE

Sanders said one of the keys of reforming Wall Street was ending its culture of financial speculation. He said he would do that by imposing a transaction tax aimed at high-speed, high-volume traders who are not investing "in the job-creating economy." Those funds would then be used for cutting the cost of higher education. "We will use the revenue from this tax to make public colleges and universities tuition-free. During the financial crisis, the middle class of this country bailed out Wall Street. Now, it's Wall Street's turn to help the middle class."

7. REFORM THE FINANCIAL RATING AGENCIES

This is the industry that not only rates people on their personal financial credit but also rates investments—and before the 2008 crash falsely labeled as credible many of the risky investments that failed. These firms are like foxes guarding the hen house, Sanders said, and cannot base their profits on getting paid by the companies whose products they are rating. "We will turn for-profit credit rating agencies into non-profit institutions, independent from Wall Street. No longer will Wall Street be able to pick and choose which credit agency will rate their products."

8. CAP CREDIT CARD INTEREST AND ATM FEES

Banks and credit card companies must be stopped "from ripping off the American people by charging sky-high interest rates and outrageous fees," Sanders said. "It is unacceptable that Americans are paying a \$4 or \$5 fee each time they go to the ATM. It is unacceptable that millions of Americans are paying credit card interest rates of 20 or 30 percent."

"The Bible has a term for this practice. It's called usury," Sanders said. "And in The Divine Comedy, Dante reserved a special place in the Seventh Circle of Hell for those who charged people usurious interest rates. Today, we don't need the hellfire and the pitch forks, we don't need the rivers of boiling blood, but we do need a national usury law."

Interest rates should be capped at no more than 15 percent for borrowed money, he said, pointing to a now-repealed 1980 law with that threshold. He also said ATM fees should be capped at \$2. "People should not have to pay a 10 percent fee for withdrawing \$40 of their own money out of an ATM. Big banks need to stop acting like loan sharks and start acting like responsible lenders."

9. LET THE USPS OFFER BANKING

The post office's money order service could be greatly expanded "to give Americans affordable banking options," Sanders said. "The reality is that, unbelievably, millions of low-income Americans live in communities where there are no normal banking services."

"Today, if you live in a low-income community and you

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Hillary Clinton made more in 12 speeches to big banks than most of us earn in a lifetime



ZAID JILANI

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders this week assailed rival Hillary Clinton for taking large speaking fees from the financial industry since leaving the State Department. According to public disclosures, by giving just 12 speeches to Wall

Street banks, private equity firms, and other financial corporations, Clinton made \$2,935,000 from 2013 to 2015:

Clinton's most lucrative year was 2013, right after stepping down as secretary of state. That year, she made \$2.3 million for three speeches to Goldman Sachs and individual speeches to

Deutsche Bank, Morgan Stanley, Fidelity Investments, Apollo Management Holdings, UBS, Bank of America, and Golden Tree Asset Managers.

The following year, she picked up \$485,000 for a speech to Deutsche Bank and an address to Ameriprise. Last year, she made \$150,000 from a lecture before the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

To put these numbers into perspective, compare them to lifetime earnings of the median American worker. In 2011, the Census Bureau estimated that, across all majors, a "bachelor's degree holder can expect to earn about \$2.4 million over his or her work life." A Pew Research analysis published the same year estimated that a "typical high school graduate" can expect to make just \$770,000 over the course of his or her lifetime.

This means that in one year – 2013 – Hillary Clinton earned almost as much from 10 lectures to financial firms as most bachelor's degree-holding Americans earn in

their lifetimes – and nearly four times what someone who holds only a high school diploma could expect to make. Hillary Clinton's haul from Wall Street speeches pales in comparison to her husband's, which also had to be disclosed because the two share a bank account.

"I never made any money until I left the White House," said Bill Clinton during a 2009 address to a student group. "I had the lowest net worth, adjusted for inflation, of any president elected in the last 100 years, including President Obama. I was one poor rascal when I took office. But after I got out, I made a lot of money."

The Associated Press notes that during Hillary Clinton's time as secretary of state, Bill Clinton earned \$17 million in talks to banks, insurance companies, hedge funds, real estate businesses, and other financial firms. Altogether, the couple are estimated to have made over \$139 million from paid speeches.

Source: *The Intercept* 1/8/16
<https://theintercept.com/>

Ten powerful reasons why Bernie Sanders scares Wall Street

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

need to cash a check or get a loan to pay for a car repair or a medical emergency, where do you go?" he asked. "You go to a payday lender who could charge an interest rate of over 300 percent and trap you into a vicious cycle of debt. That is unacceptable."

10. REFORM THE FEDERAL RESERVE.

Sanders said this arcane institution that regulates the flow of the U.S. currency and interest rates charges to banks must be reformed so that its primary purpose is serving the public, not private bankers. "When Wall Street was on the verge of collapse, the Federal Reserve acted with a fierce sense of urgency to save the financial system," he said. "We need the Fed to act with the same boldness to combat unemployment and low wages."

"It is unacceptable that the Federal Reserve has been hijacked by the very bankers it is in charge of regulating," Sanders said. "I think the American people would be shocked to learn that Jamie Dimon, the CEO of JPMorgan Chase, served on the board of the New York Fed at the same time that his bank received a \$391 billion bailout from the Federal Reserve. That is a clear conflict of interest that I would ban as president. When

I am elected, the foxes will no longer be guarding the henhouse at the Fed."

JUST THE BEGINNING

As striking as Sanders' reforms sound, he said they were unlikely to be sufficient to ensure that American capitalist excesses do not harm the country again. "No president, not Bernie Sanders or anyone else, can effectively address the economic crises facing the working families of this country alone," he said. "The truth is that Wall Street, corporate America, the corporate media and wealthy campaign donors are just too powerful." But Sanders said that new rules of the financial game could be written and that government could force Wall Street to follow them. "Yes, we can make our economy work for all Americans," he said. "And so my message to you today is straightforward: If elected president, I will rein in Wall Street so they can't crash our economy again. Will they like me? No. Will they begin to play by the rules if I'm president? You better believe it."

STEVEN ROSENFELD COVERS CORPORATE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOR ALTERNET AND IS AUTHOR OF "COUNT MY VOTE: A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO VOTING" (ALTERNET BOOKS, 2008).

Source: *Alternet* 1/9/16 <http://www.alternet.org>



Mainstream Media = Truth?

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The climate movement is stuck in "Groundhog Day"; here's how it can break free

CAM FENTON

Throughout 2015, I had a hard time explaining my feeling about the Paris climate talks. Friends and allies would excitedly ask me if I was going and I'd force a smile and explain that no, I had been to enough United Nations climate meetings. The truth was that after more than five years of attending and watching U.N. climate talks, the whole thing had started to feel like the climate movement had gotten itself stuck in a time-warped and we were living the same two weeks over and over again every year.

As I watched the Paris talks unfold, the whole thing started to feel like the movie *Groundhog Day*. If you haven't seen it or don't remember, the basic premise is that Bill Murray plays a weatherman who gets caught in a time loop, reliving the same day in rural Pennsylvania over and over. Just looking at the major actions, each one seemed to be a repeat of something from the past. Red lines in Doha and red lines in Paris. Sit-ins and walk-outs year after year from Copenhagen to Durban to Rio to Warsaw. I was reminded of something a friend told me about the Doha talks – the outcome was so predictable that he wrote press releases months in advance and the only change he had to make to the one about the final reaction was the date.

Nevertheless, there is good news. About halfway through *Groundhog Day*, Bill Murray realizes that his only way out of the time warp is to become a better person. In Paris, it feels like the climate movement – the collective Bill Murray in this analogy – have reached a similar point. On the one hand, it's great news because coming out of Paris it feels like we've crested a hill. On the other hand, it's awful because from the top of this hill, we can now see the mountain peak we have to ascend. In *Groundhog Day* terms, it's great because we know how to get out, but since time isn't standing still, we can't afford to keep repeating history over and over. So, with that in mind, here are three suggestions for ways the climate movement can break free.

1. WE NEED TO REDEFINE WHAT CLIMATE LEADERSHIP MEANS

For years, the climate movement has viewed it's principle opponents as people and institutions who deny the existence of climate change. In this context, a culture of desperation was born in much of the climate movement, where the need to win something, anything, on climate became so strong that we clamored to amplify and validate almost any politician willing to even admit the reality of climate change. Modest steps and half measures were answered with so much applause from much of the climate movement that even the most valid criticisms and questions were drowned out. The simple fact was that a lot of us felt like we desperately needed something to applaud.

Now the needle has moved on climate change, and while we can debate the merits of the Paris climate agreement, one thing that we can't ignore is that these talks marked the end of the politics of outright climate denial. This year saw a U.S. president reject the Keystone XL pipeline on climate grounds, as well as over \$3 trillion divested from fossil fuels. It also had tar sands company CEOs touting their "climate leadership." Clearly, things are changing for the better.

Going into 2016, politicians and CEOs want the title of "climate leader," and right now they're getting it without really having to work for it. Whether it's Jerry Brown in California allowing fracking across the state or Canada's new Prime Minister Justin Trudeau pledging to support a 1.5 degree Celsius ceiling on temperature rise while allowing tar sands pipelines to be approved without climate considerations, climate leadership has become such a hollow measure that you can be a climate hero one day and an oil baron the next.

That's why this movement needs to redefine what climate leadership is by raising the bar for what we, as a movement, will applaud. Governments and politicians are not fragile children in need of constant reassurance from the climate

movement. They are decision makers who by and large are not moving fast enough to do what it takes to leave fossil fuels in the ground and facilitate a justice-based transition to 100 percent clean energy. It's 2016, politicians don't need the climate movement to apologize for them not doing enough, they need us to organize to force them to do more.

2. WE NEED TO GET REAL ABOUT CLIMATE JUSTICE

The outcomes of climate talks can often be seen as a kind of "movement barometer" measuring the amount of pressure that the climate movement is putting on politicians around the globe. Looking at the outcome of the Paris talks through this lens is useful because it helps us recognize that a commitment to a 1.5 degree climate target was only achieved because of the growing power of the global climate movement – and that's something to celebrate.

By the same measure, though, we need to accept that in the Paris outcome indigenous rights, human rights and women's rights have all been moved to sections of the text where they aren't legally protected. On top of this, support for the most vulnerable people in the Paris outcome isn't anywhere near what a just and fair deal would look like. If we are going to celebrate a 1.5 degree target as a victory for this movement, we also have to acknowledge where we fell short. Coming out of Paris, the biggest losses landed on the laps of the most vulnerable people, communities and nations, and in my eyes that means we still have a long way to go to get real about the justice part of climate justice.

Since Copenhagen, a lot of the climate movement has shifted it's language in support of frontline communities and a justice-based and systemic approach to climate change. It's the sort of shift that made something like the People's Climate March possible. But, by the same token, it's telling that if you line up reaction statements to the outcome of Paris, the most impacted peoples were more critical of the deal than mainstream organizations, which were far more celebratory.

There, of course, is no easy solution to this challenge, but it starts with recognizing that climate justice needs to be more than a buzzword. This is going to mean some serious soul searching for the climate movement in 2016, and spending more time listening to, digesting and doing the work to deepen our commitment to acting on, not just speaking to, justice.


3. THE CLIMATE MOVEMENT NEEDS TO MOVE BEYOND THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

One of the worst things that ever happened to climate change was the moment it became viewed as an environmental problem. It narrowed the focus of one of the broadest, farthest-reaching social justice issues of our time and placed the responsibility for tackling it in the hands of a movement that frankly, isn't up to the task alone.

In 2016, we need to leave environmentalism behind and begin to experiment with what a real climate movement can be, because honestly, it might be the only chance we actually have to turn KeepItInTheGround from a hashtag into a strategy.

The modern environmental movement, for the most part, has very "elite" strategies. Organizing, mass mobilization and direct action have primarily been seen as tools to facilitate lobbying and negotiation strategies, which for a movement bred from a conservation ethic has meant getting to the table with corporations and government in order to achieve a compromise. This strategy has been successful at winning a lot of crucial environmental victories, but it's also come at the cost of building a genuine movement, and it won't be enough if we're going to get serious about meeting the climate challenge.

One major challenge is that the environmental movement is made up mostly of big organizations. It's like an ecosystem where every organism is an apex predator. They can exist



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Cattle grazing is a climate disaster, and you're paying for it

BEN ADLER

The rules governing cattle grazing on federal lands are so obscure that your average climate change correspondent hasn't given much thought to them. But now that a gang with guns has occupied a federal wildlife sanctuary in Oregon to gripe about the federal government's audacity to set rules for how ranchers use publicly owned land, it's worth taking a look at this policy.

As it turns out, ranchers using federal land, like the Bundy family that is leading the occupation and the Hammond family in whose name they took up arms, are recipients of massive federal subsidies for activities that exacerbate climate change and damage sensitive ecosystems. It's time the taxpayers stopped indulging these whiny welfare queens and kicked them off the dole.

WHY THIS LAND MATTERS TO THE CLIMATE

Grasslands are, like trees, essential carbon sinks. Shrubs and grasses breathe in carbon dioxide and thereby regulate atmospheric concentrations of carbon. Loss of grasslands contributes to rising rates

of carbon in the atmosphere and therefore to global warming. These lands are also important habitats for threatened species and their ruination contributes to the ongoing massive loss of biodiversity. Only 5 percent of the original grasslands in the U.S. remain.

Climate change can cause the degradation or loss of grasslands because drought and heat waves damage or kill plants. This problem is currently plaguing the West. And, in a vicious cycle, that contributes even more to climate change.

Putting cattle on these grasslands just leads to more problems: The livestock can rip plants to shreds, push other species toward extinction, and turn the land to

dust. According to the Center for Biological Diversity, "In the arid West, livestock grazing is the most widespread cause of species endangerment." The group explains: "Cattle destroy native vegetation, damage soils and stream banks, and contaminate waterways with fecal waste. After decades of livestock grazing, once-lush streams and riparian forests have been reduced to flat, dry wastelands; once-rich topsoil has been turned to dust, causing soil erosion, stream sedimentation and wholesale elimination of some aquatic habitats; overgrazing of native fire-carrying grasses has starved some western forests of fire, making them overly dense and prone to unnaturally severe fires."

In 2012, a study by Oregon State researchers found that climate change is worsening environmental stressors on Western grasslands, and therefore the federal government should consider reducing or eliminating livestock grazing on public lands.

At the core of this current kerfuffle in Oregon is a dispute over the penalty for ranchers who illegally set fire to federal grassland. The militants who took over the wildlife sanctuary think the prison sentence set forth in federal law is inherently invalid. But from a climate perspective, the behavior at issue is totally unacceptable.

In the face of an overwhelming climate crisis, you would think the federal government would make preserving and protecting these carbon sinks the overriding purpose of its land management. You would be wrong. Instead, the government leases out 270 million acres of public land in the West for livestock grazing. It's just as outrageous as leasing out public land for coal mining and oil drilling.

HOW CATTLE HURT THE CLIMATE

Even aside from their impact on

grasslands, cattle are terrible for the climate. Cows emit methane — a greenhouse gas that is 86 times more damaging than carbon over 20 years. As CNN recently noted, "14.5% of all greenhouse gas pollution can be attributed to livestock, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the most reputable authority on this topic. And a huge hunk of the livestock industry's role — 65% — comes from raising beef and dairy cattle." A pound of beef has about the same carbon footprint as driving an average American car 70 miles.

This is far worse than most foods. The Environmental Working Group found that beef has the second highest carbon footprint of any common food after lamb. Pound for pound, it is twice as bad for the climate as cheese and pork, four times worse than chicken, and more than 14 times worse than broccoli.

And that's not even considering the other unsustainable aspects of beef, such as using land and water much less efficiently than plants or chickens to produce food. There's just no reason for our government to actively promote cattle raising and beef.

TAXPAYERS ARE SUBSIDIZING THESE RANCHERS

If the federal grazing-lease program were enormously profitable, and the profits were put to some good use, then there would at least be a counterargument in the program's favor.

Instead, the program is a big money-loser — a giant taxpayer subsidy for an environmentally destructive industry. As FiveThirtyEight points out, "In 2012, the [federal government's] fees for grazing were 93 percent cheaper than the average market rate in 16 Western states (\$1.35 versus \$20.10 per AUM, which is a fancy acronym for the amount of land needed to support a cow and

her calf for a month)." These minimal grazing fees are the same ones Bundy family patriarch Cliven Bundy refuses to pay.

The Center for Biological Diversity calculates that below-market grazing fees amount to a direct subsidy to ranchers of more than \$100 billion per year, and that indirect subsidies such as federal predator control programs that protect livestock may add up to \$300 billion.

Keith Nantz, a rancher in Oregon, wrote Friday in *The Washington Post* that "many ranchers must lease [federal land] to create a sustainable operation." By "sustainable," he means profitable, not eco-friendly. If it's unprofitable to raise cattle on private land, why is it the taxpayers' responsibility to bail him out? Some things are worth taxpayer dollars: education, national defense, health care. But beef?

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

The public should use the land it owns not for subsidized, carbon-intensive economic activities like cattle grazing and fossil fuel development, but for climate change mitigation and adaptation and habitat reservation. Nantz complained in the *Post* that the federal government pushes ranchers around by creating new rules to protect endangered wildlife. He wants the feds to defer more to the ranchers on issues like whether to protect endangered species.

OK, here's my counter-offer: Nothing. You don't like being told where, when, and how to graze your cattle on public land? Then get them off public land. The ranchers frame their complaint as being about government overreach, but what they really object to is federal policies that balance their interests with others'.

Source: *Grist* 1/14/16 <http://grist.org>

The climate movement is stuck in "Groundhog Day"; here's how it can break free

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with one another, but quickly devour smaller organisms and groups, and while that may mean the ecosystem can exist, it's far from healthy and certainly not diverse. For the climate movement to be successful, we need a movement ecosystem that's as dynamic and full as the rainforest. We need to make room, and a big part of that is going to mean rethinking our strategies and campaigns.

One of the biggest problems with approaching climate change the way the environmental movement has approached other issues is that there is no negotiating with physics. If we acknowledge that the vast majority of fossil fuels need to be left in the ground for a safe climate, then we can't compromise with an industry that's business model is built on extracting and burning as much as it can. It's not even that we don't want to, it's that science says we can't.

This means that the goal of getting to the table with politicians and industry doesn't make sense, because we're never going to be at that table in good faith, and neither is the industry. We also need to acknowledge and remember that

when it comes to climate change, the table has been rotted to the core from over three decades of fossil fuel interests polluting our politics. With this in mind, the goal may need to shift from organizing to the table to organizing the table to the people, where we can balance the scales of fossil fuel interests with genuine, mass people power.

Building the kind of movement with the power to make this happen is going to require a lot of people that have helped to make this movement what it is to play outside our comfort zones in 2016, myself included. It's also going to mean taking the time to learn from other movements. Whether that's the fierce and undeniably courageous work of Black Lives Matter organizers, the rooted justice-based solutions work of the Our Power campaign or the protean, viral nature of movements like Occupy, we need these lessons to update our strategies. The climate movement also needs to spend more time learning the history of movements for civil rights to stopping nuclear proliferation.

If we approach learning from these movements not just as harvesting their best ideas, but building relationships, this could also be our best means to find the "fault lines"

of our movements. Through this we can get beyond the politics of token solidarity and dig deep to build the kind of transformative power that a climate movement really demands.

As was the case for Bill Murray in *Groundhog Day*, the only way to break free from the time loop was to learn from his mistakes and refuse to repeat them. Whether it's the United Nations climate talks, election cycles or meetings upon meetings, a lot of this movement feels like a time warp, and the true test isn't whether or not we get everything right, but if we learn, evolve and innovate to take on new challenges.

BORN AND RAISED IN EDMONTON, CAM FENTON HAS WORKED ON CLIMATE JUSTICE CAMPAIGNS ALL ACROSS CANADA. HE IS THE FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE CANADIAN YOUTH CLIMATE COALITION, CURRENTLY WORKS FOR 350.ORG AND IS BASED IN VANCOUVER, BC.

Source: *Waging Nonviolence* 1/9/16 <http://wagingnonviolence.org>



A showdown year for reproductive rights

"At the Supreme Court, justices will decide two cases that could dramatically reshape abortion law..."

NINA MARTIN

For advocates of women's reproductive rights, 2015 was the definition of "annus horribilis:" marked by tough new limits on abortion, a debilitating Planned Parenthood scandal, and a shooting at a Colorado clinic that left three people dead. For abortion opponents, it was the year when decades of incremental political and legal gains merged into something much bigger. Now 2016 is shaping up to be even more turbulent - perhaps the most momentous year for reproductive issues in a generation.

At the Supreme Court, justices will decide two cases that could dramatically reshape abortion law and gut what remains of the landmark contraception-coverage mandate in President Obama's health care reform law. In Congress and state legislatures, lawmakers are preparing a torrent of bills inspired by videos purporting to show an unsavory trade in fetal body parts for research. Looming over it all is a presidential race filled with GOP anti-abortion hard-liners and a female Democratic frontrunner who's made defending reproductive rights a cornerstone of her campaign.

"I don't think we've seen a more critical election cycle," said Daniel Becker, executive director of the national Personhood Alliance+, whose Georgia-based group supports Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, among the most outspoken abortion opponents in the GOP field. "Everything is coming to a head."

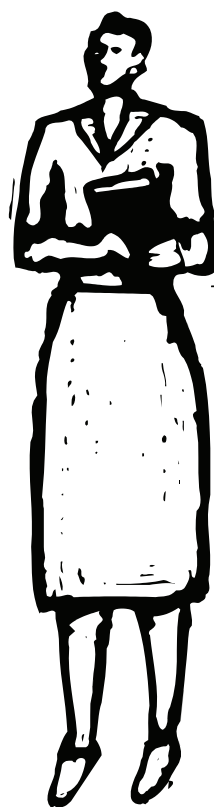
The political and legal pressures have been building since the 2010 elections, which gave Republicans control of the House of Representatives and many legislatures across the country, emboldening abortion opponents. According to a new Guttmacher Institute analysis, states enacted 288 new abortion restrictions from 2011 through 2015 - nearly as many as were passed in the previous 15 years. "Momentum is on the side of life," a jubilant Charmaine Yoest, president and CEO of Americans United for Life, the organization behind many of the legislative gains of the last few years, told the National Catholic Register this week.

But Andrea Miller, president of the National Institute for Reproductive Health, pointed to 1992, when the battle over Clarence Thomas' nomination to the Supreme Court and worries about what conservative justices might do to abortion rights ushered in "The Year of the Woman" - and swept Bill Clinton into the White House. "The parallels are fascinating," Miller said. If abortion rights supporters can capitalize on anger over the current threats to *Roe v. Wade*, she said, 2016 could be "a tremendous moment of opportunity."

Here are four issues to watch in the year ahead.

1. THE TEXAS ABORTION CASE

The coming Supreme Court showdown in *Whole Woman's Health v. Cole* has seemed inevitable since Texas lawmakers pushed through the package of measures known as H.B. 2 in 2013. Among other things, the law requires abortion clinics to adhere to surgical-level building requirements and abortion doctors to have admitting privileges at local hospitals. Lawmakers say the measures are needed to protect women from dangerous providers like Philadelphia's notorious Kermit Gosnell, convicted in 2013 of the murder of three babies during botched late-term abortions. Abortion rights supporters insist the Texas rules are a sham designed to force providers out of business and make it impossible for women



to exercise their abortion rights.

Twenty-three other states have adopted similar laws. But Texas is huge, and its restrictions have had an outsize impact: More than half of the state's 41 clinics have already shut down. The state has slashed other women's health services as well, creating "a perfect storm of barriers" to reproductive care, Jessica González-Rojas, executive director of the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, said at a media briefing this week. In some areas, women must travel hundreds of miles to find a clinic, and reports of so-called "flea market" abortions have become common.

The Texas case raises a host of important issues: How far can states go to regulate abortion before the rights laid out in *Roe v. Wade* and the 1992 case *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* become all but meaningless? Is it enough for lawmakers to claim that tough clinic regulations have a rational basis, or must they prove that the rules are medically necessary? This second question reaches beyond abortion, said Stephanie Toti, an attorney with the Center for Reproductive Rights who is representing Texas clinics: "If the courts were to hold that the states can trample on a fundamental right for pretextual reasons, that could have implications across many areas of the Constitution and many areas of core civil rights."

So far, abortion rights groups have submitted at least 45 friend-of-the-court briefs; abortion opponents are busy churning out their counter-arguments. The rhetoric is aimed directly at Justice Anthony Kennedy, who in 2007 wrote the court's last major abortion decision, affirming the federal ban on partial-birth abortion, but who also voted to uphold *Roe* in 1992 and gay marriage last year. No one seems to expect Kennedy to overturn *Roe*, though eviscerating it is a distinct possibility. Oral arguments have been set for March 2, with a decision expected in late June.

2. CONTRACEPTION AND CONSCIENCE

The other important reproductive rights case this Supreme Court term hasn't generated nearly as much attention, but the stakes are high. *Zubik v. Burwell* is a group of seven cases that, like *Hobby Lobby* before them, challenge the contraception-coverage mandate under the Affordable Care Act. In *Hobby Lobby*, the issue was whether the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act gave for-profit companies whose owners objected to birth control on religious grounds the right to deny contraception benefits to their employees; by a 5-4 vote, the court ruled yes.

In *Zubik*, the plaintiffs are hospitals, universities, nursing homes, and other religiously affiliated nonprofits. These entities are already exempt from the contraception mandate

on religious grounds. But the Obama administration obliges them to submit a one-page "opt-out" form. The nonprofits argue that even this bureaucratic requirement goes too far. Simply by filling out the form, they contend, they are setting in motion a process that allows their employees to get contraception coverage elsewhere. The organizations say this makes them complicit in an immoral act - supporting birth control - and violates their rights under the religious freedom law. "The issue here is whether the court is going to allow the government to second-guess" the beliefs of religious claimants, said Greg Baylor, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, the conservative legal powerhouse. "The question is: Did the [justices] mean what they said in *Hobby Lobby*?"

Lawyers for the nonprofits point out that women would still be able to obtain birth control, though they may face more hurdles and higher costs. Yet *Zubik*'s reasoning could broaden the religious rights of organizations in ways that Guttmacher analyst Adam Sonfield called "really sweeping" and "potentially much more dangerous than *Hobby Lobby*."

Other contraception cases are moving through the courts, raising similar questions about where to draw the line when it comes to claims of religious freedom: Should pharmacists be forced to fill prescriptions for forms of birth control that they find objectionable? Should a nurse who opposes the pill be able to sue a family planning clinic that declines to hire her? Should hospitals be able to deny tubal ligations, the second most common form of birth control in the US, to women after childbirth, the safest time to perform them? The number of cases is sure to increase as states - inspired by *Hobby Lobby* and last year's *Obergefell* gay marriage ruling - move to pass their own versions of RFRA. "The messaging by the supporters of these measures is they're really about carving out a space for those who object to same-sex marriage," said Katherine Franke, director of the Center for Gender and Sexuality Law at Columbia University and author of the new book, "Wedlocked: The Perils of Marriage Equality." "But what they're creating is a really broad license not to be governed by laws that govern anyone else."

3. THE PLANNED PARENTHOOD EFFECT

The sensational - and heavily doctored - Planned Parenthood videos released last summer "caused a watershed moment that we weren't expecting," Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the Susan B. Anthony List, which focuses on electing anti-abortion candidates to state and national office, wrote in a fundraising email in December. "We saw our opening - and we jumped all in." On the legislative front, attempts to cut funding for the organization have gotten most of the attention. Now, the legal strategists at Americans United for Life plan to use the scandal to advance the personhood rights of the unborn in hopes of further undermining *Roe*.

AUL's new Infants Protection Project consists of eight pieces of model legislation likely to pop up in statehouses over the coming months and years. Some ideas have been around for a while - bans on the partial-birth abortion procedure, on abortions after 20 weeks, and on abortions for sex selection or disabilities such as Down syndrome. The "Unborn Infants Dignity Act" would bar the sale or donation of fetal tissue and "ensure a deceased unborn infant's right to a dignified treatment, including a respectful burial"; the "Unborn Wrongful Death Act" goes beyond abortion to permit a civil cause of action for the death of a fetus at any stage of development.

The draft bills don't use the phrase "fetal personhood." But the implications for the concept of personhood are clear. The initiative is a companion to AUL's extremely effective Women's Protection Project, whose legislative framework includes bills like the Texas clinic regulations and limits on abortions that use medication instead of surgery (another category likely to be hot this year).

4. THE CALIFORNIA COUNTEROFFENSIVE

In the recent battles over reproductive rights, California has been a major outlier. Since 2013, the state has passed

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Calling all communities



RICHARD SLEZAK

Stone Soup – Stockton Community Radio is part of the Peace and Justice Network's multi-media assets: 'Connections' newspaper, Comcast Channel 26 one hour per week public access television, and Stone Soup Radio. Stone Soup Radio has been web-casting since March 17, 2014; you can listen on the web at www.stocktoncommunityradio.com.

HOW IT WORKS

To get us going during the first six weeks, Anthony BeGee Henry and Rob DJ Rob III Lathan, Afex 209, Dante Henry, and Breezy set up a large music collection. Each song and album entered was typed in, including the artist, title, and band name and music genre. The station computer was set up by Best PC Value, a local shop once located next door on the Miracle Mile. From March through June of 2014, BeGee and DJ Rob further developed the system and computer apps

that are functioning. We can record, edit, and e-mail what we broadcast, as well as receive recorded public service announcements, radio shows, and music. DJ Rob, our Music Director, has continued to put forth outstanding play lists that put out good music at all times.

And we are doing radio shows. Greg Severi, stalwart volunteer and a nice guy, does the 'Ralph Hurley Radio Show' on Tuesday nights. On Friday evenings, Julie and I do the 'Olivet Show' which includes readings from a

Christian Bible, gospel and Christian Rock music, and historical commentary, while I provide the engineering skills. I also do shows that consist of reporting weather, local activities, sports, and news, and playing music from our 'vault'. I like politics and religion, and so showcase U.S. political party platforms, both national and state. The 'Islam Show' is where you can hear the Quran, the Al-Sahih Bukhari Hadith-Sunnah Collection of sayings and deeds of Prophet Muhammad (Traditions), and include a historical perspective of events taking place in the Hejaz, Arabia during this period, describing the coming forth of Islam.

The Stone Soup mission is to present the cultures of Stockton. In addition to talk shows, we want local bands to bring their music so we can play it; Cambodian Pastor Khen Srei at United Central Methodist Church has suggested a show that would bring forth Cambodian culture and language. Stone Soup can be the venue for other foreign language communities. We are open to small businesses, business associations, and non-profit organizations to come forth and represent their Stockton cultures.

Radio involves art, entertainment, and support duties. We are a non-profit community radio. We seek volunteers who we will train and work with to do both on- and off-air duties. Web and broadcast radio operations require computer skills, which can be easily learned. Volunteering enables one to learn radio show production, allows you to put your message out to the general public, and lets you do the art of radio broadcasting. It is unpaid, but it is enriching!

Sponsors we seek for financial support. We have some supporters who were with us from the beginning, who supported the initial equipment purchases and provided funds to build the studio. For them we are so thankful. We are seeking more, as a non-profit operation sponsors, supporters, underwriters, friends and allies are key. Stone Soup offers volunteers and supporters the opportunity to create unique radio broadcasts that can bring enlightenment to

Stockton and beyond and the opportunity to be the person or business that believes in the Stockton community's ability to bring a strong, positive and thoughtful voice to the radio. Donations can be made by checks made out to PJN with Stone Soup or Radio donation in the left hand corner; in return we would acknowledge you as GRASSROOTS SUPPORTER on the air. If you would like to discuss what it takes to be a Stone Soup underwriter, and receive ongoing announcements about your business or community organization, email the Peace and Justice Network.

All donations may be sent to P.O. Box 4321, Stockton, Ca. 95204 in care of Peace & Justice Network.

Check us out on FACEBOOK Stone Soup Stockton - Community Radio

A showdown year for reproductive rights

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

laws that allow women to obtain birth control directly from pharmacists; ban some deceptive practices common at crisis pregnancy centers that masquerade as abortion clinics; and permit trained people other than doctors to perform first-trimester abortions, the largest expansion of abortion access in the US in more than a decade.

This year, much of the action could shift from the Legislature to the courts. Abortion opponents have filed a federal lawsuit against the California Department of Managed Health Care for forcing religious organizations to offer abortion coverage in their health insurance plans, as required by state law. The American Civil Liberties Union is suing Dignity Health, the state's largest hospital chain, for refusing to perform tubal ligations at its Catholic facilities. The National Abortion Federation is continuing its battle against the Center for Medical Progress, the secretive California-based group behind the Planned Parenthood videos. All of those cases are likely to have national repercussions.

Reproductive justice advocates have been active in other states as well, resulting in some significant wins beyond abortion: New Oregon laws easing access to birth control and protecting patient privacy, a New York law that lets women sign up for health insurance at any time during pregnancy, measures expanding paid maternity/paternity leave and

protecting against pregnancy-related job discrimination. Andrea Miller, of the National Institute for Reproductive Health, expects to see an explosion in these types of measures, which appeal to people along the ideological spectrum and have garnered support even in conservative areas. Even amid the pitched abortion battles of 2015, some state legislatures saw significant action, moving or passing 143 pro-reproductive rights bills, she said. "That's what gives us such extraordinary hope for the future."

NINA MARTIN IS /PROPUBICA/'S FIRST REPORTER COVERING GENDER AND SEXUALITY. SHE JOINED THE STAFF IN SEPTEMBER 2013 AFTER SPENDING MUCH OF THE LAST DECADE AT SAN FRANCISCO MAGAZINE AS ARTICLES EDITOR (SINCE 2007) AND EXECUTIVE EDITOR (2003-2005).

MARTIN HAS BEEN A REPORTER AND EDITOR SPECIALIZING IN WOMEN'S, LEGAL AND HEALTH ISSUES FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS. HER EARLY CAREER INCLUDED STINTS AT /THE BALTIMORE SUN, THE WASHINGTON POST/, AND THE /INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE/. HER WORK HAS APPEARED IN MANY MAGAZINES, INCLUDING /HEALTH, MOTHER JONES, ELLE/, AND /THE NATION/.

Source: ProPublica 1/11/16 <https://www.propublica.org>

Contact Your Reps

President Barack H. Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington DC 20500. 202-456-1414; www.whitehouse.gov; Twitter: @BarackObama, @whitehouse

Sen. Barbara Boxer, 70 Washington Street, Suite 203, Oakland, CA 94607, 510-286-8537, fax 202-224-0454; 112 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3553, senator@boxer.senate.gov; Twitter: @senatorboxer

Senator Dianne Feinstein, One Post Street, Ste 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104. 415-249-0707; 331 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3841, senator@feinstein.senate.gov; Twitter: @senfeinstein

Representative Jerry McNerney (D-9th District) 2222 Grand Canal Blvd #7, Stockton, CA 95207. 209-476-8552. Fax 209-476-8587. 1210 Longworth HOB, Washington DC 20515; info@jerrymcnerney.org, 202-225-1947, <http://www.JerryMcNerney.org>; Twitter: @RepMcNerney

Representative Tom McClintock (R-District 4), 8700 Auburn-Folsom Road, Suite 100, Granite Bay, CA 95746, 916, 786-5560, fax 916-786-6364; 434 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC, 20515, Fax 202-225-5444, Fax 202-225-544; Twitter @RepMcClintock

Representative Jeff Denham (R-District 10), 4701 Sisk Road, Suite 202, Modesto, CA 95356, 209-579-5458, Fax 209-579-5028. 1730 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-4540. Twitter @ RepJeffDunham

Governor Jerry Brown, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2841

State Sen. Cathleen Galgiani (District 5), 31 E Channel St, Room 440, Stockton, CA 95202. 209-948-7930; State Capitol, Rm 4082, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-651-4005

Assemblyperson Susan Talamantes Eggman (District 5), 31 E. Channel St., Rm. 306, Stockton CA 95202, 209-948-7479



Book Reviews

Sharing best reads & thoughts there on

The Circle by Dave Eggers 2013, Alfred A Knopf, is a book I have been listening to on cd as I drive around town and further, and find myself sitting in a parked car just to hear more. The book explores blogging, tweeting, Instagram, Facebook and more in a dystopian way. Since I am over 30 and then some, I am not very knowledgeable or fluent in any of these platforms and so this book seems to be a harbinger of what is to come as we become more and more accepting of 'transparency' in all areas of our lives. Wired (<http://www.wired.com/2013/10/the-circle-review-dave-eggers/>) finds it boring and inaccurate. I have found it pretty much a fun read/listen that explores those questions us old folks have about the advancement of

obsessive social networking. (submitted Christie Kelley)

The Story of the Human Body, Evolution, Health, and Disease by Daniel E. Liberman 2013 Vintage Books, is an account of how the human body has evolved over millions of years. In a very readable way Liberman shows how our bodies have transformed over the eons to bipedalism, non-fruit based diet, hunter and gatherers and shows how cultural revolutions have impacted us physically. In the process he provides thoughtful insight into how we can be mindful of our environment and how that can lead to healthier life styles. Mr. Liberman is professor of Human Evolutionary Biology and the Edwin

M. Lerner II Professor of Biological Sciences at Harvard. (submitted Christie Kelley)

The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It, by Paul Collier 2007 Oxford University Press, raises interesting issues for those who tend to blame poverty on economic systems created by the rich. Written from the perspective of a mainstream World Bank economist, this introduction to the lives of the poorest of the poor provides much food for thought in an area that will need attention in coming decades. (submitted by Bruce Giudici)

Clinton's pre-Iowa assault on Sanders' Medicare-For-All plan

DAVE JOHNSON

Bernie Sanders closes in on Hillary Clinton in the polls, Clinton has started "attacking" (media word) Sanders' proposals for providing universal health care through a Medicare-for-All plan. The corporate media largely covers the horse-race aspect of this as an entertainment item. Here is a look at the substance of Clinton's assertions.

MEDICARE FOR ALL

Sanders has proposed replacing "Obamacare," the Affordable Care Act mandate to purchase insurance from private companies, with a Medicare-for-All, "single-payer," "universal health care" plan. In other words, he proposes to extend (and expand) the current Medicare system to cover every American so they can stop having to locate and purchase private insurance policies. Sanders' plan would also end the need for other government health programs, including Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Medicare for All is very popular, especially among Democrats. The December 2015 Kaiser Health Tracking poll found that 58 percent of Americans support it (34 percent strongly), with 81

percent of Democrats and 6 in 10 independents saying they favor the idea. "This is compared to 34 percent who say they oppose it, including 25 percent who strongly oppose it," the poll said. Among Republicans, 63 percent say they oppose it.

CLINTON ATTACKS

Clinton claims that Sanders' plan would require a big tax hike. Politico reports this claim, in "Clinton hits Sanders on middle class tax hikes":

"Bernie Sanders has called for a roughly 9-percent tax hike on middle-class families just to cover his health-care plan," said Clinton spokesman Brian Fallon, referring to legislation Sanders introduced in 2013, "and simple math dictates he'll need to tax workers even more to pay for the rest of his at least \$18-20 trillion agenda. If you are truly concerned about raising incomes for middle-class families, the last thing you should do is cut their take-home pay right off the bat by raising their taxes."

More recently, Clinton's daughter Chelsea claimed that Sanders' Medicare-for-All plan would "dismantle Medicare" and "strip millions and millions and millions of people off their

health insurance." (Clinton later stood by her daughter's statement.) The Huffington Post reported:

"Sen. Sanders wants to dismantle Obamacare, dismantle the [Children's Health Insurance Program], dismantle Medicare, and dismantle private insurance," she said, according to an account from NBC News. "I worry if we give Republicans Democratic permission to do that, we'll go back to an era – before we had the Affordable Care Act – that would strip millions and millions and millions of people off their health insurance."

The Clinton campaign also said that Sanders' plan would "send health insurance to the states, turning over your and my health insurance to governors" including Republican governors like Iowa's Terry Branstad. "I don't believe number one we should be starting over. We had enough of a fight to get to the Affordable Care Act. So I don't want to rip it up and start over," Clinton said.

SANDERS CAMPAIGN'S RESPONSE

Sanders campaign spokeswoman Ariana Jones responded: "It is time for the United States to join the rest of the industrialized world and provide health care as a right to every man, woman,

and child. A Medicare-For-All plan will save the average middle-class family \$5,000 a year. Further, the Clinton campaign is wrong. Our plan will be implemented in every state in the union regardless of who is governor."

Sanders himself explained his health care plan and his strategic thinking behind it in an interview Wednesday with MSNBC's Chris Hayes. The claim of \$5,000 a year in savings for average middle-class families refers to the plan's elimination of ever-increasing private insurance premiums, co-pays and deductibles that people currently have to pay under Obamacare. People would end up paying less and in many cases much less – an average of \$5,000 each year. Companies would also no longer have to provide health insurance coverage for employees.

On the claim that Sanders' has a "\$18-20 trillion agenda," switching to Medicare for All would replace the current costs of Medicaid, CHIP, Obamacare and other healthcare programs. Sanders' plan would actually cost fewer trillions in the future than continuing the current system. The large "trillions" figure is misleading because

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



We are a grassroots environmental organization promoting Outings, Education and Action.

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Oregon's land dispute: who are the original owners?

JACQUELINE KEELER

When Ammon Bundy, son of Cliven Bundy, the Nevada rancher who led an armed standoff against the US Bureau of Land Management in 2014, charged into the Malseur Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon, he said he was going to return the land from an overreaching federal government to its "original owners" he was not thinking of the Burns Paiute Tribe. And he has since admitted he knows very little about them.

When he charged into town proclaiming he was "getting ranchers back to ranching, getting the loggers back to logging, getting the miners back to mining" the "original owners" he was thinking about? Without a doubt they were European Americans like himself.

But in fact, it is the Burns Paiute Tribe and other Northern Paiute tribes who are the "original owners" and possess the strongest legal claim to the land, particularly to the wildlife refuge which was once part of their former Malseur Indian Reservation. A 1.78 million acre reservation that was later opened to white settlement after the Paiute (and another tribe, the Bannock, facing starvation) rose up against settler depredations.

Exactly 173 years ago this month, knee deep in snow, 500 Paiutes were force-marched, shackled in twos, some 350 miles northward to the Yakama Indian Reservation in Washington state. I imagine Bundy had no idea that his takeover was effectively commemorating this tragedy.

In a press conference Wednesday, Burns Paiute Tribal chairperson Charlotte Roderique had stern words for Bundy: "We don't want people who have no interests at all ramrodding themselves into the discussion. I understand Mr. Bundy is going back to Las Vegas. He can give back land to the Paiute there. For those who don't know, our tribe ranged all over Nevada, Utah and California and Southwestern Idaho. We are all interrelated. We all speak the same language, some variation in dialect but we can understand each other. I think it is important that these people know they are not just affecting the Burns Paiute."

Indeed, both the Malseur Wildlife Refuge in Oregon and the land that the Bundy's have been illegally grazing cattle on were never ceded by treaty to the United States. The Northern Paiute signed a treaty with the United States government in 1868, but it was never ratified by Congress. The

treaty process represents the US government's recognition of the pre-existing sovereignty of the tribes over the lands they wished to acquire. Under international law, a sovereign nation cannot treaty away its existence so, the implication that signing a treaty extinguished the sovereignty of any tribe in the United States is a false one. Tribes are still sovereign. It is only the exercise of that sovereignty that is limited by the power of the US government.

After the Paiutes "Trail of Tears," some tribal members did find their way back to Burns, Oregon. However, they were landless and considered outlaws. They lived on the edges of town working for the white ranchers who had taken their land. Finally, in 1928, the Egan Land Company gave them 10 acres of land just outside the city of Burns. It was the old city dump which the tribal members cleaned and drilled a well, and built houses on.

In 1969 the United States finally compensated the tribe for the land taken. Tribal members were paid at 1890 prices: .28 to .45 cents per acre. Chairperson Roderique said at the press conference, "The one thing I'm really proud of is the tenacity of our people. Four hundred-twenty people are descendants of people who were able to get back here from Yakama."

Today, the tribe has regained federal recognition and has 420 members. Their population before the US army declared war on them in the late 1860's was 2,000. They have still not recovered in numbers, but the tribe oversees over 12,000 acres and 1,000 is held in trust. Some 11,000 acres are owned by tribal members but ownership is so fractionated that Roderique notes, "It's hard to develop or do anything with the land when you have to get permission from 58 other people."

Those lands are pretty much in limbo and are administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs." Asked about the Burns Paiutes, Bundy said, "They have rights as well. I would like to see them be free from the federal government as well. They're controlled and regulated by the federal government very tightly and I think they have a right to be free like everybody else."

Roderick responded humorously saying she was, "trying to compose a letter for when they return all this land to us." The fact that many Americans like Bundy are completely unaware of the existence and sovereignty of tribes, even on

lands they themselves live, is the result of a long history of clouding Native American peoples' very real political status as sovereign nations. They are nations which have a status higher than states, and certainly than the county Bundy wishes to restore the land to. Also, states outside of the original 13 colonies have no pre-existing sovereignty to the federal government over any of their landbase. Only tribes do.

The US likes to disingenuously hold itself as an arbiter of fairness internationally, even while long pursuing a policy of denigrating Native American title to their lands, if not outright stealing it, domestically. Under US Constitutional law, a papal bull written in 1454 by Pope Nicholas V which holds that only "discovering, Christian nations" can have title to the land is still the law of the land. It is called the Doctrine of Discovery and was cited as recently as 2005 by the US Supreme Court in *City of Sherrill, NY v. Oneida Nation*, "Under the 'doctrine of discovery' ... fee title (ownership) to the lands occupied by Indians when the colonists arrived became vested in the sovereign-first the discovering European nation and later the original states and the United States."

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has rightly called the Doctrine of Discovery "the foundation of the violation of their (Indigenous people) human rights." Until the US renounces this doctrine and more Americans fully comprehend the weak, legal claims they actually have to the land they live on under international law, white men like Bundy will continue in their folly, their ignorance and perpetuating injustices against the Native American nations that persist all around them despite genocide. There are now 566 federally recognized tribes. Scratch the surface of any land issue in the United States and you will find the original owners - and they won't be from Europe.

JACQUELINE KEELER IS A NAVAJO/YANKTON DAKOTA SIOUX WRITER LIVING IN PORTLAND, OREGON. SHE HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN SALON, INDIAN COUNTRY TODAY, EARTH ISLAND JOURNAL AND THE NATION. SHE IS FINISHING HER FIRST NOVEL /LEAVING THE GLITTERING WORLD/ SET IN THE SHADOW OF THE HANFORD NUCLEAR RESERVATION IN WASHINGTON STATE DURING THE DISCOVERY OF KENNEWICK MAN.

Source: teleSUR 1/11/16 <http://www.telesurto.net/>

Oppose welfare ranching, not wolves

GARY WOCKNER

The yahoo jihad at the is part and parcel of the larger problem across the public lands of the West including here in Colorado. Ranchers aren't just occupying that federal building in Oregon, they've been occupying our public lands across the West for over a century and that occupation has been armed, violent and completely subsidized by state and federal taxpayers.

Here in Colorado, that occupation is proposing to take yet another extremist step forward as the Colorado Wildlife Commission considers a resolution on Jan. 13 at its Denver meeting to "oppose wolf reintroduction" in our state. Wolves have been reintroduced to many of the states surrounding Colorado including Wyoming, Montana, Idaho,

Arizona and New Mexico, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may soon consider reintroducing wolves into Colorado too.

A keystone species that protects and restores wild landscapes, wolves—like American Indians—were almost completely and violently exterminated from the U.S. when ranchers arrived in the 1800s and colonized and assimilated the Western landscape. Wolves were slaughtered by the hundreds of thousands—trapped, poisoned, mutilated—until every last animal in Colorado was killed. This slaughter was and still is, paid for by the American taxpayer.

The cow and sheep industry is heavily subsidized across the public lands of Colorado, so much so that the some ranchers are often called "welfare ranchers."

They pay almost nothing to send hundreds of thousands of livestock across our public lands sometimes obliterating the natural landscape as the livestock devour native grasses, pound the soil into dust, and wallow in and destroy streams and rivers. They also pay almost nothing to have the state and federal government exterminate native American wildlife on our public lands—wolves, coyotes, mountain lions, bears, even eagles—that sometimes prey on calves and lambs. The epitome of this extermination is the "aerial gunner men" hired by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to fly helicopters over our public lands and kill thousands of coyotes with shotgun blasts from the sky every year.

Further, the state of Colorado actually pays ranchers for the "damage"

that native American wildlife do to domestic livestock. If a mountain lion eats a domestic sheep, the Colorado Parks and Wildlife pays the sheep rancher for the "damage" that lion caused to the rancher. Further yet, if that lion keeps eating sheep, Colorado Parks and Wildlife will go out and kill the mountain lion.

The elk and deer hunting industry in Colorado is also a mess. Millions of dollars are made every year by ranchers and outfitters to make sure that fat, lazy elk and deer are easy targets for hunters who pay large price-tags to take home a set of antlers and freezer full of meat. In some cases, elk and deer are practically baited on private property where ranchers leave hay fields for forage and then let hunters sit around on opening day waiting for the biggest buck or bull to saunter in for

breakfast.

Of course, not all ranchers are on welfare—some graze their livestock responsibly on public land, don't kill predators and even support wolf reintroduction. And not all hunters want to sit around on opening day and wait by a hay field to shoot a fat, lazy elk. Some hunters want to actually "hunt" a wild ungulate that has been chased by a wolf and also support wolf reintroduction.

Wolves have a right to be on the landscape. They're native animals, were here first and are keystone species that protect and restore wildness. In areas where wolves are reintroduced, elk and deer are healthier as wolves cull the old, sick animals and keep the others scurrying away from a wolf's fang. Exercise improves everyone's health, including deer and elk. The landscapes are healthier

too—elk and deer are forced to keep moving instead of standing in a meadow or stream overgrazing the grasses and willows. In places where wolves have returned, scientists find healthier landscapes with more song birds, more wildlife and more biological diversity. We should oppose welfare ranching, not wolves, in Colorado. The armed, violent jihad that is occupying and destroying our public lands across Colorado and the West must stop.

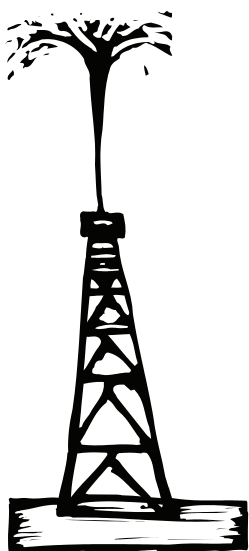
Source: EcoWatch 1/9/16 <https://ecowatch.com/>





Saturday, March 12

The California Fracking Report



The League of Women Voters of San Joaquin County is presenting a meeting on Saturday March 12, 2016 from 9:30 - 12:30 at the Health Plan of San Joaquin building at 7751 S. Manthey

Rd., French Camp. The topic is "The California Fracking Report".

This report is a summary of the recent study completed by the nonpartisan California Council on Science and Technology (CCST) and Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. The report is an independent scientific assessment of issues related to hydraulic fracturing and its effects on our water, atmosphere, seismic activity, wildlife, and human health. Presenters for the report will be Dr. Jane Long, and Dr. Preston Jordan. Also Linda Phillips from the California League of Women Voters will present timely information on energy related legislation. The meeting is open to the public.

San Joaquin women honored

BEVERLY FITCH MCCARTHY

The San Joaquin County Commission on the Status of Women has selected the following eleven women to be honored with the Susan B. Anthony Award Honoring SJC Women of Achievement, February 15, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Stockton Golf and Country Club. Reservations available at \$50 per person may be sent to POB 4443, Stockton 95204. Reservations will be held at the door. For additional information contact Banquet Chair Beverly Fitch McCarthy, 463-6957.

They are:

Maryann Cox Martin nominated by Lodi AAUW

Pheon Davidson nominated by Stockton Chapter Links, Inc.

Glynis Dovid nominated by Stockton Chapter Links, Inc.

Alison Cherry Lafferty nominated by Kroloff Belcher Smart Perry & Christopherson

Kimberly Miller nominated by the Women's Center of SJC

Dorothy Nishioka nominated by Delta Kappa Gamma, Tau Chapter

Bette Outlaw nominated by Stockton AAUW

Irene Outlaw nominated by Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc. Sorority

Tracy Paglia nominated by Moss Adams LLP

Heather Schlenger nominated by Moss Adams LLP

Colette Scott nominated by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Fourth Mondays

Delta-Sierra group evening programs



When: Fourth Mondays, 7 pm

Where: Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church
3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, across from UOP Tower.

Admission: Free and open to the public.

Mon, Jan 25

Hydrogen as an Energy Source, with Ed Stockton

Join us for this informative presentation by Ed Stockton, President and CEO of Hydrogen Technologies, Inc, who believes that this peer-to-peer distributed renewable energy is the next wave of energy creation. Hydrogen Technology, Inc, has patented a revolutionary method for burning hydrogen and oxygen in a vacuum chamber to create heat and steam with no greenhouse gases; the only bi-product is clean, hot water.

Mon, Feb 22

Walking Inn-to-Inn. with Tom Courtney

Tom Courtney brings us the Walkabout series of books and guides describing walks along the wild Pacific Coast, through the majestic Sierra Nevada Mountains, in the Cascades and through the parklands around the San Francisco Bay. Each day ends with a comfortable bed, a glass of wine, a good meal and maybe even a hot tub. Some of the hikes can take a week, but many can be enjoyed in a weekend. Some are challenging, but many are perfect for the casual hiker. He will be talking about California hiking from inn-to-inn in general and feature four hikes:

The Marin Coast - a 4 day, 41 mile hike from the Marin Headlands to Point Reyes National Seashore

Crossing the Sierra on the Emigrant Trail - a 3 day, 41 mile hike stopping at wonderful mountain resorts

The Mendocino Coast - a two day, 14 mile romantic stroll along a beautiful, rugged coast

The American River - a two day or four day springtime hike descending through the foothills.

Mon, Mar 28

Film: Chasing Ice.

The award winning film, Chasing Ice, is the story of James Balog's mission to change the tide of history by gathering undeniable evidence of our changing planet. On a tricky assignment for National Geographic, Balog began deploying revolutionary time-lapse cameras across the brutal Arctic to capture a multi-year record of the world's changing glaciers. His hauntingly beautiful videos compress years into seconds and capture ancient mountains of ice in motion as they disappear at a breathtaking rate.

92.1 low-power FM radio on the move

Stone Soup-Stockton Community Radio is beginning a capital campaign to raise funds to fund radio transmission in the Stockton area. Our goal is to raise \$32,000.00 by September 21, 2016 (9/21/16 is 9.21 Stone Soup)

We plan to approach supportive community members, business, organizations; we are looking at crowdsourcing and hosting community events, announcing our drive in the local media, posting information on Facebook and our website, spreading the word and encouraging donations.

Stone Soup is an all-volunteer radio station that can be found on-line at Stone Soup Stockton Community Radio: to move onto the radio dial, we need to purchase space on a radio tower, purchase and place a radio transmitter, update our studio equipment, pay royalties, and pay the bills that come with an active radio studio. Time to roll up our sleeves and get to it...Donations can be made to the Peace & Justice Network/for Stone Soup and mailed to P.O. Box 4321, Stockton, CA 95204.

Saturday, April 2

Fifth magnificent celebration of Stockton announced

What better way to showcase all the positive aspects of our magnificent city than to team up with San Joaquin Delta College and throw a big party! The new Delta campus plaza will be filled with stages of local entertainment, local nonprofit booths and vendors, along with a children's parade, local art displays, local heroes' awards, local authors, food truck frenzy, the "Big Picture", and so much more. As an added bonus the Market at Delta College will be open for the event and tours of campus programs will be available, including the horticulture area.

The 5th Magnificent Celebration of Stockton will be held on Saturday, April 2nd, from 11 am to 3 pm on the beautiful Delta campus that offers plenty of shade, acres of parking, and an opportunity to see the new improvements to Stockton's largest and finest educational institution of higher learning. The family-friendly free event provides an opportunity for local talent and community organizations to show the community how much this city has to offer.

Delta College students and faculty will be working throughout the fall and winter months of 2015 planning the big event, receiving valuable practical experience in event promotion, graphic design, retail management, stage production, business management, and advertising while working side-by-side with the Stockton is Magnificent, Inc. committee. Delta College alumni will be recognized in their own "big picture" and past alumni will be recognized as local heroes.

Stockton is Magnificent, Inc. is a local 501(c)3 nonprofit whose mission is to promote the positive image of Stockton through an annual event, and to encourage the community awareness of the remarkable history of our city. To participate as a nonprofit or community organization, vendor, author, artist, entertainer, volunteer or sponsor please go to Stocktonmagnificent.com, or contact Denise Jefferson, 209-244-6223. Be a part of the positive side of our city and join in the fun!





FEBRUARY / MARCH 2016 CALENDAR

Editor's note: if your event isn't listed, let us know. Send all copy to: bgiudici@caltel.com by the 10th of every month.

THUR - SUN JAN 13 - 31

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike. Thu 7:30 pm, Fri-Sat 7:30 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton. This very recent hit on Broadway was nominated for six 2013 Tony Awards, winning for Best Play. It is one of the most lauded and beloved Broadway plays of recent years. Vanya and his adopted sister Sonia live a quiet life in the Pennsylvania farmhouse where they grew up, but their peace is disturbed when their movie star sister Masha returns unannounced with her twenty-something boy toy, Spike. A weekend of rivalry, regret, and raucousness begins. \$15 - \$25. 473-2424. www.sctlivetheatre.com

SAT, JAN 23

Stockton Symphonia Misadventure Night's Dream featuring Nicolasa Kuster, bassoon, plus a cast from University of the Pacific, Women's Chorus and dancers joining the Stockton Symphony—nearly 100 performers in all. Semi-staged excerpts from Shakespeare's play join Mendelssohn's remarkable A Midsummer Night's Dream, op. 21 & 61. 6 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$25-66. www.StocktonSymphony.org 209-951-0196

MON, JAN 25

Delta Sierra Club meeting topic: Hydrogen as an Energy Source, presented by Ed Stockton. 6:30 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

JAN 26 - FEB 11

Delta Center for the Arts LH Horton Jr Gallery presents Rowland Cheney Retrospective Exhibition. SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. T 11am-4pm, W-Th 11am-6:30pm, F 11am-1pm. Free and open to the public. 209-954-5507.

MON, FEB 1

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm. Family Resource & Referral Center, 509 W. Weber Ave., Stockton.

THURS, FEB 4

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 6:30 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Pacific Avenue Clarinets at the Haggin Museum. 6:30 - 9 pm. Victory Park, 1201 N. Pershing Ave, Stockton. Jerry Criswell,

Jeff Kumagai, Amanda Martin, Christina Severin, and Chris Steffanic make up the Pacific Avenue Clarinets, presenting a distinctive collage of sound that will send you on an aural adventure to Argentina, France, the USA, and Austria with canons, tangos, divertimentos and classic American literature This presentation is included with regular admission, as part of the museum's 1st & 3rd Thursdays series. (209) 940-6315 or education@hagginmuseum.org.

TUES, FEB 9

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 5:30 - 7 pm, Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

FRI, FEB 12

UOP Resident Artist Series - Frank Wiens piano. 7:30pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Jenny Wong, director. \$10 general, \$5 senior, student free with ID. Patrick Langham Quintet at Take 5, 7 pm, Valley Brewing Company, 157 W Adams St, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student with ID.

SAT-SUN, FEB 20-21

Stockton Symphony: An Evening (and Afternoon) with Arturo Sandoval. A legend, and a master of Latin music, trumpeter Mr. Sandoval has been awarded 2013 Presidential Medal of Freedom, 10 Grammy awards, six Billboard awards and an Emmy. Sat 6 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$25-\$66 209-954-5209

MON, FEB 22

Delta Sierra Club meeting topic: Walking Inn-to-Inn, presented by Tom Courtney, 6:30 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

TUES, FEB 23

UOP Concert Band. 7:30pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 senior, Students free with ID.

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 5:30 - 7 pm, Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455

WED, FEB 24

UOP Symphonic Wind Ensemble. 7:30pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 se-

nior, Students free with ID.

THUR, FEB 25

Patrick Langham Quintet at Take 5, 7 pm, Valley Brewing Company, 157 W Adams St, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student with ID.

FEB 25 - MAR 18

Delta Center for the Arts LH Horton Jr Gallery presents a Faculty Art Show featuring Gary Carlos - sculpture; Shenny Cruces - ceramics. SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. T 11am-4pm, W-Th 11am-6:30pm, F 11am-1pm. Free and open to the public. 209-954-5507.

SAT, FEB 27

UOP Symphonic Orchestra. 7:30pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 senior, Students free with ID.

MON, FEB 29

Delta Sierra Club meeting, 6:30 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442.

TUES, MAR 1

SJDC Symphonic Band concert. 7 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. \$8 adult; \$5 student/senior over 61. 209-954-5209

WED, MAR 2

UOP Pacific Jazz Ensemble, 7:30pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 senior, Students free with ID.

SJDC Concert Band concert. 7 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. \$8 adult; \$5 student/senior over 61. 209-954-5209

THURS, MAR 3

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 6:30 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Current Personae Chamber group at the Haggin Museum. 6:30 - 9 pm. Victory Park, 1201 N. Pershing Ave, Stockton. Chamber/soul band Current Personae is a Stockton-based collective led by composer Joshua Washington. This presentation is included with regular admission, as part of the museum's 1st & 3rd Thursdays series. (209) 940-6315 or education@hagginmuseum.org.

THUR-SUN MAR 4 - 13

Delta Drama presents The Rimers of Eldritch, directed by Greg

Foro. 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. Alfred Miller Studio Theatre, SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10/\$12. 209-954-5209

MON, MAR 7

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm. Family Resource & Referral Center, 509 W. Weber Ave., Stockton.

TUES, MAR 8

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 5:30 - 7 pm, Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

SAT, MAR 12

The California Fracking Report, presented by the League of Women Voters. 9:30 am - 12:30 pm. Health Plan of San Joaquin building at 7751 S. Mantney Rd., French Camp. (p 18)

Stockton Symphony: Mozart, Beethoven and Tracy Silverman..A program of heroic music welcomes Tracy Silverman— "the greatest living exponent of the electric violin" (BBC)—back to Stockton. 6 pm, Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$25-\$66 209-951-0196.

THURS, MAR 17

SJDC Spring Festival of Choirs Concert 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Adult \$8, student/senior \$5. 209-954-5209

FIRST MONDAYS

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm, Towers Building, 509 W Weber Ave, Stockton. ccgmemb@gmail.com

FOURTH MONDAYS

Delta Sierra Club meeting, 7 pm. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

SECOND TUESDAYS

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 7 - 9 pm, Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

FOURTH TUESDAYS

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 7 - 9 pm, Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

THURSDAYS

Peace demonstration, 5-6 pm, edge of Delta campus on Pacific, across from Macy's. Free parking at mall. Weekly since 2003. We have signs, or bring your own. We get LOTS of honks! Info 464-3326. Take Five Jazz club, 7 - 9 pm, Valley Brew

SATURDAYS

Crosstown Freeway Farmers Market, under the freeway between El Dorado & San Joaquin, Stockton. 7 - 11, or when sold out. 943-1830

A BIG THANKS TO OUR LONG-SERVING DISTRIBUTORS!!



Sunday, April 24

28th annual Stockton Earth Day Festival celebrates



Stockton's Earth Day Festival has a long history of helping people recognize the importance of caring for our earth and natural resources. Through educational programs and other activities, the all-volunteer Earth Day Festival committee has helped share this vision with thousands of people each year. The festival has grown over the years but it remains true to its mission of education, conservation and recycling. We are grateful for the volunteers, sponsors, schools and community organizations that help make this a remarkable annual event. Festival filled with fun and free activities!

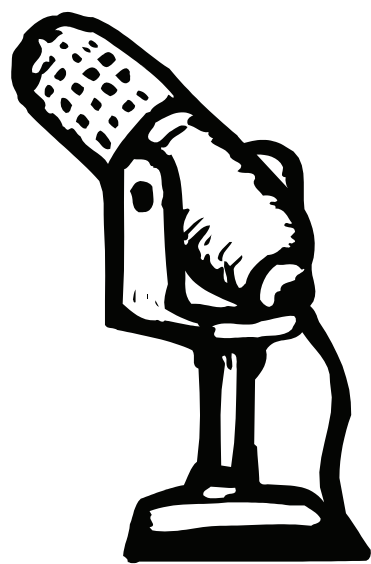
This is the premiere environmental event in all of San Joaquin County, and as always, the focus of the day long festival is to educate you about taking care of our natural resources - the earth, air and water. With global warming, conservation and other environmental issues taking a spotlight in the world these days, we expect a crowd hungry and eager to learn how to take care of their environment. It is a fun day for families, and best of all, admission is free.

The Festival will have dozens of informative, interactive booths, displays and exhibits, plus there will be plenty of great food and exotic crafts. Local area schools will be teaching you how to take better care of our earth with a variety of hands-on activities, and environmental organizations will educate you about the important issues that impact you and how you can make a difference. Community agencies will help you live a healthier, more positive life, and green businesses will assist you in making changes to your home and workplace. Over 100 vendors will border the oak trees and cross the grass field at Victory Park, making this Earth Day Festival the biggest ever. Close to 10,000 people attend this event annually.

Join the hundreds of cyclists who will bike around the neighborhood as part of the Family Fun Bike Ride and Parade. Costumed children, adults and bikes are encouraged, so wear your wildest environmental look. Or participate as a drummer in the Drum Circle that traditionally closes the Festival on a percussive high note. Make it your annual renewal of your commitment to make a global difference. See you there.

Contact us: 2016 Earth Day Festival, PO Box 4123, Stockton, CA 95204 209-483-5199 stocktonearthday@gmail.com. On the web: <http://www.livegreensanjoaquin.co>

LPFM community radio - a primer



VIC BERNSDORFF

WHAT IS COMMUNITY RADIO?

In an environment in which corporations and the government increasingly control the airwaves, where can social justice movements and marginalized communities go to have their voices heard? Enter low power FM radio (LPFM). These are stations that broadcast about three to five miles, using the power of a light bulb - 100 watts. They are always local and are known for greatly improving a community's quality of life.

Four years ago, President Obama signed the Local Community Radio Act after a 15-year organizing campaign led by Prometheus Radio Project and Common Frequency, two grassroots groups supporting community radio. The law marks the largest expansion of community radio in US history. It was a tremendous victory for social change and media justice movements. Local communities now have the power to transform the corporate-driven media landscape.

This recent expansion of LPFM

stations means that hundreds of non-profit organizations, schools, unions and other community groups have a unique and low-cost opportunity to develop programming to meet their local and issue-based needs. “With new community radio stations preparing to claim a spot on the airwaves, we’re looking forward to hearing truly local news, neighbors speaking to each other about the topics that concern them, and local culture and music programming,” said Julia Wierski of the Prometheus Radio Project.

Community radio in general is a world-wide phenomenon. Its roots date back to the late 1940s when it was introduced as a way to offer media access to union members and their families during a labor strike in Bolivia. In 1949, Pacifica Foundation established the first community radio station in the United States. Since then, this vibrant media movement continues to spread throughout the world—from Western countries to remote third-world communities. The urge to do community radio fulfills the basic desire for communication and self-expression and is on the forefront of today’s democracy movements. Typically, two principal aims are achieved:

1. Cultural, political and artistic voices excluded elsewhere get heard.

2. Individuals and communities are enriched.

Community radio happens when local people produce and broadcast their own programs and participate in operating the station. It is a community space for people to meet and collaborate. It is extraordinarily fun and often life-changing. It typically leads to individual creativity and self-empowerment.

Participants find it extraordinarily satisfying, not just to make radio in this unique fashion, but to also help transform community life. Community volunteers

are typically trained and given a central role in radio production, operation and program development. Youths also get a chance to participate. Stations are designed to be responsive to community needs and consistently seek input from listeners.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY RADIO ?

1. It provides media access for all perspectives in our communities.

2. It is participatory: community members participate in the programming and governance of a community radio station, ensuring that the station is relevant and meets local needs.

3. It embraces diverse programming, especially where there would be insufficient profit for the commercial sector and too much cost for the public service sector.

4. There is a local focus – highlighting local issues, opinions and voices in contrast to mainstream media’s increasingly centralized content production. Community radio strengthens community ties and builds civic engagement. Community radio covers news and events that don't get enough airtime at bigger outlets, such as local elections, school board meetings, and neighborhood arts festivals.

5. It uses the skills, resources and provides an opportunity to understand media by members of our community, through actively participating in its creation and delivery.

6. It becomes a tool to provide service and support to communities, especially disadvantaged and excluded communities.

7. There is an opportunity to promote democracy, human rights and sustainability.

8. It presents a challenge to global media blandness in reinforcing local identities while acting as a catalyst for integration and inclusion.

Community radio stations represent the last bastions of airwaves that are representative of the communities they come from and put the control of whose voices get heard and which stories get distributed in the hands of the community.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

An LPFM community radio project is under development at Stockton’s Peace and Justice Center. While still in its infancy, you can help shape the creation of this unique station by contributing either your time, or by making a financial contribution to the station. Check the Connections newspaper monthly for radio council meeting times and dates. Check us out on Facebook: Stone Soup-Stockton Community Radio or on our website stocktoncommunityradio.com . Volunteers are needed to help with the website development and maintenance, developing show, maintaining the station, raising funds and much more..

Check out the Internet link below to view a great example of what Community Radio is all about – in this case KCMJ 93.9 in Colorado Springs - and what it can do for you and your local Stockton community! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOTcAiVDa2c> Just type: “Got Radio? Community Radio is Coming to Colorado Springs” in the YouTube.com search field.

For more information about this project, contact: Vic at vbernsd@gmail.com 209-982-5976 or Christie kelleyno2@sbcglobal.net, 209-479-1225

Clinton’s pre-Iowa assault on Sanders’ Medicare-For-All plan

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it does not take into account the cost of the current system of Medicare for people over 65, Medicaid, CHIP, current Obamacare subsidies and other government health programs that would be replaced by Sanders’ plan. Left alone these would add up to more than Sanders’ plan.

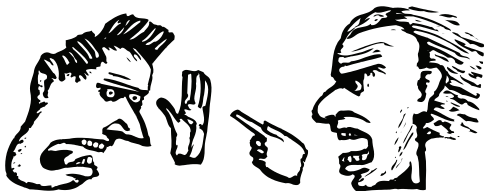
Since Sanders’ plan also removes private-company profits from the system, this “Sanders agenda” amount is actually lower than the cost of continuing with the current system. (It also includes Sanders’ plans to repair the country’s infrastructure, cut college costs, and the rest of his proposals. Note that

Sanders has outlined specific revenue sources.

The claim that Sanders’ plan would “strip millions and millions and millions of people off their health insurance” is perhaps the most misleading and disingenuous claim of all. People would not be “stripped” of their insurance; everyone would get Medicare instead so people would not need “insurance.” Clinton’s “strip” wording here implies that millions of people would lose health care, when in fact they would only lose the need to pay insurance premiums, co-pays and deductibles. Sanders responded to this respectfully, saying, “As much as I admire Chelsea Clinton, she didn’t read the plan.”

DAVE JOHNSON IS A CONTRIBUTING BLOGGER FOR THE CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA’S FUTURE.

Source: Campaign for America's Future Blog 1/14/16 <https://ourfuture.org/>



Clinton Made \$2.8 Million From 13 Speeches To Health Industry	
Health Care Firm Or Trade Association ▼	Money Made In Paid Speeches
Advanced Medical Technology Association	\$265,000
American Society for Clinical Pathology	\$225,000
Beaumont Health System	\$305,000
California Medical Association	\$100,000
Drug Chemical and Associated Technologies	\$250,000
Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society	\$225,500
London Drugs	\$225,000
National Association of Chain Drug Stores	\$225,000
National Council for Behavioral Healthcare	\$225,500
Novo Nordisk A/S	\$125,000
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association	\$225,500
Premier Health Alliance	\$225,500
Press Ganey	\$225,000