



WE ARE THE 99 PERCENT

MOTECUZOMATZIN SANCHEZ

From Democracy Now.org

Inspired by the massive public protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square and Madrid's Puerta del Sol Square, hundreds have camped out in Zuccotti Park near Wall Street since Sept. 17, 2011, as part of a campaign dubbed "Occupy Wall Street." Developing a common slogan "We are the 99 percent," solidarity encampments

and demonstrations have been organized across the United States and the world to call for financial, political and social change. A global day of action on Oct. 15 drew protests in 1,500 cities world-wide, including more than 100 in the United States.

On September 17, 2011 a movement began in New York City. New Yorkers began occupying the epicenter of the most unbridled greed in perhaps our planet's history:

Wall Street. Increasingly the majority of Americans have felt the pain and dealt with the ills of the reality that, while 1% of our nation controls the majority of the wealth, 99% live off the 'left-overs'. With no promised change being seen from Washington, everyday people across ethnic, social, religious, and political lines have taken their plight to streets for the world to see. This movement, which was resisted violently

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Protests —it's about time

BRUCE GIUDICI

The protests have come none too soon; it proves that, for Americans to act, the crisis must become unbearable. When we look at the progress corporations have made through the past 3 decades, however, we can only hope that we are not too late. With American economic dominance on the wane, actions we take now must be decisive, focused and broad-based.

This is the thrust of the New York uprising. While media have complained of the lack of a focused demand from the protest, they have missed the many demands scrawled on cardboard and poster paper: stop the foreclosures, rein in bank excesses, tax the well-off, employ the rest of us to do meaningful work—teaching and building; lists you will find in these pages and on signs held by protesters. These may not as simple as a Tea Party bumper sticker to cut taxes...but Occupier demands are what's needed if this country is to turn around economically.

On the moral and ethical end, the Tea Party would like us to pray more—and to keep our women safe from



jobs, planned pregnancies and any other choice. Again, the Occupiers prescribe an equally Biblical version of ethics and morals—thou shalt not steal while doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. If we treat our neighbors—and customers—like family, perhaps we can get to a more humane place in our economy—rather than kicking them with the admonition “get a job.”

That's the naivete—and the charm—of this movement. More people feel affinity to this group now than they do the Tea Party (50%–30%) for just this reason. There is a feeling that the general public (in this case, the 99%) have been cheated and that the cheating continues. The majority of elected officials increasingly represent the 1%—evidence is in what is (or isn't) happening in Washington. A little more street action, discussion and changing of minds can move a nation. As the weather turns chilly, it might seem tempting to connect a lack of bodies on the street with a diminishment of resolve. Not this time. So long as our leaders keep our economic car in the ditch, you can bet the American people will come up with answers. Let's expand the circle.

Profit system endangers health care in China

Editor,

As reported in the News China (October 2011 issue), Xiao Zeng, a 20 year old busboy from Hubei Province, had eight stitches removed from a sutured hand wound without anesthetic when, after completing the stitching, his surgeon discovered he couldn't afford to pay his 1,830 yuan (US\$ 286) bill.

The young man was forced to trawl the streets for a better deal, finally negotiating a bill of 800

yuan (US\$125) for the same procedure at a different hospital. The incident has caused anger online at China's profit-oriented health care system.

The profit-driven health insurance companies have been driving down “health care system” in the United States for many years. We in the Single Payer San Joaquin say that for better health care we need to rid ourselves of the profit-driven health insurance companies and institute a Single-Payer

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by police and mocked by what little media coverage it has received, sparked actions of solidarity across our nation from New York and Boston to Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, and other cities.

On Wednesday October 12, 2011, Stockton took its place in this historic event and stood in solidarity with a movement that has become known as Occupy Wall Street. It is a movement that transcends leaders and social barriers.

Stockton has much to fight for. In 2007 we were at the center of the foreclosure crisis that has weakened our nation, a direct result of Wall Street deregulation and irresponsibility. In 2011, Stockton finds itself with an 18% unemployment rate. Twenty five percent of our city lives below the poverty line. Our city is the 2nd most violent in California and 7th most dangerous in the country. City Hall is out of touch with its citizens. There appears to be no change in sight.

In light of this, I invite you to join me in standing up and demanding change as well as showing solidarity with those fighting for us all in New York and worldwide. The concerns of the people will dictate the dialogue of our local movement, tailored to local needs and concerns. Fellow Stocktonians answered

the call—including young students from Manteca and Modesto—at De Carli Square in downtown Stockton. Over the course of two days in Stockton, including a march on October 15th the Global Day of Occupy Actions, over 160 people young and old participated in Occupy Stockton actions.

Harold Bell



WE ARE THE 99 PERCENT

These gatherings were also an opportunity to help the least fortunate of us. Participants brought canned foods, blankets, and jackets to help the growing population of homeless and poor in our community. Many homeless, as well as a poor family of eight, were supported by this action. Participants included labor, college students, homeless, and educators, those who have lost their homes, the unemployed, laid off, and others affected by the greed of 1% of our nation.

Further actions are planned as the future of our

nation and its democracy is dependent on its people defending the needs of all. We are all the 99%. Events are planned for leafleting at banks, a showing of Inside Jobs and an educational forum. General Assembly meetings, where decisions are made, plans are formed and ideas are shared take place regularly. For more information of time and place go to occupystocktonca@gmail.com or email Moteczomatzin@yahoo.com

Progress is made, not found.



Contact Your Reps

Pres. Barack H. Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington DC 20500. 202—456—1414; www.whitehouse.gov

Sen. Barbara Boxer, 1700 Montgomery St, Ste 240, San Francisco, CA 94111. 415—403—0100; 112 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202—224—3553, senator@boxer.senate.gov

Sen. 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

Rep. Jerry McNerney (D—11th District) 2222 Grand Canal Blvd #7, Stockton, CA 95207. 209—476—8552. Fax 209—476—8587. 312 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington DC 20515; info@jerrymcnerney.org, 925—833—0643, <http://www.JerryMcNerney.org>

Rep. Dennis Cardoza (D—District 18) 137 E. Weber Ave, Stockton, CA 95203. 209—946—0361, 503 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, 202—225—6131.

Rep. Dan Lungren (R—District 3), 2262 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515. 202—225—5716. Local office: 2334 Gold Meadow Way, Ste 220, Gold River, CA 95670. 916—859—9906.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, 2201 C St, NW Washington, DC 20520

Gov. Jerry Brown, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916—445—2841

State Sen. Lois Wolk (District 5), 31 E Channel St, Room 440, Stockton, CA 95202. 209—948—7930; State Capitol, Rm 4032, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916—651—4005

Assemblyperson Kathleen Galgiani (District 17), 31 E. Channel St., Rm. 306, Stockton CA 95202, 209—948—7479

CONNECTIONS

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

Layout: Luis Gonzalez

Proofreader: Debbie Cousyn

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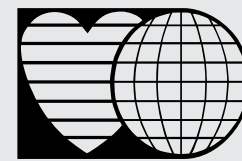
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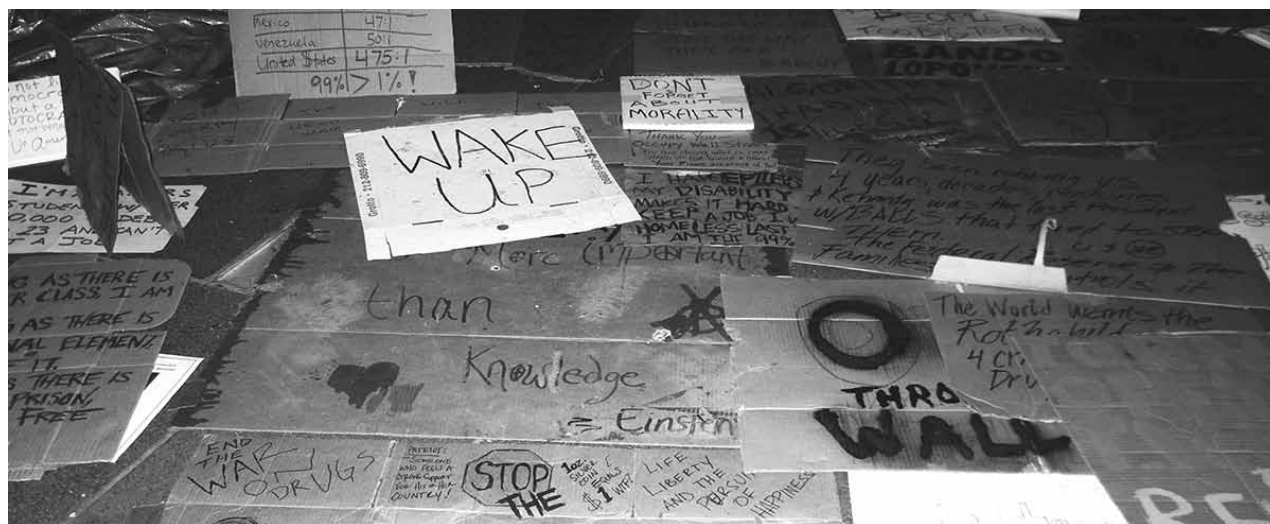
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Don't sleep through the revolution



REV. JESSE JACKSON

Occupy Wall Street protests have now spread to some 800 cities. It's spreading like a fire on a strong wind over a dry field. The heat is likely to keep on building. Conservatives have fallen over themselves rushing to side with the top one percent against the rest. Eric Cantor, House majority leader, denounces "mobs" and "the pitting of Americans against Americans." Herman Cain dismisses the demonstrators as "anti-American." Mitt Romney accuses them of waging "class warfare."

But class warfare is the reason Occupy Wall Street has sounded such a chord. Sure there's class warfare, one of America's richest men, Warren Buffett, concluded, "and my class is winning."

Last week, I joined the Chicago "wing" of the Occupy Wall Street movement. I spoke to students who dropped out of school because they couldn't afford tuition; now they are left with guaranteed student loan debt.

Students graduate with average student loan debts of over \$20,000, and the bankers' lobby passes a law that forces payment of those debts, even after bankruptcy. Now students are graduating from college laden with debts and without a job. Any wonder they are protesting?

I spoke with professors and teachers who have lost their jobs as states face declining revenues—driven in part by the foreclosure/housing crisis and resulting loss of property-tax revenues.

These protests pose a clear indictment to an economy that has been working for the few and not the many. The richest one percent of Americans now makes as much income as the bottom 60 percent. They control as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent. With that wealth comes political power, as they can afford the campaign contributions and the high-priced lobbyists needed to rig the rules in Washington. They have had their way.

The results are unconscionable. Hedge fund billionaires carve out a "carried interest" tax dodge that enables them to pay a lower tax rate on their earnings than teachers pay.

Wall Street bankers pocket millions in bonuses inflating a housing bubble, marked, as the FBI warned, by "an epidemic of fraud." Then when the bubble explodes, they get bailed out—and go back to paying themselves million-dollar bonuses—and hiking charges on credit cards and bank accounts. And while the banks are saved, 25 million people remain in need of fulltime work.

Similarly, homeowners get no relief. When workers are laid off and can't sustain their mortgage payments, they lose their homes. When their homes are underwater, worth less than the mortgage, they can't get banks to return their phone calls, can't refinance to get some relief from lower interest rates. Instead, the bankers' lobby passes a law that allows the rich to readjust the mortgages of vacation homes in bankruptcy courts, but prohibits homeowners from doing the same.

The obscene decision of the Supreme Court's conservative gang of five in *Citizens United* adds insult.

They declare corporations are persons, with the same right to free speech as American citizens. Since they think money is speech, they open the floodgates to corporate purchase of our elections.

Movements grow not because of the specifics of their agenda, but because of the truth of their protest. Occupy Wall Street protests outrages that all of us see. Their protest is too valid to be ignored; too pressing to be suppressed.

The Rainbow PUSH Coalition has been on this case for years now: we protested the attempt of the banks to privatize social security and to abolish the Glass-Steagall Act. We challenged the corruption of the "oversers" responsible for regulating the financial services industry, many of whom were raising money from Wall Street for their campaigns, or working for Wall Street upon leaving Congress.

Rainbow PUSH joined with Attorney General Lisa Madigan to expose the targeting and steering of Blacks and people of color into sub-prime loans, and to demand appropriate remedies from Countrywide and other banks that engaged in discriminatory lending practices. We've marched and protested with homeowners facing foreclosure, and rallied with a broad coalition of conscience at the annual shareholder meetings of Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America and others—decrying their policies and practices that led to the global economic crisis.

Most recently, Rainbow PUSH testified to oppose the Capitol One merger. The protests will spread; others are already joining because there is a need for economic security. Too few own and control too much, while too many are left out of the economic equation. This week, the AFL-CIO, the international labor federation, will spark protests demanding "jobs, not cuts," across the country. On November 17th, a range of groups under the banner of the American Dream Movement is planning the largest mobilizations since the mass movement that opposed the War in Iraq.

This citizen protest will face increasing opposition. Local officials will try to shut demonstrations down. Fox News and conservative talk radio will slander and decry. Politicians will deplore.

We celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King's memorial recently in Washington. But when the Civil Rights Movement was building, Dr. King was reviled as an outside agitator, slandered as a "communist." The FBI wiretapped him and tried to drive him to suicide. Non-violent demonstrators were arrested, beaten, and murdered. Nixon developed a Southern strategy based on race-baiting politics to consolidate Republican strength in the South.

Entrenched privilege does not surrender its privilege easily. Occupy Wall Street is taking on the most powerful interests. But nothing, as Victor Hugo wrote, is more powerful than an idea whose time has come. As Dr. King urged, "Don't sleep through the revolution." It is time to take a stand. So 99'ers, maintain your disciplined focus, your peaceful nonviolent approach to protest, and demand change. In the end we will win.

Source: Reader Supported News 10/12/11 <http://readersupportednews.org>



Mainstream Media = Truth? Check out the Alternatives and Find out for yourself!

If you tap in to some of the alternative media, you will get a very different perspective on events. Especially now, when the mainstream media often acts as a cheerleader for whatever the administration does, it's necessary to go a little further to get your news. An internet connection is helpful.

Firedoglake <http://firedoglake.com>

Emptywheel
<http://emptywheel.firedoglake.com/>

Calitics <http://www.calitics.com/>

Eschaton <http://www.eschatonblog.com/>

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TPM Muckraker
<http://www.tpmmuckraker.com/>

FiveThirtyEight.com
<http://www.fivethirtyeight.com/>

Congress Matters
<http://www.congressmatters.com>

Think Progress <http://thinkprogress.com>

Down With Tyranny
<http://downwithtyranny.blogspot.com/>

Crooks and Liars
<http://www.crooksandliars.com>

Media Matters <http://mediamatters.org/>

Common Dreams:
<http://www.commondreams.org/>

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Raw Story <http://www.rawstory.com>

Open Left <http://www.openleft.com/>

AlterNet <http://www.alternet.org/>

Independent Media Center
<http://www.indymedia.org>

The Nation <http://www.thenation.com/>

Hightower News
<http://www.webactive.com/hightower/>

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In These Times <http://inthesetimes.com/>

The Guardian
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/>

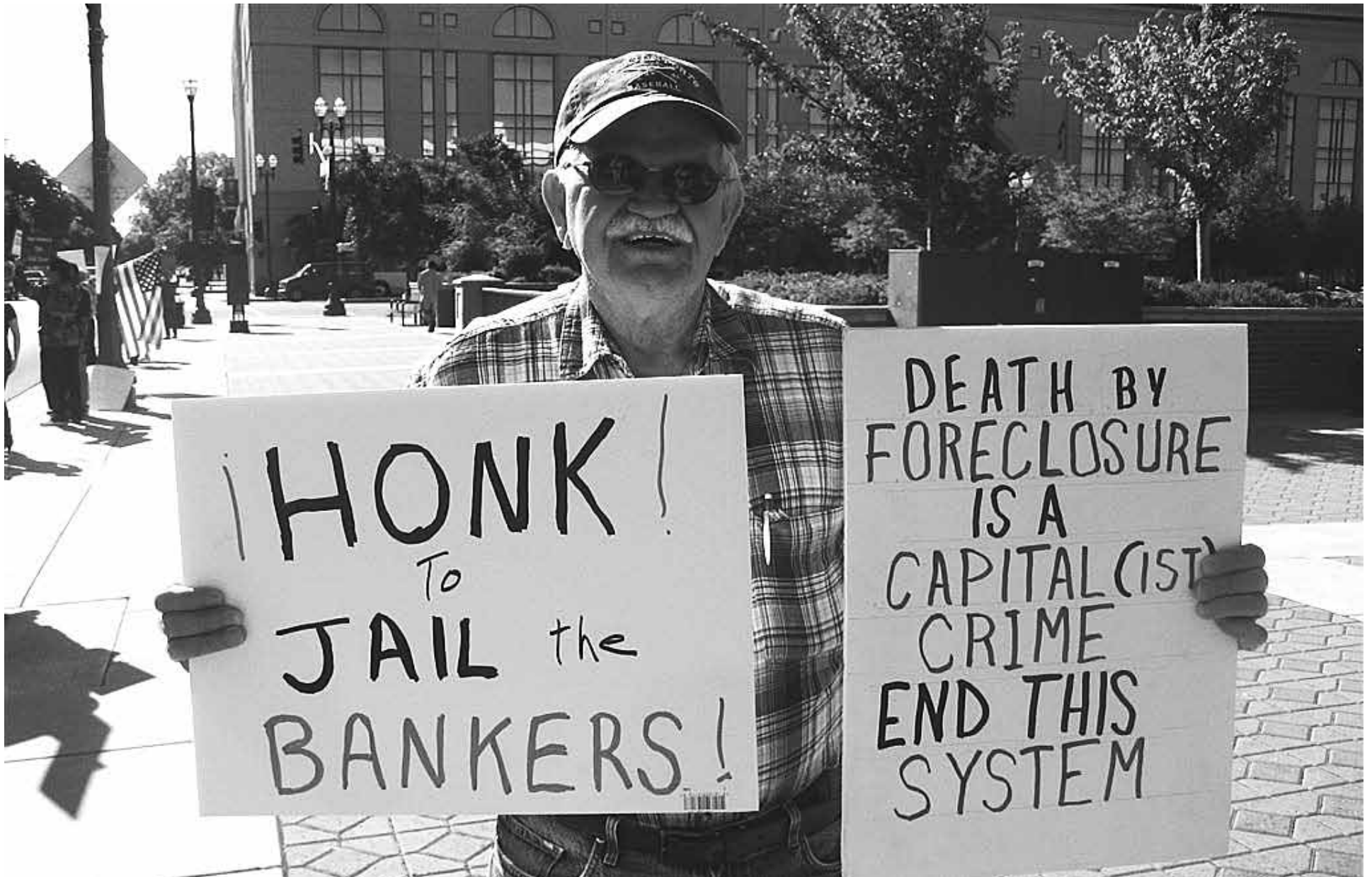
Corporate Watch
<http://www.corpwatch.org/home/PHH.jsp>

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Democracy Now! on KPFA, 94.1 FM and KVMR, 89.5 FM or on the web at: <http://www.democracynow.org>



When people should occupy Wall Street



DEAN BAKER

The Very Serious People in Washington are busy trying to find creative ways to cut Social Security and Medicare and take other benefits from middle-class and moderate-income families. The refrain here is that we just can't afford this level of generosity any more.

There are two parts of this story that should drive the rest of us crazy. And it is difficult to determine which one is the more infuriating. The first is that we know that many people in this country are fabulously rich. And as Elizabeth Warren beautifully reminded us, none of them did it on their own. But Professor Warren is actually far too generous in her account.

While some number of the wealthy may have succeeded by working hard and being smart or creative, many of the very wealthy got their money directly or indirectly through the big hand of the government tilting the playing field in their direction. Their hard work involved rigging the rules to ensure that they ended up on top.

Nowhere is this better seen than on Wall Street, which is chock full of multimillionaires and billionaires who got to the top by taking advantage of items like "too big to fail insurance" for their banks, gambling with government insured deposits, ripping off state and local governments on pension management fees and, of course, the trillion dollars in bailouts bucks given at interest rates that were way below market levels. These people know the role of government very well, even if they pretend this is all about a free market.

But the banks are not the only ones that rig the rules. The drug companies profit enormously from government-granted patent monopolies. Drugs are generally cheap, that is why it is possible to buy hundreds of generic drugs for \$5 or \$6 per prescription at chain drug stores. Drug companies

are able to charge hundreds or even thousands of dollars for prescriptions because they have patent protection. As a result we spend close to \$300 billion (at \$1,000 per person) a year for drugs that would cost around \$30 billion a year in a free market.

The government rigs the deck for the rich and powerful in other ways as well. Under the current enforcement pattern in labor law, the government comes down like a ton of bricks on any union that breaks the rules—for example by having an unlawful strike. By contrast, companies get away with a slap of the risk for even the most flagrant violations of labor law.

Our trade policy was designed to put downward pressure on wages for the bulk of the country's workforce by putting them in direct competition with low-paid workers in the developing world. This effect is exacerbated by the over-valued dollar. Meanwhile, those in relatively privileged professions, like doctors and lawyers, remain largely protected from international competition.

The list of ways in which the wealthy have structured the rules to ensure that they stay rich and get richer is lengthy. But the fact that the Very Serious People are looking to cut Social Security for the elderly and Medicaid for the unemployed at a time when Countrywide's Angelo Mozilo and Citigroup's Robert Rubin are still immensely rich is only the first reason that the public should be furious at those in power.

The second is the cause of the current downturn. The reason that we have 26 million people unemployed, underemployed or out of the work force altogether is not that we are poor, but rather that we are rich. The immediate problem facing our economy is not one of too few goods and resources; it is a problem of too little demand. And this is what should make the Wall Street Occupiers and everyone else absolutely furious at our leaders.

If people had more money in their pockets, then they would buy more goods and services. Companies would then hire more people to produce these goods and services and we would then have more jobs. The unemployment and poverty that the country is experiencing today is overwhelmingly the result of a failure of political will.

If the federal government increased spending on infrastructure, gave teens jobs cleaning up their neighborhoods, gave state and local governments the funds to keep teachers and firefighters employed and encouraged employers to shorten work hours rather than lay off workers, we could quickly get the economy back to full employment. Economists have known this story for more than 70 years, but somehow creating jobs doesn't rank as high on the priority list in Washington as cutting Social Security and Medicare.

In short, we have an economic system that, even when it is working, has been rigged to redistribute income to rich. And we have a political system that at a time of immense economic distress is more focused on undercutting the means of support for working families than fixing the economy. It is hard to understand why everyone is not occupying Wall Street.

DEAN BAKER <[HTTP://WWW.CEPR.NET/CONTENT/VIEW/80/80/](http://www.cepr.net/content/view/80/80/)> IS A MACROECONOMIST AND CO-DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND POLICY RESEARCH <[HTTP://WWW.CEPR.NET/](http://www.cepr.net/)> IN WASHINGTON, DC.

Source: Truthout News Analysis 10/10/11 www.truthout.org



Wall Street protests: a good place to start



SEN. BERNIE SANDERS

The protest movement called Occupy Wall Street has struck a nerve. The demonstrators' goals may be vague, but their grievances are very real. If our country is to break out of this horrendous recession and create the millions of jobs we desperately need, if we are going to create a financially-stable future, we must take a hard look at Wall Street and demand fundamental reforms. I hope the protesters provide the spark that ignites that process.

The truth is that millions of Americans lost their jobs, their homes and their life savings because of the greed, recklessness and illegal behavior of Wall Street. Even Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke agreed when I questioned him this week at a Joint Economic Committee hearing that there was "excessive risk taking" by Wall Street. Bernanke also said the protesters "with some justification" hold the financial sector responsible for "getting us into this mess" and added, "I can't blame them."

The demonstrators and millions of sympathetic Americans understand that odds are stacked in Wall Street's favor because of

the extraordinary economic and political clout of the big banks. Believe it or not, the country's six largest financial institutions (Bank of America, CitiGroup, JP Morgan Chase, Wells Fargo, Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs) now have amassed assets equal to more than 60 percent of our gross domestic product. The four largest banks issue two-thirds of all credit cards, half of all mortgages, and hold nearly 40 percent of all bank deposits. Incredibly, after we bailed out the behemoth banks that were "too big to fail," three out of the four are now even bigger than before the financial crisis.

Not only do these financial institutions have enormous economic clout, their wealth makes them an extremely potent political force. From 1998 through 2008, in order to achieve their goal of repealing Glass-Steagall and other financial regulations, they spent more than \$5 billion on lobbying and campaign contributions. They also spent hundreds of millions to water down last year's Dodd-Frank reform bill. After the law was passed, hundreds of millions more were spent to repeal provisions and weaken regulations. They never give up.

Where do we go from here? How do we convert the protesters' enthusiasm into concrete results?

For starters, we should break up the giant financial institutions. Left to their own selfish devices, Wall Street bankers will continue to gamble with other people's money. Sooner or later, when their bets go wrong, they will come back to Congress asking to be bailed out again. Why not nip that in the bud? There also is a sound economic argument against too few owning far too much. The idea that six giant financial institutions can exert such enormous control over the economy should frighten anyone who believes in a competitive free-market system. Good Republican presidents like William Howard Taft and Teddy Roosevelt broke up Standard Oil, the railroad trusts and other huge monopolies a century ago. Now is the time for us to end the financial oligarchy that has been so destructive to our economy. If a bank is too big to fail, it is too big to exist.

Wall Street reform also must address the powerful and secretive Federal Reserve. A Government Accountability Office audit that I requested found that

the central bank provided \$16 trillion in revolving, low-interest loans to every major financial institution in this country, multi-national corporations, and some of the wealthiest people in the world. The Fed even helped bail out other central banks around the world. When Wall Street was on the verge of collapse, the Fed acted boldly. Today, with the middle class collapsing, the Fed must act with equal vigor.

Real unemployment is more than 16 percent. Median family income has declined by \$3,600 over the last decade. A record 46 million Americans live in poverty. The gap between the very rich and everyone else, the widest of any major country, is growing wider.

Under emergency provisions already in law, the Fed has the authority to provide low-interest loans to small businesses that are starving for capital so that they can create the millions of jobs our economy needs. It should do so.

The Fed also has authority to make credit card issuers stop bilking consumers with sky-high fees and interest rates of 30 percent or more. Especially in a recession, working people use credit cards to

stretch their paychecks for basic needs. Usury is already regarded as a sin in the eyes of every major religion. It should be a crime. The Fed has the authority to limit interest rates and fees. It should do so.

The Occupy Wall Street demonstrators are shining a light on one of the most serious problems facing the United States: the greed,

recklessness and power of Wall Street. Now is the time for the president and Congress to follow that light—and act. The future of our economy is at stake.

BERNIE SANDERS IS A US SENATOR FROM VERMONT.

Source: *The Boston Globe* 10/7/11 http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion

Bank Transfer Day causes credit union buzz

BANK TRANSFER DAY CAUSES CREDIT UNION BUZZ
JIM RUBENSTEIN

Even with most credit unions closed for Columbus Day there was plenty of online buzz, and uncertainty, about what the credit union industry role might be on "Bank Transfer Day," the latest event surfacing from the "Occupy Wall Street" protests.

Industry sources, speaking off the record, suggested any wholesale switch from large banks to CUs on Nov. 5, the day designated by one Californian and carried atwitter Monday, could conceivably put net worth ratios out of whack.

The balance sheet problem was raised by several industry officials as a potential hazard as online articles focused on what "Occupy" supporters are calling now for a specific action to underscore their complaints against big banks and corporate "greed."

For the record, Mark Wolff, CUNA senior vice president-communications, said only that the trade group welcomes the idea of "a viral 'Bank Transfer Day'" since it shows "just how angry consumers are becoming with their treatment by big banks" and will now look at CUs.

CUNA said its Facebook posts have already witnessed big jumps in traffic on www.asmarterchoice.org. There also have been big gains on www.findacreditunion.org.

Many consumers, said CUNA, are already "discovering" credit unions online and "many more no doubt will as a result of this Bank Transfer Day initiative."

Wire service reports Monday identified the ringleader of "Bank Transfer Day" as Kristen Christian, a 27-year-old Los Angeles art gallery owner who said she is not affiliated with the Occupy Wall Street protest, but that demonstration organizers had reached out to her to express support.

Christian reportedly chose Nov. 5 because of its association with 17th century British folk hero Guy Fawkes, who tried to blow up the British House of Lords but was captured on that day.

A *Facebook page for the event states that "together we can ensure that these banking institutions will ALWAYS remember the 5th of November!! If the 99% removes our funds from the major banking institutions on or by this date, we will send a clear message and give the 1% a taste of the fear that we experience every day when we aren't able to pay for our rent, food, medication, utilities, student loans, etc."

The protests began in New York and have popped up around the country. A few hundred protesters gathered in Las Vegas, for instance, on Thursday night and were escorted by police for a march down the Strip. Among the calls for action on the flyers being distributed was to move banking accounts to credit unions.

Source: *Credit Union Times* 10/10/11 <http://www.cutimes.com/>



Declaration of the occupation of New York City

NYC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As we gather together in solidarity to express a feeling of mass injustice, we must not lose sight of what brought us together. We write so that all people who feel wronged by the corporate forces of the world can know that we are your allies.

As one people, united, we acknowledge the reality: that the future of the human race requires the cooperation of its members; that our system must protect our rights, and upon corruption of that system, it is up to the individuals to protect their own rights, and those of their neighbors; that a democratic government derives its just power from the people, but corporations do not seek consent to extract wealth from the people and the Earth; and that no true democracy is attainable when the process is determined by economic power. We come to you at a time when corporations, which place profit over people, self-interest over justice, and oppression over equality, run our governments. We have peaceably assembled here, as is our right, to let these facts be known.

They have taken our houses through an illegal foreclosure process, despite not having the original mortgage.

They have taken bailouts from taxpayers with impunity, and continue to give Executives exorbitant bonuses.

They have perpetuated inequality and discrimination in the workplace based on age, the color of one's skin, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.

They have poisoned the food supply through negligence, and undermined the farming system through monopolization.

They have profited off of the torture, confinement, and cruel treatment of countless animals, and actively hide these practices.

They have continuously sought to strip employees of the right to negotiate for better pay and safer working conditions.

They have held students hostage with tens of thousands of

dollars of debt on education, which is itself a human right.

They have consistently outsourced labor and used that outsourcing as leverage to cut workers' healthcare and pay.

They have influenced the courts to achieve the same rights as people, with none of the culpability or responsibility.

They have spent millions of dollars on legal teams that look for ways to get them out of contracts in regards to health insurance.

They have sold our privacy as a commodity.

They have used the military and police force to prevent freedom of the press. They have deliberately declined to recall faulty products endangering lives in pursuit of profit.

They determine economic policy, despite the catastrophic failures their policies have produced and continue to produce.

They have donated large sums of money to politicians, who are responsible for regulating them.

They continue to block alternate forms of energy to keep us dependent on oil.

They continue to block generic forms of medicine that could save people's lives or provide relief in order to protect investments that have already turned a substantial profit.

They have purposely covered up oil spills, accidents, faulty bookkeeping, and inactive ingredients in pursuit of profit.

They purposefully keep people misinformed and fearful through their control of the media.

They have accepted private contracts to murder prisoners even when presented with serious doubts about their guilt.

They have perpetuated colonialism at home and abroad. They have participated in the torture and murder of innocent civilians overseas.

They continue to create weapons of mass destruction in order to receive government contracts. (These grievances are not all-inclusive).

To the people of the world,

We, the New York City General Assembly occupying Wall Street in Liberty Square, urge you to assert your power. Exercise your right to peaceably assemble; occupy public space; create a process to address the problems we face, and generate solutions accessible to everyone.

To all communities that take action and form groups in the spirit of direct democracy, we offer support, documentation, and all of the resources at our disposal. Join us and make your voices heard!

This document was accepted by the NYC General Assembly <<http://nycga.cc/>> on September 29, 2011, with slight adjustments in wording on October 1, 2011: <<http://nycga.cc/2011/09/30/declaration-of-the-occupation-of-new-york-city/>>

New York City General Assemblies are an open, participatory and horizontally organized process through which we are building the capacity to constitute ourselves in public as autonomous collective forces within and against the constant crises of our times. Please read the Principles of Solidarity working draft <<http://nycga.cc/2011/09/24/principles-of-solidarity-working-draft/>>

Interested in starting your own General Assembly? Here is a quick guide from Takethesquare.net <<http://takethesquare.net/2011/07/31/quick-guide-on-group-dynamics-in-peoples-assemblies/>>

Source: NYC General Assembly release, 10/1/11 <http://nycga.cc/>



11 facts about the nation's biggest banks



The Occupy Wall Street protests that began in New York City more than three weeks ago have now spread across the country. The choice of Wall Street as the focal point for the protests – as even Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said – makes sense due to the big bank malfeasance that led to the Great Recession.

While the Dodd-Frank financial reform law did a lot to ensure that a repeat of the

2008 financial crisis won't occur – through regulation of derivatives, a new consumer protection agency, and new powers for the government to dismantle failing banks – the biggest banks still have a firm grip on the financial system, even more so than before the 2008 financial crisis. Here are eleven facts that you need to know about the nation's biggest banks:

- Bank profits are highest since before the recession...: According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., bank profits in the first quarter of this year were "the best for the industry since the \$36.8 billion earned in the second quarter of 2007." JP Morgan Chase is currently pulling in record profits – ...even as the banks plan thousands of layoffs: Banks, including Bank of America, Barclays,

Goldman Sachs, and Credit Suisse, are planning to lay off tens of thousands of workers.

- Banks make nearly one-third of total corporate profits: The financial sector accounts for about 30 percent of total corporate profits, which is actually down from before the financial crisis, when they made closer to 40 percent.

- Since 2008, the biggest banks have gotten bigger: Due to the failure of small competitors and mergers facilitated during the 2008 crisis, the nation's biggest banks – including Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, and Wells Fargo – are now bigger than they were pre-recession. Pre-crisis, the four biggest banks held 32 percent of total deposits; now they hold nearly 40 percent.

- The four biggest banks

issue 50 percent of mortgages and 66 percent of credit cards: Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, Wells Fargo and Citigroup issue one out of every two mortgages and nearly two out of every three credit cards in America.

- The 10 biggest banks hold 60 percent of bank assets: In the 1980s, the 10 biggest banks controlled 22 percent of total bank assets. Today, they control 60 percent.

- The six biggest banks hold assets equal to 63 percent of the country's GDP: In 1995, the six biggest banks in the country held assets equal to about 17 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product. Now their assets equal 63 percent of GDP.

- The five biggest banks hold 95 percent of derivatives: Nearly the

entire market in derivatives – the credit instruments that helped blow up some of the nation's biggest banks as well as mega-insurer AIG – is dominated by just five firms: JP Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Citibank, and Wells Fargo.

- Banks cost households nearly \$20 trillion in wealth: Almost \$20 trillion in wealth was destroyed by the Great Recession, and total family wealth is still down "\$12.8 trillion (in 2011 dollars) from June 2007 – its last peak."

- Big banks don't lend to small businesses: The New Rules Project notes that the country's 20 biggest banks "devote only 18 percent of their commercial loan portfolios to small business."

- Big banks paid 5,000 bonuses of at least \$1 million in 2008: According to the

New York Attorney General's office, "nine of the financial firms that were among the largest recipients of federal bailout money paid about 5,000 of their traders and bankers bonuses of more than \$1 million apiece for 2008."

In the last few decades, regulations on the biggest banks have been systematically eliminated, while those banks engineered more and more ways to both rip off customers and turn ever-more complex trading instruments into ever-higher profits. It makes perfect sense, then, that a movement calling for an economy that works for everyone would center its efforts on an industry that exemplifies the opposite.

Source: ThinkProgress 10/7/11 www.thinkprogress.com



Poverty and capitalism



RICHARD D. WOLFF

The US Census Bureau recently reported what most Americans already knew. Poverty is deepening. The gap between rich and poor is growing. Slippage soon into the ranks of the poor now confronts tens of millions of Americans who long thought of themselves as securely “middle class.”

The reality is worse than the Census Bureau reports. Consider that the Bureau’s poverty line in 2010 for a family of four was \$22,314.

Families of four making more than that were not counted as poor. That poverty line works out to \$15 per day per person for everything: food, clothing, housing, medical care, transportation, education, and so on. If you have more than \$15 per day per person in your household to pay for everything each person needs, the Bureau does not count you as part of this country’s poverty problem.

So the real number of US citizens living in poverty – more reasonably defined – is much larger today than the 46.2 million reported by the Census Bureau. It is thus much higher than the 15.1 per cent of our people the Bureau sees as poor. Conservatively estimated, about one in four Americans already lives in real poverty.

Another one in four is or should be worried about joining them soon. Long-lasting and high unemployment now drains away income from families and friends of the unemployed who have used up savings as well as unemployment insurance. As city, state, and local governments cut services and supports, people will have to divert money to offset part of those cuts. When Medicare and if Social Security benefits are cut, millions will be spending more to help elderly parents. Finally, poverty looms for those with jobs as (1) wages are cut or fail to keep up with rising prices, and (2) benefits – especially pensions and medical insurance – are reduced.

Deepening poverty has multiple causes, but the capitalist economic system is major among them. First, capitalism’s periodic crises always increase poverty, and the current crisis is no exception. More precisely, how capitalist corporations operate, in or out of crisis, regularly reproduces poverty. At the top of every corporation, its major shareholders (15-20 or fewer) own controlling blocs of shares. They select a board of directors – usually 15-20 individuals – who run the corporation. These two tiny groups make all the key decisions: what, how, and where to produce and what to do with the profits.

Poverty is one result of this capitalist type of enterprise organization. For example, corporate decisions generally aim to lower the number of workers or their wages or both. They automate, export (outsource) jobs, and replace higher-paid workers by recruiting domestic and foreign substitutes willing to work for less. These normal corporate actions generate rising poverty as the other side of rising profits. When poverty and its miseries “remain always with us,” workers tend to accept what employers dish out to avoid losing jobs and falling into poverty.

Another major corporate goal is to control politics. Wherever all citizens can vote, workers’ interests might prevail over those of directors and shareholders in elections. To prevent that, corporations devote portions of their revenues to finance politicians, parties, mass media, and “think tanks.” Their goal is to “shape public opinion” and control what government does. They do not want Washington’s crisis-driven budget deficits and national debts to be overcome by big tax increases on corporations and the rich. Instead public discussion and politicians’ actions are kept focused chiefly on cutting social programs for the majority.

Corporate goals include providing high and rising salaries, stock options, and bonuses to top executives and rising dividends and share prices to shareholders. The less paid to the workers who actually produce what corporations sell, the more corporate revenue goes to satisfy directors, top managers, and major shareholders.

Corporations also raise profits regularly by increasing prices and or cutting production costs (often by compromising output quality). Higher priced and poorer-quality goods are sold mostly to working people. This too pushes them toward poverty just like lower wages and benefits and government service cuts.

Over the years, government interventions like Social Security, Medicare, minimum wage laws, regulations, etc. never sufficed to eradicate poverty. They often helped the poor, but they never ended poverty. The same applies to charities aiding the poor. Poverty always remained. Now capitalism’s crisis worsens it again. Something more than government interventions or charity is required to end poverty.

ANOTHER WAY

One solution: production would have to be organized differently, in a non-capitalist way. Instead of enterprise decisions being made by directors and major shareholders,

the workers themselves could collectively and democratically make them. Let’s call this Democracy at Work (DAW), since it entails the majority making the key enterprise decisions about what, how, and where to produce and what to do with the profits.

If the workers made those decisions, here are some likely results. Primary goals would no longer be to reduce their own numbers or their wages. If technological changes or reduced demand for their outputs required fewer workers, they would likely maintain the wages of workers and retrain them for other jobs meeting growing demands. Workers would not be fired and thereby pushed into poverty.

Second, workers making democratic decisions would not likely allow today’s huge differences between average wages and top managers’ salaries, bonuses, etc. By eliminating concentrated income and accumulated wealth at the top, resources would be freed finally to end poverty at the bottom. A DAW system could produce and secure the vast “middle class” that this country pretended but never yet really had. Workers disposing of their enterprises’ profits would no longer distribute a portion to politicians and parties to protect a rich minority against the envy and resentments of the majority. By establishing a far more egalitarian income distribution, a DAW system could also transform a political system now corrupted by the money of corporations and the rich.

Third, a DAW system would be less likely to raise prices or reduce output quality. When workers are both decision-makers at work as well as consumers of their enterprises’ outputs, they would more likely pass and sustain laws to outlaw the price gouging and quality deterioration common in capitalism.

A serious commitment to end poverty and its costly social effects requires us to face that capitalism has always reproduced widespread poverty as the other side of profits for a relative few. No wonder such a system has provoked Occupy Wall Street and so many of its signature slogans and demands.

RICHARD D. WOLFF IS PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS EMERITUS, UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AMHERST WHERE HE TAUGHT ECONOMICS FROM 1973 TO 2008.

Source: MRZine News Analysis 10/12/11 <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2011/>



The seven biggest economic lies



ROBERT REICH

The president's jobs bill doesn't have a chance in Congress—and the occupiers on Wall Street and elsewhere can't become a national movement for a more equitable society—unless more Americans know the truth about the economy. Here's a short effort to rebut the seven biggest whoppers now being told by those who want to take America backwards. The major points:

1. TAX CUTS FOR THE RICH TRICKLE DOWN TO EVERYONE ELSE. BALONEY.

Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush both sliced taxes on the rich and what happened? Most Americans' wages (measured by the real median wage) began flattening under Reagan and has dropped since George W. Bush. Trickle-down economics is a cruel joke.

2. HIGHER TAXES ON THE RICH WOULD HURT THE ECONOMY AND SLOW JOB GROWTH. FALSE.

From the end of World War II until 1981, the richest Americans faced a top marginal tax rate of 70 percent or above. Under Dwight Eisenhower it was 91 percent. Even after all deductions and credits, the top taxes on the very rich were far higher than they've been since. Yet the economy grew faster during those years than it has since. (Don't believe small businesses would be hurt by a higher marginal tax; fewer than 2 percent of small business owners are in the highest tax bracket.)

3. SHRINKING GOVERNMENT GENERATES MORE JOBS. WRONG AGAIN.

It means fewer government workers—everyone from teachers, fire fighters, police officers, and social workers at the state and local levels to safety inspectors and military personnel at the federal. And fewer government contractors, who would employ fewer private-sector workers. According to Moody's economist Mark Zandi (a campaign advisor to John McCain), the \$61 billion in spending cuts proposed by the House GOP will cost the economy 700,000 jobs this year and next.

4. CUTTING THE BUDGET DEFICIT NOW IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN BOOSTING THE ECONOMY. UNTRUE.

With so many Americans out of work, budget cuts now will shrink the economy. They'll increase unemployment and reduce tax revenues. That will worsen the ratio of the debt to the total economy. The first priority must be getting jobs and growth back by boosting the economy. Only then, when jobs and growth are returning vigorously, should we turn to cutting the deficit.

5. MEDICARE AND MEDICAID ARE THE MAJOR DRIVERS OF BUDGET DEFICITS. WRONG.

Medicare and Medicaid spending is rising quickly, to be sure. But that's because the nation's health-care costs are rising so fast. One of the best ways of slowing these costs is to use Medicare and Medicaid's bargaining power over drug companies and hospitals to reduce costs, and to move from a fee-for-service system to a fee-for-healthy outcomes system. And since Medicare has far lower administrative costs than private health insurers, we should make Medicare available to everyone.

6. SOCIAL SECURITY IS A PONZI SCHEME. DON'T BELIEVE IT.

Social Security is solvent for the next 26 years. It could be solvent for the next century if we raised the ceiling on income subject to the Social Security payroll tax. That ceiling is now \$106,800.

7. IT'S UNFAIR THAT LOWER-INCOME AMERICANS DON'T PAY INCOME TAX. WRONG.

There's nothing unfair about it. Lower-income Americans pay out a larger share of their paychecks in payroll taxes, sales taxes, user fees, and tolls than everyone else.

Demagogues through history have known that big lies, repeated often enough, start being believed—unless they're rebutted. These seven economic whoppers are just plain wrong. Make sure you know the truth—and spread it on.

ROBERT REICH IS CHANCELLOR'S PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY.

Source: Robert Reich's blog 10/12/11 <http://robertreich.org/>

Health care debate shown through a GOP lens

MARK KARLIN

That's a narrative that President Obama should have used when battling for health care reform. His absence of doing so is indicative of his inability—even while giving stirring speeches, as he did on jobs—to instill a larger vision and narrative into his presidency.

The reality is that the current health care system for those with insurance—many of whom opposed the White House's health care reform package—increasingly means that they are paying more and getting less in coverage. This is resulting from escalating deductibles, co-payments, out-of-pocket limits and higher premium co-pays. Ask any American, except for the wealthiest, and this is most likely a growing financial challenge that they are experiencing.

Ezra Klein of The

Washington Post wrote a column entitled, "How Health Costs Wiped Out a Full Decade of Income Increases." Klein notes, "All evidence points to American voters not really caring about rising health care costs. But here's one pretty compelling reason they should: The escalating cost of health care has wiped out nearly all income gains made by the average American family in the past decade..."

So, instead of emphasizing the larger narrative of rising personal medical insurance costs that threatens most Americans, Obama emphasized the uninsured. The Republicans turned this to their advantage through code words and fear—but mostly through the usual wink and nod that this was some scheme to benefit minorities and dead beats.

Obama lost the battle over this narrative, even

though it was his to win, because he all too often is afraid of speaking in terms that reflect the contextual reality of public policy options in plain, homespun terms. Instead, he accepts the debate "frame" of the likes of right-wing think tanks funded by the heavy-hitting Koch brothers' crowd.

The choice was never between "Obamacare" and a system that works. It was between a health care delivery system that is eating away at the wages of all but the wealthiest Americans and a paradigm shift in providing medical care in the US.

Obama avoided the paradigm shift and created a system that will enrich insurance companies that are themselves a key cause of rising health care costs, while managing to provide the Republicans a cudgel with which to hit him over the head.

Without a vision, without resetting the terms of the debate, without bringing the truth to bear down upon the important public policy issues of the day, Obama is a trapped man trying to punch his way out of an alternative universe narrative created by three decades of right-wing propaganda and bullying.

What about that average \$1,500 in payroll tax deduction that the president proposed in his new jobs bill? Most of us will be spending it on increased health insurance premiums, deductibles and paying for non-covered services. President Obama needs to spell out the real narrative of America, not to de facto accept the one forced down our gullets by Fox News.

Source: Buzzflash 9/9/11 <http://www.buzzflash.com>



Health care: a casualty of class warfare

JOHN GEYMAN MD PNHP

As the Great Recession rolls on after three years, without signs of relief on the horizon, a growing army of many millions of Americans is finding it impossible to gain access to necessary health care that is affordable. Meanwhile, class warfare is gaining intensity with a widening gulf between the left and right over the major issues of the day, including the future of U.S. health care. As political gridlock continues, the battlefield is littered with many preventable deaths, many lives wounded by the ravages of untreated or under-treated disease, and growing stress in affected families.

The public discourse is reaching new levels of ugliness, as illustrated by an audience at a GOP campaign event cheering the idea that those without health insurance should just be left to die. GOP presidential hopefuls have no solutions to offer except the "freedom to choose" (your own fate!) and the private marketplace (which increasingly excludes those who cannot pay its rapidly increasing costs). In fact, they exacerbate the problem, under the guise of fiscal responsibility and austerity, by cutting government safety net programs while at the same time trying to exploit Medicare and Medicaid by further privatization.

These are some markers that show some of the impacts of this war:

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2010 49.9 million Americans were uninsured (which understates the problem since anyone with insurance for even a small part of the year was considered insured), the median household income was \$49,445 (a drop of 2.3 percent from 2009), and 46.2 million people (including 22 percent of the nation's children) were in poverty (the highest number in the 52 years for which estimates have been tracked). (U.S. Census Bureau. Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States, 2010)

- In his recent editorial in *The Progressive*, Matthew Rothschild notes that, over the last 40 years, the income of the top 0.1 percent of the population (152,000 people making more than \$5.6 million a year) skyrocketed by 385 percent while the income of the bottom 90 percent (about 137 million people) dropped by 1 percent. (Washington Post) In the last ten years, the median income of working-age households has dropped by more than 10 percent (Economic Policy Institute).

- According to a Gallup poll, 18.2 percent of Americans state they did not have money to buy food at all times in 2010. (Gallup, Washington, D.C.)

- The median household wealth of white families has fallen by 16 percent since 2005; Hispanic families dropped by 66 percent. (Pew Research Center Social & Demographic Trends project. Washington, D.C.)

- * Three-quarters of the increase in U.S. corporate profit margins over the last ten years have come from depressed wages. (J. P. Morgan, New York City)

- U.S. corporations pay only 10.5 percent of their profits in taxes today (vs. 40 percent in 1961) with some paying no taxes. (Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.)

- Based on a definition of the middle class of those between the 30th and 70th percentiles of the income distribution, one-third of Americans dropped out of the middle class over the last 30 years. (Economic Mobility Project. Pew Charitable Trusts, September, 2011).

- The average annual premium for health insurance for a family of four reached \$15,073 in 2011, 9 percent higher than 2010 (an unaffordable level, about 30 percent of the median family income, or twice the proportion of income that seniors paid for health care when Medicare was enacted in 1965).

- In the most recent study of mortality amenable to health care in 16 high-income nations, the U.S. led the field with the most preventable deaths, and with the least improvement over a ten-year period; the authors concluded this poor showing is likely due to "the lack of universal coverage and the high costs of care." <[http:// www.commonwealthfund.org/Publications/In-the-Literature/2011/Sep Variations-in-Amenable-Mortality.aspx](http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Publications/In-the-Literature/2011/Sep_Variations-in-Amenable-Mortality.aspx)>. The Commonwealth Fund, September 23, 2011)

- The consumer confidence level is now only 45 percent. (WSJ 9/28/11). Despite all this pain and suffering, the political process continues to ignore this national catastrophe in the name of austerity as the debate continues over the budget deficit, targeting federal spending for education, health care and other important public programs (but avoiding bigger issues, such as major defense cutbacks, real financial reform, campaign finance reform, and tax increases for the wealthy). The extreme right-wing of the Republican Party, activated and hobbled by the Tea Party, continues to hold Congress and the Obama Administration hostage as it pursues its nihilistic agenda, focused on winning further power in 2012 despite its lack of a plan to address these kinds of problems.

The present situation in health care boils down to a human and moral crisis that seems beyond the reach or concern of our current political leaders, conflicted as they are by enormous amounts of corporate cash that perpetuates our present, increasingly cruel market-based system.

John Geyman, M.D. is Professor emeritus of Family Medicine, University of Washington School of Medicine and author of *Hijacked! The Road to Single Payer in the Aftermath of Stolen Health Care Reform* (Common Courage Press, 2010)

Source: California Nurses Association post 10/1/11 National Nurses Organizing Committee, 2000 Franklin St. Oakland, CA 94612 510-273-2200 <http://calnurses.org>

Michael Moore Movie "Sicko" Screened

CATHY MATHIS

More than twenty viewers gathered to watch a private screening of *Sicko* at the Peace and Justice Center on Saturday, October 8, followed by a discussion about implementing a single-payer health care system in the United States.

Many were moved to tears by the stories of hard-working Americans whose lives were cut short and ruined financially by a for-profit health insurance system. Equally moving were the profiles of citizens who enjoy free health care in Canada, the United Kingdom and France. The profile of the French system included a ride along with the 1-hour house call doctor, a visit to a French child care center and a chat with the worker sent to do laundry for a new mother, provided by the government.

A scene in which the movie's writer and director, Michael Moore, meets with a group of US expatriates living in France drew applause when one woman reflected that the reason she thought the social policies were so generous in France is that the government is afraid of its citizens. She cited the French proclivity for street demonstrations and strikes as examples of how the French citizenry keeps its government aware of its concerns.

After the movie, Rose Roach spoke of a current campaign to adopt a single-payer system in California, as Vermont is in the process of doing. Single Payer San Joaquin will participate in a caravan of cars to Sacramento on October 23 to hear James Haslam from the Vermont Workers Center and Donna Smith, who was featured in *Sicko*, speak about this issue.



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It's labor vs. capital, stupid



DAVID MORRIS

In the 1976 movie, *Network*, anchorman Howard Beale tells his viewers,

Things have got to change. But first, you've gotta get mad! You've got to say, "I'm as mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore!" Then we'll figure out what to do about the depression and the inflation and the oil crisis. But first get up out of your chairs, open the window, stick your head out, and yell, and say it:

"I'M AS MAD AS HELL, AND I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE THIS ANYMORE!"

We're mad as hell and we're not going to take this anymore. That is the message of the sit-ins by U.S. Uncut, the protests against Bank of America, the occupation of Freedom Plaza in Washington, D.C. to protest the war, Occupy Wall Street and the growing numbers of Occupy demonstrations around the country.

We're mad at the devastation wrought in the last four years by the toxic combination of unrestrained greed and concentrated wealth. Twelve to fifteen million families have received foreclosure notices. Seven to ten million more are unemployed. Median household income has fallen to its lowest level in more than a decade while the poverty rate is at a 17-year high. The number of homeless in New York City rose to an all-time high last year—higher even than during the Great Depression—with a record 113,000 men, women, and children, many of them comprising whole families, retreating night after night to municipal shelters.

We're mad at Wall Street for taking our money and giving nothing back. This Administration has given Wall Street nearly \$10 trillion in various programs, from insuring money market accounts to the Fed's buying of troubled assets to loaning money to banks at near-zero interest rates.

Wall Street has used the bailout to enrich themselves. In 2010, it handed out \$149 billion in bonuses and compensation, near an all time high. But it did not pass that largesse down. While bank profits have risen 136 percent since the financial crisis, bank lending has fallen by 9 percent.

We're mad at the 1 percent of the country who make decisions that enrich themselves while impoverishing the rest of us. From 1980 to 2005, more than 80 percent of the increase in personal incomes went to one percent of the population. One percent of Americans now take in more than quarter of the nation's income every year. In New York City, home to Wall Street, the top 1 percent took for themselves close to 44 percent of all income in New York during 2007 (the last year for which data is available). According to the Fiscal Policy Institute the wealth of this 1 percent derived almost entirely from the financial services sector. To qualify for inclusion on the 2011 Forbes list of the richest 400 Americans you need to be worth at least \$1 billion. In 2009 those 400 had average incomes of \$227 million.

"We are the 99%" is a fitting slogan for the new movements.

LABOR VS. CAPITAL

We know who the enemy is. The Michigan teachers recently released a video showing CEOs marching into classrooms and literally taking desks away from children, a visualization of the impact of a \$1.8 billion reduction in corporate taxes coupled with a \$1 billion cut in education funding the Republican legislature enacted. Six hundred pilots marched on Wall Street to protest the refusal of the CEOs of their airlines to bargain in good faith.

We are beginning to reframe the debate, shifting from a focus on deficits to the more fundamental issue: the relationship of labor and capital.

One indication of the new mood is the willingness of opinion leaders to use heretofore impermissible language to describe the crisis. One of the nation's leading economists, Nouriel Roubini informs the *Wall Street Journal*, "Karl Marx had it right. At some point, Capitalism can destroy itself. You cannot keep on shifting income from labor to Capital without having an excess capacity and a lack of aggregate demand."

Another reflection of the new mood is the emergence of a new kind of folk hero. People like New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman who last August rejected a proposed nationwide settlement that would have absolved the country's biggest banks from future lawsuits in return for a paltry \$20 billion. As Matt Tabbibi of *Rolling Stone* points out, "in 2008 alone, the state pension fund of Florida, all by itself, lost more than three times that amount (\$62 billion) thanks in significant part to investments in these deadly MBS." (mortgage-backed securities)

Mr. Schneiderman's audacity led to his being kicked off the executive committee of state attorneys general in charge of the case. "Ever since," the *New York Times* explains, "the four-member Correspondence Unit in Mr. Schneiderman's office, in a building wedged between the New York Stock Exchange and the New York Federal Reserve Bank, has been dealing with a flood of mail. It is, by all accounts, a spontaneous and grass-roots eruption of thank-you notes."

"I'm just doing my job," says Schneiderman. "At heart, Americans are not cynical people. I think they want to believe that there's one set of rules for everybody, that there are still good cops on the beat to keep things honest."

Yes we do. Which makes us furious when Kathryn Wyld, the Fed Board member who ostensibly represents the public, tells the *Times* that Schneiderman should cease and desist his attacks on Wall Street. "It is of concern to the industry that instead of trying to facilitate resolving these issues, you seem to be throwing a wrench into it. Wall Street is our Main Street—love 'em or hate 'em. They are important and we have to make sure we are doing everything we can to support them unless they are doing something indefensible."

Unless they are doing something indefensible?

The 2011 Academy Award for best documentary went to *Inside Job*, a searing indictment of Wall Street. Its director, Charles Ferguson told the audience, "Forgive me, I must start by pointing out that three years after our horrific financial crisis caused by financial fraud, not a single financial executive has gone to jail, and that's wrong."

Seven hundred Wall Street protesters were arrested in a single day. They were disrupting traffic. The CEOs of Wall Street firms disrupted the lives of hundreds of millions.

Conservatives have been remarkably successful in persuading us that government is the enemy. The 99 percenters know that is true only inasmuch as the government is captured by the 1 percenters. We are angry at government, but what makes us more angry is that in this system you get the government you pay for and 99% of us are not doing any buying.

We're mad at government, but we haven't given up on governance, on the right to make the rules.

Last week the General Assembly of Occupy Wall Street adopted a declaration of principles that will inform the new rules (see page 6). From that declaration of principles a program will emerge. Conversations about the elements of that program have already begun. Grassroots driven fundamental change is not without precedent. We can look to the Arab spring. Occupy Wall Street was self-consciously inspired by the occupation by Egyptians of Tahrir Square.

But we can also look to our own history. At the end of the 19th century a political movement arose to confront many of the same concerns that torment us: concentrated wealth, corporate power, the influence of money on democracy. The populist uprising led not only to the passage of state and national laws (e.g. anti trust legislation, minimum wage and maximum hour statutes) but several Constitutional amendments. In 1913 the 16th Amendment allowed an income tax; the 17th Amendment, ratified the same year required the direct election of Senators; the 19th Amendment, ratified in 1920, gave women the right to vote.

FIVE NEW RULES

The conversation about program will go on for months. To contribute to that conversation I offer five new rules: two of them Constitutional Amendments and three of them laws.

1. CORPORATIONS ARE NOT PERSONS.

The 14th Amendment, ratified in 1868 gave blacks the constitutional right of citizenship: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

In 1886, in a case that had nothing to do with corporate personhood, the court clerk wrote a headnote to the case that contained these fateful sentences, "The court does not wish to hear argument on the question whether the provision in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to these corporations. We are all of the opinion that it does."

Since the case itself never addressed the question these words did not comprise a legal precedent. Nevertheless, from then on the Supreme Court has considered the question settled. Some 65 years later Justice William O. Douglas observed, "the Santa Clara case becomes one of the most momentous of all our decisions. Corporations were now armed with constitutional prerogatives." And they made the most of these new prerogatives.

The 14th Amendment, written to protect weak and largely defenseless ex-slaves, was mostly used to protect big and powerful corporations. Of the 150 cases based on the 14th amendment the Supreme Court heard between 1886 and 1896, 15 involved blacks and 135 involved business entities.

In the next 20 years, relying on the 1886 "precedent"

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the Supreme Court steadily expanded the number of Constitutional rights accorded to this new type of person. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) offers a partial list: in 1893 the Court accorded corporations the right of due process under the 5th Amendment. In 1906 it extended to them the protection against search and seizure in the 4th Amendment. In 1908 it extended to corporations the 6th Amendment right to a trial by jury.

By the 1940s Justice Felix Frankfurter could accurately declare, "Artificial or not, corporations have won more rights under law than people have – rights which government has protected with armed force." In early 2010 the Supreme Court gave corporations the right, as persons, to spend unlimited amounts of money to influence elections.

Does it need to be said that unlike a real person, a corporation lacks a conscience? It is guided neither by ethics nor morality but rather by laws that required its Boards to elevate the maximization of profits above all other concerns. Does it need to be said that if a person makes a decision that kills or maims people he will go to jail? If a CEO makes such a decision he, at worst, receives a golden parachute.

A wonderful sign at the Occupy Wall Street protest reads, "I won't believe corporations are people until Texas executes one." We need a constitutional amendment consisting of four words: "Corporations are not persons."

2. MONEY IS NOT SPEECH

In 1976 the Supreme Court ruled that money is speech and therefore protected by the First Amendment. Today members of Congress now spend 25-40 percent of their time begging for money. Political scientist Thomas Ferguson observes, "Public opinion has only a weak and inconstant influence on policy. The political system is largely investor-driven, and runs on enormous quantities of money".

When states or the federal government have tried to make elections fairer the Supreme Court says no. Vermont

passed a law to cap campaign expenditures for state offices. The Court struck it down.

Congress tried to close a loophole in the campaign finance law that allowed billionaire candidates to spend an unlimited amount of their own money on their own campaigns. The Court struck down the law. Speaking for a 5-4 majority, Justice Samuel Alito told Congress that trying to "level electoral opportunities for candidates of different personal wealth" is not "a legitimate government objective."

The Supreme Court rulings declaring money is speech and corporations are persons make for a lethal cocktail. Jamie Raskin, a Maryland state senator and law professor at American university points out that Fortune 100 corporations had profits in 2008 totaling about \$600 billion. If they spent only 1 percent of their profits on elections, a trivial sum to protect and foster their interests, the total comes to \$6 billion. That is more money than was spent for and on behalf of all congressional and presidential candidates in 2008.

We need a Constitutional Amendment consisting of four words: "Money is not speech."

3. TAX FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

In 1936, John Maynard Keynes first proposed a financial transactions tax. "The introduction of a substantial Government transfer tax on all transactions might prove the most serviceable reform available, with a view to mitigating the predominance of speculation over enterprise in the United States."

Economist Dean Baker suggests that a modest tax (0.25 percent) could easily raise more than \$100 billion a year. "A small increase in trading costs would be a very manageable burden for those who are using financial markets to support productive economic activity. However, it would impose serious costs on those who see the financial markets as a casino in which they place their bets by the day, hour or minute."

4. TAX ALL INCOME AS ORDINARY INCOME

Billionaire Warren Buffett has commented on the unfairness of having a lower tax rate than his secretary. That is so because most of his income derives from dividends and

capital gains taxed at half the rate as income from work. (I think it altogether fitting that economists use the term "unearned income" to describe this kind of income.)

In 2007 the 400 Americans with the highest income—nearly \$345 million—were taxed at less than 17 percent, less than half the ordinary income tax rate of 35 percent because most of their income was derived from investments. If we were to require that all their income be taxed at the 1999 tax rate of 39.6% this alone would generate an additional \$300 billion in revenue over the next 10 years.

5. DECLARE A MORATORIUM ON FORECLOSURES

Foreclosures hurt individuals, neighborhoods and the economy. Dumping millions of homes on the market depresses the overall value of all real estate, increases unemployment and disrupts lives and neighborhoods.

The most effective way to stop the tidal wave of foreclosures is through permanent, sustainable loan modifications that reduce homeowners' mortgage principal and interest rates to market value. In a 2010 report, National Peoples Action proposed one strategy. "Across the country, some 11 million homeowners are \$766 billion under water with their mortgages. Paid off over 30 years this means \$73 billion a year needed to reset all underwater homeowners' principals and interest rates would be about half of the \$143 billion the top six banks alone are getting ready to pay in 2010 in bonuses and compensation. Even if the top six banks were to absorb the full cost of modifying all underwater mortgages in the country, they would still have \$70 billion left for bonuses and compensation."

The Wall Street occupiers have taken a stand against monied democracy and corporate power. We would do well to join them. Make your voices heard. And demand new rules that will honor the 99% and restore democracy to the nation.

DAVID MORRIS IS VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF THE NEW RULES PROJECT <HTTP://WWW.NEWRULES.ORG/> AT THE INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL SELF-RELIANCE <HTTP://WWW.ILSR.ORG>, WHICH IS BASED IN MINNEAPOLIS AND WASHINGTON, D.C. FOCUSING ON LOCAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Source: Common Dreams News Updates 10/9/11 <http://www.commondreams.org/occupy>

For Youth Development

CHARITY BRANT

The "Y" of San Joaquin County services the Central Valley of California through many different avenues: one way this non-facility branch reaches out to the community is through after-school programs. This Y is currently involved in 3 high schools of Stockton, where students are welcomed to come in after school and participate in fun and enriching programs, sports, and tutoring every day through the evening hours.



and neighborhoods with opportunities to create long-lasting friendships. These opportunities have proven themselves very valuable with two outstanding students.

The students are challenged as leaders and are encouraged to do great things for themselves, their school, and their community through leadership programs.

Each program has a core group of students who go above and beyond the normal involvement of a teenager in their community. These students, from each of the high school programs, are often brought together at leadership trainings and community service projects to work together. They get the chance to make bonds with people outside of their own high schools

Jalil Brizan and Alexis Carranco each embodies what an ideal young adult should be. Both students were highly involved in their high schools and each was one of the most impactful students in the young Y programs as well. Jalil was one of the original leaders in the Edison High School program. He worked alongside their program staff doing numerous hours of volunteer work, motivating his peers through the creation of "Deckmasters"

a popular competitive card game program. Alexis was equally as impressive in her work at Cesar Chavez High School. She helped promote the program at its birth at the school and stayed highly involved as a liaison between the school and the Y program, incorporating her passion for her community into her involvement in both.

These two students met numerous times at Y functions as two of the most faithful participants. Recently the two graduated and, while they are greatly missed, their Y link has moved on with them to college. The two were both accepted to California State University Monterey Bay and on the second day into the semester, they ran into each other. They now meet daily to hang out. College is such a huge transition for young people and it is encouraging to know that through their connection at the YMCA they have a friendship and common support system that moved on with them.

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Walmart and the good food movement

ERIC HOLT-GIMENEZ AND ANNIE SHATTUCK

Walmart recently created a firestorm of controversy within the 'Good Food Movement' when it donated \$1.2 million to Milwaukee-based Growing Power, a national leader in the struggle to get good healthy food to low-income communities. Some food activists have criticized Growing Power for taking the money, saying the donation is a thinly veiled attempt to buy goodwill. Others assert Growing Power deserves the money – and indeed should have received even more from Walmart.

Food polemics aside, a look at the numbers reveals an important motivational scenario for the planet's largest food retailer:

Walmart is under pressure to expand after eight quarters in a row of falling sales. By last December, the company was sitting on \$10 billion in cash, cash the company needs to put to work or risk the confidence of investors. Having saturated rural and suburban markets, the company plans to open hundreds of small-format stores in urban areas, (including 15 new stores in Southern Wisconsin). With post-recession real estate prices low, Walmart and other retail chains are swiftly moving in to capture the urban market. Success would mean an extra \$80 billion a year for Walmart's bottom line.

And it could mean even more.

American cities are gentrifying. Many major urban cores are becoming whiter and more affluent. The percentage of white residents in the urban cores of Washington DC, Atlanta, Oakland, New York and Chicago is growing. Between 1999 and 2008 the income gap between suburbs and urban cores shrank. Over the same period suburban poverty grew by 25 times.

Despite the hype, Walmart does not make its big money from low income consumers. Over half of all sales are to households with incomes above the national median. Just over a quarter



of sales are to households with incomes below twice the federal poverty line. Strategic placement of stores for Walmart could, if current trends continue, mean the company will be set up to serve the white and middle income communities moving back into America's urban spaces.

For Walmart, urban expansion is not about ending food deserts – it's about getting in on the ground floor of the future – affluent – retail market in America's cities.

Community groups and labor unions have long opposed Walmart's urban ambitions. With growing strength on the national scene, the community food movement is poised to become a player by expanding new local stores. If Walmart can sail through local city council votes for the conditional use permits and zoning adjustments they often need, the company may be able to avoid the infamous site fights that have accompanied new stores nationwide – and it will undoubtedly crowd out any and all local retail alternatives. Rather than having their food dollar spirited off to the retail monopoly's corporate coffers, these alternatives could potentially keep it in the community where it can recirculate as much as five times.

What does the urbanization of Walmart mean for the health of America's underserved communities? The answer may be 'not much.' Access is only one piece of the puzzle. A recently published study in a top medical journal found that greater access to healthy food is "generally unrelated to diet quality." Income level, however, is highly predictive of health outcomes. And

while Walmart's new stores will bring jobs, they are not living-wage jobs and are unlikely to bring prosperity. The company's labor practices are notorious: wage theft, poverty line jobs, and aggressive anti-union behavior. A study of an urban Walmart that opened on Chicago's South Side in 2006 also indicated that the new store cost the local economy as many jobs as it created, without increasing local sales tax revenue. In other words, Walmart drives local food retail alternatives out of the market.

What is the lesson for the food movement? If creating diverse access to healthy food and healthy local economies is the goal, Walmart is unlikely to help us reach it, given their current business model. Their donation to Growing Power is .00001% of what they stand to make if their urban expansion plans succeed.

The Good Food Movement should welcome the expansion of Growing Power's much-needed projects. However, if good jobs and a diversified food system are key to food security, we cannot afford to be fooled into thinking that Walmart is working for the Good Food movement.

ERIC HOLT-GIMENEZ, PH.D. IS A FOOD SYSTEM RESEARCHER AND AGRO-ECOLOGIST. HE IS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FOOD FIRST/INSTITUTE FOR FOOD AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY <[HTTP://WWW.FOODFIRST.ORG/](http://WWW.FOODFIRST.ORG/)>. HE IS THE MAIN AUTHOR OF A NEW BOOK ON THE WORLD FOOD CRISIS: 'FOOD REBELLIONS: CRISIS AND THE HUNGER FOR JUSTICE FROM FOOD FIRST.

ANNIE SHATTUCK IS A POLICY ANALYST AT FOOD FIRST/INSTITUTE FOR FOOD AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY. SHE IS CO-AUTHOR OF THE NEW BOOK 'FOOD REBELLIONS! CRISIS AND THE HUNGER FOR JUSTICE' WITH ERIC HOLT-GIMENEZ AND RAJ PATEL, WHICH EXAMINES THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS AND GRASSROOTS SOLUTIONS TO HUNGER SPRINGING UP AROUND THE WORLD.

Source: *The Huffington Post* 10/7/11
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

Occupy Wall Street exemplifies commitment

BRUCE GIUDICI

My family and I happened to be in New York City a few weeks back, and we were able to spend a short time at the Occupy Wall Street protest downtown. In short, it's a must-experience event—if only for personal inspiration...

Walking in from the west, the atmosphere is

NYPD, the group has taken to using a human amplification system, whereby the individual on the podium speaks loud enough for a group to hear, and then the group repeats the statement to the larger whole. While an interesting community-building exercise, the process seemed a huge concession to the police, who were lined up shoulder to shoulder on the

holding signs are from all backgrounds—uniformed people, suits, t-shirts and long sleeves—all protesting the 1% who have taken from this economy more than has ever been justified. The Occupiers are providing reminders to us all.

The point is made continuously—we are the 99%. While we in this country are not in the dire condition



that of a street fair—a very densely packed street fair. We arrived at about 6 pm, still light enough to see the bee-like structure of the mini-community settling in, preparing for dinner. The perimeter of the Occupy site has human billboards holding protest signs, and cops moving people along. Following the blue-tape-marked path inward, you notice the sleeping bags piled in the sleeping area on the right, further on the right is the canteen, where banana boxes marked "canned goods," or "dry soup" are stacked, sorted and readied for use. On the left is a pile of signs, free for the taking by folks like me. Walking further east, toward Broadway, is a depression where many people seem to be chanting at each other. With the right of amplified sound taken by the

east side of the park, urging the passers by to move along, move along.

In New York City's "Liberty Park," in Lower Manhattan, the occupation is a living entity—made up of perhaps 500 core committed individuals (and thousands of passers-through) who understand what is wrong with this country and are becoming visual. If media are unable to understand what the protest is all about, the signs are all around them. What are their/our demands? Pick up the many pieces of literature that clearly describe the need to end foreclosure, unemployment and homelessness while the richest 1% continue to party like its 1999.

The ongoing protest would expand to a larger group, were it to move to a larger venue. People

found in Egypt, Libya or Syria—millions here struggle to feed and house themselves while the top 1% thrive in the economic system of their making.

The non-violence of this place is striking—and you feel commitment. The moral demands are strong because the inequities are so glaring. If the mainstream media misses these demands for justice, it is either grossly incompetent or willfully ignorant. "It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his job depends on not understanding it," as Upton Sinclair sagely observed long ago. So, regardless of media coverage, the protest is real and continues, regardless of who's watching.



Big environmental wins in Sacramento

On October 9, the 2011 legislative session officially came to a close at midnight. The highly anticipated first year of Governor Brown's new term has yielded new laws to protect public health from polluted drinking water and BPA in baby products. Brown signed legislation designed to curtail the immensely controversial practice of "shark finning" as well as legislation to protect California's precious State Parks from closure. Overall, Governor Brown had an excellent record of signing strong environmental bills into law; a few such measures, however, fell victim to the Governor's veto pen.

Bills Signed

WATER

This year, the governor signed a couple of bills aimed towards reducing our reliance on imported water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary by improving the development and reuse of our local water supplies. These bills include:

AB 359 (Huffman) - Groundwater management plans - This bill encourages the sustainable management of groundwater resources by requiring, as a condition of receiving a state grant or loan, local agencies to including a map of prime recharge areas in their groundwater management plans. It would then require these maps to be shared with the planning agencies, interested parties and organizations.

AB 849 (Gatto) - Graywater building standards - This bill ushers the installation and implementation of residential and commercial graywater and storm retention systems; to reduce or eliminate regulatory barriers for water use and efficiency, and if feasible, to provide incentives to increase investment in and use of graywater systems.

ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER

All of the Human Right to Water Bills that had made it to governor's desk have been signed. These bills are designed to help all California have access to safe, reliable, and affordable drinking water.

AB 1221 (Alejo) - Drinking Water Funding - This bill helps with infrastructural projects that deliver safe drinking water and allow for responsible waste water management in rural and disadvantaged communities throughout the state.

SB 244 (Wolk) - General Plans: Identifying Unincorporated Areas - This bill requires cities, counties and local agency formation commissions (LAFCOs) to analyze infrastructure deficiencies in unincorporated disadvantaged communities. The bill works to ensure that these neglected unincorporated communities, are provided with the basic necessities for a safe and healthy living environment.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION

AB 376 (Fong) - Shark Fin Ban - This bill, co-authored with Assembly Member Huffman, makes it unlawful for any person to possess, sell, offer for sale, trade, or distribute a shark fin used in the traditional Chinese dish shark fin soup. This bill attempts to minimize the dangerous falls in shark populations and consequent damages to the world's marine ecosystems.

TOXICS

AB 1319 (Butler) - BPA ban in children's products - The bill enacts the Toxin-Free Infants and Toddlers Act, which would prohibit the manufacture, sale, or distribution in commerce of any bottle or cup that contains the cancer causing chemical bisphenol A (BPA) that is intended primarily for infants or children three years of age or younger.

RECYCLING

The Governor signed legislation establishing the most ambitious recycling goal in the nation for California, at the same time enacting incentives aimed at increasing recycled material processing and manufacturing in-state. Together, this strategy is aimed at creating more than 60,000 green jobs in the state over the next 8 years.

AB 341 (Chesbro) - Bill presents a package of policies that will move California forward from land filling to waste reduction, recycling, and composting, by setting a statewide diversion goal of 75% and finally expanding recycling opportunities to the state's largest underserved sectors: businesses and apartment buildings.

AB 1149 (Gordon) - This bill will provide market-based incentives of \$10-\$20 million annually to processors and manufacturers of recycled plastic.

STATE PARKS

AB 42 (Huffman) - State Parks Partnerships - this bill allows the state to explore beneficial partnerships with non-profit organizations that can help support state park system. In these times, when our state parks are being proposed for drastic program cuts and potentially massive closures, it is important to safeguard this multi-million dollar public asset and maintain public access to our parks.

BILLS VETOED

AB 275 (Solorio) - The Rainwater Capture Act of 2011 - which would have authorized landowners to install, maintain, and operate rain barrel systems, provided that the systems comply with specified requirements.

SB 834 (Wolk) - Integrated regional water management plans - would have required regions receiving water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to demonstrate how their Integrated Regional Water Management project will reduce reliance on the Delta.

Source: Planning and Conservation League 10/10/11 PCL, 1107 9th St, Ste 901, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 822-5631 www.PCL.org



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AD PAID BY JOHN MOREARTY

Grotesque, immoral and profoundly anti-democratic: repeal the death penalty

KADE CROCKFORD

“The death penalty is grotesque and immoral and should be repealed.” So says a New York Times editorial opposing capital punishment in the wake of Troy Davis’ execution in Georgia late last month. Those are strong words from the Grey Lady, and I couldn’t agree more. Many have demonstrated convincingly that Troy Davis’ trial and prosecution were riddled with racism, error and possibly even prosecutorial misconduct. The American justice system failed Mr. Davis with tragic, irreparable results—and the Supreme Court wouldn’t step in to remedy the injustice, in part because he had been granted full due process under the law. In the eyes of at least two justices, that’s all he or anyone else is guaranteed—not necessarily justice, just due process.

The US government recently executed another American, however, without any due process whatsoever. Both the Bush and Obama administrations accused him of terrorism, but no evidence to support those claims has ever been produced for the public. He was not tried; in fact, he was denied a trial. He was not offered an opportunity to present a defense. A defense would be hard to muster, indeed, for, unlike Davis, he wasn’t ever formally charged with a crime.

So far, more than five days later, the Times has not written an editorial condemning the killing of this other American, Anwar al-Awlaki. The last time the Times editorial board addressed the issue was a full year ago, in October 2010, when it wrote: “Assassination should in every case be a last resort.” Not exactly the stirring rhetoric invoked to oppose the Davis execution and capital punishment.

The Times’ silence, however, may be better than what The Boston Globe’s editors offered readers in the wake of the extrajudicial killing. The Globe parroted the evidence-less “proof” offered by the Obama administration, and, in true stenographic form, the paper asserts as fact a number of accusations Bush and then Obama made about al-Awlaki’s role in planning attacks on Americans. Has the Globe seen some evidence it is hiding from the public? After declaring

the assassination “right and lawful,” the Globe writes that assassination of American citizens away from the battlefield “is an act that must—and will—remain exceptionally rare.”

But how does The Boston Globe know that this act will remain exceptionally rare? How can the paper, or anyone, justify this most extreme form of government lawlessness and executive power overreach? The Globe itself denounced far lesser crimes—warrantless wiretapping, torture, indefinite detention sans due process.

A Democratic president has opened a Pandora’s box that no future executive will likely close. It is a sign of the declining value of democratic ideals in our society that a historically liberal newspaper like the Globe would defend the ultimate assertion of executive power, simply because they trust the executive presently holding it.

Much more than warrantless spying or torture, murder without due process is the government act that fundamentally separates free societies from authoritarian regimes. Like capital punishment, it has no place in a free society.

Thankfully, the editorial board at The Los Angeles Times knows that the “war on terror is not a free-for-all in which the United States may behave as it wishes without accountability or adherence to principle.” We can only hope that the other major bearers of public information and shapers of public opinion like the Times, the Post and the Globe come around to this realization before it is too late.

KADE CROCKFORD IS THE ACLU MASSACHUSETTS PRIVACY RIGHTS COORDINATOR

Source: Truthout and ACLU Massachusetts Op-Ed 10/12/11 <http://truth-out.org>



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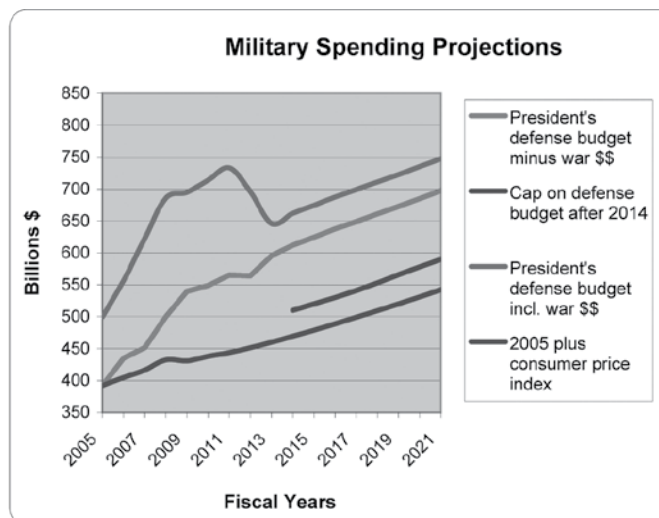
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Notes:

- Even after withdrawing most troops from Afghanistan & Iraq, the President proposed about \$50 billion a year for war spending, bringing total spending to about \$750 billion in 2021, higher than peak spending in 2011.
- Taking out past and planned spending on the wars, the President's projected military budget still goes up to more than \$690 billion -- about where we were in 2009, including war spending
- If the Pentagon were to be allowed inflation increases from 2005 (before the war supplementals started piling up), its budget would look like this line.
- Beginning in 2014**, if Congress does not agree on a spending plan that conforms to a cap set by the Budget Control Act of 2011, an automatic cap would require Pentagon spending to stay under this line.

**There could be a cap in 2013 under the Budget Control Act, but it applies to a broad category of "security" programs and therefore there's no way to calculate the effect on military spending.

Fiscal Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
President's defense budget minus war \$	392.2	435.1	451.5	500.2	539.9	548.9	565.2	564.2	595.8	612.1	624.5	637.6
Cap on defense budget after 2014										510	520	530
President's defense budget incl. war \$	499.8	556.5	622.4	685.9	695	714.2	733.3	695.9	645.8	662.1	674.5	687.6
2005 plus consumer price index	392.2	404.8	416.5	432.3	431.0	437.9	443.6	451.6	460.2	469.4	478.8	488.8
war funding	107.6	121.4	170.9	185.7	155.1	165.3	168.1	131.7				
*after 2008 = OMB assumptions												
Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021							
President's defense budget minus war \$	649.1	661.3	672.9	685.2	697.7							
Cap on defense budget after 2014	541	553	566	578	590							
President's defense budget incl. war \$	699.1	711.3	722.9	735.2	747.7							
2005 plus consumer price index	499.1	509.6	520.3	531.2	542.3							
*after 2008 = OMB assumptions												



Friends Committee on National Legislation
www.fcni.org
Contact: Ruth Flower 202-547-6000
10/3/2011

Debt solution Washington style

JIM HIGHTOWER,

And then there were 12.

When the 435 House members and 100 senators failed in July to agree on a long-term deficit reduction plan, congressional leaders did what they often do when they don't know what to do: They appointed a committee. But don't sneer, for this is – cue the trumpets – a supercommittee!

Made up of only a dozen lawmakers and perfectly balanced between Repubs and Dems, this panel is to find about \$1.5 trillion in spending cuts and new revenues to shrink the federal deficit. They are to come to an agreement by Thanksgiving – how's that for a symbolic deadline? The theory is that the group will be small enough to work together across partisan lines for the good of the country, independent of the competing budgetary needs of various groups and the demands of special interests.

The problem with theories, however, is that reality has a way of intruding on their perfection. In this case, the intrusion is literal. The 12 solons will not be sitting at the table alone, for such names as AT&T, BlueCross/BlueShield, Citigroup and GE have been escorted inside by the members. They'll not go in physically – but monetarily. For they are among the top donors of campaign cash to the 12 budgeteers, giving them an advantage over us plain citizens.

For example, Wall Streeters have invested \$17 million in the campaigns of the supercommittee's six Republicans and \$15 million in the six Democrats. That pile of political money will be a screaming presence in the negotiating room, for members will be thinking about their need to get more of it for the next election and will not want to offend donors.

By the way, one of the first decisions reached by the committee members was that they would allow themselves to continue collecting campaign donations while they decide whose programs and subsidies get cut – and whose don't. How do you think that'll work out? Turkeys are not the only endangered species this Thanksgiving!

This is one congressional committee that's likely to affect your life, for it's going to decide such things as whether to whack your Social Security benefits or cut back on Big Oil's \$4-billion-a-year taxpayer subsidy. You might have an opinion about which choice the supercommittee members should make, but can you reach any of the members personally get a chance to bend their ear? No? Too bad, because Big Oil can. And it is.

So are insurance giants, Wall Street bankers, military contractors and other corporate powers – not only because of their big-dollar campaign donations, but also because they have some very special lobbyists who're on a first-name basis with the members. You see, these lobbyists used to work for the 12 lawmakers on the supercommittee. In all, 109 former congressional staffers have now been hired by various corporate interests to lobby their old bosses.

General Electric, for example, has eight lobbyists on board who previously were on the staffs of super committee

members. They include the head of GE's Washington lobbying brigade, who had been the chief of staff for Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont. Indeed, Baucus' Senate office seems to have been a training ground for influence-peddlers – 26 of his former aides are now lobbying him and the other 11 deficit whackers to protect the subsidies that oil, insurance and other corporations receive from us taxpayers.

As one congressional watchdog dryly notes, "It's not like (the 12 members) are in an idealized, platonic debating society."

Indeed not. Once again, the game is rigged for those with the money and connections to play inside. Of course, the hired guns deny any insider advantage. The former chief of staff to supercommittee member Dave Camp, R-Mich., for example, is hustling Big Pharma's agenda, but he says flatly, "I make my case just like anyone else."

Oh, sure – anyone else who has a top staffer-turned-lobbyist working the system for them, which leaves out roughly 99 percent of us! And they wonder why Congress and corporate lobbyists rank below E. coli bacteria in public approval ratings.

NATIONAL RADIO COMMENTATOR, WRITER, PUBLIC SPEAKER, AND AUTHOR OF THE BOOK, SWIM AGAINST THE CURRENT: EVEN A DEAD FISH CAN GO WITH THE FLOW, JIM HIGHTOWER HAS SPENT THREE DECADES BATTLING THE POWERS THAT BE ON BEHALF OF THE POWERS THAT OUGHT TO BE—CONSUMERS, WORKING FAMILIES, ENVIRONMENTALISTS, SMALL BUSINESSES, AND JUST-PLAIN-FOLKS.

Source: Truthout Op-Ed 10/12/11 www.truthout.org



Ten years of capital gains tax cuts proves: rich win, you lose

DAVE JOHNSON

Why are "capital gains" taxes so much lower than taxes on other income? The reason capital gains taxes are lower is because most of the income of the rich is from capital gains. And the reason most of the income of the rich is from capital gains is because capital gains taxes are lower.

OUR SYSTEM

"Capital gains" are the gains, or profits, made from the investment of capital – the big pools of money that a few of us have the great responsibility and burden of being stuck with. The theory is that the few among us who have bundles of money (capital) use that money to start businesses or buy stocks or property (or race horses) and thereby "create jobs."

If the value of the business or property (or race horses) goes up those wealthy few make even more money (gains). This ability to obtain these huge gains is a benefit offered to those who have lots of money in the first place. Thus the term "capital gains." These gains are differentiated from the gains the rest of us make from ... working ... because the rest of us do not have the intelligence and wisdom of having those huge pools of money to invest.

INCENTIVES

In our system the income gained from these investments by these wealthy few is therefore taxed at a special very, very low rate, because they have the wisdom and intelligence to have large sums of money available to invest, and the rest of us do not. This low rate is considered an "incentive" to those who have these large accumulations of money, to try to persuade them to make these huge profits. They require these "incentives" to make huge profits, because otherwise they might not be interested in making the huge profits that can result from owning most of the property and stock and race horses (and yachts and private jets and multiple homes and million-dollar cars.)

So that is why they must be given the incentive of these very special low tax rates—to persuade them to make investments that reap huge profits that they otherwise would not want to make.

GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE

Of course, the wealthy usually complain when government gets involved in creating "incentives" and "picking winners and losers" in ways that help We, the People, saying government interference distorts decision-making. But when the "incentive" is special low tax rates to persuade the wealthy to invest and make huge profits, that's different. Because it is, that's why. Shut up. Hey, look over there!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

Public comment

Contact the joint deficit reduction committee



The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (commonly known

as the "super committee") has begun hearings focused on its mandated task to reduce the federal deficit by at least \$1.5 trillion over the next ten years. The committee has installed its own contact link to allow citizens across the country to send comments on what can be done to address the nation's debt.

The committee membership is made up of

Co-Chairs Jeb Hensarling (R-TX) and Patty Murray (D-WA), as well as Sens. Max Baucus (D-MT), John Kerry (D-MA), John Kyl (R-AZ), Rob Portman (R-OH), Pat Toomey (R-PA) and Reps. Xavier Becerra (D-CA), Dave Camp (R-MI), James Clyburn (D-SC), Fred Upton (R-MI) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD). The joint committee was established under the

Budget Control Act (P.L. 112-25). Under the law, House and Senate committees must submit recommendations to the committee by Oct. 14. The committee itself is directed to vote on a plan by Nov. 23. The House and Senate must vote on a plan by Dec. 23.

If the respective bodies cannot agree on a minimum of \$1.2 trillion in deficit

reduction before Jan. 15, 2012 an automatic "trigger" will enforce across-the-board spending cuts, 50 percent from defense spending and 50 percent from non-defense discretionary spending and mandatory spending programs that would go into effect in fiscal year 2013. Social Security, Medicaid and veterans' benefits would be exempt from such cuts,

although Medicare would not be totally exempt.

Updates on the committee's activities can be viewed by visiting their main website: <http://deficitreduction.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/>

Source: ESA Policy News 10/7/11, www.esa.org



The T is not silent

Letters from home

ELENA KELLY

On March 23, 2010 the Affordable Health Care Act became law. Since its inception it has been shrouded in controversy. The National Center for Transgender Equality has been following the progress of the legislation, and working behind the scenes on behalf of transgender people.

When President Obama signed the bill into law, the NCTE released a statement praising the Act, pointing out that there was nothing in it that mentioned transgender people at all. Most wouldn't think that was a good thing. But for decades, transgender folk have dealt with insurance company policies that had "transgender exclusions." Simply put, insurance companies have excluded transgender care from coverage. This article will shed some much needed light on what it means to be excluded from health insurance as it relates to transgender people.

In 2008, the Transgender Law Center in San Francisco surveyed transgender Californians, including me, asking questions about employment, housing and health care status. The resulting report revealed that 30% of respondents postponed health care due to disrespect or discrimination from health care clinicians. 42% postponed because they could not afford the medical care they needed. 26% reported that their condition worsened as a result.

So what do transgender people need in the way of health care? As with any other definable group, transgender people have particular health disparities as compared to the overall population. Here are a few that can impact the kinds of health care we need:

- Transgender people are more likely to be the victims of violence than others. Murders of transgender people have been reported in 20 states and 89 cities in the United States.

- Transgender people are at much higher risk of suicide than others. In a recent study, 64% stated they have attempted suicide at least once.

- Transgender people have more than double the rate of unemployment and are therefore much less likely to be able to afford health care, despite being four times more likely to have a college degree than the general population.

- Transgender people need much the same health care

as any other individuals, but are often denied care because they have body parts that are not congruent with their gender identity.

- Transgender people need mental health counseling simply because the social stigma associated with gender creates a difficult situation for those with transgender feelings.

- Some transgender people choose to take hormone therapy so that their bodies more closely match their gender identities. This process needs to be monitored by a physician or an endocrinologist.

- Some transgender people opt for surgery so that their bodies more fully match their identities, while others do not desire, or cannot afford surgery.

As the Director of the Stockton Transgender Alliance I get calls, texts and emails almost every day from transgender people living in the Stockton/San Joaquin area. The vast majority of the questions I am asked have to do with where they can get transgender health care. I have to tell them that unless they have Kaiser insurance there really is no place in Stockton they can safely go. If they have Kaiser, there are a number of well trained medical and psychological professionals available here in our clinic on West Lane. But even then there can be issues.

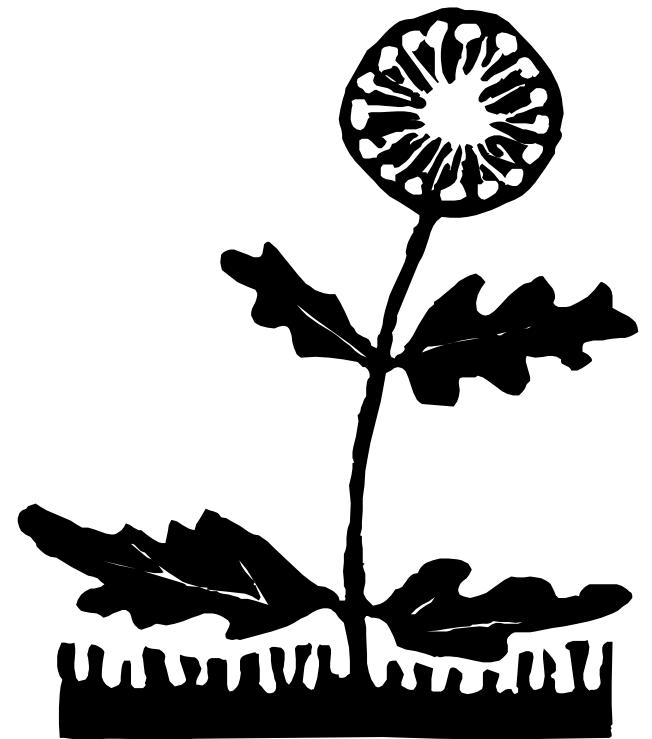
I have Kaiser through my workplace. When I started to transition three years ago, I called my Primary Care doctor here in Stockton. Her response was curt, and she said, "No, we don't do any transgender stuff here!" Luckily my daughter-in-law was a Kaiser Member Services employee and through that department I found a wonderful new Primary Care doctor, an endocrinologist, two fabulous psychologists, and an OB/GYN doctor that is second to none. They have taken first class care of me even though the Kaiser plan at my work HAS transgender exclusions!

So what happens to transgender Stocktonians who aren't fortunate enough to have Kaiser? Some get hormones through the black market. Most do not know the correct dosage because they have never had the necessary blood tests to determine what is right for their metabolism. Some go to the Bay Area or Sacramento to get care. Some are able to get limited care under Medi-Cal if they are eligible for it. Thanks to a new program at Planned Parenthood, there are

four centers in northern California that provide transgender services on a sliding scale. The nearest one that provides these services is in Sacramento.

I am beginning the process of identifying community clinics in Stockton and the surrounding areas that would be open to providing these services affordably. The cost to the clinics is very low compared to the kinds of care they give others routinely. But I am hoping my efforts will be thwarted because it just might be President Obama's gift to transgender Americans when he omitted the Transgender Exclusion Clause from the Affordable Care Act.

REV. SR. ELENA KELLY, OSH IS A MINISTER TO THE PEOPLE OF STOCKTON AND THE CENTRAL VALLEY, AND IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE STOCKTON TRANSGENDER ALLIANCE. SHE CAN BE REACHED AT ELENA.KELLY@COMCAST.NET.



House amendment to reverse Citizens United ruling moves along

BRITNEY SCHULTZ

In the wake of the landmark Supreme Court case *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which upheld that corporations were "persons" and that their deep-pocket political expenditures were a constitutionally protected expression of their free speech rights, much resistance to the decision has sprung up, from the grassroots to the halls of power in Washington.

Last month, Rep. Donna Edwards (D-Maryland) and Judiciary Committee ranking member John Conyers (D-Michigan) reintroduced an amendment to the US Constitution, HJ Res. 78,

which called for a reversal of the *Citizens United* case by limiting corporate contributions in elections. The bill is cosponsored by 18 US representatives.

Representative Edwards expressed initial hesitation to amending the Constitution, but said that the Supreme Court left her with no other choice after its ruling in *Citizens United*.

"Justice John Paul Stevens warned that the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United* threatened 'to undermine the integrity of elected institutions around the nation,' and how right he was," said Edwards. "Since that flawed ruling was issued, campaign spending by outside groups including

corporations surged more than four-fold to reach nearly \$300 million in the 2010 election cycle."

According to a poll conducted last year by Hart Research, an overwhelming majority of American voters agree that corporate spending has more to do with buying influence in Washington than with exercising free speech; 95 percent of those polled agreed that, "Corporations spend money on politics to buy influence/elect people favorable to their financial interests."

The proposed amendment targets corporations' First Amendment "political speech rights," but does not include corporations' commercial

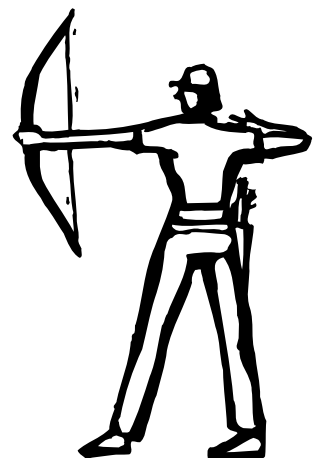
"free speech rights." Rep. Edwards said that Congress has other routes of "policing" corporate marketing.

While HJ Res. 78 is praised by some activist groups, such as Free Speech for People, others regard the bill as it is written with skepticism, pointing out that it is not a comprehensive solution for groups actively working against the larger issue of corporate personhood.

According to Move to Amend organizer David Cobb, "It is a mistake to oppose *Citizens United* only on the basis of campaign finance reform." Kaitlin Sopoci-Belknap, also from Move to Amend, told Truthout that, because the

bill legitimizes corporations' status as "persons" within the Constitution, it would actually make it harder for groups against corporate personhood to get their agenda through.

Rep. Edwards told YES! Magazine she has faith in passing the amendment: "We've amended the constitution 27 times, and this 28th amendment is no different. Some constitutional amendments have gone rapid-fire through the Congress, and I think that we have the potential for that kind of momentum here." BRITNEY SCHULTZ IS A TRUTHOUT ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING INTERN.



Source: Truthout Report
10/12/11 www.truthout.org



Navigating

In Irish, "muirchearaigh" means "navigator"—one who searches out the way

FDR speaks to us



JOHN MOREARTY

Many years ago in Washington D.C., through green trees across water, I glimpsed the Jefferson Memorial: a circle of white columns, shining. It's shimmered in my mind ever since. Finally this summer, my wife and I stood at the bronze feet of the great Virginia aristocrat and Democrat. High on marble we read, "All men ... certain inalienable rights ... life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness..." I exulted to my friend, journalist Dave Kaplan, about what we'd seen.

"Yes, John. But have you seen the FDR Memorial? Go!"

We went, and found another rich president with a conscience. Along the waterside, a park among trees. Fountains, bronze sculptures weathered green, freestanding walls. Dark granite blocks, chiseled deep with words of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, president of the United States, 1933-1945.

These words were spoken, not just written; FDR

reached people with "fireside chats," and one sculpture shows a solitary workman, huddled over his radio. Two old guys touring the monument told me, "Oh yes, we heard his fireside chats when we were kids!"

"What was his voice like?"

"He was like a Yale professor, talking right to us."

Another sculpture is a weary old couple, sitting by their shack. Cut in the stone: "The test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much, it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

Five men stand, staring, in a breadline. (Children could not resist joining the line.) In the stone: "No country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance. Morally, it is the greatest menace to our social order."

Roosevelt persuaded Congress to create the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which put millions to work restoring and protecting

the lands and waters. (The CCC is the model for the contemporary California Conservation Corps, now meagerly funded.) More words in stone:

"I propose to create a civilian conservation corps to be used in simple work. More important, however, than the material gains will be the moral and spiritual value of such work. Men and nature must work hand in hand. The throwing out of balance of the resources of nature throws out of balance also the lives of men."

FDR required American industry to convert its resources from consumerism to defeating the fascist armies of Germany, Italy and Japan, but he was no warmonger: "I have seen war on land and sea. I have seen blood running from the wounded. I have seen the dead in the mud. I have seen cities destroyed. I have seen children starving. I have seen the agony of mothers and wives. I hate war."

Eleanor Roosevelt, FDR's magnificent life partner, was a founder of the United Nations, and



Ten years of capital gains

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

JOB CREATION

This reaping of huge profits from "efficiencies" like downsizing, laying people off and making the remaining workers do 2 jobs each in the same amount of time, outsourcing, buying companies and firing everyone and then selling off the pieces, offshoring, force reductions, firing people and then bringing them back as "contractors" at half the pay, relocating factories out of the country where people don't have the protections of democracy, replacing workers with machines, etc. is called "creating jobs."

EFFECT OF CUTTING CAPITAL GAINS TAXES

In 2001 these special low tax rates for the very rich "job creators" were made even lower. This was done in order to provide even more incentive for them to make even more profits from their large accumulations of property, houses, cars, yachts, private jets and race horses, so that these "producers"—the "job creators"—would produce even more and create even more jobs. The result of these 2001 tax cuts was spectacular: eight years of the lowest economic growth and lowest job-creation rate since WWII, followed by the collapse of the entire financial system and mass layoffs of millions of us.

So the 2000s brought upon us an even greater need to provide incentives for the producers to create jobs! In fact, each time these incentives are increased and jobs do not result there is even greater pressure to provide even more incentives to the "job creators." A great system, this, if you're already rich, no? The worse things get, the more you get, because you had the wisdom and intelligence to be sitting on a huge pile of cash. Brilliant!

So with all this in mind, today the Washington Post looks at these super-low tax rates for those who have large accumulations of money, in Capital gains tax rates benefiting wealthy feed growing gap between rich and poor, for the very richest Americans, low tax rates on capital gains are better than any Christmas gift. As a result of a pair of rate cuts, first under President Bill Clinton and then under Bush, most of the richest Americans pay lower overall tax rates than middle-class Americans do. And this is one reason the gap between the wealthy and the rest of the country is widening dramatically.

[. . .] Over the past 20 years, more than 80 percent of the capital gains income realized in the United States has gone to 5 percent of the people; about half of all the capital gains have gone to the wealthiest 0.1 percent.

Repeat, "about half of all the capital gains have gone to the wealthiest 0.1 percent."

The Washington Post story explains the strongest reason why it is so important for legislators to pass these lower tax rates to "incentivize" the wealthiest to invest and make huge profits:

Some lawmakers who have backed low tax rates on capital gains have later been hired by the financial industry.

So you see, it is very clear why it is very, very important for members of Congress to make sure that there is a special very, very low rate of taxation for the wealthiest few. And the result? The 400 richest taxpayers in 2008 counted 60 percent of their income in the form of capital gains and 8 percent from salary and wages. The rest of the country reported 5 percent in capital gains and 72 percent in salary.

Yes, that is the very same 400 wealthiest who have more wealth than 60% of all Americans combined. So here is how it is: the rich are rich because they are smarter than the rest of us. And what is the proof that they're smarter than the rest of us? That's easy: Because they're rich!

DAVE JOHNSON IS A FELLOW AT CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE, WRITING ABOUT AMERICAN MANUFACTURING, TRADE AND ECONOMIC/INDUSTRIAL POLICY. HE IS ALSO A SENIOR FELLOW WITH RENEW CALIFORNIA.

Source: Campaign for America's Future 9/13/11 <http://www.ourfuture.org/>

The man sits alone, in his wheelchair. He was a survivor of polio. Like Jefferson, Franklin Roosevelt was a rich Democrat. "I never forget that I live in a house owned by all the American people, and that I have been given their trust." The "economic royalists" called him a traitor to his class.

The two old guys who remembered his voice told me, "We really need him in this country, now." I think the occupiers of Freedom Plaza, Wall Street and our Main Streets feel that, in their bones.



Come celebrate the Children's Museum

Where: Children's Museum of Stockton
402 W. Weber Ave., Stockton, CA 95203
When: October 24, 2011 11:30am – 1:30pm
Luncheon: \$20.00

The Children's Museum of Stockton's Board of Directors is inviting community members to a luncheon celebrating a successful year first year as a non-profit solely run by its board members.

New exhibits will be unveiled during the "Discover a New Adventure, Part 2" luncheon. The Pet Clinic where children can explore a Veterinary clinic, the extravagantly creative Art studio and the Galaxy room which houses former astronaut Jose Hernandez's flight suit will all be open to the public for the first time.

"It's been an exciting time for us as we keep the doors open for the children of this community. They are our future and deserve our support," said board president, Diane Batres.

Last year the City of Stockton planned to close the museum due to city budget cuts but passionate board members stepped up to keep the "little city" open.

"We just could not allow this place to close. It's been a lot of work but it has been so worthwhile," said Pat Buscher, board vice president.

Under the guidance of the Board, the Children's Museum hours of operations have been extended and the number of visitors to the Museum has increased.

"The luncheon gives us a chance to show the community this awesome facility and all the fun and educational activities we have for kids," said Mary Elizabeth Eberhardt-Sandstrom, long time board member. "And we'll have a wonderful assortment of holiday auction items that can be purchased, with all proceeds going into the construction of future exhibits!"

The Children's Museum of Stockton is a non-profit organization providing a safe, fun and educational place for children to learn and grow. At the Children's Museum of Stockton, every touch is a "know-know!"

Nov 4–6

Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

Hutchins St. Square, 125 S. Hutchins St.

Sandhill Cranes from as far away as Siberia and Alaska have been returning to California's Delta in the Central Valley to over winter. Hatched out earlier this summer, the young Sandhill Cranes chicks, or colts, have made their maiden voyage alongside their parents, returning to the Delta wetlands that their ancestors have known for over two million years.

Inspired by the birds' return, the family-friendly Sandhill Crane Festival, celebrating its 15th year, will take place in Lodi at Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins St, Friday through Sunday, November, 4-6, 2011. Free activities include the Friday evening reception, wine tasting and Art Show. Admission to the Festival is free.

Richard Beilfuss will be the Featured Speaker on Saturday, November 5, at 12:30 PM. Admission to his presentation, "The Global Status and Conservation of Cranes and the Landscapes on Which They Depend", is free. Hank Lentfer will be the Featured Speaker on Sunday, November 6, at 12:30 PM. Admission to his presentation "Faith of Cranes: Finding Hope and Family in Alaska" is also free.

Other Saturday and Sunday events include programs such as Wild Things, who return with their very special live animals; a bat presentation; an Owl Pellet Exploration workshop; a Decoy Carving Seminar for Beginners; a Crane Dance Workshop for ages 5 to adult, among many others. The Exhibit Hall, which features 30 vendors, a food court, and the hands-on Crane-ium for kids, is also free.

Visit www.cranefestival.com for more information regarding complete festival program, directions, and general information.

October 22

Trolley Dance- New Dance Company

Downtown City Centre Janet Leigh Plaza, starts @10:00 am tours on the hour through 2:00pm
\$15.00 general, \$10.00 seniors
Info: 983-8548.

This year New Dance Company is the proud recipient of dual grants to present "Trolley Dance" on October 22. We are using our Stockton Arts Commission grant to partner with San Diego Dance Theater, themselves recipients of a large grant from The James Irwin Foundation. The intent of the Irwin grant is to take San Diego's signature event to two other cities in California, and we are so pleased that Stockton was selected!

This season NDC plans to incorporate the Trolley Dance model, created by Jean Isaacs of San Diego Dance Theater, to expose underprivileged areas of a community to the art of site-specific modern dance. Trolley Dance is a unique performance series wherein tickets are sold to avid arts consumers who ride a "trolley" through town to five designated locations for professionally choreographed and performed works. Some of the locations for these site-specific performances are intentionally chosen in unusual and/or underutilized parts of town, and range from parking lots to bus stations, or perhaps to the site of an abandoned dilapidated building. Choreographers use the unique history and architecture of the site to create their works, and performances will not

only draw the attention of ticket holders, but also countless "accidental" viewers, to original modern dance creations. We plan to start the first performance at 10:00 AM downtown at the Janet Leigh Plaza in front of Centre City Cinema, with subsequent stops and performances that include Miracle Mile, University of the Pacific and Delta College. Each "tour" will begin hourly from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM (the last tour). We are partnering with San Joaquin Regional Transit District (RTD) to provide the transportation to each site along the tour, with a complete tour lasting just under three hours. Tour prices are reasonable: \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors.

Professional choreographer Jean Isaacs and her company have had a successful record of thirteen years producing this event in San Diego, and with their guidance we will also offer this remarkable event here in Stockton. In addition, Jean and her dancers will provide in-school lecture demonstrations and master classes for local dancers throughout the week they are in Stockton producing Trolley Dance.

New Dance Company, its Co-Directors, Ana Frenes and Lisa Rie, as well as Jean Isaacs and her company, are very excited to present this inaugural Trolley Dance event. Should you have any questions regarding Trolley Dance, please contact Ana Frenes at (209) 938-8548, or Lisa Rie at (209) 464-0855. Additional information and ticket purchases can be accessed at www.newdancecompany.org.

A day to remember all those who have lost their lives for their gender identity and to celebrate those people and organizations supporting the transgender community

Stockton's Transgender Day of Remembrance

**Sunday, November 20, 2011
7:00 pm**

**In memory of Ejeris Dixon & the
Transgender service members that defend America**

Sponsored by:
**Stockton Transgender Alliance,
Many Central Valley Organizations
& Individuals**

Location:
Temple Israel
5105 N. El Dorado St. @ March Lane
Stockton, CA 95207

Keynote Speaker:
Ben Hudson, Executive Director
Gender Health Center, Sacramento, CA

Mr. Hudson has served on the board of the Sacramento Gender Association and is co-founder of the Sacramento Transgender Coalition and TransFamilies Sacramento.

For more information contact Rev. Elena Kelly at (209) 649-0396 or elena.kelly@comcast.net

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Editor's note: if your event isn't listed, let us know. Send all copy to: bgudici@caltel.com by the 7th of every month.

OCT 6—NOV 3

2D-3D Figurative Works—local media. A national exhibition of 30 artists & 41 works. Tu 11AM—4PM, W-Th 11AM-6:30PM, F 11AM—1PM. SJ Delta College, LH Horton Jr Gallery, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 954-5507.

OCT 14—23

Antigone by Sophocles, presented by UOP Department of Theatre Arts, directed by Gary Armagnac. Fri-Sat 8 PM. Sat-Sun 2 PM. Long Theatre, south cAMpus of UOP. \$10-15 Info: 946-2UOP.

OCT 15—JAN 22

The Allure of Water: On Location with the Plein-Air Painters of AMERICA. Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. More than 100 new paintings from across the country. Wed-Sun 1:30—5 PM. \$5 adult 18—64, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10 free. 940-6300 info@hagginmuseum.org

OCT 21—30

Return to the Forbidden Planet, Fri/Sat 8 PM, Sun 2 PM. Studio Theatre, SJ Delta College, \$14. 954-5110.

FRI, OCT 21

All Hallows' Eve at Oak Grove Nature Center, 7—9 PM. A free and fun educational Halloween event for all ages—stroll through the garden, make a mask or puppet. Costumes encouraged. Oak Grove Regional Park, 4520 W Eight Mile Rd, Stockton. \$5 parking. 953-8814.

SAT, OCT 22

Trolley Dance presented by the New Dance Company. Trolley Dance is a unique performance series wherein tickets are sold to avid arts consumers who ride a "trolley" through town to five designated locations for

professionally choreographed and performed works. (see p 18) Starts 10AM at Janet Leith Plaza, Stockton. \$15 adult, \$10 student. 938-8548.

SUN, OCT 23

Seaport Woodwind Quintet with dancer Valerie Gnassounou-Bynoe. Quintet members include Barbara Maters (flute), Becky Secor (oboe), Beth Sanders (clarinet), Ruth Brittin (horn), and Marie Mielbrecht (bassoon). The quintet is joined by percussionist Bob Stover. 3-4 PM. Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. More than 100 new paintings from across the country. Wed-Sun 1:30—5 PM. \$5 adult 18—64, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10 free. 940-6315 education@hagginmuseum.org

Imani Wind Quintet—Friends of ChAMber music. Innovative GrAMmy-nominated chAMber music. 2:30 PM. UOP Conservatory of Music, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3601 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10—\$25. Free w/ valid student ID card. 946-0540.

Bike-In Movie, hosted by the San Joaquin Bicycle Coalition. Showing "RAD." 7 PM, Blackwater Cafe, Acacia & Yosemite, Stockton. sjbike.weebly.com

MON, OCT 24

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.

FRI, OCT 28

Stockton Symphony Patron Choice Pops: Behind the Mask—Broadway tunes from Phantom, Cats, Wicked, A Chorus Line and more. 8 PM. Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10—\$55.

954-5110.

Stockton Critical Masquerade! Wear your costume! 7 PM, in the parking lot of Stockton School for Adult, 1525 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. sjbike.weebly.com

OCT 28-31

Haunted House, sponsored by SJ AIDS Foundation and Haven of Peace. Hacienda Plaza, 4330 N Pershing Ave, 5:30—8 PM. Kids under 7 free, age 7-13 \$5, over 13 \$7. 271-9154 or 476-8533.

SAT, OCT 29

Eighth Annual Tarde de Flor y Canto 2:30—4 PM. Hosted by Richard Rios, Tarde de Flor y Canto (an afternoon of flower and song) celebrates the beauty and richness of Mexican and indigenous culture through poetry, music and dance. Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. More than 100 new paintings from across the country. Wed-Sun 1:30—5 PM. \$5 adult 18—64, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10 free. 940-6315.

Saturday Partners in Education (P.I.E.) designed to bring children (ages 6-12) to the University of the Pacific and give them a glimpse into college life. 10 AM—3 PM. UOP, 3601 Pacific Ave. \$10. 946-2444.

THU, NOV 3

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

NOV 4—6

Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival, all day (see p 18). Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins St, Free activities include the Friday evening reception, wine tasting and Art Show. Admis-

sion to the Festival is free. Visit www.cranefestival.com for more info regarding festival progrAM, directions, and general information.

NOV 4—12

Neil Simon's Barefoot in the Park, presented by the Ben Holt College Prep Academy, 3201 E Morada Ln. Fri/Sat 7:30 PM. \$7 student, \$10 general. 955-1477.

TUE, NOV 8

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 7—9 PM, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. All welcome. 467-4455

THU, NOV 10

Stockton Symphony #3 featuring Peter Soave, accordion. \$10—\$55. 8 PM. Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 954-5110.

SAT, NOV 12

Stockton Symphony #3 featuring Peter Soave, 6 PM. Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 954-5110. Third anual shred & e-waste day 10 AM—2 PM. Shred your documents, binders, CDs, VCR Tapes, hard drives and more! Recycle your unwanted computers, monitors, televisions, laptops, printers, copiers, scanners, faxes, and other equiPMent. 3255 W Ben Holt, Stockton. 954-4317.

SUN, NOV 13

Morgenstern Piano Trio—Friends of ChAMber music. 2:30 PM. UOP Conservatory of Music, Faye Spanos Concert

Oct 23

Imani Wind Quintet—Friends of Chamber Music

UOP Conservatory of Music, Faye Spanos Concert Hall 2:30 p.m., \$25, \$20, \$10 or Free w/valid Student ID card. 946-0540.

More than North America's premier wind quintet, Imani Winds has established itself as one of the most successful chamber music ensembles in the United States. Since 1997, the Grammy nominated quintet has taken a unique path, carving out a distinct presence in the classical music world with its dynamic playing, culturally poignant programming, genre-blurring collaborations, and inspirational outreach programs. With two member composers and a deep commitment to commissioning new work, the group is enriching the

Hall, 3601 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10—\$25. Free w/valid student ID card. 946-0540.

WED-SUN

NOV 18—DEC 11

Hairspray. Thu 7:30 PM, Fri-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 2:30 PM. Thur Dec 1 & 8. 7:30 PM. Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton \$15—\$25. 473-2424. www.sctlivetheatre.com

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, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

SECOND THURSDAYS

Single Payer San Joaquin meeting, 6:30 PM, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. bailey_hcasj@sbcglobal.net

THIRD THURSDAYS

Central Valley Wellstone Progressive Democratic Club, 6 PM, Perko's Cafe, 1703 E. Yosemite Ave., Manteca, Info: Rose Roach, 209-474-8496

FOURTH SATURDAYS

Greater Lodi Area Democrats (GLAD) breakfast meeting, 8:30 AM, Dee Dee's FAMILY Dining, 1170 S. Cherokee Ln, Lodi. 209-

663-3717

LAST FRIDAYS

San Joaquin Bicycle Coalition Critical Mass. 7 PM, School for Adults, 1525 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. sjbike.weebly.com

MONDAYS

Jazz at the Blackwater 8:30—11 PM. Mike Rocha, Rick Russell, Giulio Cetto, Michael Klooster and more. Acacia & Yosemite, Stockton.

WEDNESDAYS

San Joaquin Bicycle Coalition Night Ride, 7 PM, leaving from parking lot behind Espresso Coffeeshouse, 1825 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. sjbike.weebly.com

THURSDAYS

Peace demonstration, 5-6 PM, edge of Delta cAMpus across from Elephant Bar. Park at Sherwood Mall. Signs provided, or bring your own! Info: Patrick Wall, 954-5438. Dinner and a show, 6:30—9:30. Blackwater Cafe, Acacia & Yosemite, Stockton.

SATURDAYS

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

SUNDAYS

San Joaquin Bicycle Coalition, Night Ride. 7 PM, The Abbey Trappist Pub, 2353 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. sjbike.weebly.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO DISTRIBUTE CONNECTIONS TO WELL-ESTABLISHED ROUTES. ABOUT TWO HOURS PER MONTH. EASY AND FUN! CALL DEAN OR MARCIA SAVAGE, 209-339-1599.

Talking It Through

EDUCATION • ENVIROMENT • POLITICS • CULTURE

Peace & Justice Network Sponsors two Half-Hour Shows:

"Lets Talk" documentaries of important community meetings and events. **Mondays, 6pm.**

"Talking It Through" hosted by Sammy Nuñez features live discussines of important community issues, especially with your people. **Mondays, 6:30pm.**

Both shows are produced by Peace & Justice volunteer Vince Kotecki on SJTV: Stockton, Lodi and Manteca cable channel 26.

For up to the minute listings of current shows, see our website www.pjnsjc.org, click on Talking it Through.

Emergency Food Bank: A call for help for the holidays

VOLUNTEER!

Saturday morning volunteer options—all the following Saturdays offer the chance to volunteer, from 7:30 AM to 10:30 AM: Saturdays, October 15; November 5, 12 and 19; December 3, 10 and 17. Please contact tviall@stocktonfoodbank.org to volunteer for those Saturdays (work is generally food sorting, good for families and kids, too).

NOVEMBER 18, 19 AND 20

Stuff the Bus event, at Food 4 Less stores (Yvonne, need details). Please contact yderby@stocktonfoodbank.org to volunteer for this event.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Safeway food drive at local Safeway stores (volunteer shifts run throughout the day, involving greeting Safeway shoppers at the door). Please contact yderby@stocktonfoodbank.org to volunteer for this event.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21

Our huge “Thanksgiving Turkey delivery day” to over 1,800 client families, volunteers needed from 7 AM to Noon. Please contact tviall@stocktonfoodbank.org to volunteer.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Run and Walk Against Hunger at the Stockton Ports Ballpark, volunteer shifts starting at 6 AM and 8 AM, each running about 3-4 hours. Please contact tviall@stocktonfoodbank.org to volunteer.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19

Our huge “Christmas Turkey delivery day” to over 1,800 client families, volunteers needed from 7 AM to Noon. Please contact tviall@stocktonfoodbank.org to volunteer.

EVENTS AND FOOD DRIVES

“Are you looking for a way to get involved this holiday season? How about holding a food drive. I have everything you need to get started. Contact me and I can give you the forms and barrels to get started. All that’s needed is the desire to help, and let me help you do the rest.” -Yvonne.

Contact Yvonne Derby at (209) 464-7364 or see our website for more information.

TURKEY DRIVE

The Holidays are fast approaching and that means our Thanksgiving and Christmas turkey distributions are right around the corner. We need your help in rounding up some

birds. If you or anyone you know would like to donate turkeys or chickens please contact us! To donate items, call 209-224-8391 or drop them off at 7 W Scotts Ave, 95204, here in Stockton. Remember CASH helps too!

RUN & WALK AGAINST HUNGER

Join 4,000 friends for this Thanksgiving tradition, starting and finishing at the Stockton Ports Ballpark. Raise pledges to end hunger and food-insecurity; go to web site and its Pledge page for helpful tips! Volunteers needed—3 hour shifts between 6 AM and noon; contact Tim Viall, tviall@stocktonfoodbank.org or call 464-7369. Fun, work on the course, snacks/drinks and a very cool volunteer shirt!

THE EFB WISH LIST

FOOD ITEMS:

Canned meats
Canned fish
Canned Vegetables
Canned Soup
Canned Fruit
Packaged Rice or Beans
Peanut Butter
Flour
Sugar (Regular and Brown)
Cereal

VEHICLES:

Used cars of any type/condition,
95 or newer 1 ton Cargo Va
95 or newer 10-12 foot Box Van
Used fork-lifts, propane or electric

Source: Emergency Food Bank of Stockton/San Joaquin,
7 W. Scotts Ave, Stockton, CA 95203

25th Annual Peaceful Holiday Faire promotes socially responsible gift giving

Times: Friday, December 2 4—9 pm

Saturday, December 3 10 am—2 pm

Location: Central United Methodist Church,
3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton CA 95204

Admission: FREE

The Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County will present its 25th annual Peaceful Holiday Faire on Friday and Saturday, December 2 and December 3. This is a warm and friendly holiday event designed to encourage thoughtful holiday gift giving that reflects positive values and that benefits people rather than corporations.

This alternative gift fair will have unique, nonviolent items for sale by local small businesses and nonprofit organizations. Vendors include local artists and craftspeople, artisans, local organizations, and international service organizations such as Concern. We’ll be offering a variety of hand woven goods, artistic gems and jewelry, items for children/infants, and Celtic imports.

The Peaceful Holiday Faire is a joyous event—an opportunity to meet friends, partake of refreshments, listen to live music performances, and purchase gifts that are nonviolent and environmentally friendly. Please come and join us at Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. You may contact 462-3489 for more information or if you want to volunteer to help at the faire, call 943-0539.

CONNECTIONS

Would you like Connections delivered to your home? It’s FREE!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Mail to: Peace & Justice Network, Box 4123,
Stockton, CA 95204 (209) 467-4455

Peace & Justice Network does not sell or donate our mailing list. Connections is supported by donations and advertisers.

