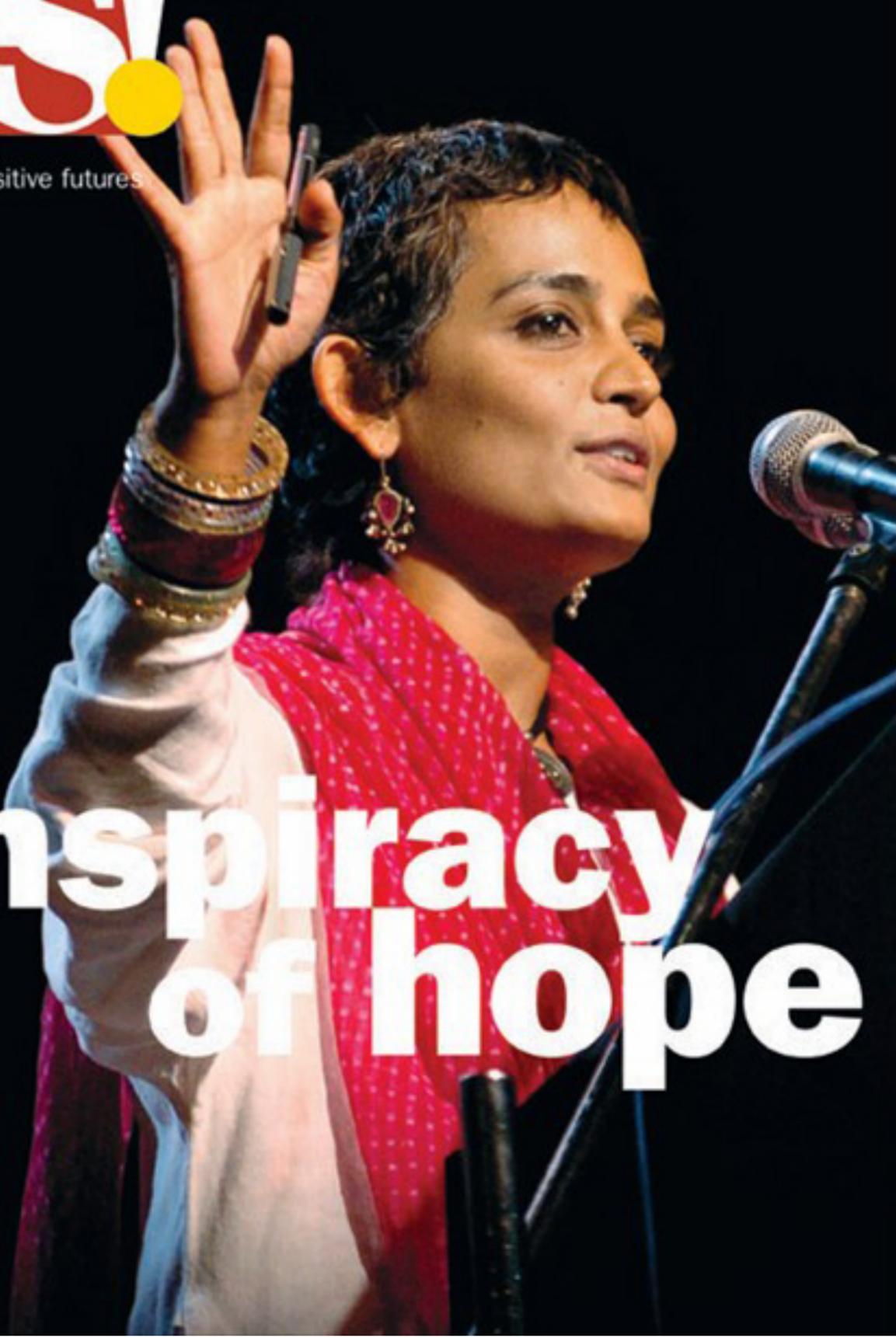


Spring 2004

Pilgrimage to enemy territory
Zapatista uprising
Another world is possible

yes!
a journal of positive futures



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Issue #29



Linda Wolf

Dear Reader,

One year ago, February 15, 2003, millions of people around the world filled the streets, marched, chanted, and sang for peace. It was not a single organization or movement that brought out the largest global protest in history. It was thousands of organizations and millions of choices people made to be there, but a single passion. Some count the day as a failure because the United States did attack Iraq the following month. But on February 15, we, the people of the world, made a powerful statement of clarity and resolve. And our marches and rallies were marked by the collaborative spirit, creativity, and peacefulness that we are working to bring into the world. *The New York Times* captured the significance when it announced the emergence of a second superpower.

The February 15 peace uprising is just the most visible of many efforts in which ordinary people from around the world are together making things happen that wouldn't otherwise be possible. Some trace this global convergence back to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, where civil society, excluded from meaningful participation in the official UN-sponsored event, held their own summit. As they shared experiences of environmental crisis and successful innovations, and worked together to write citizens' treaties, they began developing a global consensus on ecological sustainability.

Others trace this grassroots-style globalization to the uprising of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, on the day the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect 10 years ago this January, and the subsequent gatherings of global activists in the jungles of southern Mexico (see page 17). Still others trace this international activism to the late 1700s when people joined forces across continents and oceans to end an earlier practice of global, exploitative commerce—the slave trade (see page 12).

International political movements are not new. What is new is the global convergence of values around peace, ecological sustainability, and the rights of people to self-determination and freedom from poverty. In recent years, these values have found expression in the launching of the International Criminal Court, the land mines treaty, the Kyoto Accords and other initiatives of global civil society.

But how do we turn these shared values more fully into the lived realities of our world? In particular—given that the U.S. has declined to participate in these and other such agreements, and given trends that continue to show environmental decline and increasing warfare and polarization of rich and poor—how do we do so before we are engulfed in global warfare or ecological disaster?

Albert Einstein famously warned that we cannot solve problems with the kind of thinking that got us into them. Today's culture of domination cannot save itself, or us, from its ravenous economic system, over-inflated military, and wasting of the planet's life support capacity.

Instead, our best hope is coming from those who have resisted the seduction of the evils of materialism and militarism, as Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. would put it (see page 48). This leadership is emerging from the grassroots in communities around the world, especially among women and people of color who are rarely invited to the summits of the powerful and whose voices are rarely heard in the media. It is this leadership in the countries of the industrialized North as well as the South, and our collaborations across boundaries of nationality, race, religion, and gender, that gives credence to the World Social Forum slogan, "Another World is Possible." (See Fran Korten's report on the January 2004 World Social Forum on page 24).

Sarah Ruth van Gelder
Executive Editor

P.S. March 20, 2004, the anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, will be yet another occasion for a global call for peace (see page 57). Check with local activists for planned activities—or create your own!





Pramkaew/UNEP/Peter Arnold

another world is
not only possible,
she is on her way.
on a quiet day,
i can hear her
breathing.

Arundhati Roy
Porto Alegre, Brazil
January 27, 2003

COVER PHOTO: Arundhati Roy at the opening of the 2004 World Social Forum in Mumbai, India. Photo by Emmanuel Dunand/AFP/Getty Images

yes! Spring 2004 Issue #29

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YES! A Journal of Positive Futures (ISSN 1089-6651) is published quarterly for \$24 per year by the Positive Futures Network at 284 Madrona Way NE, Suite 116, Bainbridge Island WA 98110-2870. Periodicals postage paid at Seattle WA and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** send address changes to *YES! A Journal of Positive Futures*, PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island WA 98110-0818

SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$24 per year.

CALL: 800/937-4451 Monday–Friday 9:00–5:00 (PST);

SUBSCRIBE ONLINE: www.yesmagazine.org; or

E-MAIL: subs@yesmagazine.org

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PHOTO ABOVE: Tribal Indian men display painted faces at the 2004 World Social Forum in Bombay, India. Photo by Rob Elliot/ AFP/ Getty Images





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readersforum

Tell us what you think of the ideas you find in *YES!* by writing to
YES! Magazine, P.O. Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
or e-mail us at editors@yesmagazine.org

Hope for Our Water

It is with relief that I read the water issue (*YES!* Winter 2004). Having recently read Marc Reisner's *Cadillac Desert*, all about the damming of the American West over the past 100-plus years, I didn't think there was much hope left for water sanity in that part of the country, or anywhere, for that matter. The flagrant politics, power, greed and pork-barrel corruption in relation to water is mind boggling.

But the Mono Lake article, Grossman's work, the Hopi's hope and all the rest show human determination to conserve wisely. For *YES!* effort to counterbalance the often depressing aspects of human nature, which seem to be running amok these days, by bringing the optimistic view to light, I am thankful.

Hannah Fox Trowbridge
Harpwell, Maine

Right From the Tap

Here is a chuckle. "Bottled Water Flimflam" (*YES!* Winter 2004) reminded me of Clearly Worcester's Choice.

In Worcester, we are blessed with a competent and creative commissioner of public works, Robert Moylan, who has a flair for public relations. He is bottling our tap water, which comes from our reservoirs through a state-of-the-art filtration and treatment plant, attaching an elegant tri-color label, and giving bottles away at strategic opportunities.

The labels read:

"We've taken the protected water from our reservoirs in the pristine uplands of Central Massachusetts and added the best that water treatment technology has to offer. That result is Clearly Worcester's Choice, a water truly befitting an All-American City. Ozonated and filtered for unsurpassed safety and clarity.

"Clearly Worcester's Choice is available to you from the comfort of your own home. No long check-out lines and no lugging gallons of water. Simply fill this bottle at your kitchen tap and refrigerate.

"A product of the Worcester Department of Public Works and the only choice for an All-American City. Source: Worcester, MA municipal water supply. Worcester DPW brings you the safety, reliability, and low cost of a public water supply, plus the convenience of bottled water. Fill and Chill. Right From the Tap."

William Densmore
Worcester, Massachusetts

Stay Home

A reader wrote that her family plans to bicycle in different parts of the world every year to show that not all Americans drive big gas-guzzling cars. Great idea—if they bicycle to their destinations. Otherwise, they should stay home, as planes are the biggest gas-guzzlers.

I too love to travel, so I hope someone can invent a fuel-efficient means of getting across the globe.

Joan Phillips
Saint Paul, Minnesota

World Water Movement

The movement for water democracy covered in your Winter 2004 issue is building. From January 12 to 14, almost 300 water activists from over 70 countries met in Delhi, India, for the Peoples' World Water Forum. Participants declared their opposition to the water oligarchy of the World Water Council, Global Water Partnership, World Bank, and multinational corporations and confirmed their commitment to democratic, community-based control of the world's water resources.

The Forum focused on privatization, indigenous perspectives, small-scale sustainable management, corporate water mining, mega diversion and dam projects, and the establishment of water as a human right.

Small-scale, ecological community management is being accepted as both a preventive measure and a practical solution to the water crisis. This movement needs to create a new paradigm of water stewardship. We need to bring the responsibility over our water resources back to the local level. By doing this we can rebuild a culture of stewardship, the only truly sustainable solution to this impending water crisis. This will also strengthen our local economies and our communities and help us regain sovereignty over our lives and protect our cultural and ecological diversity from globalization. It is in this diversity that our hope lies. Across the planet, there are





many different methods of small-scale, low-cost, low-tech, ecologically sound management—some traditional, some modern, some a blend of the two.

The Peoples' World Water Movement can share this diversity of methods with the world, empowering people to reject the dominant, unsustainable models of agriculture, drinking water supply, and wastewater management. This movement also shows how we can implement the practices of water stewardship on a grassroots level. We are building a network to draw information on sustainable water management from organizations around the planet.

The Water Stewards Network is a North American organization that is working to collect and disseminate information on small-scale low-cost solutions to the global water crisis, and working to create a culture of water stewardship. For more information please visit our website at www.WaterStewards.org.

Michael Blazewicz
Resources coordinator,
Water Stewards Network

Corrections

We failed to credit Luke Scanlon for his graphic design, "All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Typical American," in "No Comment," *YES!* Fall 2003. We deeply regret this error. Luke Scanlon can be reached at luke@novacodova.com.

In the Winter 2004 issue, photo credits were omitted on pages 30-31. The photo credits, from left to right should have read: Pallava Bagla, courtesy UNDP India; Joerg Boething/Peter Arnold; Ian Berry/Magnum Photos; and D.V. Sridharan.

The photo credit in the Winter 2004 issue's "No Comment" should have read Jim Ingraham.

Readers take action

How are you and others taking action
to create a more positive future?
Here are your stories. . .

Cleansing Water

Perhaps many of our environmental problems exist because we humans have become disconnected from that which sustains us. Water has become something that comes out of a faucet; the source is no longer remembered as rivers or lakes with a host of intricate and interconnected life within it.

I have been working on a project in Duluth, Minnesota, that integrates ecological restoration, art, water education, and community participation. The project will use settling ponds, wetland plants, and sculptures called flowforms to cleanse stormwater.

Sediment from the city streets will settle to the bottom of the first pond. This simple step will improve the clarity of the water. From the settling pond the water will travel through a series of wetland ponds planted with native wetland species that take up or break down various pollutants.

The ponds will be designed by artists to be bold and attractive, integrating art into ecological restoration. Each pond may be planted with one species to teach the public about various wetland plant species. The third step of water cleansing comes from sculptures called flowforms, interconnected basins that move water in a swirling motion to oxygenate it.

This project is located in Duluth's downtown waterfront, an area that receives about 1.5 million tourists a year, which creates a huge education and outreach potential.

Walkways and interpretative signs will educate the public about the processes they are witnessing. Water quality monitor terminals will allow the public to see the improving quality of water from the first stage to the last. The electricity for monitoring stations and other needs will be provided by solar panels, creating energy without polluting the air or water. This project will be an ecological public green space that is educational and interactive. Readers can learn more about this project at www.sweetwateralliance.org.

Jill Jacoby
Duluth, Minnesota

Continued on page 61

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indicators

Forests Win Protection



Northern Images/ Wayne Sawchuk

A caribou grazes in a clearing in Canada's boreal forest

One of the world's largest ever environmental protection measures was achieved in December when a coalition of environmental groups, Canadian First Nations peoples, and private industry agreed to conserve 1.3 billion acres of Canada's boreal, or sub-arctic, forests. This is one of the largest unspoiled woodlands in the world and amounts to about one-quarter of the globe's remaining forest. It contains 80 percent of the world's fresh water, and the protected area makes up about 53 percent of Canada.

Environmentalists hope the agreement will protect not only Canada's northern forests, consisting largely of pine, spruce, and poplar, but also native wildlife—such as caribou, wolves, and bears—and migratory

birds, including whooping cranes, yellow rails, warblers, and sparrows.

"The Canadian Boreal Forest Initiative is the largest conservation agreement yet made in the world," said Monte Hummel, president of World Wildlife Fund Canada, one of the initiative's key participants.

The initiative was conceived about three years ago after the Pew Charitable Trusts in the United States, realizing that Canada contains a massive chunk of the world's remaining virgin forests, donated \$4.5 million (U.S.) to help the plan come to life.

The initiative includes some compromises. Roughly 50 percent of the area will be open for development, including logging and oil and gas exploration, using "ecologically sustainable" methods that have yet to be defined.

The agreement is also missing several key parties. One is the Canadian government. Without government involvement, some environmentalists worry that the agreement will lack enforcement power. The government may join the initiative in the future. Another missing party is the largest lumber producer in the world, Weyerhaeuser, which has major operations in Canada since it took over MacMillan Bloedel.

Bill Hunter, president and chief executive of the Edmonton-based Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc., one of the largest pulp mills in North America, said the plan is so large and so unusual that it's unsettling even for those who struck the deal. "I'm scared," he said. "But if this works, man, oh, man, what a model it will be for the world."

"We are conserving abundance," said Cathy Wilkinson, director of the Canadian Boreal Initiative, which helped pull together the framework. "We're flipping the paradigm...This is just a first step."

In contrast to the Canadian agreement, the Bush administration recently announced that the Tongass National Forest in Alaska, the largest in the country, would be exempted from the Clinton-era Roadless Areas Conservation rule, opening up more than half of the 17-million-acre forest for development and logging.

—Rik Langendoen

For more information on the Canadian initiative, see www.borealcanda.ca.

Miami Police Violence Draws Criticism

Voices from across the political spectrum and around the globe are calling for investigations into police violence during the November Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) demonstrations in Miami, Florida.

The FTAA talks were aimed at expanding the North America Free Trade Area to include all of Central and South America and the Caribbean. After ending a day early, the agreement fell short of outlining any definitive trade deals. What took the media forefront was the violent tactics used by police against protestors outside of the closed-door meetings.

Thousands of city, county, state, and federal police officers, armored vehicles, and helicopters turned the streets of Miami into a "police state," said Leo Gerard, President of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). The show of force was partially funded by \$8.5 million allocated from the \$85 billion Congress granted President Bush for his Iraq and Afghanistan actions.

Amnesty International, the AFL-CIO, and others are demanding that this collusion between the federal government and abusive police in Miami be investigated, and that the right to





protest peacefully be guaranteed.

In a letter to Attorney General John Ashcroft, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney outlined various abuses committed by the police force, including use of pepper spray and rubber bullets on peaceful demonstrators attempting to disperse, verbal abuse and intimidation including pointing guns at protestors' heads, and denying participants access to a permitted rally and march. "U.S. citizens were treated like a group of terrorists coming to town," said David Foster, USWA's District 11 director.

Miami Police Chief John Timoney coordinated this massive deployment of police forces, which Miami Mayor Manuel Diaz called a "model for homeland defense." Timoney was police chief in Philadelphia during the 2000 Republican National Convention, where large numbers of protestors were arrested. Charges were later dropped against 95 percent of them.

Tom Hayden reported in *Alternet* that in Miami he saw police dressed as anarchists provoke confrontations between police and protestors. The Miami City Council adopted several ordinances hours before the FTAA meetings, including banning groups of seven or more people from stopping on a sidewalk for longer than 29 minutes without a permit. More than 200 demonstrators were arrested. The USWA, AFL-CIO, Public Citizen, and others are requesting that Timoney resign.

As in the Iraq war, journalists were embedded within the police force, leading to coverage that critics claim did not deliver both sides of the story.

Anti-war groups, including United for Peace and Justice, joined the Miami protests, strengthening a growing alliance between diverse activist, labor, environmental, and indigenous groups. Sweeney marked this solidarity by visiting the convergence center where art-making, direct action training, and planning were done for the street protests. Foster noted that these alliances first emerged during the 1999 Seattle

World Trade Organization protests, but that recent threats to civil liberties are providing a new rallying point.

Faced with a weakened FTAA, the Bush administration is focusing on smaller bilateral and regional free-trade deals. On December 17, 2003, the Bush administration and Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua created the Central American Free Trade Area (CAFTA), which will allow 80 percent of U.S. consumer and industrial products to be exported to these countries duty-free. Costa Rica initially refused to join, but under U.S. pressure, in January it signed on to CAFTA.

—Rachel Milanez

Argentine Workers Build New Economy

The Brukman textile workers profiled in "Starting Over" (YES!, Fall 2002) are now back to work after being violently evicted by police in April 2003. A court in December declared the factory bankrupt and turned it into a state-owned company under worker control.

The clothing plant was abandoned by owners who, workers say, owed them back wages. Workers renamed it the December 18 factory, commemorating the day they began operating it themselves. The owners claim the factory was illegally taken over by the workers.

Worker-run factories like Brukman have continued to operate successfully in Argentina since the 2001 economic collapse caused many businesses to go bankrupt. At a recent national seminar sponsored by the National Movement for Recuperated Businesses (MNER), coordinator Jose Abelli estimated that newly recuperated businesses are putting 15,000 workers to work. Some of them, like Brukman, seek eventual state ownership, while others want to remain independent cooperatives.

"We're demonstrating that success is not profit but the creation of work and social inclusion," said coordinator Eduardo Murua, according to the

Argentine website Lavaca.org.

MNER is working to revise the national bankruptcy law to give workers a say in what happens to bankrupt businesses and create a state fund that would assist worker cooperatives. It is also creating a fund to use profits made by more successful co-ops to assist struggling businesses.

Two other movements that erupted after Argentina's plunge into economic crisis, urban barter clubs and neighborhood assemblies, have fared less well. The clubs eventually collapsed when people ran out of items to trade and corruption and counterfeiting of barter "credits" invaded the clubs. The streetcorner neighborhood assemblies, which once held as many as 200 people each, have shrunk to smaller groups of 10 to 30 *asambleistas* who nevertheless continue to organize health and cultural fairs, soup kitchens, and seminars.

This year activists hosted an "international autonomous January" in Buenos Aires that drew activists from around the world to discuss grassroots organizations like the Argentine assemblies, the *piquetero* unemployed groups, whose activities range from roadblock protests to farming collectives, and the Mexican Zapatistas, who emphasize local autonomy and horizontal political structures.

Though economists have seen a slight improvement in the country's outlook, the unemployment rate remains at 20 percent, more than half of Argentines live in poverty, and one in four doesn't have enough for a basic meal.

In the 2003 presidential elections, Argentines overwhelmingly rejected neoliberal Carlos Menem's bid to return to power, in favor of center leftist Nestor Kirchner. Kirchner has taken a tough stance with the IMF and gone after human rights violators from the military era, though he has received some criticism for allowing repression and criminalization of the *piqueteros*. Argentine activists have success-



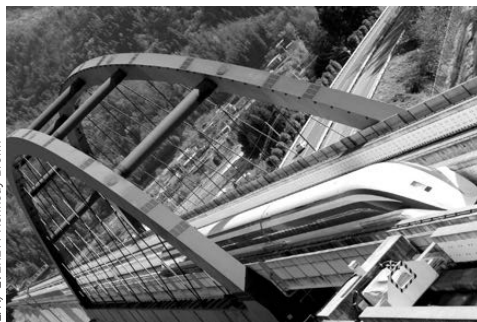
Japan's magnetically levitated train crosses a bridge on its way to setting a world record of 581 kilometers per hour on December 2, 2003

fully pressured the government to reject planned military "games" by the United States on Argentine territory.

"We are not just workers taking back our jobs," said Murua. "What we want is an entirely different model for our country."

—Lisa Garrigues

Lisa Garrigues is a YES! contributing editor.



Train Technology Speeds Ahead

Japan's magnetic levitation (Maglev) train beat its own world speed record on a recent test run. The government-funded, experimental train reached 581 kilometers (360 miles) per hour last December. Central Japan Railway hasn't announced when it will commercialize the train, which might replace its Shinkansen "bullet trains." Germany developed a Maglev train for China which, in January 2003, became the world's first such commercial train. Passengers can now travel from the Shanghai Pudong International Airport 30 kilometers to the center of Pudong in the eastern part of Shanghai in about 8 minutes, making it the fastest urban transit system in the world.

Today's American high-speed trains are slow compared to Chinese, Japanese, and European Maglev and electrified high-speed trains. Japan's electric bullet trains and France's Train de Grande Vitesse average 186 miles per hour, while Amtrak's high speed Acela train between Washington, DC, and Boston averages 75 to 80 miles

per hour. Because of government subsidies, European and Japanese train tickets are cheaper than Amtrak tickets.

This year, the U.S. Federal Railroad Administration is scheduled to choose one city to host the first U.S. Maglev train project. Among contenders are Atlanta; the Baltimore-Washington, DC, corridor; Los Angeles; and Pittsburgh. Meanwhile, Amtrak continues to experience financial woes. Last November, Congress gave Amtrak \$1.2 billion, \$600 million less than Amtrak said it needed to continue operating into 2004. The federal government continues to subsidize highways by \$33 billion and the airline industry by \$12 billion each year.

Passenger numbers are at a record high, but Amtrak officials say they will be forced to cut some routes and employees this year.

—Becky Brun

PATRIOT II Measure Becomes Law

On the day that news of Saddam Hussein's capture filled the media, December 13, President Bush quietly signed new FBI spy powers into law. The move, which broadens the government's power to track citizens' financial transactions, tucked a major expansion of the USA PATRIOT Act into the giant 2004 Intelligence Authorization Act.

By using what are called National Security Letters, the FBI can request financial records from banks without demonstrating "probable cause" that terrorism or any crime has been committed and without gaining permission from a judge. The new law now extends this power to records from stockbrokers, car dealers, credit card companies, airlines, insurance agencies, jewelers, the Postal Service, and most other businesses, and covers both financial and non-financial records. These businesses are forbidden from informing their clients that they have given the information to the FBI, and, under the new law, the FBI is no longer

required to report to Congress how many times it has used the letters.

While the security letters are not new, until passage of the 2001 PATRIOT Act, they could be used only when the FBI had specific evidence linking a suspect to espionage. Under the PATRIOT Act, they can be used in any investigation if it is "relevant" to national security. Last spring, the Bush administration tried unsuccessfully to allow the CIA and the military the right to issue such subpoenas, according to *Wired* magazine.

Expansion of National Security Letters was one of the elements included in a so-called PATRIOT Act II drafted by Attorney General John Ashcroft's staff. When the draft, which included government power to strip citizenship from Americans accused of terrorism, was leaked to the public by the Center for Public Integrity, it prompted an outcry and the Bush administration publicly backed away from it.

The new law comes as several appeals courts ruled against elements of the Bush administration's war on terror. On December 18, a panel of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan ruled 2 to 1 that the government cannot hold a U.S. citizen, Jose Padilla, seized on U.S. soil without being charged with a crime and without access to a lawyer.

The same day, a panel of the Ninth Circuit Court in San Francisco rejected the government's claim that it can hold the 660 men imprisoned at Guantanamo indefinitely without charging them with crimes or providing lawyers.

Judge Stephen Reinhardt wrote in the majority opinion, "Even in times of national emergency—indeed, particularly in such times—it is the obligation of the judicial branch to ensure the preservation of our constitutional values and to prevent the executive branch from running roughshod over the rights of citizens and aliens alike."

On December 3, the Ninth Circuit overturned parts of the 1996 anti-ter-



ror law that made it a crime to provide "material support" to any organization labeled terrorist by the State Department. The law was originally passed after the Oklahoma City bombing, under President Clinton, but the "material support" provision has been a favorite method of the Bush administration to obtain convictions in the war on terror. The court ruled that the provision blurs the line between crime and constitutionally protected freedom of expression, and that to be convicted, people must know they are supporting terrorism.

On January 26, a court for the first time struck down an element of the PATRIOT Act. A federal district court in Los Angeles ruled that the law's ban on providing "advice or assistance" to a terrorist group was so vague as to violate the First Amendment.

These rulings are likely to be appealed to the Supreme Court. The court is also hearing an appeal by an immigrant detained in connection with the September 11 attacks whose case, *M.K.B. v. Warden*, has been kept secret from the public. A coalition of 23 media organizations has joined the appeal, requesting that the contents of the case be made public. Until recently, every aspect of the case, even its existence, was secret. The case came to light, according to the Associated Press, be-

cause of a mistake at the Eleventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which briefly made records of the case public.

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear the case of Yasser Hamdi, who was declared an "enemy combatant" and held by the Bush administration without charge in a naval brig. Days later, the court refused to consider an appeal of a lower court decision that upheld the Bush administration's refusal to release names of foreigners rounded up and detained after September 11.

—Carolyn McConnell

For more information on pending court cases in the war on terror, see www.rcfp.org and www.ccr-ny.org.

Honest Corporate Reporting Honored

In a time of corporate scandals and book-cooking, this year's Business Ethics Awards included a prize for honesty in annual reports. Each year, *Business Ethics* magazine honors companies that emphasize social responsibility while maintaining a profit.

Baxter Healthcare won the Environmental Reporting Award for its consistency in reporting both its environmental accomplishments and its shortcomings. Baxter is also pledging to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2005.

3M Company won the Environmental Excellence Award for leadership in energy efficiency and lifecycle management—designing its products to minimize environmental impacts from creation through disposal.

Organic Valley, a cooperative of 633 organic farmers, received this year's Living Economy Award for companies that are locally based, stakeholder owned, democratically accountable, and life serving. The Social Legacy Award went to employee-owned Antioch Co., which has received national recognition for annually reallocating employee stock proportions so that older and newer employees receive equal benefits.

—Becky Brun

To learn more about present and past Business Ethics Awards, visit *Business Ethics Magazine's* web site at www.business-ethics.com.

Stakes High in Redistricting Cases

The U.S. Supreme Court is weighing in on redrawn congressional maps that could solidify Republican control of the House of Representatives for the foreseeable future. If Republican-controlled redistricting is upheld, the current 229 to 206 Republican majority in the House would become nearly insurmountable for Democrats.

The high court will decide whether Republican legislators in Pennsylvania went too far when they redrew the state's congressional districts in 2001. Although the state has nearly 500,000 more registered Democrats than Republicans, after a Republican-controlled redistricting, 12 Republicans and just seven Democrats were elected to Congress.

This case is part of a nationwide struggle over Republican-controlled redistricting. In December, the Colorado Supreme Court threw out a redistricting plan adopted by the Republican-led state legislature earlier this year because the state's constitution limits

Protesters demonstrate near the New York Stock Exchange in September 2003, while Attorney General John Ashcroft delivers a speech defending the PATRIOT Act



AP Photo/Scott Turow





redistricting to the year following a census. Colorado Republicans maintain that the court's ruling subverts the will of the people who elected the legislature. They have appealed to the federal court and are ready to take their case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Texas has witnessed the most contentious battle over U.S. congressional districts. Democratic state legislators twice decamped from the state to prevent their Republican colleagues from achieving a quorum and pushing through a highly partisan redistricting plan. A federal court has upheld the plan's legality and the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal. Democrats currently hold a 17-to-15 majority in the state's congressional delegation. With the new district boundaries in place, Democrats will likely lose five seats and another three will be in jeopardy. Latino groups are set to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court on the grounds of racial discrimination.

Both parties have manipulated redistricting in the past, but these efforts are traditionally limited to the year following a census. Republicans have been pushing redistricting plans several years after the census to take advantage of their gains in the 2002 election. New computer software, which can predict voting patterns down to the street level, makes redistricting an even more precise tool for undercutting one's political opponents.

Only four challengers defeated incumbents in the 2002 congressional elections, and only about 30 of the 435 seats in the House are considered competitive.

If the Supreme Court sides with Pennsylvania Democrats, Republican redistricting plans in Colorado, Texas, and other states will likely be reconsidered. If it rules that Pennsylvania Republicans did not act excessively, redistricting efforts will likely become more partisan.

Meanwhile, established progressive organizations such as People for

the American Way and the Advancement Project have stepped up their voter education and protection efforts in preparation for the 2004 elections, and new groups are emerging to mobilize voters. Women's Voices, Women Vote, launched in December, will target unmarried women as a group that could sway the outcome of the next election. Last August, labor unions, the liberal political action committee EMILY's List, and the Sierra Club, with funding from the financier George Soros, formed America Coming Together, a PAC dedicated to defeating George Bush and electing progressive candidates around the country. In January, the National Council of Churches and the Center for Community Change announced a \$15 million joint voter registration campaign.

—Krista Camenzind

Krista Camenzind is a former YES! intern.

Irish Tax Cuts Plastic Use Dramatically

Like most countries in the world, Ireland has found plastic bags a major source of litter and trash. Ireland's solution? In 2002, the government imposed a 15-cent per bag tax that is collected at check out.

The tax has resulted in a 90 percent reduction in use of plastic bags by consumers and brought in about \$10 million (U.S.) the first tax year. The money will go toward initiatives to protect the environment. However, the objective of the tax is not to collect revenue but to change consumer behavior.

More than 1 billion plastic bags will be removed from circulation by the tax, according to Ireland's Environment Minister Martin Cullen.

"It is clear that the levy has not only changed consumer behavior in relation to disposable plastic bags, it has also raised national consciousness about the role each one of us can and must play if we are to tackle collectively the problems of litter and waste management," said Cullen.

Australia, Taiwan, Singapore, South Africa, Britain, and New York City are all considering launching similar initiatives, while Bangladesh has entirely banned the use of polythene bags.

—Rik Langendoen

Philippine Activism Honored

Activists Walden Bello and Nicanor Perlas, along with a former New Zealand prime minister, an Egyptian agricultural firm, and a Korean nonprofit, received this year's Right Livelihood Awards. Founded in 1980 to honor individuals, groups, and businesses for outstanding work on behalf of the planet and its people, these prizes are often called the Alternative Nobels.

Walden Bello was a key figure in the international movement to restore democracy in the Philippines during the Marcos regime. Since Marcos' fall, Bello has been promoting alternatives to the neoliberal model of development.

Nicanor Perlas was forced to leave the Philippines in 1978 when he organized a conference exposing the dangers of the Marcos-supported Bataan nuclear plant. After Marcos was deposed, Perlas returned and campaigned against abuse of pesticides in agriculture, contributing to the Philippines' ban on 32 of the most damaging pesticides.

The Egyptian company SEKEM, another award winner, developed sustainable, biodynamic farming methods in Egypt. The Korean Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ) organized the Citizens' Legislative Movement, established an organic farmers network, and successfully campaigned for government transparency laws.

David Lange, former prime minister of New Zealand, received an honorary award for his work in promoting nuclear disarmament.

—Rachel Milanez

For more information on the Right Livelihood Awards, visit www.rightlivelihood.se. Walden Bello is a YES! contributing editor.





the page that counts

FBI estimate of cost of burglary and robbery in the U.S. every year: \$3.8 billion
Cost of health care fraud in the U.S. per year: \$100 billion to \$400 billion¹
Amount Americans spent on Internet dating during the first half of 2003: \$214 million²
Number of people in the U.S. Army on the eve of World War II: 186,000³
Number of people in today's U.S. regular Army: 480,000⁴
Number of U.S. troops in Iraq who have been killed, wounded, or become sick enough to require airlifting out of Iraq, as of December 19, 2003: 10,854⁵
Percent of Americans whose favorite sport is not football, baseball or basketball: 44⁶
Average daily wage of an adult male in an Indian/Pakistani football stitching factory: less than \$0.50⁷
Percent of the low-wage workforce in the U.S. that is not composed of teenagers: 93
Percent of low-wage jobs that are in the fast food industry: less than 5%⁸
Number of hours between the appointment of a six-person team of military defense lawyers for Guantanamo prisoners and their dismissal for decrying the unfair design of the tribunals: about 8⁹
Number of members of the replacement defense team who signed a brief to the Supreme Court arguing that the rules for these tribunals are unfair: 5¹⁰
Percent of Americans who are unable to identify a single department in the U.S. Cabinet: 58¹¹
Minimum number of times a year the Kentucky legal code requires its citizens to take a bath: 1¹²
Rank of "It's too cold" among office complaints in a survey of workplaces with 100 people or more: 1
Rank of "It's too hot": 2¹³
Percent of Wal-Mart employees eligible for food stamps: around 50%¹⁴
Combined net worth of the three Waltons who own 38% of Wal-Mart's stock: \$66 billion
Net worth of Afghanistan: \$19 billion¹⁵
Value of the gift certificate Wal-Mart offered a 10-year-old girl who was allegedly fondled by a store employee in South Carolina: \$25¹⁶
Size of the tax break Denver, Colorado, is offering Wal-Mart to locate a store in the city: \$10 million
Projected sales tax this Wal-Mart will produce between now and 2016: about \$1.6 million¹⁷
Value of merchandise Wal-Mart—which earlier advertised its mission to "Buy American"—imported from China in 2002: \$12 billion¹⁸
Cost of a single-serving bottle of Coca-Cola in Ecuador: \$0.55
Daily wage of the average Ecuadorian: \$5
Amount of Coca-Cola consumed daily by the average Latin American: 1 bottle¹⁹
Percent of Americans who would like to have a simpler holiday season: 77²⁰
Rank of Alaska in the most polluted states in the U.S.: 4²¹
Number of people there would be in Manhattan if it had as few people per square mile as Alaska: 14²²

1. Corporate Predators, "Top 100 Corporate Criminals of the Decade," www.corporatepredators.org/top100.html 2. "No Time For Dating? You're Not Alone," *USA Today*, www.usatoday.com/life/2003-11-12-modern-dating_x.htm 3. "The War Business," *Harper's*, November 2003 4. "Army To Delay Soldiers' Exits," *Reuters*, Jan. 5, 2004 5. "Medical Evacuations from Iraq Near 11,000," *United Press International*, www.upi.com/view.cfm?StoryID=20031217-032344-8720r 6. "Why You Don't Have to Care About Michael Jackson," *Progressive Review*, December 2003, <http://prorrev.com/arts.htm> 7. Global March Against Child Labour, "Child Labour and Sporting Goods," www.globalmarch.org/world-cup-campaign/child-labour.php3 8. *The Betrayal of Work*, www.thebetrayalofwork.org/facts.htm 9. "U.S. Fires Guantanamo Defence Team," *The Guardian*, December 3, 2003 10. "Military Lawyers Question Tribunal Rules," *Washington Post*, January 13, 2004, www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A11416-2004Jan12.html 11. The Polling Company, www.pollingcompany.com/News.asp?FormMode=ViewReleases&ID=73 12. Local6.com News, www.local6.com/news/2662644/detail.html 13. "IFMA Survey Ranks Top 10 Office Complaints...and Some That Score High on the Laugh Meter," *The 2003 Corporate Facility Monitor International Facility Management Association Survey*, www.ifmasf.org/Education/top_10_office_complaints.htm 14. "Tear Down That Wal-Mart," *AlterNet*, <http://alternet.org/story.html?StoryID=17297> 15. "Will Break to Wal-Mart Really Pay?" *Common Dreams News Center*, www.commondreams.org/views03/0926-11.htm 16. "NOW Declares Wal-Mart a Merchant of Shame," *National Organization of Women*, www.now.org/nnt/fall-2002/walmart.html 17. "Will Break to Wal-Mart Really Pay?" *Common Dreams News Center*, www.commondreams.org/views03/0926-11.htm 18. "The Wal-Mart You Don't Know," *Fast Company*, www.fastcompany.com/magazine/77/walmart.html 19. "Coca-Cola: Latin America's Second Religion," *AlterNet*, www.alternet.org/story.html?StoryID=13226 20. *The Center for a New American Dream*, www.newdream.org/holiday/poll02.html 21. "Alaska: Oil and the Natives," *Earth Island Journal*, Autumn 2003 22. "How Big is Alaska?" www.litia.lynden.com/litia/howbig.html



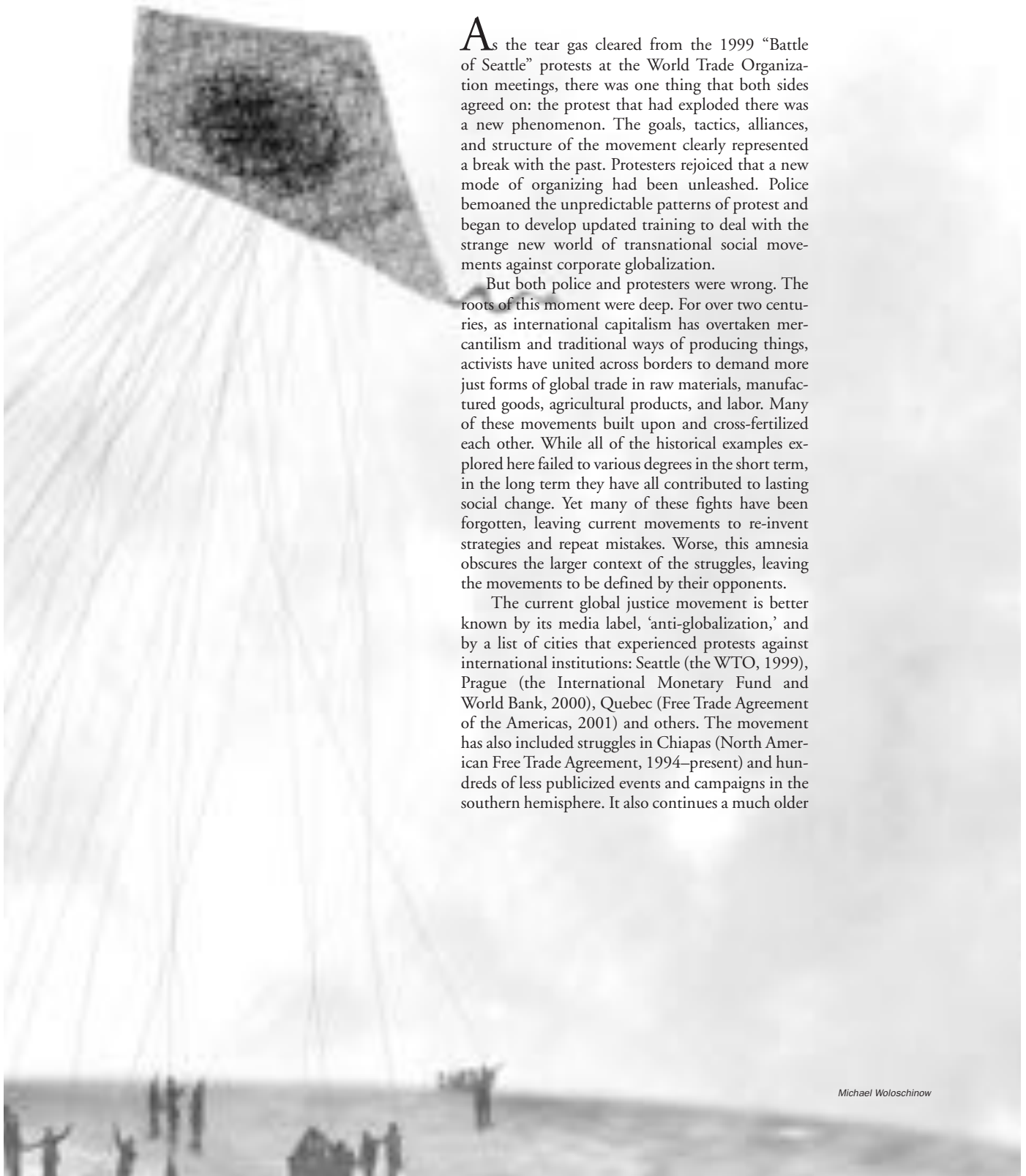


Zahara Heckscher

a conspiracy of hope

Ever since global trade began to transform cultures, people have worked together across borders of nation, religion, and race, finding strength together that they lacked separately. As they resisted globalization built on exploitation of nature and people, they globalized a vision of a better world, bending the arc of history toward justice





As the tear gas cleared from the 1999 “Battle of Seattle” protests at the World Trade Organization meetings, there was one thing that both sides agreed on: the protest that had exploded there was a new phenomenon. The goals, tactics, alliances, and structure of the movement clearly represented a break with the past. Protesters rejoiced that a new mode of organizing had been unleashed. Police bemoaned the unpredictable patterns of protest and began to develop updated training to deal with the strange new world of transnational social movements against corporate globalization.

But both police and protesters were wrong. The roots of this moment were deep. For over two centuries, as international capitalism has overtaken mercantilism and traditional ways of producing things, activists have united across borders to demand more just forms of global trade in raw materials, manufactured goods, agricultural products, and labor. Many of these movements built upon and cross-fertilized each other. While all of the historical examples explored here failed to various degrees in the short term, in the long term they have all contributed to lasting social change. Yet many of these fights have been forgotten, leaving current movements to re-invent strategies and repeat mistakes. Worse, this amnesia obscures the larger context of the struggles, leaving the movements to be defined by their opponents.

The current global justice movement is better known by its media label, ‘anti-globalization,’ and by a list of cities that experienced protests against international institutions: Seattle (the WTO, 1999), Prague (the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, 2000), Quebec (Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, 2001) and others. The movement has also included struggles in Chiapas (North American Free Trade Agreement, 1994–present) and hundreds of less publicized events and campaigns in the southern hemisphere. It also continues a much older

Michael Woloschinow





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TUC History Online, www.unionhistory.info

Labor demonstration
at Ham Hill, Somerset,
England, 1877

tradition. A glance at three examples from this history yields striking lessons for today.

Abolishing the slave trade

The first documented modern, mass movement against an element of the global economy was the campaign against the Atlantic slave trade. At its peak, from 1787 to 1807, the movement mobilized huge numbers of Europeans, Americans, and people of African origin, including people from Africa's West Coast, black sailors, free blacks, escaped slaves and former slaves from the Americas, and even sons of African royalty sent to Europe to round out their education. The campaign was strongest in Great Britain, where organizers mobilized virtually all sectors of society, from the radical textile workers of Manchester to wealthy businessmen in London, including Josiah Wedgwood of fine pottery fame.

The Sons of Africa, based in London, was the leading organization for Black involvement in the movement. Founding member Olaudah Equiano toured England, Scotland, and Ireland after the publication of his first-hand account of his capture from an African village, cruel transport to the Caribbean, enslavement in colonial America, and his subsequent travels as a sailor to Spain, Portugal, and the Arctic. Equiano's dramatic book and speeches helped build the movement.

The movement gained its leading European organizer, Thomas Clarkson, through, of all things, the Cambridge University Latin prize. In 1787, the topic for this essay contest was the question of whether the slave trade was morally defensible. Clarkson, an undergraduate at the university, didn't

have an opinion, but he wanted to win the prestigious prize. By the time Clarkson won the contest with a meticulously documented treatise describing the horrors of the slave trade, he had gained a mission. He traveled through Britain and France on behalf of the Committee of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, organizing chapters wherever he went. In addition, thanks in part to trans-Atlantic Quaker networks, American and European anti-slave trade activists crisscrossed the ocean to share organizing strategies and tactics.

The tactics would sound surprisingly familiar to the Seattle organizers: popular theater, speaking tours, letterwriting campaigns, petitions, and boycotts. *Oroonoko*, the tragic story of an enslaved African prince, was the most widely produced drama of the 18th-century in Britain. A whole new genre of political poetry was invented by female activists to bring to light the horrible implications of the slave trade for African women. Wedgwood created the must-have fashion accessory of the 1790s: pins and brooches with the image of a slave and the slogan "Am I not a man and a brother?" The electoral arm of the campaign was so powerful that in some districts politicians debated each other to prove which candidate was most strongly against the slave trade. Thousands of anti-slave trade pamphlets and newsletters reached the furthest outposts of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, as well as the United States and Canada, playing much the same role as the Internet and listserves play now.

After the French Revolution, the European branch of the movement was almost destroyed by reactionary repression, a period comparable to the current post-September 11th era. But the anti-slave trade movement eventually succeeded beyond the dreams of its originators. Not only was the trade banned in England and the U.S. after 1807, but both navies were used (at least intermittently) to intercept ships off the coast of Africa, search them, and send any Africans back to Africa. The banning of the slave trade also helped create momentum for the abolition of slavery itself. The movement thus permanently altered the rules of the global economy and set a precedent for citizen movements promoting the value of human rights above commerce.

The anti-slave trade movement provides a model for moving from activism (protest and isolated educational events) to organizing (strategic campaigns with ambitious but achievable goals). The organizers of the anti-slave trade movement were in many ways more systematic than today's global justice activists.





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For example, they used even the smallest meetings and events to gather signatures and petitions—a level of organization that has not yet been matched by today's movements. The anti-slave trade activists were also more successful in convincing the masses in Europe that the atrocities committed in Africa and the Americas concerned them; the global justice movement, at least in the U.S., has not yet become a mass movement.

The most important lesson, perhaps, is that to create institutional change, you must engage with the system. Protest alone did not end the slave trade; a change in laws did. Likewise, unless as much energy as is put into protests is invested in electoral politics and campaigns to change laws, the World Bank and other international financial institutions will not change their behavior, and the rules of the global economic structure will continue to hurt the interests of the poor.

Solidarity among workers

The same radical ideas of justice and equality that spurred the abolition movement also led to an international movement focused on the rights of workers in the globalizing economy of the mid-19th century. Marx's description of that time could easily describe our time: "All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries...whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe ... In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations."

It was in this context that, in the 1850s, English factory owners fought back against the growing power of unions by importing workers from poorer European countries to replace striking workers, including cigar makers, tailors, and builders.

The workers then developed an international strategy. With Karl Marx's involvement, they formed the First International Workingman's Association in 1864. In 1866, the First International helped prevent the bosses of striking tailors in England from hiring strike breakers from Belgium, France, and Germany by convincing their comrades overseas not to become "scabs." In 1867, a delegation of striking Parisian bronze workers visited London to seek support for their right to unionize; the First International subsequently sent hundreds of pounds from British unions

and contributed to the success of the strike.

The First International crashed in 1872 due to internal conflicts that make today's tormented consensus meetings look orderly. Still, in the long-term, the First International played a key role in the development of national labor unions and working-class consciousness in Europe. These new unions and new ideas made significant changes not only in labor conditions, but also in national policies, from free speech laws to the expansion of the right to vote beyond the propertied classes. Like the global justice movement, the international workers' movement was a multi-issue struggle that included domestic as well as global goals.

One of the broad lessons of the First International is the importance of going beyond economic nationalism for solutions to labor exploitation. The Teamsters', Steelworkers', and other unions' involvement in the 1999 Seattle coalition was a hopeful sign of the U.S. labor movement's renewed focus on internationalism. Yet labor's involvement in today's global justice movement remains fragile. The First International also teaches us that union leadership must aim to involve a broad base of rank-and-file members in international policy. Also, the non-labor branches of the global justice movement should work harder to strengthen relationships with workers, whose past struggles have achieved major victories for all of society. It is workers—that is, all of us who work for a living—who stand to lose or gain from changes in the international economic order.

Opposing 'free' trade

The movement against King Leopold's colonization of the Congo provides additional evidence of continuity between past social movements and the current global justice movement. From 1890 to 1910, a particularly brutal form of colonization took place in the Belgian Congo. The King's henchmen not only worked Congolese to death through forced labor gathering rubber in the jungle. They also chopped off the hands of any who rebelled—even the children of those who rebelled.

Adam Hochschild's superb book, *King Leopold's Ghost*, tells the story of the movement against these offenses. As Hochschild relates, the movement was sparked by a manager from an English shipping company, who recognized that his company's "free trade" with the Congo was not really free. As Edmund Morel supervised the loading and unloading of ships in Belgium, he observed that a great wealth of ivory and rubber was being imported from the Congo, but only





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Reproduced with permission of Trustees of The Wedgwood Museum, Barlaston, England

The most identifiable image of the 18th century abolition movement was a kneeling African man, produced by famed fine pottery maker Josiah Wedgwood

soldiers and guns were being exported. Helped by exposés from two charismatic African Americans who had lived in the Congo and a gay Irish republican who served as a British diplomat, Morel led a solidarity movement that eventually included activists in England, the United States, Italy, and even Australia.

New technologies played a large role in the development of the movement: transportation innovations and the telegraph made international communication and cooperation more feasible, the camera was used to document the atrocities, and slideshows helped spread these images to a wide audience. Like today's multinational corporations, the King fought back with his own information campaign: strategically placed advertisements and articles in newspapers the King supported financially, brochures and booklets distributed to elite decision makers, and high-paid lobbyists in America and England. Eventually, however, the activists succeeded in tarnishing the King's reputation and portraying his rule as a "crime against humanity," a term that African-American George Washington Williams invented to describe Leopold's lethal role in the Congo. The movement's success in education did not produce a complete change in policy, but gradually, some reforms were made, and the worst abuses of the colonial regime ended with King Leopold's death.

Just as King Leopold purported to be a philanthropist, interested only in the well-being of the Congolese, the World Bank, IMF, WTO, and FTAA all present a public face of benevolence, development, and assistance for the poor. The activists of the turn of the last century had less sophisticated technology to document abuses, but they used what they had more successfully to convince the public and politicians that the allegedly benevolent institutions of the colony were in reality incurring injury of almost unbelievable dimensions. Just as King Leopold's image became linked in the public mind to the image of a child with hands cut off, the World Bank could be linked to the image of a starving child.

Today's global justice activism has one great advantage over Congo activism: it is largely a movement of the people affected by globalization, not just a movement for them. Global justice organizers in the North must build on this strength by using their power to amplify the voices of the activists from the South, not to speak on their behalf.

History's long arc

Just as the movement against the slave trade contributed to the struggles for workers rights and human rights in the 19th century, all three movements laid the foundations for the major social justice movements of the 20th century: the anti-imperialist movement, the women's movement, the civil rights movement, the anti-apartheid movement, and more. Each of the older movements provides lessons for today's activists. While some aspects of the current global justice movement are new—the use of the Internet for informing and organizing, small groups coordinating to produce mass demonstrations, and a high degree of economic literacy—its roots are deep. The latest technology, innovative protest styles, and information politics have been used for hundreds of years by activists seeking to oppose the devastating effects of global trade on their communities and communities in other countries. Perhaps the most important lesson to draw from this history is not to get discouraged by short-term defeats. The arc of history is long. Though it may not seem so at the time, each movement bends it further toward justice.

Zahara Heckscher is the co-author of *How to Live Your Dream of Volunteering Overseas* (Penguin, www.volunteeroverseas.org).

This article is adapted from a chapter in *Global Backlash: Citizen Initiatives for a Just World Economy*, ed. by Robin Broad (Rowman & Littlefield). An expanded version, including footnotes, is available at www.ufenet.org/econ/globalization/Zahara.doc.





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zapatistas and the globalization of resistance

Bill Weinberg

Ten years ago, the day NAFTA went into effect, indigenous people of Chiapas launched a rebellion against the death sentence they believed the new trade agreement represented. The Zapatistas later went on to spark a global movement



photos in this article are by Tim Russo

On New Years Day 1994, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) took up arms in Mexico's Chiapas state in what was hailed as the first revolutionary movement of the post-Cold War world. Media accounts noting the 10th anniversary of the uprising often portray the Zapatistas as having fallen short of their dreams. But this rebellion of poorly armed Maya Indians in an obscure corner of Mexico has rippled across the globe, sparking a movement that has concretely slowed corporate globalization. Last summer, this global movement returned to Mexico, with protests against the World Trade Organization summit in Cancún. As in Seattle four years earlier, the summit ended in frustration for the architects of the free trade order.

There are obvious reasons for the widespread media portrayal. The one-party dictatorship the Zapatistas took up arms against has been broken up, but the biggest beneficiary is the free-market right of President Vicente Fox, who has outmaneuvered the Maya rebels on their minimum demands. Fox kept his 2000 campaign pledge to sign the rebels' peace plan, which would instate constitutionally protected autonomy for Mexico's indigenous peoples. Hashed out with congressional negotiators five years earlier,





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ABOVE: Zapatista women from Amador Hernandez protested for more than a year a military base established in the oil rich region in 1999. The base was dismantled in late 2000.

PREVIOUS PAGE: A Zapatista woman is one of 10,000 women who marched in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, on March 8, 1996, for International Women's Day

the plan was the EZLN's sole condition for transforming from a clandestine to a civil movement. With Fox's signature, the plan went before Mexico's congress for approval. In March 2001, 24 Zapatista *comandantes*—wearing their trademark ski masks but unarmed—led an historic rally for the plan in Mexico City and addressed congress. But when congress voted the following month, Fox's party pushed through a version stripped of all binding provisions on indigenous control of territory and resources.

It seemed the Zapatistas were back to square one—still in arms, but aware they would be crushed if they used them; still in control of many indigenous communities in the jungles and mountains of Chiapas, but losing ground to the army-supported paramilitary groups that oppose them.

To reconceive the world

Yet the Zapatistas did much to prompt the democratic opening that brought Fox to power. The 12 days of warfare in Chiapas that followed the 1994 uprising forever altered Mexico's political landscape.

A massive public outcry called a halt to the government offensive—which largely targeted unarmed Maya communities—and pressured both sides to negotiate. With the rebels demanding guarantees of Indian rights and democracy for Mexico generally, the moribund political machine that had ruled for three generations realized some *glasnost* was required to avoid an explosion.

But the Zapatistas emerged in response to globalization, not just to Mexico's internal dictatorship. The Zapatistas timed their uprising to coincide with NAFTA taking effect, declaring the treaty a "death sentence" for Mexico's Indians—who stand to be forced from traditional lands by agribusiness and development projects. Drawing inspiration from Emiliano Zapata's followers, who rose up elsewhere in Mexico in 1910 against a dictatorship that embraced free trade policies, the neo-Zapatistas were the world's first guerillas to explicitly take up arms in response to a trade agreement.

The new Zapatistas advanced less through military means than through moral and even theatrical





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means. The most obvious example of this is the jungle amphitheater they built, dubbed Aguascalientes, for the high-profile dialogues they hosted with leaders of Mexico's political opposition. Even their rifles—and they have never had enough rifles to go around, as evidenced by the young rebel troops of January 1994 marching into battle with sticks symbolically shaped like rifles—have, to an extent, been props in a highly effective political theater.

They also made unprecedented use of the Internet, zapping the words of their verbose and poetic Subcomandante Marcos to the press even when they were on the run deep in the jungle. Marcos says the Zapatistas do not seek to seize power like traditional guerillas, but instead, pursue “a revolution to make a revolution possible”—opening a space for dialogue within civil society on how to reconceive the world.

Maya rebels as global catalyst

Beginning with the Aguascalientes conference they hosted in the Chiapas jungle in August 1995, the Zapatistas held a series of *consultas* and *encuentros*—consultations and meetings—aimed at extending their movement to Mexico's civil society. In August 1996, they hosted the Intercontinental Encuentro for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism for their supporters from around the world—now quite numerous, thanks to Marcos' contagious cyber-charisma. Emphasizing the event's multicultural character, Marcos dubbed it the “Intergalactic Encuentro.” While Latin Americans, North Americans, and Europeans predominated, every continent was represented. Marcos and the Maya comandantes addressed political pilgrims from some 50 countries at the mud-locked jungle settlement of La Realidad.

The Intergalactica was the springboard for an International Network Against Neoliberalism, which pledged to build cross-border resistance to the free trade order. The Intergalactica would “continue on every continent ... in every home, school or workplace where human beings want a better world.” The Network followed up with a series of meetings in Europe, even bringing Zapatista representatives to Spain and Italy. “Neoliberalism”—commonly called “free trade” in the US—was recognized as a threat to democracy, labor rights, and public control over land and resources by communities far removed from the stark survival struggle in Chiapas. Marcos called on his army of “moles” to lay the groundwork for resistance throughout the planet.

This network was an early kernel of the movement that burst onto the world scene at the

November 1999 Seattle protests against the World Trade Organization (WTO). This loosely coordinated movement has since convened for creative disruption whenever exponents of corporate globalization have come together, most recently at last November's FTAA summit in Miami. At Seattle in 1999 and Cancún in 2003, WTO summits ended in failure, in part due to large, attention-grabbing protests.

The Zapatistas have openly participated, often sending statements and delegates. They have also built alternative economic initiatives with international supporters, providing examples of globalization-from-below—such as fair trade organic coffee grown by Zapatista collectives, marketed by Denver's Human Bean Company with a maxim of “human values before profit.”

In July 2003, with their peace plan still stalled, the Zapatistas announced they were advancing with their local autonomous government in Chiapas in spite of

The new Zapatistas advanced less through military than moral and even theatrical means. They also made unprecedented use of the Internet, zapping the words of Subcomandante Marcos to the press even when they were on the run deep in the jungle





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Will globalization merely destroy indigenous culture? Or can it be made reciprocal, bringing Maya traditions of resistance to bear in expanding democracy on planet Earth?

ABOVE: Zapatista supporter walks with thousands of others in Acteal, Chiapas, to commemorate the first anniversary of the massacre at Acteal where 46 people were killed on Dec. 22, 1997 by paramilitaries
PREVIOUS PAGE: Zapatista reporters interview people unused to being featured in the media

official intransigence. The EZLN's five "Aguascalientes" community centers scattered across Chiapas—originally established for dialogue with civil society—were transformed into "caracoles" (snail-shells). These caracoles are to serve as regional seats of the local rebel villages and coordinate on a regional level, while attempting to build links of solidarity with supporters on the continents they are respectively assigned. Such links could include shipments of aid, marketing of "fair trade" products, delegation exchanges, and consciousness raising about international struggles analogous to Zapatismo.

First, Marcos joked that the Caracol of La Realidad was launching a Realidad-Tijuana Plan to spread democracy in Mexico—a play on the mega-industrial Puebla-Panama Plan pushed by Fox and the Inter-American Development Bank. Next, the other caracoles extended the conspiracy of hope across the planet: a Morelia-North Pole Plan for North America, a Garrucha-Tierra del Fuego

Plan for South America, an Oventic-Moscow Plan for Europe and Africa, and a Roberto Barrios-New Delhi Plan for Asia and the Pacific.

The "Fourth World War"

"Globalization, neoliberalism as a global system, should be understood as a new war of conquest for territories," Marcos wrote in a 1997 communiqué. He postulated a "Fourth World War," which has superseded "World War III," or the Cold War: a "world order returned to the old epochs of the conquests of America, Africa, and Oceania. This is a strange modernity that moves forward by going backward. ... In the world of the post-Cold War, vast territories, wealth, and above all, a qualified labor force, await a new owner." How much truer are these words after the actual (if not formal) declaration of a world war in the wake of the September 11 disaster and the military occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq?

The new model of global organizing was seen again in the coordinated worldwide protests against the Iraq war drive on February 15, 2003, when millions flooded the streets in cities across the planet. The Zapatistas sent a Marcos-penned letter to the massive rally in Rome. It was read from the stage by Heidi Giuliani, mother of activist Carlo Giuliani, who was killed by police during protests at the July 2001 Genoa G8 summit. In November 2003, federal funds ostensibly approved for the Iraq military campaign were actually directed to the Miami police for security at the FTAA summit—where paramilitary tactics sparked demands for an investigation by international human rights groups.

The Zapatistas are still perceived as occupying the moral high ground in Mexico, so it remains impossible for the Mexican government (or the US State Department) to label them "terrorists." And the recent Cancún and Miami protests show the global movement has survived the post-9/11 war footing. The emergence and survival of the Zapatista movement raise the question of whether globalization will merely destroy indigenous culture, or if it can be made reciprocal, bringing Maya traditions of resistance to bear in expanding democracy on planet Earth. This question is more challenging than ever as neo-Zapatismo enters its second decade.

Bill Weinberg is author of *Homage to Chiapas: The New Indigenous Struggles in Mexico* (Verso Books, 2000) and editor of the on-line World War 3 Report, www.ww3report.com. He is currently working on a book on popular resistance to Plan Colombia in the Andes.





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Why is “inclusive capitalism” on its way out
and what can civil society do to resurrect democracy
and economic justice? A member of the German parliament
reflects on the possibilities

resurrecting democracy



Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker

Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker is a member of the German Bundestag (parliament), founding president of the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment, and Energy, and co-author with Amory and Hunter Lovins of Doubling Wealth, Halving Resource Use. He is also a member of the International Labor Organization's World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, whose report will be presented in London on February 24. YES! editor Sarah Ruth van Gelder interviewed him in October in the Reichstag Building in Berlin.

Sarah Ruth van Gelder: You were recently chair of the Bundestag Select Committee on Globalization. What was the purpose of that committee and what were the main findings?

Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker: Since 1990, we can see a drastic change of the global economy in two types of countries. One, of course, is the former communist countries, which have now introduced capitalism. Less obvious is the other group, made up of those countries that were particularly influenced by the east/west tension, notably West Germany but also Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, France, Italy, but then also Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, and many Latin American countries. During the Cold War, these countries had a comfortable bargaining position against international capital markets because it was of the highest importance to





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international capital to keep those countries away from communism.

In the 1960s, in times of the Vietnam War, the so-called Domino Theory was the prevalent political theory, and to fend off that bacillus of communism, “inclusive” capitalism was invented and became a reality in those countries.

SvG: By inclusive capitalism, do you mean capitalism with a strong safety net?

EvW: Yes, a strong safety net and progressive taxation, so the rich contribute more as a percentage of income to the state functions of infrastructure, education, police, and the social safety net. That was the reality in West Germany and in Sweden and in all of those other countries until 1990. But as the specter of communism disappeared, for international capital markets it suddenly became tempting to force countries to reduce taxes on corporations, on millionaires, and on inheritances. So we have seen a relentless, cut-throat competition throughout the world making lives especially uncomfortable for chief executive officers. They then had to pass on the pressure they

slow, while globalization rewards speed. We need to resurrect democracy worthy of its name, where people and not capital markets determine the fate of a country.

SvG: Do you see signs of that happening?

EvW: Yes. There are two different roads to be pursued. One is global governance concerning financial stability, human rights, climate, and drug traffic. It has to be admitted, however, that ordinary citizens have few opportunities to be part of that global governance game.

So we need a second road to democracy, and this has to do with civil society. Civil society has international reach and should strengthen its international muscles.

If Nike has been shown to be involved in child slavery in their production chain somewhere in Asia, then U.S., Asian, and European customers can say: We don't like products from a company that is involved in such dirty business. They can join hands worldwide with the children in Vietnam, or wherever they see these practices, and help establish core labor standards—which are essentially human rights. In other cases, they can join in defending the local environment against destruction by the operations of international companies. Or they can protest violations of human rights by central governments.

Civil society, with the help of the Internet, is able to join hands electronically, and in a matter of a few hours, an issue campaign can be born. That gives ordinary citizens an opportunity to have a global reach.

What I, as a parliamentarian, find fascinating is the possibility that these civil society movements will join with national parliaments, so that we can help establish the rules in a way that facilitates honest campaigning. For instance, transparency rules on the supply chains of companies—that is something that parliaments can address. Or we can join hands with the environmental movement in moving towards international ecological tax reform. Or we can take steps to preserve peace through social equity so that not so many American soldiers have to lose their lives in Iraq as an indirect result of horrendous economic inequities. All those indirect effects of blatant injustice have to be—and could be—prevented through local campaigners with an international backing from civil society. This is my vision for a better world.

We need to resurrect democracy worthy of its name, where people and not capital markets determine the fate of a country

were feeling to their national governments, saying: Look, you have to relieve us of taxes, otherwise our competitors in other countries will destroy our profits and our companies and our jobs.

These days, in Germany, we are working on extremely painful reforms—so-called—that reduce our safety net, all in the service of international competitiveness. The electorate wants something quite different, but we are being blackmailed.

This spiral of destructive competition has become the name of the game in all countries—and this is what we call globalization. Globalization has uprooted the fundamentals of national democracies, for better or worse. Democracy has always been





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citizen action networks and global change

Anwar Fazal

According to the Chinese proverb, "If you feed a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." But consider the people of the South Pacific. They and their ancestors have fished for centuries. What use is their knowledge against the Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese companies that ravaged their oceans with miles of drift nets; the Americans who used their islands and waters as dumping grounds for toxic wastes and deactivated chemical weapons; and the French who continued nuclear testing in their region. When development workers from these same "developed" nations come and presume to teach the natives how to fish, they add insult to injury.

Justice for the poor and protection of the environment depend on building citizen power to counter the abuses of powerful states and transnational corporations, such as those that deprive Pacific islanders of their fish. The experience of the International Organization of Consumers' Unions (IOCU) provides useful insights into what this requires.

The IOCU was founded in 1960 as a rather polite membership organization that served as a clearing house for consumer product information. Since then, we have evolved into a support body for powerful advocacy networks involving thousands of organizations and millions of citizens.

Our first global campaign centered on the practices of transnational companies, such as Nestlé, in promoting the use of infant formula in place of breast milk in poor countries. These practices were causing thousands of infant deaths each year. An international consumer boycott and information campaign resulted in passage of the World Health Organization's International Code of Marketing for Breast Milk Substitutes. Later we helped form other global networks dealing with pharmaceuticals, tobacco, toxic wastes, biotechnology, food irradiation, and other issues. Our insights grew with our experience.

We have found that when dealing with global issues, the most effective networks are those that link:

- Protest and proaction. Immediate fire fighting

efforts must link with efforts to achieve larger structural changes that prevent future fires.

- Grass and sky. Groups that work at the community level must be linked to those that specialize in broader political spaces.
- North and South. Many Southern problems have Northern sources and can be resolved only through mutually supportive action by citizens of both North and South.

We have learned to build networking strategies around a clear understanding of:

- Information. Countless citizen organizations are starved for information in a useful form.
- People and power. The effectiveness of citizen networks depends on millions of skilled leaders and the commitment of organized citizen lobbies. Movements must clearly identify the sources and flows of power in society, at both local and global levels. Engage those, such as youth and women, who have lacked opportunities to participate in global policy processes.
- Revolution and evolution. Clear vision and mission statements must define both the future we want and the specific outcomes we seek as steps toward its achievement.
- The local and the global. Encourage people to see how their problems relate to, and derive from, the global context.
- Danger. Nurture the independence of the network's elements so that if one part of the network is weakened, other parts can step in. Build on what exists. Minimize funding needs, and never become dependent on a single funding source.

Global networking is a key to the transformation of global society. The task is enormous, with ample need for the contribution of every responsible citizen.

Anwar Fazal, former president of the IOCU, is a recipient of the Right Livelihood Award and is currently engaged with peace-making (www.everlastingpeace.net) and interfaith dialogue (www.malaysianinterfaithnetwork.org). He lives on the island of Penang, Malaysia, and can be contacted at secre@waba.po.my.





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photos this article are by Simone Bruno

Frances F. Korten

report from the world social forum

In mid-January, more than 80,000 global activists, scholars, Nobel laureates, poets, musicians, indigenous peoples, and community organizers gathered to declare once again, “Another world is possible!”

The occasion was the fourth World Social Forum (WSF). Held in Mumbai, India (formerly Bombay), it was the first WSF to be held outside of Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Imagine a setting like a giant state fair—only instead of pigs, pies, and amusement rides—the tents and halls hold seminars and workshops on pressing issues, the stages are alive with dancers, poetry, and plays, and the streets noisy with drumming, chanting groups of indigenous peoples and Dalits (the Indian “untouchable” caste). Now imagine this huge event with no advertisements for SUV’s, designer clothes, or fast food—instead the signs call for campaigns to stop the privatization of water, make Tibet a zone of peace, and promote fair trade, not free trade.

Imagine such a space with no Coca Cola or Pepsi. (Activists and villagers in several areas of

India claim Coke’s bottling plants are drying up village wells and polluting rivers, and have launched campaigns that call Coke “unthinkable, undrinkable.”) Then imagine a space filled with raucous protests, vigorous debates, and exuberant celebrations where there are few if any security searches and the police are friendly and helpful. Imagine people of all races and classes, hot, tired, squeezed together in noisy, crowded streets, greeting each other with warmth and respect. Imagine all of that and you have imagined the fourth WSF, a space that not only declares another world is possible—it creates that world.

Not surprisingly, the current U.S. administration was a common target of protest. Participants universally condemned the U.S. military intervention in Iraq and the takeover of Iraq’s economy and resources. Noted author and activist Arundhati





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Roy, called on participants to focus on “two major corporations that are profiting from the destruction of Iraq,” track down their offices worldwide, and shut them down. Despite the anger directed toward U.S. policies, I felt no hostility toward me as an American; everyone I met expressed gratitude for allies working within the “belly of the beast.”

Over the six days of the Forum, momentum built for a global protest march on March 20th—the first anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Participants clearly had in mind the success of the February 15, 2003, marches, which were called for at the November 2002 European Social Forum. That call was magnified at the third WSF in January 2003, generating the largest protest march in the history of the world, and earning global civil society the moniker of the world’s “second superpower.”

The first WSF, in January 2001, was conceived as a counter to the corporate-led globalization agenda of the World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland. But four years later, I heard no mention of Davos. The WSF has come into its own as a place where civil society can advance alternatives to the “neoliberal” agenda and strengthen the networks and movements to make those alternatives real.

The WSF is on a rapid-growth trajectory. The 80,000 participants from 132 countries at Mumbai dwarfed the 20,000 participants at the first WSF. At Mumbai, the 120-page tabloid-sized program tantalized participants with choices of over 1,200 events, up from 420 at the first WSF. What enables this vast offering is that the WSF itself puts on only a few of the events. For the rest, it provides an “open space” in which participants create their own workshops and cultural offerings, making them vibrant reflections of the hopes and concerns of people around the world.

Not only have the global gatherings grown, but over the last 18 months, regional social forums have burgeoned in Africa, Europe, as well as Asia and Latin America. This year, a Social Forum of the Americas is planned in Quito, Ecuador, in late July. And in early October, a Northwest Social Forum—which we at *YES!* are assisting—will be held in Seattle (see www.nwsocialforum.org).

The end of the decade of massive UN-sponsored global meetings explains in part the growth of the WSF. The UN decade, which started so spectacularly with the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and went on to include the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, came to an end with the 2001 World Conference on Racism in Durban. The UN is not currently planning any more of the huge

world summits. But the self-conscious identity that global civil society gained through those conferences is stronger than ever and is now finding expression in a space created not by a top-down global bureaucracy but by civil society itself.

Moving from Porto Alegre to India this year gave the Forum an even clearer position as civil society’s premier global gathering. And with Dalits and *adivasis* (India’s indigenous peoples), women’s groups, gays and lesbians, and refugees declaring their right to live in dignity, human rights have joined the issues of corporate-led globalization and militarism as central to the WSF agenda.

In January 2005, the Forum will return to Porto Alegre. For 2006, the location is undecided, with many pushing for Africa. Others are asking that the Forum be held every other year to make more space for regional forums.

The growth of the World Social Forum and the flowering of regional forums has naturally brought controversy, even within the activist community. For some, the WSF’s commitment to nonviolence makes it too tame; others feel the Forum’s insistence on being a space and a process, but not in itself a source of common positions saps its potential for advancing collective agendas.

The controversy and the growing academic literature about the Forums are additional indications that these gatherings have taken center stage as the place where global civil society meets—to protest a disastrously unfair world order and to develop a more empowering vision. The Forums have become a living, breathing manifestation of an emerging planetary consciousness and the indomitable human capacity to imagine that—yes, another world *is* possible.

Dance, music, drumming, and celebration were as much a part of the Mumbai, India, World Social Forum as were speeches and workshops





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a pilgrimage to Syria



Courage that comes from a hope beyond words takes these pilgrims into Damascus to listen and learn, and to search for places to plant seeds of peace

Elias Amidon & Elizabeth Rabia Roberts

Sometime in the third century, a black Christian monk from Ethiopia wandered into the desert region northwest of Damascus. This man, later known as St. Moses the Abyssinian, spent years with his followers praying in the caves pocketing these desert cliffs. One of the caves, lived and prayed in since then by a succession of desert fathers, became the focus for the 6th century monastery built adjacent to it, now known as the Monastery of St. Moses the Abyssinian, Deir Mar Musa el-Habashi. It is at this small monastery—a place of stark beauty, communion, and prayer—that we end our pilgrimage to Syria.





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One has to bow down to enter this cave that plunges like a tunnel about 15 meters into the mountain. Carpets have been laid down on the floor and a humble altar and cushions placed at its deep end. Before dawn each day, a few of us make our way into the cave to pray in the silence. On the final night of our stay, two men show up to join me at 5:30 a.m. in the cave, lit by a single candle. I wait until they are settled on their cushions and then blow the candle out.

The darkness and the silence are like lovers, so well do they fit together. We each begin to pray silently, stating with the voice of our hearts the reason we have come here. Then we begin the remembrances, known in Sufi terms as zik'r or dhik'r, simple words or phrases repeated many times first aloud and then silently.

After some time we begin to chant the Christian prayer in Arabic, "Ya Rab urham!" which means something like: "Oh Rab! (Nourisher, Teacher, Bestower of Existence) have mercy!"

"Ya Rab urham, ya Rab urham, ya Rab urham!" The words sound tender, comforting, intimate. They vanish in the silence. They re-emerge from inside us. They vanish again. With each repetition of the prayer, a pulse of mercy radiates through us and vanishes in the darkness. Mercy? What is this light that is like a warmth and a sound, yet beyond sensation? We feel the familiar boundaries of our bodies become porous until the edges between us disappear, and the edges between us and the cave, and the mountain, and the light of the dawn outside, disappear. We sense the people awakening in their houses, the earth turning, the sun touching the land, everything happening at once, without boundaries, in a sea of mercy.

"Ya Rab urham!" we repeat, the sound of the prayer entering the silence of the cave like a heartbeat in a womb. "Ya Rab urham!" For an indeterminate moment it feels to us as if a new world is being created, and we are in the middle of its creation in a light in the middle of a mountain.

—Elias Amidon

"In America, the idea of us Syrians is that we eat foreigners," joked Mahat El-Khoury, a 71-year-old human rights worker and recent Damascus "Woman of the Year."

"We Syrians feel misunderstood by the West. You don't understand our religions, our family ways, our history, or our politics. You think we're terrorists. We like American people but we feel poorly treated by your government and its policies."

Mahat's feelings were echoed by many of the

Syrians we spoke with during the three weeks we spent in Syria in November. We were joined in our pilgrimage by 15 people from six western countries to bear witness to Muslim-Christian relations, to Arab-Western relations, and to the realities facing the Syrian people at this time of tension and distrust.

Tension was high for the pilgrims who committed to this journey and for their families. One man told his mother he was only going to London, and a woman told us later that on the first day in Syria she was convinced we would be kidnapped or stoned.

On the second morning we asked our fellow pilgrims to wander in Damascus alone or in groups of two and three to initiate conversations with ordinary Syrians and to ask them ever deeper and more caring questions about their feelings and beliefs. This suggestion always causes much consternation when it is described to our fellow pilgrims. But afterwards it is spoken of as the watershed event that shifts one from experiencing the world as a tourist to experiencing it as a pilgrim.

That day, and in the days after, we met with students, architects, teachers, business people, Christian priests, Muslim sheikhs, and social workers. We visited churches, mosques, shrines, schools, offices, homes, and monasteries. As word of our presence spread, we received more and more invitations to meet and talk. People were eager to have their stories heard. Though we did not always agree with what we were told, our task was not to persuade, but to try to understand.

Each of us experienced in someone we met the tender heart. This is not spiritual sentimentality, but the reality of an interconnected world. Together we practiced, in the midst of the unknown, expanding the boundaries of our hearts.

On a practical level, our presence occasioned a number of ever-widening ripples. Elias and Shabda Kahn, a guest teacher on the pilgrimage, were interviewed on Syria's leading TV news commentary program. A participant on the pilgrimage, who is a representative of the international Sister Cities project, met with officials of the Ministry of Urban Affairs and received assurances of cooperation in setting up American-Syrian Sister City partnerships. The Abu Nour Foundation, the largest Muslim non-profit organization in Syria, agreed to join the international peacekeeping group, Nonviolent Peaceforce (see *YES!* Fall 2002) as a member organization.

Our presence provided an opportunity for Sheikh Nabil Hilbawi, one of Syria's most respected

PHOTO: from left, Father Paolo, Elias Amidon, unnamed translator, Sayid Abdullah Nijam (Shiite cleric)





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Shi'ite clerics, to meet with Christian leaders. We were also the occasion for a special interfaith concert performed at the new Damascus Opera House, which combined a Mevlevi Sufi choir and whirling dervishes with a 75-member Christian choir. The two groups performed separately, and then in the finale joined together to sing anthems of peace.

In a particularly stirring moment, we were all guests at Friday prayers in the largest mosque in Damascus, the seat of the Grand Mufti, Syria's leading Islamic cleric. There were several thousand people present. When the Mufti's sermon was finished, Elias was asked to speak. He spoke of the humiliation that so many Muslims feel in our times, both as a result of Western policies and as a result of self-betrayal. He spoke of our respect for their long and sophisticated culture, their religious integrity and commitment to family life, for their spontaneous kindness and expressions of generosity. He thanked them for welcoming us so warmly and apologized for the lack of fairness and understanding in America's recent policies toward Syria.

He concluded with these words: "The policies and politicians of the world are failing us. To protect our children, we all must do everything we can to break through the masks that are being painted on our faces. When we truly meet each other, we will have peace. Let nothing stop our getting to know each other."

The mosque was quiet. When we stood to leave we were swarmed by men below and women on the balcony above with tears in their eyes thanking us, wishing us well, and inviting us to their homes.

The service at the mosque was broadcast on television and radio throughout the country. Did we overstep our bounds? Ours is not a political delegation. Elias simply spoke from his heart and from our experience. An Orthodox priest congratulated us that evening: "You give us hope. You feel with us, you show there are Americans who care." Another seed of understanding was planted in this rocky soil.

All was not love and light. If you listen and question long enough, the Syrians' anger and suspicion emerges. For millennia, empires have come to rule this land and these people. With an American occupation of Iraq on their eastern border and Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza to their southwest, most Syrians fear that American-Israeli interests have expansionist goals in their land.

Part of our witness was to hear this anger, this distrust, and among some Syrians, a desire for justice

that borders on a desire for vengeance. More will be needed than ending the violence that surrounds this country. That essential step simply creates the space for the acts of reconciliation, forgiveness, and trust-building that must weave the long-term peace. Here is where religion can play so important a part and why pilgrimages grounded in the unity of religious ideals facilitate this healing.

We dream of communities of pilgrims or emissaries like ourselves going to places of conflict to extend friendship, humility, and open-hearted listening. Our experiences of such pilgrimages have taught us that once the intent is set, doors open, opportunities appear, and networks of friends emerge.

—Elizabeth Rabia Roberts

Father Paolo, the abbot of the Monastery of St. Moses the Abyssinian, is a great bear of a man with a voice to match. He watches with happy amusement as our group, and other members of the monastery, spend days painting prayers on gaily colored pieces of cloth. These prayer flags are made in the belief that the wind will carry the prayers to the four directions. They are prayers for peace, for understanding among all peoples, for justice, and for healing and joyousness.

The morning they are finished we gather on the monastery's flat rooftop to sew the flags on a 100-meter length of rope. We also assemble a second rope of traditional Tibetan prayer flags. With one end of each tied to the building, the two ropes are dropped down and then played out along the cliff ledges on either side of the monastery until the wind catches them and they sail up in beautiful arcs of fluttering prayers.

Father Paolo raises his arms from the rooftop and starts to chant in his booming voice, "Allah husamahus salaam!" "God's name is peace!" He turns slowly in circles, his arms outstretched, his immense voice filling the mountain gorge in every direction. He turns there, bellowing this prayer for a long time while one by one we all join him, calling out, reaching up, the sun glinting in our eyelids, "God's name is peace!" and the truth of it is, for this moment, made manifest.

—Elias Amidon

Elias Amidon and Elizabeth Rabia Roberts are co-directors of the Boulder Institute for Nature and the Human Spirit, which runs programs on human rights, citizen peacemaking, environmental ethics, and indigenous cultures. You can sign up to get their "Letters from the Road" at www.boulderinstitute.org. They are also co-editors of the books *Earth Prayers*, *Life Prayers*, and *Prayers for a Thousand Years* and teachers in the Sufi tradition.





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making the whole world a witness



Austin Haebler/Forefront

What would happen if the victims of human rights abuses could tell their own stories to the world? Could they win some level of safety and peace?

Dana Hughes

San Salvador—As the midmorning sun beats down and the humidity traps the fumes and exhaust from buses and cars, a group of young Salvadorans set up cameras among the people and pigeons in a public park. As they work, they attract a lot of attention from bystanders, including the police, who don't stop them, but continue to watch with suspicious eyes.

Learning how to film that suspicion is the reason the group is there. They are setting up their cameras under the leadership of Sam Gregory, the program coordinator for a group called Witness that is providing film training for Entre Amigos ("Between Friends"), an organization of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people in El Salvador. The group plans to document the discrimination and abuse its members suffer from authori-

ties as part of a campaign for reforms. But before any of that can happen, they have to learn how to make videos, which is where Gregory and Witness come in. Gregory knows that effective training requires practice in public where circumstances aren't as easily controlled as they are in the backyard where the training sessions began.

Witness is a nonprofit organization that uses video and other communications technology to promote and defend human rights. Over the course of 10 years it has trained 150 partner organizations in more than 50 countries. The groups vary by cause as well as location, ranging from a South America-based group of scientists who solve human rights crimes to a U.S.-based group focusing on juvenile incarceration.

Emiliana Aguilar learned videography to document the experiences and courage of indigenous people of Guatemala





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The scope of Witness's work hasn't always been so broad. It was founded in 1992 by the British musician Peter Gabriel, after an amateur photographer videotaped the beating of Rodney King by Los Angeles police officers and drew international attention to human rights abuses in the United States. If a video recorded by chance could have so powerful an effect, Gabriel thought, why not record international abuses more purposefully? He joined with the Lawyers Committee on Human Rights and the Reebok Human Rights Foundation to start Witness. It began with two staff members, a budget of \$150,000, and a primary concentration on providing cameras. Today Witness is an independent organization with 11 full-time staff members and eight on-site volunteers who work from a large loft in New York City's Tribeca neighborhood, and camera training is only part of their work.

In 1996 Witness helped its partners at the Global Survival Network produce "Bought and Sold," a documentary based on an undercover investigation of the Russian mafia's involvement in trafficking of women from the former Soviet Union. Footage from the film was picked up by ABC News, BBC and CNN and was the subject of a front-page story in *The New York Times*.

The media attention produced results: President Clinton issued an executive order allocating \$10 million to fight violence against women, with special emphasis on trafficking. The issue received more attention after Madeleine Albright put it on the agenda in her meetings with heads of state, and in 2000 the United Nations passed a transnational protocol to prevent trafficking. That year, the U.S. Congress also passed the Trafficking Victims Protections Act.

Following the success of the "Bought and Sold" campaign, Witness hired Gillian Caldwell, who had participated in the trafficking investigation as co-director of Global Survival Network, to be its first executive director. Under Caldwell's watch, Witness installed a full-time production and editing facility on site and the number of its in-house productions increased from three to 30 in two years.

She also led the group to make greater use of the Internet. Besides explaining the work of the organization and its partners, the Witness website (www.Witness.org) features "Rights Alert," webcasts that highlight footage from partner organizations with accompanying narratives and suggestions for action.

"We were one of the first nonprofit organizations with sophisticated Web broadcasting on the

Net," Caldwell says. "It was getting about a hundred hits a month in 1998. We get over 1.5 million hits a month now."

As it has grown, Witness has won the attention of media celebrities and government officials. Actors Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins serve on the board of directors, and films are narrated by performers such as Q-Tip, a rap artist. As the group's visibility has increased, the number of Witness partners has increased by more than 40 in the past four years, and the applications continue to come in. The group has expanded its focus from civil rights to include social, economic, and cultural rights as well.

Witness is also beginning to train some of its long-term partners to do video and editing training themselves. Joey Lozano, a freelance journalist from the Philippines, first became interested in the role of the media when he noticed the lack of reporting on human rights abuses during the Marcos dictatorship. Working with Witness, Lozano began training groups in rural areas in basic journalism and broadcasting. One group was Nakamata, a coalition of 10 indigenous peoples organizations working to secure land rights on the island of Mindanao. After three indigenous leaders were murdered in 2001, Lozano and Nakamata documented the crime in a video that Witness broadcast on its website. A Philippines investigative news program also aired the footage. Because of the local and international attention, the National Bureau of Investigation conducted an inquiry that led to the indictment of three people for murder. A film featuring Lozano and Nakamata recently won the Abraham Award at the Hamptons International Film Festival.

Sandrine Isambert, a former video editor for Witness, also helped train partners. "Once partners see the process of editing, they understand shooting and scripting better," she says. Isambert worked closely with the Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense (Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team), one of the world's premier groups of scientists involved in human rights work. The team combines clues from interviews, exhumation of human remains, and laboratory analyses to solve crimes, identify victims, and return their remains to their families. Testifying before courts and international tribunals, E.A.A.F. has been instrumental in bringing to justice government officials from places like Argentina and Haiti for abuses committed during the 1980s and 90s. Witness helped the group produce and distribute a video, "When Bones Talk," explaining its work in





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layman's terms for representatives of governments and nongovernmental organizations.

Gregory, who has a background in both commercial film production and human rights activism and is fluent in Spanish, is the primary contact and instructor for Witness's Latin American partners.

In 2002, Gregory conducted a monthlong training program in Central America. He spent two weeks in villages on the northern coast of Honduras working with the Comité de Emergencia Garífuna de Honduras (Garífuna Emergency Committee of Honduras). An indigenous group working on sustainable development, the Comité has faced arson and death threats from wealthy developers in local communities. Gregory helped the group film and edit footage of abuses committed recently in various Garífuna villages. He also spent time in Guatemala, working with Jesus Tecú Osorio, a survivor of Guatemala's civil war, who has been documenting the effects of the war on its victims and survivors. And Gregory conducted the training in El Salvador for Entre Amigos, a new Witness partner.

Because the clientele of Entre Amigos is primarily working class and poorly educated, the first challenge the group faces with new members is to help them understand their rights. Another challenge facing Entre Amigos is getting the government to enforce these rights. In El Salvador 75,000 people disappeared or were killed during a 12-year civil war that ended only 10 years ago. Although a democratic system has been in place since 1994, effects of the war linger—there is an extremely high poverty and crime rate and such a proliferation of guns that supermarkets post signs asking customers to check their weapons before shopping. Since El Salvador is still in the process of establishing basic rule of law and civil rights, addressing discrimination based on sexual orientation is not a priority.

At the initial training session last July, even before the cameras were brought in, Gregory encouraged the group to clarify its goals for the use of video.

In El Salvador, ordinances originally designed to fine lewd behavior in public are turning into excuses for illegal detainment and harassment of gays and transsexuals openly displaying affection. Abuses are common in the prison system, with guards harassing homosexual and transgender inmates and placing them with others who are openly homophobic. So Gregory discussed different ways to record and document such abuses.

The second day focused on technical camera training. Gregory explained that Entre Amigos

would be using digital hand-held cameras and passed two of them around the group. Then he showed a video on how to use the cameras, stopping the tape to demonstrate each time it introduced a new topic. He made sure everyone in the room handled a camera and tried the techniques.

The group then moved outside to practice in the backyard, where they immediately faced lighting and sound challenges. Next they practiced filming in public, staging an interview with one of the Entre Amigos members, who pointed out where last year's gay pride parade took place.

The last day of the training focused on editing. Like a television cook who prepares different parts of a meal in advance, Gregory worked at night on his computer, logging and editing footage shot that day so that the group could see the various stages of the process. Almost all of the Entre Amigos participants see the process of editing as the link to everything they learned. With an understanding of editing, members of the group say, they see how future footage can be tailored to fit their goals and advance their cause.

William Hernández, the director of Entre Amigos, remarks that what the group has learned during the week will permanently change the nature of its work. Joaquín Cáceres, Entre Amigos' director of educational programming, agrees, emphasizing that Gregory has provided more than just camera training; he has given the group a strategy. "It's a tool we will utilize as much as possible to help spur people into action."

This article originally appeared in *FFR*, the *Ford Foundation Report*, Winter 2003. Dana Hughes is a staff writer for *FFR*.

This amateur video shot in 1991 by George Holliday from his apartment, showing Los Angeles police officers beating Rodney King, led to the arrest of police officers Stacey Koon, Laurence Powell, Timothy Wind and Theodore Briseno



CNN via Getty Images





conspiracy of hope

Forced to flee rape, forced labor, and devastation,
Burmese women living as refugees in Thailand discover that
they can turn to one other for support and fierce leadership—
and demand the world's attention

finding dignity in exile



photos by Brendan Hoffman

Ingrid Drake

Twenty-five women file into a room on the Thai side of the Thai-Burmese border to begin a five-day leadership workshop. Ranging in age from 16 to 60, the women, several of whom carry babies, wear traditional *longhi*, sarongs of woven cotton. At first, the women sit in rows by age, the eldest in front. This is how it is done among the Shan, an ethnic group from southeastern Burma. The women seem startled when Nang, the facilitator, tells them to sit in a circle. After they are resettled, Nang, a founding member of the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN), says everyone will have an opportunity to speak about her experiences fleeing Burma. Nang realizes it is difficult, so she starts by sharing her own story.

In 1990, when she was 17, Nang's father, a farmer, was killed by the Burmese military. Across the Shan state, soldiers were forcing villagers to serve as porters or road-builders for no pay, not even food. To resist meant death. Groups of soldiers, often under the influence of drugs, would rape and kill women and young girls. Scared and not able to finish school, Nang left her mother and siblings to venture across the border for a future in Thailand. She traveled alone through the jungle, arriving in northern Thailand, where she worked at a construction site, a factory, and a night market. As an undocumented laborer, she put in long hours, earned low wages, and feared being returned to Burma by Thai authorities.





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Many women in the circle, now wide-eyed or sobbing, hear in Nang's experience an echo of their own. A safe space has been created for them to tell their own stories, some speaking for the first time about their experiences with rape and prostitution. Through piecing together their stories, the women learn how the Burmese junta, with the Orwellian name of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), has especially targeted the Shan for repression because the Shan region, which was independent from Burma until 1962, has been a base for a number of opposition groups. But there is another reason why the military has relocated hundreds of thousands of people from more than 1,400 Shan villages since 1996, Nang tells the group. The SPDC has been seeking international investment to privatize natural resources in the Shan state.

By the last day of the workshop, participants have a much fuller understanding of the reasons behind their predicament—and they've learned some practical skills. They've learned how to counsel survivors of sexual violence and to teach others about HIV/AIDS, family planning, and Thai law. Nang calls the workshops a success when the women start discussing what role they can play to end 40 years of brutal military rule in Burma and when they ask her to return with more training. For many, this is the only formal education they have ever received.

Traditionally, in Shan villages, village headsmen had decision-making power, fathers assumed control in the household, and young people were expected to follow their elders. When the SPDC disrupted Shan society, forcing men from their farms to build roads for the military and leaving women as heads of households and targets for rape by the military, village headsmen could do little to protect their citizens. No longer safe in their homeland, more than 100,000 Shan made the dangerous trip across the border to Thailand. The young women who fled faced not only soldiers, but also human traffickers for the infamous Thai sex industry.

Once inside Thailand, women like Nang did not find a strong support system. Unlike other refugees fleeing Burma, the Shan have not received refugee status from the Thai government, which would entitle them to health and education services and freedom of movement. After being injured doing construction work in northern Thailand, Nang could not get medical care, nor be alone in her tent without unwanted sexual advances from her boss and other laborers. Instead, Nang rested in the shade at the construction site as a friend kept watch over her.

Like the women in the workshops she leads, Nang did not know how her experiences were connected to the larger political situation in Burma and to the global economy until she started talking with other refugees. When she began volunteering with the Burma Relief Center and the Migrant Assistance Program, civic groups that served Shan exiles, Nang met women who worked with groups like the Shan Herald Agency for News and Alt-ASEAN. Together, they talked about how Thailand benefits from the low-wage labor of Shan refugees working in pineapple plantations, massage parlors, or textile factories. Nang learned that Thailand is heralded by international financial institutions as a model of free enterprise and economic development, but has not signed the United Nations Refugee Convention or ceased its business dealings with Burma. In fact, Thailand is planning to purchase 500 megawatts of electricity from the damming of the Salween River, which runs through the Shan state.

Weaving a safety net

The women discussed what they could do for Shan people, especially women and children, and how to stop the SPDC. In 1999, Nang and 40 other women formed SWAN. The group met on weekends, so women who worked during the week could attend. Meetings made up of a circle of 10 to 25 women, with a bowl of steaming Shan-style rice noodles in the center. Together they would weave a safety net to support internally displaced women in the Shan state and those living as undocumented laborers inside Thailand. They offered late-night literacy classes for youth and adults, as well as medical and childcare, and an emergency hotline and safe house for those escaping prostitution.

They are collaborating with Thai-based women's groups to distribute posters and comic books written in the Shan language that break down the myth that women are to blame for rape and HIV infection. SWAN is now building an understanding in the Shan community that violence against women is not a woman's problem, but a human rights violation everyone must address. For example, they are working closely with a supportive headman of a refugee village to create a women's crisis center staffed by local women who have attended SWAN workshops.

To raise funds for their programs, provide a livelihood for Shan refugees, and preserve cultural traditions, SWAN initiated a training program in which women prepared Shan food for catering events and sewed Shan clothes to be sold around the world.





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They conducted human-rights and gender-equality workshops on the border, networked with Shan, Thai, and Burmese organizations, and launched an ambitious internship program in which interns gain computer and facilitation skills, as well as language instruction in Shan, Thai, English, and Burmese.

As women on the border continued to report cases of sexual violence, SWAN realized it needed to get the story of the military's systematic rape of Shan women to the world. In 2002, SWAN and the Shan Human Rights Foundation published the report *License to Rape* in three languages, and distributed more than 12,000 copies to UN agencies, embassies, and human-rights and women's groups. The report succeeded in focusing international attention on the SPDC's activities. SWAN members testified before the United Nations, the U.S. Congress, and numerous other governmental bodies about the need to maintain sanctions against Burma's military government. It also awakened many in the Burmese opposition movement to the effectiveness of women's work.

Informed by their experiences laboring in sweatshops and watching massive projects like the proposed Salween Dam displace native people, SWAN members are joining the global movement for environmental and social justice. Several young Shan women have interned with groups such as the Bank

Information Center to better understand the forces behind corporate globalization. SWAN members now have contacts at the UN and relationships with donors from places such as Australia and Norway.

Though groups like SWAN face increased surveillance by Thai authorities, the women continue to reach out to allies and other indigenous people's groups around the world. SWAN members who met women activists from Guatemala and South Africa discovered common experiences. "We share the same feeling... why do women have to face being more vulnerable to violence?" said 22-year-old member Charm Tong.

Building a movement for equality

In 1999, SWAN co-founded the Women's League of Burma (WLB) with 11 other ethnic women's organizations to advocate for greater women's influence in the Burmese resistance movement. Despite the fact that Burma's popularly elected president is a woman, Nobel Prize-winner Aung San Suu Kyi, it was still difficult for women, especially ethnic minority women, to find a seat at the table with exiled Burmese democracy activists. WLB is pushing for gender equality to be written into the new constitution. By working closely with other ethnic women's organizations and demonstrating how pluralism can thrive in Burma, SWAN countered the SPDC's claim that disputes between various ethnic groups make democracy impossible.

When the Shan women chose not to have an executive director govern their new organization back in 1999, onlookers said, "You'll be a ship without a sail, lost and looking for direction." Yet five years later, SWAN has grown to a membership of more than 100, touched the lives of thousands more, and not veered from a course of equality and peace for all.

Despite being refugees, without land, money, or security, SWAN challenges the Burmese military, which is well-funded from exploitation of natural resources and participation in the illicit narcotics trade, by building women's leadership capacity. The women opted for a collective leadership model where all members share decision-making power, because, as Charm Tong explains, "Everyone has an important contribution to make."



For more information, see SWAN, www.shanwomen.org;

Women's League of Burma, www.womenofburma.org; and the

U.S. Campaign for Burma, www.uscampaignforburma.org. Ingrid

Drake is a teacher, mediator, and member of the DC Radio Co-op and can be reached at theteachingreporter@yahoo.com.





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New European regulations may reduce toxic hazards around the globe

a race to the top?

Elizabeth Grossman

All too often globalization is synonymous with a race to the bottom. Freed to roam the globe, corporate capital can move wherever labor and environmental regulations are weakest. Even the threat of such a move can stifle demands for higher standards, depressing wages and weakening environmental protections everywhere.

But could globalization ever mean a race to the top? Can high standards be globalized?

As evidence has mounted of the harm to human health and the environment many chemicals used in information-age products cause, European activism against these toxins has also grown, culminating in stringent new regulations. Beginning in 2006, all electronic equipment produced and sold in the European Union (EU) will be subject to two sweeping regulations, one designed to keep toxics-laced electronics out of municipal waste, the other to reduce use of toxic substances in the first place.

Under the WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) directive, electronics manufacturers will be responsible for taking back and recycling their products and consumers can return used appliances to manufacturers without charge. By shifting costs of disposal from society as a whole to manufacturers, this policy creates an incentive for producers to design products that are easier to recycle and use fewer toxic ingredients.

The other EU directive, RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances), will require the elimination from new equipment (with certain exceptions) of lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, and two types of flame-retardants (polybrominated biphenyls and polybrominated diphenyl ethers, both documented to be persistent in the environment and to accumulate in the tissues of humans and animals). This legislation will unify what individual countries—particularly those in northern Europe—had begun to regulate on their own.

All electronics sold in Europe will have to meet these standards. U.S. manufacturers are optimistic about complying with the new regulations.

“EU design requirements will become global requirements,” says David Isaacs, Hewlett-Packard’s director of global public policy. “Our plan is to meet

the RoHS standard globally,” says Dell spokesperson Bryant Hilton. “We thought there was credible evidence for the concern, and that there were adequate alternatives,” says Timothy Mann, IBM’s program manager for environmental policy, of IBM’s elimination of certain polybrominated diphenyl ethers since the late 1990s. Adequate alternatives are key to solving the materials problems. Of the RoHS-restricted materials, lead presents the biggest challenge. Dell, HP and IBM all say that this directive is spurring their efforts to find substitutes for lead wherever possible, but they warn that this may not be possible in the case of monitor glass and cathode ray tubes, where lead is used as a radiation shield.

In the U.S., the new EU regulations have created new impetus to achieve high standards on the use and disposal of toxins. Pressure on manufacturers—in the form of purchasing power—is coming from groups not often cast as environmental activists: large group-purchasing organizations. The Western States Contracting Alliance, the Society of College and University Professionals, and organizations that purchase equipment for the healthcare industry are among those working to include environmental criteria—including take-back, hazardous materials reductions, and recycling that bars export of electronic waste—in new orders, and developing environmentally preferable purchasing programs, some with input from the GrassRoots Recycling Network and Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition’s Computer Take-Back Campaign.

The new EU regulations are not panaceas for the problems caused by electronics waste, but manufacturers and recycling advocates generally agree that pressure from Europe is prompting environmental improvements throughout the industry. “I don’t want to overemphasize the good,” says Ted Smith of the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, but “the two directives taken together are having a tremendous impact in harmonizing things upward.”

For more information, see Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, www.svtc.org; GrassRoots Recycling Network, www.grn.org; and the EU, http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/index_en.htm. Elizabeth Grossman is the author of *Watershed: The Undamming of America* and *Adventuring Along the Lewis and Clark Trail*.





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With mad cow disease causing alarm for consumers, activists from Europe, Canada, and the U.S. are trading strategies and data on how to run successful campaigns for the humane treatment of livestock and people



Courtesy of Viva!USA

Holly Dressel

The word has been spreading across Europe, Canada, and the U.S. about the truly horrifying damage that accompanies the hog industry, and today, doors are starting to slam shut on mega-hog barns all around the world. Rural communities that found themselves with their property values halved, their asthma rates tripled, and their watercourses destroyed formed local organizations to defend themselves against incursions by more big hog barns. Then they warned others, spreading the word near and far about the dangers of industrial hog farms and about the alternatives—sustainably raised pork and farms that raise truly happy hogs.

In Canada, the industrial hog barns are still on the move, particularly on the prairies. But back East, with eight major Quebec rivers contaminated by hog wastes, property values destroyed in what

used to be the one of most beautiful rural regions of the province, and asthma rates rising rapidly in a country where medical bills are paid by government taxes, the province is finally cooling its 15-year love affair with the hog industry.

Quebec has paid a high price for its hog industry, the largest in North America. The province provided such generous “insurance” and other subsidies and tax incentives to industrial hog farms that the producers barely needed to sell the pork to make a profit. The industry itself so infiltrated the single farmers’ union, the Union des Producteurs Agricoles, that many came to see it as more a tool of corporate interests than a voice for local farmers on these issues.

Quebec’s situation became especially serious as the prime, hog-growing territories were overrun





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and the industry began to invade formerly hog-free areas, like the rich, dairy and apple-growing valley east of Montreal, where agricultural run-off will threaten the city's water, or the northern Gaspé area, home to boreal forest, salmon, whales, and an important tourist industry.

The groups that formed to fight back began on the village level, then spread throughout whole valleys. Local leaders quickly got in touch with similar organizations in French-speaking New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as well as France's long-established and powerful agricultural union, the Union Paysanne. As the industry brought despair to communities in the neighbouring Maritimes and west through the Canadian prairies, more rural activists made contact with each other.

Today, a coalition of these groups, called Beyond Factory Farming, headquartered in Saskatchewan, works closely with national groups like the Sierra Club of Canada and the Council of Canadians, and with U.S.-based groups such as the Grace Factory Farm Project and the WaterKeepers' Alliance. Together, they share scientific and legal information, trade ideas on effective strategies, and raise funds. The province's new attitude towards hogs grew directly out of this local, national, and international grassroots networking.

Changing attitudes toward agribusiness

Not surprisingly, this popular uprising against industrial hog farms is being felt by policy makers. Hundreds of people regularly show up at provincial environmental review hearings to express their views of the hog industry and the role of government in protecting and subsidizing an industry they believe is damaging water quality, property values, and peace of mind. Quebec's Bureau d'Audience Publiques sur l'Environnement (BAPE) commissions, charged with conducting such hearings, recommended revolutionary legislative reforms affecting not only the pork industry, but all provincial agriculture.

According to their recommendations, "Producers must now pay attention to the natural ecosystems pre-existing in the watershed where their operation is located," Romeo Bouchard reported recently in the *Journal of the Union Paysanne*. "They must answer to local government, which, for its part, must effectively manage its territory for multiple and not single uses, not the least of which is general public health."

So far, Quebec's newly elected government has agreed to all the major points brought up by the

BAPE Commission on hog farming. In addition to extending a pre-existing 18-month moratorium on new hog barns for another year, it has warned that the moratorium won't be lifted until studies have established norms to protect soil and water, and until municipalities are able to take over control of the industry. Most importantly, the provincial health and environment ministries will now have as much to say about hog farms as the formerly all-powerful provincial agricultural ministry.

Although the provincial government has not publicly commented on many other BAPE recommendations, the commission showed itself ahead of the latest cases of mad cow disease by demanding that the government prohibit the use of meat and bone meal as feed for pigs, ban the use of antibiotics as growth enhancers, and institute a system of traceability for pork. They also encouraged the pork industry to take note of emerging consumer concerns about animal well-being and genetically modified foods.

These recommendations, too, inspired and energized groups across North America and Europe still fighting for local rights over mega-industries. It raises the bar on everyone's demands, and has given hope to some of the most beleaguered communities in the western U.S. and Canada. Today, a distant community's triumphs, as well as its defeats and disasters, are no longer a secret. A web of communications now makes a victory thousands of miles away into a new pattern for everyone.

Holly Dressel is co-author with David Suzuki of *From Naked Ape to Superspecies* and *Good News for a Change: Hope for a Troubled Planet*. She is also a YES! contributing editor.

Resources on Factory Farming

Grace Factory Farm Project, a national clearinghouse on industrial agriculture, offers free consulting and a Teen Activist Guide. www.factoryfarming.org

Beyond Factory Farming Coalition, based in Canada, promotes livestock production that supports human, animal, and environmental health. www.beyondfactoryfarming.org

Corporate Agribusiness Research Project monitors corporate farming and provides an online newsletter and news service. www.electrarrow.com/CARP

Organic Consumers Association offers information about industrial agriculture and where to buy organic produce, beef, and other products. www.organicconsumers.org

Agribusiness Accountability Movement provides online research and articles on factory farming and alternatives to it. www.agribusinessaccountability.org

Land Stewardship Project helps farmers switch to sustainable farming and consumers organize against factory farms. www.landstewardshipproject.org

Waterkeepers' Alliance. www.waterkeeper.org





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Nearly all activists use the Internet for e-mail and websites. But only a few have begun to harness the full power of the emerging networked world

appropriating the internet for global activism



Mark Surman & Katherine Reilly

Miami school
children learn
about Indymedia's
open publishing
software

In the quest for global peace and social justice, the Internet and other emerging network technologies provide powerful tools to support our work. But most organizations have not moved beyond e-mail and basic websites—they haven't yet learned truly strategic uses of these technologies. Put simply, the tools are in our hands, but most of us have not yet decided what to build. Below, we present a glimpse of what the future might hold based on our research on organizations that are out front in their innovative use of these emerging technologies.

OneWorld—a voice for civil society

At first glance, OneWorld.net looks like a straightforward news website focused on civil society issues. It contains compelling and professionally presented articles on HIV/AIDS, sustainable development, human rights, peace, and the digital divide.

Under the hood, however, the London-based OneWorld is a very different kind of site. It is a network of civil society content producers from around the world all working to paint a collective picture of a better world. Almost 100 percent of the content





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is drawn from the websites of OneWorld's 1,500 partner sites. In creating "the news" for a particular day, OneWorld editors pull the best material from this pool of partner sites, write new headlines and précis, and publish the material to the front page. At a global level, the coverage is in English. Regional coverage in five additional languages is provided by more than 10 regional and country sites.

While most civil society websites tell stories from a single organization's perspective, OneWorld presents the perspective of multiple organizations according to theme. The result is a diversity of opinion and content driven directly by the work and interests of civil society organizations.

Indymedia—grassroots open publishing

Since starting as a single Web site and media production storefront set up for the Seattle WTO protests in 1999, Indymedia has grown to more than 100 sites covering all continents. A single international site collects the best content from all of the locals.

Indymedia is among the best-known examples of open publishing. A typical local Indymedia site consists of a "wire" section that automatically presents open publishing material as it is posted to the site. In addition, the site contains a "news" column consisting of stories chosen or written by the local editorial team. Whether news or wire, all of these stories come from grassroots media activists.

"While other online alternative news sources often fill their Web pages with editorials, commentaries, and news analysis," writes Gene Hyde, in an article published at www.firstmonday.org, "Indymedia's primary emphasis is in providing a Web outlet for filing original, first-hand coverage online through print, photos, audio, and video."

Biwater censorship case—online activism

Online tactics can reverse corporate decisions in a few short days, as business interests scramble to avoid negative press. A good civil society example is the Biwater censorship case.

In the late 1990s, Biwater, a privately owned British corporation specializing in water privatization, tried to take control of a number of water concessions in South Africa. This led to public criticisms from the South African Municipal Workers Union, South Africa's *Mail and Guardian* newspaper, the LabourNet.org website, and others.

In April 1998, Biwater threatened legal action against the nonprofit Internet service providers

(ISPs) that hosted the LabourNet and *Mail and Guardian* websites. Unable to afford an expensive legal battle, both ISPs removed the material critical of Biwater.

The removal of the pages turned out to be the beginning, not the end, of the fight against Biwater. LabourNet webmaster Chris Baily called on activists to use the Internet to fight back against Biwater's use of restrictive libel laws to throttle democratic debate. Two European ISPs dedicated to working with civil society—Antenna in the Netherlands and Inform in Denmark—responded.

Antenna and Inform, both member of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), mirrored the removed pages on their own servers. This meant that the pages were still accessible to the public but they were no longer housed within the British or South African jurisdictions where the "cease and desist" orders had been served.

Another eight APC members agreed to mirror the Biwater material, spreading the articles across servers in Europe and the Americas. With so many groups involved that were located in so many different countries, Biwater's legal challenge became almost impossible. Biwater sent no more letters on the issue.

Sarai/Waag—North/South collaboration

The Sarai/Waag Exchange provides a good example of how two civil society organizations—one from the North, the other from the South—use the Internet to collaborate on an equal level. The Exchange is an open-ended research partnership and series of fellowships aimed at getting to know one another by being immersed in each others' experiences, practices, and locality.

Sarai is a Delhi-based new media initiative that explores the new media landscape and seeks to change that landscape by organizing workshops and developing media labs and community projects.

One such project is the Cybermohalla computer centres, where people in the poor neighborhoods of Delhi record and communicate what is going on around them. "About 15 women and five men, most of them in their early 20s, turned barefoot journalists and report about their surroundings: their *basti* of dust, makeshift houses, corrugated iron, mud walls, narrow lanes, trading, smoking fires, noisy roosters, crying babies, and playing children that is in constant danger of being bulldozed because the





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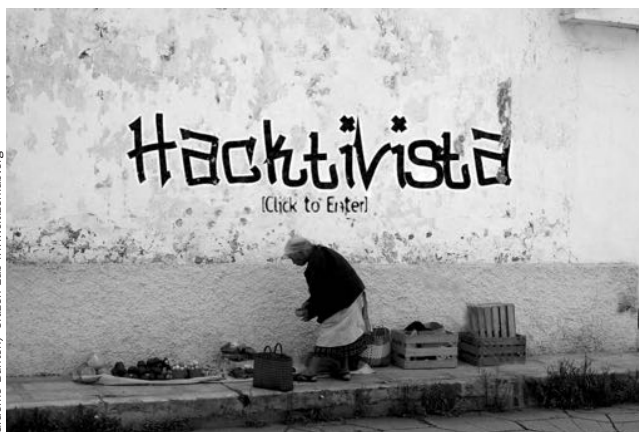
entire settlement of a few thousand people is illegal, whatever that means,” writes Michael Hegener in an article on <http://waag.sarai.net>. “The main outlet of their work is a Hindi newspaper posted on the walls that informs about the things the passers-by may speak about, but about which they never read.”

The Amsterdam-based Waag Society shares Sarai’s interest in seeing media from a variety of angles, carrying out research, developing software, and pointing out the connections between technology and culture. The Delhi and Amsterdam groups both have a passion for technology that is “open source”—placed in the public domain so it is available for anyone’s use. This interest led the Exchange to hold an “open source and development cooperation” workshop in Amsterdam during the summer of 2003 involving practitioners from both South and North.

“The old aid model is nation to nation, for instance, Holland helps India,” writes Hegener, quoting Ravi Sundaram of Sarai. “Now it is possible for Waag Society and Sarai to collaborate at an equal level. We both learn though the collaboration: we work together, set up events together. We spoke little about the aid implications, the formal aspect. The most important thing about the Exchange is that, for the first time, it is possible to speak at an equal footing.”

The potential of the Sarai/Waag Exchange is significant enough that others have asked to join, and the partners have agreed to open it up—albeit cautiously. Only one new organization—the Alternative Law Forum—will be joining in 2004. If this goes well, another organization may join in 2005.

Home page
of Citizen Lab’s
Hacktivist
website



Greene Bunton / Citizen Lab www.citizenlab.org

Citizen Lab—detecting hackers

As more civil society organizations go online, the importance of network security increases. Citizen Lab is developing a Secure Scan research project to help non-governmental non-profit organizations (NGOs) detect hackers and improve security on their networks. It plans to investigate the widespread anecdotal evidence that NGOs are being subjected to hacker attacks.

Human rights organizations appear to be especially likely to be targets of such attacks. For example, in January 2001, the Argentine human rights group Las Madres de la Plaza del Mayo reported being hacked for the third time and having information destroyed on their hard drives. The attacks were attributed to a group called Jorge Videla, the name of a military official who was part of the 1976-1983 dictatorship that was responsible for the disappearances of 15,000 to 30,000 people.

Citizen Lab works with NGOs in the South, auditing their network security and patching up any vulnerability. It plans to seek permission of the NGOs to install tools that allows the network to be monitored and any intrusion to be detected.

Exception, not the rule

In these organizations, we see a world where technology is at once central and forgotten. E-mail lists, websites, and databases are so deeply ingrained into the DNA of these organizations that they are no longer the point or the problem. The fluidity and flexibility of these technology tools have become the natural raw material from which more important things are built – coalitions, campaigns, knowledge, networks. They, in turn, create new forms of organization and ways of working together that are changing the terrain of civil society and giving a glimpse of an uncharted future. As this terrain starts to emerge and come into focus, we see glimpses of the future.

Adapted from the report of the Information Technology and International Cooperation Program of the Social Science Research Council. The full report—which profiles civil society organizations that have successfully appropriated the Internet and the challenges they continue to face—can be downloaded at www.ssrc.org/programs/itic/.

Mark Surman, president of Commons Group, has been developing leading-edge, community-based media projects for the past 15 years. Katherine Reilly is an independent researcher and consultant working on social and political aspects of new technologies in Canada and Latin America.





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etiquette for activists

Michael F. Leonen



Langelie / Global Justice Ecology Project



Anne T. Keeney

Why do so many attempts to build coalitions across race and culture result in hurt and division? These seasoned activists have worked with a variety of diverse coalitions, and they offer these tips on what makes the difference between success and disaster

As a teenager, Kenyan national Njoki Njoroge Njehũ thought good intentions were enough to work across racial lines and national borders. She thought wrong—and discovered why.

While attending the 1985 UN Decade for Women Conference in Nairobi, her first international experience, she heard Australian aboriginal artist Lilla Watson say: “If you have come to help me, I don’t need your help. But if you have come because your liberation is tied to mine, come let us work together.” Those words changed Njehũ.

Today, like Njehũ, activists are discovering that it takes more than good intentions when it comes

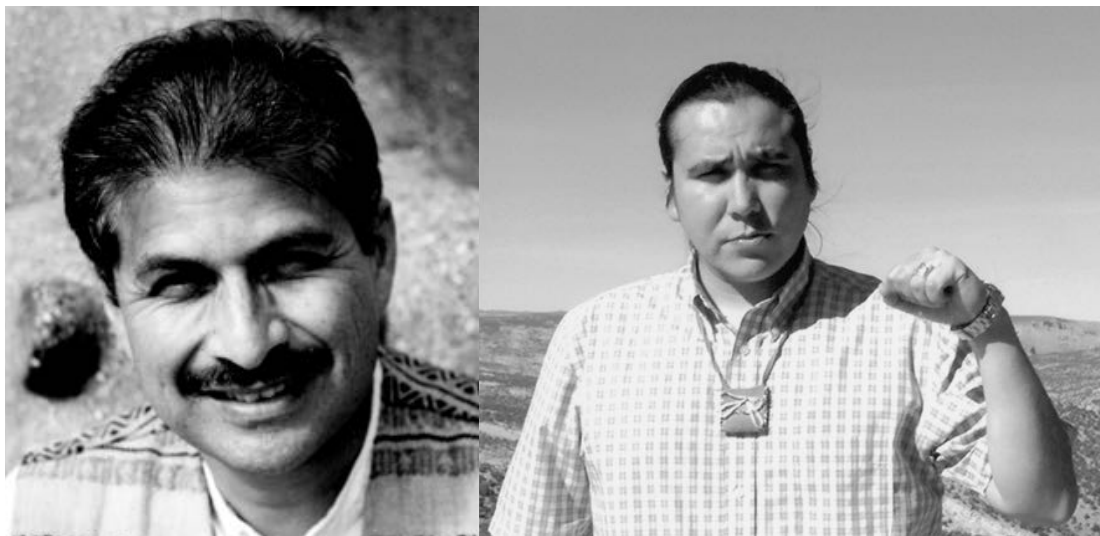
LEFT: Njoki Njoroge Njehũ, director of 50 Years is Enough (www.50years.org).

RIGHT: Pramila Jayapal, executive director of the Hate-Free Zone of Washington (www.hatefreezone.org)





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LEFT: Roberto Vargas,
a facilitator and
consultant.

RIGHT: Clayton
Thomas-Muller,
an organizer with
the Indigenous
Environmental
Network
(www.ienearth.org)

to cross-border work. Here are some of the lessons activists say make the difference between effective coalitions and disintegration:

Believe in the possibility

Pramila Jayapal, executive director of the Hate-Free Zone of Washington, was terrified the night before the Justice For All hearings (see *YES!* Fall 2003), when immigrants were to testify about experiences with post 9-11 discrimination. “How will they know that anything will get better?” she asked. “How am I so sure that the pain they will undergo is worth it?”

It was. Hundreds of immigrants showed up for the hearings to either testify or lend support. Major media networks took notice. Senator Edward Kennedy and other policy-makers listened.

“We’ve been told to fight for ourselves,” Jayapal says. “But you have to believe that the power is in the collective. You have to believe in the possibility that things will get better when we come together.”

Address individual issues

Many of the immigrants Jayapal works with are skeptical about working with other groups. They want to know if working with a coalition will diminish their ethnicity or their unique issues.

Build trust by working with them separately, says Jayapal, who was born in India and grew up in South Asia. The Hate-Free Zone of Washington operates a hotline to address individual—not systemic—issues. “You can’t take away systemic political advocacy,” she says. “You can’t take away the direct support, either.”

Don’t impose your norms

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, an indigenous Ibaloi from the Philippines and executive director of the Indigenous Peoples’ International Centre for Policy Research and Education (www.tebtebba.org), says racist and discriminatory attitudes often divide Northern and Southern activists.

Tauli-Corpuz cites foreign activists who visit the Philippines for solidarity work. Some, she says, become impatient if processes are not fast or efficient enough by their standards. They impose their own standards, which do not fit the norms and concept of time and space of the communities they visit.

For example: “Those from the South, especially Asia, have a different way of dealing with a difficult person,” she says. The more direct approach of those from the North can be offensive to Southerners.

Provide interpreters

English may be the language most often used for international gatherings, says Tauli-Corpuz, but not all English concepts translate well into languages used by indigenous people. Even if they do, translation takes time away from meaningful conversations.

Portable translation machines can save time, allowing more conversations to take place, she says. “A pool of interpreters who have an understanding of indigenous cultures and contexts has to be expanded. Donors must be convinced that the budget for interpretation is crucial.”





conspiracy of hope

Take time to understand each other

Roberto Vargas remembers the time when, during a retreat of activists, a person of color related his experience with racism. A white participant interrupted to say, "I already know what your realities are all about."

They don't, says Vargas, a Chicano and principal consultant of the New World Associates. "We should maintain the freshness of learning the uniqueness of each person, allowing each to teach us their culture and experiences with racism," he says.

To a Chicano, this is called *conocimiento*—sharing oneself, asking questions of each other that range from Where are you from?, Who are your family? and What is your cultural background? to What is your experience with racism? and What do you expect or need from me to be an ally?

Learn to forgive and forget

Vargas, who experienced racism as a child up to the time he taught at the University of Berkeley, remembers a time when he was consumed with anger. His brother confronted him, saying, "Roberto, I've always looked up to you, but now I can't listen to you anymore because you're too full of hate."

Anger to motivate your activism only takes you so far, says Vargas. "We need to learn to forgive and let go. We need to recognize that we need to work together."

Ask permission

"No matter how insignificant or how huge the matter, people need to ask permission and not just assume," says Clayton Thomas-Muller, a First Nations Canadian. For example, he says permission is needed to take pictures or to chant during sacred ceremonies just as it is needed to exploit indigenous land and resources. Thomas-Muller says asking permission may sound basic but it builds relationships. Most problems occur because others forget—or refuse—to do so.

Step back

Asking permission, Thomas-Muller adds, relates to stepping back to allow indigenous people to speak for themselves and lead the movement. "We speak for ourselves," he says, repeating the slogan of the Indigenous Environmental Network, where he is a campaign project organizer.

The thought that indigenous people will selfishly enjoy the land and its resources is unfounded. So is the thought that they fear modernization.

Thomas-Muller cites the Gwich'in Nation

of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Despite threats from the government, they continue to live around the Porcupine Caribou herd with their sacred rituals and practices intact—and with Internet connection.

"We do have an understanding about how to take care of ourselves," he says. "We are not wanting to go back to the tepee. We are also evolving like the rest of Mother Earth."

Not all groups can work together

Tanya Dawkins, senior vice-president of the Collins Center for Public Policy (www.collinscenter.org), says different approaches to change can make it difficult or impossible for some groups to work together. The parameters of the relationship must be defined clearly, Dawkins says.

A natural attrition will occur, when some find that the joint work is not what they are looking for. "This is okay as long as the attrition is not because of the process," she says, "not because they felt isolated."

Don't forget gender, class issues

Dawkins says gender and class issues are often neglected even within the movement. These issues do not automatically resolve themselves when activists of the same movement begin to work together.

"It's quite the contrary," she says. As with any endeavor, gender and class issues need to be dealt with consciously in building coalitions.

Don't do diversity for its own sake

Njoki Njoroge Njehú agrees. She cautions, though, against diversifying for the sake of diversification.

"If you are a woman of color, you fill in many diversities," she says. "If you are there to fit a certain demographic, it feels different and people will treat you differently. You are not there as an equal. You are there because of what you look like."

Pass on the privilege

Njehú has come a long way since hearing Lilla Watson in 1985. Today, she is director of 50 Years Is Enough, a coalition that challenges IMF and World Bank policies. She is widely interviewed and quoted by international and U.S. broadcast and print media. Yet, she believes in allowing others the limelight.

"We have the privileged access to the media," she says. The New Voice on Globalization, a project Njehú is involved in, works to make sure that grassroots activists also have opportunities to be spokespersons.





conspiracy of hope

Ancient stories tell of a time when the peoples of the world are reunited and their gifts bring a new world into being.

Might this healing process already be underway?

Ilarion (Larry) Merculieff

the gifts from the four directions

Four years ago, the Bering Sea Council of Elders was formed to focus on the health of the Bering Sea ecosystem and the viability of the coastal and river cultures dependent on it. The Council is often referred to as the *WisdomKeepers of the North*. The Council is composed of some of the most revered elders in seven culturally distinct regions of Alaska. As the coordinator for the Council, I have the privilege of implementing the Council's instructions and making connections with Wisdomkeepers from many indigenous traditions in the Western Hemisphere.

During the course of my work, I have been given many messages, stories, and prophecies, and have found that many are related or similar. One of the prophecies involves what I call *The Gifts from the Four Directions*. There are many iterations of this prophecy as it is interpreted through cultural lenses. The Hopi Wisdomkeepers talk about the *World of the Fifth Hoop* where the four sacred colors will reconnect. The Navajo call this time the *Fifth World*. This version is one I synthesized from the stories of several cultures, taking care to ensure that the integrity of the messages is maintained.

Many stories talk about how there has been a pendulum effect in which the world shifts back and forth between masculine and feminine imbalance over many millennia. The current cycle, which began thousands of years ago, is a time of masculine imbalance. Spiritual leaders throughout the world knew that this time was coming—a time when all things feminine would be exploited, smashed, and destroyed, including all Mother Earth-based cultures, feminine-based spirituality, and women. The spiritual leaders around the world communicated with one another through the original language created from an intimate connection with Creation.

They decided to hide the sacred and secret teachings because they knew that the two-leggeds (people) would abuse and misuse the teachings. There were many ingenious ways the teachings were hidden—in common words of different cultures, in story, in song, in art, and geometric patterns woven in cloth and garments. In many cases, specific parts of the teachings were intentionally forgotten. The spiritual leaders knew that the sacred and secret teachings would only be made whole again when the two-leggeds heal enough to open their hearts and thus reconnect with their brothers and sisters from the different directions and colors around the world. In doing so, they would share their sacred ways with others until the sacred and secret teachings are fully restored.

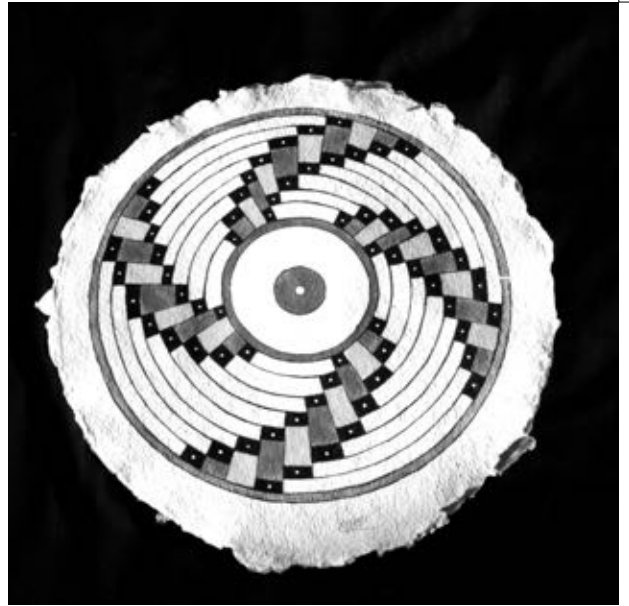
It is said that there will be a time when the gifts of the four sacred colors, red, white, black, and yellow, will come together from the Four Directions and combine to create something new that has not been seen since the beginning of time.

It is said that only when humans are open enough in the heart will there be the deep reconnection that allows a true sharing of the sacred and secret teachings. These teachings from the Four Directions come in the form of the four sacred elements—earth, air, fire, and water.

The sacred yellow color brings the gift of air from the East. The Eastern traditions understand and are masters of the use of air through breath and how breath combines with chants and sounds to create powerful healing and connection to Divine Silence.

The sacred black color brings the gift of water from the South. The African traditions understand and are masters of the use of motion and rhythm





that is in complete harmony with the movement and rhythm of the Universe, through dances and complex drumming to help human beings harmonize with Creation.

The sacred red color brings the gift of earth from the West. Indigenous traditions throughout the world understand and are masters in the use of knowledge in communications with, and the nurturing and healing of, Mother Earth.

The sacred white color brings the gift of fire from the North. The people of the sacred white color understand and are masters in the use and application of energy in technology, like the spark plug, rocket engine, and the like.

The combining of these gifts will occur only when the humans have learned the true wisdom that comes from open-heartedness born of love, compassion, silence, and truth. Indeed, real sharing cannot occur without these four qualities. With these four qualities, and with conscious intent and action to combine the gifts of the four sacred colors, one can only speculate as to what immense beauty will be created.

It is also said that women will be restored to their place as the original healers, and when this occurs they shall lead the way. The role of the men as the spiritual warriors in this new time is to protect the sacred space of women so they can do their work. When these things are done, the pendulum of imbalance will stop for the first time since the beginning of time.

This journey has already begun as Eastern meditation traditions and breath mastery are shared throughout the world, as technology of the West spreads, as African dance and drumming is shared in every corner of the world and melded with other

musical traditions, and as people throughout the world seek indigenous wisdom to learn how to live on and with Mother Earth.

World religions are beginning to find common ground as spiritual leaders engage in dialogue. Science, in such areas as quantum physics, quantum mechanics, biology, and astrophysics, is beginning to converge with spirituality and metaphysics as they seek answers to how the Universe works. Indigenous teachings are found on the Internet and in large numbers of published works, and indigenous spiritual leaders and elders are gathering around the world to share their ways with greater and greater frequency. Conventional medicine is slowly beginning to explore the healing ways of other traditions. Women are actively seeking their own healing and creating the new ways of leadership that heal separation in its myriad of forms throughout the world.

Much of the world has yet to see the incredible new possibilities that can come from spiritual intent to share consciously and combine knowledge and wisdom from the four sacred colors, but it is beginning to happen. The Elders say, "nothing is created outside until it is created inside first."

If we stay the course in healing separation within and without, it is only a question of time until the sacred Gifts from the Four Directions—the four sacred colors—come together for the purpose of creating a new world.

Ilarion Larry Merculieff is an Aleut, born and raised in the Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea. He serves as the coordinator of the Bering Sea Council of Elders and is currently raising funds for a gathering of elders and youth in Alaska. You can contact him at lmerculieff@netscape.net or 1610 Woo Boulevard, Anchorage, Alaska 99515.

Sacred Circle
"Four Directions"
(acrylic on hand-
made paper),
by Veran Pardeahtan





conspiracy of hope

resources for crossing borders

Becky Brun

policy advocacy

Global Trade Watch, a division of Public Citizen, engages people in lobbying politicians on trade policy by providing congressional voting records and ready-to-send action alerts. www.citizen.org/trade, 202/588-1000

Global Policy Forum encourages people to participate in global policy issues by monitoring UN policy-making. The website provides case studies as well as criteria to measure the effects of globalization. www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/index.htm

Center for Economic and Policy Research issues regular reports on globalization. Each week, its web site features an Economic Reporting Review that critiques current economic and business articles from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. www.cepr.net, 202/293-5380

Global Exchange promotes environmental, political, and social justice worldwide. Provides citizens with hand-on tools for creating global partnerships. www.globalexchange.org, 415/255-7296

Food First publicizes policies that cause hunger and poverty worldwide and provides action plans for people who want to promote international food justice. Since 1975, Food First has provided books, education materials, and a newsletter about international food and human rights issues. www.foodfirst.org, 510/654-4400

International Forum on



Claus Meyer/ Peter Arnold

Indigenous Brazilian from Altamira records a group of people coming together to protest a new dam project.

Globalization examines the effects of globalization on indigenous peoples, natural resources, and food and agriculture, and recommends practices to revitalize local economies. www.ifg.org, 415/561-7650

International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) provides original, non-partisan reporting on trade and sustainable development to citizens worldwide. Publishes *Bridges*, a monthly newsletter that focuses on the links between trade and sustainable development. www.ictsd.org

International Gender and Trade Network has seven regional offices that work together to educate citizens about the impacts of trade on women. www.genderandtrade.net, 202/635-2757 x128

International Labor Rights Fund (ILRF) mobilizes people to fight for child labor rights, rights for working women, and sweatshop monitoring around the

globe. Educates consumers about shopping responsibly and holding corporations accountable for unjust actions. www.laborrights.org, 202/347-4100

United Nations Development Program (UNDP), works with governments and citizens in over 160 countries to reduce poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women. Publishes annual Human Development Reports that show the vast differences in human development in countries throughout the world. www.undp.org, 212/906-5364

No Border Network connects people from around the world working on migration policies and issues relating to deportation, migration, and border camps. www.noborder.org

Third World Network, is an independent information clearing house that uses its web site, magazines, and books to report on various issues in developing countries, including

women's rights, trade policies, and global climate change. www.twinside.org.sg

Border Ecology Project works with Mexican and U.S. organizations to develop solutions to environmental and health problems along the U.S.-Mexico border and throughout Latin American regions. www.borderecoweb.sdsu.edu/bew/drct_pgs/b/bep.html 505/983-4642

consumer campaigns

Oxfam International's Make Trade Fair campaign educates and invites people to challenge unjust international trading practices by providing sample letters to international trade commissioners, a toolkit for activists, and information about how to purchase Fair Trade products. www.maketrade4fair.com, 617/728-2480

TransFair USA, the only independent U.S. certifier of Fair Trade practices, sells coffee, tea, and chocolate from farmers who have received





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just payment and treatment.
www.transfairusa.org,
510/663-5264

education

The American Forum for Global Education provides an interactive web site for youth and teachers, supports young leaders, and publishes a quarterly magazine. www.globaled.org, 212/624-1300

Taking It Global connects young people in over 200 countries through a Global Youth Action Network and Service Day. Provides a Youth Action Guide to help young leaders turn their ideas into action. www.takingitglobal.org, 416/977-9363

Global Citizens for Change organizes international volunteer projects for young people and provides resources for teachers who want to bring global issues into their classrooms. www.citizens4change.org

media

The Globalist is a multi-faceted trilingual website about globalization featuring a daily online magazine, learning tools for students, business leaders, and consumers, and an online forum. www.theglobalist.com, 202-898-4760

Independent Media Center engages hundreds of independent journalists, filmmakers, and broadcasters in grassroots reporting on globalization, protests, and other community issues. www.indymedia.org

CorpWatch is an on-line magazine on corporate-led globalization. The website educates and helps mobilize citizens to work on environmental justice,

labor rights, and human rights issues. www.corpwatch.org, 510/271-8080

books

When Corporations Rule the World, by David C. Korten, documents a system of global corporate rule that is creating economic, environmental, and social devastation around the world. Kumarian Press and Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2001.

Alternatives to Economic Globalization, provides a comprehensive report by 19 researchers and activists on alternatives to the current corporate model of globalization. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002.

The Case Against the Global Economy and for a Turn Toward the Local, edited by Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith, argues that local economies are a better choice than free trade and economic globalization. Includes articles by 43 leading economic, agricultural, and environmental experts. Sierra Club Books, 1997.

Shafted: Free Trade and America's Working Poor, edited by Christine Ahn, provides real testimonies of farmers, fishermen, seamstresses, and other working Americans whose lives have been worsened by global trade agreements. Stories illustrate the connections between domestic and international environment, economic, and labor policies. Food First Books, 2003.

Vanishing Borders: Protecting the Planet in the Age of Globalization, by Hilary French, focuses on the environmental effects of the global economy and includes

recommendations for improving corporate and government environmental practices. Provides examples of businesses that have implemented environmental standards. World Watch Books, 2000.

Global Citizen Action Guide, edited by Michael Edwards and John Gaventa, is a diverse collection of case studies examining the lessons from recent social movements and the challenges that lie ahead. Lynne Rienner Press, 2001.

A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible?, edited by Tom Mertes, describes current campaigns that are challenging neoliberal globalization; told by the movements' leading activists and theorists such as Right Livelihood Award-Winner Walden Bello and the Zapatistas' Subcomandante Marcos. Verso Books, 2004.

Global Uprising, edited by Neva Welton and Linda Wolf, offers true stories told by activists who are leading the fight against worldwide injustice through direct action. New Society Publishers, 2001.

Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy, edited by Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild, describes and analyzes the vast migrations of women around the world in search of employment and better lives, and its repercussions, including a global "care drain." Metropolitan Books, 2003.

Open-Economy Politics: The Political Economy of the World Coffee Trade, by Robert H. Bates, takes readers on a chronological tour of the origins, operations, and collapse of the International Coffee Organization, a world "gov-

ernment of coffee" that was formed in the 1960s. Princeton University Press, 1997.

Homage to Chiapas: The New Indigenous Struggle in Mexico, by Bill Weinberg (see page 17), explains the current struggle for land in the Chiapas region of Mexico, outlines the ways in which NAFTA allowed agribusiness giants to control much of its land, and describes some of the efforts of local people to shape policies. Verso Books, 2002.

Tunnel Kids, by Lawrence Taylor and Maeve Hickey, offers a glimpse into the lives of young people from Nogales, Mexico, who live in the streets and drainage tunnels that cross the Mexico-U.S. border. The University of Arizona Press's website offers tips on how to use this book in the classroom. 2001. www.uapress.arizona.edu

Southern Exposure, by Barbara P. Thomas Slayter, shows how inequality and poverty have increased in South America as a result of globalization. Kumarian Press, 2003.

films

Another World is Possible, directed by Mark Dworkin and Melissa Young, presents a sampling of real issues and events at the second World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Produced by Moving Images, 2002.

Life: A Series of 30 Programs, edited by Robert Lamb, is a series of thirty 24-minute programs that examine the range of issues related to globalization and its effects on ordinary people throughout the world. Produced by Television Trust for the Environment. Bullfrog Films, 2000.





community

On the 75th anniversary of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birth, an elder stateswoman of the Black Power movement reflects on what might have been different if we'd taken King's most radical teachings to heart—and what might still be possible



Matt Herron/Take Stock

The beloved community of Martin Luther King

Grace Lee Boggs

In the 1960s I didn't pay much attention to Martin Luther King, Jr. My own social change activities unfolded in the inner city of Detroit. So I identified more with Malcolm X than with Martin. Like most Black Power activists, I viewed King's notions of nonviolence and beloved community as somewhat naïve and sentimental.

Neither was I involved in the 15-year campaign launched in 1968 by Detroit's Congressman John Conyers to declare King's birthday a national holiday. I held back, concerned that it would turn King into an icon, obscure the role of grassroots activists, and reinforce the tendency to rely on charismatic leaders.

Thirty-five years have now passed since King was killed, decades during which I have been con-

tinuously involved in the struggle to free our communities of the crime and violence that escalated in the wake of the urban rebellions of the late 1960s and the de-industrialization of Detroit. In the 20 years since President Reagan signed into law the King holiday, we seem to have drifted further from anything like a beloved community in this nation.

Thinking back over these years, I can't help wondering: Might events have taken a different path if we had found a way to infuse our struggle for Black Power with King's philosophy of nonviolence? Is it possible that our relationships with one another today, not only inter- but intra-racially, would be more harmonious if we had discovered how to blend Malcolm's militancy with King's vision of the





beloved community? Could such a synthesis have a revolutionary power beyond our wildest dreams? Is such a revolutionary power available to us today?

These are the times that try our souls. I cannot recall any previous period when the challenges have been so basic, so interconnected, and so demanding, not just to specific groups but to everyone living in this country, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, or national origin.

As I have read and re-read King's speeches and writings from the last two years of his life, it has become increasingly clear to me that King's prophetic vision is now the indispensable starting point for 21st-century revolutionaries.

King's new kind of revolution

Viewing Martin Luther King, Jr., as a revolutionary is in sharp contrast to the official view of him as simply an advocate for the rights of African Americans within the current system. In the last two years of his life, confronted with problems that required more complex solutions than visions of Black and White children marching hand in hand, King began to explore a new kind of revolution, one that would challenge all the values and institutions of our society and combine the struggle against racism with a struggle against poverty, militarism, and materialism.

"The black revolution," he insisted, "is much more than a struggle for rights for Negroes. It is exposing evils that are deeply rooted in the whole structure of our society."

"The war in Vietnam," he said, "is a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit. Material growth has been made an end itself. Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power."

This is what we should be talking about as we celebrate King's 75th birthday this year.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955–56, which provided King with his first experience in movement leadership, was a watershed because it created a theory and practice of revolutionary struggle very different from that which prevailed in the first half of the 20th century under the influence of the 1917 Russian Revolution. In those days most radicals, including myself, conceived of revolutionary struggle as an insurrection, a seizure of power by the oppressed from their oppressors, by the victims from the villains.

By contrast, the Montgomery Bus Boycott was a year-long, nonviolent, disciplined, and ultimately successful boycott by an African-American community, struggling against their dehumanization, not as

angry victims or rebels, but as new men and women, representative of a new more human society. Using methods that transformed them, they triggered the human identity and ecology movements that over the last 40 years have been creating a new civil society in the United States.

As a Baptist preacher and philosopher, King played a pivotal role in helping the bus boycotters in Montgomery, Alabama, create the new paradigm of nonviolent transformative struggles, which over the next nine years forced Congress to pass the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Self-transforming, structure-transforming

King was a movement activist for only 13 years, from his participation in the Montgomery Bus Boycott to his assassination in April 1968. But the dialectical development of his thinking during those turbulent years is unmistakable.

In June 1965, the rebellion in Watts, California, confronted King with the reality that civil and voting rights legislation had little to offer black youth living desperate lives in northern ghettos. So in 1966 he went to Chicago to meet with these young people.

Reflecting on these meetings and on the mounting resistance to the Vietnam War, King concluded that the crisis of black youth was rooted in structural questions that required going beyond both civil rights and Black Power. "One unfortunate thing about Black Power," he said, "is that it gives race a priority precisely at a time when the impact of automation and other forces have made the economic question fundamental for blacks and whites alike."

As a result, in his major writings and speeches in the last two years of his life (*Where Do We Go*

Grace Lee Boggs was born to Chinese immigrant parents in 1915. After receiving her Ph.D. in philosophy, in 1953 she came to Detroit, where she married Jimmy Boggs, an African-American labor activist. The two became deeply involved in Black Power organizing and left-wing politics. With race- and gender-based discrimination precluding an academic career, she dedicated herself to a lifetime of activism.



From Here: Community or Chaos? and *Time to Break Silence*), King began to project a new kind of radical revolution that would begin the shift from a “thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society.”

He rejected the dictatorship of technology, which, he said, diminishes people because it eliminates their sense of participation. “Enlarged material powers,” he warned repeatedly, “spell enlarged peril if there is no proportionate growth of the soul.” “When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people,” he said, “the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.”

Instead, King had a vision of people at the grassroots and community level participating in creating new values, truths, relationships, and infrastructures as the foundation for a new society. He called for programs that would involve young people in “self-transforming and structure-transforming” direct actions “in our dying cities.” He called for a radical revolution in values and a new social system that goes beyond both capitalism, which he said is “too I-centered, too individualistic,” and communism, which is “too collective, too statist.”

The catastrophe of the Vietnam War also inspired him to project a new concept of global citizenship that we now urgently need to practice as we grapple with the catastrophe of our current occupation of Iraq. “Every nation,” he said, “must now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies.”

“Disinherited people all over the world,” he said, “are bleeding to death from deep social and economic wounds.” In order for the United States to get on the right side of this world revolution, we must “undergo a radical revolution in values.”

King’s reasons for opposing a war against communism could be applied almost verbatim to the current war against terrorism. “Poverty, insecurity and injustice,” he explained, “are the fertile soil in which the seed of communism grows. A positive revolution of values is our best defense against communism.”

Giving birth to a new society

It is difficult to imagine a set of projections that go more to the roots of our current crisis. In fact, I venture to say that if, over the nearly 40 years since MLK’s assassination, we had been building a movement to make the revolution that he projected, September 11th might have been avoided.

As the Bush administration continues to exploit popular fears to carry out its agenda of military buildup, cutbacks in social programs, and suppression of dissent, we need to tap into King’s revolutionary spirit. By internalizing and sharing his concept of love as the readiness to go to any length to restore community, we can help more Americans recognize that the best way to insure our peace and security is not by warring against the “axis of evil” but through a revolution in our own values and practice. That revolution must include a concept of global citizenship in which the life of an Afghan, Iraqi, North Korean, or Palestinian is as precious as an American’s.

Hopeful signs are popping up in cities and communities throughout the country. More than 100 U.S. cities and 400 more around the world have defied the Bush administration’s abandonment of the Kyoto Treaty on global warming by devising local initiatives to meet the treaty’s goals. Local groups are organizing programs to reduce our dependence on global capitalism by creating more self-reliant economies, including local currencies like the Ithaca dollar and urban agriculture programs. Experiments in education for our young people, such as Detroit Summer and KIDS (Kids Involved in Direct Service), are pioneering self-transforming and structure-transforming community-building programs in our schools from kindergarten through high school.

King constantly pointed out to those in the freedom movement that their refusal to respond in kind to the violence and terrorism of their opponents was increasing their own strength and unity. He reminded them and the world that their goal was not only the right to sit at the front of the bus or to vote, but to give birth to a new society based on more human values. In so doing, he not only empowered those on the front lines, but in the process developed a strategy for transforming a struggle for rights into a struggle that advances the humanity of everyone in the society and thereby brings the beloved community closer to realization. This is what true revolutions are about. They are about redefining our relationships with one another, to the Earth and to the world; about creating a new society in the places and spaces left vacant by the disintegration of the old; about hope, not despair; about saying yes to life and no to war; about finding the courage to love and care for the peoples of the world as we love and care for our own families. King’s revolutionary vision is about each of us becoming the change we want to see in the world.



arts&media



Does anyone else feel this strange music?

Carol Estes



The universe is fond of odd pairings. Electrons appreciate protons. Flowers like bugs. Forests need fire. How else can we explain the partnership—and the love—between the rebellious Gen-X spoken word artist Drew Dellinger and the erudite cultural historian Thomas Berry, three times his age?

*i was born
in the eye of a storm*, Dellinger writes.

It was 1969, in the piedmont country of North Carolina. The struggle for civil rights had been felt across the entire country but particularly the South. Schools in North Carolina finally began to integrate in 1966, but the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., just two years later left the region confused, discouraged, and numb. So when the Dellingers' new baby was born, they named him Andrew King Dellinger—Drew for short.

*that balcony in Memphis
in my eyes
gunshot in my ears*

As one of two white children in his kindergarten class, Dellinger was designated a "pace child." But if his teachers expected him to set the pace because he was a white boy, they were disappointed. Dellinger was a restless child, constantly in motion. He hated sitting in rows, couldn't stay in his seat, refused to do his schoolwork.

Instead, as he grew, he haunted the library with his friend, Steve Snider, hunting through the rows of dusty books for answers.

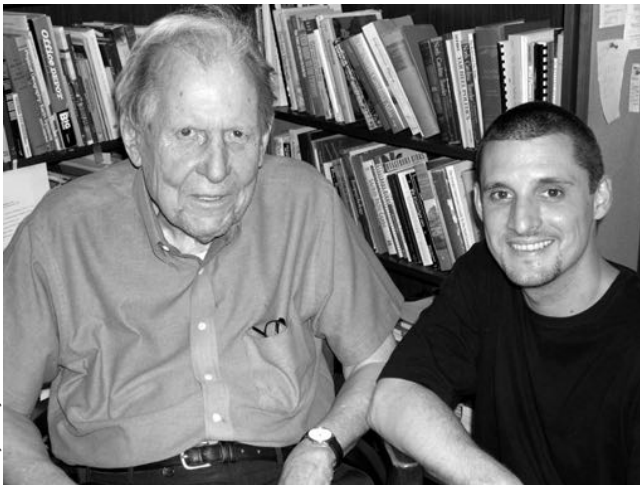
*i want to know the laws of earth and objects
like patterns of migration
like the boiling point of water
like the law that holds the moon
so
gently*

They discovered some of the answers they were looking for in physics, astronomy, world religions. They pored over the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., about *somebodiness*, about the Beloved Community, about his opposition to the war in Vietnam.



They discovered Carlos Castaneda. ("Hey, is this really *nonfiction*?") They struggled to understand the ideas of the radical feminists—Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon ("Whaddya mean, they don't like *Playboy*?"). Along with millions of others, they sat in darkened family rooms watching *Roots* and *Eyes on the Prize*, awakening to issues of race and justice.

*let's go
to death row
let's close every jail in the nation, free a
whole generation
plus Mumia.
I'm not joking,
we'll end in Oakland
with some
sit-ins on the dock of the bay
like the Doc, MLK
watching the apartheid roll away.*



Simmy Makhlani

Nevertheless, Dellinger and his friend sensed that what they'd glimpsed was only a small part of the big picture. By the time they headed off to Prescott College in Arizona in 1990, they were searching for a larger vision, a vision that integrated physics and astronomy and justice and ecology.

Then one day ("Oh my God! This is it!") they found Thomas Berry's book, *The Dream of the Earth*. It was qualitatively different from anything they'd ever read, Dellinger says. "Thomas Berry was talking about the comprehensive story of the

universe as a context for education, for economics, for thinking about the universe as a whole, about the role of the human in the universe. We said, 'We gotta figure out how to meet this guy!'"

When they learned that Berry was scheduled to speak at the Earth and Spirit conference in October of 1990, they immediately bought tickets for Seattle.

Berry spoke for a half hour.

"I don't think I knew how old he was," Dellinger says with a laugh. "He was the oldest person I'd ever hung out with. He was lovable and deep and sagacious and wise and humble and so learned." So Dellinger and Snider approached Berry after the talk and invited him to come to Arizona and lecture at Prescott College. Berry agreed to come.

Teaching the new cosmology

Newly energized, Dellinger and Snider decided to invent and teach a class at Prescott called New Cosmology: The Universe Story, even though they were still freshmen themselves. They put together a syllabus and a reading list that included books by Thomas Berry, Brian Swimme, and Matthew Fox. (The class, one of the first in the country on this topic, became a fixture in the Prescott catalog.) They formed a rap band called Sweet Acidophilus. And they designed a magnificent prelude to Berry's guest lecture—an hour-long multi-projector presentation of music and stars and nebulae and galaxies. A love song to the universe.

"Tonight," Thomas Berry said when he stepped to the podium, "is a night of cosmological significance."

does anyone else feel this strange music?

A woman sitting near Dellinger began to cry.

Berry explained that the triumph of industrialization is so complete that it has destroyed itself. It has collapsed. It's over. Now, he said, we must build a new relationship with the land, a new relationship with life, a new relationship with the stars. We need a new story of who we are and where we are—a story told not by scientists alone, but by artists. We need to know that our destiny is not the accumulation of money; it is the expansion of soul.

everything is singing a story

The next summer Dellinger and Snider traveled to Assisi, Italy, to study with the great teacher for the



first time. They were not disappointed. Thomas Berry lectured from dawn until dusk for nine days straight, following trains of thought that wove through millennia and swept all the different religious and cultural traditions into his vision.

In all these cultures, he explained, humans find meaning in the same way: by integrating human processes into the cosmological processes. In ancient China, for example, the Emperor's palace had both a winter and a summer quarters, so the Emperor had to move from one part of the palace to the other based on the season. And anyone who played winter music in the summer or vice versa risked throwing off the whole cosmological order.

Each day Dellinger and his friend wrote pages and pages of notes until their hands ached. Then when it grew dark, they sat around the table together, students and teacher, eating pasta and drinking wine, laughing and talking. Dellinger was learning more than he ever had. And he and Thomas Berry were becoming friends.

*I think, maybe this
could be a bliss
like when Dante met
Beatrice.*

Love letters

Since then, Dellinger's star has risen. He has won awards, performed cosmology rap and spoken-word poetry at more than 200 locations across the United States, and sold more than 2,000 copies of his CD with the song "Universe Jam," and 1,000 copies of his new poetry book, *love letter to the milky way*. He's writing his dissertation about the similarity between Thomas Berry's ideas and those of Martin Luther King, Jr.

And he has remained friends with Berry. "I owe so much to his vision. I try to use my energy and my creativity in the service of the larger issues that affect all of us—the extinction crisis, the issues of white supremacy and the legacies of slavery and genocide that we're still dealing with as a nation."

But Thomas Berry's powerful spirit may be fading.

"I'm almost 90," he says. "My memory fails me. What we need now is people like Drew, people who have the understanding of the scientific interpretation in back of industrialization but who see where we need to make a completely new approach."

Berry thinks about his legacy, the world he'd



Hubble Space Telescope, courtesy NASA

like to bequeath to the creatures who swim beneath the waves, who thrive in the soils, who grow in the meadows and forests—and the human creatures, too.

"My hope is largely with the artists and the essayists," he says. "The arts are our healing. Our salvation. Our hope."

*I've had limitless
lifetimes.
I've had limitless
lifetimes
to write rhymes
and get my game tight,
then waited to be incarnated
'til they invented
this
mic.*

*...and life
twists and fades like
smoke in the stage lights...*

To contact Dellinger or find out about *love letter to the milky way: a book of poems*: email drew@poetsforglobaljustice.org; www.poetsforglobaljustice.org. Carol Estes is a YES! contributing editor and co-founder of Estes Media, a film production company.





Getting Kids Off Drugs



Kevin Radford / Superstock

TEACHING THE RESTLESS: One School's Remarkable No-Ritalin Approach to Helping Children Learn and Succeed

by Chris Mercogliano

Beacon Press, 2003, 256 pages, \$25.00

Teaching the Restless is a sharp critique of schooling, child-rearing practices, and America's increasing rush to medicate away any perceived 'problem' behaviors. In a disarmingly honest narrative, Chris Mercogliano admits his biases and presents his arguments through persuasive success stories about children who, in most schools, would have been "medicated to learn." The strategies Mercogliano describes will not transfer easily to public schools, but he raises important questions about schooling and child rearing that should be considered by any-

one living with or working with these children.

Over the past decade, the rapid increase in the number of very young children placed on Ritalin or similar psychoactive medications has been staggering. (Recent studies cite a 300 percent rise in the number of two- to four-year olds taking these medications and estimate that nearly 20 percent of school-aged children are taking these drugs.) Mercogliano's stories about nine students highlight some of the societal structures that may contribute to this alarming trend. Although Mercogliano frequently refers to psychological, sociological, and medical research about ADHD, the stories about William, Brian, Damian, Tanya, Gaby, Carl, Walter, Mumasatuo, and Mark provide vivid illustrations for his critique.

As both an educator and the parent of a child who was labeled ADHD, I share many of Mercogliano's concerns about the ways schools fail many children. Modern school practices favor those who learn best through linear, sequential methods based in reading or writing. Children who thrive on routine and can sit quietly and absorb information by listening or working on paper and pencil tasks are privileged in today's classrooms. Those, like my own son, who respond to novelty, need to be active and moving, and learn most effectively through hands-on activities or through highly visual, non-language strategies are often disenfranchised. Because our son was given few opportunities during the school day to engage in tasks that capitalized on his strengths and was repeatedly faced with repetitious tasks that required him to use his least competent learning modes, he became restless. This restlessness often translated into apparent distractibility, unfinished work, and disruptive behaviors. Our evenings were spent haggling about unfinished work, and our teacher-student conferences were too frequently unhappy discussions about all the ways he wasn't fulfilling the school's expectations. Although my son retained a fairly happy outlook on life, for some children this distress can escalate into defiance.

According to Mercogliano, disruptive behaviors may be the only way children have to let the world around them know that they are frustrated—not yet ready for the task, or not able to tackle





it in the form presented. Instead of listening to their behaviors and offering different learning tasks, we label and medicate them in order to manage their disruptive behaviors, an approach that not only may lead children to view themselves as defective learners, but also may shut down their most effective ways of learning.

As parents, we agonized about whether to accept the recommendations to use medications, gave it a try for a while, but ultimately left the choice to our son. He didn't like the feeling of these medications, so we discontinued them. We tried tutors and other supports, and finally moved him to a private, innovative school, with some limited success. He dropped out, returned, dropped out again, and finally completed high school. We still look back today and shake our heads. He finally hit his stride when he enrolled in an advanced technical program in automotive and diesel mechanics. When given hands-on tasks working with engines, he could focus and learn very effectively. The public schools offered him few of these options.

Our son's problems were related to some of the other practices that Mercogliano critiques. Same-age groupings, for example, are based on an unfounded expectation that all children of a similar physical age will be ready to learn the same material in the same way at the same age. Public school teachers must teach large classes of children with wildly different skills, some from chaotic homes, ill-prepared academically, and ill-equipped socially to work cooperatively with others. Teachers are under increasing pressure to shape their teaching toward the narrow testing requirements of the Bush administration's No Child Left Behind Act. These pressures

mean teachers have little time to individualize work for students.

Unlike these teachers, Mercogliano has worked for 30 years in an innovative environment with plenty of support. He has taught for thirty years at the Free School, an alternative school in Albany, New York, that enrolls fifty students each year—preschool to eighth grade. The school's philosophy is that learning should start when the child is ready. Students are given a remarkable amount of freedom to set their own learning goals and choose the methods they might use to accomplish these goals, as long as they also take responsibility for following the few, but important, school rules.

At the Free School, students who have been unsuccessful in more traditional classrooms became active, engaged students, and Mercogliano argues that most students eventually learn most subjects quickly and efficiently when provided with various methods to master them or when they have developed their own motivation.

A case in point is Gaby, an artistic, imaginative student and visual learner, who avoided the structured, linear thinking associated with mathematics for most of her time at the Free School. As she was preparing to enter a public high school, she recognized that she needed to be competent in math skills to function successfully. Motivated, she mastered all eight years of math curriculum within one year.

The curriculum is individualized because, as Mercogliano says, "The school should fit the child, not the other way around." As a result, teachers' roles are quite different from those in typical classrooms. Instead of a sequential curriculum guide and common lessons for all students, the teach-

ers have time to provide generous individual attention to each student and create a lively and stimulating learning environment, with many different ways to learn the same material.

I found myself agreeing with many of Mercogliano's points. Because medication is overused and often inappropriately administered, our initial response might be to recommend that no one should receive medication for ADHD. Yet current reports from carefully designed studies indicate that for some children (and adults) medication in combination with other support structures can help them learn and work more successfully. The key question is whether medications help the student become an engaged, excited learner. Success in school should never be equated with docility and fitting in to society.

Marie Eaton is a professor of humanities and education at Fairhaven College, Western Washington University.

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RADICAL SIMPLICITY: Small Footprints on a Finite Earth

by Jim Merkel

Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers
2003, 248 pages, \$17.95

Sometimes it's easier not to know. It's comfortable to have a vague idea that a bit of recycling and fewer miles in the car constitute sustainable living. Those who are satisfied with a few small things should not read Jim Merkel's *Radical Simplicity*. The book is radical in both meanings of the word: Merkel's analysis is both revolutionary and directed at the roots of our way of life.

Merkel starkly outlines the unsustainability of our current path. Were the productive acreage of the Earth divided evenly among its human inhabitants, each would get 4.7 acres. If all humans used their full 4.7 acres, nothing would

remain for the other species. The average American consumes the productive capacity of nearly 25 acres. Put another way, America's 300 million people consume the share of more than 1.5 billion people (or more than 5 times their fair share). Merkel notes that his \$5,000-a-year lifestyle—unimaginable poverty for most Americans—ranks him in the wealthiest 17 percent of all humans.

Is it even possible to reduce one's ecological footprint by more than 80 percent? Merkel forthrightly admits having the same question when he began to attempt it. He also admits that he's not there yet, although his ecological footprint is now three acres, small enough that if every human did the same, there would still be something left to support non-human life. He recognizes the tension between the impulse to sustainable

living and the pervasive culture of consumption.

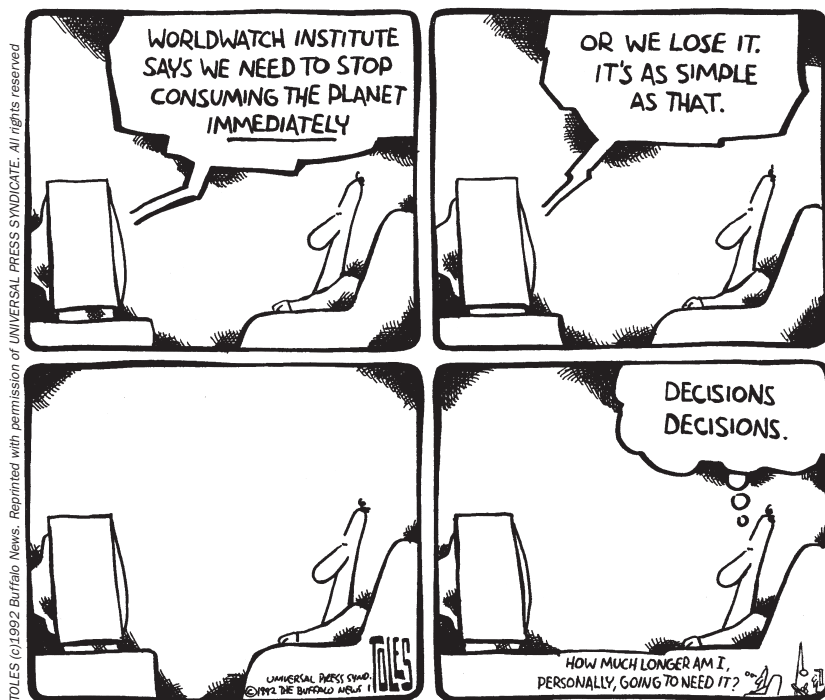
Merkel charts his own evolution, from a weapons engineer on a fast track to material wealth to a person who lives on less than \$5,000 per year. His transformational moment was the Exxon Valdez oil spill. As he watched the news of that disaster, he realized the deep connection between the oil-based American model of consumption and the destruction of habitats and species, including homo sapiens.

Merkel set out to find another way, a pilgrimage that took him from the Indian state of Kerala to the Native American Diné Nation in Arizona, from the Himalayas to the Sierra Nevada, and from British Columbia to Maine.

Radical Simplicity shows the result of that journey: the discovery that life on a fair-share footprint, although austere by American standards, is not only possible, but satisfying. The alternative is to continue as we are, with the one billion richest consuming 80 percent of the goodies now available (which represents the whole of the Earth's carrying capacity), leaving the other five billion to eke out a mere existence on the remainder.

Merkel applies his engineering background to produce a systems analysis, detailing the present reality and the steps available to change it. He relies on the work of others—the Ecological Footprint analysis of scientists Mathis Wackernagel and William Reese and the money/life-energy paradigm of Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin's *Your Money or Your Life* (YMOYL)—along with his own third element, reconnection with nature.

YMOYL is familiar to most in the sustainability movement (for those coming to it new, Merkel in-





cludes a stripped-down model); the concept of the ecological footprint is more familiar as a concept than a detailed reality. The latter is the linchpin of Merkel's book.

This book is not a jeremiad. It's a manual, an engineer's text written with grace and good humor. Unlike many books on voluntary simplicity and sustainability, this one provides tools to quantify the effects of your consumption choices. Readers can measure their ecological footprint—the number of acres of usable land occupied in supporting their standard of living.

Merkel provides diagnostics: his "Sustainability Sweatshop" helps set goals (and does it early in the book, before revealing what it takes to reach them); he offers Wackernagle and Reese's "Ecological Footprint Quiz," followed by detailed instructions for calculating an ecological footprint. His chapter "The Wiseacre Challenge" discusses how life looks lived with one-, three-, and six-acre footprints. The materials from YMOYL show how to reclaim your life energy from the effort to earn and spend money; the chapter, "Learning from Nature," demonstrates how to turn that freed-up energy toward a better relationship with the natural world. Finally (what engineering text would be complete without them?) there are extensive appendices providing worksheets for calculating your ecological footprint, taking the Wiseacre Challenge, and applying the principles of YMOYL.

Existing work on sustainability, resource justice, and escaping the consumer lifestyle has opened the door to the possibilities of a simpler life. Merkel invites the reader to step through the door and follow him down the path to realizing those possibilities.

Doug Pibel is a YES! contributing editor.

In brief ...

BLACK BOX VOTING: Vote-Tampering in the 21st Century

by Bev Harris

Plan 9 Publishing, 2003, 300 pages. Available for free download at www.blackboxvoting.com. Bound copies may soon be available for \$15.95 at the same site

Bev Harris has issued a compilation of her research into electronic voting machines, the companies that make them, and the documented threats they represent for our election process. Its publication comes as electronic voting machines are facing increasing scrutiny from lawmakers, technology experts, and the public, scrutiny fueled in large part by Harris's activism.

Harris is no computer expert, though her background as an accountant no doubt stands her in good stead when it comes to smelling a rat. She has talked to the computer experts and done her research. *Black Box Voting* is not the last word on electronic voting machines. But it is the first, as there has yet been no other text on the subject written in layperson's English. The book is the result of one woman's belief that something is seriously wrong with our voting system.

—Carolyn McConnell

FIFTY WAYS TO LOVE YOUR COUNTRY: How to Find Your Political Voice and Become a Catalyst for Change

by MoveOn

Inner Ocean Publishing, 144 pages, \$10.95

MoveOn.org originated from two citizens' disgust with the impeachment of President Clinton. But since the Iraq war, the organization has exploded onto the political scene, tapping into the power of the Internet to organize huge numbers of people rapidly. With the help of a donation from George Soros, they are launching a major voter mobilization effort for the upcoming election.

This book is part of their plan to get ordinary citizens engaged in politics, offering step-by-step how-to's for such political activities as writing letters to the editor, creating online petitions, helping run campaigns, and even getting elected. It uses the trademark first-person style MoveOn developed so effectively in its e-mail campaigns; each article is written by a citizen who tells a political success story and offers concrete advice.

—CM

FARMING WITH THE WILD: Enhancing Biodiversity on Farms and Ranches

by Daniel Imhoff, with design by Roberto Carra and a foreword by Fred Kirschenmann

Sierra Club Books, 182 pages, \$29.95

This lovely book features profiles and photographs of places around the country where people are creating ways to farm not in battle with wilderness, but in harmony with it. These efforts—from ranchers who have reintroduced fire to the prairie, to farmers who restore native vegetation to their irrigation canals, go far beyond organic farming's refusal to pollute the environment. This book tells ways of farming and ranching that actually restore wildness.

—CM





Thank You!



Linda Wolf

The end of the year is a special time for me as I watch your encouraging words and contributions pour in. Each time I sign a thank you card and read a supportive note, I am moved all over again by the enthusiasm behind your gifts. All of us at *YES!* are grateful that you understand that to get out a positive message so counter to the prevailing mindset takes more than the price of a subscription. It is with pleasure that we list the names of each of you who gave \$25 or more—sometimes much more. You have enabled us to reach out to young people, teachers, activists, and all manner of practical idealists who, despite everything, know that we can create a just, sustainable, and peaceful world. Thank you!

Fran Korten
Executive Director

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rie Wood • Ron Wright • Ann Wyman • Amy Yahna
• Richard A. Yarnall • Karen A. Yoshitomi • Judy
Young • Katherine Youngmeister • Kathy Youngson
• Diane Zimmerman • anonymous (51)

Foundations

Community Investment Fund of the
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Ford Foundation • The Larson Legacy
• Lifebridge Foundation • New Visions
Foundation • Panta Rhea Foundation •
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New Faces, New Projects

"We the people"

YES! has released its first video production, *We the People: Conversations on Being American*. Filmed at the *YES!*/Positive Futures Network Fall 2002 State of the Possible retreat, *We the People* is a 26-minute exploration of being American in these times, intended for use in a variety of discussion contexts (classrooms, living rooms, faith-based gatherings, and other contexts where people gather to explore ideas and experiences).

With narration by PFN board member Danny Glover, a diverse group of community leaders from around the country discusses personal identity, triumphs and failures of social justice in our country's history, and their hopes for moving toward "a more perfect union."

Each video comes with a study guide and copy of "What Does It Mean to Be an American Now?" (*YES!* Winter 2004). Already, readers have written to tell us how they will be using the video in their own communities. The video can be ordered online at www.yesmagazine.org or by calling 800/937-4451.

—Susan Gleason

Supporting young leaders

Our education program is working with the Democracy Matters Institute (www.democracymatters.org) to encourage college students to commit to civic action and social change. With campus chapters across the nation, Democracy Matters focuses on the effects of private money in politics and campaign finance reform. We'll provide free issues of *YES!* and *YES!* discussion guides for student participants

at regional and national student leadership conferences to inspire the next generation with empowering, positive solutions and stories.

—Kim Corrigan

Volunteer spotlight

Over the past year, Gary Sutton has lent his considerable organizational skills to our marketing and education programs and is helping us do outreach to teachers, students, and organizations to match their interests to issues of *YES!* Gary has volunteered with a number of non-profits over the years, but says that working at *YES!* feels particularly important during these times.

—Kim Corrigan

Changes in editorial

YES! has had the good fortune of recruiting Michael Leonen to join us as managing editor. Michael is



an award-winning investigative journalist from the Philippines. Reports he co-authored contributed to the impeachment of President Joseph Estrada, to changes in the national energy policy, and to the listing of the Banaue Rice Terraces among UN World Heritage sites. In addition to writing and editing

(see his article on page 41), Michael is doing photo research and overseeing the production of *YES!*

Also, we recently invited some of our best regular writers to become *YES!* contributing editors (see page 1). We are grateful to the editorial advisors who helped in the early days of *YES!* We plan to continue seeking their advice and leads, although we will no longer maintain a formal "editorial advisors" group.

—Sarah Ruth van Gelder

Teaching human rights

YES! supports the work of Amnesty International USA's Human Rights Education (HRE) program (www.amnestyusa.org/education) by giving free one-year teacher subscriptions to their nationwide network of K-12 and college teachers. We will also highlight HRE resources on the Education Connection page of the *YES!* website. *YES!* applauds HRE's commitment to teach about human rights by both informing and nurturing the values and attitudes that lead to support of those rights.

—Kim Corrigan

The good life

The next issue of *YES!* will focus on the good life. Just what is the good life, or a good life? Is it a life filled with material possessions and money, or is it something else? What experiences have you had that changed your view of what a good life might be? Send stories about how you achieved a good, or better, life and what that looked like, in 500 words or less, to the address on page 61.

—Carolyn McConnell



Readers take action

Continued from page 5

Global Visionaries

In 1999, President Bill Clinton gave the first official U.S. apology to the people of Guatemala for the U.S. role in Guatemala's 36-year civil war. He said the U.S. "was wrong" to support military regimes in their brutal campaigns that claimed the lives of more than 200,000 people. As one of the 230 students who have participated in the Global Visionaries (GV) leadership program, I've experienced first-hand the effects of this tragedy, and have been forever changed.

Carmen, another GV youth participant who was also deeply moved, said, "The Guatemalans I connected with held no grudge toward me for being an American. The experience allowed me to let go of some of my guilt while holding onto my grip on the extent of the injustice."

Global Visionaries, a Seattle-based non-profit, offers young people a year-long service and leadership program, including a two- to three-week trip to Antigua, Guatemala. Students help build homes and schools, volunteer at the local hospital, live with Guatemalan families, study Spanish, and work with local organizations to improve housing, health care, and educational opportunities for impoverished families.

GV's relationship with Guatemala began seven years ago in Colonia Hermano Pedro, one of the towns ravaged by Hurricane Mitch. At the request of the mayor, GV staff and students worked with townspeople to plant more than 200 trees, rebuild the community center, and repair roads.

Twice a year, GV youth participants return to continue the work

and deepen personal relationships. The GV students have formed a Youth Board to bring our voice to the leadership of GV, and now we are planning to raise money to build another community center in Colonia Hermano Pedro.

What started as "lending a hand" has grown into an international partnership in which both parties understand the immense benefits of the friendship and shared vision. These experiences have transformed me into a person who is committed to service be-

cause it makes me feel like an active participant in the world.

Felicia Gray

**GV participant and vice president of
the GV Youth Board
with Xheni Shehu, GV Intern**

Send your typed, double-spaced submission of 500 words or less to:

Readers Take Action, YES! magazine

PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

E-mail: editors@yesmagazine.org

Include your name, address, and an e-mail address or telephone number.

events & announcements

Global Day of Protest Against War

Protests will take place on March 20, the anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and elsewhere. Sponsored by United for Peace and Justice (www.unitedforpeace.org).

The Alchemy of Democracy

Praxis Peace Institute conference, June 13-18, 2004, at the Asilomar Conference Grounds, Pacific Grove, California, will focus on empowering democratic thought, embodiment, and action. The conference will include in-depth inquiries, skill-building workshops, and action projects. Topics include: Myths & Beliefs; Personal & Political Transformation; Creativity & Imagination; and Empowerment & Leadership.

Invited speakers include David Korten, Sarah van Gelder, Peter Coyote, Riane Eisler, Peter Camejo, Caroline Casey, Van Jones, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Tom Hayden, Lynne Twist, Eli Pariser, Ocean Robbins, and others. For more information, see www.praxispeace.org or call 707/939-2973 for a brochure.

12 Youth Activists Honored

Twelve youth, 10 to 16 years old, received the first annual Action for Nature's Eco-Hero

Awards, praising them for taking action to better the environment.

Lindsay Carlson and Brandee Van Donsel from northern California share the award in the under 13-years-old category for their work to prevent removal of trees near their home in the Sierra foothills of California by a utility company. Justin Friesen, age 10, of Canada, one of two international award winners, represented children at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

Action for Nature is accepting applications for the 2004 Eco-Hero Awards through February 29. E-mail awards@actionfornature.org. The group has also published a book, *Acting for Nature*, that tells inspiring stories about youth protecting the environment. For more information visit www.actionfornature.org.

The Power of Hope

This youth empowerment organization will be leading a series of workshops in Seattle and Bellingham, Washington, this spring for youth to use music, dance, theater, and spoken word to make their voices heard in their communities. Power of Hope will also lead workshops on facilitation and art for adults who work with youth. See www.powerofhope.org or call 360/671-7390.



sustainableliving

Searching for simple and practical ways to live sustainably?
Want to be part of the solution? Looking to create a safer world
for yourself and your family?

Yes! But How?

Non-stick Cookware

Is it safe to cook with non-stick cookware?

The material used in non-stick cookware is polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), a substance most of us know as Teflon or Silverstone. When heated for long periods at high temperatures, these non-stick coatings degrade, releasing chemicals that can kill birds and could have harmful effects on people and the environment.

Current research findings disagree over the temperature at which the materials in non-stick coatings degrade and become potentially toxic. Some suggest that normal pre-heating can create a temperature that is high enough to release chemicals such as trifluoroacetic acid (TF), which can be toxic to plants and takes decades to degrade. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which are linked to ozone depletion, and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), a carcinogen that never breaks down in the environment and has been shown to be toxic to rats and monkeys, may also be emitted in small amounts.

Manufacturers of non-stick products, however, assure consumers that normal cooking conditions will not result in the extreme temperatures that produce harmful fumes. The FDA also argues that particles that may chip off of non-stick cookware with hard use will pass unchanged through your body and pose no health hazard.

While your pan may not become

hot enough to affect the coating during day-to-day cooking, it is a good idea to safeguard against releasing any harmful substances. Use plastic utensils and soft cleaning pads on your cookware to avoid chipping off particles that can get into your food or into the air. Never preheat an empty pan for longer than a minute.

If you would rather avoid the possible hazards of using non-stick cookware (and the hazards of producing it), consider switching to stainless steel or cast iron cookware. Cast iron is an old favorite. It lasts much longer (so long that you can pass cast iron pans to your grandchildren), can safely withstand high temperature, and may be a source of nutritional iron. Stainless steel will not tarnish or corrode and is resistant to wear.

—Rachel Milanez

Old Fridge

My old refrigerator seems to run for long periods of time, even when it has not been opened. I don't like the noise or the waste of electricity. What can I do to help it run more efficiently?

There are at least three things you can do to help your old fridge run more efficiently: make sure your fridge's door is well sealed, guard against ice buildup, and clean dirty condenser coils.

To test your fridge's door seal, close it on a dollar bill. If the bill pulls out easily, you may need a new gasket. If not, you could still help

your fridge run more efficiently by not leaving the door open for long. Every time you open the door, the compressor has to run for eight to 10 minutes afterwards to keep the inside of your fridge cold.

Ice buildup in your freezer acts as an insulator, making your fridge run longer and work harder. Defrost the freezer compartment regularly to prevent the buildup.

Dirty condenser coils cause your fridge to use more energy than it should, so clean them several times a year. Be sure to unplug the fridge first and be careful not to bend or break the coils while cleaning them.

Lastly, if your fridge is over 10 years old, consider replacing it with an Energy Star refrigerator. This can save you over 2,000 kWh. It also reduces carbon dioxide emissions by over 2,000 pounds every year. However, you must balance these savings against the raw materials and energy consumed in producing a new refrigerator—or any new product.

—Becky Brun

Expired Medicine

What is the most responsible way to dispose of expired or unwanted medicine?

No universal policy for the disposal of expired or unwanted medicine exists. Flushing these down the toilet has long been the preferred method of disposal for most people, including pharmacists. However, studies have





found rising levels of antibiotics and hormones from birth control pills in municipal groundwater supplies. Whether that level is mostly a result of excrement or of discarded pills is unclear.

Alternatives to flushing medications down the toilet do exist, however. The most commonly advised alternative is to break up capsules and crush tablets, then put the remains back in their original child-resistant containers. Tape them up and double-bag them before tossing.

Another alternative is to check whether your local hazardous waste collection program accepts expired medicines. Some pharmacies may also accept them.

Consider donating any yet-to-expire medicine to an organization that sends these to developing countries. United Trauma Relief (web.mit.edu/utr/www/) offers information on donating unused drugs.

—Becky Brun

Recycling Cellular Phones

I have updated my cellular phone and now wonder what to do with my old phone. Any suggestions?

Do keep your old cellular phone out of landfills and incinerators. Cell phones contain lead and mercury.

According to the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association (CTIA), more than 80 million cellular phones are sold in North America each year. On average, consumers replace their phones every 18 months, creating a stockpile of retired wireless devices and a source of hazardous waste.

Wireless communication companies have set up phone recycling programs. AT&T Wireless, for example, invites you to participate in its tax deductible recycling of used cellular phones, accessories, and batteries. Sprint PCS, through its Sprint Project Connect, urges you to donate

previously used phones to help people with disabilities. Verizon Wireless, through its HopeLine program, uses proceeds from the sale of donated phones to fund nonprofit agencies or to purchase cellular phones for victims of domestic violence.

There are also private companies that will buy your used cellular phone. CellForCash.com, for one, lists 217 models for which it will pay prices ranging from \$4 for an analog Motorola StarTac to \$85 for a Nokia 6800. The company resells used phones to companies that refurbish them.

Copper can be recovered from chargers. The plastic in handsets can be recycled (although reprocessing plastic consumes so much energy and so degrades the product that recycling of plastic is of questionable value). Precious metals—from gold to silver and palladium—can be recovered from circuit boards. Nickel, iron, cadmium, lead, and cobalt can be recovered from batteries.

You could donate your phone to a friend who has yet to own one or to a charity in your community. Websites such as Earth 911 Locator will locate your nearest donation center.

For more information, visit:

- www.earth911.org/.
- www.cellforcash.com.

Or visit the website of one of the companies that distribute cell phones and can help you recycle them:

- AT&T Wireless Reuse & Recycle program at www.attwireless.com/our_company/cares/recycle_program.jhtml.
- Sprint PCS Project Connect at www.sprintpcs.com/www.sprint.com/commUNITY/communities_across/spc.html.
- Verizon Wireless HopeLine program at www.verizonwireless.com/b2c/aboutUs/community_service/hopeLine.jsp.

—Mike F. Leonen

Leftover Soap

What can I do with leftover pieces of soap?

Soaking those soap scraps inside a wide-mouthed container with a screw-on pump can turn them into liquid hand soap. Commercial versions of this container include liquefying beads to help break down soap. Another option is to rub the soap scraps into a washcloth or mitt.

A quick web search containing the phrase “soap saver” will pull up a number of resources, including crochet patterns and instructions for making or buying a variety of soap-saving gloves and sachets.

—Susan Gleason

Send your questions to:

Yes! But How?

YES! magazine

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Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

E-mail: editors@yesmagazine.org

Please include your name, address, and an e-mail address or telephone number

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backissues

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- 9 Economics As If Life Matters** David Korten on the post corporate world; Indigenous economics; Community money
- 8 Education for Life** John Taylor Gatto on education vs. schooling; 101 ways to get educated
- 7 Peace Makers** Building peace in Ireland, South Africa, Israel, Iraq; Nuclear insecurity
- 6 Rx for the Earth** Theo Colborn on chemicals in the environment and our bodies
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- 4 Sustainable Sex** Beyond commercial sex, the sexual revolution, and repression; Gay parents
- 3 Sustaining Watersheds** Northwest communities learn to live within natural limits
- 2 Money: Print Your Own!** Redesigning money could shift the economy; Beyond greed
- 1 Future Watch: Signs of an Emerging Culture** An end to poverty; European eco-taxes

Books & Video

Saying YES! Your favorite interviews from past issues of *YES!* magazine, featuring David Korten, Joanna Macy, Paul Hawken, and others

Making Peace Visionary ideas from *YES!* magazine about peaceful and compassionate alternatives to war, fear, and violence

We the People: Conversations on Being American Video comes with a study guide and copy of "What Does It Mean to Be an American Now?" (*YES!* Winter 2004)

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got trash?

Can't resist those burgers and fries, nachos and dips? Is your waistline telling on you? You're not alone. Even bears are getting fat these days.

Bears living around humans are twice as fat as those that subsist in the wilderness. The culprit? Garbage. All those grease-soaked wrappers tossed in the trash, the last few fries from that order you had to supersize, the bits of burger dripping special sauce, are too delectable for bears to pass up.

Fast food may be just too many calories too fast and too easy. It is for bears—critters who once had to trek for miles to scabble up a few bugs and berries can just flip a few garbage lids and gorge while lounging on their enlarged backsides.

Like humans, bears find fast food chains comforting and reliable. "For a bear, garbage is probably the ultimate food source," researcher John Beckmann told the Associated Press. "It's available year-round, it's in the same place week after week, and it's replenished after use."

If you're agonizing over a few extra pounds, be glad you're not one of these binging bears—some of them are 300 pounds overweight.

And if it seems the only alternative to junk food is nuts and twigs, for bears it really is.

Beckmann says the solution is tougher packaging—bear-proof trash cans. It might work for humans too. Tupperware with child-proof lids? The next fad diet may be on the way.

