

Fall 2007

Barbara Kingsolver's Year of Eating Local
An Honorable Way Out of Iraq

yes!

Building a Just and Sustainable World

Stand Up to Corporate Power

ISSUE 43

Who Will Rule—People or Corporations?
7 Companies You'd Love to Work for
Living Wealth: Better Than Money
Communities Take Power



HOW TO TAKE ON CORPORATIONS
5 WAYS TO GET FREE

Citizens in Barnstead,
New Hampshire,
protected their water
from corporate bottlers

US \$6.50 Canada \$8.95



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I'm helping to create an economic system that will respect and protect the earth – one which would replace corporate globalization with a global network of local, living economies. Business is beautiful when it's a vehicle for serving the common good.

Judy Wicks



Robert Shetterly

from Americans Who Tell The Truth series, business owner Judy Wicks

New England artist Robert Shetterly began painting portraits of Americans he admired at a time when he was deeply saddened and angry at what was becoming of the U.S. "My respect and love for these people and their courage helped to transform that anger into hope and pride and allowed me to draw strength from this community of truth tellers." www.americanswhotellthetruth.com

 www.YesMagazine.org/truth for a photo essay of Shetterly's portraits



We the People, Rising

Corporate power is an old problem for us in the United States. Thomas Jefferson warned us about it, as did Thomas Paine and George Washington. Nearly a century later, Abraham Lincoln viewed corporate power as an imminent danger to the Republic:

"I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. ... corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed."

In our own century, corporate power has expanded in the media, health care, prisons, schools, war, disaster relief—the list goes on—and it has constrained desperately needed action on climate change.

It's not hard to see how the gradual concentration of corporate power takes place. As corporations accumulate wealth and power, they change the rules and the cultural norms in their favor. These new rules and norms enable them to accumulate still more wealth and power. This system rewards behavior that concentrates wealth and discourages behavior that does not.

It's a vicious cycle, and we see its grim effects in the growing gaps between the affluent and poor, in the downward spiral of our environment, in the conflicts caused by scarcity and exclusion, and in the fear of being left behind that permeates our lives.

We also see the effects of this lopsided power in the low voter turnout among ordinary people, who believe, with good reason, that the doors of government are closed to them but wide open to those who hire lobbyists and write big political campaign checks.

As corporate power grows, its excesses are

harder to mask. CEO compensation packages are in the hundreds of millions. Big-box corporations don't even pretend to care about their effects on towns across the United States. Pharmaceutical companies extract supersized prices and profits from the most vulnerable—the ill, disabled, and elderly. Outsourcing and downsizing leave employees destitute while corporations and their financiers grow richer. Wall Street speculation and trading further inflate the value of paper wealth, while the real wealth of our world—our ecological support systems, family wellbeing, and communities—declines.

The mainstream media seldom cover these issues. Nevertheless, popular understanding of the power and damage of corporations is growing. People are starting to look behind the "corporate veil" only to discover that the Great and Powerful Oz is only powerful if we offer up our compliance.

At this critical moment, a number of leaders in human rights, labor, environmental protection, constitutional rights, and socially responsible investment are rising to challenge excess corporate power. Some have taken on individual campaigns against specific corporations, often with success. But recognizing that they can win some battles and still lose the war, some of them have begun to take on the corporate form itself.

When *YES!* was approached by a team of these people who have formed a "Strategic Corporate Initiative," we agreed to help them to tell the stories of how We the People are gathering ourselves up to do again what we did when the 13 colonies first struggled for independence—to declare ourselves free of the dominance of corporate power.

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Sarah van Gelder".

Sarah van Gelder
Executive Editor

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Stand Up to Corporate Power

THE MISSION OF YES!

is to support you and other people worldwide in building a just, sustainable, and compassionate world. In each issue we focus on a different theme through these lenses ...

NEW VISIONS

Solving today's big problems will take more than a quick fix. These authors offer clarity about the roots of our problems and visions of a better way.

WORLD & COMMUNITY

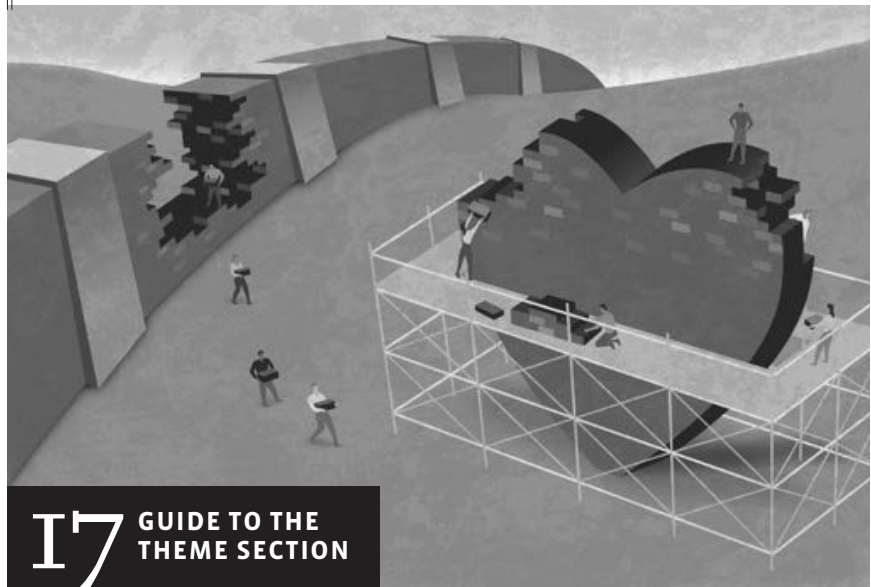
Here you'll find new models that foster justice and real prosperity, and sustain the Earth's living systems. How can we bring these models to life and put them to work?

THE POWER OF ONE

Stories of people who find their courage, open their hearts, and discover what it means to be human in today's world.

BREAKING OPEN

Humor, story-telling, and the arts—taking you into unexpected spaces where business-as-usual breaks open into new possibilities.



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Where you learn how to make your community safe for democracy. *By Jeff Kaplan*

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Photo by Channing Johnson

Barnstead resident Gail Darrell joined forces with Selectmen Gordon Preston, left, and Jack O'Neil to protect the town's water. While on assignment in Barnstead, Boston photographer Channing Johnson explored the backroads with Gail. They frequently missed turns while chatting about sustainability and social justice in rural New England.

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READERS FORUM

Tell us. Send your response to a *YES!* article, your stories about making the world a better place, and your ideas for connecting with *YES!* readers to editors@yesmagazine.org or to PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110.



WANT THIS ISSUE?

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or call 800/937-4451

Lessons from Cuba

I totally agree with your ideas about Cuba. In 1988, I had the privilege of traveling to Cuba with a group of 12 through the World Affairs Council of Oregon. Most of us were educators, so we spent a couple of days on the Isle of Youth visiting schools.

We also spent much time looking at medical facilities. The United States could take a few lessons from what Cubans have done with and for their people.

BRUCE RICHARDS
via email

Crossing Barriers

Last week, we received the Latin America issue with the article about Evo. We indigenous people of Bolivia are very happy that we were able to share our history as a

people and to overcome the language barrier. Thank you for everything. Here in my workplace, the magazine is very welcome, especially this recent issue.

(translated from Spanish)

JUBENAL QUISEPÉ
Cochabamba, Bolivia

Dictatorship in Venezuela?

Your Latin America issue was informative and inspiring, as always. I want to add one point.

The United States raised alarms when Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez denied the renewal of a TV station's license because the station backed the coup d'état that temporarily removed him from office in 2002. Under the right-wing dictatorships that governed most of Latin America for

decades, funded by U.S. military aid in exchange for favoritism toward U.S. corporations, participants in such a coup would have immediately disappeared—into prisons, graveyards, or simply into thin air. I commend Mr. Chavez for taking a more civilized course.

Meanwhile, up North, the present U.S. administration seems to behave more and more like a Latin American dictatorship. I foresee a time when *YES!* readers will dig out their copies of this magazine to follow the inspiring example of our neighbors to the South.

STEPHEN WING
Atlanta, GA

Neoliberal?

I have a question about the Latin America issue: What does the term “neoliberal” mean? I see myself as a liberal and am proud of it. I can't for the life of me understand how such a negative image can be associated with liberal.

KATIE MOORE
Los Angeles, CA

We agree that “liberalism” has been unfairly maligned. “Neoliberalism” is something else; this term refers to the set of policies that align economies

and governments to the interests of giant corporations and their financial backers. It is based on the theory that deregulation, privatization, tax cuts for the wealthy, reduction in government investment in human capital and infrastructure, and the dismantling of trade barriers will result in economic growth that will eventually trickle down to ordinary people. The actual result of neoliberalism is more wealth and power for the few, lower wages and fewer services for middle class and poor, and social and economic decline for society as a whole. The summer issue of YES! examines how Latin America is moving in a different direction.

—Editors

The Governor's Health Plan is not the Solution

In your Spring 2007 issue, Sarah Kuck wrote about Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposal for “near-universal” health care for California's 36 million residents. Schwarzenegger's plan (largely written by the insurance industry) is seriously flawed.

Like the failed Clinton health care plan, it is a complicated, indirect way of achieving what a single-payer system would accomplish simply and directly.



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In your excellent, comprehensive Fall 2006 issue—Health Care for All—Doug Pibel and Sarah van Gelder showed us that single-payer systems (such as SB 840, the California Universal Health Care Systems Bill) can cover their entire populations at half the per capita cost of other plans. This is the direction California—and the nation—should be moving in.

MARION VITTITOW, PhD
Santa Cruz, CA

Remember the Polar Bears

Here's an action almost everyone can do to help reduce global warming: drive slower. By driving 55 mph, as we did during the oil crises of the 1970s, our cars will use 10 to 15 percent less gas per mile.

Every time the needle creeps up to 60, I remember

polar bears and slow down. It makes me feel good.

JENNY DEUPREE
Franconia, NH

Peace is Possible

I was filled with hope and gratitude beyond words when I read Peace is Possible in Iraq, your interview with Medea Benjamin.

I plan to fax a copy with the reconciliation plan to key government officials, media outlets, and my rather large circle of influence.

What a service you've done! As a long-time subscriber who has been inspired time and time again by your work, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

MARY MANN
Cumming, GA

Read the interview at
www.YesMagazine.org/medea



Hey, look! This is no ordinary dull white paper with occasional imperfections.

The paper you are holding is New Leaf 100% recycled, 100% post-consumer waste, process chlorine-free paper. Wow.



YES! ONLINE

PROJECT CENSORED 2008 salutes YES! as "the standard" for positive stories about change. We have a sneak preview...



PHOTO ESSAY: Americans Who Tell the Truth.



INTERVIEWS, photos and poetry from the USSF.



VIDEO: The Yes Men take on Corporate Oil.

ALSO: Reader cartoon captions ... Music that inspires us ... Film picks ... Yes! But How advice on sustainable living

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YES! (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! P.O. Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110-0818

SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$24 per year

CALL: 800/937-4451; 206/842-0216

FAX: 206/842-5208

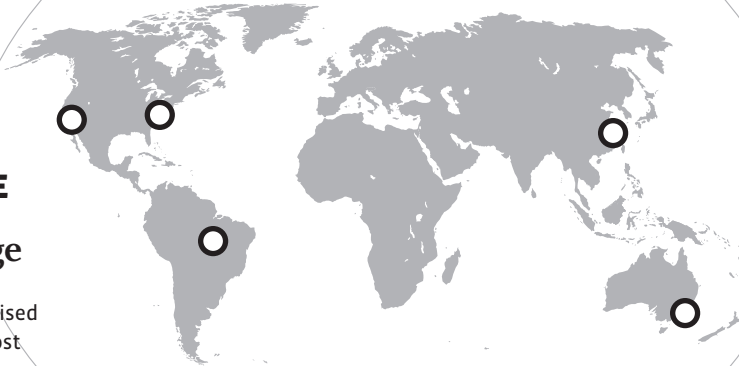
WEBSITE: www.yesmagazine.org

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Signs of Life

SMALL STORIES ABOUT BIG CHANGE



CLIMATE CHANGE

Solar Power Surge

👍 The solar industry is poised for rapid growth and cost reductions that will make it a mainstream power option in the next few years, according to a new assessment by the WorldWatch Institute in Washington, DC, and the Prometheus Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

People around the world are installing solar cells on the roofs of their homes and businesses. Communities and companies are creating solar parks—connected arrays of solar panels, sometimes installed along parking lots or in polluted “brown fields” that cannot otherwise be used.

Solar cell manufacturers are now able to produce enough photovoltaic (PV) cells each year to generate 5,000 megawatts (MW) of electricity. That’s 10 times the manufacturing capacity of 2002. Some analysts say this number will triple by 2010. A typical coal or nuclear power plant has a capacity of about 1,000–2,000 MW.

After growing at 20–25% per year in the 1980s and ‘90s, the solar PV industry has grown 40–45% per year over the last six years, says Mark Farber, founder of Evergreen Solar, a Marlboro, Massachusetts, company.

With the new generation of plug-in hybrid vehicles, this new abundance could mean solar will spread its reach to include the transportation as well as the electricity sector.

“At these growth rates, solar will hit a home run for addressing the climate crisis,” said Todd

Live Earth Concerts



JAMES KIRSOP, WWW.JAMESKIRSOP.COM

👍 Jack Johnson performs at the July 7 Live Earth concert in Sydney, Australia. Intended to raise awareness of climate change, Live Earth concerts were staged in Sydney, Tokyo, Shanghai, Johannesburg, London, Rio de Janeiro, and New York. Organizers predicted the event, which was also broadcast on the Internet, would reach more than 2 billion people with 24 hours of live music across seven continents. Johnson’s guitar reads: climatecounts.org.

📺 www.YesMagazine.org/liveearth to see Jack Johnson’s performance

Larsen, Co-op America’s climate action director in Washington, DC.

Climate scientists estimate that we need to reduce carbon emissions globally by at least 80% by 2050 to avoid the worst consequences of climate change.

“If we want to do this without coal or nuclear power,” Larsen says, “this means that after implementing all available energy efficiency measures, and installing wind and geothermal generation, the world will still need an additional 17 terawatts of low-carbon energy by 2050.” A terawatt is 1 million megawatts. “Growing at just 25% per year, solar can do this by 2042.”

In addition to solar PV, other types of solar power are also growing rapidly. These include solar thermal for hot water and industrial applications, and concentrating solar power (CSP), for utility scale applications. In China, an estimated 30 million households now use solar power to heat their water. And California alone may have more than 8,000 MW of CSP by 2020.

Small and large companies alike are getting into the business. First Solar of Phoenix, Arizona, plans to provide 685 MW of solar power to five big projects over the next few years. PPM Energy, a Portland, Oregon, company specializing in wind power, announced plans to invest over \$1 billion in solar in coming years.

“The conventional energy industry will be surprised by how quickly solar becomes mainstream—cheap enough to pro-

“ One of the greatest achievements for conservation in American history. ”



MICHAEL DAULTON, DIRECTOR OF CONSERVATION POLICY FOR THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, ON THE BALD EAGLE'S RECOVERY. IN JUNE THE BIRD WAS REMOVED FROM THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST. VAST HABITAT PROTECTIONS AND A BAN ON THE INSECTICIDE DDT ARE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EAGLE POPULATION BOOM, WHICH HAS BROUGHT THE BIRD'S NUMBERS FROM 417 NESTING PAIRS IN 1963 TO NEARLY 10,000 TODAY.



ADRIAN PINGSTONE

vide carbon-free electricity on rooftops while also meeting the energy needs of hundreds of millions of people in poverty who currently lack electricity,” said Janet Sawin, senior researcher at Worldwatch Institute.

Alisa Gravit is executive director of Co-op America, www.coopamerica.org

ALSO ...

Oil industry officials are acknowledging for the first time that petroleum production will not keep up with growing demand. The National Petroleum Council report “Facing the Hard Truths about Energy” says “the global supply of oil and natural gas ... is unlikely to meet projected 50% to 60% growth in demand over the next 25 years.”



The black earth developed by the people of ancient

Amazonia to enhance soil fertility may provide a key to sequestering carbon in the soil where it won't contribute to climate change. Terra preta, made from smouldered organic material, holds extra carbon in its “biochar” and in the microorganism populations that it sustains. Today's proponents of terra preta advocate the charring of agricultural waste to create a soil that holds up to 9% carbon, as compared to plain soil, which holds only 0.5%. A hectare of meter-deep terra preta can store 250 metric tons of carbon.

—Justine Simon

Source: Nature, Vol 442, 10 August 2006



Large companies such as IBM are holding meetings in Second Life, an online world where your avatar (your virtual alter ego) interacts in real time with other avatars. Some executives find holding meetings in Second Life more effective than conference calls or video link-ups, and they can reduce their carbon footprint by meeting virtually rather than traveling for face time.

Also in Second Life is One Climate Island, a place where you can learn about renewable energy, listen to presentations about climate change, and meet like-minded people to discuss climate issues—without using any carbon to get there.

—Melissa Anderson

Interested? See www.oneclimate.net and www.secondlife.com



More than 280 colleges have signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, an agreement to cut campus greenhouse emissions 2% each year and 50% by 2050. The agreement was organized by campus environmental groups Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education and Eco-America, and was also encouraged by the Campus Climate Challenge, a coalition of 37 student environmental advocacy groups. Universities plan to achieve emission cuts by limiting waste and increasing efficiency of electricity, heating, commuting, and travel.

—Zach Kyle

DEMOCRACY

Maine Leads on Net Neutrality



In June, Maine's Legislature became the first in the nation to express strong support for preserving net neutrality.

Network Neutrality means no discrimination on the Internet. Internet providers are prevented from speeding up or slowing down Web content based on its source, ownership, or destination. The big telecom firms want to eliminate net neutrality so they can charge content providers additional fees for preferred access.

The legislature's declaration states, “Full, fair, and non-discriminatory access to the Internet is critical to the ability of Maine citizens to participate in the information economy and is an important element of citizens' access to information necessary to their roles as informed participants in our nation's democracy.”

It directs the Office of the Public Advocate to determine whether Maine can enact its own net neutrality protections or if the state must defer to the federal government.

The measure was supported by Common Cause Maine, the Maine Civil Liberties Union, the League of Young Voters, other citizens' groups, and many small businesses including GWI.net, Rentageek.com, and Mainecoastdesign.com.

Telecom lobbyists representing Verizon, AT&T, and Time Warner actively opposed the measure.

Jon Bartholomew is a resident of Maine and the National Media and Democracy Organizer for Common Cause.

ALSO ...

From October 12 to 19, not-for-profit organizations interested in operating a full-power, noncommercial radio station will have a rare opportunity to apply to the FCC for a license.

Interested? <http://getradio.org>

IRAQ WAR

All Sides Prep for War Funding Showdown

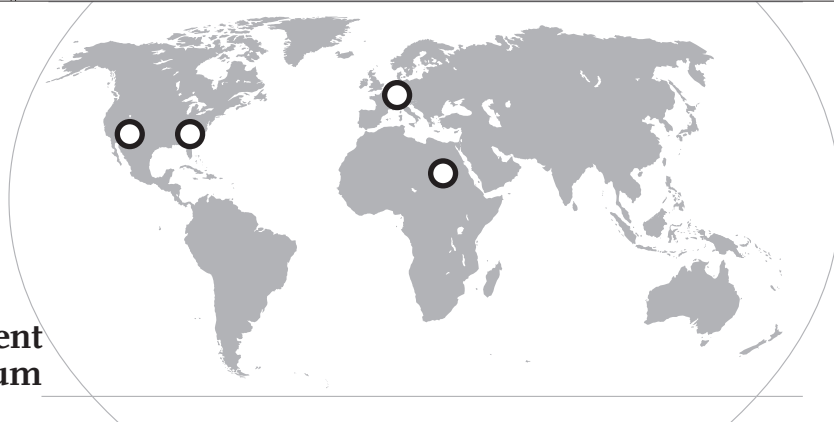
As the members of Congress enjoy their summer recesses, anti-war groups are gearing up. Their goal: to convince lawmakers to use the power of the purse to end the occupation in Iraq.

Americans Against Escalation in Iraq, a national coalition, is planning protests outside of lawmakers' offices in 15 states.

Another powerful group, The Occupation Project, will camp out in the offices of representatives and senators who voted in step with the Bush plan in May.

Before that vote, the project occupied 39 offices in 25 states, resulting in the arrest of 320 nonviolent protesters.

—Zach Kyle



DARFUR

Sudan Divestment Gains Momentum

👍 The states of Texas and Hawaii have joined the Sudan divestment movement. Since April 2005, when Harvard University sold off its stock in companies doing business in Sudan, 55 universities, 18 states, and eight cities have divested from Sudan, along with seven international and religious organizations. Divestment legislation is pending in another seven states and in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The divestment movement is a reaction to the genocidal campaign waged by Sudan's government-backed militia against rebel groups. The conflict has resulted in the deaths of at least 400,000 men, women, and children, and millions have been turned into refugees.

The divestment campaign appears to be paying off. According to the Sudan Divestment Task Force, several companies with the strongest ties to the Sudanese government have left Sudan due to investor pressure. These include the Canadian firm CHC Helicopter, which provides helicopters to the offshore oil and gas industry, and Rolls Royce PLC, which sells oil-engineering equipment.

After intense pressure from investors, Fidelity Investments, the country's largest mutual fund company, sold 91% of its Petrochina shares and 99% of its Sinopec shares that trade on the New York Stock Exchange. Both companies have strong business



Bicycle caravans from Hungary, Sweden, and Germany came to Heiligendamm to protest the G8.

KAREN ELIOT

ties to Sudan.

Fidelity still owns stock in Petrochina and Sinopec on the Hong Kong stock exchange, and the Fidelity Out of Sudan campaign has vowed to keep the pressure on. (www.fidelityoutofsudan.net)

"Divestment helped end the apartheid regime in South Africa," says Alisa Gravitz, Co-op America's executive director. "It's our hope that by refusing to invest in companies doing business with Sudan, we can help end the genocide there."

Sarah Tarver-Wahlquist is associate editor at Co-op America, www.coopamerica.org.

ACTIVISM

Bicyclists Rally Against G8

👍 Over 30,000 protesters at the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm, Germany on June 6–8, 2007 demanded action, not just words, on global poverty, war, and environmental degradation.

The leaders of the world's eight most industrialized nations convene annually, and protesters often target the event.

Bicycle caravans from Hungary, Sweden, and Germany

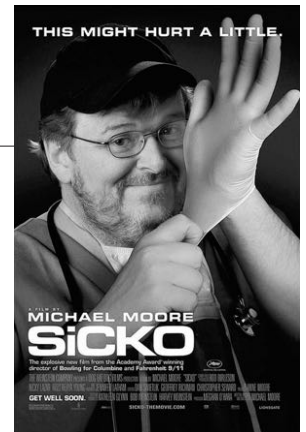
came to Heiligendamm, holding events along the way aimed at raising awareness of G8 issues—such as AIDS in Africa and debt relief—and at relating the effects of global capitalism to the everyday lives of local inhabitants.

Simultaneous bicycle caravans sprang up in Korea, England, and San Francisco. Participating in the caravan shows a dedication to reducing carbon emissions, one of the San Francisco activists told Indybay media. And it's a "symbol of commitment to take action from the bottom up."

— Justine Simon

“SICKO has opened the door to organizing in hundreds of communities. People are now realizing that single-payer health care is not just a dream but a real possibility.”

👍 **MARILYN CLEMENT**, NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR HEALTHCARE-NOW, SAYS ACTIVISTS ARE ORGANIZING SICKO-RELATED EVENTS IN GAINESVILLE, BOCA RATON, ATLANTA, LOUISVILLE, INDIANAPOLIS, CHICAGO, PITTSBURGH, NEW YORK, JAMESTOWN, ITHACA, DENVER, SACRAMENTO, AND BOSTON. SEE WWW.HEALTHCARE-NOW.ORG AND, FOR SIX WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED: WWW.YESMAGAZINE.ORG/SICKO



PUBLIC OPINION

Americans are Liberals. Who knew?

👍 On a series of key domestic issues, Americans are much more progressive than one might think given today's political debates. Here are some of the polling results compiled by the Campaign for America's Future and Media Matters:

- In 2006, even before the release of *Sicko*, 69% of Americans said the federal government should provide health care for its citizens, up from 59% in 2000.
 - When asked in February 2007 if they would pay an extra \$500 a year so that all Americans could have health care, 82% said yes.
 - Of those surveyed early this year, 79% want caps on carbon emissions, 84% favor higher environmental standards for business, and 86% would like more investment in solar and wind power.
 - Support for energy conservation rose to 64% in 2007, up from 56% in 2001, while only 26% favor expanded energy production, down from 33%.
 - Since 1972, belief that women should be equal to men in the workplace has risen from 47% to 78%.
 - The belief that homosexuals should have equal job rights has risen from 55% to 89% since 1977.
- The report covers a wide

range of issues, including national defense, unions, immigration, and criminal justice. On issue after issue, the study shows that a majority of Americans are liberals.

—Catherine Bailey

Interested? Download the report at www.yesmagazine.org/cafm

VOTING

Attorney Firings & Voting Fraud

👍 Congressional hearings into the firings of eight U.S. Attorneys are bringing to light evidence that the firings were related to efforts to suppress minority votes during the 2004 election cycle.

Former U.S. Attorney David Iglesias testified that, shortly before he was fired, he was pressured by Senator Pete Domenici and Representative Heather Wilson to pursue allegations of voter fraud. Iglesias was unable to find any evidence of prosecutable fraud among more than 100 cases referred by state Republicans. Most of the alleged fraud related to new voter registrations, mostly of poor and minority voters, according to John Boyd, an Albuquerque attorney who represented Democrats in a resulting court case.

Tim Griffin, who was chief of communications for the Bush-Cheney campaign in 2004, was

appointed U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

According to 2006 reports by BBC reporter Greg Palast, now being followed up by Representative John Conyers in hearings, Griffin was involved in a “vote caging” scheme during the 2004 elections.

Vote caging involves sending letters marked “do not forward” to targeted voters. If the mail is returned, the vote of the addressee is challenged as illegitimate.

According to Palast, this resulted in the disenfranchisement of U.S. military personnel stationed overseas, homeless people, minorities, and other likely Democratic voters. The mailing lists used in the caging scheme targeted areas with large minority populations, Palast says.

Griffin resigned the post following reports that Conyers was requesting the BBC's records on the caging allegations.

The Republican Party had signed court-enforceable consent decrees agreeing to discontinue vote caging activities following vote caging incidents in the 1980s, according to a June 18 letter from Senators Edward Kennedy and Sheldon Whitehouse to the Department of Justice.

Although the details vary, the U.S. Attorney firings appear to be related to voting issues. “In all cases that I have reviewed,” Palast says, “the firings were tied to failure to bring voter fraud cases.”

Both houses are investigating. One former Department of Justice aide, testifying under a grant of immunity from criminal prosecution, indicated that prior witnesses had misstated facts. The House Judiciary Committee voted to recommend contempt citations for two former White House staffers who failed to appear after being subpoenaed. A vote on the citations is expected after the August recess.

—Doug Pibel

Popular Vote Rules in Maryland

👍 Maryland has become the leader in a nationwide movement that aims to abolish the Electoral College—without amending the U.S. Constitution. By enacting the National Popular Vote bill, the state promised its 10 electoral votes to the winner of the national popular vote. The law, adopted in April, will not go into effect unless more states sign on. A presidential candidate needs 270 electoral votes to win, so until enough states pledge to defer their votes to the people's choice, the system will remain as it is. However, similar bills are sponsored by 305 legislators in 47 states, and have passed both houses in Hawaii and Illinois.

—Catherine Bailey

Interested? Check out www.nationalpopularvote.com.



Kelydra Welcker Practical pollution solution

Two years ago, a debate was raging in West Virginia's Mid-Ohio Valley over APFO, a potentially carcinogenic chemical entering drinking water from the manufacture of Teflon®.

Rather than wait for a final verdict on its safety, 16-year-old Kelydra Welcker decided to take a different approach: figure out how to get the chemical out of the water—and quickly.

She began by reviewing basic high school chemistry principles and learning about APFO online. After almost two years of research, Welcker developed an inexpensive countertop filtering device that local families could use to remove APFO from the water. Simply place water overnight in a container with metal electrodes and granulated, activated carbon and *voilà!* By morning, the APFO is gone.

Although the research continues to take up a lot of her time as she tries to improve the device, Welcker, now 18, says, "Trying to clean up the environment is my passion, so I don't feel like I'm giving up anything to do this."



Rev. Todd Eklof Weighing in on waste

On Earth Day 2006, Reverend Todd Eklof had something of an epiphany: it was time to make a statement about the excess of garbage in America. His idea: save all his junk mail for one year as a visual symbol of waste.

"If I could have saved *all* my garbage for a year, I would have," he says, "but I didn't have anywhere to put it."

On Earth Day 2007, Rev. Eklof loaded a cart with more than 50 pounds of accumulated junk mail and pulled it four miles from his church to the local Louisville post office, where he staged a press conference drawing attention to the wastefulness of junk mail.

The press conference included Kentucky state representative Jim Wayne, who proposed a statewide "no junk mail" bill. Modeled after the national "Do Not Call list," it would prevent everyone except nonprofits and political candidates from sending junk mail to people who don't want it.

Rev. Eklof is optimistic about its chances of success. "Everybody hates junk mail."



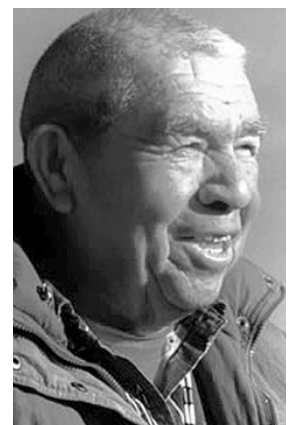
Lauren Jacobs Giving back to the Community

Lauren Jacobs was one of the first in her family to go to college. She was able to attend college in large part because of the union wages earned by her father and grandfather. Now she's using that education to help other families realize the same dreams by working as a union organizer for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

"Parents have to work two or three jobs just to get by," Jacobs says. "These low wages say, 'You don't matter. Your children don't matter.'"

In June, she helped the security guards at Harvard win an average \$4,300 increase per year. Her work is part of the SEIU's nationwide security campaign, which seeks to improve conditions, pay, and benefits for the nation's security guards, who are primarily people of color.

Although the job isn't easy—it requires long hours and travel—after 11 years, Jacobs is still excited to start each day. "I've seen workers joining together to fight and win. That gives me a lot of hope."



In Memoriam **Corbin Harney** Western Shoshone leader

Corbin Harney, spiritual leader of the Western Shoshone Nation, died of cancer on July 10 at age 87. Harney had dedicated his life to fighting nuclear testing and dumping in his ancestral lands, including at the Nevada Test Site.

"Corbin inspired thousands of people, native and non-native, to take action in a peaceful and nonviolent way," his personal assistant, Julia Moon Sparrow, was quoted as saying in a *Las Vegas CityLife* article.

"We, the people, are going to have to put our thoughts together to save our planet," he said. "We've only got one water, one air, one Mother Earth."

Harney traveled around the world as a speaker, healer, and spiritual leader. He spoke before the United Nations in Geneva and authored two books: *The Way It Is: One Water, One Air, One Earth* (Blue Dolphin Publishing, 1995) and the forthcoming, *The Nature Way*. In 1994, Harney established the Shundahai Network to respond to spiritual and environmental concerns on nuclear issues.

AN HONORABLE EXIT FROM IRAQ

7- STEP PLAN TO END TERRORISM

The United States should not win in its war against Iraq. It should change its strategy to being just.

The United States was wrong to attack Iraq. Possession of weapons of mass destruction is not a justification, moreover Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction. Toppling Saddam Hussein is no justification; the imposition by a stronger nation of its political preference for the running of another nation's government has never been a legitimate basis for attack.

Every justification for the attack by the United States against Iraq leads to the same conclusion: the United States acted as an international delinquent, a violator of Iraqi sovereignty, and an international threat to peace.

So how could one even entertain the notion of winning a war for which there is no justification?

The thinking among the "leadership" of American society in trying to find a victorious exit from Iraq is awry. The United States has been the bad guy all along. It must now exit honorably. The elements of an honorable exit strategy should include the following:

- 1. Confession.** Declare to the Iraqi people and the international community that the United States was wrong in conducting this war.
- 2. Apology.** Apologize to the Iraqi people and the international community for its conduct of the war.
- 3. Reparation.** Take responsibility for the repair of the damage caused by the war, and bring the people and the physical condition of Iraq back to the condition they would have been in had the United States not invaded Iraq. Iraqi families who have suffered the loss of lives or injuries should be compensated in amounts established by a neutral commission and fully funded by the United States.
- 4. Leadership.** The United States should leave Iraq immediately and turn over its responsibility for reparation to an international coalition that will direct the rebuilding of Iraq.
- 5. Relinquish profits.** The profits gained by U.S. com-



SUE MCDONALD / IS

panies and individuals as a result of the war should be turned over to the reparation effort.

- 6. Disengage from Iraqi affairs.** The United States should make a legally binding commitment to refrain from any overt or covert attempt to affect the internal affairs of Iraq.
- 7. Accept accountability.** U.S. individuals, including the highest-ranking civilian and military personnel, should be subject to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and to domestic courts to answer to war crimes charges.

This plan will not be supported by the U.S. public initially, because of its high price. But the plan will stop the cost from escalating further in terms of lives lost and injuries on all sides of the war, and the destruction of property.

The price will only go higher the longer this unjust war continues, and the repayment will eventually be meted out, if not willingly by the United States, then through continued terrorism throughout the lives of our children and their children, ad infinitum.

The continuation of this war will not resolve terrorism. If terrorism is to end, it will only come through a just peace. An end to U.S. government terrorism will decrease other forms of terrorism, and this, along with the elements above, can begin to build a foundation of justice as the basis for long-lasting peace. ♾



Pōkā Laenui is executive director of Hale Na'au Pono, a Community Mental Health Center in Wai'anae, Hawai'i. He is active in the Hawai'i and international arena as a proponent for indigenous people's rights and for the decolonization of Hawai'i. www.opihi.com/sovereignty.

COMMENTARY :: Jonathan Rowe

COOPERATORS OF THE PRAIRIES

Few images loom larger in the American psyche than that of the Wild West, especially in the rightward political precincts. Whether they want to get the government off our backs, or to set free the rugged entrepreneurs who need no help from society or government, the implicit reference is to the cowboys of the West—the movie version at least.

It was not accidental that the man who imbedded this version into the political vernacular, Ronald Reagan, was himself reprising a role from his “B” Westerns. The late ex-president didn’t just memorize his scripts; he believed them. Not for the only time, he chose a congenial fiction over an inconvenient reality.

Start with the notion that wealthy Americans all have made their money through honest endeavor, and that taxes therefore are a form of theft.

History tells a different story. The first fortunes in the American West were made from cattle, which is to say, often from theft. “Cattle thieves turned respectable as soon as their herds got large enough,” observed William Shannon in his 1945 book, *The Farmer’s Last Frontier*.

Not only that. The cattlemen literally took their land from the public domain, which itself was snatched from the original occupants. They paid no rent, and often contrived to take legal title. One favored gambit was to hire people to file homestead claims. When those came through, the ranchers “bought” the homesteads from their employees.

The railroads followed, thanks to sprawling land grants from the state and federal governments. The railroads turned Wall Street into *Wall Street*, which in turn created many of the fortunes that finance—and benefit from—cowboy politics today.

Another myth casts these early cattlemen as proto-libertarians, who pursued their fortunes without help from either government or one another. Actually they were cooperators of the first order. Society not only existed for them; it was crucial to their own success.

Some 30 years ago, a biologist by the name of Garrett Hardin popularized a theory called the “tragedy of the commons.” Hardin conjured up a hypothetical common pasture, and peopled it with hypothetical herdsmen dragooned from the economics texts—that is, selfish, myopic, and incapable of cooperation. *Voilà*, the pasture soon was depleted. Hardin’s fable has justified the push to privatize the land and water ever since.



“They said it was just temporary—until my FEMA trailer came through.”

LEONA SKAAR

I’m adding a guest room as soon as I can afford it.

KAREN AND BILL SCARVIE

In Ken’s household, a commitment to zero-waste has meant extra office space.

ZOE MONTGOMERY



www.YesMagazine.org/cartoon for more reader captions

Yet on the actual commons of the western plains, the cattlemen showed more sense. They adopted the Mexican practice of branding cattle to keep their herds distinct. They enlisted state governments to ban the sale of cattle that did not have a registered brand. (Then as now, government wasn’t “the problem” when it came in handy.)

Perhaps most importantly, the early cattlemen worked together to limit herds so as not to overwork the grazing land. This was not always pretty business. But it was cooperative business, in contrast to the myth; and it was of a piece with the house raisings and husking bees of the agrarian frontier.

The Clint Eastwood version makes better—or at least easier—drama. But it was cooperators who really made the West. The ultimate challenge of the storyteller is to make virtue interesting. Where is the filmmaker who will imprint that reality onto the political vernacular today? **Y**



Jonathan Rowe, a YES! contributing editor, is a fellow at the Tomales Bay Institute, which recently published *The Commons Rising*, a report on the revival of commons-based economics throughout the United States. Rowe is a founder of the West Marin Commons Association and is host of America Offline, a weekly program on KWMR-FM in West Marin County, California.

We Saw Another World in Atlanta

Since 2001, tens of thousands have been gathering at World Social Forums. The United States has been slow to catch on, but on June 27, it finally happened. Poor people, young people, people of color, gays and lesbians, and all manner of people who believe “another world is possible, another U.S. is necessary” joined together by the thousands in Atlanta for the first **U.S. SOCIAL FORUM**.

Sarah van Gelder

It was a moment organizers in the United States and in many parts of the world had been waiting for. After years in the planning, the United States joined a global movement of movements that comes together under the banner: Another world is possible.

The United States Social Forum (USSF) was led by people of color and representatives of grassroots organizations, some of whom count their members in the thousands. Instead

of drawing crowds with superstar speakers and performers, the participants were the stars. Those who are accustomed to being excluded were at the center, and those who were used to being silenced were heard.

The USSF “is a milestone for the emerging planetary citizenship that is converging through the World Social Forum process,” said Cândido Grzybowski in a web posting. Grzybowski is director of the Brazilian organization

IBASE and one of the founders of the World Social Forum. “It is encouraging to witness the transformation of the North American political culture itself and of its popular base, which is infused with inspiration, initiative and courage.”

Between 10,000 and 12,000 people came to Atlanta to talk about war, peace, human rights, living wages, jobs, energy, climate justice, Katrina, immigrant rights, poor people’s rights, and new approaches to economics. >>

PHOTO COURTESY USSF ATLANTA



We Saw Another World in Atlanta

» Organizers of the USSF drew on their experiences attending the World Social Forums to prepare for Atlanta. “We saw the power that comes from opening up a space in which all the issues and all the different movements can converge,” said Genaro Rendon, co-director of the San Antonio, Texas, based Southwest Workers Union.

To get people to Atlanta, organizers from many parts of the country organized caravans of cars, vans, and buses. The People’s Freedom Caravan was among the largest. Each stop of the Caravan’s six-day journey from Albuquerque to Atlanta was hosted by a different local group. In Albuquerque, the attention centered on Native American sacred sites and immigrant rights. In Houston and San Antonio, it was pollution from oil refineries and an Air Force base that was harming the health of those living nearby. In New Orleans, Freedom Caravan riders helped clean up a public housing project and learned of the struggle of Katrina survivors to return home. In Jackson and Selma, it was the movement for living wages and efforts to find and prosecute those involved in the murders of civil rights workers decades ago.

Local activists from each stop joined the Caravan; by the time it reached Atlanta, this Social Forum on wheels was 500 people strong.

From Possibility to Reality

The opening march was led by native peoples, followed by stilt walkers, giant puppets, bicyclers, and marching bands interspersed with delegations from across the country, each highlighting the issues and hopes for a better world that brought them to Atlanta.

There were nearly 900 workshops in dozens of venues, and 14 “solidarity tents” centered on Native Americans, Africa, youth, democracy, health, peace and justice, water, the solidarity economy, and other topics. There were giant plenaries, a ceremony led by an Ojibwe water-keeper to recognize the sacredness of water, a “family reunion” for formerly incarcerated people and their friends and families, a film festival, a youth encampment, a children’s social forum, and concerts and parties that ran late into the night.

The genius of the social forum model is its self-organized quality. All those who register have the opportunity to propose workshops in advance of the

forum and to organize activities in the solidarity tents. Participants, rather than forum organizers, determine most of the content of the forum and lead the workshops. By allowing all to have their say, and by being rigorously inclusive, many of the power struggles that divide diverse coalitions are avoided and the focus stays on building a better world.

Nonetheless, conflict happens. On the last day, at the People’s Movements Assembly, indigenous participants took offense when the microphone was taken from an Ecuadorian indigenous man before he was finished speaking. The People’s Movements Assembly process allows participants two minutes each to make a proposal in front of the entire group. The indigenous group asked for, and received, 15 minutes to work through the issues raised by the incident with speeches and a drum circle.

“I hope the audience understood how we stand in solidarity around someone who has been wronged,” said Tom Goldtooth, executive director of the Indigenous Environmental Network. “We have cultural practices around bringing back dignity, and the drum is a central part of that.”

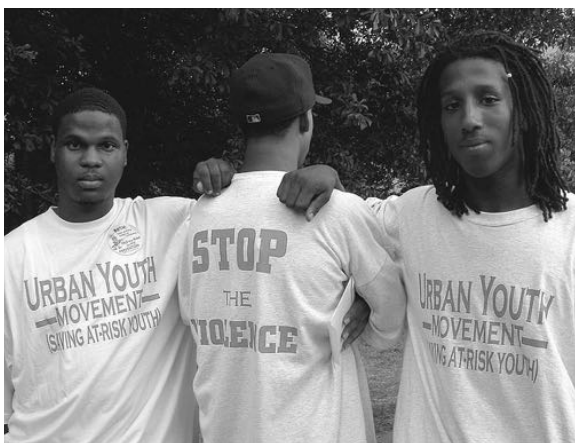
Hopeful Talk



BARB HOWE

Black Workers for Justice gave a workshop on how to organize in so-called “right to work” states.

Inspired Youth



ANDY DAVEY

Rashad, Troy, and Roosevelt of the Urban Youth Movement, a group that relocated to Atlanta from New Orleans.




Culture



Indigenous leadership and culture had a strong presence.



www.YesMagazine.org/ussf

-  Reports, links, photos, and poetry
-  Audio from the People's Freedom Caravan
-  Photo essay through the lens of Florida photographer Barb Howe

"We're trying to build unity, but there are going to be differences," said Cindy Wiesner, a member of the National Planning Committee. "We have to learn to navigate conflict and listen, but also stand for what we each believe in and for what's good for the whole."

A Historic Moment

What difference did the Social Forum make? What is possible now that was not possible before? Most apparent was the inspiration people took from witnessing the strength, diversity, and youth of the crowd, and the passion people bring to making change.

"People were in awe of the ways people all across the country and across the world are doing their work and trying to figure out how to build an alternative to what is," said Wiesner.

Many went home with plans to host local social forums and to build on newly formed collaborations:

- A dozen domestic workers' groups from California to Maryland founded a national network.
- A U.S. Solidarity Economy Network formed out of a group that had organized a series of workshops.
- The recently formed Media Action

Grassroots Network (MAG-Net) introduced a ten-point platform for media justice at the USSF.

• The Right to the City coalition, made up of groups working on gentrification and displacement, went public.

"The USSF did what many conferences and other types of movement and sector gatherings have tried—provide not one big tent, but a visionary meta-frame within which a variety of allied formations could set up camp," Malkia Cyril, director of Youth Media Justice, wrote in her blog.

The USSF "ignited a prairie fire of optimism within the progressive left, the sheer size and diversity of which has not been witnessed in this country in decades," Celeste Lacy Davis of the Funding Exchange wrote in her blog.

"The time is right," said Jerome Scott of Project South, one of the USSF organizers. "When you look at the average American's economic situation, it is bad and getting worse. ... The American people are getting to the point where they know that fundamental change is absolutely essential."

For some, the welcome they received at the USSF was a revelation.


"To come to a gathering where we

meet non-native people who are so appreciative and thirsty for communication with us, many didn't know how to take that," said Goldtooth.

"Gatherings like this will be more frequent," he predicted. "We're all children of Earth, and we need to start respecting the sacredness of Mother Earth and working together."

What's Next?

The National Planning Committee has called for another U.S. Social Forum to be held in 2010 and it has endorsed the World Social Forum International Council's call for a global mobilization culminating on January 26, 2008.

There will be a Social Forum of the Americas in Guatemala in October 2008, and another World Social Forum, most likely in the Amazon region, in 2009. 

Sarah van Gelder is executive editor of YES!

Activism



BROOKE ANDERSON



SARAH VAN GELDER

Freedom Caravan riders at the Valero plant in Houston, remembering those sickened by the plant's pollution.

Partnerships



SARAH VAN GELDER

Stilt walkers at the opening day march, with signs about what is possible and necessary.

Percentage of female representatives in national legislatures around the globe in 1990: **12**

Percentage in 2006: **17**¹

Percentage of fast food restaurants with more bacteria in their ice than in their toilets, as tested by a Florida 7th grader: **70**²

Percentage of studies reporting favorable results for a medication if they are funded by the drug's producers: **80**

Percentage reporting favorable results if funded by a pharmaceutical competitor: **30**

Percentage reporting favorable results if conducted with no industry support: **50**³

Percentage chance that a given gene in your body is patented and privately owned: **20**⁴

Number of human pathogens privately owned, including haemophilus influenza and Hepatitis C: **20**⁵

Number of states that don't require adult drivers and passengers to wear seatbelts: **1**

Percentage of 2006 traffic fatalities in that state (New Hampshire) not wearing a seatbelt at the time of accident: **77**⁶

Percentage of adults who say Medicare should negotiate with drug companies for lower prices: **79**

Number of seniors and disabled Americans who receive drug coverage through Medicare: **22 million**⁷

Percentage of senators who, last April, voted in opposition of legislation to renegotiate Medicare drug prices: **55**⁸

Amount, in dollars, "sustaining contributors" donate monthly to Scooter Libby's defense fund to "clear his name": **25-1,000**⁹

Dollars required to supplement the diet of a four-member family for one month through the charity Feed The Children: **20**¹⁰

Winning distance, in feet, of 2006 "Punkin Chunkin" contest, in which competitors fling pumpkins with trebuchets and catapults: **3870.50**¹¹

Dimensions, in feet, of the shack London squatter Harry Hallows calls home: **8x12**

Years the 70 year-old Hallows has squatted there: **21**

Assessed value, in pounds, of the land given to Hallows by the Land Registry after he invoked squatter's rights: **2 million**¹²

Average payout, in dollars, to the families of innocent Afghans killed by Marines: **2,000**¹³

Average payout, in dollars, to 9/11 victims and victims' families: **1.7 million**¹⁴

Complete citations at www.yesmagazine.org/ptc

1. United Nations, "The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006," retrieved June, 2007. **2.** "Fast Food Ice Dirtier than Toilet Water," ABC News, February 20, 2007. **3.** Relationship between drug company funding and outcomes of clinical psychiatric research, 2006. **4.** Denise Caruso, "Someone (Other Than You) May Own Your Genes," *New York Times*, January 28. **5.** Michael Crichton, "Patenting Life," *New York Times*, February 13, 2007. **6.** Editorial staff, "The time has come to pass seat-belt law," *The Nashua Telegraph*, May 27, 2007. **7.** Christopher Lee, "Americans back price negotiations on Medicare drugs," *The Washington Post*, December 9, 2006. **8.** Robert Pear, "Bill to let Medicare Negotiate Drug Prices is Blocked," *New York Times*, April 18, 2007. **9.** The official web site of the Libby Legal Defense Trust, www.scooterlibby.com. **10.** Feedthechildren.org. Figures based on averages and confirmed by organization headquarters. **11.** The official web site of the Punkin Chunkin World Championship, www.punkinchunkin.com. **12.** "Tramp wins rights to prime land," BBC News, May 24, 2007. **13.** David S. Cloud, "U.S. Pays and Apologizes to Kin of Afghans Killed by Marines," *New York Times*, May 9, 2007. **14.** Department of Justice, "September 11th Victim Compensation Fund Claims' Deadline Approaches," Dec. 2003.

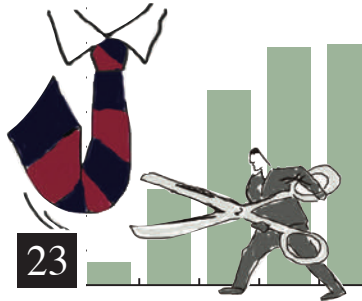
Stand Up to Corporate Power

Why try to fight? Corporations have the money and the power. That's what we're told. But people across the country are standing up to corporations. If we join forces, we can claim the power that rightly belongs to us.



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A Strategy for Change. A global citizens' movement can make corporations serve the public good.
Historic Scorecard. 20



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Just The Facts. Maybe what's good for corporations isn't good for us all. Check out the numbers.



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Community, Rule Thyself. Consent by the governed. As good now as it was in 1776.



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Measure T. Humboldt County says elections are for people, not corporations.



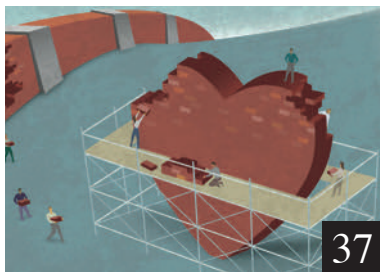
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Commons to Protect. Who owns the air, the sky, our genes? We do. Here's how we're protecting them.



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Who's Standing Up? The faces of resistance to corporate power. It may not be who you think.



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Living Wealth is the Best Revenge. Money's not what it's cracked up to be. Let's measure value in human terms.



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7 Cool Companies. Where you can do good AND make money. And they said it couldn't be done.



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5 Ways to Get Free. Save money, help the environment, and get away from corporations.



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Who Will Rule?

Citizen movements are proving that we can take on corporate power, and together **BUILD A FUTURE THAT WORKS FOR ALL LIFE.**

Michael Marx and Marjorie Kelly

Corporate power lies behind nearly every major problem we face—from stagnant wages and unaffordable health care to overconsumption and global warming. In some cases, it is the cause of the problem; in other cases, corporate power is a barrier to system-wide solutions. This dominance of corporate power is so pervasive, it has come to seem inevitable. We take it so much for granted, we fail to see it. Yet it is preventing solutions to some of the most pressing problems of our time.

With global warming a massive threat to our planet and a majority of U.S. citizens wanting action, why is the U.S. government so slow to address it? In

large part because corporations use lobbying and campaign finance to constrain meaningful headway.

Why are jobs moving overseas, depressing wages at home, and leaving growing numbers under- or unemployed? In large part because trade treaties drafted in corporate-dominated back rooms have changed the rules of the global economy, allowing globalization to massively accelerate on corporation-friendly terms, at the expense of workers, communities, and the environment.

Why are unions declining and benefits disappearing? In large part because corporate power vastly overshadows the power

The 2006 revenues of the top 200 corporations were \$13.1 trillion.
The GDP of the entire world was \$61 trillion.



of labor and governments, and corporations play one region off against another, busting unions to hold down labor costs while boosting profits, fueling a massive run-up in the stock market.

Why were electricity, the savings and loan industry, and other critical industries deregulated, contributing to major debacles whose costs are borne by the public? In large part because free market theory, enabled by campaign contributions and lobbying, seduced elected officials into trusting the marketplace to regulate itself.

With all this happening, why do we not read more about the pervasiveness of corporate power? In large part because even the “Fourth Estate,” our media establishment, is majority owned by a handful of mega-corporations.

Big corporations have become de facto governments, and the ethic that dominates corporations has come to dominate society. Maximizing profits, holding down wages, and externalizing costs onto the environment become the central dynamics for the entire economy and virtually the entire society.

What gets lost is the public good, the sense that life is about more than consumption, and the understanding that markets cannot manage all aspects of the social order.

What gets lost as well is the original purpose of corporations, which was to serve the public good.

A Movement for the Public Good

The solution is to bring corporations back under citizen control and in service to the public good. The main components of such a movement already exist—including organized labor, environmentalists, religious activists, shareholder activists, students, farmers, consumer advocates, health activists, and community-based organizations.

We’ve seen the power of ordinary people working together on the streets of Seattle in 1999, challenging the World Trade Organization. We’ve seen them achieve impressive results curbing sweatshop abuses, limiting tobacco

advertising, challenging predatory lending practices at home and abroad, and protecting millions of acres of forests, to name just a few successes.

We’ve also seen the growth of community-friendly economic designs like worker-owned enterprises, co-ops, and land trusts that, by design, put human and environmental well-being first.

Focus on Corporate Power

Each of these movements advocates for healthy communities, for a moral economy, and for the common good. If they acted together, they would possess enormous collective power. But as yet there is no whole, only disconnected parts. Despite many achievements, the gap in power between corporations and democratic forces has widened enormously in recent decades.

Activists and citizens are beginning to turn this around. We can build on this work. But if we are to close the gap in power, our strategies must evolve. We need to dream bigger, to speak with one voice across issue sectors, and to act more strategically. We need to focus less on symptoms of corporate abuse and more on the underlying cause—excessive corporate power. We must recognize that ultimately our struggle is for power. It is not just to make corporations more responsible, but to make them our servants, in much the same way that elected officials are public servants.

We need what the movement now lacks: a coherent vision of the role we want corporations to play in our society and a strategy for achieving that vision. It’s about putting We the People back in charge of our future, rather than the robotic behemoths that set their sights on short-term growth and high profits, regardless of the consequences.

The streams of many small movements must flow together into a single river, creating a global movement to bring corporations back under the control of citizens and their elected governments. The urgent need for unified action impelled a small group of organizations to initiate a long-term

Who We Are: The SCI Story

Over the past two decades, each of us has been involved in often-successful campaigns to curtail excessive corporate power, from rainforest protection to social investing. We have worked on campaigns to abolish toxic chemicals, defend labor rights, advance corporate ethics, and block international trade agreements.

While we have helped make large corporations more responsible, we’ve failed to make them less powerful. We’ve come to realize that without unified action, we may win battles, but we will lose the war.

The Strategic Corporate Initiative is our attempt to ignite a critical discussion on the path forward. We believe that, if united, the scattered movements already creating change can be the catalytic force to create a humane, sustainable, democratic society and economy.

The Strategic Corporate Initiative (SCI) steering committee is made up of the authors of this article, **Michael Marx**, director of Corporate Ethics International (CEI) in Portland, Oregon and **Marjorie Kelly**, author of *The Divine Right of Capital*, with the Tellus Institute in Boston; along with John Cavanagh, Chuck Collins, and Sarah Anderson of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC; Charlie Cray of the Center for Corporate Policy in Washington, DC; and Mari Margil, formerly with CEI and now with the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund.

 www.YesMagazine.org/sci for the report “Strategic Corporate Initiative: Toward a Global Citizens’ Movement to Bring Corporations Back Under Control”



» Strategic Corporate Initiative (SCI), of which we are a part.

A Way Forward

Over the past 18 months, the SCI team interviewed dozens of colleagues and progressive business executives to develop a coherent, long-term strategy to rein in corporations. Three major strategic tracks emerged:

1. We need to restore democracy and rebuild countervailing forces that can control corporate power.

At the community level, this means elevating the rights of local municipalities over corporations. Communities should have the right to determine what companies will do business within their jurisdiction, and to establish requirements like living wage standards and environmental safeguards.

At the national level, restoring democracy means separating corporations and state. Corporations and the wealthy should no longer be allowed to dominate the electoral and legislative processes.

At the international level, the task is to create agreements and institutions that make social, environmental, and human rights an integral part of global economic rules.

2. We need to severely restrain the realms in which for-profit corporations operate. Most extractive industries (fishing, oil, coal, mining, timber) take wealth from the ecological commons while paying only symbolic amounts to governments and leaving behind damaged ecosystems and depleted resources. The solution is to develop strong institutions that have ownership rights over common wealth. When commons are scarce or threatened, we need to limit use, assign property rights to trusts or public authorities, and charge market prices to users. With clear legal boundaries and management systems, the conflict over the commons shifts from a lopsided negotiation between powerful global corporations and an outgunned public sector, to a

dispute resolved by deference to the common good.

3. We need to redesign the corporation itself, as well as the market system in which corporations operate. Companies' internal dynamics currently function like a furnace with a dial that can only be turned up. All the internal feedback loops say faster, higher, more short-term profits.

And maximizing short-term profits leads to layoffs, fighting unions, demanding government subsidies, and escalating consumerist strains on the ecosystem.

To prevent overheating, the system needs consistent input from non-financial stakeholders, so that demands for profit can be balanced with the rights and needs of employees, the community, and the environment.

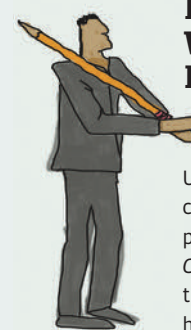
To end "short-termism," company incentives—including executive pay—should be tied to measurements of how well the company serves the common good. Stock options that inflate executive pay should be outlawed or redesigned. Speculative short-term trading in stock should be taxed at significantly higher rates than long-term investments. Companies should be rated on their labor, environmental, and community records, with governments using their financial power—through taxes, purchasing, investing, and subsidies—to reward the good guys and stigmatize the bad guys.

At the same time, we need to celebrate and encourage alternative corporate designs, such as for-benefit corporations, community-owned cooperatives, trusts, and employee-owned companies.

The paths outlined here do not represent impossibilities. With a citizens' movement, we could turn these musings into reality in 20 years.

Building a Global Citizens' Movement

How can we change laws regulating corporate behavior when corporations dominate the political process? The answer is that change begins



Darn Right We're Keeping Score

Until 1886, the law said corporations weren't people. But in *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific*, the U.S. Supreme Court held that corporations

have the same rights as humans. Or did it? The court's official opinion says it did not consider corporate personhood. The only statement that corporations have 14th Amendment rights is in the headnotes, which have no value as legal precedent. That hasn't stopped courts ever since from declaring that the Bill of Rights is as much for corporations as it is for real people.

People
Corporations

- ☒ **1773 Boston Tea Party:** *Unfair taxes and corporation-favoring trade laws inspire colonists to toss 45 tons of tea into Boston Harbor.*
- ☐ ☒ **1819 Dartmouth College v. Woodward:** *Government can't alter corporate charters.*
- ☒ **1868 Paul v. Virginia:** *Explicit Supreme Court holding: Corporations are not people.*
- ☒ **1877 Munn v. Illinois:** *No 14th Amendment protection for corporations.*
- ☐ ☒ **1886 Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad:** *Landmark case establishing precedent of corporate personhood.*
- ☒ **1890 Progressive Era:** *T. Roosevelt, known for trust busting, sues 45 trusts in two terms. Less known: Taft sued 90 in just four years.*
- ☒ **1890 Sherman Act:** *First anti-trust law; isn't used until 1904.*
- ☐ ☒ **1905 Lochner v. New York:** *Establishes 5th Amendment "substantive due process" for corporations; used to overturn 200 regulatory laws in 30 years.*
- ☐ ☒ **1906 Hale v. Henkle:** *Corporations get 4th Amendment search and seizure protection in criminal cases.*

- ✓ **1911 Standard Oil v. U.S.:** Found J.D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil empire to be a monopoly; dissolved trust into nine firms, including Exxon, Mobil, and Chevron.
- ✓ **1914 Clayton Act:** Bolsters regulatory agencies and provides key definitions missing from Sherman, such as "trust."
- ✓ **1925 Gitlow v. New York:** Expands corporate rights under 1st, 5th, and 14th amendments.
- ✓ **1935 Wagner Act:** Part of New Deal. Strengthened worker rights and unions, established National Labor Relations Board to oversee labor issues.
- ✓ **1947 Taft-Hartley Act:** Corporations regain leverage on fledgling unions.
- ✓ **1976 VA Pharmacy Board v. VA Consumer Council:** Finds that advertising constitutes free speech.
- ✓ **1976 Buckley v. Valeo:** Political contributions are protected free speech; can't be regulated.
- ✓ **1978 Marshall v. Barlow's Inc.:** 4th Amendment requires OSHA to get warrant for safety inspections.
- ✓ **1996 Telecommunications Act:** Deregulates media consolidation. In 1983, 50 corporations control nearly all print, television, and radio. Now, five do.
- ✓ **1996 International Dairy Foods v. Amestoy:** Court overturns law requiring labels on products containing bovine growth hormone, holding that free speech includes right not to speak.
- ✓ **1999-present, PA Townships, New Hampshire towns:** Ordinances place rights of humans and environment above those of corporations. See page 24.
- ✓ **2006 Measure T:** Humboldt County, CA, voters revoke corporate personhood, ban political contributions from corporations based outside of county. See page 29.

RESEARCH BY ZACH KYLE
YES! MAGAZINE GRAPHIC, 2007

The top 5 oil companies control 55% of the U.S. gasoline market.



with the people, not their government. It always has. Civil society organizations and communities can align their interests to produce a wave that government leaders must either surf upon or drown within.

The people control the vital issue of legitimacy, and no system can long stand that loses its legitimacy, as fallen despots of the 20th century have demonstrated. Corporations have already lost much of their moral legitimacy. *Business Week* in 2002 found that more than four out of five people believed corporations were too powerful. A national poll by Lake, Snell, Perry, and Mermin two years ago concluded that over three-quarters of Americans distrust CEOs and blame them for the loss of jobs. An international poll by Globe Scan recently found corporations far behind NGOs in public trust.

Trigger events lie ahead that will create further openings for change. We can expect to see new global warming catastrophes, unaffordable energy price spikes, and new corporate scandals. We can capitalize on these openings if we can help people connect the dots—making the link, for example, between excessive CEO pay, companies' short-term focus, and the inability of the private sector to manage long-term problems like the energy crisis and global warming.

We also need conceptual frames that link various movements together into a common effort. Currently our economy is dominated by a Market Fundamentalism frame, based on the belief that when self-interest is set free, Adam Smith's "invisible hand" will create prosperity for all. Also dominant is the Private Property frame, which justifies actions by executives and shareholders to exploit workers, communities, and

the environment in order to maximize the value of stockholder and executive "property" in share ownership.

We can advance new frames. "Moral Economy," for example, is a frame that puts the firing of thousands of employees and simultaneous awarding of multimillion-dollar bonuses to executives in a moral context. Suggested by Fred Block of the Longview Institute, the Moral Economy frame invites the introduction of new system forces into market dynamics in order to protect the moral order, and to counteract the amoral, short-term, self-interested behavior promoted by Market Fundamentalism.

Within the overarching framework of a Moral Economy, other frameworks like Community and the Commons challenge the supremacy of individualism and self-interest in the Market Fundamentalism frame. Community well-being becomes the standard by which business practices are judged, and communities themselves the arbiters of whether standards are met. The Commons represents our shared property and wealth, which is not to be exploited for the selfish benefit of the few.

New conceptual frames, trigger events, a crisis of legitimacy—elements like these can serve to help build a citizens' movement. But we cannot simply wait for this movement to form spontaneously. At the international level, we need regional organizations to come together to agree on overarching priorities. At the national level, we likewise need discussions that forge strategic priorities. At the community level, we need to create a network of municipalities working together to challenge corporate rights, to promote alternative business forms, and to inventory and claim our common wealth assets. Communities can >>

» also take the lead in creating public financing of campaigns, and in tying procurement and investment policies to corporate social ratings.

The idea is not that people will drop their issues and adopt new ones, but that we can learn to do both at once. We can knit ourselves into a single movement by adopting common frames and by integrating strategic common priorities into existing campaigns. For example, campaigns covering any issues from the environment to living wages could demand that targeted companies end all involvement in political campaigns.

As individuals, we can relegate our identities as consumers and investors to secondary status, elevating to first place our identities as citizens and members of families and communi-

advertising would benefit a great many public interest causes. How often in recent years have initiatives to protect forests, increase recycling, provide healthcare coverage, and raise minimum wages been defeated by corporations who outspent their civil society opponents by a ratio of over 30 to one? We've all witnessed elected leaders move to the political center once they started receiving a steady flow of corporate contributions.

Likewise, if we could reduce the 13,000 registered corporate lobbyists in Washington, D.C. and end the revolving door between government regulators and corporations, would a handful of companies be allowed to own the lion's share of our media? Would savings and loan, energy, transportation, and tobacco companies still

to support social and environmental goals at home. Transnational corporations that take destructive action are held accountable in a World Court for Corporate Crimes.

In 20 years, imagine community self-governance has become the new norm. No longer can companies open new stores in communities where they are unwanted, or play communities off one another to extract illegitimate public subsidies. We value and protect our precious common wealth, from ecological commons like air, water, fisheries, and seeds, to cultural commons like music and science.

In 20 years, imagine that it is a violation of fiduciary responsibility for corporations to pay CEOs obscene amounts, or to aggressively fight unions and lobby against environmental safeguards.

Imagine ... Responsible companies protect the environment as though there is a tomorrow, and they view worker knowledge and the company's reputation as their greatest assets.

ties, people with a stewardship responsibility for the natural world and with moral obligations to one another. We can stop buying the story that government is inefficient and wasteful, grasping that the real issue is how corporations and money dominate government. We can stop thinking that the solution is more Democrats in power, and realize it is more democracy.

The transformative changes we need will not be on any party's agenda until a citizens' movement puts them there. It's up to us to build that movement. By joining together—by taking on the common structural impediments that block progress—we can make it possible for all of us to achieve the variety of goals we're currently struggling for.

How would reducing the underlying power of corporations affect today's issue campaigns? Ending corporate campaign contributions and political

have been de- or unregulated? Would oil and coal companies still drive our national energy policy?

Imagine ...

Imagine what it might be like in 20 years if our efforts are successful and people could once again govern themselves. A line would be carefully drawn between corporations and the state, reducing financial influence over elections and lawmaking, making possible a whole new generation of progressive elected officials committed to social transformation.

In 20 years, imagine that the institutions of the global economy are overhauled so that labor and environmental issues are integrated into trade policies, and impoverished nations are freed from unpayable international debts. Trade and investment rules promote fair exchange, and national governments have the policy space

Responsible companies protect the environment as though there is a tomorrow, and they view worker knowledge and company's reputation in the communities where they operate as their greatest assets. Imagine such companies receive preferential treatment in government purchasing, taxation and investment policies, while irresponsible companies find themselves barred from government contracts.

Imagine we have a new national policy to make employee ownership as widespread as home ownership is today. And alternative company designs—like cooperatives and new, for-benefit companies—grow and flourish.

Imagine, in other words, that We the People are able to reclaim our economy and society from corporate control. Daring to dream that such a turn of events is possible—and charting the path to get there—is a critical challenge of our new century. **▼**

Just the Facts

Catherine Bailey and Doug Pibel

1

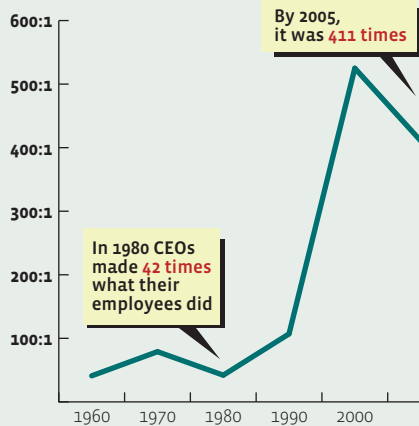
How long it takes to earn \$10,000 ...

It takes a minimum-wage earner **214 8-hour days** to earn \$10,000

How Much Do CEOs Make?

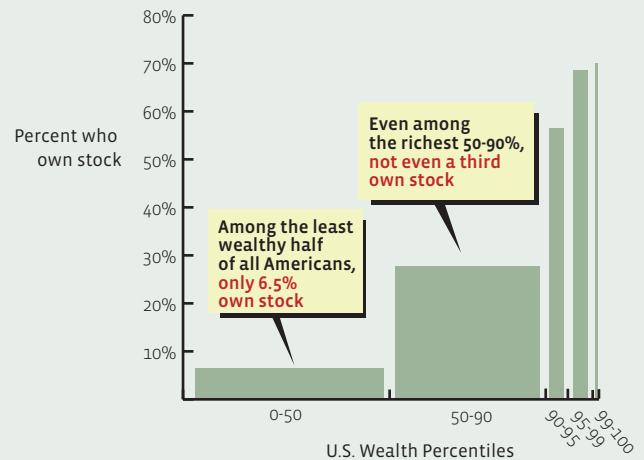
2 The disparity between CEO and worker pay is growing.

Ratio of CEO pay to workers



Who Pockets the Profits?

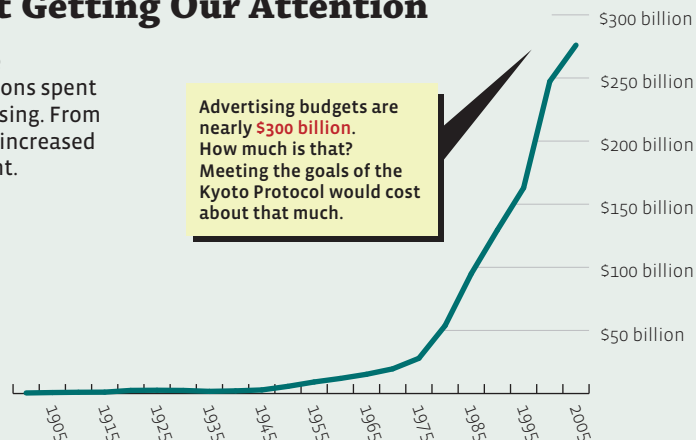
We all benefit when corporations make big profits, right? Wrong.



Money Spent Getting Our Attention

At the beginning of the 20th century, corporations spent \$450 million on advertising. From 1975 to 2005, spending increased more than 1,000 percent.

Advertising budgets are nearly **\$300 billion**. How much is that? Meeting the goals of the Kyoto Protocol would cost about that much.



It takes the average Standard & Poor's 500 CEO **1.75 hours** to earn \$10,000.

Sources: Advertising Age Special Issue: The Advertising Century; The 2007 Statistical Abstract of the United States; Currents and Undercurrents: Changes in the Distribution of Wealth, 1989-2004 (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System); 2007 Executive PayWatch (America's Union Movement)

COMMUNITIES TAKE POWER

It's a rude awakening when a corporation decides to build a hog farm or a big-box store in your community. Or dump sewage sludge or open a mine. It may not be something residents want, but they soon find out that the laws are stacked in favor of the corporation. Communities across the country are taking our founding documents at their word and declaring citizens' right and duty to protect their water, land, local economy, and way of life, even if it means taking on the enormous power of corporations. Here are some of the peaceful revolutionaries who have stepped up.

THE CITIZENS OF BARNSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE, USED LOCAL LAW TO KEEP CORPORATE GIANTS OUT OF THEIR WATER

Doug Pibel

In 1819, the Supreme Court declared for the first time that corporations are entitled to protection under the Constitution. That case started in New Hampshire. Since then, corporations have been granted virtually all the rights constitutionally guaranteed to human beings. They use those rights to site polluting feedlots, dump toxic sludge, build big-box stores, and take municipal water to sell, all whether citizens want them to or not.

Now, New Hampshire townspeople are fighting to turn that around and put people, not corporations, in charge. What manner of revolutionaries are these? The kind you should expect in the United States: laborers, mothers, farmers, businessmen, and other ordinary citizens. They are people like Gail Darrell, a New Hampshire native who, 25 years ago, moved with her husband

to the little town of Barnstead to raise their children in a rural environment. They are people like Barnstead Select Board member Jack O'Neil, a Vietnam veteran and George Bush voter.

What's These People's Problem?

Barnstead is located just south of New Hampshire's lakes region. The Suncook River runs through town, and four lakes are within the town limits. It's a water-rich community sitting on a big aquifer.

Which puts it in the crosshairs of corporate water miners. As bottled water has become a "must have" commodity generating nearly \$10 billion a year in consumer spending, corporations have descended on communities like Barnstead and set up pumping operations. They extract hundreds of thousands of gallons of water a day,

bottle it, and ship it out for profit. Taking that much water raises the specter of lowered water tables and dry wells, infiltration of pollutants or saltwater, and damage to wetlands. The townspeople lose control of one of the necessities of life.

Barnstead residents watched as nearby Barrington and Nottingham fought to block multinational corporation USA Springs from taking their water. They saw those communities work through the state regulatory system and, after years of labor and hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs, find themselves without a remedy. Corporations, they were told, have constitutional rights that limit what regulators can do with zoning or other land-use controls.

Gail Darrell and Diane St. Germaine, another Barnstead resident, didn't want their town to face the same expensive

»

Gail Darrell, center, and other Barnstead, New Hampshire, residents pressed for a law to counter the "tyranny and usurpation" of the people's right to govern themselves, especially with regard to water. Gordon Preston, left, and Jack O'Neil were two of five selectmen who supported the ordinance.

» battle. They already had experience with the regulatory system, having worked to get the town to ban local dumping of Class A sewage sludge. Once that ban was in place, the corporations shipping the sludge simply got it reclassified as Class B biosolids, and the town was back to square one.

“That was my first introduction to the regulatory process which actually does not allow citizens to say ‘No’ to anything,” Darrell says. “All corporations have to do is change a word and they get their way.”

The Trouble with Site Fights

One-at-a-time regulatory battles over a single project—whether sludge dumping, a Wal-Mart, or a nuclear power plant—are called “site fights.” They are sometimes successful, although only about one time in 10. Even then, defeated corpora-

tions are free to try again, as Wal-Mart frequently does when citizens defeat its siting plans.

The problem is that the system isn’t set up to protect the rights or interests of the average human. Rick Smith of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) says that when people realize that corporate rights override community rights it’s “shocking to them.”

That the rights of a legal fiction, the corporation, trump the rights of human beings is the result of years of work by corporations to bend legislation and court rulings in their favor. Since the Supreme Court first cracked the constitutional door in 1819, it has steadily opened it wider, giving corporations virtually every protection in the Bill of Rights.

The Court, for instance, held that

corporations have First Amendment rights to free speech and, in a later case, said that free speech includes spending money on political campaigns. Corporations have acquired full due process rights, a right to Fifth Amendment compensation for governmental “takings,” and a right to require search warrants, even for OSHA safety inspections. (See historical scorecard on pages 20-21.)

Those rights come in handy in fighting governmental regulation. As long ago as the 1920s, the Supreme Court ruled that Pennsylvania could not require coal mines to leave enough coal in the ground to support the earth overhead, even if that meant that people’s houses might be damaged or destroyed. Making corporations sacrifice that coal, the court said, would be an unconstitutional “taking” of property.

If corporations don’t get the results they want in court, they can take the more direct approach of tailoring their own legislation. In a world where politicians depend on money to get elected, having a constitutional right to write big checks gains valuable access. Having a say in federal legislation is particularly useful since the Commerce Clause of the Constitution says that federal law trumps state law on matters of interstate commerce.

Beyond Site Fights

With the deck stacked against local control, what are citizens to do to step outside the regulatory game and take back power? Some bold communities have banned specific corporate

operations, not based on regulation, but on a declaration that human beings have the right to control their local resources, and that corporations are not people and not entitled to rights the Constitution grants to humans.

That happened first in Pennsylvania when farmers and small-town residents tried to resist the encroachment of corporate feedlots and the dumping of sewage sludge from other states.

Ruth Caplan, of the Alliance for Democracy’s “Defending Water for Life” program, tells how a Pennsylvania coalition including the Sierra Club, the Farm Bureau, unions, and the Democratic governor responded by getting legislation passed limiting pollution from corporate feedlots.

HOW POWERFUL?

Between 1996 and 2000, 60% of U.S. corporations with at least \$250 million in assets reported no federal tax liability to the GAO.



“The farmers in rural Pennsylvania were furious,” about the new law, Caplan says, “because they didn’t want less pollution. They didn’t want those corporate farms in their area. Period.”

Lawyer Thomas Linzey, founder of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), started getting calls from those outraged farmers. Linzey, Caplan says, had been working within the regulatory system, but he and the Pennsylvania farmers realized that they needed a new strategy. Linzey drafted model ordinances asserting community rights to self-governance and banning corporations from damaging operations in townships. More than 100 Pennsylvania townships have adopted those ordinances.

Linzey and CELDF began offering “Democracy Schools,” intensive weekend programs presenting the history of corporate power in the United States, and the history of successful movements, such as the abolitionists and suffragists, to overturn settled law. Caplan attended one of those schools. It was “a real wake-up call for me,” she says, “because most of the work we’ve done has been through the regulatory system, with some success. But it’s not leading toward a fundamental change between corporations and the rights of people and nature.”

Caplan took her newfound knowledge to a U.S.-Canadian meeting on the problem of bottled water. There she met activists from New Hampshire who subsequently introduced her to Darrell and St. Germaine. Caplan told them of CELDF’s work, and offered to work with them and the people of Barnstead on the water issue.

Darrell and St. Germaine made presentations to the town’s Select Board, which had earlier passed a “Warrant

»



Stefan Mackowski, 3, flanked by sisters Sarah and Shannon, enjoys the water on Halfmoon Lake in Barnstead, N.H. At right, the bumper of Gail Darrell’s car.



Preamble and Purpose

We the People of Barnstead, N.H., declare that water is essential for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—both for people and for the ecological systems, which give life to all species.

We the People of the Town of Barnstead declare that we have the duty to safeguard the water both on and beneath the Earth's surface, and in the process, safeguard the rights of people within the community of Barnstead, and the rights of the ecosystems of which Barnstead is a part.

We the people of Barnstead declare that all of our water is held in the public trust as a common resource to be used for the benefit of Barnstead residents and of the natural ecosystems of which they are a part.

We believe that the corporatization of water supplies in this community—placing the control of water in the hands of a corporate few, rather than the community—would constitute tyranny and usurpation; and that we are therefore duty bound, under the New Hampshire Constitution, to oppose such tyranny and usurpation. That same duty requires us to recognize that two centuries' worth of governmental conferral of constitutional powers upon corporations has deprived people of the authority to govern their own communities, and requires us to take affirmative steps to remedy that usurpation of governing power.

—Section 2, Barnstead Water Rights and Local Self-Government Ordinance

» Article" declaring the town's intention to protect its water. Ultimately, they invited CELDF to make a presentation to the Board. At the end of that presentation, the Board asked Linzey to draft an ordinance similar to the ones in Pennsylvania. Linzey told the group that they needed to understand that they would be taking on settled law, Caplan says.

"Well, Mr. Linzey, we understand that, and we're ready to walk point for you," Jack O'Neil replied, using a Vietnam-era term for being out front on patrol.

Reclaiming Rights

CELDf's model ordinances go beyond zoning or other efforts to control corporate behavior. They ban corporations from specific operations altogether, citing the Declaration of Independence, international law, state law conferring rights on citizens, and the general rights of human beings

to govern themselves and take care of their own communities.

Darrell says that she and St. Germaine spent the next year educating Barnstead residents about the proposed ordinance. "We talked to people about water rights everywhere we met them—at the dump, in parks. We told them why we needed to have this ordinance be unanimous and in place before corporations came to town."

People were receptive to the idea but curious why the ordinance needed to cite such a broad range of law. "There was a lot of education about why we needed to deny corporate personhood," Darrell says, "People don't understand how we've gotten to this point and how corporations have gotten so much power." Darrell credits CELDF's Democracy Schools with giving her the information she needed to provide that education.

In March 2006, the ordinance came before the town meeting. After final

discussion, Barnstead took its vote: 136-1 in favor. The one "No" vote, Darrell says, was not in general opposition to the measure, but was cast by a person who felt declaring that corporations are not persons went too far.

Now Barnstead is walking point, the first town in the nation to ban corporate water mining within its limits.

One Town at a Time

The fight to take back power from corporations continues. Across the country in Humboldt County, California, the people passed a referendum banning outside corporations from participating in elections and declared that corporations are not recognized as people there. Blaine Township, in southwestern Pennsylvania, outlawed the destructive practice of longwall coal mining. People in Montgomery County in rural Virginia are fighting the taking of farmland to build a giant railway terminal.

These are admittedly radical steps, although, as Ruth Caplan points out, they are being carried forward by people who are not radicals. "These are not liberals, not progressives, not activists. But they don't want corporations to tell them how they should run their community."

The courts have not yet ruled on these measures. If they are challenged, no one knows what the outcome will be. But these new activists point to the abolitionist and women's suffrage movements. They were radical. They challenged well-settled law. They lost repeatedly, until the public saw the truth of their position, and the law changed.

Darrell and her fellow townsfolk are working on amendments to strengthen their ordinance if a challenge does come. If they're defeated in court, she will continue to work to make humans more important than corporations. She's in it, she says, "to have a clear conscience. I did what I could after I got educated. I can tell that to my kids. It's my duty. I'll take that charge and do the best I can." ⑦

Doug Pibel is managing editor of YES!

DEMOCRACY, UNLIMITED: MEASURE T BANS CORPORATE CAMPAIGN FINANCING



HEIDI A. ANDRADE

In Arcata, California, and the rest of Humboldt County, non-local corporations are banned from politics.

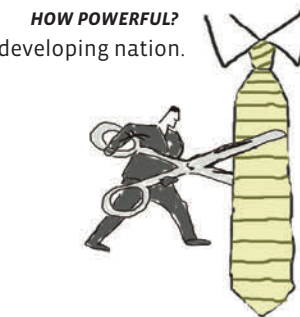
Kaitlin Sopoci-Belknap

In 2006, Humboldt County, California, became the latest, and largest, jurisdiction to abolish the legal doctrine known as "corporate personhood."

Measure T was successful because our all-volunteer campaign came together to pass a law that bans non-local corporations from participating in Humboldt elections. The referendum, which passed with 55 percent of the vote, also asserts that corporations cannot claim the First Amendment right to free speech.

By enacting Measure T, Humboldt County has committed an act of "municipal civil disobedience," intentionally challenging "settled law." But voters also recognize that Measure T is an act of common sense. We polled our community and found that 78 percent believe corruption is more likely if corporations participate in politics.

Of the world's 100 largest corporations, only one is based in a developing nation.



County modeled a campaign carried out with respectful unity.

This effort did not spring up out of thin air. It was the result of years of old-fashioned community organizing by Democracy Unlimited of Humboldt County that included workshops and educational programs explaining how corporations have acquired more rights under the law than people have.

We designed the campaign with "big picture" goals in mind from the beginning. We knew we wanted to claim for our campaign the best and most noble ideals of American history—especially self-governance and protecting people's rights against abusive power. We realize that the founding of this country is deeply flawed, but we used the national creation story to put Measure T on the side of truth and justice.

To that end, our PAC was named the Humboldt Coalition for Community Rights, and our website was VoteLocal-Control.org. Our primary outreach tool was a tea bag that reminded voters of the proud history of the Boston Tea Party as an act of rebellion against the most powerful corporation of the day, and called for a modern-day T(ea) Party of our own.

Like the populists of the 19th-century agrarian movement, we believe that genuine change cannot be imposed from the top down. It must proceed from the ground up, and the battles must be waged in local communities. ⑦

Kaitlin Sopoci-Belknap is director of Democracy Unlimited, a fellow for Liberty Tree: Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, and a principal with the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy. She was spokesperson and campaign co-manager for Measure T.

For information on DUHC workshops, see page 30.



Humboldt County's promotional tea bags proclaim: "It's Time for a (T)ea Party of Our Own"

COMMON KNOWLEDGE: HOW TO GET LOCAL CONTROL—TAUGHT BY PEOPLE WHO'VE DONE IT

Jeff Kaplan

Whether the issue is water rights, big-box stores, meddling in local politics, or the taking of citizens' land, almost every community in the United States—if not the world—is being harmed by excessive corporate power. Corporations have appropriated authority that rightly belongs to the people. As a result, communities that seek change through the “proper channels” find those procedures have been defined by corporations themselves and lead nowhere. Strategies of resistance need to invoke the peoples' right to exercise democratic power over corporations and governments. Several organizations offer training and workshops to share their experience with establishing democracy at the community level.

Democracy Unlimited of Humboldt County (DUHC), the driving force behind Measure T, offers a wide variety of workshops, including an introductory “First Steps in Dismantling Corporate Rule.” This workshop explores the history of corporate arrogation of democratic rule and basic strategies for resistance. It emphasizes building democratic principles into a campaign's leadership structure. DUHC also offers a weekend-long “Deep Democracy Retreat,” and workshops oriented to issues such as turn-

ing back the corporate destruction of the environment and takeover of our food supply and educational system. DUHC will create special workshops to address the needs of individual communities. Email info@DUHC.org or phone 707/269-0984.

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) offers its Democracy School, a weekend-long retreat that teaches “a dramatic new way of looking at our role as citizens in a democracy” and how “to reframe” sin-

gle issues to confront the rights used by corporations to deny the rights of communities, people, and the earth.” CELDF has helped Pennsylvania farmers and other groups confront agribusiness and other corporations, and keep giant hog farms, sewage sludge, and water exportation schemes out of their communities. The course includes the history of both the corporation and democratic resistance in the United States, as well as strategies and tactics useful for organizing resistance today. More information, including a schedule of Democracy Schools, is available at www.constitution411.org or contact Stacey Schmader at 717/709-0457.

ReclaimDemocracy.org presents one- and two-day workshops to help participants “recognize and subvert corporate and anti-democratic paradigms and language to create campaigns that actually build democracy, i.e. rule by the people.” Communities can tailor workshops to their local needs, supplementing the core curriculum, “From Here to Democracy,” with modules on specific objectives, such as revoking corporate “political speech” and building alliances with independent businesses to neutralize corporate power locally. See “Presentations” link at reclaimdemocracy.org or email info@reclaimdemocracy.org for details.

The Program on Corporations, Law & Democracy (POCLAD) offers custom-designed workshops combining an analysis of the historical/legal usurpations of citizen self-governance rights with such “Democratic Arts” as organizing skills, conflict resolution, and democratic conversation, facilitation, and decision-making. Contact them at people@poclad.org or 508/398-1145.

DUHC, POCLAD, ReclaimDemocracy.org and other groups are working to set up Democracy Net, a website where activists can find a schedule of these workshops, other events, and information about community organizing efforts. For more information contact kaitlin@duhc.org. ⑦

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM AND MORE: PUTTING CITIZENS IN CHARGE OF DEMOCRACY

Charlie Cray

People across the country aren't waiting for action from politicians and judges. Here are the hot spots where activists are getting corporations out of government and elections.

Funding Elections

Since Maine citizens passed the first law providing public funding for elections in 1996, six other states have followed suit. Clean elections remove big corporate money from politics by providing public funding for candidates who demonstrate popular support by gathering a certain number of small qualifying contributions. With help from Public Campaign, activists are working to pass new or improved Clean Elections laws in more than 40 states. Recognizing the public commitment to change, members of both houses of Congress have also introduced public campaign financing bills.

Protecting Internet Access

The Internet has provided an unprecedented platform for citizen activists, who have used it for political organizing, fundraising, and to provide news and opinion not available in the major media. But telephone and cable companies control virtually all broadband Internet access and are threatening to enclose the commons of cyberspace. A coalition of public interest groups is pushing for a series of measures that would protect net neutrality and keep technology platforms away from corporate control. For more information go to www.savetheinternet.com and publicknowledge.org.

Reclaiming the Ballot

For years, activists have raised significant concerns about the integrity of electronic voting machines. Both failures and vulnerabilities have been reported by election officials and computer scientists who have successfully “hacked” these machines. Observers say it would probably be prohibitively expensive to immediately sever these corporations' contracts. Meanwhile, members of Congress have proposed legislation that would improve the integrity of next year's elections by mandating an auditable paper trail, already a requirement in 28 states.

Pushing for Accountability

The Center for Political Accountability, an organization started by shareholder activists in 2003, uses shareholder pressure to force corporations to disclose their soft money contributions and their donations to trade associations for political purposes. CPA and its allies filed 44 shareholder resolutions related to political disclosure during the 2007 proxy season. Thirty-one large companies adopted some kind of political disclosure and accountability policies as a result.

Increasing Voting Options

Across the country, millions of voters are already using the more democratic instant runoff voting (IRV) method in

local, county or state elections. Under IRV rules, voters can pick just one candidate or rank several of them. If no candidate wins a majority of first choices, the top two candidates advance to an instant runoff. If a voter's first choice is eliminated, the ballot is counted for whichever one of the top two candidates the voter ranked higher. IRV eliminates the “spoiler candidacy” defect in our current election system, making third-party candidates viable, which counters the oversized corporate influence in the two-party system. More than a dozen cities, counties, and states (for overseas voters) have adopted IRV. For more information see Fair Vote, www.fairvote.org.

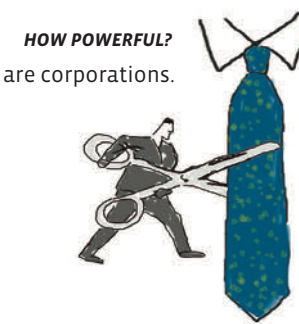
Localizing Politics

From Pennsylvania to California, cities and counties are banning corporations from local politics and challenging corporate personhood and constitutional rights. For more on these movements, see stories in this section.

Deepening Democracy

Liberty Tree FDR, the Alliance for Democracy, Students for a Democratic Society and a variety of other groups converged in Atlanta at the end of June for the “Democracy Track” at the U.S. Social Forum—six days of strategizing, discussion, and exploration of “new ways to democratize all of our struggles.” ⑦

Charlie Cray is director of the Center for Corporate Policy and a member of the Strategic Corporate Initiative.



Of the 100 largest economies in the world, 53 are corporations.

Protecting Our Commons

Water, forests, and other natural “commons” provide the necessities of life. Shared stories, music, and knowledge enliven our cultures. Today, corporations are trying to enclose these and other commons—or externalize their costs onto them. But a movement is gaining momentum to protect our commons for generations to come.

Sarah van Gelder and Doug Pibel

FORESTS & WILDLIFE

Why: Forests offer food, fiber, energy, medicines, habitat, oxygen, and climate stabilization.

Threats: Logging, petroleum, and mining corporations convert these commons to short-term private profits, leaving behind eroded land and poisoned water, air, and earth.

Signs of Progress: Ecuador plans to preserve a forested indigenous area by leaving the area's oil unexploited. Forest area certified as sustainable is up 45% in one year to 68 million hectares in 66 countries. Sweden has cut pesticide use by 68% over 12 years.

CYBERSPACE

Why: The Internet is key to accessing and distributing information and mobilizing civil society within and across borders.

Threats: Telecom and cable companies seek to commercialize the Internet and make some websites more accessible than others.

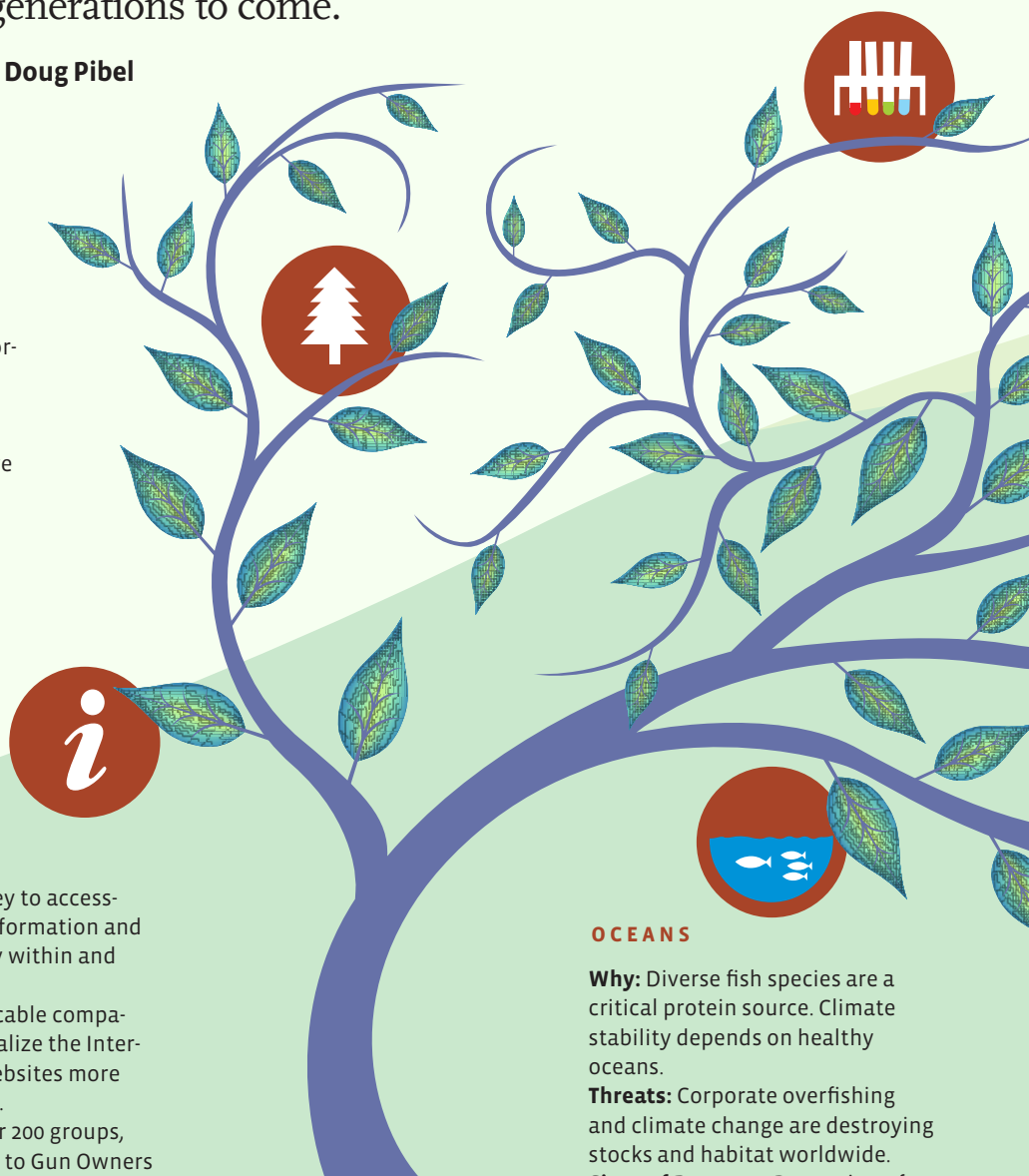
Signs of Progress: Over 200 groups, ranging from the ACLU to Gun Owners of America are working to protect “net neutrality.” Community WiFi helps overcome the digital divide.

OCEANS

Why: Diverse fish species are a critical protein source. Climate stability depends on healthy oceans.

Threats: Corporate overfishing and climate change are destroying stocks and habitat worldwide.

Signs of Progress: Protection of swordfish led to recovery. Australia is protecting 33% of the Great Barrier Reef.



KNOWLEDGE

Why: Knowledge grows with the free flow of information.

Threats: Patents on publicly funded research leads to monopoly pricing. High cost of information and technology creates digital divide.

Signs of Progress: Wikis, the Creative Commons, open-source software, and "Open Education Resources" offer low-cost resources built by a global community.



SPACE

Why: The wonders of space belong to everyone.

Threats: The U.S. plans the militarization of space.

Signs of Progress: A global ethic holds that space belongs to everyone.

BROADCAST SPECTRUM

Why: Communication is critical to a functioning democracy and community identity.

Threats: Privatization and consolidation restrict access to those with deep pockets.

Sign of Progress: The U.S. public demands funding for public broadcasting; FCC to allocate spectrum to noncommercial radio; public interest voices getting heard on media.



FOLK WAYS

Why: Music and stories are critical to community, connection, cultural understanding, and change.

Threats: Mass culture homogenizes folk traditions, turns public material into copyrighted works, "encloses" new works, impedes further evolution.

Signs of Progress: Creative Commons, the Internet, alternative media enhance diversity and creativity.



GENES & SEEDS

Why: Genetic diversity makes for stable, resilient supplies of food, fiber, and natural medicines; protects ecosystems.

Threats: Corporations patent genes, push monocultures, seek to control seeds, introduce GMO strains into the food supply and the wild.

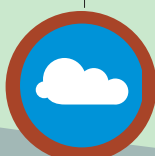
Signs of Progress: Resurgence of support for local, non-corporate farming. Consumer and farmer resistance to GMOs and pesticides.

PUBLIC SPACES

Why: The town square is where we go to meet, debate, and celebrate.

Threats: Malls and privatization of public and open spaces limit interactions that build community.

Signs of Progress: Movements to protect urban gardens, parks, green belts, and town squares can be found worldwide.

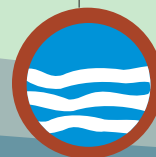


WATER

Why: Fresh water is a right and a necessity.

Threats: Pollution, dams, privatization, water bottling, factory farms, waste, and climate change threaten supply.

Signs of Progress: Global resistance to privatization, rainwater harvesting, watershed protection, water conservation.





HOW POWERFUL?

More than 1 out of every 4 people in the United States logs onto the Internet with AOL-Time-Warner, the largest media corporation in the world.

WHO'S STANDING UP



Debra Harry

Native peoples take aim at corporate pirates

THE FREE MARKET IS SUPPOSED TO REWARD innovation, but new ideas are hard to come by. So many corporations find it easier simply to tap traditional knowledge, patent it, stamp it with their logos, and sell it.

This is corporate piracy, and among those leading the fight against it is Debra Harry, who is Northern Paiute, from Pyramid Lake, Nevada. Harry heads the Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism (IPCB), an organization that advocates for the right of Indigenous peoples to own and protect their traditional knowledge.

A classic example of biopiracy, Harry says, is the Hoodia cactus, which the San peoples of Southern Africa have traditionally used to stave off hunger on long hunting trips. Hoping for a blockbuster anti-obesity drug, the South African government patented P57, the appetite-suppressing ingredient in Hoodia, and partnered with drug companies Phytopharm and Pfizer to develop a drug—all without the Sans' knowledge or consent. After international outcry, the San did secure a share of the profits, but it amounts to less than 0.003 percent of net sales. And the Sans' share comes from the government's portion of the profits, while the corporate share remains unchanged.

"Almost every genetic research project has a corporate profit motive behind it," Harry says. "Even so-called public interest research at public universities is frequently privatized."

Harry agrees that benefit-sharing agreements can bring a few much-needed resources to marginalized communities. But for many indigenous peoples, the promise of profits is not their principal goal; to them, she says, protection of sacred species and knowledge is paramount.

That's one reason the IPCB helped defeat the Human Genome Diversity Project, which sought to take genetic samples from over 700 indigenous populations worldwide, essentially gifting any subsequent findings to researchers. Now, the IPCB is opposing a similar but more grandiose Genographic Project.

Bill Moyers

A media star vs. the media

Today, just five corporations own the U.S. media, down from 50 in the '80s. Journalist Bill Moyers notes this trend with alarm. "It's not simply the cause of journalism that's at stake today," he says, "but the cause of American liberty itself." Moyers sees the campaign against corporate media as the single most important way to protect American democracy. He uses his weekly television program, "Bill Moyers Journal," to illustrate the problem with examples, such as the lack of critical journalism in the lead-up to the Iraq War and the media's silence about the Cheney and Bush impeachment campaigns.

Alexia Salvatierra

Blessed—and organized—are the poor

"We have a slowly awakening giant in our hands," says Rev. Alexia Salvatierra, head of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE). She's referring to the working poor of Los Angeles County who have, with the support of CLUE's 600 interfaith members, racked up some surprising victories against corporate opponents.

Last year they persuaded the city council to extend the Los Angeles city living wage and worker-retention laws to 3,500 additional workers. They also convinced the Building Owners and Managers Association of Greater L.A. to agree, tentatively, to allow security officers to unionize. Now they're taking on the Glendale Hilton and the Radisson LAX over union representation.

"The working poor are offering a new vision to the American people," she says. "Adelante!"

TO CORPORATE POWER



PHOTO COURTESY APOLLO ALLIANCE

Leo Gerard

Don't call him a moderate

THE STEELWORKERS UNION is not middle-of-the-road, move-to-the-center, so-called moderate, 'me, too,' hard-hat Republicans," says Leo W. Gerard, international president of the United Steelworkers Union (USW).

That's a welcome message to angry steelworkers convinced that the Democratic party has sold its liberal soul to the so-called "center." It explains, in part, why Gerard sailed into the USW presidency unopposed, the first man in the union's 63-year history to do so. And it's the reason workers have flocked to join the USW. Including members gained from negotiated mergers with other unions, the USW has gained 350,000 members under Gerard's leadership—a 60 percent increase.

Gerard, the son of a union organizer, promotes a simple agenda: economic justice for everyone. During his two years in office, he has negotiated tariffs to help save the U.S. steel industry (eventually dropped by President Bush under pressure from the World Trade Organization) and a Workers First law that moves workers' claims to the head of the line in corporate bankruptcy proceedings.

Gerard is also the driving force behind the creation of Heartland Network. These enormous pools of multi-employer pension funds invest labor's capital in "high-road" workplaces, using investment strategies that are jobs-oriented, support small, worker-friendly manufacturing, and build sustainable regional economies.

With his outspoken commitment to small-d democracy, Gerard, a 60-year-old French Canadian who's been called "a heavy-weight teddy bear," is breathing new life into the trade union movement.

Paula Wolff

Mom says "Turn off BusRadio!"

To cash-strapped school districts, it sounds like a bargain: the BusRadio corporation offers to install free audio equipment in school buses. In return, the districts hand over their kids' minds for a few minutes each day to listen to "age-appropriate commercials."

But to parents like Paula Wolff, president of the Parent Teachers' Association of Jefferson County, Kentucky, it's a poor trade-off. Wolff led the successful fight to keep BusRadio out of her school district.

"My child is already targeted enough [by advertisers] without being bombarded on the way to and from school," Wolff told the school board.

BusRadio says they're simply providing advertisers with a way "to reach the highly sought-after teen and tween market." Their opponents, like Wolff, argue that BusRadio is exploiting the compulsory education law by forcing kids to listen to commercials.

Ward Morehouse

Against corporate persons

Ward Morehouse knows about corporate impunity. He has worked to bring Union Carbide to justice since 1984, when the poison gas leak at its plant in Bhopal, India, left 22,000 dead. He failed. But along the way he learned that worrying about "good corporate citizenship" is a diversion from the real task: exerting citizen control over corporations. In 1995, he co-founded, with Richard Grossman, the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy. Its goal is stripping corporations of their legal status as persons, which Morehouse believes is a prerequisite for democracy.



HOW POWERFUL?

Nearly 70% of goods sold by Wal-Mart, the largest corporation in the world, are imported from China.

Kristin Halvorsen

Norway withdraws funds from unethical corporations



IT'S NOT EASY TO STAND UP to the corporations of the world's only superpower. But Norway's minister of finance, Kristin Halvorsen, did and lives to tell the tale.

Norway is the world's third largest producer of oil, behind Saudi Arabia and Russia. As a result of rising oil prices in the last decade, the small nation of 5 million people has accumulated a surplus of about \$300 billion, enough to pay each man, woman, and child a substantial sum. But that's not what the Norwegians did with the surplus. They invested in the nation's future, stashing the oil money in a Government Pension Fund against the day when the oil reserves are depleted. And to avoid overheating their own economy, they decided to invest all the fund's money abroad.

Those are unusual decisions in a get-rich-now world. But in 2004, the Norwegian Parliament followed up with an even more remarkable decision: it unanimously adopted a tough set of ethical guidelines and committed to divesting the fund of stock in companies that didn't meet them.

Of the 21 corporations that have failed to meet the standards so far, 12 are based in the United States. In January, Halvorsen announced that the fund had sold off its holdings of Wal-Mart stock due to "serious/systematic violations of human rights and labor rights," citing the company's alleged willingness to tolerate child-labor violations among its suppliers and obstruct its employees' efforts to unionize.

The mining giant Freeport-McMoRan also is on the divestment list for causing "severe and permanent environmental damage" to Indonesia's rivers. Also among those who have already failed the ethics test are General Dynamics, Northrup Grummond, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and BAE Systems. The fund sold off nearly \$1 billion worth of stock in listed companies.

As a result, Halvorsen faced criticism from the U.S. ambassador, Benson K. Whitney, who accused her of unfairly singling out U.S. companies in her screening process. But Halvorsen believes the process is working—foreign ambassadors have been asking what they have to do to keep their firms off the list. Her next targets are rumored to be tobacco firms and those corporations that contribute to global warming.

— Profiles by Carol Estes, Zach Kyle, Jen Angel and Justine Simon

David Solnit

The fine artist of protest

He's pretty much known as "The Puppet Guy." Although there have been many other radical puppeteers over the years, arts organizer David Solnit has been instrumental in popularizing the use of giant puppets in mass demonstrations since the 1990s.

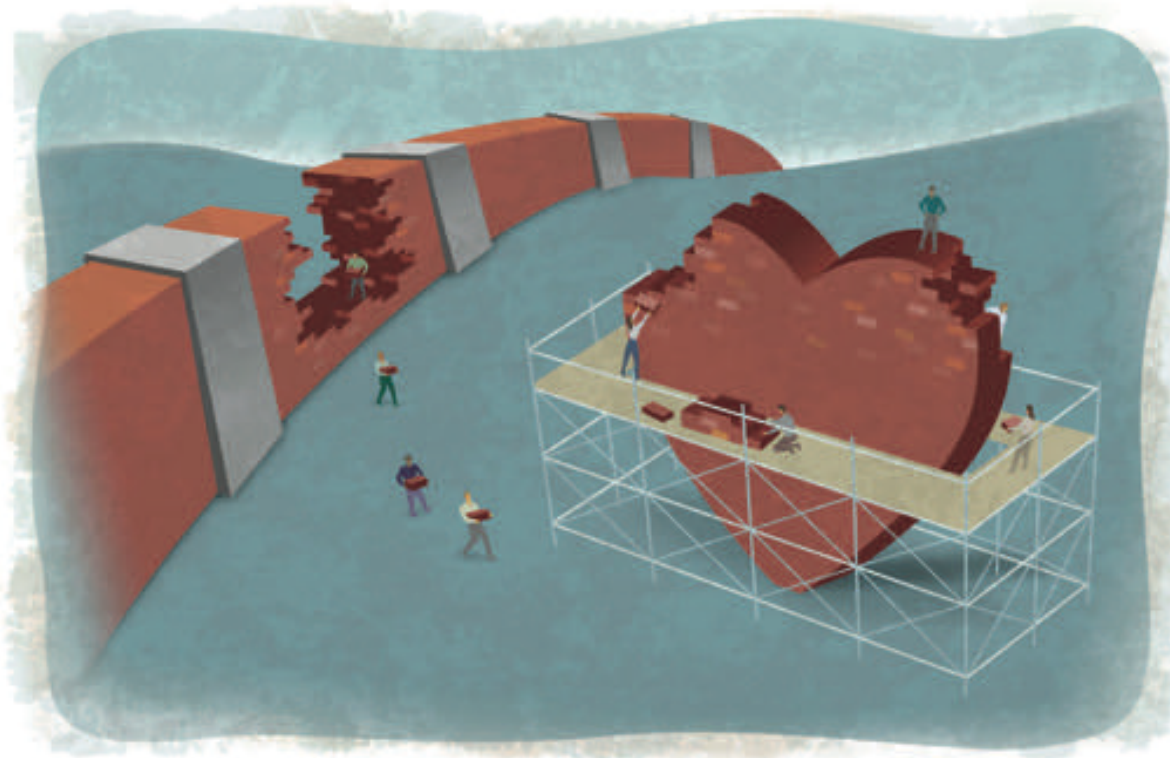
Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Solnit began organizing in the early 1980s. But he soon grew tired of the same old protests. He wanted a new way to reach people, a way that was participatory and engaging. So he has used his skills to help others create images for their campaigns, such as the Coalition of Immokalee Workers campaigns against Taco Bell and McDonald's, the annual School of the Americas vigil, and countless anti-war demonstrations.

What do puppets have to do with protest? "Images have the power to reach people in their hearts," he says, and creating art and street theater is a great way to engage activists and the general public—making politics more participatory and fun for everyone.

Solnit is more than a puppeteer. He has been involved with most mass mobilizations in the United States in the last 25 years. He is a skilled direct action trainer and gives workshops on strategic organizing. He incorporates elements of art and theater into everything he does, including protesting the G8 in Scotland in 2005 with the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (www.clownarmy.org).

Nevertheless, Solnit is humble and unassuming, joking that his main purpose in life is to tote around puppets in his pickup truck. He is rarely in the spotlight and is uneasy when he is.

Solnit was a main organizer in the World Trade Organization (WTO) protests in Seattle in 1999 and in the shutdown of San Francisco the day after Iraq was invaded in 2003. Currently he is supporting GI resisters through an organization called Courage to Resist (www.couragetoresist.org).



DON BAKER FOR YES! MAGAZINE
WWW.EVIDENCEOFHUMANITY.ORG

Better Than Money

If there is to be a human future, we must bring ourselves into balanced relationship with one another and the Earth. This requires **BUILDING ECONOMIES WITH HEART.**

David C. Korten

If we are to slow and ultimately reverse the social and environmental disintegration we see around us, we must change the rules to curb the pervasive abuse of corporate power that contributes so much to those harms.

Taming corporate power will slow the damage. It will not be sufficient, however, to heal our relationships with one another and the Earth and bring our troubled world into social and environmental balance. Corporations are but instruments of a deeper social pathology

revealed in a familiar story our society tells about the nature of prosperity.

Empire Prosperity Story

The prevailing prosperity narrative has many variations, but these are among its essential elements:

- Economic growth fills our lives with material abundance, lifts the poor from their misery, and creates the wealth needed to protect the environment.
- Money is the measure of wealth and the proper arbiter of every choice

and relationship.

- Prosperity depends on freeing wealthy investors from taxes and regulations that limit their incentive and capacity to invest in creating the new jobs that enrich us all.

- Unregulated markets allocate resources to their most productive and highest value use.

- The wealthy deserve their riches because we all get richer as the benefits of the investments of those on top trickle down to those on the bottom. >>

- » • Poverty is caused by welfare programs that strip the poor of motivation to become productive members of society willing to work hard at the jobs the market offers.

This money-serving prosperity story is repeated endlessly by corporate media and taught in economics, business, and public policy courses in our colleges and universities almost as sacred writ. I call it the Empire prosperity story.

Few notice the implications of its legitimization of the power and privilege of for-profit corporations and an economic system designed to maximize returns to money, that is, to make rich people richer. Furthermore, it praises extreme indi-

vidualism that, in other circumstances would be condemned as sociopathic; values life only as a commodity; and diverts our attention from the basic reality that destroying life to make money is an act of collective insanity. In addition to destroying real wealth, it threatens our very survival as a species.

Earth Community Prosperity Story

Consider these elements of a contrasting life-serving prosperity story that looks to life, rather than money, as the true measure of wealth.

- Healthy children, families, communities, and ecological systems are the true measure of real wealth.

- Mutual caring and support are the primary currency of healthy families and communities, and community is the key to economic security.

• Real wealth is created by investing in the human capital of productive people, the social capital of caring relationships, and the natural capital of healthy ecosystems.

- The end of poverty and the healing of the environment will come from reallocating material resources from rich to poor and from life-destructive to life-nurturing uses.

• Markets have a vital role, but democratically accountable governments must secure community interests by

We must turn from growing financial capital to growing living capital, from concentrating ownership to distributing it.



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In 2006, there were 13,903 individuals registered to lobby the federal government.



assuring that everyone plays by basic rules that internalize costs, maintain equity, and favor human-scale local businesses that honor community values and serve community needs.

- Economies must serve and be accountable to people, not the reverse.

I call this the Earth Community prosperity story because it evokes a vision of the possibility of creating life-serving economies grounded in communities that respect the irreducible interdependence of people and nature. Although rarely heard, this story is based on familiar notions of generosity and fairness, and negates each of the claims of the imperial prosperity story that currently shapes economic policy and practice.

The High Cost of Making Money

It took me many years in my work abroad as a member of the foreign aid establishment to wake up to the fallacy of the Empire story—the idea that advancing economic growth by maximizing returns to money is the key to ending poverty and healing the environment. The epiphany came during a conference in Asia at which nongovernmental organizations were presenting case studies of the social and environmental consequences of large aid-funded development projects undertaken to promote economic growth. In case after case, the projects displaced poor people and disrupted essential environmental processes to produce benefits for those already better off.

Eventually I came to realize that conventional economic growth indicators rarely measure growth in human prosperity. Rather, they measure the rate at which the rich are expropriating the living resources of the planet and converting them to products destined for a garbage dump after a brief useful life. The process generates profits

for people who already have far more money than they need while displacing people from the resources they need for their modest livelihoods. In summary, the primary business of the global financial system and the corporations that serve it is to increase the wealth gap. It works well in the short-term for the privileged few, but it is disastrous for the society.

We see the effects in the current state of the world. The market value of global economic output has tripled since 1970. By conventional reckoning, this means we humans have tripled our wealth and well-being.

Yet indicators of living capital, the aggregate of human, social and natural capital, tell a very different story. The Living Planet Index, an indicator of the health of the world's freshwater, ocean, and land-based ecosystems, declined 30 percent since 1970. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 15 of 24 ecosystem services examined "are being degraded or used unsustainably, including fresh water, capture fisheries, air and water purification, and the regulation of regional and local climate, natural hazards, and pests."

Indicators of human capital—the skills, knowledge, psychological health, capacity for critical thought, and moral responsibility characteristic of the fully functioning person, and of social capital—the enduring relationships of mutual trust and caring that are the foundation of healthy families, communities and societies—point to equally unfavorable trends.

Even as living capital shrinks, the population that depends on it continues to grow. Meanwhile, the growing concentration of money means a few people are able to claim an ever-larger share of a shrinking pie of living capital to the exclusion of everyone else. According to a recent United Nations study, the richest 2 percent of the world's adults own

Incorporating Trouble

Unlimited corporate size allows for the concentration of unlimited power. Globalization extends that power beyond the reach of accountability to any state or public body. Limited liability is an invitation to use that power irresponsibly. Public share markets depersonalize the relationship between the corporation and its owners, eliminate the need for enduring commitment, and tend to divide the world between those who live by the product of their labor and those who live from returns to money. The result is an extreme form of absentee ownership that strips decision-making of human sensibility. A perceived legal requirement to manage the corporation in the exclusive short-term financial interest of its shareholders further suppresses the innate human sense of moral responsibility and feeds an individualistic, immoral organizational culture.

51 percent of all global assets. The poorest 50 percent own only 1 percent. This distribution of ownership is a measure of the global distribution of power—and the gap is growing at an accelerating rate. The power imbalance allows the privileged minority to change the rules to accelerate their expropriation of the declining pool of real wealth, which increases the hardship and desperation of those excluded. We are on a path to an increasingly violent last-one-standing competition for the Earth's final tree, drop of drinkable water, and breath of air.

By our measures of financial capital, we humans are on a path to limitless >>>

» prosperity. By the measures of living capital, we are on a suicidal path to increasing deprivation and ultimate self-extinction.

Putting Life First

If there is to be a human future, we must bring ourselves into balanced relationship with one another and the Earth. This requires turning existing economic priorities and models on their head and making the values of the Earth Community story the foundation of our economy. We must:

1. Turn from money to life as the defining value, from growing financial capital to growing living capital, and

disaster and unbearable hardship. They ignore the simple fact that those results are already the lot of roughly half our fellow humans. The proposed reordering can avoid the spread of hardship and begin to alleviate the existing suffering.

Economic reallocation and democratization are no longer simply moral issues. They are imperatives of human survival and must replace economic growth and the pursuit of financial gain as the defining purpose of economic life.

The work of bringing forth a new economy devoted to serving the needs of our children, families, communities, and natural environments begins with building public awareness that there is

internalize the social and environmental costs of their choices. And it is not sacred. Without responsible governmental oversight, the market can lead to highly destructive social pathology.

By its nature, the market creates winners and losers. Furthermore, the winners are often those most skilled in finding ways to pass social and environmental costs onto others. The winners increase their share of the resource pie, which increases their economic and political power to shape markets and rules to improve their future prospects. The result is a self-reinforcing spiral of increasing concentration of wealth and power. This

The human species has reached a defining moment of choice between moving ahead on a path to collective self-destruction or joining together in a cooperative effort to navigate a dramatic turn to a new human era.

from short-term to long-term investing;

2. Shift the priority from advancing the private interests of the few to advancing the individual and community interests of all; and

3. Reallocate resources from supporting institutions of domination to meeting the needs of people, community, and nature.

We have enormous potential to improve the lives of all by reallocating resources from military to health care and environmental regeneration, from automobiles to public transportation, from investing in suburban sprawl to investing in compact communities, from advertising to education, from financial speculation to productive investment in local entrepreneurship, and from providing extravagant luxuries for the very wealthy to providing basic essentials for everyone.

The champions of Empire dismiss any such reordering of priorities on the ground that it will bring economic

an Earth Community prosperity story that offers a vision of hope and possibility for a positive future. Although a story so contrary to the prevailing Empire story is likely to be greeted with initial skepticism, the Earth Community prosperity story enjoys the ultimate advantage because it expresses the truth most of us recognize in our hearts: if our children, families, communities, and natural systems are healthy, we are prosperous. Whether conventional financial indicators like GDP or the Dow Jones stock index rise or fall is irrelevant.

Rules for Conserving and Sharing

To get from where we are to where we need to go we must recognize that the market is an essential and beneficial institution for allocating resources in response to individual choices. But it is beneficial only so long as it operates by rules that maintain equity and competition and require players to

supports the unjust hoarding and profligate consumption of resources by a privileged class. In an increasingly environmentally constrained world, learning to conserve and share resources is an essential requirement of social order and well-being.

Even with adequate regulation to minimize social and environmental abuse, the health of a market system also requires public intervention to recycle financial capital continuously from winners to losers. In the absence of such recycling, financial wealth and power accumulate in perpetuity, increasing the fortunes of a few family dynasties at the expense of democracy, justice, and social stability.

Recycling financial wealth to maintain a democratic allocation of access to real resources is, of course, totally contrary to the self-serving logic of corporate capitalism. Yet it is essential to democracy and social health, both of which depend on an equitable distribu-

In 2000, the sales of the top 200 corporations were 18 times the combined yearly income of the 1.2 billion people living in "severe" poverty.



tion of power, and an essential function of democratic government.

Community-based Economics

From a system-design perspective, a healthy society must either eliminate profit, interest, and for-profit corporations altogether, or use the taxing and regulatory powers of publicly accountable democratic governments to strictly limit concentrations of economic power and prevent the winners from passing the costs of their success onto the losers. This creates yet another system design issue. As government becomes larger and more powerful, it almost inevitably becomes less accountable and more prone to corruption.

Paul Hawken has correctly observed that big business creates the need for big government to constrain excesses and clean up the messes. To maintain equity and secure the internalization of costs, democratically accountable government power must exceed the power of exclusive private economic interests. The smaller the concentrations of economic power, the smaller government can be and still maintain essential balance and integrity in the society.

There will be less need for a strong governmental hand to the extent that we are successful in eliminating sociopathic institutional forms, making community-based economies the norm, and creating a public consensus that predatory economic behavior now taken for granted as "just human nature" is actually aberrant and immoral. Responsible citizenship may then become the expected business norm. There will always be a need, however, for rules and governmental oversight to deal with what hopefully will be a declining number of sociopathic individuals and institutions who seek to profit at public expense.

Equalizing economic power and rooting it locally shifts power to people and community from distant financial markets, global corporations, and national

governments. It serves to shift rewards from economic predators to economic producers, strengthens community, encourages individual responsibility, and allows for greater expression of individual choice and creativity.

The Essential Choice

The human species has reached a defining moment of choice between moving ahead on a path to collective self-destruction or joining together in a cooperative effort to navigate a dramatic turn to a new human era. The profound cultural and institutional transformation that is needed goes

Elements of Systemic Change

The Strategic Corporate Initiative creates an excellent foundation on which to base a yet larger conversation and policy agenda. The following are some of the measures to consider.

Replace money indicators with life indicators as the measure of progress.

Create and apply appropriate tools for making investment decisions based on returns to living capital rather than returns to financial capital.

Roll back concentrations of economic power and the division between workers and owners by implementing a progressive wealth tax on people and corporations, democratizing the ownership of economic assets, and placing strict limits on inheritance to implement a modern version of the Jubilee that redistributes assets to restore social balance at the end of each lifetime.


Locate responsibility for setting economic rules and priorities in democratically accountable institutions of government at the most local level feasible in order to maximize opportunity for full public participation.

Limit political participation to real people, which means barring corporations of all types from political participation. End the practice of allowing corporate tax deductions for advertising and lobbying expenses.

Enforce cost internalization through regulations, service fees, and legal liability of individual and institutional investors for harms caused by for-profit corporations they own.

Discourage financial speculation by confiscatory taxation of short-term capital gains and all gains from purely speculative buying and selling of financial assets.

—David Korten

up against the short-term interests of the world's most powerful people and institutions. The barriers to what we humans must now achieve are daunting. By any rational calculation, the needed transformation is not politically feasible. Yet it is essential to human survival and prosperity, which means we must set ourselves to the task of figuring out how to make the impossible into the inevitable. 

David Korten is co-founder and board chair of YES! His latest book is *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*.



7 Cool Companies

The Best Alternatives to Corporate Power

Employee Ownership

W. L. Gore

Newark, Delaware and 45 locations worldwide

Founded: 1958 / Employees: 7,500

Annual Revenue: \$1.84 billion



EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP and a highly egalitarian workplace culture make W.L. Gore very different from your typical corporation. A worker may be a team leader on one project and follow others on another. Compensation is not determined by “the boss,” but is tied to your contribution and decided by a committee, like many law firms. The firm regularly ranks on Fortune’s “Best Companies to Work For” list.

Gore is best known for its Gore-Tex fabrics, but also is an industry leader in other areas. Gore’s heart patches and synthetic blood vessels have been implanted in more than 7.5 million patients.

When Gore was founded, there were fewer than 300 employee-owned businesses in the United States. Now workers own a growing share of nearly 10,000 American businesses. All told, 10.5 million employee-owners own \$675 billion in business assets. This ownership stake is financed by workers’ pension contributions through Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs). Workers do not “run” most ESOPs, but federal law gives

them control over “major decisions” such as merger or dissolution, which leads ESOPs to keep jobs and capital anchored in home communities. Many ESOPs, like Gore, informally give workers considerable say. ESOPs also financially benefit their employee owners. The average value of an ESOP retirement account now exceeds \$64,000, far greater than most people’s 401(k) holdings.

Gar Alperovitz, Steve Dubb, and Ted Howard

Restraining corporate power requires changing the way we think about business. This means changing who owns, controls, and benefits from it. Profits, for instance, can flow to workers, consumers, or the community—not just to outside investors. And these businesses succeed! Examples from outside the United States include worker-cooperatives in Argentina; Grameen Bank of Bangladesh (which, with its founder, Muhammad Yunus, won the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize); and the Mondragón cooperative in northern Spain, which employs over 75,000. In the United States over 120 million co-op and credit union members form the beginning point of a growing continuum of ownership forms that controls trillions of dollars in assets. The range is vast: from small worker- and community-owned firms to state pension funds, many of which are flexing their ownership muscle to force changes in corporate policy and target investment to meet public needs. What follows are seven of the best current models.



LESLIE BARBOUR FOR YES! MAGAZINE

Weaver Street Market, a worker- and consumer-owned co-op, produces its own artisan breads, each loaf shaped by hand. Baker Emily Buehler, right, also teaches breadmaking classes at the co-op.

Social Enterprises

Pioneer Human Services

Seattle, Washington
Founded: 1963 / Employees: 1,000
Annual Revenue: \$60 million

WE TEND TO THINK OF NONPROFITS and businesses as opposites, but Pioneer Human Services shows that the mission orientation of nonprofits can blend with the financial savvy of business with impressive results.

Pioneer, which offers drug- and alcohol-free housing, employment, job training, counseling, and education to recovering alcoholics and drug addicts, finances 99 percent of its budget through fees for services and earnings generated in the manufacture, distribution, and sale of products. Businesses include retail cafés, sheet metal fabrication, aerospace precision machining (it's a contractor for Boeing), wholesale food distribution, and contract packaging.

Not only do these enterprises stabilize funding for Pioneer's social services, the businesses themselves are central to Pioneer's mission of helping "people on the margins of society" stay out of prison and off the streets. Its businesses enable Pioneer to give jobs to more than 700 men and women drawn from the ex-offender, homeless, and drug-recovery populations that it serves.

Pioneer forms part of a growing "social enterprise" trend. Using IRS data, a National Center for Charitable Statistics researcher estimated that, in 2001, U.S. human service sector nonprofit commercial income totaled \$41.6 billion.

Creative Cooperatives

Weaver Street Market

Carrboro, North Carolina
Founded: 1988 / Worker-owners: 92
Consumer-owners: 9,794 / Annual Sales: \$20 million

WEAVER STREET MARKET IS A FOOD CO-OP that combines employee and consumer membership, with each group electing representatives to its board. The co-op has expanded greatly in recent years, adding a second storefront and a restaurant, with a third storefront in development.

Weaver Street illustrates a growing trend in the emerging community economy—businesses that meet a triple bottom line of economic, social equity, and environmental returns. Almost half the food it sells is produced locally, and it has invested in a local chicken-producing co-op. It estimates that 50 cents on every dollar spent at the co-op remains in the community versus 15 cents at chain stores.

The co-op hosts an average of four community events a week and has formed its own community foundation. Weaver Street fuels its truck with bio-diesel fuel from the Piedmont Biofuels co-op and purchases 10 percent of its electricity from green energy sources. It also recycles 15 types of waste.

Weaver Street is just one of the nation's estimated 21,840 co-ops and credit unions. Credit unions alone have over \$700 billion in assets. Nationwide, co-ops in 2005 generated \$273 billion in revenue and employed more than 600,000.



ANDREW WILLIS

ONE DC helps residents strategize to fight a development plan that would displace poor people in the historic Anacostia neighborhood.

Community Development

ONE DC

Washington, DC

Employees: 8 / Housing Units Organized: 1,000+

Annual Revenue: \$750,000

SPUN OFF LAST YEAR as an independent group after nine years of work in Washington, DC's Shaw neighborhood, Organizing Neighborhood Equity DC—or "ONE DC"—builds community equity and wealth through developing neighborhood businesses, including a worker-run temp agency, a bike repair shop, an ice cream store franchise, and an African-American heritage tour company. ONE DC combines these efforts with community organizing, focused in three areas: affordable housing, living-wage jobs, and community control over development. When a developer wanted to build a mixed-use facility above a local public transit stop, ONE DC helped residents leverage their political power and negotiate a "community benefits agreement" mandating that at least 25 percent of housing units would be affordable and 15 percent of the retail space would be set aside for local business. ONE DC also helps tenants buy their own buildings by taking advantage of a city law that gives renters the first right to purchase their apartments if the landlord chooses to sell. Executive Director Dominic Moulden proudly boasts that his small group has organized "1,000 units of subsidized housing in a gentrifying area."

ONE DC is just one example of the nation's 4,600 community development corporations (CDCs), nonprofit, neighborhood-based groups that play a key role in giving residents a voice in community planning and development in virtually every city. A 2005 survey found that nationwide CDCs help create 75,000 jobs per year.

Community Land Trusts

Champlain Housing Trust

Burlington, Vermont

In operation since: 1984 / Members: 5,000+

Annual Revenue: \$5.9 million

FORMED IN OCTOBER 2006 from the merger of two Vermont community land trusts that date back to 1984, Champlain Housing Trust is the largest community land trust in the country, providing affordable housing for 2,100 households. "Even though we work throughout [a] large region, we are still community-based," CEO Brenda Torpy says. "One-third of our volunteer Board of Directors are residents in our housing, and the Board also has representation from four municipalities and someone with a regional housing perspective."

A study of Burlington land trust's first two decades found that 61.9 percent of residents who sold their land trust home, after an average residency of six years, were able to "step up" to traditional homeownership. Meanwhile the equity gain the trust retains enables it to continue providing affordable housing to future generations.

These findings are important. The revival of inner-city neighborhoods often displaces long-time residents, leading to widespread gentrification. Community land trusts are nonprofits that hold land in trust and prevent gentrification by keeping land off the market. Instead, the trust sells houses using a restricted deed while retaining title to the land. This lowers prices, allowing lower-income residents to purchase the homes; in turn, the homeowner signs a deed agreeing to restrict the resale price and share the equity gain with the trust to preserve affordability for future buyers.

Large-scale community land trusts, drawing upon the lessons from Burlington and 150 others across the nation, are now being developed in cities ranging from Chicago, Illinois to Irvine, California. In Irvine, the city plans to develop 9,700 units of land trust housing by 2025.

Gar Alperovitz, Steve Dubb, and Ted

Howard are leaders of the Democracy Collaborative at the University of Maryland. Gar Alperovitz's recent book, *America Beyond Capitalism*, is now available in paperback. For additional examples of alternative corporate models, see their website at www.community-wealth.org.



PHOTO COURTESY JACOBS CENTER FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD INNOVATION

Market Creek Plaza's ties to its community can be seen in its portrait wall, which honors local residents who have made significant contributions to this San Diego neighborhood.

Public Pensions

CalPERS

Based in Sacramento, California

Founded: 1932 / Plan Participants: about 1.5 million

Assets: \$244 billion

PUBLIC PENSION FUNDS in the United States hold approximately \$3 trillion in assets. California's Public Employees' Retirement System, better known as CalPERS, is showing that these assets can be managed for community benefit. CalPERS is the largest public pension fund in the nation, giving it significant leverage to challenge corporate practices.

And CalPERS uses its leverage, especially to push for limits on executive compensation and severance payments. For instance, it acted as sole lead plaintiff in a federal court lawsuit against UnitedHealth Group over its executive stock-option practices. It has also supported shareholder resolutions to require information disclosure, greater corporate attention to environmental cleanup, and better human rights practices in developing nations.

CalPERS' direct investment activity has been equally impressive. As of 2004, CalPERS dedicated 11 percent of its fund to in-state investments. Roughly 2 percent is targeted specifically for investments in California's low-income communities through organizations like Pacific Community Ventures (PCV), a group that identifies businesses in low-income communities that are likely to generate high-wage jobs. A typical example is Niman Ranch, an Oakland-based natural meat product distributor. With pension fund support, Niman now does about \$50 million a year in business and employs 110 formerly low-income workers at an average wage of \$14 an hour.

Cutting Edge Ownership

Market Creek Plaza

San Diego, California

Initial Public Offering: 2006 / Number of Investors: 416

Project value: \$23.5 million

WE USUALLY HEAR THE TERM "initial public offering" in connection with Silicon Valley, but in San Diego, community leaders came up with a new twist on the IPO concept: a local, community-based public offering linked to a new model of individual and community ownership.

The community is the diverse working-class Diamond neighborhood in southeast San Diego. With the support of the Jacobs Family Foundation, the community raised philanthropic and government funding to develop a commercial and cultural complex, anchored by a shopping center. A key element was the community public offering, which provided community residents and employees an exclusive opportunity to buy shares (valued at \$200 and capped at \$10,000) for a total 20 percent ownership stake in the project. As one community owner noted, "That we own stock, and that we have an opportunity to make a difference in what type of business goes in the community [is unbelievable]. We have some say-so in the community environment."

The new Neighborhood Unity Foundation also has a 20 percent ownership share that provides it with a sustainable source of funding for its community wealth-building efforts. The Jacobs Family Foundation, which retains 60 percent ownership, intends to turn over its share to community owners by 2018. Ultimately, area residents will own 50 percent of the project and the neighborhood foundation the other 50 percent, retaining the profits generated to benefit the community rather than outside investors.

Fuel

Oil profits are skyrocketing. Peak Oil drives resource wars.

Good Switch to biofuels made from waste. Carpool.

Better Bus. Bike. Meet your needs close to home.

Clothes

Fashion fuels the ad industry. Many clothes are made in sweatshops.

Good Choose union- and U.S.-made clothing.

Better Make your own, patch holes, buy secondhand. Avoid big brand names.

Food

Most domestic food is grown using GMOs and vast amounts of petroleum. Importing food contributes to global warming.

Good Eat seasonal foods. Buy local/organic.

Better Try the 100-mile diet. Start a garden. Support farmers' markets.

Money

U.S. economic activity consists mainly of moving money around.

Good Make sure your investments are socially responsible. Put your cash in a local bank or credit union.

Better Use a local currency system, or start one. Barter for goods and services to get away from money altogether.

Entertainment

Big corporations stifle independent music, books, and movies.

Good Buy music directly from the artist. Support independent bookstores. Watch independent movies.

Better Make your own. Sing, play music, tell stories. Only 100 years ago, almost everyone did. Draw out the creativity around and within you.

5 Ways to Get Free

Making lifestyle choices that protect the environment, reduce global injustice, reflect social responsibility, and contribute to richer communities can also move us away from corporate control. Here are five suggestions for a freer life.

Catherine Bailey

HOW TO TAKE ON CORPORATIONS

ORGANIZATIONS

Corporate Ethics International has three projects: the Business Ethics Network, the Strategic Corporate Initiative (SCI), and the Big Box Campaign. It offers how-to guides for community organizers, reports on victories, and proposes ways to limit corporate rule. www.corporateethics.org

Corporate Accountability International has been organizing campaigns for over 30 years focusing on oil, water, and agri-food. www.stopcorporateabuse.org

The Corporate Accountability Project offers five “not-so-easy” steps to get corporations under control. It also boasts an impressive archive of corporate boycott links. www.corporations.org

CorpWatch publishes stories that expose corporate fraud, human rights violations, and environmental exploitation. www.corpwatch.org

CitizenWorks offers a toolbox for taking action in your community, with information about tapping into a volunteer base, contacting decision makers, and more. www.citizenworks.org

Public Citizen advocates for consumers, focusing on environmental standards and health. www.citizen.org

The Public Information Network’s “Endgame” offers workshops on corporate rule, activist research manuals, and articles about protecting our oil reserves and forests. www.endgame.org

The Program on Corporations, Law, and Democracy has articles, videos and DVDs, interviews, and brochures challenging corporate authority. www.poclad.org

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) offers affordable legal services to communities seeking to rid themselves of corporate domination and environmental damage. www.celdf.org

The Tomales Bay Institute is a leading think tank that promotes public awareness of the commons through blogs,

essays, book reviews, and profiles of activists. www.onthecommons.org

The Institute for Policy Studies covers a broad range of issues. Many of its programs focus on labor rights, fair trade, and reducing the harmful impact of globalization. Its e-mail newsletter keep you up to date on issues you care about. www.ips-dc.org

Responsible Shopper offers research on companies that are subjects of consumer/shareholder campaigns, with ideas for taking action. www.responsibleshopper.org

GRASSROOTS ACTION

The Alliance for Democracy is a populist movement that seeks to end the domination of corporations in our society. www.thealliancefordemocracy.org

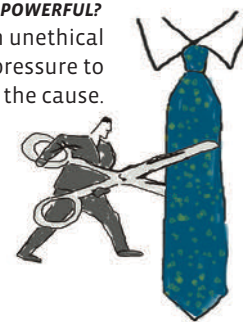
The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) is made up of low-income families in the United States, Canada, and Latin America who work for economic and social justice in their communities. www.acorn.org

The International Labor Rights Fund fights for workers’ rights to fair wages and treatment. They are promoting the **International Day of Action against Wal-Mart** on November 17. www.laborrights.org

Wal-Mart Watch is a grassroots group offering a user’s guide to keeping Wal-Mart

HOW POWERFUL?

When asked about their reasons for engaging in unethical business behavior, 70% of employees reported “pressure to meet unrealistic business objectives” as the cause.



out of small communities and contacts with experts who can help win site fights. www.walmartwatch.com

Blue Planet Project is building a movement that works to counter water privatization around the world. www.blueplanetproject.net

FILMS

The Corporation compares the behavior of a corporation to that of a psychopath. www.thecorporation.org

The Leech and the Earthworm voices indigenous peoples’ take on biopiracy. www.grain.org/seedling/?id=288

Independent America features small business owners struggling against corporate incursion. www.independentamerica.net

McLibel follows two ordinary citizens who are sued by McDonald’s for distributing fliers criticizing its practices. www.spannerfilms.net/mclibel

Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price tells the personal tales of people and communities impacted by Wal-Mart. www.walmartmovie.com



www.YesMagazine.org/corporationfilms

Check out these documentaries and feature films at the online YES! Picks Corporation Film Festival. Many are available to borrow for free through www.thefilmconnection.org



www.YesMagazine.org

/resourceguide43 More resources on corporations

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AFTER LIVING FOR 25 YEARS IN THE ARIZONA DESERT outside Tucson, author Barbara Kingsolver and her family were tired of trucked-in food and water piped 300 miles from the Colorado River. "We wanted to live in a place that could feed us," Barbara Kingsolver writes, "where rain falls, crops grow, and drinking water bubbles right up out of the ground." So she and her family packed up and moved to a farm in Appalachia to begin a year of living on food they grew themselves or bought locally.

MY YEAR OF EATING LOCAL

ZUCCHINI WARS



Barbara Kingsolver

My kids find this hard to believe, but when I was a child I'd never heard of zucchini. We knew of only one kind of summer squash: the yellow crooknecks we grew copiously in our garden. They probably also carried those down at the IGA in summertime, if any unfortunate and friendless soul actually had to buy them. We had three varieties of hard-shelled winter squash: butternuts, pumpkins, and a green-striped giant peculiar to our region called the cushaw, which can weigh as much as a third-grader. We always kept one of these on the cool attic stairs all winter (cushaw, not third-grader) and sawed off a piece every so often for our winter orange vegetable intake. They make delicious pies. And that is the full squash story of my tender youth. Most people might think that was enough.

Not my dad. Always on the lookout for adventure, he went poking into the new Kroger that opened in a town not far from ours when I was in my early teens.

Oh, what a brave new world of culinary exotics: they carried actual whole cream pies down there, frozen alive in aluminum plates, and also vegetables of which we were previously unaware. Artichokes, for example. We kids voted for the pies but got overruled; Dad brought home artichokes. Mom dutifully boiled and served them with forks, assuming one could eat the whole thing. We tried hard. I didn't touch another artichoke for twenty years.

Invasion of the Italian Dirigibles

But our lives changed forever the day he brought home zucchinis. "It's Italian food," he explained. We weren't sure how to pronounce it. And while the artichokes had brought us to tears and throat lozenges, we liked these dark green dirigibles a lot. The next year Dad discovered he could order the seeds and grow this foreign food right at home. I was in charge of the squash region of the garden in those days—my brother did the onions—and we were diligent children. I'm pretty sure the point source of the zucchini's introduction into North America was Nicholas County, Kentucky. If not, we did our part, giving them to friends and strangers alike. We ate them steamed, baked, batter-fried, in soup, in summer, and also in winter, because my mother developed a knockout zucchini-onion relish recipe that she canned in jars by the score. I come from a proud line of folks who know how to deal with a squash.

So July doesn't scare me. We picked our first baby yellow crooknecks at the beginning of the month, little beauties that looked like fancy restaurant fare when we sautéed them with the blossoms still attached. On July 6 I picked two little pattypanns (the white squash that look like flying saucers), four yellow crooknecks, six golden zucchini, and five large Costata Romanescas—a zucchini relative with a beautifully firm texture and a penchant for attaining the size of a baseball bat overnight. I am my father's daughter, always game for the new seed-catalogue adventure, and I am still in charge of the squash region of the garden. I can overdo things, but wasn't ready to admit that yet. "I love all this squash," I declared, bringing the rainbow of their shapes and colors into the kitchen.

I was still cheerful two days later when I brought in the day's 19 squash. And then 33 more over the next



HANK DANIEL

Barbara Kingsolver and her husband Steven L. Hopp, and daughters Camille (top) and Lily spent a year eating only what they could buy locally or grow on their southern Virginia farm.

week, including a hefty haul of cubit-long Costatas. We split and stuffed them with sautéed onions, bread crumbs, and cheese, and baked them in our outdoor bread oven. All dinner guests were required to eat squash, and then take some home in plastic sacks. We started considering dinner guest lists, in fact, with an eye toward those who did not have gardens. Our gardening friends knew enough to slam the door if they saw a heavy sack approaching.

An Armada on the Counter

Had we planted too many vines? Should we let the weeds take them early? Oh, constant squash, they never let you down. Early one Saturday morning as I lay sleepless, I whispered to Steven, "We need to get a hog."

"A hog?"

"For the squash."

He knew I couldn't be serious. We didn't need a pig. But we did need something to dispatch all this



My Year of Eating Local

SANDRA CALDWELL / IS

» zucchini—some useful purpose for the pyramid of excess vegetable biomass that was taking over our lives.

My family knows I'm congenitally incapable of wasting food. I was raised by frugal parents who themselves grew up in the Depression, when starvation seemed a genuine possibility. I have now, as a grown-up, learned to buy new jeans when mine have patches on the patches, but I have not learned to throw perfectly good food in the garbage. Not even into the compost, unless it has truly gone bad. To me it feels like throwing away a Rolex watch or something. (I'm guessing on that.) Food was grown by the sweat of someone's brow. It started life as a seed or newborn and beat all the odds. It's intrinsically the most precious product in our lives, from an animal point of view.

But there sat this pile on the kitchen counter, with its relatives jammed into a basket in the mudroom—just waiting for word so they could come in here too: the Boat Zucchini.

Sometimes I just had to put down my knives and admire their extravagant success. Their hulking, elongated cleverness. Their heft. I tried balancing them on their heads, on their sides: right here in the kitchen we had the beginnings of our own vegetable Stonehenge. Okay, yes, I

was losing it. I could not stay ahead of this race.

Could they design an automobile engine that runs on zucchini?

It didn't help that other people were trying to give them to us. One day we came home from some errands to find a grocery sack of them hanging on our mailbox. The perpetrator, of course, was nowhere in sight.

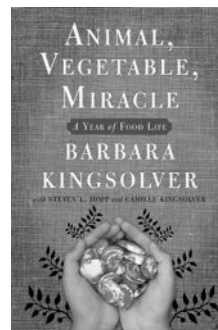
"Wow," we all said—"what a good idea!"

Garrison Keillor says July is the only time of year when country people lock our cars in the church parking lot, so people won't put squash on the front seat. I used to think that was a joke.

I don't want to advertise the presence or absence of security measures in our neighborhood, except to say that in rural areas, generally speaking, people don't lock their doors all that much. The notion of a "gated community" is comprehensible to us only in terms of keeping the livestock out of the crops. It's a relaxed atmosphere in our little town, plus our neighbors keep an eye out and will, if asked, tell us the make and model of every vehicle that ever enters the lane to our farm. So the family was a bit surprised when I started double-checking the security

of doors and gates any time we all were about to leave the premises.

"Do I have to explain the obvious?" I asked impatiently. "Somebody might break in and put zucchini in our house." 🍷



From *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, by Barbara Kingsolver with Steven L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver. Copyright © 2007 by Barbara Kingsolver, Steven L. Hopp, and Camille Kingsolver. Reprinted by arrangement with HarperCollins Publishers.

Garrison Keillor says July is the only time of year when country people lock our cars in the church parking lot, so people won't put squash on the front seat. I used to think that was a joke.

Grilled Vegetable Panini

Summer squash (an assortment)
Eggplant
Onion
Peppers
Olive oil
Rosemary
Oregano
Thyme
Salt and pepper

Slice vegetables lengthwise into strips no thicker than 1/2 inch. Combine olive oil and spices (be generous with the herbs) and marinate vegetables, making sure all faces of the vegetable slices are covered. Then cook on grill until vegetables are partially blackened; you may want to use a grill basket for onions and peppers.

Disappearing Zucchini Orzo

3/4 package orzo pasta (multicolored is fun)
Bring 6 cups water or chicken stock to a boil and add pasta. Cook 8 to 12 minutes.

1 chopped onion
Garlic to taste
3 large zucchini
Olive oil for sauté

Use a cheese grater or mandoline to shred zucchini, sauté briefly with chopped onion and garlic until lightly golden.

Thyme
Oregano
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Add spices to zucchini mixture, stir thoroughly, and then remove mixture from heat. Combine with cheese and cooked orzo, salt to taste, serve cool or at room temperature.

Zucchini Chocolate Chip Cookies

1 egg, beaten
1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup honey
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
Combine in large bowl.

1 cup white flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Combine in a separate, small bowl and blend into liquid mixture.

1 cup finely shredded zucchini
12 ounces chocolate chips
Stir these into other ingredients, mix well. Drop by spoonful onto greased baking sheet, and flatten with the back of a spoon. Bake at 350 degrees, 10 to 15 minutes. Makes about two dozen.
Don't tell my sister.



Squash-Season Meal Plan

SUNDAY ~ Braised chicken with squash, corn, and cilantro

MONDAY ~ Grilled vegetable panini, served with green salad

TUESDAY ~ Sliced cold chicken (cooked Sunday) and zucchini orzo

WEDNESDAY ~ Grilled hamburgers with grilled green beans and squash

THURSDAY ~ Egg-battered squash blossoms stuffed with cheese, served with salad

FRIDAY ~ Pizza with grilled baby squash, eggplant, caramelized onions, and mozzarella

SATURDAY ~ Lamb chops and baked stuffed zucchini



Pace University and New School SDS members at an Iraq War Moratorium walk out.



Mentor Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, a veteran of the women's liberation movement.

Not Your Grandfather's SDS

STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY is reborn, working with veteran activists to build movements for today.

Joshua Kahn Russell

On Martin Luther King Day 2006, a group of young students and old 1960s movement veterans made an announcement: Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) is back.

Some onlookers reacted with bemused skepticism. Even those of us trying to get the project off the ground worried it would be a forum for nostalgic old-timers to relive their glory days or that the project would impose an outdated model to live up to. The last thing my generation needs is more '60s worship (or bashing!).

Growing up, I didn't have any activist mentors. My friends and I simply didn't know how to find organizers from "back in the day." The ones we did meet were often unhelpful. Older folks would attend our events and tell a room full of young activists that there are no young activists anymore. Others would pretend to support us, "passing the torch" by telling us it was the new generation's re-

sponsibility to "clean up the mess left by the older one." They seemed to have no interest in actually organizing with us.

Because of this disconnect with past organizing efforts, a lot of us had a warped understanding of how social change is made. We were constantly measuring our activism up to some mythical idea of "the '60s." U.S. sound-bite culture chronicles the past as one big crescendo after another—as if our movements were just a series of isolated earth-shattering events. My generation was taught that one day out of nowhere, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat and BOOM, ignited a movement. We're not taught that she was a well-trained, strategic organizer and that the action was part of a long-term struggle.

Learning about the '60s as a series of crescendos left my generation with a confused sense of what it means to organize. Much of our "organizing" seemed to be building one mass mobilization

after another. Battle of Seattle! Boom! Genoa! Boom! Quebec! Boom! ... from the February 15 anti-war demos, to the Miami FTAA meetings, to the March for Women's Lives, to the Republican National Convention, we had a lot of "booms" without too much movement-building, strategy, or commitment to long-term struggle.

Placing contemporary youth activism in a broader and more accurate historical context helps today's SDSers change this confused sense of what it means to organize. With initial support from some old SDS vets and allies, we started to make connections with other movements for change and with movement veterans from across the Left spectrum.

Today, a small but vital group of older activists gives us advice, welcomes us into their homes, marches with us, raises money with us, gives jail support, helps coordinate conferences, gives Web and tech support, and is available to dis-



SDS members at the Northport High School in New York.



The author (left) and a collaborator.

PHOTOS COURTESY SDS AND TOM GOOD

cuss their best thinking about the mistakes and successes of their activism.

Many older folks have treated SDS as a forum for bickering and hashing out old battles. Indeed, they have tested the patience of the young folks almost to the breaking point. Many SDSers assert the need to draw some lines to claim space as youth. But the patient advice and consistent support of our mentors, largely behind the scenes, has provided a hopeful example of intergenerational movement building. In the process we have learned that mentorship is a two-way street—we teach just as much as we learn. It's reciprocal. It's solidarity.

The decision to rebuild an old, "famous" organization gave us the spark and attention we needed to launch a national organization as well as connect with insightful elders. Still, most new SDSers join, not because of our past, but because we offer democratic space to build community and organize. Students are hungry for meaningful action. In one year, SDS has grown into a network of thousands of students in more than 200 chapters across the country. Most of our members are new to organizing.

The principles and vision of a participatory society are what appeal to young people—not nostalgia for the '60s. SDS' history is valuable to learn from, but in

many ways, it is disconnected from the realities of today. We are a new organization for a new era.

Young SDSers are not interested in settling 35-year-old dramas, but we take seriously the history of factionalism, authoritarianism, male-domination, whiteness, and deviation from democratic process that defined so many organizations in the late '60s, SDS included. The new SDS is committed to participatory democracy. As we collectively develop our national structure, we are committed to horizontal organizing and re-imagining relationships of power. We are grappling with issues of power around race, gender, and class, and learning what it means to be accountable to communities most impacted by the issues we take on. Our elders repeatedly tell us that we are confronting issues with a sophistication they never imagined when they were our age.

By organizing students as students, SDS is finding a point where we can relate to non-activists and be relevant. As we engage new people, we are activating them and winning campaigns. Nothing builds a movement like winning.

Some of our victories include free speech battles that contributed to the resignation of Pace University's president David Caputo, coordinating student strikes on May Day to support

immigrants' rights, occupying recruiting centers in Manhattan, mounting hunger strikes to win a living wage for Harvard staff, helping coalitions of activists block weapons shipments from West Coast ports to Iraq, and helping shut down the entrance to Chevron's world headquarters in the Bay Area to highlight the connection between oil, climate change, and war. The mentorship of our elders has helped guide us—in these actions, in building our organization, and in resisting the sectarian squabbles of yesteryear.

When we win, we show students that they do have power and can make change. That shatters cynicism and alienation. It calls into question what we were taught about how change is made and about our own role in making history. We begin to realize that the slogan "another world is possible" is not a cliché, but a serious call to action, grounded in a long history of people struggling for—and winning—a better world. We begin to take our organizing more seriously, and ourselves less seriously. Now, when some older folks ask where the youth are today, we have an answer. **Y**

Joshua Kahn Russell is an organizer with Students for a Democratic Society and Rainforest Action Network. He is a member of Bay Rising Affinity Group (BRAG!) and lives in Oakland, California.



SERGEY KOGUN/IS

Secrets of Happiness



Why Good Things Happen to Good People

STEPHEN POST
AND JILL NEIMARK

*Broadway, 2007,
320 pages, \$23.95*

REVIEWED BY CECILE ANDREWS

Once in a while, along comes some research that could really make a difference.

In the last few years, psychologists have begun to explore the subject of happiness. It seems ironic that we need “research” to tell us how to be happy, but we don’t seem to be doing too well on our own—over the last several years, happiness has been on the decline and depression has spiked.

The theme of this new research is this: After a certain point, money and material things don’t increase happiness. What does? Caring relationships with other people.

This is incredibly important research. Too many of us believe that if we’re rich, we’ll be happy. It’s a belief system that is responsible not only for personal unhappiness, but for corruption in society and devastation of the planet. In a system with no limit on profit, some will do anything, no matter what the consequences, to get rich.

There’s another fascinating group

of studies that focuses on the health of populations. These studies find that the biggest predictor of the health of a nation, as measured in terms of longevity, is the gap between the rich and the poor. Study after study has found that when this gap widens, longevity goes down. Thus, in the 1950s when we had a broad middle class, the United States was at the top of the list of developed countries for health and longevity. Now, as the wealth divide continues to widen, we’re at the bottom.

It’s not just a case of the poor bringing down the average. No, the wealth divide also hurts the rich. A rich person in the U.S. has a shorter life expectancy than someone in a place like the Netherlands where the wealth divide is smaller.

This last finding is puzzling. The rich can afford health care, so what’s going on? It appears that it’s not just health care, but the experiences in our daily lives that affect us. A cutthroat culture with extreme competitiveness and an egregious struggle for status turns out to be bad for everyone.

To help us understand this puzzle, we

People who are kind and caring score higher on all sorts of measures like happiness, health, longevity, self-esteem, and creativity.

can turn to a new book, *Why Good Things Happen to Good People*. Author Stephen Post, professor of bioethics at Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine and president of the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love, writes about the growing body of research that shows that kindness, caring, and generosity are good for your health, happiness and longevity. As he puts it in his final chapter: "Give and be happier. Give and be healthier. Give and live longer." Over and over the studies show that "good" behavior not only helps the recipient, but the giver. People who are kind and caring score higher on all sorts of measures like happiness, health, longevity, self-esteem, and creativity.

So the research on wealth distribution and longevity makes sense. In a country with a huge gap between the rich and the poor, social trust and social cohesion break down, and Post finds that trust and caring are crucial to health and happiness. Post's book isn't pop psychology that just tells us to smile and think happy thoughts. He shows the complexity of "good" behavior by exploring a variety of "ways" one can contribute: The Ways of Generativity, of Forgiveness, of Courage, of Humor, of Respect, of Compassion, of Loyalty, of Listening, and of Creativity.

The book is fascinating and readable, and this research is important. But we also need to consider the institutional and policy changes that encourage "good" behavior. Erich Fromm, one of our most important American philosophers, said that people are capable of both "good" behavior and "bad" behavior, and it is societal institutions and policies that determine which will flourish.

For instance, Post recommends volunteering, joining groups, or getting involved with the arts. But who has the

time anymore? He shows how important it is to take time to listen to people, to pay attention, to appreciate, to empathize, to care. But who does this when they're rushing to an appointment or exhausted after long hours at work? In a highly competitive and unequal society where people are forced to work long hours, they will focus on money, status, winning, and "getting ahead." They will have less time, energy, and motivation for "good" behavior. In societies like so many of today's European countries, where government policies have created a large middle class and shorter work hours, people focus on things other than the race for success and the fight for more.

Ultimately, we need movements that bring about policy changes that create a society that enables "good" behavior. This is not to say that we don't also need personal change, because personal change can motivate people to work for social change, and Post shows how important personal change is for individual health and happiness. Further, policy changes are long in coming, and Post shows how we can make positive personal changes today. (Waiting for the "revolution" can take a while.)

Neither personal nor policy changes will be easy. How many of us have been dismissed as "do-gooders," naive innocents who fail to recognize that it's a dog-eat-dog world and that you'd better get the other guy before he gets you. This is the belief system that supports the corporate consumer society and is destroying the well-being of people and the planet. Post's work shows us our true human nature and helps us remember what's really important.

Cecile Andrews is the author of *Slow is Beautiful: New Visions of Community, Leisure, and Joie de Vivre* (2006) and *Circle of Simplicity: Return to the Good Life* (1997).

YES! PICKS ::

Musical inspiration while putting out this issue



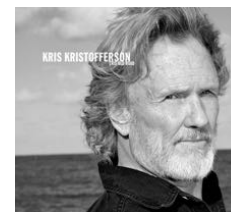
Instant Karma: The Campaign to Save Darfur

This benefit album rounds up nearly two dozen of today's emerging artists to reinterpret John Lennon's solo music. Highlights are **Jack Johnson's** "Imagine," and **Snow Patrol** and the **Postal Service** capturing the starkness of "Isolation" and "Grow Old with Me."



These Times We're Living In: A Red House Anthology

This collective response to Sept. 11 offers reflection. Best moments are **Lucy Kaplansky's** "Land of the Living," **Peter Ostroshko's** heartbreaking "Hymn: Page 9/11," and in Canadian **David Francey's** "Fourth of July," we see ourselves from the outside.



This Old Road

Turning 70 plainly had **Kris Kristofferson** coming to terms with his legacy and his world. The spare production by Don Was takes stock through the eyes of a wise grandfather who says he's seen worse days, and better days.



Have a listen at
www.YesMagazine.org/music

IN REVIEW ::

ADJOA, 28
BOWKU VILLAGE, GHANA

Adjoa is the youngest of four wives. Last year, she organized a 30-member women's savings and credit association. The women discovered they had a more powerful voice collectively than as individuals. Now the women contribute substantially to the once all-male village meetings.



AKHI, 32
TANGAIL, BANGLADESH

At 13, Akhi was sold into a brothel by her aunt. After battling depression for several years, she decided to improve her lot. Akhi gained support from religious, political, and social groups to advocate for sex workers' rights. Condom use is now at 86 percent, and the number of 12- to 13-year-olds recruited has decreased.



FAHIMA, 38
KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

When the Taliban came to power in 1996, Fahima opened a clandestine school for young girls. At one point, 130 girls were coming to her home each week to study math and science. When the girls were asked why they were going to Fahima's house, they said she was their aunt. She continued operating her school until the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

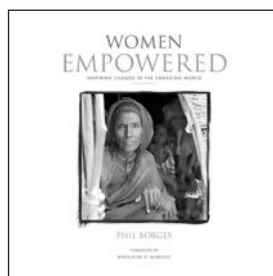


ABAY, 29
AWASH FONTALE, ETHIOPIA

Abay was born into a culture in which girls are circumcised before age 12. When it came time for her circumcision ceremony, Abay said, "No." Her mother insisted: An uncircumcised woman would be ostracized and could never marry, Abay was told. She ran away to live with a sympathetic godfather. Eight years later, Abay returned to her village. She finally convinced one of the women to let her film a circumcision ceremony. She showed the film to the male leaders. They had never seen a female circumcision and were horrified. Two weeks later, the male leaders called a special meeting and voted 15 to 2 to end female circumcision in their village.



Extraordinary Women



Women Empowered

PHIL BORGES

Rizzoli, 2007

112 pages, \$29.99

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER PHIL BORGES' projects have yielded consistently fine art over the years, most notably his work with Amnesty International in the late 1990s. *Women Empowered* is his latest project in Africa, Southeast Asia, and South America. Currently on tour and now in book form, this work is his most incisive. His signature flesh-tone-on-black-and-white portraits are accompanied by the stories of how these women overcame their circumstances to improve their lives and the lives of others. With humility, Borges allows the women's stories to elevate his portraits and inspire his audience. The photographs themselves remain unselfconscious, quietly encouraging the women to step forward. Recently, *American Photo* magazine included Borges in a tribute of 10 inspiring photographers, saying: "Though his new project is about other heroes, Borges is one of ours because he has the ability to find an uplifting angle on stories many other photographers tell in hopelessly grim detail." — Tracy Loeffelholz Dunn



www.YesMagazine.org/borges to see a photo essay

Interested? www.philborges.com includes a schedule of the touring photo exhibit



Personal Safety Nets

DR. JOHN W. GIBSON
AND JUDY PIGOTT

Safety Nets Unlimited, 2007

224 pages, \$17.95

REVIEWED BY LISA FARINO

I must admit that when I first started reading this book, I was more than a little dubious. *Personal safety nets*? Weren't they a relic of the past?

In recent decades, economic globalization and the growing wealth disparity have disrupted the community networks people once relied on. We are not just a country of immigrants, we're now also a country of migrants, scurrying around our vast nation looking for good jobs, affordable housing, and educational opportunities.

The result: extended families are dispersed and communities are constantly in flux, making it difficult to build a network of friends and neighbors for mutual support during times of personal crisis. Our longer work hours and commutes make it even harder for people to offer support.

Admittedly, I'm a bit of a cynic. Two years ago, I was hit by a car and discovered that my own personal safety net was more the consistency of swiss cheese—minus the cheese. When I reflect on the months during which I struggled with an array of injuries, what I remember even more than the physical pain was the psychological pain of feeling alone, lacking support from anyone other than my husband.

But as I read *Personal Safety Nets*, it became clear how I might have acted

differently. Good thing, because soon after I read the book, life threw me another challenge. I suddenly lost a good part of the hearing in one ear and found myself highly medicated and under doctor's orders to be sedentary.

This time, the experience couldn't have been more different. I had lots of friends visiting and phoning, helping to keep my spirits up. When I needed rides to appointments, I got them, along with offers for more. Friends helped with projects around the house, and one sent my husband home from a party with food for me.

Why were the two experiences so different? I credit almost all of it to reading *Personal Safety Nets* and applying the wisdom of Gibson and Pigott. Here are the five lessons that most positively impacted my experience the second time around:

Tell people what's wrong: It's easy to feel embarrassed or ashamed when our bodies fail us, but if you don't tell people what's wrong, how can you expect them to help?

Ask for help: It's humbling to admit we can't handle everything on our own. But if we don't ask for help, we're less likely to get it.

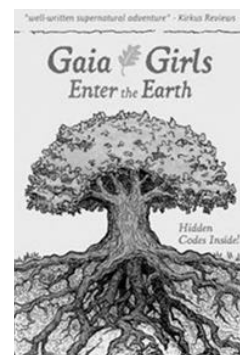
Be specific in requests: It's a lot easier for someone to respond if your request is clearly defined.

Don't take "no" personally: Sometimes people don't have the time to help, or they may shy away, finding illness and injury a scary reminder of their own fragility and mortality. Either way, it's important not to take it personally when someone says no.

Remain a giver: While it's important to accept help graciously, it's also important, even through injury or illness, to continue to be givers. We can offer kind words, smiles, and a continued interest in our friends' lives. In fact, shifting some of our focus to others helps lift our spirits, an important part of recovering from illness and injury.

Reading this book is a great way to prepare for the future and also a poignant reminder of the care and support we can offer others today.

Contact Judy Pigott at judster7@comcast.net



Gaia Girls: Enter the Earth

LEE WELLES

Daisyworld Press, 2006

336 pages, \$15.16

REVIEWED BY CATHERINE BAILEY

This charming children's fantasy centers on 10-year-old Elizabeth Angier, an ordinary farm girl destined to help heal the Earth. Her adventure begins when an otter embodying Gaia explains that she needs Elizabeth's help, not only to preserve the farm she loves, but also to take part in saving the planet.

To aid Elizabeth, Gaia grants her the power to transport herself through tree trunks and roots, communicate with soil-dwelling creatures, and even rearrange patches of earth. Using these tools, along with her own intuition and courage and a little help from her friends, she sets out on her mission.

Blending humor, adventure, suspense, and hope, *Gaia Girls* contains many lessons about sustainability and justice. Simple, accessible, and entertaining enough for children to enjoy, the story nevertheless takes on such issues as factory farming, the dangers of pesticides, the problems with big-box stores, and the deceptions of advertising. Over the course of the story, Elizabeth grows as a person, grappling with loss and sacrifice, learning the hard way about abuse of power, and gaining the courage to stand up and fight for the Earth.

The Gaia Girls series will eventually consist of four books. Book Two, *Way of Water*, was released earlier this year.



TEDDY BEAR FILMS

FILM ::

China Blue Documentary, 2006, Teddy Bear Films, 88 min.

Directed by Micha X. Peled

REVIEWED BY PETER LUYCKX

The anti-sweatshop movement is growing rapidly in the United States and, along with labor and fair-trade organizers, young people are taking the lead. That's fitting, because the workers making our clothes are also very young.

The movie *China Blue* introduces us to 16 year-old Jasmine, a thread-cutter at the Lifeng Factory, a denim manufacturer in Shaxi, South China. We meet Jasmine on her first day at the job, arriving straight from her parents' village with an aspiration shared by young people everywhere—to create a life for herself, one that's better than the one she left behind.

But at the factory, optimism quickly gives way to disillusionment. Unpaid overtime is the rule, and when an order is due, workers are forced to work day and night. Wages are paid out late and withheld until urgent orders are fulfilled.

China Blue shows us how conditions in the factory are tied to the cut-throat competitiveness of the global marketplace. We see how European and American companies negotiate foreign factories down to the last penny, and how buyers impose tight deadlines that force factory owners to speed up pro-

duction.

These hard-nosed negotiations allow companies like Wal-Mart to sell jeans at rollback savings—at the cost of rolling back working conditions. Big-name brands play the same game, but parlay low production costs into high profit margins.

Jasmine wonders throughout the film: "Who are the tall, big people wearing these jeans?"

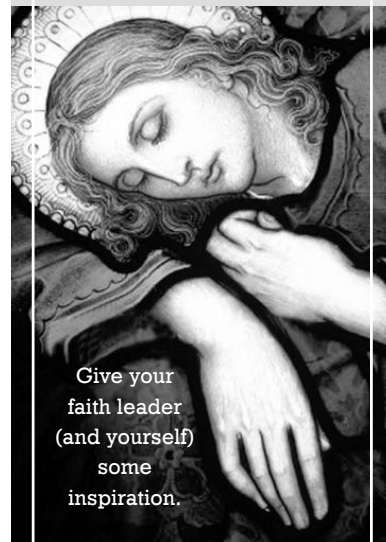
We know the unspoken answer: it's all of us.

Watching the movie, I realized there's a tightly-woven connection between me, a consumer in the United States, and workers in a Chinese sweatshop.

But our intimate connection to the problem also points to the obvious solution. Since we buy clothes from companies outsourcing to sweatshops, we have a responsibility to do everything we can to influence their actions abroad. We need to let them know that we care about the workers half a world away and, whenever possible, spend our money accordingly.

We have the purchasing power to reclaim jeans into a symbol that fits our values, again. How often can we say that we are truly sitting on a solution?

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www.YesMagazine.org/chinablue to see the trailer

FROM THE PUBLISHER



We've got a chance to move to clean energy in a way that benefits everyone. But that will happen only if we citizens understand the choices and make our voices heard.

Don't Give Away the Sky

Now that global warming is a hot political topic, our society is moving rapidly toward policy choices on how to slow and reverse it. If we want the transition to clean energy to be fair and effective, we citizens must understand the options. So let me share insights I took from a recent conference about policy choices likely to come up in Congress that involve billions of dollars.

A system called "cap and trade" is widely advocated in the United States, and already in use in Europe, as a way to get industries to reduce the carbon they pour into the air. The system "caps" the total rights to emit carbon and allows industries to sell their pollution rights. By reducing the cap 2 percent each year over the next 40 years, we can reach the 80 percent reductions that scientists say we need to avoid climate catastrophe.

But the devil is in the details. We must all understand key choices in the cap and trade system if we are to help our lawmakers do what's good for everyone.

One choice is whether to start the system by giving industries carbon rights for free based on their current pollution levels. The coal, oil, and gas industries relish this approach. They call it being "grandfathered in"—a sweet term for a multi-billion dollar giveaway that leaves the public in the cold. It would be a lot like the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which gave broadcasters billions of dol-

lars worth of our airwaves without the public getting a dime.

A better option is to make all industries pay for the right to put carbon into our air. Hold an annual auction where industries bid for carbon rights. Industries that pollute the most would have to buy the most rights, creating an incentive for cleaner energy.

Another choice regards who holds the auction and gets the payments. In the Spring 1999 issue of *YES!*, Peter Barnes, author of *Who Owns the Sky?*, suggested creating a Sky Trust that recognizes that the atmosphere belongs to all of us and payments for its use should benefit everyone. The Sky Trust would auction carbon emission rights under an enforceable mandate to obtain the highest price. The trust would receive the payments and disburse them for the public good. One possibility is to distribute the proceeds equally to every U.S. adult, helping us all cope with the costs associated with abating global warming.

A third choice is whether to allow "carbon offsets." With offsets, a polluting coal plant, for example, could spend a modest sum to have trees planted in Honduras and claim it doesn't need to reduce its pollution because its carbon was "offset" by the carbon the trees absorb. As Europe has found in its cap and trade system, offsets open a quagmire of questions and conflicts. Might

the trees have been planted anyway, so they are not a real offset? Were they actually planted? Did they ever grow big enough to actually offset the carbon? Offsets open giant loopholes. It's like trying to inflate a balloon with a hole in it.

Is it realistic to think Congress could resist the biggest polluters' push to give them the carbon rights? Might we actually create a public Sky Trust? Can we avoid loopholes that undermine the system? Environmental groups are starting to educate their constituencies on this issue—I personally learned a lot from Rob Sargent of U.S. PIRG, one of the people at the conference and at the forefront of this issue. Big corporations that aren't major polluters can be allies. They don't want the fossil fuel industries to walk off with windfall profits. And public pressure for real solutions is building.

So we've got a chance to move to clean energy in a way that benefits everyone. But that will happen only if we citizens understand the choices and make our voices heard.


Fran Korten, Publisher

 www.YesMagazine.org/carbon
to learn more or comment

WHO WE ARE ::

YES! Magazine is published by the Positive Futures Network, an independent, nonprofit organization supporting people's active engagement in creating a just, sustainable, and compassionate world. The work of the Positive Futures Network is to give visibility and momentum to signs of an emerging society in which life, not money, is what counts; in which everyone matters; and in which vibrant, inclusive communities offer prosperity, security, and meaningful ways of life.

NEWS AND NOTES ::

Dal LaMagna Runs for President

In July, *YES!* board member Dal LaMagna announced his candidacy for the U.S. Presidency with a platform to end the violence in Iraq. Dal is a passionate advocate for listening to the Iraqi perspective as the United States finds its way out of the war. In June he traveled to Baghdad and Amman, Jordan to learn more from key Iraqis and help set up meetings for them with key U.S. officials. His daily accounts of his visits are posted at www.lamagnaforpresident.com. A successful businessman, Dal founded the Progressive Government Institute, which works with the Backbone Campaign on developing a progressive cabinet, and he serves on the board of the Bainbridge Graduate Institute.

—Fran Korten

YES! Earth Charter Reader Inspires Kids

Teachers and students at Voyager Elementary School on Bainbridge Island, Washington have taken the lessons of the *YES!* Earth Charter Reader to heart. Over the last year they took action in several ways on its stories of an interdependent world. They measured the garbage each child produced, set up a compost system, planted a strawberry garden, and erected habitat for bees and butterflies. For Earth Day, students, staff, and parents signed the Earth Charter and pledged to uphold its principles of sustainability, justice, and care for the Earth. The Reader, which features Earth Charter principles, lesson plans, and *YES!* articles, is available online: www.yesmagazine.org.

—Kay Hubbard



Beloved *YES!* Volunteer Passes On

Like many nonprofit organizations, *YES!* depends on volunteers to keep our operations running smoothly. Among our most dedicated was Millie Smith, who moved to Bainbridge Island in 1991 specifically to volunteer for our predecessor magazine, *In Context*. In 1996 when we launched *YES!*, Millie increased her volunteer hours to help get us started. She volunteered for *YES!* even as her health declined, bringing articles to keep us up on the latest national outrage and breakthrough innovation. Millie died in June, just short of her 87th birthday. Even in death she supported *YES!*, asking friends to donate in lieu of flowers. Millie lives on in all our hearts.

—Sally Wilson

Cuba Health Care Article Hot

For 10 straight days in June, the *YES!* article on Cuba's global health initiative topped the high-traffic website Alter.net.org's list of most emailed articles and spread to hundreds of other websites. The article, based on *YES!* editor Sarah van Gelder's visit to Cuba, tells of the country's pioneering program to export doctors worldwide and train thousands from other countries (including the U.S.) free of charge in Cuba.

—Susan Gleason

Interested? See the Cuban health care article at www.YesMagazine.org/cubacure.

YES! PICKS ::

Things To Do, Places To Go



www.YesMagazine.org/events

For an expanded listing of upcoming events

Confronting the Triple Crisis

September 14–16, Washington, D.C.

The International Forum on Globalization will hold an international teach-in on the triple threats of climate change, peak oil, and resource depletion. Speakers include *YES!* board chair David Korten, Maude Barlow, Frances Moore Lappé, John Cavanagh, Winona LaDuke, and Randy Hayes.

www.ifg.org

Sowing Seeds Education Workshops

September–December, various cities. The Institute for Humane Education is holding workshops around North America for educators interested in consumerism, media, animal protection, environmental preservation, social justice, and the interconnection of these issues.

www.humaneeducation.org

Green Festivals

October 6–7, Washington, D.C.

November 9–11, San Francisco, CA.

Thousands attend these regional gatherings to learn about creating sustainable economies, ecological balance, and social justice. Meet *YES!* staff and volunteers in San Francisco. See announcement, page 65.

www.greenfestivals.org

Bioneers

October 19–21, San Rafael, CA.

Now in its 18th year, the Bioneers Conference gathers people at the crossroads of ecological restoration, human health, social justice, and the sacred. Regional “satellite” conferences will take place in over 16 communities around the country.

www.bioneers.org

Peak Oil and Community Solutions

October 26–28, Yellow Springs, OH.

Community Solutions' Fourth Annual Conference will showcase strategies for reducing energy use and helping communities transition to less oil dependency. Key presenters include David Korten, Richard Heinberg, and Judy Wicks.

www.communitysolution.org



YES! BUT HOW?

IF YOU'RE SEARCHING FOR PRACTICAL WAYS TO LIVE SUSTAINABLY, JUST ASK US.

Send questions to editors@yesmagazine.org
or to YES! But How? PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

CAN YOU SAY IRON?

I've heard that non-stick pans may not be the safest to cook with. I've also heard that cast iron skillets are a much better alternative. What's wrong with non-stick pans? And aren't cast iron skillets really complicated to clean?

Those non-stick pans contain some nasty stuff. For starters, non-stick surfaces contain perfluorooctanoic acid, which the EPA classifies as a "likely human carcinogen." No surprise from a chemical whose name you can't pronounce.

Even worse, heating empty non-stick cookware on the stove releases toxic fumes proved to kill pet birds within 15 minutes.

Giving up non-stick cookware doesn't mean you have to fry eggs in a soup pot and spend hours scraping stuck, crusty goo. Cast iron cookware uses old-school technology to keep food from sticking: a good grease coating.

Cast iron skillets require a little upkeep, but they work like a charm. To season a new pan, slather it with lard or bacon grease and bake for 15 minutes at 250-300 degrees. Vegetable oil is a workable, vegan-friendly alternative though it doesn't work quite as well. Remove the skillet, pour out any excess grease, and bake the pan for a full two

hours. Repeat this process a second time for a natural, non-toxic, non-stick cooking surface. And no dead canaries!

Soaps and detergents will strip the seasoning off your cast iron, so just clean with hot water and a scouring pad. Residual food slides off easily while the skillet is still warm. —Z.K.

ANGIOPLASTY FOR DRYERS

It seems to be taking longer to dry clothes in my dryer. Any idea what I can do to make my dryer run more efficiently?

Try cleaning your dryer's exhaust duct, that accordion-style tube connecting the dryer to the wall. Lint gums up that tube, just like it gums up the lint filter, restricting airflow like a clogged artery. This reduces the dryer's efficiency and is also a fire hazard. Every year, almost 13,000 fires start when tinder-dry lint in dryer ducts catches a spark.

To loosen this stuck lint, you'll need an exhaust duct brush, a stiff circular brush fastened to a long rod made of flexible material that can be snaked through the duct. When you clean the ducts, be sure to clean from both the external (outside) end as well as the end that's attached to your dryer. The latter will require that you temporarily

disconnect the duct from the dryer.

While the brush will allow you to pull out much of the accumulated gunk, it's best to finish up by vacuuming out any remaining loosened lint with a vacuum cleaner hose.

Although you need to clean the lint filter (part of the dryer) every time you use the dryer, the exhaust duct only needs to be cleaned twice each year—more frequently if you notice that clothes are taking longer to dry. Proper cleaning will help minimize your dryer's energy consumption. —Z.K.

Our Issue 43 researchers

Zach Kyle is a recent graduate from Western Washington University. He intends to use his journalism degree to bring energy into the jaded newsprint world. **Catherine Bailey** will be returning to college in the fall, where she plans to further explore her passion for activism and social justice.



Zach Kyle



Catherine Bailey

DIET FOR A COOL PLANET

I've heard that cutting down on meat consumption can help reduce my carbon footprint. How much of a difference could I make by changing my diet?

We tend to think of fossil-fuel-powered cars, planes, and other vehicles as the big sources of carbon emissions. But a recent study by the University of Chicago revealed that switching from an average meat-based American diet to a vegetarian diet would reduce an individ-

ual's carbon output by 1.5 tons per year. That's even more effective than switching to a hybrid vehicle!

What accounts for this difference? First, most animals are raised on an energy-intensive corn-based diet. Growing so much corn requires staggering amounts of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which means staggering amounts of oil. Cornell University estimates that a single corn-fed cow will indirectly consume 284 gallons of oil in its lifetime. In addition, the methane gas released by animal waste products is 23 times more effective at trapping heat than carbon dioxide.

For more information on becoming a vegetarian, I recommend this site: www.vegsoc.org.

Even if you're not ready to go totally vegetarian, consider that the average American diet consists of 180 pounds of meat each year. That's almost half a pound every single day. By reducing your meat consumption to just a few servings per week, you can still make significant headway in reducing your carbon footprint. —C.B.

BEAUTY IS MORE THAN SKIN DEEP

The lists of ingredients on my cosmetics contain a lot of chemicals. Are these chemicals safe? And if not, how do I find safer options?

Cosmetics contain many ingredients that can be absorbed through the skin, ingested, or otherwise exposed to our systems. Some of these substances are harmless, but others have been shown to increase risks of cancer, birth defects, reproductive disorders, and more. Unfortunately, there are only minimal federal regulations on the use of chemicals in cosmetics, and the

FDA doesn't have to approve, or even test, the ingredients found in makeup and other skin care products. They leave that up to the producers of the cosmetics.

Of the approximate 10,500 chemicals used in cosmetics, only 11 percent have been tested by the industry-funded Cosmetic Ingredient Review panel. In some cases, chemicals with confirmed dangerous properties are still included in personal care products. Some of the more dangerous include mercury, lead acetate, formaldehyde, petroleum distillates, and coal tar.

"Skin Deep," a report by the Environmental Working Group, estimates that one-third of all personal care products contain at least one carcinogenic chemi-

cal. They also learned that the European Union has banned over 1,100 chemicals from being used in the manufacturing of personal care products, while the United States has banned just nine.

The good news is, hundreds of companies are participating in an initiative called the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics (www.safecosmetics.org). These companies have vowed to replace the harmful chemicals in their products with safe alternatives within three years.

Curious about the nature of the products you use? Visit www.cosmeticsdatabase.com for an extensive analysis of nearly every available brand. —C.B.

YES! PICKS ::

Quick & Easy Vegan Lunches

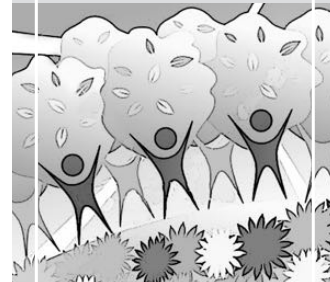
If you've ever thought that preparing vegan food required exotic ingredients or had to be expensive, time-consuming, or complicated, think again. Joanne Stepaniak, author of *The Vegan Deli*, serves up an amazing array of simple, affordable vegan dishes featuring the savory flavors found in authentic east-coast delis. The hearty soups, salads, and spreads make healthy, tasty, easy-to-pack lunches for kids and adults alike. Here's an adaptation of one of our favorite, ultra-easy recipes:

Balkan White Bean Salad

3 cups drained cooked white beans
3 to 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons vinegar
Salt and pepper
Minced scallions
Minced fresh parsley
2 medium tomatoes, cut into 12 wedges
8 to 12 pitted black olives

Toss beans with oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, scallions, and parsley. Garnish with tomatoes and olives and serve with whole-grain bread.

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NPC representative (Yes Man Mike Bonnano) explains to 300 oil industry executives that the “Vivoleum” candle was made from the flesh of an Exxon janitor.



PHOTOS COURTESY THE YES MEN

On June 14, 2007, the Yes Men showed up at Canada’s largest oil conference in Calgary, Alberta, posing as ExxonMobil and National Petroleum Council representatives.

The “NPC rep” announced that current U.S. and Canadian energy policies are increasing the chances of huge global calamities. But he reassured the audience that in the worst case scenario, the oil industry could “keep fuel flowing” by transforming the billions of people who would die into oil.

The project, called Vivoleum, would work in perfect synergy with the continued expansion of fossil fuel production. The oilmen listened to the lecture with attention, and then lit “commemorative candles” supposedly made of Vivoleum obtained from the flesh of an “Exxon janitor” who died as a result of cleaning a toxic spill. The audience only reacted when the janitor, in a video tribute, announced that he wished to be transformed into candles after his death.



www.YesMagazine.org/vivoleum to see the spoof video tribute