



peace & justice news

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Gene Bergman's remarks on August 9, 2013.

PJC Hires Executive Director: Rachel Siegel

Burlington artist-activist brings multi-faceted abilities to our growing organization

The Peace & Justice Center board of directors hired Rachel Siegel as the new Executive Director.

Rachel comes to the Center with a long history of political and social activism as well as significant fundraising experience.

"I am honored and grateful to serve the Peace and Justice Center, the community at large and the world as a whole through our mission to create a peaceful and just world. The experience, knowledge and commitment level of the staff and board is exciting and I am delighted to work with them all," says Siegel.

"We are very pleased that Rachel will join the Center and help shape the current and future programming. She is articulate, intelligent, and at her core is an activist for issues of equality and justice," said Nathan Suter, a member of the Board of Directors.

Rachel is exceptionally committed to the causes of economic, racial and environmental justice; has tremendous organizational and fundraising skills; is a proven leader in the community; and is well-established in Burlington. She grew up and continues to live here and has an extended network of activists, peers,

leaders, and collaborators throughout the region.

Rachel has worked for positive change as an advocate for women and economic justice through both Vermont Works for

Women, and as a founding member of Vermont Access to Reproductive Freedom. She currently serves as a Burlington City Councilor representing the Old North End.

Rachel's other interests include gardening, hiking, camping, dance choreography and performance. She is the

mother of Gertie and Ira (ages 9 and 7) and the partner of Jules Fishelman who works at Vermont Energy Investment Corporation. ☺



Peace & Justice Center Annual Meeting

Dec. 17, 2013, Tuesday

6pm Dinner, 7pm Business & Board elections
Burlington City Arts, (2nd Flr), Church St,
Burlington VT

Meet our new Executive Director and see
the Reference for Radicals Art Show

RSVP: rachel@pjcvt.org

EDITOR

Wendy Coe

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CIRCULATION

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PJC MISSION

Our mission is to create a just and peaceful world. To this end, we work on the interconnected issues of economic and racial justice, peace, and human rights through education, advocacy, training and non-violent activism, and community organizing, since 1979.



From the Center

Dear PJC members, friends, supporters, and newcomers,

I am so glad to be writing to you as the new Executive Director of the PJC. While I am new to this wonderful organization, its mission has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. Economic and racial justice, peace, and human rights are at the core of my life. As I settle in to the active life of the Center I look forward to meeting you.

My earliest involvement with the economic justice movement was marching with teachers on strike outside City Hall in Burlington in 1977. I was seven and carried a sign I had made that said, "We want are [sic] teachers back." I was marching to support the teachers in their labor negotiations. While I did not have those words to back my actions, I had the conviction, handed down from my family, that workers rights were essential human rights. I was proud to be one in the number that made a difference. I felt like our actions mattered.

My earliest involvement with the peace movement was as a camper at Farm and Wilderness, a Quaker summer camp that taught the principals of simplicity, equality, honesty, service, and non-violence. In 1984, when I was 14 years old, I participated in four days of a peace march that was travelling the length of Vermont on Route 100. With about a dozen other campers and staff and hundreds of Vermonters, we walked during the day and slept under the stars at night, raising awareness of the need for disarmament. The blisters on the bottom of my feet after walking barefoot one day impressed upon me the benefit of shoes. Talking to the activists who were doing the full march impressed upon me the fact that if we want to make change, we need to take action, even and especially if it disrupts our comfortable life.

My earliest memories of racial injustice were from elementary school, but it wasn't until I was in my 20s that I started to understand white privilege and made a life commitment to anti-racist work both internally and in the world. I continue this work now also as an anti-racist parent with the hope that the next generation will be able to unlearn the biased training of our culture with more ease and thoroughness than we can.

As I have grown in awareness about my own white privilege and other injustices, I have resolved to live a life of action. Margaret Mead's much-used quote truly fits in my world view: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." As I work in my life to subvert the violence in our culture and work toward equity, I am delighted to join the Peace & Justice Center and all of you in a unified front. Together we can do what we cannot do alone.

You can find many examples of the type of work that moves me personally in this newsletter. In addition to informative updates on our Fair-Trade, Cost of War, and peacework programs, this issue of the *P&J News* includes a stirring speech by Gene Bergman that was shared at the candlelight boat ceremony commemoration of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki last August. This speech touches on the very heart of why the mission of peace is relevant today.

Please make time to read Frank Smecker's article on the ways racism manifests today which, among other injustices, creates a system where nearly one-third of all African-American men are part of the criminal (in)justice system. The author, Frank Smecker, implores us to first recognize that racism does exist in our so-called "color blind" society so that we can start to dismantle it.

My first project as the new ED is to listen and learn. To that end, I invite you to contact me to share what you love about the PJC, what you hope for the future of the PJC and how you want to be involved. Please say hello when you stop in at the store to find Fair Trade and local gifts for any occasion including all of the upcoming holidays, or join us for dinner and business at the Annual Meeting on December 17th at the Burlington City Arts Center on Church Street. Please call the Center at 802-863-2345 ext. 8 for more information or to RSVP. I hope to get to know each of you more in the coming months and years as we work together to make the world more peaceful and just.

Sincerely,

Thank You!

- To Myers Bagels for donating bagels to our Inventory Crew.
- To Localvore for letting us use their meeting space.
- To all our volunteers and interns who we couldn't do without: they contribute about 525 hours per month!

Invisible Cost of War

By Julian Geoffrey Lopez, PJC Intern

When some people think about war, they relate their thoughts to newspapers and statistics. These provide numbers that demonstrate the tangible outcome of a conflict: deaths of soldiers and civilians, wounded people, deserted towns, and the territory covered. The problem is that there are a plethora of issues that media doesn't talk about because they can't be seen. The Peace & Justice Center's *Cost of War Speaker and Film Series* has paid attention to the complications that war gives rise to and are not addressed.

When one enlists for the army, marines, navy, or air force, one assumes that one's job will have its risks due to the nature of the job; one understands that one can be killed or injured by the "enemy," but who is this enemy? Currently it's not that easy to tell if another party is a friend or foe. Today's newspaper will compare and contrast the soldiers that have fallen in the front line to the ones in the opposition who have been killed, tomorrow's newspaper will show a different graph promoting the glory of being a soldier regardless of one's gender, the day after tomorrow the newspaper will incite one to enlist.

When one hears of a rape taking place in the midst of a war, one thinks of the "enemy" raping women and committing horrible atrocities. No one ever hears of the women in the army who get raped by their comrades because no one in power is benefited by the public's knowledge in such a shocking matter. The army perpetuates these horrific incidents and doesn't let these issues go out in the eye of the public in order to preserve the belief that all soldiers will find is a life of honor and camaraderie by joining this institution.

Everyone knows of some soldier – even if solely from the news – who has returned home from a war or conflict in another nation with scars or lost limbs. We can all see the effect that war had on him/her, but there are many other effects that we cannot see without getting to know the person. Regardless of whether a person is physically hurt or not, every

soldier experiences a series of hurdles when they return to the civilian lifestyle because they have a hard time adapting to the new conditions that have been put in front of them. Internally, veterans suffer from an evil that they cannot escape from even if they hid in a small room all by themselves; their "enemy" lives within them.

As human beings we believe that we understand everything that is going on around us even if it doesn't relate directly to us, but the unseen malevolence can be hidden and it will stay there unless people spread the word about them. Why is "enemy" in quotation marks all throughout this article? Well, it's all a matter of perspective. ☪

Cost of War 2014: Focus on Drones

Beginning in January, 2011, our Cost of War series has been our flagship program, with events every month, sometimes involving major speakers like Bill McKibben, Chris Hedges and Medea Benjamin, at other times presenting panels on subjects such as the ordeals faced by returning soldiers and the controversial nature of US policy towards Iran.

We've also shown films such as Jeremy Scahill's "Dirty Wars," which played to a full house at The Roxy Theater. We've organized rallies, particularly against the planned basing of F-35s at Burlington Airport, and memorials to Hiroshima and Nagasaki every August.

We are very excited to announce that beginning in January, 2014 our Cost of War program will continue with a more strategic plan to highlight drones and drone warfare. Cost of War: Focus on Drones will be a two-year, statewide campaign in Vermont to educate the populace on the dangers of drone warfare during its first year, and to start a grassroots anti-drone movement during its second year. ☪

The Peace & Justice Center presents:

Where Soldiers Come From October 27, Sunday, 5pm Roxy Theater, Burlington VT

From a snowy small town in Northern Michigan to the mountains of Afghanistan and back, *Where Soldiers Come From* follows the four-year journey of childhood friends, forever changed by a faraway war.

For more info check out the website (www.wheresoldierscomefrom.com)

Tickets are free, but donations are welcome.

Due to limited seating you will need to get tickets. Tickets available at the PJC. Contact Kyle 863-2345 x6 or kyle@pjcv.org. ☪

LW Ordinance Cuts Workers

At the Burlington Ordinance Committee meeting on Oct. 1st councilors Paul, Mason, and Bushor decided to send the ordinance back to the full City Council on Oct. 21st for a second reading and most likely to adopt the updated ordinance into law. This was after the City Attorney reported minimal information gathered from the airlines. US Airways is a union airline so their workers would not fall under the livable wage ordinance because of this. DELTA & United informed the city that they subcontract most of their work at the airport. They did not give specifics on wages, but according to recent job postings some airport workers are hired at \$9/hr. JetBlue refused to give any information on workers wages or hiring practices at all.

It is clear that this limited data is not complete enough to show that the airports do or do not have the capacity to pay a livable wage. The impact of demanding that they follow the current law is unclear. Basically, the ordinance committee did not receive any empirical evidence that the city or state would suffer from the enforcement of the livable wage requirement on leased properties in the airport and yet they continue to go through with striking the language and stripping the many airport workers of their right to a livable wage.

On October 17th there is one more Ordinance Committee meeting and then **the Livable Wage Ordinance will be read on October 21st for the full council to vote on.** If you live in Burlington please urge your two City Councilors to support a strengthened livable wage ordinance that includes as many workers as possible and does not cut out workers who currently qualify. ☪



Fair Trade

October is Fair Trade Month

By *Carmen Solari, PJC Store Manager and Fair Trade Program Director*

October is Fair Trade Month! It's the special month of the year we get to take a moment to appreciate fair trade for all that it is. Fair trade is many things and on a grand scale, fair trade is the people's alternative to an unfair system. Conducting business as usual implies a constant race to the bottom where the time and care put into the products we buy is not valued. Fair trade seeks to calculate the true cost of an item and set a price that reflects that cost as well as all things necessary for a decent lifestyle for the producer or

artisan.

Simply put, it is a strategy for poverty alleviation. As consumers, we have the power to make a positive impact on the lives of people who are many miles away. While companies will always exist who do not seek to respect the humanity of their workers, it seems that the fair trade movement is growing, thanks to an ever increasing demand from consumers like you and me.

There are now multiple labeling organizations, which can be confusing, so we've included a guide to those

various labeling organizations. Because we live in a society that is constantly capitalizing on our sympathies, it's important to know who is investing in improving livelihoods and who is trying to make you *think* your money is helping communities.

Be sure to look for the words "Fair Trade" on products. Buzz words like "ethical", "moral", and "just" trade don't necessarily mean the company has any systems or principles in place, much like "all natural" is used in place of "organic" as a marketing tactic that holds no weight. We want to keep integrity in business and grow its presence further!

This October, join me in reflecting on the beauty and importance of respecting our brothers and sisters all over the world through supporting fair trade. ☺

Fair Trade: Craftworks Cambodia

By *Vienna Tartaglia, PJC Intern*

Fair Trade. Many people are not completely aware of what this means. However, we hope that this will change dramatically over the next few years. Fairly-traded goods are currently seen as a much higher-priced item that are readily available cheaper at other, commercial locations. However, this is a misconception. Similar to the commercial market, there is still a range of prices, which are driven up or down, in correlation, by the quality and nature of the product.

Fair trade is a movement founded on the need to have safe working environments and fair pay for people in developing countries around the world. They are supported by sending their products to fair trade distributors such as the Peace & Justice Store. The income is used to provide a better quality of life for the artisans and their community. Fair trade requires a percentage of profits to be set aside for community use, which will be decided democratically. This premium has been used for a variety of uses for anything from building schools to converting equipment to run off of veggie oil.

■ Craftworks Cambodia

One Fair Trade cooperative the Peace & Justice Store supports is Craftworks Cambodia. One of their artisans, Chantha Thoeun, is a survivor of the war in Cambodia. He lost his parents at a very young age and was raised by his grandparents. It was during this time when Thoeun was introduced to the Skip Organization. This organization is an orphanage center that works to educate the young people of Cambodia. At the Skip Organization, he was taught the art of jewelry making, which he studied for over 4 years. He and his wife now make jewelry together, along with other crafts, to support their family. Thoeun has even



saved enough money to study graphic design to improve his skills in creating jewelry.

Thoeun is part of a group of six artisans who collect bullet and bomb casings left from the Cambodian Civil War. They transform these tools of war into beautiful jewelry that is distributed all over the world as not only a means to support their communities, but also a symbol to the people of other nations to never forget the atrocities committed in their country over 30 years ago now. This leads them to have a better future for their community and country. The metal is plenty and a free resource to them, but it has a stronger meaning than just raising money. The fact that they are taking materials that were used in war and creating something beautiful that will last is an inspiration. They also symbolize a reminder for those that purchase, that there is hope for recovery after war. ☺

 Fair Trade

Buyer's Guide to Fair Trade Labels

By Rosie Macy, PJC Intern

With so many Fair Trade labels out there, it can be hard to know what to buy. This guide should clear up the confusion!

■ FLO/ Fairtrade International

While the term “Fair Trade” refers to all products certified through a set of standards that aim to provide a simplified and just trade system, “Fairtrade” as one word is a trademark of FLO. Formerly known as Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International, Fairtrade International is the leading labeling organization in the United States today. Based in Germany, FLO has both a certifying branch and a standard-setting branch. They distinguish between smallholders working in co-operatives and workers whose employers provide certain resources that fall in line with Fairtrade standards; they have different standards for each. FLO is the “umbrella” certifier for all products in the US and their label is the most common one seen on products.



■ Fair Trade USA

Fair Trade USA, previously called TransFair USA, was a member of FLO but split from the organization in 2011. FTUSA left the International System and announced their new standards that they would then certify. They also introduced



two trademarked logos for products that meet their new standards. FTUSA has decided to allow multinational corporations associated with coffee to use their fair trade logo. This action has caused great concern among the thousands of members of small coffee producer cooperatives who have been helped by the Fair Trade movement to gain more market share.

■ Fair Trade Federation

Fair Trade Federation is a coalition of businesses worldwide, but registered in the US or Canada, that adhere to fair trade standards. The Fair Trade Federation has a thorough process through which businesses can become accredited. Unlike other fair trade labels, FTF does not certify individual products, but instead certifies entire businesses; they require businesses to be participating in trade for at least a year before applying. Businesses can use the FTF logo to promote their values and mission, both on



their company marketing information as well as on products of the member businesses.

■ IMO/Fair For Life

Institute for Marketecology (IMO), based out of Switzerland, is the third-party certifier for Fair For Life's logo. Fair for Life does not use a product-specific standard for certification. Fair for Life Certification covers fair working conditions and social responsibility as well as fair trade relationship, including fair prices and a fair trade development premium.



■ Direct Trade

Direct trade is a model and phrase that is not dictated by a third party certifier, nor is there any specific logo associated with Direct Trade. This model most commonly applies to coffee, and is an alternative trade model from Fair Trade. Some may view Fair Trade as difficult to access, strict or costly for some producers or retailers. Direct trade allows for individual purchasers to be more flexible and perhaps more true to their values and goals, buying the product directly from the producers. In some cases, this allows for the producer to receive higher compensation than Fair Trade might. ☺

Anti-racism Training

“Building the Beloved Community: Realizing Racial Justice:” Friday, November 1st from 6pm-9pm and Saturday, November 2nd from 9am to 5pm. Location TBD.

This two day interactive training based on popular education includes the video “Making Whiteness Visible,” Heart-to-Heart Conversations, Theater of the Oppressed, Star Power, and a work plan that integrates racial justice. Sha’an Moulert will lead this training. She is a consultant, community organizer, educator, artist, and co-founded the African American Alliance of the Northeast Kingdom, a grassroots organization committed to racial justice. Please join us on this most crucial journey, as we strive to realize our vision of a racially just society.

This event is FREE and open to the public. It is being sponsored by the Peace & Justice Center's Racial Justice Coalition and financially supported by PJC members as well as a grant from Haymarket People's Fund. For more information contact Kyle: 802-863-2345 x6 or kyle@pjcvt.org. We hope to see you there! ☺

Agitate! Agitate! Agitate!

Exposing the Ideology of Racism in the 21st Century

By Frank Smecker

Frederick Douglass once wrote: “Slavery cannot stand. Its character is like that of Lord Granby: ‘it can only pass without censure as it passes without observation.’” The same can be said about racism itself, especially today—we can’t talk about the racism that *still* exists if we refuse to recognize it. And if we refuse to recognize it, if we can’t even talk about it, then we’re far from blotting it out altogether from our daily lives.

Which reminds me of a recent experience my partner had. A little while back, she attended a workshop on gender and race relations. That night she arrived home, eager to share with me what had occurred at the workshop, specifically, a story the facilitator shared with the class. The story is as follows. One evening, while at the grocery store, a child referred to him as a “chocolate man.” The mother, embarrassed (of course), immediately tried to correct her daughter, explaining to her—reprimanding her, even—that that wasn’t right, that she shouldn’t say such things. Calmly, with a smile, this man replied to both the mother and daughter: “Hey, it’s ok, let’s talk about this.” For the next five minutes he explained to the child the entire spectrum of chocolate—that there’s white chocolate, milk chocolate, dark chocolate...and so on and so forth.

The point to this, of course, is that racism today often appears in such covert ways. And, no less important, when it does appear, no matter how covert it is, it’s imperative to talk about it, to open up the conversation, primarily to foreclose racism from becoming a deep-rooted, unconscious inclination.

The more radical point to be made here is that, political correctness—in this instance, the mother quickly censuring her child—can sometimes circumvent the much-needed discourse surrounding race relations. It can act as a resignation to the reality of racism, rather than directly engaging with its errors for the sake of abolishing it.

That said, fifty years after the celebrated March on Washington—at which Martin Luther King Jr. called for an end to racism—racism still persists, despite what we’re told, that we live in a “color blind” society. To wit, mass incarceration in the US, writes Michelle Alexander in her book *The New Jim Crow*, has “emerged as a stunningly comprehensive and well-disguised system of racialized social control that functions in a manner strikingly similar to Jim Crow.” People of color who are released from prison are often stripped of their voting rights, excluded from juries, segregated, forced to live a life along the margins of this so-called “color blind” society.

Nearly one-third of all African American males are under criminal justice supervision; and despite being somewhere between six- and ten-percent of the US population, nearly 50-percent of the US prison population is comprised of people of color. That’s a staggering statistic, especially considering that the US imprisons more people than any other country around the globe. Most inmates are there for drug offenses; infractions that drug-using whites seldom see sentences for. This is merely a fact, one that reflects an indisputable racial bias.

Author and professor in the School of Journalism at the University of Texas, Robert Jensen, avers that there’s even a problem with the term “people of color”: “the problem with [this term],” he writes, “is that it takes the focus off white people.” If we were to invert the focus, it’s likely we’d soon come to realize that the US is still segregated, primarily in terms of housing. According to the 2012 Fair Housing Trends Report, put out by the National Fair Housing Alliance, a conservative estimate of housing discrimination in the US puts the number at four million *every year*.

Here, one should consider that the way in which many white Americans perceive communities of people of color can often be referred to as what Slovenian philosopher, Slavoj Žižek, calls

an “imaginary cartography,” which “projects onto the real landscape its own shadowy ideological antagonisms.” In his book *The Fragile Absolute*, Žižek describes the “imaginary cartography” in terms of how Western Europe perceives the Balkans; he writes:

Then there is “reflexive” Politically Correct racism: the multiculturalist perception of the Balkans as the terrain of ethnic horrors and intolerance, of primitive irrational warring passions, to be opposed to the post-nation-state-liberal-democratic process of solving conflicts through rational negotiation, compromise and mutual respect. Here racism is, as it were, elevated to the second power: it is attributed to the Other, while we occupy the convenient position of a neutral benevolent observer, righteously dismayed at the horrors going on “down there.”

Do we not find a striking similarity between Žižek’s description of the way in which the Balkans are perceived by the rest of Europe, and the way in which much of black America is perceived by the rest of white America? It appears that America, too, has its own “imaginary cartography,” one which attributes to those living in ghettos across the country a “terrain of ethnic [hostility] and intolerance, of primitive irrational [violent] passions, to be opposed to the ... process of solving conflicts through rational negotiation, compromise and mutual respect.”

Regardless of its contours and features, racialization and racism is part and parcel of a larger ideology, one that posits the egregious claim that there exists in the world certain people who, by virtue of their race, by virtue of their skin color, or by virtue of their income, or whatever else it may be, are either inferior or superior to others. And insofar as it’s an ideology, it also exists in the capacity of a system: it’s a way of organizing a society; it instructs people how to view, in a very specific, erroneous way, the world and those who inhabit it. And albeit many of us claim to not consciously believe in racial superiority or inferiority, many seldom, if ever, question the social policies, or the existence of social arrangements managed by said policies, which ultimately serve to maintain an

imbalanced dichotomy between those who are deemed superior and those who are deemed inferior; between those born into privilege, and those born into poverty.

Such an ideology inevitably leads to cruel and unjust discrimination, to hatred even, which, in effect, creates a wretched place for those who are discriminated against. We're often told that in today's "post-ideological" world, we are beyond racism. After all, we've elected a black president. But the way in which racism exists today is more complex than just the standard historical accounts of brutal bigotry (though sometimes it's still expressed in the same old disgusting ways). Today racism is more covert, often obfuscated by economic and class relations, obscured by the language of political correctness, and so on.

What must be addressed is this: There are those who see the exclusive focus of new racisms and intolerances in the First World as being cynical in the face of real Third World problems; poverty, violence, hunger, and so on. But yet, this dismissal of the First World problems of racism is itself a form of "racist escapism." That is to say, by focusing only on the abject conditions of the Third World, one avoids engaging in the social plights of the First World. Here one is merely elevating their First World status to the level of what Teju Cole, writing for *The Atlantic*, coined the "white savior complex," which is not that dissimilar from the concept of the "imaginary cartography" emphasized earlier: the egregious idea that the racial Other cannot govern itself, and thus requires a Western, liberal intervention.

The job of today's true liberal, then, is to recognize the racism, the antagonisms, that still persist in a so-called "color blind" society, and to recognize that this belongs to a larger constellation of oppressive power structures, which affects *the world at large*. To dismantle this repulsive system of racist oppression, one should heed the advice of Frederick Douglass—one should "Agitate! Agitate! Agitate!" 

Smecker's first book, "The Night of the World: Traversing the Ideology of Objectivity" (Zero Books) will be out on the cusp of the New Year.

Youth Building A Peaceful World

By Claire Shapiro, PJC Intern

I am the new Peacework Intern, and this fall I plan to work on counter-recruitment in local high schools and peace education programs here at the Center. In this work, I will engage with students to raise awareness of work and educational opportunities outside of the military and facilitate the community in gaining tools to help build peace in themselves, in their community and in the world. In preparation for this, I decided to research youth-centered peace-building efforts locally and internationally. Young people are working toward peace in response to religious conflicts, development needs, street violence and crime, and to empower themselves as individuals and strengthen their communities.

Here in Vermont, the nonprofit organization Kids4Peace brings local children together to participate in discussions and activities that foster intercultural understanding. Through summer camps and year-round gatherings, Kids4Peace helps children from the Abrahamic traditions to build connections and recognize their common heritage. In its Jerusalem chapter, Kids4Peace works to cultivate friendships between children and families on opposite sides of the Israel/Palestine conflict who might see each other as enemies.

John Reuwer, who has taught nonviolent communication to adolescents in Kids4Peace, shares that at the core of his work is the belief in each individual's ability to make a difference, and to choose nonviolence in any conflict. Though this message stays the same for Reuwer's work regardless of the age of his audience, he feels that young people are particularly open to nonviolence because they have fewer violent language and behavior patterns to "unlearn" than do adults.

Addressing religious intolerance between Christians and Muslims in **Indonesia**, activist Elyse Syauta Latuheru believes that youth today are divided and prone to conflict due to the history of violence among older generations.

Latuheru is working to educate young people and encourage them to live harmoniously with those from other religious backgrounds.

In terms of peacework for development, The African Youth Peace Initiatives organization in **Uganda** trains youth to resolve conflict through several avenues. Through job trainings, peace education workshops, and community-based development projects, AYPI aims to address the foundational instabilities that lead to problems for Uganda's large youth population.

In 2012, two of **El Salvador's** most powerful gangs declared a truce. Today, young men who are former gang members have found alternative employment on an urban farm and in a bakery, and former opponents have come together to negotiate a lasting peace.

In **Colombia**, the national chapter of Prison Fellowship International has launched a program for at-risk youth in the country's second-largest city. The program targets those most likely to participate in criminal activities, trains them in restorative justice theory and techniques, and offers mentoring and mental health counseling.

Between 2011-2013, the Council of Europe's Youth Peace Ambassadors program brought together 50 participants from conflict-ridden communities for seminars, online trainings, and mentoring. Participants in the program worked on individual projects to bring their skills back to their local communities and act as agents of change.

The Youth Peace Initiative in Sydney, **Australia**, takes a similar approach, and offers mentoring and social media outreach to adolescents to empower them to become agents of positive and peaceful change.

When we look within our community and abroad, we can see that young people are building peace in response to a variety of political, economic, and religious instabilities. These efforts offer inspiration for our local activities, and help us to think about peace as a truly dynamic process. 



Robin's Nest

Freedom & Unity: The Vermont Movie

By Robin Lloyd



Only a few dozen local film/history buffs managed to watch all six segments of *Freedom and Unity: The Vermont Movie*, shown in Burlington Oct4-6. But it's on tour now, and I hope many of you will make a point of seeing this remarkable homage to our state. It is the result of seven years of work by dozens of Vermont filmmakers, and consists of a nine hour stream of images, flowing from an animated simulation of the glaciers leaving Vermont through the Abenaki presence and past, to the closing of Vermont Yankee, all masterfully edited by Nora Jacobson.

I speak from the perspective of one of the filmmakers who was a participating member of this extraordinary collaboration from the beginning. Knowing how prickly filmmakers can get when someone tampers with our images, the fact that all of us were willing to offer our footage up to Nora's chopping block is a testament to Nora's creative skills and our group's commitment to the grand story of Vermont – documenting not so much the state's exceptionalism as its uniqueness, as “a beacon, a haven, a refuge, an idea, a symbol, a state...” (see the website for a deeper description).

Freedom and Unity is not only the state logo, but an appropriate description of our collaborative process. In 2006, motivated in part by the upcoming quadricentennial celebration of the arrival of Samuel de Champlain on the shores of *Ondakina* (1609), Nora developed a 22 page list of Vermont events and people and offered it to filmmakers to choose one to document, however we wanted.

Over the years, we would gather from around the state, sometimes for a weekend at a rural retreat, to talk through and develop the ideas. With the participation of historians and writers, the sessions were like seminars on Vermont history, geography and race. The last segment ends with Hurricane Irene, the power of

community, and a beautiful flock of birds swirling in the night sky.

The discussion that followed the last Burlington screening on October 6 was congratulatory and thoughtful. Producer Nat Winthrop acknowledged that Nora struggled with the ending: how to intertwine the threat of global warming with the images of community resilience that surfaced after Irene. Lauren-Glenn Davitian called it a love letter to Vermont.

Tom Howard said that where many films elevate patriotism, this documentary focuses on ‘matriotism.’ “It shows that our future is complex, we can't handle it alone.”

One viewer liked the stories from the rest of the state, but felt that Burlington, as cultural hub, was short-changed. “There was no coverage of the creation of the Vermont Women's Health Center, the Onion River Co-op, the People's Free Clinic.” Historian Bruce Post added that Burlington has played a major role in shaping Vermont especially since redistricting, but that what happens in the rest of the state is less known. “So many of us are uninformed. We hang on to the myths of Vermont, but there are many things, such as the eugenics program (that only ended in Vermont in 1972), that were not so admirable. The film puts a headlight on unsung heroes.” (Ethan Allen is only mentioned in passing!)

■ A People's History of VT

Bruce also remarked that Vermont has always been dominated by strong interests such as the Proctors which militate against people's power. He congratulated Phil Hoff, who is featured in the film and was present for part of the screening, for trying to change that dynamic during his tenure as Vermont's first Democratic governor in 108 years.

Nat agreed that the film could be compared to Howard Zinn's “A People's History of Vermont.” The director's father, Nicholas Jacobson, featured in Part 2 of the film, *Under the Surface*, was from a wealthy Jewish family in New York City who hated urban life and came to Vermont to farm. He called himself a communist. Daughter Nora has brought a progressive and inclusive perspective to this project.

Others felt that it gives a middle class view: a product of the people who made it. Filmmaker Louise Michaels said that yes, it's a privilege to be a filmmaker.

Lauren Glenn added that what's special about Vermont is that “we have public access channels around the state where people can talk. Vermont is small enough and enough people are invested in caring that we can make a new future. This film is part of a wave of stories that can continue into the future.” But she acknowledged that “even in cable access we haven't really passed the class divide. She added “in this film, we're seeing the view of a certain tribe” that is interesting “because it hasn't been told before.”

Tom Howard had the last word. “This film is a valentine, full of arrows, to the heart of what Vermonters are. Every filmmaker got to make what they loved. I wouldn't want to change it.”

■ Schedule

Freedom and Unity: The Vermont Movie: Six Parts.

- **Middlebury's** Gala and Part 1 took place Oct. 8. Remaining parts: Oct. 14 to 22 at the Unitarian Church, Middlebury.

- **Rutland's** Gala and Part 1: Oct. 10. Remaining parts: Oct. 16 to 24 at Merchants Hall, 40-42 Merchants Row.

- **Stowe's** Gala: Nov. 2, at 6:30pm, followed by Part 1 at 7:30 at the Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, 7320 Mtn Rd. Remaining parts: Nov. 5 to Dec. 3.

- **St. Alban's** Gala: Nov. 3, at 2:30pm followed by Part 1 at 3:30 at Bliss Auditorium, 9 Church St. Remaining parts: Nov. 4 to Dec 2.

- The film will also be screened in **Bennington, Brattleboro, St. Johnsbury, Derby Line and Newport**. Check with the website <http://thevermontmovie.com/> for complete information. 

What is Veterans For Peace?

Veterans For Peace (VFP) is an international organization of military veterans and allies whose mission is to abolish war and build a culture of peace. Convinced by our own experiences, we raise our voices to inform the public of the true causes of war, the enormous costs of war, and our obligation to heal the wounds of war.

VFP currently has 140 chapters and 4,000 members in 10 countries. Our work includes: educating the public, advocating dismantling the war economy, providing assistance to veterans and victims of war, and most significantly, working to end all wars, and eliminate nuclear weapons.

■ The Will Miller Green Mountain Chapter of VFP

Founded in 1991, our all non-violent activities include: speaking out against war and the militarization of our community; advocating for health services and financial support for veterans in need; participating in demonstrations, rallies and parades; writing letters, opinion pieces and poetry for the media; speaking in schools and outreach to youth; producing a monthly public-access television program about issues affecting veterans; and supporting VFP national working groups and projects.

We have members and activities statewide, and welcome non-veterans to join as Associate Members. We collaborate with the Peace & Justice Center and other peace groups in abolishing war as an instrument of National policy.

We meet monthly in Montpelier's Kellogg Hubbard Library, usually the third Saturday at 10:00am. For more information, contact Chapter President Adrienne Knapp adriennej@hotmail.com.

Veterans For Peace co-sponsors the Peace & Justice Center's Cost of War Series. ☪

The PJC acts as an incubator for many activist groups through Allied Membership. VTJP is one of those members and their message follows:

151 Organizations Tell Ben & Jerry's: Stop Selling in Israeli Settlements

By *Mark Hage*

The international campaign to end Ben & Jerry's complicity in Israel's occupation and illegal settlement regime continues to gain momentum. On September 9, Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel (VTJP) released a letter [<http://www.vtjp.org/icecream/internatletter.php>] to CEO Jostein Solheim signed by 151 civil society organizations. It calls on Ben & Jerry's "to stand by its Social Mission and to ensure that its products are not sold, catered and distributed in Israeli settlements."

The letter's signatories share a commitment to international law and human rights, and believe that a company's social mission should be more than words on paper. This is especially true in the case of Ben & Jerry's, whose iconic social mission, as the letter makes clear, "articulates a commitment to the welfare, security and dignity of all communities, local, national and international."

That social mission cannot be reconciled with an Israeli settlement project in Palestine that is, the letter asserts, "predicated on systematic repression, racial segregation, land dispossession, the unlawful expropriation of water, and pervasive violence against Palestinians."

VTJP's letter has garnered support from across the world—from the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia, PA to Boycott Divestment Sanctions South Africa in Johannesburg; from Jewish Voice for Peace in Oakland, CA to the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign in Dublin; from Lutherans for Justice in the Holy Land in Portland, OR to Kia Ora Gaza in Auck-

land, New Zealand. Several faith-based and student organizations signed on.

Groups in 28 US states and the District of Columbia, plus those in eight countries, including Israel, and the West Bank, sent an unequivocal message to Ben & Jerry's: "...consistent with international law and Ben & Jerry's Social Mission, we call on you to take all necessary contractual and legal measures to bring your franchise's settlement business to an end in a verifiable way, and to release a public statement of your company's commitment to end its business ties to Israel's occupation and settlement enterprise."

The company has acknowledged receipt of the letter. VTJP's dialogue with its management team and Board president is now in its third year, though our public campaign only began in March, 2013 (see www.vtjp.org/icecream/). Political pressure is mounting on the company, but nothing has changed yet in its business dealings with Israeli settlement venues. Ben & Jerry's in Israel remains a corporate beneficiary of the country's military and economic domination of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Those who oversee its operations from Vermont have yet to sever the franchise's links to Jewish-only settlements, or even to issue a statement in opposition to them.

Our campaign will not end until it does. ☪

Mark Hage is an activist with Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel. He can be reached at mhage56@yahoo.com. Organizations that wish to sign the September 9th international letter to Ben & Jerry's can do so at: http://www.vtjp.org/icecream/internatletter_signatory.php. VTJP meets the 2nd Monday of the month at the PJC.

CALENDAR

October 2013

[19] Saturday

• 10am **Veterans for Peace**, Will Miller Green Mountain Chapter meets monthly in Montpelier's Kellogg-Hubbard Library. Usually the third Saturday, but check with President Adrienne Knapp at adriennej@hotmail.com Also Nov. 16 and Dec. 17.

[21] Monday

• 7pm City Council voting on LW Ordinance. See article on p. 3.

• 7pm **Fed Up VT** meeting at RU12 every Monday. Fed Up VT is a radical grassroots women's rights coalition fighting for economic equality, reproductive rights, and freedom from gender-based violence. fedupvermont@googlegroups.com

[23] Wednesday

• 7pm **Lisa Shannon**, author of *A Thousand Sisters: My Journey into the Worst Place on Earth to be a Woman*, and founder of **Run for Congo Women**, was the first national grassroots activist in the US working to raise awareness of the humanitarian crisis in Democratic Republic of the Congo. She has been featured in the *New York Times* by Nicholas Kristoff and has appeared with Hillary Clinton on *Oprah*. SMC, McCarthy Recital Hall.

November 2013

[3] Sunday

• 12-1 **Vets for Peace** live call-in show on Channel 15.

6:30pm **Justice for Syria a Candlelight Vigil**. Join the Peace & Justice Center and UVM's Amnesty International Club and help raise awareness of the Syrian human rights crisis. Rachel Siegel, PJC's Executive Director, will lead the continued call for diplomacy and community dialogue to end the human rights crisis and voice concerns about using force. Bring a candle. Questions? Email sibrahim@uvm.edu. At City Hall Park, Burlington.

[5] Tuesday

• 8:30pm: **Peace & Popcorn** at PJC. Peace & Popcorn is a casual movie night open to the public. This is a great way for people who are interested in peace, racial justice, the environment, economic justice, international issues, politics, etc. to watch a documentary they normally wouldn't make time for, and to connect with people of similar interests. The best part is, we serve popcorn, and it's free! Good films and good company.

[6] Wednesday

• 7pm **Maria J. Stephan** is a strategic planner with the US Dept of State and co-author of *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. **Robert Helvey**, retired US Army Colonel, was sent by the International Republican Institute to teach non-violent strategy to students in the former Yugoslavia in 2000 which led to the non-violent overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic. They will discuss the spread of non-violent resistance movements, Maria from an empirical and Bob from a

practical standpoint. SMC, McCarthy Recital Hall.

[9] Saturday

6-8pm **Five Women Witnesses: Two Weeks in Palestine**. Presentation topics include: home demolitions, refugee camps, the separation wall, the spirit of Palestinian people, Kairos Palestine, Rabbis for Human Rights and interfaith nonviolent direct action. At First Congregational Church, Burlington. Also speaking at All Saints Episcopal, Friday 11/8, 5pm and at the Waterbury Congregational Church, Sunday 11/10 at 10am. Sponsored by VTJP with many co-sponsors.

[11] Monday

• 6-8pm **Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel** meeting at PJC.

• 7pm In honor of **Veteran's Day, Mike Heaney**, a former Infantry Platoon Leader in the Vietnam War, historian, and author will speak about his experience as a soldier, veteran, mentor to other veterans, and scholar who studies the costs of war as they relate to the human spirit. Lt. Heaney will share his stories of returning to Vietnam years after the war ended, and the relationships he now has with Vietnamese veterans who were at one point his enemy. Location: Train Station, 1 Main St, Burlington.

[13] Wednesday

• 5-6:30pm **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom** (WILPF) meeting at the Peace & Justice Center. 862-4929.

[23] Saturday

12 noon **Close the School of the Americas Annual Vigil**. Gather in front of City Hall, Burlington. We will have signs. It's time we close this disgraceful institution. We will walk up Church St, then return to City Hall for the Presente ceremony. Sponsored by Pax Christi Burlington. All welcome.

December 2013

[9] Monday

• 6-8pm **Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel** meeting at PJC.

[11] Wednesday

• 5-6:30pm **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom** (WILPF) meeting at the Peace & Justice Center. 862-4929.

[13] Friday

• 5-8pm **Art Show Opening of the Reference for Radicals** at Burlington City Arts, 2nd Flr. The Reference for Radicals project is a partnership between the Peace & Justice Center, independent activists, and local artists. The twelve collaborating artists use their various mediums to tell the story of a Radical idea or word that is closest to their hearts. The pieces are for sale by silent auction.

[17] Tuesday

• 6pm **PJC Annual Meeting** at Burlington City Arts. See box p. 1.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki 2013—Their Continuing Presence

REMARKS BY *Gene Bergman for the Peace & Justice Center at the candle boat ceremony on the Burlington Waterfront August 9, 2013*

First, I want to thank the Peace & Justice Center for asking me to speak tonight. This is like a memorial service for those who died in the atomic bombings and have died or been harmed since from radiation and collateral effects created in the process of making nuclear weapons: the mining, transportation, production, testing, storing, stockpiling, and preparing to use these bombs in the US and throughout the world. We stand witness.

Let us have a moment of silence for the 200,000 people who died from the dropping of two bombs 68 years ago and the untold others who've perished since.

Why do we continue to mark these bombings? First, we mark them because of the sheer magnitude and indiscriminate nature of atomic bombs. Over 60% of the people of Hiroshima were *immediate* victims of the "Little Boy" bomb. 60% of the city killed or injured instantly. 75% of the people killed there were civilians. Of the up to 70,000 killed by the "Fat Man" bomb in Nagasaki, only 150 were soldiers. The rest were people like you and me and everyone else around us now just going about their business. People on those swings on the boardwalk. People at work. Children running on the sidewalk and in the park. Just average people.

All we need to know about the horror of these weapons is found in the first Japanese radio reports of the bombing of Hiroshima when they reported that "Practically all living things, human and animal, were literally seared to death."

And we *continue* to live under the shadow cast by these mushroom clouds. Do you remember the recent hysteria over North Korea's threats, the ongoing cold war with Iran or the justification for the Iraq war? The Bomb is not ancient history. It is a sword hanging over our heads; part of the same culture that is cooking the planet. We mark it to stand witness, to honor the dead and swear an oath to the living: Never Again!

It is not *just* the "threat" of war we face. It is the concept of war that knows no bounds, something present in every war being waged in 2013. What we continue to be confronted with is the question of "total war."

This question was posed by Father Siemes, a Christian missionary in Hiroshima who was temporarily away at the time of the blast. John Hershey, the journalist who documented the immediate aftermath in his book *Hiroshima*, quotes Siemes' reflections after he returned to the city after the bombing: "Some of us consider the bomb in the same category as poison gas . . .

It seems logical that he who supports total war in principle cannot complain of a war against civilians. The crux of the matter is whether total war in its present form is justifiable, even when it serves a just purpose. Does it not have material and spiritual evil as its consequences which far exceed whatever good might result?"

While each war ravaging our planet poses this question, remember that just 2 nuclear bombs literally seared to death all living things in those two large cities! These weapons are a "species" far different than other weapons of war. And according to Jonathan Schell, a fellow at the Nation Institute and author of the seminal book *The Fate of the Earth*, there are 23,000 nuclear warheads stockpiled on our little world today, all more powerful than Fat Man and Little Boy; 9,000 possessed by our own country and 13,000 by Russia. Think of the destruction reaped by just two and contemplate there being 23,000.

Nothing, nothing short of the abolition of all nuclear weapons from the Earth and a system—political, legal, and moral—that considers the building of nuclear weapons, let alone the use, a crime against Humanity and Life itself is sufficient to end this material and spiritual evil.

And lest you feel safer because we and Russia have 22,000 out of 23,000 warheads, I remind you of the ongoing nightmare that Japan is suffering at its leaking Fukushima nuclear power plant. 300 tons of radioactive water are leaking into the Pacific from the reactor every day. The production of nuclear weapons has polluted vast amounts of soil and water at hundreds of nuclear weapons facilities all over the world, releasing plutonium, uranium, strontium, cesium, benzene, PCBs, mercury and cyanide that will remain hazardous for thousands, some for hundreds of thousands, of years.

The Fat Man and Little Boy continue to reap Death. Around 1,900 cancer deaths can be attributed to the after-effects of these bombs. A study by the Japanese Radiation Effects Research Foundation found that from 1950 to 2000, 46% of leukemia deaths and 11% of solid cancer deaths among the bomb survivors were due to radiation from the bombs: 200 leukemia and 1700 solid cancers.

And the impact is not just physical. The "hibaskusha," survivors, not only suffered the pain of the aftermath of the total destruction of the cities. They were shunned as being contaminated by radiation.

So why do we mark this moment? We're here to remember. To say Never Again. To pay our respects. Respects for the dead and dying. Respects for the people who have stood up for 68 years and said NO to nuclear weapons and nuclear war. Respects for the hundreds of millions who said NO to the insanity of Ronald Reagan's belief that Nuclear War is Winnable and fundamentally changed the course of human events with the Nuclear Freeze and the anti-Euromissile Movements. We're here to say NO to the material and spiritual evil of Total War and Weapons of Mass Destruction and say YES to Life, to Hope, to Goodness, to Peace.

We mark this moment because it is right. We should do this even if we were the only ones. Thank you for being here and standing with me. ☺

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