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In this issue...

May Day Against the War	page 1
This is How it is Done by Norla Antinoro	page 2
Vatican Wakes Up and Smells the Coffee; Expands List of Sins	page 3
The Community Organizer -- as Practitioner, Teacher, Writer and Student by Hunter Gray	page 4
Multnomah County Local	page 6
Where Income Tax Really Goes	page 6
After by Sam Friedman	page 7
The People's Act of Love – reviewed by Brian Plinski	page 8

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

-Margaret Mead

"Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary."

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"A person is a person because he recognizes others as persons."

Desmond Mpilo Tutu

MAY DAY AGAINST THE WAR **An Injury to One is and Injury to All!**

May 1st is International Workers' Day, and in recent years a day of action for immigrant rights. May Day in Portland this year is shaping up to be a day of important anti-war actions. These actions put the spotlight on how the Iraq occupation and war hurts workers and immigrants. Socialist Party of Multnomah County meets at Main and South Park Blocks, in front of the Portland Art Museum, 4:30pm.

4:00 PM Rally and 5:00pm March, South Park Blocks (SW Park and Salmon)

The event will draw the connections between attacks on immigrant workers' rights and those of all workers, and how the war in Iraq affects immigrants. The war causes and intensifies jingoistic and xenophobic nationalism, politics and violence based on fear and lies, militarism including militarization of the southern border, and special targeting of immigrant workers for military recruitment with citizenship incentives. Immigrant workers understand this, and oppose the war in higher proportion than the general population.

download pdf flyer - (english)

<http://www.pdxpeace.org/files/u2/englMaydayflyer08.pdf>

(spanish)

http://www.pdxpeace.org/files/u2/Volante_Mayday_Espanol.pdf

This is How it is Done - Live the Work, Work the Message

by Norla Antinoro

Last week I attended a media training session sponsored by MoveOn and True Majority Action. They had a DVD followed by a conference call all aimed at training activists how to get their message out to the media and make it work. As I watched and listened and took careful notes, I realized that someone I know is already doing all of that and proving how well it works.

The take home message from the training session was that to get the media to cover your story and help you get the message out, there are a few things you need to do and do regularly and well. If you do them well, the media will love you and work with you and tell your story for you.

Recent stories in the *Guelph Mercury* and the *Guelph Tribune* show us someone who lives his message and who knows how to use the media to help get that message out – reliably, consistently, repeatedly: Edward Pickersgill. The media in Guelph love this man. He gets coverage not just for the events he wants covered. They seek him out as their resource when they need a quote or the print equivalent of a sound bite in any social justice area.

On an ordinary day Edward was going about his job, working to provide low cost and subsidized housing for people in need. A reporter from the local newspaper called him because they were running a story called “Guelph 's Homeless: Still Out in the Cold.” The reporter needed facts stated clearly and she needed them from someone she has come to trust as a resource. Thus the call to Pickersgill. In a brief telephone conversation he provided her with the material she needed.

The reporter knew she could depend on this man as a resource and he came through. “This

is life-threatening weather,” he said. “This really, really highlights and brings to the fore the need for an out-of-the-cold program in Guelph .”

“The critical hours, he said, are between about 11 p.m. and 4:30 a.m., when the Welcome In Drop-in Centre opens for the day. Most people know if they contact him between about 10 p.m. and 2 a.m., he can find them a place to stay.”

“It’s an ad hoc, ‘If you can find Ed you can get a Band-Aid solution,’” Pickersgill said. “But it’s just a Band-Aid solution. We really need an out-of-the-cold program.” (*Guelph Mercury*, January 22, 2008)

Here is the crux of the matter. Pickersgill is a housing advocate who devotes a great deal of time and energy to making sure the disadvantaged in his town have a safe place to stay when conditions are at crisis levels. On a daily basis he works to improve the overall housing situation for the homeless and near homeless as well. So this is *his* message that was getting out and yet he did not have to go looking for a reporter to give him coverage. The reporter came looking for him because he has followed the rules laid out below and established himself as a reliable and interesting resource for any and all social justice issues in his town.

Another reporter sought him out in connection with a completely different story. In the store front next to the Fresh Start housing centre where he does most of his work, Pickersgill has helped set up the FairShare Foodshelf. It is not enough that the homeless and near homeless have a chance to find a home, they must also have food to eat. Bringing these services together provides for the disadvantaged of Guelph like never before.

The *Guelph Tribune* was preparing a brief story about the new location for the Foodshelf and, without any prompting at all, the reporter called Edward Pickersgill for information and a good quote. "The FairShare FoodShelf saw a strong turnout of people at its new location at 158 Wyndham St. N. on Friday," they reported. "Fifty-nine people came out to receive food that day", said spokesperson Edward Pickersgill. "It was the first day open for the food shelf after a move ... He said 59 was a "good average" of people, as the food shelf had 100 to 120 customers when it operated out of (the church)... He said the next step is to make the location a "food information centre" for those needing to find out how to get food." (*Guelph Tribune*, January 22, 2008)

Most of us who work as activists for one progressive cause or another find it a constant challenge to get the media to cover our stories and events. Pickersgill does not have that problem. They not only cover his stories, they come to him when they need help covering their own stories in the area of social justice. If you were to spend a week shadowing this man, you would see someone who works his message and lives his work. And it is this that the MoveOn/True Majority training was trying to get across to us all.

The rules that MoveOn and True Majority Action were hoping to teach us are lived and breathed by this man:

- Become a resource for the media for information, not just for your own events and stories but someone they can go to for a quote whenever they have a story related to your area of interest.
- Form a relationship with the reporters in your area beyond just going to bang on their door when you have an event you want covered or have a story to tell of your own. Become someone the reporters consider a friend.

- Be accurate and concise.
- Be absolutely reliable. The media needs to know that when they quote you, it's right on the money. Make it pertinent, on topic, and always factually correct.
- Practice putting your message into easily quotable brief statements.
- Make your message clear but not any more inflammatory than the facts themselves would make it. Leave out all the hyperbole. The facts are dramatic enough if stated well.
- Provide a good visual image when needed.

Sinners, Beware!

Vatican Lists 5 New Sins

The big sins have been around since Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with the 10 Commandments. You know you can't commit adultery or murder and steal, lie or covet. Now the Vatican has added to that list of sins.

The five new sins, as issued by Monsignor Gianfranco Girotti on Sunday, March 9 are:

1. Drugs
2. Pollution
3. Genetic manipulations
4. Economic injustices
5. Social injustices

Girotti said in an interview with the Vatican's daily newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano, that known sins increasingly manifest themselves as behavior that damages society as a whole. "While sin used to concern mostly the individual, today it has mainly a social resonance, due to the phenomenon of globalization," he explained. Girotti leads the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican body that issues decisions on matters of conscience and grants absolutions.

THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZER -- AS PRACTITIONER, TEACHER, WRITER AND STUDENT

by HUNTER GRAY/HUNTER BEAR] FEBRUARY 19 2008

I think that Community Organizing can only be effectively done and conveyed, to / with grassroots people or formal students, if the organizer is a genuinely experienced -- experienced -- individual.

Virtually anyone can call himself / herself a "community organizer." There are not, in this particular field, any formal certification requirements or issued licenses. And it also takes a Real One [of which there are fortunately many] to effectively teach and write about it.

To me, a bona fide community organizer is someone who is actively and effectively involved over a substantial period of time in the hard, tedious, and sometimes genuinely dangerous work of getting people together and keeping people together -- for meaningful action. And, as I certainly see it, of course, this has to be within the context of the pursuit of social justice.

This has to involve much more than, simply, a few here-and-there, hit-and-miss local endeavors -- or limited "support" activities from a safe and cloistered setting. It has to involve vastly more than simply being a participant in, say, a march.

I'm talking about someone who plays a signal role in initiating constructive fires [figuratively] and who, systematically, works to carry that through to relative success as yet another stretch of the trail in the Save the World Business. Sometimes it's a pitchy-pine hot and flaring fire, more likely it's the long oak wood burn with an occasional flare.

An organizer can be an altruistic someone who starts as a neophyte and who works with an experienced organizer -- and it can also be someone who arises spontaneously in a social justice crisis and feathers out with dispatch. In both instances, the organizer "learns by doing" and keeps going.

And a genuinely good and effective organizer never stops learning from the grassroots people with whom he / she works.

Without wasting time on false modesty, I've sometimes referred to an "organizing credential" of mine as my graduate degree in militant organizing. Awarded me in 1963 in the heat of our massive Jackson [Mississippi] Movement was a sheaf of papers with myself as the lead name: City of Jackson vs. John R. Salter, Jr et al. Prepared by Mississippi's top anti-civil rights lawyer [Thomas Watkins] who consulted with a bevy of others

including the then state AG, it's considered the most sweeping anti-civil rights "order" issued during the general period. It sought to prohibit us from engaging in any kind of demonstration and boycott, "conspiring" to do such, and doing anything to "consummate conspiracies" to demonstrate and boycott. And, to forestall any legal complications from the state's perspective, it set the first hearing date 90 days hence. It was copied by other jurisdictions in the South. The bevy of heavily armed wide-brim hatted Mississippi deputy sheriffs who coldly and formally delivered my copy obviously viewed it as pure Holy Writ. For our part, we simply defied it and kept going. [It's on our website, not hard to find. -- along with a great many accounts and details of my own personal organizing projects.]

But my greatest satisfactions are always based on the positive appraisals of those on whose behalf I'm involved -- in actual social justice campaigns. Those are priceless.

Academia? Taking a class or two? That can offer some valuable approaches and insights -- but only if the teacher is an organizer with substantial experience who can talk in solid fashion, not only about the work of others but, primarily, what he / she has actually done. Organizing is a living art, not simply an erector-set craft and, if it's taught as art, the recipient -- formal student or grassroots person -- will learn some very solid things.

There was a time, briefly, at the end of the 1960s, when several schools of social work issued MSW degrees with a specialization in community organizing. Apparently that proved too difficult for the schools which shifted, fairly quickly, into social policy [mostly agency administration.] In our organizing work on the South/Southwest side of Chicago, we were fortunate in hiring and retaining two MSW persons, each of whom had their degree with a formal and specific organizing focus -- via University of Michigan and University of Illinois [Circle.] They did, as was the case of our entire staff of two dozen or so, very fine work. But they readily conceded that they were learning far more in the field than they ever had in classrooms.

For my part, I have taught community organizing [while continuing my own organizing on the side] in every one of the far-flung colleges and universities at which I've sojourned. While on some occasions, it's been an added dimension to a course formally on another topic, it's also been, in the main, as its very own course. These have carried both undergraduate and graduate

credit depending on the specific student. And, of course, I've also taught it, as a working organizer, to grassroots people and other organizers as well -- in all sorts of workshops and conferences.

And, wherever I've taught community organizing, academic or grassroots or whatever, every single person -- bar none -- has wanted a practical, down to earth approach with as many personally experiential case histories of campaigns that I can provide. I cannot emphasize this strongly enough. [This also includes the personal histories of various protagonists.] And I do have a great many of these personal accounts -- and there are others who do as well. At this juncture, I have several rich decades of them.

But faithfully remember: a really first-rate organizer / teacher always -- always -- learns much from his / her grassroots colleagues and classroom students.

And, although I have my own somewhat eclectic vision and am not oblivious to theory [I got along nicely and profitably in Sociological Theory], I've never found theory by itself -- and certainly not heavy ideology -- to be especially interesting to those to and with whom I talk. That poses no problem for me. The genuinely radical Southern poet, the late John Beecher, an old friend over many decades, commented approvingly and publicly of me that "he wears no man's collar."

Whenever or wherever I've taught community organizing, I've always used many of my personal case histories. If particular occasion permits, I lace these with much use of primary documents -- everything from field reports to leaflets, media clippings, legal briefs, much more. We do a heavy focus on tactics and strategies, building democracy, ethical questions. [In formal courses, I've often given a key issue and its setting as an essay test question.]

Field practicums aren't offered vis-a-vis a single class. But, for especially interested students, I early on did separate, follow-up Independent Studies -- de facto practicums, complete with appropriate field placements [and for full academic credit, of course.]

I avoid overly detailed, tight syllabi. And I consistently encourage a hell of a lot of discussion. Many people have had, in their own right, grassroots organizing experiences of one kind or another. Workshops [and conferences] always have people who are actually doing good things in the field.

And all of that is super-enriching.

Certain films can be extremely helpful -- e.g., Salt of the Earth, Norma Rae, Shane. And there are many others.

And music, too: well-done civil rights songs; and labor and related stuff from, among others, Pete Seeger and Joe Glazer.

Outside speakers? Certainly an occasional one, very preferably another organizer / grassroots activist -- directly from, as the old Wobblies used to put it, "the point of production."

Written scholarly or quasi-scholarly works on community organizing? Be careful -- very careful. Most of that, at best, has only very limited use. Usually dry and lifeless, this stuff is almost always written or compiled by ivory-towered academics using comparable works by comparable others and offers very little in the way of technique and insight. I place high priority on the accounts of folks who have actually Organized. [This can include people such as the late Saul Alinsky with whose "top down" organizing strategy, I -- with my grassroots-up focus -- strongly disagree. I've used Alinsky's Rules for Radicals on several occasions as a support text.] Occasionally, I've used my own very detailed book -- Jackson, Mississippi: An American Chronicle of Struggle and Schism, 1979 and 1987]. <http://hunterbear.org/jackson.htm>

It's been long out of print but is sometimes findable on the Net [under my former name, John R Salter, Jr].

I should also add that there are corollary works from related fields that can be helpful. A faithful member of some of our discussion lists, Sam Friedman, produced -- after long and very careful study, much of it quite direct, Teamster Rank and File: Power, Bureaucracy, and Rebellion at Work and in a Union [1982]. This is first-rate and very readable sociology in the best sense. And there are certainly all kinds of other good works in this genre. Autobiographies and oral histories by organizers and participants can be quite valuable.

But, again, on written works dealing specifically with Community Organizing, Be Very Careful.

My own course in Community Organizing is here, in mini-form: http://hunterbear.org/my_combined_community_organizing.htm

And this has much on our organizing in Chicago during a long, sanguinary epoch. It contains, among other things, our practical critique of Alinsky:

http://hunterbear.org/chicago_organizing.htm

As I wrote recently in my Outlaw Trail: The Native As Organizer:

So, if you are an aspiring social justice Organizer --

Multnomah Local

Co-Chairs: Kathy Bushman, Brian Plinski
Secretary: Cassidy Martinez

Michael C. Marino, former Treasurer, resigned from that post in March. Anyone interested in taking over that position should contact Plinski or Bushman, Co-Chairs of the Local.

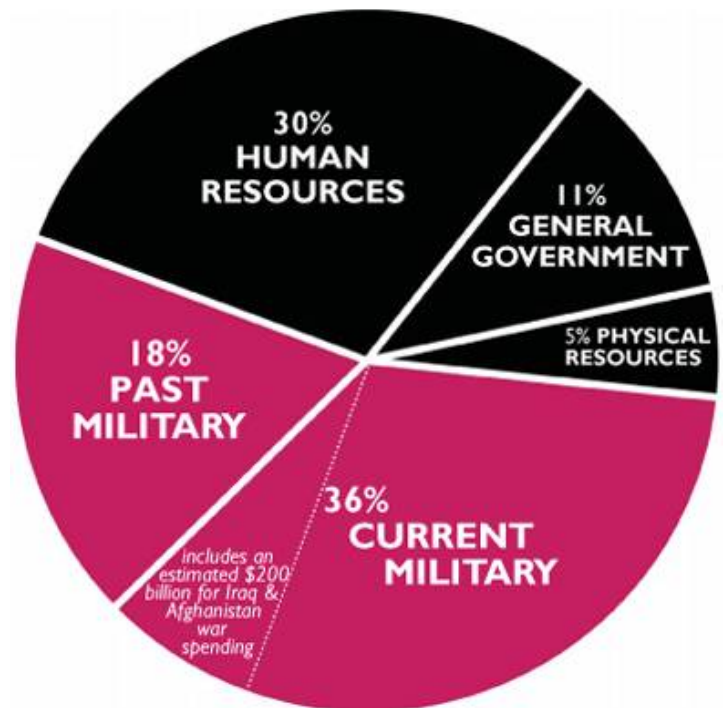
The Local has voted to work with the Socialist Party of Oregon ballot line to work on securing ballot access anew; SPO lost ballot access due to filing deadlines passing without being met.

War Resisters League Analysis of Our Tax Dollars

Ever wondered where your income tax *really* goes? So does everybody else! The folks at WRL create a chart every year after researching some of this stuff. This is the fiscal year 2009.

WHERE YOUR **INCOME TAX** MONEY REALLY GOES

U.S. FEDERAL BUDGET 2009 FISCAL YEAR



"bright eyed and bushy-tailed" -- recognize that you can't practice that always critically needed vocation and have the things about which Thorstein Veblen wrote so well and indictingly in this classic attack on conspicuous consumption, The Theory of the Leisure Class.

You'll get your skull cracked, your hide cut, and you'll often get fired.

But I'd rather have Those Memories than Money.
http://hunterbear.org/outlaw_trail1.htm

From the Mountains of Eastern Idaho -

In Solidarity,

Hunter Gray [Hunter Bear]

HUNTER GRAY [HUNTER BEAR/JOHN R SALTER JR]
Mi'kmaq /St. Francis
Abenaki/St. Regis Mohawk
Protected by Na'shdo'í'ba'í' and Ohkwari'

Check out our Hunterbear website Directory
<http://hunterbear.org/directory.htm>
[The site is dedicated to our one-half Bobcat, Cloudy Gray:
http://hunterbear.org/cloudy_gray.htm

SEE MY COMBINED COMMUNITY ORGANIZING PIECES -- WITH MUCH NEW STUFF HUNTER GRAY/JOHN R SALTER, JR [HUNTER BEAR] SEPTEMBER 5 2004 -- AND WITH NEW INCLUSION: THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZER AS PRACTITIONER, TEACHER, WRITER AND STUDENT [HUNTER GRAY -- FEBRUARY 19 2008] ALL OF THIS MUCH REPRINTED - PLUS MANY NEW COMMENTS
http://hunterbear.org/my_combined_community_organizing.htm

Wobbly Mentor:
http://hunterbear.org/wobbly_mentor.htm
See Forces and Faces Along the Activist Trail:
http://hunterbear.org/forces_and_faces_along_the_trail.htm

Col. Dan Smith (USA Ret.) reports that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are costing \$15.7 billion a month.

After, on the way to thereafter

by Sam Friedman

After the Heartbreak
House of fighting,

and after the fire next
time,

after the parties, the
toasting and cheering

when none will bewail

that capitalism has been
erased,

we will build our global
city

like a flower from the
ashes

with its roots suckled
and fed and watered

by the local and daily
and real.

One petal will be the
friendships of work time,

another our neighbors,
as we talk and we share.

Those who sew diapers,
those who pin them and change them,

will share with the
planners, will help shape the towers,

the basement foundations

and the neighborly labor
of digging,

of digging and building
our city anew.

And so, in the morning,
I may scrape out a waste dump,

figuring out how with my
pals on the job.

In my 2 p.m. gig, I may
write a paper on AIDS,
or hug and console

a stranger or friend.

My evening, perhaps, put
our heads in the oven

as we clean a community
stove,

or I may weave a poem,
or rest overlong,

or whatever seems needed
and fun

as we build our
embraceable

new global city

from the petals and
rootings of dreams.

Originally published in
*Murders most foul: Poems against
war by a World Trade Center survivor. Central
Jersey Coalition against Endless War. 2005.*

SPO

P.O. Box 5633

Portland, OR 97228

"The People's Act of Love"

by James Meek

Reviewed by Brian Plinski

Set against the backdrop of the Russian Revolution and the uncertainty that its consummation unleashed, James Meek's The People's Act of Love is an exceptionally vivid and richly informed exposition of life, love, and ideological fanaticism. Told with breathtaking eloquence and a remarkable, impassioned sympathy, Meek's story glides effortlessly between the machinations of Reds, Whites, Anarchists, Cannibals, and a sect of religious castrates, who hope to eliminate suffering by eliminating desire altogether. As well written as it is bold and evocative, this book rightfully belongs in the same breath as Anna Karenina and other Russian greats.

Historical comparisons aside, one cannot escape the sense that Meek's novel is fundamentally modern in its lament against millennial extremism in all its manifestations. For beneath all its grotesque butchery and perverse fanaticism -- "He's not a destroyer; he is destruction, leaving these good people who remain to build a better world on the ruins. What looks like an act of evil to a single person is the people's act of love to its future itself."

Meek's novel is nothing if not optimistic.