



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO
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PUBLICATION

MAY, 2013
VOLUME XXI, NO. 8

38th Annual Pancake Breakfast

Sunday June 2, 2013

8:00 a.m. — Noon

*Benefit for
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# America's response to tragedy

By **MICHAEL FELSEN**

Boston, Massachusetts – It's been a hard week for Boston. A native New Yorker, I've lived in this town for close to forty years. My wife and I raised three boys who hawked Coke and peanuts in the grandstands at Fenway Park, and cheered on the Celtics at Boston Garden. And for many years, we stood together each April and applauded the countless runners, from countless countries, who sped toward the finish line at the magnificent Boston Marathon.

Those warm memories are tarnished now. The harrowing events of last week have left us dazed by a cluster of senseless bursts of violence. Baghdad, Oklahoma City, Mumbai, Kabul, Moscow, Columbine, London, Newtown and so many other places around the globe, have been victimized by terrorizing acts of one stripe or another. Now, unhappily, Boston joins those ranks. What twisted logic could have inspired, or what hidden trauma could have impelled anyone to inflict such wanton destruction on the lives of innocents? Today, one suspect is dead and the other is hospitalized and in custody. The nagging question remains: Why?

In one sense, it really doesn't matter. Whatever the motivating force, the damage is done. The wounds are inflicted on families and communities. In every case, the acts are inexcusable. And yet, we care about "why" because we look for lessons and wonder what, if anything, we can do to prevent the next such catastrophe.

Two days after the Boston Marathon bombings, National Public Radio featured

University of Arizona psychologist Jeff Greenberg, who studies how people respond to events that force them to confront their own mortality. "When death is percolating close to consciousness, people become more 'us vs. them' — they become defensive of their belief system, positive toward those they identify with and more negative to those who espouse a different belief system," he said.

That human tendency lurks here, in the wake of last week's events. We've learned that the suspects of the heinous acts of 15 April self-identified as Muslim. In response, some have already chosen to shun, and even vilify, that entire community of faith. This despite the fact that we have already heard from Muslim leaders in Boston and beyond that these acts were crimes, pure and simple, and in no way justifiable by the Islamic faith.

Among the many lessons from the week's events is this: it's our job to prevent this kind of blaming and stigmatizing of an entire group on account of the unconscionable acts of a few. Wholesale demonization of the "other" simply can't be justified as serving the cause of security, justice, human understanding or, for that matter, any other value.

This message came through loud and clear at the interfaith memorial service held on 18 April in Boston's South End. More than two thousand gathered and listened while Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith leaders, joined by Boston's Mayor Tom Menino, Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick and President Barack Obama spoke words of comfort and inspiration.

We were reminded that we can't allow

another's hate to make haters of us; that our task is to heal and rebuild, united by our common humanity. We were reminded that our community is defined not by violence, hatred or fear, but by love and generosity, as seen, for example, in the actions of those heroic bystanders and first responders who ran toward — rather than away from — danger, and aided those injured by the explosions. And we heard this resonant theme: that the dilemma of evil is that it inspires good; in our diversity, we have been united.

Patrick recalled the words of Martin Luther King: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness — only light can do that." And Obama enjoined: "In the face of cruelty, we will choose compassion... we'll choose friendship, we'll choose love." Can any of us doubt that an outstretched hand is more likely to promote an open mind and an open heart in the "other," than a clenched fist?

We miss the point entirely if we allow the acts of extremists to force us into our own respective corners. They win if in response to their acts we poison our community, by shunning — instead of engaging — those whose culture or beliefs are different from our own.

Here in Boston — but not only here in Boston — that's a race we need to run, and win, together.

*Michael Felsen is an attorney and President of Boston Workmen's Circle, a 110-year old communal organization dedicated to secular Jewish education, culture and social justice.*

Source: Common Ground News Service,  
[www.commongroundnews.org](http://www.commongroundnews.org)

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# 31st Annual Peace Camp June 28, 29, and 30, 2013



Camp Peaceful Pines  
near Pinecrest, California



## Registration Form

Early Registration Deadline: **June 2, 2013**

### Adults (age 19 and older)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Total x \$80 ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Youth (ages 4 -18)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Total x \$60 ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Infant (ages 0 - 3) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ **NO CHARGE**

Early registration discount by June 2: subtract \$10 per person \_\_\_\_\_ (-) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I need vegetarian meals \_\_\_\_\_ Voluntary Donation for scholarships \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Special Health needs, allergies, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Special needs for cabin assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ **GRAND TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I can offer/need a ride Friday \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday \_\_\_\_\_

**There is an additional \$15 fee for each person who comes to camp without pre-registration.**

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**Modesto, CA 95353-0134**

### Parent authorization for minor children (must be signed if applicable)

I give permission for decisions to be made in my absence about the need for medical care. I give permission for my child to be treated by a physician or hospital in case of an emergency. I understand and agree that the Modesto Peace/Life Center is not responsible for my child/children. I will not hold the Modesto Peace/Life Center, its officers or leaders liable for medical aid rendered.

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: If adults bring children not their own, the parent/legal guardian of those children must complete and sign a separate parent authorization.*

For camp information and scholarship availability:  
Call Ken Schroeder, (209) 569-0321.

## Register for Peace Camp early and save!

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

Register now for Peace Camp, June 28-30 and get a \$10 discount per person. The Modesto Peace/Life Center's 31st annual camp will be at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108 in the Sierras, about 100 miles east of Modesto. Friday offers a hike for those who can leave in the morning, spend the day hiking and arrive at camp in time for dinner. Hike leaders are John Lucas and Mike Chiavetta.

Rob Brittain coordinates our Saturday workshop on economic and racial privilege. Scott Gifford, former Modesto's Fremont Open Plan teacher, returns from the North Bay to lead us in music with his guitar, some plastic recorders, cardboard Appalachian dulcimers and BoomWhacker percussion tubes. Jamming with guitars ukuleles and other instruments is welcome. If there's a favorite song that you'd like to sing around the campfire this year, let him know by email (scottgifford@sbcglobal.net) or on Facebook. Also enjoy campfires, the talent show, crafts, recreation and the beautiful mountain setting.

The \$80 fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Young people 18 and under are \$60. Early registration, by June 2nd, entitles registrants to a \$10.00 per person discount. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Registration forms are available in this issue or at <http://www.stanislausconnections.org> where they can be printed and mailed. All ages, families, singles and new campers are welcome. Minors need to be accompanied by an adult. Campers may arrive after 2:00 p.m. on Friday. The camp opens with supper at 6 p.m. on Friday and closes after the Sunday morning workshop. Directions and other information will be mailed to participants before camp. Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-569-0321.

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## First Place ~ Division III, Peace Essay Contest: Taryn Lane Oakdale Junior High School ~ Ms. Wegener Improving Air Quality

Dear Mr. President,

In today's busy world, many of our daily endeavors are taking their toll on the air. Pollution is a significant issue, especially with modern needs for transportation and energy. Air pollution has shown severe effects in both the environment and society. Pollution from fuel exhaust and smoke stacks contributes to global warming. Air pollution is also a malefactor when it comes to our health; chronic asthma is very widespread. There are several actions the federal government can take to help reduce the amount of pollution in the air.

One way that you, as the president, can help improve the air quality is by passing a law that requires car makers to produce vehicles with higher fuel efficiency standards. A car that gets 30 miles per gallon, rather than 15, will burn less fuel, therefore release less exhaust. If most people drove cars like this, the amount of fuel exhaust emitted into the air would be greatly reduced, which would help diminish pollution.

Another way the federal government can help solve this global pollution issue is by promoting solar energy as an alternative to oil and coal. You could provide tax breaks or other incentives for people and businesses that utilize solar energy. This will help decrease reliance on fossil fuels, which are a major source of pollution. In addition to promoting solar energy, you could use tax revenue to fund research and technological advances in the field of solar energy.

Mass transit systems are a third possible solution for our planet's pollution issue.

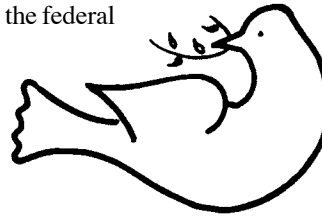
Passenger trains like Amtrak and BART are effective on

a local level, but there is a need for similar transportation between regions or even states. As the president, you can help put this plan into action by allocating federal funds toward this goal.

The primary concerns with this position include the high cost of building such an extensive mass transit system, but a small increase in taxes on everyone can generate enough revenue to cover the cost. Some might also argue that the amount of solar energy used will only make up a small percentage of America's total energy, therefore not really making a difference in the amount of pollution in the air. However, it all adds up. After all, no one expects solar energy to take over as the most common source of power, but due to an increasing need for energy, America should have greener alternatives to fossil fuels.

The issue of pollution is serious, and it has many severe consequences. However, if America takes these steps to diminish air pollution, we can create a healthier population and a more peaceful planet. The world will be a better place for future generations. By using fuel efficient vehicles, mass transit systems, and solar energy, we can help put a stop to air pollution and make sure the people of the future have clean air so they can prosper.

Sincerely,  
A Student



## SUPPORT. ADVOCACY. LOVE.

For more information on meetings, our programs, and ways you can give back to the LGBT community, visit [www.pflagmodesto.org](http://www.pflagmodesto.org)

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## 60th Annual Spring Art Show May 4 to June 13

Gala Reception May 4, Art Walk May 16

The Central California Art Association had 189 entries in the 60th Annual Spring Art Show. There are 143 accepted art works by 62 regional artists. There is a \$500 Best of Show Award, and awards in four categories: acrylic and oil; watercolor; mixed media, graphics and pastel; and 3-D. Mayor The "Mayor's Award," which will be presented by Vice-Mayor David Geer.

The Gala preview is Saturday, May 4, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., with awards presented at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20, on sale at Mistln Gallery. The Gala includes swing music, Latin and pop by Jazzoni with Tim and John. There is also a prize drawing, hors d'oeuvres and, wine tasting provided by E. & J. Gallo.

The show is free to the public from May 7 to July 13.

The non-profit Central California Art Association promotes excellence in visual arts, provides cultural experiences and promotes art education. Visit the Mistlin Gallery at 1015 J St., Modesto, 529-3369. Hours: Tuesday to Friday 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday noon to 4:00 p.m. Visit <http://www.ccartassn.org>



## Smelling the Petunias (Among Other Things)

By JENIFER WEST

(It is this writer's intention to share a personal experience in hopes that it might help someone else. Each of us must take responsibility for our own individual health, including researching any issues of concern, and consulting a health care professional as appropriate.)

I've learned that it's possible to lose a sense so gradually that one doesn't actually notice until it's pretty much gone. This is particularly true with the sense of smell, which is, of course, inextricably linked to the ability to taste. For years, I attributed my diminishing ability to smell things to having worked with some nasty chemicals during a brief stint repairing musical instruments. And I didn't even realize that my sense of taste was waning, as well.



Losing the ability to smell was odd – somewhat like losing one's hearing: I might be aware of some scents that weren't particularly strong, yet completely unable to detect others that were overpowering to others. I recall being at the nursery once, looking at things for our yard. Recently, I realized I'd pretty much lost the ability to smell altogether. And I would have just accepted it and carried on, except for something I came across in researching

sourdough starters (natural yeast), of all things.

"Un-soaked" grains contain a mineral salt called phytate, which binds with zinc, iron, calcium and magnesium – making them unavailable to the body. But the phytate, apparently, binds with as much of these minerals in our digestive tracts as possible, robbing us of these nutrients from other foods, as well. This, in turn, can cause mineral deficiencies – including zinc. And zinc is used in many processes and functions – including the senses of smell and taste – so a deficiency can cause a wide variety of symptoms. Common ones include: alopecia (hair loss); skin problems, including eczema, psoriasis, acne, rashes and dandruff; loss of appetite, weight loss; loss of vision or changes in vision; poor or stunted growth; recurring infections, slow-healing wounds; loss of sense of smell or taste; behavioral and sleep disturbances, hyperactivity, depression; allergies, sensitivities; digestive problems,

such as diarrhea and inflammatory bowel disease; loss of sex drive; mild anemia; pre-eclampsia (toxemia) in pregnancy, post-natal depression; reduced fertility; and white spots on fingernails, poor nail growth.

Groups that tend to be at risk for zinc deficiency include people who have difficulty digesting and absorbing foods (those with ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, malabsorption syndrome and other digestive challenges), vegetarians, pregnant and lactating women, people with sickle cell disease, the elderly, and alcoholics.

Unfortunately, there isn't really a blood or other test to detect a zinc deficiency. In my case, it was glaringly obvious. If you suspect you may be deficient in this mineral, please discuss it with your doctor. Fortunately, the symptoms are generally reversible. My own personal experience has shown me that the symptoms of even a long-standing zinc deficiency can begin to diminish almost immediately.

(The good news is that soaking grains in an acidic medium, such as natural yeast (sourdough), deactivates the phytate, and may even transform it so that it actually has anti-oxidant and other positive nutritional benefits.)

And oh, how lovely, that first scent of flowers, brownies baking, and even unleaded gas! I'm not really sure how long it's been since I was really aware of all the scents around me. But I do know that, within a day or two of beginning a zinc supplement, I noticed a sweet scent (took a few minutes before I realized it was my niece's shampoo!). I don't even remember the last time that happened! Slowly, magically, I'm regaining my sense of smell. Wow – a sharp, pungent onion, covered in damp earth. And the sweet, spicy fragrance of petunias, wafting through the garden! I was shocked to realize that it'd been so long since I'd been aware of that distinctive scent, I actually didn't recognize it at first – had to follow it to the source, before I realized what it was.

The best part of all – flavor nuances I didn't even realize I'd been missing. I remember the exact moment it hit me – a bite of salmon, sparked with lemon juice – sharp sourness, balanced by the delicately sweet, yet pungent, fish – an explosion of flavor!

My goal in sharing all of this is to help anyone else who might be living with the symptoms of zinc deficiency, without realizing what might actually be going on. Again, please consult your health care professional with any health concerns. But if you have been losing your sense of smell (and taste) because of a zinc deficiency, the world around you could very well get a whole lot more interesting!

[Petunia photo courtesy of [thankyouall blog](http://thankyouall.blogspot.com); [shukriyaapka.wordpress.com](http://shukriyaapka.wordpress.com)]

## Green Tips for a Green Planet: Plastic food storage and utensils-what to use?

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

We are in a long process at our house of remodeling our 37-year-old kitchen, and since we have at least 2 or 3 kitchens worth of kitchenware, we are taking a serious look at what to keep and what to send on to new homes. Our main green focus is plastic food storage containers.

Our research shows there are many safe alternatives to avoiding unhealthy chemicals found in some plastic kitchenware:

- Containers with recycling numbers 2, 4 or 5 (found in the triangle at the bottom of plastic containers) are considered safe for food storage. Avoid numbers 3 and 7, which often contain BPA (bisphenol A) or phthalates (used in making PVC plastics), chemicals that act like estrogen and can interfere with hormone levels and are especially harmful to developing bodies. Canada and the European Union have banned BPA and PVC in baby bottles, but here in the US look for BPA-free and PVC-free plastic food containers.
- Gradually shift from safe plastics to glass containers with glass lids. BPA and PVC-free lids are user friendly for short term storage.
- Never use plastic containers to reheat foods, especially take-out containers. Even "safe" plastics may contain possible harmful chemicals, which can leech onto food that is in direct contact with them when heated.
- Hand wash plastics in lukewarm water. Unfortunately, like heating in a microwave, the high heat and steam used in dishwashers can also release harmful chemicals.
- Use and reuse green-friendly re-usable kitchen supplies and plastic outdoor and picnic plates and utensils. Heavier plastic-ware can be washed and reused, and plastic-ware made from recyclable and bio-compostable materials is now available.

We were happy to discover that we did not have to toss all our plastic food storage or kitchenware, and we are pleased we can pass along these plastic-ware tips to you. Enjoy your green-friendly kitchen, and have a healthy and happy picnic and outdoor entertaining season!



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# Solange Altman and the Coalition for the Dream Act Deferred

*Solange Altman, along with Homero Mejia, presented a workshop on immigration at the Modesto Peace/Life Center's 2012 Peace Camp. They explained the plight of undocumented immigrants and their families and promoted the Dream Act Deferred campaign in Stanislaus County which was getting under way that summer. In her statement Solange relates how she was inspired by Dick Gregory when he was the 2012 speaker at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration. She made the following remarks upon receiving an award as an Outstanding Woman of Stanislaus County on March 16, 2013.*

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of the women being honored this evening. When I came in and looked at the posters of past recipients, I saw Peggy Mensinger, Marsena Buck, Myrtle Osner and Nancy Smith. These women were and are my heroines. Never, ever did I think I would be part of a group of such outstanding women. I am humbled.

I would also like to thank the Commission. In recognizing me you recognize that immigrants are important. They rise before all of us and retire long after we do. They do the work that Marge Piercy described as "common as mud." They are not invisible. The work they do is important, and they are a vital part of our community.

The reason I am being given this award is largely because of the recent work I have done with youth applying for Deferred Action, and I want to take some time to explain to you how that all came about.

After I started my immigration practice I was contacted on all too many occasions by a school administrator, teacher, coach or member of the clergy who was calling to tell me about some amazing athlete, brilliant student, or compassionate church youth who had just gotten into his/her dream school, but would not be able to attend because s/he was undocumented. They would ask, "Can you talk to them to see if there is something you can do to make them legal?"

So I would meet with them. And their stories went something like this. When I was six months old my mother handed

me to a coyote (alien smuggler) who brought me across the border. My sister and I were 7 and 8 when we were strapped into the back seat of a car with people we barely knew, driven hundreds of miles, terrified we were being kidnapped and that we would never see our parents. I was 5 when I walked behind my mother through the Arizona desert because she could no longer take my father's abuse.

The choice to come here was not theirs. The decision to break the law was not theirs. They were innocent. Yet they are being forced to suffer the consequences of decisions made



...at some point in our lives  
we are all uniquely situated to  
make a moral difference in the  
life of an individual, a group or  
the community, and, when the  
moment arrived, to have the  
courage to respond to the call  
for action.

for them. To be denied a social security card may not seem important, but without one an individual has no legal identity in our society.

I thought of the cases I had studied in law school where illegitimate children were denied rights and benefits because of circumstances that were not their doing. Just as it had been wrong to punish illegitimate children, it is wrong to punish these undocumented kids. This is not just!

In virtually every case, there was nothing I could do for these youth. Congress has refused to provide the legal tools needed to provide them legal status. While I could do nothing for them, I vowed to myself that I would never forget them.

Then last June President Obama announced that he would grant Deferred Action to certain youth like the kids I had seen. Deferred Action would grant them protection from deportation for 2 years, a work permit which would lead to a social security number and a drivers license.

Upon hearing the announcement I thought back to something that I had heard civil rights leader, Dick Gregory, say in a presentation months before. He said something to the effect that at some point in our lives we are all uniquely situated to make a moral difference in the life of an individual, a group or the community, and, when the moment arrived, to have the courage to respond to the call for action. Thinking back on this I decided I wasn't going to wait for these kids to come to me, I was going to reach out to them.

So I called some friends. We convened a group made up of Maggie Mejia of the Latino Community Roundtable, Homero Mejia of Congregations Building Community, Yamilet Vallodolid of El Concilio, Teresa Guerrero of the Parent Institute for Quality Education, Roberto Serrato of Ceres Unified, Dave Tucker, Linda Legace, Kathy Conrotto of the Unitarian Universalists, Maria Jaime & William Broderick Villa of the Curtis Legal Group, with support from the Central Valley Democratic Club and the Peace Life Center. And the Coalition for Dream Act Deferred of Stanislaus County was born.

Then we went to work. First we held a series of forums to educate the community. I addressed about 1,000 people about the change in the law that was coming. Then we held a series of legal workshops that helped almost 500 youth apply for Deferred Action without having to pay attorneys fees. We solicited volunteers and 150 people came forward from all walks of life to serve as paralegals. I may have been the spark plug and the designer of the legal framework for these workshops, but these volunteers were the moving parts of the engine, and Yamilet Vallodolid was the gasoline that made the vehicle go forward.

I am honored that you want to give me this award, but I have to say that the greatest satisfaction of doing this was helping kids like Jose Paredes, an outstanding student from Oakdale High School, who was accepted to U. C. Berkeley, his dream school. But he couldn't go because he is undocumented, and would not be able to get financial aid. So Jose is at CSU Stanislaus. Now he doesn't have to worry about being deported. He can work and drive legally. He is on his way to achieving his goal of being a doctor. When he reaches that goal, and we know he will, he will be here to serve our community.

So I'm going to accept this award on behalf of the Coalition for Dream Act Deferred, but I will take custody and control of it. It will hang in my office, but I will grant liberal visitation privileges to anyone who wants to see it.

One last thing. I would be remiss if I didn't thank those who have supported me. My husband Steve --- you are my rock --- you are the one who told me to stay focused on immigration law and didn't let me get distracted with other causes which I am prone to do; my kids Nicholas and Tatiana --- thank you for loving Kraft macaroni and cheese which made it easy to feed you before rushing off to all those meetings. You two are my proudest achievements. And finally and most importantly to my father Jack, rest in peace, a Portuguese immigrant who, even when he didn't have much, always found a way to help other immigrants. You always believed in me. You always encouraged me. You were the inspiration for the Coalition for Dream (D), Act (A), Deferred (D).

Thank you.

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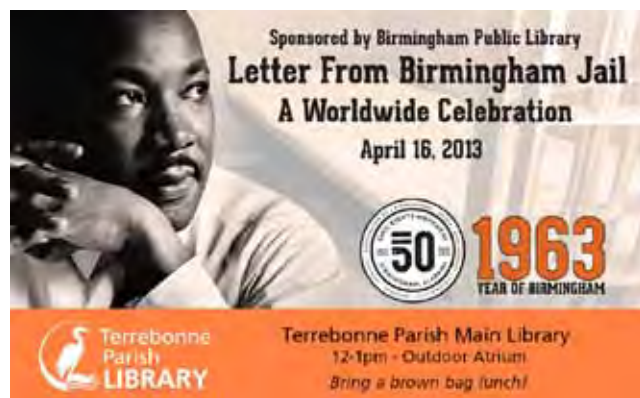


## Reading Dr. King's "Letter From the Birmingham Jail"

On Tuesday, April 16, 2013, Modesto Junior College commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the day in 1963 when Martin Luther King, Jr. began writing his famous "Letter From the Birmingham Jail."

The letter shows the depth of Dr. King's faith and underscores the central role of nonviolence in his vision of social change. The civil disobedience campaign in Birmingham, Alabama and what King wrote in his letter helped our nation begin to heal the wounds of racial prejudice. MJC was one of over 240 places around the U.S. and the world where the commemoration took place.

The project was initiated by the Public Library in Birmingham. Locally, the reading was sponsored by the college's Civic Engagement Project, the Literature and Language Arts Division, and the Black Student Union. Nearly 100 students, faculty, staff, and people from our area community participated by reading and listening.



MJC student reads from the 'Letter.' Photo: James Costello

## Excerpts from "Letter From Birmingham Jail"

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct-action campaign that was "well timed" in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never." We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward gaining political independence, but we stiff creep at horse-and-buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, "Wait." But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can't go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son who is asking: "Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?"; when you take a cross-country drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading "white" and "colored"; when your first name becomes "nigger," your middle name becomes "boy" (however old you are) and your last name becomes "John," and your wife and mother are never given the respected title "Mrs."; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you go forever fighting a degenerating sense of "nobodiness"—then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the

cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.

\* \* \*

I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of

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direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection. I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and that when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress. I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that the present tension in the South is a necessary phase of the transition from an obnoxious negative peace, in which the Negro passively accepted his unjust plight, to a substantive and positive peace, in which all men will respect the dignity and worth of human personality. Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open, where it can be seen and dealt with. Like a boil that can never be cured so long as it is covered up but must be opened with all its ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must be exposed, with all the tension its exposure creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured. . . .

I had also hoped that the white moderate would reject the myth concerning time in relation to the struggle for freedom. I have just received a letter from a white brother in Texas. He writes: "All Christians know that the colored people will receive equal rights eventually, but it is possible that you are

EXCERPTS. . . . . cont. next page

## Excerpts from “Letter From Birmingham Jail”

from page 6

in too great a religious hurry. It has taken Christianity almost two thousand years to accomplish what it has. The teachings of Christ take time to come to earth.” Such an attitude stems from a tragic misconception of time, from the strangely rational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually, time itself is neutral; it can be used either destructively or constructively. More and more I feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than have the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy and transform our pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity.

But though I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist, as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Was not Amos an extremist for justice: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” Was



not Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel: “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Was not Martin Luther an extremist: “Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God.” And John Bunyan: “I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience.” And Abraham Lincoln: “This nation cannot survive half slave and

half free.” And Thomas Jefferson: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal ...” So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice? In that dramatic scene on Calvary’s hill three men were crucified. We must never forget that all three were crucified for the same crime—the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thus fell below their environment. The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, truth and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment. Perhaps the South, the nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists.

I had hoped that the white moderate would see this need. Perhaps I was too optimistic; perhaps I expected too much. I suppose I should have realized that few members of the oppressor race can understand the deep groans and passionate yearnings of the oppressed race, and still fewer have the vision to see that injustice must be rooted out by strong, persistent and determined action.

Text of the complete Letter can be found at [http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated\\_letter\\_from\\_birmingham/](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/)

## Random Acts of Outrage

By JOHN MCCUTCHEON

Yesterday marked the 45th Anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. I remember the day well, a sophomore in high school who followed King’s outrageous and challenging call to non-violent resistance with all the incredulity and wonderment that a 15-year-old could muster. I recalled a speech he gave in 1965 particularly vividly...

“We cannot in all good conscience obey your unjust laws because non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good. So do to us what you will, and we will still love you. But be ye assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And one day, we will win our freedom. We will not only win freedom for ourselves. We will so appeal to your heart and your conscience that we will win you in the process.”

During the current debate about guns and society, Rush Limbaugh said that John Lewis and King would have been better served and protected during the Selma March if they’d been armed. But if the Civil Rights Movement had been an armed rebellion, it would have never lasted a week. Because everyone would have been killed. What King taught us is if you want to defeat The Man, you have to fight The Man with weapons he does not understand. As impossible as it seemed at the time, they did and they won. Let’s not mistake the fact that no victory is final or complete, but we’ve moved the rock a little further up the hill, no doubt.

Therein lies a challenge for us today, still echoing in King’s words. He understood that the rock had to go up the hill. We had to push it ourselves. It’s hard. It’s gonna take time. And, as he said the night before he died, “I may not get there with

you, but I have seen the Promised Land.”

We live in an era of short-term answers to long-term questions. Immediate gratification, dodging the “fiscal cliff,” the quick fix, the Big Lotto...that’s what we’re fed. No one has the courage to challenge us because no one believes we’ll listen or rise to the quest.

Real change requires real work. We can keep putting band aids on the economy, the Middle East, income inequity, gun violence and mental health issues, and more. Change doesn’t come with a newly-passed law and with a court decision. Change comes when hearts are moved, when we heed the call to the “better angels of our nature.” It feels counter-intuitive and naive today. But it’s always the crazy folks who are the harbingers of mass movements. The college kids sitting in at lunch counters, covered with food and bruises. The seamstress refusing to give us her seat. The nameless people on the news attacked by dogs and fire hoses. They wore us down with their capacity to suffer. And they showed us a way to affect change without reaching for the gun.

So as we fight injustice we also fight our own impatience. Impatience, that tempts us to seek the quick fix rather than real change. Whether it be voting rights, rights of marriage and inheritance, whatever...it takes time, sacrifice, and the long memory. We are not the first, nor are we the last. And those who came before us, like Dr. King, still show us that we can, do, and will change. “The arc of the Moral Universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”

John McCutcheon returns in concert to Modesto on Jan. 14, 2014. Visit John’s website at <http://www.folkmusic.com>

### Robbed

The dangerous people are not the ones  
Who hit you with clubs and rob you with guns;  
The thief won’t attack your character traits  
Or belittle your abilities to your face!  
It likely will be a well-meaning friend  
Who merely crushes your will to win.  
No, he doesn’t rob you, at point of gun,  
He simply says, “It can’t be done.”  
When pointed to thousands who already are  
He smiles and says, “They’re superior!  
Personality-wise, and abilities, too,  
They’re way ahead of what others can do!”  
It matters not that his words are untrue  
For, you feel “others” must know you!  
So, you’re robbed of your hopes, your  
dreams to succeed,  
Robbed of the material blessings received,  
Robbed of your faith that says, “I can,”  
And robbed by an ignorant, gunless friend.  
So, the deadliest of men is not he with a gun,  
But the one who tells you, “It can’t be done!”  
For that taken by burglars can be gotten again,  
But, what can replace your will to win?

— Kitty Chappell, Ojai, California.



# Report of The Constitution Project's Task Force on Detainee Treatment

Excerpted and edited from the report. The complete report and its recommendations are available at <http://detainee taskforce.org/newsroom/multimedia/>

*The Constitution Project is a national watchdog group that advances bipartisan, consensus-based solutions to some of the most difficult constitutional challenges of our time.*

*The Constitution Project's blue-ribbon Task Force was charged with providing the American people with a broad understanding of what is known - and what may still be unknown - about the past and current treatment of suspected terrorists detained by the U.S. government during the Clinton, Bush and Obama administrations.*

*This report is the product of more than two years of research, analysis and deliberation. It is based on a thorough examination of available public records and interviews with more than 100 people, including former detainees, military and intelligence officers, interrogators and policymakers. It is the most comprehensive record of detainee treatment across multiple administrations and multiple geographic theatres - Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantanamo and the so-called "black sites" - yet published.*

## Selected General Findings and Recommendations

**Finding #1:** U.S. forces, in many instances, used interrogation techniques on detainees that constitute torture. American personnel conducted an even larger number of interrogations that involved cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Both categories of actions violate U.S. laws and international treaties. Such conduct was directly counter to values of the Constitution and our nation.

**Finding #2:** The nation's most senior officials, through some of their actions and failures to act in the months and years immediately following the September 11 attacks, bear ultimate responsibility for allowing and contributing to the spread of illegal and improper interrogation techniques used by some U.S. personnel on detainees in several theaters. Responsibility also falls on other government officials and certain military leaders.

**Finding #3:** There is no firm or persuasive evidence that the widespread use of harsh interrogation techniques by U.S. forces produced significant information of value. There is substantial evidence that much of the information adduced from the use of such techniques was not useful or reliable.

**Finding #4:** The continued indefinite detention of many prisoners at Guantanamo should be addressed.

**Finding #5:** The United States has not sufficiently followed the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission to engage its friends to develop a common coalition approach toward the detention and humane treatment of captured terrorists.

**Finding #6:** Lawyers in the Justice Departments Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) repeatedly gave erroneous legal

sanction to certain activities that amounted to torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in violation of U.S. and international law, and in doing so, did not properly serve their clients: the president and the American people.

**Finding #7:** Since September 11, the Justice Departments Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) failed, at times, to give sufficient weight to the input of many at the Department of Defense, the FBI, and the State Department with extensive and relevant expertise on legal matters pertaining to detainee treatment.

**Finding #8:** Since the Carter administration, the Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) has published some opinions, a practice that continues to this day. Transparency is vital to the effective functioning of a democracy. It is also vital that the president, during his or her presidency, be able to rely on confidential legal advice.

**Finding #9:** It is the view of the Task Force that the United States has violated its international legal obligations in its practice of the enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention of terror suspects in secret prisons abroad.

**Finding #10:** The Task Force finds that diplomatic assurances that suspects would not be tortured by the receiving countries proved unreliable in several notable rendition cases, although the full extent of diplomatic assurances obtained is still unknown. The Task Force believes that ample evidence existed regarding the practices of the receiving countries that rendered individuals were more likely than not to be tortured.

**Finding #11:** The Task Force finds that U.S. officials involved with detention in the black sites committed acts of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

**Finding #12:** After September 11, 2001, psychologists affiliated with U.S. intelligence agencies helped create interrogation techniques for use in questioning detainees. The methods were judged to be legal by the Department of Justices Office of Legal Counsel (OLC), but the Task Force has found that many of them constituted torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

**Finding #13:** Medical professionals, including physicians and psychologists, in accordance with Department of Defense and intelligence agency operating policies, participated variously in interrogations by monitoring certain interrogations, providing or allowing to be provided medical information on detainees to interrogators, and not reporting abuses.

**Finding #14:** Prior to September 11, 2001, ethical principles and standards of conduct for U.S. physicians regarding military detainees included prohibition against involvement in torture, monitoring or being present during torture, or providing medical care to facilitate torture. From 2006 to 2008, after information was available on the treatment of detainees, additional medical professional ethical principles and guidance were established by medical associations, including the duty to report abuses and prohibitions against conducting or participating in or being present during interrogations, and

providing detainees medical information to interrogators.

**Finding #15:** After September 11, 2001, military psychologists and physicians were instructed that they were relieved of the obligation to comply with nonmilitary ethical principles, and in some cases their military roles were redefined as non-health professional combatants.

**Finding #16:** For detainee hunger strikers, DOD operating procedures called for practices and actions by medical professionals that were contrary to established medical and professional ethical standards, including improper coercive involuntary feedings early in the course of hunger strikes that, when resisted, were accomplished by physically forced nasogastric tube feedings of detainees who were completely restrained.

**Finding #17:** It is the view of the Task Force that it is harmful for the United States to release detainees without clear policies or practices in place for the re-introduction of those individuals into the societies of the countries of release.

**Finding #18:** (see online report).

**Finding #19:** The high level of secrecy surrounding the rendition and torture of detainees since September 11 cannot continue to be justified on the basis of national security.

**Finding #20:** The Convention Against Torture, in addition to prohibiting all acts of torture, requires that states ensure in their legal system that the victim of an act of torture obtains redress and has an enforceable right to fair and adequate compensation. The United States has not complied with this requirement, in large part because of the governments repeated, successful invocation of the state-secrets privilege in lawsuits brought by torture victims.

**Finding #21:** The Convention Against Torture requires each state party to criminalize all acts of torture, attempts to commit torture, or complicity or participation in torture, and proceed to a prompt and impartial investigation, wherever there is reasonable ground to believe that an act of torture has been committed in any territory under its jurisdiction. The United States cannot be said to have complied with this requirement.

**Finding #22:** The Obama administrations standards for interrogation are set forth in the Army Field Manual on Interrogation. In 2006, a small handful of changes were introduced to the Manual that weakened some of its key legal protections.

**Finding #23:** Detainees transfer from United States custody to the custody of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) in Afghanistan has resulted in their torture. The United States has a legal obligation under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture not to transfer detainees to NDS custody unless it can verify that they are not likely to be tortured as a result.

**Finding #24:** (see online report at <http://detainee taskforce.org/newsroom/multimedia/>)



## Less and Less

I have more and more days when I pay less and less attention  
to the erstwhile experts spouting their cant, sliding their  
phenomenal plans for strategic advances in the next  
country they intend to bomb, the talking heads  
that litter air waves, waving the flag for  
special interests. More and more I retreat  
to my country life with strains of banjo  
amid the bird song, checking in now  
and then to see what those with  
less and less sense  
are doing.

## Unsterile Environment

Around the globe the wind swirls  
in soft gusts and monsoons carrying particles  
of the quick and the dead  
to our lungs, into our cells,  
making us all, as long as we live —  
and thereafter—part of each other.

We all breathe—no exceptions—recycled air:  
nomad's sweat swept on a desert wind, bull elks  
panting in the clash of rut, the last squawk  
of a chicken caught in owl talons, a sick  
old man's groan. And star jasmine wafting  
on a summer night, pine branches broken under snow,  
a packed-diapered baby's howl of rage.

I smile at the new mother  
who wraps her infant against the warm breeze,  
double-boils his bottles of water,  
wards off big family kisses,  
as if the baby weren't already  
inhaling the second-hand breath of the world.

Published in *Moondance*, 2003

## Lost on the Vina Plains

with thanks to Willa Cather

Here the earth is the floor of the sky, strewn  
with rubble nodded over by wildflowers.  
Their petals meld into cobalt  
blue as the vault above.  
Over broken lava, foot-twisting stone,  
the teasing fragrance of some unknown  
herb mixes with sun-stoked earth in a brew  
neither witch nor angel could know.  
We sip the air with mouths wide open,  
heads thrown back, eyes wild. Heedless  
of gnats drawn to the moist mucous-cave.  
Soles of our feet welded to planet-skin,  
all other molecules strain to the light.  
Arm hair trembles in the movement of spheres.  
Weightless, we are lost in the sun.

Published in *Tule Review*, Spring 2001

## Women in Black: September 11, 2002

Alone on the north steps of the Capitol  
in Sacramento a woman stands—a dark pool of quiet  
in the sea of speeches and songs.

People gather on wide stairs,  
in scattered dots on the broad green,  
by a microphone installed for politicians  
clearing their throats, eager to speak.  
People light candles.

The woman stands in silence,  
dressed in black, veil covering her face.  
Another woman, also in black, mounts the steps,  
sets down her purse.

She, too, drapes black over her head,  
assumes a comfortable stance, folds her hands.  
Their only greeting a small sad smile  
one to the other.

Within minutes a dozen more Women in Black  
cluster near the first one, each covered head  
like the rest.

For some the silence comes easily,  
they meditate in full public view.  
Some twitch and wriggle, think of lists,  
worry about who will take the kids to soccer.

One, giggly with nerves, whispers  
to the large woman beside her,  
is gently hushed by a head turned aside.

A small boy in a red 49ers shirt stops,  
fetches his brother, stares at faces hidden behind silk.  
A street musician strums a few chords, ambles  
back to the sidewalk, singing.

Eyes wide and stricken, a man in a worn suit halts.  
His companion stumbles on her platform heels,  
mutters a curse, grabs his arm and yanks.  
Policemen glance at the women, see no threat, look away.

For an hour in the noontime sun, in their black  
clothes and silence, the women witness  
for all mothers their sorrow at the death  
of even one innocent out in the rain  
of bullets and blood.

Published in *Poets Against The War*, Feb. 2003



## Patricia Wellingham-Jones uses writing to heal her world

Patricia Wellingham-Jones is a former  
psychology researcher and writer/editor with  
an interest in healing writing and the benefits  
of writing and reading work together. Widely  
published in poetry and nonfiction, she has been  
published in *Song of the San Joaquin*, *Snail Mail  
Review*, *Quercus Review*, writes for the review  
department of *Recovering the Self: a journal of  
hope and healing*, has ten chapbooks of poetry,  
and has led a writing workshop on the banks of  
the Tuolumne River in Modesto.



# In praise of emotion

By URI AVNERY

IT WAS a moving experience. Moments that spoke not only to the mind, but also – and foremost – to the heart.

Last Sunday, on the eve of Israel's Remembrance Day for the fallen in our wars, I was invited to an event organized by the activist group Combatants for Peace and the Forum of Israeli and Palestinian Bereaved Parents.

The first surprise was that it took place at all. In the general atmosphere of discouragement of the Israeli peace camp after the recent elections, when almost no one dared even to mention the word peace, such an event was heartening.

The second surprise was its size. It took place in one of the biggest halls in the country, Hangar 10 in Tel-Aviv's fair grounds. It holds more than 2000 seats. A quarter of an hour before the starting time, attendance was depressingly sparse. Half an hour later, it was chock full. (Whatever the many virtues of the peace camp, punctuality is not among them.)

The third surprise was the composition of the audience. There were quite a lot of white-haired old-timers, including myself, but the great majority was composed of young people, at least half of them young women. Energetic, matter-of-fact youngsters, very Israeli.

I felt as if I was in a relay race. My generation passing the baton on to the next. The race continues.

BUT THE outstanding feature of the event was, of course, its content. Israelis and Palestinians were mourning together for their dead sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, victims of the conflict and wars, occupation and resistance (a.k.a. terror.)

An Arab villager spoke quietly of his daughter, killed by a soldier on her way to school. A Jewish mother spoke of her soldier son, killed in one of the wars. All in a subdued voice. Without pathos. Some spoke Hebrew, some Arabic.

They spoke of their first reaction after their loss, the feelings of hatred, the thirst for revenge. And then the slow change of heart. The understanding that the parents on the other side, the Enemy, felt exactly like them, that their loss, their mourning, their bereavement was exactly as their own.

For years now, bereaved parents of both sides have been meeting regularly to find solace in each other's company. Among all the peace groups acting in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they are, perhaps, the most heart-lifting.

IT WAS not easy for the Arab partners to get to this meeting. At first, they were denied permission by the army to enter Israel. Gabi Lasky, the indomitable advocate of many peace groups (including Gush Shalom), had to threaten with an application to the Supreme Court, just to obtain a limited concession: 45 Palestinians from the West Bank were allowed to attend.

(It is a routine measure of the occupation: before every Jewish holiday the West Bank is completely cut off from Israel – except for the settlers, of course. This is how most Palestinians become acquainted with Jewish holidays.)

What was so special about the event was that the Israeli-Arab fraternization took place on a purely human level, without political speeches, without the slogans which have become, frankly, a bit stale.

For two hours, we were all engulfed by human emotions, by a profound feeling for each other. And it felt good.

I AM writing this to make a point that I feel very strongly about: the importance of emotions in the struggle for peace.

I am not a very emotional person myself. But I am acutely conscious of the place of emotions in the political struggle. I am proud of having coined the phrase "In politics, it is irrational to ignore the irrational." Or, if you prefer, "in politics, it is rational to accept the irrational."

This is a major weakness of the Israeli peace movement. It is exceedingly rational – indeed, perhaps too rational. We can easily prove that Israel needs peace, that without peace we are doomed to become an apartheid state, if not worse.

All over the world, leftists are more sober than rightists. When the leftists are propounding a logical argument for peace, reconciliation with former enemies, social equality and help for the disadvantaged, the rightists answer with a volley of emotional and irrational slogans.

But masses of people are not moved by logic. They are moved by their feelings.

One expression of feelings – and a generator of feelings – is the language of songs. One

can gauge the intensity of a movement by its melodies. Who can imagine the marches of Martin Luther King without "We shall overcome"? Who can think about the Irish struggle without its many beautiful songs? Or the October revolution without its host of rousing melodies?

The Israeli peace movement has produced one single song: a sad appeal of the dead to the living. Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated within minutes of singing it, its blood-stained text found on his body. But all the many writers and composers of the peace movement have not produced one single rousing anthem – while the hate-mongers can draw on a wealth of religious and nationalist hymns.

IT IS said that one does not have to like one's adversary in order to make peace with them. One makes peace with the enemy, as we all have declaimed hundreds of times. The enemy is the person you hate.

I have never quite believed in that, and the older I get, the less I do.

True, one cannot expect millions of people on both sides to love each other. But the core of peace-makers, the pioneers, cannot fulfill their tasks if there is not an element of mutual sympathy between them.

A certain type of Israeli peace activist does not accept this truism. Sometimes one has the feeling that they truly want peace – but not really with the Arabs. They love peace, because they love themselves. They stand before a mirror and tell themselves: Look how wonderful I am! How humane! How moral!

I remember how much animosity I aroused in certain progressive circles when I created our peace symbol: the crossed flags of Israel and Palestine. When one of us raised this emblem at a Peace Now demonstration in the late eighties, it caused a scandal. He was rudely asked to leave, and the movement publicly apologized.

To give an impetus to a real peace movement, you have to imbue it with the spirit of empathy for the other side. You must have a feeling for their humanity, their culture, their narrative, their aspirations, their fears, their hopes. And that applies, of course, to both sides.

Nothing can be more damaging to the chances of peace than the activity of fanatical pro-Israelis and pro-Palestinians abroad, who think that they are helping their preferred side by demonizing the other. You don't make peace with demons.

FRATERNIZATION BETWEEN Palestinians and Israelis is a must. No peace movement can succeed without it.

And here we came to a painful paradox: the more this fraternization is needed, the less there is.

During the last few years, there has been a growing estrangement between the two sides. Yasser Arafat was very conscious of the need for contact, and did much to further it. (I constantly urged him to do more.) Since his death, this effort has receded.

On the Israeli side, peace efforts have become less and less popular. Fraternization takes place every week in Bil'in and on many other battlefields, but the major peace organizations are not too eager to meet.

On the Palestinian side there is a lot of resentment, a (justified) feeling that the Israeli peace movement has not delivered. Worse, that joint public meetings could be considered by the Palestinian masses as a form of "normalization" with Israel, something like collaboration with the enemy.

This must be changed. Only large-scale, public and heartfelt cooperation between the peace movements of the two sides can convince the public – on both sides – that peace is possible.

THESE THOUGHTS were running through my head as I listened to the simple words of Palestinians and Israelis in that big remembrance meeting.

It was all there: the spirit, the emotion, the empathy, the cooperation.

It was a human moment. That's how it all starts.

From <http://www.avner-news.co.il/english/index.html>





# Folk Clubs in the UK

By DANIEL NESTLERODE

One of the enjoyable differences between the UK and the US has been my introduction to and participation in folk clubs. Pennsylvania lacked any such thing when I was growing up, and if California had any before I left last year it would have been news to me.

The creation and development of British folk clubs owes a bit of a debt to the public house. Most villages have at least one public house. [Actually, that should be "had at least one public house." But that's another story.] At a public house --also known as a pub-- you can have a pint of ale, sit by the fire, and chat with your neighbors. Most pubs have a function room that in former decades was free to use with the publican's permission.

In the 1960s when England was rediscovering its musical roots, most pubs hosted a new type of club dedicated to the preservation and proliferation of those musical roots. Generally, these were and are called folk clubs. The local folk club usually has between 20 and 100 members and is often run by committee. The committee chooses the acts and sets the yearly performance calendar.

The performance calendar generally consists of concerts, sessions, and open stages. Open stages are exactly like open mikes in the US. Usually anyone wishing to perform at an open stage shows up a bit early and asks for a floor spot. These are granted without hesitation. Sometimes a given folk club will wish to limit the number of acts at an open stage in order to give the performers a bit of time beyond the usual 2 song limit. And often these folk clubs publicize the names of open stage performers in advance. In this case, the performer will need to contact the

folk club in advance to schedule a slot.

Sessions, sometimes called song circles or "round the room" nights, are evenings devoted to sharing music rather than performing it. The choice of song rotates around the room from person to person. Participants bring an instrument or sing a capella. You can get anything from a budding songwriter to an experienced traditional singer, and everything in between without much respect to genre. If someone chooses a song you can play along with, accompaniment is often welcome. But generally the person choosing the song will play solo.

A concert will have a support act and a headline act. In American parlance the support act would be the opening act. Usually this is local artist or group making the transition from open stage regular to headliner. Sometimes the folk club will have a few open stage regulars support the headliner. These choices depend on the club's philosophy and purpose.

The headliner is someone who is generally touring the island trying to make a go of a musical career. Headliners usually have at least one full

length CD under their belts. They have developed at open stages, progressed to support act, and probably have recorded an EP before taking on the challenge of recording a full CD. This process usually last at least a couple of years.

The cost of putting on concerts can be subsidized by arts grants and is often supported by admissions paid to open stage



nights. Thus the price to see a name act, like Martin Carthy or John Rebound, can be as low as £10.00, about \$15.00.

The best part about the folk club is not that there are a few sprinkled hither and yon. The best part about the folk club is that every village with a willing set of participants has one. This means that touring artists can count on having a gig most nights of the week if they want it, and that the distance between gigs can be as short as a half hour's drive.

In California, a performer would need to book gigs at least 3 times farther apart in order to avoid shorting their audience draw. In other words, people on California are willing

to go farther to see a performer than people in England. So performers in the US need to guess at the size of that distance in order to make sure they get as many people as possible at one gig. Otherwise they end up asking their audience to choose between two venues and then the performer plays two smaller shows instead of one larger one.

Social and cultural practice with regard to driving and seeing live music here in England make it possible to play gigs much closer together, even though England itself is only a little larger than California. For example, the Cambridge area has the Cambridge Folk Club, the Portland Arms Folk Club, Royston Folk Club, St. Neots Folk Club, and the Milkmaid Folk Club in Bury St. Edmunds. At the same time, pubs in the area host sessions and open stages without using the auspices of a folk club.

Collectively, British folk clubs are an excellent way to nurture local talent and keep the tradition of live acoustic performances alive. They are so successful that the venerable BBC pays attention to the movement by hosting a weekly hour-long folk show on BBC2. BBC2 also hosts an award show for Folk artists called the BBC2 Folk Awards.

I don't know if folk clubs would work in California. I suspect that most Californians, who are not already participating in something similar like the California Bluegrass Association, are not of a mind to take up the challenge. But think of the community building advantages. With a safe place to start, many people who would otherwise shun public performance might feel welcome and supported instead of like they were going a long way out on a limb. Who knows? You may have the next Joan Baez in your town!

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