

Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO
PEACE/LIFE
CENTER
PUBLICATION

NOVEMBER, 2010
VOLUME XXIII, NO. 3

2nd Annual Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference a success!

By MIKE & JANA CHIAVETTA

"I learned how much I can do for my community, and now I will."

"A lot of people were able to get together for something that we feel passionate about, and it nice to meet others with the same interests."

"I met some people and heard a lot of interesting opinions that made me think."

"Everyone is so passionate about what they do, it's inspiring!"

These are just a few of the comments by participants in the just concluded 2nd Annual Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference that was held on Saturday, September 25th at the Modesto Church of the Brethren. This dynamic group of young people (high school aged), numbering nearly 90 participants, enthusiastically embraced the numerous community groups that presented during the conference.

The conference theme was **that students can be the change that they want to see**

in the world and, that there are local area organizations working for positive change here and globally. The students heard from diverse groups: Habitat for Humanity, Sierra Club, Alley Cat Guardians, PFLAG, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Free the Children, Church of the Brethren, Cruelty Free Consumers, Invisible Children, Tuolumne River Trust, ACLU, and of course The Modesto Peace/Life Center. The central message was that these groups have opportunities for students to become involved and make a difference.

The day began with great energy as students perused the tables of the participating groups. This was followed with music by the talented Gianna Joy. Then, various speakers focused on the importance of understanding that, in big and little ways, there are avenues for a teenager to become an instrument of change. Wonderful food was provided throughout the day by the superb kitchen crew, Deborah Roberts and Mike Casaneda. After lunch, each student attended three workshops that

included an enlightening workshop by Lauren Roach of Free the Children on resource allocation in the world, a panel discussion that allowed the attendees to understand how to be involved locally, and "Peace Ambassador" training led by Jana Chiavetta.

A big "shout out" to Yogurt Mill and their donation of 120 servings of their wonderful yogurt for the afternoon snack. (It was a huge hit!) The culminating activity was a magical moment in which students shared their reactions to the conference by listing two "pluses" and one "wish." A sampling of these are at the beginning of this article. Then, students were asked to sign a banner that said, "Be The Change" as a commitment to work for social justice. As the participants descended on the banner to sign their commitment and Will I Am sang "One Tribe, you all," it was evident that the 2nd Annual Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference was a success!



The Peace/Life Center is committed to continuing the energy felt at the Conference. Plans are already underway for the 3rd Annual Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference, which focus on Civil Rights.

In addition to this endeavor, each month on the 2nd Tuesday there is a Social Justice Youth Gathering held at the Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., Modesto, from 5:30 PM and until 7:00 PM. This "Gathering" is open to all area high school students interested in the issues that the Peace Center has stood for over the last 40 years: Peace, Justice and a Sustainable Environment. For information contact Jana and Michael Chiavetta, 204-7137 or 527-7530 or mike.chiavetta@gmail.com or bananachiavetta@gmail.com. Peace!

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Let's work together: resources for saving our schools

By AMY MALICK, Everyday Democracy:
Tools for Community Change

"The superheroes we've been waiting for to save our schools are all around us. In fact, they might just be me and you." – *Waiting for Superman*

The new movie *Waiting for Superman* highlights the desperate plight of children failed by our public schools. We may disagree about solutions. But one fact is clear – the children we are failing the most are poor children of color.

This is a crisis. Our country, and our democracy, will not be strong until every

child has equal opportunity to learn and to contribute.

To rise to the challenge, we must learn to work together across differences or it will be impossible to build strong schools and communities, make sound public decisions, and solve the toughest of public problems.

We need to answer some fundamental questions: What do we want children to know and be able to do? How will our communities support that learning? How will we address gaps of opportunity and outcome, and espe-

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Donna Brazile to speak at MLK Commemoration in January

Veteran activist Donna Brazile will be the featured speaker at the 17th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration at Modesto Junior College, 7 PM on Monday January 24, 2011.

Veteran Democratic political strategist Donna Brazile is Vice Chair of Voter Registration and Participation at the Democratic National Committee, and a native of New Orleans where she worked for the full recovery of that city after Hurricane Katrina.

Ms. Brazile's passion is encouraging young people to vote, to work within the system to strengthen it, and to run for public office.

Motivated by the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Ms. Brazile began her political career at the age of nine when she worked to elect a City Council candidate who had promised to build a playground in her neighborhood. Four decades later, Ms. Brazile has worked on every presidential campaign from 1976 through 2000, when she served as campaign manager for former Vice President Al Gore, becoming the first African-American woman to manage a presidential campaign.

Author of the best-selling memoir *Cooking with Grease: Stirring the Pots in American Politics*, Ms. Brazile is an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, a syndicated columnist and an on-air contributor to CNN, and ABC, where she regularly appears on "This Week with Christiane

Amanpour."

In 2009, *O, The Oprah Magazine* chose Ms. Brazile as one of its 20 "remarkable visionaries" for the magazine's first-ever *O* Power List. In addition, she was named among the 100 Most Powerful Women by *Washingtonian* magazine, and received the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's highest award for political achievement.

Ms. Brazile is founder and managing director of Brazile & Associates LLC, a general consulting, grassroots advocacy, and training firm.

ACTION: Sponsored by the Modesto Peace/Life Center, the City of Modesto, CSU Stanislaus and others, the event is free so as many people as possible can attend. But our costs are considerable. *We depend solely on donations of money or services from our initial co-sponsors and from caring groups, businesses, and individuals like you.* Please help us bring Donna Brazile to our community! **Sponsors are needed ASAP.**

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to "Modesto Peace Life Center-MLK," and send it to Jim Costello, 1849 Richard Way, Ceres, CA 95307-4504. The Peace Life Center is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Our tax ID # is 94-2800825.

For information, email Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org, or call 537-7818.

Video Media People Wanted!

Are you interested in getting a program you produced and edited on television? This is your opportunity!

The Modesto Peace/Life Center broadcasts two days a week on Comcast Channel 26, Wednesday and Saturday nights from 9 PM to 10 PM. We are looking for people who are **interested** and **have skills** with producing and computer editing of digital video programs.

If your interested please attend the meeting at the Modesto/Peace Life Center, 720 13th St. in downtown Modesto on Thursday, November 18 at 7 PM.

ACTION: For more information call John Lucas, 527-7634 (H) or 765-3813 (cell).

John McCutcheon returns in January

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

John McCutcheon makes his 10th annual visit to Stanislaus County on Tuesday, January 18, 2011 in a benefit concert for the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

The 6-time Grammy-nominated folk musician has entertained and inspired full-house audiences here year after year. The show is at 7 PM at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave.

Want to be a sponsor? Contact Keith Werner at 572-1307, keith.werner@sbcglobal.net for details. John McCutcheon's website is www.folkmusic.com where you can find the words and listen to the mp3 for "Lets Keep It Straight," Johns song about Don't Ask, Don't Tell. (www.folkmusic.com/mp3s/).

EDLOS Farewell Tour

By **TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL**

(EDLOS: acronym for Excessive Decibel Levels from Outer Space. The guys: refugees from the planet "A" which circles the star Capella in the constellation Auriga.)

The EDLOS last brought their unique blend of classically trained singing, diverse musical styles, and infectiously funny and entertaining stage presence to Sunday Afternoons at CBS in 2000. After over two decades of music and insanity, they've decided to gracefully retire in early 2011. Sunday Afternoons at CBS is pleased to be included in their retirement tour at 3 p.m. November 14, 2010 at Congregation Beth Shalom, 1705 Sherwood Ave. in Modesto.

The group, formed in 1989 by four classically trained singers, chose to explore a broad range of musical genres from Gregorian chant to bluegrass and country, Motown and Rock and Roll to original compositions, all using their magnificent voices as the only instrumentation.

These guys are remembered as much for their musicianship as for their downright hilarious stage high jinks and use of props, wigs, hats and costume changes. Their appeal is truly to people of all ages.

They have performed throughout the United States and Canada with the likes of Waylon Jennings, Crystal Gayle, Ray Charles, Chicago, the Temptations, Lou Rawls, Bernadette Peters, Tower of Power and many others, and they have been featured on their own, "The Lonesome Pines" PBS special.

They have won numerous awards for their recordings and compositions, and are the only group in the history of the Harmony Sweepstakes, the most highly esteemed of all a cappella competitions, to win all three top prizes: 1st Place, Best Arrangement and Audience Favorite.

ACTION: Tickets available at 571-6060 weekdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and at the door. Check out The EDLOS at www.cbsmoesto.org/concerts.

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The President's Deficit Commission: What is it, and why should I care?

From the Friends Committee on National Legislation

1. What is it? Congress never could come to a conclusion on the federal budget this year. They never did pass a budget resolution for the Fiscal Year 2011 budget – which started October 1, 2010 – and they couldn't even agree on regular appropriations bills. Everything is being handled with temporary measures, called "continuing resolutions."

Maybe it was just too hard to face the fact that the 2011 budget would add more than \$1 trillion to the federal debt. The nation is either spending too much, or not bringing in enough income – or both – to balance the books.

In April this year, the President established The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform to find a way out of the nation's budgetary doldrums.

The president appointed some members and House and Senate majority and minority leaders appointed some. The president gave them a charge: come up with a plan that will balance the core budget by 2015. (The "core" budget includes everything except interest payments.) **The Commission's report, which must be endorsed by 14 of its 18 members, is due December 1.**

The Commission reports only to the president, and only in an advisory role. But the Senate leadership has committed to an up-or-down vote on the Commission's package of recommendations, and the House may follow suit.

2. Why should I care?

The Commission's recommendations could affect spending and taxes in two ways:

- Congress could agree to accept the package of recommendations wholesale, and incorporate them into their decisions about spending and taxes.
- The President could incorporate the package of recommendations into the next budget that he presents to the new Congress.

Either way, programs that we care about could be cut deeply.

3. What could happen?

On the table (or chopping block, if you prefer) are programs that affect a lot of people. All the social programs, such as education, housing, health care, hunger programs, children's programs, etc. are prime targets. Entitlement programs, like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and food stamps, are drawing a lot of attention, because they grow in size as the need for them grows. An older population needs more Medicare; a poorer population (brought to us by the Great Recession) needs more Medicaid, food stamps, and unemployment benefits.

On the other hand, military spending is also on the table. In the last ten years, the military budget has more than doubled. That increase accounts for about 2/3 of the overall increase in the federal budget during that time. No other government department's funding has come anywhere near that much of an increase.

The report of the Sustainable Defense Task Force is in the Commissioners' hands; that report points out specific

ways to cut almost \$1 trillion from military spending over the next ten years. Secretary of Defense Gates has spoken of his plans to cut about \$330 billion from weapons systems, redundancies, and efficiencies over the next ten years, although he would prefer to re-route those funds back into other Pentagon projects.

These cuts in Pentagon spending would be enough to balance the budget by 2020.

4. What about the income side?

In 2001 and 2003, President Bush promoted tax cuts to stimulate the economy. These tax cuts included some refundable credits for those at the low end of the income scale, but benefitted taxpayers

at all income levels, even the very wealthy. The tax cuts only last till December of this year. The president's budget recommended ending the tax cuts for people with incomes above \$250,000, and for couples with incomes above \$500,000. Congress has been considering whether to extend all of the cuts, or only those that affect middle and lower-income households. This is a "big ticket" item. Extending all of the tax cuts, even for the very wealthy, will cost about \$1 trillion more, over the next ten years, than extending only the cuts that affect middle and lower-income households.

5. Is there a trillion dollar theme here?

- The federal budget is at least \$1 trillion out of balance this year.
- Cuts in Pentagon spending could save almost \$1 trillion by 2020.
- Not extending tax cuts for the wealthiest 1% of U.S. households could bring in an additional \$1 trillion over the next ten years.

The Deficit Commission has some clear choices to make, and we want them to make the right ones. Congress stands ready to accept whatever the Deficit Commission comes up with, and we want to be sure that Congress accepts only what is acceptable.

NOVEMBER: Talk to the Deficit Commission

The Deficit Commission has been hearing from organizations and experts since April. *Now they need to hear from all of us.*

They need to hear that we know they have choices:

Don't extend the tax breaks for the wealthiest households. These tax cuts were the largest contributor to the deficits that accumulated between 2001 and 2007. Not extending them will save \$1 trillion over the next 10 years.

Cut Pentagon spending substantially. Use the recommendations of the Sustainable Defense Task Force to bring Pentagon spending in line with what our nation actually needs and can afford.

Invest in programs that create jobs, assist those hardest hit by the recession, and take care of our elders – on whose shoulders we stand – and children – who will create our future.

What do we say to the commission? Tell the story about how federal money makes a difference to all of us, to our communities. Tell about the jobs created by the Recovery money, about the health care being provided through Medicare and

Medicaid, about the importance of being able to get training, or education – especially in a tough and changing economy. They can see statistics; we need to remind them of our reality.

Who can talk? Any individual can talk. But also, groups can talk. Youth groups, employment support groups, senior groups, people in trades and professions, town councils, counties, school boards, hospital and nursing home boards. All of these groups would feel the weight of the cuts that the deficit commission could decide to make.

How do we contact the commission? Mail, faxes, and email are all good. Commissioners can be contacted through the Deficit Commission Office:

1650 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20504
commission@fc.eop.gov

How to get in touch with the Commission or Congress: Use this link to send a quick e-mail: <http://capwiz.com/fconl/directory/congdir.tt>

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Edited from FCNL | 245 Second Street NE, Washington, DC 20002 | 202-547-6000 | Toll-free: 800-630-1330 | www.fcnl.org

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

is published monthly except in August
by the Modesto Peace/Life Center
720 13th St., Modesto, CA 95354.

Open by appointment.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 134,
Modesto, CA 95353
209-529-5750.

CONNECTIONS is available for
a suggested donation of \$25.00/yr.

Four-Season Anniversary

By JENIFER WEST

This Fall marks our one-year anniversary – as of September, we’ve been year-round gardeners for a full year. What a great adventure it’s been! It started innocently enough, with the purchase of a book on year-round gardening (Eliot Coleman’s *Four-Season Harvest*, Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 1999). And it’s led to some interesting side trips, including forming a committee to establish the Patterson Four-Season Community Garden.

The beauty year-round gardening is that anyone with the inclination, a spot that gets at least six hours of sunlight a day, and access to seeds for the right kind of crops can do it. You don’t even need actual ground – a container or two on the patio will do just fine. And here in the Central Valley, you don’t need a greenhouse, or even a cold frame!

Along the way, we’ve pulled things up and replaced them as the seasons have changed. The tomato vines, magenta spreen (lovely micro-green with fuschia-tinged leaf clusters), and bolted Swiss chard have recently been relegated

to the compost bucket. The raised beds will get a good dose of compost to support the lettuce, cabbage, spinach, carrots, beets, onions and broccoli they will shortly be called upon to produce. I highly recommend Mo-Grow Magic, the compost available from the City of Modesto. It’s only \$3 a bag (1 cubic foot), and is also available by the truckload. Call 538-2557 for more information.

I’ll miss the bees though, when they’re no longer to be seen, making use of the squash blossoms and eggplant flowers. As those ladies are disappearing at an alarming rate, it’s reassuring to me to see them as they go about their business. Though I had good reason to be frightened of them as a child (a sting would necessitate a trip to the doctor, as well as a day or two with the offended body part elevated and swathed in ice packs), I do love to see them working in my garden, these days.

But I’m actually glad the seasons are changing for a lot of reasons. For one, I’m just plain tired! Summertime brings a bounty of fresh fruits and veggies, and I feel compelled to preserve as much of it as possible. It provides variety in our diet, it saves us a lot of money, and even though we have nice things to eat fresh from the backyard – no matter if it’s been below freezing for days – it’s lovely to have a bit of summer with our winter meals!

We have access to commercial grade canning tomatoes,

for example, and, thanks to the assistance of my Favorite Canning Buddy (thanks, Punkin!), our pantry now holds jars and jars of ketchup, barbecue sauce, salsa, and a fiery Moroccan sauce called *Harissa*, all from the *Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving*. I’ve also canned marinara, tomato soup, and spaghetti sauce. It’s now recommended that tomato products be acidified before canning – unless you’re using an approved recipe, be sure to do some research before

canning them. The folks at the UC Cooperative Extension can help, or refer you to a master canner. Please be sure to use a reliable resource – a recent internet search for a spaghetti sauce recipe for canning turned up several sites with instructions for water-bath canning spaghetti sauce with meat in it – a definite no-no, unless you’re not afraid of a little botulism – which can be fatal.

Another reason I’m glad the seasons are changing is that gardening, when it’s cool, is actually much easier than at any other time of the year – very little is needed in the way of watering and weeding. We’re big salad eaters, and carrots, beets, lettuce, spinach and the like grow very well when it’s cool outside. In fact, now that I understand the best growing

conditions for salad greens, I’m surprised at the prices that are charged for them in the winter. (Lettuce, incidentally, will germinate at temperatures as low as 40 degrees.)

So this afternoon, I spent time planning what to plant where. It’s important to rotate your plantings, which will help avoid pests and diseases. I’ve put all of my garden info, from what seeds are on hand, to what we’ve planted and when, how it grew and whether we liked it, into a spreadsheet. How did we manage before computers? Like all gardeners, I succumbed to temptation while looking at the seed descriptions online – more than once. (If you find yourself with a surplus of seeds, store them in an airtight container in the fridge.) I’m looking forward to getting them in the ground.

Four-season gardening is possible anywhere that gets at adequate sunlight, regardless of how warm it is. The trick is in planting crops that like the current weather – whether it’s tomatoes and peppers in spring, Brussels sprouts in August, peas, beets, lettuce, spinach and carrots in October (or later), or mache and mizuna in November. Cool-weather gardening is easy, and very rewarding.

For information, call the UC Cooperative Extension [(209) 525-6800], or search online for “year-round gardening” or “cool weather crops.” Visit <http://ucanr.org/>



"The beauty year-round gardening is that anyone with the inclination, a spot that gets at least six hours of sunlight a day, and access to seeds for the right kind of crops can do it."



Schools

... from page 1

cially high barriers facing people of color?

All of us must be involved: parents, students, teachers and adults from all walks of life. If we listen to each other and work together, we will have a better chance of finding and supporting solutions that help our young people learn.

We have a long way to go. But in our work, we have seen that many people from all backgrounds want to work together to make schools work for all children. We have seen that, if there are opportunities to take part, many people will do so.

We all must act, now. We must do our part to create honest expression, respectful listening, and collaboration. We must be the superheroes our children need.

Moved by the challenge, we have pulled together resources to help you bring together people from different backgrounds, to work together on education reform. Please let us know what you are doing, and how we can help you at this critical time for young people.

To see these resources and learn more about Everyday Democracy, visit <http://www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Article.1218.aspx> and <http://www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Index.aspx>

Amy Malick is communication director for Everyday Democracy, 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1403 East Hartford, CT 06108: 860.928.2616; Fax: 860.928.3713 General email: info@everyday-democracy.org



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Rivers of Birds, Forests of Tules: Central Valley Nature & Culture in Season

By Lillian Vallee

When those of us, displaced by the Founders Hall renovation on the East Campus of Modesto Junior College and now inhabiting a trailer park called Pirates Village, grouch about the temporary inconveniences of thin walls, broad classrooms, inaccessible thermostats and spooky blind corners, we might consider all the elementary schools in Stanislaus County which have sprouted similar trailer park villages instead of permanent school buildings. What kinds of problems are teachers facing in trailers sending a visual message of impermanence, or at least, a lack of commitment to buildings expressing some beauty and stability. Many public schools built in pre-Proposition 13 California expressed the passionate aspirations of a diverse, postwar population poised to tackle its problems and lead. What do the trailer villages on school sites tell us today about our priorities?

Public schools and public spaces appear to be suffering the same neglect. In a letter sent to California residents by Elizabeth Goldstein, President of the California State Parks Foundation, I read that 22% of our state parks are partially closed, and another 53% "have suffered significant service reductions" (closed restrooms, less trash pickup, and \$1.2 billion maintenance backlog). "California state parks," writes Goldstein, "are teetering on the brink of a funding cliff." California has over 275 state parks featuring nearly 15,000 campsites, 3,000 miles of trails, 625 miles of rivers and lakefronts, and 280 miles of coastline. These "third spaces," that is, neutral places in which we neither live nor work, are safety valves for the population, places to which residents (especially those with limited funds) can retreat to recreate, to relieve stress, to enjoy islands of natural beauty.

I have a friend who has been a seasonal employee for the state parks. This is the second season he has worked in The Four Rivers Area which includes San Luis and Los Banos creeks, Pacheco Park and riparian zones along the Merced River in McConnell and Hatfield State Parks. Tourists came to visit. The unemployed came to console themselves. Families came to celebrate. Church groups came to picnic.

All summer long, he collected prodigious amounts of garbage and undid the vandalism, cleaned bathrooms, and tried to make the parks restful and welcoming, even with a minimal number of workers. The degree of disrespect deflated him. The lack of stewardship deflated him. The lack of management wore him down. McConnell and Hatfield are beautiful parks, full of mature oaks refrigerating the riverine air in the summer. People flock to their coolness. Some of the

problems could have been solved with adequate personnel and public education.

Some of the oldest trails, riverine vistas, and remnant land grants belong to these parks which also suffer from a lack of interpretive programs. McConnell has an amphitheatre which is rarely used. Goldstein's letter pleads for pressure on officials to adequately fund the parks, to "ensure that essential educational programs continue," and to "restore, protect, and care for the vast natural, cultural and historic assets of the state park system." A California State Parks brochure adds that the mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is "to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity...and [by] creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation."

Like many Californians, I am a product of California public school and university systems from a time when they were the best in the nation. And my education did not end there. The interpretive programs in the state and national parks, free to the public, taught nature literacy and ecological awareness. The programs fostered attachment and stewardship by teaching residents to respect the natural, cultural and historic assets of public spaces. I have camped in these parks, hiked their trails, valued their history lessons, and found their beauty disarming. When I last visited the state parks closest to home (Caswell, McConnell, Hatfield), their condition was distressing: they were full of litter, downed trees, graffiti all over the restrooms, and visitors had parked their cars on the lawns instead of in the parking spaces.

Recently I visited the San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area. October in the Diablo Range is an olfactory banquet of bluecurls

(*Trichostema lanatum*), vinegar weed (*Trichostema lanceolatum*) and tarweed (*Madia elegans*). On one shore of the Reservoir is Pacheco Park, rich in archaeological and ethnographic indicating the area had once been inhabited by Northern Valley Yokuts and the Mutsun branch of Coastal Ohlone. Highway 152 along the park traces an old native trail running from the Central Valley to the coast. The park—rich in wildlife, historic features, and sweeping panoramas of grasslands and oak woodlands—is the last remaining portion of an old Mexican land grant, El Rancho San Luis Gonzaga. Spike's Peak offers a stunning 360-degree view of San Luis Reservoir, the Central Valley and the Coast Mountain Range.

Proposition 21 on the November ballot establishes an \$18.00 annual vehicle license surcharge to help fund state parks and wildlife programs. Vehicles charged this fee would have free admission to all state parks. While opponents claim this proposition is just another example of "ballot box budgeting," supporters, such as Mike Sweeney (Executive Director of the Nature Conservancy), Pamela Jo Armas (President of the California State Park Rangers Association), Jim Adams (Regional Executive Director of the National Wildlife Federation), the Ocean Conservancy, Latino Health Access, and the Public Health Institute, to name just a few, believe the proposition will "keep state parks open, properly maintained and safe," as well as "provide for family recreation, help our economy and protect jobs."

"The soul craves beauty," writes Thomas Moore in *Care of the Soul*, "and in its absence suffers what James Hillman has called 'beauty neurosis.'" We certainly don't need another neurosis to add to the ones we already have and we may be able to avoid this one, at least in the state parks, for the price of a medium pizza.

Sources: Elizabeth Goldstein, Letter Soliciting State Parks Foundation Members; California State Park brochures, maps; California General Election Official Voter Information Guide.



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Obama's finest hour: killing innocent people for "Made-Up Crap"

By CHRIS FLOYD

If ever I am tempted by the siren songs of my tribal past as a deep-fried, yellow-dawg Democrat, and begin to feel any faint, atavistic stirrings of sympathy for the old gang, I simply think of things like the scenario below, sketched last week by Johann Hari, and those wispy ghosts of partisanship past go howling back to the depths:

Imagine if, an hour from now, a robot-plane swooped over your house and blasted it to pieces. The plane has no pilot. It is controlled with a joystick from 7,000 miles away, sent by the Pakistani military to kill you. It blows up all the houses in your street, and so barbecues your family and your neighbours until there is nothing left to bury but a few charred slops. Why? They refuse to comment. They don't even admit the robot-planes belong to them. But they tell the Pakistani newspapers back home it is because one of you was planning to attack Pakistan. How do they know? Somebody told them. Who? You don't know, and there are no appeals against the robot.

Now imagine it doesn't end there: these attacks are happening every week somewhere in your country. They blow up funerals and family dinners and children. The number of robot-planes in the sky is increasing every week. You discover they are named "Predators", or "Reapers" – after the Grim Reaper. No matter how much you plead, no matter how much you make it clear you are a peaceful civilian getting on with your life, it won't stop. What do you do? If there was a group arguing that Pakistan was an evil nation that deserved to be violently attacked, would you now start to listen?

...[This] is in fact an accurate description of life in much of Pakistan today, with the sides flipped. The Predators and Reapers are being sent by Barack Obama's CIA, with the support of other Western governments, and they killed more than 700 civilians in 2009 alone – 14 times the number killed in the 7/7 attacks in London. The floods were seen as an opportunity to increase the attacks, and last month saw the largest number of robot-plane bombings ever: 22. Over the next decade, spending on drones is set to increase by 700 per cent.

Friends, it's very simple: if you support Barack Obama and the Democrats – even if reluctantly, even if you're just being all sophisticatedly super-savvy and blogospherically strategic about it, playing the "long game" or eleven-dimensional chess or what have you – you are supporting the outright murder of innocent people who have never done anything against you or yours. You have walked into a house, battered down the bedroom door, put the barrel of a gun against the temple of a sleeping child, and pulled the trigger. That is what you are supporting, that is what you are complicit in, that is what you yourself are doing.

But hey, let's be all super-savvy and eleventh-dimensional ourselves here for a moment. Let's be pragmatic, and technocratic, let's be grown-ups, let's not get sidetracked by a bunch of jejune, dorm-room, hippy-dippy moralizing. No, let's concentrate on practicalities, let's get down to brass tacks, let's be serious and focus on "what works" to protect our national security. OK, so here's the practical result of the illegal campaign of mass murder that Obama is waging on the sovereign territory of one of America's allies:

... Drone technology was developed by the Israelis, who

"Two per cent of the people killed by the robot-planes in Pakistan are jihadis. The remaining 98 per cent are as innocent as the victims of 9/11."

routinely use it to bomb the Gaza Strip. I've been in Gaza during some of these attacks. The people there were terrified – and radicalised. A young woman I know who had been averse to political violence and an advocate of peaceful protest saw a drone blow up a car full of people – and she started supporting Islamic Jihad and crying for the worst possible revenge against Israel. Robot-drones have successfully bombed much of Gaza, from secular Fatah to Islamist Hamas, to the brink of jihad.

Is the same thing happening in Pakistan? David Kilcullen is a counter-insurgency expert who worked for General Petraeus in Iraq and now advises the State Department. He has shown that two per cent of the people killed by the robot-planes in Pakistan are jihadis. The remaining 98 per cent are as innocent as the victims of 9/11. He says: "It's not moral." And it gets worse: "Every one of these dead non-combatants represents an alienated family, and more recruits for a militant movement that has grown exponentially as drone strikes have increased. ... It could be poised to get even worse: Bob Woodward's *Obama's Wars* says the US has an immediate plan to bomb 150 targets in Pakistan if there is a jihadi attack inside America.

Why, it's almost as if the drone campaign was designed to create more and more enemies – and more and more contracts for war profiteers to build more and more drones, which can then be used to create more and more enemies, which means more and more contracts for say, it is a practical plan, after all! A practical plan to create terrorism, not quell it.

And what is the "evidence" used by the Administration militarists as they draw up their target lists for the defenseless villages in Pakistan? What is the "intelligence" produced by the \$75 billion lavished on our 200,000 security apparatchiks every year? On what basis is Barack Obama killing people in Pakistan? Hari reports:

...[The] press releases uncritically repeated by the press after a bombing always brag about "senior al-Qa'ida commanders" killed – but some people within the CIA admit how arbitrary their choice of targets is. One of their senior

figures told *The New Yorker*: "Sometimes you're dealing with tribal chiefs. Often they say an enemy of theirs is al-Qa'ida because they want to get rid of somebody, or they made crap up because they wanted to prove they were valuable so they could make money."

That's right: Barack Obama is killing hundreds of innocent civilians in Pakistan on the basis of crap made up for money. Made-up crap. For money. That's why a child who is just as precious as your child is to a parent who is just as real a person as you are was killed this week, by Barack Obama and the Democratic Party and the entire bipartisan foreign policy establishment of the United States of America: crap made up for money.

And of course, it's not just tribal chiefs making up crap for blood money: the entire aforementioned bipartisan foreign policy establishment is now and has for years been making up crap "so they could make money" – for themselves, for their corporate patrons, for their government agencies, for their defense and "security" stockholdings, for the perpetuation of their bloated, belligerent, pig-ignorant domination of world affairs and American society – by killing innocent people all over the world.

"But oh my gosh, oh my lord, we have to support Obama! What if those Tea Party Republicans get into power? What would happen then?" What would happen? The same god-damned thing that's happening right now, that's what. More and more war, more and more murder, more and more domination by a militarist kleptocracy. As Glenn Greenwald notes this week, Obama and the Tea Partiers (and the neocons, and

CRAP continued p. 7

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"Crap"

... from page 6

the liberal hawks, and the Bush Regime war criminals) are in lockstep (even goosestep) on keeping the War Machine stoked and rolling.

That's why the opposition to the Tea Party Republicans has been so anemic, focused almost entirely on personality flaws or asinine comments or resumé padding or stupid things they did in college. The Democrats can't possibly attack them on substance — i.e., the fact that the Tea Partiers are rabid warmongers who delight in murder, torture and repression and believe that the poor, the sick, the old, the weak, the unlucky, and the vulnerable should just eat shit and die already — because these are the same positions the Democrats hold! Who "reformed" health care into a gargantuan, guaranteed boondoggle for rapacious conglomerates? Who bailed out the bankers and left millions in the hands of savage "robosigners"? Who set up the "Catfood Commission" and stocked it from top to bottom with long-time, deep-dyed haters of the poor and the weak? It wasn't Dick Cheney, bub.

I don't want to see the Tea Partiers in power. But I'm not going to support one faction of murderers and plunderers just to keep out another faction of murderers and plunderers. Hari makes this good analogy about the drone program:

Yet many people defend the drones by saying: "We have to do something." If your friend suffered terrible third-degree burns, would you urge her to set fire to her hair because "you have to do something"? Would you give a poisoning victim another, worse poison, on the grounds that any action is better than none?

Similarly, I say: would you support one murderer — who likes to break into children's bedrooms and blow their brains out — in order to stop another murderer, who would do the same thing, from taking over a vicious gang of murderers? What would be the basis, the reason for your support? That the first murderer wears nicer suits? Digs cooler music? Throws better street parties? Leaves a pretty little flower next to the blown-out brains?

For a system sunk so deeply in evil, there is no "lesser" evil to choose. The militarist kleptocracy itself is evil, and every political faction that does not denounce it and seek to dismantle it is complicit in this evil. The choice is to stand outside such factions; the choice is non-cooperation with evil, as advocated by Thoreau, Tolstoy, Gandhi, King. I'm not going to spend my brief time here on earth standing with blood-soaked killers, no matter what factional name they give themselves, or what loyalties they might claim on our myth-clouded memories of the past. I'm not going to teach my children that all we can do is to grovel before one child-murdering maniac or another, to keep quiet, to never speak the truth, to sell their votes, their dignity and their souls to murderers who would pervert every good instinct — and every bad instinct — every worthy hope and every nasty fear, to keep themselves in power.

Dead children. Made-up crap. For money. That's what our leading "dissidents" want us to support. There is much that could be said about the utterly puerile arguments being offered for this murder-abetting stance; but in the interests of brevity, and civility — and my own sanity — I will forbear, and simply say: no thanks.

<http://www.chris-floyd.com/articles/1-latest-news/2035-obamas-finest-hour-killing-innocent-people-for-qmade-up-crapq.html>

Two: Ground Zero Mosque and Trust the News

By ALEX ANVARI, Student, Modesto High School

Ground Zero is a site of mourning, a grave reminder of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The construction of a mosque and community center two blocks away from Ground Zero has caused national controversy. President Obama and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg both support the mosque in face of overwhelming criticism. Shockingly, only 20% of Americans believe that the freedom of religion should be valued and the mosque be built. We, as Americans, tend to forget that the United States has more Muslim blood on its hands than Al Qaeda has on its hands of innocent non-Muslims. We as Americans have been blind to the trials and pains of being a Muslim in America.

The basis for the mosque opposition is that the mosque is offensive to 9/11 victims. The supporters of this argument have forgotten that innocent Muslims also died during the attacks. If a church was to be built near the site of an abortion clinic bombing, would Americans be up in arms? Opposition to the mosque is fueled by Republican politicians' attempts to gain votes for the upcoming elections and by sickening racism. How can Americans come together in peace if we continually push away an already abused people? Muslims have rights too, a fact that has been forgotten by the majority of Americans.

The diversity seen in America is one of the reasons our country is the envy of the world; we must protect it. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." These words found in the New Testament were used by one of America's greatest presidents, Abraham Lincoln, in face of a war that split our nation. Today, Americans are in the middle of a similar fight. To honor the founding fathers of this nation, we must protect the rights of Muslims in America.

Trust the News?

However depressing the news may be, its value is crucial in democratic societies. Americans rely on the news to keep up to date on those they voted into office, world affairs and local activities. Today's world has given the average American many mediums through which he or she can access this knowledge. Whether it be through newspaper, radio, television or internet, news is taken in and trusted as fact. The belief that "if it's on TV it must be true" has spread and many Americans are left in the dark to our true state. Fox News promotes the GOP agenda daily; commentators like Glenn Beck and Sean Hannity present their opinions as fact, deceiving the masses. Fox News has had to apologize repeatedly for journalistic inaccuracies, which just happen to support their conservative standpoint. Fox News is not alone in this however. Every single news outlet has some sort of bias and to further their agenda; they spin the facts.

Newspapers especially need to be read with a critical eye. Left and Right, inaccuracies, misquotes and fraud have riddled the press. An internal probe of a single *Times* worker revealed inaccuracies in thirty-six out of seventy-three articles, that one reporter deceived an entire city. Many more accounts of blatant lies in the newspaper have emerged since then. How can democracy survive when Americans are left blind to the truth? Every scrap of information these days

must be taken with a grain of salt. Every single citizen of this nation must take it upon him or herself to pick through this fraudulent mess. To see what's presented and clear away the bias is the only way this nation can see the light of freedom again. To experience true freedom, Americans must be fully aware of the state of this fine nation.



Highlights from the 2nd Annual Social Justice Youth Conference on TV

By JOHN LUCAS

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's highlights from the 2nd Annual Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference will be broadcast for November on Comcast Channel 26. The program will run from then on every Wednesday and Saturday from 9 PM to 10 PM until November 24.

I hope you all have an opportunity to view this program. Let others know about it. This was a very meaningful event for young people. Over 85 local high school students participated. The various participating organization showed ways young people can get involved in the community to bring about positive changes in the world.

A shout out for PLC board members Mike and Jana Chiavetta for organizing this very important event!

Last Civic Engagement Project film November 10

The Modesto Junior College Civic Engagement Project presents its last film for the semester FREE to the public on Wednesday, November 10th at 7 PM in Forum 110 on MJC's East Campus.

No Impact Man: In an age where the most important color in politics is green, writer Colin Beavan, his wife and baby daughter embark on a yearlong journey to decrease their carbon footprints, aiming for no net environmental impact over the course of the year. This 2009 Sundance Film Festival documentary follows their efforts from eating only locally grown food to reducing their trash to compost alone.

Information: Bill Anelli, M.A., Dept of Philosophy; anelli@lib@mjc.edu, 575-6152.



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The Universe

As grains of sand upon the beach,
As stars that shine beyond our reach,
As blades of grass within the glade,
As trees that branching shield with shade,
As flowers that bloom with fragrance sweet,
As fields that wave with golden wheat,
As oceans swell and rivers flow,
As mountains soar and gleam with snow,
As whales that glide beneath the sea,
As eagles swoop then climb so free,
As bees that buzz in joyous flight,
As fireflies that light the night,
We too dear Lord, are your creation
Bless us with peace, nation to nation.



The Tree

Through the park I see the tree
Ancient, worn, misshapen,
Branches angled to earth, to sky,
In silent resignation.
Snows of winter, winds of spring,
Summers' hot caress,
All have passed one hundred times
Leaving life's impress.
But still it stands above the plain
In calm anticipation,
Another hundred years to pass
In peaceful contemplation.
I cannot see its buried roots
That bring it nourishment,
Burrowing deep in mother earth
For strength, encouragement.
But through the park it waves to me.
One soul salutes another.
And I, consoled, contentedly
Wave back.
The tree.
My lover.

Myra Young Balinson: poet and psychologist

Myra Young Balinson was born and bred in England, where her love of writing began. As a child, her stories won prizes from local newspapers. She developed an appreciation for poetry through memorizing and reciting poems each year in school, and as a teenager she wrote a play, *Gather Ye Rosebuds*, performed by students in her high school. During World War II, she was in London for the Blitz, when Nazi Germany bombed the city for more than 70 consecutive nights.

At age 21 Myra came to the United States to study at Columbia University in New York City. After earning a master's degree in clinical psychology, she interned at the University of Pittsburgh's Western Psychiatric Institute under the supervision of Dr. Benjamin Spock. She returned to New York to work toward her doctorate, with mentors including Margaret Mead. She also served as the chief psychologist in the child psychiatry division of St. Luke's Hospital of Columbia University. In the 1960s she was a research psychologist

for the newly established Head Start Program in Harlem.

Myra is a longtime supporter of animal welfare groups; she has adopted numerous animals from animal shelters and currently enjoys the company of four dogs at home. For many years she was a volunteer in the hospice movement. She is an active member of Modesto's Congregation Beth Shalom and is committed to the Jewish practice of *tikkun olam*, of which the most important part is helping those in need. Her recent accomplishments include learning to swim at age 77. She was happily married to Dr. Norman V. Balinson, a child psychiatrist, for 45 years and is the proud mother of three children and benevolent grandmother to four grandchildren.

Link to all of Myra's poems at <http://stanislausconnections.posterous.com/poetry-of-myra-balinson-head-start-pioneer-wo#>

"Life Is a Banquet" — Shirley MacLaine

Life is a banquet, some folks say.
A banquet? Where do they eat?
Not at the table of the poor,
The destitute, the weak.
Some wander starving through this life,
No food for soul, for mind, for body
Born into starvation's pit
With little hope and endless worry.
How can I feast when others thirst?
How can I be uncaring?
My life's not worth a beggar's purse
Unless it's full with sharing.

Tibet

Tonight I watched a young man die,
Far away across the seas.
Across the seas and mountains
In an icy village high,
High above the warring world
He lived and loved and died.
They came to help him on his way
From this life to his next,
An aged priest, a boy his aide,
An ancient book of prayer,
Intoning words so strange to hear
Of comfort, loving care.
"You must not cry," he told the wife,
"That makes it hard for him
To leave this life and look ahead.
The new life he must lead
He must think about and concentrate
Or he may reappear
As animal not human.
So let him go. No tears."
The weeping stopped. The chanting rose
And all in silence watched
As deep in prayer the priest intoned
And held the weakening hand.
In clean and fresh array
The young man on his right side lay.
Lord Buddha died that way.
To ease his lonely journey
For forty-nine long days.
His soul will travel meeting gods
Some good and kind and sweet,
But others fearsome, angry, mad.
He must not cringe, retreat.
The prayers of all who mourn for him
Will guide him gently on
To that new life, to live again
On earth. A soul reborn.

Burundi

Mile upon mile of terrified trekkers
Wearily walking
All life's possessions bound up in bundles
Wearily walking
Straight for the border.
Death follows closely
Mocking their efforts
"Just a few miles now"
Dragging their children
Too tired for crying
Exhausted by terror
Starving and mindless
Stumbling onward
On to the border
On toward safety
Left foot now right foot
Thousands and thousands
Like ants from an ant heap
Carrying their misery
One line of movement
On to the border
On to the border.
But death travels faster
And meets them with gates barred.
"Why did you think
Anyone would want you?
Only I bid you welcome.
Only I bring you peace."

Sarajevo

The guns have stopped their coughing.
As if some ogre, sick in the night,
Had gone to sleep. Oh God! The quiet.
The bliss of silence. The stars
Icily sparkling, once again
Are visible in the night.
No yellow flashes disturb the air.
No screams pierce the darkness.
No bodies fall, a ballet in design.
Littering the ground like bloody refuse.
The children are sleeping.
Mothers still wakeful.
Where will the food come from tomorrow?
Will there be a tomorrow
Or is this silence Death?



WE GET
LETTERS



Wrangler of felines supports TNR and community gardens

Kudos on your June issue. Lillian Vallee's article on growing your own food and community gardens was inspiring and, as always, showed her passion for our planet.

The DeMott-Feldman piece on the local Alley Cat Guardians was very informative. As the wrangler and companion to numerous felines, I wholeheartedly support TNR programs locally and nationally.

W. H. Auden once wrote, "We must love one another or die." We need Earth volunteers and lovers more than ever before.

Carol Benson
Modesto

Why do we pay?

Elaine Gorman's article on local recycling was very informative. Cities all over California, including Stockton, remain committed to curbside recycling. I was shocked to learn when Modesto suddenly pulled the plug. If there is "no market for recyclables," why do Modesto consumers still have to pay extra fees for every can, bottle, etc., we buy? Where did that extra money go?

The city tried to assuage our anger by doing some composting and offering a list of places we can take our leftover recyclables to. But what about seniors and others who can't drive to a recycling place?

Lousy "solution," Modesto. Shame on you.

Carol Benson
Modesto

To everyone who helped with the wonderful, memorable "Forty Years for Peace" celebration:

It was great to greet long-time friends and meet new faces in Modesto's peace efforts. Most of all we were so grateful to feel there's an underground river of peace and justice flowing forever and that we are part of it.

We know the power of that still, small voice and realize it can never be extinguished.

With petals of love and joy scattered on that everlasting river.

Potochniks three: June, Maria and Sophia, and Rudy's spirit—alive and well.

Modesto

Social justice leadership conference: running toward justice

The star charlatan of Fox "News" recently advised his sheep that if their churches push social justice, run from them.

Luckily some houses of worship still run toward social justice - which is, I think, more approximately what Jesus had in mind.

Saturday (9/25) I had the honor of spreading the ACLU gospel to nearly a hundred of our area's best and brightest high schoolers.

The daylong "social justice leadership conference" was held in theologically conservative Modesto Church of the Brethren - which (along with College Avenue Congregational and my own Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship) seems eternally in the forefront of good, human, progressive causes.

Bouquets to teachers Mike and Jana Chiavetta, our town's most exciting new arrivals in decades, who put it together. To the sponsoring Modesto Peace/Life Center, which saw a need and addressed it. To participating organizations: Alley Cat Guardians and Guide Dogs for The Blind to the Sierra Club, Tuolumne River Trust, PFLAG and others.

Less enthusiasm for teachers and principals who failed to give this program full support, and to the media who ignored it as.... what?

Fred Herman
Modesto

Another recycling source

"Adventures in Recycling", a front page article in the September 2010 edition of *Stanislaus Connections*, helped guide area residents to Yosemite Recycling, a new business site that buys some recyclable materials. It's nice to know that this business accepts non-CRV plastics. There are a number of recyclables, however, that Yosemite Recycling does *not* accept, namely scrap metal items.

I work at Modesto Junk Company downtown on 9th Street just north of the DoubleTree Hotel. Our business has been locally owned and operated and employing area residents since my great-grandfather started the business 90 years ago. Other than non-CRV plastics, we buy all of the things that Yosemite Recycling accepts, plus much, much more.

We accept CRV aluminum cans, glass and plastic beverage containers, non-CRV glass bottles, cardboard, and all scrap metals (free of fluids and hazardous materials). The scrap metals for which we pay the area's highest prices includes household food cans, pet food cans, soup cans, tuna cans, iron/steel materials, brass, copper, aluminum, junk auto batteries, stainless steel, and more.

As Modesto's original green company, we encourage everyone to do their part and recycle as much as possible. Think about all of the modern amenities made of metal things in your home or business that you come into contact with everyday. All of them can be recycled rather than thrown away! A more detailed list of the many things that can be conveniently recycled with us can be found at www.modestojunk.com, or you can call us at (209) 522-1435.

Keith Highiet
Modesto CA

Holiday Prison Project: a note of thanks

By DAVID HETLAND

This is a note received the other day - from a former inmate at Chowchilla's Central California Women's Facility who was released in March of 2009:

Enclosed, you'll find a donation to the Prison Project that prepares Christmas bags for women prisoners at CCWF. I received several of those bags while I was incarcerated there. They are such a treat in those dreary surroundings and now, as conditions worsen almost daily, they are even more important. Thank you.

Collected items are coming in at a steady pace. We are doing very well with soap and greeting cards. We still need lots and lots of shampoo, conditioner, and lotion. Although it wasn't on the original list of items to be collected, we are accepting the small individual packets of taco sauce. Does anyone have a connection to the management of a Taco Bell or Del Taco? We have an estimated 700 sauces but, of course, need another 3000 to be able to provide one to each inmate.

Your support of this project is appreciated.

ACTION: Bring donated items to the Peace/Life Center Office (call ahead to ensure the office is open, 529-5750). For more information, contact Shelly Scribner (521-6304) or Dave Hetland (388-1608).



Stanislaus **CONNECTIONS**, published by the Modesto Peace/Life Center, has promoted non-violent social change since 1971. **Opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the center or editorial committee.** **CONNECTIONS** encourages free speech to serve truth and build a more just, compassionate, peaceful and environmentally healthy community and world. We seek to enhance community concern, bridge interests of diverse groups. **CONNECTIONS'** editorial committee views peace as built on economic and social justice and equal access to the political process. We welcome pertinent signed articles - to 800 words - and letters with address, phone number. We edit for length, taste, error and libel. Deadline is 10th of the month. Send articles to Myrtle Osner, 1104 Wellesley, Modesto 95350, 522-4967, or email to osnerm@sbcglobal.net or Jim Costello jcostello@igc.org.

Photos and ADS should be submitted as high-resolution JPEG or TIFF files. Do NOT submit as pdf files if possible.

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The enemy within: Mobocratic spirit abroad in the land

Ed. note: *Ponder these words, then, guess who wrote them (answer at end of article).*

"We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the earth, as regards extent of territory, fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate. ... At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant, to step the Ocean, and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest; with a Buonaparte for a commander, could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years.

"At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. ...

"I hope I am over wary; but if I am not, there is, even now, something of ill-omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country; the growing

disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober judgment of Courts; and the worse than savage mobs, for the executive minister of justice. ... Accounts of outrages committed by mobs form the everyday news of the times. ...

"When men take it in their heads to day, to hang gamblers, or burn murderers, they should recollect, that, in the confusion usually attending such transactions, they will be as likely to hang or burn someone, who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is; and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of to-morrow, may, and probably will, hang or burn some of them, by the very same mistake. And not only so; the innocent, those who have ever set their faces against violation of law in every shape, alike with the guilty, fall victims to the ravages of mob law; and thus it goes on, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals, are trodden down, and disregarded. But all this even, is not the full extent of the evil. By such examples, by instances of the perpetrators of such acts going unpunished, the lawless in spirit, are encouraged to become lawless in practice; and having been used to restraint, but dread of punishment, they thus become, absolute unrestrained. ... Thus, then, by the operation of this mobocratic spirit, which all must admit is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any Government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed ... [and] this Government cannot last. ...

"The question recurs, 'how shall we fortify against it?' The answer is simple. Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the

Revolution, never to violate in the least particular, the laws of the country; and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and Laws, let every man remember

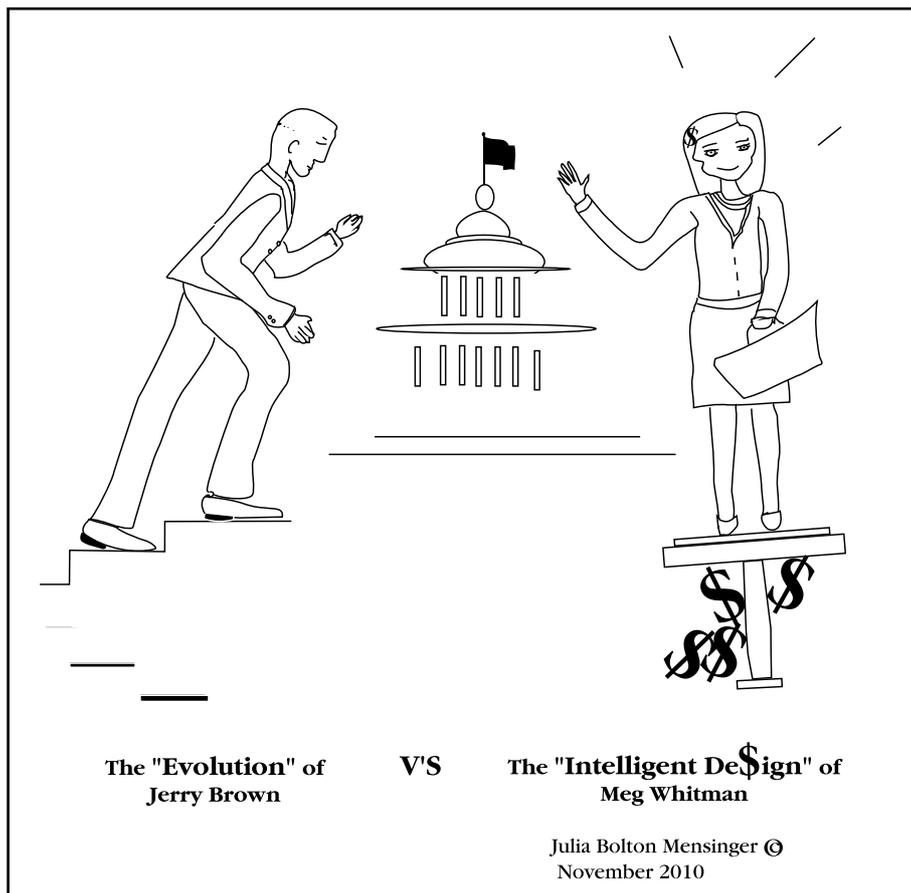
that to violate the law, is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the character of his own, and his children's liberty. ... In short, let it become the political religion of the nation; and let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the brave and the gay, of all sexes and tongues, and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars.

"The scenes of the revolution are not now or ever will be entirely forgotten; but that like everything else, they must fade upon the memory of the world, and grow more and more dim by the lapse of time. ... They were the pillars of the temple of liberty; and now, that they have crumbled away, that temple must fall, unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the solid quarry of sober reason. Passion has helped us; but can do so no more. It will in future be our enemy. Reason, cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense. Let those materials be molded into general intelligence, sound morality and, in particular, a reverence for the constitution and laws. ...

"Upon these let the proud fabric of freedom rest, as the rock of its basis; and as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

This is an excerpt from twenty-eight year old Abraham Lincoln's speech to the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois. Titled "The Perpetuation of our Political Institutions," Lincoln's 1838 comments addressed the rampant lynchings that followed the Emancipation Act of 1833, and his belief that America's greatest dangers came not from abroad but from within.

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