

Speak!

Volume 8
Issue 2



JHR
JOURNALISTS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

environmental justice

Disaster in Japan

The Future of Nuclear Energy

A unique trauma
of displacement

*The Dispossession of
Rwanda's Batwa people*

The New 99
Percent

*Special column
by the Human
Rights Working
Group*

Journalists for Human Rights @ McGill



JOURNALISTS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

FROM THE

Speak!

Editor-in-Chief

Journalists for Human Rights (jhr) @ McGill, a Students' Society of McGill University club since 2003 and the McGill chapter of the national NGO, is a group of students actively engaged in informing their community about local, national, and international human rights issues through media campaigns and other on campus projects.

jhr's goal is to make everyone in the world fully aware of their rights. Creating rights awareness is the first and most necessary step to ending rights abuses. By mobilizing the media to spread human rights awareness, jhr informs people about human rights, empowering marginalized communities to stand up, speak out and protect themselves. By concentrating our programs in post-conflict African countries like the Congo (DRC), Liberia and Sierra Leone, jhr is improving human rights where they are most at risk.

jhr provides unbiased media and capacity building training to African journalists. Typically, a jhr trainer will work alongside an African journalist for 6-8 months, mentoring him or her and helping with field production. jhr stays in each country for only 5 years, in order to promote sustainability without dependency. jhr partners with local media organizations to reach millions of people at risk of abuse with information on how to protect their rights, and the rights of others.

jhr @ McGill also provides students with national and international human rights journalism opportunities. Through the jhr Chapters Program, we have offered McGill students opportunities for publication in national magazines and academic journals and the chance to participate in media internships in Ghana. jhr's Train the Trainer Conference on Media and Human Rights has been hosted four times at McGill.

jhr @ McGill is always open to new members, so if you would like to write and edit articles for *Speak!*, assist with the radio broadcast or TV production, or help organize fundraising or advocacy events, send us an email at jhrmcgill@gmail.com and we will add you to our listserv.

To learn more about jhr's international work, please visit: <http://www.jhr.ca>

For more info about jhr @ McGill and our upcoming activities, please visit: <http://jhrmcgill.wordpress.com>

In 1982, the state of North Carolina planned on constructing a hazardous waste dump in Warren County. It would be used to bury 400,000 cubic yards of soil contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Local activists, organizers and researchers mobilized to prevent their community from becoming the dump-site, arguing that the neighbourhood had been chosen because its residents were black and poor. This is recognized as one of the struggles that catalyzed the American environmental justice movement. Robert Bullard, considered the movement's father, says that we must "connect the dots" between racism and classism, among a vast array of structural inequalities. "It's not just the landfill, it's not just the incinerator, it's not just the garbage dump, it's not just the crisscrossing freeway and highway, and the bus barns that dump all that stuff in these neighborhoods -- it's all that combined." In this issue we investigate the complex nature of the EJ movement. How is it unique from 'environmentalism' and why is it important in today's age of increased resource extraction and industrial development? How can we apply environmental justice concepts and frameworks that emerged from American grassroots resistance and understand them in an international context? We invite you to join us in exploring these questions as we learn about producing human rights media. Such a process means that you will see a wide range of article topics, writing styles and a diversity of voices. As always, we hope that this issue will open up a space for discussion and incite your inner activist!

With much love,

Emily and the Newspaper Team

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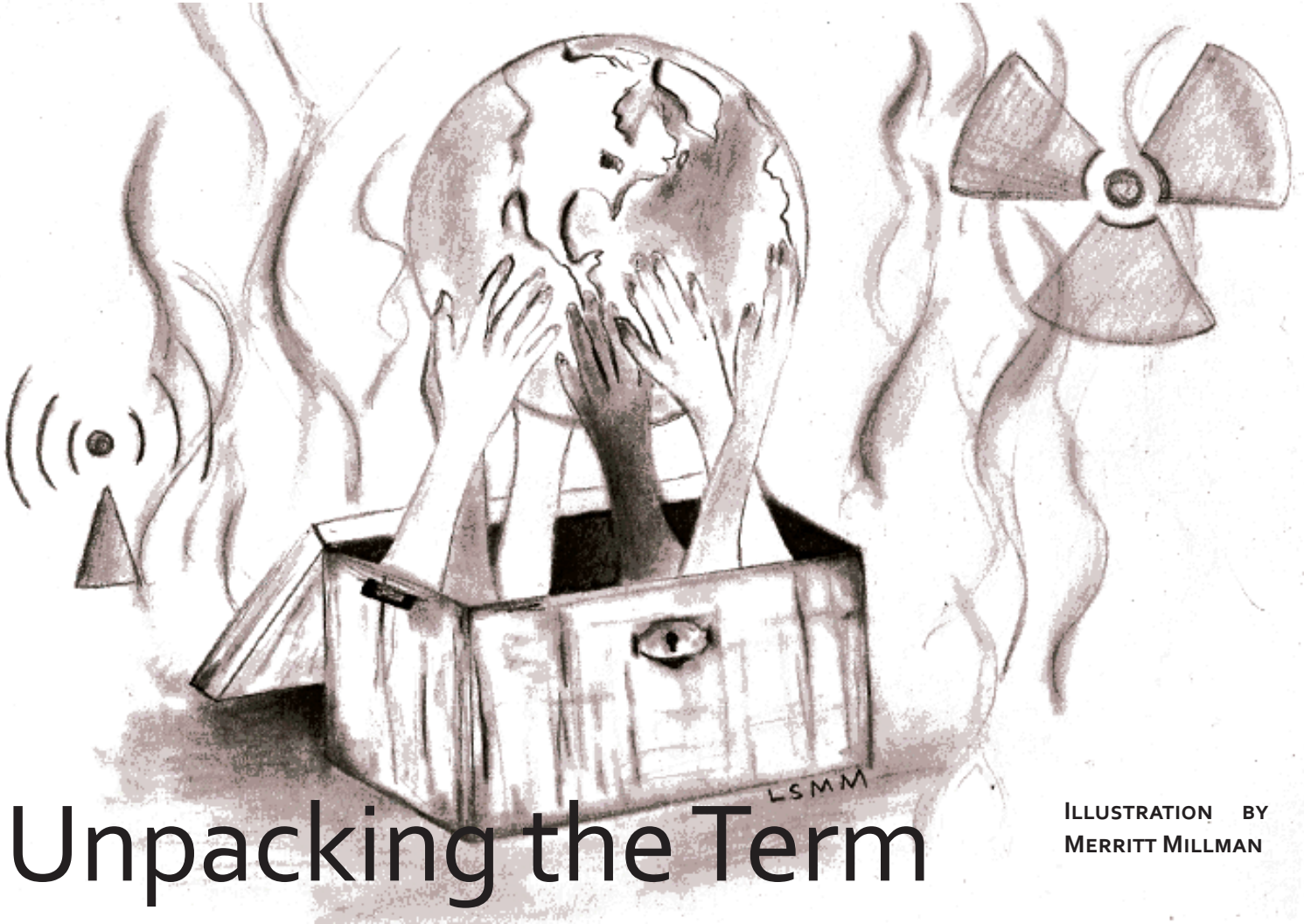
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FACT SHEET ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

DEFINITION BY MELISSA XIE

Environmental justice is a response to environmental racism, the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on marginalized groups. The environmental justice movement integrates the physical environment with the cultural environment, and seeks to address the synergistic racial, geographical and accessibility inequities. The mandate behind environmental justice is not to redistribute inequities, but to abolish inequities altogether to maintain a sustainable planet that transcends generations through ethical and responsible usage of land and resources.



Unpacking the Term

ILLUSTRATION BY
MERRITT MILLMAN

BY JESSICA NEWFIELD

The term “environmental justice” is often a remote and misconstrued concept that generates misunderstandings about the nature of the term and its relevance. It is an issue that does not exclusively concern climate change, but has diverse implications for economic policy as well as human development.

The Keystone XL pipeline extending from Northeastern Alberta to the US Gulf Coast demonstrates this conflict. The project faces opposition from environmental groups and political activists, and undermines the US'

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Unpacking the Term: Environmental Justice

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

publicized commitment to clean energy. Friends of the Earth (FoE) insists that “tar sands oil is one of the dirtiest fuels on the Earth. Investing in tar sands oil now will delay investments in clean and safe alternatives to oil, such as better fuel economy requirements, plug-in electric cars fueled by solar power, and smart growth and public transportation infrastructure that give Americans choices other than cars.”

Another imperative concern is that the Keystone XL crosses the Ogallala aquifer, one of the largest reserves of fresh water in the world. It provides drinking water for two million people, and fuels 20 billion dollars in agriculture. If a significant leak occurred, drinking water would be ruined and the mid-western US economy greatly affected.

This raises an important question: to what extent are peoples' livelihoods weighed by environmental burdens and how much political and legal influence do affected local groups have over the extraction of natural resources?

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, environmental justice “will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn and work”.

Various misconceptions arise from the confusion of “Environmental Justice” with “Environmentalism”. Attempting to preserve the environment at all costs neglects factors of social justice and human rights that are equally part of the equation. In the same way, solely striving for economic growth ignores the eco-

logical component.

The palm oil industry in Indonesia exemplifies this discrepancy. Since 2007, Indonesia has been the world's largest producer of palm oil. This exported product evidently contributes to state revenue, developing inland regions, and increasing rural employment and standards of living.

However, the palm oil industry can also have detrimental environmental consequences, such as causing rampant deforestation. It would appear that there is a subsequent trade-off between palm oil expansion and the environment. Does this mean that we cannot achieve sustainable economic development that is also compatible with conservation? The question therefore is whether “environmental justice” and “environmentalism” can co-exist, in a conceivable manner.

Sean Phipps, President of Greenpeace McGill, believes that, though the two concepts are distinct, “we cannot consider having one without the other because they are intrinsically linked”. His work with the McGill Research Group Investigating Canadian Mining in Latin America (MICLA) reflects that mining companies are responsible for social, environmental and human rights abuses in Latin America, and specifically in local mining populations.

This student-run research collective is concerned with the lack of resources and legislative power in targeted communities. Phipps states that in “any situation in which there is a group with decision-making power that can potentially dictate peoples' livelihoods without these people being consulted, there is a

form of injustice.”

This applies, for example, to how indigenous groups and communities in Latin American countries are often unable to govern their own affairs and are hardly ever informed or consulted by mining companies that wish to appropriate their land.

Companies should have to make their case to the concerned community before imposing their projects. Despite the United Nations' adoption of the Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples, indigenous communities do not seem to possess actual enforceable rights, just symbolic ones.

If “environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies” (as defined by the EPA), then we can infer that much progress still needs to be made by the environmental justice movement.

Social justice for the underprivileged and disadvantaged segment of the world population cannot be achieved without a safe and protected environment. A shift in our perspective of environmental justice is essential for improving related legislation and mitigating socio-economic and environmental impacts.

This could facilitate greater citizen involvement in deciding how our land is used and exploited. Thus, the environmental justice movement would be better represented and understood if there were greater emphasis on the lives impaired by deficient supervision and regulation of corporate practices.

TIME LINE

A History of Environmental Measures in the United Nations

BY IAN SANDLER

JULY 30TH, 1968: 45th session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) recommends in resolution 1346 that the General Assembly considers creating a UN conference on the problems of the human environment

1970: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is established to enforce laws that protect human health

JUNE 5TH-16TH, 1972: United Nations Conference on the Human Environment takes place in Stockholm, establishing the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)

1972: DDT, a toxic pesticide is banned in the United States

1983: General Assembly establishes a special commission to report on environmental problems

1987: World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) submits the Brundtland report which develops the theme of sustainable development

1989: The oil tanker Exxon Valdez runs aground in Alaska, spilling 11 million gallons of crude oil and prompting more stringent environmental measures

1992: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development or the "Rio Conference" leads to the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development

-Agenda 21: global plan to promote sustainable development

-Rio Declaration on Environment and Development: defines the rights and responsibilities of states

-Statement of Forest Principles: principles given to main-



*Wildlife in aftermath of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill of 1989.
Photo courtesy of Wikimedia*

tain the sustainable management of forests worldwide

1992: The Environmental Protection Agency releases Environmental Equity: Reducing the Risk for All Communities, one of the first global governmental reports on environmental justice

1997: UN General Assembly convenes "Rio+ 5" to implement Agenda 21

2000: World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) or "Rio + 10" initiated a review of progress since 1992

2011: UN Convention on the Environment and Human Rights

WORLD EVENTS



Map by Yoel Natán
at www.yoel.info

1 ATTAWAPISKAT, CANADA

The remote, fly-in community of Attawapiskat First Nation declared a state of emergency in early November 2011. The lack of housing threatens the health and survival of community members as winter approaches. 19 families live in shacks with no running water; 122 families live in condemned housing; 96 people live in one industrial-sized trailer and there is an immediate need for 268 new houses. The community lacks funding for essential infrastructure and on top of an acute housing shortage and overcrowding faces

environmental health challenges of toxic contamination from an oil pipe leak under its school, and a failed sewage system which has required the mass evacuation of residents in the past. In spite of sharing its traditional territory with the richest diamond mine in the Western world (the De Beers Victor diamond mine), there is no equitable distribution of this wealth. Attawapiskat is located where James Bay meets the Attawapiskat River, with a population of 1,800 on reserve and a total population of 2,300.

Attawapiskat First Nation Calls

on De Beers to Respect First Nation Rights | www.DiamondNe.ws
<http://www.diamondne.ws/2009/08/20/attawapiskat-first-nation-calls-on-de-beers-to-respect-first-nation-rights/#ixzz1ed5HBUQ1>

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/charlie-angus/attawapiskat-emergency_b_1104370.html?ref=canada#undefined

<http://intercontinentalcry.org/attawapiskat-state-of-emergency-ignored/>

Environmental Justice

Around the World

BY KATHRYN LENNON

2 WASHINGTON, DC, USA

In October of 1991, a gathering of delegates at the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in Washington, DC drafted and adopted 17 principles of Environmental Justice that have since served as a defining document for the growing grassroots movement for environmental justice. The principles call for re-establishing relationships with the sacredness of Mother Earth, link rural and urban ecological concerns, call attention to the long-term environmental consequences of the colonization of the Americas, and consider governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law and universal human rights.

3 TORONTO, CANADA & EL ESTOR, GUATEMALA

In March 2011, Rosa Elbira Coc Ich and ten other indigenous Mayan Q'eqchi' women from the community of "Lote Ocho" filed a lawsuit against Canadian mining companies HMI Nickel, and its corporate owner, HudBay Minerals. The eleven women were gang-raped by armed mining company security personnel, police and military during the forced evictions of Mayan Q'eqchi' families from their homes and farms in 2007. The evictions were ordered by HMI Nickel in relation to its Fenix mining project. Despite making public promises to abide by international standards to ensure that evictions would be carried out without violence and in respect of human rights, HMI Nickel, which managed the mining project from its head office in Canada at the time, took aggressive action against the communities living on land related to its Fenix mining project by seeking their forced expulsion.

<http://rabble.ca/news/2011/03/mayan-victims-gang-rapes-announce-lawsuit-against-canadian-mining-company>

4 HAITI

In June 2010, Haitian peasant farmers rejected a donation of hybrid corn and vegetable seeds from Monsanto, the American multinational agricultural biotechnology corporation. 10,000 farmers said no to the offer from Monsanto to replenish Haitian seed stocks following the January 2010 earthquake by marching and burning the hybrid seeds in a powerful act of defiance. Chavannes Jean-Baptist of the Peasant Movement of Papay (MPP) said in a message to Haitian farmers, "Monsanto is taking advantage of the earthquake... to open the country's doors to this powerful company. We cannot accept this." Hybrid seeds are not suitable for replanting the next season, which means that farmers would be forced to purchase seeds from Monsanto each year, making them dependent on the company.

<http://www.nwrage.org/content/haitis-farmers-reject-monsantos-seed-donation>

5 DETROIT, USA

Cultivating food on abandoned lots in Detroit is an act of survival. Since the automobile industry failed and factory jobs disappeared, the former car capital has, out of necessity, become the grounds for imagining a different economic and social structure. Here, urban agricultural projects are an act of resistance against poverty, hunger, racism, classism, in a city with a population that is 90% African American/Black. Environmental justice and food justice are central to many of the creative initiatives here that focus on strengthening

communities, creating urban green spaces, empowering youth, and dismantling racism and poverty through growing food and creating green jobs. Detroit is an example of how new life and opportunity can grow up out of the grassroots.

6 CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA

In October 2011, at the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Basel Convention, 178 countries agreed to allow the ban on exports of toxic wastes from the 29 wealthiest OECD countries to non-OECD countries to become law. Jim Puckett, Executive Director of the Basel Action Network, said: "The Ban Amendment ensures that developing countries are not convenient dumping grounds for toxic factory waste, obsolete ships containing asbestos or old computers coming from affluent countries. It enforces the Basel Convention obligation that all countries manage their own hazardous waste."

http://ban.org/about_basel_ban/what_is_basel_ban.html

7 KWA ZULU NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

The South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA) organizes, lobbies, reports and researches across historic racial divisions in South Africa to speak out for environmental justice and against environmental racism. Since 1996 it has worked to reduce the toxic releases of oil refineries in South Durban, the biggest petrochemical cluster in Africa. SDCEA works to prove the links between pollution and leukemia in the community, build community resistance to apartheid-era laws that see the health and rights of less powerful communities violated in the name of industrial development.

<http://www.sdcea.co.za/>

FEATURE

DISASTER IN JAPAN

And the future of nuclear energy



PHOTO COURTESY OF INHABITAT.COM

BY OLIVIA ZEYDLER

"At my home in Tokyo, it was terrifying to take cover when the ground started shaking... I came to appreciate how terror can be disabling for human beings", author Tomoyuki Hoshino, who felt the magnitude 9.0 earthquake from his home in Tokyo, wrote in the Hokkaido Shimbun in April 2011.

The 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami left Japan with an unprecedented third catastrophe: the melt

down of the Fukushima Power Plant. This provoked a controversial question for the Japanese government; do we put citizen's lives in danger when trying to satisfy our pressing duty to deter climate change?

"Although I can say that this terror subsided, it remains lurking deep in my nerves... the nuclear power plant accident continues, and the possibility of catastrophic disaster continues, and the reality is that ... we are made continuously terrorized by the current situation," Hoshi-

no continued.

Before the events of March 11, 2011, Japan was the world's leader in nuclear energy. One of the few available energy options for a clean energy economy, nuclear power was projected to satisfy 50 percent of Japan's total energy needs by 2030. But after the triple disaster, there has been a major shift in Japan's public opinion on nuclear energy, forcing the government and developers to reevaluate their high hopes for it.

"The crisis is casting a shadow

over the safety of our livelihoods, so I think it's natural to raise our voices from the place where we live," Japanese activist Hajime Matsumoto said in an interview with Time Out Tokyo Edition.

Nuclear meltdowns, especially one as large as Fukushima, releases lingering radiation into the air. The Japanese government has drawn attention to the 300,000 children in Fukushima Prefecture who were exposed at radiation hotspots.

Radiation exposure could put children at risk of heart disease, various skin ailments, and asthma. Yet the nuclear industry may continue to "insist that no one is at risk from low-level radiation exposure from Fukushima," Peter Karamoskos, nuclear radiologist and public repre-

sentative on the Radiation Health Committee of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, wrote for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

"The rest of us will need to wait some months or years before we have a plausible estimate of total human radiation exposure upon which to base an estimate of the death toll," Karamoskos wrote.

As intensive clean-up continues, thousands of workers are being exposed to these potential hazards every day.

Atsushi Watanabe (not his real name), a 20-year-old blue-collar worker who helped to shut down the Fukushima power plant, confessed in an interview with The Independent, "I could never ask a woman

to spend her life with me.... If I told her about my work, of course she will worry about my future health or what might happen to our children. And I couldn't hide what I do."

He has accepted the prospect of never having a family, due to the possibility of severe health effects stemming from radiation exposure.

Unfortunately, the long term health effects do not show up until later, and legislators will make no definitive decisions until they do.

Additionally, rain can wash exposed nuclear waste into mud ditches. The same mud may then be used to fertilize and grow food. This has potential to implant radia

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PHOTO COURTESY OF KIM KYUNG-HOON/REUTERS

NEW COMMON SIGHT: Officials check young evacuees from areas surrounding the Fukushima Daini nuclear plant for signs of radiation in Koriyama, Fukushima, Japan.

Disaster in Japan: Future of nuclear energy



DANGERS GO GLOBAL? Trace amounts of radioactive iodine were detected in milk Washington and California states.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THINKSTOCK/
ABC NEWS RADIO ONLINE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

tion into all of Japan's food supply, leading to a collapse in Japan's food security.

Sumiteru Taniguchi, the 82-year-old director of the Nagasaki A-Bomb Survivors Council, has insisted that "Nuclear power and mankind cannot coexist. We survivors of the atomic bomb have said this all along. And yet, the use of nuclear power was camouflaged as 'peaceful' and continued to progress. You never know when there's going to be a natural disaster. You can never say that there will never be a nuclear accident."

The Japanese government has recently announced that some areas located near the power plant may be uninhabitable for decades, reported the New York Times.

Yet continually, the international community assumes that nuclear power is safe and reliable. The Jap-

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES: Below, Greenpeace Japan workers monitor seafood for signs of radiation.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEREMY SUTTON-HIBBERT/GREENPEACE

anese government is still depending on nuclear power as its main energy provider, and the main energy exporters such as the United States, United Kingdom, and France are encouraging expansion.

Matthew Penny, Concordia University professor and writer for the Asia Pacific Journal, said, "It appears that despite a phase-out at home, Japan will continue to export nuclear reactors. In essence, I think this is a watershed for Japan – which is currently debating a substantial turn to renewables."

Japan could take advantage of this historical event to use as a motive to switch to a clean, smart-power energy economy, setting a progressive example for the global

community. Alternately, it could ignore the disaster and public opinion and continue forward with nuclear expansion.

"Japanese regulators and politicians described Chernobyl as an essential Soviet failure that taught a few lessons to Japan in 1986... where now Fukushima is being described as a freak accident by most," Penny said..

Corporations and Japanese government's assurance of the safety of low-level radiation is "at odds with the current situation in Japan - the 20 km evacuation zone around the Fukushima nuclear plant, restrictions on food and water consumption in Japan and restrictions on the importation of food from Japan," Karamoskos

“Japanese regulators and politicians described Chernobyl as an essential Soviet failure that taught a few lessons to Japan in 1986...where now Fukushima is being described as a freak accident by most.”

wrote for the ABC.

The voices of the Japanese people strongly indicate that they view nuclear energy in a very different light.

As Matsumoto commented to Time Out after the April 10 Anti-Nuclear Power Demonstration in Japan, “Recent marches in Ginza and Shibuya saw numbers swell to as much as 40 times the expected attendance... there’s a feeling that the usually apathetic, politically disengaged youth of Japan could be about to take to the streets in swathes.”

He continued, “We were able to remain ignorant of bad policies and social issues, and just enjoy our affluence. However, this disaster and crisis has affected our lives so much – especially in Tokyo and Tohoku – and people who weren’t into politics are developing strong feelings against nuclear power plants.”

A poll distributed on November 4 by the national broadcaster NHK illustrated that 70 percent of respondents wanted to reduce reliance on nuclear power. There is a huge community

movement towards overcoming Japan’s reliance on nuclear technologies.

“One thing I am certain about is that I’d rather live with much less electricity if it mitigates the kind of risk we are seeing now... there are lots of possible alternatives, but our top priority is to stop the nuclear power plants” Matsumoto said.

So would continuing the use of nuclear-powered energy be considered a violation of human rights? Or should the prospects of a nuclear-reliant clean energy grid be abandoned, for certainty that the people can live free from terror?

This issue underlies a global dilemma of energy demand, reliance, and extraction. Hoshino

SUPPORT SWELLS: Activist Hajime Matsumoto organized an Anti-Nuclear power Demonstration in Koenji, Tokyo on April 10, 2011, to unexpectedly high turn-out.

concluded, “If [Japanese society is] truly serious about not wanting to face something like this again, we must face up to the fact that it is not only Tokyo Electric Power Company’s responsibility, but our responsibility too, so for that reason, shouldn’t we amend our rhetoric about abandoning nuclear power plants? I think real reconstruction is possible if we change ourselves.”

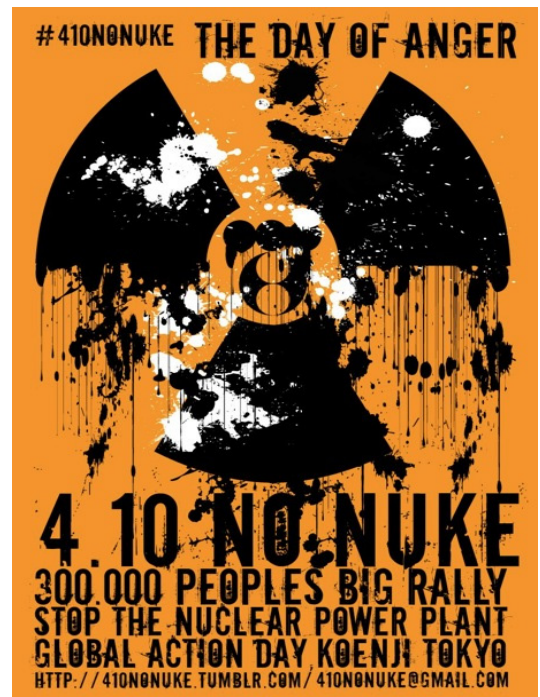


PHOTO COURTESY OF 410NONUKE.TUMBLR.COM



PHOTO COURTESY OF REUTERS/YURIKO NAKAO

REACTIONS: Anti-nuclear demonstrators and a Buddhist monk protest outside Tokyo Electric Power Company’s headquarters in Tokyo, April 5, 2011.

Human Rights Working Group Column

The New 99 Percent

BY MENACHEM FREEDMAN



"Like Rothschild Boulevard, but less disciplined and orderly."

This was how Israeli journalist Amira Hass described Montreal's Occupy protest, comparing it to the street protests for social justice that rocked Israel over the summer.

Like Hass, when protesters began setting up tents in Montreal's new People's Plaza, I was struck with a strong sense of *deja-vu*. Having spent time at both protests, I gained a unique perspective on a dynamic overlooked by Occupy's media coverage to this day: the relationship between the "99 percent" and the migration state.

I spent the last summer working in Tel-Aviv with an NGO called Hotline for Migrant Workers. I had come to provide paralegal assistance for

THE MANY PUBLIC FACES OF LEVINSKY PARK: At right, adults and children play in the park while at left, a sign exhorts protestors to keep their tents clean.



opposed an economic system controlled by a handful of oligarchs, where unemployment is half that of America's, but more than twice the percentage of the population live under the poverty

Israel's non-citizen population, but ended up being caught up in what some have described as "Israel's Great Social Awakening" and "Tel-Aviv's Summer of Love." It all started right by my apartment, on Rothschild Boulevard.

Rothschild is one of Tel-Aviv's beautiful main drags that, dotted with palm trees and covered in grass, winds its way to the beach. As with Occupy, the tents that began to sprout along the boulevard represented an ecology of different interests. But mainly, the protest

line.

The tent protests were, at first, no more than a novelty for me. I was working with asylum seekers from Cote d'Ivoire, Darfur and Eritrea, who were fighting for refugee status and the right to work. In comparison, the Israeli protesters' message seemed valid, but not pressing. Every day I would walk past placards, guitar players, hookah smokers, hippies and design students camping out and sharing coffee, then move on to the office. But when the tents came to Levinsky Park, these two

HWRG Column

worlds suddenly collided.

Israel is home to a community of 40 thousand African refugees, almost all of whom arrived in the last five years. Israel's refugee administration is in its infancy and it has afforded almost none of these refugees a permanent status that would give them basic social rights. The majority of refugees live in Tel-Aviv, where NGOs fill in the gaps by providing medical, legal and social aid. Many live in Levinsky Park, a small green space in a south Tel-Aviv slum. They live in the park because, with no work permit or social assistance, they cannot afford rent.

When the tent protests' expansion into Tel-Aviv public space reached Levinsky, the interactions between the old and new occupiers were hopeful at first. One of the main concerns of the protest was the high price of real estate in central Israel. Migrants were both a cause and a victim of this phenomenon. They were the ones who paid exorbitant prices for slum apartments, because they had nowhere else to go.

But the hope of creating a joint refugee-Israeli struggle in south Tel-Aviv ended in tragic failure. On the one side, some Israelis were more interested in blaming the refugees for their problems than in allying with them against a common enemy. On the other side, refugees who had fled oppression in their home countries and in Egypt were unconvinced that they could safely participate in the protest. This belief was bolstered by threats from the

police.

Things really fell apart after about a month. By then, the Levinsky tents were all but taken over by Israelis who were homeless not by choice but by necessity. Some were addicts and mentally unstable. Levin-sky at this point was truly occupied in the maleficent sense of the term. The park had been a safe space for newly-arrived refugees. It had a playground where I would see immigrant children running around till the wee hours under the careful eye of their older siblings or relatives as they waited for the parents to finish work. But by the end of the summer, there was so much violence that many migrants just wanted the protesters out and the tents gone.

Friends of mine, left-wing activists, were mystified by the failure of the Levinsky project. When I think back to the happy days of the beginning of the protest, to the signs written in Eritrean Tigrinya, Sudanese Arabic, Hebrew and English and the food tent that served Israeli and migrant alike, I wonder how it got so bad, so fast. It seemed like Israelis and migrants had so much to gain from an alliance.

I believe the Levinsky protest failed for many reasons, but there is a fundamental one I would like to emphasize for its relevance to the Occupy movements of North America. This has to do with what some political scientists, among them James Hollifield, call the paradox of the liberal state. Economic development has made modern economies dependent on foreign labour and globalizing policies, while political pressure has enshrined certain services and benefits as the rights of modern citizens. Hollifield says that the migration state and the welfare state are incompatible and headed for collision.

When Occupy calls itself the 99

percent, this implies a 100 percent totality, the body of citizens in a state. But citizens are not the only people who live in a modern migration state. Beyond the locally disadvantaged 99 percent are the globally disadvantaged, some of whom have made it to our shores. If Hollifield is correct, the Levinsky fiasco is one that will be repeated over and over, because it represents a clash between two opposing paradigms: the closed, protected welfare state and the unbounded migration state.

This tension is resolvable, but it will require careful thought. Refugees and migrant workers remind the 99 percent that beyond their national borders is an even more skewed economic system. One person's fascist-capitalist oligarchy is another person's land of safety and opportunity. For my part, I believe the welfare state cannot fully close its borders. Citizens of our nation owe a debt to the world's refugees that goes beyond Geneva conventions, because we are implicated in a global system of violence for which we bear responsibility. We also have a duty that comes from the heart, preventing us from shutting the doors on the "poor, huddled masses yearning to be free."

As the Occupy movement continues, it must recall not only local threats to current Canadian citizens, but also the winds of change which threaten the future of Canada's generous refugee system. Bills such as C-4 will, if passed, give the government absolute discretion to detain asylum seekers for a year and prevent them reuniting with their families. As the movement fights for the survival of the welfare state, it must not forget its obligations as a migration state towards the strangers in our midst and those who need our help.

INTERNATIONAL

What's up with the world: News Briefs

BY JOANNA SAAB

OCCUPY MOVEMENT WORLDWIDE

The international protest movement which is for the most part oriented against social and economic inequality was initiated by the Canadian activist group Adbusters, a not-for-profit, anti-consumerist, pro-environment organization which was partly inspired by the Arab Spring and the Spanish Indignants. The movement started in Kuala Lumpur in July 2011, with Occupy Dataran and eventually propagated to over 95 cities, across 82 countries. In the Western world, the Occupy movement proliferated in cities such as New York, San Francisco, Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver, among others. The movement has been criticized by some for being leaderless and lacking a clear agenda or positive suggestions, while others have expressed contentment toward the worldwide initiative, with the hope of altering society for the better.

BLUE TIDE OF CONSERVATISM IN SPAIN

Predictably, Mariano Rajoy's right-wing Popular Party won the absolute majority in parliamentary elections in Spain. For the first time in European modern history, every important capital in the continent will be a conservative sanctuary. The economic crisis in Spain has generated a real-estate crash and an escalating unemployment rate, where 25% of the population and half of all youth are jobless. This economic climate led the Socialist par-

ty of Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero to its demise, especially after their spending cuts were met with little success. The conservatives now in power will have to bear the difficulties that the austerity and bailout programs might engender in the long-run, since they are likely to be unpopular among voters.

ITALIANS RALLY AS MONTI UNVEILS HIS CRISIS PLAN

The new Italian Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance, Mario Monti, former European commissioner responsible for Internal Market, Services, Customs and Taxation, and then Competition, recently disclosed his program to counter Italy's stagnation. In reaction, to its release, thousands of people protested in many Italian cities against the "government of the bankers". Monti and his technocratic government have been working on measures to avoid Italy's collapse under debts, following the departure of former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. In Milan, the country's economic capital, students clashed with police in protests against budget cuts. Students clashed with police as they marched to Bocconi University, an institution reputed to form the business elite.

GREEKS MANIFEST AGAINST AUSTERITY MEASURES

Some 50,000 people rallied on the streets of Athens to protest against the austerity measures that the

newly formed government of Lucas Papademos, former vice-president of the European Central Bank, is about to implement to deal with the economic crisis. The peaceful protest was a message of warning toward the government and coincided with the anniversary of the student uprising against the regime of the colonels in 1973, whose commemoration usually turns to an antigovernment mobilization. This year, demonstrations were mainly directed against the austerity measures. On the other hand, Lucas Papademos will have to live up to the challenge of maintaining cohesion within the divided government and working toward alleviating the crisis.

EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT RESIGNS

Egypt's army-appointed government resigned in the face of a third day of protest where thousands of demonstrators against the nation's military council clashed with security forces in Cairo's Tahrir Square. The protesters were determined to go through with their demands of having a civilian government. In their struggle, they requested the end of the military power that moved the departure of Hosni Mubarak, and the slogans were particularly directed at Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, a cacique of the old regime, de facto head of state.

VESTIGES OF THE LIBYAN DICTATOR

As the late col. Moammar Gadhafi, Libya's dictator for 42 years,

was dethroned and killed by his people, Seif al-Islam, his remaining son, was captured in the southern Libyan Desert recently by revolutionary fighters and brought to Zintan, a small city in north western Libya. The Libyan people wish for Seif al-Islam to be tried at home for the crimes he committed against them instead of the International Criminal Court, despite the country's lack of elaborate justice system. While it will take time for a fair trial to take place, Libyans want to prosecute Seif al-Islam, who partly represents the dictatorial regime under which they were subjected, something which they were unable to go through with Gadhafi. Meanwhile, Human Rights Watch called for Seif al-Islam to be handed over to the International Criminal Court, stating that the killing of his father and brother Muatissim was concerning.

SYRIA'S PRESIDENT NOT TO BACK DOWN

Nine month after the outbreak of protests against Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, which made over 3,500 deaths according to the UN, he remains adamant despite his growing international isolation and criticism. Bashar al-Assad claims to be ready to fight foreign forces until death, while his country will be subjected to economic sanctions after the expiration of an ultimatum from the Arab League, urging him to stop the repression he is undertaking against the Syrian demonstrators.

LEGALIZING PROSTITUTION TO FIGHT AIDS IN BOTSWANA

Former president of Botswana, Festus Mogae, who now heads the National AIDS Council, believes that legalizing prostitution would facili-

tate its prevention. He claims that decriminalizing prostitution would not only stop the police from chasing after consenting adults and concentrate on other problems but would enable sex workers to denounce clients that refuse to pay or use protection. The Democratic Party (BDP) currently in power did not take any position concerning the matter yet, while the opposition of Botsalo Ntuane supports it. Meanwhile, this has raised negative reactions from the part of religious groups, mainly Chistians, strong in this rather conservative country.

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON IRAN

In order to prevent Iran from developing Nuclear weapons, Canada will join the United States and Britain in implementing new sanctions directed at Tehran's finances. Even though the Iranian government insists that the nuclear program is for civilian and scientific purposes, Canada will sever financial links with the country, including its central banks, while Britain has already cut off trading with their financial institutions, and the United States is preparing to reinforce restrictions on flows of money to and from Iran by addressing the latter as "a primary money laundering concern".

A VOICE FOR AFGHAN WOMEN

Ten years after the first Afghanistan Conference in Bonn, Germany, to set the course for Afghanistan's future, the international community will meet again on December 5. The conference will focus on the overall political process that should lead to stabilization and the engagement of foreign countries in Afghanistan after 2014. Meanwhile, an encompassing range of international hu-

man rights organization has express concern toward women's rights issues in Afghanistan, among them, women's rights activists wondering about women's situation after troops leave the country. Afghan women activists have come together to demand international support for the involvement of women in the reconciliation and peace process with the Taliban.

NEW LAW PROTECTING WOMEN RIGHTS IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan passed an Anti-Women's Practices Bill that will punish anyone who forces women into marriages or denies them inheritance. The culprits would be sentenced to prison 3-10 years or will have to pay approximately a \$6,000 fine. The passing of the bill engendered positive reactions from Women's rights groups in Pakistan while other rights groups expressed concerns about how the amended legislation will be administered due to the predominant unfavourable attitude towards women in Pakistan.

UNITED STATES REINFORCE MILITARY PRESENCE IN AUSTRALIA

The United States will strengthen their military presence in Australia and intend to stay in the Asian-Pacific region, which is considered immensely strategic according to president Obama. In addition, the president insisted that the United States do not fear China, even if he announced a new security agreement with Australia, an arrangement that is largely perceived as a response to Beijing's growing hostility. Indeed, China did not appreciate this agreement, warning that an increased military presence in Australia is not appropriate and deserves considerable surveillance.

INTERNATIONAL

The Dirty Byproducts of China's Economic Growth

BY MORGANE CIOT

China's promotion of economic growth is intended to elevate the wealth and well-being of its population. But its quantum lurches towards capitalism have had quite the inverse effect, corrupting the health and incomes of its citizens. The pollution generated from China's unchecked industrialization faces little opposition. Environmental justice is floundering under Party-

sanctioned corruption, poor health care policies, and a perversely utilitarian regime strategy that seeks to maximize economic development without considering its environmental dimensions.

The two most prominent environmental issues are air and water pollution. According to the NGO Human Rights in China (HRIC), chronic pulmonary disease is the leading

cause of death in China, and The New York Times reports show that water contamination reduces the amount of clean water available to use, leading to water scarcity for over 600 million people.

The sources of pollution are not all self-contained, however. The transfer of 'dirty' industries and waste trade from Western countries have been a boon to Chinese industries,



INCHING FORWARD: The first item on the Chinese government's environmental policy proposal, the "Scientific Outlook on Development," is to clean up old steel factories such as this one in Baoutou.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF WHENABILLIONCHINESEJUMP.COM

SIGNS OF PROGRESS? The government's plan calls for a move toward a low-carbon economy by expanding wind farms, which are being built across the Mongolian desert.

China's economic growth

but have evolved at the expense of the health of urban residents, workers and the country's rural, migrant "floating population." Flexing its comparative advantage of massive amounts of manpower, China accepts international waste, allowing an army of poor villagers make a career out of foraging through radioactive waste for metal scraps.

These issues affect a fairly expansive spectrum of the Chinese population, with a special vengeance for the poor. Another, less publicized problem has victimized children. Lead poisoning is the most common pediatric problem in China, due to the prevalence of lead smelters and battery factories around poor rural villages. Because children's biological and cognitive functions are still developing, high exposure to lead leads to variety of problems, including reduced IQ, learning disabilities, behavioral problems, impairment of visual, auditory, and motor skills, neural damage, comas, convulsions, and even death, according to a Human Rights Watch report from this past summer.

The report also found that even children in non-industrial areas are prone to elevated blood lead levels: using formula milk or living near the street are both sources of lead exposure. Lead poisoning as a result of pollution will result in a generation of children who are cognitively and physically impaired.

The Communist Party is well aware of these problems, but, as the Guardian reports, they also know that relaxing industrial development would only engender social instability as unemployment and commodity prices would rise. Yet though environmental justice is

subsumed by the need to lift people out of poverty, pollution ironically constrained economic growth by affecting crop yields. Furthermore, the situation is amplified by unaffordable health care costs: 8-12 percent of China's GDP goes towards medical bills, lost work and disaster relief, according to The Economist. While economic growth is raising people out of poverty, as per the Party plan, growth-generated pollution is having a retrograde impact by increasing health care bills.

Unfortunately, individuals trying to rock the environmental status quo have historically faced indifference at best, incarceration at worst. As Human Rights Watch discovered, the case of lead poisoning is one of the most egregious examples of officials turning a blind eye to environmental injustice. Village clinics, in collusion with local governments, consistently underplay the risk of lead exposure, even falsifying or refusing to show test results and recommending only vague treatments - like drinking more milk - to children with life-threatening lead levels in their blood.

Moreover, if a child does not live within the fictitious "one kilometer" radius from a plant, the only distance that doctors claim poses a health risk, testing is difficult to obtain even if that child is very sick. Many of the factories that cause pollution are connected to local governments in some way, forming a strong matrix of resistance against parents who voice complaints. In addition, clinics tend to withhold information because they simply do not have the resources to treat the growing number of children suffering from lead poisoning.

"I'm very worried about my son's health," Su, a man from Henan province whose son has lead poisoning, told the Human Rights Watch. "I'm very worried about my son's future, but what can I do? The government ignores us."

The government, both at local and at national levels, has been ignoring Su, as well as the wider consequences of its actions. So far, China's attempts at reform have been largely superficial, designed to appease international mandates and public opinion. The National Environmental Protection Standards, implemented as of last month, have for the first time specified standards for pollutants from the rare earths industry and guidelines for drafting a corporate environmental report. Earlier this year, China released its five-year economic plan, which included provisions to slow emissions, cut pollution, and switch focus from economic development to sustainability.

However, the government's crackdown on demonstrations this summer in the city of Dalian, where a storm destroyed a factory and left residents exposed to dangerous chemicals, may be sadly indicative of its prioritizing social order over citizens' rights to remain healthy and unharmed by pollutants.

While pollution concerns remain subservient to the inflexible and overarching goal of fast-paced development, there will be no progress in environmental justice. China's goal is to improve overall well-being by mitigating poverty, but its unshakable tunnel vision may have caused it to lose sight of the individual importance of human lives.

Urban Transport in India: Where Wealth Determines Mobility

BY JANE ZHANG

"India is a country of two worlds," claims Anvita Kulkarni, a U1 Physiology student at McGill, of her experience in her home country. In India, "you can drive down highways, freeways, and roads paved with concrete and tar and pass by shiny shopping malls one minute and crowded slums the next." Interestingly, India's transport system and land use is just as mixed and diverse as the nation's ethnic diversity; however, India's development is moving towards a Western planning trajectory, with growing car use and car-dependent infrastructure.

From an urban planning perspective, India's highly dense urban form is a major advantage to diverse modal development, though its pervasive poverty poses a significant hurdle. Unfortunately, recent automobile-centered urban development has stripped Indian cities of their natural advantage and left the poor even more helpless.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) 2005 statistics, global motor vehicle growth has been predominant in industrializing countries, especially India. With major automobile firms like Tata, India's motor vehicle production has climbed to over 3.5 million

from just 800,000 in the last 10 years. Based on this, one may infer that India's cities have a higher need for automobile infrastructure. However, this mentality leads to a vicious cycle.

"...the World Health Organization lists road traffic fatalities as the 9th leading cause of death globally, and predicts it to be 5th in 2030, ahead of all cancers."

Professor Madhav Badami from the McGill School of Urban Planning illustrates that "while road-building may improve speeds for vehicles and ease congestion in the short term, it leads to ever more vehicle activity and congestion, and the need for more roads." Thus even in well-equipped and resource-rich countries like Canada, car-centered development simply perpetuates car use, a rather unsustainable mode of transport.

Unfortunately, India is inherently maladapted to automobile development – space is scarce enough

with the booming population, and most citizens do not have the means to travel by private vehicles. While car use is increasing in India due to growing incomes and rapid urbanization, this is only representative of a wealthy minority. In fact, the Ministry of Urban Development notes that 80% of India's population still relies on walking, bicycling, and public transport.

The core of the issue is a loss of accessibility for everyone. While the relatively wealthy driving minority suffers the user-on-user externality of traffic congestion, the poor suffer the most. Vulnerable populations such as the young, elderly, disabled, and poor, are forced out of their own roads due to automobile-accommodating infrastructure: the loss of sidewalks to highways, neighbourhood streets to freeways, and road crossings to hard meridians. These changes have left pedestrians unable to cross their own streets. Badami laments that "in a nation of pedestrians, the pedestrian has been rendered a third class citizen."

Road traffic fatalities are an additional result from car dependency, and present a severe public health issue. Pedestrians and cyclists are forced to compete for road space with cars, trucks, buses, motorbikes,



Traffic in India, courtesy of The Commoner

and other vehicles that pose serious safety hazards; they make up 63% of road traffic fatality and injury victims.

These accidents can further burden the poor. Badami notes that fatalities “occur during the most productive phase of life, and economically devastates families.” Given that a large population of victims are young working-age men, grief comes at a higher cost for previously struggling families.

Badami highlights the unfairness that “road users and modes that are the least responsible for traffic fatalities and other urban transport impacts are the most adversely affected.” In fact, this is a grave social equity issue, where the impoverished suffer the most, yet are least capable of coping with these events.

Moreover, while mainstream media trivializes these as “incidents,” the World Health Organization lists road traffic fatalities as the 9th leading cause of death globally, and predicts it to be 5th in 2030, ahead

of all cancers.

Families with just enough income have no choice but to purchase motorized two-wheeled vehicles – motorcycles, scooters, and mopeds – a more economically and fuel efficient alternative to cars. An average two-wheeler in India costs four times less than a car yet is over four times more fuel efficient, and is easy to maintain, service, and park. Moreover, its small size makes for easy manoeuvring through heavy congestion.

These vehicles often become the essential mode of transport for a large family. It would not be surprising to see a motorcycle carrying four or five passengers plus baggage in Indian cities, which further perpetrates road accidents.

With so many factors at work, it is no surprise that change comes slowly to improve urban transport in India. Kulkarni says of India, “people are used to disorder. Even if the government tries to establish a system, people are not used to having a system. It’s hard to implement

any sort of changes, especially for a billion people.” Just one look at the lack of traffic enforcement illustrates this fact. Laws that Canadians take for granted like seat belts and road traffic signs do not apply in much of the Indian context.

Although rapid growth in automobile use in India has contributed to employment and economic progress, its adverse effects appear to be both severe and numerous. Automobiles, essentially the least used and least sustainable mode of transport, are accommodated and their usage encouraged at the expense of other transportation means.

Cars not only build up massive congestion and pollution, but pose serious accessibility, public health and equality issues for the majority of the Indian population. Instead of allowing this car-dependent system to detriment its growing population, perhaps India could grasp this as a democratic opportunity to move forward into a new era of environmental justice.

Climate Change: the First World's Fault or the Third World's Problem?

BY ANNIE SHIEL

The effects of climate change are already sweeping the planet: glaciers are melting, ecological diversity is disappearing, and severe weather patterns are increasing in prevalence. According to an article by the Science Daily, social problems are not far behind; if climate change is not reversed, it could threaten the global food supply and deepen the poverty of millions of people.

The problems caused by global warming will undoubtedly affect the entire world. However, the question of where to look for change has thus far gone unanswered. It is evident that climate change is a global crisis, but whose responsibility is it to "fix"?

For many people, this responsibility falls upon the shoulders of the industrialized developed countries whose carbon emissions have greatly contributed to global warming. According to John Galaty, professor at McGill's School of the Environment, "the responsibility for the production of greenhouse gases is primarily in the North, but of course has an effect in other countries as well." Pointing to the prevalence of droughts in the horn of Africa, he noted, "The recipients aren't necessarily the propagators of the problem."

This asymmetry between the causes and effects of climate change in developed and developing countries has led to the implication of developed countries in "ecological debt." Dr. Nicolas Kosoy,

also a professor at McGill's School of the Environment, described ecological debt as "all of the ecological and natural resource extraction that has happened throughout history... that has allowed other countries to develop."

According to the Southern People's Ecological Debt Creditors Alliance, the incurrence of so-called "ecological debt" began during the colonial era and continues to the present as a result of ecologically unequal terms of trade between developed and developing countries, natural resource extraction, land degradation and water pollution caused by export-oriented foreign companies, and a general failure to take environmental damage into consideration. According to Dr. Kosoy, European countries used Africa as their "playground," employing unsustainable methods to extract resources and add to their own wealth.

This is not to say that developing countries have not contributed to the climate change crisis. The increased consumption warranted by the rapidly growing populations of the Global South puts significant strain on the environment and increases global demand for fossil fuels.

At the same time, the lax industrial regulations of some developing nations attract so-called "dirty industries" and the harmful emissions that accompany them. According to Eileen Claussen, President of the Pew Center on Global Climate

Change, "greenhouse gas emissions from developing countries will likely surpass those from developed countries within the first half of this century, highlighting the need for developing country efforts to reduce the risk of climate change."

According to the World Resources Institute, "because of inequalities in historical and per capita emissions, many believe that industrialized countries should make and keep the first round of commitments...before asking developing countries to do more."

Anup Shah, founder of the website "Global Issues," points to the fact that developed countries have more resources to fight the problem, while many developing nations remain preoccupied with the immediate survival of their citizens. Shah claims that it is "unfair to expect the third world to make emissions reductions, especially considering that their development and consumption is (more generally) for basic needs, while for the rich, it has moved on to luxury consumption and associated life styles."

While there is certainly a long road ahead in climate change mitigation, developed and developing countries alike are working to solve the problem. Industrialized nations with abundant resources continue to regulate emissions and conduct research on alternative energy sources, while less industrialized nations aim to employ cleaner, less destructive technologies in industry and agriculture.

NORTH AMERICA



Construction of pipeline near Yankton, South Dakota in 2009.
Photo courtesy of Tar and Pipelines at Wordpress

Keystone Pipeline Construction Promotes Investments in *"the dirtiest source of transportation fuel"*

BY MORGAN VLAD-McCABE

In 2008, Canada, the US and TransCanada, a "leading energy infrastructure company," began constructing a pipeline system to transport synthetic crude oil. From its origin in the Athabasca Oil Sands, Alberta, it travels south through the Dakotas to market hubs in Illinois and Oklahoma. Due to the expected large quantity of oil coming from the tar sands, a secondary route was proposed to run through Montana, where it would meet up in Nebraska. The pipeline will end in Texas to serve the Port Arthur marketplace.

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NORTH AMERICA

Keystone Pipeline promotes "the dirtiest source of transportation fuel"

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This \$13 billion investment is expected to satisfy 5 percent of current US petroleum consumption, and ultimately represent 9 percent of US petroleum imports. Originally it was meant to be a partnership between ConocoPhillips and TransCanada. However, in 2009 TransCanada assumed total ownership of the project, purchasing ConocoPhillips' remaining interest.

There were to be four phases of construction, the first having been completed in June 2010. In February 2011, the oil hub in Cushing, Oklahoma began operations, signaling the end of phase two. TransCanada has not begun phase three due to heightened attention. The suggested path and the Gulf Spill of 2010 raised concern regarding the environmental impact of the project. On November 11, after three years of deliberation the Obama administration decided to postpone construction until further environmental investigation has been completed.

A geographical analysis of the projected route helps highlight the vast controversies inherent in this project. Travelling south through Nebraska, the pipeline cuts through the Sandhills, as well as the Ogallala Aquifer, which spans eight states and provides drinking water to approximately two million people. The aquifer supports \$20 billion in agriculture. Some parts of the pipeline will transverse an active seismic region that recently had a 4.3 magnitude earthquake in 2002.

Construction also threatens Indigenous groups' important resources and their treaty rights of traditional hunting, trapping, and gathering. Clayton Thomas-Muller, of the Pukatawagan Cree Nation, explained that their objection to the pipeline is, "aimed at the disproportionate targeting of our people, our way of life and of our homelands becoming the sites for the fossil fuel regime and becoming batteries, I guess you could say, for America's unsustainable energy consumption needs."

Environmentalists and Indigenous groups of the US and Canada contend the pipeline is not worth potential environmental risks. Keystone XL is particularly problematic because it carries diluted bitumen ("dilbit"), which is the watered-down by product of oil extraction in tar sands. Dilbit is hazardous for a number of reasons; it contains cancer-causing chemicals like benzene, and toxic heavy metals, such as arsenic. Furthermore, dilbit is much more corrosive than oil because it carries sand thus increasing the potential for leakage. Already in July 2010 a leak occurred spilling over a million gallons of dilbit into Michigan's Kalamazoo River. The fear is that a leak in the Ogallala Aquifer could occur, which would in turn ruin the drinking water of millions, and devastate the mid-western US economy. Tar sand oil extraction is also one of the least environmentally friendly, and can reportedly re-

lease up to three times the amount of greenhouse gases compared to more traditional methods.

TransCanada argues the pipeline will create 20,000 new jobs in construction and thousands more in the refinery sector. They allege that the pipeline is the safest means of transporting oil over long distances, and any spill in the aquifer "would be limited to a very small area" according to Cardno Entrix. A fundamental reason for constructing this was it would decrease dependence on Middle Eastern oil. Furthermore, they reason that blocking construction would only deprive the US of much needed oil, and instead it would be shipped somewhere else in the world regardless.

TransCanada hired an external organization, Cardno Entrix, to assess the environmental impacts of the project, if any. The final evaluation declared the operation would have "limited adverse environmental impacts." Upon further investigation, however, it is apparent that Cardno Entrix and TransCanada have previously worked together and the pipeline is one of Cardno Entrix's largest clients. An independent company with no ties to TransCanada should have been used to avoid any conflict of interest. There was also a serious lack of transparency in the decision making on behalf of the State Department and its readiness to approve the environmental impacts of Keystone XL.

The illusive nature of this project

has not boded well with the public. Henry Waxman, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, called it a "multi-billion dollar investment to expand our reliance on the dirtiest source of transportation fuel currently available."

After the Gulf Spill, Obama voiced his commitment to pursuing cleaner and more sustainable

forms of energy, such as solar and wind power. The Keystone XL pipeline seems to directly contradict this proclamation. Fortunately, the Obama administration has answered the pleas of environmentalists, politicians, and citizens in postponing the decision to continue construction.

Not only should we be question-

ing how the pipeline will affect our environment, but also why it is being constructed at all. This money could have been invested in developing new alternative fuel sources. The fact that TransCanada has already asked for safety waivers does not seem like a positive start.

Latino Farm Workers in California

BY ALEX BADDUKE

In May 2008 teenager Maria Isavel Vasquez Jimenez collapsed in the fields of a California vineyard, and soon after died from what officials say was a heat stroke. Maria Isavel was 17 years old, two months pregnant and an undocumented farm worker from Mexico. She was working in approximately 38-degree weather, and is said to have been denied proper hydration, shade, and breaks.

A San Joaquin Valley county judge accepted the plea bargain from the accused supervisors, punishing them with community service, fines, and probation. However the ruling allowed the accused to escape jail time altogether. The issue raised many questions concerning the rights of farm workers, and mobilized groups such as the United Farm Workers (UFW) to demand fairer treatment and protection to all agricultural workers.

Farm work is one of the most hazardous jobs in the world, perhaps number one in the United States. Farmers and ranchers make up the largest proportion of work-related deaths in the US, with 302 deaths out of a total of 4,551 in 2010 according to the Bureau of Labour

Statistics.

California is America's number one agricultural state, as well as the state with the highest immigrant population with an estimated 10 million immigrants from the 2010 Census - approximately 27% of the overall population. The vast majority of immigrants live in the San Joaquin Valley, where most crop farms are located in California.

Of all immigrants, the majority are Latino. Many come in search of better living standards, and end up working in labor-intensive jobs, such as farming for the \$8 per hour minimum wage.

Some of the dangers encountered by farm workers include exposure to chemicals, pesticides, toxic gases, dangerous machinery, harsh weather conditions and other environmental hazards, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

OSHA sets safety regulations and standards for farm workers to adhere to, which are subject to inspection. Farms with fewer than 11 employees, however, are exempt from inspections, leaving 88% of farms without enforcement of the standards. According to Inventory

In 2007, Pesticide use in the United States was 1.1 billion pounds. That is 22% of the world estimate of 5.2 billion pounds of pesticide use.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

In 2007, Eighty percent of all U.S. pesticide use was in agriculture.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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NORTH AMERICA

Latino Farm Workers in California

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*Maria Isavel Vasquez Jimenez, teen farmer who died in 2008
Photo courtesy of Fox News.*

of Farmworker Issues and Protections, compiled by Bon Appetit and UFW, one third of farm workers in the US work under employers who are not subject to such regulations.

Despite the fact that agriculture is one of the most dangerous industries, farm workers are subject to the least protective labor laws in the US, as they are not included in the National Labor Relations Act. Although California is the lead state pushing for changes, there continue to be issues of enforcement and implementation of the laws that protect the farm worker.

California Labor Laws provide ten minute breaks every four hours, and a half hour meal break every five. However denial of rest and meal periods are the third most common farm worker issues reported by legal advocates in California. The fifth is

occupational safety and heat stress protections. This highlights the issue that although laws and standards may exist, they are not necessarily followed, as seen in Maria Isavel's case.

On Cesar Chavez Day earlier this year UFW led a march a march to California capital, Sacramento, to protest governor Jerry Brown's veto of the Fair Treatment for Farm Workers Act. The legislation, introduced by Senator Steinberg, extends the union rights of farm workers in California. The protests proved successful as Governor Brown signed a reformed version of the bill in October of this year.

UFW president Arturo S. Rodriguez commented in a press release, "Today, Governor Brown helped farm workers take their biggest step forward yet in the cause of fair treat-

"In May 2008 teenager Maria Isavel Vasquez Jimenez collapsed in the fields of a California vineyard, and soon after died from what officials say was a heat stroke. Maria Isavel was 17 years old, two months pregnant and an undocumented farm worker from Mexico. She was working in approximately 38-degree weather, and is said to have been denied proper hydration, shade, and breaks."

ment for farm workers by approving his proposal put into legislation by Sen. Steinberg. Under SB 126, if growers cheat during an election campaign, break the law and deny farm workers their right to have a union, then the Agricultural Labor Relations Board can certify the union."

The tragic death of Maria Isavel and the legal responses it provoked are the fruits of a much larger issue. Heat is only one of the many dangers that farm workers face, and without proper protection this leaves workers vulnerable to environmental dangers and social injustices of all sorts. Not only are standards not adequately followed, but many discrepancies go unrecognized or under-reported. This is the case for what some call the number one danger of working in agricul-

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) works to reduce the use of toxic pesticides through its Pesticide Management programs. These programs include pesticide subsidization which encourages farmers to use alternative methods and technical guidelines targeted at national governments and NGOs.

The Rotterdam Convention is a multilateral treaty that promotes shared responsibility of international trade and hazardous chemicals. It also facilitates information exchange regarding chemical characteristics to promote sound use of such products. Article 6 targets developing nations and offers them support in reporting hazardous pesticide formulations.

In 1999, the California Department of Health Services, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and Public Health Institute at Berkeley conducted a study on pesticide illness among farmworkers in U.S. and California. They found that over 186 million pounds of agricultural pesticide use was reported in 1999. 30% of pesticides used were on California's list of chemicals known to cause cancer or reproductive harm.

ture: pesticides.

Pesticide exposure is one of the inevitable hazards a farm worker can be exposed to either directly or indirectly. According to the Agricultural Center at UC Davis, headaches, rashes, burns, eye irritation, paralysis as well as chronic illnesses, such as cancer, all stem from pesticide exposure.

One of the main problems regarding pesticide exposure and other environmental dangers is that farm workers are often reluctant to seek health care. Fear of officials and deportation is common amongst immigrants with insecure citizenship. As Alicia Gonzalez emphasizes in her research, language and cultural barriers also exist between Latinos and health care providers.

Gonzalez is a researcher at the Central Valley Health Policy Institute (CVHPI) who tackled the issue with a health education model for improving Latino health care access.

"We trained health community workers to help bridge the gap to health care services and help them [immigrants] feel more competent in navigating the US health care system" says Gonzalez of the program.

Overall, Gonzalez says the project, which aimed to provide immigrants with a medical home (the place someone goes regularly for health care), was a success. After three months the follow-up showed that health insurance amongst the population involved in the study rose significantly from 45% to 70%.

Gonzalez also studied the health status of undocumented Latino immigrants. "Fear is the number one barrier," Gonzalez says of the illegal population in the Central Valley. "Scared of being discovered, scared of being deported, not knowing how the health care system works or where to go."

"The longer they are here the worse their health status is because of the jobs that they work in," she

notes. This alarming fact, revealed through her study of undocumented Latinos, shows the treacherous health implications of working in agriculture and that health status disparities in California are immense.

Gonzalez believes the issues lies in the lack of health information with which immigrant farm workers are provided. "What would help remedy this is raising awareness for these farm workers, because half the time they do not know what they are being exposed to," says Gonzalez, "They have a right to know."

Since California is both the top agricultural state as well as the state with the most immigrants, it goes without saying that the rights of immigrant farm workers should be a top priority. Whether the solution is better labor laws and enforcement of standards, or more accessible health care, awareness of this issue needs to be raised.

“Sustainable” Projects Threaten Indigenous Livelihoods

By EMILY REN

Many people commonly hold the belief that climate justice or “green” innovations are inherently good; however initiatives for climate justice can often have harmful impacts for the people who inhabit that area. In many cases, the process of building more “sustainable” projects marginalize aboriginal groups such as the James Bay Cree or the Albertan Cree.

Over the years, the case of the James Bay Cree and Hydro Quebec has become an increasingly contentious situation that continues to impact the lives of the James Bay Cree today. One of the important questions that emerges from this debate is what is the role of humans in the environment? And is the Cree's claim that humans are part of nature valid?

On April 30th 1971, the Quebec government announced its plan to build a massive hydroelectric power development in northern Quebec, one that would divert major rivers to create a series of dams, dikes, reservoirs and power stations; and more recently, the creation of several wind power turbines. Such a project was not only crucial to creating sustainable energy, but it was also key to creating new jobs and encouraging industry development.

Although the Cree and Quebec government have since signed several agreements, including the one in 1993 where the Cree fought and blocked a multi-billion extension of

the James Bay hydro project, many of the Cree still feel that their voices are being ignored.

In particular many of the Cree adhere to a system of beliefs in which all nature pulsates with life and ecology is spiritual. For example, animals control the hunt and if the hunter is disrespectful, the animals can retaliate by making themselves scarce. It encompasses the

*“One of the important questions that emerges from this debate is **what is the role of humans in the environment?** And is the Cree's claim that humans are part of nature valid?”*

idea that animals, land and people share the same Creator and just as one respects persons, one must attribute the same respect to the animals and land as well. With this in mind, it is evident that the Hydro Quebec's building of dams do, in some way, disturb the encompassing religious beliefs of the Cree- but to what extent is this justifiable?

A similar case can be found in the case of the Albertan Cree and the tar sands oil extraction project. While the oil sands represent an im-

portant stimulus for the economy and provide a source of previous natural resource, this project has had detrimental impacts on the surrounding environment and on the cultural identity of the Woodland Cree.

More specifically, the case of the Mikisew Cree highlights the overwhelming impact of oil sand extraction on the physical well being of these people, an entire community whose ability to live off the land have been significantly reduced. For example, one of the effects of the oil sands has been a general decline in wildlife and commercial fish; this greatly deters the Cree from their traditions of hunting off the land.

Furthermore, the river and land pollution generated by these oil sands is eroding the traditional and spiritual gathering places of the Cree; thus the language and culture of the Mikisew Cree can no longer be passed down from generation to generation. Given such impacts, there is much at stake for these people in regards to future oil sand extraction projects.

These brief case studies of the Mikisew Cree and the James Bay Cree illustrate two brief examples of some of the wide-ranging impacts of climate justice and green projects. Thus, it is important to consider both the effects on a community's natural environment and social fabric when undertaking any kind of new project.

In 2008, the Athabasca Chipewyan and Mikisew Cree called for a moratorium on tar sands development.

In March 2010, a coalition of 30 First Nations from British Columbia declared, in response to the Keystone Pipeline construction, that “...tankers carrying crude oil from the Alberta Tar Sands will not be allowed to transit our lands and waters.”

“Our ancestors have lived on these lands for thousands of years and the decimation of the land, air, water, vegetation in the past 40 years of tar sands mining is the worst any industrialized country has seen ever. Worst case for our people living downstream is the multitude of rare cancers we are living and dying with while the governments continue to give approvals for further development.”

— George J. Poitras, Former Chief of the Mikisew Cree First Nation

“Our hunting grounds and ancestral burial grounds that are not already under water are, or will be, crisscrossed by huge transmission lines and networks of roads, airports and workers' camps. The ancient fishery, on which my people depend spiritually, socially and economically, has been all but destroyed in the La Grande watershed by mercury contamination. The Crees themselves have been contaminated.”

— Testimony of Grand Chief Matthew Coon-Come of the Grand Council of the Crees (Quebec) to the Joint Energy Committee, Boston in 1993

“We used to be able to drink water directly from Beaver Lake and it didn't hurt us. We can no longer do that because of the tar sands developments.”

— Ron Lameman, Beaver Lake Cree Nation



“A Unique Trauma of Displacement:” the Dispossession of Rwanda’s Batwa People

BY FRANCESCA MITCHELL

On the majestic slopes of Rwanda’s Nyungwe and Parc des Volcans national parks lie rich, green forests, home to a mosaic of ecosystems, a myriad of rare plants and animals, and - until recently - the indigenous Batwa people. For these marginalised people, sometimes known as Pygmies, environmental justice is not just a vague conceptual idea but it relates to a specific place and situation: the Batwa’s dispossession from their forest homelands to make way for ‘protected areas’ and national parks, and the consequent loss of their traditional way of life.

The expropriation of Batwa land by various regimes began in the 1980s, despite the continued validity of ‘customary’ land laws in Rwanda since independence in 1961. The Nyunwe zone was de-

clared a national park in 1988, and Parc des Volcans was established in the 1990s, largely for conservation purposes. Of particular concern was the risk of the extinction of the mountain gorilla, with only 320 individuals of this species remaining in 1989. Despite concerted efforts by conservationists and the rise of ecotourism, the country’s gorilla population continues to be listed as critically endangered.

According to the Wildlife Conservation Society, human activity poses the largest threat to the gorilla populations in Rwanda, and as such, large areas of land were taken from the Batwa upon the creation of these parks. However, they received no government compensation and no aid with resettlement.

As Willis Jenkins, a professor at Yale University explains, “it seems

that a (much-needed) gorilla conservation program adopted a strategy based on the view that all human culture poses a threat to wild nature. It is not at all clear that the Batwa culture did pose a threat. It seems that the policy cleared the forest of exactly the sort of society that could live well in the forest, without posing a threat to the gorillas. Conservation could have happened with the Batwa, informed by Batwa knowledge.”

The forests are now managed by the Rwandan and Ugandan governments, providing an important source of income through conservation and tourism. As Jenkins highlights, this can easily be seen as having “the appearance of simple expropriation of a people’s resources”.

However, for the Batwa people,

this injustice is more than an economic equation. Their traditional way of life stretches back over many centuries, with evidence of Batwa populations in Rwanda predating the arrival of the Bahutu and Batutsi ethnic groups. Until recently, the Batwa lived mainly from hunting and gathering in the territory's natural forests. They have a distinct culture, often associated with their folkloric and traditional dance and the intonation of their specific language.

Since being forced to abandon their homelands, many Batwa communities have suffered the loss of many of these traditions, and much of their once extensive traditional ecological knowledge is no longer being passed down to younger generations. The majority of Batwa have had little choice but to become agricultural labourers, often without their own land, or to work as potters, to the extent that this craft is now often identified with their ethnic identity.

Professor Jenkins describes their situation as a "unique trauma of displacement," due to the way in which their dispossession from their forest homelands has challenged their very identity. "The Batwa," he expands, "present themselves as a people so deeply shaped by their inhabitation of the forest that their entire identity, their understanding of themselves as persons, becomes impossible outside the forest. They were relocated nearby, but in the open fields outside the forest, many Batwa had little idea how to live in a way they recognized as dignified."

Moreover, it appears that marginalisation of this minority group continues to this day, both in practice and in popular ideology. According to Minority Rights International, there is a frequent stereotyping of the Batwa community amongst the

Bahutu and Batutsi majority populations, who claim that the Batwa are amoral and possess supernatural powers.

On a more practical level, a 2004 Norwegian People's Aid report found that 43 percent of Batwa households were landless, and that extreme poverty had pushed 40 percent of the Batwa population to beg as a form of income.

Moreover, a national survey undertaken this year by the Community of Indigenous Peoples in Rwanda (CAURWA) estimated that of the 33,000 Batwa currently living in Rwanda, only seven percent are members of health insurance schemes. 51 percent of the Batwa population had never attended school, compared with a national average of 25 percent. Only 48 percent of Batwa children enrol at primary school, in comparison with a national figure of 78 percent, and literacy rates among Batwa adults are only 23 percent.

Such discrimination against an indigenous group contradicts international laws on indigenous rights, as stipulated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, the Rwandan situation is uniquely complicated by the country's legal ban on ethnic discourse in the wake of the 1994 genocide. Indeed, since Article 33 of the Rwandan Constitution essentially criminalises ethnic self-identification, the Batwa are not recognised by the Rwandan government as indigenous people, and as such, are not granted the indigenous rights stipulated in international law.

Johnson Busingyie, the secretary-general of the Rwandan Ministry of Justice once stated that: "Such ethnic divisions have only caused conflicts between the people of this country," and the government maintains that the use of ethnic la-



*Right and above: Young Batwa boys in Gisenyi, Rwanda
Photos courtesy of Pauline Chery*

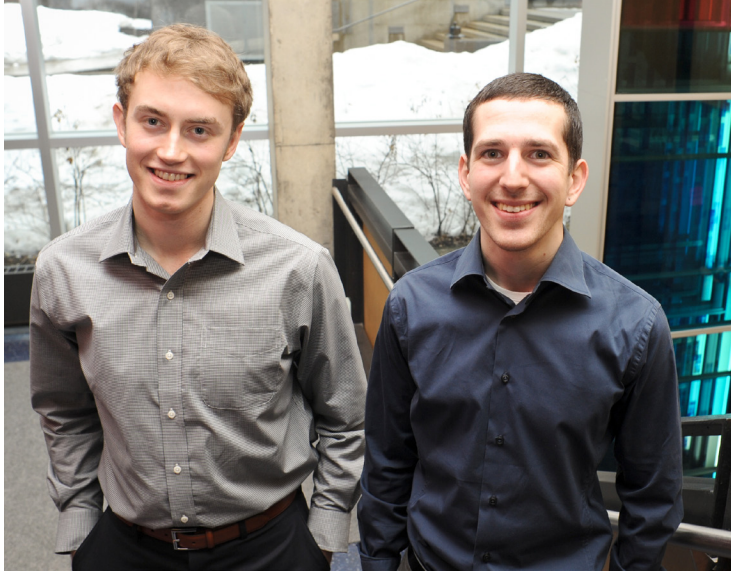
bellung undermines the reconciliation process of a country with such a recent history of civil strife. The Batwa, then, can expect no form of government assistance in their situation, as action in favour of one ethnic group is deemed unconstitutional.

In the name of the equality of all Rwandans, which the Batwa living in the country are largely considered to be, the government is beginning to acknowledge this group's marginalised status. They are now being included in national housing schemes, and some families receive aid from authorities in sending their children to school. However, despite this, the latest land policies make little or no consideration for hunter-gatherer groups; and the indigenous rights, traditions and identities of the Batwa continue to be sacrificed in a clear case of environmental injustice. It remains to be seen what can be done for this marginalised people.



The Competitive Edge of Sustainability

BY INNA TARABUKHINA



Co-chairs for the SSMU Sustainability Case Competition: David Morris (right) and Omer Dor (left)

Photo courtesy of Inna Tarabukhina

The SSMU Sustainability Case Competition is a sustainable campus initiative that invited McGill students to submit proposals for a student-run café that is innovative and implementable. The competition recently began for 60 participants. Omer Dor, co-chair of the competition, talks about what this initiative means to McGill Community and future sustainability projects on campus.

1. WHAT GAVE RISE TO THE CASE COMPETITION?

After the Architecture café was closed in September 2010, a lot of interest was generated at the prospect of establishing a student-run café on campus. A recent discussion among the undergraduate faculty presidents brought about the idea of creating a case competition for the design of a café, created by students, run by students and for the students – all

with environmental and economic sustainability in mind. And so, the SSMU Sustainability Case Competition was born.

2. WHAT ARE THE GOALS AND COMMITMENTS OF THE COMPETITION?

The first is to create a student-managed, McGill-wide collaboration among students in the domain of environmental sustainability. Second, to provide students with the opportunity to network with one another as well as with industry professionals. Finally, to obtain a proposal for a student-run café that is innovative and implementable.

3. HOW DO YOU HOPE TO GENERATE AN EN MASSE STUDENT INVOLVEMENT?

As SSMU has a plan to eventually implement a student-run café, members of the McGill community will be solicited for their opinion about various aspects of the café. One of the tasks for the groups in the second round is to develop an

innovative method of community consultations. The consultations allow the teams and the working group to better understand the needs of the community. These results will also be made available to the public. We hope to involve hundreds if not thousands of members of the McGill student community.

Moreover, the exposition day held in March provides an excellent venue for discussion about the student-run café. During the event, each of the teams will deliver a presentation about their plan for the café. The judges and mentors will be present at this event, as well as campus leaders in sustainability. The presentations will be filmed and uploaded to the website for the public's benefit.

4. WHAT THEMES OR ATTITUDES ARE YOU HOPING TO BRING TO LIGHT WITH THE CASE COMPETITION?

We hope that the competition emphasizes facets of environmental sustainability in a concrete context. Several ideas will be explored such as energy, products, products, water, etc. We hope to foster a culture of sustainability at McGill insofar that an ultimately very visible student space will be made as sustainable as possible.

Also we hope to illustrate that the case competition is run completely by student volunteers, and that such initiatives are indeed possible to accomplish with volunteers.

5. DESCRIBE YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CASE COMPETITION.

The case competition will be a

competitive, interesting and challenging learning experience for all those involved. Participation in the case competition is an outstanding opportunity that involves an intriguing task for any McGill student. Leaders in sustainability will provide guidance and mentorship to the student groups in their areas of expertise.

6. WHAT DOES THIS PROJECT MEAN FOR FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES AT MCGILL?

A lot of time and development will go into the design plans and

business outlines. The final plans will demonstrate that large-scale projects such as a student-run café can indeed be both environmentally sustainable and financially successful.

As well, the rules encourage students to incorporate existing initiatives into their plans (e.g., composting food waste using the Big Hanna system, using food from Campus Crops). Students will be familiarized with existing environmental sustainability initiatives on-campus as they develop their plans for the sustainable café.

The competition spearheads a new student direction in both sustainability and student-run campus initiatives. To learn more or to follow the Competition, go on www.ssmucasecomp.com. The final projects, along with the winning case, will be publicly presented in the beginning of February at the Expo. If you have any questions or wish to reach the Chairs or the Communications Officer, contact casecomp@ssmu.mcgill.ca.

OP/ED

Negotiating the Second Green Revolution: the transfer of GM seeds to Africa

BY HUGO MARTORELL

The UN Millennium Development Goals call for the eradication of world hunger and considers the ability to feed oneself as a basic human right. While the need to protect this right appears straight forward, the best strategies to tackle this global program remain contentious. One controversial initiative is the development of genetically engineered seeds.

The scientific debate over genetically engineered seeds dominates the issue of food security. While world agricultural production increases, observers, ecologists and scientists disagree on whether or not genetically engineered (GE) seeds actually increase crop yield.

Such critics point out that technological advances are often misconceived for directly increasing

production yield. For instance, herbicides alone do not increase yield, but substantially reduce time and production costs, which is very attractive for many landowners. In reality, agricultural production operates in a comprehensive strategy that includes many different tactics, such as the new management techniques, mechanization, advanced breeding, and use of genetically modified (GM) seeds, which themselves demand fertilizers, etc.

The Union of Concerned Scientists' 2009 report *Failure to Yield*, an American study spanning over twenty years, concluded that genetically modified soybeans and corn have not substantially increased yield compared to their non-GM counterparts.

Moreover, according to the Institute of Science in Society, Argentina has become one of the world's top soy producers after turning to export-oriented production of Roundup Ready soya, and yet has witnessed a yield decrease of 5 to 10 percent compared to non-genetically modified soya.

Recorded cases in India (2006) and South Africa (2009) both show massive failures of genetically engineered crops, leaving rural peasant communities completely destabilized. In the case of India, thousands of farmers committed suicide, as they were unable to repay their debt for the genetically modified seeds they bought.

These seeds are successful only under a range of set conditions, which may widely differ from the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

Second Revolution: GM seeds

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31



ecological and environmental circumstances in developing countries, where these biotechnologies are being transferred.

According to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), drought-resistant rice generates mixed results. Nonetheless, technology is improving at a fast rate, and the funding of indigenous research institutes may bear fruitful results in the future.

However, the disproportionate power relations between multinationals and independent farmers prove exploitive. The incorporation of the latter in the globalized food chain mostly starts off by selling seeds. The farmer is tied to the promise of having an unprecedented high yield, and must then continue to buy these same one-time-use seeds in the future. Farmers become dependent on the price of transgenic seeds, which initially results in indebtedness. According to the NYSE, the price of the Monsanto seeds has been increasing since 2008.

Farmers, fearing biodiversity loss,

are frustrated with the introduction of genetically modified seeds in Africa. Communities around the world consider their environment's biodiversity a cultural heritage that must be preserved. Different varieties of crops grow in different conditions, and even under harsh environments, whilst serving different uses in daily life. With the natural process of insects and winds or pollen containing GE organisms easily contaminate non-GE crop DNA.

What can be done?

The exportation of cash crops and minerals has trapped Africa, the most resource rich continent, and leaves little space for resolving its food insecurity.

The radical answer is a political one, and would redefine African countries' position in the world economy by first building their own forces of production. Aziz Fall, McGill and UQAM professor and activist, is a staunch supporter of such a solution today. Fall illustrates its feasibility by pointing out to the case of the revolutionary president of Burkina Faso from 1983 to 1987, Thomas

Sankara, who led his country to attain food self-sufficiency in only four years before his assassination.

Sustainable agriculture can be implemented in both urban and rural settings. Amadou Makhtar Diop, international project coordinator for the Rodale Institute, offers a few solutions. However, he first and foremost underlines the necessity of "community-based systems of cooperative family farms, organized to market for regional distribution and re-integrating livestock wherever feasible."

Soil-regeneration can be dealt through optimal water management and irrigation, such as saving rainwater; establishing drop-by-drop systems and financing dam projects. Likewise, reforestation initiatives by NGOs such as Trees for the Future, are considered a main factor in curbing the effects of desertification. Furthermore, the use of organic matter (i.e. compost) can supply the soil's need for nutrients. Crop rotations are a way to reduce demand on a narrowed set of soil nutrients.

Farmers pass down their knowledge from generations to generations, and local ingenuity is at the center of mastering one's environment in a sustainable manner. One surprising example is the underground aqueducts in the Algerian desert.

Policymaking cannot be successful if it does not incorporate local people's knowledge and concerns, and their skepticism should not be

viewed as anti-progressist in any way. The focus should be especially turned to women, who are the main forces of production in the agricultural sector.

The debate over food security continues to be set in the paradigm of science and technology. Solutions can indeed be found in these areas, but must avoid generalizing any set of ecological conditions whilst focusing on sustainability and

a community's specific needs and dynamics.

Power dynamics should be a main concern, as they may not give an equal voice to corporate-financed African research institutes and farmer cooperatives and communities. Science should not be deny the benefits of agroecological farming, especially if Africans themselves promulgate the latter.

Greenwashing: an advertising gimmick?

BY AMIR BEN SHABAT

In recent years, the media has been choked with advertisements showing major oil companies, automakers and other large corporations solving the environmental and energy problems of the day. It can bring enormous boom to business for a corporation to align itself with public concerns about the fate of the Earth. To achieve them, they may resort to "greenwashing."

The origin of the term "greenwashing" emerged from environmental group protests by Greenpeace against these big corporations like General Motors (GM) and DuPont. Investopedia defines the term as an action whereby "a company, government or other group that promotes green-based environmental initiatives or images but actually operates in a way that is damaging to the environment or in an opposite manner to the goal of the announced initiatives." Companies may also engage in greenwashing to deflect attention from oil spills and other environmental disasters they cause. Phil Mattera, director of the a non-profit industry analysis organization, the Corporate Research Project, believe these corporations were "whitewashing their poor environmental record with these green claims." In other words, corporations use these advertisements to

show that they are green when in reality, they are nothing close.

In the 1990s, marketers began to recognize the benefits of appealing to green consumers. This revelation first took hold in countries such as Britain and Canada. The green business wave spread to the United States in time to coincide with the 20th annual Earth Day celebration. According to Mattera, large U.S. companies such as DuPont began "touting their environmental initiatives and staged their own Earth Tech environmental technology fair on the National Mall." GM ran ads such as the Chevrolet Campaign under the slogan "gas friendly to gas free" to show its supposed concern about the environment, while continuing to resist significant increases in fuel efficiency requirements.

Nonetheless, these days many environmental groups have created partnerships with corporations that are advocating to go "green." Such relationships can legitimize business initiatives while turning environmental groups into support groups for their corporate partners. One example is Adam Werbach, former Sierra Club president, who joined the payroll of Wal-Mart. He was the youngest person ever to be the president of the Sierra Club, and was known to be a big critic of Wal-

Mart. He now works for them. For Wal-Mart, winning over one of the most widely known environmentalists in the United States was a critical part of its battle to redefine itself as environmentally progressive. Werbach's involvement has helped Wal-Mart become more environmentally sustainable.

Yet, when looking at Wal-Mart as a company that is trying to go green, one can hardly forget that it is one big company with unclean hands. It is difficult to avoid thinking that the company is using its environmental initiatives to divert attention from its widely criticized labor practices, both in its own stores and in the low-wage factories of its suppliers abroad. Until the company provides decent working conditions, respects the right of its employees to unionize and ceases to sell goods made using sweatshop labour, Wal-Mart cannot expect to become a paragon of social responsibility. It lags even on the environmental responsibility front, since true sustainability largely entails a substantial degree of localized production and moderate-size enterprise, practices that Wal-Mart lacks. Hard as they advertise, corporations such as Wal-Mart and GM may never be true friends of the environment.

ACTION: Creative Resistance

Art and Environmental Justice

BY KATIA FOX

Environmental Justice Eco-Art was born out of a single photograph taken from the Apollo 8 spacecraft in 1968 titled "Earth Rise". It showed the world how fragile our earth is, making it look like a toy in comparison to the wide expanse of outer space, and it sparked what is now an increasingly influential political art movement.

As eco-artist Ruth Wallen describes, "Ecological art work can help engender an intuitive appreciation of the environment, address core values, advocate political action, and broaden intellectual understanding." The ability to evoke strong emotions while conveying a concrete message has made Eco-Art a global sensation. On the most basic level, it aims to help improve our relationship with the natural world, but its end goal is much more complicated.

Eco-Art first began as a means of raising awareness about the deteriorating state of our ecosystems, natural resources, and weather. It often shocks viewers by revealing their role in nature's decline. For example, Chris Jordan's work, "Plastic Bottles" (2007), depicts a sea of two million bottles, the amount used every 5 minutes in the United States. The imagery is powerful and this type of Eco-Art tends to be the most common.

Perhaps the most widespread environmental awareness campaign is Earth Day. This past Earth Day showcased five eco-artists, including Jason deCaires Taylor. His under-

water sculpture park in Grenada, West Indies, created artificial reefs for marine life to colonize and inhabit. Only about 10-15% of the sea bed is solid enough to allow natural reef formation.

The sculptures are durable and environmentally sensitive, and have been successful in attracting coral growth and creating new marine ecosystems. Taylor's work is one of many that go one step further than awareness, combining art with science to make a beautiful and functional statement.

Similarly, eco-artist Lynne Hull has created sculptures that can be found all over North and South America. These sculptures, shaped like minimalistic trees, provide shelter, food, and water for wild-life in the period of reclamation of damaged sites.

Eco-Art campaigns all over the world are pushing for government action and making sure their voices are heard and their art is seen.

Many different Eco-Art campaigns were launched throughout the years, but perhaps the most popular and effective are the giant pieces of art meant to be visible from space. In November 2010, Radiohead lead singer, Thom Yorke, worked with 350.org, a global net-



Above: Earth Rise photograph from Apollo 8 spacecraft (1968), To right: Underwater sculptures by Jason de Caires

work of organizations, to gather thousands of people to form gigantic pictures using their bodies and clever crowd positioning. Together, they organized the creation of multiple 2-D images across the world, from a polar bear on a melting glacier in Iceland, to a Scarab Beetle in Egypt, and a sun in South Africa.

This took place a week before the UN Climate Meetings in Mexico and served as a reminder that the world was watching and cared deeply about the results. This earth-wide exhibition is now titled 350 Earth and its collection of art is growing by the day. 350.org founder Bill McKibben said, "We hope these art pieces can help spark a new movement to solve the climate crisis. Art is not a substitute for political action, but it can help build a public movement that can begin to apply real pressure."

This kind of pressure is exactly what 3,000 Ryan International

ACTION: Profile

An **Eco-Art photography contest** open to all Canadian youth ages 14-24 just closed; however, the winning photos will be enlarged and displayed in popular locations in Canada's Capital Region. In the winter, 40 Eco Art photos form an exhibit at Dows Gallery on the Rideau Canal Skateway, the world's largest skating rink. A selection of the winning photos will also be displayed outdoors in the Capital during the busy summer festival season.

The **Recycling Artists Eco Fair**, December 2-4 2011, will feature 50 exhibitors of eco-friendly objects, clothing, jewellery and accessories -- all made from recovered materials. Free admission and will take place in the Biosphere, Environmental Museum.

School children and eco-artist Daniel Dancer hoped to create in New Delhi on October 22 this year. The children formed an image of an elephant, recently named a National Heritage Animal in India, to remind their leaders that they can't afford to ignore climate change, the "elephant in the room".

Shai Zakai, Director of the Israeli Forum of Ecological Art and widely recognized as a pioneer of the Eco-Art movement, described her art as "a visual language, which makes me different from other environmental leaders. My work can begin at the point where we feel words cease to make a difference". Eco-Art works to revolutionize the way audiences see issues around climate change and nature conservation. The movement also pushes the general populous to a state of awareness and a thirst for change.

The Green Belt Movement *and Wangari Maathai (1940-2011)*

BY HATTY LIU

In 2004 Wangari Maathai became the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, but she had been collecting "first" honours for three decades strong. She was the first woman in eastern Africa to earn a PhD, to chair a university department, and was among the first Kenyan women to run for Parliament. The pioneering verve of her career is nowhere better reflected than in the Nobel-winning Green Belt Movement (GBM), one her first and most enduring projects.

"I don't think you need a diploma to plant a tree," wrote Maathai in her memoir, "Unbowed." She reportedly said the same to the GBM's first participants. The proven correctness of her belief has powered the movement ever since. At its inception in 1977, as now, the GBM equipped and remunerated rural women for raising seedlings and restoring green belts in their own community. Trees could return the favour by forestalling environmental degradation and by providing wood for cooking or shelter. In combining environmental and social concerns, the GBM served environmental justice in its purest form.

In following years the movement's scope would widen and diversify more. The GBM inspired like-minded environmental projects across Africa and sparked dialogue on sustainable African development, a topic often revisited by Maathai in her writings. The GBM is also stamped with Maathai's interest in women's issues and, she wrote in "Unbowed," it was

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GREEN BELT MOVEMENT



NYERI, KENYA: Wangari Maathai speaks with reporters at the launch of her memoir, "Unbowed."

"no coincidence that it was nurtured during the time that the global women's movement was taking off." The GBM would become active in women's advocacy and civic education, training women in forestry, food-processing and conservation.

Another, more sobering parallel between Maathai's career and her project of widest acclaim is the Kenyan government's violent opposition to their work throughout the 1990s. However, as Maathai acknowledged in "Unbowed," it was necessary that the GBM grow "from a tree-planting program into one that planted ideas as well." Tree-planting would be an entry point to developing community consciousness. A successful 30 years and 45 million trees later, this continues to be upheld as the GBM's unwavering goal.

ACTION

Spotlight on Montreal based organization: Santropol Roulant

BY EMILY LENNON

As a Montreal-based not-for-profit organization, Santropol Roulant uses food to bring together generations and strengthen the local community. The organization addresses the health and food security needs of seniors and Montrealers living with a loss of autonomy through projects like the Meals on Wheels program, a rooftop garden, and kitchen and bike workshops. Since its founding in 1995, Santropol and its 1800 volunteers have delivered over 380,000 meals thanks to those in need.



Are you looking for an opportunity to work with dynamic individuals, work on the rooftop garden, gain experience in the kitchen, or see different neighbourhoods of Montreal by delivering meals? The next volunteer orientation sessions will take place on December 10 and December 20.

Call 514-284-9335 or email info@santropol.org for more information

Santropol Roulant is located at 111 Roy East

Green Fire: an interdisciplinary approach

BY KAITLYN SHANNON

In late September, the film *Green Fire* was shown here at McGill by the McGill School of Environment – its first screening in Canada. I had the chance to speak with Curt Meine, who was a key figure in the creation of the film, and who appears as the film's on-screen guide.

Green Fire tells the story of Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), who is considered by many to be the founding father of the American conservation movement. But Leopold is not only renowned for his efforts to protect the land and wilderness that he loved; Leopold's concept of a "land ethic" was monumental in shaping our modern ideas of human relationships with nature. Leopold was the first to emphasize the need for harmony between people and land. He believed that the field of ethics cannot be limited to human-human relationships, but

can only be complete when it addresses human-nature relationships as well.

Meine is an expert on Leopold: he wrote the first biography of Leopold for his PhD, and is now a senior fellow at the Aldo Leopold Foundation (just the many hats he wears!).

Meine is convinced that Leopold's story is essential for understanding contemporary environmental issues. "No other figure in our whole history combines so many parts of the big puzzle." Meine emphasizes the importance of telling the story of the history of environmental ideas, policy and science through one figure. Understanding the history of those who have come before them gives people (especially young people) a sense of background, helping them to feel less lost in the tumultuous, muddled array of discourses they are faced

with today. Thus, the film's originality comes from its unique approach, which is neither entirely historical nor contemporary, but rather seeks to show how knowledge of the past is essential for a true understanding of the issues we face today.

Meine's work as the Director for Conservation Biology and History at the Centre for Humans and Nature and as an adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin combines conservation science and history. This idea of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the environment was first put forth by Leopold. Leopold, recognizing the inevitability of ethical questions associated with environmental problems, called out to experts in ethics, such as philosophers and theologians to help solve science's ethical questions. Leopold stressed the need for an ethical interpretation of sci-

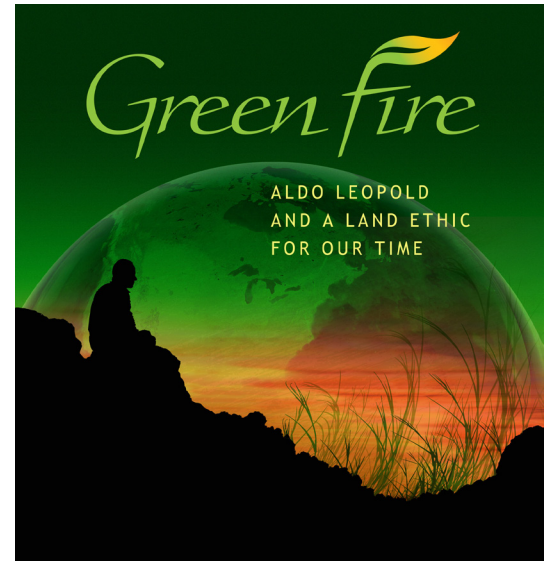
entific knowledge, and promoted the idea that scholars of all fields need to work together to tackle environmental problems. His legacy is evident today in the newly created field of environmental ethics, as well as in the recent trend to include social and economic fields in the study of environment.

When asked what Leopold would think about how the conservation movement has shifted and grown today, Meine responded positively, saying that "Leopold would be encouraged, if not satisfied." Meine believes that we live today in a "litany of woe," constantly bombarded with seemingly insurmountable problems: population growth, increased consumption, overstressing of the oceans, terrestrial biodiversity, just to name a few. Meine emphasizes the need to avoid becoming discouraged by these trends. We should be aware of them, know we can make a difference, and be sure to understand and include human values and needs in our solu-

tions. "Discouragement is our greatest threat."

Indeed, this is the message portrayed by *Green Fire*. The film showcases a variety of people working in very different circumstances, but all carrying on, and expanding, Leopold's legacy. Meine says the key to success is to understand the world around you by enriching your experiences on earth and enjoying a positive relationship with nature. We cannot hope to make a difference when we are motivated by obligation or guilt; it is only when we find a meaningful point of connection with the natural world that we can come to understand our individual, unique ability to make changes.

This article was adapted from an entry posted on the McGill School of Environment Blog. This blog reports on environmental events on campus and in Montreal, and discusses environmental issues at the



Green Fire, "to show how knowledge of the past is essential for a true understanding of the issues we face today."

forefront of discussions amongst students, faculty, staff and visiting scholars. The blog welcomes feedback and encourages further discussion about issues such as environmental justice, food security and climate change. Read more at <http://blogs.mcgill.ca/mse>.

ACTION: TOOLBOX

McGill

Office of Sustainability -- <http://www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/>
Sustainable McGill Project -- <http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/environment/>

Campus Crops -- <http://www.campuscropsmcgill.blogspot.com/>

Midnight Kitchen -- <http://themidnightkitchen.blogspot.com/>

Organic Campus -- <http://organic-campus.blogspot.com/>

Greenpeace McGill -- <http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/greenpeace/Greenpeace%20McGill.html>

Montreal

Alternatives Journal, Montreal -- <http://www.montrealenvironment.ca/tag/alternatives-journal/>

Climate Justice -- <http://climateactionmontreal.wordpress.com/>

Canada

Two introductory texts:

Speaking for Ourselves: Constructions of Environmental Justice in Canada, J. Agyeman, R. Haluzada and P. O'Rlley

Environmental Justice and Racism in Canada: An Introduction, A. Gosine and C. Teelucksingh

Pesticide Action Network (North America) -- <http://www.panna.org/>

GoodWork Canada, green jobs -- <http://www.goodworkcanada.ca/>
"Environmental Justice Kit" -- <http://www.carrefourjeunesse.ca/english/actionresources/guides.htm>

Indigenous Environmental Network -- <http://www.ienearth.org/index.html>

International

Principles of Environmental Justice

-- <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>

Meet Robert Bullard, the "father of environmental justice" -- <http://www.grist.org/article/dicum>

Greenbelt Movement -- <http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/>

Environmental Justice Resource Centre -- <http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/>

Friends of the Earth International -- <http://www.foei.org/>

United Farm Workers (U.S.) -- <http://www.ufw.org/>

Green Cross International -- <http://www.gci.ch/>

Greenwire, Energy and Environmental Policy News -- <http://www.eenews.net/gw/>

A Night with the Occupiers

BY PAULINE CHERY



Above: Tent "Decolonisons Montreal" at the Occupy Montreal campsite where we spent the night. Right: Queen Victoria statue that stands in the middle of Square Victoria recaptured by the occupiers. Photos courtesy of Pauline Chery.



We arrived at the campsite around 8:00pm. The calm and the quiet seemed strange considering this was a place of revolution. We quickly dropped off our blankets in the tent and made our way to the main services which, we were surprised to find, were in full action. The kitchen's pantry was overflowing with dozens of donated cans and dried goods. Nearby, a clothing shop provided anyone who asked with sweaters and warm blankets. A table had been set up for coffee and tea. Even a dishwashing station had been conveniently installed right above the drainage system. It was undeniable: no matter what it looked like from the outside, in just a few short days, the occupiers of Montréal had transformed a simple public park into a new way of living.

Ever since October 15th 2011, around 170 tents have stood in sharp contrast to the towering sky scrapers that surround Square Victoria. Inspired by a global movement originating from Wall Street NYC, occupiers have

gathered in the heart of the Montréal financial district to challenge the current financial and political institutions. Two weeks ago, Carla Green, a U1 psychology student and I decided to join the campers and witness firsthand the inner workings of such a powerfully global movement.

Shortly after our arrival, we received word, that an information-sharing meeting was taking place in the Square Victoria Metro. It was conducted without a formal leader, a defining and remarkable characteristic of the global Occupy movement. Anyone attending the meeting was allowed to voice suggestions about issues they wanted to address. The people assembled then voted on those they believed to be the most pressing by enthusiastically waving their hands in the air. Once the top five concerns were established, the process began all over again: occupiers proposed suggestions and solutions, which were then voted upon.

Members of the Urbanization and

Environment committee discussed different ideas about how to keep warm in the winter. The Finance committee presented a plan to ensure fiscal transparency. It seemed extraordinary that even in the mundane discussion of the campsite's logistical arrangements, the movement could stay true to its principles of inclusion.

"Everyone's a student, everyone's a teacher. No one's higher no one's lower" said Viviane a student from the McGill School of Environment who has been camping there for over a week. "Keeping this movement [as] leaderless and as board and inclusive as possible is the reason we've been so successful". Paul Bodey, a part time English teacher and warehouse worker added "what we're building here right now, what these guys are doing washing dishes and what we're talking about [at the meeting] is the solution itself. The community is the solution."

The Occupiers of Montréal have created a truly inspiring atmosphere,

A Night with the Occupiers

one in which everyone's opinion is expressed and valued. "I think people have a lot of respect for the movement even if they don't want to go sleep in a tent" stated Amy, another McGill student studying Neuroscience and Middle Eastern studies, "getting the message out to people is the biggest thing we could hope for". Paul Bodey added, "I would like this movement to grow in political strength so that we can really make our voices heard and that we can take political action. But first we need the foundation, which is the community"

Our night ended shortly after midnight as a group of young Occupiers gathered in a circle under the light

of the nearest lamppost and started playing soccer. We stayed there for about an hour before settling down in our tent, kicking the ball around and listening to the songs of a nearby guitar player.

Some people draw inspiration from the wildest of events and places. That night I drew inspiration from a community that builds tents, provides food, donates clothes, washes dishes, and occasionally plays soccer. This wasn't the story of two individuals temporarily removing themselves from the comfort of their homes. Rather, this was a story about the love, inspiration and dedication that connects occupiers in 900 cities worldwide.

Crude Reality: the future of our fuelled planet

BY APARNA NARAYANAN



Photograph by Edward Burtynsky, part of his OIL collection. Courtesy of Foreign Policy.

The description below a photograph of a petroleum refinery in Fort McMurray reads "labyrinth pipelines of refiners evoke a strange industrial biology, branching like veins through a body. Organs of a human body-pumping away tirelessly . . ."

Does this mean that if such pipelines stop, even for the briefest of moments, the 21st century is threat-

ened? In this photo series, OIL, Edward Burtynsky aims to answer this question.

Edward Burtynsky is a Canadian photographer who has captured worldwide attention with his landscape-centric photographs. He focuses on industrially altered environments and scenes that are ecologically threatened. His photo series

called OIL, consisting of approximately 55 photographs, documents the effect of oil on the earth and human life. This thematic series can be divided into three parts: the first dealing with the extraction of oil from the earth and its refinement. Second, we see the urban-day transportation networks and motor culture. Burtynsky then addresses the "end of oil"-the consequences of our energy driven existence.

Part one of this photo-series exhibits crude oil in remote industrial sites in North America, Bangladesh, China and other places. They reveal the commercial mechanics of oil extraction and refinement. The photographer shows us countless refineries in North America, and the scope and speed of crude oil development and manufacturing. He then progresses to demonstrate the consequent effects of this oil use on urbanization, transportation and modern-day infrastructure. Countless photographs of black "oil sands" give audiences a glimpse of the ugly future oil dependency will bring in the coming decades; these images only consolidate the need for humans to realize this. From Fort McMurray in Alberta to Baku in Azerbaijan, Burtynsky photographs vast mass lands of junkyards, garbage, and non-biodegradable substances which were previously operated with the help of oil.

Burtynsky has undoubtedly created his photo-series in order to encourage global communication about sustainable living and ideals of environmental justice. By reflecting on the ramifications of our lifestyle and the indisputable threat our planet and communities face, there will be a larger potential and possibility of solutions.

The exhibition is showing at the McCord Museum (690 Sherbrooke Street West) until January 8 2012. To see the online version of the OIL series from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and learn more about the photographer, visit http://www.corcoran.org/exhibitions/press_burtynsky

UPCOMING

BY SIMONE STEINBERG

EVENTS

Speak!

What: Sex Work and Gendered Violence

When: December 6th, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Where: 1500 de Maisonneuve West, Suite 404

A workshop part of the Blue Print Project: a radio and popular education series, by CKUT and the Centre for Gender Advocacy, to raise awareness about gendered violence. A member of Stella (an sex-workers' rights organization based in Montreal) will present on systemic violence and discrimination and the effects of law and policing on sex workers in Montreal.

What: Activism in Montreal 101

When: December 8, January 23, February 28, March 14, April 12

Where: 1500 de Maisonneuve West, #204

All students, non-students, and community members are welcome to take part in a workshop about social justice organizing with QPIRG Concordia. Workshops are offered once a month and include an overview of collectives, groups, organizations, campaigns and projects that people can join or volunteer for.

What: Cinema Politica Concordia screening of !War Art Revolution

When: December 5, 7 PM

Where: 1455 de Maisonneuve, Room H-110

This documentary relates the Feminist Art Movement to the 1960s anti-war and civil rights movements and explains how historical events started many feminist actions against major cultural institutions. "A rollicking and uncompromising history of the women's and feminist art movement in the USA."

What: Feeding the world without destroying the planet: What we can learn from the agricultural areas around Montreal

When: December 8, 6 PM

Where: Redpath Museum, 859 Sherbrooke Street West

Speaker Elena Bennett, part of the McGill School of Environment, will discuss agricultural landscapes that can provide many different ecosystem services, including food, high quality freshwater, opportunities for recreation, and flood control.

What: The International Polar Year Conference 2012

When: April 22-April 27 2012

Where: Montreal's Palais de Congres

This year's conference, From Knowledge to Action, will be one of the largest scientific conferences for polar science and climate change, impacts and adaptation yet. Students and early career scientists get a reduced rate and are invited to participate in a career development workshop titled, From Knowledge to Careers, from April 19-22.

What: Rights in Black and White

When: January 20th, 2012

Description: Dress to impress in Black and White and come out to Muzique Nightclub to dance the night away for a good cause (always in-style). The fundraiser will support Journalists for Human Rights @ McGill in their mission to mobilize media in advancing human rights. Tickets are \$7 (must be bought in advance) and include VIP service for ladies before midnight; to buy yours or to find out more, call/text 514-594-2449 or email jhrmcgill@gmail.com.

To see this issue in color: please check out our website!

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WRITING
COMPETITION

jhr @ McGill and the Human Rights Working Group are hosting the first-ever joint writing competition.

The competition is open to **all McGill students**. We invite you to send in a creative piece (Short story, poem, song, spoken word piece, photo, etc.) of **up to 750 words** that discusses **human rights themes**.

Submit your piece online at jhrmcgill@gmail.com or in person (office location TBA) by **January 15, 2012**. Winners will be announced **January 30**.

First prize winners will receive **prizes!** We will choose winners in two categories: **written and visual**

Winners and runner ups will be published on the HRWG blog, in Jhr's Speak! Magazine and on the Jhr website.

For further information and entry forms check out our website at <http://jhrmcgill.wordpress.com/>

OPEN
7
DAYS