

# ONEWORLD

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY



Volume 5: 2011-2012

**2011-2012  
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Cover Photo by Julia Biemann  
Back Cover Photo by Kayla Heyer

# DEAR READERS,

It has always been a core mission of Gonzaga University to be a force for positive change in the world. As members of the Gonzaga family, we recognize that we are connected to a global community and have a fundamental responsibility to others. While this responsibility fully manifests itself in action, we acknowledge that the first step in affecting positive change is awareness. We must make ourselves aware of injustices around the world, as well as the many forces that seek to deny the rights and dignity of others. It is through the desire to spread awareness that we present you with this year's issue of OneWorld Social Justice Magazine.

Within this publication, you will find works of poetry, photos, and articles communicating some of the injustices experienced by many people around the world. We hope to initiate the process of action by fostering awareness of inequalities. In this way, OneWorld also acts as an outlet for members of the Gonzaga Community to share their transformative experiences. Our aim is to stir passion for and further involvement with these issues by sharing the reality of hardships and poverty that many people face. The works contained in this publication are as diverse as the issues of inequality they discuss. We hope to present you with a more global outlook in the hopes that you will find kinship with one or more of the presented topics. This year, we have created a special section on Africa in order to highlight both Gonzaga's involvement with the continent, and to bring attention to the grave difficulties that the countries of that region face.

Our hope is that, as you read this issue of OneWorld, you will ask the question: "What can I do?" Often times we are intimidated, thinking that we are not capable of affecting change. As you will read, there are many ways to take meaningful action. We hope that you come to see that the power of an individual can make a difference, and that when we all work as one, we really can create enormous change.

"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."

— Archbishop Desmond Tutu

If you are moved to act, as we hope you will be, we encourage you to consult our resource page for more information, and to write about your activities and submit them next year.

You may be just One, but together we are all OneWorld.

Sincerely,

Julia Biemann  
Editor-in-Chief

Interested in writing?

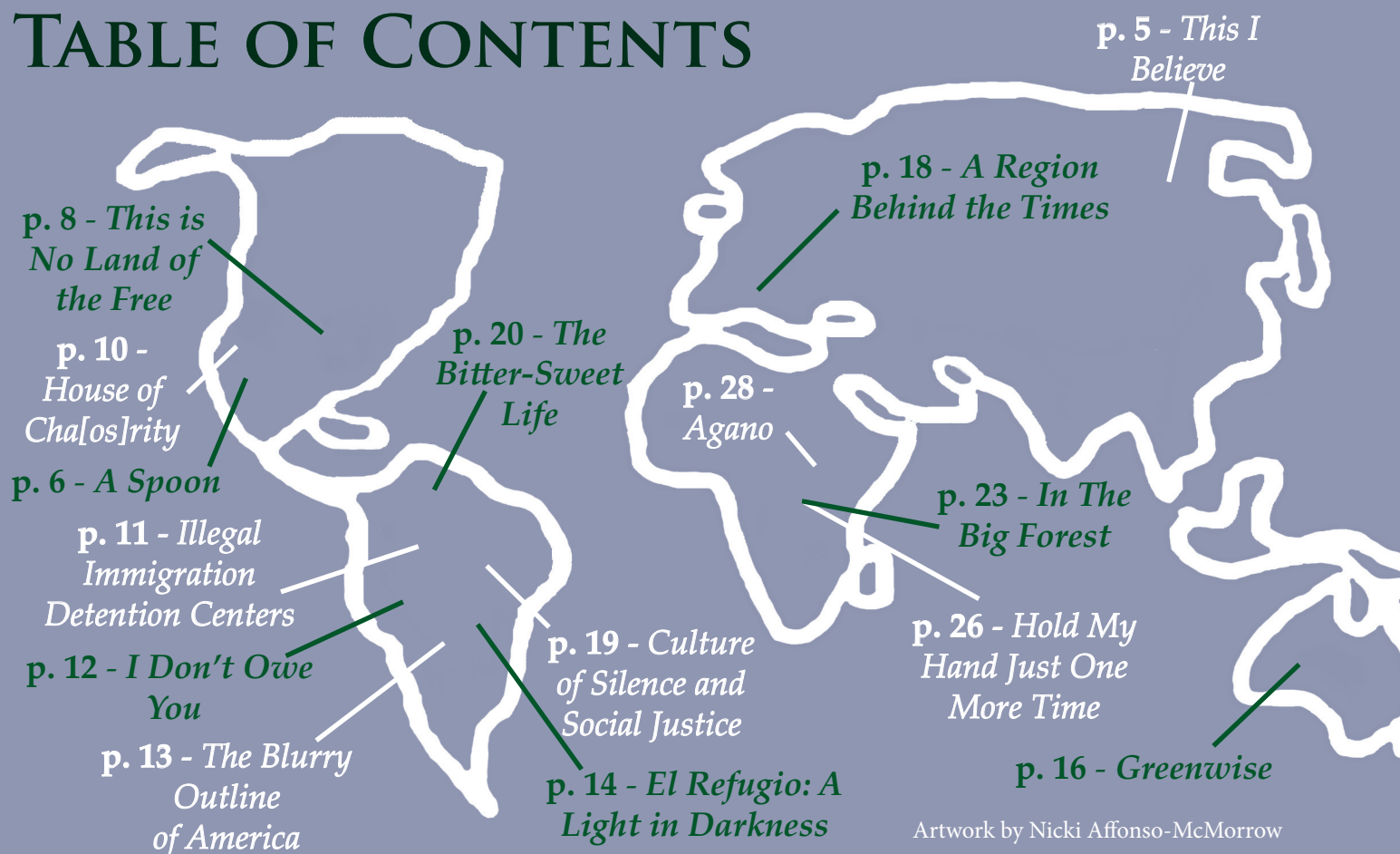
We are looking for stories of social justice that will  
inspire our community.

E-mail us at

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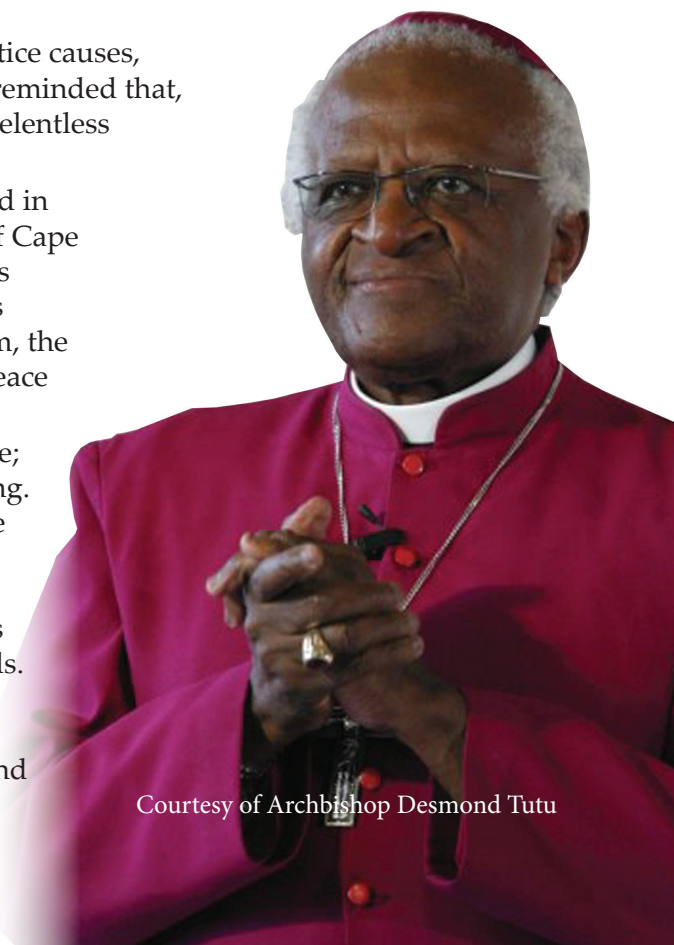
Artwork by Nicki Affonso-McMorrow

***As Gonzaga University begins its 125th year celebration, we are blessed to welcome Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu as our commencement speaker for the 2012 graduating class.***

Tutu has long been an inspiration to those working for social justice causes, especially those related to racism. Through his example, we are reminded that, while the work is often difficult, progress can be made through relentless dedication to justice.

Best known around the world for his work against apartheid in South Africa, and his designation as the first black Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa, Tutu has won numerous awards praising his contributions towards a more just, peaceful world. These awards include the Nobel Peace Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism, and the Gandhi Peace Prize.

Tutu is a great role model for those working for social justice; once the apartheid ended in South Africa, he did not stop working. There is a great thirst for justice evident in his work, a great hope placed in humanity and in God, and a great striving for a better world. He has continued his social justice mission in areas of human rights, medical care, homosexual rights and poverty. His great gift to humanity is his perseverance in the face of great odds. We are so very fortunate to welcome this honored guest to our campus. We thank him for all that he has done and are proud to dedicate this issue of OneWorld to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu.



Courtesy of Archbishop Desmond Tutu



# ONE NEW WORLD

We are already one, but we imagine we are not. OneWorld exists to rediscover that while we are many in our cultures, religions, and struggles, we are one in our common identity. We yearn to remove the barriers of ignorance and indifference because the most basic and unchanging truth that unites us is the infinite value of the human person. OneWorld emphasizes that unity by raising awareness of social injustice, inspiring action, and transforming our hearts, minds, and society.





*"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little pieces of good put together that overwhelm the world."  
-Desmond Tutu*



Photo by Carly Harris

## THIS I BELIEVE

*By Krista Beyer*

I believe in the power of the individual. That, although we are small fish in an ocean or a pond, we each can make a difference. In fact, I believe the individual is necessary for change to occur. I believe that both solitude and solidarity are essential to make this change. Great ideas and great passion emerge from the solitary thoughts of individual people, while working in solidarity with others helps us achieve our dreams and goals. We have more passion than we realize, more power than we know, and more knowledge than we understand. With these attributes we have both the responsibility and the ability to find something we care about and work for it.

For me, I am passionate about the issue of poverty. I believe that "a threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (Martin Luther King, Jr.). Poverty is a threat that will effect generations to come, in a perpetual cycle, unless it is addressed. I also believe that the most effective way to address poverty is to provide jobs and education so that people can be empowered to elevate themselves from the poverty cycle. The issue of poverty is prevalent everywhere, with a person dying of hunger somewhere in the world every 3.6 seconds. This especially affects children in developing nations where 27-28% are estimated to be underweight. Sub-Saharan Africa is a huge contributor to this statistic with an enormous percentage of the population far below the poverty line, as well as the lowest child school enrollment rate of any region. Although Africa is an ocean away and a huge area to tackle, we still have the power to make an impact; we just need to find the will and the passion to do so.



# A SPOON

By Nicki Affonso-McMorrow



Photo by Rajah Bose



Photo by N. Affonso-McMorrow



Photo by Rajah Bose

It started with a spoon. A spoon on a dining table, a spoon tossed in the trash. A spoon that was later discovered, examined, and cut. This melted metal was formed into a ring and sold at the Portland Saturday Market in March.

It started with a trip. A sign-up sheet, an informational meeting, and a commitment to an alternative spring break experience. An experience characterized by early mornings, coffee shop naps, and lots of hard work. Like the spoon was transformed by hard work, so were my ideas about homelessness after my trip on Mission:Possible Portland.

When we arrived at the door of the Downtown Chapel in Portland, Oregon, I had one thought: "I've been to Portland before, but never like this." Even from our short time in downtown Portland, it was evident to me that this was a place that many people had never seen. Homeless people walked the sidewalks like students in hallways; they walked as if the entire 3 to 4 block span was their home, free to do whatever they pleased. What I would later find out is that this small area *was* their home. It was all they had. We also learned that the city of Portland is trying to shrink this district in order to move the homeless population elsewhere and expand the more profitable Pearl (read: shopping) District.

We moved our belongings into the large recreation room we'd be sleeping in, the same place where toiletries and undergarments were handed out daily to the homeless that came in. This was also the place where I would later meet someone who would change my entire experience.

Every morning we woke up at 4am and walked to the Blanchet House of Hospitality, a free restaurant-style kitchen completely run by formerly homeless men. Not only does it provide free meals 6 days a week to the

homeless of Portland, but also helps the men that work there stay off the streets. The workers are given room and board in exchange for working in the kitchen 6-7 hours per week. It is expected that the men look for permanent work and housing during their time with the Blanchet House so that they can eventually move on. Each morning, we served breakfast to the patrons and dealt with the many different personalities and the situations that this entailed. When that was over, half of us served at the Blanchet House for lunch, and the rest returned to the Downtown Chapel to hand out toiletries and underclothing to the homeless that visited.

It was one such afternoon, when my group and I returned to the Downtown Chapel, that I met a man who shared a common interest with me. I had seen this man around often and, honestly, there was no way that I could have missed him. He was a burly man that was only made larger by his layers and layers of coats and sweatshirts. He never spoke, even when spoken to, and always wore a black beanie on his unruly head of hair. I had been scared to approach him all week. I was used to seeing many homeless that were mentally ill or even violent, and I wasn't sure if his silence masked one of those traits. The thing that drew me to him, though, was his hands. On each of his hands was an entire spoon wrapped around the base of his fingers. In addition to the single spoon, there were different parts of other spoons twisted around the upper portions of his fingers. It was his version of a spoon ring, the same type of ring I had bought that sunny Saturday on one of my first days in Portland. One of the final afternoons I was at the Downtown Chapel, I realized that I needed to interact with this man soon, or I would miss my chance. After waiting almost the whole shift, I hesitantly walked over to the table where he was sitting alone. I sat down and said a simple, "Hi." He didn't respond, but he looked up at me, so I knew I had his attention. "I like your spoon rings. I have one too, I just got it." I stuttered. As I said this,



I took off my ring and placed it on the table in front of him. He took it in his hands, examining its pattern and cut as I'm sure he had done with the spoons he wore on his own hands. He finally spoke, "It's nice."

The trip was full of many different emotions, but the simple truth I realized was that we are all the same. These words echoed through my head as I walked the streets of downtown Portland and as I served at the Blanchet House. *We are all the same* as I slipped my spoon ring back on my finger and smiled. I realized that it is our duty to see that sameness in others, and to help those of us who have had a rougher time. Today, I wear that spoon ring constantly. It reminds me not only of my experience in Portland, but also the commitment I made to help everyone and anyone I can. I encourage you to make the same commitment. Whether it is in Portland, Spokane, or beyond—you can be a light in the lives of other people. Life is rough, and you can be the one that makes someone's load lighter, even with a simple smile. You will begin to make a difference in the lives of others, and they, in turn, will bring about an even bigger change in you.

## MEDIA RESOURCES

Media can be a powerful tool in connecting us further with social justice issues. If you are interested in learning more about issues around the world, or reconnecting with familiar media which have social justice messages, here are some exceptional resources.

### Movies

Paradise Now (2005)  
Of Gods and Men: (2010)  
The Power of One: (1992)  
Invisible Children (2004)  
Woman Thou Art Loosed (2004)  
The Killing Fields (1984)  
My Family-Mi Familia (1995)  
The Thin Red Line (1998)  
Hotel Rawanda (2004)  
Milk (2008)  
Dead Man Walking (1995)  
Crash (2004)  
Pay it Forward (2000)

### Songs

"The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll" -Bob Dylan  
"My Generation"- The Who  
"I Shot the Sheriff"  
-Bob Marley & the Wailers  
"London Calling"-The Clash  
"(What's so Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding- Elvis Costello & The Attractions  
"Tennessee"- Arrested Development  
"Holiday"-Green Day  
"Everything is Everything"  
-Lauryn Hill  
"Windowsill"-Arcade Fire  
"Waiting on the World to Change"-John Mayer

### Books

In the Time of the Butterflies  
by Julia Alvarez  
Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America  
by Barbara Ehrenreich  
Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West  
by Dee Brown  
The Kite Runner  
by Khaled Hosseini  
Middlesex  
by Jeffrey Eugenides  
The Fire Next Time  
by James Baldwin  
Snow Falling on Ceders  
by David Guterson  
Long Walk to Freedom  
by Nelson Mandela





Photos by Melanie Kondrat

# THIS IS NO LAND OF THE FREE

*By Chelsea Baker*

America: land of the free, home of the brave. This land prides itself on these words and shouts them loud and clear for the world to hear. At one time they may have rung true, but not today. Today these words are tainted by twenty-seven million terrifying secrets. These secrets account for the twenty-seven million slaves all over the world, including the United States. It is estimated that around twenty thousand people are trafficked into the United States from other countries every year, and that two hundred thousand American women and children are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation yearly (Van De Putte). These are our mothers, our sisters, our daughters. Sex trafficking is a rapidly spreading disease in the United States, and awareness of its existence and impact is lacking. Until awareness is brought to the public, thousands of women and children will be infected each year and subjected to its tortures. With the proper support and funding of organizations that bring awareness to and fight this issue, the secrets of the twenty-seven million people in bondage can be broken, and slavery will come to an end, one slave at a time.

Human trafficking is the modern day practice of slavery, defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery” (TIP Report). More specifically, sex trafficking is defined as a “commercial sex act induced by force, fraud, or coercion” (TIP Report). Trafficking is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world, and the second largest illegal enterprise, followed by illegal drug sales (Polaris Project). Sex trafficking is only a small part of the very large enterprise, and yet it holds to be a prominent problem. Women and children are tricked, abducted and sold into slavery from places such as Asia, Latin America, Europe and even within the United States’ borders. Once they are obtained and brought to the United States, they are trafficked through major cities in states such as Florida, California, New York and Texas (Mulligan). Unfortunately, most people who live in these destination states for sex trafficking are not even aware that it exists, let alone that it could be occurring right next door.



Brothels can be found in the back rooms of restaurants, in hotel rooms, warehouses, and even normal houses in the suburbs. Elementary schools across the country teach students that slavery died in the mid-nineteenth century, yet the statistics show us that it is in fact very much alive. There are more slaves in the world today than there was during the entire African slave trade, a period of hundreds of years. Something must be done.

People are, in fact, starting to take action, and awareness is spreading. President Barack Obama declared January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. "During National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, we acknowledge that forms of slavery still exist in the modern era, and we recommit ourselves to stopping the human traffickers who ply this horrific trade" (Obama). Government involvement is a recent addition to the fight against modern slavery. Organizations like Polaris Project and Do Something have gained enough publicity that they are beginning to bring awareness to the public who in turn are bringing awareness to the government. The government is the real source of power that can bring about change, and it is vital for organizations to continue knocking on the doors of the people who can make the changes necessary for slavery to be abolished.

Most non-profit organizations make it as easy as possible to become involved. Do Something is a great organization for teenagers who are looking to get involved in the fight against modern slavery. Polaris Project and the producers behind *Call+Response* both focus exclusively on the problem of modern slavery and provide great resources for people looking to get more involved. Polaris Project provides information for those who are interested and gives ideas of how to get involved, while *Call+Response* is a recent movie that brings musicians from all genres together to make a documentary of modern slavery. They work to bring awareness to young people in a way that relates to them. They describe several ways to get involved, from donating to organizations to buying a copy of the movie and showing additional screenings that bring awareness to the public. Additionally, they provide links to other sites that have more information on the topic of sex trafficking. They present ideas of how someone can take a stand against slavery in everyday life: buy fair trade products that have not been made by slaves. Write letters to companies engaging in slave labor. Donate to organizations that free women and children from bondage and restore them to health both physically and emotionally. There are thousands of ways for one person to step up, thousands of tiny impacts that one person can make. There is power in one.

Currently, twenty-seven million people are keeping secrets, hidden behind the lies of millions of their captors. In his poem "Four Quartets 1: Burnt Norton," T.S. Elliot portrays the mindset of the world in a beautiful way: "Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind cannot bear very much reality" (Elliot). Even when people are

aware, many opt out of getting involved. But the reality is, one voice that steps up does make a difference. When one voice speaks up, soon another one joins, and eventually an entire population is fighting for a cause. Don't be the one who keeps quiet. Don't be the skeptic.

Twenty-seven million people are enslaved all over the world. Women and children are forced into bondage and required to obey the requests of their masters in utter submission. They are violated again and again, day after day. They are worn down until they are simply empty shells of a person. This is the face of modern slavery (Not For Sale). Awareness is making its way around the world, but many areas are left unreached. Organizations that fight for this cause do all they can to take these people out of bondage and bring them back to life, all while bringing awareness to the public. They have a huge impact, but they cannot do it alone: they need the help of the public, they need funding, they need support. On the website for *Call+Response*, a humble truth is posted at the top of the homepage saying, "justice is what love looks like in public" (*Call+Response*). Martin Luther King, Jr. further enhances this truth when he says, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (King). There is a major injustice plaguing the world, and something needs to be done to stop it.

*Call+Response*. Dir. Justin Dillon. Fair Trade Pictures, 2008. DVD.  
Mulligan, Deborah. "Human Trafficking: Conference Aims At Alarming Trend." *ProQuest. South Florida Sun - Sentinel*, 2 May 2010. Web. 24 Nov. 2010.

Obama, Barack. "Presidential Proclamation - National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month." *The White House*. Web. 06 Dec. 2010.

"Stop Paying for Slavery Tour - Not For Sale: End Human Trafficking and Slavery." *Not For Sale: End Human Trafficking and Slavery*. Web. 07 Dec. 2010.

*Trafficking In Persons Report*. Rep. Vol. 10. PDF.

Van De Putte, Leticia. "Working Together to End Human Trafficking in Texas." *ProQuest. La Prensa*, 31 Jan. 2010. Web. 24 Nov. 2010.

"What Is Human Trafficking." *Polaris Project*. Web. 29 Nov. 2010.



Photo by Julia Biemann



# HOUSE OF CHA[OS]RITY

By Jessica Morley

It's Morning.  
More Specifically,

7:26 am

The calm before the storm.  
I chew on the quiet air  
The resilient floor empty  
Silently anticipating insurrection.  
Where is life?  
My tired eyes shuffle to the door.  
Ah! There it is –  
From behind this wall, through the locked glass  
I see patience and restlessness  
(Mostly restlessness)  
The reality of liminality  
A line, a mob  
Bare-Boned and exposed  
Disguised by the façade of coats, hats, filthy bags,  
bull shit  
Tattered and tired from overuse while  
Covering up cold, pain, illness, fear, intoxication,  
uncertainty.

7:29

Anticipation  
Faces eager, anxious, impatient, gruff, bruised,  
dogged...

7:30

Explosion.  
Doors opened wide, but narrow  
(Hopefully our hearts are wider.)  
The air instantly alive  
Bustling with an uneasy flux of adrenaline and  
exhaustion  
Welcome to the House of Chaos!  
Welcome to the House of Charity?

[God's Time]

Peace  
All you who are burdened  
May you find something of beauty here.  
(Or at least a crappy cup of coffee.)

Photo by Ellen Maccarone

Photo by Luke Watrovich



Photo by Ellen Maccarone



Photo by Hannah Back



Photo by Luke Watrovich





# ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTERS

*By Nicholas Pangares*

Please allow me to preface this article by saying that this is not an issue of illegal immigration. So, I urge you to please disregard how you feel about illegal immigration in the U.S while reading this. The real issue here is what kind of morals we want our government to have. If you're like me, you would like to live in a society that values human dignity and respect. I don't think it is too much to ask that the U.S government recognize that all humans, despite their transgressions, should be allowed their basic human rights. However, the detention centers that the U.S operates for illegal immigrants hardly recognize this at all.

I would like to make it clear exactly what I am talking about. In the U.S, especially in states near the Mexican border, we have establishments called Immigration Customs Enforcement centers. These ICE centers, and other detention facilities like them, are meant to serve the purpose of holding obtained illegal immigrants in the U.S as they await trial. Seeing as there are many of these immigration cases, as well as many people held within the centers, this waiting process can sometimes take years before the case is even brought to trial. Meanwhile, we have human beings who are kept in captivity and are left in the dark about when, or if, their case will be tried.

What's worse is the multitude of flaws within the centers themselves. Many of these facilities have inadequate medical care for the people trapped inside of them. Centers have been known to keep poor records of the inmates staying there, making removal requests from their loved ones a diplomatic nightmare. The holding cells are similar to the isolation of a prison cell. The cells and windows are small, and the inmates are given limited communication with the outside world. Unlike a prison, though, these immigrants rarely have any idea as to the length of their stay or how serious the crime is. The mental effects of these centers have also led to multiple deaths and suicides: 109 people in 2009 alone.

Whether or not these immigrants broke the law is beside the point. These individuals have been brought into captivity against their will for long periods of time without being given the right to a fair trial. As of 2009, there were 28,000 illegal immigrants being held in detention centers across the U.S. That's 28,000 people living in fear, surrounded by loneliness, and suffering in isolation. Given the questionable nature of the center's records, who knows if these inmates deserve to be there at all? There

have been times when inmates in these centers were being held for misunderstandings or citizenship inconsistencies, and had no need to be held hostage. President Obama vowed to disband immigration detention of this kind upon taking office, but so far there has been nothing significant to support this besides a few changed policies in the ICE handbook.

This reality is a hard one to swallow, and it is one that frankly does not get enough attention from the media and the general public. As Americans, we like to see ourselves as

conscious and sensitive to the social justice issues of the world. We see a third world country fighting back against its oppressive government, or trying to rid itself of violent forces, and we are more than willing to help and support. Yet when it is our own government doing the oppressing within our own country, it somehow becomes much easier to ignore. These centers provide a stunning insight into our countries lack of social character and moral standards. It is time we thought about what we mean by "basic human rights" and start applying that meaning in our government's practices. So, I urge you all, spread the word about this travesty, and do your research to find out what you can do about it. This is not an issue that should be neglected.

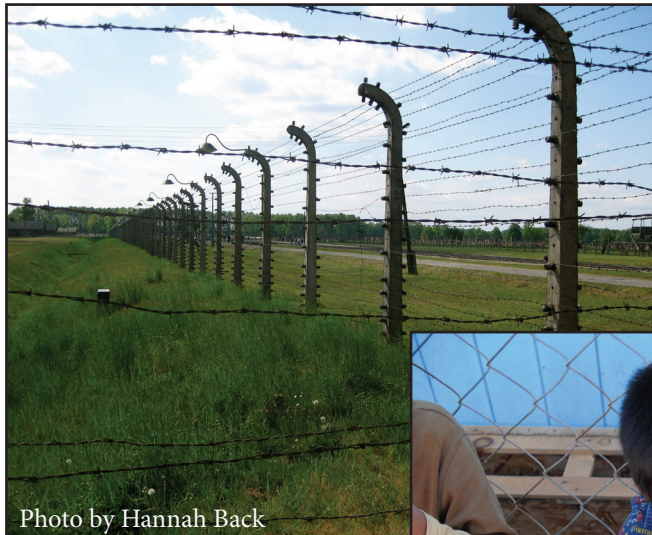


Photo by Hannah Back



Photo by Shannon Enloe



# I DON'T OWE YOU

By RC Marquez

The sun's heaviness weighs on each car as we inch closer to our red, white and blue destination. Cars race to get into some pointless lane. Suddenly, legions of cars are lined up in a treacherous format. They use their vehicles to prevent others from cutting in. These drivers do not offer any courtesies – only lack of care.

This is Mexicali, the capital of Baja California. This is a sprawling metropolis where people from all over the republic come in search of jobs and family reunions. They come to the "line" to sell or beg to anyone who will give him or her a glance. These are the downtrodden people who are invisible. Some of these border pedestrians will continue their hazardous attempt to pursue their destiny to the other side. "The other side," the area where the Pilgrim's pride and Immigrant's tears come to seek out greener pastures and golden doors. This American dream of a place where everyone is respected and no one is left out.

During the month of July, temperatures hit the molten level. Cars with tinted windows are rolled up. Air-conditioners are working ferociously to keep their inhabitants from breaking a sweat. However, *The People of the Line* are not hindered. Although, some may pretend their plight, most will work their lives for the little that we take for granted. Dirty, tired and beat, they push through another day.

As the sun's rays continue to drench each car, an indigenous girl is carrying her baby in a red shawl. She

walks from car to car determined to get a helping hand. She is about 17 years old, and her face is unlined, yet gaunt. She does not yet show any of the ravages of her existence. The baby, perhaps accustomed to the boisterous sounds of the vehicles, is unruffled. His tiny black eyes stare straight at me. I look away – his stare bothers me.

She carefully approaches a man in his 4x4 monster truck. He is wearing his designer shades and stares directly into the sun. He sits there on top of his mountain truck – The King of the Road. As she quietly calls out her needs, the man without even a glance, roars out, "No te lo debo!" I don't owe you (for it)! Unfazed and undaunted, she continues her journey to the next car, and then the next. Seeking that one person who will give her temporary financial shelter.

We sigh with relief as we finally reach the crossing. Here, on "the other side," I see several girls who appear to be 17 years of age. They are texting and another is asking about the latest on the Khardashians. They are so carefree and made up.

We have a home and we feel safe at night. My children are fast asleep. That girl from Mexicali and her child remain etched in my mind. She is a reminder that some people are prisoners, not just by barbed walls, but also by the attitudes and perceptions of their own countrymen.

Photo by Emily Back



Photo by Julia Biemann  
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Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by RC Marquez





Photo by Julie Wachter

# THE BLURRY OUTLINE OF AMERICA

By Kara Flageollet

Over the past few years, the issue of immigration has become an intense area of discussion in America, taking its place among debates about abortion, gay marriage and health care. Often, people take a stance on this issue that coincides with their political values. Social justice is a major aspect of immigration, but it is frequently overlooked. The issue is not whether or not it is a human right for people to be able to migrate freely, but rather whether or not it is a social injustice to exclude people from our nation.

America seems like a progressive country. Despite an increasing inclination toward social justice, the laws regarding immigration have become steadily more strict and exclusionary. The original U.S. immigration laws were formed in 1875 to prevent convicts and prostitutes from entering the country. Gradually, the list of excluded peoples grew to include Chinese Immigrants, paupers, and the mentally ill. Forming these laws was an instance of the federal government directly discriminating.

In the last few years, the majority of immigrants coming to the U.S. have traveled from South America (End Illegal Immigration). Those that oppose discrimination claim that the presence of immigrants is detrimental to the economy and society. That same claim was made when a great amount of Irish citizens traveled to America in the early 1800s. "Help Wanted" signs were never too far from "No Irish Need Apply" signs. The prejudice against Irish Americans was enormous in the 1800s. In reality, Irish Americans at that time were immeasurably beneficial to the economy and advancement during the industrial revolution (The Kinsella Organization 7).

Decisions on whether or not immigration is beneficial are frequently decided without considering the perspective of the immigrant. Often, people are forced to leave their home country in order to survive and provide for their families.

Not only is the actual process of immigration associated with negativity, but there is significant discrimination against immigrants who become citizens. Leslie is a Latina who has experienced prejudice firsthand. "I am a citizen here in the United States. I am part Mexican. I just hate how people treat Mexicans like if they were some criminals, or did something bad" (My Immigration Story). Having to face racism is not something that anyone should endure; it is a direct violation of everything our country stands for.

When examining the social justice issue that underlies these policies, the question of whether or not we should allow others to be a part of American society becomes vastly easier to answer. Next time an argument arises over immigration issues, question whether the arguments for exclusion are founded on fact or judgment.

*End Illegal Immigration. "Americans Working to Stop Illegal Immigration." 2009. Web. Accessed 2/21/12. ([http://www.endillegalimmigration.com/History\\_of\\_Illegal\\_Immigration\\_in\\_US/index.shtml](http://www.endillegalimmigration.com/History_of_Illegal_Immigration_in_US/index.shtml))*

*My Immigration Story. The Human Side of Immigration. The Story of U.S. Immigrants in their own Words. 2008. Accessed 2/22/12 (<http://www.myimmigrationstory.com/>)*

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# EL REFUGIO: A LIGHT IN DARKNESS

*By Katie Beno-Valencia, Former OneWorld Editor*

Photos by Jasmine Roe



Flor, her two children, and mother-in-law hesitantly entered into the house and sat with us for just a moment. The kids accepted our offers of popsicles as much needed relief on this sweltering, summer day in South Georgia. They didn't stay long, just long enough to take a few deep breaths and rest in the quiet living room of the tiny, generations-old house. They asked my husband and I a few questions about where we were from, what brought us here, and about this tranquil little place. And then they decided it was time to climb back into their car and continue on their 10-hour journey back to North Carolina.

A few months later, and Flor and her family were regular guests at this house. They made the long journey every two weeks from their home in North Carolina to visit Flor's husband and the children's father, Peter, who was detained at the Stewart Detention Center. The detention center, the largest in the United States, is located 3 hours south of Atlanta, Georgia in a rural, isolated and seemingly desolate place. Tonight there are nearly 2000 men detained there, waiting processing for deportation. The men are not there serving a sentence or being punished for crimes, as immigration violations are a civil offense. But the facility sure feels like a prison when the doors slam behind you and the men inside do not leave. The detention center is operated by a for-profit corporation, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) that contracts with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). CCA is paid \$80 per detainee per day with their contract to run the Stewart Detention Center.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement has 32,000 immigrants in their custody on any given night. This cost the U.S. taxpayer an estimated \$1.7 billion dollars in 2010. The private prison industry is the main beneficiary of this ever-expanding system of immigration detention. Since 2001, private corporations have gained more and more control over immigration detention facilities and continue to gain record profits. In the first three quarters of 2011, CCA grossed more than \$1.3 billion in total revenue and \$121 million in profits. The private prison industry is more concerned about generating income for their in-

vestors than maintaining humane standards inside their facilities. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has a set list of standards that their contractors are supposed to follow, but there is little oversight and these standards are not binding regulations. Three men have died while in custody at the CCA-operated Stewart Detention Center. Roberto Martinez Medina, a 39-year-old immigrant died of a treatable infection. But due to the facility's distance from the nearest hospital and reports of CCA staff ignoring the pleas of Martinez Medina, he died in March 2008.

While private prison corporations gain record profits, families continue to suffer the pain of facing separation from their loved ones. Undocumented men and women face the uncertainty of familial separation and deportation, often resulting from a traffic stop. In Georgia, as in every other state except for Washington and Utah, drivers must show proof of citizenship or legal immigration status in order to get a driver's license. A woman driving her children to school or a man driving his family home after mass, could be stopped and asked for proof of a valid driver's license. If they do not present one because they are "unlicensable," they face arrest. Once in the custody of local authorities, their immigration status is checked by a national database of immigration records. Then that mother or father faces being transferred to ICE custody and the process for deportation begins. Under the Immigration and Nationality Act, it often doesn't matter if the individual has U.S. Citizen children, or spouse, or parents. They still face the violent forced separation from their children and families and lives they have created.

The men and women then await deportation, often while in the physical custody of ICE, in local and privately run facilities. The private prison corporation benefits directly from the pain of families. They have lobbied to increase the immigration detention system, while more humane alternatives exist that enable individuals to be with their loved ones while waiting processing and proceedings in the often-backlogged system. The average cost for alternatives to detention cost as little as \$13 per day, compared to the \$95 per day that the detention system



costs. CCA, and other private corporations, continues to profit while running facilities like the Stewart Detention Center. For every one of the 2000 men detained, there is a mother worried about her son, a wife worried about her husband, or children crying to be with their father.

Just a mile from this massive medium-security facility is a “two and a half bedroom” house that serves as a beacon of hope. El Refugio (“The Refuge” in Spanish) is a hospitality house where volunteers offer housing, home-cooked meals, and accompaniment every weekend to family members of the men that are detained at the Stewart Detention Center. A group of volunteers founded the house just a year ago to serve as a much-needed respite for families in desperate situations. Lumpkin, Georgia, where the Stewart Detention Center is located, is a town of just 1,700 people about an hour from Columbus, Georgia, the next largest city. There is just one restaurant and two gas stations in the town, and no hotels, grocery stores, or stoplights.

Families and friends can visit their loved ones at the Stewart Detention Center once a week for one hour behind a glass booth, talking through a scratchy telephone. A group of individuals and organizations would often host humanitarian visits with men at the detention center. After conducting these delegations, one of the founders of El Refugio noticed how many of the families would exit the visitation room crying and distraught. The families and loved ones then faced often long car rides back to their homes in states as far away as South Carolina, North Carolina, Texas, and New York. Even the drive to Atlanta is three hours. So, a group of dedicated volunteers gathered

together to create this little light in the darkness, El Refugio.

El Refugio has nine twin-beds in three bedrooms, a tiny kitchen, an ever-expanding dining room, a bathroom, and a living room. We have a full house nearly every weekend with guests that are visiting their loved ones. We have many that pass by just to enjoy a quiet moment of reflection or a warm meal (or a cold popsicle in the summer!). Sometimes we just listen, sometimes we cry, sometimes we pray. But most of all we open our hearts to be broken by the families, and try our best to accompany them in their time of need. We often host delegations of interested individuals who visit those detainees that we know of who do not have family members able to make the journey to visit them.

Flor and her family became frequent guests at El Refugio. Peter, the son of naturalized U.S. Citizens, the brother of a U.S. Airforce veteran and U.S. citizen, the father of two U.S. citizens, and the husband of a legal immigrant, was detained at the Stewart Detention Center for four months. In November 2011, volunteers of El Refugio received the excited call from Flor that her husband was being released while he continued to fight his deportation. Without the support from El Refugio, Flor would not have been able to visit with her husband as frequently as she did. El Refugio offered a refuge and support for Flor and her family as they struggled against the broken immigration system that allows private companies to profit off of her family's pain.



Photo by John Macdonald



Photo by Katherine Dörner



# GREENWISE POEM

*By Brittney Carino*

Goodbye old world, bring on the new...  
There are so many rumors, but only one truth  
The time is now to pick the low hanging fruit  
And get reconnected to our source of food  
Because the future is in the hands of the youth  
As well as the economic power of a few  
With the choice of scarcity or abundance  
Extinction or sustenance, malnutrition or substance  
Through permaculture, we stack functions  
With overproduction over consumption  
Causing a slower reduction,  
Of natural resources becoming closer to nothing  
While society is congested with jokers drunken  
Like a poser muffin cooking in a toaster oven  
Just waiting to be baked  
But our children's fate is at stake  
We can't be waiting for change, because change can't wait  
Once you've consciously observed the landscapes  
And all the legislative mandates  
That got human classmates trapped in tax rates

In a language Mother Nature can't translate  
Because our connection has been lost with no direction  
The future depends upon the actions in the present  
Every moment is a gift more rewarding than wrapping presents  
To some it is a curse on a holiday event, with no intent to represent  
The perpetuated power hierarchy of corporate kingdoms and poor peasants  
In search for mass destructive weapons  
Expressed on television, a weapon of mass deception  
We've become so disconnected,  
Mother Earth has been disrespected  
Nature, Life has interdependent complexion that needs some correction  
With the power of the co-creative collective  
We can become reconnected to the source  
So if you wanna learn a lesson to reach a higher dimension  
Then of course you gotta ask the authority questions

Like how many species gotta go extinct? And how many people gotta die?  
Before we actually think, and ask the question why  
Why can't we seek the truth? Why we gotta live these lies?  
Controlled by an oligarchy with the devil in disguise  
But from the father of creation, there's no place they can hide  
So open your minds wide as I testify

We got so many problems, and no one to solve them (except ourselves)  
Because every problem has a solution  
And we can solve them without confusion  
By involving some of these new kids  
Involved in a movement, as a cause of revolution  
That can stop the pollution  
A call to conclusion of false illusions

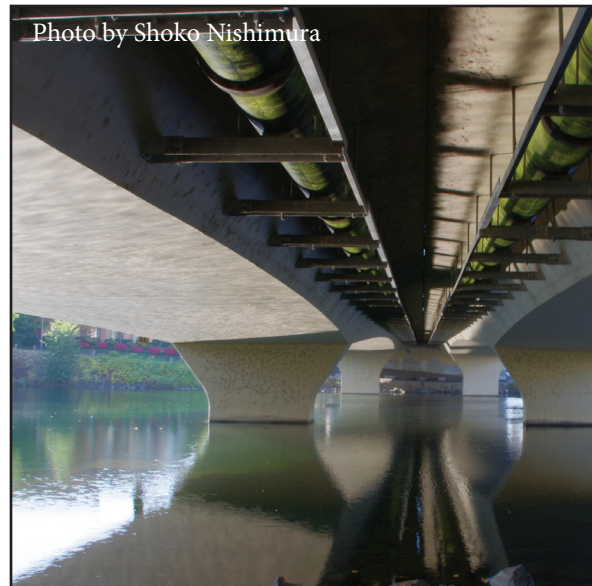
Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by Shoko Nishimura





All we need to change, is the way that we've been trained  
The Earth constantly depletes by the way that we behave  
As our patterns of life are getting steadily deranged  
The media is only part of the problem, it's the spirit that's within  
So don't let your ego talk, open your ears and actually listen  
We're just puppets on a string to this crooked system  
Ya crooked, like the way I grind on a skateboard  
The more I free my mind, they just wanna hate more  
Hopelessly misguiding you like a fake lord  
They profit off of stripping our precious earth  
And manipulating the people like William Randolph Hearst  
With all their propaganda embellished with fancy perks  
Too many lost souls lurk, never learned what life is worth  
Bought and sold, now they're vision has been blurred  
But don't fear the end, it's just a spiritual rebirth  
Cause love is a blessing and can never be a curse  
The strongest weapon, but does take some work  
And I know it's hard to swallow truth, cuz it hurts  
But competition, power, and greed all contribute to the worst  
To solve the problem, we can only look at the root first  
Love for money, it's the root of all evil  
Making the balance of life unequal  
Constantly deceiving the people, while the truth becomes feeble  
I just wanna live my life, but to them it's illegal  
We must preserve our biodiversity for life to last  
Otherwise our greatest successes are just a thing of the past  
This is all I've learned from life beyond the material craft  
That these vampires have constructed on our spiritual path

Towards enlightenment, where every living being is free  
It's not the world that needs to change, it's our beliefs  
Once you learn to add positivity, than whatcha need is what you'll see  
Like a bird planting a seed, and  
A fruit falling from a tree, infested with food the chicken can eat  
Bugs like a bee, from a flower to add organic zinc,  
To the water tables sink, and aerate the soil with its feet  
Now the ecology cycle is healthy and complete, and no longer weak  
As the rhythm never misses a beat  
But the most violent killer to mankind is lust and envy  
They can never have enough so they work inequity  
Spiritual wickedness feeds off gluttony and cruelty  
Causing disturbances in the web of life fluently  
And making it a struggle to achieve unity  
Love is true, but to most it is truancy  
True indeed, it is so unconditional  
Bridging the gap between the metaphysical  
Everything is political, but we need not think that way  
Because it leads us astray and robs our greatest power away  
They say to look away, but they're scared to look inside  
Wrong or right? Which side do you apply?  
Why do poor people gotta cry? While wicked men don't even sigh?  
And if I have lost you, then I apologize  
Because I battle evil, and will never lose the fight  
But if I'm anywhere short of the truth  
I ask God to forgive me  
On the road to Zion, his majesty uplifts we.





# A REGION BEHIND THE TIMES

*By Emily Back, Former OneWorld Editor*

When I first got my invitation to serve as a Community Health Volunteer in Albania, I foolishly had to Google “Albania” and read up on location and general facts. I had heard of the Yugoslav Wars and tidbits about the culture, but felt in no way confident enough in my abilities to serve their community. The Balkan region to me remains an imaginative whirlpool. So, in my six-month preparation for departure, I began to uncover Albania: the place, the people, and the history that make this region unknown to many. When reading about healthcare and government access in this region (the very systems I will be working for), the most troubling concept for me to grasp is the limited access women have to modern healthcare practices.

Hermetically sealed off from the world since the mid 1940s, Albania has just in the last fifteen years come out of Communism, and is staggeringly ignorant when it comes to modern practices. Although Albania is revered as one of the “top places to visit” because of its geographic beauty, this region has seen more violence and inequality than I will ever know. Up until the late 1980s, Yugoslavia was a stable and prosperous country made up of many smaller regions. But after the death of Josip Tito, Yugoslavia began to disintegrate. Rising nationalism among its ethnic groups and increasing power of Slobodan Milošević (President of Yugoslavia, endorsing the Serbian nationalist agenda) caused traditional communist neutrality to cease. Simultaneous wars erupted throughout the region in areas overlapped by two or more ethnic populations. When Kosovo broke off into its own region, there was disagreement over which ethnic group should occupy; Albanians were more prevalent, but Milošević was adamant about reviving the Socialist Republic of Serbia. Even though Albanians occupied a majority of the Kosovo region, Serbians maintained power within the government because of Milošević’s presidency. Tensions between the Kosovo Liberation Army (made up of Kosovar Albanians against Yugoslavia) and the Serb militias inside Kosovo led to a mass exodus of Kosovar Albanians and extreme unemployment. Genocide, ethnic cleansing and rape among both ethnic and religious backgrounds remained prevalent in this region up until the late 1990s. And now, what remains is a fractured area punctuated by psychological devastation and fear.

The result of the Yugoslav wars and decades fo-

cused on preservation of name, ethnicity, and region has led to a now stable population possessing extremely outdated views. A majority of populated areas in Albania and countries of former Yugoslavia maintain a perspective of women’s roles in society based several decades in the past. Albania itself is regarded as Western, but not Westernized in the sense that it strives for a full democracy and global mindset, but fails to provide modern standards to the female population. Women are largely still regarded as second-class citizens. In a majority of areas women are expected to be home before dark, and being seen with male counterparts is perceived as promiscuous. In addition to this, women do not allow themselves to be alone with men for the simple realization that the

way they are regarded makes the male have the power to do as he pleases without repercussion. The mentality is slowly changing and there are less rigid gender roles, especially in the cities, but inequality is still in abundance.

A former regime of intimidation and murder has instilled in this population the mental-

ity to hold on to traditional beliefs. The mentality that causes women of this region to sacrifice the benefits and rights that most people of the modern world receive. So, in this post-conflict development site, how can an outsider (yours truly, and many others like myself) successfully promote health strategies that challenge gender hierarchies without overstepping cultural boundaries?

I’ve grown up in a region of the world dominated by continuous efforts to end inequality and injustice in every form, I have the ability to achieve as much if not more than my male counterparts, and constantly take advantage of many of my given constitutional rights. Needless to say, when I walk down to local solidarity events for those around the US, I hold a new appreciation for how far we’ve come. The fight for equality is never over, but acknowledging the problems associated with our culture and development has helped tremendously. Moving to Albania will undoubtedly present unforeseen struggles for a third-wave feminist adjusting to an extremely patriarchal society. But challenge is always the price for progress. For this region, understanding contemporary healthcare and support for developing equality will no doubt put a healthy dent on an otherwise traumatic history.

*“The fight for equality is never over, but acknowledging the problems associated with our culture and development has helped tremendously.”*

Photo by Cecilia Estraviz



# CULTURE OF SILENCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

*By Timothy Orton*



Photo by Julia Bemann

As a child, Paulo Freire and his family experienced the global ripple effect of the 1929 market crash in the United States in his home of Recife, Brazil. A friend and colleague of Freire, Donaldo Macedo, wrote that, as a child, Freire and his family fell from middle-class economic status to experience the dehumanizing effect of poverty. He recalled living on the cusp of starvation, "it was a real hunger that had no specific date of departure ... our hunger was of the type that arrives unannounced and unauthorized, making itself home without an end in sight." Many of Freire's classmates experienced hunger such as his, and years later as an adult he continued to see it afflict many of his Brazilian countrymen.

As an adult, Freire dedicated his life to trying to build a world that was "less ugly, more beautiful, less discriminatory, more democratic, less dehumanizing, and more humane." While many educators in the United States have come to know Freire for his work in literacy education, the people marginalized by oppressive Western neo-liberalist policies know him best. Yet, in spite of it all, he optimistically viewed history as a possibility and the future as not "inexorably determined."

As an educator, Freire traveled throughout Latin America and other parts of the world where he witnessed the harsh reality of oppressive governmental policies that favored elitist classes and victimized the lower class. He aptly referred to these policies as the "culture of silence." The dehumanization of the millions silenced is the antithesis of humanity, because they are not seen nor recognized as human beings. Freire wrote, "If, for animals, orientation in the world means adaptation to the world, for man it means humanizing the world by transforming

it." During the process of becoming more human-like, our ancestors began to think of their relationship to the world separated from purely basic instinct and adaptation. In other words, Freire believed the human enterprise was to become more human. However, what often occurs is that the few oppress the many. The act of controlling others as voiceless non-humans, according to the "norms" of the oppressor, works much in the same way that animals conform to their environment over which they have little control. The difference is that humans can become more "human," whereas animals cannot become more "animal." The consequence is, however, that dehumanization entangles both the oppressor and oppressed into a dysfunctional relationship that undermines humanizing the world.

The human project Freire undertook was a pedagogical approach directed at analyzing conscientizacao, which refers to learning to discern social, political, and economic injustice and to take action against the oppressive elements of that reality. Without both, argued Freire, one is either an "armchair activist" or activist without understanding. Therefore, praxis for liberation consists of developing critical consciousness and action directed at tearing down the structures that support oppression. While many educators around the world have embraced Freire's pedagogy, few educators in the United States understand the depth of his work.

In light of the current financial crisis that is distancing so many from prosperity and, consequently, their humanity, millions of Americans are becoming a culture of silence. Freire, if he were alive today, would encourage the voiceless members of society to critically analyze the causes of oppression and through transforming action create a new reality, which is the pursuit of humanity. What is the crucial issue, however, is more than disparity in wealth, lack of jobs, and political inaction. It is whether human beings are able to evolve past our basic animal like instincts of adaptation and conformity and evolve toward becoming more human. This is the great human task Freire set before us.



Photo by Lynda Quinn





Photo by Jackie Miller

# THE BITTER-SWEET LIFE

*By Katherine Catlin*

Don Juan Salgado barely bated an eye as he recounted to me the manner in which his friend had recently died.

First, he became increasingly tired throughout the day. Worn out by small activity, he could summon none of his usual energy to play with his children. Eventually, he lost his appetite. Despite Juan's encouragement, he could barely force himself to eat. The ultimate hours were suffered vomiting blood repetitively in a nearby hospital until he passed into an eternal rest. I held back my tears until just as the story was ending when I realized that Juan wasn't just relating a friend's demise – he was describing his own future final battle with the same sickness.

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is a decreased capacity of the kidneys to excrete waste products, and has no specific treatment. The symptoms start as a general feeling of unwellness. Years later it develops into loss of appetite, fatigue, bruising from anemia, chest pain, bone pain, and eventual death. Here in the States, CKD primarily a complication of diabetes or high blood pressure, but there

is a rising tide of patients in Latin America lacking these diseases.

For residents of La Isla, a small community in the Chinendega region of Nicaragua, CKD is no stranger. The community has nicknamed itself "La Isla de Viudas" (The Island of Widows) because so many of the residents have died from the epidemic. A recent study concluded that about 70% of men and 33% of women in La Isla are affected. More research is needed, but the most recent causal study alleged that the most likely origin is liberal usage of untested pesticides, on the nearby sugar cane plantations, that has been previously applied without protective equipment. It is inhaled by workers throughout the day, and local water supply is feasibly contaminated as well.

Almost all regional economic activity is based around sugar farms owned by Ingenio San Antonio and their parent company, The Pellas Group. If you've heard of Flor de Caña rum, Toña beer, Victoria Beer or Ingenio San Antonio sugar, residents of La Isla are the ones making it flow. The company is fully aware of the CKD epi-



demic and its likely connection to their activity. Yet, in a blatant violation of human rights and corporate responsibility, they are doing next to nothing. Instead, they have launched an aggressive media campaign to sweep the issue under the rug.

Work conditions and dehydration are probable aggravators. Shifts are often twelve hours during the high season in average temperatures of 85 degrees. US military guidelines would suggest twenty minutes of rest for every forty minutes of work in this temperature range to prevent heat stress; OSHA recommends thirty-thirty. Employees in La Isla tell me they usually get one lunch break (during which they walk home if they want food), and one fifteen minute break later. Guidelines also suggest replacing one quart of fluids per hour. The men cannot carry water in the field because they need both hands to harvest. According to local law, water should be provided regularly, but conversations here indicate that it is not. Of course this is all denied by the company, and if workers speak out they are fired. Beyond CKD, the nearby communities suffer further abuse:

Last June a 15-year-old boy was shot after a security guard assumed he was stealing a sugar cane. The company paid off the mother, and there was no trial.

To reach the community one must cross a ditch, which is impassable due to water flow during the rainy season. Last winter the Ingenio built a bridge to get trucks and other equipment across. Afterwards, they sent employees back to destroy it. We can only assume this ludicrousness was to keep locals isolated and unable to seek other employment.

One afternoon, as we left the community, they were burning one of the sugar cane fields to clear it for new crop. From miles away we could see the rage-red smoke, and ash rained down like Nicaraguan snow. It was so thick it clouded out the sun, and forced an early twilight. My lungs burned for a day, and I was only there a short time from a far distance. The community underneath the smoke will have to evacuate with no provisions from the plantation. Locals tell me the burnings will continue in

different fields for months. The company says they are no longer burning the cane.

There is hope. In 2008, an independent filmmaker named Jason Glaser stumbled upon the community while making a movie about banana workers. He was so moved that he abandoned his work to start La Isla Foundation ([www.laislafoundation.org](http://www.laislafoundation.org)). They have successfully fought to reopen a community health clinic and bring in various Universities to study the issue. The group is now conducting a census of the community, raising awareness, and providing computer and sewing classes to residents so they can derive an alternative source of income.

Local groups are also developing to help themselves. La Isla has been organizing for some time, constrained by the fact that only retired employees can protest. I have also spoken with a resident of a larger town nearby who says several Nicaraguan organizations are collaborating to launch an international awareness campaign.

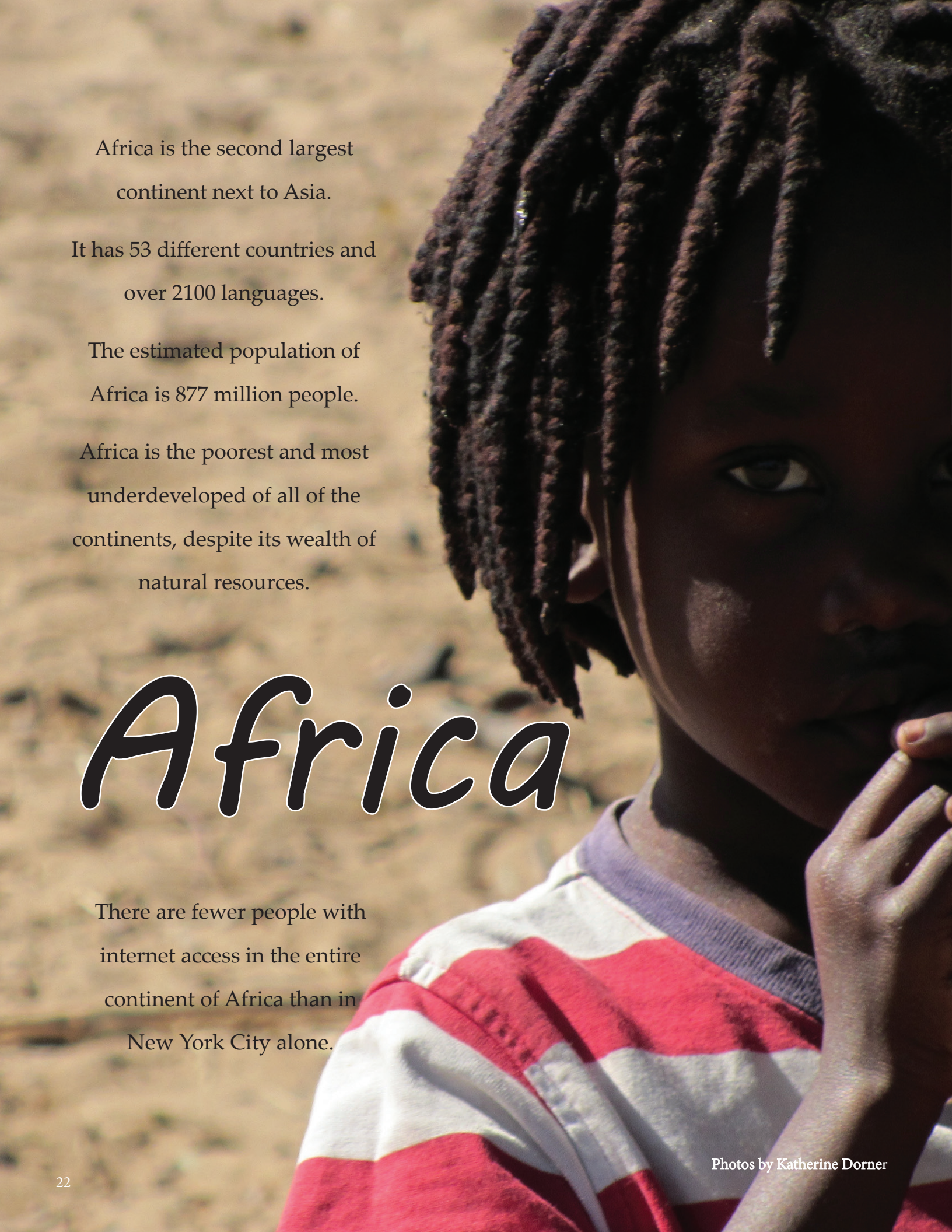
Personally, my contact with La Isla has moved me in ways I can't describe. I had read the statistics before I visited, but meeting the individuals face-to-face has upturned my sense of order and justice in the world. They are incredibly kind, intelligent and open people. They have little, yet share everything. It's easy to think that they should just leave, but they don't

have the economic opportunity to do so. Moreover, they are now so accustomed to the rights violations that it's almost a joke. My stomach churns hearing the latest gossip about company abuse— they laugh. Though my heart hangs heavy with all that I can't change, it's important for us as privileged Americans to make an effort. We must support human rights causes financially, and through volunteerism whenever possible. At the very least we are obligated be aware. I urge one and all to expend more thought on consumer choices; especially when goods are imported. Cheap sugar tastes sweet, but others are suffering the bitter aftertaste.



Photo by Julie Wachter





Africa is the second largest  
continent next to Asia.

It has 53 different countries and  
over 2100 languages.

The estimated population of  
Africa is 877 million people.

Africa is the poorest and most  
underdeveloped of all of the  
continents, despite its wealth of  
natural resources.

# Africa

There are fewer people with  
internet access in the entire  
continent of Africa than in  
New York City alone.

Photos by Katherine Dorner



# IN THE BIG FOREST

By Susan Norwood



*The morning started with our final teaching session. Then we went to see that the palm oil extractor was loaded and ready to go. When we got to the truck, we were informed that three pieces of equipment were being readied to go to*

*the village – two pieces were loaded on the truck and the third would be brought out later after these were unloaded. Needless to say, we were confused! We had raised funds for only the extractor, so we told the machine shop workers to take the huller off of the truck. But then we were told that everything had been verified with the accountant and that all was in order for three pieces of equipment – the extractor, the huller, and a boiler/separator.*

*The day at the village was amazing! The extractor completed a day's worth of "foot-work" crushing palm berries in about 30 minutes. The palm oil extractor will produce more and better quality palm oil than the traditional method of processing. The money will be used to send the village's children to school, to buy healthier food to eat, and to get health care. An example of a true partnership – the village, CAO (Central Afrika Obota), Songhai Centre, and us. During our reflections after dinner tonight, we reflected on how many of the UN Millennium Development Goals were addressed by this one small act.*

But this story really began more than two years before. And it is, I think, an important story to tell.

## Summer 2008

In May of 2008, I had the opportunity to travel to Benin with a potential benefactor who had read about our program's inaugural year, and its project of working with the Songhai Centre to develop the capacity to manufacture ceramic water filters. During this visit, through another contact, we were introduced to representatives of Centre Afrika Obota (CAO), a Beninese non-governmental organization. Over a couple of meetings, CAO described their projects. They specifically talked about a village that was trying to buy palm oil processing equipment and what this equipment would mean to the village. The benefactor with whom I travelled indicated that he would be making a substantial financial contribution to CAO's programs, and was particularly interested in buying the palm oil

equipment for the village.

I returned to Benin in late July for our second year of the WATER program. Our time at Songhai Centre was spent following up on the WATER filter project, conducting water testing, collecting health information, and providing basic health education. Towards the end of our two weeks in Benin, we were able to visit two villages with CAO: one that had machines for processing palm oil, and one that was organizing itself into a women's palm oil cooperative, working with CAO to learn how to manage its resources so that it could acquire palm oil processing equipment.

The trip to the second village was memorable. The women and children were welcoming – but somewhat wary. We saw how the women processed palm oil in the "traditional manner" – first hulling the palm nuts one by one with something that looked like a big nutcracker, and then crushing the berries with their feet. The process was time-consuming, physically-demanding, and unsanitary. We were told that this process resulted in a poorer quality of palm oil that could not be stored, and brought only a low price at the market. As a cooperative, the village women pooled the income from the palm oil they sold. These funds were used to buy food for the village, help send the children to school, and help pay for health care when a village member becomes ill. The women also were trying to save funds to purchase palm-oil processing equipment. As we were leaving, our hosts from CAO remarked that they had not received any money from the university benefactor yet. I promised to stay in contact with CAO throughout the upcoming year, and expressed interest in working with them in some capacity when we returned to Benin the following summer for the third year of the WATER program.





## Summer 2009

Our projects at Songhai Centre in 2009 again involved following up on the water filters, water testing (the filters were working!), and providing classes in basic health and first aid. During the second week of our stay in Benin, we had the opportunity to visit the village with CAO. The women and children at the village seemed less guarded this year, but the village was still making palm oil in the traditional manner. As we were leaving the village after the second visit, our friends from CAO told me that they still had not heard anything from the benefactor who had traveled with me to Benin the previous year. This made me angry – perhaps there had been some misunderstanding regarding his intentions from the outset, but I felt that CAO and the village had been let down in some way. It was a combination of this and seeing the hard work the women were doing to try to better life in the village that convinced me that we needed to try to raise the money to buy palm oil processing equipment for the village.

## Summer 2010

Our year-long fundraising efforts were small-scale and grass-roots. Money came from friends, family, WATER alumni, and from selling knitted socks, scarves and bags made from African fabrics to colleagues. In the big scheme of things, the amount we were trying to raise wasn't huge – but it was slow to add up. We learned that the building that had been set aside in the village to house the palm oil extractor had been destroyed by the rains. We negotiated with CAO that they would help the village construct a new building, and we would provide the equipment. Just when we thought we had secured enough money to purchase the palm oil extractor, the price went up – so we dug in again to raise what we needed. Finally, we were able to purchase a diesel palm oil extractor from Songhai Centre. We were told the building was underway and would be completed and ready while we were in Benin.

On Monday, August 2, we made our first trip to the village. We were warmly welcomed by the women and children. The building was underway, but not completed. When we arrived, the mud walls were about as high as my chest. We carried mud for a couple of hours, and, when we left, noticeable progress had been made. However, the building still needed a roof and concrete floor, and there were plans to cover the walls with concrete. CAO informed the village

that if the building was not ready when we returned, the equipment would not be installed.

I'll never forget the events and emotions of Thursday, August 5. When we arrived – with the three pieces of equipment, not just the extractor! – the building was completed! The equipment was maneuvered into the building, set up, and tested. We spent the day at the village just being a part of the village's life. Even the chief of the larger community came to express his thanks. I've reflected a lot on that day since then – but it's one of those monumental events that is going to take a while to completely process. It was, quite simply, a remarkable day in so many ways.

## Lessons Learned

I want to share our story about the palm oil project because it has taught us and reinforced some important lessons:

"The humble heart does not say, 'I can't do anything.' But rather, 'I can't do everything. I know my part and I am happy to do it.'" – Max Lucado

"What I do, you cannot do; but what you do, I cannot do. The needs are great, and none of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and

together we can do something wonderful." – Mother Teresa of Calcutta

We have learned anew that little efforts can add up to something big. Too often, we tend to excuse inaction by saying that what we are able to do is so small that it surely won't make a difference. I am reminded of the line from a children's story that goes something like this: "Think what would happen if everybody did..." Little donations – of time, of help, of money – add up to reach larger goals.

"Peace comes with a full belly." – Claudette Ortiz

"Isn't everyone a part of everyone else?" – Brad Schulberg

We aren't going to save the world, or Africa, or even Zoungbomey through the palm oil project or the WATER program. But we believe in trickle-down effects – good ones and bad ones. And helping a village buy better food, send its children to school, and access health care can have ripple effects that will benefit all of us. Reflect back on the UN Millennium Development Goals – most of them were addressed in some way by this one very small project that cost very

*"Children are a wonderful gift. They have an extraordinary capacity to see into the heart of things and to expose sham and humbug."  
- Desmond Tutu*



little money in the big scheme of things.

"First it is necessary to stand on your own two feet. But the minute a man finds himself in that position, the next thing he should do is reach out his arms." – Kristen Hunter

I grew up in a loving family that gave me everything I needed and most of what I thought I wanted. I also know that what happens in small villages in Africa and other places affects me. But we don't have to travel to Africa and other far away places to see need and to make a difference – there is plenty of need and there are plenty of opportunities to foster social justice close to home.

## Beyond

Change is going to happen in Africa and elsewhere one village at a time. We have learned that working for change takes time and perseverance. Change is most likely to occur and be sustainable when communities identify their own needs and desires and are helped to develop the capacity to meet these needs on their own. In the words of one of our students, we need to be partners rather than patrons. We need to be thoughtful about how we help – when to do for and when to do with. We need to empower, rather than create dependency. We need to be wary about perpetuating exploitation and paternalism in the name of change by making sure that change efforts meet the community's need – and not our own needs. Change efforts also need to be mindful of the environmental and cultural context in which they are situated. These types of change require grass-roots efforts and partnerships. WATER is going to continue its work in Benin. Zoungbomey will change and we plan to follow up and see the impact of the palm oil project. There may be more ways in which we can engage with this village; there are undoubtedly more villages with which we can engage. We hope our story inspires you to find your own "village" and work for change, too.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead

Photos by Susan Norwood





# HOLD MY HAND JUST ONE MORE TIME

By Kurt Guenther

When we arrived in Zambia almost a month ago, what did we expect to find here in a world so far away? Were the answers within the people we would meet? Were the answers just hiding within ourselves needing to be found? Time has paradoxically passed both slowly and quickly as days have turned into nights and people have been both born and buried in the community. If there is one thing I have learned in my time here, it is that the transcendent joy of the Zambian people cannot be ceased. From Mama Kawatu's love of life to Christopher's passion for learning to the children's joy in having their name said to Mama Josephine's unrelenting pleasure in making me sing "Twaya Mwanta" over and over, the unique joy in every Zambian spirit has overwhelmed us in every sense of the word.

The children of Zambezi, especially, have offered the unique ability to reach all corners of our emotions at any given moment in time. From one day to the next the kids here are able to make us yell in anger, smile in friendship, complain in frustration, laugh hysterically, run with and away from, and cry both tears of joy and misery depending on the circumstances. Despite the conflicting emotions that may be evoked by the Zambian children, there was one experience, of many, that cemented my undying love for these kids.

One day after class I rolled one of the Zam-Bikes down to the market to have a flat tire pumped up. As I trudged through the sand pulling the bicycle behind me, with no idea where to go, I realized just how much love and kindness these kids are filled with. Sometimes they may come off as obsessive and unrestrained knowing no boundaries, but in that single moment in time, the only thing those children cared about was helping me. They are innocent and benevolent creatures that would do anything to help or make us *chindeles* (white people) happy. It is a joy that transcends their circumstances -- the pure and endless joy of God that so vividly resonates from their smiles, laughter, and little footprints in the sand.

Maybe if they knew the true disparity between their lives and our lives, so full of wealth and opportunity, they wouldn't be smiling so brightly. But, I truly think that the happiness and excitement they receive every time we hold their hands or call them by name could not be erased with all the power in the world. They love so unconditionally and live so freely--which is even more heartbreaking to see because I know that most of them will not graduate from college, let alone high school. They may just be another face in the grand scheme of oppression and pov-

Photo by Kayla Heyer

erty...but maybe that can change.

That's what we are trying to do here, not just save a few lives or feed a couple hungry kids, we are trying to rewrite history and repave a culture of freedom, education and empowerment, and that all begins with the relationships we begin creating the moment we step off that little six-passenger plane. It is a lofty goal, but by putting the power in the hands of the Zambians we are trying to eliminate past cycles of reliance on foreign aid and the impersonal good will of others who live continents away. In a perfect world we would have no reason to come here at all other than to maintain the kinship that so many of us have built throughout the history of this trip and the entire program.

The power must be rerouted to the people who must believe that they hold the keys and fuel to their own liberation. One must believe that their situation can change before that change can become a reality. By pouring our true compassion and selves into each and every friendship, we are giving the people the love required for them to be masters of their fates and agents of a new reality through relationship and a little bit of education. They just need the confidence to know that they don't have to rely on white westerners to provide the money and food for their own daily survival.

In the leadership and sustainability seminar that I have been teaching these past few weeks to the people of Zambia, I am starting to understand that by simply listening, supporting, and affirming the thoughts and ideas of my students, it is empowering to them. I'm not sure how often the men, and the women especially, have the chance to express their unique perspectives and stories to people who actually care. It is definitely a new and exciting experience for them as so evident from the gratitude they show us at the end of each class. I don't want to be the savior white American coming to "help them," I just want to be there for them. I have realized that we are not here to pick up or carry the people of Zambezi, we are here simply to hold their hands.

This simple act of holding someone's hand represents so much -- on the surface it signifies maybe a friendship or new relationship, but the embrace represents a true commitment and exemplification of support, love, and partnership that we wish to share. It is the nonverbal equivalent to looking someone in the eyes and saying with all your heart, "I believe in you." That is why we are here. This isn't a missions trip, this isn't a community service trip; we aren't here because we pity these poor



people who need our help so badly. Sometimes the tangible results may be concealed by the transforming hearts of both ourselves and the Zambians alike, but as so perfectly stated in the book, *The Little Prince*, "But the eyes are blind. One must look with the heart."

In Zambezi, when you deal with the people, your heart more wisely guides you than your head. I often wonder what has led us all to this same point in our lives, as we soon depart from a place that many of us will still call home long after we have left. If we simply relied on logic, why would any of us be here on this trip? Why would we choose a month of freezing cold showers over hot ones back home? Why would we choose a month of beans and *nshema* over home-cooked meals and late night Taco Bell runs? Why would we choose to sleep on paper-thin twin mattresses over our soft and warm beds back home?

The answers to these questions are unique for every single one of us, and maybe some of these things we didn't explicitly choose, but we did all make the decision to have spent these last three plus weeks in a place that we knew would not provide the same amenities we are so used to having. Gordon, the hospital director we met in Chitokoloki, said that you can only live in one world at a time, USA or Africa - pick one, but I genuinely believe there is so much we can bring back home to incorporate into our own lives. Values of simplicity, compassion, solidarity, and endurance through adversity have been undoubtedly present on our voyage, and these same themes will hopefully follow us back to the city and life we call our home.

At this point, it seems like there is no way we can ignore the changes that have been made to our hearts and spirit, but as the saying goes, "It's easy to be holy on a mountaintop, it's the coming down where one experiences the real challenge." As difficult and painful parts of our time here in Zambezi may have been, the real test of our compassion and love is how we will be affected by this experience on a long term level. Will we be able to sustain the growth and transformation once we're back in the real world, or will we fall back into our old and comfortable habits and worldview? Will our commitment to accompaniment and kinship with all people carry into our daily lives back home? That is the real question and test of who we are and who we have become in a place that will be ingrained in our memories for the rest of our lives. Tomorrow we leave and there is no doubt we will be called to say our goodbyes to the endless faces of children and people in the community. They may say nothing and we may be at a loss for words, but every one of us will know and feel what their hearts are crying out ... hold my hand just one more time.

*"To the people of Zambezi, to all my friends and family back home, and to the wonderful people that shared in this amazing journey -- I love you all"*



Photos by Kurt Guenther





# AGANO

*By Julia Biemann and Jackie Dillon*

The percentage of Kenyans attending university is shockingly low. A student's ability to attend college in Kenya is determined by the outcome of a standardized test, KCSE [Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education], that is taken one time at the end of each student's high school career. As a result of this narrow opportunity and the poverty experienced by most of the students, only 3% of college-aged Kenyans are able to attend university. Although Kenya offers free tuition to the top tier of students, it is extremely difficult to be a part of this list, and can take up to two years to be placed. For women, the numbers in university are drastically lower. The few women who are accepted are faced with financial and personal hardships that hinder their chances of furthering their education, which in turn leads to a vast number of women suffering from unemployment.

In response to this growing issue, Agano with Kenya, an organization based out of Southern California, was created to work with young women in Kenya who had no hope of attending college. This young 501(c)3 non-profit organization has created a new model based on the concept of "paying it forward" to fund the dreams of the college aged women accepted into the program. At the beginning of the program, each student commits to a ten year agreement that includes university funding and career guidance to one of the twenty-one private universities in Kenya. In exchange, the applicants will do community service and a portion of their future income will go towards providing future funding for the next generation of Agano with Ke-



nya participants. The program is divided into three phases:

- 1) College tuition, room, board, and living expenses are covered for each participant. In return, the student commits to community service work during school holidays.
- 2) Upon graduation, each participant will spend one year in the United States interning for a company related to their field of study. In return for the year of labor, that company will donate to Agano with Kenya the equivalent of one year of tuition for a new student entering the program.
- 3) For the first five years of a paid career back in Kenya, the participants will donate 10% of their salary back to Agano with Kenya to help fund the next generation joining the program.

Agano with Kenya receives applications from young girls with ambition of success, but few resources. Winfred,

*"It always seems impossible until it's done."  
-Nelson Mandela*



Photo by Nikki Busch



a participant of the Agano with Kenya program who has just completed her first year at Strathmore University (a college ranked in the top ten universities on the continent of Africa), applied to the program so she could to afford university after excelling on her KCSE. In her application she wrote:

“I had various obstacles, such as lack of money to do my shopping because my mother did not have a job. I also remember various times our house had to be locked due to lack of money to pay house rent, so I moved to Fr. Henry’s (elementary boarding) school to live during high school holidays. My mother went up country. I worked very hard despite these problems and attained a mean grade of A- in my Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. I felt on top of the world, but my biggest worry now is how I will I join university as I cannot afford the fees and other requirements needed.”

In the past year, Winfred has participated in multiple community service projects, and is currently spending three months as a second grade teacher’s assistant in Athi River, Kenya. This success story is only one of many that Agano with Kenya has been fortunate enough to be a part

of.

Recently, The Agano with Kenya participants crocheted over fifty caps for cancer patients for Knots of Love, a charity based in Newport Beach California, and it has donated over 20,000 caps to people in chemotherapy in the US. The Agano participants have also spent time planting trees in Kenya to fight deforestation.

Agano with Kenya gives the young women of Kenya a chance at success. The participants are attending the top schools in Kenya, and majoring in law, information technology, medicine, actuarial science, economics, nursing and commerce. The hope is that the Agano with Kenya participants will lead Kenya through the 21st century, making up the members of Parliament, the board rooms of the top businesses, and the top positions of the health care structures of Kenya.

But, it won’t be because they were given anything. It will be because they partnered with an organization that believed in them, and demanded much from them. It will be because they had what it took to be leader- they just needed a little help to take the first step.



Photo by Jene Meece



Photo by Kayla Heyer



Photo by Nikki Busch



Photo by Jene Meece



Photo by Susan Norwood



Photo by Jene Meece



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Here is a list of resources, international and local, that will help you take the next step in your journey towards making the world a more just place.

## International

### **Clean Clothes Campaign**

[www.cleanclothes.org](http://www.cleanclothes.org)

Improving working conditions in the global garment industry.

### **Friends of the Earth**

[www.foe.org](http://www.foe.org)

Friends of the Earth strives for a more healthy and just world. We understand that the challenges facing our planet call for more than half measures, so we push for the reforms that are needed, not merely the ones that are politically easy.

### **Greenpeace International**

[www.greenpeace.org/international/en](http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en)

Greenpeace exists because this fragile earth deserves a voice. It needs solutions. It needs change. It needs action.

### **MADRE**

[www.madre.org](http://www.madre.org)

We advance women's human rights by meeting urgent needs in communities and building lasting solutions to crisis

### **One World International**

[www.uk.oneworld.net](http://www.uk.oneworld.net)

We pioneer internet and mobile phone applications that the world's poorest people can use to improve their life chances, and that help people everywhere understand global problems - and do something about them.

### **Rainforest Action Network**

[www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)

Rainforest Action Network campaigns for the forests, their inhabitants and the natural systems that sustain life by transforming the global marketplace through education, grassroots organizing and non-violent direct action.

## Local

### **Campaign for Labor Right**

[www.clrlabor.org](http://www.clrlabor.org)

Grassroots mobilizing department of the U.S. anti-sweatshop movement.

### **Social Justice Fund Northwest**

[www.socialjusticefund.org](http://www.socialjusticefund.org)

When it comes to community organizing, it doesn't get much more grassroots than Got Green.

### **Jesuit Volunteer Corps**

[www.jesuitvolunteers.org](http://www.jesuitvolunteers.org)

The Jesuit Volunteer Corps offers women and men an opportunity to work full-time for justice and peace.

### **Feeding America**

[www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)

Our mission is to feed America's hungry through a nationwide network of member food banks and engage our country in the fight to end hunger.

### **Student Conservation Association**

[www.thesca.org](http://www.thesca.org)

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) is America's conservation corps. Our members protect and restore national parks, marine sanctuaries, cultural landmarks and community green spaces in all 50 states.

### **Teach For America**

[www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org)

Teach For America is growing the movement of leaders who work to ensure that kids growing up in poverty get an excellent education.

### **Catholic Charities**

[www.catholiccharitiesusa.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org)

Catholic Charities works with individuals, families and communities to help them meet their needs, address their issues, eliminate oppression, and build a just and compassionate society.



Photo by John Macdonald



Photo by John Macdonald



Photo by N. Affonso-McMorrow



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