



RPECNEWS

The newsletter of the Richmond Peace Education Center

July-August 2005

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Profiles in Peacemaking

An Introduction

Ruth Anne Young

I have heard people say, "But does nonviolence really work?" Here at the Richmond Peace Education Center, we do believe it works. As part of fulfilling our mission to promote nonviolence, we will begin offering a series of articles that provide insight into the hows and whys of successful nonviolent campaigns – the philosophies and strategies that do indeed work.

These articles are called "*Profiles in Peacemaking*". Each issue of RPECNEWS, beginning with this one, will feature two articles. The first article will highlight a person or group who achieved great success using nonviolence to address a political/social justice issue. This profile will focus on the philosophy and strategies used to achieve success. We start in this issue with Jane Rosecrans' reflections on one of the founders of the modern nonviolence movement, Mohandas Gandhi. It can be found on page 6.

The second article will be a follow-up article looking at a current political/social justice issue through the lens of the first profile. In this issue of RPECNEWS, we look at the experience of one small African village seeking economic justice from a large oil company. This can be found on page 7.

I remember seeing a quote from Gandhi. It went something like this, "As great as the advancement in technology has been, I believe that even greater advancements in nonviolence are to come." He considered his work with nonviolence to be experiments upon which others can build, in much the same way as new technologies build upon old. Indeed, people have continued to creatively experiment and build upon Gandhi's work. We hope, through these articles, to bring you news of some of these experiments, to foster continued creative thinking about dealing with conflict, and to inspire you with examples of faithful courage in the face of injustice.

If you have a particular person or group you would like to see profiled in this series, please contact John Gallini at: gallinjb@aol.com.

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Reflections from the Board Chair

Wendy Northup
July, 2005

Well, it's been quite a two months! As you all know by now, Ken Willis resigned effective the end of June and we've been busy trying to keep things going since then. As a Center we all owe Ken a debt of gratitude. He came as executive director at a difficult time for the Peace Center: we had had a number of directors in fairly rapid succession and things seemed pretty unstable. Ken arrived and really gave us some grounding and served diligently for the next six years, bringing us to our 25th anniversary.

I wonder how many of you are aware of what a milestone that is. We have had our ups and downs over the past 25 years, but we have always maintained enough support to maintain a full time staff, and that means a continuity of programs. Continuous work is required to keep the issues of peace and justice alive in the Central Virginia region.

As you all know, there are many other groups in Richmond working on various peace and justice issues; some are denominational, trying to make their faith live through their involvement in the community; others are coalitions of people who have banded together around specific issues of deep concern to them. The one thing that RPEC can offer to these groups is a central place to get the word out about what everyone is doing in the region. We all know we are more effective when we speak with a single voice. For the past 25 years, the Peace Center has been trying to offer a vehicle for people to speak with a single voice.

So as we approach the fall, we are once again planning for our Annual Dinner. This year we will be giving the Peacemaker of the Year award to Senator Bobby Scott, who has served for many years and has often been the lone voice crying in the desert. You recently received a fundraising letter from us, and I hope you have all responded as generously as you can, so we can welcome a new director with stability and a show of strong support. We are offering programs this summer at the Berryman Center. We will be working hard in the fall to develop a new conflict resolution team to spread our message throughout the region. And we will be looking for volunteers to help with other programming.

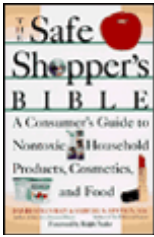
So this is an exciting time for us. It's not just the new logo and a new look for the newsletter, but a chance to once again create ourselves as the voice for peace in Richmond and throughout Central Virginia. So, thanks to all of you for your support and your continued membership in this important organization.

Consumers Corner Infant Care and Clothing

John Gallini

Are We Bringing Up Baby in a Haze of Hidden Infant-Care Product Carcinogens? (from Seventh Generation's *Non-Toxic Times*, May, 2005)

According to the Organic Consumers Association and the Cancer Prevention Coalition, we may be doing just that, and the reasons may surprise you. The hazards these organizations recently highlighted aren't listed on product labels, and you won't find them in ingredients listings because they're not supposed to be there. Instead, they're sneaking into baby products on the backs of legitimate ingredients or being created when those ingredients break down.



The article then identifies ingredients such as preservatives, wetting agents, detergents and fragrances, along with the associated carcinogens. Their general conclusions make lots of sense.

In general, when it comes to baby care products, less is more. Make the decision to use as few products as possible on your child's hair and skin. Aside from a little gentle natural soap, they don't need much in the way of toiletries! For those categories of products you do choose to purchase, select products with a minimum of ingredients and buy those that use only naturally-based ingredients. Be aware, however, that some natural ingredients, like lanolin and talc, can cause problems, too. So make sure to inspect natural products with a critical eye as well.

For more information about the hazards in personal care products, visit <http://www.preventcancer.com/consumers/>.

On Eco-conscious Fashion – from Umbra Fisk (Grist Magazine, 6/20/05)

Umbra writes about online sources of organic- or sustainable-fabric clothes that are guaranteed sweatshop-free, with the proviso that there are many she has not mentioned. I am finding that I do most of my limited shopping for clothes online (the most recent being a pair of Birkenstock shoes). So here are some suggested websites.

First visit www.treehugger.com This "green lifestyle" site enlightens about all manner of current and future innovations, without trying to sell you anything. You will find its clothing section particularly useful, whether you're after underwear made from seaweed or the latest news in shoes.

Now, on to those making the wares. Patagonia (www.patagonia.com) has been a leader in developing low-impact clothing. The company has a sizable organic cotton and fleece made from recycled soda bottles. It's also a founding member of the growing Fair Labor Association.

Another conscientious couturier is American Apparel (www.AmericanApparel.net) which manufactures a line of hip (mayhap too hip?) cotton clothing in downtown Los Angeles. AA's mission is to develop sweatshop-free garments, made in the United States, with a business model focused on fair wages and well-treated employees. It has a small line of organic cotton clothing-- also hip, but only in white thus far.

As conscientious clothing companies go, Patagonia and AA are sizable. Smaller designers and manufacturers around the world also use ecological and socially responsible techniques and materials, and this is where the web yet again proves its usefulness. Made-By (www.made-by.org) is one company mentioned by Umbra. I have purchased items from Maggie's Organics (www.organicclothes.com), Union Jean and Apparel (www.unionjeancompany.com) and Birkenstock (www.birkenstock.com) - and there is now a Birkenstock distributor in Richmond, out Broad St. past Short Pump. They do not yet have men's shoes in stock, but will order them for you.

I am always happy to receive suggestions of sources for ecologically sensitive shops and web sites to pass on to RPEC readers. Send me a note at gallinjb@aol.com.

Happenings at

Conflict Resolution Trainings for Children & Youth Held

RPEC recently provided 15 hours of creative conflict resolution training to approximately 45 children and youths. These trainings were held for 1 1/2 hours one evening a week for ten weeks. One was at the Boys & Girls Club in Fairfield Court on Wednesday evenings and the other was at Charity Family Life near Creighton Court on Tuesday evenings. The participants in the program ranged in age from 10 – 16. According to facilitator Sherletta Highsmith, the kids really responded to the interactive sessions, including the opportunity to create their own raps and later showcase them. Another high point was the creation of affirmation tee-shirts created by the participants. One unique aspect of this particular group was that it included several sibling groups, providing the opportunity to examine family conflicts from the various perspectives of the different family members.

RPEC Participates in Summer Camp at Berryman Center

RPEC will provide several hours of creative conflict resolution programming for the participants of the New Hope Community Summer Arts Camp being held at the Berryman Center. The RPEC program will take place on three Wednesday afternoons during the month of July.

Children and youths will explore the four key areas of creative conflict resolution: Affirmation, Communication, Cooperation, and Problem Solving. They will participate in interactive sessions involving skits, plays, games, and other fun activities designed to teach the participants new ways to address conflict.

Annual Auction – Save the Date – November 11

Plans for this year's auction are well underway. We have a date, November 11, and a place – St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Jim Bennett and his quartet will be back to entertain. Be sure to see the announcement in this newsletter about the Peacemaker of the Year award. This will be given at the Auction. We are in the process of gathering items for the auction, so if you have some ideas, contact Johnnie Taylor at the office (232-1002).

Website Update –rpec.org

The RPEC Website is getting a new look. Thanks to ALR Design for creating the basic design and Ron Peterson of Proweb Technology for working on putting it up on the web! You should be able to see this new look soon. We've also recently added a new section called "Getting Involved" and updated the "About RPEC" section. We're still working on revising our issues, links, and calendar sections. We hope to have those finished this fall.



Bulk Mailing Volunteers Needed

Our industrious office manager, Johnnie Taylor, is looking for help with bulk mailings. This is an easy opportunity to volunteer with the Center and have some fun socializing with other RPEC volunteers and with staff. If you have some time to spare, give Johnnie a call at the office (232-1002) to let her know you can help – she'll really appreciate it!

Help Us Document our Programs

We're looking for some specific in-kind donations to help us document our programs and use in our programs. If you have any of these items around your house or office, and they are not being used, please consider donating them to RPEC. You get a tax deduction, and we can improve on our work. It's a real Win-Win for everyone. Thanks!

Needed items:

- Digital camera to document our programs
- Video camera to document our programs
- Video and DVD player for use in trainings and with resources from our lending library

the Center

Peace Salons

The RPEC Membership Committee is seeking to begin a series of Peace Salons. These are small, informal social gatherings of members and friends. While enjoying food and fellowship, a question, such as “how are you working on peace-making in your life” will be given to the group for discussion. A different question can be explored at each gathering. These informal sessions offer us the opportunity to support one another in our efforts, to remind us that we are not alone, and to strengthen our bonds of community. If you are interested in participating in or hosting a Peace Salon, please contact RPEC Membership Committee Chair, Mim Scalin at 353-0217.

Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign

Are you an employee of the State of Virginia? If so, you have a terrific opportunity to help the Peace Center. The Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign will be held from October 1 – November 30. RPEC has been approved as a participating charity in this program. If you designate RPEC as the recipient of your pledge, RPEC will receive 100% of your donation. In addition, we will receive an extra donation of approximately 8% due to “matching,” or undesignated dollars. Look for this opportunity at your workplace in the coming months!

Peace Essay Contest

RPEC plans to sponsor a peace essay contest for school children this fall. Details have not yet been finalized. Volunteers are needed to help with this project. If you would like to work on this, please contact Christopher Patterson at slough@waste.org

New Director Search

The search for a new executive director is underway. Deadline for application is July 31. Once applications have been received, the search committee will review them and begin scheduling interviews. We hope to have a new executive director by the fall. Be sure to read Wendy’s “Message from the Board Chair” comments for more details.



Membership Committee looking for more members

The Membership Committee is looking for new members. If you like going to special events, meeting new people, and talking with others about your commitment to peace-making, this could be the committee for you. Membership Committee members get to go a variety of community events, and they put a human face on RPEC as they talk to others about our work. If you would like to join this committee, contact Mim Scalin at 353-0217.



Programs Committee looking for more members

The Programs Committee is looking for new members. This committee plans and organizes unique events and educational programming for the community around local, national and international peace and justice issues.

Examples of programs this committee is responsible for include:

- Conflict resolution trainings
- Public forums on timely issues of peace, nonviolence and justice
- The Richmond Youth Peace Project – a collaborative effort with Drums No Guns to organize youth to develop innovative approaches to reducing youth violence
- Vigils to mark the anniversary of significant historical events such as the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki or the invasion of US troops in Iraq

The Programs Committee plans the largest number of RPEC events and activities.

If you want to have a say in what programs RPEC plans and be involved in making them happen, contact Christopher Patterson at slough@waste.org

Profiles in Peacemaking

Mohandas Gandhi's *Satyagraha* or "Spirit Force"

Jane E. Rosecrans

In 1894, Mohandas Gandhi read Leo Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Although Gandhi had read and was influenced by many thinkers and writers (including Henry David Thoreau, John Ruskin, and Rabindranath Tagore), Tolstoy "overwhelmed" him. He later wrote that "before the... profound morality and the truthfulness of this book, all the books... seemed to pale into insignificance." Tolstoy's argument for "non-resistance," a form of pacifism was based on Matthew 5:38-39: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." The ideas of nonviolence and "resist not evil" found in the Christian Gospels had been formulated by American abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison and Adin Ballou. Tolstoy corresponded with Ballou and incorporated several of Ballou's works on non-resistance into *The Kingdom of God is Within You*.

Gandhi was moved by the essentially religious nature of "non-resistance," but he sought a more forceful nonviolent resistance to injustice. As a result, Gandhi developed a philosophy he named *satyagraha*, combining the Hindu word for "truth" (*satya*) with the Hindu word for "holding firmly" (*graha*). Gandhi translated *satyagraha* as "soul force" or "truth force." As a practice, *satyagraha* meant to organize in an effort to nonviolently resist injustice. According to Gandhi, "*satyagraha* is gentle, it never wounds. It must not be the result of anger or malice. It is a breach of *satyagraha* to wish ill to an opponent or to say a harsh word to him or of him with the intention of doing harm." This gentle nonviolence was nevertheless forceful. The process was simple: Declare your opposition to an unjust law. Break that law. Suffer the consequences.

Satyagraha is essentially a spiritual practice. In *The Way to God*, Gandhi describes what he calls the religion of *ahimsa* (nonviolence). "I am not a visionary," Gandhi wrote. "I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of nonviolence is not meant merely for rishis and saints. It is meant for the common people as well." Later, Gandhi declares, "Man as animal is violent, but as a spirit is nonviolent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses toward *ahimsa*, or rushes toward his doom."

After Gandhi returned home to India from South Africa just as World War I was breaking out, he again emphasized the internal, spiritual nature of nonviolence: "We may petition the government, we may agitate for our rights, but for a real awakening of the people, the more important thing is activities directed inward." This spiritual grounding became Gandhi's legacy as he appealed for unity among Hindus and Muslims, decried religious intolerance, and sought justice for women, the untouchables, and the poor.

Gandhi's first act of *satyagraha* was an act of personal protest – he refused to leave the Bihar province where he had gone in 1917 to investigate whether planters were exploiting peasant laborers. In 1920, he planned a limited campaign by trained activists to disobey the law combined with fasting and prayer. But following rumors that Gandhi had been arrested, violence erupted. After a period of "noncooperation," during which lawyers would boycott and civil servants would quit their jobs, riots erupted. In response, Gandhi declared, "If I can have nothing to do with the organized violence of the government, I can have less to do with the unorganized violence of the people."

Then, in 1930 Gandhi encouraged Indians to make their own salt, and to refuse to pay the salt tax, followed by a "salt march." This process of marching and illegally making salt lasted months and grew to include other acts of civil disobedience, including activists laying down in front of trucks loaded with foreign goods and boycotts of cloth. Civil disobedience erupted in almost every province of India in 1930. Eventually civil disobedience was suspended as Gandhi continued to work to liberate untouchables and women, and to promote village industries and education reform. It wasn't until 1947 that India finally gained its independence from British rule, but the path to self-rule was inspired by the nonviolent movement of *satyagraha* that is the cornerstone of Gandhi's legacy.

The Power of 150 Peaceful Women

Jane E. Rosecrans

In Africa, gangs of young men have threatened oil executives with kidnapping and sabotage. But in July of 2002, 150 women peacefully seized control of a ChevronTexaco Oil terminal in Escravos, Nigeria. "Escravos" is the Portuguese word for "slaves" in a part of Nigeria -- the Niger Delta -- that is among the poorest places in West Africa.

The protesting women, who were armed with placards and green leaves, sang solidarity songs to protest against years of plunder of their natural environment by European and US oil companies. They held over 1000 western oil workers hostage and shut down a facility that exports half a million barrels of oil a day, threatening to remove their clothes—a gesture that many Nigerian tribes consider an act that shames all those it is aimed at. The protest of women aged 30 to 90 stunned the oil company into negotiating with them. "*Our weapon is our nakedness,*" Helen Odeworitse, one of the leaders told reporters.



Nigerian women sing and dance in victory in the main dockyard in Escravos, Nigeria, on Monday.

The women's desperation reflects their effort to escape grinding poverty. While Chevron employees – including Americans, Britons and Canadians -- enjoy comfortable homes, nearby villagers subsist in tin-roofed shacks without running water or electricity. Villagers accuse oil companies and the Nigerian government of neglecting them despite the huge oil wealth pumped from their land. They also accuse the oil firms of degrading their environments and destroying economic activities, mainly from fish farming and peasant agricultural activities, through oil spillage and pollution.

These women are not seasoned activists like those who protested the G-8 summit in Edinburg, Scotland, but local women who believe the company that is enriching itself on their land should share that wealth with their community. The women demanded the oil company employ 25 of their sons; install electricity and water systems in their communities; build schools, clinics and town halls; and help them build fish and chicken farms so that they can sell food to the corporation's cafeteria.

Following the negotiated settlement between the women and Chevron executives, the women celebrated by singing and dancing, many of them with babies bound to their backs. Without violence, or even the threat of violence, 150 impoverished women were able to negotiate demands to improve their community. Their protest also inspired other women to seize four other oil facilities in the region. One month later, in Lagos, Nigeria, hundreds of Nigerian women left ChevronTexaco pumping stations in canoes and on foot after ending a siege to demand more jobs, business loans, schools and hospitals for their communities. "History has been made," said Esther Tolar, a spokeswoman for the pumping station protesters. "*Our culture is a patriarchal society. For women to come out like this and achieve what we have is out of the ordinary.*"

These women truly exemplified Gandhi's example of satyagraha. They found their own creative way to speak truth to power with love.

For Further Reading and Viewing:

Ackerman, Peter and Jack Duvall. *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict*. NY: Palgrave, 2000.

Chernus, Ira. *American Nonviolence: The History of an Idea*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. *Non-Violent Resistance*. NY: Dover Publications, 2001.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. *The Way to God*. Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Hills Books, 1999.

Gandhi. Dir. Richard Attenborough. Perf. Ben Kingsley, John Gielgud, Candice Bergen. 1982. Columbia Tri-Star Pictures. DVD. 2001.



CodePink IN PRINT

From Utne magazine, July-August 2005
(www.utne.com)

Nina Utne

In November 2002, I joined a group of women at the start of a four-month vigil outside the White House. We called ourselves CodePink as a spoof on George Bush's color-coded security system, as a play on the alarm sounded when a child is abducted from a hospital (drawing an analogy to the theft of our children's futures) and as a playful way of celebrating the feminine nurturing of life. We couldn't prevent the war in Iraq, but CodePink has touched many lives, with our 100 chapters in this country, others overseas, and a lot of media attention.

CodePink has taken groups to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran. (Marla Ruzicka, who was killed by a car bomb in Iraq in April, committed herself to bringing attention to the war's civilian casualties after a CodePink trip.)

Now CodePink is publishing a book, "Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism" (Inner Ocean, 2005), edited by CodePink co-founders Jodie Evans and Medea Benjamin (www.codepinkalert.org). More than 70 contributors (I'm honored to be among them) offer their prescriptions for peace. I can guarantee you that opening it to almost any page will deepen your commitment to peacemaking.

Bobby Scott to Receive RPEC Peacemaker Award

Paul Fleisher

The RPEC Awards Committee has selected Congressman Bobby Scott as this year's "Peacemaker of the Year". The award will be presented at the RPEC annual auction on November 11.



Scott was born in 1947. He is a graduate of Harvard College and Boston College Law School. After graduation, he practiced law in Newport News from 1973 to 1991. Scott was first elected to Congress from Virginia's Third Congressional district in 1992 after serving in both the Virginia House of Delegates (1978-1983) and the Virginia Senate (1983-1993). Scott is the first African-American to be elected to Congress from Virginia since Reconstruction. His congressional district extends from Richmond to the Virginia tide-water area. Scott has always been an outspoken advocate for justice, with racial profiling and equal voting rights among his central issues of concern. He is also a longtime advocate for public education and fair

treatment for correctional inmates. During the rush to invade Iraq, Scott was a loud, clear voice of reason leading resistance to the Bush administration's call to war. You can read his speech to the House as it considered authorizing the use of armed force against Iraq, and his 2003 remarks on the bill adding \$166 billion of funding to the war appropriations at: <http://www.house.gov/scott/press/floor.remarks.iraq.supplemental.htm>.

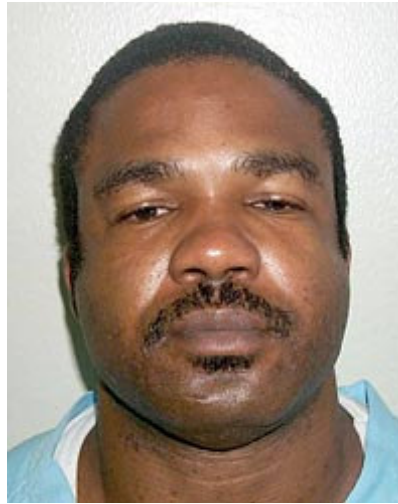
Scott's stand against the war came with significant personal risk. Opposing the war put him at odds with the Bush administration and many of his Congressional colleagues. Because Scott represents a district with many Defense Department employees, it also put his own congressional career in danger. Congressman Scott has always been available and responsive to his constituents. He has repeatedly taken the concerns of the people he represents before the House. He has demonstrated in his words and his votes that he understands the connections between peace in the international arena and justice in our daily lives. The Richmond Peace Education Center's Peacemaker of the Year award is a fitting tribute to Congressman Scott's long career as an advocate for justice and peace.

Death Penalty Update: US Supreme Court Stays Virginia Execution

Jack Peyden-Travers

On July 11, a unanimous US Supreme Court issued a stay of execution in the case of Robin Lovitt. Less than 5 hours before his scheduled death by lethal injection, Lovitt was spared when the court agreed to consider his appeal. By the time word reached the news media a number of those planning to attend the Fill-the-Field vigil outside the gates of the Greensville Correctional Center were already traveling to Jarratt. Cars from West Virginia and North Carolina joyfully turned around.

Several of the planned death watch vigils in northern Virginia were turned into gatherings of thanksgiving. When the Supreme Court reconvenes in October of this year, a decision will be made to either accept the case or deny the appeal. Given the turmoil over Justice O'Connor's replacement and the continuing questions surrounding Chief Justice Rehnquist's health, no one is second-guessing what the court will do in this case. We hope that a hearing of the appeal of the Fourth Circuit's decision of April 2005 rejecting the claims of defense attorneys regarding the destruction of evidence, etc will be approved. Should that be the case, Virginia might get through 2005



Robin Lovitt

without an execution. The only other year the Commonwealth has not held an execution since the resumption of state killing in 1982 was 1983. 94 executions over the past 23 years is more than enough!

On July 25th, Daryl Atkins, the Virginia inmate whose death penalty case *Atkins v Virginia* ended the execution of the mentally retarded in the United States will be back in York County Circuit Court. The state of Virginia is attempting to prove that a miracle of sorts has occurred at the Death Row at Sussex I State Prison. The prosecution will be arguing that Daryl Atkins is no longer mentally retarded! Unfortunately, no national statistics have

yet to be compiled on how many individuals have been spared execution due to being mentally retarded since the 2002 *Atkins* decision, but it is estimated to be at least 50. It is believed that 10% of the 3,700 inmates on death row in the U.S. suffer from mental retardation. Unfortunately, Virginia is not alone in still attempting to execute the mentally retarded. Most claims of mental retardation appear to be hotly contested. In York County a total of 100 witnesses are expected to testify before a jury which will decide the question of whether or not Daryl Atkins is still mentally retarded.

VADP is looking for volunteers who would be willing to undertake the production of a monthly radio show on the death penalty on Indymedia which broadcasts as a low frequency FM station in the Richmond area. This would be a project of the VADP-Richmond chapter. Please call Chris Lucas at 804-347-3730 or Jack Payden-Travers at the VADP office at 888-567-VADP if you are interested in being part of this new outreach activity. We also invite readers to check Richmond Indymedia for articles that we hope to publish on that website on a regular basis. See <http://richmond.indymedia.org/>.



Virginians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
P. O. Box 4804 Charlottesville, VA 22905

Phone (434) 960-7779 or (888) 567-8237

mail@vadp.org

Working to create an Anti-racist Community

Cathy Woodson

Virginia is a state with many people of different ancestries. Acknowledging and celebrating our differences is a step that can interrupt the system of racism. A definition of racism is: ***a system of advantage and disadvantage based on race. Race is a political construct that was created to keep power and control over people who were not classified as white.***

Talking with people who are different from ourselves provide an opportunity to identify our stereotypes and assumptions about different peoples and gain a better understanding of their culture. It can also build relationships and allies to address social justice issues in the community.

Virginia Organizing Project provides a check list of things individuals can do to combat racism as individuals in the community. Each item can help us work toward a non-racist society.

Some of the listed suggestions are:

- o *Learn to confront a racist remark.*
- o *Talk to young people about racial justice.*
- o *Inventory your books, videos, music and pictures on your walls; are people of color represented in positive ways?*
- o *Make a commitment not to tell ethnic or racial jokes that are demeaning.*
- o *Celebrate holidays of other ethnic and racial groups.*
- o *Subscribe to a publication that deals with race issues.*
- o *Patronize businesses owned and operated by people of color.*
- o *Read three books on race issues over the next three months.*
- o *Give a friend a copy of a book on race issues that you found helpful.*
- o *Let people know that you are not interested in hearing demeaning ethnic or racial jokes.*

It is important to talk about racism at home, at school, in our faith communities and in our social and community organizations. The process of interrupting the system of racism is not easy, it takes a willingness to learn the history and be watchful of opportunities to use our influence to make change happen. Dialogue with people of different ethnicities, races, economic and educational background is a beginning.

Suggested books:

- Barndt, Joseph. *Dismantling Racism: The Continuing Challenge to White America.* Augsburg Fortress, 1991.
- Higginbotham, A. Leon. *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process, the Colonial Period.* Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Parent, Anthony S., Jr. *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740.* University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Thompson, Cooper, Emmett Schaefer and Harry Brod. *White Men Challenging Racism.* Duke University Press, 2003.

CALENDAR

Meetings of Local Groups

Every Sunday	Food Not Bombs Richmond-Meal Sharing , 4:00 P.M. in Monroe Park. Hotline # 359-4880 for details
Every 3rd Wed.	Amnesty International , University of Richmond campus. Contact Ray Hilliard at 289-8289
Every 3rd Friday	Sufi Dancing: Dances of Universal Peace , 7:30-9:30 PM except Oct. Round House, Byrd Park. 353-4901
Every Thursday	Richmond Organization for Sexual Minority Youth (ROSMY) , 7:00-9:00 PM. Call support line: 353-2077 for more information; 353-1699 for the administrative line.
Every 3rd Saturday	Equality Virginia , 12:00 noon at the office. A political advocacy group working towards equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens of Virginia. Open to the public. Contact number is 643-4816.
Every 4th Saturday	Pax Christi Peace Community - Call Paula Powdermaker for details - 355-7395
Every 3rd Sunday	The Richmond, Virginia Buddhist Peace Fellowship - holds a meditation vigil for peace in Monroe Park at 1:00 PM.
Every 2nd Saturday	Walk for Peace - 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM. Meet at the Boulevard entrance of the Virginia Museum. Wear black.
Every Friday	Protest the War on Iraq - Noon til 1:00 PM at 10th and Main Streets.
Every 3rd Thursday	Richmond Chapter VADP - 7:00 PM at St. Marks Episcopal Church.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 12-14 Dismantling Racism workshop sponsored by Virginia Organizing Project, at Richmond Hill. For more information, contact Cathy Woodson at 261-7497 or e-mail: cwood329@aol.com



ACTION ALERT * UNITED FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

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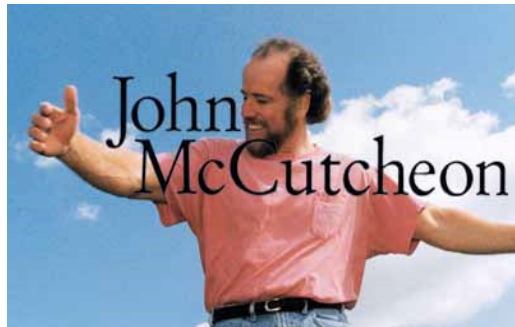
September 15

RPEC Web Page:
<http://www.rpec.org>

John McCutcheon Provides Another Delightful Evening

John Gallini

John McCutcheon has been singing and playing his songs of protest and inspiration at benefit concerts for RPEC for over 15 years. I think I have been to every one of his concerts here. Amazingly, his music always brings fresh humor and insights, along with some nostalgia. This year, in observing the response of our national leaders to the Iraq war and the scandals at Abu Ghraib prison, John observed that **“the buck stops miles from here!”** Then moments later he was reflecting on the value of old-time barber shops. And, as he always does, he offered a “medley of his favorite hit”,



May-Lily Lee

Christmas in the Trenches, which encapsulates RPEC’s feelings about war so well.

May-Lily Lee opened the evening with her own approach to folk songs. For those of us used to seeing her as host of *Virginia Currents*, it was great to hear her lovely voice and thoughtful compositions. It was especially nice that her father was able to enjoy the concert.

Financially, the concert brought in nearly \$2,000 – a much needed boost as we start the summer season. Thanks to John and May-Lily and all of you who attended.



**Richmond Peace
Education Center**

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