

RPECnews

The newsletter of the Richmond Peace Education Center

July-August 2014

City Sharpens Its Attack on Poverty

In April, University of Richmond professor Thad Williamson took a leave of absence from the university to accept Mayor Dwight Jones's appointment as director of Richmond's new Office of Community Wealth Building. RPECnews's Grant Rissler sat down with Williamson to gain insight on what's ahead and how RPEC members can be involved in the anti-poverty effort.

Rissler: What are the major priorities for the first year of the Maggie Walker Initiative?

Williamson: It's a multi-faceted poverty reduction strategy. It's not just providing more services or programs. It's really getting serious about what it takes to move a family from an insecure situation to a stable economic situation. That involves having skills and a career plan, but also stable transportation, healthcare, and housing.

The first priority is to simply make sure the money gets used by the different agencies for what it's intended



Dr. Thad Williamson

for. But in terms of the substance, we've prioritized work-force development and the ability to connect and train folks for sustainable, living-wage jobs. Then at the same time, you have to provide the needed support services to maximize success.

The city has a work-force program – relatively new, but it has fairly impressive results. So we're bolstering

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RPEC Annual Auction Promises Contests for Choice Items

By Rob Gabriele

“This Wintergreen luxury house allowed our group to enjoy easy living in the mountains. We used the spa. We played tennis and took lessons. We took a hike and

relaxed in the sauna. We joked about keeping it secret so we wouldn't have competition in bidding the next year. Actually we did purchase it for a second year. Now the secret is out. . .bring your credit cards. . .and we will be your competition!”

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A week at a beach house just north of Sandbridge will be up for bid in the RPEC auction.

RPECnews

is a publication of the
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RPECnews is published 6 times per year and has a circulation of approximately 1,800. We welcome article and calendar submissions.

Reflection

Adria Scharf
RPEC Executive Director

A New Day for Virginia?

Gov. Terry McAuliffe recently uttered words rarely spoken by elected leaders in the Commonwealth of Virginia. He declared that Virginia needs to wean itself from federal defense dollars. "The economy of the past, where we could simply take the economic benefits of federal government activities in our state, is over," McAuliffe told the Governor's Advisory Council on Revenue Estimates last week.

Is it a new day for the Commonwealth?

Virginia, home of the Pentagon, the Norfolk naval base, and a bevy of defense contractors, is more dependent on military spending than any other state in the country. More than 13 percent of Virginia's gross domestic product is derived from defense spending. Only Alaska and Hawaii are close in terms of their dependence.

Cutting military spending is right for the country. It's necessary. Of all the money that the president requests and Congress appropriates every year (the federal "discretionary budget") more than half goes to war and defense-related expenditures. (By comparison, education gets just six percent of federal dollars, and housing and community get about five percent.) Congress actually allotted more money to the war in Afghanistan last year than it gave to the Department of Education.

Our children and our country urgently need a change in priorities.

My hope is that the Governor's recent comment signaled the beginning of a new conversation. War has been good to Virginia. We need to make peace even better.

We at RPEC have watched with heavy hearts the horrific destruction in Gaza. We grieve the more than 1,800 people in Gaza who have been killed (many of whom are civilians). We also grieve the 67 Israelis who have been killed. RPEC opposes all attacks on civilians and supports equal human rights and security for all. We lift up our deepest wish for safety and healing for all the families who have suffered grievous losses and trauma in recent weeks.

Let's commit to working for a just resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. . .and a future of peace and security for all.

— Adria Scharf, Director

RPEC happenings

RPEC Auction

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So say the previous winners of the ever-popular Wintergreen House at the RPEC Auction. It will be back at this year's auction along with hundreds of other prizes including vacations, expeditions, services, delectibles, and potential Christmas gifts.

Mark your calendars for November 8th. RPEC's 2014 auction is already well underway. The prizes are coming in and it promises to be bigger and better than ever. Last year we sold out and had a waiting list so buy your tickets early. Tickets are available now at <http://www.rpec.org/2014-dinner-auction> or by calling 804-232-1002. Taking place once again this year at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Downtown Richmond, the auction will feature a silent auction combined with social hour during which you can see old friends, meet new friends, and bid for cool stuff while enjoying cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. And as usual, following the silent auction, we'll have dinner and the live auction.

The auction is RPEC's biggest fundraiser of the year, bringing in almost 20 percent of our annual budget. And that, of course, is the real reason for coming. Your support in making the auction a success ensures that RPEC can continue to offer alternatives to violence in our schools, our neighborhoods, our city, our world, and our hearts and souls.

Tickets this year are priced at \$45 each or a table of 8 for \$360. This includes hor d'oeuvres, two cocktails, and dinner – the best bargain in town!

Besides the Wintergreen House, here is a small sample of what else will be on offer to committed bidders:

A week at a beach house in Ocean Side, Va. (just north of Sand-

bridge) This is a four-bedroom house with a screened porch and open deck.

Retreat to the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. Three nights in a carriage house apartment near Woodstock, Va. in a country setting close to hiking, caverns, vineyards, wine tastings, country driving, and historical sights.

A segway tour of Richmond. Experience Richmond from a whole new perspective tooling around the city on these two wheelers.

Coffee and conversation with well-known Richmonders Michael Paul Williams, prize-winning columnist for the Richmond Times-Dispatch; Claire Guthrie Gastanaga, head of the Virginia ACLU and leader in the fight for marriage equality in Virginia; Rev. Ben

Campbell, founder and director of Richmond Hill, prophetic witness for racial and social justice and healing of our city, and Ed Peeples, whose recently published memoir, *Scalawag*, tells the story of “a white southerner’s journey through segregation to human rights activism.”

Home improvement services including painting, carpentry, gardening and more.

The ever-popular dinners — a veritable world culinary tour.

Gift certificates galore including Sub Rosa Bakery, Chop Suey Books, and many more. Do one-stop Christmas shopping at the auction.

Our auction team is still accepting donations of getaways, gifts, services and other prizes. Please contact us at rpec@rpec.org or 232-1002 to make a tax-deductible contribution.

RPEC CR Trainers Keep Busy Over The Summer

RPEC is in the middle of a busy summer of conflict resolution programming. Our youth program leaders are co-leading teen-led conflict resolution workshops with children at five sites: Northside Family YMCA, William Byrd Community House, Peter Paul Development Center, Camp Diva, and Youth Ministry Entertainment Camp. In these workshops, our teen leaders teach younger

children and other teens healthy, non-violent, ways to resolve and manage conflict.

RPEC's adult trainers are just as busy, gearing up to lead a training on de-escalation with Richmond Public Schools new teachers – our sixth consecutive year of leading the training with RPS staff. In addition, RPEC trainers led workshops with visiting Iraqi students at VCU.

Thanks To All Who Heard John McCutcheon

Thanks to all of you who joined us in June for our concert with John McCutcheon! The audience numbered 270, which provided almost \$5,000 of support for RPEC.

In addition to singing original songs interwoven with stories, John shared personal memories about his

friend Pete Seeger, and the audience joined in singing songs by the late great folksinger and activist. We thank all who came, all who took out ads in the concert program booklet, and express special thanks to La-Difference and Ice Cream Connection for their support of the event.

Attack on Poverty

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that. We're adding targeted support services aimed at participants, looking at their entire household context instead of just looking at the individual worker; it's treating them as parents or as someone caring for an elderly person, looking at the whole range of needs for a household – child care and transportation or emergency care needs. That's really the workhorse of the whole strategy. Without that we don't have a real way to move families into lasting economic stability. That's the goal.

In your most recent op-ed in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, you noted the 50-year anniversary of President Johnson's War on Poverty and drew some parallels with that program. How has anti-poverty work had to change in the last 50 years?

One thing in common with what they were talking about in the 1960's is the focus on employment. There's a huge correlation between full-time employment and ability to rise above the federal poverty line. But I think in some ways, what was perceived as progressive discourse on poverty in the late 50's and 60's often represented low-income people almost as a world apart, sort of outside mainstream culture. Now a larger proportion of the population is economically more vulnerable at a national level. And yet you also have particular subcultures of poverty in different geographic areas.

What we have in Richmond – urban poverty – is clearly and quite obviously related to the city's entire history of racial segregation, the oppression of African-Americans.

There were some very key decisions that were made in the '50s and '60s that have shaped life chances for thousands and thousands of Richmonders.

When you think about the combined effects of running the highways through Jackson Ward, the fact that the school systems were never genuinely integrated, the failure of our metropolitan area to develop a transportation system appropriate to an economy of this size, the concentration of public housing communities along with a long history of neglect to those communities – that all creates a very specific brand of generational poverty in Richmond. What is striking is that from the very start the [Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission] was charged not to duck those structural issues, but instead to look them in the face and say, how do we seriously respond?

There are also social, structural and cultural changes resulting from fifty years of concentrated urban poverty that produce additional challenges. This is where questions about family structure and parenthood and healthy fatherhood are a legitimate part of the conversation. I interpret those issues as being a consequence of the lack of solid opportunities for African-American men in particular, combined with the crisis of mass incarceration, which contributed to changing family patterns.

The book you have with you looks at urban fatherhood. (*Doing the Best I Can: Fatherhood in the Inner City*) Is that something you've been reading up on?

It's a challenging issue to understand and a challenging issue to talk about. For a long time many liberal folks did not want to talk about it for fear of being misunderstood or being labeled a racist or something along those lines.

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Free CR Workshop for Teen Leaders

Join the Richmond Youth Peace Project (RYPP)'s annual two-day conflict resolution workshop for teen trainers Sept. 27-28. The program introduces teens from grade 8 through age 20 to conflict resolution techniques to use in their own lives, and to share with others. Participants will learn to lead workshops for schools and youth groups.

The training is FREE. Participants earn community service credit, and those who successfully complete the workshop will be invited to become RYPP conflict resolution trainers. Supervised by experienced adults, they will promote, plan and present conflict resolution workshops for children and teens during the coming year.

Registration for the program closes in early September. Apply online to rypp@rpec.org.

Film & Discussion:

Freedom Riders

On Thursday, August 28, at 6:30, attend a screening of a powerful documentary about the small group of white and black volunteers who rode into the Deep South in 1961 as part of the civil rights movement.

The film includes new footage. A discussion will follow the showing at the Virginia Historical Society, 428 North Boulevard, Richmond.

The film is the third in the film series, "Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle," co-sponsored by the Virginia Historical Society and the Richmond Peace Education Center.

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There's been quite a lot of focus in the academic literature on the experience of moms, trying to understand single motherhood, and while that literature isn't well understood, it's a literature that's there. There's very little literature on trying to understand fathers and where they fit in this. This is a book by a couple of sociologists who spent a lot of time talking to people first hand – I'm still reading it.

I think many RPEC members are looking for new things to read. For a sense of what it takes to confront poverty, do you have any recommendations?

George Packer of the New Yorker has a very readable book. (*The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America*) It does a wonderful job of using stories to explain the impact of growing inequality in the United States over the last 30 or 40 years and how that's perpetuating poverty at the same time that the folks at the very top are prospering more than ever.

Somewhat dated but still good is David Shipler's *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*. In general I've been heavily influenced by the work of William Julius Wilson on urban poverty and particularly looking at the interaction between structural economic factors and some of these cultural factors.

The best book on poverty policy that I know of is *Poverty Knowledge* by Alice O'Conner which takes a good hard look at how social science and policy-makers respond to poverty and how it has changed, not always for the better, over time. (*For lists and links of recommended books and articles, see the online issue of RPECnews.*)

A new paper plant to be built by a Chinese firm in Chesterfield County is expected to create 2,000 new jobs. How much impact does a new employer like that have on opportunities for people working to get out of poverty in the city?

That depends precisely on what other supportive policies are in place. With high-quality, easily available public transportation, and if we had agreements with the employer to use employees trained from particular work-force programs, then it could have a very big impact. The unfortunate reality is that those kinds of larger economic development deals often are not thinking very intentionally about how to connect the economic development to poverty reduction, certainly not in a regional way. The city of Richmond has it in its power to do a better job, and I think we're moving toward greater recognition of the importance of doing so.

What are the key ingredients to seeing a significant decline in poverty over the next five to ten years?

The biggest one is employment. If we can build our work-force center up to the capacity to serve a thousand people a year and have a success rate of sixty to seventy percent, and you do that long enough, you're talking about moving five to seven thousand families [out of poverty]. The poverty population in Richmond is somewhere between forty and forty-five thousand, so you're talking about a pretty significant chunk.

At the same time, in the longer term strategy, the fundamentals are being driven by the quality of the education system, looking at very concerted efforts to connect every kid leaving the system to either a viable career path or educational opportunity. That's a generation-long work. That's going to require more investments, better policies, improvements in the school system.

One of the ideas that could help to change the picture is a college scholarship program that would be a privately funded initiative to assure universal college access to all graduating RPS students. It's partly about the money, but also about changing the expectations, being able to say to kids when they are younger, "there's an opportunity for you," and providing the support services along the way. Richmond is 85th out of the top 100 metropolitan areas in upward social mobility, according to a study done last year. That's not good. If you break it down by counties, you realize that the problem is almost entirely in the city. So a scholarship program provides a vehicle for social mobility but it also provides a way to begin to change the demographics of the school system.

Speaking about the Maggie Walker Initiative specifically, what are the opportunities for people to get involved in supporting the effort?

Any show of public support for the initiatives is an easy one, but specifically I think the faith community has had a positive impact through the Micah Initiative over the years. One idea that I'm interested in exploring is could we do a Micah Initiative in supporting adults, particularly adults who are making the transition to full-time employment, to help people be more successful and realize they're not alone. Also I think that process, if done thoughtfully, could help create more and deeper understanding of poverty among those who are providing the peer support. There are lots of things one can do as an individual, from getting involved in after-school programs to supporting parks and rec; supporting neighborhood schools.

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Another thing specifically is, we're going to be asking the large employers in the city: are there opportunities to buy goods and services more locally and ways to employ local people? The paper recently had a story about bike racks that are being made locally by participants in our workforce program. That came about because one City Council member raised the question and people said, yeah, we can do this here. What if everybody started thinking about that question on a regular basis?

I think the reason this work is taken seriously is that we're not depending on higher levels of government to start massive new programs or provide massive new resources. Many would be pleased if more resources were available, but we can't count on that. Instead, look at what we already have. What we have is a major downtown university, two other colleges, significant-size industry, medical institutions. We have other anchor companies, and that's a lot of wealth.

Part of our vision is wealth building. If people don't have assets, don't have skills, nothing can change. It leads to a pretty hopeless prescription. But instead, the diagnosis is "look, we have people that have capabilities that have been blocked for various reasons, who haven't had the opportunities to develop them. If we can find ways to connect that downtown wealth with the surrounding neighborhoods, we can do much better."

Thad Williamson — Activist - Scholar

Dr. Thad Williamson is associate professor of leadership studies and philosophy, politics, economics and law at the University of Richmond's Jepson School.

Prior to the being appointed director of the Office of Community Wealth Building, he drafted the anti-poverty commission report and co-chaired the implementation process. He also served on the Richmond Regional Economic Development Strategy Committee, and the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Redistricting. In Washington he has worked at the Institute for Policy Studies and the National Center for Economic and Security Alternatives.

Dr. Williamson received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Harvard University and an M.A. in Religion from Union Theological Seminary. He has written or co-edited numerous books, including *Sprawl, Justice, and Citizenship: The Civic Costs of the American Way of Life*, published by Oxford University Press.

Some RPEC members live outside the city. What are some specific ways they can make a difference?

Support for regional transportation at the county level is very, very important. I think attitudes have evolved a lot, but the leadership in the counties needs to hear from a substantial number of citizens that this is something they want, and the arguments that may be the most persuasive may not be poverty reduction arguments. There are others – quality of life arguments, economic development arguments.

Finally, the last thing, the obvious thing: so much of what happens in Richmond is determined on the state level, so whether Medicaid goes through or not would impact more people, persons living in poverty, more than anything a locality could ever do, in one swoop. Virginia's politics continue to be very challenging, but organizing on the big issues at the state level is vital, including looking at ways at the state level to get more space for the localities to try some things.

What's the biggest difference you notice going from teaching to city government?

It's just a very, very different organizational environment. Certainly I think more happens in a day, and there are more highs and lows in government, in my brief experience so far. You also realize that academia gives you the freedom to think about things in sustained ways. Being in academia for a long time, you lose sight of how much of a privilege that is, both as a way of life but also because that kind of quality thinking time is needed to produce worthwhile insights. Government, especially doing a project as complex as this, is tough, a juggling act from one thing to another, all of which are important. It gives me truly great respect for everyone in city government as a career.

Any other major things you'd want RPEC members to be aware of with the Maggie Walker Initiative?

One of the biggest obstacles I've seen in Richmond is almost the spiritual crisis — the cynicism, the belief that nothing will ever get done, that Richmond doesn't change or can't change. It can be a self-fulfilling discourse, the negativity. To pull this off you have to be both very clear-eyed and honest about the depth of all the problems, but you also have to be honestly optimistic and hopeful as citizens to create a climate of support. Look, what's happening in Richmond has gotten national attention — just the audacity, in some ways, of what we're trying to do. What we're doing here in Richmond has significance for our community, but it's also significant, potentially, nationally. So I would say let's take this opportunity and get behind it.

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Attack on Poverty — *continued from Page 6*

Key books on poverty in America today

NYTimes Review of George Packer's [*The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America*](#)

NYTimes Review of David Shipler's [*The Working Poor: Invisible in America*](#)

Rank, Hirschl, & Foster's [*Chasing the American Dream: Understanding What Shapes Our Fortunes*](#)

William Julius Wilson's [*More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City*](#)

Alice O'Conner's [*Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History*](#)

Edin and Nelson's [*Doing the Best I Can: Fatherhood in the Inner City*](#) – Article in Philadelphia Weekly

Articles on Richmond's Anti-Poverty Efforts

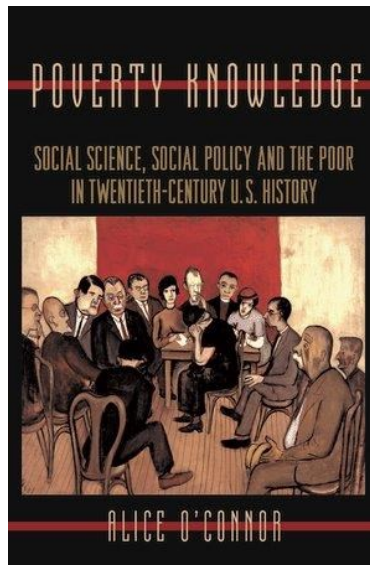
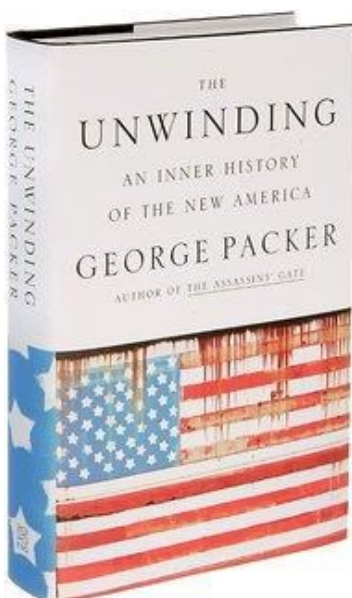
Action Plan: [Dwight Jones' anti-poverty task force](#) asks the mayor to follow his heart.

John Moeser: [“Is the arc of the moral universe bending toward justice in Richmond?”](#)

Thad Williamson: [“Learning the lessons, rethinking our attitudes”](#)

Thad Williamson: [“City launches effort to build community wealth”](#)

Anti-Poverty Commission [Report from 2013](#)



Clean Out Those Closets!

September is "RPEC Month" at The Thrifty Quaker thrift store. Proceeds from sales will go to RPEC. Set aside your gently used items and deliver them to Thrifty Quaker (13567 Midlothian Turnpike) in late August or early September.

Or bring them to RPEC by August 26 and we'll deliver them for you. See www.thriftyquaker.com.

Combined Campaigns

Does your workplace participate in the Combined Campaigns? Fall campaigns start in September. All it takes is a simple check in a box for you to make a payroll contribution to support RPEC's work for peace. RPEC's campaign codes are:

- Local Government and Schools (LG&S): #140
- Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign (CVC): #3751
- United Way: #3181

Please specify both the code and Richmond Peace Education Center.

RPEC Makes an Impact

In words of RPEC Teen Leaders:

“I’ve had the joy of being able to make a positive impact in the lives of the children that I teach.”

—DaJon Johnson (age 18)

“Leading conflict resolution workshops has strengthened my leadership skills and allowed me to meet people who are different from me.”

— Suzannah Woods (age 16)

“I never thought of myself as someone to be looked up to until I saw how the school children, especially the boys, responded to me. It made me realize that I’m having a greater impact than I thought.”

—Jorrell Watkins, former RYPP leader (age 21)

No Place to Hide

*Edward Snowden, the NSA
and the U.S. Surveillance State*

By Glenn Greenwald

Book Review by Sam McKinney

The beginning of *No Place to Hide* reads like an espionage thriller, a rapid story that is both compelling and informative. The book's author, journalist Glenn Greenwald, is led into a world of spycraft by Edward Snowden, the man who would eventually be responsible for one of the most significant leaks of classified information in U.S. history. They bob and weave following strict security protocols to avoid government agents. Their strategy meetings in Hong Kong eventually lead to the publication of the first articles that took the world by surprise in June of 2013.

Throughout the process Greenwald portrays Snowden as a completely rational and clear thinking patriot, with an impressive ability to analyze and plan. It is an extremely interesting side of the story that we have not seen in press over the last year.

However, once the spy thriller has ended, Greenwald gets a bit bogged down in presenting individual pieces of the larger NSA collection programs. It was probably necessary to include a great many details so the reader could gain a clearer understanding, but after the intrigue of the first part of the book, it is a bit of a drudge. Eventually, Greenwald begins to make his arguments, which are really the meat of the book.

Greenwald makes the case that the metadata (information like the phone numbers, time, and duration of calls) can actually be more illuminating when profiling a suspect than the content of one individual phone call. In that regard the NSA's possession of the metadata, though technically legal, gives it a profoundly intrusive window into the private lives of innocent American civilians. Even worse, our government has the ability to gather such info may have a chilling effect on free

speech and creativity of thought. Being aware you are watched may be enough to compel compliance.

Beyond the ethical problems rife in the NSA's programs, its quest "to collect it all" (as Greenwald quotes former NSA chief Keith Alexander) is, Greenwald argues, degrading the agency's ability to properly vet and analyze intelligence which could prove useful to the national security of the United States.

Greenwald also points to the failures of the current system of oversight. The complicity of congressional committees, the rubber stamping process of the FISA court, and the failure of the establishment media all allow for the kind of overstep represented by NSA programs that vacuum huge quantities of information from private citizens not suspected of illicit activity.

In fact, the strongest, most salient argument of the book is against the establishment media. The author holds the mainstream media complicit in keeping government secrets

hidden from the American public. The importance of adversarial journalism in maintaining a healthy republic is great, and Greenwald accuses the establishment media of protecting their own interests by protecting the government, effectively following the marching orders of successive presidential administrations. However, taking into account the enthusiastic legal threats and prosecutions of whistleblowers and journalists by the Obama administration highlighted in the book, it may be difficult to blame mainstream outlets for toeing the line.

Although Greenwald has a political agenda, *No Place to Hide* is a multifaceted book that highlights important questions in post-9/11 America. The author reminds us of the power of transparency in combating abuses of power, the

necessity of an adversarial press, and the importance of holding power accountable. Those ideas are vitally important in this age of media saturation and ever-growing executive branch power. There can be no doubt that the protagonists of the story place great value in acting on those ideas.

RPEC has a copy of the book available to be borrowed as part of its lending library.

Greenwald on Snowden:

"By daring to expose the NSA's astonishing surveillance capabilities and its even more astounding ambitions, he has made it clear, with these disclosures, that we stand at a historic crossroads. Will the digital age usher in the individual liberation and political freedoms that the Internet is uniquely capable of unleashing? Or will it bring about a system of omnipresent monitoring and control, beyond the dreams of even the greatest tyrants of the past? Right now, either path is possible."

Consumers Corner

John Gallini

Consumer Boycotts

A consumer boycott is one method of putting pressure on a retail company to change a policy. The process of making informed choices involves choosing one company over another, but that rarely involves making the companies that we avoid aware of the reasons for our choice.

We last wrote about boycotts 10 years ago. In this article we rely upon the United Kingdom organization "Ethical Consumer." According to its website:

"A company usually becomes a target due to questionable business practices such as testing on animals or using sweatshop labor. Companies are sensitive to boycotts because they can have serious financial implications. Once boycotted few consumers return to a brand—so companies can lose a customer for life.

"The economic clout of boycotts shouldn't be underestimated. In 2011 a boycott of the state of Arizona in the US cost its economy a massive \$141 million dollars in just seven months after it passed controversial immigration laws."

Ethical Consumer provides an extensive list of active boycotts, available at <http://www.ethicalconsumer.org/> We have selected these ten to highlight:

Asda / Wal-mart

Category: Supply Chain; called by: Organic Consumers Assn.

The Organic Consumers Association (OCA) calls on people to boycott Wal-Mart and support commerce that is organic, local, fair-trade and fair-made.

Bluefin Tuna

Category: Environment; called by: Greenpeace

According to Greenpeace, Bluefin tuna is an endangered species that could soon be extinct. Despite this it is still being served in sushi restaurants in the UK.

BP

Category: Environment; called by: Boycott BP

BP is boycotted over one of the worst environmental disasters ever to befall the United States, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Chevron Texaco

Category: Political, Environment; called by: Ethical Consumer, Chevron Toxic and Avaaz.org

Chevron Toxic cites the company for dumping billions of gallons of toxic waste in the Ecuadorean Amazon and failing to clean it up. Avaaz.org calls for a global boycott of Chevron over its involvement with Burma.

Hyatt Hotels

Category: Workers Rights; called by: hyatt-hurts.org

A coalition of feminist, labour and equality activists calls to boycott hotel chain Hyatt over the treatment of workers. Campaigners say: "Hyatt has abused housekeepers and other hotel workers, replacing long-time employees with minimum-wage temporary workers and imposing dangerous workloads on those who remain.

Kentucky Fried Chicken

Category: Animal Rights; called by: PETA

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has called a boycott of KFC for animal welfare reasons. They say suppliers cram birds into huge waste-filled factories, breed and drug them to grow so large that they can't even walk, and often break their wings and legs. At slaughter, the birds' throats are slit and they are dropped into tanks of scalding-hot water—often while they are still conscious.

Kellogg's

Category: Environment; called by: Organic Consumers Assn.

OCA cites Kellogg's for using sugar from genetically engineered sugar beets. To see how the company rates and for alternatives see the Ethical Consumers' free Buyers' Guide to cereal.

Nestlé

Category: Irresponsible Marketing; Called by Baby Milk Action

Nestlé is cited for irresponsible marketing of baby milk formulas which infringe the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes. It's also criticized for using Palm Oil and not labeling GM ingredients.

Shell

Category: Human Rights; called by: MOSOP-UK and Essential Action

The boycott of Shell is called over the company's activities in the Niger Delta.

Starbucks

Category: Worker Rights; called by International Workers of the World and Organic Consumers Association.

Starbucks is under a boycott call over its treatment of Ethiopian coffee farmers.