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Using video as a tool for social change

A project of Peace and Justice Works

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Flying Focus Highlights Israel/Palestine Conflict

Since the US-supported Israeli bombardment of Gaza began in October 2023, Flying Focus has produced several new programs. Thanks to our rich back-catalog of programs dating back decades, we have been re-running older shows about the issue in-between the newer shows. Here are the two new shows we produced between December and June.

History and Personal Impacts of the Gaza Conflict

In December 2023, Jewish Voice for Peace put together a forum over Zoom featuring four knowledgeable and engaging speakers, which we featured in our two-part show *"Ending the Cycle of Violence in Israel/Palestine"* (VB #130.8&9). They gave context for the Israeli bombardment of Gaza following Hamas' attack on Israel in October 2023.



Joel Benin, an emeritus Professor of Middle East History, gave an overview of how the state of Israel was formed due to pressure from those who wanted to colonize the existing state of Palestine. Mohammed Nabil, a Portland-based advocate for Palestinian rights, spoke about being from Gaza and how his family has suffered from the ongoing conflict. Wael Elasady, a co-founder of SUPER (Students United for Palestinian Equal Rights) at Portland State University, spoke about how the Israelis continually violate human rights and international law with the backing of the United States. Noa Grayevsky shared her journey from a Palestinian Jewish youth indoctrinated into unquestioning support for Israel to anti-Zionism. KBOO Community Radio's Emma Lugo organized the event and provided the video.

"My family had to evacuate from a community that used to be a safe space for the first 35 days of the war on Gaza. After that they got a clear order to evacuate or die." —Mohammed Nabil in *"Ending the Cycle of Violence in Israel/Palestine"* (VB #130.8&9).

Jewish American Activist Mark Braverman Talks Peace in Palestine

Mark Braverman is a Jewish American author and activist trained as a clinical psychologist. He is a pioneer in developing innovative approaches to crisis intervention and recovery from trauma. He is now devoted full time to the cause for peace in historic Palestine. He has written two books about the situation in Palestine and is the Executive Director of Kairos USA, founded in response to the 2009 Kairos call of Palestinian Christians. Kairos is a movement of Christians who believe the time is right for decisive action to end the crisis in Israel and Palestine.

Braverman spoke at the First Unitarian Church in Portland on February 12, 2024. Our program, *"Mark Braverman: Searching for Peace and Justice in Palestine"* (VB #130.12&13) covers that talk which included the context for October 7-- Jewish history, Zionism and Palestinian resistance; the current furor over anti-semitism; the church and colonialism; and the settler colonialism of the US.

Formerly a fervent Zionist, Braverman explains how he came to change his view of Israel. His is an interesting and important perspective on the tragedy continuing to unfold in Palestine.

This show, which was produced by Barb Greene, can be seen online at flyingfocus.org/Braverman_streamingpage.html.

Pushing Media to Tell the Truth About Climate Change

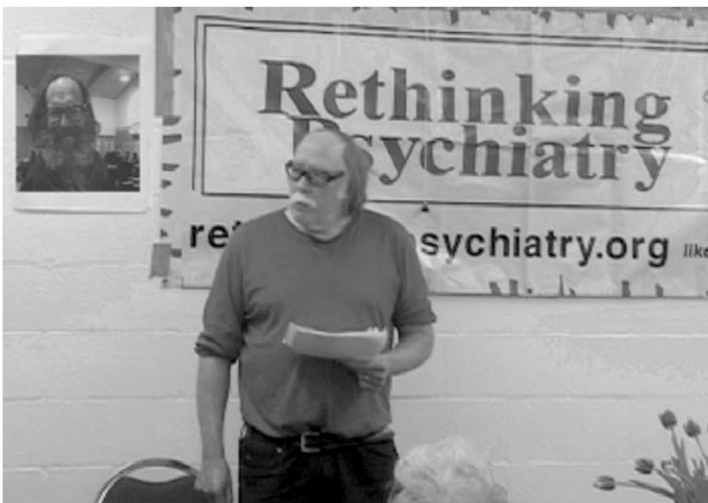
When you get your news, are the reporters connecting issues of the weather, the economy and militarism to the climate crisis? In *"Telling the Truth About Climate Change"* (VB #131.11&12), FFVC talked with Lynn Handlin of Extinction Rebellion PDX (XRPDX), who explains why that group held a protest outside the local ABC affiliate KATU in Portland on February 2, 2024. KATU is owned by the conservative Sinclair Broadcast Group. Clips of the protest show those gathered telling the media to wake up (like a certain mammal had to do that day... Groundhog Day) and tell the truth about climate change. Chanting, speakers, and even a discussion with KATU staff are all part of the events of that day. Handlin fills in more details about how the XR movement got started, what responses there have been from other media outlets, and what you the viewer can do about climate change and the reporting about it.

The demonstration footage was recorded by FFVC Field Coordinator PC Peri. The interview was conducted by producer / editor Dan Handelman.

Remembering a Unique Portland Activist

Barry Sutton was one of a kind. He was a cultural aficionado, attending concerts, readings, lectures, and meetings of all sorts. He frequented many houses of worship, including Catholic, Unitarian, Methodist, Lutheran, Quaker, Buddhist, the Peace House, and several synagogues. He was a dedicated social justice and environmental activist, well known in Portland, and also to Noam Chomsky at MIT and the director of programs for unhoused people at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, DC. And he did all this while living on the streets of Portland for 50 years, getting around on his bike.

Barry died in September, 2023. On April 2, 2024, Rethinking Psychiatry held a memorial for him. FFVC recorded the event for the program "*Barry Sutton: Celebrating a Unique Activist*" (VB #131.7&8). It includes journalist Daniel Forbes reading his opus honoring Barry's life, along with memories from family and friends. Barry was an inspiring person. We hope you have a chance to watch the show.



Read about Barry in this article: tinyurl.com/BarryOregonian.

Read Daniel Forbes' full poem here: tinyurl.com/BarryPoem.

The Flying Focus show can be seen online on our YouTube page and at flyingfocus.org/BSutton_mem_streamingpage.html.

Lasting Effects and Imminent Threats of Nuclear Weapons

On August 9, 2023, exactly 78 years after the US dropped a nuclear bomb on the Japanese city of Nagasaki, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility once again held a commemoration to remember the devastation of both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Calling attention to the Atomic Scientists' "doomsday clock" being closer to all-out nuclear war than any time since the 1960s, the event was called "90 Seconds to Midnight: No More Nuclear War." Oregon PSR provided Flying Focus their video of the event, from which we created the two-part program "*90 Seconds to Midnight: Hiroshima/Nagasaki 2023*" (VB #130.2&3). Speakers also note the nuclear devastation to indigenous and other communities in the USA, as well as Pacific Islands that were used for testing.

Speakers include Cathy Sampson-Kruse from the Umatilla Tribe, Kamil Khan who was then Executive Director of ORPSR,

Cody Urban of the Resist U.S.-Led War Movement, Former Bikini Atoll Council member Fred Johnson, Columbia Riverkeeper Advocacy Director Dan Serres, PSR Board Member Yukiyo Kawano (a Third Generation Hibakusha), and Hanako Wakatsuki-Chong, the Executive Director of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon. There are also music/dance performances from Portland Taiko, the Marshallese Dance Troupe and the Tsubaki Buyo Doukukai Dancers.

Tying Historical Wrongs to Racist, Land-grabbing Roots

A March, 2024 forum held at the Social Justice Action Center in Portland examined the racist, land-grabbing roots of US and global policies. The main speaker was Tariq Khan, a lecturer on psychology at Yale University and author of *The Republic Shall Be Kept Clean: How Settler Colonial Violence Shaped Antileft Repression*. Khan brought his work as a historian to his understanding of the US's settler colonialist origins and how that initial violence of indigenous dispossession and slavery continued and expanded to include repression of those who have organized for a better world, particularly working people. The forum is featured on our two-part program "*How the Powerful Appropriate People's Land and Space*" (VB #131.3&4).

The other featured speaker is Karim Hassanein, an architect at Colloqate Design in Portland who's part of the Design As Protest Collective. Hassanein talked about how architects and urban planners deliberately use space to break up communities which organize for people power. This show was produced and edited by Dan Handelman, with video recorded by PC Peri.

How to Beat the High Cost of Living — Community Solidarity!

These days we've all noticed that everything costs more, from groceries to rent to utilities. Flying Focus has been able to keep up with the times, with an annual budget of – no joke! – about \$5200 in 2023. We really appreciate the community solidarity shown by people who help us educate the public with donations and orders for DVDs, USB drives or streaming versions of our shows. In addition to keeping our suggested donations for DVD prices the same for many years (\$8 to \$11 in most cases), we dropped the asking amount for "streaming rights" last year from \$75 to just \$35 (\$50 for larger institutions).

We hope you will be able to make an investment in the ongoing documentation of what's been going on in the Portland activist community for the last 32+ years. In the next few months, we need to raise about 1/4 of this year's total-- roughly \$1300. If you can make a donation of any size, send a check or money order to the address on NE Sandy Boulevard. If you are not ordering physical media, you can also donate through the Peace and Justice Works Network For Good page, just be sure to use the "designation" field to indicate the money is for Flying Focus. It's great for us to be able to set a budget as we go along, so regular donations are very helpful. NFG allows people to make annual, quarterly or monthly donations of \$10 or more. We're feeling the pinch too-- the cost for our mailbox and other utilities are up at least 10% this year, after previous increases. We hope you can support our local media group that Lisa Loving of KBOO-FM recently called "Amazing – a historic video documentary creator."