

## Public Sector Unions Under Attack

Elizabeth Williamson

As hope of additional federal stimulus money fades and big corporations fail to make new hires despite their increasing profit margins, the full weight of the recession has begun to fall on state governments. Looking for a scapegoat, politicians and business leaders have settled on public sector unions, blaming workers for budget shortfalls.

Public higher education has been hit especially hard—state colleges and universities are often described as providing “non-essential” services—and workers aren’t the only ones being targeted; through dramatically increased tuition fees, students are essentially subsidizing the government’s refusal to make the education of state residents a priority.

Attacks on public sector unions are often couched in terms of making “collective sacrifices,” even if a disproportionate share of the financial burden is actually being put on working people. Soon after he took office in January, Wisconsin governor Scott Walker began formulating a plan to reduce bargaining rights and cut benefits for all state workers.

“You are not going to hear me downgrade state and local employees in the public sector,” Walker said, before going on to pit workers against one another, arguing that “we can no longer live in a society where the public employees are the haves and the taxpayers who foot the bills are the have-nots.”

Now that Walker—backed by billionaires David and Charles Koch, if not by the voters who elected him—

appears to have succeeded in slashing workers’ rights in a state that has had strong public sector representation for more than 50 years, his strategy is likely to be embraced by other governors. Ohio’s John Kasich, for one, has been talking since 2009 about his plan to “break the back of organized labor in the schools.”

But it’s not just Republicans who are responsible for attacks on union workers; as former state representative Brendan Williams points out, Obama signaled his tacit acceptance of anti-government, anti-union policies at the state level when he called for a wage freeze for all federal em-

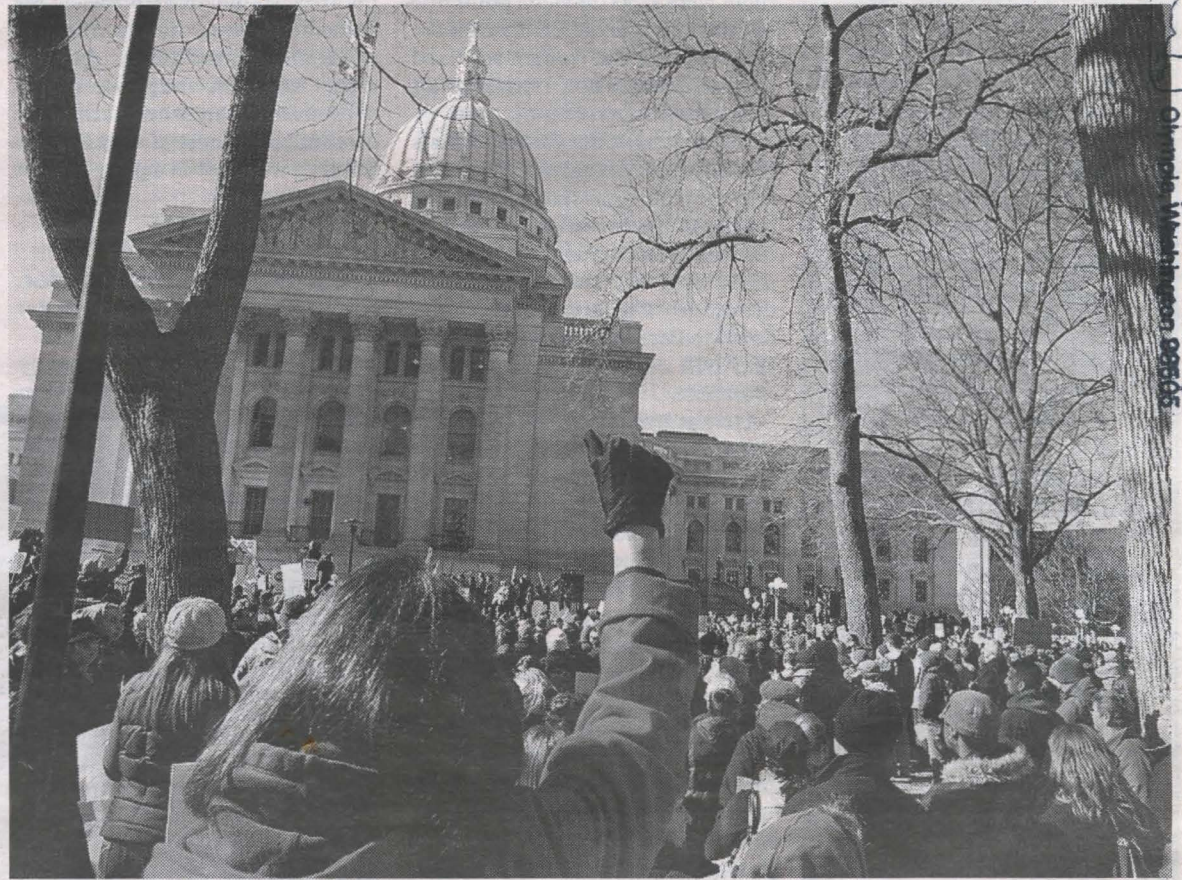
**Students are essentially subsidizing the government’s refusal to make the education of state residents a priority**

ployees.

Long-term polling analysis by David Madland and Karla Walter of the Center for American Progress has revealed a historical correlation between Americans’ opinion of government, business and labor: all three drop simultaneously when unemployment rates skyrocket.

Yet 78% of respondents polled by Hart Research in 2009 were in favor of legislation that would make it easier for workers to bargain collectively with their employers. Previous Hart studies have suggested that most respondents would join a union if they felt they would not be penalized by their employers.

Attacks on public sector unions



Tens of thousands of people protested a bill eliminating public sector unions’ right to collective bargaining inside and outside the Capitol building in Madison, WI in February

are being fueled by a conservative media onslaught, which seeks to connect union workers with perceived excesses in government spending. More than half of the top hits in a Google search for “public sector unions” link to explicitly anti-union pieces written by columnists, bloggers, and fellows of conservative

organizations like the Cato Foundation. Such rhetoric has successfully normalized the idea of a zero-sum game, in which low-wage and unemployed workers must somehow compete with unionized workers for the wages they have rightfully earned.

As Bill Lyne, president of the United Faculty of Washington State,

argues, “The private sector, having returned to massive profits after a massive public bailout, is now demonizing public employees as the source of our economic woes, in an attempt to further bust public employee wages, health benefits, and retirement benefits.”

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## Editorial Statement

At the root of the uprisings in Libya, Egypt, and Wisconsin is an outcry against declining living standards and governments beholden to the profit motive and rule by force. This outcry ought to resonate in our community.

Those of us in Olympia who depend upon state programs such as Social Security and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) have seen these insufficient lifelines drastically cut, despite popular protest. Behind the surface appearance of a feckless student population, Olympia is the home of many working-class people who will suffer deeper poverty because of massive cuts in the state’s budget.

Students and their families face foreclosure, unemployment, debt, and insufficient (or wholly absent) healthcare along with workers. The Evergreen State College administration and Governor Gregoire, following the same ideology as Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, are weakening the political power and intensifying the economic uncertainty of workers and students alike.

Governor’s like Walker and Gregoire tell us that we are not in this together, that struggles against tyranny and declining living standards are not connected. That instead of building upon the strength of our shared experiences, we should seek out someone among us to blame.

Walker proposes we blame public workers, especially unionized public workers, who, he alleges, absorb scarce public funds with their wages, healthcare and pension benefits. All of which, the claim goes, they won by association with “greedy” unions.

In Arizona, racism and geography enable politicians to single out immigrants as scapegoats for a global economic crisis, when the results of that crisis (along with a

history of colonization and US interference) in their home countries forced them to migrate in the first place.

The uprisings in North Africa, the Near East, and Wisconsin demonstrate that the crude ideology of blame simply does not suffice to answer widespread contradictions in the capitalist system. Furthermore, mass participation shows that these rebellions are not the work of self-proclaimed “radicals,” but the manifest aspirations and outrage of whole populations, especially workers.

In Egypt the realization of these aspirations – democracy and better living standards – are closer at hand

**The uprisings in North Africa, the Near East, and Wisconsin demonstrate that the crude ideology of blame simply does not suffice to answer widespread contradictions in the capitalist system**

with the ousting of Hosni Mubarak, but a long way from becoming reality. In Wisconsin, under the guise of formal democracy, protesting workers have other challenges to overcome before their aspirations can be realized. An obstacle to both movements, however, comes in the form of the group who remain absent in the streets of Egypt, Libya, and Wisconsin: the rich.

From Egypt to Wisconsin, it’s the wealthiest members of society who have the most to lose in the face of democratic worker uprisings. Why do the wealthy support a military dictator like Mubarak or fund a campaign like Walker’s?

At heart, this question is about ideology, not just economics. In a capitalist world, where an impoverished majority lives in the shadow

of a powerful, rich minority, some ideological justification is necessary. Especially as the cost of food and housing climb out of reach for more and more people, and we read daily news of the intransigent economic crisis, it is becoming increasingly difficult to validate capitalism, a system which, crisis or no, rewards the world’s billionaire bankers and depresses the world’s workers.

The notion that workers should make further “sacrifices” in order to weather this economic storm is designed to convince not only the wealthy class, but workers themselves of their necessary subservience to capital. In Egypt, this subservience was maintained by overt authoritarianism, secret police, intimidation and torture.

In our country, there is certainly violence, intimidation, and torture (most spectacularly in the service of the “war on terror”) but the justification for exploitation is more subtle, couched in the language and practices of a formal democracy, which turns out to be less than democratic in practice.

Because of violent opposition to democracy, the aim of the Egyptian and Libyan struggle is acceptable to US ruling class interests. The battle being waged in Wisconsin, and now in Ohio, Indiana and our state, seems less clear, muddled by claims about national debt, state budget shortfalls, and the appearance of democracy.

Supporting Egyptian and Libyan protesters against the brutality of dictators is heralded as supporting democracy. Why is supporting Wisconsin’s protesting workers not similarly democratic? Why are economics allegedly at the heart of demands upon US public work-

Editorial cont. pg. 4

## Stories from Madison

What follows is an interview with two community organizers in Madison, WI, who were involved in the protests at the state capitol in February.

Tessa de Wyllie Echevarria is an Evergreen graduate and member of the socialist, feminist, anti-racist organization *Solidarity*. Connor Donnegan is a graduate of the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis and is also a member of *Solidarity*.

**What is Scott Walker’s bill about and why would so many people come out to protest it?**

Tessa: It’s called a budget repair bill and it’s technically supposed to repair any shortfalls in the budget before the legislature actually proposes the budget for next year. However, the bill was around 140 pages long and only eight pages had anything to do with finances.

It attacked every group of people in Wisconsin. It sold off the coal plants, it filled in marshlands and added toxins to farmland, it took out collective bargaining for unions, and defunded school arts programs. All of these things subsidizing corporations and selling off public assets to private corporations along with stripping certain rights that come from the state.

It effectively created solidarity in our state because it attacked everybody — everybody had a different reason, or multiple reasons, to be against the bill. This was one of the reasons for such a large turnout. When they did pass it through, they took out the financial aspects of the bill, which totaled eight pages.

Wisconsin had a million dollar budget surplus in January. Within his first month, Walker gave it all

away in tax breaks to corporations who had helped put him in office. This created a deficit, which was then the reason given for the bill. I think part of the reason for such a large response was that Wisconsin wasn’t in a recession four months ago.

It wasn’t going to be facing the cuts that most other states in the US are facing, because we were inside our state budget. So what’s been happening in other states for the last three or four years, happened in Wisconsin in two months. Now we’re facing as many cuts as other states, but it’s more sudden, which generated a more powerful response.

**Why would public sector workers oppose this bill?**

Tessa: Along with collective bargaining rights, the bill took out automatic dues deductions from paychecks. Unions fought very hard for this, to make sure people were paying their dues and the union could function. So, coming out of this, public sector unions can still exist, but they cannot collectively bargain for their members, and they personally have to go out and collect all of the dues.

It’s going to take more person power to collect all of the dues and the union’s not going to be able to do anything. Why would people pay dues to a union that isn’t going to be able to do anything?

With that, there’s the clear deterioration of the workplace because unions don’t just bargain for wages and benefits, it’s also about safety, hours, and everything that goes into having a decent workplace.

So public sector workers were pro-

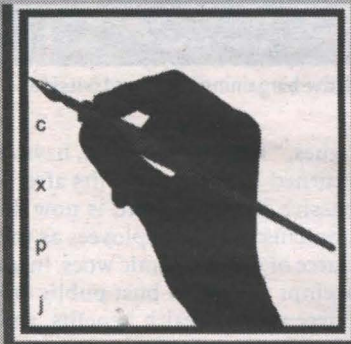
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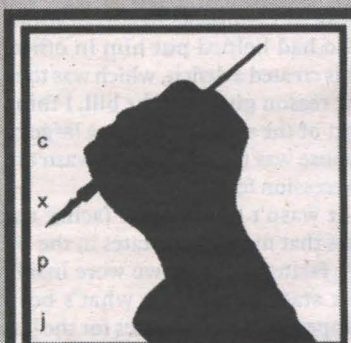
# CxPJ

The Counterpoint Journal (CxPJ) is a collective of Evergreen students, staff, and alumni who publish an independent, alternative newspaper. The paper is designed as a space for voices, issues, and analysis silenced or marginalized by mainstream media in our community. Originally a direct response to questionable policies at Evergreen's campus newspaper, the Cooper Point Journal (CPJ), the CxPJ has expanded its coverage and readership beyond the college through two years of quality journalism.

We accept submission of articles that deal with timely, relevant, and local issues. We specifically seek submissions based on research and that include interviews with folks directly affected by the issue being discussed. We also accept photography, poetry, art, and other creative works.

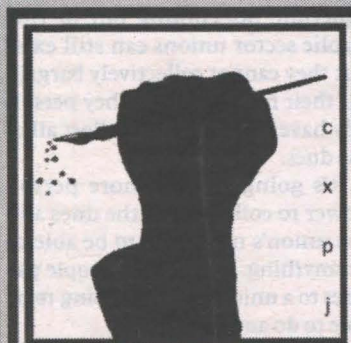


Submit original work or to contact us with questions or comments, email: tesc.counterpoint@gmail.com.



The editorial collective reserves the right to question, edit or refuse any content it receives. The collective will make every attempt to consult the author(s) in regards to any potential revisions.

The Counter Point Journal is also available online at counterpointjournal.org.



CxPJ logos by Lamise Al-Shawahin

## Evergreen Still Not Taking a Stance Against Sexual Assault

Allyson Michaels

If you walk into a classroom in any given college in the United States and see a group of twenty women who are getting ready to graduate, it would be fair to estimate that five of them were raped at some point during their college career. Chances are that whether the women reported the incident or not, nothing happened to their perpetrator.

In most cases, if a student who is the victim of a sexual assault reports it to the school judiciary system, the results of the investigation will be inconclusive. They will probably say something like, "Due to a lack of evidence" or, "The fact is that it comes down to her word against his," and they will not hold that person accountable.

Here at Evergreen, the Grievance Officer is responsible for receiving and responding to reports of any behavior that breaks a rule in the student conduct code. That means that the Grievance Officer's job is to receive and read incident reports, undergo an investigation (if she feels it is necessary), and ultimately decide if the accused is guilty or not and what their punishment should be.

A woman named Andrea Seabert-Olsen currently holds this position. In an interview, Andrea admitted, "The victim is never really happy with the outcome of the grievance process." That is probably because people are rarely held accountable through the grievance process. According to Andrea Seabert, the point of her job "is not to take care of personal needs. It is not based on compassion, but on pragmatic evidence."

"I work much differently than the legal system. Our school's policy is based on restorative justice. We believe in a continuum of responsibility. Many cases are not black and white. People are not always simply

guilty or not guilty. Sexual assault is always one of those challenging situations."

"In cases I have dealt with, responsibility is on a continuum. Some people are absolute predators who seek vulnerable people and their acts are much more premeditated. In other cases I have seen, one person sought consent and the other party gave consent but because of drugs or alcohol they were not in a place to have given it."

### The most important and urgent thing is the need for our school to implement a sexual assault policy

According to Washington State law, if a person is incapacitated (such as by alcohol or drugs), they cannot give consent. To have sex with somebody under those conditions constitutes rape in the second degree. For some reason, however, student conduct codes do not always match up with state laws.

According to Andrea, the newer student conduct code is better and does take incapacitation due to alcohol or drugs into consideration. However, as far as I know it has not yet been used. Until it is tested, it is hard to know if it will really do a better job of holding people accountable for violent actions.

The family of a woman named Jeanned Clery, who had been tortured, sodomized, and raped in her dorm room in Pennsylvania, started a movement that eventually led to the Clery Act. The Clery Act requires institutions of higher education to annually report crime statistics. This act mandates that schools make public their on-campus crime statistics, publicize prevention and actions designed to respond to crime, institute

crime logs, and demonstrate that the rights of victims of sexual assault are preserved.

In 2005, The National Institution of Justice studied schools across the country and their compliance with the act. This study found that most schools comply with the requirements to report crime but only about a third do so in a way that is consistent with federal laws.

Fewer than half the schools studied informed students how to file criminal charges. Instead, according to Hava Aviv, sexual assault advocate and training specialist with Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, "Victims are rarely believed. In many cases they will be blamed for wearing revealing clothing, acting flirtatiously, or being too drunk."

Although according to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), one in five women will be raped during their college careers, schools are no better equipped at handling incidents of sexual assault than they were in 1992 when the Clery Act was enacted.

According to the NIJ, to comply with Federal laws, every college and university should have a sexual assault policy that includes the following: (1) a definition of sexual assault that includes consent and complies with the state law's definitions, (2) a formal policy for responding to incidents which includes who is to be

### Currently our school mentions sexual assault in a brief paragraph in the student conduct code

trained to respond, (3) methods for students to report assault, and (4) prevention methods and resources for victims.

Our school does not currently have a sexual assault policy. As of last year, however, we do have a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) thanks to the efforts of Talcott Broadhead, Coordinator of the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention (OSAP) at Evergreen.

Talcott feels that this new SART, "is not only best practice for colleges, but it is also generally victim-centered and it is an important way for the school to respond in a coordinated way and to ensure that all of the support services we can provide are victim-centered. It is a check and balance system. A team making decisions about how the response should be."

Another great thing that our school has recently taken up is mandatory consent workshops for all incoming freshmen who live in resident halls. These would not be possible without the efforts of the Coalition Against Sexual Violence (CASV), a student group here at Evergreen. They are the ones that fought to make consent workshops mandatory. The group also conducts the workshops throughout the year.

When I asked Talcott what usually happened when a victim reported a sexual assault, she told me that, "If someone comes into my office and reports a sexual assault but they do not wish to take any actions (police, school judiciary system) I have to grant them their privacy."

"If they do not wish to participate in an investigation or grievance process, that wish will be honored. I will support each person to be involved in a formal college response at whatever level they feel ready to be involved."

However, according to Title IX, a

Sexual Assault cont. pg. 6

## tech\_talk\_installation\_1: Secure Yer Bits

u\$3rp4\$\$, rootcanal, and true\_rompler

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <openssl/ssl.h>
```

If you fread() our article in the last issue of the CxPJ then you were told that "the internet is the wild west" and "that's how we like it". This, in reference to something about morality or power or whatever.

Bullshit, it was all bullshit. We lied to you. Because the truth is that the wild west looks like East Berlin in 1980 or Downtown Manhattan in 2002 compared to the internet. There is no physical allegory for the lawlessness of cyberspace.

Yet within this Anarchist paradise do we witness the gestation of the most brilliant feats of human collaboration. Consider wikipedia, the most exhaustive (true\_rompler: exhausting) encyclopedia of all time; or face\_book, a glorified form of email, the single most comprehensive communication tool since email; or email, the fastest means of information dissemination since regular mail; or lemonparty.org, the most important political movement of our generation. All of these significantly multi-authored applications could only find form in the nutrient-rich sludge of non-hierarchical, knowledge-equals-power power dynamics - the power structure of the internet.

Yet like all anarchist paradises\*, the internet is also an anarchist dystopia. Child molesters are everywhere, as evidenced by that tv show, and they're using the internet to find other child molesters pretending to be sex-starved pre-teens. Credit card theft is at an all time high, probably. Free services such as gmail and facebook are being used to racially profile users, and to store all their dirty secrets for all eternity on server Sergey Brin's laundry room (true\_rompler: cuz he needs

to clean all ur dirty bits).

Basically its shit is fucked.

And what's worse, you're fucked too if you don't know what's what! "Wat?" you say.

That's right, \*your\* shit is fucked. You of all people are hella susceptible to attacks, all because you are ignorant stoolies, fools with no damn sense and not knowing what is going on.

Ignorance is bliss, but your ignorance is making life more difficult for everyone else by the transitive

see this because they employ their fastest hand to draw and redraw your screen.

At this point you might be asking yourself, "Where are all the womens, huh?" Unfortunately, computer "science" is unequivocally the science which womens find least interesting: less than 10% of new American Computer Science undergraduates identify as female, down from 20% in 1990. However, this could be entirely due to the proliferation of radical identity politics

want to see next.

Good Enough.

But what happens when you want to see something from the Internet, say, the wikipedia article about Anarcho-syndicalism? Well, that article is written down on a strip of paper inside of a computer miles and miles away from yours. In fact, your computer doesn't even know what computer it's on.

But the tribe inside your computer is very charming: they've worked out a deal with a Local Area tribe who will help you see what is on those strips you want at Wikipedia. And so, either via super fast bank vacuum tubes or telepathy, your people are put in contact with their people.

And great, you can be like "yo computer, lemme get that som' that facebook once" and your little men are just like "yo local Area tribe, our person wants to see [that som' that facebook], can you show us it?" and they do and fasthands draws it real quick on the screen and you're like 'dope.'

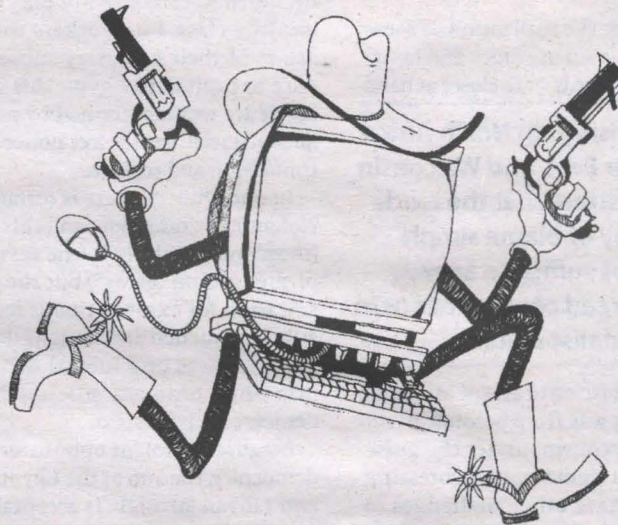
Ok! That's exactly how the computers and the internets work.

What's this got to do with security?

Well, so now when you want to buy something like MF Grimm's new Le Tigre meets Young Jeezy mashup mixtape from Amazon-dot you're faced with a form where you gotta pay. So you enter your Tulip Credit Union Debit Visa card number and click enter and your little guys write all that shit down on a strip of paper and send it over to the Local Area tribe. (true\_rompler: I spent like 30 mins looking for this mixtape, if you find it let me know...)

Then God knows what happens

Yer Bits cont. pg. 6



Art by Croft

property of being dumb. Also it makes life more difficult for you too, asshole. So sit yer asses down so we can learn you something.

The story goes like this:

Inside each computer lives a small tribe of men with strips of paper and tiny little pens. When you type at your keyboard, these men work furiously to transcribe all the things you write on to the strips of paper and then to pass them around so they're filed in the right drawer. Of course, you don't

in mainstream America and the subsequent cultural re-conception of gender and body.

Oh wait that never happened.

At any rate, tiny men write down everything you type and there's a tiny man inside the mouse who watches what you click on and writes that down and then sends it through the mouse cable (which is actually one of those vacuum tubes at bank drive-thrus) to the men inside the computer proper so they can have fasthands draw what you

**Unions cont. from pg. 1**

Public sector unions have only existed in the United States since the 1960s, but they currently represent almost 40% of public sector workers, whereas unionization rates in the private sector are below 7%. Most Americans have never had a chance to join a union, and therefore have a limited understanding of what it would mean to

**Reducing the salaries of state workers won't bring back jobs or stimulate growth**

be a part of one. What they do know is that unions work to increase wages for their workers and for the most part have been successful in doing so, even as anti-union regulations and the outsourcing of jobs have made it increasingly difficult to organize.

ivia Mitchell calls "pension envy." Tim Pawlenty, Minnesota's former governor, calls union workers "exploiters," claiming that their gold-plated pension plans are hurting taxpayers. But these plans only become unsustainable when legislators—as in the case of Illinois and California—fail to adequately fund them, creating unmanageable costs that are passed on to taxpayers all at once.

As Peter Kardas, former director of Evergreen's Labor Center puts it, "The problem isn't that the public sector is highly unionized, it's that the rest of society isn't." American workers used to be able to take certain features of full employment for granted, including defined benefit pensions, health care coverage with modest co-pays, annual cost-of-living pay increases. Now these basic benefits are seen as "frills" that only unionized employees are

empt workers who make less than \$30,000 a year. Unfortunately, lawmakers—who earn more than the median household income for no more than part-time work—have ignored Gregoire's request that they, too, "share in the sacrifice."

The unions have also agreed to increase worker's contributions to their health care premiums, a concession which equates to a permanent pay cut. But Joe Zarelli, the ranking Republican on the Senate Ways and Means Committee, is unimpressed with the concessions the unions have made, arguing that employees should agree to work the same number of hours for less pay, and to accept both the health care and the salary cuts as permanent regardless of whether or not the state's economy recovers.

"You are either reducing pay or you are not," he said. "You're shorting the citizens again." His

of their funding from the state; in Gregoire's most recent budget, that support has been reduced to 30%, even lower than the current percentages for the notoriously

**There is no correlation between states whose employees have bargaining rights and states with big deficits**

underfunded California state university system. Only in Governor Jerry Brown's most recent budget proposal did state subsidies for the California system drop below 50%; Washington State was at 50% funding two years ago.

State lawmakers across the country are relentlessly redefining public university education as a private good that should be paid for by "consumers," i.e. students. "Why," Gregoire mused, in her State of the State Speech, "do we assume all taxpayers should pay for programs that benefit a few?"

Washington's universities are among the worst funded in the country and yet among the most highly rated, with the best graduation rates of any state in the country. But the government—drowning in debt and under constant pressure from the business lobby—wants employees to do more work for lower funding levels, while putting an increasing burden on students, just as cuts to Basic Health and other social services are putting a disproportion burden on the elderly, working families, and other groups already hit hard by the recession.

The problem is not unionized workers' salaries and benefits; the problem is anti-government rhetoric and the policy decisions that go with it. Nearly 10% of Washington residents are unemployed, but reducing the salaries of state workers won't bring back jobs or stimulate growth. In fact, given the state's

regressive tax policies, a reduction in workers' buying power will only mean a further reduction in state revenue, while increasing the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

According to John Nichols, correspondent for The Nation, unions "have been the primary advocates in the United States, for the better part of 30 years, for public sector spending and for public education. If you weaken these unions, you really do weaken the public sphere. And frankly, that's something that a lot of right-wing think tanks in Washington would like to see happen."

Reducing bargaining rights and cutting benefits will not only decrease the quality of life for existing union members, it will decrease the possibility that other workers will have the chance to stand up for their own rights on the job. Public employees in Wisconsin weren't about to let that happen; they flooded the state capitol for nearly a week to protest Walker's legislation.

Here in Washington grassroots groups like POWER (Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights) are beginning to resist the logic that pits union members against non-unionized workers; all of us deserve a living wage for the work we do and access to government services.

Unions are in the unique position of being able to bargain their own wages and working conditions, and they can provide a much-needed structure for building change from the ground up. But the broader goal of organized labor is one shared by working people across the country: to make life more livable, for all of us.

Elizabeth Williamson is a member of the United Faculty of Evergreen (AFT/WEA). Workers at TESC are also represented by AFSCME Local 443 and ILWU Local 5.



Worker's Rally at the Capitol building in Olympia in February. Photo by Lin Nelson.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that median weekly wages for full-time union workers were \$917 in 2010, whereas the median for non-union workers was \$717.

This disparity only proves the point that allowing workers to bargain collectively increases their chances of earning a greater share of the profits of their labor. But opponents of public sector unions often argue that such increases in worker compensation are unsustainable. In fact, there is no correlation between states whose employees have bargaining rights and states with big deficits.

Robert Reich has recently pointed out that some states that deny their employees the right to form unions—Nevada, North Carolina, and Arizona, for example—are running deficits of over 30 percent, while many that do give employees the right to bargain—Massachusetts, New Mexico, and Montana—have small deficits of less than 10 percent.

Opponents also claim that public employees earn far more than private-sector workers, but economics professors Keith Bender and John Heywood have shown that when you account for training and expertise, these differences disappear — most government employees still earn less than their private sector counterparts with similar educations.

Public sector workers, especially those who are unionized, do tend to have more generous pension and health care benefits, resulting

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in what Wharton professor Ol-

able to access.

There is no question that state governments, including our own, are facing a genuine budget crisis. Nationwide, this crisis has been exacerbated by the derailing of health care reform, meaning that employers and employees must continue to wrangle over ballooning health care costs. Here in Washington, the failure of initiative 1098—which would have levied an income tax on individuals making more than \$200,000 a year while actually lowering property taxes—has further worsened the situation, prompt-

**Most government employees still earn less than their private sector counterparts with similar educations**

ing deep cuts to social services and education.

For the most part, Gregoire has been less aggressive than her counterparts in other states when it comes to blaming organized labor. Her most recent approach has been to work with the unions to create widespread furlough and pay reductions in order to temporarily avoid further job cuts.

The agreement she reached in December with representatives of the Washington Federation of State Employees, Service Employees International Union 1199 and the Teamsters—which includes a 3% across the board pay cut through unpaid furloughs—will affect about 48,000 state workers, more than half the government workforce. "This agreement again asks our employees to share in the sacrifice," Gregoire said. "I'm proud to say they are answering that call and doing their part to move Washington through the worst budget shortfall we've ever seen."

To the credit of both negotiating teams, the agreement ex-

comments, like those of Walker and Pawlenty, serve to pit workers against one another, rather than acknowledging the corporate interests who are truly getting the most out of the economic recession.

According to a recent bill summary from the Senate, the December agreement states "Elected officials, State Troopers, and the employees of institutions of higher education, the State Printer, and the Marine Division of the Department of Transportation are exempt from the reduction"—although Gregoire has urged lawmakers to take the same cut they are asking from other state employees.

Evergreen employees—many of whom are organized—would thus not be affected by the agreement. And yet, the hundreds of workers in Evergreen's classified union, who are represented by AFSCME Local 443, have been asked to take the salary cut as part of their contract negotiations. Talks are currently at an impasse due to the management team's rejection of a "me-too" clause, which asked non-unionized staff earning more than \$25,000 to take the same 3% cut.

It is important to note that although Evergreen's decision to reduce the wages of its unionized workers was voluntary, other cuts have been mandatory. State agencies across the board have already quietly passed on a greater share of health care costs to all employees. My own monthly payments have gone up by 40% since December due to costs passed on by the insurance companies. They would have gone up 116% in the next biennium due to decreased contributions from the state if it had not been for my union, who bargained the governor down to 25%.

But the overall budget numbers are even more shocking. Public colleges and universities in Washington used to receive 70%

**Student Conduct Code**

*C.V. Rotondo*

In the winter of 2008, Evergreen established a Disappearing Task Force (DTF) to revise the Student Conduct Code. The Code describes the college's expectations of students from academic honesty to assault. It outlines where and when the Code applies, who will administer it, arbitration systems and possible punishments. In June 2010, the DTF sent a revised code to The Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA), Art Costantino.

An email sent over Evergreen's listserv, tescrrier, in late October set out that the DTF will convene "general forums" on the code and hold a public hearing before making another recommendation. This recommendation could be one of two proposals: submit the code as written, which, if agreed to by Evergreen president Les Purce, will make the new code effective July 1, 2011, or postpone revising the code for further consideration. Much has happened since the 2007–2008 school year with ramifications for the Student Conduct Code.

For two weeks during November 2007, Evergreen students and faculty, along with community members from Olympia, Tacoma and Seattle converged on the port of Olympia to oppose the continuing occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. A ship carrying Stryker vehicles, armored personnel carriers deployed to the occupations from nearby Fort Lewis (now Joint Base Lewis McChord), had arrived in Olympia to unload its cargo.

Many at the port risked arrest and police aggression by blocking the port's entrances with physical barricades and their bodies to prevent the unloaded Strykers from getting to the base. Public debate, regrettably staged on the editorial pages of The Olympian, was primarily a diatribe against the College. The Evergreen administration faced public relations challenges allegedly created by the students and faculty involved in pro-

test at the port. But, before the rancor against Evergreen fully subsided, another, more spontaneous student uprising put the public relations team back to work.

Outside a concert in the College Recreation Center featuring hip-hop artists dead prez on Valentine's Day 2008, concertgoers responded to what they saw as a racist detainment by Evergreen officer April Meyers.

She detained a young Black man for a fight that had taken place in-

**"To lump all of the potential violations under that one standard is inappropriate. The potential cost to students is just too great"**

side the concert. Finding herself and her car surrounded by folks chanting, "Let him go!" Meyers called for backup, and the same Olympia Police Department (OPD) that in November pepper-sprayed, charged, and truncheoned their way through port protestors, responded.

This time, the OPD literally came in swinging, preceded by indiscriminate clouds of pepper spray that even blinded Meyers as she attempted to release the detained man from the back of her car. After hospitalizing one student and traumatizing many others, the OPD retreated, leaving behind an immobilized Thurston County Sheriff's vehicle. The car was flipped and damaged by the crowd.

Working closely with local police, the Evergreen administration began an investigation designed to exact restitution for the damaged vehicle by punishing the students involved, and restoring Evergreen's allegedly corroded image.

Anyone with video footage of the event was encouraged to turn it in to police, and students were identified and punished, most notably by their

**Conduct cont. pg.7**

**Editorial cont. from pg. 1**

ers but not a major element, in the media's portrayal (with a few choice exceptions), of recent uprisings in the Middle East?

In fact, "democracy" is on the US agenda in Libya, just as it is for occupied countries like Iraq and Afghanistan, but an empty "democracy" devoid of economic equality. "Democracy" for US workers is similarly being redefined by politicians like Walker and his wealthy benefactors, who want to destroy the democratic possibilities of powerful workers' unions.

After celebrating their victory, the Egyptian people find themselves facing military control and the frustration of their demands. There are even tougher battles ahead for them as they construct the democracy they fought and sacrificed so much for. Still threatened by the instabilities of the global market and the political maneuvering of the US and NATO, the Egyptian

**To be successful, we must begin addressing the true causes of the problems constantly re-created by capitalists and re-narrated by politicians**

tians are in a precarious situation.

The military might of the US and its allies is historically virulent in undermining, through overt or undercover operations, the democratic and socialist aspirations of peoples, especially in places like the Middle East and Latin America. In the upcoming months of the Egyptians' struggle, democracy and economics will be intertwined, and any solution, if it is to achieve the protestors stated aims, must address both.

For workers in Wisconsin, Washington, and across the US, the struggle must, similarly, be fought

on both fronts.

The public workers of Wisconsin are just the recently visible targets for displacing-capitalism's crises. Workers, organized or no, public or private, are similarly under the gun, even if their struggles are not national news. While the global economic crisis continues, politicians, along with capitalists all over the world, will be looking to displace its effects onto other populations and away from themselves.

What about the non-unionized, the unemployed, immigrants, and the working poor? Every one of them already bears the burden of capitalism's failures privately and the media only provides occasional and crude glimpses of their daily suffering and resistance.

The current battle is one among many for workers, and to be successful, we must begin addressing the true causes of the problems constantly re-created by capitalists and re-narrated by politicians. What does it mean for public workers in Wisconsin to have more democracy, more control over the nature and results of their work?

It's not about wages, but about power; it's about control over work and the disbursement of public money and services. What about an extension to all workers of the right to define their work, how their services, resources and products are distributed? The momentum generated from this fight can be channeled into more demands, more democracy, and the possibility of a different set of economic values. Democracy in its truest sense cannot be realized without pushing at least that far, and beyond.

**Madison cont. from pg. 1**

testing because it's their workplace. Students and parents were protesting because the bill would defund the public schools and create a horrible work environment for teachers, and particularly teacher's aids, who were cut most in this bill, along with special programs. The cuts would increase class sizes and the amount of classroom materials would go down.

This bill also affects anyone who uses public services in this state, such as the bus. A third of the transportation systems in Madison are funded by federal aid. The federal aid requires that workers have collective bargaining rights, which means we're losing a third of the funding for our bus systems in Madison and a good deal elsewhere in the state. It will be drastically cutting service to areas where people can't afford to have cars, plus cutting

Tessa: Well, in Walker's own words, he is Ronald Reagan, and this is the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) strike that Reagan broke in 1981. He's actually really good at pushing the conservative agenda, familiar to people across the country, especially in places like Indiana and Ohio.

Here, he managed to get control of the senate and the house. And in the house, a fourth of the new people elected are from the Tea Party: right-wingers who will follow Walker's lead. It's the way Walker has gone about politics ever since he was elected Milwaukee County Executive in 2002. He cut public services there, which is why the Milwaukee public school system is so much worse off than the rest of the state — he completely slashed their budget.

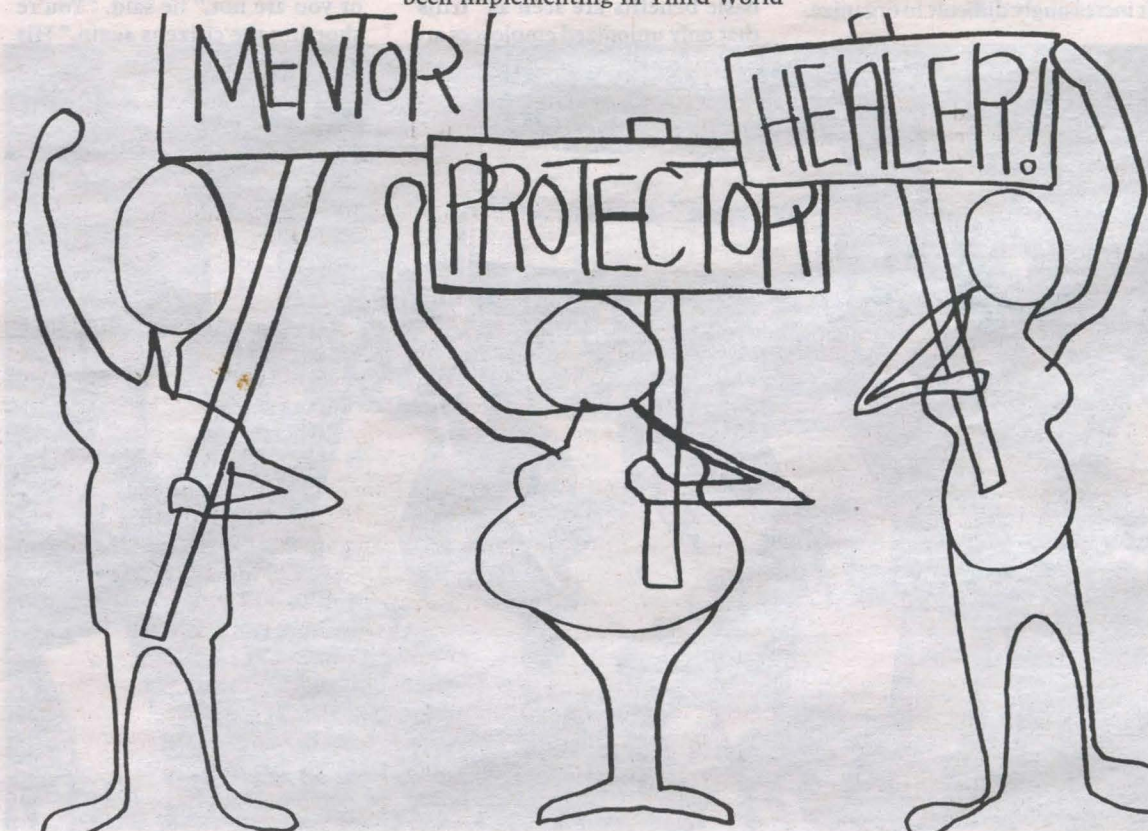
It's neoliberal policies that we've been implementing in Third World

It brings up the question of consciousness, class-consciousness, and education, because as someone who's been politicized for a long time and spends time thinking about strategy and politics, I was faced with the fact that not everyone does.

Some people don't have a strong grasp on what's happening, don't put it in a broader context, and are responding to an attack. It limits their strategy and tactics. Everyone is sitting back and reflecting at the end of the day, trying to put everything together. When I reflect, I think: we need more education.

**How do you plan on participating in that education?**

Connor: In Minneapolis, we have what we call "experimental college." The one time I left Madison during all of this was to teach a course on



Art by Croft  
a lot of jobs.

**What does what happened here mean for people across the country, especially the working class?**

Connor: It means a lot for two reasons. First it's part of a coordinated assault against state workers and social programs at the state level. The best article I've seen so far was in the Huffington Post. It talked about ALEC: basically a very low profile, high power, conservative lobbying group that many Fortune 500 corporations have a stake in.

They write legislation that will support industries who are paying them, such as legislation that the prison industry wrote in Arizona, which is all about locking up immigrants. They buy off politicians with fancy trips.

But they're not technically a Political Action Committee (PAC), so they're hard to track down. Walker has also been coordinating with other new Republican governors. Very similar legislation showed up across the Midwest, in New Jersey and Florida, all at the same time. It was a really concerted attack against public sector workers.

The second thing is that Obama's budget is doing the same thing as Walker's: implementing harsh austerity measures that are completely unwarranted. Walker cut tons of social programs so that he could give tax breaks to corporations. Obama's budget looks very similar, with just as many tax cuts for wealthy individuals and families as cuts in social programs.

People can look at the way we resisted here as a model for resisting these austerity measures elsewhere in the country. It has to happen at a national scale. It's spreading and the only way to stop it from spreading is to mount a strong enough resistance that politicians will judge it to be a bad idea for their political future.

**Why would Walker do this? Why would he create a recession situation then create a bill that attacks unions to fix it?**

countries for a long time, now being implemented in the states, which is something that has been coming for a while.

**What does Walker really get out of this? What does his ideal world look like?**

Tessa: Well, Walker gets richer through the corporations that support him, like Koch Industries. They are in power plants, and our public plants get privatized, or sold to private companies, in Walker's bill. Privatizing increases the profits of people who are able to buy public goods cheap and reap big profits. But to me, a lot of it is designed to break unionized labor.

Getting rid of unions means Walker and the state government wouldn't have to worry about wages and safety and all of the things that go along with having an organized labor force.

**What kind of alternative would you propose to Walker's plans? Was there an alternative proposed during the protests?**

Connor: Here, people proposed taxing the rich and that's exactly what needs to happen. There wasn't a budget crisis, it was fabricated, and there are tons of corporations that aren't taxed at all. Taxing corporations has become another common demand here. Wisconsin has some of the lowest corporate tax rates in the country. Verizon, for example, pays \$0 in taxes to this state.

At the same time, the broader economic crisis is not going away - it's not a rhetorical point. Taxing the rich, while it isn't going to hurt the economy, isn't enough to address the national and global economic crisis, which is a much bigger problem. A federal jobs program would lessen the pain that the crisis is causing.

**What does being in a socialist organization have to do with this?**

Connor: For me, it means that you put this in light of a broader struggle and a more long-term movement. I've been forced to think about this.

the economic crisis. It's a free community course, anyone can take it, and anyone can teach courses.

There's also a study group that *Solidarity* organizes and other groups, *Wisconsin Wave* and *Wisconsin Resists*, are putting on an educational event, popular education style, on neoliberalism. It's just a basic concept that people don't know.

Neoliberalism is basically the political response that the ruling class came up with during the last economic crisis in the 1970s. The idea was to solve the crisis by both pushing down wages, which meant destroying the unions, and opening up the Third World to more intense exploitation.

This goes hand-in-hand with them taking a lot more power through the state, and using it to break working class power. It also meant propagating right-wing ideas, such as lowering wages and creating more competition.

**What ended up happening when thousands of people showed up at the capitol? Did a group take control? How did people decide what to do and how to do it?**

Tessa: That was one of the amazing things and one of the downfalls of the rallies and protests. Nobody expected tens of thousands of people to show up at the capitol.

I was there on the first day, and there were about 300 of us. It was a typical thing and we thought, a lot of people turned out, that was awesome. We went back out and a couple hundred had shown up. Then there were a couple thousand and people just kept coming. Eventually there were 8,000 people and then 10,000 and finally around 70,000 people here.

There was no concept that that was going to happen before hand, on either side. Most of the organizing, planning, and strategizing were happening day by day. One of the first nights at 9:00 pm, there was a finance committee meeting about

## Lessons in Being Green: Biomass and Participation at Evergreen

C.V. Rotondo

In October 2010, the Counter Point Journal published an extensive story about Evergreen's biomass gasification project. A biomass gasification facility was proposed as a way to reduce the college's dependence upon natural gas for heating buildings and water and support the campus' Climate Action Plan (CAP), a major component of which is carbon neutrality by 2020.

Though the project had been underway since the fall of 2009, when the Clean Energy Committee (CEC) voted to commit student funds to a feasibility study, the beginning of the 2010 - 2011 school year saw open conflict between opponents of the project and the college administrators and staff working to make biomass a reality.

Opponents of the project claimed victory on April 1, after Steve Trotter, Chair of the Sustainability Council and Executive Director of Operational Planning and Budget, sent an email to Evergreen staff, faculty, and the campus listserv, TescCrier, stating that the biomass project was not moving forward.

Much has occurred between our October story and the announcement of the project's termination, and it's important that the events surrounding Evergreen's bid for biomass be recounted. Hopefully the tale of biomass will lend lessons to the future pursuit of alternative energy systems at Evergreen.

According to Dani Madrone, an Evergreen senior, intern at the Center for Community-Based Learning and Action, and recent co-author and editor of a biomass study produced by the program: Applied Research: Biomass, Energy, and Environmental Justice, community engagement

about the biomass project has been fraught from the beginning. "In the fall quarter, I had talked to the *Counter Point* about my vision for how this process should go: a community-based learning environment, in which the school learned along with the community," Madrone explained during a recent interview.

"Over the summer (2010), I had done a lot of outreach. People were confused as to why Evergreen was pursuing this and some were convinced that it was a really bad idea," she continued. However, reflecting on an initial student forum held in October, Madrone was hopeful. "That was a pretty good experience, not to say there was any agreement reached, but there were at least connections made and more understanding between the varied perspectives."

Following this forum, Madrone organized a successful presentation by Dr. Mark Harmon, a faculty at Oregon State University and a renowned carbon forest cycle expert. Harmon lectured in two programs and presented a community lecture that included the Masters in Environmental Science program. "What he brought to the table is the reality of the challenge of managing a carbon cycle. It's such a complex topic, every single day we learn something new that could lead to serious accounting errors," explained Madrone.

According to Madrone, the ongoing research into biomass was enhanced by Harmon's insights. "The question got so much bigger after he came — as it should have. Had he come with a simple answer, he wouldn't have contributed to the

Biomass cont. pg. 8

and all of a sudden people e, "Hey, you going to spend t in the capitol?" "Maybe I'll night in the capitol." "Can we "Maybe we can do that." And ist got their sleeping bags and ave for weeks.

usly, as that went along orga- began to form out of it. The al groups that claim hierar- these things began to emerge: ns, the labor beauracrats. They ganizing for the ends they They wanted collective bar- rights restored and automatic d that was it.

ere was the Student United , which is the student govern- at connects all the different ty of Wisconsin campuses. puses were a large part of the bill proposed to separate lison from the rest of the uni- and start to privatize it. So were very involved, because ition was going to go up 20 next year.

groups tried to curtail the the protest. They said: "Actu- only want these things. In fact, ke all the concessions you e just want collective bargain- e original chant was "Kill the people changed the chant to Whole Bill," because we were

**people who have the organization and the money actually become the mics because they have microphones and the mics**

o fight against people claim- ership of the movement when ally wasn't leadership of the ent.

in a small group of eight who were staying in the capi- broke up into small groups to ut why we came to the capitol, win would look like, why we it was an important place to y group had a corrections of- was there because his union e dissolved if the bill passed, ly woman from a Native res- a up north who was undergo- notherapy and "Badger Care," onsin health care system that her Kemo, was going to be cut. was actually going to die if the through. There were also two kids and a teacher.

ll of those people wanted dif- nings and a win looked differ- ch of them. So it was very hard ize people, even just get the of food, bedding, and health-

end it was the people who ol of the logistics who ended ming the police liaisons, and p controlling the movement e capitol, because they were ple went to with questions ood or bedding. So they be- kespeople. That was pre- ntly Organized Council and ed Labor because they had the s and the money to be able to gs to people.

s what happens when you ve an organized protest: the ho have the organization and ey will actually become the ecause they have the micro- and the speakers.

ey can create a list of speakers pitol and all talk the same line yone will think that's what ev- lse is thinking. It's a very easy ontrol a crowd that's not orga-

**participating in the protest changed**

or: What's happened has been teresting because no one's ontrol of it. That's a really situation then I'm used to as ist. No one's really in control, ust happen as they happen. tegize with a small group of ho are around for what you're o do in the next hour, maybe morning. It's totally different.

It really forces anyone, no matter their politics, to recognize that they're not in control. For most people, you're not going to be in control and the process is going to be democratic, as much as a spontaneous action can be democratic.

**What happens now that the bill has been passed? How do people move forward, what are you working on?**

Tessa: Walker signed the bill and put it on the books, despite a restraining order against the bill in the courts. Nobody really knows what that means yet. That might just piss off the courts to some extent. But right now the Supreme Court is very conservative.

I'm getting more into my comfort zone with organizing, which is fighting against something that already exists, rather than trying to prevent something from passing. I felt like the protests were a stalling tactic — Walker always had the votes, he was going to pass it. We just stalled it for a month, which is important in its own way, but everything was very symbolic up until this point.

The way I see it, the most important struggles now are going to be workplace struggles: work stoppages and slowdowns, coming in late, building up to the ability for unions to strike. None of the unions here are really organized enough to call a strike. They haven't had a strike in so long, only a few people in the unions have ever gone on strike or know how to organize one.

Also, the union membership isn't politicized enough to go on strike. So I think the important thing now is education in the unions and working on small actions that build up to actually having strikes.

Particularly now that a lot of the unions are without contracts, they don't have collective bargaining or dues collection—they don't have the money or the power to strike. It would be more like striking to get a union than it would be a union going out on strike.

I've been focusing my energies since leaving the capitol on pushing issues of how the bill is going to affect people of color and raising class consciousness. A lot of people were saying this is killing the "middle class" of America.

Groups I'm a part of are saying this is an attack on working class people—we're not middle class Americans. Most of the people who are really going to be affected by this bill are working class and poor people. So education has been really helpful.

I'm also working on boycott campaigns against the corporations that supported Walker. People are starting to put together that Walker got into office and can do what he's doing because he's backed by these giant corporations. So, along with Walker, we should be targeting the corporations funding Walker because he can be replaced. It's the corporations who really benefit from this.

I also got a job working on representative recalls, which I'm not particularly excited about because I don't think this fight will be won in the legislature. I don't have very much faith in the system, especially the Democrats, which is who will run against Republicans.

One important thing that recall does is empower people to realize that they can actually change government if its not working for them. That sort of empowerment is the thing I'm interested in a lot of people getting. Oh wait, if you really piss me off, I can recall you.

I think that's a small step in the direction of figuring out that you need to make the government do what you want, rather than just listening to the government. A big thing we've seen in the last month is the mass radicalization of people who don't then know what to do with it.

Small wins, like recalls, are really important for people recently radicalized, to continue to push the envelope and do more, instead of getting disillusioned and fed up.

**What lessons do you take away from this experience?**

Tessa: Something I learned in the capitol was that I need to be more outgoing. People who were outgoing and talkative with people, checking in and chatting, really brought people together. At a protest, I have the mentality that I take care of myself and my affinity group, or the people I'm there with, because I'm used to things turning violent very quickly.

I was very much in that mindset in the capitol. If stuff goes down, this is who I need to watch out for and this is who I'll leave the building with. I didn't relax and take the time to actually have more radical conversations with people and bring them together so they would feel more comfortable organizing rather than being solitary. There were a lot of people there from across the state who didn't know anyone else in the capitol. They could've been brought in and their voices heard.

The unions fucked shit up for everybody. Not rank-and-file workers, the union beauracrats. I went into so many meetings with the state heads of SEIU (Service Employees International Union), the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor — Congress of Industrial Organizations), and AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees), and they were horrible. They were just like the Democratic Party, asking: "How do we get these people to do what we want, then go home?"

It's hard to build awareness of this kind of thing with people at a protest. It's hard to tell people that the people who are on that microphone are not actually looking out for you at all.

How to deal with the Democrats is something I don't do well. They were able to co-opt a lot of the energy and funnel it towards the Democratic Party. The idea was, "oh, the Democrats are saying no. The Democrats are the people's government." They became heroes in the state, especially the fourteen Democrats who fled.

There were so many chants about them: the "Fabulous Fourteen." I kept trying to point out to people that we made them leave, they didn't leave because they wanted to, they realized they had to if they wanted any chance of being reelected.

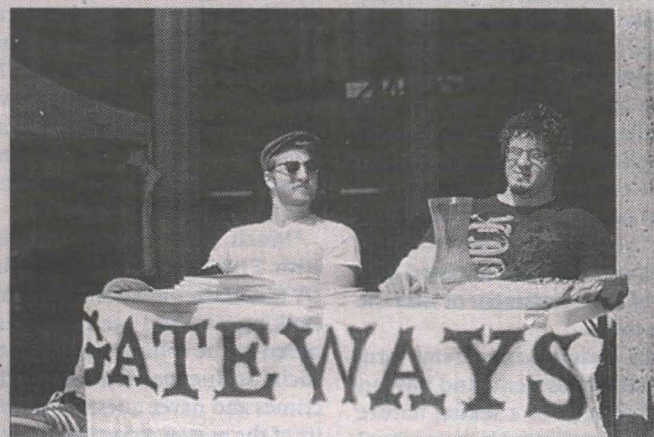
Really people should have been doing more organizing in the workplace rather than focusing so much energy on the capitol. Though I think the capitol was a very important centerpiece for the rest of the country and state to be able to see. I heard countless stories from people in towns up north and east about how they were able to keep going with protests in their cities because of what was happening at the capitol.

Symbolically, it was very important, but strategically, in the long haul, it didn't get us further in the workplaces when workers still had collective bargaining. We didn't get that far because everyone poured energy and money into the capitol; a lot of people believed they were going to stop the bill. We should have done more community work.



Oscar Overlund-Petros. Photo by Croft.

## Gateways for Incarcerated Youth



Volunteers tabling for Gateways outside the Evergreen library. Photo by Croft.

What follows is an interview with Oscar Overlund-Petros, College Support Coordinator with the Gateways for Incarcerated Youth Program

**Tell us your history with Gateways.**

I was a student in the Gateways program under professor Tony Zaragoza in the 2008 — 2009 school year. I studied with anywhere from 12-20 youth at Maple Lane Juvenile Institution with the Evergreen college class students. During this time, our class helped raise over \$8,000 for the program.

My second year in Gateways (2009-2010) I was a volunteer, developing materials for the African-American Culture Group at Green Hill and Maple Lane. Then I was recruited to be an intern and as which I attended weekly African-American Culture Group Meetings, Gateways staff meetings, and helped with various office duties. After a few quarters of mentoring a group of anywhere from 10-20 youth, I applied for the Gateways Staff Position as a senior at Evergreen and thankfully got the position.

**What do you do for Gateways?**

Currently, I am the College Support Coordinator. I help Chico Herbison (Faculty Lead of Gateways) with the College Class Program at Green Hill Juvenile Institution. With the help of a college class student, we hold study groups twice a week to assist the young men in the college class with reading, writing, and storytelling.

I also interview youth & work on individual writing projects with extremely dedicated youth. I also help coordinate the four Culture Groups at Green Hill with the honorable help of four volunteer group mentors. There's an African American group, Chicano group, Asian Pacific Islander group, and Native American group who meet as often as possible to work on culturally relevant activities (sweat lodge ceremonies, group seminars, murals, and more).

**How does your work fit into the Gateways Program?**

The College Class Program is one aspect of Gateways. Currently, there are three main components of the program: The College Class, The Academic Mentoring Program, and support for the Culture Groups. In the past, we've had other programs such as an online class, but due to budget cuts we had to stop those programs.

**What effects do budget cuts have on Gateways?**

Maple Lane is closing. It was scheduled to close in 2013 but it looks like the close was expedited, so the close

is scheduled for June 2011. What it means for the program is that we're going to have to close our relationship with Maple Lane very shortly. Winter 2011 will be the last quarter for the College Class and support for the Culture Groups at Maple Lane. The Academic Mentoring Program will continue going to Maple Lane until all the youth we are working with no longer reside there.

What it means for Green Hill is that we're experiencing major staff changes, so there's a lot of tension out there. You have Maple Lane staff with seniority entering Green Hill which pushes the short time staff out. The youth are feeling it too because the culture groups can't meet as often as they'd like.

**How is Gateways dealing with these changes?**

We're expecting no funding from Evergreen for tuition for the incarcerated youth we work with in the College Class, which we've had for two years.

**What does it mean for the Gateways Evergreen program?**

The class has two to four faculty already in place for future classes. Funding for the College Class isn't going anywhere because it is a full-time, high demand class. The issue we face is tuition waivers/funds and how we can locate them for the (incarcerated) guys who put in their work to try and earn college credit. But rest assured, the Program will be around in some fashion. There's a huge waitlist for the class, and always has been.

**What's the tuition issue?**

In the past, Gateways students, volunteers, and community members have helped put on fundraisers to raise money for tuition and books. Since the youth don't have funding to pay for their own tuition and books, it's on us to figure that out.

The idea is that if they leave prison with college experience and credit, they are more likely to attend higher education and get accepted into college than if they didn't have that experience and credit. Currently, two credits at Evergreen costs \$407.20 and is rising with budget cuts.

**How do people plug in, how can they help?**

On Sunday, June 5th, we are having our 3rd Annual Co-Ed Kickball Tournament to raise funds for the program. It is one of the most popular events on campus and draws 150 people. It is family friendly and open to the public. It starts at 10:00 am, rain or shine! Registration is \$10 per person. Teams have to be 8-12 people and co-ed. Get your registration packets at the Gateways Office at Sem 2 E2126 or online at: gateways.evergreen.edu. See you there!



**Silent cont. from pg. 6**

You cited the Pentagon's "basic standards" to dismiss P.J. Crowley's claim but you failed to mention their origin where Abu Ghraib made its name.

I want you to resign like LBJ did that day when he told Americans sick of war the political game he wouldn't play.

There were a hundred thousand in Madison just the other day and even though you ignored it they ain't going away.

You're too young to remember why capital made a pact there was industrial warfare and labor was on the attack.

Now your Republican allies are reversing all state protection but these short sighted losers don't even see the connection.

It wasn't for labor that capital made the deal many of these protections were aimed to calm the working class' zeal.

Now, there are new leaders out there and they will make us proud when we tell them to step up and lead our newly politicized crowd.

There is no doubt about it the right wing will eat itself but you are no alternative just a never-been on the shelf.

**Dan Leahy**

3/17/11

was never clear. The nearness of both the Olympia port protests and the dead prez concert, coupled with allegations, on campus and off, that SDS orchestrated both, led the group to claim the suspension was politically motivated.

In response, SDS and its supporters occupied the hallway leading to Art Costantino's temporary office in the Seminar I building. They demanded the reinstatement of SDS and a new student group discipline policy, created by students. The occupation and subsequent negotiations lasted until the night before graduation in June 2008, when the occupiers were granted their demands.

The 2008-2009 school year was a time of heightened tension, always present at Evergreen, between critics of Israel's occupation of Palestine, and apologists for Israel's policies. Siia Shalom, a now defunct student group, which Phan Nguyen called a "little Israeli lobby," in a Counterpoint Journal article, was created on campus.

The debate between the newly created group and long-standing Palestinian liberation organizers on campus took center stage in the Cooper Point Journal (CPJ), the college's only newspaper at the time. The polemics grew in hostility, incorporating defamation of individuals and falsified quotes from Martin Luther King Jr.

Attempts to redress both the defamation and false quotations were met with intransigence by the CPJ staff. After several meetings, the paper announced a decision to stop publishing any pieces about the Israel-Palestine conflict because, allegedly, anything more would only further erode civil dialogue. With the college's official print media closed to them, artists, organizers, and writers employed other means to engage the issue.

Student artists in particular decided to take the issue directly to the college community with a bit of political theater. One spring morning in 2009,

the Evergreen administration, the Cooper Point Journal staff and their student, faculty, and staff supporters, set about creating and maintaining a particular image of the college. Students (and faculty) became the targets of what was deemed a "witch hunt" following the dead prez concert and the sharp curtailment of their free speech rights.

The silence, in the name of civility, of the college's "official" media seemed to sanction these actions. This image of Evergreen was tailored to legislators, local, state and national publics (the port protests made national and international news). This image is worryingly similar to that corporate-leaning, docile university that Wolach's statement rallied against.

We currently face an incarnation of this allegedly "apolitical" rhetoric from the college administration on last spring's student vote to divest, or revoke college money, from Israeli

**The revised code is still very much a refinement of the traditional punitive model found at Brand X College**

companies and those that do business with Israel. A Student Conduct Code created in this time of volatile politics and shifting public sentiment must be considered carefully. I sat down with Evergreen constitutional law professor José Gomez to do just that.

Gomez has direct experience with the proposed revisions to the conduct code. In May 2010, DTF members visited his program to solicit feedback from students. The students' criticisms, noted in Appendix C of the DTF's report (available on their website) focused on standard of proof and a requirement that students report if they witness violations of the code.

The proposed code uses the standard "more likely than not," to

"Uniformity of standards of evidence would be easy; it's the easy way out. But to lump all of the potential violations under that one standard is inappropriate. The potential cost to students is just too great," says Gomez. Responding to the DTF's concern that the "ultimate sanction" wouldn't be known ahead of time, Gomez says, "It should be possible to say that those violations with the potential to result in suspension or expulsion require a higher standard of evidence."

Regarding the DTF's claim that "more likely than not" is the standard for conduct codes at college's across the country, Gomez responds, "Evergreen has been known to lead the way on certain things and this [a higher standard of proof] might be one." Gomez then considered the revised language of a section also criticized by his students last spring: failing to assist in the application of the Code.

In response to criticisms of this section, the DTF changed the language. It now reads: "failing to intervene with conduct that constitutes damage to property or a danger to the health or personal safety of an individual." "By narrowing it to those things that are really serious, that any reasonable person would be concerned about, they've taken care of the snitching thing," responds Gomez.

He continues, "There are certain things that you can report to authorities that don't take on the quality of snitching. It expects a certain amount of responsibility from community members for the community that we're a part of." Another place where specifics would be helpful is the language prohibiting "realistic replica" weapons.

The code sites "the possession or use of any instrument designed to cause harm, or realistic replica of such instrument, which might reasonably threaten or cause fear or alarm to others." Though the pen is allegedly mightier than the sword, student artists used realistic replicas in political theater in the spring of 2009 when the college's newspaper disavowed their words.

Though Evergreen is lauded as an alternative institution, the once unarmed campus security has evolved into an armed police force. Gomez addressed the issue carefully and in the context of "many tragic active shooter incidents at schools and colleges over the past several years." "I do not think it unreasonable to prohibit such replicas generally," he says. "However, I think that the prohibition is unreasonably broad. There should be an exception that allows the use of such replicas in performances, whether on stage or in street theatre." In considering the design of an appeal board, specificity was also central.

While the primary focus of the grievance process is "informal resolution," there is the option, at the Student Conduct Code Administrator's (SCCA) discretion, to impose formal resolutions. If a resolution decided

by the SCCA is unsatisfactory to the accused student, that student can appeal.

When this happens, a lot rests on the VPSA. The board designed to hear appeals is made up of three students, one staff, and one faculty member. The code grants the faculty agenda committee the right to designate their representative. Students and staff allegedly have no such bodies. In the name of expediency, the choosing of student and staff members is put in the hands of the VPSA, to be done through "an open selection process established by the Vice President."

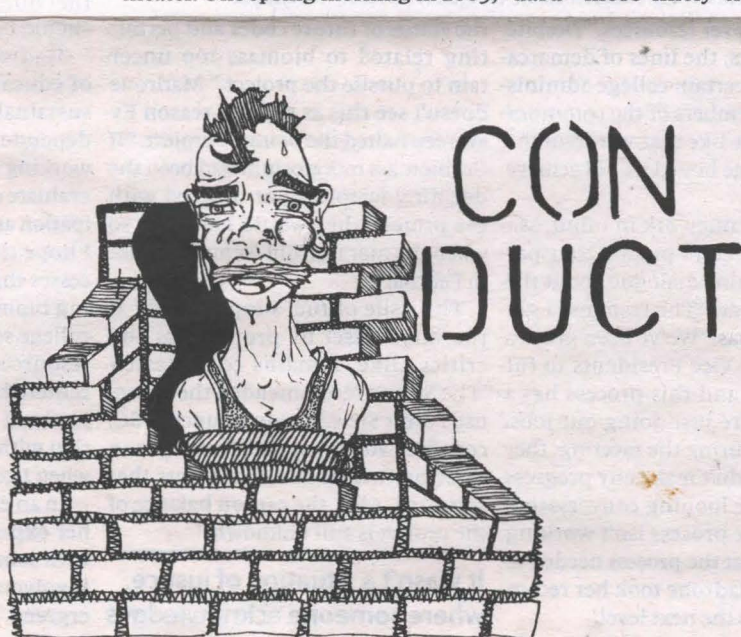
"So what does it mean that the student and staff members of the board will be designated by an open selection process?" asks Gomez. The student filing an appeal may request the removal of board members, but this comes after the fact, once the members have already been designated. "They've already been chosen; they're there. They think they're going to serve and that puts a much heavier burden on the person objecting to someone on the panel," explains Gomez. He had an alternative idea.

"One way to fix this is to have a pool of students at the beginning of each year or each quarter who've agreed to serve on an appeal board. You'd have a pool of students who are potential panel members, who are then selected by the panel, not the VPSA. Each side would be able to designate [students] and each side would have the right to veto someone or object." Gomez had broader ideas about the code as well, ideas based on restorative justice.

"It's clear that providing an informal resolution option in the revised student conduct code recognizes the desirability of providing alternative approaches to the traditional punitive justice model," Gomez begins. "That seems to open the door a crack to alternative responses to wrongdoing, but the revised code is still very much a refinement of the traditional punitive model found at Brand X College."

What he envisions is a conduct code in which "restorative justice is the rule, not the exception." This would require "a major cultural shift away from punishment as the answer to disciplinary problems," he says, and could be accomplished by creating systems of "peer mediation, dispute resolution, peer decisions about restitution, and peer counseling."

In his final comment on what a student conduct code for Evergreen could be, Gomez echoes his response to the Task Force's intransigence on standards of proof. "As an alternative school that prides itself on innovation, we need to do more to develop effective models for addressing misconduct."



Art by Croft

**Conduct cont. from pg 3**

coaches. The punishments included suspension from college sports along with criminal charges and the attendant costs of lawyers and court fees. At an infamous public forum following the "Valentine's Day Riot," Evergreen president Les Purce ingratiatingly offered students, faculty, and staff an anecdote about a party mishap during his childhood for which he'd been punished, concluding with the admonishment that we needed to "clean up our house."

Until we did, we were collectively punished, on top of the ongoing "investigation," by a "concert ban," which prohibited concerts on campus until a new policy was drawn up. Students, especially those engaged in overt political activity, quickly learned what kind of political tool the ban could be.

The spring of 2008 saw the suspension of a student group, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), for allegedly violating the concert ban, or Student Activities procedure, or both. It

students, faculty, and staff found their way onto Red Square blockaded by a section of concrete wall and folks in fatigues, apparently armed, aggressively demanding identification.

All morning, the college was witness to this mock Israeli checkpoint, a tame glimpse into the world of Palestinians, and Israelis for that matter, under occupation. Complaints from staff, students, and campus police became allegations and threats of sanction against the students involved.

At a public forum organized by the artists and their supporters, primarily the student group Mid-East Solidarity Project (MSP), adjunct faculty David Wolach read a prepared statement defending not only this particular political theater, but political theater in general, warning that a corporate-leaning, anesthetized university was a threat to critical education. His statement, along with articles on the street theater and free speech, were published in the newly created Counterpoint Journal.

During the events and public dialogues of these years, members of

ing a very low standard, of a charge that could potentially carry criminal charges, it could serve as a bridge between the college and law enforcement in ways that may not be appropriate," Gomez explains.

Violations that may result in suspension or expulsion, which Gomez's students likened to "the death penalty of academia," "just cry out for a higher standard of evidence, like beyond a reasonable doubt," he says. In their final report, the DTF claimed that incorporating different standards of proof for different offenses "could be counterproductive when dealing with some misconduct such as sexual assault, because it may discourage survivors from making a complaint."

They go on to say it's impractical to switch standards of proof because it's not always clear "what the ultimate sanction may be for alleged misconduct," and "multiple standards of proof suggest a more legalistic approach," undesirable for a college conduct code that is allegedly based on restorative justice.

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**Biomass cont. from pg. 4**

inquisitiveness of academics. The conversations that needed to take place started to happen." Harmon's insights weren't enough, however, to mend fissures in the communication between the college and the surrounding community.

"Evergreen received a 3.7 million dollar grant from the Department of Commerce to proceed with the biomass gasification facility. I learned that they received the grant and I insisted that someone tell the public about this news. The people should hear it from Evergreen rather than find out some other way. They ended up finding out some other way. I don't know if this lack of transparency was intentional. Maybe they didn't want to let people know about the grant for fear they would freak out. Maybe there was just no specific person delegated that task. Either way, it was a definite flaw in the process."

After news of the grant got out, Madrone organized a public dialogue on carbon neutrality as a follow-up to the lecture by Mark Harmon. At the forum, the group identified the objectives, constraints, and stakeholders for the task of replacing Evergreen's heating system as a step toward the college's goal of carbon neutrality.

Evergreen officials formally announced the grant from the Department of Commerce and two economists from the community presented the economic challenges of biomass at Evergreen. According to Madrone, "There was really great representation at the dialogue: there were students, faculty, staff and administrators of the college. There were also a few community members, some opposed and some ambivalent.

We identified the problem: the problem is not that Evergreen needs a biomass gasifier; the problem is that Evergreen is burning natural gas, which is contributing to climate change. We also talked about the biomass process and there was even a pivotal time during the conversation in which everyone agreed on something regarding the decision-making process.

There was specific language that was agreed upon to ensure that people who participated in the community engagement were not wasting their time. That was a big step towards building trust and relationships so that we could continue the dialogue on 'this issue.' Unfortunately, indicative of events to follow, what was agreed upon never actually happened.

Soon after the dialogue, John Hurley, Vice President of Finance and Administration, testified to the state about the 3.7 million dollar grant from the Department of Commerce the school had received. In a testimony to the House Capital Budget Committee on December 9, 2010, he said: "We will begin our permitting process shortly and this facility is expected to start construction in the summer of 2011."

This was a validation of Madrone's warning to the college and a blow to the project's community engagement. "Of course, people freaked out at that. It was a big lack of transparency on the part of Evergreen." In light of the fact that the Sustainability Council was telling people no decision had

been made and research was ongoing, a meeting was organized with Hurley about his testimony. "John wrote a letter to the Council, stating that he misrepresented their work, but, he had to do it because that's the nature of the game for finance and administration." Despite Hurley's explanation, this lack of transparency was the beginning of the end of Madrone's official involvement in the project.

"It got to a point where what I was doing was no longer welcome at Evergreen, because, as it was said to me, I kept stirring up people who were upset about the issue. My view was that I was trying to engage people to participate so we could have a more consensus-building process, but that was not working with the timeline of financing the project. The college had to let the Department of Commerce know by the end of March whether or not they were going to accept the funding and, well, consensus building takes time, patience, and stakeholder involvement." Lack of transparency and college administrators' unwillingness to participate in community engagement led her to officially withdraw from the process in January.

"I expressed my opposition to the process because of a document that Evergreen submitted to the Thurston County Commissioners during their briefing on the biomass moratorium." In a document submitted to the County, titled Shared Values, Healthier Community, Environment and Future, there is a timeline that describes Madrone's work to engage the public over the summer, stating that it was "supported by Evergreen's Sustainability Council and Sustainability Coordinator."

According to Madrone, "It made me angry because my work was only well-supported when it suited everyone and I was the one taking the brunt of the force of opposition in the community. I made promises of collaboration and transparency. But as soon as my work started impeding the process of funding the project, it was no longer supported." Despite withdrawing, Madrone continued the work of educating students and the public about the project, and pushing for more transparency.

"Not only did I continue to speak to the community about the progress of the project, but I also continued to receive their input and deliver their comments to the College. One person from the community requested that Evergreen follow the process of the State Environmental Policy Act for the CAP. I looked into this request by reading the CAP more in depth, and what I discovered shocked me. Evergreen wasn't even following its own plan for reaching carbon neutrality."

Indeed, the document that is intended to bring Evergreen to the forefront of the sustainability movement reads that, in 2011, a "Renewable Energy disappearing task force is required to study current renewable energy options and best practices, effective community engagement, acquire community opinions, and recommend future action steps pertaining to on-site energy generation." Should biomass be chosen through this process, it would be pursued in the 2013-15 biennium.

"I ended up withdrawing from the process after giving my recommen-

dations to the Sustainability Council (SC). I expressed the need to halt the current process because of the damaged relationship with the community. Also, we couldn't make a good decision because there were too many unanswered questions and not enough time for research.

With a lack of consensus in the scientific community, it is important to allow time for the analysis to develop. We needed to save the human resources that were being dumped into this project and improve our relations with the community." Community engagement wasn't just part of the formula for Madrone. For her, there are bigger questions about how sustainability really works.

"You can't force sustainability onto a community. People have a fragmented vision of where society needs to go to ensure a future on this planet. It's important that we work on building consensus around these issues so that we can work together on the solutions."

"If you try to force sustainability onto the world, by saying 'we're going to do this for your own good,' you start to develop enemies. As resources become more and more scarce, we need to get along, not fight with each other.



Biomass protest at Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA) in Olympia

We fight wars over resources." Despite her best efforts, the lines of demarcation between certain college administrators and members of the community looked more like that war than the accord Madrone hoped would achieve real solutions.

With this framework in mind, Madrone continued to pursue transparency and genuine dialogue about the biomass project. "The response I got from the SC was: 'We've been given a charge by the Vice Presidents to fulfill a process, and this process has a deadline. We're just doing our jobs.' At one point during the meeting, they said they couldn't make any progress because of the looping conversation about how the process isn't working. I suggested that the process needed to change." So Madrone took her recommendations to the next level.

"I delivered the same recommendations to the Vice Presidents. I asked them to rescind their charge to the SC. No response. I went and talked with Art Costantino, Vice President of Student Affairs, in person. He seemed to understand the issue. He recalled the time that Evergreen wanted to construct a roundabout at the entrance to the school.

First they made a decision without consulting the community. There was serious backlash, so they decided to renew the process with community engagement. Though not everyone was completely satisfied with the result there was more understanding about the issue. He received my comments and said that he would bring them to the table when they received the report back from the SC. I told him that I thought it would be too late to wait until then." When the Vice Presidents did not respond to her requests, Madrone went to the top, so to speak. "I wrote a letter to Les Purce, president of the College."

"I had the letter endorsed by many members of the campus and local community. I asked for the same things: that we honor the moratorium, follow the Climate Action Plan, that

something be done to create a policy on public participation, and that the students get back the \$125,000 from the Clean Energy Committee (CEC) that was put towards the research." The response seemed to indicate a pattern.

"I actually met with Les, but I'm not sure what came from the conversation. It was the same response: he will make a decision by the deadline for the Department of Commerce (end of March). My response: we need to decide sooner because our relationship with the community is degrading day by day as this process continues."

While the project has officially come to a close, at least temporarily, and though some of Madrone's demands have been met, the underlying questions of process, student participation, and communication with the surrounding community continue to go unanswered.

The biomass moratorium is being adhered to because of the project's closure as stated in a letter to the campus community from Steve Trotter on April 1, "The moratorium not only leaves us unable to proceed for nearly a year (a significant reason we declined the Commerce grant), but it also leaves



the status of future codes and permitting related to biomass too uncertain to pursue the project." Madrone doesn't see this as the real reason Evergreen halted the biomass project. "If the biomass moratorium had been the deciding factor to not proceed with the project, they would have said so when the moratorium went into place in February."

The issue of fuel supply, raised at the very outset by proponents and critics alike, remains complicated. "The SC has recommended the school use Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood, but there's not yet an existing fuel stream that meets that standard. Also, the carbon balance of the project is still unknown."

**It wasn't a situation of justice, where someone acknowledges that something went wrong and the students' money shouldn't go to that purpose. It was more a loss of power in this situation**

"Is FSC certified forestry balanced enough to say that biomass is carbon neutral? Another element that has been ignored in the evaluation of this project is the social impact. Is a project such as this acceptable to the campus or the community? What can be done to educate people about the challenges of renewable energy?" Despite unanswered concerns about process and carbon neutrality, there have been certain victories thanks to Madrone's efforts.

"I had been asking that the the \$125,000 of student money that came from the CEC be returned. I asked the SC, the VPs, and then the president of the college, but this request was overlooked. So I went to the CEC and submitted a proposal requesting that they revoke this grant because of a lack of student participation and a lack of transparency, two things that were identified in the award letter."

Unlike her other venues for hold-

ing the college accountable, the CEC responded by writing a letter to Les Purce stating that something went wrong with this project. There was not enough student participation. They told Purce they were going to vote on whether or not they would revoke the grant.

The CEC also offered "some opportunity for amelioration," by asking for three things. First, a Disappearing Task Force (DTF) on renewable energy - a component of the campus' CAP. Second, a DTF on public participation, so "there's some kind of process set up or at least guidelines for a process to address issues of controversy. According to Madrone, "So students and community members have a way to be involved when they're affected by the actions of the college." Finally, they asked that Purce honor the biomass moratorium.

"He responded with a report from John Hurley, and his understanding was that the plan was to spend the student money last all along, and that there was at least \$125,000 left in the budget. He also said, with the budget crisis, he cannot commit to any more work for next year, including additional DTFs." So the students' money would be returned, but not in the manner that Madrone had hoped. "It wasn't a situation of justice, where someone acknowledges that something went wrong and the students' money shouldn't go to that purpose. It was more a loss of power in this situation."

Despite this, Madrone still holds the return of the money as a victory. "I am really glad that the students' money did not fund this project, and I think it would have had it passed unnoticed. I'm still pursuing the other demands and I also need to acknowledge that the budget cuts are very real. The staff, faculty and administration are stretched thin and if we need to take a step back from sustainability goals to get through the budget then that dialogue should be on the table."

Madrone continues her pursuit of education and dialogue around sustainability in the form of an independent learning contract. "I'm working on a project this quarter to evaluate case studies of public participation and governance at Evergreen. I hope to evaluate some of the processes that have taken place, including biomass. I'm trying to give the college some recommendations and resources for a process that can be centered on consensus building and justice. I want to leave this information with the Evergreen community when I go."

In an effort to share the wisdom of her experience, Madrone leaves us with some comments about student involvement in governance at Evergreen. "There are few options for students to effect change on campus, and you must be incredibly persistent to be involved in the available processes."

"It can be very discouraging to have your concerns go overlooked, but if you share your story you will know that you have support. That will make the difference." This may be valuable advice in the near future, even around issues of biomass.

"It's not over for biomass. The original objective has not been fulfilled. Evergreen contributes to global warming, as we all do through our habits of transportation, consumerism, and needs for comfort. Biomass has been put on hold. Many have asked for my final verdict on the issue, and the jury is still out." Similarly, in terms of sustainability, "it's not over."

"There are two schools of thought on the issues of energy in society: we need to replace our consumption of fossil fuels or we need to start a descent from high energy consumption. Business as usual versus a radical paradigm. My guess is they will meet in the middle. The unanswered question is: where?"



Biomass protest in downtown Olympia