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## Street Journal

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## UN Special Rapporteur Calls Sacramento to Task: Give Homeless Sanitation and Water!

### Staff Report

Catarina de Albuquerque, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, visited Sacramento on a fact finding mission in February 2011 investigating access to water and sanitation. This visit was part of a larger U.S. tour where she investigated other communities water and sanitation issues, such as contaminated water and water service denials to poor people. In her visit to Sacramento, she focused mostly on our homeless population and she found our City wanting and violating the human rights of its homeless residents in respects to their access to water and sanitation.

Catarina wrote a letter to Sacramento

Mayor Kevin Johnson, dated January 23, 2012, with her concerns and a plea for Sacramento to take heed of its poor treatment of homeless people that don't,

but should, have housing. She stated in the letter that the lack of adequate sanitation

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Colin Bailey speaking at Press Conference

## No fooling: National Day of Action for the Right to Exist, April 1st

By Paul Boden, WRAP

Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) and USA-Canada Alliance of Inhabitants (USACAI) are calling on our members and allies throughout the United States and Canada to join us on April 1 for a bi-national day of action to protest the ongoing criminalization of poor and homeless people in our communities. "They want us out of our community!"

"We're always told to move on, but to where? There are no places for us to be." - Survey respondents.

We are building a movement to reclaim our communities for all members: not just those who set the rents. In order to build this movement and assert our human rights, we must make clear the myriad of ways in which our community members are treated as though they are less than human. We must "connect the dots."

Over the past 30 years, neo-liberal policymakers have substituted private gain for public good; they have abandoned economic and social policies that supported housing, education, healthcare, labor, and immigration



programs. WRAP and USACAI are at work identifying and tracking such policy, legal, and funding trends in order to publicize their spread and their effects. This is not a matter of theoretical analysis: this is an investigation of the policies and tools by which more and more people have been made to suffer.

### Connecting the dots

Three decades ago, the deregulation of financial industries came simultaneously

with the withdrawal of government support for affordable housing. Just since 1995, the United States has lost over 290,588 existing units of public housing and 360,000 Section 8 units, with another 7,107 approved for demolition/disposition since March of 2011. At the same time, some 2.5 million foreclosures have taken place since 2007, an additional 6.9 million foreclosures have been initiated, and a projected 5.7 million borrowers are at risk.

In those same 15 years, over 830,000 new jail and prison cells have been built, draconian immigration laws and eligibility screening criteria have been implemented in housing, healthcare, education and jobs programs, and America's three largest residential mental health facilities are now all county jails (Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York).

### A new wave of criminalization

1982 marked the beginning of homelessness as a "crime wave" that would consume the efforts of US police forces over the next three decades. Crime statistics show that across the country, millions were sitting, lying

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Homeless Services Info

# Growing Concerns over Homeless Dying in Europe's Big Freeze

## Street News Service

As the temperature plummets in Ukraine, the death toll continues to soar with the country's homeless worst affected, calling into question the Ukrainian government's stance on homelessness and unemployment. Casualties are also reported in other European countries.

Street paper editors across Europe have reported deaths amongst homeless people as a result of the extreme cold weather. The worst casualties were in Eastern Europe.

So far, 135 people are believed to have died in Poland and a further eight deaths occurred in Romania over the weekend, bringing the total casualties there to 65.

In Serbia, which declared a state of emergency last week, street paper editors have confirmed that 22 people have now died in the cold snap.

In Berlin, Germany, a man believed to be a vendor of street paper *Strassenfeger*, was burned alive in a container whilst trying to make a fire to keep warm. The street paper said the police are investigating the death and that it has not yet received confirmation about the victim's identity.

A street paper in Hannover, Germany, also reported the deaths of two further homeless. One died in his sleep after taking shelter in a park gazebo, and the other became trapped while trying to fetch clothes out of a charity bin.

The editor of the soon-to-be-launched street paper in Greece reported deaths of five homeless people, of which two occurred in Crete, and the rest in Volos, Thessaloniki and Patra.

In Britain, the first death was reported on February 12 as temperatures in the country sank to -1F, claiming the life of one homeless man in Hull.

While statistics vary, it is estimated that the big freeze has

claimed up to 400 lives across Europe during the last two weeks, with the homeless and elderly remaining the worst affected.

The numbers remain highest in Ukraine, where over 135 people have died from the extreme cold, with the majority of victims being homeless. So far, the frozen bodies of 64 homeless people have been found in the streets of Ukraine's cities, as those sleeping rough are struggling to survive in temperatures as low as -31F.

Thousands of homeless people have already been treated in hospitals for frostbite and hypothermia, with health officials instructing hospitals not to discharge homeless patients, even after treatment, in order to spare them from the cold.

The big freeze has claimed up to 400 lives across Europe, with the homeless and elderly worst affected.

Emergency officials have confirmed that, of the Ukrainians who have died, about 60% were found frozen on the streets, 10% died in hospitals and almost 30% in their homes.

The country's emergency ministry has also set up 3,000 heated tents across the country to provide temporary refuge for Ukraine's homeless, offering them warmth, comfort, food and hot drinks. Yet government resources are being severely stretched as there are simply too many people needing help, and most are sent back to brave the bitter cold after only a few hours respite.

As the number of those freezing to death across Eastern Europe escalates, statistics show that more people have died in Ukraine than any other country, highlighting the plight of the country's homeless and the government's struggle to provide them with adequate support.

"So far the government say they have had 85,000 people applying for help. As it is, this



Photo: A woman begs for money as people pass by, with the air temperature at about 9 degrees Fahrenheit, in Kiev, Ukraine. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich

is a horrible statistic, but it also shows that these 85,000 people were not provided with any kind of help before," says Maryana Sokha, editor of street paper *Prosto Neba*, sold by homeless people in the city of Lviv.

"Today in Ukraine there are some 100 social agencies providing social services for homeless people, 30 of which are non-governmental," she continues. "The quality of the service is another issue, but is it really enough to have 100 agencies in a country with 45 million inhabitants, a quarter of which live in absolute poverty?"

Experts believe that the reason so many have died is due, not just to the bitter climate, but rather Ukraine's social and economic policies, which have contributed to more cases of homelessness on its streets than in other eastern European countries.

Still suffering from the after-effects of its economic crisis during 2008-2009, Ukraine has an unemployment rate of 8.5%, one of the worst in Europe. During the brutal cold snap, the majority of deaths occurred in eastern Ukraine, the region with the highest numbers of unemployed.

"Ukraine's problems of homelessness can be also determined by the quantity of social agencies that work here, the quality of their service and by the gen-

eral attitude of the authorities and society towards homeless people," argues Sokha. Experts have also said that a negative stance toward the homeless has contributed to the poor official response to the crisis.

Sokha also warns that the death toll in Ukraine is likely to be far more severe than currently estimated, with many deaths going unrecorded; "I believe that many homeless people will be found dead later in abandoned houses or factories where they have been trying to find shelter," she says.

"This is another opportunity to break the boundary that exists between homeless people and society"

Throughout the crisis, the government has been aided by NGO's such as "Community of mutual aid *Oselya*" which has worked with the homeless people of Lviv for the past ten years, and was the first of its kind in Ukraine. The organization helps the city's homeless through different projects like street work, day centers, training, community workshops and the street paper *Prosto Neba*.

"Every day, workers of *Oselya* provide people in the city with hot food, tea and clothing, and information about places where they can receive help," says Sokha. "We also try to find people in abandoned houses, factories or cellars and urge

them to go to hospitals or night shelters. It's very important in this country, where homeless people are not used to the fact that someone can offer them aid and compassion."

The tragic death toll of the past week sheds light on Ukraine's homeless problem and the failure of its government to address this issue. Despite its current efforts, not enough is being done to help at least 85,000 homeless people currently roaming the streets of Ukraine's cities in search of survival.

"Media coverage has raised the problem and brought about debate for possible solutions. It is reminding the public about the seriousness of Ukraine's homeless problem, so this is another opportunity to break the boundary that exists between homeless people and society," says Sokha.

She does, however, remain skeptical about the long-term impact of the 'snow emergency support': "It is good that we have authorities and organizations doing something about this situation now, and saving people's lives. I'm just afraid that they will forget about them until the next extreme cold."

[www.streetnewsservice.org/](http://www.streetnewsservice.org/)  
Street News Service



## Commercial Giants Exploit Bangladesh Workers

by Hinz und Kunzt - Germany

For years, Lidl, Aldi and the German textile discounter KiK have claimed that they care about the working conditions of the women in Bangladesh who make clothing for them. A new study shows that the only things which are improving are their advertising tactics.

The remains of the day? Nowhere near enough, especially for the woman who says, "when I work a 16-hour-day, I only have four hours left to look after my children and do the housework. I am completely exhausted. But this job is my only option."

The woman is one of 162 workers in a factory in Bangladesh which produces clothing for Aldi, Lidl and KiK. Workers at ten of their supply factories were asked to take part in a survey by the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) about their working conditions. For the past five years, the CCC has been confronting the discounters with the massive labor law violations they are committing in low-wage countries.

The Hamburg street newspaper Hinz&Kunzt also reported on social dumping and the exploitation of employees taking place in KiK supply factories. The Clean Clothes Campaign then investigated whether the situation had improved. Many workers wishing to talk to the campaign received threats from their bosses and in one of Aldi's supply factories, the investigation even had to be halted in the interests of the workers' safety.

The conclusions of the research are shocking: labor law violations resulting in undignified conditions, discrimination and sexual exploitation all continue to be part of the workers' daily lives. Most of them have no employment contract and have no idea that they have rights. Not one of the factories visited has its own works council.

40% of those surveyed reported that they have to work more than 45 hours of overtime each month. Most of them work between 13 and 15 hours a day, seven days a week. International Labor Organization conventions, however, only permit 48 regular working hours per week in addition to a maximum of 12 hours overtime. Despite the hard work they do, most workers only earn between 30 and 40 Euros each month; one in ten workers earn just 27 Euros a month or less. To provide for a family of four, however, you would need between 100 and 200 Euros.

Hinz&Kunzt confronted Aldi, Lidl and KiK with these accusations. Each of the businesses' press departments sent back a long email - but they did not give any concrete answers to our

questions. Instead, they said that they are continuing efforts to improve working conditions. Aldi mentioned the fact that it has joined the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) - membership of which is voluntary - in order to introduce lasting "social standards in supplier countries". One of Lidl's priorities is to "introduce professional training courses for selected producers", just as KiK claims to have "an audit rate of 100%" when it comes to its suppliers in Bangladesh.

They go on to say that "admittedly, we have not yet improved the situation, however our system is transparent, we are aware of the weaknesses which exist and are able to target them specifically." For the CCC, the BSCI is no more than a smokescreen for companies to hide behind in order to avoid taking responsibility themselves. The same applies to the training courses and audits for employees that Lidl and Aldi boast about in their response.

"We recognize the efforts the companies have made," says Sandra Dusch Silva, representative of the *Christliche Initiative Romero*, a member organization of the CCC. "However, these steps will not lead to any real improvement in the working conditions of their employees. Aldi, Lidl and KiK are trying to hush up their failings by presenting themselves as socially responsible."

The CCC demands that the discounters fulfill their duty of care, introduce wages which are enough to live on, make the structure of their supply chains public and ensure that suppliers comply with labor laws.

In their emails to Hinz&Kunzt, the discounters do not reveal exactly what they plan to do in the future in order to achieve this. Lidl does, however, talk of "a challenge for all companies in the retail trade" and Aldi admits "that creating structures for the introduction and reliable checking of social standards across the whole supply chain is a process which takes time." Precisely - for the workers concerned, it is taking far too long.

*Information about the study and about the Clean Clothes Campaign can be found at [www.cleanclothes.org](http://www.cleanclothes.org) and [www.sauberekleidung.de](http://www.sauberekleidung.de) (in German). You can also read Aldi, Lidl and KiK's full answers to our questions as well as reports about KiK at [www.hinzundkunzt.de/KiKundCo](http://www.hinzundkunzt.de/KiKundCo) (in German)*

*Translated from German into English by Talei Lakeland.*

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

Hinz und Kunzt - Germany

## For the Maya, the World Isn't Ending - The Environment Is

IPS

The end of the Maya long-count calendar does not predict a global catastrophe, let alone the end of the world, say native activists and elders who spoke to IPS in Guatemala. But what are coming to an end are the world's natural resources, as a result of human activity, they warn.

According to the Maya calendar, Dec. 21, 2012 will mark the end of a grand cycle of 13 144,000-day "baktuns", lasting 5,126 years.

But the end of a cycle does not mean the end of the world, and the collective hysteria triggered by the supposed 2012 Maya doomsday prediction does not at all reflect the thinking of today's Maya Indians in Guatemala.

"There are leaders who let themselves be carried away by what they hear, or because '13' has very strong energy and they are worried that a catastrophe will happen, but none of that is true," said Antonio Mendoza, an activist with Oxlajuj Ajpop, a local NGO whose name in the Maya Quiché language refers to the 13 forces represented by the Maya calendar.

On the contrary, he said, "this new stage is extremely important for reflection and analysis about human coexistence and nature," he told IPS.

According to historians, the grand cycle began on Aug. 11, 3,114 BC, and ends on Dec. 21 this year, which marks the winter solstice - and the start of a new long-count cycle.

"What does cause us a great deal of concern is how to bring people together in the effort to refocus our behaviour with respect to nature, global warming and the neoliberal

policies that only extract oil and minerals and install large factories, posing a serious threat to humanity," Mendoza said.

Maya organisations in Guatemala have planned a series of activities this year, including seminars and gatherings to discuss opportunities for development for indigenous people.

"The idea is to come together in unity and solidarity and salvage the valuable (Maya) knowledge about nature and Mother Earth," Mendoza said.

The ancient Maya civilisation was initially established around 2000 BC in present-day southern Mexico, Guatemala, western Belize and northwestern Honduras. It flourished until about 900 AD, which marked the start of the post-classic Maya period that ended with the Spanish conquest.

The contemporary Maya live in Guatemala, Belize, western Honduras and El Salvador, and five states in southeastern Mexico.

At the height of the Maya culture, during the classic period - 250 to 900 AD - it was one of the most advanced civilisations in the world, noted for its architecture and city planning, sophisticated mathematics, accurate astronomical calculations and hieroglyphic writing system.

The Maya made lasting contributions in art, literature and science. Their modern-day descendants have their own languages, traditions and customs, and the majestic archaeological sites in the areas where they live draw a steady influx of tourists and academics.

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Photo Courtesy [www.publicdomainpictures.net/Gruhl](http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/Gruhl) (modified)



# "Walk a Mile in My Shoes"

## Staff Report

"Walk a mile in my shoes" is exactly what about 50 mostly middle class legislative staff, service providers and individuals did at Step Up's Poverty Simulation on February 22 in Sacramento. Step Up, started by Catholic Charities members, invited about 20 people that currently live in poverty to play the roles of service providers, police, social workers, bankers, landlords, store clerks, employers and other professions a poor person may have to deal with.

After a brief training and role assignment, there was a press conference featuring California State Assemblymembers



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**Stacy playing the part of Supercenter Clerk**

## No Fooling continued from page 1

down, hanging out, and - perhaps worst of all - sleeping. To take one city as an example, by the end of 2011, these new crimes comprised roughly one third of all prosecuted offenses in San Francisco.

We all suffer from governments that waste resources and refuse to develop real solutions to social problems, but the people whose survival is criminalized suffer the most.

Over the past year, WRAP has led a survey effort with its West Coast grassroots members and allies in Portland, Berkeley, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Denver, Houston and Worcester, MA documenting homeless people's experiences with the criminal justice system for survival-related "crimes." USACAI has helped WRAP to take this effort broader by reaching out to their members and surveying homeless people in cities throughout the United States on these issues. Survey forms are available in English and Spanish if your organization wants to help build on this initial effort. WRAP is now releasing preliminary results from discussions with over 668 people:

78% of survey respondents reported being harassed, cited or arrested by police officers for sleeping outside. 75% reported the same for sitting or lying down, and 76% for loitering or simply "hanging out." These were far and away the top crimes for which homeless people were charged. A sad corresponding fact is that only 25% of respondents believed that they knew of safe, legal places to sleep. In California, the public lodging law makes sleeping outside always illegal for homeless people. The law, by

its nature, makes a large class of poor people inescapably criminal.

It can feel easy to scoff at these crimes: most of the relevant laws, nationwide, are summary offenses ("infractions" in California; "violations" in some other states), which means that they can't directly result in any jail or prison time. However, 57% of respondents reported bench warrants issued for their arrest as a result of these citations: that is, if they couldn't afford to pay the fines that these tickets carried, or if they were unable to make court dates, then they became subject to arrest.

### Using the word "we"

Core to our success in this survey research was the active, engaged outreach of volunteers from nearly a dozen different organizations throughout the United States. Using an organizing method that WRAP members have developed and polished on the streets of cities on the West Coast, they were able to procure good information, and, far more importantly, begin important conversations within our communities about the real nature of criminalization and its impacts. By seeking out homeless people in the places where they really spend time and engaging our communities on their own terms, we were able to develop true, communal knowledge, founded in collective experience, and we are able to use the term "we" to talk about our communities in ways that isolated "experts" never can. We are organizing in a more honestly democratic way.

### What we need

This is not about caring for or even advocating for "those people." This is about all of us. As Aboriginal leader Lilla Watson said, "If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

The rise of repression in the United States and Canada is a war against all of us. We need all of us to act in this struggle for dignity, fairness and human rights. The people who pay for and profit from the criminalization of homeless people are the same people who benefit from our nations' refusal to meet basic human needs. They are using these laws to do what invading armies do: they attack us at our most vulnerable flanks - the communities of poor and homeless people who have been subjected to shame and blame for decades.

The sit/lie law that Seattle passed in 1993 is nearly verbatim to the same sit/lie law

that San Francisco passed in 2010. The sit/lie law that San Francisco passed to use against homeless people is the same law that the San Francisco Police Department now uses to harass Occupy protesters.

If you are not homeless, if you are not the target now, then understand that you are next. Isolated and fragmented, we lose this fight. But we are no longer isolated.

We can only win this struggle if we use our collective strengths, organizing, outreach, research, public education, artwork, and direct actions. We are continuing to expand our network of organizations and cities and we will ultimately bring down the whole oppressive system of policing poverty and treating poor people as "broken windows" to be discarded and replaced.

*WRAP and USACAI are calling for a national day of action on April 1st to raise awareness on this issue.*



# Homeless Right to Sanitation and Water

## continued from page 1

and water could "...amount to cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment." In her report she stated that "An immediate, interim solution is to ensure access to restroom facilities in public places, including during the night. The long-term solution to homelessness must be to ensure adequate housing."

On her visit to Sacramento in February 2011, she met with homeless people from Safe Ground Sacramento and others in our community. She found that water faucets used by homeless people were decommissioned and that restrooms were being locked, barring access by homeless people that have been left with nowhere to take care of their sanitation needs. Not only has this city infrastructure been denied to the homeless, and actually other residents as well, the City of Sacramento refused to allow the non-profit organization, Safe Ground Sacramento and other benefactors, to provide portable toilets and garbage service to the homeless people living in tent camps.

Safe Ground Sacramento held a press conference on February 7, 2012 outside City Hall, after not getting a response from the city. Speakers were from Safe Ground, Loaves & Fishes, Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, Legal Services of Northern California and other individuals. At the end of the conference, Tim Buckley demonstrated the sanitation system he developed when he was living in the Safe Ground camp. He titled himself the "Safe Ground Sanitation Engineer". Using a privacy tent with a camp toilet, he used two plastic bags to line the toilet. Demonstrating the operation with bags of water, he removed the bags and carried in two bicycle baskets about 4 bags full of what he nicknamed "spaghetti" in front of all the media. When actually performing the task, he took to a public restroom at Loaves & Fishes about a mile away from the camp and emptied the bags into the sewage system. Catarina de Albuquerque thought the fact that Tim and others must perform this service is unacceptable, and that denial

of lawful and dignified sanitation can amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Though the letter from the Rapporteur was addressed to the Mayor of Sacramento, the message was to our whole community, and

to communities everywhere: to stop denying homeless people the right to exist and their rights to exist in dignity!

You can read the letter at [www.sacloaves.org/un](http://www.sacloaves.org/un)



**Home-made Portable Toilet on Display**

## Martin Luther King March in Sacramento

**By Tracie**

I have been marching the MLK march for the past 6 years. It is something I look forward to during the year. This year was different in that I was unable to march the entire march due to serious health issues.

I watched the beginning of the march on television and it was wonderful to see all the beautiful POOR people gather to march this iconic annual event.

I got a ride to the corner of 10th and W streets so I could watch the march from there. While I was in the van, on the way to the march, I heard MLK speaking on the radio. He was calling poor people to action, to build tent cities across America, to set up tents at the Capitol and then OCCUPY them. I was excited as I walked the last block to 10th street. I saw the first of the marching bands all dressed in gold and making some noise.

By the time I got to the corner, the bands had passed and the marchers were com-

ing on the scene. And what a scene it was. I watched as hundreds of people passed me - so many beautiful people all walking the walk for freedom, equality and justice.

There were people of all ages from the babies in the strollers to the very old, all with a vision of Dr. King's dream. The last time I saw that many people United for a march was in Detroit at the United States Social Forum. These beautiful people seemed to go on forever, the hundreds soon turned to thousands and the thousands to masses. I could actually envision all these beautiful poor people going to the White House to occupy in protest of the massive inequalities we all suffer in these devastating times.

I saw poor people's banners and so many people, but, not much noise. There were no demands, no protests, no singing or shouting, simply thousands of people marching together. I even saw three political figures marching, they would be Council member Angelique Ashby, Assembly member Roger Dickenson and

President Pro Tem, Darryl Steinberg. There may have been more, but these are the three figures I knew and recognized.

It seemed like a good half hour, maybe longer, until I caught sight of the SafeGround banner turning the corner onto 10th from Broadway, by then I was at about 10th and V or U. I waited as the SafeGround and the Occupy banners neared and joined the march at that point.

I marched the rest of the march with SafeGround and Occupy, mostly with Occupy. One of the women holding the Occupy sign was chanting as she marched. King would have loved her spirit. She was shouting "WAKE UP! WAKE UP SACRAMENTO! WAKE UP! There were chants like "We are the 99%" "One People, One Voice" there was the blast of the horn (like the horn of Jericho) and then calling on the Lord, a lot of hallelujahs, then back to the chants.

There were hundreds of people still behind us, so I do not know if there were

any other folks chanting, bringing attention to the issues of the day or if it was just Occupy chanting.

When we rounded the corner to the Convention Center, I got to hold the end of the Occupy banner. It was hard with my weak arms, but we held it high. The banner said OCCUPY the DREAM and was beautifully hand made.

After the march, I tried to get into the Convention Center. There were so many thousands of people that the door was blocked. I finally got in only to find the first exhibit hall full to capacity. I was already kind of tired from the little way that I marched, so I just went to Cesar Chavez Park to wait for the rest of the Occupiers and the planned Rally. At the rally, there were speakers and live music, G.P. Bailey was the opening musician. It took forever to get the power for the music, but it finally happened.

I was unable to stay for the entire rally as by this time I was pretty tired and had to go home.



# INTELLIGENT DESIGN AND THE JACKALOPE

www.chongonation.com

by the homeless science writer,  
**Chongo**

Imagine having a box with an "on-off" switch and four different keys, "a," "c," "t," "g," and "enter". Imagine next, keying in a series of half a billion letters or so, followed by "enter." A living organism emerges, alive, according to the series entered, a different one for each and every combination possible. Lastly, imagine that this box is no longer imaginary, but actually exists.

Like two others that have preceded it, this article addresses the fact that science can now artificially synthesize a species without any physical genetic predecessors, as nature would require for doing so, that is, through the creation of offspring; specifically, it addresses the "power" that this technology might render. Again, to state what science can now do, as clearly as it can be stated: science finally possesses the technology to physically assemble a living organism (a species) -- the DNA -- from wholly inanimate, non-living material.

Science can now "manufacture" life, "at will," using purely lifeless chemicals (no, not mud or clay), molecule by molecule, according to instructions from a computer, which is, itself, programmed by humans, making the "will" incorporated, that of the human programming the DNA sequence (and without the incorporation of any extra-natural phenomena whatsoever). Among many other important, historic, scientific revelations that this achievement substantiates, most noteworthy among them, manufacturing life artificially, physically demonstrates "once and for all," the irrefutable validity of the Theory of Evolution, because the chemistry is identical.

Before, the only means existing for "intelligently designing" life has been by selectively breeding it, as was done to create domestic animals, animals that would never have emerged through natural selection (evolution); but this process is limited, being incapable of creating new species. (Although hybrids, like the mule, for example, a cross between a donkey and a horse, are otherwise viable, they are not a species, because, according to a general scientific definition of the term, being a species

requires the ability to produce fertile offspring, and no mule can ever be fertile, producing offspring.)

Apart from the selective breeding that came with the domestication of animals, the only other means for designing life has, of course, been the "selective breeding" of evolution alone, which, in and of itself, lacks any expression of plan, purpose, or forethought, as domestic breeding does, and hence, lacks "intelligence" altogether in its designs (which is why most of its innovations fail). (Nature, however, can do one thing that selective breeding can't. Because nature has a resource that selective breeding lacks, namely, time, vast amounts of it, for the thousands of generations necessary. There is time enough for NEW information, and hence new species, to emerge, through evolution's purely UNintelligent process of selection.)

Independently of scientific manipulation, only accidental mutation can create new genetic information. Evolution has the hundreds of thousands, indeed millions of years and comparable numbers of generations, to mutate enough new information to yield a wholly new species. Rare and infrequent happenstance is required for creating new information improving design. This is why evolutionary change is so slow and gradual compared to the duration of a single human life span, requiring, for example, approximately two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) years (as well as, again, about as many generations), to evolve an eye as effective as our own.

Given that nature has thousands of millions of years (it has been on land for over four hundred million), two hundred and fifty thousand (a quarter of a million) is trivial. Consequently, the eye has evolved many different times in nature, among many different types of animals. There is nothing whatsoever miraculous about it.

In contrast to mutation,, which must blindly "stumble" into new genetic information, intelligent design CAN create it -- ANY within the capacities of the technology -- wholly from "scratch" (ignoring, of course, the creation of the ideas leading to the novelty, which is, itself,

the outcome of the evolving of a complex brain), using merely four different jars of proteins that constitute DNA (adenine, cytosine, thymine, guanine), and an electrical spark initiating the "cascade" of actions that life is (a collection of patterns). Instead of awaiting a beneficial mutation to survive and prosper, intelligent design need only "formulate" the appropriate genetic code, and need take only as long as it takes to physically assemble the organism ONCE.

Utilizing another scientific term that creationists once misused in their attempt to scientifically justify the inclusion of a supernatural agent into the text of a ninth grade biology textbook, because its design can be formulated in advance of their assembly, intelligently designed life can be genuinely "irreducibly complex," which is something that ordinary evolved life can never be, despite erroneous claims by the mediocre "scientists" found in creationist doctrine claiming the contrary. (A federal court ruled that it is illegal to teach this doctrine as science in public schools: *Kitzmiller vs. Dover*, 2005.)

In a true scientific application of the term, irreducible complexity means that foresight, and hence insight, can be incorporated into artificially designed life, which is something that can never be done through nature's ordinary, single step method of designing life, again, evolution. Absolutely no part of anything living on earth, past or present, has ever been irreducibly complex.

Ordinary life lacks the power of irreducible complexity because all ordinary evolving (that is, UNintelligently designed, reducibly complex) life lacks foresight in every last aspect of its designs. To be clear, there exists no such thing as a "direction" to evolution. Mutation lacks any kind of thought at all. Even so, because there is so much time and so many generations, every so often, a new design feature improves that which precedes it, instead of failing. With the right "luck," it proliferates in a population, improving a prior, less effective feature, or perhaps introducing an altogether new one never existing before. This method makes only single steps at a time, never many together, as genuine scientific irreducible complexity would.

Ordinary life on Earth has always evolved at the rate of one genetic step at a time. In contrast, intelligent design can take as many steps as the design includes, all at once, with all steps ever taken reflected in the genes of the new offspring, but without having to have gone through the selective rigors that evolution's series of single steps would have imposed. Moreover, artificially created life forms can not only take many steps at once, but, can take steps that would or could never have been taken by single steps. Therefore, what would be effectively impossible is no longer so, given the powers of foresight that genuine intelligent design's genuine irreducible complexity can include. Moreover, it heralds the power of science to even surpass evolution's robust generative abilities, by introducing possibilities for life that would otherwise be altogether impossible.

The possibilities for intelligently designing life are vast. They not only include many that could possibly have emerged naturally through the UNintelligent design of evolution, like an ancient woolly mammoth (the only prehistoric animal whose DNA has been mapped), perhaps dinosaurs, trilobites, or long extinct plants and giant, prehistoric insects, for example, but include also an even greater number of other species that NEVER could, through evolution (like the "jackalope," for example, a jack rabbit with the antlers of an antelope). With intelligent design, they can. Furthermore, the number of possible variations far exceeds not only the number of species presently on the planet (millions), but also, the number of species that have ever lived upon it during the past several thousand million years. The enormous number of these unexplored possibilities is staggering, their scope vast.

Science has finally enabled life to intelligently design itself. But, after having gone this far, there is now no turning back -- not without turning back human invention and achievement itself. Intelligent design holds the promise of miracles, like cures for any disease, for example. Likewise, it is rife with a plethora of horrifying risks too, like half human "servants" living and dying to "serve" an indifferently and malevolent master, or "super human" soldiers living

only to kill, serving the same kind of master, just to name two obvious applications. Like any powerful scientific technology, in ANY hands, designing life has the capacity for creating monsters and nightmares, surely as easily as creating the miracles to which it can also be applied. Designing life commands the power of evolution itself, the power to shape its course altogether. Only the competent need be empowered with its application, because of its potential power of shaping the course of life itself.

Artificially designing life is the most powerful biological tool every created. In these modern times, many individuals have far-reaching political authority and/or immense wealth that empowers them access to the intellectual resources necessary to implement this technology, unchecked, according to the short sighted whims of a reptilian brain that still dwells beneath the human will of all, especially those undeservingly empowered, and which has no regard for tomorrow.

Only civilization itself stands between us, and a host of other, yet to be imagined, horrifying outcomes of intelligently designed life; and civilization clearly rests upon understanding the magnitude of the potential risks, just as much as it relies upon realizing the marvel of its benefits. This, of course, demands a widespread understanding of genuine science, which, sadly, diminishes with every human decision made instead, to avoid the time and work necessary for gaining this understanding. This series of articles (like the chongonation.com website) attempt to remedy and hopefully someday reverse this regrettable trend, so that intelligently designed life is that, rather than the simple-minded wants and fears of an empowered reptile brain, in human form, shaping life and possibly even evolution itself, irresponsibly, unsightfully, and UNintelligently instead.

*(Videos pertinent to the subject of this article can be seen by clicking on "Education" from the <http://www.chongonation.com> home page. Chongonation.com is a web site dedicated to educating those who have least opportunity for learning the scientific foundations that describe nature more accurately than any other body of ideas ever conceived. Chongonation.com has books and free videos that provide such opportunity, in lay terms.)*

# Walk a Mile

continued from page 4

Roger Dickinson, Mariko Yamada, Nancy Skinner, Bonnie Lowenthal, Katcho Achadjian, and State Senator Carol Liu.

Then the pseudo-poor took their seats in their pseudo-homes or emergency shelter beds to begin their pseudo-day. They were given a description of who they were and their situations, and were given the meager financial resources (play money) to navigate through until the end of the month. Each week was represented by a 15 minute period. At the end of each 15 minute period they had to go home and plan the next week.

Participants found great difficulties in choosing

between food or paying the utilities, how to pay for child care while starting their new jobs, evictions and ending up in a homeless shelter, not being able to care for their children or keep them in schools, and other difficulties.

James Little, a homeless member of SHOC, played the part of an Illegal Activities Person. He really got into the part—he found a baby (doll) left at home alone so he kidnapped it, leaving a ransom note. Other children were taken to Child Protective Services for their simulated neglect.

Some people muddled through and successfully accomplished their

simulated survival through the exercise, but most ended in disaster. The players on both sides of the table became emotionally invested in the simulation, some seemed to actually experience the stress related to surviving the day with inadequate resources and support.

The Poverty Simulation's purpose was to enable participants to view the real world of poverty leading to maximum understanding and future positive action.

You can watch some videos of the experience online at <http://youtube.com/shocpaula>

## For the Maya

continued from page 3

According to official statistics, indigenous people comprise close to 40 percent of Guatemala's population of 14 million, although native organisations put the figure at over 60 percent.

Mario Molina of the national network of Maya youth organisations, RENOJ, told IPS that Dec. 21 "will not mark the end of the Maya or the world, but will be a moment to assess the progress made in the development of nature and humanity."

The activist expressed concern over the deterioration of the environment that is occurring worldwide, and global warming caused by human activities, which "is one of the fundamental issues to be discussed."

"This is also a good time to build a unified multicultural country with a shared vision," one of the long-standing aims of the historically marginalised indigenous people of Guatemala.

Extreme poverty and the lack of basic services like water, electricity, education and healthcare are pressing problems in the indigenous areas of Guatemala. In this Central American country, 54 percent of the population is poor and 13 percent lives in extreme poverty, according

to the 2011 National Survey on Living Conditions.

Molina complained about the racism suffered by the Maya population, which is reflected in their low level of political participation and high poverty rates. He said they would take advantage of the end of the Maya calendar cycle to promote actions "in search of respect for dignity, life and human rights."

Some see the change in the Maya calendar as presenting other opportunities. For example, the government tourism institute launched the "Dawn of the Maya" campaign to celebrate the end of baktun 13 and use it as a hook to draw tourists interested in the Maya culture and archaeological sites.

Maya elder Alejandro Cirilo Pérez, spiritual adviser to outgoing President Álvaro Colom - whose term ends Saturday Jan. 14 - told IPS that "This isn't the end of the world. What has happened is that phenomena like earthquakes, tidal waves, tornados and disease have been aggravated by the enormous pollution caused by man."

The idea that the world is going to end in December 2012 has spawned books, blogs, TV programmes and

movies, as well as outlandish projects in different parts of the world, like underground survival shelters.

But the spiritual guide said "The Maya calendar is something that only the Maya understand, although academics, archaeologists, anthropologists and historians have written so many books about it, without understanding it."

Pérez said the true Maya literature was burned by Diego de Landa, a Spanish bishop of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Yucatan in Mexico (1524-1579), who considered the Maya codices "superstition and lies of the devil."

De Landa was one of the first Franciscan friars to reach the Yucatan peninsula, where he tried for years to evangelise the native Maya population, in the face of great resistance. In a 1562 public ceremony called an auto-da-fé, he burned scores of Maya codices and sculptures.

[www.streetnewsservice.org/](http://www.streetnewsservice.org/)  
IPS

# Obituary

*Cori Johnson-Nave*  
*d. 12/28/11 Aged 39*  
*cause unknown in Apt.*

*Kevin Christopher Moore*  
*d. 1/14/12 Aged 38*  
*carbon monoxide poisoning*  
*while sleeping in tent*

*Chester Raymond Sletto*  
*d. 1/14/12 Aged 46*  
*carbon monoxide poisoning*  
*while sleeping in tent*

*Clarence David Hall*  
*d. 1/26/12 Aged 60*  
*of illness in care center*

*Nancy Lee Dickinson*  
*d. 2/7/12 Aged 46*  
*cause unknown in Apt.*





**Yes!**

I want to see **HOMEWARD**,  
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Enclosed find my donation of \$15 for a one year subscription.  
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Make checks payable to the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC)  
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clip & mail coupon

## HOMELESS RESOURCES

### Night Shelters

Salvation Army: 12th and North B St. 30 days per year: Dormitory living, C&S: Dinner, breakfast clothing for residents: Men/Women: Sign-up SA patio weekdays at 1PM. 442-0331

St. John's Shelter: Women and Children. 4410 Power Inn Rd. Call between 10am & 3pm for space availability. 453-1482

Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon St. Beds for Men Only, sign up 6:30pm at mission, Newcomers/Referrals have priority. 7:30pm Chapel Service with meal afterwards, 6am breakfast for residents. Showers / shaves 9-11am & 1-2:45pm. open to all homeless men: 447-3268

SAEHC, Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center: 4516 Parker Ave. 24 hrs: Family Shelter: Families, single adults with children who have no other resource: Women's Refuge, single women, no children: Call for screening/space availability 455-2160

### Day Shelters

Friendship Park: 12th St. & North C: Weekdays 7am - 2:30pm: open to anyone: Many services

### Meals

Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon St.: 7 days, Evening meal, Men/Women: Church service 7:00pm required, dinner following 8:30-9:15pm. Sunday 11am service, lunch at noon. 447-3268

Loaves & Fishes: 1321 No. C St.: Lunch every day 11:30am-1pm. Tickets available 7 am- 12:30 pm at Friendship Park weekdays: at 8 am on Saturday and 10am on Sundays.

Women's Civic Improvement Center: Seniors Only: 3555 3rd Ave. 11:30-12:30 lunch M-F 452-2866

Helping Hands: 3526 5th Ave. Sundays, 8-11 breakfast, sack lunch, clothing

Food-not-Bombs: serves free food in Cesar Chavez Plaza, 9th & J St., every Sunday 1:30 pm. All Welcome.

Foundation of Faith Ministries 2721 Dawes St. Rancho Cordova. Every 4th Sat. 3-5 pm All Welcome.

Glory Bound Street Ministry 4527 Parker Ave. Sundays; breakfast 11:30 am after 10 am church service; dinner 6:30 pm after 5 pm church service: Fridays; dinner 7 pm after 6 pm church service. Must attend services. 452-7078

### Women & Children

Maryhouse: 1321 No. C St. suite 32: Breakfast for Women and children 8am-9am. Day shelter 8am-3pm weekdays for women and families.

Wellspring 3414 4th St.: T&Th full breakfast: M-W-F continental breakfast for women and children. 454-9688

also see Wind in Youth Services for young adults

### Free Clothing

Sacramento Food Bank: 3333 3rd Ave. (at Broadway) 10am-2pm Mon - Fri. 456-1980

Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon St. Men: M-Sat 9-11am or 1-2:45pm: Women and Children: Thursday. Signups start at 9am attend Bible study at 9:30am and get clothing at 10am 447-3268

Glory Bound Street Ministry 4527 Parker Ave. Clothes Closet, Sundays 11:30 am all welcome. 452-7078

### Medical

Mercy Clinic: For homeless adults, children: Next to Fire Station on N. C St. 7:30am & 12:30pm. 446-3345

Sacramento Dental Clinic: 4600 Broadway (Primary Care Bldg) Walk-ins 8 am - 12:30 pm 874-8300

### Mental Health

Guest House, 1400 N. A St.: Homeless Mental Health Clinic, M,W,Th,Fri., 8-11:30am Tues 8-11:30am only. Mental Health evaluation, medication if needed. Housing referrals for mentally ill, GA refs, SSI aps, refs to A & D counseling: 443-6972

TLCS Intake Offices: 1400 N. "A" St. Bldg.-A; Adults 18 yrs & up; Referrals to transitional living programs, independent living, mental health support services; SSI/SSDI application assistance; Walk-ins 8-11am M-F 440-1500

Genesis: Professional Counseling for life problems. Referrals. Next to Friendship Park gate. 699-1536

### Youth Services

Diogenes: youth 16-21 yrs old. Hot Line call 1-800-339-7177

Wind Youth Center: 701 Dixie Ave. Serves youth ages 12-20. Breakfast and Lunch; Clothing; Laundry and Showers; Case Management. Drop-in Hours: M-F from 8:00am to 4:30pm and Sat 10am to 2pm. 443-8333

### Crisis Intervention

WEAVE: Services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children. Referrals to court mandated battery intervention programs, Safe house, 24 hr. crisis line: 920-2952

Sacramento Mental Health Center (County): 2150 Stockton Blvd 24hr. Will evaluate anyone for voluntary or involuntary psychiatric care due to danger to self or others. 732-3637

### AIDS / HIV

AIDS Housing Alliance provides residential care, transitional housing & permanent housing services to homeless persons living with aids. 329-1093 weekdays.

CARES (Center for AIDS Research, Education and Service): 1500 21st St. Serves people with HIV and AIDS. Medical care, mental health, case mgmt, health ed and regional prevention/ed classes. 443-3299

Breaking Barriers: Homeless Outreach Program provides direct services to people living with AIDS and HIV. Transportation to social services, medical appointments, job interviews, and housing assistance. 447-2437

Harm Reduction Services: 3640 40th St.; High risk outreach; HIV, Hep-C testing; case management for HIV; free medical clinic, needle exchange. 456-4849

Alternative Test Site: Free anonymous testing, Wed /Thurs. Call for appt. 874-7720.

### Legal Aid

Disability Rights, CA: Free legal services for people with disabilities. Call for appt. toll free: TTY:(800)776-5746

Tommy Clinkenbeard Legal Clinic: 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center) Free legal assistance and advocacy for problems related to homelessness. 446-0368

Legal Services of Northern California, Inc: 515 12th St. (at E ST.) M-F 8:30am-12pm, 1pm-5pm. Problems with public benefits, landlord / tenant, divorce clinic. Call for appt. 551-2150

## About SHA



**Sacramento Housing Alliance** is a network of concerned citizens who promote decent affordable housing for low income households and homeless people through advocacy and participation in public discourse.

For more info, or if you would like to participate, please call:

**(916) 455-4900**

<http://sachousingalliance.org>

*The SHA does not  
itself provide or  
manage housing.*

Welfare Rights: 1901 Alhambra Blvd. (2nd floor) M-F 9am-5pm: AFDC, Food Stamps, Workfare and Medical rep at hearings. 736-0616

Social Security Disability / SSI Lawyer  
Free Consultation (916) 658-1880

### Miscellaneous

Francis House Center: 1422 C St. 9:00-noon walk-in - direct services resource counseling, vouchers for IDs, Dvr Licenses, Birth Certs, Transp Assistance; noon-3:00 - appts for in-depth resource counseling; by appt: Senior/Disability/Veteran's advocacy, notary service. Job Development Center open 9am-3pm M-Tu-W-F and noon-3pm Th. Motel vouchers for qualified families. 443-2646

Social Services: 28th & R St. M-F 7:30am-5pm. Call for asst. 874-2072

Employment Development Department (EDD): 2901 50th St. (at Broadway) M-F 8am-5pm. Unemployment, job services. 800-300-5616

Medi-Cal: 1-800-773-6467, 1-888-747-1222. Or see DHA eligibility workers 1725 28th St. 916-874-2256

Social Security Office: 8351 Folsom Blvd (East of College Greens Lite-rail stop) M-F 9am-4:30pm 381-9410: Natl line 1-800-772-1213

211 Sacramento  
Dial 211  
for tele-info & referral service

Califorina Youth Crisis Line:  
1-800-843-5200

Health Rights Hotline:  
551-2100

VA Outreach:  
1-800-827-1000

Homeless VA Coordinator:  
(916) 364-6547

## Welcome to Homeward:

Please help us make a difference!



Homeward Street Journal has been publishing since 1997 as a non-profit project of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, which is a member of the Sacramento Housing Alliance. The paper's mission is to alleviate miscommunication between communities by educating the public about housing and poverty issues, and by giving homeless people a voice in the public forum. Homeward also informs homeless persons of shelter and occupational assistance, and acts as a creative self-help opportunity for those individuals who wish to participate.

The opinions expressed in Homeward are those of the authors, and not necessarily the Sacramento Housing Alliance or SHOC or Homeward.

### Submissions and Editorial Policy

We welcome any participation or contributions: Articles, poems and other writing can be submitted at our office in Friendship Park, or mailed to the address below.

All writing submitted for publication will be edited as necessary, with due respect for the author's intent. The editors will attempt to consult with an author if changes are necessary, however, the paper will go to print with the story as edited if the author is unavailable.

All Letters to the Editor must be signed to be published. If the writer wishes to remain anonymous s/he should so state, but the letter must still be signed.

Poetry and graphics will not be edited, either the paper will publish the submission or not.

In submitting articles to the paper, authors give their permission to print their submissions in accordance with the above stipulations, as well as possible reprinting in NASNA member papers, with due byline. Any requests for stories outside the above three will be referred to the author.

Subscriptions are available with a \$15 contribution. Make checks out to SHOC (Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee).

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