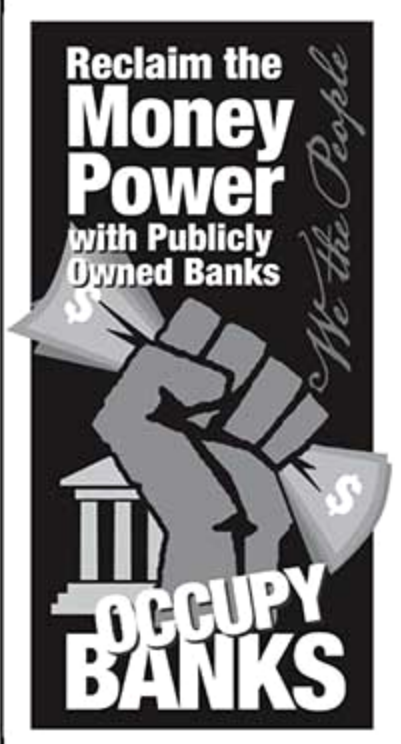


GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO

 <p>Reclaim the Money Power with Publicly Owned Banks</p> <p><i>We the People</i></p> <p>OCCUPY BANKS</p>	<p>Gray Panthers of SF Presents</p> <p>Why Not Public Banks?</p> <p>With Susan Harman, Public Banking Institute</p> <p>Tues, March 17, 12:30 PM Unitarian Center 1187 Franklin (Geary) Fireside Room #38 bus (not 38L)</p> <p>Public Invited Free, Wheelchairs OK</p>
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**Tuesday, March 17 General Meeting
12:30–3PM
Unitarian Universalist Center
1187 Franklin @ Geary**

GRAY PANTHERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & EVENTS

All meetings and events take place at 2940 16th Street 200-4, *unless otherwise noted*

Board Meeting Wednesday, March 4 at 1PM,
Main Library, Stong Room, 1st floor.

Book Club Monday, March 30, Noon
Celtic Café, 142 McAllister
(between Hyde/Leavenworth)

Newsletter Committee Thursday, March 5,
Noon in the office.



Wednesday, MARCH 4 Meet, 5:45 PM, 3721 18th/ Shotwell. March to Maximus meeting Demand truly affordable housing not monster luxury towers!

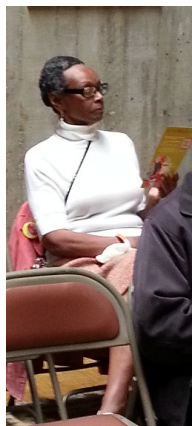
February Meeting Report

Carol Ruth Silver spoke at our February meeting about her involvement in the early days of the Freedom Riders. She has shared this history with pre-schoolers and Gray Panthers. She believes, as we do, that history must be preserved by those who lived it, and she does it in her book, *Freedom Rider Diary*. Her book gives us a journey to the days of brave resistance to segregation by Black and white youth who traveled from all parts of the country to the South in the early '60s. During her 40 days in Parchman Prison, she managed to write down what took place for the scores of freedom riders there who were arrested and jailed. Once weekly they got paper & a pencil, which was then taken away. Carol was able to complete her notes by chewing the wood off a pencil, saving a piece of the lead and hiding it.



Ms. Silver was working at the UN in New York and said every newspaper carried the stories of Freedom Summer. She felt called to join the movement, contacted CORE which organized bus trips, and ended up in Jackson, MS., where she was arrested with 5 African American and white divinity students. They were taken

to Parchman—all in the same van—declaring they had integrated a vehicle in the South! During those 40 days, the cell she and another woman initially shared grew more crowded each day as more freedom riders were arrested, and their voices filled the jail with freedom songs. *Freedom Rider Diary* is available from Inkworkspress.org, 510-845-6753.



Photos Kay Walker

March Meeting

Susan Harman, of the Public Banking Institute, will discuss public banking and possibilities for public banking to the City. Sup. Avalos has proposed this in the past, and 64 unions and community groups in the country are demanding public banking at the Post Office. The United States Postal Service (USPS) could provide many banking services at easily accessible locations, and protect postal jobs!

In March Past

March 1, 1974: Seven former high-ranking officials of the Nixon White House were indicted for conspiring to obstruct the investigation into the Watergate break-in.

March 4, 1933: President Franklin D. Roosevelt elected and appoints the first woman to a Cabinet post, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins.

March 8, 1908 International Women's Day, NYC demonstration to end sweatshops & child labor.

March 11, 2011 Earthquake & tsunami cause Fukushima nuclear disaster.

March 16, 1968: American soldiers murdered 504 Vietnamese men, women, and children in the My Lai Massacre during the [Vietnam War](#)

March 25, 1965: Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King led a march through downtown Montgomery, Alabama.

March 22, 1972: The Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution passed by the U.S. Senate prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender fails ratification by 3 states.

March 31, 1968: President Lyndon Johnson does not seek re-election due to the Vietnam conflict.

March 28, 1979: The reactor core of the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant overheated, releasing of radioactive steam into the atmosphere and threatening a nuclear meltdown.

March 24, 1989: One of the largest oil spills in U.S. history occurred as the oil tanker *Exxon Valdez* ran aground off Alaska, leaking crude oil into the natural habitat over a stretch of 45 miles.

March 19, 2003: The United States attacks Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein from power, falsely accusing Iraq for the 9/11 attack on New York City. March 18 1963 Supreme Court rules that states must provide free legal counsel to indigent people provide.

Climate March: No Fracking California



8,000 people march in Oakland California to end fracking. People of Mendocino

County, by 67%, just passed *The Mendocino County Community Bill of Rights Fracking and Water Use Initiative*, which establishes the rights of the people of Mendocino Co. to a healthy environment, clean air, water, and the right of ecosystems to exist and flourish. It also secures the rights of residents to local self-governance. Fracking is banned as a violation of those rights, directly challenging so-called “constitutional rights” of corporations to frack in the County. The extraction or sale of local water for use in fracking anywhere in the state is also banned, along with the dumping of toxic frack waste. Further, the measure bans the transfer of offshore fracking oil or waste through the County. This measure should apply statewide.

Fracking continues to grow in our state. It is used in 50% of new oil wells started each month in California, as many as 175 wells monthly. 5.4 million of us, mostly people of color, live within a mile of an oil or gas well. However, Gov. Brown has yet to acknowledge fracking’s real threat to the health and safety of our communities. Brown has a history of kowtowing to corporate oil. The Division of Oil, Gas, & Geothermal Resources (DOGGR), so-called regulators recently was exposed for allowing oil companies to inject oil extraction fracking fluids into aquifers more than 2,500 times! Even though the federal EPA warned of this environmental violation, Gov. Brown has pushed and continues to push for speeding up the drilling process and pressuring regulators.

In 2013, Gov. Brown signed SB4 allowing fracking to proceed without environmental review. Activists called for a moratorium on fracking instead. SB4, although requiring companies to obtain permits to drill and disclose chemicals use, a provision could allow Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) to waive the requirements under the existing California Environmental Quality Act.

IWD Then and Now



International Women’s Day, celebrated on March 8 for over 100 years, arose after a terrible fire killed 146 women working in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory of New York City. Many jumped to their death as a last resort. Steel doors were routinely locked, and women and children kept imprisoned for 10- and 12-hour days. Years before the tragedy, 20,000 shirtwaist workers called a strike, and protested these same working conditions. Today some insist, “*you’ve come a long way Baby*” Maybe, but there’s a long way to go. For example, 85% of women are in prison in connection with cases of domestic abuse.

Marissa Alexander was sentenced to 20 years in a Florida prison for standing her ground by firing a warning shot into the ceiling over her abusive husband’s head. No one was injured. Yet, under Florida’s Stand Your Ground law, Trayvon Martin was murdered by George Zimmerman who roams the country a free man. For 3 years, women activists and supporters across the country campaigned to get Marissa out of jail, succeeding on Jan. 27. “I was in awe at their dedication, their solidarity, their support,” Alexander said in a recent interview at her home. “The fact that they would dedicate their most precious resource, their time, to support me was heart-warming.” Women from the Bay Area caravanned across the states informing people along the way, ending up in Florida for the Jan. 27 hearing. Their message: support Marissa’s right to Stand Up and Fight Back. Her case recalls that of Joanne Little, 1975, first Black woman in U. S. history to be acquitted for use of deadly force to resist a white deputy sheriff who tried to rape her.

Alexander will be forced to wear and *pay* for a surveillance ankle monitor, and is forbidden to leave her home except for work, church, her children’s school, or appointments with doctors or the court. Ankle monitors is a practice in the increasing privatization of punishment in the U.S.

Incarceration Is Not Justice

832% more women in prison today than 1977.
1 in 25 will give birth in shackles.
75% are domestic violence survivors.
Black women incarcerated 3x more than white.
1 in 10 will be sexually assaulted in prison.

How We Won Free MUNI For Seniors and People with Disabilities

Free MUNI started as a Free MUNI for Youth campaign. It started partly as a beginning wedge to make MUNI free to everyone, but also as a means to protect Black and Brown youth, who were being arrested and even deported for fare evasion in police sweeps through buses in the Mission and Bay View.

The group POWER, which has presented at Gray Panthers meetings, and Chinatown Community Development Center worked hard on the campaign for several years and carried it to success for free MUNI for low-and middle-income youth. They also encouraged Senior & Disability Action to work for Free MUNI for Seniors and People with Disabilities, which SDA also won through hard work. What started largely as a movement to combat racism became a program benefiting youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. Fighting racism always benefits the 99%.

And, thanks to youth who fought for us at all MTA meetings!

It starts March 1, 2015. To register for Free MUNI for Seniors & People with Disabilities, see <http://tinyurl.com/odc27xc>, or call 415-701-2311.

Single Payer for Vermont?

It is not easy to enact a single-payer health care plan on an individual state basis. The obstacles states face include getting the necessary Medicaid and Medicare waivers; getting the waivers required by the 2010 Affordable Care Act; complying with federal statutes that may preclude folding Medicare and the military's Tricare into a state single-payer plan; plus federal laws that restrict states' ability to outlaw private employer-provided coverage. Governor Shumlin came up with a plan, Green Mountain Care, not true single-payer health care. It was a public-private partnership with several private payers. Philip Caper is a physician in and board member of Maine AllCare, a non-profit committed to making health care in Maine universal, accessible, & affordable for all. Dr. Caper, a board member of Physicians for a National Health Program explains, Green Mountain Care (GMC)

“Green Mountain Care would have replaced most private insurance with a tax-funded, publicly-controlled, non-profit insurance fund. However, it would have retained other programs such as Medicare, Tricare, military families and the VA, as well as some of the employer-sponsored or so-called ERISA health plans offered by large multi-state employers such as IBM. The more complicated our way of financing health care is, the more money has to be wasted on unnecessary administration. That money does not buy a single BAND-AID or aspirin. The real administrative savings comes from a plan like Medicare where everybody's in the same pool.”

PNHP founders Steffie Woolhandler and David Himmelstein found that "Even GMC boards' inflated cost estimates indicate that universal coverage under its quasi-single-payer plan would cost somewhat less overall than the current system." The costs of care would have fallen under the plan, but some, mostly high-income, healthy Vermonters' tax and healthcare cost would increase. The Vermont plan was far from progressive, but it was less regressive than the state's current pattern of health care funding. Governor Shumlin's close reelection race was ultimately decided by the legislature. What happened in the legislature to convince Governor Shumlin he needed to backpedal on his promise to enact single-payer health care reform? Philip Caper posed, “The answer is I don't know, but I can speculate. Any transition from our current private health insurance system to a public system will require rather large increases in taxes— never a popular proposal coming from any politician. My guess is that there are a significant number of members of the Vermont legislature who would prefer not to have to vote on a significant tax increase and let Governor Shumlin know that. He had a choice between withdrawing his proposal or losing his job. I think that's what probably happened.”

“Americans have a knee-jerk negative reaction to any suggestion that we raise taxes. We don't like taxes but we sure seem to like the thing taxes pay for. For instance, we seem to like our public roads, public schools, public libraries, police and fire departments, our public judiciary, and our public environmental protection. All are paid for through taxes. I believe health care should be treated in the same way: as a public good, not a private commodity.”

Protect Pension Funds!

For Over 6 months, City & Country of SF retirees have researched, presented facts, submitted over 3,400 signatures, & attended board meetings of the SF Employees' Retirement System (SFERS). Still in a 6 to 1 vote, the Board plans to invest 5% or \$1 billion of pension money into hedge funds. Only Board member Meiberger voted against hedge fund investment. Board member Wendy Peskin Jordan claims "There are good hedge funds. Yet asked if any of her money is in hedge funds she said, "No". Board member Stansbury, instead of attending a SFERS meeting was arresting a public defender in the Court House doing her job defending a client!

Another board member claimed the majority of workers favored hedge fund investment! But, Local 1021 represents 15,000 employees & 1,000 retirees, collected thousands of signatures, & presented a letter from SEIU President Roxanne Sanchez opposing hedge funds. Hedge funds are risky, fee-intensive, non-transparent and can take 20% of the profit. A Local 21 representative said the union supports hedge funds. Yet in a survey of IFTPE Local 21 members—91% *are not* in favor of investing in hedge funds. Combined results from all 3 on-line surveys of City employees reveal 95.8% do not believe hedge funds will protect the Pension Plan in a stock market decline. 85.9% say SFERS should be restricted from investing in hedge funds. 95.8% believe the SFERS Board should not make a decision to invest in hedge funds without explicit approval of the 54,823 employees & retirees.

CIO Coacker favors hedge funds and hired a consultant with Angeles Co., that holds hedge funds in the Cayman Islands.



The City of SF follows the Precautionary Principle and prohibits investing in fossil fuels; hedge funds invests heavily in oil. Their investment in derivatives helped cause the 2008 crash. As the board persists in this risk, retirees, employees, & supporters are not going away.

Women, Class, Poverty, Marriage

Wealth inequality is the worst since the 1920s, with women and people of color bearing the brunt. From 1990-2008, white women who didn't graduate high school lost 5 years of life expectancy. 15% of all US women are in poverty, versus 11% for men. It's worse for single moms (40%), black or Latin women (23-25%), and women over 65 living alone (19%). Women are nearly 2/3 of US minimum wage workers. Among full-time year-round workers, women earn 78% of men.

Some causes: discrimination in income, hiring/promotion, and education; sexist-assigned family care roles interrupting full-time long-term employment; and higher proportion of single parenthood, all made worse by Bill Clinton's "welfare reform" and dismantling of social support programs.

Like racism, sexism is the lifeblood of capitalism. Sexist pay differentials directly generate hundreds of billions per year in corporate profits, and indirectly make more profits by undercutting men's wages. Sexist social service and welfare cuts reduce already-small corporate taxes. Sexist ideology diverts us from fighting our class enemies.

Advances have been made in freeing women from bad marriages, but because of the factors above, being single has economic disadvantage far beyond only one income: for 65-69 year olds, savings in married households is almost 10 times than single-person households. Only 5% polled say they don't want marriage, but many young adults can't afford to marry. Only 43% of women under 30 with high school or less are married when they give birth, compared with 92% of college graduates. From 1970-2010, only women with top 10% earnings had higher marriage rates; for the bottom 65% earners, marriage rates dropped 20%. The same is true for men. Working class poverty is turning family structure into a new class divide.

We need a society that doesn't just outlaw discrimination, but guarantees each person the necessities of a good life regardless of age, gender, gender identity, or marital/employment status: health-care, income, education, housing, and childcare. This would be a step toward ending institutional sexism by eliminating women's dependence on marriage for economic survival.

Gray Panthers of SF

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We believe ALL people are entitled to certain fundamental rights:

- meaningful employment
- economic security
- decent and affordable housing
- quality health care
- a life of dignity from birth to death free from fear and abuse
- a world in peace



Age and Youth in Action

Call the office for membership information.

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Actions and Events

Sun, Mar 1, Report-back, Surviving Human Trafficking in Nepal. 2PM, SF Main Library, Latino Rm. See <http://tinyurl.com/pq9buzf>

Tues, Mar 3, Protest Netanyahu's speech to Congress. 5PM, Israeli Consulate, 456 Montgomery. More at 415-821-6545.

Tues, Mar 3, SF99% Coalition Meeting. 6:30 PM, MLK Rm, Unitarian Ctr, 1187 Franklin.

Wed, Mar 4, Maximus: We Demand Affordable Housing. 5:45PM, 3281 18th St, at S. Van Ness

Thurs, Mar 5, Rally to Save City College's Tenderloin Campus. 1 PM, 750 Eddy, near Polk.

Thurs, Mar 5, Modern Times Event: Berkeley & the New Deal. 7PM, 2919 24th St at Florida.

Thurs, Mar 12, Senior & Disability Action Meeting. 10AM, Unitarian Ctr, 1187 Franklin.

Thurs, Mar 12, CARA SF CAT Meeting. 1PM, MLK Rm, Unitarian Ctr, 1187 Franklin.

Tues, Mar 17, SF Gray Panther Meeting: Why Not Public Banking. 12:30PM, Fireside Rm, Unitarian Ctr, 1187 Franklin, at Geary

Sat, Mar 21, Say NO to New War in Iraq and Syria. 12Noon, Powell & Market, 415.864.5153. See <http://tinyurl.com/nntvcxw>

Tues, Mar 24, Support BART-Friday Protestors at Court. 8:30AM, 850 Bryant. See <http://tinyurl.com/knbsgrp>

Sat, Mar 28, SF OWL Meeting, Fracking & What To Do. 10AM, 870 Market, Rm 1185. See <http://tinyurl.com/ovwkqb6>

Gray Panther Lou held up a GP banner protesting Fast Track TPP at a Senate hearing in D.C
See video at <http://tinyurl.com/kv6cfq8>