

## UPCOMING EVENTS

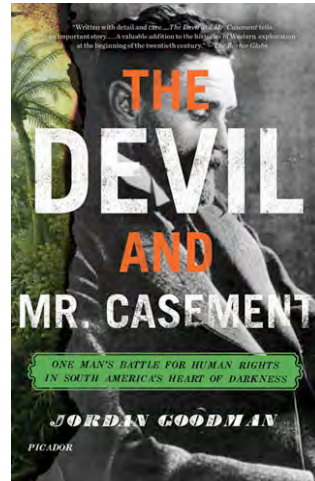
**Thursday, August 23, 7:30 PM.** Monthly Meeting. We meet at the Caltech Y, Tyson House, 505 S. Wilson Ave., Pasadena. (This is just south of the corner with San Pasqual. Signs will be posted.) We will be planning our activities for the coming months. Please join us! Refreshments provided.

**Tuesday, September 11, 7:30 PM.** Letter writing meeting at Caltech Athenaeum, corner of Hill and California in Pasadena. During the summer we meet outdoors at the Athenaeum's "Rath al Fresco," on the lawn behind the main building. This informal gathering is a great way for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

**Sunday, September 16, 6:30 PM.** Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion group. This month we discuss "The Devil and Mr. Casement" by Jordan Goodman.

## RIGHTS READERS Human Rights Book Discussion Group

Keep up with Rights Readers at  
<http://rightsreaders.blogspot.com>



Next Rights Readers meeting:

Sunday, Sept. 16,  
6:30 pm

Vroman's Bookstore  
695 E. Colorado,  
Pasadena

The Devil and Mr.  
Casement

By Jordan Goodman

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Kathy had some problems with her computer and couldn't do her usual column this month. Here's a report on Sunday's Prop 34 house party. Many thanks to Stevi, Laura, and Paula for organizing this very successful event!

### SAFE CA - Prop 34 House Party by Stevi Carroll

Twenty-six of us gathered at Laura and Ted's house for friends, food, facts, and fundraising. In addition to Group 22's members, we had friends who swim together, drink coffee together, rouse rabble together, and celebrate life together. The Proposition 34 pitch was easy to deliver to this crowd, and it opened the door to a spirited discussion. So much knowledge gathered in the room.

By the end of the afternoon, we'd raised over \$450.00 and may have a few more bucks coming in for the campaign. Many people took donation envelopes to share with friends or colleagues. I know one woman who sent me her regrets about not being able to attend and asked me to give her a donation envelope when I see her midweek. Her comment to me: This is such an important issue!

We had the opportunity to bring people together, to raise money for the SAFE CA campaign, and to celebrate Kai's upcoming birthday. Community nurtures compassion.

We were introduced to Roger Casement in *King Leopold's Ghost*, our very first Rights Readers book selection some 12 years ago. This book picks up his story a bit later as he investigates rubber plantations in South America. And as Martha says, if you show up for the discussion having read the just-released novel *The Dream of the Celt* by Mario Vargas Llosa, also about Roger Casement, you won't be turned away!

### REVIEW

The New York Times  
February 14, 2010  
Empire of Savagery in the Amazon  
By GREG GRANDIN

### THE DEVIL AND MR. CASEMENT: One Man's Battle for Human Rights in South America's Heart of Darkness

By Jordan Goodman

The 19th-century doctrine of progress held slavery and capitalism to be incompatible. Coercion, liberals believed, violated the ideals of natural rights and free labor. Wage work, Marxists thought, was more profitable than forced work, and that alone would doom slavery. Then in 1904, nearly four decades after Appomattox, Roger Casement, an Irish-born career diplomat in the British Foreign Office, wrote his Congo report, revealing that King

Leopold of Belgium had enriched himself by presiding over a rubber trade founded on pure cruelty. "What has civilization itself been to them?" Casement asked of Leopold's Congolese victims, 10 million of whom, by some estimates, had perished in but two decades. He himself had the answer: "A thing of horror."

"The Devil and Mr. Casement," by Jordan Goodman, the author of several works of history, reconstructs the Casement investigation in the Putumayo region of the Amazon rain forest that followed the Congo report. There, the Peruvian Julio César Arana ruled over a rubber empire of 10,000 square miles, and from 1910 to 1913, Casement exhausted himself trying to force the British government to take action against Arana and his London-incorporated Peruvian Amazon Company. He twice traveled to the Amazon, collecting evidence of whipping, torture, mass rape, mutilation, executions and the hunting of the region's Indians, whose population Casement calculated had fallen to 8,000 in 1911 from 50,000 in 1906.

Goodman's book adds to Casement's reputation as a pioneer of the human rights movement's tactics, including the on-the-spot investigation, the gathering of victims' testimony and the leveraging of public outrage to spur reform. Casement was one of the first to use the phrase "crime against humanity," and he judged Arana to be guilty of "not merely slavery but extermination" — what later would be called genocide.

But Casement's moral trajectory ran opposite to that of many modern human rights activists. France's current foreign minister, Bernard Kouchner, for example, dropped his youthful support for national liberation movements to embrace what some have criticized as "humanitarian imperialism." Casement tried at first to use the services of a foreign office to ease suffering. Yet he veered off what he called the "high road to being a regular Imperialist jingo." His time in Congo and the Amazon deepened his sense of anti-colonial solidarity. "I was looking at this tragedy," he said of Congolese slavery, "with the eyes of another race" — the Irish — "a people once hunted themselves." Knighted in 1911 for his humanitarian work, he was hanged by the British five years later for conspiring with the Germans on behalf of Irish independence.

Casement's execution is not the climax of Goodman's story, because this book doesn't have a climax. It tapers off without resolution.

The British directors of Arana's company are interrogated by members of Parliament. Reports are issued, sermons are preached, politicians are outraged. Arana appears before Parliament's committee on the Putumayo, after which he boards a steamer back to Peru untouched. The reader is left to ponder the fate of his indigenous victims.

This is an apt ending to a fine and meticulous book, for a kind of slavery still remains in force in the Amazon. Thousands of workers, for instance, trapped in conditions nearly as dismal as those documented a century ago in the Putumayo, make the charcoal used to forge pig iron, which is then purchased by international corporations to produce the steel used in everyday products, including popular makes of cars.

Arana ultimately lost his company and died broke. Yet the devil continues to get the better of Mr. Casement.

*Greg Grandin is the author, most recently, of "Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City."*

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## DAY ONE YOUTH SUMMIT

by Stevi Carroll

June 7th we got a message on our Amnesty Facebook page from Adriana Pinedo, Alcohol Policy Coordinator for Day One in Pasadena. She asked us to have a table at Day One's annual Youth Summit on August 13 at All Saints Episcopal Church. A chance for some outreach to kids! Great.

Day One is a nonprofit organization that works with young people to provide public health education. Sifting through DO information, I figured out the organization works to give kids interests other than hanging on the corner and getting into trouble. A quick look at the calendar of events for August shows a variety of activities for them.

After snagging a table in the shade of the building, I chatted with Lesford Duncan from Californians Against Slavery, Proposition 35 on this November's ballot, while we waited for the lunch break and the participants.



Lunch time arrived and so did the kids and some adults. While one woman said she got Urgent Actions she responded

to, most people I talked to, teen or adult, didn't know about Amnesty International. One young girl listened intently as I explained the various areas AI is involved in, and when I got to the death penalty, she became puzzled. "Why," she asked, "do we kill people?" After we talked for a while, she asked me if I thought the death penalty would be a good topic for her school's debate club. We'd already talked about Prop 34 with its 45% in favor and 45% opposed, so she could see that, yes, the death penalty would be a good topic. Thanks to Kalaya'an Mendoza, our Western Regional Field Organizer, I had a DVD that explains how to start a youth group which she took. Christy Zamani, the executive director of Day One, also asked about starting a teen group, so the DVD came to the rescue again. Perhaps we will have a Pasadena teen AI group.



By the end of the lunch hour, I passed out a number of copies of *Passport For Human Rights: Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, all of the DVDs to start a youth group, lots of stickers, most of our newsletters, and some flyers. As one woman said, "I didn't even know you were out there." We are and now they know.

## PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE Gao Zhisheng by Joyce Wolf

On July 23-24, the U.S. Department of State hosted its Annual Human Rights Dialogue with the Chinese Government. Assistant Secretary Michael Posner gave a press briefing in which he mentioned Group 22's adopted prisoner of conscience Gao Zhisheng. (Mr. Gao is a human rights lawyer who was detained in 2009 and endured brutal torture during his forced disappearance. He is now serving a 3-year sentence in Shaya Prison in remote western China.)

"The overall human rights situation in China continues to deteriorate. Over the last two days, we've focused on a number of cases where lawyers, bloggers, NGO activists, journalists, religious leaders, and others are asserting universal rights and calling for peaceful reform in China. A number of these individuals have been arrested and detained as part of a larger pattern of arrest and extralegal detention of those who challenge official actions and policies in China. Among the cases we raised were lawyers like Gao Zhisheng and Ni Yulan, who have been imprisoned because of their legal advocacy on behalf of clients who espouse controversial positions and who are critical of official actions. We urge the Chinese Government to release such lawyers as well as imprisoned democracy activists like Liu Xiaobo, Chen Wei and Chen Xi, who have actively pursued political openness and the promotion of fundamental freedoms for Chinese citizens."

You can read Michael Posner's entire briefing and watch the video at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/rm/2012/195498.htm>.

For this month's action, I suggest we send a note to Mr. Posner, thanking him for his efforts on behalf of Gao Zhisheng and encouraging him to continue working for human rights activists in China. Here is his address:

Michael H. Posner  
Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy,  
Human Rights, and Labor  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520



## DEATH PENALTY NEWS

By Stevi Carroll

### Justin Wolfe

Daniel Patrole was murdered. Owen Barber admitted to killing Mr. Patrole. Another guy, Justin Wolfe, was sentenced to death because Mr. Patrole, on the advice of his defense attorney and the prosecutors and to avoid the death penalty, fingered Mr. Wolfe for hiring Mr. Barber to commit the murder. Mr. Wolfe maintained his innocence; however, his lawyer, John H. Partridge, had never tried a capital murder trial and admitted he made many mistakes.

Finally, the 4th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals agreed with a lower court ruling that the charges against Mr. Wolfe should not stand. For at least two weeks, Mr. Wolfe remains on death row while the officials for the Commonwealth decide whether or not "to request a new hearing, seek an appeal to the US Supreme Court, prepare for a new trial or drop the case."

Students from the University of Virginia Law and the Innocence Project worked on Mr. Wolfe's case. The death row exonerations of 140 since 1973 may have increased one more.

To read this story, go to *Fourth Circuit Critical of Prosecutors in Wolfe Case*

<http://centreville.patch.com/articles/fourth-circuit-critical-of-prosecutors-in-wolfe-case>

### Texas Joins the One-Drug Procedure

With the execution of Yokamon Hearn, Texas has joined the states that now use only one drug, pentobarbital, to execute the condemned. Lundbeck, the company that makes pentobarbital, has banned export of the drug to the US and says it does not want it used for executions. States have a surplus of it, and now that the drugs for the three-drug cocktail are unavailable, the states are moving to the one-drug procedure.

Yokamon Hearn's execution also drew attention because of his 'mental functions'. Mr. Hearn's mother drank heavily while pregnant with him, and he had a long history of parental neglect and abuse and was "a defendant mentally scared and unfit for execution." The United Nations special rapporteur wrote to state authorities saying, "[T]here is evidence to suggest

*that he...suffers from psychosocial disabilities."* (<http://rt.com/usa/news/texas-execution-hearn-animal-583/>)

Despite this and other pleas to spare Mr. Hearn's life, Texas executed him.

### Mentally Disabled Death Row Inmates

June 20, 2002, in the case *Atkins v. Virginia*, the US Supreme Court ruled that mentally disabled people cannot be executed. Writing the Opinion of the Court, Justice John Paul ends with "Construing and applying the Eighth Amendment in the light of our 'evolving standards of decency,' we therefore conclude that such punishment is excessive and that the Constitution 'places a substantive restriction on the State's power to take the life' of a mentally retarded offender." This statement seems fairly straight forward, but alas, not so. While the Court used a definition of mental retardation from the standards set by psychological practice, it delegated to the states the particulars of enforcing the Court's mandate.

Governor John Kasich, Ohio, granted John Jeffrey Eley clemency because of his 'low intellectual functioning.' Judge Peter C. Economus who sentenced Mr. Eley to death said he did so because Mr. Eley's attorneys presented little mitigating evidence; however, "If I had been presented the additional mitigating evidence outlined in the clemency petition at the time of the trial, especially evidence of Mr. Eley's low intellectual functioning, his impoverished childhood, his significant alcohol and substance abuse, and his probable brain impairment, I would have voted for a sentence less than death." Although an Ohio parole board voted 5-3 to uphold Mr. Eley's death sentence, Governor Kasich overruled their decision. Attorney Gary Van Brocklin, who prosecuted the case and had a change of opinion about it, said of the Governor, "I have to commend him for a courageous stand. It's easy to run the other way." (<http://usnews.nbcnews.com/news/2012/07/11/12667772-ohio-governor-grants-clemency-to-death-row-inmate?lite>)

Warren Hill, Georgia, another 'intellectually disabled' death row inmate was granted a temporary stay of execution 90 minutes before his scheduled execution. His stay of execution hinged not on his mental capacity but on the use of a one-drug, pentobarbital, lethal injection procedure which Georgia has moved to.

Because Georgia applies a standard of “beyond a reasonable doubt” in cases of intellectual disability, death row inmates have to prove they are “mentally retarded” not to be executed. A recent Guardian article, “Warren Hill: 10 reasons why Georgia should not execute him,” says Mr. Hill’s IQ tested to be 70, a score only 3% of the general population shares; several of the jurors now say they would have sentenced him to life without parole had it been an option; and the family of the murdered man, Joseph Handspike, does not want Mr. Hill executed because they “feel strongly that persons with any kind of significant mental disabilities should not be put to death.”

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jul/23/warren-hill-georgia-execution-10-reasons>

Marvin Wilson had an IQ of 61. The state of Texas executed him. According to the definition of what constitutes a mental handicap for Texas, Mr. Wilson did not fit that definition. Texas does not use a clinical or scientific method for defining who is or is not mentally handicapped enough to be spared execution, but does use the “Lennie” test. Using John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*, the argument is “Most Texas citizens ... might agree that Steinbeck’s Lennie should, by virtue of his lack of reasoning ability and adaptive skills, be exempt” from execution. By implication anyone less impaired than Steinbeck’s fictional migrant ranch worker should have no constitutional protection.” The Steinbeck family was outraged by this use of John Steinbeck’s work and joined the call to stop the execution.

On August 10, 2012, at the Alliance for Justice - Justice Watch web site, Lee Kovarsky, Mr. Wilson’s attorney, wrote a guest post titled “Swimming upstream: the execution of Marvin Wilson” in which he talks about how Texas is able to execute a man who according *Atkins v. Virginia* should not have been put to death. Mr. Kovarsky ends his article with “After I told Marvin he was going to die, I told him it would not be in vain. I told him that he might not have changed the minds of ‘courts’, but that his story would eventually change the minds of living, breathing people—that his story would help highlight a particularly impoverished state of discourse about how we punish people like him.”

<http://afjjusticewatch.blogspot.com/2012/08/swimming-upstream-execution-of-marvin.html>

In the spirit of that thought, we continue to have work to do.

### Sentence Commuted to Life Without Parole

July  
26 John Eley Ohio

### Stays of execution

July  
23 Warren Hill Georgia  
24 Darien Houser Pennsylvania  
25 John Koehler Pennsylvania  
26 Willie Clayton Pennsylvania

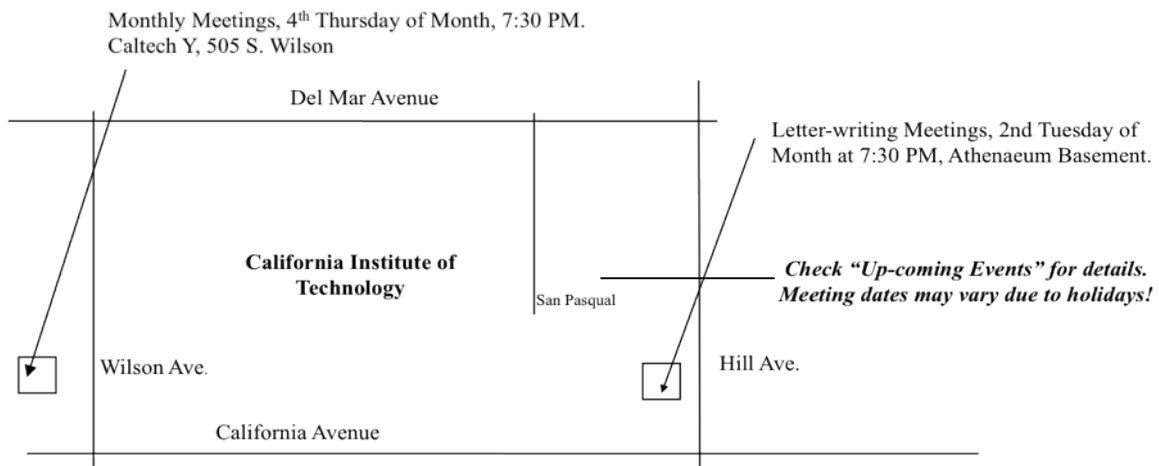
August  
1 Marcus Druery Texas  
3 Michael Tisius Missouri  
15 Jason Reeves Louisiana

### Executions

July  
18 Yokamon Hearn Texas  
1-drug lethal injection

August  
7 Marvin Wilson Texas  
1-drug lethal injection  
8 Daniel Cook Arizona  
1-drug lethal injection  
14 Michael Hooper Oklahoma  
3-drug lethal injection

GROUP 22 MONTHLY LETTER COUNT	
UAs	25
POC	9
Total	34
To add your letters to the total contact <a href="mailto:lwkamp@gmail.com">lwkamp@gmail.com</a> .	



From the 210 exit on Lake Avenue, head south, turn left on Del Mar  
From the 110 continue on Arroyo Parkway north, turn right on California  
Street parking is generally available.

Amnesty International Group 22  
The Caltech Y  
Mail Code C1-128  
Pasadena, CA 91125  
[www.its.caltech.edu/~aigp22/](http://www.its.caltech.edu/~aigp22/)  
<http://rightsreaders.blogspot.com>



Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.