

Amnesty International Group 22 Pasadena/Caltech News

Volume XXI Number 7, July 2013

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, July 25, 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, August 13, 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, August 18, 6:30 PM. Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion group. This month we read "Watcher in the Pine" by Rebecca Pawel.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hi All

I'm enjoying my summer break of a few weeks until school starts again in August – catching up on my reading, going to the pool, and just flaking off in general!

Remember Malala Yousafzai, the young girl shot in the head by the Pakistani Taliban October 2012, for advocating for girls' education? July 12th was her 16th birthday and she addressed the UN. Click on this link for excerpts from her speech..

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-23282662>

Happy Birthday, Malala!!



Women and girls have been assaulted during protests in Tahrir Square, Egypt during the recent uprising against former President Mohammed Morsi. Here is the link to an AI action to stop sexual violence against women: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/emails/W1307EDWMN1.html>

Con Cariño,
Kathy

RIGHTS READERS

Human Rights Book Discussion Group

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



Next Rights Readers meeting:

Sunday, August 18
6:30 pm

The Watcher in the Pine
by Rebecca Pawel
Vroman's Bookstore
695 E. Colorado, Pasadena

AUTHOR BIO

Rebecca Pawel was born in 1977 and was raised in New York City. She spent a summer studying

in Madrid in 1994 and fell in love with Spain. She also majored in Spanish language and literature at Columbia University.



Death of a Nationalist was nominated for Best

first Novel for both the 2004 Anthony and 2004 Macavity, and won the 2004 Edgar Best First Novel. It was also a finalist for the LA Times Best Mystery.

She is currently a teacher at the High School for Enterprise, Business and Technology in New York City.

BOOK REVIEW

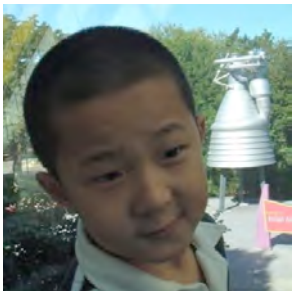
A cop's transfer to a new posting in Franco's Spain comes with a full slate of new problems.

Pleased to leave his position in Salamanca for a promotion to his own command in the Cantabrian village of Potes, Lt. Carlos Tejada anticipates less strife with his fellow officers and a warmer reception for his pregnant wife Elena, usually shunned as too much of a leftist (Law of Return, 2003, etc.). When they arrive at the snow-encrusted outpost, however, no one is there to meet them, and when the farmer they

get to give them a lift drops them at the nearest lodging in the dead of night, the innkeeper Anselmo is mysteriously absent and his wife extremely agitated at their appearance. The next morning, when Tejada slogs his way to the station, he is informed that his predecessor, Lt. Calero, had been murdered by Red guerrillas. Determined to whip his lackluster cadre of five officers into shape and settle Elena into more amenable accommodations, Tejada is stymied by the insubordination of Sgt. Marquez, bedeviled by Maquis guerrillas out to avenge the results of 1939, and faced with innkeeper Anselmo's murder, mountain bandits and a missing cache of dynamite, and Elena's premature labor. The resolution leaves Tejada—sated by political disagreements with nationalists, loyalists, guerrillas, communists, and his wife—yearning for a discharge from the Guardia.

Equal parts history lesson and crime novel, displaying both offhand cruelty and welcome depth.

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE
Gao Zhisheng
 by Joyce Wolf



This month Group 22 will join other Amnesty groups around the world to send birthday cards to Gao Tianyu, who will be 10 years old on August 27. He is the son of imprisoned human rights lawyer

Gao Zhisheng, Group 22's adopted prisoner of conscience. He has not seen his father since 2009, when he and his mother and older sister escaped to the USA from China shortly before Gao Zhisheng's detention and enforced disappearance.

Amnesty's Asia Pacific Regional Office organized this action. Here is the information that we received from the AIUSA China Country Specialist:

This action will run from 1 August until 31 August 2013.

We would encourage birthday cards to be sent, and would particularly like these to

come from other children. They can be as creative as you like!

[The family would appreciate] messages wishing Tianyu a happy birthday, and offering encouragement to him and his family. If you have taken action or plan to take action for Gao Zhisheng, please do share this information too.

Please write your messages in English, Chinese, or in your own language.

Please send cards to the Asia Pacific Regional Office in Hong Kong, and they will be mailed to Gao Zhisheng's family from there:

Gao Zhisheng solidarity action
 c/o Amnesty International
 Asia Pacific Regional Office
 16/F, Siu On Centre,
 188 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai,
 Hong Kong SAR

Group 22 will collect cards during our August meetings and mail them to AI in Hong Kong. If you don't make it to one of our meetings and would like to arrange for us to mail your cards, email us at aigp22@caltech.edu.

We would also love it if you could email photos of you or your kids writing cards or holding "Happy Birthday to Gao Tianyu!" signs. This could be a great summer family project – thank you and have fun!

SECURITY WITH HUMAN RIGHTS
 By Robert Adams

The following is reprinted from the AI USA website:

“USA must not persecute whistleblower Edward Snowden”

The US authorities' relentless campaign to hunt down and block whistleblower Edward Snowden's attempts to seek asylum is deplorable and amounts to a gross violation of his human rights Amnesty International said today.

“The US attempts to pressure governments to block Snowden's attempts to seek asylum are

deplorable," said Michael Bochenek, Director of Law and Policy at Amnesty International. "It is his unassailable right, enshrined in international law, to claim asylum and this should not be impeded."

The organization also believes that the National Security Agency (NSA) whistleblower could be at risk of ill-treatment if extradited to the USA.

"No country can return a person to another country where there is a serious risk of ill-treatment," said Bochenek.

"We know that others who have been prosecuted for similar acts have been held in conditions that not only Amnesty International but UN officials considered cruel inhuman and degrading treatment in violation of international law."

Senior US officials have already condemned Snowden without a trial, labelling him both guilty and a traitor, raising serious questions as to whether he'd receive a fair trial. Likewise the US authorities move to charge Snowden under the Espionage Act could leave him with no provision to launch a public interest whistleblowing defence under US law.

"It appears he is being charged by the US government primarily for revealing its - and other governments' - unlawful actions that violate human rights," said Bochenek.

"No one should be charged under any law for disclosing information of human rights violations. Such disclosures are protected under the rights to information and freedom of expression."

Besides filing charges against Snowden, the US authorities have revoked his passport – which interferes with his rights to freedom of movement and to seek asylum elsewhere.

"Snowden is a whistleblower. He has disclosed issues of enormous public interest in the US and around the world. And yet instead of addressing or even owning up to these actions, the US government is more intent on going after Edward Snowden."

"Any forced transfer to the USA would put him at risk of human rights violations and must be challenged," said Michael Bochenek.

DEATH PENALTY NEWS

By Stevi Carroll

One-drug Protocol

California has dropped its three-drug protocol requirement to move toward a one-drug solution to remove the hold on executions that's been in effect since 2006. Deborah Hoffman, spokeswoman for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation said, "At the governor's direction, CDCR is continuing to develop proposed regulations for a single drug protocol in order to ensure that California's laws on capital punishment are upheld." One problem states have with lethal injection is that pharmaceutical companies don't want their drugs used to kill people intentionally.

Warren Hill

Warren Hill was scheduled to be executed July 15. The week proved to be one of execution dates followed by stay-of-execution announcements for Mr. Hill. In 2002, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in *Atkins v. Virginia* "Executions of mentally retarded criminals are 'cruel and unusual punishments' prohibited by the [Eighth Amendment](#)." With an IQ of 70, Mr. Hill has an IQ that qualifies him as mildly mentally retarded; however, the State of Georgia sets the bar for mental retardation at an IQ of 77 with the burden of proof resting on the defendant to prove "beyond reasonable doubt" that he or she is retarded. No other state has this requirement. Should Mr. Hill not be executed his low IQ will probably not be the reason, but rather the one-drug protocol lethal injection used by the Georgia executioners.

Pentobarbital, the drug used in the one-drug protocol, has become difficult to obtain. In 2011, European manufacturers of the drug embargoed its importation to the USA because of their objections to its use in executions. Manufacturers in the US followed suit. To circumvent this roadblock, Georgia passed the unofficially named "Lethal Injection Secrecy Act" that includes: "The identifying information of any person or entity who participates in or administers the execution of a death sentence and the identifying information of any person or entity that manufactures, supplies, compounds, or prescribes the drugs, medical supplies, or

medical equipment utilized in the execution of a death sentence shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 4 of Chapter 18 of Title 50 or under judicial process. Such information shall be classified as a confidential state secret."

With this in the law, the state wanted to create its execution drug by going to compounding pharmacies that would have their pharmacists create the drug necessary for the execution in secret. Mr. Hill has received an indefinite stay of execution because a Fulton County judge ruled that by keeping the source of the drug secret, he and his lawyers cannot "raise a meaningful challenge that his execution could cause needless suffering because he does not know the source of the drugs being used to kill him or the qualifications of the pharmacy that compounds them." Mr. Hill also has a Writ of Habeas Corpus pending with the U.S. Supreme Court.

Georgia is Not Alone

Other states that also have secrecy provisions to keep the identity of compounding pharmacies unknown include Arkansas, Florida, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Tennessee. As California moves toward a one-drug protocol, I wonder if our fair state will follow along the secrecy path.

The Texas 500

Even though last month I wrote about some conservatives, including a fellow from Texas, who were reconsidering the efficacy of the death penalty, the Texas executioner killed his 500th inmate since 1976. Kimberly McCarthy died June 26. One credit I will give Governor Rick Perry is that he did not mock Kimberly McCarthy as then Governor George W. Bush did Karla Faye Tucker (<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2004/08/28/46908/-Clearing-Up-the-quot-Karla-Faye-Tucker-quot-Episode#>). The Texas executioner has killed two more people since Ms McCarthy's execution.

Trayvon Martin

The Trayvon Martin - George Zimmerman case has raised many questions, and depending what a person thinks about race and justice in the USA, the answers vary. President Obama discussed how he, too, has experienced some of the subtle, and not so subtle, reactions to him in public especially when he was young as an African-American man. As our country

becomes less white and more brown, black and mixed, I think we will need to talk first within ourselves and then with each other about how we see and understand people who are different from us. Race, of course, will not be the sole factor since education, income, social status and many other facets of our lives influence our thinking and beliefs.

The chart at the link below gives us an interesting look at the composition of the death row population in the USA. Particularly interesting to me is Utah's death row population.

STATE DEATH ROW POPULATION BY RACE COMPARED TO US CENSUS DATA ON RACE <http://www.ncadp.org/page/-/documents/State%20death%20row%20population%20by%20race.pdf>

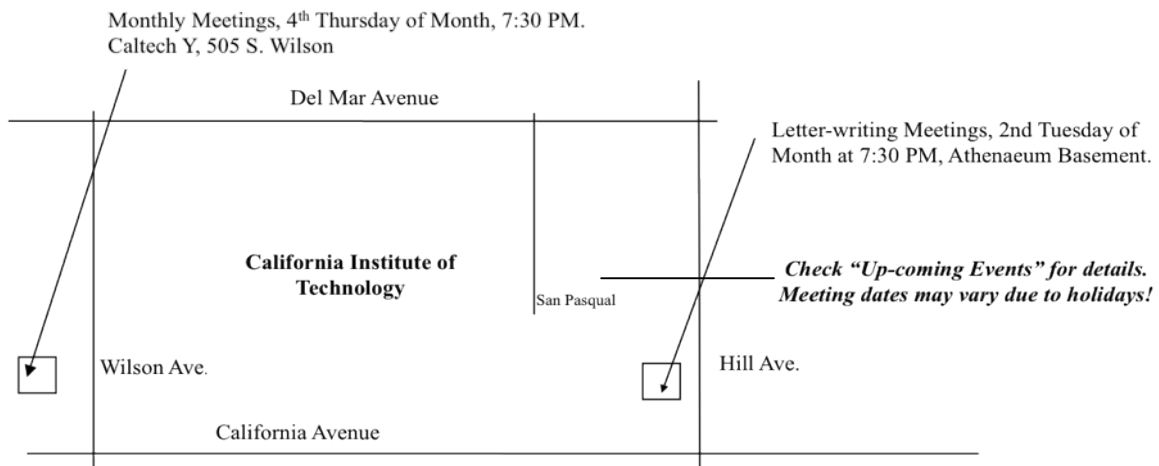
Stays of Execution

June		
24	Marshall Gore	Florida
July		
3	Marshall Gore (again)	Florida
10	Rigoberto Avila, Jr.	Texas
15/19	Warren Hill	Georgia

Executions

June		
25	Brian Davis	Oklahoma 3-drug lethal injection
26	Kimberly McCarthy	Texas 1-drug lethal injection
July		
16	John Quintanilla	Texas 1-drug lethal injection
18	Vaughn Ross	Texas 1-drug lethal injection

GROUP 22 MONTHLY LETTER COUNT	
UAs	23
POC	11
Total	34
To add your letters to the total contact lwkamp@gmail.com .	



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://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.