

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, September 27, 7:30-9:00 PM. Monthly Meeting. We meet at the Caltech Y, Tyson House, 505 S. Wilson Ave., Pasadena. This is our first meeting after summer break. We'll be discussing possibilities for future meetings. Please come with your suggestions.

Tuesday, October 9, 7:30-9:00 PM. Letter writing meeting at Caltech Athenaeum, corner of Hill and California in Pasadena. This month we still meet outdoors at the "Rath al Fresco," on the lawn next to the building.

Sunday, October 21, 6:30 PM. Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group. This month we read "**The Plot Against America**" by Philip Roth.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hello everyone,

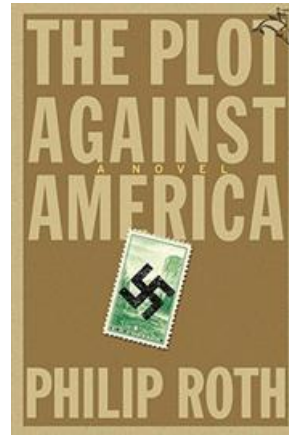
Now it is officially fall but still hot...looking forward to cooler days, snuggling up with one of the cats and a good book!

Speaking of which, I have been reading "*The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*" by Lawrence Wright. Rob and I have been watching the miniseries of the same name on Hulu. Highly recommend both - shocking to see how many opportunities there were to stop Bin Laden that were never taken.

Group 22 hosted the movie *Letter from Masanjia* at the Playhouse Theater in Pasadena last weekend. Stevi and Wen were there to represent Group 22 and solicited signatures on a petition for our former POC, Gao Zhisheng. We heard the film was excellent, but didn't have a chance to see it due to work and other commitments. (My sister and I are still working on my dad's estate. The house has sold and is in escrow. Should be over in a few weeks.)

Handmaid's tale happening in Texas? Go to pbs.org, PBS Newshour for September 21, and watch or read the segment titled "How the next Supreme Court justice could affect your access to birth control" about cuts and changes to the Title X family planning programs for low income women. Shocking in this day and age that some people are opposed to contraception and want to impose their views on everyone else.

Con carino,
Kathy



Next Rights Readers Meeting

**Sunday, October 21
6:30 PM**

**Vroman's Bookstore
695 E. Colorado Blvd
Pasadena**

The Plot Against America

by Philip Roth

KIRKUS REVIEW

A politically charged alternate history in which Aryan supremacist hero Charles Lindbergh unseats FDR in 1940—with catastrophic consequences for America's Jews.

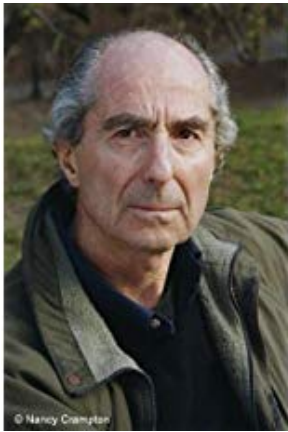
Roth's latest (and one of his most audacious) is narrated by a fictional character named Philip Roth, who describes the impact of Lindbergh's presidency (linked ominously to "Lindy's" cordial relationship with fellow statesman Adolf Hitler) on Newark insurance salesman Herman Roth, his stoical wife Bess, and their sons Philip and Sanford ("Sandy"). Novelist Roth skillfully constructs a thickly detailed panorama of urban Jewish life, featuring such vividly developed characters as Philip's truculent cousin Alvin (wounded in a "Jewish" European war, and permanently damaged), his suggestible maternal aunt Evelyn (who adores Lindbergh), and Evelyn's influential fiancé, silver-tongued conservative apologist Rabbi Lionel Bengelsdorf. The latter two pay dearly for their naively placed allegiances. But so do the passionately skeptical Roths: first, when Sandy's summer on a Kentucky farm imbues him with "American" (in fact anti-Semitic) values; and later, following the 1942 Homestead Act, purportedly conceived to relocate eastern seaboard Jews throughout Middle America, actually an ominous harbinger of how Lindbergh plans to solve "the Jewish problem." The tight focus on the Roths itself shifts when Lindbergh-hating columnist Walter Winchell announces his presidential candidacy, violence escalates alarmingly, martial law is imposed, war with Canada (whence many Jewish families flee) is anticipated, and a savagely ironic turn of events returns FDR to the national spotlight—but doesn't assuage Herman Roth's all-too-justifiable fears. The story gathers

breakneck velocity and intensity, ending perhaps too abruptly (and, perhaps, pointing the way to a sequel). But hilarious and terrifying by turns, it's a sumptuous interweaving of narrative, characterization, speculation, and argument that joins *The Ghost Writer* (1979) and *Operation Shylock* (1993) at the summit of Roth's achievement.

An almost unbelievably rich book, and another likely major prizewinner.

<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/philip-roth/the-plot-against-america/>

ABOUT PHILIP ROTH (1933 - 2018)



In the 1990s Philip Roth won America's four major literary awards in succession: the National Book Critics Circle Award for *Patrimony* (1991), the PEN/Faulkner Award for *Operation Shylock* (1993), the National Book Award for *Sabbath's Theater* (1995), and the Pulitzer Prize in fiction for *American Pastoral*

(1997). He won the Ambassador Book Award of the English-Speaking Union for *I Married a Communist* (1998); in the same year he received the National Medal of Arts at the White House. Previously he won the National Book Critics Circle Award for *The Counterlife* (1986) and the National Book Award for his first book, *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959). In 2000 he published *The Human Stain*, concluding a trilogy that depicts the ideological ethos of postwar America. For *The Human Stain* Roth received his second PEN/Faulkner Award as well as Britain's W. H. Smith Award for the Best Book of the Year. In 2001 he received the highest award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Gold Medal in Fiction, given every six years "for the entire work of the recipient." In 2005 *The Plot Against America* received the Society of American Historians Award for "the outstanding historical novel on an American theme for 2003--2004." In 2007 Roth received the PEN/Faulkner Award for *Everyman*.

<https://www.amazon.com/Philip-Roth>

LETTER FROM MASANJIA

By Stevi Carroll

The film *Letter from Masanjia* premiered Friday, September 14, 2018, in Pasadena and New York. Under the guidance of Wen Chen, Group 22 co-sponsored the Pasadena opening. A sell-out crowd enjoyed the evening's screening that was followed by a Q & A with director Leon Lee.



Stevi, Leon Lee, Wen.

Letter from Masanjia is a moving documentary that brings the viewer into the reality of Chinese prison labor camps where inmates are forced to make products for export.

From the Epoch Times:

For human-rights watchers, Masanjia Labour Camp is the bleakest symbol of China's totalitarian regime. In the country's vast network of labour camps, it was always the most feared.

This story began in 2011 when Julie Keith, a mother of two living in Oregon, opened a package of Halloween decorations purchased at a local K-Mart. Inside the package she found a handwritten note in Chinese and broken English which read, in part, "If

you occasionally buy this product, please kindly resend this letter to the World Human Right Organization. Thousands people here ... will thank and remember you forever."

The note outlined the gruelling working conditions in the Masanjia Labour Camp and referenced the torture and abuse experienced by detainees.

The writer was Sun Yi, a Falun Gong prisoner of conscience detained in Masanjia who often hid letters in the Halloween decorations he was forced to produce and package.

(To read the entire article, go to https://www.theepochtimes.com/letter-from-masanjia-the-poignant-story-of-sos-letter-writer-sun-yi_2500904.html)

Sun Yi shows us what courage, humility, and honor look like. Sun Yi and Julie Keith meet in Jakarta where Sun Yi escaped to for asylum. One of the Halloween decorations Sun Yi made was styrofoam headstones. As Sun Yi and Julie Keith talked, he asked such a simple yet powerful question: What does RIP mean?

So often when I see all of the things that are made in other countries, China included, I wonder what the people who make them think about the items and whether or not they have any idea what they could possibly be used for and why people might want them. Sun Yi's question shined light on my thoughts.

As the movie ends, Sun Yi leaves us with his thought about life. I paraphrase here, he said - Good will triumph over evil.

To see the trailer for Letter from Masanjia, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKRavgm-KPY>.

Wen brought a petition for Gas Zhisheng, our group's former prisoner of conscience, who is once again disappeared. Many people stopped by our table to sign. Many thanks to Wen for organizing our involvement with this important premiere. I know she, Veronica, and I were deeply affected by this documentary.

[Note from Joyce: I also found the film deeply moving when I saw it the following week. The petition for Gao Zhisheng received over 60 signatures. At next month's letter writing, we will have an action for imprisoned human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong, who appeared in the film.]

DEATH PENALTY NEWS

By Stevi Carroll

The Penalty - a documentary film

In mid September, the documentary film *The Penalty* premiered in California. The film shows three people's experience with the death penalty. It covers the state's need to find the drugs to use for the lethal injection protocol as an attorney works to prevent a 'botched' execution. A man who spent 15 years on death row for a crime he did not commit tries to put his life back together after his release. The family of a murder victim is divided as the state works to enforce the death penalty sentence.

The film's co-director, Will Francome, said, "With this film we wanted to examine capital punishment through the stories of some extraordinary people who have to deal with the death penalty in their daily lives. By taking viewers on this journey with them, we hope they will come away with a new understanding of just how much the death penalty brutalizes all of us, whether consciously or not."

About the film, Mike Farrell, president of Death Penalty Focus, said, "So much has been written about the death penalty that it becomes easy for people who have already made up their minds about it to tune out the usual arguments. But with *The Penalty*, you're seeing and hearing from real people who have been victimized by this barbaric system, and the evidence of the toll it has taken on them can't be denied."

The Penalty allows the viewer to be with three extraordinary people as they embark on journeys of recovery, discovery and rebellion and find themselves center stage in the biggest capital punishment crisis in modern memory.

To see the trailer, go to <http://www.thepenaltyfilm.com/>

Exoneration

[Aaron Salter](#) - State: MI

Date of Exoneration: 8/15/2018

In 2004, Aaron Salter was sentenced to life in prison without parole for a shooting that killed one man and wounded two others in Detroit, Michigan. He was exonerated in 2018 by evidence pointing to another man as the gunman.

Stays of Execution

September

12 Ruben Gutierrez TX
[Stay granted](#) by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas on August 22, 2018 to provide newly appointed counsel time to investigate the case and "to preserve Gutierrez's right to meaningful and effective legal representation." The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit [upheld the stay](#) on September 10.

13 Shawn Grate OH
Legally premature death warrant. Execution of the death warrant stayed by operation of law ([Ohio Rev. Code sec. 2953.09](#)) when Grate filed a notice of appeal on July 19 to permit him to pursue direct appeal remedies that are available to all Ohio capital defendants as of right.

October

10 James O.Neal OH
[Rescheduled](#) for February 21, 2021 by Gov. John Kasich on September 1, 2017

17 Raymond Tibbetts OH
Death sentence commuted by Gov. John Kasich to life without possibility of parole on July 20, 2018.

Executions

None since last month

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

Narges Mohammadi

By Joyce Wolf

Group 22's adopted prisoner of conscience in Iran, human rights activist Narges Mohammadi, has been repeatedly hospitalized, most recently in August for gall bladder surgery. Prison authorities have refused to grant her medical furlough. Now her mother is requesting permission for Narges to visit her seriously ill 85-year-old father.

From Center for Human Rights in Iran:

SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

The mother of imprisoned human rights activist Narges Mohammadi has urged Tehran Prosecutor Abbas Jafari Dowlatabadi to allow the ailing political prisoner to go on furlough (temporary leave) so she can visit her ailing father and receive medical treatment.

"Why aren't you agreeing to her furlough?" Ozra Bazargan wrote in her letter to Dowlatabadi. "How far will you go in treating my daughter unjustly?"

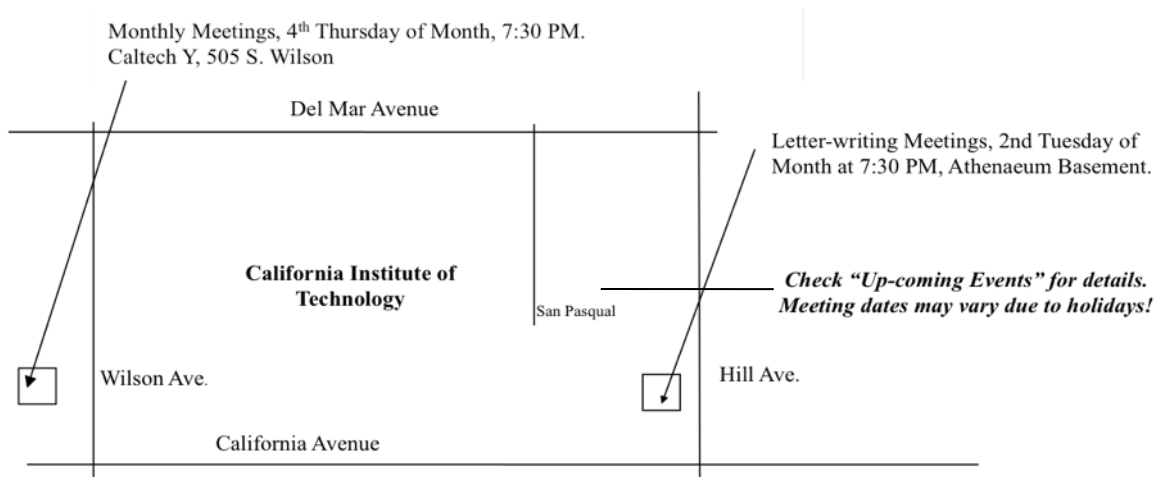
"If you insist on denying furlough to my daughter, at least let your agents bring her to see her worried, sick, old father for just an hour," she added.

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/09/let-my-daughter-see-her-sick-father-pleads-narges-mohammadis-mother/>

You can find updates and actions for Narges on Twitter by searching #FreeNarges.

GROUP 22 SEPTEMBER LETTER COUNT

UAs	21
POC	1
Total	22



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.