

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, March 25, 7:30 PM. *Monthly Meeting.* Help us plan future actions on the Patriot Act, Campaign Against Discrimination, death penalty, environmental justice and more. **THIS MONTH ONLY** the meeting will NOT be in the Caltech Y, but in the clubroom above the bookstore (just north of where Arden Road meets California Blvd, see our map, or the one on the Caltech website, www.caltech.edu/map). Take the stairs at the NE corner of the building of the bookstore, or the elevator near the stairs. Closest parking is on California Blvd (then take the path into the campus just east of the intersection with Arden Rd), or on Holliston Ave near San Pasqual St (then walk west on San Pasqual where it turns into a pedestrian way).

Tuesday, April 13, 7:30 PM. *Letter-writing Meeting* at the Athenaeum. Corner of California & Hill. This informal gathering is a great for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

Sunday, April 18, 6:30 PM. *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* Vroman's Book Bookstore, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. This month we discuss *White Sky, Black Ice* by Stan Jones. (More info below.)

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hi all. Hope you're enjoying the nice weather we've been having lately-I certainly have!

What's new with Group 22? Come to one of our 3 monthly meetings (book group, letter-writing, or monthly planning meeting) and find out! See upcoming events section for dates/times/locations of meetings.

This Sunday March 21, we discussed *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi, a former professor of English literature in a university in Tehran. It is a diary of her experiences during the time when the Iranian Revolution began, the ensuing losses of freedoms for all, but especially women, the war between Iran and Iraq and the story of a group of young women from her university classes who meet secretly in her home to discuss various works

of literature. I found it to be a fascinating look into another culture and the power of art to transform existence and we had a great discussion about these themes. Join us this month when we have a little fun with the environmentally themed mystery novel, *White Sky, Black Ice*.

Amnesty has begun a major campaign, "Stop Violence Against Women", and is focusing on domestic violence as a human rights issue and on violence against women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. This campaign is focusing on domestic violence in Iraq, sexual violence against women in the DRC occurring during armed conflict, the killing of human rights defenders in Colombia, and the murders of young women in Juarez, Mexico, and sexual violence against women in the US Military.

The environmental education fair at the Arboreum (oops!-the LA County Botanical Garden!) was fun. Several group members manned the tables, including Wen and her new baby, Sylvia! We had several kids (and adults) sign the petition on behalf of Eloida Mejia Samayoa, a Guatemalan woman who has received death threats for her work to stop mining in her village (see action below). Joyce Wolf has assembled some photos of the fair at her website: <http://home.earthlink.net/~joycewolf/laeef/>

Another environmental event is coming up, Earth Day, on April 23. Group 22 usually has a table at CalTech and we need volunteers. More info will be coming as the date approaches.

Don't forget the Annual General Meeting in Brooklyn, New York April 16-18. To register, visit www.amnestyusa.org/events/agm2004 or call 310-815-0450.

Hope to see you at one of our meetings soon!

Take care,

Kathy aigp22@caltech.edu

HAITI

Protect Human Rights Protections & End Impunity

Amnesty International is deeply concerned that the human rights situation in Haiti will worsen in Haiti unless both rebel forces implicated in serious human rights violations and armed supporters of former President Jean Bertrand Aristide accused of abuses are disarmed and brought to justice. Please urge Secretary of State Colin Powell to call upon the international community to take immediate steps to disarm and detain past and present human rights abusers.

Background information

The violence that has shaken Haiti in the past weeks has many causes. One source of conflict stems from disputed parliamentary and local elections in 2000 overwhelming won by the Fanmi Lavalas (FL) party of Jean Bertrand Aristide. The Organization of American States declared that the voting had been largely free and fair but that there had been pro-FL irregularities in the method used to determine whether a second round was needed. On this basis, opposition parties contested the legitimacy of all those elected.

The political divide between the President, his supporters, and opposition forces contributed to a stalemate that erupted into violence on numerous occasions since 2000. In 2001 and 2002 Amnesty International reported violent attacks between armed supporters of both sides. In 2002, AI reported an unprecedented wave of violent clashes in November and December involving supporters of opposing parties and at times the police. At least five people were reportedly killed and many more wounded in the confrontations. Over the last six months political violence, particularly against opposition demonstrators, has grown. In addition, armed anti-government groups have increasingly committed targeted abuses against government supporters.

On January 12, 2004, the terms expired for sitting parliamentarians. The opposition had consistently refused to take part in elections to replace them, citing fears for security. As a result, there was no functioning legislature, and Aristide was in effect ruling by decree, further weakening his credibility.

Beginning on February 5, 2004, armed government opponents began attacking police stations, court houses, prisons and officials' homes in towns throughout the center and north, forcing the police and local authorities to flee. Over 100 deaths have been reported since the latest round of fighting broke out. Two departmental prisons and the National Penitentiary have been ransacked and many detainees released, including notorious human rights violators such as Prosper Avril, and Jean-Claude Duperval, former Chief of Police during a time in which police officers were accused of committing extrajudicial executions and other serious violations.

In recent weeks, Amnesty International has repeatedly expressed its grave concern about the presence of notorious convicted human rights perpetrators such as Louis Jodel Chamblain and Jean Pierre Baptiste (a.k.a. Jean Tatoune) as leaders of the rebel forces now circulating freely in the capital, Port-au-Prince. On March 3, AI released a

report called, "Haiti: Perpetrators of past abuses threaten human rights and the reestablishment of the rule of law." The report summarizes the human rights record of several former military and paramilitary leaders who are now operating openly in Haiti.

Sample letter:

The Honorable Colin L. Powell

Secretary of State

United States Department of State

2201 C Street, NW

Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Powell,

I am deeply troubled by recent events in Haiti and concerned about the safety of the Haitian people amid reports of ongoing violence in their country. Both supporters of former President Aristide and the armed opposition have committed serious abuses against the civilian population. Leaders of the armed rebel forces include notorious figures such as Louis Jodel Chamblain and Jean Tatoune convicted in abstentia of such crimes as the 1994 Raboteau massacre in which an estimated 20 people lost their lives. In addition, several of the rebel forces are reported to include a number of former Haitian soldiers and paramilitary forces implicated in human rights abuses in the Central Plateau region of Haiti over the last year. These rebel forces reportedly rounded up suspected government supporters; their fate remains unknown. Also, government supporters, including the police force and unofficial armed gangs, have been accused of increasing numbers of abuses against perceived opposition supporters and members of the general public in the past weeks.

Despite the March 3 announcement by rebels that they would disarm, their promise will remain hollow unless the United States and the international community take decisive action. I urge you to consider the following recommendations as essential to establishing a secure environment that enables respect for human rights, including the well-being of civilians, in Haiti and throughout the region.:

1. The Multinational Interim Force (MIF) must commit to ensuring the disarmament of both the rebel forces and the pro-Aristide militias. The failure to disarm the disbanded Haitian military and paramilitary in 1994 has been one of the root causes of ongoing political violence in Haiti.

2. The MIF must guarantee that notorious human rights offenders with pending sentences for human rights convictions, such as rebel leaders Louis Jodel Chamblain and Jean Pierre Baptiste ('Jean Tatoune'), are taken into custody and brought before the Haitian justice system.

3. The MIF must ensure that the safety of judges, prosecutors, police officers, witnesses and human rights defenders involved in bringing human rights abusers to justice is guaranteed.

4. The international community must ensure that under no circumstances are those convicted of or implicated in serious human rights abuses given any position of authority, whether in a transitional government or among the security forces, where they might commit additional violations.

5. The MIF must ensure that those on all sides alleged to have committed human rights abuses during the conflict are brought to justice. Only in this way can the rule of law be fully upheld and the cycle of political violence broken.

6. International civilian human rights monitors must be deployed as a matter of urgency, in addition to multinational military and police personnel, to act as a deterrent to further abuses and to ensure that accurate and detailed human rights information is provided to inform every step of the international response to the unfolding situation in Haiti.

Thank you for taking my concerns into consideration.

Sincerely,

RIGHTS READERS

Human Rights Book Discussion Group
Vroman's Bookstore
695 E. Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena

Sunday, April 18, 6:30 PM



White Sky, Black Ice

by Stan Jones

White sky and black ice are two aspects of the physical life in the remote Alaskan village of Chukchi, where young and ambitious state trooper Nathan Active is starting his police career. Nathan has decidedly mixed feelings about Chukchi,

despite its often stunning beauty. He was born here to a 15-year-old Eskimo girl, who quickly fostered him off to a white family in Anchorage. Also, within its boundaries it contains all the problems facing native Alaskans. Entrapped by poverty and alcohol, too many of them end their lives with suicide. Even an enterprising local leader, Tom Werner, who has fought to ban alcohol and to keep

a nearby copper mine open to provide jobs, can't stop two more men from killing themselves in the book's first few pages.

But to Nathan, with his outsider's sensibilities, these last two suicides look suspicious. Even though his politically disgraced superior and the local police warn him off, he stubbornly digs into the circumstances of the deaths and finds connections to the international consortium that owns the Gray Wolf copper mine.

Stan Jones, an environmentalist, journalist, and bush pilot, obviously knows and loves the people and territory he writes so well about in this, his first mystery.— Amazon.com

LETTER COUNT

Urgent Action	19
Death Penalty	18
Just Earth	12
Racial Profiling	9
North Korea	6
Women's Campaign	2
Total	66

Want to add your letters to the total? Get in touch with lwkamp@sbcglobal.net

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Take Action against Domestic Violence in Iraq!

Iraqi women have endured severe hardship for decades. The US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 has led to widespread looting and gun crime. An Iraqi women's rights organization, the League of Iraqi Women, reported that between April and August 2003 more than four hundred women were "kidnapped, raped and occasionally sold". Women have been forced to give up work or school, and are confined in their homes due to daily newspaper reports of kidnappings and rape.

Background information

"He was very angry and he took his Kalashnikov... The neighbors said: 'Leave her alone'... But then he didn't stop, he shot my legs, I could not feel them, they were numb, the sun was setting, I was looking at the sky, I said to the men: 'I don't want to die.' They took me to the hospital."

Despite the number of eyewitnesses and the seriousness of the crime, neither the family nor the hospital reported the case to the police and her husband was not arrested. The family said it was a matter to be solved within the tribe. Fatima returned to her father's house after she left hospital. Her husband expressed regret and offered her compensation, seeking reconciliation with her through

the mediation of elders of her tribe. However, she is refusing to return to him, despite the pressures.

Iraqi women have endured severe hardship for decades: loss of male relatives in the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war; mass expulsions to Iran of entire families declared by the authorities to be of "Iranian descent;" government repression, including the chemical weapons attack on Kurds in Halabja in 1988; the 1991 Gulf war and the subsequent suppression of the Shi'a uprising; 13 years of UN sanctions from 1990 to 2003; and the US-led military action in 2003. Under the government of Saddam Hussein, women were arbitrarily arrested, tortured, "disappeared" and executed by the authorities on political grounds. In 2000, scores of women accused of prostitution were said to have been beheaded in public by a paramilitary group.

The political and security vacuum following the US-led invasion and occupation in 2003 has led to widespread looting and gun crime. Daily newspaper reports of kidnappings and rape have led many women to give up work or study and they are effectively confined in their homes. An Iraqi women's rights organization, the League of Iraqi Women, reported that more than 400 women had been "kidnapped, raped and occasionally sold" between the end of the war in April and August 2003.

Even in their homes, Iraqi women may not be safe. The breakdown in law and order after the fall of Baghdad, combined with the disbanding of the police force by the occupying powers and the proliferation of firearms, has contributed to a rise in "honour killings" and domestic violence. These crimes are often ignored by the police, as in Fatima's case. Some Islamist leaders have exploited the current instability in Iraq to press for their own agendas, which would entail imposing restrictions on women's freedom of expression and on women's freedom of movement.

In the home and in the community, in times of war and peace, millions of women and girls are beaten, raped, mutilated and killed with impunity. Join Amnesty International's campaign to demand that governments, communities and individuals act to stop violence against women throughout the world.

Take action against domestic violence in Iraq

Sample letter and petition:

Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III
Presidential Envoy to Iraq
Office of the Coalition Provisional Authority
Department of Defense
The Pentagon

Washington, DC 20301

Dear Ambassador Bremer,

I am writing to you because I am concerned about the treatment of women in Iraq. Iraqi women have endured severe hardship for decades. Under the government of Saddam Hussein, women were arrested, tortured, 'disappeared' and executed by the authorities on political grounds. In 2000, a paramilitary group publicly beheaded hundreds of women accused of prostitution.

The US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 has led to widespread looting and gun crime. An Iraqi women's rights organization, the League of Iraqi Women, reported that between April and August 2003 more than four hundred women were "kidnapped, raped and occasionally sold". Women have been forced to give up work or school, and are confined in their homes due to daily newspaper reports of kidnappings and rape.

As a supporter of Amnesty International, I join in calling on the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi Governing Council to fulfill its obligation to provide survivors with an effective remedy to bring those responsible for human rights abuses and violence against women to justice.

Ambassador Bremer, please:

- Prioritize the personal security of women and the establishment of an independent and impartial agency to monitor and ensure effective judicial responses to acts of violence against women, including kidnapping, rape and murder.
- Involve women's rights organizations in the reform of the judicial system, in particular to strengthen women's rights and equality in law and to ensure that "honor crimes" and domestic violence are treated as serious criminal offenses.

Sincerely,

JUST EARTH

Guatemalan Activists Receive Death Threats

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Eloída Mejía Samayoa, President and Legal Representative of Asociación Amigos del Lago Izabal, Friends of Izabal's Lake Association, following recent death threats against her.

Eloída Mejía Samayoa is head of an environmental organization that is opposed to the reactivation of mining activities in Izabal Department. On 18 February, she was reportedly warned to stop opposing mining activities or risk being killed. Her landlord was also allegedly told that her house would be burnt down if she continued her activities. Three days later, a meeting in the city of Puerto Barrios

which was convened by Asociación Amigos del Lago Izabal , Friends of Izabal's Lake Association to inform locals about the ecological impact of mining activities there was interrupted by unknown individuals. They threatened Eloída Mejía Samayoa by saying, "que cayera su cabeza", "her head will fall".

The threats against Eloída Mejía Samayoa follow the killing of environmental activist Enrique Alcántara on 10 February in Puerto Barrios. It is not known who killed him, but those who carry out illegal logging and animal-trafficking are among the suspects.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- -expressing concern for the safety of Eloída Mejía Samayoa;
- -calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the death threats against Eloída Mejía Samayoa, for the results to be made public and those found responsible to be brought to justice;
- urging that immediate measures are taken to ensure the safety of Eloída Mejía Samayoa and all the other members of Asociación Amigos del Lago Izabal , Friends of the Izabal's Lake Association

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General
Sr. Juan Luís Florido
Fiscalía General del Ministerio Público
8a. Avenida 10-67, Zona 1,
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Human Rights Procurator
Dr. Sergio Fernando Morales Alvarado
Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos (PDH)
12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1,
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA
Email: despacho.pdhg@correooficial.com
OR opdhg@intelnet.net.gt

COPIES TO:

National Council for Protected Areas
Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas
(CONAP)
5a Avenida 6-06, Zona 1 Edificio IPM, 7º Nivel
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA.

Ambassador Antonio Arenales Forno
Embassy of Guatemala 2220 R St. NW
Washington DC 20008
Email: ambassador@guatemala-embassy.org

DEATH PENALTY

More Juvenile Executions Scheduled in Texas

We continue to campaign for an end to juvenile executions. Here is a sample letter for three scheduled executions in Texas.

The Honorable Rick Perry
Governor of Texas
State Capitol
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711
Fax: 1-512-463-1849

Dear Governor Perry:

I write to express my concern for Edward Capetillo, Raul Villarreal, and Efrain Perez, who are due to be killed in the Texas lethal injection chamber on March 30, June 23, and June 24, 2004, respectively. All three have been on death row since the mid 1990s.

International law unequivocally prohibits the execution of people who were under age 18 at the time of committing a capital offense. Four U.S. Supreme Court Justices, one short of a majority, have described the execution of juvenile offenders as "shameful" and a "relic of the past." Since 1998, Amnesty International has recorded 19 executions of child offenders worldwide. Thirteen of these executions took place in the United States, with eight of those occurring in Texas. Seven of these executions in Texas involved African-American prisoners, six of whom had been convicted of the murder of a white person.

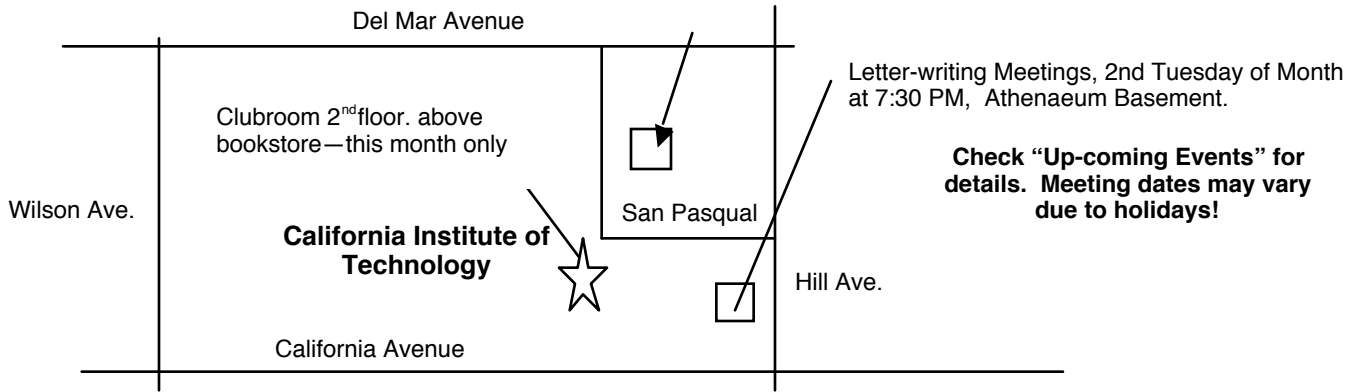
Studies have consistently shown that the race of the victim is a significant factor in determining which prisoners are more likely to receive a death sentence in the U.S. Edward Capetillo, Raul Villarreal, and Efrain Perez, all of whom are Latino, were convicted of crimes involving white victims. All three were 17 years old at the time of their respective crimes.

I urge you to do all in your power to stop these executions and bring Texas into line with international standards pertaining to the sentencing of juvenile offenders. I thank you in advance for your immediate action on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

copy to:
The Honorable Colin Powell
United States Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 "C" Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520
fax: 1-202-647-2283

Monthly Meetings, 4th Thursday of Month, 7:30 PM,
Caltech Y Lounge, 414 S. Holliston.



Check "Up-coming Events" for details. Meeting dates may vary due to holidays!

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
P.O. Box 50193
Pasadena, CA 91115-0193**



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.