

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday, September 25, 7:30 PM.** *Monthly Meeting* Caltech Y is located off San Pasqual between Hill and Holliston, south side. You will see two curving walls forming a gate to a path-- our building is just beyond. Help us plan future actions on Sudan, the War on Terror, death penalty, environmental justice and more.

**Tuesday, September 13, 7:30 PM.** *Letter-writing Meeting* at the Athenaeum. Corner of California & Hill. **The Rathskellar closes in summer so look for us and our sign, outside at a table on the lawn!** This informal gathering is a great for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

**Sunday, September 18, 6:30 PM.** *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* Vroman's Book Bookstore, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. This month we read Andrew X. Pham's Vietnam memoir, *Catfish and Mandala*. (More info below.)

**Sunday, September 25, 1:00-4:00 PM.** "Redemption" Film Screening and Discussion. All Saints Church, 132 N. Euclid Ave, Pasadena (in the Forum). This film details the life of California death row inmate, Stanley "Tookie" Williams. (More info below.)

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hope everyone is enjoying the last few weeks of summer. I am back to work, but it is fairly quiet and I am cleaning out my files and organizing in preparation for the new school year. There is less traffic and people, as August is the month everyone seems to go on vacation!

Robert and I drove to the Grand Canyon and Monument Valley for a week. Neither one of us had seen the canyon since we were kids-I forgot how spectacular it is. We went to the South Rim and also the East Rim (close to the Western edge of the Navajo Nation) which has a watchtower overlook. In Monument Valley, we went on a jeep tour and had Navajo tacos (on fry bread)! I'll bring the pictures to the next meeting!

On August 26, 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment - the Women's Suffrage Amendment to the US Constitution - became law, allowing women full

voting rights for the first time in American history. Since its implementation in 1971, Women's Equality Day has commemorated the culmination of a successful civil rights movement by women. Amnesty is using this date for collective action to call for ending gender-based violence.

As the September 30, 2005 expiration date for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2000 draws closer, we face the threat of losing the remarkable gains made in ending domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Every day the United States fails to ratify and implement the Treaty for the Rights of Women (CEDAW), we send out a dubious message about our principles and the value we attach to women's rights. That is why we need to make a powerful stand, urging for ratification of CEDAW and re-authorization of VAWA.

Next month, visit [700women.org](http://700women.org) for an update on a National call-in Week to your senators and representatives in support of the VAWA legislation and remind Senators of your support for the ratification of CEDAW by the Senate.

Please join LA Women for Juarez and Congresswoman Hilda Solis, Amnesty International and Dolores Huerta, for an Inter-Faith Prayer Memorial and Vigil for the women victims of violence in Juarez, Mexico on Tuesday, August 23 rd at 7pm at Our Lady Queen of the Angels Church. The service will include dancing, music and excerpts from documentaries on the subject and will be followed by a walking vigil through Olvera Street.

Since 1993, it is estimated more than 400 women have been murdered in Ciudad Juárez, the Sister City of El Paso. Of these deaths, approximately 100 have been sexual-torture killings of young women, ages 12 - 35. The totals of the missing and unaccounted for is uncertain but it is estimated to be more than 500.

The plight of the women of Juarez has been well documented in many documentary films and art venues, including, "Senorita Extraviada," a case study by Lourdes Portillo and in *Desert Blood*, a novel by Gaspar de Alba. No justice or significant legal action has taken place.

The purpose of this event is to bring several groups or organizations and the general public in unity and prayer for the end of violence against women in Juarez and the end of all violence in general. For more info visit: [www.losangelesforthewomenofjuarez.org](http://www.losangelesforthewomenofjuarez.org). An action on Juarez follows.

Sincerely,

Take care, Kathy      [aigp22@caltech.edu](mailto:aigp22@caltech.edu)

# STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

## *Congressional Resolution on Women of Juarez*

Sample Letter (see Kathy's column for details.)

The Honorable (first name, last name)  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. (last name),

I am writing to urge you to become a cosponsor of the (House Concurrent Resolution 90/Senate Concurrent Resolution 16) on the murders of hundreds of young women in Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua, Mexico since 1993. Representative Hilda Solis and Senator Jeff Bingaman introduced the resolution concurrently in the House and Senate. Both were introduced with strong bipartisan support.

Amnesty International has reported that nearly 400 young women have been murdered in Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua since 1993. Of these, 137 experienced some form of sexual violence before being killed. In nearly all these cases investigations were either mishandled or not carried out. A Mexican Federal Special Prosecutor has reviewed almost half of these cases, and she has already found negligence or incompetence by state authorities in over 150 cases. So far, no state authority has been held accountable for their negligence and lack of due diligence, although an arrest warrant has been issued for the former Chihuahua State Attorney General.

Compounding the tragedy is the fact that several persons detained and accused of the murders have claimed they were tortured and/or forced to confess. In one such case a woman from Minnesota and her Mexican husband were detained and allegedly tortured into confessing to the murder of a young woman in Chihuahua city. After extensive reviews of the case a judge decided to release the couple for lack of credible evidence. Unfortunately, the State Attorney General continues to appeal this decision and has not dropped the charges against them.

The murder of young women in Juarez and Chihuahua cities are important to the United States because violence against women is unacceptable anywhere. These cases often have a direct impact in the U.S. because extended families reside on both sides of the border. In addition, this violence can affect U.S. visitors to Juarez and Chihuahua.

I urge you to contact Rep. Solis's (or Sen. Bingaman's) office to cosponsor this important resolution. Ongoing international attention to this tragedy will assist the struggle for justice of the victim's families and send a strong message that

violence against women is unacceptable, wherever it occurs.

Sincerely, Your NAME and ADDRESS

**VIETNAM POC**  
*Brother Nguyen Thien Phung*

This month our focus is educating ourselves about contemporary Vietnam in an effort to understand the context for Brother Nguyen's incarceration. To that end we urge you to join us for our discussion of *Catfish and Mandala* (see below). One interesting piece of background about the religious order Brother Nguyen belonged to, the Congregation of the Mother Coredemptrix, is that many refugee members of the organization settled in Carthage, Missouri where they founded a seminary (there appears to be a branch in Corona as well). Photojournalist Christopher Record produced this photoessay about young priests in Carthage, "Serving in Shadows" found online here: <http://www.sightphoto.com/sightphoto/story/mpw/ky01.html> If your Vietnamese is not too rusty, you can also check out the order's website ([www.dongcong.net](http://www.dongcong.net)). We look forward to inquiring as to the order's prior involvement in any actions concerning Brother Nguyen or possible future collaborations with us.

## RIGHTS READERS

*Human Rights Book Discussion Group*

**Vroman's Bookstore**

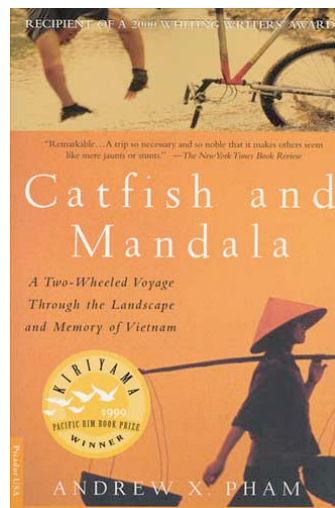
*695 E. Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena*

**Sunday, September 18, 6:30 PM**

*Catfish and Mandala*

*by Andrew X. Pham*

A brilliantly written memoir in which a young Vietnamese-American uses a bicycle journey in his homeland as a vehicle to tell his eventful life story.... The most riveting sections are Pham's exceptional evocations of his father's time in a postwar communist reeducation (read: concentration)



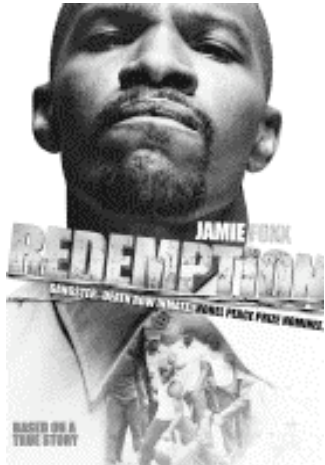
camp and the family's near miraculous escape by sea from their homeland. The heart of the narrative is Pham's depiction of his five-month adventure in Vietnam, often not a pretty picture. Because of his unique status as a budget-minded Viet Kieu (overseas Vietnamese), he runs into significant

harassment from the police and many unfriendly civilians. For every moment of self-discovery and enchantment there seem to be ten of disappointment and dispiritedness plus nearly constant physical pain from his journey and a bout of dysentery. But Pham perseveres. He returns to his home, America, with a smile on his face. An insightful, creatively written report on Vietnam today and on the fate of a Vietnamese family in America. – Kirkus Reviews

--Winner of the Kiriayama Prize

## DEATH PENALTY

*Stan "Tookie" Williams Event on Sept 25*



Group 22 invites you to a screening of the film "Redemption" a film based on the life of California death row inmate Stanley "Tookie" Williams. The event is co-sponsored by All Saints Church's anti-racism group, COLORS and their Prison Ministry and will be held Sunday, September 25 1:00 - 4:00 PM at All Saints Church, in the Forum (132 N

Euclid Ave, Pasadena). A lunch available for \$5.00 donation. The film stars Jamie Foxx and Lynn Whitfield and details Williams' journey from notorious gang leader to gang-prevention advocate and author of anti-gang children's books. Williams has neared the end of the appeals process and it is anticipated that an execution date may be set for him this fall, along with as many as four other California death row inmates. The film will be followed by a discussion of the Williams case and the status of the anti-death penalty efforts in California.

## DEATH PENALTY

*Oppose Death Penalty Expansion/Anti-Gang Bill*

Sample Letter:

Senator Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Senator Barbara Boxer  
United States Senate  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Senator Boxer/Feinstein,

As your constituent, I urge you to oppose S.155 -"The Gang Prevention and Effective Deterrence Act of 2005". Gang violence is a serious problem, but S. 155

would not protect communities and instead would violate human rights. Organizations such as the NAACP, Human Rights Watch, the Children's Defense Fund and Amnesty International USA all oppose the language in this bill.

Of particular concern are provisions in the bill that would expand the number of death-eligible offenses. The language in this bill is so broadly drawn as to create death-eligible offenses in nearly any crime related to transportation of a firearm in interstate commerce or any crime of violence. This runs counter to Supreme Court jurisprudence that requires death penalty statutes to be narrowly drawn so that only the "worst of the worst" offenders are those sentenced to death.

Also, as with state death penalty systems, the federal death penalty is fraught with racial bias and disparities. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) released the findings of its review of the federal death penalty in September 2000 that provided statistics that reveal widespread geographical and racial disparities in the application of the federal death penalty. The death penalty system in the United States has sent innocent individuals to death row. Already, 119 people have been released from death rows across the country after being wrongfully convicted. Last year, a University of Michigan study identified 199 murder exonerations since 1989, 73 of them in capital cases. The same study found that death row inmates represent a quarter of 1 percent of the prison population but 22 percent of the exonerated.

In addition to violating international human rights standards, the death penalty system is fatally flawed. I urge you to oppose S. 155 and other efforts that would expand the federal death penalty. Please let me know how you intend to address this issue.

Sincerely, Your NAME and ADDRESS

## WAR ON TERROR

*Concern for Conditions of Detention*

Sample Letter:

The Honorable George W. Bush  
The President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am deeply concerned that the United States has held Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri without charge or trial in solitary confinement for over three and a half years. He has been held in conditions that appear to amount to torture, and has not received adequate treatment for his declining mental and physical health. I urgently request that he be given

appropriate treatment for his physical and psychological health problems immediately, and given access to his family. I further request that he be released unless he is brought to a full and fair trial.

Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri is said to have been denied basic hygienic necessities such as adequate bedding, clothing and toilet paper. The prison doctors who have seen him have refused to deal adequately with his complaints. His lawyers were first allowed to meet him in October 2004, when he had been in custody for almost three years.

According to a lawsuit filed by his lawyers on August 8, Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri has been held, shackled, in a cell measuring approximately 3x2 meters since June 23, 2003. The small cell window is covered with plastic, so he is not able to see the outside world. He is allowed only brief periods out for exercise. To make it difficult for him to sleep, a portable industrial fan is left on 24 hours a day near the door of his cell, and is reportedly turned up high when he is deemed to be "non-compliant". Sometimes when he is sleeping guards wake him by shaking him, or by banging constantly on his cell door.

As a devout Muslim, Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri prays five times daily at scheduled times; however, he has been denied a prayer rug and has not been given a clock, making it impossible for him to know when to pray. The lawsuit also alleges that prison officers have mistreated and disrespectfully handled his copy of the Qu'ran. The US Religious Freedom Restoration Act prohibits US authorities from discouraging free religious practice unless there is a compelling governmental interest.

The lawsuit also describes how the cell is often made extremely cold and how the water supply is sometimes turned off, forcing him to defecate on his food tray so that the faeces did not remain for days in the same cell where he lives and prays. The lawsuit also states that he has developed a number of medical conditions resulting from his detention, including "sharp and debilitating tingling pains in his leg", "vision problems, including seeing flickering lights and white spots...constant headaches, back pain, dizziness, uncontrollable tremors...and ringing in his ears." It would appear that he has not received adequate medical treatment for these conditions. The doctor who treated him for the tingling pains recommended that a special x-ray was needed to assess nerve damage, but that medical procedure has been denied. Further medical recommendations that he be given a chair with a good cushion and a thicker mattress were also denied.

The lawsuit says that he "has experienced a number of symptoms that demonstrate severe damage to his

mental and emotional well-being, including hypersensitivity to external stimuli, manic behavior, difficulty concentrating and thinking, obsessive thinking, difficulty with impulse control, difficulty sleeping, difficulty keeping track of time and agitation". His lawyers argue that this behavior is a direct result of the prolonged isolation and other inhumane treatment.

During the first year he was held as an "enemy combatant" he was interrogated repeatedly. On one occasion he says that interrogators threatened to send him to Egypt or Saudi Arabia where, they told him, he would be tortured and sodomized, and his wife would be raped in front of him. Interrogators are also said to have falsely told him that some of his brothers and his father were in jail because of him, and promised that they would be released if he cooperated. He has not been interrogated for the past year.

Ali-Saleh Kahlah al-Marri reportedly entered the USA legally with his wife and five children on September 10, 2001 to pursue postgraduate studies. He was arrested in December 2001 and held as a material witness in the investigation into the September 11 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center. He was subsequently charged with credit card fraud and making false statements to the FBI, but in June 2003, less than a month before he was due to stand trial, you designated him an "enemy combatant" and he was transferred to US military custody in the Naval Consolidated Brig in Charleston, South Carolina. He is the first non-US national to be held as an "enemy combatant" on US soil.

His treatment in detention may amount to torture, and I thus urge you to ensure that Ali-Saleh Kahlah al-Marri's allegations of ill-treatment be investigated and urge that anyone responsible be brought to justice.

Sincerely, Your NAME and ADDRESS

## POC HAITI

### *Protest Detention of Gerard Jean-Juste*

Sample Letter:

Ambassador of Haiti  
Embassy of the Republic of Haiti  
2311 Massachusetts Ave NW  
Washington DC 20008

Dear Ambassador,

I was alarmed to hear of the arbitrary arrest and detention of Gerard Jean-Juste on 21 July. He was taken into police custody "for his own protection" and then charged with the murder of Jacques Roche. He was abroad at the time of the murder of which he has been accused, but he is a prominent opponent of

the government. Amnesty International considers him a prisoner of conscience, detained solely because he has peacefully exercised his right to freedom of expression.

Rev. Jean-Juste has been an outspoken supporter of former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and critic of the present government, in his sermons and in radio broadcasts. On 21 July he attended the funeral of journalist Jacques Roche, at a church in the Pétionville suburb of the capital, Port-au-Prince. He was assaulted and threatened by a mob outside the church, who said he was one of those responsible for the violence that is sweeping the capital. He was taken to Pétionville police station by officers from the Haitian police and the UN civilian police force, CIVPOL.

At the police station, he was accused of the murder of the journalist. Although he was supposedly there simply for his own safety, he was locked up in a cell at the police station with another 43 detainees. The following day he was transferred to the National Penitentiary, where he is in solitary confinement. According to his lawyer, he has reportedly been charged with the murder of Jacques Roche. However, Rev. Jean-Juste and his lawyers were not shown an arrest warrant or any other official statement of the charges. He is one of dozens of Aristide supporters who have been arbitrarily detained in this way.

I urge Haitian officials to immediately and unconditionally release Rev. Gerard Jean-Juste. He appears to be a prisoner of conscience, arrested and detained solely for the legitimate expression of his opinions. Arbitrary detention is becoming increasingly prevalent throughout Haiti and I urge Haitian authorities to put an end to this practice.

Sincerely, Your NAME and ADDRESS

<b>LETTER COUNT</b>	
Urgent Actions	17
Summer Postcard Action	17
Total:	34
Want to add your letters to the total? Get in touch with <a href="mailto:lwkamp@sbcglobal.net">lwkamp@sbcglobal.net</a>	

**CHILDREN'S EDITION UA**  
*MEXICO: Adalí Peñalosa, age 15*

Did you know that Amnesty offers a monthly "Children's Edition" Urgent Action, designed for young people to write on behalf of other children around the world? This is a terrific resource for parents who want to include children in their activist pursuits, as well as for classroom teachers. A Spanish version is also available. Visit

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/aikids/> for more info. Here's the latest action—the language may be simplified but adults are welcome to join with the many children writing on behalf of this Mexican youth this month.

Peñalosa, age 15, was brutally attacked in Guerrero, Mexico, where his father is a peasant environmentalist.

Please help Amnesty International ensure the safety of 15-year-old Adalí Peñalosa and his family.

Adalí Peñalosa was wounded by gunmen on May 19, 2005 as he arrived home in Banco Nuevo, Guerrero State, Mexico, with his father and three brothers. Adalí, his father, and his 19-year-old brother Issac, have been seriously hurt; tragically, his brothers Armando, and Adatuel, were killed in the attack.

**BACKGROUND:**

Adalí's father, Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez, is an environmentalist and a founder of the Peasant Environmentalist Organization of the Sierra de Petátlan (OCESP). Amnesty International believes that the attacks upon and the charges against Albertano Peñalosa and other Guerrero environmentalists and their families have been made, not because of crimes the OCESP members have committed, but because of their peaceful protests against excessive and illegal logging in forests in Mexico's southern state of Guerrero.

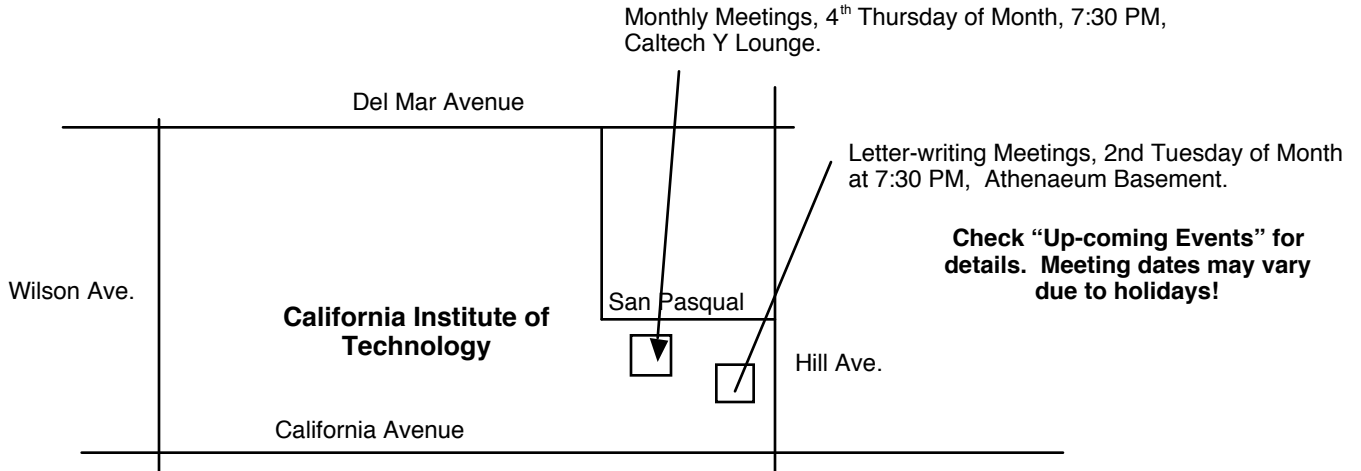
**WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

Please write a short, courteous letter to the Governor of Guerrero State before October 31, 2005. Tell the Governor that you are worried about Adalí Peñalosa and his family. Explain to the Governor that you believe children should not be attacked or killed. Ask the Governor to begin a complete investigation into the armed attack on Adalí, and his brother, because international law, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), is supposed to protect young people from harm. Thank Governor Torreblanca for reading your letter and urge him to let you know what he plans to do to protect Adalí and other innocent children in Guerrero from future attacks.

The address for the Governor of Guerrero is:

[Salutation: Dear Governor,]  
Gobernador Del Estado De Guerrero Lic. Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo  
Boulevard Rene Juarez Cisneros No. 62, Edificio B  
Ciudad De Los Servicios, Cp 39075  
Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico

Editor's Last Word:  
Read us on line: <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~aigp22>  
Martha Ter Maat, 626-281-4039 / [rightsreaders@yahoo.com](mailto:rightsreaders@yahoo.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**  
**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.*