

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, October 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.

Sunday, October 28, 2 pm. Liu Xiaobo book event (non-AI). Pacific Asia Museum, 46 Los Robles, Pasadena. See following article.

Tuesday, November 13, 7:30 PM. Letter writing meeting at Caltech Athenaeum, corner of Hill and California in Pasadena. The Rathskeller is in the Athenaeum basement; take the stairs to the right of the main entrance. Look for the table with the Amnesty sign. Please join us to write actions on human-rights violations around the world. This informal gathering is a great way for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

Sunday, November 18, 6:30 PM. Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion group. This month we discuss "Stasiland: Stories from Behind the Berlin Wall" by Anna Funder.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

This month Group 22 members have been active in the electoral process as Stevi, Rob, and others have done phone-banking for Proposition 34, the initiative that would convert the death penalty in California to LWOP (Life without Parole). The election is less than 2 weeks away – have you been watching the debates? Who do you think will win? I can't tell you how to vote – the important thing is to vote!



People around the world were horrified and outraged when a high-school girl was shot in Pakistan by the Taliban for her activism in favor of education for girls. Malala Yousafzai miraculously

survived the attack and is recovering in a hospital in Britain. Two of her classmates were also injured in the attack on her school bus.

Latest reports have her being able to stand with assistance and write. She is unable to speak because she has a tracheostomy. Doctors expect her to recover without major neurological deficits. Please keep this lovely young girl and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

If you would like to express your support for Malala and her classmates, Amnesty has an action and here is a link:

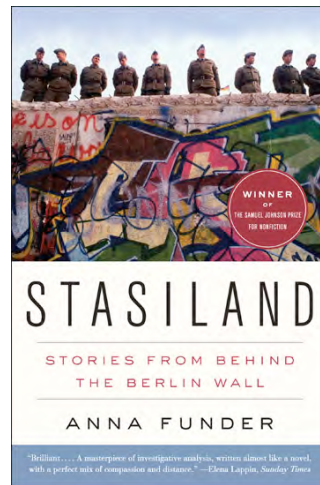
<http://tinyurl.com/8hvo99j>

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, Nov. 18,
6:30 pm

Vroman's Bookstore
695 E. Colorado,
Pasadena

Stasiland: Stories from Behind the Berlin Wall

by Anna Funder

REVIEW (www.kirkusreviews.com)
STASILAND (reviewed on April 15, 2003)

Sydney-based Funder's impressive debut crisply renders her pursuit of East Berlin's ghosts.

When she was writer-in-residence at the Australia Center in Potsdam, the author became fascinated by the uneasy truce former East Germans kept with their recent Communist past, which was literally all around. The German Democratic Republic's surveillance apparatus, run by the Stasi (secret police), was more pervasive than elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc; many people became informers, while others had their lives ruined for minor

infractions. Funder befriended several survivors, such as Miriam, who was arrested at 16 in 1968 for anti-authoritarian pranks; fearing prison, she attempted to cross the Berlin Wall, served time, and was persecuted for years. (Eventually her lover died, mysteriously, in custody.) A couple the author met had nearly lost their sick child, who was at a better hospital in West Berlin; her landlady was barely able to acknowledge what turned out to be a history of twisted treatment by the Stasi. Similar trials are recalled with cocky humor by survivors like Klaus Renft, once a naïve underground rock star whose band provided youthful GDR residents with “something authentic and unauthorised.”

Funder also sought out ex-Stasi workers willing to tell their stories; she had a memorably bizarre encounter with Herr von Schnitzler, a despised pioneer of televised propaganda who defended the regime with undiminished vitriol. Funder shrewdly blends memoir elements with these personal histories and casts an attentive eye on the decrepit landscape with its haunting traces of the old regime, most dramatically expressed by the official effort to untangle the Stasi’s paper trail: an office of so-called “puzzle women” working to restore shredded documents in an effort projected to take 375 years. The former GDR may be out of the news these days, but Funder’s fully humanized portrait of the Stasi’s tentacles reads like a warning of totalitarian futures to come.

Colorful, intensely observed, well executed, with lots of black humor and disturbing undertones.

About the Author



Anna Funder is an Australian writer who grew up in Melbourne. She has worked as an international lawyer specializing in human rights and constitutional law. She

is the prizewinning author of *Stasiland: Stories from Behind the Berlin Wall*, which has been published in twenty countries and translated into sixteen languages. In 2004 *Stasiland* won the BBC Samuel Johnson Prize, the most prestigious nonfiction award in the United Kingdom. *All That I Am* is her first novel. Anna Funder lives in Brooklyn with her husband and children. (www.harpercollins.com)

Sunny SoCal in *The Barbarian Nurseries* by Stevi Carroll

Sunday, October 21, 2012, Rights Readers met at Vroman’s to discuss *The Barbarian Nurseries* by Hector Tobar. A few minutes into our discussion, Hector Tobar joined us. What a treat.

Not only did we learn that the Torres-Thompson children are based on Hector’s own sons and daughter, but that the gritty, very real people and descriptions come from Hector’s experiences as a reporter for the LA Times. He is a writer who enjoys his characters, their experiences and the settings in which they find themselves.

Currently, Hector’s working on two more books, one a historical novel about the trapped Chilean miners and another about a man who wanted to write a novel so he lived the life of a novel but was never able to write the novel. Both books sound like they are right down our Amnesty alley.



Suzanne, Julie, Lucas,
Hector, Stevi, Joyce

Liu Xiaobo Book Event

Visual Artists Guild and Pacific Asia Museum
Cordially Invites you to:

No Enemies, No Hatred:
Selected Essays and Poems by Liu Xiaobo
A program with co-editor Perry Link

Sunday, October 28, 2012 at 2 p.m.
Pacific Asia Museum,
46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena,
California 91101

Liu Xiaobo is a Chinese writer and human rights activist. Winner of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize, Liu is currently imprisoned in China for his writings. This book marks the inaugural English-language collection of his work. Dr. Perry Link, Visual Artists Guild's 2012 Champion of Freedom of Speech awardee, is one of the foremost scholars on China in the West. Dr. Link is an authority in modern Chinese literature and language. An international expert on Chinese human rights issues, Dr. Link has edited this volume of Liu Xiaobo's writings from the past two decades. Dr. Link also translated Charter 08, a manifesto for reforms which Liu Xiaobo initiated and which became one of the documents China's government used to prosecute Liu. Dr. Link is Emeritus Professor of East Asian Studies at Princeton and Chancellorial Chair in Humanities at the University of California at Riverside.

Reservation:

The program is **free but you need to RSVP** Pacific Asia Museum at 626-449-2742 to get free admission to the Museum. For more information, please contact Ann Lau, Visual Artists Guild at 310-539-0234

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE
Gao Zhisheng
by Joyce Wolf

The CECC (Congressional-Executive Commission on China) released its 2012 Annual Report on October 10. The report mentions Group 22's adopted prisoner of conscience Gao Zhisheng.

Here are some excerpts from the Statement of CECC Chairman Christopher Smith and Cochairman Sherrod Brown:

The report recommends that the U.S. Congress and President urge China to immediately ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, strengthen the rule of law, enhance transparency, engage in dialogue with ethnic minorities without preconditions, and release political prisoners such as Nobel Peace Prize winner **Liu Xiaobo** and human rights lawyer **Gao Zhisheng**.

"In an egregious miscarriage of justice, authorities this past year 'claimed' that the

missing rights lawyer **Gao Zhisheng** violated the terms of his parole mere days before his suspended sentence was to expire," Smith said. "Gao and many other political prisoners in China languish in jails simply for advocating for and exercising their basic human rights. They are a testament to how far China must go to be a country where rule of law and international human rights are respected."

The report observed Chinese leaders more concerned with internal Party politics than with reform. It found a "deepening disconnect" between the growing demands of the Chinese people and their government.

"On issue after issue, from revision of China's Criminal Procedure Law to the government's treatment of Falun Gong practitioners, Catholics, Muslims, Protestants, and other religious groups, Chinese officials continued to err on the side of repression or symbolic half-measures rather than pursue real, meaningful reform," said Smith and Brown.

This statement and a link to the full 2012 report are available at <http://www.cecc.gov>.

DEATH PENALTY NEWS

By Stevi Carroll

Proposition 34

Work continues with phone calls to get out the vote to vote YES on Prop 34. All Saints Church provides volunteer opportunities to make phone calls Sunday, Monday and Tuesday through November 4th. To sign up, click on <http://tinyurl.com/8jyxo2v> and scroll down to Pasadena. People can also call from home. This option is offered at the bottom of the page at the above link.

Polls show Prop 34 is a close race, so some of those undecided or on-the-fence-about-voting people could make the difference.

Many thanks to our group for what we have done to support the YES on Proposition 34.

John Edward Smith

September 25, 2012, is a day John Edward Smith will remember. After 19 years in Calipatria State Prison for a murder he did not commit, Mr.

Smith was released. The one eye witness, Landu Mvuemba, who led to his conviction was critically wounded at the time of the murder of DeAnthony Williams and identified Mr. Smith two months after the incident. Mr. Mvuemba later recanted his testimony saying he'd been pressured by the police to identify Mr. Smith. At the time of Mr. Smith's arrest, he was a gang member, something that may have influenced his conviction.

Mr. Smith's grandmother, Laura Neal, regularly traveled from Mid City Los Angeles to the prison near the Salton Sea to visit him. In recent years, these trips were more difficult because Ms Neal became ill.

Mr. Smith said he has no bitterness and looks forward to spending time with his family.

To see a brief news report, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqkbiAIDir0>.

Terrance Williams

Last month Terrance Williams was waiting to be executed on October 3 for murdering a man who sexually abused him. On October 2, Mr. Williams received a stay of execution due in large part to the tenacity of Judge Teresa Sarmina. Judge Sarmina examined the trial notes from 26 years ago and found that information about Amos Norwood's history of fondling teenage boys, including Mr. Norwood, had been withheld by the prosecution. Because of this, members of the jury found no mitigating circumstances when deciding on the death penalty. The Philadelphia District Attorney has appealed this ruling to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Mr. Williams will spend life in prison without parole, or a new jury will decide his fate regarding the death penalty.

Damon A. Thibodeaux

Damon A. Thibodeaux left the Louisiana State Penitentiary the end of September 2012 after 15 years on death row for a murder DNA evidence proved he did not commit. After a nine-hour interrogation, Mr. Thibodeaux, then 23, confessed to the rape and murder of his 14-year-old step-cousin. Because interrogations are not videotaped, what transpired during his confession is unclear. What is clear at his point is that DNA and other evidence exonerated him and he is now free. Since 2000, six people have been released from Louisiana's death row. Mr. Thibodeaux is the 300th person nationwide to be

exonerated through post-conviction DNA evaluation.

Amnesty Online Action

Stop the Execution of Bobby Hines in Texas <http://tinyurl.com/8ks3xo2>

Mr. Hines is scheduled to be executed on October 24, but I did not see his name on the calendars I use for execution information. Please check the website to see if this is still a valid online action.

Stays of Execution

October

2	Terrance Williams	Pennsylvania
9	Terry Ray Chamberlain	Pennsylvania
10	Andre Staton	Pennsylvania
11	David Richard Ramtahal	Pennsylvania
18	Anthony Haynes	Texas
23	John Ferguson	Florida

Executions

September

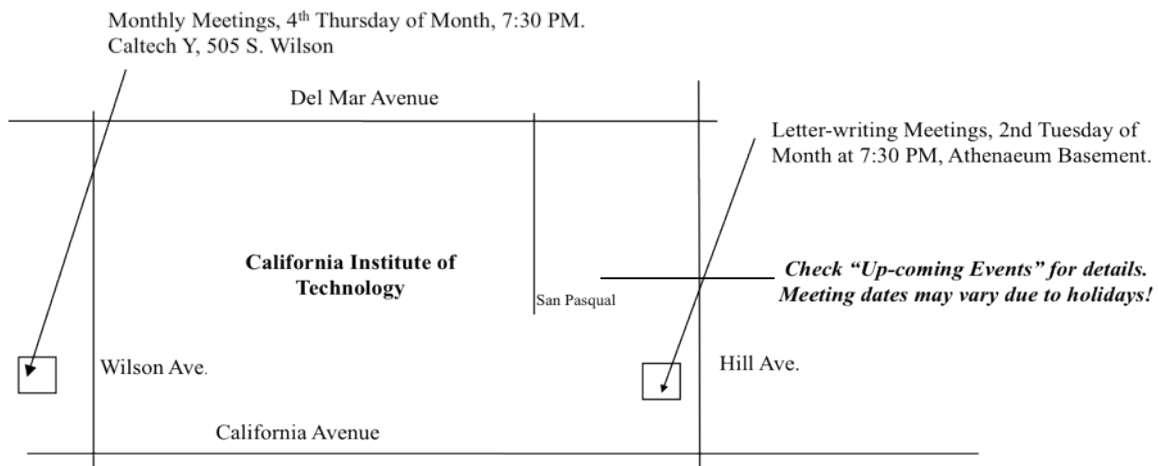
25	Cleve Foster	Texas	one-drug lethal injection
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October

10	Jonathan Green	Texas	one-drug lethal injection
15	Eric Robert *	South Dakota	one-drug lethal injection

* volunteer- an inmate who waived ordinary appeals that remained at the time of his execution

GROUP 22 MONTHLY LETTER COUNT	
UAs	18
POC	7
Total	25
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.