



UUJEC Autumn Newsletter 2018

Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community

Karla Chew, Editor. Inquiries to: newsletter@uujec.com

HR 676 Medicare for All

It's about time that our President learned what socialism is — it is government ownership of the means of production. I have not noticed Democrats advocating that, even though our President alleges that they do.

Because they know the United States healthcare system is rated lowest in quality and highest in cost among western nations (37th in the world according to the World Health Organization), many people do support HR676 (Improved Medicare for All), which creates a publicly financed, privately run system of health care that would bring quality health care to all United States residents at a cost less than what 90% of us pay for health care now.

And, instead of providing less than what Medicare provides now (as our President

maintained in a recent issue of USA Today), HR676, once it becomes the law of the land, will provide basic vision care, dental care, long-term care — three benefits not included in our current Medicare — and more coverage of prescription drugs as well as what is provided by Medicare.

Under HR676, people who change their jobs will still keep their healthcare and will have freedom of choice to access all licensed

healthcare providers and facilities in our nation.

Funding for Medicaid, Medicare and the Children's Health Insurance Program will be kept. Instead of paying private insurance premiums, individuals who earn less than \$53,000 will pay a 3% payroll tax, those who earn more than \$53,000 will pay 6%, and there will be a 6% surtax on incomes more than \$225,000 and a small tax of on stock and bond sales.

Also, deductibles and co-pays will be eliminated.



Private insurance companies will still be allowed to provide insurance for non-medically necessary plastic surgery and private rooms. However, insurance companies will no longer decide what care you can get; you and your health care provider will.

HR676 already has one-hundred twenty-three sponsors. The number will increase after the newly elected Representatives take office. Please let your Representatives know that you want them to sponsor HR676, to work to get it passed in both the House and Senate and implemented.

Written and submitted by Judy Deutsch

Get to Know Your Board:

Sally Jane Gellert Co-Chair

Unitarian Universalist since 1998 is a member of Central Unitarian Church NJ and has been active in civic education and advocacy for a decade or more. In 2011, Sally worked with other environmental UUs to introduce an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) to support Tim DeChristopher Currently active in each of the UU Legislative Ministry of N.J.'s 5 task forces.

Maintains Occupy Bergen County's social-media presence. Member of InterOccupy, supporting grassroots groups, both Occupy- and non-Occupy-based. Cofounder of Bergen



Unitarian Universalist Relief Group (BUURG), which held a Superstorm Sandy Benefit concert and provided relief efforts.

Communications director of the Lackawanna Coalition, a railroad-passengers advocacy group in New Jersey. Works with local advocacy/activist groups and the Ramapough Lunaape tribe.

E-mail Sally at SJGUU @ aol.com.

Book Reviews: Have you read a book on economic justice you'd like to review and share with UUJEC membership? Contact uujec@uujec.com for more information.

The Hacking of the American Mind The Science Behind the Corporate Takeover of our Bodies and Brains

By Robert Lustig, 2017

Dopamine & Serotonin: Addiction vs Happiness, Pleasure vs Contentment

The biochemistry of the human body is now well enough understood to verify what philosophers and sages have been telling us for ages, and then some. That's what this lively book is about: how dopamine is the hormone that gets us addicted to pleasurable experiences, from opioids to sugar, and how serotonin can rescue us from addiction. Serotonin is the hormone of the happiness and contentment with life long sought by Stoic philosophers, mystics, ascetics, and other spiritual seekers.



But corporations now understand our biochemistry too, and use it to exploit our weaknesses for financial gain. That is, addiction is very profitable,

despite the unhappiness and early deaths. Fortunately, the cures are cheap and very effective if we pursue them with zeal: a good night's sleep, low sugar / processed food diet, mindful meditation, regular exercise, helping others, building community, and other ways of contributing to a better world.

Contributed by Dick Burkhart

Focus on Fairness

An Economic Workshop Presented in Door County WI

October 2018



Members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Door County (UUFDC) were inspired by the economic workshop presented by the Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community in Evanston, Illinois—so inspired by what they experienced in Evanston that the UUFDC decide to put on a similar workshop in Door County.

The UUFDC reached out to other faith communities in its community looking for help putting the workshop together. They found help from the Episcopal and Lutheran Churches. They formed a group and called their workshop *Focus on Fairness*. The name was chosen to be as politically neutral as possible. The workshop consisted of three evening events.

The first event was a two-hour lecture and discussion by Lawrence University professor Dr. Dylan Fitz. Professor Fitz presented a series of graphs that demonstrated the widening economic gap in the United States, both in wealth and income, especially since 1980. Through his presentation, Professor Fitz was able to show very objectively how the income and wealth gap is widening in this country. Professor's Fitz's Power Point can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kECeOrXgoo84xREnvs1RD1b4CqxywIc/view>

The second event was a two-hour presentation by Chuck Collins, who personalized the argument for income equality. Chuck Collins is a senior scholar at the Institute for Policy Studies and the author of many books including *Born on Third Base*. He is a “one-percenter” who makes the case for tackling inequality, bringing wealth home, and committing to the common good.

The great-grandson of one of America's iconic industrialists, Chuck grew up as a member of “the one percent”, gave his inheritance away at 26, and became one of the nation's leading thinkers and activists on solving economic inequality. His entire presentation can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/W6hjIF0cfzA>

Contributed by Jim Black

What we do: UUJEC strives to create a world of justice, equity, and compassion where the inherent worth and dignity of every person is recognized and affirmed as set forth in our Unitarian Universalist Principles.

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