



UUJEC Fall Newsletter 2016

Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community

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

SAVE THE DATE 2017: April 3 - April 5

Join Us in Washington D.C. to Work for Justice

“Reversing Inequality Conference”

UUJEC is partnering with the Unitarian Universalist for Social Justice in the National Capital Region (UUSJ) to host the upcoming conference “Reversing Inequality” in Washington DC.



During the 3-day Summit you will:

- Network with other UUs fighting for justice.
- Learn and share best practices for economic justice and advocacy.
- Hear from dynamic speakers, like Chuck Collins, on the latest issues.
- Get involved with the latest campaigns against inequality.
- Visit lawmakers to influence positive change.

Conference registration information will be available soon. Any questions please email uujec@uujec.com

Video Curricula Success in Wisconsin

I recently utilized a little, unknown gem from the UUJEC website. There is a drop down menu under the “escalating inequality” tab, which includes a curriculum created by Terry Lowman, co-chair of the UUJEC, called “TED Talk curriculum and videos”. These are an excellent and well organized selection of videos centered on various aspects of income inequality. The videos are short and very powerful. The videos are mostly TED Talks but You Tube videos are also included. When I looked at the curriculum I realized that putting on a presentation would not require a lot of effort on my part, Terry had done all of the work. So I decided to present one of Terry’s curricula.

I was given the okay by my local UU fellowship to do a four-week presentation of the “escalating inequality” curriculum, sent out press releases and made an announcement at Sunday service. In bullet point fashion, I wrote out a short introduction for each video and had questions and comments to hopefully start discussions after each video. I did not know what to expect.



About twenty people attended the sessions. Given our small congregation of about 100 members and a county which is sparsely populated this turn out was respectable. The presentations drew attendees outside of our fellowship from the general population as well. There were insightful observations and great comments and questions after each video. I believe the attendees left the presentation with a little more knowledge. I hope they will talk with others about income inequality and the responsibility we all have to do what we can to close the income gap.

<http://uujec.com/tedcurriculum>

<http://uujec.com/corruptionDemocracy>

Jim Black UUJEC Board Member from Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Door County Wisconsin

Corruption of Our Democracy TED Talk Curriculum, for UUA's new Congregational Study/Action Issue

From the UUA website on Congregational Study/Action Issues, CSAI:

As corporations use "corporate personhood" and "money as speech" for their interests rather than the people's needs, can a constitutional amendment be passed to protect us? Could this further Unitarian Universalist work for social and environmental justice and help protect the health and safety of the people and the planet?

This curriculum was created to provide an easy to facilitate, high quality approach to the Congregational Study/Action Issue. Typically, UUs will have a vital conversation after viewing such compelling material, making facilitation a breeze.

To get our printable curriculum including chalice lightings, an 8 ½" x 14" flyer to promote the workshops and information on how to get a free video thumb drive, please visit the UUJEC website by clicking <http://uujec.com/corruptionDemocracy>

Terry Lowman UUJEC Co-Chair

"Economic Justice Spotlight"

Our first "Economic Justice Spotlight" features the First Unitarian Society of Madison (FUS) who received the 2016 Economic Justice and Leadership Award from UUJEC this summer. FUS is heavily involved in outreach and education within the community.

"Since 2013, we have hosted an NPR-facilitated racial justice panel, the Nuns on the Bus, directors of Interfaith Worker Justice; a Young Gifted and Black teach-in; and a "Food, Race, and Justice" event.



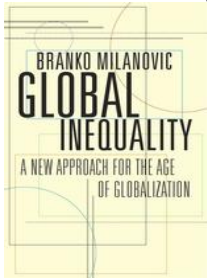
We moved away from Earth Day events toward promotion of the just society/ strong economy/ healthy planet understanding via ongoing education. Our anti-racism courses – whether taught by our ministers or allies – teach the history of structural racism and the present-day economic ramifications.

UUJEC Blog: Join the Conversation

As we continue to develop ways to better communicate with our members, we thank you for your feedback and suggestions. As a result, we've created a blog on our website to ensure an open line of communication on articles of interest to you and your congregations. Please visit our blog page <http://uujec.com/blog> read our recent articles, comment and share. You must be signed in or registered to join in the conversation, which takes 2 seconds to complete. If you need assistance, let me know uujec@uujec.com ~Rachel~

Book Reviews : Have you read a book on Economic Justice that you would like to review and share with the UUJEC membership? Contact uujec at uujec.com for more information.

“Global Inequality – A New Approach for the Age of Globalization”



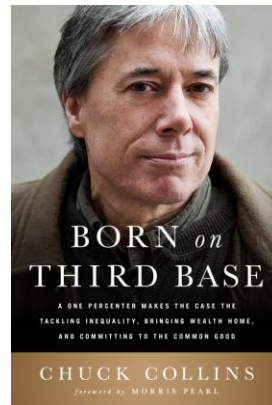
by Branko Milanovic (2016)

Branko Milanovic demonstrates that escalating economic inequality within nations is occurring globally, not just in the US. Yet, at the same time, the numbers show an overall trend toward convergence of incomes across nations. But are nations really getting more equal when the numbers depend so much on China, while Africa has been left behind?

Even within, nations may be at different historical stages, which he calls waves of inequality. For example, inequality increased in the United States until the Great Depression and World War II set the stage for a growing middle class and more egalitarian society, with another wave of escalating inequality beginning around 1980. In contrast China is still in its first wave of capitalistic inequality.

Milanovic correctly identifies the strong plutocratic forces driving escalating inequality in the US yet missed this year's political revolt by Bernie and Trump supporters. And, like most economists, he fails to understand limits-to-growth – that the world cannot just grow itself into equality when so many of its resources (fossil fuels in particular) and ecosystems are maxing out, despite all the wonders of technology. How to tackle global inequality remains a huge challenge, but at least some economists are taking a new look.

Dick Burkhardt, Chair of the GA Committee



**_ FALL 2016:
Born on Third Base**

A One Percenter Makes the Case for Tackling Inequality, Bringing Wealth Home, and Committing to the Common Good

By Chuck Collins

For more information, see:

<http://www.chelseagreen.com/born-on-third-base>

About the Book:

As inequality grabs headlines, steals the show in presidential debates, and drives deep divides between the haves and have nots in America, class war brews. On one side, the wealthy wield power and advantage, wittingly or not, to keep the system operating in their favor—all while retreating into enclaves that separate them further and further from the poor and working class. On the other side, those who find it increasingly difficult to keep up or get ahead lash out—waging a rhetorical war against the rich and letting anger and resentment, however justifiable, keep us from seeing new potential solutions.

But can we suspend both class wars long enough to consider a new way forward? Is it really good for anyone that most of society's wealth is pooling at the very top of the wealth ladder? Does anyone, including the one percent, really want to live in a society plagued by economic apartheid?

It is time to think differently, says longtime inequality expert and activist Chuck Collins. Born into the one percent, Collins gave away his inheritance at 26 and spent **the next three decades mobilizing against inequality.** He uses his perspective from both sides of the divide to deliver a new narrative.

Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community Organizing Powerful Conversations About Escalating Inequality

We are seeking congregations to host forums and book events starting October 2016 and over 2017. The author is eager to work with congregations to host events or partner with universities, colleges and other institutions to help defray travel expenses. For more information, contact Chuck at chuckcollins7@mac.com.

UUJEC Co-Sponsors Conference on Education

On September 10th Ventura Stories, co-sponsored by UUJEC, held a conference targeting to raise awareness and motivate participants to support increased funding for education in California. The conference in Ventura County CA. featured participants sharing stories of their own educational experience and experts explaining the current state of education in California as well as the history of funding.

Participants were arranged in round tables with individuals from different ages, ethnicities and socio-economic status exchanging stories. The stories they exchanged about their schooling highlighted how funding and support for education has changed since the mid 1960's. State financial support for education today was as much as 50% lower than 30 years ago. It also made clear inequity in funding among ethnic groups and subsequently, inequity in opportunity.

Experts talked about outcomes and results in education. Surprisingly, despite lower funding, graduation rates have gone up and drop-out rates

have gone down. These improvements though, did not hide the fact that California educational system has declined in ranking from being a leader during the 1970's to one of the worst performing systems in the USA today.



At the end of the session, participants started taking action. They wrote 49 postcards to local elected officials urging them to support more funding for schooling. Advocates for educational ballot initiatives in California such as Prop 51, Prop55 and Prop 58 explained the need for these efforts to succeed. Participants left with a greater knowledge of how to make funding for education more stable and equitable.

Michael Teasdale UUJEC Co-Chair

The Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County (UUTC) is hosting a **Fall Social Justice Series** featuring Rev. Barber (Oct 26) and the screening of "First Degree" (Nov 15). Info: Contact Virginia MacDonald at vrmacd@mtnwaves.net (828-862-6505) or UUTC Social Action Chair Bob Bennet at bobabennet@gmail.org . The Flyer is on our web page at www.uujec.com.