

BSUP² | SPRING 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SOCIALIST MOVEMENTS TODAY

Building Communities of Solidarity & Resistance

April 21-22, 2017



175,000 at January 21, 2017 Women's March, Boston Common

BOSTON SOCIALIST UNITY PROJECT

Boston Socialist Unity Project seeks to bring about unity through collective projects and educational events. Our goal is to foster a greater sense of community among Boston area socialists and organizations in hopes of developing better communication, stronger campaigns, and a broader vision of a future without capitalism.

Over time collective projects will germinate and socialist education events become sustained with the long-term goal of establishing a permanent socialist school offering basic classes in Marxism, organizing, etc. The greater the number of organizations and individuals working together, the greater the possibility of building effectiveness and power.

www.bostonsocialistunity.org

PROGRAM-AT-A-GLANCE

Friday, April 21

6:00 – 7:50 PM

Registration

7:00 – 9:00 PM

Kick-Off Event

Foundation Movement

“Capitalism and Incarceration”

“Planting a Left Pole, Inspiring a Left Vision”

Mat Callahan and Yvonne Moore

Saturday, April 22

9:00 – 9:50 AM

Registration

Breakfast provided by Food for Activists

10:00 – 11:20 AM

Opening Plenary

“Cultivating True Warriors” and

“Creating an Ecosocialist Society: Learning From Nature”

11:30 – 12:50 PM

Morning Workshops

1:00 – 2:20 PM

Lunch provided by Food Not Bombs

1:30 – 2:20 PM

Lunch Plenary

“Political Strategies for Challenging the System”

2:30 – 3:50 PM

Afternoon Workshops

4:00 – 5:00 PM

Closing Plenary

“Imperialism and the Global Commodity Chain”

KICK-OFF EVENT | 7:00 PM

Hip Hop Artists, The Foundation Movement are committed to addressing issues of injustice and oppression, while also entertaining crowds with hot beats and relevant lyrics.

Capitalism and Incarceration

Eugene Puryear is a Washington, D.C.-based activist. As a high school student in Charlottesville, Va, Eugene organized a walkout when the war in Iraq began in 2003, and helped to organize a number of the large-scale demonstrations that took place against the continuing U.S. war and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. He was a key leader in the struggle to free the Jena Six in 2007, was a founder of the anti-gentrification group Justice First as well as the Jobs Not Jails coalition, the DC Ferguson Movement and Stop Police Terror Project-D.C. Puryear is also the author of the book *Shackled and Chained: Mass Incarceration in Capitalist America*. In addition Puryear was the 2008 and 2016 Vice-Presidential candidate for the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Planting a Left Pole, Inspiring a Left Vision

Barbara Madeloni is the President of the Massachusetts Teachers Association. She has been a progressive leader in the statewide movement against school privatization, fighting for the schools our youth and communities deserve.

Mat Callahan and Yvonne Moore, as a duet, have sung inspiring political songs together for more than ten years. Some of the songs are written by Mat; others are long-forgotten popular songs of freedom which Mat has rediscovered on both sides of the Atlantic. Mat and Yvonne live in Switzerland, where Yvonne also has an independent career as a singer, and is well known as an interpreter of Blues.

OPENING PLENARY | 10:00 AM

Cultivating True Warriors

Sherri Mitchell is a member of the Penobscot Indian Nation. She received her Juris Doctorate and a certificate in Indigenous People's Law and Policy from the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College of Law. Sherri was a longtime advisor to the American Indian Institute's Healing the Future Program and currently serves as an advisor to the Indigenous Elders and Medicine People's Council of North and South America. She is the Director of the Land Peace Foundation and the co-host of Love (and revolution) Radio. Her new book *Sacred Instructions; The Heart of Spirit Based Change* will be in print in September of 2017.

Creating an Ecosocialist Society: Learning From Nature

Fred Magdoff is Emeritus Professor of Plant and Soil Science at the University of Vermont. His interests range from soil science to agriculture and food to the environment to the US economy. His research at UVM was on ecologically sound ways to improve soil fertility, especially focusing on the critical role of soil organic matter.

Fred is the co-author of *Building Crops for Better Soil Management* (3rd ed., 2010); *What Every Environmentalist Should Know about Capitalism* (2011); and *Creating an Ecological Society: Toward a Revolutionary Transformation* (forthcoming). He has also written numerous articles on environmental issues, including on ecological agriculture, production and use of biofuels, ecological civilization, population and global resource depletion, and the environmental and social problems of capitalist agriculture.

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TOGETHER
WE FIGHT. WE WIN.

**Building Independent Power and Organizations
Room 36-153**

We will engage in dialogue about revolutionary strategies to beat the rising right wing, share Freedom Road's analysis of the New Confederacy as the main enemy, and do some mapping of the US left: and consider the possibilities in Massachusetts for Independent Political Organizations to unite our movements and build power to defeat the right. This workshop will share Freedom Road's perspective on the centrality of the New Confederacy, and talk about its state-based strategy, and the potential for state-focused independent political organizations (IPOs) to unite the left in building political power and a strategy for socialism. This is a strategy that Freedom Road is developing on the ground in the US South and which we are excited about learning from and working with others to work out in the Massachusetts 'blue state' context. We will draw out some strategic questions:

- 'inside/outside' strategies for political power: strategies that can operate both inside and outside the political arena, as strategies that can operate both inside and outside the Democratic party;
- united front strategies that can develop the strategic alliance of the working class and the national liberation movements, and which can uphold the political leadership of working class people of color and women
- progressive and tactical alliances

Finally, workshop participants will do some mapping of the social movement and party left as we consider the reality and potential for IPOs to be a useful vehicle and strategy in Massachusetts. No special background or experience required.

**Creating An Ecosocialist Society: Learning from Nature
Edgerton Hall (Room 34-101)**

Fred Magdoff is a Professor emeritus of plant and soil science at the University of Vermont. This workshop will explore in depth the themes presented in his plenary speech.

**The 2006 May Day General Strike and the Migrant
Solidarity Movement Today
Room 36-144**

Lessons will be drawn from the 2006 May Day General Strike in the effort to build a mass social movement in solidarity with migrant workers today. The workshop will be hosted by active organizers in the May Day General Strike. They will describe the mass mobilizations of 2006 against the criminalization of migrant workers, culminating in the general strike and its aftermath. The workshop will take up developments since the strike and discuss a strategic and tactical orientation that can advance the movement today

The first presenter is Sergio Reyes, who came to the U.S. as an exile in 1976 after 3 years in Pinochet's prisons. Since then, Sergio has worked to oust the civilian-military in Chile, and is active in Latinos for Social Change, and solidarity with struggles in Puerto Rico and the Americas. Sergio has worked for migrants' rights and is currently with the Venezuela Solidarity Committee and the Sacco and Vanzetti Commemoration Society. The second presenter, John Harris is an organizer with the Boston May Day Coalition. He was a co-founder of the Greater Boston Stop the Wars Coalition and was the coordinator of the Iraq War Veterans Tour.

Cultivating True Warriors
Room 36-156

The workshop will explore in depth the themes presented in Sherri Mitchell's plenary speech. Sherri Mitchell is a member of the Penobscot Indian Nation. She received her Juris Doctorate and a certificate in Indigenous People's Law and Policy from the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College of Law. Sherri was a longtime advisor to the American Indian Institute's Healing the Future Program and currently serves as an advisor to the Indigenous Elders and Medicine People's Council of North and South America. She is the Director of the Land Peace Foundation and the co-host of Love (and revolution) Radio. Her new book Sacred Instructions; The Heart of Spirit Based Change will be in print in September of 2017.

Capitalism in Education: Why It's Wrong and How to Fix It
Room 36-155

Aubrey Adrianson, Socialist Party of Boston, will make a presentation that will cover three major areas: the damage caused by capitalism to education, what a socialist education system could look like, and how to change our education system now. This workshop is mostly lecture based. It will start with why we should care about education, the dangers of privatized education and the proposed HB610, and why capitalist ideas regarding how schools should be run are damaging to the overall goal of education. Next, the presentation covers a possible model for education using socialist principles. Last, we will cover how to make changes in the education system now. If time permits, we should have a focused discussion about resistance and agitation and its role in changing education.

LUNCH PLENARY | 1:30 PM

Political Strategies for Challenging the System

Socialist Alternative, the Green-Rainbow Party, the Socialist Party, Our Revolution, the Communist Party-Boston, and the Party for Socialism and Liberation were invited to share their strategies for building socialist movements in the United States. Our goal today is to understand the strengths of each approach, learn from each other, and perhaps identify areas of collaboration even where our immediate goals may be different.

- How do they choose to work in elections (e.g. national presidential candidacies, local or regional elections)?
- What are the challenges of the two-party system (e.g. compete within a dominant party, run third-party races, use the election for educational purposes, participate in non-partisan campaigns like referenda and city council races)?
- How do they relate to social movements (e.g. support different social movements directly as part of the party's activity, campaign on social movement matters, integrate social movements into the party structures)?

**Media Relations for Left Activists
Room 36-153**

Through an open discussion with an experienced socialist journalist, Jason Pramas, with Boston Institute for Nonprofit Journalism and DigBoston, attendees will get a better idea of how to attract more press coverage to their political events and actions.

This practical workshop will take the form of an open discussion around one common problem often faced by political activists on the broad oppositional left. Let's say you're running an event or action, and you want the broadest possible coverage in the news media - in hopes of attracting the general public to attend. How would you go about doing that? Let's talk!

**The Explosion of Deferred Dreams: Musical Renaissance and Social Revolution in San Francisco, 1965-1975
Room 36-112**

As the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love floods the media with debates and celebrations of music, political movements, 'flower power', 'acid rock' and 'hippies,' The Explosion of Deferred Dreams offers a critical re-examination of the interwoven political and musical happenings in San Francisco in the '60s. Author, musician and native San Franciscan Mat Callahan explores the dynamic links between the Black Panthers and Sly and the Family Stone, the United Farm Workers and Santana, the Indian Occupation of Alcatraz and the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and the New Left and the counterculture.

**Student Organizing: A Socialist Perspective
Room 36-144**

Husayn Karimi, Lev Kendrick from MIT and Sapphire Lurie and Rachel Silang from Fordham University will present a scientific socialist perspective on the current student movement both nationally and locally. Historically, students have been among the most active participants in mass movements of the Left. Such enthusiasm can only be improved by acute, disciplined socialist practice. With spontaneous protests erupting on campuses across the country in response to the Trump administration's reactionary politics, we will focus on key areas of student organizing work: campus labor solidarity, anti-gentrification work, and anti-imperialist agitation. Students are strategically well-placed for struggle in these areas, using tactics suited to the particularities of student organizing. Student movements must be in dialogue and solidarity with the broader people's movement, a necessity ultimately rooted in a Marxist conception of student organizing struggles. We will lean towards focusing on Boston student organizing, but may draw examples from a national scale, and may convey our argument by means of historical examples.

**Organizing for the Millions for Prisoners
Room 36-156**

The Millions for Prisoners Human Rights March was called out of the necessity to unite the various resurgent movements against police terror, mass incarceration, and white supremacy. The main aim for the Millions for Prisoners Human Rights March is to demand an end to legalized slavery and abolish the clause in the 13th amendment that upholds legalized slavery among many other social ills. Join Eugene Puryear in discussing ways to unite the formerly incarcerated, their family members, victims of police terror, and anti-racists to take aim at one of the last vestiges of Jim Crow. The march takes place on Saturday, Aug. 19 in Washington DC.

Repeal, Replace, Revolt: Socialists on Single Payer
Room 36-155

Join Sandy Eaton, a member of Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS) and a lifelong hospital worker to discuss the need to expand the fight to create a just healthcare system embedded in a just society, building on the four pillars of such a system: access, affordability, quality and equality.

At this moment, everyone's access to affordable, high-quality health care is at risk. Threats from the Congressional majority and the new president to repeal the Affordable Care Act lead to the question: What comes next? Even with the ACA marketplace approach, twenty million lack insurance coverage, medical debt remains the leading cause of bankruptcy, and whole communities are losing needed services and facilities. This is especially true in working-class communities, particularly communities of color, and among women, immigrants and the LGBTQ community. The resistance to cutbacks has ballooned, and the fight for a single-payer replacement has never been deeper. How did we get this way? What forces are at play locally, nationally and globally to beat back the neoliberal assault on the working class and to create healthcare justice? January's National Single Payer Strategy Conference convened under the theme: Going on offense while playing defense. What special insights and responsibilities do socialists have within this burgeoning movement?

Dogs of War: Syria, North Korea and US Imperialism
Edgerton Hall (Room 34-101)

Current burning issues of war and peace will be discussed with Vijay Prashad, an Indian historian, journalist, commentator and a Marxist intellectual.

BSUP³ | SPRING 2018
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Join us for a follow up meeting to discuss the success of this year's conference, and to start the discussion about how to build an even better event next year!

Saturday, May 13, 2017 | 1:00 – 3:00pm

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9A Hamilton Place
Boston, MA 02108-4701

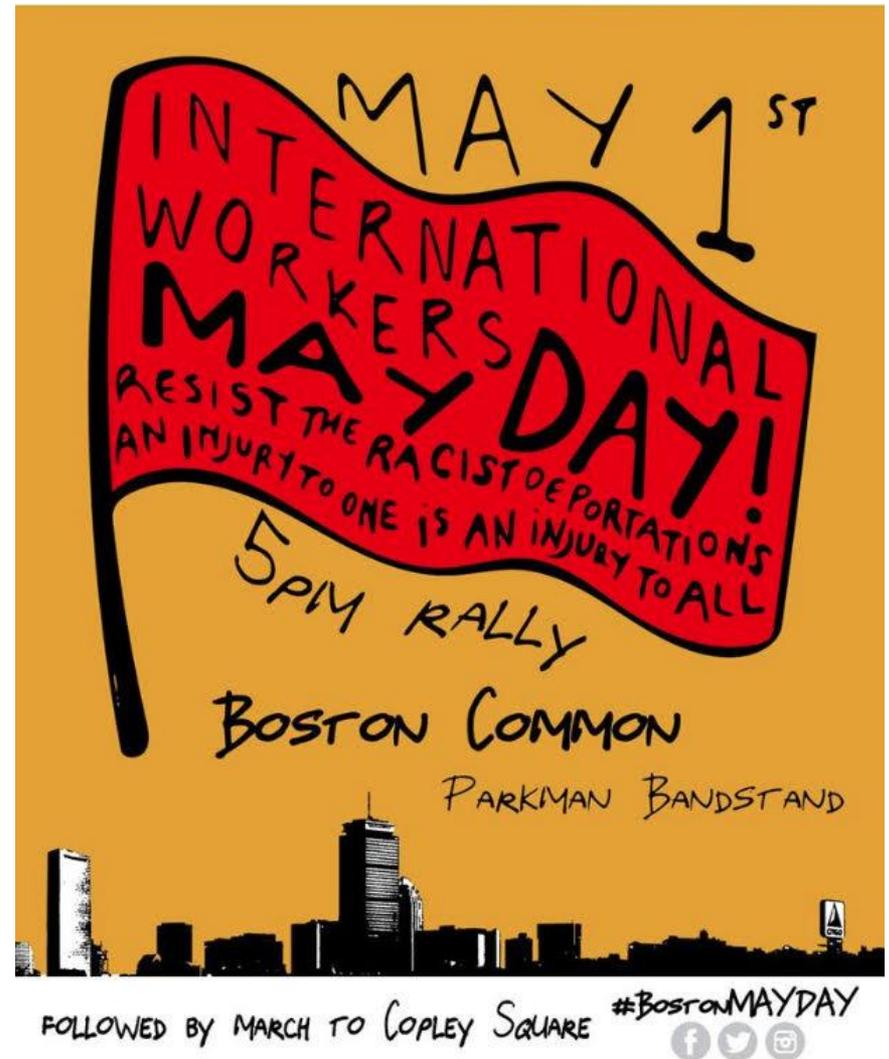
CLOSING PLENARY | 4:00 PM

Imperialism and the Global Commodity Chain

Vijay Prashad is an Indian historian, journalist, commentator and a Marxist intellectual. He is the George and Martha Kellner Chair in South Asian History and Professor of International Studies at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. In 2013–2014, he was the Edward Said Chair at the American University of Beirut. Prashad is the author of *The Death of the Nation and the Future of the Arab Revolution* (2016). In 2012, he published five books, including *Arab Spring, Libyan Winter* (AK Press) and *Uncle Swami: South Asians in America Today* (The New Press). His book *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (2007) was chosen as the Best Nonfiction book by the Asian American Writers' Workshop in 2008 and it won the Muzaffar Ahmed Book Award in 2009. In 2013, Verso published his *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South*. He is author of *No Free Left: The Futures of Indian Communism* (LeftWord Books, 2015) and the editor of *Letters to Palestine* (Verso Books, 2015), a book that includes the writings of Teju Cole, Sinan Antoon, Noura Erakat, and Junot Diaz.

Prashad is also a journalist. He writes regularly for *Frontline*, *The Hindu*, *Alternet* and *BirGun*, and is a contributing editor for *Himal Southasian*. He usually writes on the Middle Eastern politics, development economics, North-South relations and current events.

In 2015, Prashad joined as the Chief Editor of the New Delhi-based publisher *LeftWord Books*. He is also an advisory board member of the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, part of the global BDS movement.



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The Boston Socialist Unity Project thanks all of the organizations that are sponsoring and exhibiting at the 2017 Boston Socialist Unity Conference. We would not have this amazing event without your support!



Food for Activists

Host: MIT Student Activist Coalition

Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism
Communist Party USA of Greater Boston
CryptoParty
Freedom Road Socialist Organization/Organicacion Socialista del Camino para la Libertad
July 26th Coalition of Boston in Solidarity with Cuba
Massachusetts Global Action
Massachusetts Peace Action
Monthly Review
Party for Socialism and Liberation
Socialism and Democracy (journal)
Socialist Alternative
Socialist Party of Boston
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