

PREVIOUSLY ON "MEDIA EDGE" (January-June, 2014)

Episode 477 (June 28 - July 4)

Segment 1 -- "This Land Is Our Land"

For more than three decades, transnational corporations have been busy buying up what used to be known as the commons -- everything from our forests and our oceans to our broadcast airwaves and our most important intellectual and cultural works. In "This Land is Our Land," acclaimed author David Bollier, a leading figure in the global movement to reclaim the commons, bucks the rising tide of anti-government extremism and free market ideology to show how commercial interests are undermining our collective interests. Placing the commons squarely within the American tradition of community engagement and the free exchange of ideas and information, Bollier shows how a bold new international movement steeped in democratic principles is trying to reclaim our common wealth by modeling practical alternatives to the restrictive monopoly powers of corporate elites.

Segment 2 -- "Militainment, Inc." (Part 2)

Militainment, Inc. offers a fascinating, disturbing, and timely glimpse into the militarization of American popular culture, examining how U.S. news coverage has come to resemble Hollywood film, video games, and "reality television" in its glamorization of war. Mobilizing an astonishing range of media examples - from news anchors' idolatry of military machinery to the impact of government propaganda on war reporting - the film asks: How has war taken its place in the culture as an entertainment spectacle? And how does presenting war as entertainment affect the ability of citizens to evaluate the necessity and real human costs of military action?

Episode 476 (June 21-27)

Segment 1 -- "Returning Fire"

Video games like "Modern Warfare", "America's Army", "Medal of Honor" and "Battlefield" are part of an exploding market of war games whose revenues now far outpace even the biggest Hollywood blockbusters. The sophistication of these games is undeniable, offering users a stunningly realistic experience of ground combat and a glimpse into the increasingly virtual world of long-distance, push-button warfare. Far less clear, though, is what these games are doing to users, our political culture, and our capacity to empathize with people directly affected by the actual trauma of war. For the culture-jamming activists featured in this film, these uncertainties were a call to action. In three separate vignettes, we see how Anne-Marie Schleiner, Wafaa Bilal, and Joseph Delappe moved dissent from the streets to our screens, infiltrating war games in an attempt to break the hypnotic spell of "militainment." Their work forces all of us -- gamers and non-gamers alike -- to think critically about what it means when the clinical tools of real-world killing become forms of consumer play.

Segment 2 -- "Militainment, Inc." (Part 1)

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Segment 3 -- "Hiwar"

Iraqi artists and writers wanted a cultural center in Baghdad for years. After the war with Iran, the 1991 Gulf War and ongoing sanctions, they could not wait for peace. So the Hiwar Centre was opened in 1992.

Episode 475 (June 14-20)

Segment 1 -- "The Story of Change"

This short video urges viewers to put down their credit cards and start exercising their citizen muscles to build a more sustainable, just and fulfilling world.

Segment 2 -- "The Story of Citizens United vs. FEC"

An exploration of the inordinate power that corporations exercise in our democracy.

Segment 3 -- "An Evening With Chris Hedges"

Chris Hedges, former Foreign Correspondent for the New York Times and currently a columnist for Truthdig.com, gave a moving presentation to a capacity audience on November 1, 2013 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento, recorded by a Media Edge video production team. Hedges was part of the team of reporters at The New York Times awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 2002 for the paper's coverage of global terrorism. He also received the Amnesty International Global Award for Human Rights Journalism in 2002. The Los Angeles Press Club honored Hedges' original columns in Truthdig by naming the author the Online Journalist of the Year in 2009 and again in 2011. The LAPC also granted him the Best Online Column award in 2010 for his Truthdig essay "One Day We'll All Be Terrorists."

Segment 4 -- "Make a Better World"

A music video by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, blended with the music of Maria Muldaur.

Episode 474 (June 7-13)

Segment 1 -- "The Story of Stuff"

With over 12 million on-line views, "The Story of Stuff" -- an animated documentary about the lifecycle of material goods -- is one of the most widely viewed environmental-themed short films of all time. Since its release in December 2007, The Story of Stuff has been shown in thousands of schools, houses of worship, community events and businesses around the world.

Segment 2 -- "What the Economic Crisis Really Means - and What We Can Do About It"

This animation sums up the key challenges facing our global society of credit crisis and resource scarcity and describes a path we can take to a happier life, now and in the future.

Segment 3 -- "Dakota 38"

In the spring of 2005, Jim Miller, a Native spiritual leader and Vietnam veteran, found himself in a dream riding on horseback across the great plains of South Dakota. Just before he awoke, he arrived at a riverbank in Minnesota and saw 38 of his Dakota ancestors hanged. At the time, Jim knew nothing of the largest mass execution in United States history, ordered by Abraham Lincoln on December 26, 1862. "When you have dreams, you know when they come from the creator... As any recovered alcoholic, I made believe that I didn't get it. I tried to put it out of my mind, yet it's one of those dreams that bothers you night and day." Four years later, embracing the message of the dream, Jim and a group of riders retrace the 330-mile route of his dream on horseback from Lower Brule, South Dakota to Mankato, Minnesota to arrive at the hanging site on the anniversary of the execution. "We can't blame the wasichus anymore. We're doing it to ourselves. We're selling drugs. We're killing our own people. That's what this ride is about, is healing." This is the story of their journey--the blizzards they endure, the Native and Non-Native communities that house and feed them along the way, and the dark history they are beginning to wipe away.

Episode 473 (May 31 - June 6)

Segment 1 -- "Catching Fire"

Catching Fire tells a compelling story of how a small but committed group of local, tribal, state and federal land managers are bringing back the use of prescribed fire as a tool to protect communities and ecosystems across Northern California. It examines the use of fire by the Karuk Tribe of California, and the connection between the rise of megafires across the West and the last century of fire suppression. Drawing on interviews with fire scientists, tribal and federal land managers, and fire savvy residents from across the North State, this film provides insight on how our relationship to fire can be restored through strategic use of fire as a powerful management tool.

Segment 2 -- "Tax Dollars at War"

An excellent animated video, based on a radio interview about US military spending as a proportion of our national budget.

Segment 3 -- "Grounds for Resistance"

This documentary film is about Coffee Strong, a coffee shop located outside the gates of the U.S. Army base Fort Lewis in Washington: its importance for its most active members, active duty soldiers and their families, veterans of recent and past conflicts, and regional and national political movements. At the center of the film are the men and women whose experiences in the military and war compel them to commit themselves to help others who are serving or have served in the past. Each individual featured in the film exists within a nuanced tangle of conflicting emotions tied to pride, dedication to service, friendship, anger, disillusionment, sadness, and guilt. The film examines each one's stories from their decisions to join the military, their experiences of war, and their motivations for devoting themselves to Coffee Strong. It explores how their relationships with one another and their activist efforts to make a more peaceful and just world help them cope with their own experiences.

Episode 472 (May 24-30)

Segment 1 -- "PSR 2014 Scholarship Essay Contest Finals"

This year's Scholarship Essay Contest, sponsored by the Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, was recorded by a Media Edge crew on April 27, 2014 at the Dante Club in Sacramento. The winning essays were chosen from entries submitted by greater Sacramento area high school students that reacted to this year's prompt, a quotation from the late South African leader and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Nelson Mandela, who said, "Education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world." After the ten finalists read their essays and were questioned by a panel of local community leaders, the authors of the top three essays (as determined by the panel) earned \$3,000, \$2,500 and \$2,000 scholarships, and the other seven each earned a \$1,000 scholarship.

Segment 2 -- "The Story of Solutions"

The Story of Solutions, released in October 2013, explores how we can move our economy in a more sustainable and just direction, starting with orienting ourselves toward a new goal. In the current 'Game of More', we're told to cheer a growing economy – more roads, more malls, more Stuff! – even though our health indicators are worsening, income inequality is growing and polar icecaps are melting. But what if we changed the point of the game? What if the goal of our economy wasn't more, but better – better health, better jobs and a better chance to survive on the planet? Shouldn't that be what winning means?

Segment 3 -- "The Story of Broke"

The United States isn't broke; we're the richest country on the planet and a country in which the richest among us are doing exceptionally well. But the truth is, our economy is broken, producing more pollution, greenhouse gasses and garbage than any other country. In these and so many other ways, it just isn't working. But rather than invest in something better, we continue to keep this 'dinosaur economy' on life support with hundreds of billions of dollars of our tax money. The Story of Broke calls for a shift in government spending toward investments in clean, green solutions -- renewable energy, safer chemicals and materials, zero waste and more -- that can deliver jobs AND a healthier environment. It's time to rebuild the American Dream; but this time, let's build it better.

Segment 4 -- "Eating Mercifully"

This short film from the Humane Society of the United States explores Christian perspectives on factory farming. A growing number of Christians are changing their diet and consumer purchases because the way animals are treated in factory farms is inconsistent with their beliefs. Some are demanding better treatment of farm animals, while some are simply leaving animals off their plates altogether.

Episode 471 (May 17-23)

Segment 1 -- "The Story of Cosmetics"

An examination of the pervasive use of toxic chemicals in our everyday personal care products, from lipstick to baby shampoo. This film by The Story of Stuff Project reveals the implications for consumer and worker health and the environment, and outlines ways we can move the industry away from hazardous chemicals and towards safer alternatives.

Segment 2 -- "The Story of Electronics"

The high-tech revolution's collateral damage: 25 million tons of e-waste and counting, poisoned workers and a public left holding the bill. Host Annie Leonard takes viewers from the mines and factories where our gadgets begin to the horrific backyard recycling shops in China where many end up. The film concludes with a call for a green 'race to the top' where designers compete to make long-lasting, toxic-free products that are fully and easily recyclable.

Segment 3 -- "Wild Versus Wall"

The Sierra Club border film, Wild Versus Wall, details the unique and diverse natural areas along the southern borders of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, and explains how they have been and will be affected by current and planned federal border policy and infrastructure, as well as the danger to our rights and safety imposed by sweeping new powers granted to the Department of Homeland Security.

Segment 4 -- "Daniel Ellsberg, PhD"

Daniel Ellsberg is a former United States military analyst who, while employed by the RAND Corporation, precipitated a national political controversy in 1971 when he released the Pentagon Papers, a top-secret Pentagon study of U.S. government decision-making in relation to the Vietnam War, to The New York Times and other newspapers. Ellsberg spoke in Sacramento on September 9, 2011 about secrets, lies and ethics from the Vietnam era through the WikiLeaks publications. His presentation was recorded by Media Edge.

Episode 470 (May 10-16)

Segment 1 -- "Big Bucks, Big Pharma"

This video pulls back the curtain on the multi-billion dollar pharmaceutical industry to expose the insidious ways that illness is used, manipulated, and in some instances created, for capital gain. Focusing on the industry's marketing practices, media scholars and health professionals help viewers understand the ways in which direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertising glamorizes and normalizes the use of prescription medication, and works in tandem with promotion to doctors. Combined, these industry practices shape how both patients and doctors understand and relate to disease and treatment. Ultimately, "Big Bucks, Big Pharma" challenges us to ask important questions about the consequences of relying on a for-profit industry for our health and well-being.

Segment 2 -- "A Stranger in His Own Country"

Thousands of Iraqis have been displaced by sectarian violence and have had to seek refuge in other parts of the country. This is a portrait of Abu Ali, a refugee from Kirkuk living in a displaced person's camp on the outskirts of Kerbala. He is a peace-loving man with a keen sense of justice, trying to find a way to survive and provide for his family in the difficult circumstances in which they now find themselves.

Segment 3 -- "Generation M"

Despite the achievements of the women's movement over the past four decades, misogyny remains a persistent force in American culture. In this important documentary, Thomas Keith, professor of philosophy at California State University-Long Beach, looks specifically at misogyny and sexism in mainstream American media, exploring how negative definitions of femininity and hateful attitudes toward women get constructed and perpetuated at the very heart of our popular culture.

Episode 469 (May 3-9)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Fulfilling a long-held dream, Logan Smith and Tammy Strobel are homeowners—of a tiny house. It's affordable and mobile. In Logan's tour, visit the galley kitchen with alcohol cookstove—a safe, cheap, portable fuel. Opposite is the composting toilet and shower, and above is a sleeping loft. Spaciousness in the multi-use great room is magnified by skylights and sunshine streaming through French doors. "Have House, Can Travel" could be their motto, but for now they're planting themselves in their new community's life.

Segment 2 -- "The Ghosts of Jeju"

A shocking documentary about the struggle of the people of Jeju Island, S. Korea. Set in the context of the American presence in Korea after World War II, the film reveals horrible atrocities at the hands of the U.S. Military Government of Korea.

Segment 3 -- "Yes We Can, Can"

A music video by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, blending inspirational images with the music of Maria Muldaur.

Episode 468 (April 26 - May 2)

Segment 1 -- "PSR 2013 Scholarship Essay Contest Finals"

Last year's Scholarship Essay Contest, sponsored by the Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, was recorded by a Media Edge crew on April 28, 2013 at the Dante Club in Sacramento. The winning essays were chosen from entries submitted by greater Sacramento area high school students that reacted to this year's prompt, a position statement by the American Academy of Pediatrics in April 2000: "Firearm regulations, to include bans of handguns and assault weapons, are the most effective way to reduce firearm-related injuries." After the finalists read their essays, the authors of the top three essays earned \$3,000, \$2,500 and \$2,000 scholarships, and the other seven each earned a \$1,000 scholarship.

Segment 2 -- "When Abortion Was Illegal"

This Academy Award-nominated film features compelling first person accounts which reveal the physical, legal, and emotional consequences during the era when abortion was a criminal act.

Episode 467 (April 19-25)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Seattle residents are capturing rain from their rooftops not only to water their yards, but to slow runoff into the streets. Jim Bristow gives a gutter-to-ground tour of a residential system, including small-profile cisterns tucked beside the house. Jim also shows a "rain garden," which acts as a catch-basin beside the sidewalk. It collects and drains rainwater, which only spills over into the street during severe rain events. Government agencies subsidize the cost of these small systems, which reduce the amount of storm water flooding the city's sewage system, and ultimately flowing into Puget Sound.

Segment 2 -- "Google and the World Brain"

The story of the most ambitious project ever conceived on the Internet. In 2002 Google began to scan millions of books in an effort to create a giant global library, containing every book in existence. They had an even greater purpose - to create a higher form of intelligence, something that HG Wells had predicted in his 1937 essay "World Brain". But over half the books Google scanned were in copyright, and authors across the world launched a campaign to stop Google, which climaxed in a New York courtroom in 2011. This film explores the dreams, dilemmas and dangers of the Internet.

Segment 3 -- "I Am Not A Prop"

An inspiring speech by 12 year old Madison Kimrey kicks off this video, which asks the question, "What's up with Voter ID laws?"

Episode 466 (April 12-18)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Most people are woefully unprepared for the depression that is now unfolding, says economic analyst Nicole M. Foss, senior editor of The Automatic Earth. In a depression, there's not enough money in circulation. "But by using alternative currencies, we can provide our own liquidity and support economic activity in local areas." Her colleague Laurence Boomert, the founder of The Bank of Real Solutions, shares several success stories. When government spending dried up, his town of Golden Bay, New Zealand used their alternate currency to keep educational programs going. "If we didn't have crises, we wouldn't change," Laurence asserts. "It's a great time to take action now before things get difficult."

Segment 2 -- "Catastrophic Pentagon Cuts? Not Really...."

A short video that illustrates the fact that after a \$1 trillion cut over the next 10 years, the end of two wars, and accounting for inflation, we'd still spend more on the Pentagon than we did during most of Vietnam and the Cold War, and much more than we spend on education.

Segment 3 -- "Reel Bad Arabs"

This devastating tour of the American cinematic landscape reveals an astonishing and persistent pattern of slanderous Arab stereotyping. Reel Bad Arabs exposes a long love affair with Arab villainy and buffoonery in American films.

Segment 4 -- "The Humor Times Presents Will Durst"

Media Edge presents excerpts from political comedian Will Durst's new one-man show -- "BoomeRaging: From LSD to OMG" -- recorded at the 24th Street Theatre in Sacramento on August 23, 2013. According to Durst, the show is about the travails of being "chronologically gifted," or "what happens when acid flashbacks meet dementia."

Episode 465 (April 5-11)

Segment 1 -- "From Danger to Dignity"

After more than a century of back-alley tragedies, a national movement to decriminalize abortion took root. FROM DANGER to DIGNITY combines rare archival footage with present-day interviews to weave together two parallel stories: the evolution of underground networks to help women find safe abortions outside the law and the intensive efforts of activists and legislators who broke the silence and changed the laws.

Segment 2 -- "SHADA"

A photographic journey with Haiti's Forgotten Children by Sacramento area photographer and activist Leisa Faulkner.

Segment 3 -- "COINTELPRO 101"

This film exposes illegal surveillance, disruption, removal, and other extreme tactics used by the US government in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. COINTELPRO refers to the official FBI COunter INTELigence PROgram carried out to surveil, imprison, and eliminate leaders of social justice movements and to disrupt, divide, and destroy the movements as well. Through interviews with activists who experienced these abuses first-hand and with rare historical footage, the film provides an educational introduction to a period of intense repression and draws relevant lessons for the present and future.

Episode 464 (March 29 - April 4)

Segment 1 -- "Over Troubled Waters"

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the largest estuary on the west coast of the Americas, is a national treasure being squandered by greed. In this visually rich documentary, Ed Begley, Jr. narrates the story of the battle being fought by the people of the Delta to protect the region they love and encourage saner water policies for all of the people of California.

Segment 2 -- "Hands in Peace"

Hands in Peace builds peace among diverse communities by adapting the ancient Greek Olympics for children. The children celebrate our common humanity and cultural diversity through non-competitive festivals like this one held in Sacramento.

Segment 3 -- "Health Care as a Human Right in Occupied Palestine"

At an event in Sacramento last year, Dr. Ruchama Marton, founder of Physicians for Human Rights-Israel and 2010 winner of the Right Livelihood Award, and Dr. Allam Jarrar of the Palestinian Medical Relief Society described the current state of health care in the West Bank. They also discussed the challenges in providing comprehensive health services in light of the military occupation. The event was sponsored by PSR/Sacramento and Jewish Voice for Peace/ Sacramento, and endorsed by Sacramento Area Peace Action.

Episode 463 (March 22-28)

Segment 1 -- "The United States of ALEC"

Bill Moyers' report on the most influential corporate-funded political force most of America has never heard of -- ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council. A national consortium of state politicians and powerful corporations, ALEC presents itself as a "nonpartisan public-private partnership". But behind that mantra lies a vast network of corporate lobbying and political action aimed to increase corporate profits at public expense without public knowledge.

Segment 2 -- "A Really Inconvenient Truth"

Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" woke the world up to the dangers of global warming. But, argues Joel Kovel, while we should be grateful to Gore for sounding the alarm, we also need to go far beyond his reading of the causes of this crisis and of what needs to be done about it.

Episode 462 (March 15-21)

Segment 1 -- "Not Just a Game"

We've been told again and again that sports and politics don't mix, that games are just games and athletes should just "shut up and play." But according to Nation magazine sports editor Dave Zirin, this notion is just flat-out wrong. In *Not Just a Game*, the powerful documentary based on his bestselling book "The People's History of Sports in the United States," Zirin argues that far from providing merely escapist entertainment, American sports have long been at the center of some of the major political debates and struggles of our time. In a fascinating tour of the good, the bad, and the ugly of American sports culture, Zirin first traces how American sports have glamorized militarism, racism, sexism, and homophobia, then excavates a largely forgotten history of rebel athletes who stood up to power and fought for social justice beyond the field of play. The result is as deeply moving as it is exhilarating: nothing less than an alternative history of political struggle in the United States as seen through the games its people have played.

Segment 2 -- "The Mean World Syndrome"

For years, debates have raged among scholars, politicians, and concerned parents about the effects of media violence on viewers. Too often these debates have descended into simplistic battles between those who claim that media messages directly cause violence and those who argue that activists exaggerate the impact of media exposure altogether. *The Mean World Syndrome*, based on the groundbreaking work of media scholar George Gerbner, urges us to think about media effects in more nuanced ways. Ranging from Hollywood movies and prime-time dramas to reality programming and the local news, the film examines how media violence forms a pervasive cultural environment that cultivates in heavy viewers, especially, a heightened state of insecurity, exaggerated perceptions of risk and danger, and a fear-driven propensity for hard-line political solutions to social problems.

Segment 3 -- "When Elk Fly"

The price our wildlife pay for the sake of cattle and the diseases they brought here from Europe.

Episode 461 (March 8-14)

Segment 1 -- "Seeds of Freedom"

This film, narrated by Jeremy Irons, details how seeds, which have been the heart of traditional farming and natural biodiversity since the beginning of agriculture, are being transformed into an expensive, patented commodity used to monopolize the global food system.

Segment 2 -- "The 800 Mile Wall"

The 800 Mile Wall highlights the construction of the new border walls along the U.S.-Mexico border as well as the effect on migrants trying to cross into the U.S. This powerful 90-minute film is an unflinching look at the failed U.S. border strategy that many believe has caused the death of thousands of migrants and violates fundamental human rights. Since border walls have been built, well over 5,000 migrant bodies have been recovered in U.S. deserts, mountains and canals. Some unofficial reports put the death toll as high as 10,000 men, women and children. As a direct result of U.S. border policy, migrants are forced to cross treacherous deserts and mountains in search of low skill and low paying jobs in the United States.

Episode 460 (March 1-7)

Segment 1 -- "The Fragile Promise of Choice"

Through vignettes from cities and rural areas around the country, this documentary examines how restrictive legislation, in an atmosphere of harassment and violence, affects the lives of abortion providers and the women who seek their services. The film features interviews with community doctors, women seeking services, clinic directors, clergy, and counselors. Their stories illustrate the increasing number of situations in which legal does not necessarily mean accessible.

Segment 2 -- "Yeah, My Moms Wear Comfortable Shoes"

Four individuals describe what it was like to grow up in a home with a lesbian mom and her partner.

Segment 3 -- "Legacy of Torture: The War Against The Black Liberation Movement"

This video documents the torture of activists John Bowman, Hank Jones and Harold Taylor by New Orleans police in 1973, and the assassinations, police brutality, and abuse suffered by the Black community during the 1960s and 1970s.

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Episode 459 (February 22-28)

Segment 1 -- "The Story of Bottled Water"

The story of manufactured demand -- how you get Americans to buy more than half a billion bottles of water every week when it already flows from the tap. This film explores the bottled water industry's attacks on tap water and its use of seductive, environmental-themed advertising to cover up the mountains of plastic waste it produces.

Segment 2 -- "An Evening With Naomi Tutu"

Naomi Tutu, daughter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, spoke in Sacramento in March 2012 at an event recorded by Media Edge. Tutu was educated in Swaziland, the US and England, and has divided her adult life between South Africa and the US. She has served as a development consultant in West Africa and a program coordinator for programs on Race and Gender and Gender-Based Violence in Education at the African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town. She has also taught at the Universities of Hartford and Connecticut and Brevard College. The challenges of growing black and female in apartheid South Africa has led to her present avocation as an activist for human rights. Those experiences taught how much we all lose when any of us is judged purely on physical attributes. During her Sacramento appearance, she blended her passion for human dignity with humor and personal stories.

Segment 3 -- "Getting Out"

This documentary shows the impact that the Rehabilitation Through the Arts program had on former prisoners trying to reestablish their lives. Filmed inside the walls of the notorious "Sing Sing" prison in New York, this video documents the 15-year incarceration and subsequent release of two inmates. It also highlights the difficulties many former prisoners experience trying to reestablish life outside of prison walls.

Episode 458 (February 15-21)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

"We're enjoying the abundance and the feeling of richness and generosity along with everybody else," say Sharing Gardens coordinators Chris Burns and Llyn Peabody. During this five-year experiment in the giving economy, the garden tripled in size. Volunteers of all ages work in the gardens. They share the bounteous harvest with food bank recipients, churches, gleaners and others in their community. No money is exchanged. Materials and labor, and even use of the property, are freely given and showing up in abundance. Llyn and Chris are now living rent-free in a house owned by a volunteer. Observing that "giving keeps coming around full circle," they offer advice for stepping into the giving economy in our lives today, starting small and simply.

Segment 2 -- "Google and the World Brain"

The story of the most ambitious project ever conceived on the Internet. In 2002 Google began to scan millions of books in an effort to create a giant global library, containing every book in existence. They had an even greater purpose - to create a higher form of intelligence, something that HG Wells had predicted in his 1937 essay "World Brain". But over half the books Google scanned were in copyright, and authors across the world launched a campaign to stop Google, which climaxed in a New York courtroom in 2011. This film explores the dreams, dilemmas and dangers of the Internet.

Segment 3 -- "Baghdad Days"

Hiba Bassem, a young woman from Kirkuk, returns to Baghdad after the war, to finish her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts. The film is a diary of her year as she tries to find a place to live, looks for work, graduates from college, deals with family problems and struggles to come to terms with her position as a woman on her own. This film won a New Horizon silver award at the Al Jazeera International Film Festival in Doha (2006) and a golden award at the Rotterdam Arab Film Festival (2006).

Episode 457 (February 8-14)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

When we actually face what's happening on the planet, the picture isn't pretty. Author Carolyn Baker ("Speaking Truth To Power") is concerned by rapidly-unfolding climate change, and the fragile Fukushima reactor situation. Systems thinker Dave Pollard ("How To Save the World") sees endgames for three inter-related systems—economic, energy and ecology—any one of which could lead to civilizational collapse. We're in a predicament we can't fix, but we can choose how we respond. Carolyn suggests thinking of the Earth community, of which we are a part, as being terminally ill. Take time to reflect on our lives, make amends, and value the time we have. Both guests suggest learning how to live in community, being present for one another. Dave is intrigued to create stories envisioning life in a century or so, stories that can inspire the resolve to directly face these turbulent times.

Segment 2 -- "First Lesson in Peace"

The Jewish-Arab conflict through the eyes of a six-year-old girl.

Segment 3 -- "I Won't Drown on that Levee and You Ain't Gonna Break My Back"

After Hurricane Katrina, there was a botched evacuation of the Orleans Parish Prison, and racial tension and brutality that divided the population into survivors and looters along lines of race and class.

Episode 456 (February 1-7)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Two ongoing environmental events are affecting all life on the planet, even if it's not yet noticeable where you live. Alex Smith of Radio Ecoshock is watching climate change and Fukushima very closely. In this program, he summarizes the latest reports and predictions. Extreme weather events are increasing and worsening. Ocean dead zones are growing. Methane from melting permafrost is warming the atmosphere faster than carbon dioxide. The Fukushima nuclear site has already increased airborne radioactivity in the northern hemisphere. Ocean-borne radioactivity will be hitting the North American west coast by 2014. And no one knows what to do about it. But Alex has ideas on how we can respond individually and positively."

Segment 2 -- "An Evening with Rabbi Michael Lerner"

Founder of the Network of Spiritual Progressives, Rabbi Michael Lerner spoke in Sacramento in 2012 at an event recorded by Media Edge. In his book, "Embracing Israel/Palestine", Lerner describes his views about building peace between Israel and Palestine, which he discusses at length during this presentation. Lerner is a political activist, the editor of Tikkun, a progressive Jewish interfaith magazine based in Berkeley, California, and the rabbi of Beyt Tikkun Synagogue of San Francisco. Lerner was a leader in the Berkeley student movement and the Free Speech Movement, chair of the Free Student Union, and chair from 1966-1968 of the Berkeley chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society.

Episode 455 (January 25-31)

Segment 1 -- "The Story of Cap & Trade"

A fast-paced, fact-filled look at the leading climate solution being discussed on Capitol Hill. Host Annie Leonard introduces the energy traders and Wall Street financiers at the heart of this scheme and reveals the "devils in the details" in current cap and trade proposals: free permits to big polluters, fake offsets and distraction from what's really required to tackle the climate crisis. If you've heard about Cap & Trade, but aren't sure how it works (or who benefits), this is the movie for you.

Segment 2 -- "The Story of Citizens United vs. FEC"

An exploration of the inordinate power that corporations exercise in our democracy.

Segment 3 -- "The Hollywood Librarian"

Using the context of American movies, this film holds surprises for people who think they know what librarians do. American film contains hundreds of examples of librarians and libraries on screen -- some positive, some negative, some laughable and some dead wrong. Dozens of interviews of real librarians are interwoven with movie clips of cinematic librarians and serve as transitions between the themes of censorship, intellectual freedom, children and librarians, pay equity and funding issues, and the value of reading.

Episode 454 (January 18-24)

Segment 1 -- "The Story of Stuff"

With over 12 million on-line views, "The Story of Stuff" -- an animated documentary about the lifecycle of material goods -- is one of the most widely viewed environmental-themed short films of all time. Since its release in December 2007, The Story of Stuff has been shown in thousands of schools, houses of worship, community events and businesses around the world.

Segment 2 -- "Tax Dollars at War"

An excellent animated video, based on a radio interview about US military spending as a proportion of our national budget.

Segment 3 -- "Occupation 101"

An award-winning, thought-provoking and powerful documentary film on the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The film presents a comprehensive analysis of the facts and hidden truths surrounding the never ending controversy and dispels many of its long-perceived myths and misconceptions. It also details life under Israeli military rule, the role of the United States in the conflict, and the major obstacles that stand in the way of a lasting and viable peace. The roots of the conflict are explained through first-hand on-the-ground experiences from leading Middle East scholars, peace activists, journalists, religious leaders and humanitarian workers.

Episode 453 (January 11-17)

Segment 1 -- "I Am Not a Prop"

An inspiring speech by 12 year old Madison Kimrey kicks off this video, which asks the question, "What's up with Voter ID laws?"

Segment 2 -- "An Evening With Chris Hedges"

Chris Hedges, former Foreign Correspondent for the New York Times and currently a columnist for Truthdig.com, gave a moving presentation to a capacity audience on November 1, 2013 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento, recorded by a Media Edge video production team. Hedges was part of the team of reporters at The New York Times awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 2002 for the paper's coverage of global terrorism. He also received the Amnesty International Global Award for Human Rights Journalism in 2002. The Los Angeles Press Club honored Hedges' original columns in Truthdig by naming the author the Online

Journalist of the Year in 2009 and again in 2011. The LAPC also granted him the Best Online Column award in 2010 for his Truthdig essay "One Day We'll All Be Terrorists."

Segment 3 -- "The Story of Change"

This short video urges viewers to put down their credit cards and start exercising their citizen muscles to build a more sustainable, just and fulfilling world.

Episode 452 (January 4-10)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

"I want to die and be returned to the earth so that I have the least harmful impact... Not just to live that way but to die that way. I'd like to become the compost for a beautiful tree that bears fruit to feed the next generation." Brandy Gallagher of O.U.R. Ecovillage relates how land trusts are protecting land for future generations by providing spaces for green burials. Green burials are an environmentally-conscious alternative to costly and toxic funeral products and processes. For our final act, we can "use our dying for the living."

Segment 2 -- "The Next American Revolution"

An illustrated presentation of distinguished historian and political economist Gar Alperovitz, who shows how bottom-up strategies can check corporate power, democratize wealth, and empower communities.

Segment 3 -- "The Race For What's Left"

Renowned energy expert Michael T. Klare provides an invaluable account of the new and increasingly dangerous competition for the world's dwindling resources.