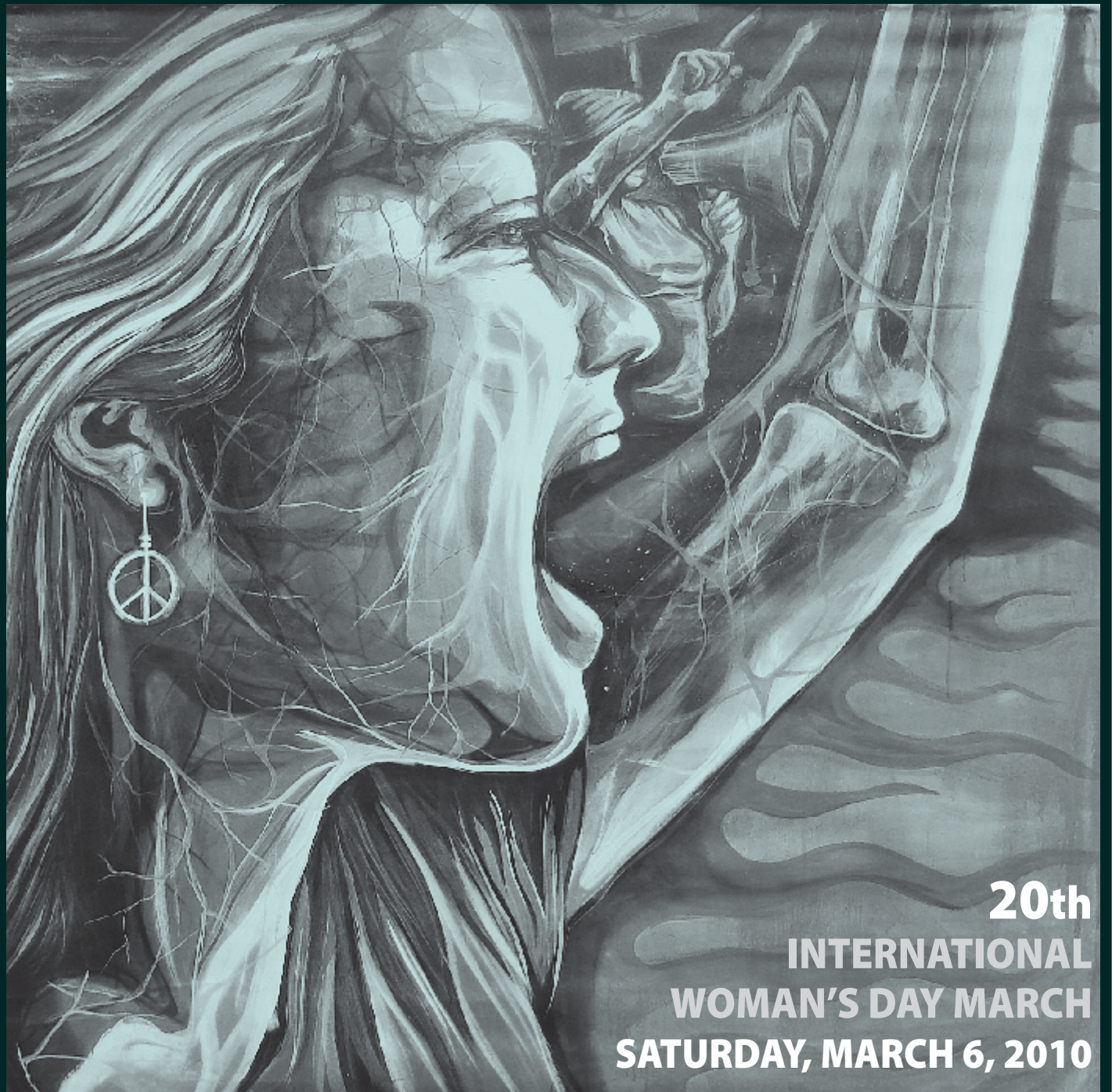


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# La Voz de Esperanza

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**20th**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**WOMAN'S DAY MARCH**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2010**

**INSIDE** JUSTICE INTERRUPTED: THE JUÁREZ FEMICIDES | LABOR STRUGGLE AT THE GRAND HYATT | OBAMA & THE WAR | TELLING LIVES: EMMA PÉREZ & MARIA COTERA'S NARRATIVES | THE ALARMING FICTION OF CORPORATE PERSONHOOD

# La Voz de Esperanza

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**COVER ART: ADRIANA M. GARCIA**



## The recent Supreme Court ruling on January 21, 2010

in the Citizens United v. Federal Election Committee case that appears to bestow corporations with personhood and unlimited power to influence elections with the infusion of huge amounts of money is of particular angst for me. It disturbs me because I've had a front row seat in San Antonio and in Austin and seen how corporations are influencing the mis-development of my two home cities through voting influence and elections controlled by money. Already, the decision in San Antonio to go forth with millions more for nuclear energy has been given the sanction to go forth by President Obama who in his recent state of the union address called for renewed efforts for nuclear. Undoubtedly, concerns for corporate energy welfare is behind this and San Antonio's future could be sealed. The possibility of nuclear contamination, nuclear explosions and the dumping of nuclear waste on people of color land is not of paramount importance. The people's well-being takes a back seat to corporate welfare, once again. This happens time and again in every political arena locally and globally whether its about energy, education, transportation, education, jobs, war, health delivery, conservation, water or whatever. It's all about money. And the fact that we live in a so-called "democracy" does not change the reigning power of "corporacracy."

The word democracy comes from a combination of the Greek words "demos" meaning "people" and "kratos" meaning "power." It is time for a new movement of People Power. If we do not move forward as individual human beings and progressive organizations to stop the redefining of "personhood" we can fully expect things to get worse. In my science fiction fantasy world mind where water becomes as valuable as oil or diamonds with all the accompanying grief and oppression, I can already see gangly plastic robots, humanoid avatars, clones and artificial intelligent beings competing for my version of humanity. I am not kidding!

There IS a movement afoot, that we MUST become involved in. The movement strives to amend the U.S. Constitution to insure that people's rights are secured FOR human beings:

*Human beings are people; corporations are legal fictions. The Supreme Court is misguided in principle, and wrong on the law. In a democracy, the people rule. We Move to Amend. We, the People of the United States of America, reject the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Citizens United, and move to amend our Constitution to:*

- Firmly establish that money is not speech, and that human beings, not corporations, are persons entitled to constitutional rights.
- Guarantee the right to vote & to participate, & to have our votes and participation count.
- Protect local communities, their economies, and democracies against illegitimate "preemption" actions by global, national, and state governments.

Sign a petition at <http://movetoamend.org/we-corporations> and learn more about the MOVE TO AMEND, corporate personhood and the history of corporate power in the U.S. Also, read more on the Citizens United case in Amy Kastely's excellent article in this La Voz, p. 12 and 13. - With great concern, Gloria A. Ramirez, La Voz editor

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# JUSTICE INTERRUPTED:

## THE CIUDAD JUÁREZ FEMICIDES & GLOBAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

by Elvia R. Arriola

**I**N 2004, an international collective of feminist activists traveled to Ciudad Juárez to hold a series of public talks as well as intimate gatherings with some of the families who had survived a daughter's untimely death in the killings that have people referring to this bordertown as the "femicide capitol." The ten day conference was memorialized in a book of photography and transcribed testimonials. Grieving mothers, brothers, sisters and grandparents remembered the victims full of life; others spoke of their last day and how it was when they realized the loved one was not only gone, but had also suffered such a violent death. The Juárez memorial portrayed a few of the surviving families who had formed Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa. The identity and life of each of their loved ones could almost serve as a prototype for any of the hundreds of victims who, since 1993 have represented one of Juárez's hundreds of female homicides, or femicides -- a child, a student, a maquiladora worker. For example, Sylvia Morales, was fifteen when she disappeared. She had been studying to be a paramedic and also worked part time at a shoe store in downtown Ciudad Juárez. Before leaving home that day she told her mother Ramona "Set aside some of whatever you cook today; I'll try to be home early." Sylvia was pretty, studious and very helpful around the house on her days off from work or school. Her father who was dying of lung cancer finally passed away three months after Sylvia disappeared.

Like many victims, Sylvia's body was found by a farmer herding animals on September 1, 2003 in Lote Bravo, a desert area on the outskirts of the city. The police drove her mother, Ramona, to the morgue to identify the body. Ramona recognized her daughter's shoes and clothing but then realized that she was looking at the body of another dead girl, not Sylvia. The officers ignored her pleas for clarification. Eventually, she just walked home alone as they stopped paying attention to her or stated they were too busy to answer her questions. As a poor woman her treatment represented the culture of disenfranchisement that surrounds the relationship between the working poor and the government structure in Juárez.

As we approach International Women's Day, I feel a sense of hope and disappointment at once when talking about the ongoing lack of justice and accountability in the Juárez murders. The hope is in the recent decision in December 2009 by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) issued by a Costa Rican justice who lambasted the Mexican government for its systematic failure all these years to address in an appropriate and responsive manner the abductions and killings of girls and women in Juárez. On the other hand, public discourse

tends so often to focus only on questions of corruption in the government or the sheer incompetence of Mexican officials in solving the crimes and finding the killers that a broader and just as important context from which to view the femicides is consistently marginalized. In the remainder of this essay I would like to slightly change the focus and centralize the context of the role Ciudad Juárez plays as a city and home to the working poor in Mexico's active participation through the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the global economy. I will also briefly incorporate the memory of some of the victims profiled in the Juárez memorial of 2004, an event that itself played a part in the path towards the landmark ruling of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights which will also be addressed.

In each city today which, like Ciudad Juárez, has become an export processing zone, and is important to their nation's participation in the global economy, there is a background context that has contributed to the creation of socio-economic environments that are hostile to women's safety, especially working women's lives. Some of this context is directly linked to the structure of free trade law and policy designed to privilege foreign investors invited into Mexico to do business under NAFTA. Pursuant to that legal architecture, there has been since 1993 a rapid transformation of the border at all levels. Small tourist towns have become new havens for large factory construction in massive plots of land leased from

**In the maquiladoras a work culture that minimizes the humanity of the worker extends outwards to the environment within which all of Juárez is industrialized to become one of the nation's shining stars in the global economy.**

major utilities or local government, all with the intent and design for the investor, usually a large American company with offices throughout the world, to benefit from the rules of free trade. Corporate foreign investors relocate business operations to a country that offers cheap labor, generates a product for the consumer economy and exporting it under rules that further enhance profitability with reduced taxes, tariffs and so on.

These operations have generated intense recruitment of workers who often come from the poorest regions of rural Mexico in search of work in a city unprepared to welcome them with proper housing, transportation, social services or accountable government to make their working lives decent and safe. In the maquiladoras a work culture that minimizes the humanity of the worker extends outwards to the environment within which all of Juárez is industrialized to become one of the nation's shining stars in the global economy. The general response to the critique of this work culture often goes like this – “they should be happy to have those jobs; these women would probably end up as prostitutes; they should be grateful.”

That is no answer. That is avoidance of the bigger question of how and why the current set-up of free trade law and policy

**The norm for the world created by the rules of the fair trade game, not just in Juárez, but wherever the stamp of neoliberal economics leaves its mark, is unforgiving dehumanization.**

A bus filled with mostly women makes its way from the shanty town of Anapra to Ciudad Juárez, one very early dawn. Most of the women that have gone missing or have been murdered were on their way to work.



Image & Caption: Antonio Zazueta Olmos | [www.flickr.com/photos/antonioolmos](http://www.flickr.com/photos/antonioolmos)

only privileges and empowers the factory owners and the large multinational corporations and does not even pretend to empower the workers with the dignity of their human right to protest against unsafe working conditions, which include not just what happens inside the factory but in the surrounding areas and in their communities. As activists in the maquiladoras know well, the voice of the workers is a threat to the stability of a smooth running global factory. Protest to the rules of the game by the peon is unacceptable. One only has to look at the structure of NAFTA and the weakness of the labor side agreement (NAALC) and understand that the social changes initiated by rapid industrialization in some places created a perfect setting for extreme social insecurity and for gendered violence. Anyone can observe this in a typical maquiladora town. The offices of the managers are always beautifully designed and

landscaped. Surrounding the industrial parks or a large factory is the stark contrast of the shantytown “colonias” where workers set up camp because there is no affordable safe housing. Miles of unforgiving poverty. Unpaved, muddy streets. No running water. No flooring. Shack after tiny shack containing large families where the heads of household are holding it together on the wages earned at a maquiladora. Usually not enough to thrive on, maybe to survive but not to move out of poverty, at all. Certainly, not to secure a sense of safety and security in the world, or in one's community. The norm for the world created by the rules of the fair trade game, not just in Juárez, but wherever the stamp of neoliberal economics leaves its mark, is unforgiving dehumanization.

The law can be a tool for positive social change, but in the case of free trade law and policy, as in the NAFTA or now even CAFTA, it may be a major contributor to great social harm. I have previously argued that NAFTA, in fact, allows for the creation of a kind of corporate indifference to the needs of workers, and certainly to the needs of women who live, work, or travel to and from maquiladora factories contributing to the resulting hostile environment for their safety. The privilege to not care about the workers' needs is what I call “fatal indifference” as I will describe further in the facts surrounding the victimization and death of Claudia Ivette González, whose family served as one of the petitioners in the



action that ultimately led to the decision of the IACHR last December, and whose death is arguably linked to a pernicious disciplinary practice used by maquiladora supervisors as a means for social control of the laboring classes.

It is well known that the killings began to surface in the mid 90s, following the signing of NAFTA in 1993 by President Clinton, which opened up the border and its sleepy towns and cities to unprecedented levels of foreign investment, construction of factories and hiring of Mexican workers by American corporations. Very soon after the borders opened up, there began to emerge stories about the findings of women's bodies who had been victims of grotesque, sexualized torture prior to their last breath. The frustration of the victims' families has been the systematic interruption of justice as girls bodies were found in ways that evoked a sense of horror because of the lies associated with the bungled investigation efforts.

For example, the case of Brenda Esther Afrara Luna was described by Casa Amiga's founder the late Esther Chávez to a reporter in 2002. Brenda disappeared around 2000 when she was just fifteen. A few weeks later, the police came to Brenda's mother's home and told her that her daughter's body had been found. The mother knew the body she was viewing was not that of her daughter's. Esther Chávez told the reporter “there are so many cases just like this.”



The murders, which have continued, still average 30 killings of women per year. It is also true that the levels of violence in Juárez have become even more intense, including male victims caught in the web of violence between warring gangs trying to control the drug trafficking routes through Juárez and sending each other messages with beheadings and planned shooting sprees. But the culture of drug violence should not distract us from the other constant image of a city that represents, at once, the height of economic profitability while being the most hostile environment for the next female victim whose prototype is to be young, vulnerable, frequently working in a maquiladora, domestic service or low wage sales job, and typically living in extremely unsafe conditions in the Juárez shantytowns.

Consider the case of Berenice Delgado Rodríguez, who was just a child when she was raped and strangled in 2003. The daughter of Juana Rodríguez Bermudez went missing February 10, 2003. “Bere” as her mother called her, had been sent to the corner store to buy sodas. Bere’s biological father abandoned her and her mother Juana, when Bere was a baby. Juana, her mother, was twenty-six and in a common law marriage with Chuy who cared for her two sons and Bere. They had a third son together. At Bere’s disappearance, Chuy was in terrible grief according to Juana.

What shocked Juana and the family was the effort made by the police to find a suspect, any suspect. They chose Chuy, Bere’s stepfather. He was detained, beaten up by the police and urged to confess. Bere’s body had been found on land next to Ferromex, the national railroad service. They kept trying to get Chuy to say that he killed Bere and brought him back to the station two more times where he was roughed up enough to break his ribs. Eventually, new forensic evidence showed that Bere’s tiny hand contained grey hairs released from the killer’s head. Chuy had no grey hair. Juana, Chuy and the children had all lived in Colonia Obrera, or “workers’ colonia.” When it was over; the investigation and the acceptance that her only girl child had been taken from her, the family moved out of Colonia Obrera in search of a place that would make them feel safer. Of course, there have never been apologies from the governmental authorities who have repeated such acts in a number of the bungled investigations of the Juárez femicides.

What is tragic about the killings is this context of the workers’ vulnerability and powerlessness, as well as the social conditions of their lives whether in insecure neighborhoods or toxic workplaces. Juárez has one of the highest levels of production in Mexico under NAFTA. Like Tijuana, Baja California, it had levels of industrialization begun in the 1960s under the Border Industrialization Program, which expanded further under NAFTA and provide the historical context for the presence of over three hundred maquiladoras throughout the city, employing well over a quarter million workers. A city that forty years ago had maybe 20,000 people grew by 60,000 persons a year, most of them coming from extremely poor, rural sections of the Mexican interior. A high majority of those who move to border cities like Juárez, or Reynosa, or Ciudad Acuña, take jobs in the factories bearing names

like Gateway Computers, General Electric, Sony, LG or Kimberly Clark, Levi Jeans, and ALCOA producing everything from clothing and jeans, to computers, cell phones, automobile dashboards and seat belts, handbags, appliances, greeting cards, and even the cutout discount coupons in the Sunday newspapers. Drove of young people board charter buses to show up for work. They wear uniformed aprons. They are all likely to work 10-12 hour days, may earn the

## The murders, which have continued, still average 30 killings of women per year...



equivalent of \$40 to \$60 per week, a take-home pay that cannot catch up to the higher costs of living at the border. They perform tasks that might have been done once in a U.S. factory, which shut down, left Americans jobless, outsourced to Mexico, someday to China, always in a race to the bottom of the wage scale. Inside the factories they meet up with the enforcement of harsh sometimes arbitrary rules. “No, you can’t go to the bathroom now, you have to wait until the shift is over.” Lunch is a bare fifteen or twenty minutes in some factories. Lateness is not tolerated. A worker who is late is sent home. Even if the factory is in an isolated area, away from people or public transportation, and no matter at what hour.

The case of Claudia Ivette González represents another prototype of the female homicide victim in Juárez. Claudia was living with her mother. She was a maquiladora worker for the Lear Corporation, which is based in Michigan. The Lear company makes automobile interiors. According to its website, Lear employs over 90,000 workers in 33 countries around the world. And one of their workers was Claudia in a Juárez factory. On the day of her disappearance, Claudia must have missed a bus, or something caused her to be late to work. She was to enter at 7 a.m. Accounts vary as to whether she was four minutes or two minutes late. At home, the family did not worry until she didn’t return from work. By midnight or 1 a.m., they knew something was not right and went to the police who told them to wait 72 hours. The next day they went to the bank where Claudia might have claimed her paycheck. It had not been claimed. Claudia was not known to hang out or stay out late. At the factory her mother was told that Claudia had been sent home for being two minutes late. Meanwhile, Claudia had been looking forward to getting a bonus check that day for not missing a single day of work in three months. During the 72 hour wait, the family began their own search. Claudia’s body was found a month later in the infamous Cottonfield along with twelve other bodies and in a lot next to the offices of the Association of Maquiladoras. At the ten day public forum Claudia’s mother stated “*They are never going to get the assassins. They are being protected. There’s too*

*much money involved. The men they went after upon the discovery of the bodies in the cottonfield are not them.”*

I recently used the story of Claudia in a work entitled, “Accountability for Murder in the Maquiladoras” where I have tried to argue that the violence against women in Juárez, the killings, manifest an extreme version of a dehumanized treatment of workers that is simply regular and common in most of the Mexican maquiladoras. When a kind of disrespect and gendered violence is common and typical inside the factory it is not unusual to have it extend outwards to the whole environment within which the worker is sought, recruited, hired, treated, mistreated and not cared for. Typical systematic patterns of abuse, harassment and violence against women occur day in and day out in the NAFTA

## Typical systematic patterns of abuse, harassment and violence against women occur day in and day out in the NAFTA factories at the border.

factories at the border. My aim is to theorize about the lack of social responsibility by the corporate investors. To imagine a reason for accountability when the structure of free trade law policy is heavily biased



to protect the corporate investor, to make them immune to any complaint that maybe their shop set-up has some problems when it comes to the safety of their supposedly most valued corporate element – the worker. In other words, the murders can happen because an environment throughout the cities being welcomed into the global economy is hostile to all workers’ safety even if they pay lip service and display attitudes to the contrary. Check out the website, for example, of the Lear corporation and its self-proclaimed care for the employee. Hard to believe, when one learns the circumstances surrounding Claudia’s death.

Yet, Ciudad Juárez and the femicides are not a unique problem for Mexico or the global economy. If it were, we would not be seeing rising numbers of female homicides also occurring in places like Guatemala and Honduras, countries that are now the object of free trade under the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) which was modeled on the same terms as NAFTA, pushed on a very fast track for Congressional approval, and is just as empty of provisions protecting migrant laborers’ rights and the enforcement of national or international health, labor, environmental or safety norms.

Let us put the whole phenomenon of the murders into context

–of an industrial city becoming larger and more prosperous as a result of foreign money coming in through NAFTA. Of companies leasing huge plots of land from either the government or from major utilities like the railroad so as to set up factories that import materials from the U.S. parent company and then re-export the assembled product into the U.S. market economy. To produce as quickly as possible for as little as possible. To hire people at cheap wages, to control them, to own them long enough to meet production deadline, to compete in the global economy and remain active on the New York Stock Exchange. To employ ground level managers and supervisors who are paid well enough to live in nice homes in Juárez or even El Paso, while the workers return to “las casas de carton.” That is the scenario for the femicides.

For me, the stories of the murders have an important larger context – it should not be separated from the systematic abuse and violence against working class employees who daily face supervisors who sometimes treat them like animals, say the male workers, who are exposed to toxic fumes; or workers who are penalized harshly for small infractions, who have no privacy and no human rights to complain, to organize on their own behalf. Outspoken workers are fired and then they are blacklisted. The list of insensitive and inhumane treatment goes on -- such as women suffering miscarriages on the worksite from being exposed to fumes or having to work long hours in positions that destroy their bodies or expose them to chronic pain or long term respiratory and musculoskeletal damage. They work machines and are treated like extensions of the machinery. And because NAFTA privileges the employer and grants few to no rights to the worker these maquiladoras function as gated communities. Once inside the gates, you belong to the employer.

On the morning Claudia was late, she had become an outsider and sent out the gate. Does it matter that the factory was in an isolated part of the city, typical of many factories, and that she was far from public transportation? That, typical of the maquiladora worker who never had extra cash, she had no other way to get home other than to walk? Is it any surprise that she was vulnerable to the kidnapper and became another victim in Juárez? What would it cost a company like Lear to change its policies? To say, we value our female workers enough that we will escort them to the bus to make sure they get home safely. To have recognized by 2002, with the constant news of violence against women occurring in Juárez, that they would care to set up a different scheme for securing a compliant punctual workforce? Or that, just because they are socially responsible they would never think of sending a young woman home alone, on foot, at just past seven in the morning into a desolate part of the city. What would it mean for a company to “walk the talk” when they state that they care about their most valuable resource – the employee?

To some degree the hostility of the social environment in Juárez to women’s lives finally found some acknowledgement in the recent landmark decision of the Inter American Court of Human Rights filed on behalf of three of the murder victims found in the cottonfield, including the surviving family of Claudia Ivette González. The findings of the Costa Rican based judge on the Inter-American Court on Human Rights, a part of the Organization of American States, state that by the time of the cottonfield murders in 2002, there had been set a pattern of gender violence in Ciudad Juárez that should have prompted government authorities to find



ways to prevent violence against women. The decision of the court rendered December 15, 2009 is but a start. It finally tells Mexico it must take certain measures to bring about justice to the families that made the human rights complaints and that it must attempt to curb future acts of violence against women.

Because the country of Mexico adheres to the decisions of the IACHR it cannot appeal the decision. The remedies are extensive and include the command that Mexico must conduct a serious murder investigation and investigate law enforcement officials [within one year] who are responsible for obstructing justice in the cotton field case (which included fabrication of evidence and torture of innocent scapegoats). The Mexican government must also hold a public ceremony in Ciudad Juárez to apologize for the crimes and it must build a monument to the three hundred plus women murdered in the border city alone. It must publish the sentence of the international court in the official government record and in newspapers and expand gender sensitivity and human rights training for police. It must step up and coordinate efforts to find missing women and permanently publicize the cases of disappeared women on the Internet; and investigate reported death threats and harassment against members of the families responsible for making the human rights complaint against the Mexican government.

Claudia's mother was reportedly satisfied with the decision even if she knew the killers would never be found or held accountable. We can applaud the lawyers and the activists that brought the complaint to the international courts of justice. But, what is missing is the larger context of the environmental instability that is the norm of industrialization whether under NAFTA or CAFTA or anywhere that the leaders of global finance target as important to the global economy. And that is, that so much change that comes about has gendered implications. So many of the workers of the world are female. So much is at risk when we open the new factory door to the modern woman of an undeveloped country.

And what about the maquiladoras? Don't they bear some responsibility to the victims and the conditions that contribute to women's continued victimization? I would hope so. It is a question worth continuing to pursue. Why is it that companies making money under NAFTA are willing to look the other way or hide behind the obstructions of justice that have pointed the finger at the vulnerability of the worker, especially the female worker? While it is right and just to punish the Mexican government and order them to fulfill these remedies, this is NOT ENOUGH. We must begin to re-think the way in which we promote free trade law and policy.

I want to find a theory for linking closely the hostile environment allowed by free trade agreements that intentionally leave out human rights for the workers, to the hostile environment of a city

that doesn't care about the people who go to those factories and slave all day, and come home to shantytowns, to incomes that barely feed their families, to settings in which there is no safety anywhere, not at work, not in their neighborhoods, not on the way to and from work. I want to ask, for example, was the Lear Corporation arguably partly responsible for putting Claudia Ivette in the path of danger? This is a difficult question because I know that in the language of the law there is no real proximate cause. In the language of ethics and morality and social responsibility, however, sending home a worker at that hour of the day, in a city that already was known to be plagued with gender violence and female murder? They could be responsible. They should at least have to think about it.

I have admitted that it is difficult to make the connection between the disciplinary measures for lateness at the Lear factory and Claudia's eventual abduction and killing. But when a company tells the world on the Internet that we are socially responsible, and we value our workers then it may want to re-think its factory policies, when it enforces one that clearly endangers their workers in and around the workplace.

There's a reason why activists for justice in the maquiladoras say that you can't separate the murders from the gross indifference to the health and safety of the workers employed by the large and powerful NAFTA factories. It is the law that welcomes them to do business, and the elites of those countries that never question their policies or practices. Put them all together, gender abuse and violence, corporate power, government acquiescence, and you have a recipe for an environment clearly hostile and dangerous to women.

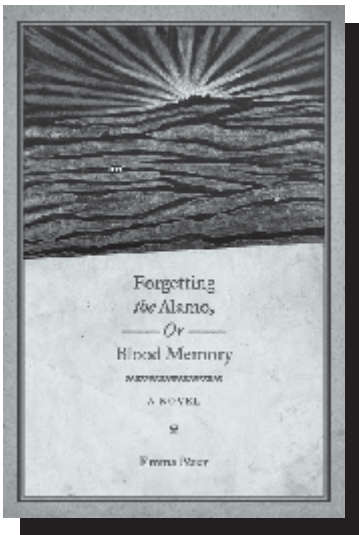
It is a tragedy that the victims that were maquiladora workers should have become martyrs for justice in the maquiladoras and in Juárez. The day

Claudia Ivette went to work she was happy about having complied with the company policies and hoping to get a bonus check. But two minutes late is two minutes late. Her record of service was unimportant as was her whole existence to the supervisors that sent her home, whose own policies were approved by the corporate structure all the way to the top. She became a target to a killer that morning, because her life was unimportant to him, as it already had been to her employer. Like Claudia many other workers in the global economy of today are also seen only as essential cogs in the wheels of production. ■

*Bio: Elvia R. Arriola is Professor of Law at Northern Illinois University and is currently visiting at St. Mary's University in San Antonio for the Spring 2010. She can be contacted at [elviaarriola@gmail.com](mailto:elviaarriola@gmail.com).*

Note: Sections of this essay are taken from my article "Accountability for Murder in the Maquiladoras: Linking Corporate Indifference to Gender Violence at the U.S.-Mexico Border," published in 2007 by the Seattle Journal for Social Justice, Seattle University School of Law.

**WHILE IT IS RIGHT AND JUST TO PUNISH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT AND ORDER THEM TO FULFILL THESE REMEDIES, THIS IS NOT ENOUGH. WE MUST BEGIN TO RE-THINK THE WAY IN WHICH WE PROMOTE FREE TRADE LAW AND POLICY.**



**Forgetting the Alamo, Or, Blood Memory: A Novel**  
by Emma Pérez  
University of Texas Press  
-Chicana Matters Series

This novel is an intervention in queer history and fiction with its love story between two women of color in mid-19th-century Texas. Pérez illustrates how a colonial past still haunts our nation's imagination. The battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto offered freedom and liberty to Texans, but what is often erased from the story is that the common people who were Mexican, Indian, and Black did not necessarily benefit from the influx of so many Anglo immigrants to Texas. The social themes and identity issues that Pérez explores--political climate, debates over immigration, and historical revision of the American West--are current even today. Pérez will read from her book in the shadow of the Alamo, an historic event for our community just before "Fiesta" begins.

# TELLING LIVES:

## Emma Pérez & Maria Cotera's Narratives of Tejana Life

Norma E. Cantú

Recent works of fiction set in Texas and written by Tejana/o authors explore issues of regional concern; Barbara Renaud González's brilliant and well crafted first novel, *Golondrina, Why Did You Leave Me?* Or Oscar Casares's second collection of stories, *Amigoland*, are set in the recent past and also engage life in Tejas. Adding to the growing number of novels set in Texas dealing with Tejana/o life,



Emma Pérez

Emma Pérez's *Forgetting the Alamo, or Blood Memory*, a meticulously researched novel (Pérez is, after all, a historian) introduces a diverse cast of characters. Micaela Campos, the lesbian protagonist who comes of age in the chaotic times during and after the battles of the Alamo and of San Jacinto, weaves the story together as her Tejano family and way of life are shattered by the likes of as unsavory antagonists as ever populated a Western tale.

But this novel is unlike any Western I have ever read even as it adheres to most of the genre's requisite elements--conflict, tension, a love interest, crooked card games, a horse (Lágrimas), weapons--a knife and a rifle (in this case it is Micaela's father's weapons), a cast of characters that includes the good: her mother Ursula, her father Agustin Campos, and Miss Elsie, innocent children and Native Americans; the bad: the Colonel whose main goal is to slaughter and scalp Indians and the torturers, the marauding Rove and his buddies, and those too difficult to classify, Jedidiah Campos Jones, her cousin, who betrays her, and Pedro, or Pete the young boy, who peddles goods and steals from her; Clara or La India, her love interest; and the many others: soldiers, vaqueros, Indians, and plain folk who both swindle and steal, squatters who take over Tejano lands, and innocent victims, Native Americans who are slaughtered, women and girls who are raped and killed. Many of them lingering in the reader's mind, for they are well defined characters.

Micaela, dressed as a boy, travels in search of her family's torturers seeking revenge through a region of Central Texas populated by characters that represent the gamut of good and evil and she witnesses it all. She travels from her home near San Jacinto to Galveston and to New Orleans and back. Now and again,

The work of María Cotera and of Emma Pérez may appear to be at opposite ends of a spectrum, after all the former is scholarly analysis and the latter fiction, but upon reading these texts one finds that they purport to do the same thing, and while the genres and even the writing may exist in different worlds, the effects end up being quite similar. Cotera's analysis of three key early 20<sup>th</sup> century figures in literary folklore and Pérez's tale of a young Lesbian Chicana coming of age during the 1830s in South Texas focus on areas heretofore unexplored in literary scholarship or in fiction.

upcoming  
events  
at esperanza

a reading featuring **EMMA PÉREZ & MARIA COTERA**  
**Sunday, March 28 at 3pm** followed by a Q&A with both authors

Presented in collaboration with the UTSA Women's Studies Institute, Trinity University, Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS) and the Esperanza Center



ghosts appear and offer solace or disturb the living.

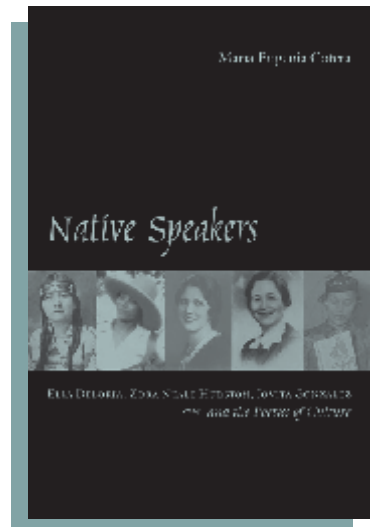
In a few instances, however, the seams showed as the author seemed to step out of character. Some language and sentences are awkward: "I could no longer explain even to myself the onus of all that had occurred on a journey I begged to be over but instead persisted as if to prove that something vast, yet inferior, was in charge of my destiny." In Chapter 10, Micaela offers a series of toasts as she drinks saying in Spanish "brindis a ti mi cielo, y brindis a ti, mis árboles, y también les brindo animalitos del monte" obviously a Spanish speaker, as Micaela is, would not use such language, but these are minor distractions. The treatment of race and racism and of the love between Clara and Micaela crystallizes the plot. I won't ruin the read by giving away the ending, suffice it to say that it is a plausible if improbable ending and that as I finished reading it I wanted to start reading it again. And, that's quite a compliment!

As is my wont, I read more than one book at once. So it happened that as I was reading Pérez' novel, I was immersed in *Native Speakers: Ella Cara Deloria, Zora Neale Hurston, Jovita González and the Poetics of Culture* by Maria Cotera. Just as Pérez's novel enriches the literary production of Tejanas, Cotera's scholarly work enriches the scholarly production by and about Tejanas such as the recent *There Was a Woman: La Llorona in Folklore and Popular Culture* by Domino Pérez and *Beyond the Alamo: Forging Mexican Ethnicity in San Antonio, 1821-1861* by Raúl Ramos, that also focus on Tejana/o history and life. Cotera's work includes incisive analysis of the work of three leading literary folklorists: Deloria, Hurston, and González. Because she is a fine scholar and an excellent writer, Cotera manages to weave the life stories of these daring and courageous scholars into a colorful and rich tapestry. While Cotera's analysis of Deloria and Hurston is no doubt significant and critical, for the sake of brevity, I focus here on Jovita González.

Cotera's work on González is well known—she wrote the critical essay published in the first edition of González's *Caballero*—so her analysis in *Native Speakers* of González's collaboration with J. Frank Dobie, the Texas folklorist, reveals few surprises. Yet, Cotera expands and contextualizes González's writings, both her folklore and fiction, rightly focusing on the political and pedagogical dimensions of González's folklore studies. Cotera redeems what some scholars have criticized in González's seemingly assimilationist work. González's historical recovery of Tejana/o life and politics, as Cotera posits, constitutes an unearthing of the complexity of such a history, including the intersectionality of race, class and gender. Cotera's careful reading of González's *Dew on the Thorn* and its place in Tejana studies is a scholarly tour de force as it integrates numerous disciplines of folklore, history, literature and ethnography; yet, I wish she had included a metanarrative exploring her own engagement with the undertaking that no doubt has become a life project.

My other complaint, though minor, looms large for Tejana scholars; Cotera titles her chapter 6, "Feminism on the Border," yet fails to acknowledge or credit the Chicana scholar whose book is thus titled, Sonia Saldivar-Hull. Said chapter, an analysis of *Caballero*, puts Anzaldúan concept, including the idea of nepantla, in conversation with the co-authored novel. All in all, *Native Speakers* highlights the voices of folklorists, visionaries, women whose work changed the ways their communities were and are studied; Cotera's book like Emma Pérez's does what had not been done before, examine and critique the heretofore ignored terrain of Tejana life through telling the stories of scholarly and fictionalized Tejana lives.

Bio: Norma Cantu, a noted Chicana author, is professor of English at the University of Texas at San Antonio.



Maria Cotera

**Native Speakers: Ella Deloria, Zora Neale Hurston, Jovita Gonzalez, and the Poetics of Culture**  
by Maria Eugenia Cotera  
University of Texas Press

Winner of the 2009 Gloria Anzaldúa Book Prize of the National Women's Studies Association, *Native Speakers, Ella Deloria, Zora Neale Hurston, Jovita González and the Poetics of Culture* examines the work of three women of color with interconnected histories of marginalization during the 1920s and 1930s in the intellectual fields of folklore studies, anthropology and ethnolinguistics. The Feminist Review notes, "Cotera further claims that 'the most provocative point of connection' is each woman's exploration of 'the political and poetic possibilities of fiction.' The emphasis she places on the fictional work of these women is unique, especially in the cases of Deloria and Gonzalez, neither of whose fiction was published during their lifetimes." The weave of intellect and story makes the telling of these writers' lives a must hear in this special reading.

LA VOZ DE ESPERANZA · MARCH 2010 VOL. 23 ISSUE 2 · 6



**CINEMUJER**

**Friday & Saturday, March 26 & 27**

check [www.esperanzacenter.org](http://www.esperanzacenter.org) for updates

upcoming  
events  
at esperanza

# The Labor Struggle at the Grand Hyatt, Our Fight, Too!

by Pancho Valdez

*"If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound with mine, then let us work together."*

-Aboriginal Activist Group, Queensland Australia

**T**owards the end of the Cesar Chávez march last year it was brought to my attention that workers at the downtown San Antonio Grand Hyatt had signed up by a margin of 62% to be represented by UNITE HERE, a progressive union representing hotel, laundry and restaurant workers nationwide.

This show of support has the potential to make a very positive impact on area service workers. Last June, I received a phone call from Jay Mehta of UNITE HERE asking for a community support perspective. He informed me that the Grand Hyatt management had reneged on their promise to remain "neutral" in the organizing campaign and had engaged a labor relations consultant to terminate several members of the union organizing committee. To make a long story short, I became a community volunteer to assist the union.

To fully understand the situation, it is imperative to have some background. Grand Hyatt workers earn \$10.21 per hour, a significantly higher wage than other hotel workers in San Antonio.

treatment. Under a collective bargaining agreement such issues are resolved on the basis of seniority. Bosses resent this because it takes away their power to reward their flunkies. According to sources, workers who are not active in the union or those opposed to the union get smaller work loads. While this is probably illegal, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), a federal agency set up to enforce worker's rights, has a very long documented history of dragging its feet and sometimes actually siding with employers rather than protecting workers' rights. This is one reason why organized labor is adamant about passage of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). This also why the union voted to cancel the NLRB supervised election in July after Hyatt management fired workers sympathetic to the union. Had the union agreed to the election with the morale of the workers down, it would have, in all probability, lost the election. Once a union loses an election, it not permitted to conduct another election for a at least a year.

Across the nation, the Hyatt has engaged in similar anti-worker activities. In Boston, the Hyatt laid off around 100 housekeepers and replaced them with contract workers who earn only \$8 per hour as compared to the \$14-\$15 per hour laid off workers made. Nationally, housekeepers are mostly Latinas, African American or women from the Caribbean islands. In Indianapolis, Chicago, Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Francisco, the Hyatt is either fighting organizing campaigns or forcing the union into strike mode and demanding that workers pay more for healthcare. This, in face of the Hyatt posting \$1.3 billion in cash or its equivalent as of last September according to E Trade.

The struggle at the Grand Hyatt here is significant as well as historical. Area hotel bosses are fighting hard and counting on the NLRB to assist them in defeating UNITE HERE. This struggle goes far beyond just being a labor dispute. It is about justice for African American, Chicano and white working class folks, mostly women. These courageous workers need and deserve our solidarity in order to overcome the injustices imposed on them.

**People can help by:** **1) volunteering with UNITE HERE.** Contact Danna Schneider (dschneider@unitehere.org or 313-510-3004) or Daniel Ovalle (ovalle.daniel@yahoo.com) **2) contacting Mayor Julian Castro to intervene.** REMEMBER, \$200 million of our city funds are invested at the Grand Hyatt! Call the mayor at: 210-207-7060, 207-4168 (fax) or email: mayorjuliancastro@sanantonio.gov **3) getting the word out on what's happening.** Have your church, community group and/or union get informed and pass resolutions in support of the workers. **4) Not using Hyatt hotels.** Corporate bosses understand only one thing... MONEY! If people withhold cash flow and let them know why, the boss's hearts and minds may follow.

San Antonio workers at the bottom of the economic ladder are organizing and fighting for what is due them. If they fail, we all fail. When they are victorious, we will all share in the victory!

*Bio: Pancho Valdez has been involved in struggles for civil rights, labor & peace since the summer of 1965 | 210.882.2230 or fv.agitator@gmail.com*



The reason is that the Hyatt was awarded \$200 million from San Antonio to get the project off the ground. While the agreement mandated this minimum wage scale, it did nothing to protect the rights of workers. In fact, construction workers who helped build the present hotel building have yet to be paid by Faulkner U.S.A. a building contractor out of Austin, TX with a notorious track record of not paying owed wages.

The grossly inhumane work load imposed on the Grand Hyatt housekeeping staff was the primary issue that motivated workers to sign up with UNITE HERE. Housekeepers (primarily women of color) are expected to clean between 30 and 34 rooms in a seven and a half hour shift. This is more than 4 rooms per hour that require not only cleaning but also the changing linens and making beds. Housekeepers often spend more than 15 minutes per room if the job is to be done properly. Workers not making the quota are disciplined and can even be suspended or fired.

These heavy work loads force workers to work more rapidly causing accidents to occur. Housekeepers report injuries to hands, wrists, arms, shoulders and backs from trying to keep up with the work. (Under union contract, workers have a work load of 12-15 rooms per shift.) It is not uncommon for supervisors to demand that injured workers continue working causing further injury. A study conducted by 4 universities including the University of Illinois' Chicago School of Public Health published in the American Journal of Industrial Medicine shows that Latina housekeepers at the Hyatt chains are at higher risk for occupational injuries than those employed by any other major hotel chain. When asked to comment on this, Hyatt bosses chose not to respond.

Favoritism is also an issue. Preferred work hours, assignments, time off, and scheduled holidays are given on the basis of preferential



# OBAMA and THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

by Elliot Benjamin, Ph.D

There are so many red flags one can focus upon in Obama's Afghanistan war escalation decision, inclusive of numerous additional Afghanistan civilian deaths as well as American and Afghanistan soldier deaths, massive additional spending while we are still in the midst of economic danger, the creation of many new terrorists and suicide bombers who will dedicate their lives to killing Americans, the strengthening of the present corrupt Afghanistan government, the increasing popularity of the Taliban as defenders of their people against

"U.S. invaders," etc. But what disturbs me the most is that this new debacle is happening under the auspices of the person who was elected by many who thought they were electing a "peace candidate." Obama is no peace candidate; his war policy is essentially no different in substance from that of Bush and the near president and vice-president McCain and Palin. The only difference appears to be "where" we send out troops to war and bomb innocent civilians: Iraq or Afghanistan/Pakistan.

I very much hope we have a genuine peace candidate for the Democratic presidential candidate in 2012. This may not be as unfeasible or unrealistic as some people think, since Obama was supposedly the "peace candidate" that millions of Americans thought they were voting for in 2008. But Mr. Obama has disappointed many people and is intent upon continuing a foreign policy that I'm

afraid I do not really see much difference in from that of Bush. The whole world got taken in by Obama, as he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize while in the midst of being immersed in two wars, and



**MARCH IN LOS ANGELES  
U.S. OUT OF AFGHANISTAN  
AND IRAQ NOW! SAT., MARCH 20 2010**



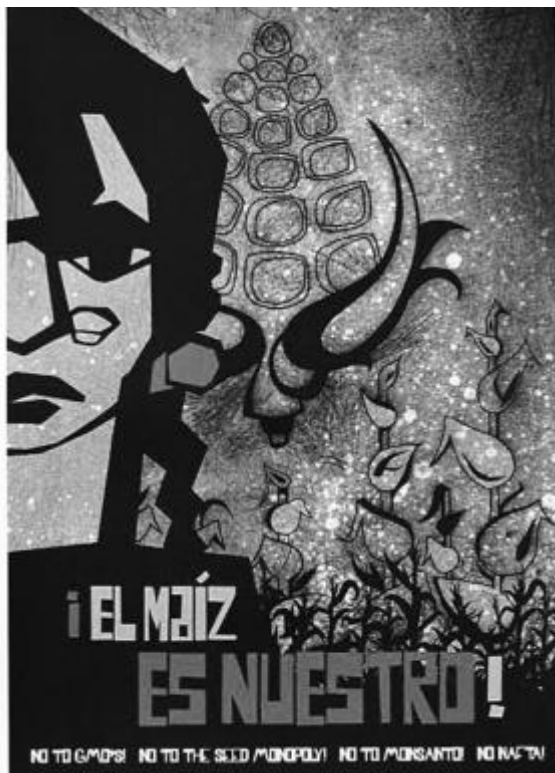
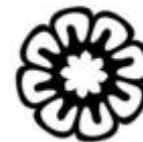
**HOLLYWOOD & VINE, 12 NOON ENDORSE & VOLUNTEER TODAY ANSWERLA.ORG**

he bears responsibility for significantly escalating one of them. This is a horribly ludicrous situation, and one that will wreak further havoc on both our country and the world.

I conclude with some wise advice from my good rural Maine friend Stevie: "The way to peace is not through war. The death ante has been up, since the first increase in troops, now he is putting forty thousand more in. More troops more death, on both sides. It seems to me that if you want to negotiate a peace with anyone, you first have to stop killing each other. To my simple mind, no one has asked the one question that began this whole fucken mess. That question is, why is the Islamic world angry at us??? And what can we do to address any wrongs. Again, my simple guess is to not answer the question with a bullet in the head!!!! - 1/21/10

## MAMAZ

Mujeres Artistas y el Maiz



FAVIANNA RODRIGUEZ

**Mujeres Artistas y el Maíz, es un colectivo** que surge a partir del cuestionamiento de lo que está pasando con nuestra principal base alimenticia milenaria. Para nuestra cultura el maíz es sagrado y la semilla nativa de nuestros pueblos indígenas está a punto de su extinción, debido a la falta de apoyo al campo por parte del gobierno, la pérdida de la tradición de siembra en nuestras comunidades por la migración, escasez de agua por el cambio climático y los intereses económicos de las empresas transnacionales. El colectivo Mujeres Artistas y el Maíz (MAMAZ), les invita a la próxima exposición del Maíz en el Mexican American Cultural Center en Austin, Texas en el mes de abril de 2010. Busque mas detalles sobre la exhibición en abril en la La Voz de Esperanza. Para información sobre MAMAZ y sus otras exhibiciones de maíz mire a: <http://colectivomamaz.blogspot.com>

**Women Artists and the Maize (MAMAZ), is a collective** of women artists who arose from the questioning and reflection of what is happening with their nutritional base, maize. For our culture, the maize is sacred. However, the native seed of our indigenous towns is on the verge of its extinction due to the lack of support of the government, the loss of the tradition of sowing in our communities, immigration, water shortage, the climatic changes that we are living, and the economic interests of the transnational companies. The MAMAZ collective invites you to the upcoming exhibit on Maiz at the Mexican American Cultural Center in Austin, Texas in April, 2010. Look for details in the April issue of La Voz de Esperanza. To read more on MAMAZ and their past maize exhibits check: <http://colectivomamaz.blogspot.com>

# THE ALARMING FICTION OF CORPORATE PERSONHOOD:

by Amy Kastely

## Citizens United v. Federal Election Committee

In the recent case of *Citizens United v. Federal Election Committee*, the five Reagan-Bush appointees on the Supreme Court held that federal election finance legislation prohibiting corporate spending to promote a candidate for federal office within 30 days of an election is unconstitutional. This decision raises yet another obstacle to the possibility of democracy in the United States and perhaps most significantly, it fortifies predatory capitalism against future efforts to curtail the corporate plundering that has devastated so much of the world's population and natural resources.

### The Decision

The case began in January 2008, when Citizens United, a right wing advocacy corporation, released a 90-minute documentary criticizing Democratic Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton.<sup>1</sup> Citizens United arranged to have the film made available for free through a video-on-demand network and for promotional advertisements to be run on local broadcast and cable television two or three weeks prior to state Democratic primaries.

More than fifty *amicus* ("friend of the court") briefs were filed in the Supreme Court. Briefs in support of Citizens United were filed by the National Rifle Association, numerous right-wing institutes, organizations, and individuals, and the American Civil Liberties Union. On the other side, arguing in support of the Federal Election Committee were Common Cause, LULAC, the American Independent Business Alliance, and a group of "Former Officials of the American Civil Liberties Union" who disagreed with the position taken by current ACLU officials.

Chief Justice Roberts (appointed by Bush II) and Justices Kennedy (Reagan), Scalia (Reagan), Thomas (Bush I), and Alito (Bush II) held that corporations, whether for-profit or non-profit, have a right to freedom of speech protected by the First Amendment to the same extent as actual human beings. To support this holding, the majority evoked the alarming fiction that a corporation is a "person" within the meaning of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Therefore, the majority concluded, corporations have the right (just like other people?) to spend limitless corporate money to promote candidates for elected office and that the federal election finance law violates this right. Justice Stevens wrote a scathing dissent, which Justices Sotomayor, Ginsberg, and Breyer joined. The Dissenters emphasized the distorted logic of treating a corporation as if it were a human being: "The conceit that corporations must be treated identically to natural persons in

the political sphere is not only inaccurate but also inadequate to justify the Court's disposition of this case." (at page 53).

This decision will certainly increase reported election spending by large corporations, unions, and 501(c)(4) advocacy organizations. According to Fortune Magazine, the top fifty corporations cleared \$363 billion in 2009 profits. If those companies spent just 1% of their profits on public elections, their \$3.6 billion will surpass the \$3.1 billion reportedly spent by candidates for all federal offices in 2008. Of course, this \$3.1 billion figure may be too low, as it does not include corporate money indirectly channeled into election spending, so all we can know for sure is that there will be more reported spending as a result of the Supreme Court's decision.



If those [top 50 fortune magazine] companies spent just 1% of their profits on public elections, their \$3.6 billion will surpass the \$3.1 billion reportedly spent by candidates for all federal offices in 2008.

Yet even significant increases in corporate election spending will not change U.S. electoral politics very much. The truth is that wealthy corporations already express their opinions on matters affecting our local, national, and global communities; they already enjoy special access and authority with elected officials; and they already shape public opinion by controlling and even fabricating the information available to the public. Indeed, the sophisticated manipulation of U.S. public opinion has been an essential component in the post-World War

1. Among the other films produced by Citizens United and listed on its website, citizensunited.org, are *We Have The Power* hosted by Newt and Callista Gingrich, *Perfect Valor* with Fred Thompson, *Rediscovering God in America* hosted by Newt and Callista Gingrich, *Ronald Reagan: Rendezvous with Destiny*, and *Blocking the Path to 9/11: Anatomy of a Smear*.



II “global economic development plan” that has fed sixty years of reckless consumption in the U.S. and has plundered resources, subverted democratic rule, siphoned World Bank loan dollars into U.S. pockets, disrupted global ecosystems, and devastated native communities throughout the world. (see John Perkins, *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* (2005).

## Corporate Personhood and the Possibility of Regulatory Control

What is different now, for the first time in at least thirty years, is the glimmer of possibility that greater public understanding of the atrocities committed by U.S. predatory capitalists will lead to greater popular support for nations throughout Latin America who refuse to honor unjustly imposed debts. In addition, it may lead to greater popular demand for the U.S. government to curtail corporate power and to hold corporate officers and owners responsible for the damage and injuries committed in the U.S. and throughout the world. And in this glimmer, there is a genuine possibility that the U.S. Congress and President, unable to ignore or repair the massive damage done by U.S. based corporations, may, in the not-too-distant future, demand accountability for corporate plundering and muster the political will to curtail corporate excess. If it takes the imminent risk of environmental catastrophe to get there, WE ARE THERE. If it takes the vengeful anger of generations without hope, WE ARE THERE. If it takes the irreversible extinction of plant and animal species, WE ARE THERE. If it takes more than a thousand children dying each hour from lack of food and clean water, WE ARE THERE.

And information about crimes committed in the name of U.S. capitalism continues to reach public eyes. Since September 11, 2001, many former military and government employees have broken codes of silence to tell others what they have seen while

working for “global economic development.” Some are tormented by knowing an answer to the question frequently asked after 9-11-01: Why do they hate us so much? Many such whistleblowers are ready to assist Congress in formulating appropriate limitations on corporate activities. A similar thing happened after the wall street meltdown of 2008: scores of articles and books were written by people who worked in wall street brokerage firms, mortgage firms, banks and title companies. See, e.g. Richard Bitner, *Confessions of a Subprime Lender: An Insider’s Tale of Greed, Fraud, and Ignorance* (2008); see also Michael Lewis, *Liar’s Poker* (1990). The reports of these insiders must inform public control over the financial institutions that we purchased through the wall street bailouts.

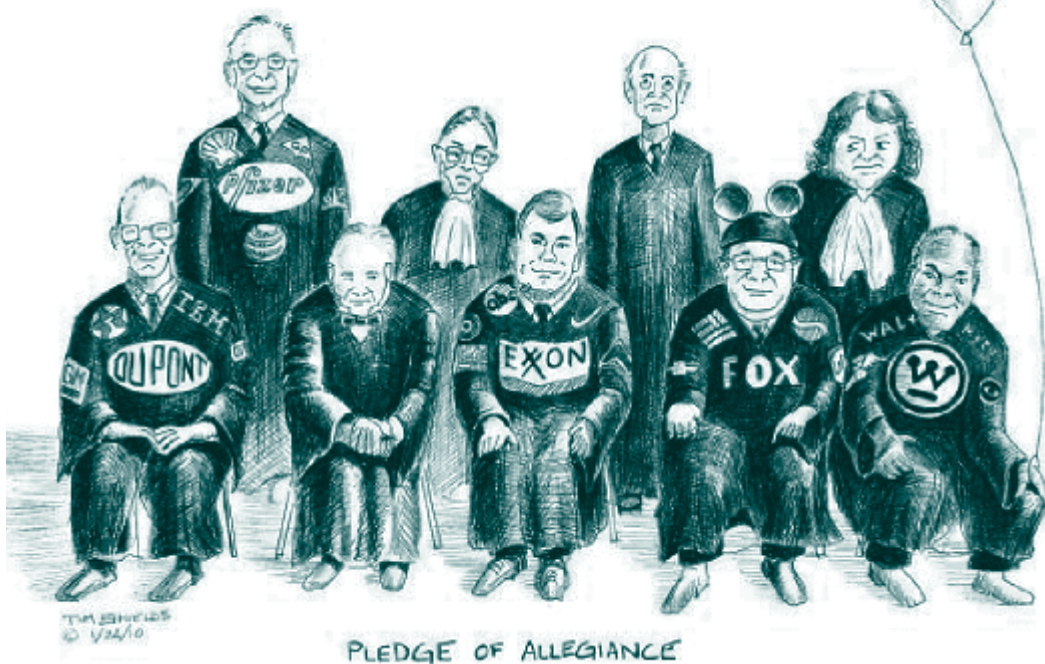
So what is different now is the real possibility that Congress and the President will be forced to act and will muster the political will to impose genuine limits on corporate activities. But when that day comes, the *Citizens United* decision will severely restrict Congress’ ability to enact such restrictions.

Despite Justice Alito’s blustering “NO” during Obama’s State of the Union Address, *Citizens United* does represent a radical shift in First and Fourteenth Amendment law. Although the statement that “corporations are persons under the 14th Amendment” has been recited by courts, lawyers, and journalists for years, this legal fiction was not adopted in the case most frequently cited for that proposition, *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad* (decided in 1886), and was never directly adopted by the Supreme Court! What this meant, in a legal context, was that this doctrine, which is so flawed in its formulation and so lacking in theoretical foundation, was vulnerable to reformulation or outright rejection by a future Court who was moved to reexamine it directly.

During Oral argument on *Citizens United*, Justice Sotomayor noted the weakness of the corporate personhood doctrine, but apparently recognized the lack of support among the Justices for direct examination of this doctrine. Justice Sotomayor observed: “there could be an argument made that was the Court’s error to start with, the fact that the Court imbued a creature of State law with human characteristics.” Justice Sotomayor then urged that this Court should decide *Citizens United* on the limited statutory ground that the federal election finance law does not prohibit release of documentaries like “Hillary Clinton.” Before *Citizens United*, the “error” of corporate personhood could have been corrected by a future Court, facing an outraged public and having one less right-wing Justice. Now, however, after the *Citizens United* decision, only a Constitutional Amendment will clear the way for urgently needed legislation.

Bio: Amy Kastely is a professor of law at St. Mary’s University and is on the *Conjunto de Nepantleras* of the Esperanza Center.

Justice Sotomayor observed: “there could be an argument made that was the Court’s error to start with, the fact that the Court imbued a creature of State law with human characteristics.”



**Amnesty International #127** meets on 4th Thurs at 7:30 pm at Ashbury United Methodist. Call 829-0397.

**Anti-War Peace Vigil** every Thurs. 4-6pm. Corner of City Hall Bldg @ Flores & Commerce. veteransforpeace.org | ivaw.org

**Bexar County Green Party** Contact info@bexargreens.org or call (210)471-1791 for more.

**Critical Mass** bicycle ride!! Meet up at Downtown Central Library the last Friday of every month at 6:00 pm, rain or shine. mspace.com/satxcriticalmass

**DIGNITY S.A.** holds mass Sundays at 5:15 pm at St. Ann's. Call 735-7191.

The **S.A. Free Speech Coalition** meets at 6:30pm on 1st Wednesdays @ La Esperanza. Call 210.228.0201, www.esperanza-center/freespeech

**Fuerza Unida** is at 710 New Laredo Hwy. Call 927-2297.

**Habitat for Humanity** holds Orientation on 1st Tuesdays at 1st Presbyterian Church, 404N. Alamo, Rm 302 at 6 pm.

**Parents/Friends of Lesbians/Gays (PFLAG)** meets 1st Thursdays at 7pm @ 121 W. Woodlawn. Call 655-2383. | 6pm~Español

**Proyecto Hospitalidad Liturgy** meets on Thursdays at 7 pm at 325 Courtland. Call 736-3579.

**The Rape Crisis Center** is at 7500 US Hwy 90 W., Bldg 2 in SA. Hotline number is 210.349-7273. Call 210/521-7273 or Drominishi@rapecrisis.com

**San Antonio Healthcare Now Coalition** meets 1st Thurs. at 6:30 pm @ **National Nurses**

**Organizing Committee** office 7959 Fredericksburg Rd. Call 882-2230 or check: www.healthcarenowsa.org

**San Antonio NOW** meets 4th Wed @ La Madeline on Broadway @ 6:30pm. Call: 673-8600

**The Shambhala Buddhist Meditation Center** offers classes on Tues./Thurs. at 7pm, Sun. at 11:30 am. at 1114 So. St. Mary's. Call 222-9303.

**The Society of Friends** meets Sun. at 10 am at The Friends Meeting House, 7052 N. Van-diver. Call 945-8456.

**The Society of Latino and Hispanic Writers SA** meets 2nd Mondays, 7 pm @ Barnes & Noble, San Pedro Crossing.

**S.N.A.P. (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests)** meets 2nd Sat. of each month at 1pm at 1443 S. St. Mary's. Call 725-8329.

**Voice for Animals** meets last Sat. at Whole Foods in the Quarry @ 3 pm. Call 737-3138 or see www.voiceforanimals.org

For **Texas Media Empowerment Project** info contact: deannec@texasemp.org

**Metropolitan Community Church of SA (MCCSA)**, 611 East Myrtle has services and Sunday School @ 10:30 AM. Call: 599-9289.

**The Solidarity Support Group** meets M-F @ 5802 S. Presa. Call Janet @ 582-8776 or Leo @ 436-8018x307.

**San Antonio Gender Assoc.** meets 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 6-9pm at 611 E. Myrtle, Metropolitan Community Church, downstairs. www.sagender.org

The **ESPERANZA PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER** is part of *Community Shares of Texas*

**Sign-up to donate monthly to the Esperanza Peace & Justice Center [agency # 8670] directly from your paycheck at work through these CST participants:**

*In San Antonio:*

(San Antonio Area)

- State Employee Charitable Campaign (#074561)
- San Antonio Combined Federal Campaign
- City of San Antonio Local Charitable Campaign
- Bexar County Employees Local Charitable Campaign
- San Antonio Combined School District Charitable Campaign
- San Antonio Water System Local Charitable Campaign

*Outside of San Antonio:*

- Central Texas Combined Federal Campaign (Austin area)
- City of Austin Combined Charities Campaign (#1526)
- Travis County Combined Charities Campaign
- City of Houston Combined Municipal Campaign (#1113)
- Houston ISD Combined Charities Campaign (#1132)
- City of El Paso Combined Charitable Campaign
- County of El Paso Combined Charitable Campaign

*And, all of Community Shares of Texas campaigns in the private sector.*

**ESPERANZA  
PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER\***  
\*Call us at 210.228.0201  
to sign up with our electronic direct deposit program,  
or to access employment site codes.

**TO ADD YOUR GROUP'S MEETING DATES OR TO MAKE CHANGES** contact [lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org) or call the Esperanza Center at 210.228.0201.

## Make a tax-deductible donation.

I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ /month by automatic bank withdrawal. Contact me to sign up.
 
 I pledge to send \$ \_\_\_\_\_ each \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ quarter \_\_\_\_\_ six-months through the mail.
 

 Enclosed is a donation of \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 La Voz subscription / \$100 Institutions \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer!
 
 Please use my donation for the Rinconcito de Esperanza

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

for more info call 210.228.0201

Make checks payable to the Esperanza Peace & Justice Center. Send to 922 San Pedro, SA TX 78212. Donations to the Esperanza are tax deductible.



# Notas Y Más

March 2010

Brief notes to inform La Voz readers about events, issues and happenings in the community. Send announcements for Notas y Más to: [lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org) or by mail to: 922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212. The deadline is the 10th of each month.

The San Antonio Club of the Communist Party USA holds its regular monthly meeting on March 14th from 3-5pm at the Esperanza Peace & Justice Center, 922 San Pedro. Contact John at [juanchostanford@yahoo.com](mailto:juanchostanford@yahoo.com)

Artpace and Gemini Ink pair 2 to Watch with writer/journalist, Bárbara Renaud González and current WindowWorks artist, David Zamora Casas for a critical discussion and examination of crossovers between the genres on Thursday, March 25 at 6:30 pm at Artpace, 445 N. Main. Check: [geminiink.org](http://geminiink.org) or call 210.734.9673.

The first CantoMundo Poetry Workshop is convening July 8-11, 2010, at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Master poets Martín Espada and Demetria Martínez will teach a three-hour craft workshop each. Submit an application to participate in the Master Poet Craft Workshop as well as a separate proposal to present a craft lecture, if desired, by 5 p.m. CST, Friday, March 19, 2010. Contact Celeste Guzman Mendoza at [ay\\_sisi@hotmail.com](mailto:ay_sisi@hotmail.com) for details.

The 8th Annual National Latino Writers Conference will be held from May 19-22, 2010, Wednesday through Saturday at the History & Literary Arts building of the National Hispanic Arts Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Submit manuscript samples by April 1, 2010. There is a \$300 registration fee. Call 505.246-2261 or check [www.nationalhispaniccenter.org](http://www.nationalhispaniccenter.org) for more.

Chicana/o Environmental Justice Struggles for a Post-Neoliberal Age is the focus for the NACCS 2010 conference in Seattle, Washington from April 7-10, 2010. Proposals are now being accepted. Contact Prof. Devon Peña, [dpena@naccs.org](mailto:dpena@naccs.org) or check [www.naccs.org](http://www.naccs.org) for details.

MALCS 2010 Summer Institute will be at Arizona State University in Phoenix on July 21-24. The theme for the Institute is "Derechos Humanos: (Re)Claiming Our Dreams Across Contested Terrains." It is the 25th year since the Chicana Summer Institute was first conceptualized! Join MALCS or renew memberships and receive the latest MALCS Journal! Check <http://malcs.net/> Also, see below.

Check out the website of Nicholas Kristof of the NY Times, a powerful advocate for women around the world at: [www.nytimes.com/2010/02/04/opinion/04kristof.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/04/opinion/04kristof.html) The column includes a link, [www.womenforwomen.org/index.php](http://www.womenforwomen.org/index.php) to an organization called Women for Women, that helps our sisters in war-torn regions, in very concrete and effective ways.

Performance Artists! CALL FOR ENTRIES: 3 Minutes Max, Anti Nuclear / Pro Renewable ENERGY STATEMENTS for Citizens To Be Heard at the Municipal Plaza Building, City Council Chambers, Thursday evenings as indicated on the agenda (check: [epay.sanantonio.gov/agendabuilder/eagendalist.aspx](http://epay.sanantonio.gov/agendabuilder/eagendalist.aspx)) Email Alice at: [carmela.canestraro@gmail.com](mailto:carmela.canestraro@gmail.com) or call 210.739.9939 if interested.



Ninfa Ruiz who has published her stories in La Voz now has a book available online! Check [www.ondabooks.com](http://www.ondabooks.com) and look for "Los Secrets de Ninfa."

¡BAILE!

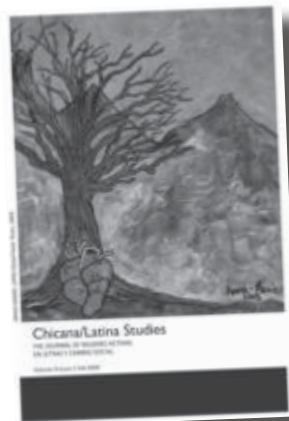
SATURDAY APRIL 10, 2010

LANIER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

SANCHEZ/FUENTES

TICKETS \$7 8PM ESPERANZA CENTER WITH DJ EL GENERAL

Call Isabel @ 210. 227.6868 or the Esperanza @ 210.228.0201



## JOIN MALCS OR RENEW MEMBERSHIPS NOW & RECEIVE THE LATEST MALCS JOURNAL OF CHICANA/LATINA STUDIES!

**Commentary** Journal Report, 2003-2009 - Karen Mary Davalos | Benchmarks, Personal and Collective - Tiffany Ana López | Dreaming and Scaffolding - Josie Méndez-Negrete | Overview: MALCS Summer Institute - Tiffany Ana López and Josie Méndez-Negrete

**Historia** Auto/ethnography and Reverse Migrations in South Texas: An Anthropologist's Testimonio About Method and Meaning in the Gathering of History - Jennifer Najera | Comino Chronicles: A Tale of Tejana Migration - Antonia Castañeda

**Cargas y Dolor** Testimoniando: A Latina/Chicana Critical Feminist Approach to Racism on College Campuses - Mariela Nuñez-Janes and Andrea Robledo | Seriously Funny: A Critique of Hollywood's Post-Colonial Gaze in the Work of Michele Serros - Emma Garcia | Today Tuesday - Judith Flores Carmona | Complicated Answer - Judith Flores Carmona

**Consejos y Sobrevivencias** Dolor Hereditario - Veronica Pérez | Roller Derby: Transporting into Academia Lessons from the Body Slam - Lee Ann Epstein | The Wake-Up Call - Anónima

[www.malcs.net](http://www.malcs.net)

# NOCHE AZUL DE ESPERANZA

Wednesday, March 10 @ 8pm | \$5



w/ set design by artist/muralist Adriana Garcia | Esperanza Peace & Justice Center

# MUJERES EN MUSICA

Honoring in song the lives of **women** who are a constant part of **global social change** and **conciencia**.

**Musicians:** Azul, Bett Butler, Joël Dilley, Lauro Torres and Paul Ward

Esperanza Peace & Justice Center  
*presents*  
**CINE MUJER**  
**Friday & Saturday**  
**March 26 & 27, 2010**

check [www.esperanzacenter.org](http://www.esperanzacenter.org) or call 210.228.0201 for info



LA VOZ DE ESPERANZA  
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20TH ANNUAL SAN ANTONIO

# INTERNATIONAL WOMAN'S DAY MARCH & RALLY

## SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2010

10 am Meet at **Bowie and Market St**  
(near front of Grand Hyatt)

Rally at **Plaza del Zacate** (Milam park,  
501 w commerce, across from Santa Rosa Hospital)

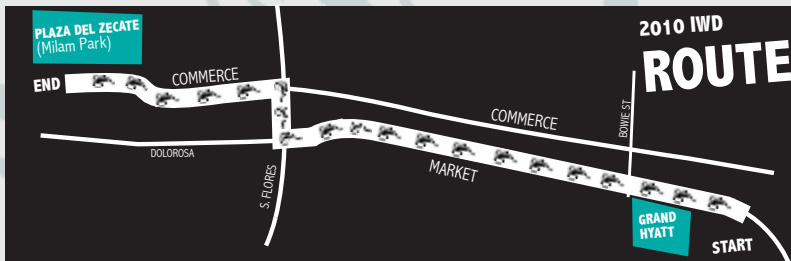
*Mujeres, la fuerza de la lucha*  
*Women leading the struggle*

*Rally Speakers Include*

**ELIZABETH "BETITA" MARTINEZ**  
*y mas!*



Volunteers needed call  
210.228.0201 for info



This year's march will start near the front of the Grand Hyatt to put pressure on the hotel to end their oppressive anti-union actions and mistreatment of women workers! Join us to march in the streets in solidarity with women and social justice movements here in San Antonio and all over the globe!

**IWD**  
**after**  
**party**

**SAT MAR 6 @ 9pm | \$5 Donation**  
The Cove, 606 W Cypress  
live music • poetry • raffle

[www.sawomenwillmarch.org](http://www.sawomenwillmarch.org)