The Olive Branch

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CENTER FOR PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES
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The Olive Branch is a publication of the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies at Ball State University. Every issue, we shine a spotlight on people, events, campus groups, conferences, and organizations who are working towards a more peaceful world.

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
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NATIONWIDE PRISON STRIKE #AUGUST21
SLAVERY NEVER ENDED

MARIELLE FRANCO: A HUMAN RIGHTS ICON FOR PEACE

While returning from a Black women's empowerment event, Brazilian council member Marielle Franco was shot and killed on March 14th, 2018. As the only Afro-Brazilian representative in a council of 51, and only one of seven women, Franco was a champion of human rights in Rio de Janeiro. She strived to increase the rights of women, queer individuals, and favela residents, while also reducing the violence faced by these communities.

Political disarray and corruption are rampant in Brazil. The community members most affected by this violent climate are the poor, Afro-Brazilians, and women. Moreover, a disproportionate amount of violence is targeted at those living in the favelas—the poor, slum cities built into the mountainsides. Hence, the citizens of the favelas rely on gang protection to keep themselves and their families safe. Consequently, due to increased gang violence, a militant police force has descended upon the favelas; leading to the death of innumerable innocent individuals caught in crossfires.

Franco was working to reduce corruption in the Brazilian government, improve the living conditions of underserved communities, and bring a halt to police brutality in the favelas. She recognized that the intersection of race, gender, and socio-economic class led to increased violence being faced by her citizens, and she consistently strove to increase their level of well-being. Remarkably, her work improved the lives of many individuals, even though it went against the government's corrupt and often violent practices.

With her drive and commitment, Franco was able to unite differing groups of race and class, to make real change possible. Her non-violent demonstrations, marches, and other activities emphasized peaceful resolutions to citizen issues. Her influence allowed her citizens to see that they could be united, powerful, and successful in the face of adversity. Most importantly, she believed that diplomacy and loyalty to those most affected by government policies and violence was a crucial strategy for social change.

> "She was executed because she was a black favela dweller who fought against the murder of black favela dwellers" said her classmate Lua Nascimento (Freelon, 2018, par. 4).

Brazilian authorities are still unsure of who killed Franco, and due to the disarray of the country and its politics, the investigation into her murder has been mishandled. Notably, her death sparked peaceful protests across the country. It is evident that despite having served her constituency as a council representative for merely 14 months, her emphasis on peaceful conflict resolution deeply resonated with those who stood with her even after her term of office ended. Franco's death has had a global impact, and she is an icon to underrepresented and underserved communities. She serves as an inspiration to those who fight for human rights, and to all groups who strive to make themselves heard in a peaceful and effective manner.

References

Freelon, K. (2018, March 16). Say her name: Marielle Franco, a brazilian politician who fought for women and the poor, was killed. Her death sparked protests across brazil. Retrieved from https://www.theroot.com/say-her-name-marielle-franco-a-brazilian-politician-w-1823812564

NATIONAL PRISON STRIKE: POWER TO THE PEOPLE

August 21st, 2018 marked an important day on the calendar of many former, and current prison inmates. Prisons have notoriously been bashed for their use of free labor at the hands of incarcerated individuals. However, the Jailhouse Lawyers Speak (JLS), a group of incarcerated people based out of South Carolina that advocate for prisoner's rights, called to action a 19-day nationwide strike to protest harsh prison conditions. The strike was launched on the anniversary of the death of prominent prison reform activist George Jackson and is set to end on September 9th—marking the 47th year since the Attica Prison uprising in New York. Although, the exact number of protests taking place in the United States (U.S.) is unknown, 17 states have committed to this activity.

The reasons for the current national prison strike vary. However, the leading causes strive to end "prison slavery, poor living conditions, and death by incarceration " as stated by Raven Rakia, author of Why Prisoners are Going on Strike Today (2018, par. 1). In fact, the inmates released a list of ten demands. They call for an end to over sentencing, parole denials of black and brown individuals, racist gang laws, and denied access to rehabilitation programs. They also demand that several reform acts be rescinded and that there be immediate improvements to the conditions of prisons and prison policies. Further, they urge state prisons to fund more rehabilitation services, and ensure that the prisoners receive representation and voting rights. Lastly, the prisoners are protesting the 13th Amendment which condones involuntary servitude as a part of their time in prison.

Inmates involved in this strike are striking peacefully by refusing to attend to their labor—whether that be in the kitchen or fighting deadly wildfires. Other forms of protests being held include sit-ins and hunger strikes. Amani Sawari, a spokesperson for the strike stated, "the main leverage that an inmate has is their own body " (Lopez, 2018, par. 8). By withholding their labor, inmates are retaining their most valued asset against the state. More importantly, these peaceful forms of resistance illustrate the use of non-violent protests to achieve a desired goal.

The Attica prison uprising mentioned earlier has long been considered as one of the bloodiest the U.S. has ever seen. However, much like the inmates protesting now, the inmates then were striking against being valued only for what they could do for the state. The lack of regard for their needs incited a deadly riot that is remembered for the bloodshed and not as a moment in history that could have led to monumental changes within the U.S. prison system. Thus, the cause was lost when violence ensued. Hence, as the current inmates strike in a non-violent manner, we are reminded of the power of the people, the strength in solidarity, and the possibility of change. In doing so, we can debate the effectiveness of the peaceful means being used, and value the strike for what it aims to accomplish for inmates in the U.S.

References

Lopez, G. (2018, August 22). America's prisoners are going on strike in at least 17 states. Retrieved from https://www.vox.com/2018/8/17/17664048/national-prison-strike-2018

Rakia, R. (2018, August 21). Why prisoners are going on strike today. Retrieved from https://www.thenation.com/article/why-prisoners-are-going-on-strike-today/

CONFERENCES

- International Youth Peace Conference (IYPC) Conference. Sogndal Fjordane, Norway. September 24th-October 1st, 2018.
- Peace and Justice Studies Associations 2018 Annual Conference. Philadelphia, PA. September 28th-30th, 2018.
- Association for Conflict Resolution: 2018 Annual Conference. Pittsburgh, PA. October 3rd-6th, 2018.
- The Future of Humanity: the Challenge of Global peace and Security. College Park, MD. October 16th-17th, 2018.
- Authentic Leadership for Progress, Peace and Prosperity Conference. West Palm Beach, FL. October 24th-27th, 2018.
- PeaceCon 2018. Washington DC. October 24th-26th, 2018.
- 2018 Annual International Conference on Ethnic and Religious Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding. Queens, NY. October 30th-Nov 1st, 2018.
- PCRC 2018—Peace and Conflict Resolution Conference. Bangkok, Thailand. 5th-7th November 2018.

OFF CAMPUS GROUPS

- A Better Way: provides shelter and services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Edible Muncie of Delaware County: works to eliminate hunger in Muncie and Delaware County by gathering, organizing and advocating for the wise use of resources to assist those in need.
- Islamic Center: fosters and facilitates religious, cultural, and community activities of Muslims in Muncie and the surrounding area.
- Muncie Action Plan: a strategic guide that expresses the values and aspirations of the Muncie community and creates a compelling agenda for our future.
- Muncie Human Rights Commission: ensures that equal rights and opportunities of Muncie citizens are protected.
- Muncie OUTreach: provides an accepting environment to enhance the personal growth of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth in the Delaware County area.
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: betters lives of Americans who are affected by mental illness.
- YWCA: advocates to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.
- United Way of Delaware County: fosters and promotes an inclusive environment that integrates the unique contributions of diverse individuals and organizations in all aspects of their work

ON AND OFF CAMPUS EVENTS

September 8th **Walk Indiana 2018—8:00 AM**

Walk Indiana started in 2010, and ever since then it has been encouraging Hoosiers to walk and exercise. Cardinal Greenways uses funding from this event to keep the beautiful trails clean through out the year.

Anderson Walk 2018—12:00 PM

Out of The Darkness Walks is a fundraiser towards the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). Funds made are used to support survivors of suicide loss, educational programs, and new research.

Stand Up for Kids—6:00 PM

Stand Up for Kids is a comedy show to raise funds for abused and neglected children in nearby counties. Money raised goes to Kids Talk, an organization that conducts child-friendly interviews of children who are reported to have been victims of abuse, neglect who have witnessed violent crimes. It will take place at the Paramount Theatre, Anderson, IN.

September 12th **Community Arts Expo—5:30 PM and 7:30 PM**

Experiencing creative expression enriches our lives and community by empowering us to share our voices and enables us to listen to the voice of others. This event will take place in Emens Auditorium, BSU.

September 15th **12th Annual White River Clean Up—8:00 AM**

The annual White River Clean up (WRC) has been responsible for removing 96,000 pounds of trash out of our river in the past 10 years. This is the largest single volunteer event in Delaware County.

September 21st and 22nd **The Christians—7:30 PM**

Muncie Civic Theatre introduces The Christians. This play is about faith, heaven and hell, and the often insurmountable divide between people of the same religion.

ON AND OFF CAMPUS EVENTS CONTINUED

September 26th **Cultural Lunch—Brazil 12:00 PM**

Join the Rinker Center in celebrating the culture of Brazil. You can bring your own lunch or enjoy a dish inspired by Brazil at the Tally. There will be stories from students from Brazil, and conversation.

October 7th **4th Annual Hot Rods for Hunger—1:00 PM**

Hot Rods for Hunger takes place at the Muncie Mall. You can look at some cool cars and chat with community car-fans. All the proceeds raised support the work of Second Harvest Food Bank.

October 19th **Fun Home—7:30 PM**

The Department of Theater and Dance is presents an original musical about seeing your parents through grown-up eyes. Graphic Novelist Allison dives deep into her past to talk about her sexuality, her father, and her unique childhood growing up at the family's funeral home.

October 26th **Do Good with a Twist—5:30 PM**

Come to The Second Harvest Food Bank to participate in an event where you can have a unique date night while also volunteering!

October 28th **Marine Band National Concert Tour—3:00 PM**

"The President's Own" United States Marine Band tours each year during September. The tour lasts approximately 31 days, during which the band performs in roughly 29 cities. This event will be at Emens Auditorium. The concert is free, but tickets are required.

ORGANIZATIONS

International Justice Mission

International Justice Mission is a global organization that protects the poor from violence in the developing world. IJM fights by rescuing victims, bringing criminals to justice, restoring survivors, and strengthening justice systems. The group meets Tuesdays at 6:00 PM in the Student Center, Room 301.

OXFAM America

Oxfam America is a global organization working to right the wrongs of poverty, hunger, and injustice. Oxfam saves lives, develops long-term solutions to poverty, and campaigns for social change.

Cardinal Kitchen

Cardinal Kitchen is Ball State University's campus food pantry. The pantry is located on the second floor of the Multicultural Center and is available for use to all undergraduate and graduate students. The pantry is open the last three Tuesdays of every month from 5:00-8:00 PM. Its mission is to ensure that no Ball State student goes hungry on our campus.

MOSAIC

MOSAIC is a social justice peer education program whose mission is to engage undergraduate students in open dialogues focused on diversity and social justice topics to promote awareness, change, and inter-group understanding.

Global Brigades

Global Brigades is an international non-profit organization that empowers communities to meet their health and economic goals through university volunteers and local teams.

Feminists for Action

Feminists for Action is a group dedicated to the empowerment of women, men, and children through advocacy and education. They strive to educate others about issues in the global, national, and community level. They encourage thought-provoking discussions and work to organize events to benefit feminist causes. FA meets Tuesdays at 6:00 PM in Burkhardt Building Room 220.

Ethnic Theatre Alliance

The purpose of Ethnic Theatre Alliance is to explore worldviews of cultures, diversity, and social justice in order to educate members through Fine Arts. They do this in accordance with the Ball State University mission to create a community for the members to learn and develop worldview cultures so they may become better artists and people.

ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUED

Ball State University Social Justice League

The Ball State University Social Justice League (SJL) is an organization of students and faculty members united by their commitment to social justice. The SJL seeks to change social institutions, political and economic systems, and governmental structures that perpetuate unfair practices, structures, and policies in terms of accessibility, resource distribution, and human rights.

Student Action Team

Student Action Team (SAT) is an organization made up of general members and housing and residence life representatives. This organization is dedicated to volunteering and supporting Ball State University. SAT meets 4 PM on Mondays in the Kinghorn multipurpose room.

Spectrum

Spectrum's goal is to provide an anonymous, healthy and safe place for Ball State University students and surrounding communities who are discovering their sexual orientation to help find an understanding network of support. Spectrum meets Thursdays at 8:00 PM in Room 310 at the Student Center. Prior to meetings, they meet to have informal family dinner in the Tally at 6:30 PM.

Students for Life

Ball State Students for Life (BSSFL) is committed to the protection of all human life; from conception until natural death. They strive to educate members and the Ball State University community about why they value life in all its forms. They strive to respond with love, compassion, and support to those who suffer from restrictions of life. BSSFL meets every Wednesday from 6:30-8 PM in the Whitinger Business Building Room 142.

Call to Action

Call to Action (CTA) is a student organization at Ball State looking to educate and create awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) political issues at the local, state, and federal levels in order to empower students to take positive action towards equality for LGBT individuals and to influence others to take positive action. CTA has meetings on Mondays at 7:30 PM in Teacher's College Room 108.

BSU COUNSELING CENTER SUPPORT GROUPS

Every year, hundreds of students, faculty, and staff members use the services of the Counseling Center at BSU. This comprehensive services office provides free and confidential psychological and career resources to students. Call (765) 285-1736 or stop by Lucina Hall, Room 320 to schedule an appointment and gather more information.

Understanding Self and Others

Group members explore patterns of relating to self and others by discovering understanding and acceptance of themselves and their environments. Discussions vary greatly from depression, anxiety, relationships, family concerns, eating issues, alcohol abuse and/or personal growth. The groups thrive on diversity as members discover their common bonds through emotional experiences. This group has sessions multiple times a week: Monday from 1:00-2:30 PM and Wednesday from 1:00-2:30 PM and 3:00-4:30 PM.

Weight Not, Want Not

Weight Not, Want Not is a support group for women with eating disorders or body image struggles who want to explore effective ways of coping. Its time is to be determined by availability of group members.

Safe Haven

This therapy group provides a safe place for LGBT students to explore and discuss patterns of relating to self and others by discovering understanding and acceptance of themselves and others. Topics of discussion vary greatly from coming out, finding support, relationships, family concerns, depression, anxiety, and/or personal growth. Safe Haven meets every Tuesday from 2:00-3:30 PM.

Surviving and Thriving

Surviving and Thriving aims to help sexual assault survivors. In this group, students share their experiences, find ways to cope, and gain perspective. The time for this group is to be determined by availability of group members.

Life ProTips

This four week workshop is meant to help better understand participants' thoughts and feelings to overcome the daily challenges of life. This group meets on Monday from 4:00-5:00 PM.

Building Resilience

This four week workshop helps participants learn useful skills to empower them to build resiliency when things feel out of control. This group meets on Monday from 3:00-4:00 PM.

ABOUT US

The Center for Peace and Conflict Studies is an interdisciplinary center whose mission is to pursue research on structural and direct forms of violence and conflict; to implement nonviolent strategies to resolve conflict; to offer mediation services to individuals, groups, and organizations; and to train people in conflict resolution, mediation, peacebuilding, leadership, meditation, and sportspersonship skills. The center also pursues public diplomacy, sports diplomacy, and cultural exchange as part of local, regional, national, and international projects designed to promote mutual understanding, appreciation, cooperation, and respect. Our services include monthly events, newsletters, the Social Justice League, the Muncie Interfaith Fellowship, meditation classes, mediation training and services.

Staff Members

- Director: Lawrence Gerstein, Ph.D.
- Research Fellow: Gerald Waite, M.A.
- Curriculum Coordinator: Steven Hall, Ph.D.
- Outreach Coordinator: Beth Messner, Ph.D.
- Graduate Assistant: Aashna Banerjee, B.A.

To include your events in the newsletter, please write to abanerjee@bsu.edu

Come visit us!

310 McKinley Avenue, Muncie, 47306
White house located across the street from the campus shuttle bus stop at the BSU Student Center!

9 AM-4 PM: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
9 AM-5 PM: Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Do drop by!

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