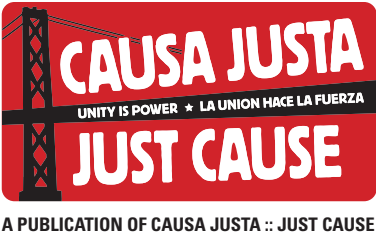


JUST CAUSES



MEASURE JJ : PROTECT OAKLAND RENTERS

Broad Community of Supporters, Tenants
Help Move Measure Forward

Across the country and here in California, a renter’s movement is taking place.

Oakland, Richmond, San Mateo, Burlingame, Alameda, Mountain View all have renter protection measures headed to the November 2016 ballot. Santa Rosa passed a renter protection ordinance this year and Long Beach and San Diego are launching their own campaigns for protections. Other cities are starting the conversation, from renter assemblies to housing forums, the movement is growing in force.

And spirits soared July 20 in Oakland when the City Council unanimously voted to place the Renter Protection Act of 2016 on the November ballot.

After some 300-plus speakers and hours of passionate and raucous testimony late into the night and early morning hours from renters and property owners cheering and jeering loudly in the packed hall, Proposition JJ will now be on the ballot to LET THE VOTERS DECIDE.

The measure passed as a result of organizing and people power at its finest as we moved council members in the right direction. It is not ALL that is needed but it does substantially expand protections for thousands of tenants.

This was a battle of ideas and Oakland has emerged one step closer to decent renter protections.

Thanks to all who spoke at Council meetings, all the individuals, community groups and organizations, all the tenants, supportive landlords, workers, young people — all of Oakland who sent emails, made calls, attended or spoke at Council meetings, supported in so many other ways, got signatures with us early on and those who were and still are with us in spirit.

The Committee to Protect Oakland Renters got this far because of you. The vote was a direct result of a collective effort involving housing and tenants’ rights, faith and the labor community.

Councilmembers would not have voted to pass it if it weren’t for all the relentless pressure from the broad community, all the organizing it took to move

SEE PROTECT OAKLAND RENTERS, PAGE 7



Image by Design Action Collective

The Burn Of Reactive Responses And (Tenant) Up-Risings In The Mission

By Diana Flores

Two years ago, when I began to serve as a counselor/organizer out of our Mission District Tenant Clinic, I dreaded taking on emergency cases that had to do with fire disasters. In the last two years, we have supported close to 150 cases at 11 different sites in accessing and securing resources immediately after a fire disaster.

In fact, a string of fires in recent years have displaced some 194 people and killed three more in the Mission District, according to Mission Local.

Our housing clinic has witnessed the impact of these fires that occur in coincidental frequency in highly dense and concentrated areas.

And though we can’t say for certain whether these fires were due to greed arson, one thing is clear: tenant requests for safety measures in these buildings were neglected and commonplace.

Neglect doesn’t just characterize the period after a fire when city agencies are scrambling to reach historically non-cooperative, absent-minded and often profit-driven landlord.

Tenants who resided in the buildings were comprised of “vulnerable populations”, as city terms go, Single Residence Occupancy (SRO) families and individuals, long-term tenants, families with school-age children, seniors and disabled,



June 18 fire near on Mission Street near 29th. Courtesy SFGate Liz Hafalia

primary occupants of communities and creators of neighborhoods.

When these large fires occur, a film comes to mind: “The Other Barrio” produced by Lou Demmateis, that tells the story of a building inspector who tenaciously follows the trail of tenants killed and displaced by huge building fires. The film is based on the tragic true story of the Mission’s Gartland Hotel, which burned

to a crisp in 1975 when, as some have suspected, its landlords wanted to get rid of their tenants.

Conspiracy theories aside, we, in hand with the Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco (HRC), Mission SRO Collaborative, and the office of Supervisor David Campos, see a deep need to make improvements on tenants protections and rights after a building fire.

SEE BURN, PAGE 5



WE ARE CAUSA JUSTA :: JUST CAUSE

Causa Justa :: Just Cause builds grassroots power and leadership to create strong, equitable communities. Born through mergers between Black organizations and Latino organizations, we build bridges of solidarity between working class communities. Through rights-based services, policy campaigns, civic engagement, and direct action, we improve conditions in our neighborhoods in the San Francisco Bay Area, and contribute to building the larger multi-racial, multi-generational movement needed for fundamental change.

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You can also email us at: info@cjjc.org

- Follow us on Twitter at [causajusta1](https://twitter.com/causajusta1)
- ‘Like’ us on Facebook at facebook.com/causajusta

JUST CAUSES THE NEWSPAPER

“Just Causes” is the community newspaper of Causa Justa :: Just Cause. We have been printing since 2007 covering stories and events relevant to our members and community supporters. We would like to hear your thoughts and opinions about the paper. If you are interested in seeing something covered, submitting content for the paper, purchasing an ad, giving us feedback or anything else, contact us at info@cjjc.org and put Newspaper in the subject line

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Housing Clinic Victories

Keeping Tenants in their Homes - One Victory at a Time

By Nohelia Ramos

Our clinics on both sides of the bay are filled with tenants coming in for support. We’ve seen many tenants coming in for attempted evictions and harassment by landlords. Often tenants don’t feel like they can ask for repairs and when they come in for help many of their homes have had long-term issues. Many don’t realize that they have protections and they are afraid to approach the landlord. Here are a few inspiring stories we thought we’d share about tenants who know that #WhenWeFightWeWin!

Last winter the Oakland clinic offered tenant rights support to Manuel and Martha Briceno who have lived in their home since 1988. They have raised their children in that triplex and are now helping to raise their grandchildren there.

They came into the clinic with serious harassment issues and we worked together, organizing the case, writing letters and responding to over three notices to cease - including notices about unlawful tenants in their units (their children); and notices to get rid of their dogs, although they had received permission to keep their dogs from the previous owner. They even ended up giving way their dogs.

During the period of time they were meeting with us, the family received a rent increase for more than \$1,000 and the landlord told them they did not have rent control. So the family went to a rent board hearing in May — and won. The rent hike was not approved and the Briceno’s monthly rent remains the same. They have now begun a harassment case against their landlord. Said Martha Briceno: “We felt happy and empowered when we won. We’re happy right now and are ready to fight whatever comes our way.”

Our clinic has worked with Patricia & Omar Montalbo on their

housing issues since November 2015. They have lived in their home since 2007 and their unit was recently purchased by a new landlord. As is all too common, the new landlord tried to increase their rent by \$2,000 -- from \$2,750 to \$4,750.00.

CJJC and the family pushed back against the rent increase (they don’t have rent control) and were also successful in convincing the new landlords to deal with some serious mold issues in their house.

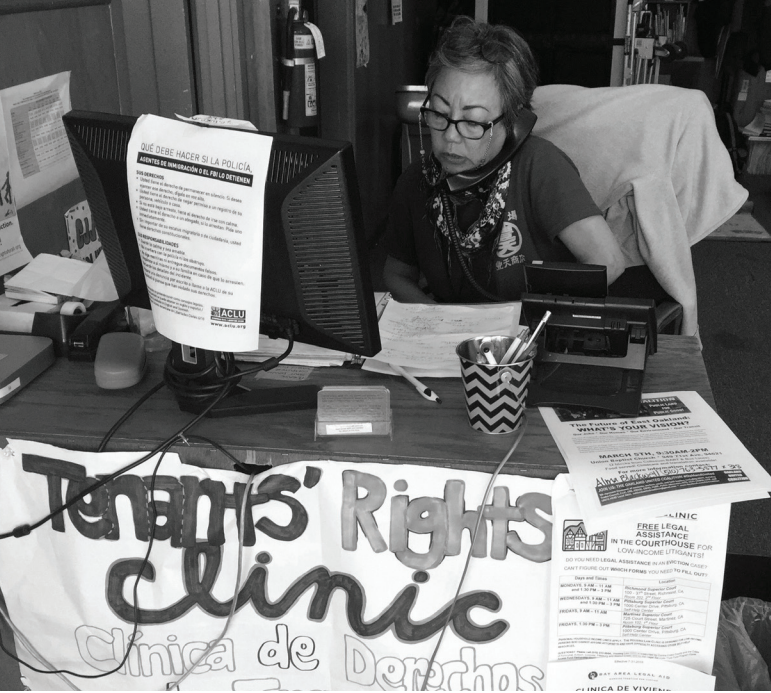
Although the landlord didn’t want to pay the temporary relocation expenses, the tenants held their ground and forced the landlord to issue the relocation money for the three days they had to be out of their unit.

The mold issue is fixed, the tenants are back in their home, and are still holding their ground in trying to postpone the rent increase for as long as possible.

Given the repairs that were requested, the tenants have another six months or so before any rent increase can be issued from the landlord. Said Patty, “We are pushing back because everything is so expensive. I am so thankful for Causa Justa and the hard work at the San Francisco clinic.” Since then, the two have become members of the organization.



CJJC has been working with Anielka and her family in San Francisco since February 2015. Anielka and her family moved into affordable housing unit in the Bayview. Unfortunately, less than a week after moving into their apartment in November 2014, their apartment flooded and many of their belongings were ruined.



Oakland Clinic volunteer Momi Palapaz



They were relocated to a smaller apartment and were told by the company that they would be returned when the work was completed. However, the company waited months to begin work in their unit.

Her family spent almost one year waiting for their original apartment to be ready and they were able to return in time for the holiday season last November.

Anielka and her family just received their check in early summer and will be coming by to drop off a donation to the organization!

“I feel relieved and happy because I don’t have to deal with these people, and to find out that there are folks to help out like Leticia (Arce) at Causa Justa! I feel happy to tell people that they are not alone!”



Sanyika Bryant, counseling a tenant in our SF clinic.

Fight Continues to Save Home of Elder in the Mission

Long-time resident unknowingly signed contract that could lead to loss of her home.

By Saryta Rodriguez

The story of Kathleen Needham must be read as a warning to elders who own land and homes here in San Francisco who are for all intents and purposes sitting on top of goldmines. Needham’s case is an example of the extent some real estate agents will go to obtain homes.

117 Ripley Street has been a staple of San Francisco’s Bernal Heights neighborhood for generations. Nicknamed Thug Mansion, the house was built by Kathleen Needham and her brothers in 1981 and has housed generations of San Franciscan families, community workers, elders, artists, youth, and students.

Three years ago, Needham was approached by real estate agent Shelley Trew of Vanguard Properties, Inc., who relatives say convinced her to sign a document consenting to sell her home.

On July 17, 2013, Needham finally relented to the pressure applied to her by Trew, but was still ultimately confused about the terms of the deal. In the weeks that followed, she made several attempts to reach Trew, only to be consistently told by other employees at Vanguard that Trew was unavailable.

SEE FIGHT CONTINUES TO SAVE, PAGE 6



Protest in SF in front of Vanguard Properties. Photo courtesy Tommi Avicolli Mecca

Marvel in the Mission

Community Planning for Ourselves

By Maria Zamudio

In Oct. of 2013, the Mission community was told that a new development would be coming to 16th and Mission. 350 new units of luxury housing, two 10-story towers on 16th St. and a 5-story garage on Capp would throw a shadow over most of Marshall School. Although the developer, named Maximus, insisted that he let the community know his plan through various public meetings, many people including local residents and businesses most impacted knew nothing about it.

COMMUNITY VISION

The Mission community rose up and formed a powerful coalition called Plaza16. Plaza16 coalition has been fighting this development for two years. We’re demanding that the owner turn the land over to the community. We’ve also been planning a community alternative for the site. Since August 2015, we have been bringing Mission residents together to develop the building we want. We’ve had over six community meetings, engaged more than 300 people and have developed the “Marvel in the Mission,” a

We’ve had over six community meetings, engaged more than 300 people and have developed the “Marvel in the Mission,” a community alternative to the Monster proposal by Maximus.



Rally to stop Monster in the Mission. Photo by Rick Gerharter

community alternative to the Monster proposal by Maximus.

We started by envisioning what a development for the people would look like with the goal of developing our communities and humanity and not making millionaires more money. After visioning, we continued to the hard part of prioritizing and creating a design with the help of Landscape Architecture student and Causa Justa :: Just Cause Community Planning and Design Intern, Jessica Rozul. “The decisions here are being made by the people, and they are based on our needs for something that would be historic for our community.” said Faustino Valenzuela, Causa Justa lead member.

We now have a concrete plan for a, 100% affordable, 100% community designed multi-use development project for 16th and Mission. We also have an entire community of leaders that are organized; who are fighting for their community and who have seen their vision and struggle become a tangible proposal.

“This is a process the community has never seen before. Buildings are built, prices are set and they never take into consideration what we need as working class residents of the Mission. We are never considered, but here we are doing the planning ourselves,” said Gloria Esteva, Causa Justa member leader and Mission resident.

Our next steps are to continue to let our community know about our plan through community meetings and outreach. We’re going to put pressure our city government to invest in affordable housing, especially when it has been designed and planned by the community who most needs it.

If you are interested in supporting the Plaza16 work and in helping to get the “Marvel in the Mission” built, make sure to let the following people know! Mayor Lee at mayoredwinlee@sfgov.org; John Rahaim director of the SF Planning Department at John.Rahaim@sfgov.org and Rodney Fong, president of the SF Planning Commission at planning@rodneymfong.com Why? Because #HousingisHumanRight! ■

“Evicted”

A Conversation with Matthew Desmond

This is an excerpt of an on-line national dialogue in May with Matthew Desmond on the national eviction epidemic. Desmond is the author of “Evicted: Poverty And Profit in the American City.” The event was organized by Homes For All and moderated by Dawn Phillips, CJJC Program Director

Dawn Phillips: Your book does a powerful job describing the relationship between evictions, poverty and race. Can you say more about how you see those connections?

Matthew Desmond: The face of our eviction epidemic are mothers with kids. Low-income African American women, and Latinas —and mothers in particular, are exposed to eviction at an incredibly high rate.

Among Milwaukee renters 1 in 5 Black women report being evicted at some time in their life, compared to 1 in 15 white women. So the way I think about this is that eviction is like the female equivalent of incarceration. Many young poor African American men are being locked up, and many poor African American women are being locked out. There is a story there, about legacies of racial disadvantage, ongoing mechanisms of racial discrimination, poverty, eviction, gender, and mothering.

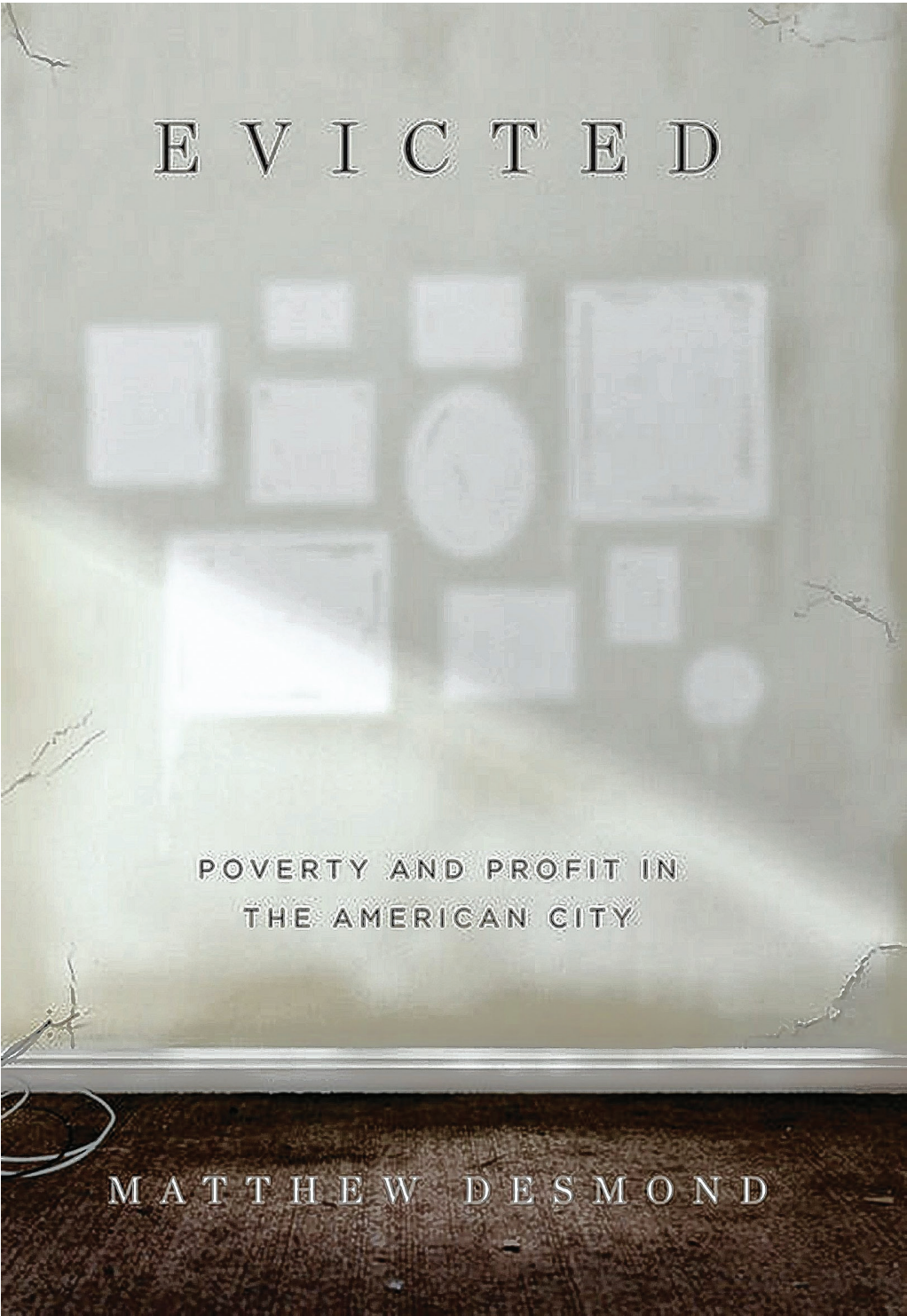
Evictions are not just in inner cities, they’re found on the coast, they’re found in the middle of the country.

“If parents throw kids out on the street in the wintertime, that’s called abuse. But if you do it through an eviction, it’s just called an eviction”

DP: Talk more about this

MD: Income, especially for families with moderate means, has basically been flat-lined, but housing costs, from rent to utilities, has risen by enormous proportions. So, between now and 1995 for example, median rent in the country has increase by about 70%. And you’ve had a reluctance of the federal government to bridge the gap. The vast majority of Americans who qualify for any kind of housing assistance don’t receive it.

SEE *EVICTED*, PAGE 6



Baton Rouge, Falcon Heights, Dallas

July 11, 2016

The Black and Palestinian experiences of marginalization and exclusion have many parallels

By Linda Burnham

This is an abridged version of a longer piece which can be read on our website.



March in San Francisco against state violence. Photo by Beat Belser www.beatbelser.ch

“Was he colored?” That’s what my grandmother would say whenever she heard news about a criminal act.

She knew that if the alleged perpetrator were “colored” his criminality would be read not simply as the act of an individual, but as an expression of an ingrained racial tendency.

Somehow being Black meant that the actions of every random thief, rapist or murderer who was also Black redounded to you and your people.

I imagine most Black families had a version of “Was he colored?” And I wouldn’t be surprised if Muslim American families have an equivalent expression today.

Untying the knot of individual culpability and the consequences of racial belonging is nowhere near as straightforward as it might seem.

It has fallen to President Obama, time and again, to make sense out of the incomprehensible and

bind the wounds of a nation apparently bent on self-destruction.

In the aftermath of Dallas, Obama quickly condemned the despicable violence of a demented, troubled individual.

The president’s intent was clear and laudable.

He sought to defuse tensions by definitively asserting that the shooter’s action was not associated with a political movement or a particular

organization, that his murderous deeds should in no way be linked to African Americans in general. He struggled to shift the focus from “Was he colored?” to “Clearly he was crazy, right?”

But before boxing Micah Johnson up and setting him aside as deranged and demented it’s worth asking a few questions.

Untying the knot of individual culpability and the consequences of racial belonging is nowhere near as straightforward as it might seem.

Honestly, good people, did anybody in their right mind – that is, not troubled or demented – think that the police could continue to pick off Black people at will and on camera without producing a Micah Johnson?

And is troubled and demented shorthand for “traumatized by repeated exposure to the graphic depiction of the murder of people who look just like me?”

SEE *BATON ROUGE*, PAGE 6

We Want a Platform that Addresses Real Justice and Human Development

Written by members of the Immigrant Rights Committee Campaign: Norma Pelayo, Faustino Valenzuela, Gloria Esteva, Sonia Cruz, Kitzia Esteva-Martinez

In recent months, immigrant and Black communities have received racist attacks by hate-filled individuals and politicians who are taking advantage of the climate of hatred to advance the agendas of the right.

We see viral hatred emerge — and presidential candidates are getting a lot of support for hateful anti-immigrant messages.

We see that the presidential debates and speeches are a political circus by people who don't pay attention to real solutions to the social problems of people in the U.S. — a people who suffer more and more every day under increasing poverty and social stratification.

These virulent messages and speeches are having an effect both on the U.S. working class in general, and with the immigrants in particular, who are scapegoats.

The demonization of Latino and Muslim immigrants is already causing havoc in our communities.

In California, we've seen hate crimes against people presumed to be undocumented. We have also seen the House of Representatives take action with anti-immigrant laws that attempt to put an end to the legacy of inclusiveness and pro-immigrant justice in cities that have declared themselves sanctuaries and have introduced and passed protective legislation for immigrants.

Demonizing immigrants has brought much venom into the national political circus and we must understand as we enter this new moment in history during which the state will not give us anything unless we organize and demand it.

Neither party's candidates give us a platform that actually reaches the understanding of the crisis under which we live as a working class — nowadays already the majority of the people in the U.S.

We want a platform addressing real justice and human development for the 47 million poor people in the United States* — including poor and working class whites who currently believe the racist rhetoric. The working class across all races must analyze who is stealing and amassing the wealth we produce, leading us towards an economic and environmental chaos.

Whoever wins, as the people we must demand a country where hatred and racism have no place; where prosperity is generated for all; where all genres have the same value, no machismo, no sexism, no homophobia; where everyone has access to better education, to an opportunity to get a job and restore our lives; a country where prisons are no longer needed.

Real solutions are human rights: housing, education, rehabilitation and health care. These are all fundamental rights to human development.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2014, U.S. Census Bureau; Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014, U.S. Census Bureau



Image courtesy of Favianna Rodriguez

BURN: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Victory! Front row-L-R: Sarah Ribeiro-Broomhead, Lucas Solarzano, Diana Flores. Back row L-R: Blanca Lopez, Sanyika Bryant, Liliana Tomé, Yadira Sanchez Photo: CJJC

MAKING CHANGE

We are championing policy and making demands to address the need for a more mindful and comprehensive citywide response to fire disasters.

In late July, the SF Board of Supervisors approved fire amendments to the city's fire, building and housing codes that among other things, keeps the focus on property owners to make needed repairs quickly, and that tasks the Dept. of Building Inspections with "re-inspecting" buildings with pending Notices of Violation every 90 days until the issues are addressed.

Following the deadly fires of early 2015, we participated in the Emergency Interagency Fire Safety Task Force and started identifying spaces in which we can demand a more effective response to fire disasters.

The Ordinance to Amend the Fire/Housing Code additionally requires clear timelines from landlords to ensure the right of return for tenants and improves interagency communication and collaboration, all to prevent fire-related disasters from becoming pathways to permanent displacement of long-term residents.

We are also working with Supervisor Campos' office and Human Services Agency to secure funds towards rental subsidies for displaced tenants. In addition, two new Community Outreach positions will be added to the San Francisco Fire Dept., along with a competently staffed concentrated fire investigation unit.

We will be participating in the upcoming efforts to add sprinkler and safety systems in tenant units ensuring these improvements do not result in the displacement or high impact on tenants.

TRAUMA OF DISPLACEMENT

The trauma of surviving these disasters is challenging enough and temporary displacement is made even more difficult in a city where relocation is a challenge given the scarcity of available and affordable habitable housing.

"When you go through the trauma of a fire, that's bad enough. But to have to experience the

trauma of not knowing what's going to happen, it's just not fair," Tommi Avicolli Mecca, director of the counseling program with the San Francisco Housing Rights Committee told Mission Local.

Although the city has worked towards matching displaced residents with temporary residential units, tenant frustrations increase when these units are not fit for their needs.

If tenants cannot find a suitable unit to live out the temporary displacement, this jeopardizes their ability to apply consistent pressure on the landlord to comply and keep them updated when they can return in their unit.

Causa Justa is committed to the right of return for long-term tenants and will continue to denounce their permanent displacement and follow closely to make sure that this plan is put in place — and enforced. ■

TENANT RIGHTS CLINICS IN SAN FRANCISCO AND OAKLAND

Causa Justa :: Just Cause (CJJC) provides free tenant counseling and case management for low-income residents of San Francisco and Oakland through our Tenants' Rights Clinic. We do not have attorneys on staff, but we can give you advice regarding your general rights as a tenant in San Francisco or Oakland. If you are having problems with repairs, rent increases, evictions, harassment or other problems with your landlord/property manager please call us to make an appointment.

Services are available in both English and Spanish. We encourage people to call for an appointment so that you can avoid long waits and having to return for multiple visits.

SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE: 3201 Mission Street, Site 201 Telephone: (415)487-9203	OAKLAND OFFICES: West Oakland: 3268 San Pablo Ave (@ 33rd Street) Telephone: (510) TENANTS or (510)836-2687	East Oakland: 9124 Int'l Blvd (@92nd Ave) Telephone: (510) TENANTS or (510)836-2687
OFFICE HOURS: Monday & Wednesday: 1pm-5pm Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday: 9:30am-12pm and 1pm-5:30pm <i>We are closed for lunch everyday from 12pm-1pm</i>	OFFICE HOURS: Monday & Wednesday: 1pm-5pm Tuesday: 9am-12pm & 1pm-5pm <i>We are closed everyday from 12-1pm</i>	OFFICE HOURS: Thursday & Friday: 9am-12pm & 1pm-5pm <i>We are closed everyday from 12pm-1pm</i>

FIGHT CONTINUES TO SAVE **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3**

“This contract should have never been signed because she was not aware of what that contract said,” Nancy Pili Hernandez told Mission Local. Said Hernandez, who is Needham’s niece, “[Trew] lied

about what the paper said that she initially signed.” Hernandez added that the perspective buyer is currently suing her aunt for breach of contract for not going through with the sale.

On signing the contract, Needham unknowingly agreed to assume responsibilities for all legal costs. It turns out according to court documents, that the one prospective buyer of the property had “close, but undisclosed financial ties with” Trew and Vanguard Properties

Needham eventually discovered both the relationship between Trew and the potential buyer and that a neighboring property much like her own had recently been sold for \$1,650,000 by Agent Shelley Trew himself.

This made clear that Trew seems to knowingly undersell Needham’s property to help out a fellow business partner, with whom he had conducted several real estate deals prior to targeting 117 Ripley.

Nevertheless, the document Needham was manipulated into signing, with no knowledge of the real estate industry in San Francisco and certainly no knowledge whatsoever of the relationship between Trew and the perspective buyer, is still being enforced.

Trew, the self-proclaimed “King of Bernal Heights,” who has bought or sold some 64 properties in Bernal Heights, according to Mission Local, cannot be permitted to continue preying upon Bernal Height’s elderly for the sake of his own profit margins.

Accountability in the real estate industry has perhaps never before been so important, as even the legal avenues through which folks are compelled to leave their homes are often fraught with financial risk and unforeseeable consequences.

Needham is currently suing the King and his company for breach of duties, fraud, concealment, undue influence, misrepresentation (both intentional and negligent), and financial elder abuse. ■

Here are a few ways you can help put a stop to the sale of Kathleen Needham’s home and prevent fraudulent and predatory behaviors like this from being thrust upon other San Francisco residents:

- **Write a Yelp review** of Shelly Trew to warn others of his predatory actions.
- **Write to Trew’s bosses** and demand Trew’s immediate termination:
paula@vanguardsf.com and james@vanguardsf.com
- **Visit him and his bosses** at 2501 Mission Street Office and make a complaint in person.
- **Reach out to the SF Government Real Estate Division** to file a complaint: (415) 554-9850
- **Reach out to the Bay Area branch of the California Bureau of Real Estate** to file a complaint: (877) 373-4542
- **Help flyer the neighborhood** with WANTED signs demanding his termination.
- **If you know anyone else** who is being harassed by him, please encourage them to file a complaint with the State Board of Realtors: <http://www.dre.ca.gov/Consumers/FileComplaint.html>

Trew assured Needham at the time that she would not be obligated to sell. He convinced her that by signing the contract she could find out how much the house was worth according to her relative Nancy Pili Hernandez.

Needham, 76, suffers from mental and physical impairments and did not know the full consequences of what she was signing. She relied on Trew’s verbal assurances for interpretation.


#RentersDayOfAction#RenterPower

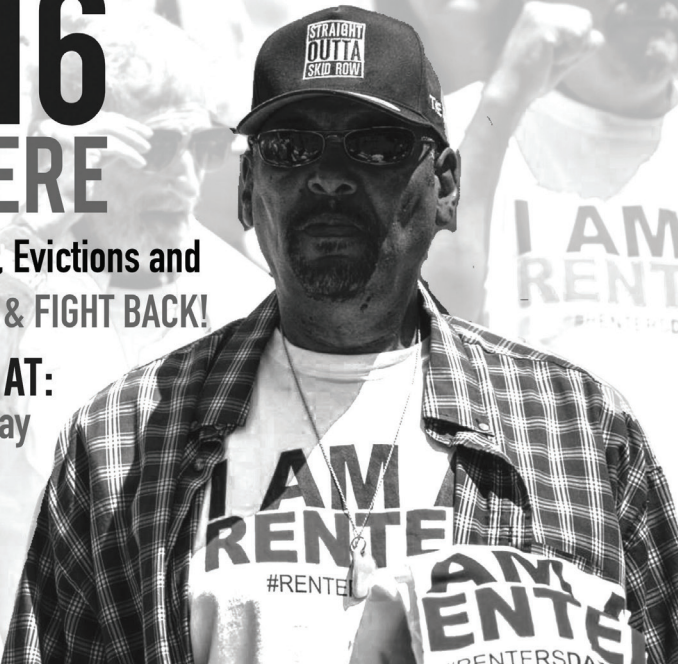
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EVERYWHERE

Fed Up With Rising Rents, Evictions and Gentrification? STAND UP & FIGHT BACK!

PLEDGE YOUR ACTION AT: homesforall.org/rentersday







BECOME A CJJC MEMBER! HELP BUILD STRONGER NEIGHBORHOODS!

Membership forms are at any CJJC office

Email us at info@cjjc.org

EVICTED: **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4**

“The way I think about this is that eviction is like the female equivalent of incarceration. Many young poor African American men are being locked up, and many poor African American women are being locked out.”

Under those conditions, evictions have become common, because we’ve reached a point today where the majority of families who are renters that live below the poverty line spend at least half of their income on rent.

DP: Could you say more about this idea of how evictions are actually a form of systemic violence against individuals?

MD: Evictions are violent acts. If they’re carried out by sheriff’s departments they’re carried out with someone with a badge and a gun. And there’s a moment of physical removal. Just that moment itself has aspects to it that are very violent. I just gave a talk and an imminent sociologist in segregation was there, Doug Matthews, and he said, ‘if parents throw kids out on the street in the wintertime, that’s called abuse. But if you do it through an eviction, it’s just called an eviction.’

You can ask, what does an eviction do to someone’s life? I spent the last several years trying to answer that question. It does a lot. It does quite a lot. An eviction record can harm your chances of moving into decent affordable housing.

An eviction record can often bar you from public housing because housing authorities count an eviction as a mark against your record, which means owners systematically deny housing help to, arguably, families that most need it.

We have good evidence that eviction causes you to lose your job... it’s such a consuming, stressful event that it can cause you to make mistakes at work and eventually lose your footing in the labor market.

And then there’s the effect eviction has on your spirit, your mental health... When you add all that up, we have to conclude that eviction is a cause of poverty, not just a condition. It’s making life harder, casting people on a different and more difficult path.

DP: You talked about the ways in which eviction for Black women is analogous with the impact of mass incarceration on Black men in the U.S. Share the historical roots of how this came to be.

MD: Today, about 70% of white folks are homeowners, but only 40% of Black folks are, and around 40% of Latino folks are. You have a pretty significant discrepancy in terms of who owns their homes today, which tracks along racial divides. So why is that? There’s a historical answer. If you just look at the African American case, one way to tell the story of the last couple hundred years of racial injustice against African Americans is a story of a systematic dispossession of Black folks from the land.

This goes back to slavery, to sharecropping, from the Northern Migration to inner city ghettos and the kind of lack of access to homeownership, to redlining, and to private mortgages, and to today, where the majority of African American families are renters. In the current affordable housing crisis, one way to understand who’s disproportionately affected by rising rents is to ask who is a renter and who is a homeowner, and what our history tells us about why that’s the case.

DP: We often hear people talking about big problems like the housing crisis, as inevitable processes that “just happen.” Can you talk more about the role that government plays in sustaining the eviction crisis that you’ve described.

MD: One way they’ve contributed in a major way to evictions is by not investing in a serious way in affordable housing. We have a situation where

only 1 in 4 families that qualifies for any housing assistance receives it, and the waiting list in some of our biggest cities is not counted in years, its counted in decades. That situation would be rather unthinkable when it comes to other kinds of basic necessities. Imagine if we turned away 3 of 4 families that applied for food stamps, say “I’m sorry, there’s not enough to go around, you have to go hungry.” But that’s exactly how we treat families of moderate means searching for affordable shelter today.

To watch the interview, which also included powerful Homes For All leaders Deborah Arnold &

BATON ROUGE: **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4**

Or for “agonized by the fact that the officers of the law who placed a handcuffed man in the back of a van and snapped his spine in an intentionally “rough ride” were neither held criminally accountable nor labeled troubled and demented?”

Or for “depressed beyond imagining and haunted by the ghosts of the men and women whose lives were snatched by the side of the road, down back alleyways, and in precinct stations from one end of the country to the other before the era of cell phone video?”

Or for “pierced through the heart by the voice of four-year-old Dae’Anna, comforting her mama?”

Because if demented and troubled is shorthand for any of that, then Micah Johnson may have been a lone gunman, but he is far from alone.

That whoosh you heard that Friday morning was the sound of people rushing to condemn the Dallas shootings, or to extract condemnations from others.

There is, of course, no moral justification for gunning down police officers. And, retaliatory violence aimed at the armed representatives of the state, beyond being a suicidal provocation, also shuts down all avenues for advancing the cause of racial justice.

Melonie Griffiths go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INCKqkPQdtc>

Desmond is the John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences at Harvard University and co-director of the Justice and Poverty Project. He is the author of the award-winning book, On the Fireline. In 2015, Desmond was awarded a MacArthur “Genius” grant. ■

But there is a lot of room for reflection between the cheap polarities of condemn or condone.

So here we are, once again, with calls from all quarters for dialogue across the racial divide. But if the long years before the emergence of the various movements for Black lives have taught us anything, it is this: our purported partners in dialogue simply turn their backs and leave the table as soon as the pressure is off.

This moment calls for the vigorous defense of our right to continued protest and the intensification and elaboration of multiple movements for Black lives – for the sake of our ancestors and the generations to come.

And for the sake of this country that is our home.

Linda Burnham is the Research Director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. She is the co-author of Home Economics: The Invisible and Unregulated World of Domestic Work. She has led large delegations of women of color to the 1985 UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi, the 1995 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, and the 2001 United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa.

Reprioritizing Justice

By Kitzia Esteva-Martinez

“This jobs program is an investment in the future of our community.” — Darris Young, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

Prop 47 was passed in 2014 by a coalition of anti-criminalization progressive organizations across California as a first step to de-criminalize working class people who have been harshly punished by tough-on-crime initiatives.

Prop 47 reclassifies several poverty-linked crimes from felonies to misdemeanors allowing people who were previously branded as felons the ability to access much needed services for their reintegration post-incarceration.

For immigrants, Prop 47 means being able to reclassify their record to access both social services and immigration relief programs like Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, better known as DACA.

For decades, the privatization of prisons and detention centers has caused a criminalization crisis in our Bay Area communities. 1.2 million formerly incarcerated folks in Alameda County have been deported through Alameda County Sheriff participation in unconstitutional immigration enforcement programs.

MILITARIZATION OF URBAN CENTERS

We have seen the militarization of urban life

in the Bay Area. Our cities are finding it lucrative to put more police in the streets and more resources towards law enforcement, thus imprisoning more people. The notion, that criminalization is the solution to crime and violence in our neighborhoods, has been perpetuated as popular common sense, as if policing and prison magically prevents crime, as if our community members deep in economic crisis who are resorting to crime to survive are simply disposable.

Instead of allowing prison’s corporate interest to shape policy in Alameda County we must organize and follow the lead of the people impacted by criminalization and gentrification to create initiatives grounded in ending economic marginalization.

SOLUTIONS AND VICTORIES

In Alameda County the recently-merged Justice Reinvestment Coalition (JRC) of over 20 organizations including Ella Baker Center, Bay Area Black Workers Center and Causa Justa, are working on building the leadership of economically marginalized and formerly incarcerated people.

We will envision alternative solutions to the disenfranchisement of communities of color and formerly incarcerated people that lead to crimes of poverty and recidivism and then we will push our vision forward.

JRC is about empowering and engaging community members to understand Prop 47 and its benefits to formerly incarcerated Black and Immigrant folks.

In fact, after months of community mobilizations led by JRC calling on the Alameda County Board



Photo by Beat Belser www.beatbelser.ch

of Supervisors to invest in savings from Prop 47 to generate 1,400 jobs to formerly incarcerated folks and youth in the school-to-prison pipeline, this summer the board voted unanimously in favor of a new Re-Entry Hiring Program, to provide those 1,400 county jobs

The vote comes after months of community organizing led by JRC demanding more county jobs for people who have been impacted by the criminal justice system

“Four years ago, I left prison after being inside for 17 years. Then, I didn’t feel significant at all. After this win, I am feeling significant,” said Darris Young, a local organizer with the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights. “Most of the people who I got out of prison with couldn’t get a job, and have ended up back inside. This jobs

program is an investment in the future of our community, and in the people who have been shut out of opportunities for far too long.”

People at the margins know that investing in human development initiatives instead of policing will get us to address the crisis of incarceration and economic marginalization.

As we continue to fight for justice reinvestment and to reprioritize resources away from imprisonment and into human development initiatives that generate, housing, education, healthcare access and social welfare for marginalized communities of color, we will continue building the ability for Black and Latino impacted members to be at the forefront of our vision to Reinvest in Justice not imprisonment!

JOIN OUR STRUGGLE FOR HOUSING AND IMMIGRANT JUSTICE!


BECOME A CJJC VOLUNTEER!

With just a few hours a week or month, you can help us wage effective campaigns and build a movement. Volunteer opportunities include: administrative support, campaign research, mailings, outreach in the neighborhoods, media tracking, grassroots fundraising, Spanish translation and interpretation (native Spanish speakers especially welcomed), childcare, event planning, giving rides, helping with our tenant rights and foreclosure prevention clinics and much, much more. We offer a dynamic orientation, ongoing support and training and even political development opportunities like study groups, for our volunteers. Come join the team!

Contact Molly at (510) 763-5877 ext 302 or email molly@cjjc.org



A few Causa Justa members and staff at the Marvel in the Mission planning session. *Top Row L-R* Carmen Campezano, Norma Pelayo. *Bottom Row L to R*, Sandy Flores, Sonia Cruz, Eduarda Cruz

 **GET INVOLVED!**

BECOME A MEMBER OF CJJC!



Do you live in San Francisco or Oakland and want healthier and stronger neighborhoods?

Do you believe that the only way we can get justice is if we come together and fight for it?

Do you believe housing is a human right and that no one is “illegal”?

If you answered yes to any of the above, then it’s time to become a member of Causa Justa :: Just Cause!

To join, fill out a membership form at any CJJC office or call our offices to have one mailed to you. To contact us in San Francisco call (415) 487-9203, for our Oakland office call (510) 763-5877 or email us at info@cjjc.org

 Follow us on Twitter at [@causajusta1](https://twitter.com/causajusta1)  'Like' us on Facebook at facebook.com/causajusta

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PROTECT OAKLAND RENTERS: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

them to do the right thing –

This was a battle of ideas and Oakland has emerged one step closer to decent renter protections.

The proposed measure will:

- Expand Just Cause Eviction Protections to include units constructed until December 31, 1995 (current protection only covers units built through October 1980).
- Require landlords to petition with the Rent Board for rent increases above the annual Consumer Price Index before levying increases on tenants
- Will include the creation of a “Rent Registry” which will give tenant rights organizations and advocates better access to badly needed data
- Require City staff to send out annual notices stating allowable rent increases and related laws to tenants for their awareness and protection

We are inspired and excited but know that now the “fun work” begins to TURNOUT TO VOTE for November to pass these much-needed protections to curb the displacement of Black residents, immigrants, and poor families. This will protect Oakland’s future so that the people that made Oakland what it is today and can also be part of the Oakland that gets developed to benefit ALL of us not just some.

The regional and state movement of renters is rising up and saying ¡ya basta! We are all getting there, one campaign at a time. Now roll up your sleeves and get ready to motivate, educate and organize!

Check out the Committee to Protect Oakland Renters FB page. Go to www.protectoaklandrenters.org and www.cjjc.org to keep updated on ways you can plug in and where we will put up a Renter Protection Act Toolkit for ways you can get involved. To volunteer, contact becki@cjjc.org / 510-763-5877 x317

For a good read check out this article that appeared in the American Prospect. <http://prospect.org/article/bay-area-voters-take-rent-control>

For updates on most of the campaigns taking place check out www.tenantsstogether.org

For national renter news go to www.righttothecity.org

#ProtectOaklandRenters ■



Cartoonist Dan Archer captured an image of the # ItTakesRoots # PeoplesCaravan # BertaVive
<https://thenib.com/philly-streets-day-17t=recent>

During their vacation, several of our staff went with Grassroots Global Alliance, of which we are a member, on the #ItTakesRoots #PeoplesCaravan to Cleveland and Philadelphia. They took to the streets in the name of justice with folks from throughout the nation. They continued the call to action for Justice for Berta Cáceres and all the other Honduran activists whose lives have been taken violently because of their organizing to defend Indigenous people, the Earth and women, and their struggle for self-determination. They have a lot to share and we'll be posting about it on our website at www.cjjc.org. To read more about the caravan and the adventures, go to www.ggjalliance.org #Justice4Berta

