


Historians Against the War Howard Zinn Memorial page

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Howard Zinn

August 24, 1922 – January 27, 2010

Memorials (Please email any memorials for this webpage to zinn@vishva.org)

A signal colleague of mine

Howard Zinn was a signal colleague of mine for twenty-three years at Boston University (before I left in 1991) and a dear friend and Newton, MA neighbor to this day. Most important, apart from his "from the bottom up" and "revisionist" history was his breadth of knowledge and profound concern about so many issues, large and small, from the cold war to tenants and workers' rights. He cared about these matters personally no less than intellectually, and he would write about them with great facility and tenderness.

He was also amazingly talented, whether working as historian, political scientist or playwright. His pen was as deft as his mind and thought processes, and I never ceased to be amazed at his energy and versatility and ability to keep me working through all the days no matter how difficult the times were. I shall also never forget the time in the mid-1980s when my son Michael—meeting Howard while out bike-riding—asked him if he would speak at his Newt'n high school, and how Howard said "yes" without a second's hesitation. And then proceeded to draw a record crowd that came away charmed as well as inspired despite the pre-talk anxieties of school officials who seemed to fear the age of revolution was at hand.

Above all, Howard was an incredibly kind and caring human being. He loved his friends and community, and even when he wrote critiques of people in politics or higher education whom he deplored, he never spoke nor wrote ill of them personally. He was a remarkable person, and we shall all miss him.

Arnold A. Offner
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Thoughts on Howard Zinn

I can't claim that I knew Howard Zinn very well.

However, I have regarded him as a mentor ever since I read his book, "Vietnam: The Logic of Withdrawal" back in 1967. I was still in the U.S. Army, after having served in Vietnam in 1966 and getting wounded there, and I related to him because he was a veteran of World War II. In October, 1967 I marched on the Pentagon and in November joined the Eugene J. McCarthy campaign. In 1968, I was a McCarthy delegate to the Democratic National Convention. I have been part of the anti-war movement ever since.

I like this quote from Howard and pass it on to my fellow historians and anti-war activists.

"To be helpful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places -- and there are so many -- where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction.

"And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory."

Quote: Howard Zinn's autobiographical "You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train"



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August 24, 1922 – January 27, 2010



Keynote speaker Howard Zinn at HAW's first national conference

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From: Howard Zinn's autobiography, "You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train"

He was a good man.

Regards,
John

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Radio Free Maine recordings

Two of my friends have written and suggested that I need space to grieve the

passing of Howard Zinn.

Well, here's how I feel now.

Howard is part of the circle, his spirit goes on and, he is captured forever on Radio Free Maine recordings. As we record and interpret the People's History, his presence will always be felt, Right now, over a half a dozen Mainers are working on a People's History of Maine.

Howard started a movement of writing histories that mean something for the people. Who were the Mainers who fought for voting rights for all in Maine. Who fought for Social Security? Who fought for food stamps?

Who fought for worker's rights?

Howard will always be present, just as I say, Presente.

As Joe Hill said, "Don't Mourn, Organize".

When I recorded him in November, both David Barsamian (Alternative Radio) and I observed how great Howard looked and sounded.

I will miss this man who helped open my eyes to our history and the People's History.

Howard Zinn, Presente!

[An account of Howard Zinn's last public talk.](#)

Roger Leisner

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OF HOWARD ZINN AND OTHER HEROES

By William Loren Katz

In less than a year the battle for truth has lost three of its most innovative and stalwart voices, historians John Hope Franklin, Ivan Van Sertima and Howard Zinn. Each challenged aspects of the cheerfully bigoted narrative that has passed for history in schools, colleges, texts and the media. Each created works that made history by awakening millions of fellow citizens to a new host of heroic men and women whose daring contributions had been shamefully ignored.

As they gathered their documentation, Franklin, Van Sertima and Zinn confronted a lily-white, elite establishment comfortable with racism, economic injustice, and imperialism - or willing to cast them as forms of progress. Indeed, the books of these innovative scholars amounted to a vast underground railroad of treacherous knowledge. Ivan Van Sertima wrote during a time when Arnold Toynbee led the world's leading scholars in claiming Africans made no contribution to civilization, its science or art, none, zero. Van Sertima cited sources beginning with Columbus to prove an African presence in America before 1492 -- exploding a pivotal self-serving Caucasian myth. Then he went on to detail African contributions to global science.

John Hope Franklin wrote in a time when Henry Steele Commager and Samuel Eliot Morison, Pulitzer Prize historians, used their widely used college text, The

Growth of the American Republic, to describe slavery in this hideous way. "As for Sambo . . . he suffered less than any other class in the South from its 'peculiar institution.'" Franklin faced a citizenry schooled on notions that people of African descent really benefited from slavery and had no history worth recounting. His response was to painstakingly detail how people of African descent contributed substantially to each stage of America's economic and democratic growth. Howard Zinn broadened the battle when he claimed conventional U.S. texts and school courses failed by celebrating wars, legislation, Presidents, generals and captains of industry. He stood history back on its feet when he told on how masses of American women and men, people of color and poor whites built the country first as slaves and indentured servants, and then as mill hands, assembly line workers and maids. He further antagonized traditional scholars by rejoicing in the disobedience of slave rebels, union organizers and radical civil rights and anti-war agitators. He found dissidents to be America's real patriots and democrats -- not the George Washingtons, Thomas Jeffersons and Andrew Jacksons who talked of liberty while they traded in slaves, and sent posses after those who escaped. Proceeding from different angles, Franklin, Van Sertima and Zinn established that much history is a false tale, a patriotic pabulum designed to white wash past crimes, burnish traditional heroes and promote conformity. Each joined demonstrations for causes dear to their historical understanding. The documents unearthed by Franklin, Van Sertima and Zinn illuminated the world, moved mountains and lifted people who had been told their ancestors never amounted to much. Though these truth-tellers will be sorely missed, their deep love of humanity and extraordinary works will live as long as people seek to examine the past as a way to chart the future. I found of the three men to be delightful, supportive friends; their influence and personal interest proved an enormous benefit to my work. I was blessed to ride on their shoulders, and lucky enough to tell each of my love for them, their good humor and crusading works.

William Loren Katz is the author of forty history books, and editor of more than 200 others. His website: WWW.WILLIAMLKATZ.COM

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Howard visited Naperville North twice. I was very fortunate to have had time with him when he visited Chicago, we visited Emma Goldman's grave at Forest Home in November of 2009... he has made a very real difference in our teaching.

Howard Zinn, 1922-2010

If history is a story, the story must be retold. When our historical knowledge increases, our understanding should too. Howard Zinn challenged me, when I was a young man, to see more than just the famous, infamous, and celebrated in our collective past. He continues to teach me as an older man, that we should not separate our intellect from moral imperative and responsibility... to speak for the oppressed, stand up for the weak, and take action against injustice. When Howard Zinn died yesterday, I lost a teacher, a friend, a guide, and an example of how to

live an ethically driven life. Howard Zinn the professor wrote books; [A People's History](#), [You Can't Be Neutral on A Moving Train](#), etc. Howard Zinn the husband of Roslyn, for 63 years, helped raise two wonderful children. Howard Zinn the activist spoke out against injustice while marching, protesting, and urging students to do the same. Howard Zinn the WWII decorated war veteran spoke out against war. Howard Zinn the man was humble, funny, and kind. Howard Zinn the journalist continued to speak with an uncompromising pen. Even the people who disagreed with his views were attracted to his sincerity and good work. His two visits to NNHS in 2002 and 2009 brought him closer to us. Zinn's words will live on through his students and friends, teachers and activists. Howard Zinn believed in the possibility of real change emanating from the people in social movements. He believed in action. He believed in peace. And we believe it, too. At Spellman College in 2008, Zinn encourage students, "My hope is that you will not be content just to be successful in the way our society measures success; that you will not obey the rules, when the rules are unjust; that you will act out the courage that I know is in you." He urged the students to take as role models not the African-Americans such as Condoleezza Rice, or Colin Powell, "who have become servants of the rich and powerful", but WEB Dubois, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.

kermit eby III Naperville North High School

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My memorial to Howard Zinn is brief. I never met Howard Zinn. I have no working class credentials. I am a man of the democratic left.

I was inspired by Zinn's pacifism and courage in speaking out on the floor of the 1968 Convention of the AHA in New York. That year saw a serious debate within the AHA on the proposition: How far should the professional organization take a political stand?

The leader of the doves was John K. Fairbank of Harvard University. I was already a public dove trying to end the war since May 1964. I was fortunate to be on the first Teach-In to end the war, held at Ohio University in 1966, at age 36. I was on the stage with OU's senior historian John C. Cady. Cady was another middle class dove and expert on Southeast Asia.

When the nation shifted to the right in 1975, Howard Zinn's writings kept hope alive. I was a member of a committee of two at Ohio University which tried to invite Howard in the 1990's to come to Athens, Ohio as a guest speaker. The invitation fell through because he contracted the flu.

As we used to say in the 1960's: "Question Authority" "Debate is the Oxygen of Democracy."

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I first met Howie and Roz when they were my tenants in a two family house I owned in Auburndale MA. This was in the late 70s. I was outside one day and he came up to me, as he knew I taught history at Newton North High School, and asked me what I thought of the opening pages of People's History...having really no clue as to what this was all about I said it (the opening pages) worked and then it hit me like a ton of bricks that this guy was the guy who wrote The Politics of History which I had just recently read. But what impressed me the most was that Howie was genuinely interested in what a high school teacher thought of this groundbreaking work. What a mensch.

I also loved Howie for his sense of humor. I visited him at his house on Wellfleet one summer and he was going out the door with his tennis racket. I said "Who are you playing...John Silber" Without a second's hesitation Howie replied, "Yes, I am bringing a tennis racket and he is bringing a machine gun."

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Howard Zinn: An Inspiration

Howard Zinn has inspired generations of students and will continue to do so through his books, videos, and documentary films. As an example, when I discuss history as an academic discipline, students learn that the historiographical process includes discovery, analysis, interpretation, and communication. In recent years, I also have shown them the film "Howard Zinn: You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train." This adds another dimension to the process. For the first time, students clearly see the value of history and understand that activism or making a contribution to society by fighting for constructive change is the responsibility of every citizen and the final outcome of the study of history.

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In Memory of Howard Zinn

There is no question that with Howard Zinn's passing away, the revolutionary movement has lost an untiring activist and intellectual. I will record here the first thoughts that crossed my mind when I heard the news.

Howard Zinn lived long enough to go through the threshold of the 21st century. Unlike many scholars and thinkers of his time and earlier, he was lucky enough to experience the rise and decline of the evil that has shattered the world for the last century. Within a decade, he traversed from hopelessness to hope, as he witnessed the revolutionary awakening of people from all walks of life in many corners of the world. I can imagine the joy bubbling in the heart of the author of "The People's History of the United States," as he watched the global horizon and saw bright light shining over hunger and death, and giving the poor and the desperate the vision of another world.

Revolution in people's lives will come and freedom, equality and justice will prevail. Howard Zinn fought his entire life for these ultimate human rights and heard the rumble of a better future towards the end of his life.

There is no purer joy than seeing the fruit of your life's work budding right in front of you.

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I was honored to be the one to introduce Howard Zinn when he spoke at the Austin HAW meeting; I also chaired a session on his life and work at the Atlanta meeting. I suppose I got those opportunities in part because of my 2003 book, HOWARD ZINN: A RADICAL AMERICAN VISION (Prometheus Books). It meant a lot to me that Howard felt I had done a good job introducing people to his life and writings. "I believe you did an excellent job in interpreting my ideas," he said. "You also ingeniously managed to contact many people for their comments--not the least being Noam Chomsky who supplied that scintillating foreword!" "I certainly appreciate the care and the sympathetic understanding you gave to this project," he concluded.

I miss Howard Zinn intensely already! I would think that anyone who worked for peace and justice and who sought a meaningful/relevant/optimistic approach to our history is missing him also--and I would assume that includes all members of HAW. How can we honor him? By being guilty, as he was to the very end, of "failure to quit," by using the power that "We, the people" have, A POWER GOVERNMENTS CANNOT SUPPRESS, as he called it in one of his books.

Thank you for your life and your work, Howard!

Davis Joyce

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The last time I saw Howard Zinn was at the HAW conference in Austin, Texas, in February 2006. His keynote address was inspirational. At brunch the following day, his twin virtues of kindness and intelligence shone through. So did a wry sense of humor.

It is true that he will be missed. As a radical British historian, I always appreciated his insistence on the radical nature of America's past. But it is the responsibility of each generation to think, protest, and change the world. This has been and continues to be our charge.

If you have not already done so, perhaps you could encourage HAW members to post their own reminiscences.

Jeffrey Kerr-Ritchie, a HAW since 2006.

I value politics, not for the man it elects, but for the discussion it permits. (Wendell Phillips, 1856)

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Dear colleagues,

I am hopeful that by addressing this message to "reply-HNN" I will become a part of the discussion on [HNN about the death of Howard Zinn](#). But I am notoriously inept on the internet and I wonder, Michael Honey, if you can make sure that this message reaches that destination.

First of all, I should like to thank the colleagues who, somehow knowing of my long friendship and comradeship with Howard, have telephoned or e-mailed or written a letter expressing condolences to me about his death. It is true that next Christmastime it will be exactly fifty years since as a graduate student at Columbia University I attended the Columbia "smoker" at the American Historical Association meetings in New York, looking for work. At about midnight there came toward me across the floor Bill Leuchtenberg, in whose classes both Howard and I had studied, and together with him a tall, skinny man with dark hair, already walking awkwardly because of a back injury sustained (as I understand it) at a Manhattan warehouse where he worked while a graduate student. Howard hired me to join the faculty of Spelman College, a college for African American women in Atlanta. That summer of 1961, before moving to Atlanta, Howard and I and his two

children Myla and Jeff climbed Mt. Chocorua in New Hampshire. As he narrates in his autobiography, up and down the mountain Howard and I discussed every imaginable political topic either of us could think of and found nothing about which we disagreed. (Howard tells this story in a chapter concluding that class origin does not determine everything.) As he also describes in the memoir, when, two years later, he was unceremoniously fired just after students had dispersed for the summer and so could not readily protest, I emerged from a hospital room where my son lay after a nearly life-ending fall from a window and did what I could to organize the expression of indignation about the way Howard had been discharged. (Not only was Howard a tenured professor and a department head, he had organized an innovative new program of Asian Studies for the entire Atlanta University complex.)

All of that said, I should like to make the following points:

1. I disagree with the statement that Howard Zinn was "after all a political scientist." He was an historian who, after discharge by Spelman in June 1963, could find a job only in a political science department.

2. As I have written in *Radical History Review*, the most remarkable thing about Howard as an academician was that he was always concerned to speak, not to other academicians, but to the general public. Soon after arriving in Atlanta I asked him what papers he was preparing for which academic gatherings. This was what I supposed historians did. Howard looked at me as if I were speaking a foreign language. He was one of two adult advisers to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and was preoccupied with the question, how may racism be overcome.

3. My second enormous debt to Howard has to do with oral history. As a teacher I was using Botkin's edition of WPA slave narratives and an autobiographical record by W.E.B. DuBois. The Zinns lived in the same building on the Spelman campus as did the Lynds. One day I walked unannounced into the Zinn apartment and found Howard tape recording the words of two SNCC organizers who had just been released from jail in Albany, Georgia. As I have also written in *RHR* it was as if a light went on inside my head. It suddenly occurred to me that I too could do oral history.

4. For those who have accompanied me thus far I now wish to make clear that from a very early time Howard and I had differences about history. Like other participants I was caught up in the lived experience of Mississippi Freedom Summer, during which I was Freedom School coordinator. Three years later, just before leaving New Haven for Chicago, I was walking across the New Haven Green and saw Dave Dennis, principal CORE representative in the 1964 summer project. I invited him to breakfast the next morning. He told Alice and myself that SNCC staff had initially opposed inviting hundreds of white volunteers (myself included) to Mississippi. I found myself thinking as an historian and I have not been able to stop. As Wesley Hogan has written, a mystique hangs over those doings that makes it difficult to ask questions. But she has also shared extracts from the SNCC archives which show that a majority of SNCC staff not only initially opposed the invitation to volunteers, but also, on the very eve of the summer

project, wondered why Mississippi African Americans would wish to be seated at a convention of the national Democratic Party. I never could draw Howard into consideration of such issues.

5. I believe that not only was Howard a complex human being but also particular books that he wrote and particular efforts in which he engaged, such as "The People Speak" on the History Channel, have both pluses and minuses. I doubt that any of Howard Zinn's critics wish that he had expressed a more "nuanced" view of the encounter between Columbus and the Arawak Indians, the opening scene of his *People's History* and far and away my favorite part of that book. (I can remember, when I was a Harvard undergraduate, Samuel Eliot Morison lecturing on Columbus in his yachting whites.) But in my own graduate work I came to feel that historians practicing "history from below" and "history from the bottom up," of whom I was one, had a tendency to romanticize the poor and oppressed persons whom they studied and, especially, to believe that such folks were motivated by ideology to a greater degree than was in fact the case. Hudson Valley farm tenants whom I studied supported or opposed the American Revolution based on the politics of their landlords, believing that if the side to which their landlord belonged was defeated, they might come to own their farms. Tenants in southern Dutchess County demanded the confiscation of the estates of their Loyalist landlords whereas tenants fifty miles away, whose landlord was an ardent supporter of independence, staged an armed revolt in support of the King. Similarly, city artisans who as Sons of Liberty were the cutting edge of the struggle for independence not only voted for the supposedly counter-revolutionary new Constitution in 1787-1788 but staged elaborate parades in its support. Why? In each case artisans sought whatever would keep the import of British manufactured goods from destroying their livelihoods.

My residence of more than a quarter century in a declining steel city, Youngstown, Ohio, has reinforced this view of things. No apology is needed that farm tenants should wish to own the farms on which they toiled, that artisans (like Mexican farmers today) should wish to prevent imports from abroad from destroying their means of making a living, or that a steel worker should turn toward whomever seemed to hold out some hope of reopening the mill. The point is that in none of these instances were ordinary folks motivated by ideas. They were trying to survive economically.

I don't wish to butcher a complicated topic with another set of over-simplifications. I simply observe that Howard was never very much interested. On the eve of Freedom Summer I wrote to him after an intense SNCC meeting (see Carol Polsgrove's book, *Divided Minds*, for extracts from the letter) saying that it seemed to me SNCC needed an economic program comparable to "40 acres and a mule" for what people might be able to do once they had achieved the vote. Howard was preoccupied with the need for federal marshals to be sent South to protect civil rights volunteers. I was uneasy about ever-increasing dependence on the national government. A few days later Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner were murdered. But I believe that lack of agreement about a long-range economic program was a major reason that, after the summer of 1964, SNCC floundered.

6. It would be wrong to suggest that Howard clung stubbornly to an unchanging

worldview. This may have been by and large true of him (as it has been generally true of myself) since the mid-Sixties. But he changed dramatically as a young man in his attitude toward war. Howard grew up in the era of the anti-fascist Popular Front and volunteered for service as a bombardier in the Air Force. Two things described in his autobiography caused him to change his mind. First, there was another young man who, during the long hours of "hurry up and wait" before bombing runs, discussed politics with Howard. The young man believed that the war was a contest of rival imperialisms. If that is so, Howard finally asked him, why are you here? To talk with people like you, the young man answered. A few weeks later he was killed. Second, shortly before the end of the war, Howard took part in obliterating a French village in which German troops, waiting to surrender, had taken refuge. Accordingly, Howard, while never a pacifist, became convinced that no conceivable modern war could be worth the collateral deaths and other mayhem it would inevitably cause.

7. So what do I think? My favorite memory of Howard has to do with the end of the first version of his play "Emma." A group of aging anarchists are gathered at the Lower East Side cafeteria where they have always hung out. They are stirring the embers and planning to leaflet the next morning about something or other. Suddenly, Alexander Berkman walks in. He has just been released from many years of imprisonment for his abortive attempt to murder Henry Clay Frick during the 1892 Homestead strike. His friends break off their discussion. Berkman says, What were you talking about when I came in? They respond, Oh, it doesn't matter: this is our time to celebrate your release. No, I want to know, Berkman persists. The friends explain their leafleting project. Berkman says, And do you have someone for every location? To tell you the truth, they answer, we still need someone for Broome Street. Berkman says, I'll take Broome Street -- and the curtain falls.

8. If the concern of Howard's critics is to insist on his many-sidedness and complexity, that should be our approach to any historical personage or phenomenon. But let us not caricature him. It may be maddening to David Horowitz and Ron Radosh that the People's History has sold something like two million copies. But shouldn't the historian's question be to try to understand why the book has captured the conscience of a generation? I have arranged for it to be sent to certain Ohio prisoners my wife and I know well. One of them is a leader of the Aryan Brotherhood. He wrote back, anxious to reassure me that the book was making the rounds of the cell block, "to blacks as well as whites."

Go well, brother Howie. Like the heroes of Stephen Spender's poem, I Think Continually Of Those Who Were Truly Great, you "left the vivid air signed with your honor."

Staughton Lynd

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I am deeply saddened to hear of the loss of Howard Zinn this week. It was an honor and privilege to get to know Howard. What began as a simple paper for a graduate

seminar turned into so much more when Howard and I began to converse about details of his life and his philosophy. I was fortunate to meet Howard in person twice, and to correspond with him through email well after I had completed the seminar. Howard offered advice to me ranging from where I should consider going for my PhD, to book recommendations on the Haymarket Affair, in addition to conversation about the 2008 election. Howard was always encouraging of my scholarship. I recall sending him copies of both my work on him and my work on the Chicago demonstrations of 1968. I was flattered when he wrote me back to tell me my work was "exciting" and that I "write very well." It meant a lot to me coming from him. When I asked Howard what his advice would be for younger historians just entering the profession, he was also very candid with me: "Don't get buried in the profession. Stay at the edge, keep half of yourself outside the academy, outside the library, in the real world of social conflict. Don't write for your colleagues but for your fellow citizens." Howard was more than just a mentor, more than just an inspiration, he was a friend, and I will sorely miss conversing with him.

Henry Maar is a graduate student in the history department at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His work on Howard Zinn, "Rebel With A Cause," was presented at the 2007 HAW conference in Atlanta, and can be read on the HAW website. He can be reached at hmaar@uemail.ucsb.edu

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Howard Zinn (1922-2010):

We have lost a towering figure of remarkable quality during the age of intellectual decline and moral timidity in Americana. This is the time of destructive creation in (and by) Wall Street, which has now been piggybacked on Joseph Schumpeter's "creative destruction," an apt description of bread-and-butter and winner-take-all modus operandi of business throughout America and elsewhere. This is an era that our government has invaded the two major Muslim countries based upon a little more than out-of-thin-air reasoning, and decidedly created a two-front war that has not only dilapidated us to the core morally but, if history is of any consolation, will haunt us not unlike the ghost of Hamlet's father all the way to the end of the twenty-first century. We have entered into the era of transnationalization of capital and capitalism, which is synonymous with the end of the Pax Americana and American hegemony and which had sunk us since the 1980s in the ocean of hegemony-smashing globalization; yet our sanguine government acts like a newly minted hegemon of the yesteryears, and then when hardly any nation (particularly those which were the subject of past US coups) does give a hoot, it mindlessly plan to dominate, even invade, it by extra-judicial and colonial means. The excruciating lessons of Vietnam War, civil rights, Watergate, labor strife, rampant racism and racial segregation, immigration and immigrant bashing, racial and political profiling, blanket surveillance of citizenry, government secrecy, not to mention, tempering with tenure and academic rights appear to have lost on those who sit at positions of power in this country. It is in midst of these unlearned lessons and unheeded mistakes that Howard Zinn's loss is felt so glaringly today. Howard Zinn wore a couple of dozen hats in dealing with all these crucial matters in his long life

and colorful career, which placed him among a handful of most daring and effective public intellectuals in the twentieth century. He was a renaissance man, in his thought and in his deeds. He will be remembered as an illuminating towering candle in the altar of humanity that burnt fully to the very last droplet, before it faded away. The world is dimmer now and I miss him already.

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It was the early 70s in Wellfleet Mass, and I was a nobody and Howie as I called him an impressive, sexy, good looking, well known activist. He called me to ask me to play tennis because he'd heard I was a trouble maker and people on the courts were avoiding me. I had been playing tennis in cut off jeans and wasn't too good. My partner said "shit" when she missed the ball and a guy on the other court 4 men in white outfits, one a Harvard war monger, chastised us for our language. I replied, "You'd better get used to it, you'll be shovelling it come the revolution." (was I out of touch) Silence followed and it got harder for me to get games.

So Howie became a regular partner and we'd talk too much and forget to play. He loved political arguments and we had many mainly with the power elite around the courts, about the war, Israel, local politics. Howard got the ball back and was a tricky player beating people with much better form, which often angered them. He played until he had macular degeneration, but took that in stride too.

He was genuinely interested in others, not only their work, but personal life. He was real supportive during my divorce and not at all prudish about my odd collection of boyfriends that followed, others were.

The FBI was stationed outside my house and I asked Howard what to do. He said take their photo, which I did. When Howard saw the car he walked up to it and asked the agent what he was doing and gave him a piece of mind.

He spoke at every political event in the Cape and gave the groups money rather than charged them. His talks were modest and he had a fine ironic sense and would often put himself down. A moderator once introduced him and went on and on about his virtues. He said this wasn't St Howard. He was fun to hang out with and truly believed in people's struggles.

He also took criticism. Some of us saw his Marx returns play and criticised the weak female characters, Jenny and Eleanor. He changed the text to make them more significant.

He could be counted on for an honest opinion. His son ran the WHAT theater in Wellfleet and when I'd ask him about a play he'd say, "crap", or they are worthwhile, see it. Ros Zinn walked on air and had a quiet magic about her. Howard was proud of her art work and the book of letters from prison she collected. They were real team together.

I used Peoples' History in my class for two decades. Students were turned around by it, especially foreign and political students. It was like consciousness raising. A friend's son wrote me from prison and asked for the book. I sent it to him and he said everyone wanted to borrow it and could I send another. This was meaningful to Howard and he asked about the prisoner.

Rosalyn Baxandall
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Like so many in *Historians Against the War*, I was profoundly saddened when I heard the news of Howard Zinn's death. It's hard to sum up what Howard Zinn meant to me. In my budding days as an activist, I used to hang around this anarchist bookstore in Pensacola, Florida where the owner once handed me a copy of *The People's History*. From the first page of the book, I was hooked. I had always been a history buff, but I had never read anything like Howard Zinn wrote in that book. To say that it transformed me would be an understatement.

Only a few months after I was discharged from the Navy, already in a completely different mindset, I was on a bus heading to Seattle for the WTO protests. In my backpack, I carried a few changes of clothes, a bandanna, a jar of peanut butter, and *The People's History of the United States*. Reading this book let me know that what we were doing in Seattle was in-line with what thousands and thousands of people had done throughout the history of this country. I remember the profound joy I had when, after the protests, I read Zinn's writings on Seattle and thinking "This is what Howard Zinn was writing about. THIS is People's History!"

A few years later, some members of the local I.W.W. branch helped to bring Howard Zinn's "Marx in Soho" to the University of West Florida. Before the event, I thought it would be neat if we could get the author to do an interview with us. To my surprise, he obliged. Over the next few years, I had the opportunity to interview Howard Zinn two more times--once for the Independent Media Center and then again for a zine that I write for. I think what moved me most about Zinn was along with his words, how accessible he was. For a man who was as busy as he certainly was to take time out of his life and answer what were more probably the same questions he had answered hundreds of times over was a testament to his desire to reach out and spread these ideas.

I saw him speak once in Gainesville where I have this cute picture of Zinn, my partner, and our baby daughter. Zinn looks a little dazed in my photo because I think I startled him when I took the picture. Dazed look and all, that photo is one of my prized possessions. For a long time I dismissed much of academia is too elitist for my taste, not radical enough. Zinn changed my impression of academia, or at least the what I viewed as the limitations of the university. Howard Zinn showed me that there was no reason why a historian, while remaining true to her or his academic integrity, could not also write with a bias towards the people. Radical

History was relevant and People's History was important. History was not simply the story of generals and presidents, but was also the story of workers, immigrants, women, and people of color. As an activist, Howard Zinn let me know that our struggles mattered. While the war makers were obviously a part of history, so was our side--and that was inspiring!

Like Zinn, I went back to school on the GI Bill. I am currently in Graduate School studying American History where I hope to teach one day. I am back in school, in no small part, because of Howard Zinn's example. In fact, my graduate thesis will be "A People's History of Pensacola, Florida," obviously modeled after Zinn's work.

I owe a great deal to this man and, like all of the HAW community, feel a tremendous loss with the death of Howard Zinn. Surely, his work will continue to be re-published and will certainly continue to be relevant for a long time to come. For all the great women and men that Howard Zinn wrote about in *The People's History*, he was my true hero. To say he's gone, but not forgotten sounds trite, but it's still true. I know I won't forget what a wonderful man he was. That said, I'm sad that he's gone.

Thanks, Professor Zinn--wherever you are.
Howard Zinn-Presente!

Scott Satterwhite, Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of West Florida
HAW member since 2003

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Remembering Howard Zinn -- a tribute from the Emma Goldman Papers

Remembering Howard Zinn, honoring his life, and honored by his friendship

From Candace Falk, Emma Goldman Papers, University of California, Berkeley

Yesterday, I heard about Howard's death. A silence and sadness and also a sense of absolute appreciation, respect, and love now permeates the air. He lived with a vision, integrity, creativity and an insatiable desire to reach out and expose the horrors sustained as well as the victories of the those who dared to speak out and inspire others to stand up to injustice, to remain vigilant about freedom.

He was kind, generous, funny, and offered support in any way he could. Once he told me that he'd written so many blurbs for books that if his comments were collected and bound, it might become a multi-volume series in itself.

I was one of the lucky ones, not only to have received many blurbs, accolades, letters of support, but also to have known him since the 70s as a friend, political activist, and historian. We also shared an appreciation for the feisty complex anarchist Emma Goldman. We wrote back and forth, answered each other's questions, and cheered each other on. Just a few months ago, we talked about

finding a way to work together to bring her back to life in film, on the heels of his wonderful play and many talks that included her spirit ? which was also his.

To catch a glimpse of that friendship, no doubt one among many, many, many others, I share some excerpts of our e-mails over the years?to bring back his voice, his love, his unique presence that will, one hopes, live on?in the pathos of his absence:

A recent e-mail after our visit in Wellfleet:

Dear Candace:

I was happy to see you in Wellfleet, and to meet your friends, all of whom are very interesting. I could tell that Lois was much more than a sex counselor.

Unfortunaely I can't do dinner in Truro, but thank Lois for wanting me.

Let's stay in touch (wel, it's inevitable, isn't it!)

A much earlier e-mail after Howard received our volumes: Emma Goldman: A Documentary History of the American Years ? Vol. 1 Made for America 1890-1901 and Vol. 2 Making Speech Free 1902-1909.

Dear Candace:

The two magnificent volumes came today, with your beautiful inscription. Thank you, thank yo u. You are the best.

Much love from me and Roz,

Howard

A sweet note trying to help the Emma Goldman Papers brainstorm about funding:

Dear Candace:

It's good to hear from you, even if it is to hear the not surprisng news about the needs of the E.G. Project. (By the way, I just got a phone call from someone in Montreal who tells me they are putting on a bi-lingual production of EMMA)

I've never been good at fundraising. Even knowing some people with a lot of money (Ben Affleck, Matt Damon for instance) I've never approached them for money, even for my own projects.

I only have one thought, which probably won't raise the big sums of money you

need, but might help. I've been involved (with Anthony Arrove) in these various Read

ings from VOICES OF A PEOPLE'S HISTORY, in Los Angeles, Santa Fe, several times in New York. They are usually benefits for some good cause. And we will have one in Berkeley in November, for the benefit of the Middle East Children's Alliance (they have the Berkeley Community Theater for November 9th, which seats about 3000 people and they expect to raise at least \$30,000, probably more). What makes all of these events packed is that we have well-known actors and artists doing the reading. In L.A. in October we had Viggo Mortenson, Marisa Tomei, Kerry Washington, and others. At various times we've had James Earl Jones, Alice Walker, Kurt Vonnegut, etc. So: what about a reading in N.Y., of selections from Emma's writing, lectures, letters? Men as well as women reading her stuff. Maybe other anarchist literature, as well (Sasha, Kropotkin, Tolstoy) We could probably get some well-known actors and artists (Susan Sarandon, Marisa Tomei, Grace Paley, Paul Robeson, Jr. Eve Ensler, Tony Kushner, etc. Charge up to \$50 (why not, the price of a theater ticket?) for a place that holds 1000 and make \$25-50,000. Anthony and I would make contact with the Readers we know.

Just a thought.

Much love,

Howard

An e-mail regarding the death of a great historian of anarchism--Paul Avrich:

Candace Falk wrote:

Hello again, Howard and Roz. Sad news of Paul Avrich's death in the New York Times today. He was a very generous (and patient!) man who definitely paved the way for anyone who seriously studied anarchism... from the Kronstadt sailors onward. He was working on a biography of Alexander Berkman; . . . good that his other books, and good spirit lives on. xo here's to life.. that extends beyond itself.
Candace

Yes, Candace, that was sad news. I met Paul years ago, once at the opening of the first production of EMMA in New York, which was attended by the editor of the *Frei Arbeiter Stimme*, who told me proudly that he had once kissed Emma when she was in Canada near the end of her life, and he was asked to translate her talk for the French speaking audience. He knew more about Anarchism than just about anyone.

Love,

Howard

An e-mail exchange after Howard sent a note letting me know that there was a Chaired professorship named for Emma Goldman, and I let him know about an art installation at a UC Davis construction site announcing an Emma Goldman Institute for Anarchist Studies:

Candace Falk wrote:

Hi Howard.. dear... ah, I didn't know about an Emma Goldman Professorship... what a wonderful development.. wish there was one for me these days when our project is struggling even more than usual..and yet our work is getting better and better. hopefully in the big picture of history that matters.. it will make a difference. thanks so much for keeping me in your orbit. How are you?? I'm in New York .. spoke at NYU.. and marvelling at 'the old country'.. xo from the big apple.. Candace (p.s. I'll forward another great Emma thing to you..an art installation at UC Davis at a construction site.. a sign announcing an Emma Goldman Institute for Anarchist Studies.. a total spoof that looked absolutely authentic. I'll try to find it on my e-mail attachments.. you'll find it fun too. But knowing that there is a U of Wisconsin real thing.. is quite remarkable!)

That's a wonderful spoof! Will you still be in N.Y. on Sunday?. I'm doing something that evening at 7 PM at the Cooper Union with Dr.Gino Strada, author of GREEN PARROTS: DIARY OF A WAR SURGEON. He and I have become friends these past few years. He has operated on war victims all over the world for the last fifteen years, and now he and I are working on a project for the abolition of war. Easy, no? Utopian, of course, but we think the time is right to raise the issue not just of this war or that war, but all war, and we're assembling a bunch of internationally known writers to put together a little volume centered on that theme, which Einstein expressed back in 1932, when he said "War cannot be humanized. It can only be abolished."

Anyway, love to you and yours,

Howard

An e-mail announcing an Opera based on his play 'Emma' donated to the Emma Goldman Papers, and a newsy update about his time with Roz, and also cheering on my son Jesse who was in the throes of applying to college (p.s. as an aside, when Jesse was about 2 or 3 and we visited Howard at his BU office, he climbed on the bookshelf and started to throw Howard's books on the floor, at which point Howard suggested that we take him on a stroll, in his stroller, and walked the BU campus grounds for hours):

Dear Candace:

Elaine Fine will be thrilled to hear that you want here opera for the archives. She has a distinguished record as a composer and has been working hard on EMMA.

All those things you were doing were more important than answering e-mails.

E-mails get in the way of life! Last summer when we were in beautiful Wellfleet, with the bay at our feet I promised Roz (because we have a computer there) that I would not open the computer until after sunset. It turned out to be a wonderful idea, even if it meant staying up late responding to everything.

Jesse sounds terrific. Truth is, even when I was teaching at B.U. I had no influence on admissions (except for graduate students applying to our department because then it's the department that makes the decisions instead of the Admissions office). I don't doubt he'll be accepted. If he ends up at B.U. I'll meet him and give him some tips on good courses to take in political science.

Emma news? Did I tell you that in September they put on a wonderful production of EMMA in Woodstock? The young woman who played Emma was superb, and the man who played Johann Most was sensational (he is Frank Serpico, the one-time cop, now actor -- maybe you remember Al Pacino playing him in SERPICO).

Other EMMA productions (can't remember if I told you about them): This past August, in St. Paul, ran several weeks, was seen by 500 people.

Past November, in Monterey Bay, seen by about 1000 people.

This month, in Chicago, a group called "In the Works" will put it on.

The play has been translated into French, Spanish, Korean, and an Arabic translation is being done now in Syria.

Thanks so much for the great holiday card of Emma's words -- so right for this moment!

Stay well.

Love,

Howard

And yes, we all loved Howard and were grateful that he stayed well enough in heart, mind, and body -- recounting history and making history and remaining our favorite voice of the people's history.

Respectfully shared--Candace Falk

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To add your own memories to this page, send them to marc@yachana.org.

www.historiansagainstwar.org