

225 N 70th St, Seattle WA 98103 206-789-5565 <http://www.wwfor.org>

***WWFOR** seeks to replace violence, war, racism and economic injustice with nonviolence, equality, peace and justice. It links and strengthens FOR members and chapters throughout Western Washington in promoting activities consistent with the national FOR statement of purpose. WWFOR helps members and chapters accomplish together what we could not accomplish alone.*

Interracial and Intergenerational Movement Building: Weaving Action into Our Lives”

Western Washington FOR's 2016 Fall Retreat in Lacey (near Olympia)

Social time and light refreshments start at 9:00 am.

The program starts promptly at 10:00 and ends at 5:00.

Enjoy workshops, small group conversations and more.

Bring Your Own lunch.

For more information: contact Glen Anderson (360) 491-9093 or visit <http://www.wwfor.org/fall-retreat-2/>

Location and driving directions: The WWFOR Fall Retreat is held at the **Gwinwood Conference Center** (the old main lodge) in Lacey, near Olympia.

From the north, take I-5 to Exit 109. Turn right onto Martin Way, left onto College Street, left onto Lacey Boulevard, right onto Ruddell Road, left on 25th Ave SE, right on Hicks Lake Road SE, left on 30th Ave SE, right into Gwinwood and see the Old Main Lodge straight ahead when you first enter the conference center. Parking is in front of the building and beyond it.

From the south, take I-5 to Exit 108. Follow the very long exit to College Street. Turn right onto College and follow the rest of the above directions.

Cost: We keep costs low and try to just barely break even. \$15 per person will cover our costs. We give discounts to young and low-income people upon request. Persons who can afford to give more will help offset the cost for those who have less. Part of keeping the cost low is for you to **BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH**. We will provide coffee, tea, and light refreshments throughout the day.

A Vietnam War Veteran's Poem a poem by Mark Fleming

COMRADE

I really never knew him but he has been my companion for many years.

Someone said he was a jerk. I can't say.

All I know is that the brief time we were together left a lasting impression.

You see, I watched him die.

His death was not dramatic or heroic. Just dumb.

An accident in a war filled with many accidents.

The difference was that I saw it happen.

I watched him die.

He fell out of a helicopter that was his ticket to safety.

A medical evacuation for a minor cut,

Hardly even a wound,

A convenient excuse to get out of the jungle.

But nobody expected him to die.

We watched him rising toward the chopper

Envyng his good fortune, each of us

Wishing that we were ascending in his place.

The chopper's big rotors slapped the air

As it hovered above the mountain side.

Its turbines screaming,

Waiting to carry him back to safety.

I saw the medic lean out of the door,

Reaching to pull him in.

I saw him put his feet on the skids.

And I saw him fall away from the chopper.

He fell abruptly, violently.

No slow motion effect. No eternity to reach the ground.

Just a rapid free fall and a bone crunching thud.

Mere seconds ended his life at 19.

We wrapped him in a poncho

And hooked him to the cable again.

This time he made it,

Boots pointing upward as they disappeared into the open door.

But this time was too late.

The chopper carried away a corpse,

Leaving us to our thoughts, black and evil.

No one wanted to trade places with him now.

The Mortality Games: U.S. Is Disqualified In Trials For Health Olympics

By Mary Anne Mercer and Stephen Bezrucchka first published in The Huffington Post, August 1, 2016

The United States has been competing in the modern [Olympic Games](#) since they began in 1896, and doing well. We win the most gold medals in the summer games, and we usually stand second in winter contests. The Olympic Games rankings are important measures of status for competing countries, rallying citizens to support their athletes to excel, beat previous world records, make their countrymen and women proud. Books about the intense challenges of competing and winning in the Olympics are best-sellers.

Being an Olympic sport requires an international sanctioning body. What would it take to have a new event, paralleling the sports Olympics, that ranks countries according to their accomplishments in producing healthy citizens?

The [World Health Organization](#) would be an appropriate sanctioning body. Given today's collection of annual births and deaths, a whole range of comparisons could be developed: the longest-lived overall; longevity for subgroups; death rates in young children; deaths to women from pregnancy-related causes. Let's call these the Mortality Games, or the Health Olympics.

[How would the U.S. do](#) in such events? In a word, badly. We would be eliminated in the trials, unable to even qualify for the final day's competition in any contest. In life expectancy, we

stand 35th in the world. Another 44 nations have lower child death rates, and for deaths of women in childbirth we stand 46th. For adult mortality, in 62 other nations a 15-year-old girl has a smaller chance of dying by age 60 than in the US. Even Sri Lanka beats us in that event — a humiliating result. For boys, 52 nations do better. If we had Iceland's child death rates, something that surely is achievable, 49 fewer children would die every day in this country. While we get justifiably upset with the recent tragic shootings in the U.S., those deaths amount to less than one day's child mortality here. These unnecessary deaths happen in the richest, most powerful country in world history, which spends close to half of all health care outlays worldwide.

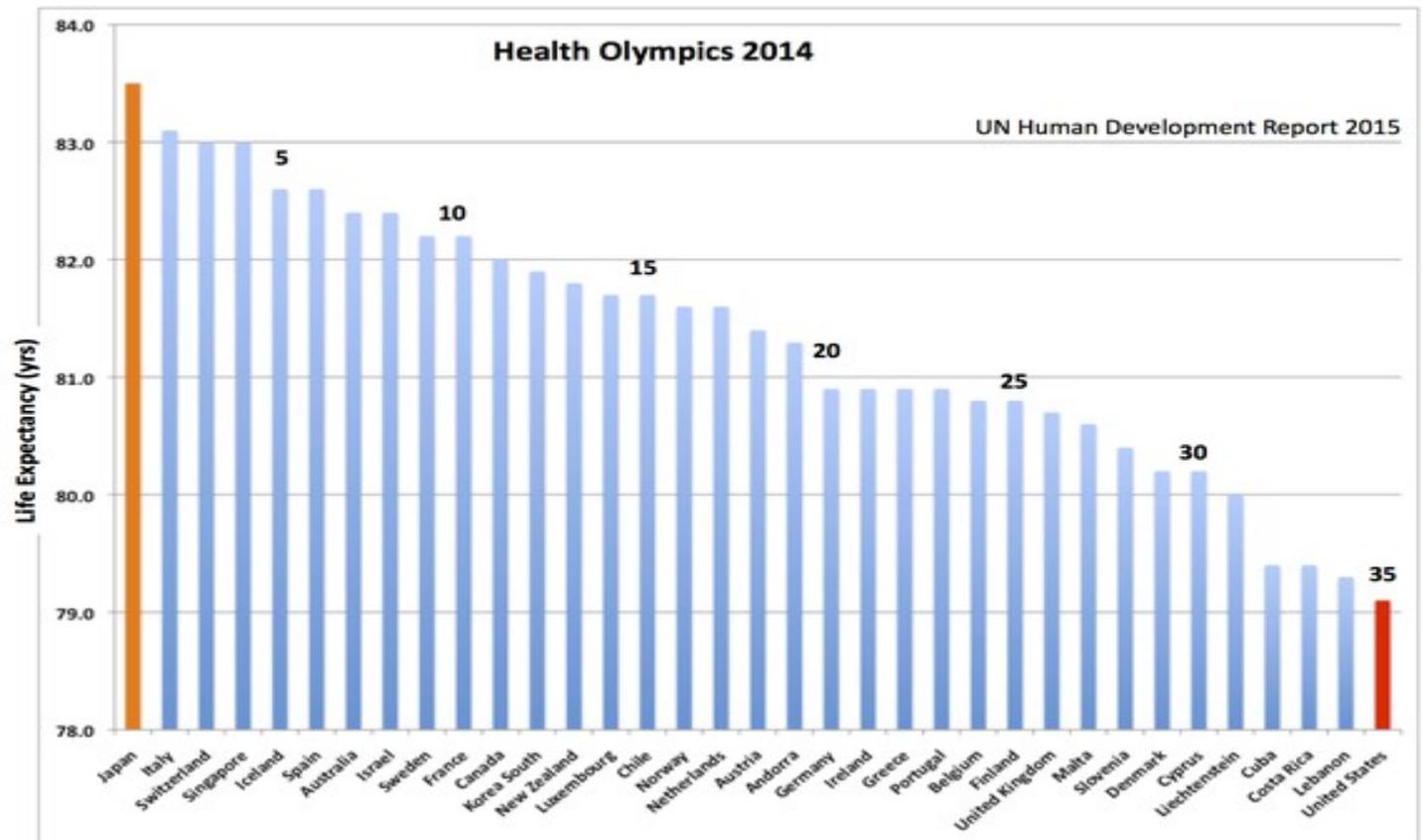
Scores for most Olympic sports events have seen progress over the decades, with shorter times and better outcomes. Mortality is also generally improving over time, but in the maternal mortality Olympics, eight nations have seen worsening scores in the last 15 years. [The U.S. ranks among them](#), along with Afghanistan, Guinea-Bissau and South Sudan, a tragic and humbling reality.

If we rewind some 65 years, the U.S. would have won the gold for low maternal death rates. We had cause then to be proud of our performance in the other health events.

In 1952 we would have won the most medals, and could have proclaimed that we were one of the healthiest nations on the planet. Since then, although our times and rates have improved, they've improved considerably faster in other countries, so [we have fallen behind](#).

In only one event would we win the gold medal today without question — the amount of [money spent on health care](#), over 17% of our huge economy. No one can touch us there.

How should we interpret our performance in the Mortality Games?



Cont. from page 2

The U.S. Institute of Medicine issued a document in 2013 entitled [U.S. Health in International Perspective: Shorter Lives Poorer Health](#). This groundbreaking report pointed out that we were dead first among rich nations, and highlighted that our medical care system was not the reason. Two factors they pointed to as likely causes were our wicked levels of economic inequality and the lack of attention to early life.

There is increasing concern about the widespread effects of inequality in the U.S. Among them are studies showing that inequality kills, with estimates of the [death toll of inequality](#) in the U.S. to be hundreds of thousands of men, women and children. The currently increasing inequality should take the blame for at least part of our dismal showing in the Health Olympics.

But the beginnings of life and growth are also where health begins. [Early life](#), the first 1,000 days after conception, is when chronic diseases such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease and diabetes are programmed, and it is estimated that roughly half of our health as adults is determined during that period. Careful attention and care to infants by their parents in those first months of their existence has dramatic effects on their future health. [Mothers in particular need to be with those infants](#) for as much time as possible during their early months. Yet most mothers are employed, and need compensation for their time away from work. We are one of two countries world-wide that do not have a federally mandated paid parental leave policy, making us tied for the gold medal in that shameful event. How should we train for the Health Olympics in future generations? It took us over sixty years to go from being one of the world's healthiest nations to today's dismal showing. There is no quick fix. No trainer or regimen can get us to win in 2020, but we can begin to get back in shape. The gross levels of current inequality are not inevitable; they can be changed with reasonable and fair economic policies. Because good health starts early in life, we as a nation must also establish greater support to parents for raising healthy children. That will take time and money, but if we are committed to getting back into the Games, we could start by making small changes in taxation of the wealth of the top 1% — and in a generation or two we could become proud medalists again. The training is political and our health, yours and mine, will be the outcome. Let the games begin: Go Team USA!

Letter to the Editor by Larry Kerschner After Orlando: A Short History of American Massacres

While the horrible event that recently occurred in Orlando with the murder of 49 people by a man armed with an assault rifle may be the largest massacre by a single individual in US history, it is far from the only large massacre.

In the 1863 Bear River massacre near the present-day city of Preston in Franklin County, Idaho, 225 Shoshone were murdered by US Troops. In the 1864, the Sand Creek massacre occurred when a 700-man force of Colorado Territory Militia attacked and destroyed a village of Cheyenne and Arapaho in southeastern Colorado Territory, killing and mutilating an estimated 70–163, about two-thirds of whom were women and children. In 1868 at Washita in the Indian Territories, George

Custer and the 7th Cavalry murdered 150 Cheyenne. In 1890 at Wounded Knee almost 400 Lakota Sioux were murdered by the US 7th Cavalry Regiment

The Tulsa Race Riot was a large-scale, racially motivated conflict on May 31 and June 1, 1921, in which a group of whites attacked the black community of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Greenwood District, the wealthiest black community in the United States, was burned to the ground. Over the course of 16 hours, more than 800 people were admitted to local white hospitals with injuries, the two black hospitals were burned down, and police arrested and detained more than 6,000 black Greenwood residents at three local facilities. An estimated 10,000 blacks were left homeless, and 35 city blocks composed of 1,256 residences were destroyed by fire, resulting in over \$26 million in damages. The official count of the dead by the Oklahoma Department of Vital Statistics was 39, but other estimates of black fatalities vary from 55 to about 300.

The Elaine race riot took place on September 30–October 1, 1919 in the vicinity of Elaine in rural Phillips County, Arkansas. With a total of five whites and estimates of possibly 854 blacks killed in white rioting in the county.

The Rosewood massacre was a violent, racially motivated massacre of blacks and destruction of a black town that took place during the first week of January 1923 in rural Levy County, Florida. Estimates of the number of black people killed range up to 150.

The East St. Louis riots (also known as the East St. Louis massacres) of May and July 1917 were an outbreak of labor and race-related violence that caused between 40 and 700 deaths and extensive property damage.

Not to forget the various massacres the US has been involved in overseas: in 1906 at the Moro Crater in the Philippines 1000 people were killed by the US Army; in 1948 on Jeju Island, South Korea, 40,000 people were killed by the Republic of Korea under the direction of the US military; in 1950, 400 Korean civilians were gunned down at No Gun Ri, South Korea by US troops; and we all remember My Lai one of hundreds of documented massacres by the US military in Vietnam. Massacres are as American as apple pie.

Real Cooperation with the Nations is the Best Survival Tactic

By John M Repp

Unexamined assumptions are the real dictators in a culture and society. Too many people in the USA believe that human beings are by nature competitive and competition brings out the best in us. This idea is seldom questioned. Our media saturates us in stories of competition. The sports networks give us games all day long. Fortress America looks out and sees danger everywhere, every country wanting to “destroy” us as the foreign policy advisor to Donald Trump writes. (“Flynn adds to the confusion of Trump foreign policy” by Trudy Rubin, The Seattle Times, July 24, 2016, p A13 <http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/flynn-adds-to-confusion-of-trump-foreign-policy/>) Our current economic thinking, so terribly wrong-headed and incompetent, is focused around competition.

Even the teaching of the science of biology, thought to be objective, is full of rhetoric about competition. Darwin's idea that

natural selection is driven by competition is the platform from which too many biologists leap to the conclusion that all life is competitive. But that is a leap too far. “Although competition is an inescapable theme of life, the essence of life is cooperation” (Colin Tudge. Why Genes Are Not Selfish and People are Nice: A Challenge to the Dangerous Ideas that Dominate Our Lives. 2013, p 71 <http://www.florisbooks.co.uk/book/Colin-Tudge/Why+Genes+Are+Not+Selfish+and+People+Are+Nice/9780863159633>)

Cooperation makes life possible. The chemical cycles that are the basis of life are more like a square dance than a street fight. Living things have a very complicated structure, lots of different chemicals acting together, depending on each other. The eukaryotic cell, a cell where the DNA is enclosed in a nucleus, evolved when formerly competing, smaller non-nucleated single cell creatures combined to become one organism. A similar evolution happened when multi-cellular organisms evolved. And of course, most plants and animals live in societies. When we look at the ecology of a rainforest, a meadow, or the ecology of the microbes in our gut or the soil, we see an infinite number of exchanges between countless different species that depend on each other. Insects and flowers co-evolved. The whole earth has evolved so it acts like one living organism. To quote Colin Tudge again: “Life in general is a balance between competitiveness and cooperativeness, but cooperativeness must prevail – or life could not exist at all”. (Tudge, p. 98)

Now consider the times in which we live. We, the whole world, need to cooperate to deal with climate change. To achieve the goals outlined by the Paris Climate Change Conference of 2015, the nations will have to work together. If the USA would really get serious about climate change mitigation, by getting completely off fossil fuels and changing how we farm for example, and helping fund the rest of the world to do the same, then we would do more for our national security than anything else. We are actually behind the rest of the advanced countries in climate change mitigation. Where is our vaunted “leadership” in the world”?

In this historical moment, why have our leaders in Congress and in the White House, very quietly, decided to “modernize” the nuclear arsenal to the tune of \$1 trillion! A whole new set of ICBM’s, cruise missiles, a new bomber, and an all-new fleet of nuclear submarines plus all the warheads they carry will be built over the next thirty years. **This is totally immoral, illegal, intolerably expensive, massively dangerous, and militarily useless!** No wonder this is being kept quiet. (Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility, summer 2016 newsletter, p. 4 <http://www.psr.org/chapters/washington/summer-2016-newsletter.pdf>)

Our leaders are breaking the highest law in the land. Our nation signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty in 1968 where we promised to abolish nuclear weapons. Treaties rank above all other laws of our land, just below the Constitution itself. In the face of this blatantly illegal activity by the highest levels of government, we have the right to rebel. We should do it nonviolently, but we should do it. We should continue the political revolution the Sanders campaign started.

We can make agreements with all our supposed enemies and order our military to stand down. We should follow Article 6 of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and get rid of our nuclear arsenal. Instead of spending \$1 trillion on a new nuclear arsenal, we should spend it on dealing with climate change.

“the best survival tactic by far...is to co-operate” (Tudge, p.94.) We have a right to live on this beautiful planet. No one should threaten it.

CAN WE HEAR BOTH?



CRY OF THE EARTH



CRY OF THE POOR