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# Editorial Statement

Taking stock of the multifaceted universe of positions and goals that constitute Left politics today, we are left with the disquieting suspicion that perhaps a deeper commonality underlies this apparent variety: what exists today is built on the desiccated remains of what was once felt to be possible.

In order to make sense of the present, we find it necessary to disentangle the vast accumulation of positions on the Left, and to evaluate their saliency for an emancipatory politics of the present. Doing this work implies a reconsideration of what we mean by “the Left”.

This task necessarily begins from what we see as a prevalent feature of the Left today: a general disenchantment with the present state of progressive politics. We feel that this disenchantment cannot be cast off by sheer will, by “carrying on the fight,” but must be addressed and itself made an object of critique. **Thus we begin with what immediately confronts us.**

The editorial board of The Platypus Review is motivated by a sense that the very concepts of the “political” and the “Left” have become so inclusive as to be meaningless. The Review seeks to be a forum among a variety of tendencies and approaches to these categories of thought and action—**not out of a concern with inclusion for its own sake**, but rather to provoke productive disagreement and to open shared goals as sites of contestation. In this way, the recriminations and accusations arising from political disputes of the past might be elevated to an ongoing critique that seeks to clarify its object.

The editorial board wishes to provide an ongoing public forum wherein **questioning and reconsidering one’s own convictions is not seen as a weakness, but as part of the necessary work of building a revolutionary politics.** We hope to create and sustain a space for interrogating and clarifying the variety of positions and orientations currently represented on the political Left, in which questions may be raised and discussions pursued that do not find a place within existing Left discourses, locally or Internationally.

As long as submissions exhibit a genuine commitment to this project, all kinds of content will be considered for publication.

—*The Platypus Review* Editorial Board

Articles can range in length from 500–1,000 words. We will consider longer pieces but would prefer that they be submitted as proposals. Please send article and event calendar listing submissions, and any inquiries about this project to: [platypus1917webzine@yahoogroups.com](mailto:platypus1917webzine@yahoogroups.com)

All final editorial decisions, whether they concern length or content, will be discussed with and approved by the writer.

# November calendar

The Platypus Review features a monthly calendar highlighting cultural, political and educational events of interest to Chicago leftists. Beginning with Issue #2, a series of event reviews—open to submissions—will accompany the calendar, providing a space for reports-back, follow-ups and critiques.

Send events and review proposals to [platypus1917webzine@yahoogroups.com](mailto:platypus1917webzine@yahoogroups.com)

## Film Screening: Crude Impact

11/2–11/4,  
multiple screening times  
Facets Cinematheque, 1517 W Fullerton  
[www.facets.org](http://www.facets.org)

James Jandak Wood’s stunning documentary on the historical impact of oil extraction on indigenous peoples & their environment.

## 2007 Midwest Socialist Conference: Building a Revolutionary Alternative

11/3–11/4  
University of Illinois at Chicago,  
750 S Halsted  
<http://www.myspace.com/midwestsocialism>  
<http://www.socialistworker.org>  
The Conference will bring together socialists and other activists involved in struggles across the region: from opposing the war to organizing against the death penalty, for immigrant rights, and for national health care. Registration begins at 9am on Saturday. First workshops begin at 10am.

## Funding the Revolution: Participatory Economics & Funding Activist Organizing in Chicago. Discussion with Z-Magazine’s Michael Albert

11/5, 6pm-8pm  
Jane Addams Hull House, 800 S Halsted  
Sponsored by 49th St Underground,  
AREA Chicago, Jane Addams Hull House  
Museum, Chicago Area Participatory  
Economics Society  
<http://www.chicagoparecon.org/>

## The 3 Rs: Reform, Revolution & Resistance The Problematic Forms of Anti-Capitalism Today

Art Institute Auditorium, 280 S Columbus  
11/6, 7pm  
[www.platypus1917.com](http://www.platypus1917.com)

Panelists: Michael Albert of Z Magazine, Chris Cutrone of Platypus, Stephen Duncombe of New York University, Brian Holmes of Continental Drift &Universite Tangente, Marisa Holmes of Students for a Democratic Society

## VAP Lecture Series – Art and Politics Donald H. Russell, Executive Director, Provisions Library: Resources for Arts and Social Change

11/7, 6pm  
SAIC auditorium, 280 South Columbus Drive

Donald Russell has over 25 years experience directing arts, non-profit, philanthropic and publishing ventures. He has special expertise in engaging the arts as a catalyst for social change.

For more information call 312.443-3711 or email [events@saic.edu](mailto:events@saic.edu).

## The Movement for a Democratic Society National Convergence

11/8–11/11  
Loyola University  
<http://movementforademocraticsociety.org>

## Film Screening: *Five Factories*, 2006, Dario Azzelini

11/8, 7:30pm  
Mess Hall, 6932 N Glenwood  
<http://49underground.org/>  
Workers in some shuttered factories in Venezuela, inspired by the cooperatively run factories in Argentina, took over and reopened their workplaces. The titular five factories were reactivated with the government’s permission and involvement. Still, the film provides a window onto this interesting phenomenon.

## Teachers for Social Justice Curriculum Fair

11/10, 11am–5pm  
Orozco School, 1940 W 18th  
Co-sponsored by Rethinking Schools

The Curriculum Fair is like a Science or History Fair, except that teachers “present” or “exhibit” their curriculum oriented toward social justice, we have a whole group discussion, and we have a number of workshops.

## Nayan Chanda, Director of Publications at Yale Center for Study of Globalization

11/12, 12pm  
Roberta Buffet Center For International and Comparative Studies, Northwestern University, 1902 Sheridan, Evanston, IL  
[www.cics.northwestern.edu](http://www.cics.northwestern.edu)

## Pomegranate Health Collective General Meetings

11/13, 6–8pm; 11/25, 1–3pm  
Harold Washington Library, 6th Floor South Study Room. (wheelchair accessible)

A group of DIY health activists in Chicago dedicated to making health information accessible to everyone, with a focus on outreach, education and referrals. Contact [info@pomegranatecollective.org](mailto:info@pomegranatecollective.org) for information on how you can join the collective.

## “Gender-Based Violence in Turkey” Yesim Arat, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Bogaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

11/14, 4pm  
Roberta Buffet Center for International and Comparative Studies, Northwestern University, 1902 Sheridan Rd, Evanston, IL  
[http://www.bcics.northwestern.edu/Events\\_Speaker\\_Keyman.html](http://www.bcics.northwestern.edu/Events_Speaker_Keyman.html)

## LGBT Adoption and Custody

11/14, 6:30pm  
The Howard Brown Health Center,  
4025 N Sheridan  
[www.howardbrown.org](http://www.howardbrown.org)

A Howard Brown legal presentation for the LGBT community. RSVP at [rsvp@howardbrown.org](mailto:rsvp@howardbrown.org) or call Hope at (773) 388-8906.

## VAP Lecture Series – Art and Politics: Andrea Bowers and Marcos Ramirez ERRE

11/15, 6pm  
SAIC auditorium, 280 South Columbus Drive  
Co-sponsored by Gallery 400, UIC

Los Angeles-based artist Andrea Bowers’ work is situated at the intersection of art and activism. Marcos Ramirez ERRE creates large-scale public installations informed by a political and social consciousness and addresses the dynamics of the border between the United States and Mexico.

For more information call (312) 443-3711 or email [events@saic.edu](mailto:events@saic.edu)

## “Oligarchy and Elite Rule,” Jeff Winters, Department of Political Science Faculty and Fellows Colloquium

11/16, 12pm  
BCICS Conference Room, 1902 Sheridan Rd, Northwestern University  
[www.cics.northwestern.edu](http://www.cics.northwestern.edu)

## VAP Lecture Series – Art and Politics: Andy Bichlbaum from the YES MEN

11/ 28, 6pm  
SAIC auditorium, 280 South Columbus Drive

The Yes Men are a group of culture jamming activists who practice what they call “identity correction” by pretending to be powerful people and spokespersons for prominent organizations. They create and maintain fake websites similar to ones they want to spoof, and then they accept invitations received on their websites to appear at conferences, symposia, and TV shows.

Admission: \$5 per person for general public; \$3 per person for SAIC alumni, non-SAIC students, and seniors; Free for students, faculty, and staff of the Art Institute of Chicago. For more information call 312.443-3711 or email [events@saic.edu](mailto:events@saic.edu)

## Conference : “The Rise and Decline of Imperial Leadership” Keyman Family Program in Modern Turkish Studies

11/30, 8am–8pm  
[http://www.bcics.northwestern.edu/Events\\_Speaker\\_Keyman.html](http://www.bcics.northwestern.edu/Events_Speaker_Keyman.html)

This conference will try to reset the agenda for the investigation of a competitive model of the rise and decline of Empires using a comparative approach that centers on the particulars of economic leadership in the Ottoman Empire, the Spanish Empire, the British Empire and their Dutch and French rivals.