Theory and Practice of Direct Action

Thursday, September 17th
Reception 6:00; Panel 6:30-8:30 pm
Cape Cod Lounge, UMass Amherst

Direct action—from sit-ins, occupations, and blockades to tree-spiking, theft of government documents, and Internet hacktivism—has played a crucial but changing role in U.S. political movements from the mid-20th century to today. STPEC is proud to host a panel discussion with four activists and organizers from the Pioneer Valley who have participated in direct action to resist war, torture, racism, police violence, home foreclosures, and nuclear power. Their experiences shed light on the different philosophies that have guided direct action over time and on the different risks and stakes for activists based on race, gender, sexuality, age, and class.

Moderated by Dan Clawson, Professor of Sociology, UMass; longtime activist and union organizer

Panelists:
Karen Gladden and Rose Smith: Springfield No One Leaves: eviction blockades and protests to stop home foreclosures;
Vanessa Gonzalez: organizing against police violence, institutional racism, and the carceral state; solidarity with Palestine;
Randy Kehler: organizing and activism against war and war taxes, nuclear weapons, nuclear power, governmental secrecy, and for democratically financed elections;
Paki Wieland: international solidarity in Afghanistan, Bahrain, Cuba, El Salvador, Gaza, Pakistan; activism against imperialism, torture, drones, nuclear power

Presented by the Social Thought and Political Economy Program (STPEC) at UMass Amherst as part of the Social Science Matters Series on Resistance, organized by the UMass College of Social and Behavioral Sciences