

## Arthur's take

# PLNU discussion on California's water crisis

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Sparkling cranberry juice was the beverage of choice at the school of

history and political science's "water policy forum." Thursday. As the drink wetted the tongues of the event's approximately 30 participants for what was to be a fruitful discussion on an inherently dry subject, organizers distributed booklets concerning a commodity, water, that acts in the world in ways no other liquid refreshments, like cranberry juice, ever could.

The organizers explained that, splitting into four or five groups, participants and group leaders would use the literature to guide a non-partisan discussion on sustainable possibilities for California's shrinking water supply.

Initially, participants were encouraged to share any firsthand experiences with California's drought. Sophomore nursing major Mel Hernandez was first to volunteer, explaining that, upon returning home in the Imperial Valley, a primarily agricultural community, for [season] break, he couldn't

help but notice many half-dry fields and a similarly high level of unemployment directly related to increased scarcity [or decreased availability] of water in the region.

In contrast, sophomore political science major Joe Speide illustrated the abundance of water in his home state of Michigan by mentioning that there they "turn on [their] sprinklers in the rain."

It's sobering, he said, to hear that across the country water is a serious problem.

The conversation proceeded to center around three main methods with which to address California's water crisis. The first, titled the "Just Add Water" approach, focuses on techniques like desalination, construction of new reservoirs and canals and improved wastewater processing to solve the issue. Some downsides of this approach include significant increases in taxes and spending for research and execution, as well as major time being added, effectively no incentive to conserve water.

The second approach, "Good To the Last Drop," relies on a decreased water-dependance in California. Actions based on this approach would include fines, incentives or other initiatives to conserve water on both personal-local and corporate levels. A significant issue with this approach, the group pointed out, is that in some areas water has run out now. If there's little to no H2O left to conserve, how are cutbacks even possible?

Even if this weren't an issue, senior political science major and history minor Clint Bekey, who has a self-proclaimed cynical view on human nature, offered that if only 42.2 percent of voters would turn out the one day of the year where change directly involves their participation, as was the case in 2014's general elections, then how can one expect the same population to make a significant, daily change in their water habits and lifestyle?

The final solution proposed by the literature, "You Can't Fool Mother Nature," suggested the institution of an independent "water cleaning-house," where experts instead of poli-

ticians would be funded and tasked with managing California's water situation in whatever way they found best. Although the idea of an apolitical body is attractive because the experts would not be distracted by re-election and partisanship, these scientists would not, as one group member pointed out, be held responsible to the women and men who elected them on a local level. Farmers in Imperial Valley, for example, would not no longer have a single representative with their interests in mind.

Many participants said they came out with more questions than answers, sharing an increased appreciation for the issue and the complexity of finding a solution. The thing is, California is running out of water now. And, although most participants agreed that an ideal solution to California's water shortage should involve a combination of the proposed solutions above, all agreed that change also needs to happen now.

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as intriguing in his supporting role.

The city of Bruges, Belgium is more than just the setting or the bearer of the film's title. In fact, it might as well be an additional character that never appears with its own dialogue. As a focal point, Ray and Ken con-stantly address Bruges. To say Ray hates Bruges is a gross understatement of the degree of which he detests the medieval city. As a film device, the narrow winding nature of the medieval streets could not be a better scene for the tale of two himen on the run.

The film is punchy and violent and not for the sensitive at heart. However, it is thrilling and a great watch with friends. Catch it on Netflix under the drama category now!



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[and] the risks of intimacy are far less than the risks of isolation."

After sharing her story, Rodgers was asked questions from both audience members and facilitators, Ross and Kendra Oakes Mueller.

"She radiates a sense of authenticity," said Ross Oakes Mueller, professor of psychology and facilitator of the conver-

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the Point Weekly