

Lives and Truth at Stake in the Niger Delta

A Sweet Crude Forum

The deeper story and larger issues behind the Sweet Crude film crew detention in Nigeria.

Monday, May 19th, 7:00 pm, Kane Hall 130, University of Washington

If atrocities are being committed and cameras aren't there to witness them, will anyone ever know to send help? Face down this question and others with the Sweet Crude crew and a panel of international journalists, activists and human rights experts at an interactive forum Monday evening, May 19th at Kane Hall.

Educate.

After five decades of devastation from oil extraction, the people of the Niger Delta are desperately impoverished and they've had enough. Environmental activism, peaceful protest and stakeholder dialogues have failed to bring about change. As a result, a new brand of militancy has emerged. The Nigerian government has responded by militarizing the region.

Agitate.

The Niger Delta is a powder keg on the brink. Increasingly, journalists attempting to document the truth of the situation have been targeted by the Nigerian government. On April 12th, Sweet Crude filmmaker Sandy Cioffi, producer Tammi Sims, cameramen Sean Porter and Cliff Worsham, and their colleague Joel Bisina were seized and illegally detained for a week. The government is now posturing to restrict access to the Delta, a move that will effectively ban journalists from the region.

Advocate.

In 2007, 86 journalists were killed—up 244% in five years. 887 were arrested, 1511 physically attacked or threatened, 67 kidnapped. How can we expect a peaceful resolution in the Niger Delta, or anywhere else in the world, if cameras aren't allowed to show what's happening? Given its strong diplomatic ties to Nigeria, why isn't the U.S. government speaking out against this content suppression and other human rights violations? How can we protect journalists and filmmakers who brave volatile environments to tell the critical stories of our time?

Panelists

Katrina Anderson – International Human Rights Attorney
Joel Bisina – Nigerian-American Founding Director, Niger Delta Professionals for Development
Sandy Cioffi – Filmmaker, Sweet Crude
Sowore Omoyele – Nigerian journalist, Sahara Reporters
Tom Rhodes – Africa Program Coordinator, Committee to Protect Journalists
Moderated by Marcie Sillman, Sr. Reporter KUOW

Tickets \$10 / \$5 students at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/35133 or at the door.

Doors open at 6:30 pm. More info at www.sweetcrudemovie.com.

This event is supported by Amnesty International Puget Sound; Committee to Protect Journalists; Seattle Arts & Lectures; Silverstein Thomas Rice and Associates; UW Center for Global Studies; UW Law, Societies and Justice Program; UW Program on the Environment; UW School of Law; UW Simpson Center for the Humanities.