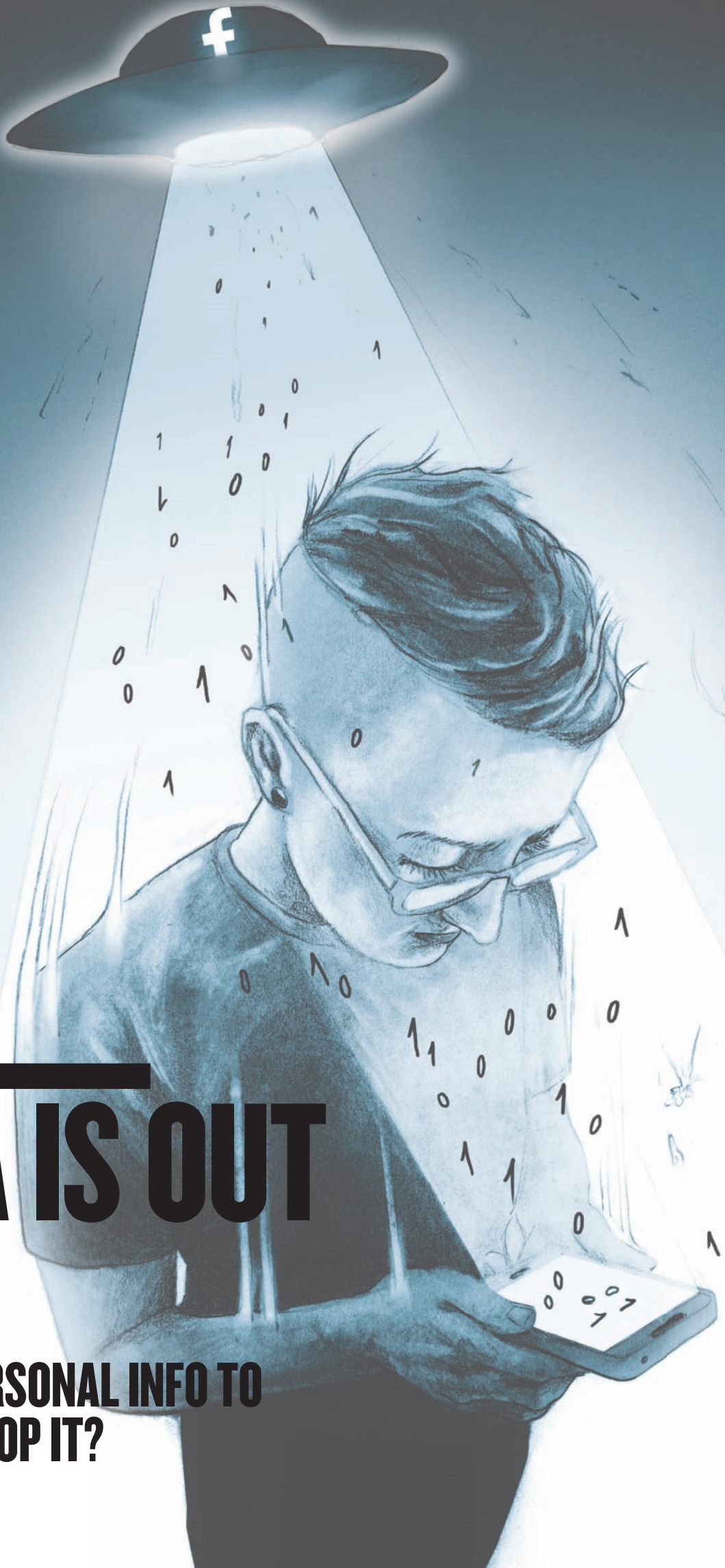


#235: MAY 2018 • INDYPENDENT.ORG

THE INDYPENDENT



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YOUR DATA IS OUT THERE

**FACEBOOK IS USING OUR PERSONAL INFO TO
MANIPULATE US. CAN WE STOP IT?**
PETER RUGH, P10



THE INDEPENDENT



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

THRU JULY 22

WED-SUN, 11AM-6PM •
\$0-\$16

**EXHIBITION: RADICAL
WOMEN: LATIN AMERI-
CAN ART, 1960-1985**
This exhibition explores
the groundbreaking con-
tributions to contemporary
art by Latin American and
Latina women. Featur-
ing 123 artists from 15
countries, the exhibition
focuses on the use of the
female body for political
and social critique and
artistic expression.
BROOKLYN MUSEUM
200 Eastern Pkwy, Bklyn

TUE MAY 1

12PM • FREE
**RALLY: FIGHT TOGETH-
ER! STRIKE TO WIN! MAY
DAY NYC 2018**
On International Workers'
Day, celebrate the col-
lective power of migrants
and workers in New York
and around the world.
Program begins at noon,
march at 5 pm.
Union Sq. S., Mnhtn

THU MAY 3

7PM-9PM • FREE
**TALK: WE CAN'T EAT
AUSTERITY: CRISIS AND
RESISTANCE IN PUERTO
RICO**
It's been more than six
months since Hurricane
Maria and although the
crisis in Puerto Rico
has left the headlines,

thousands of people on
the island still do not have
electricity and life there
has changed fundamen-
tally. Giovanni Roberto of
the Comedores Sociales
de Puerto Rico delivers an
eyewitness report.
HUNTER COLLEGE
(HUNTER WEST 507)
695 Park Ave., Mnhtn

MAY 4-MAY 22

Times vary • \$10-\$75
**FILM: WORKERS UNITE
FILM FESTIVAL**
Films from the United
States and around the
world that highlight and
publicize the struggles,
successes and daily lives
of workers in their efforts
to unite and organize for
better living conditions
and social justice.
CINEMA VILLAGE
22 E.12th St., Mnhtn

SAT MAY 5

11AM-6PM • FREE
FAIR: BRONX BOOK FAIR
The borough's premiere
literary event, this year
will feature poets Willie
Perdomo and Sokunthary
Svay and children's book
author Tiffany Papa-
george. Plus, readings,
workshops and panels.
**BRONX LIBRARY CEN-
TER/NEW YORK PUBLIC
LIBRARY**
310 E. Kingsbridge Rd.,
Bronx

SAT MAY 5

8PM-2AM • FREE
**PARTY: KARL MARX'S
200TH BIRTHDAY PARTY**
Join Sven-Eric Liedman,
author of *A World to Win:
The Life and Works of Karl
Marx*, and Charlie Post for
a conversation on Marx's
life and legacy. Book sign-
ing and birthday cake at 9
pm, dancing at 10 pm.
VERSO BOOKS
20 Jay St., Suite 1010,
Bklyn

MAY 6-MAY 7

SAT 7PM, SUN 6PM
**MUSIC: GRACE CHORALE
OF BROOKLYN: MESSI-
AHS FALSE AND TRUE**
A 75-member choir
performs Rex Isenberg's
libretto, which examines
the rise and fall of the
messianic figure in soci-
ety. The piece combines
texts from charismatic
leaders throughout history
with passages from the
Bible to explore the search
for meaning in times of
cultural crisis.
PLYMOUTH CHURCH
57 Orange St., Bklyn

THU MAY 10

6:30PM-8PM • \$5-\$20
**TALK: ISABEL WILKER-
SON IN CONVERSATION**
During the Great Migra-
tion, millions of African
Americans moved from
the rural south to urban
centers in the North and

West. This conversation,
with audience Q&A, will
explore how the Great
Migration transformed
our cities, politics and
culture with Isabel
Wilkerson, author of *The
Warmth of Other Suns*,
an authoritative history
of this pivotal moment in
American history.
FEDERAL HALL
26 Wall St., Mnhtn

THU MAY 10

7PM-9:30PM • FREE
**BOOKS: THE DIY PORN
REVOLUTION: AN IN-
TIMATE POV ON KINK,
SEX WORK, PORN AND
POLITICS**
Feminist porn icon Madi-
son Young reads from re-
cently published autobio-
graphical works that delve
deep into sexual worlds of
kink and sex work through
a feminist lens.
BLUESTOCKINGS BOOKS
172 Allen St., Mnhtn

FRI MAY 11

8PM • \$20
MUSIC: THE MELVINS
They inspired Nirvana and
took punk to new dimen-
sions. Don't miss these
grunge legends as they take
the stage in Williamsburg.
WARSAW CONCERTS
261 Driggs Ave., Bklyn

SAT MAY 12

1PM-6PM • FREE
MARKET: WITCHING

HERBS PLANT MARKET
Come make some plant
friends and channel
your inner green witch
at the occult bookshop
and spiritual community
space, Catland.
CATLAND BOOKS
987 Flushing Ave., Bklyn

THU MAY 17

7:30PM-9PM • FREE
**PANEL: CLIMATE
CHANGE: WHOSE STORY?**
Who is telling the story
of climate change and
how does it shape our
response? What stories
lead people to action? A
panel including former-
Green Party City Council
candidate Jabari Brisport,
Yessenia Funes of Earther
and 350.org communica-
tions director Lindsay
Meiman discuss strategies
for communicating the ur-
gency of climate change.
BRIC
647 Fulton St., Bklyn

MAY 19-MAY 20

SAT & SUN, 10AM-6PM
• FREE
**FESTIVAL: 9TH AVENUE
INTERNATIONAL FOOD
FESTIVAL**
A celebration of New
York's cultural diversity.
Awaken your taste buds
as you stroll between 43rd
and 57th Streets and taste
scrumptious foods from
the many vendors along
the way.



IT REALLY IS TRUE: Congratulations to Indy
Contributing Editor Nicholas Powers and his partner
Jamara Wakefield on the March 17 birth of their son, True
Coleman Powers.

MAY

UT CONNEWITZ PHOTO CREW

43rd St.—57th St., Mnhtn

AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM
47-29 32nd Pl, Queens

MON MAY 21

6:30PM • FREE
AWARDS: THE JAMES ARONSON AWARDS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE JOURNALISM & CARTOONING WITH A CONSCIENCE
The Aronson Awards honor original reporting that exposes injustice and its underlying causes and highlights possible reforms. This year's honorees include journalist, activist and educator Herb Boyd, author of *Black Detroit: A People's History of Self-Determination*, who will receive a lifetime achievement award.
HUNTER COLLEGE (LANG HALL, 4TH FL.)
69th St. Btw Lexington & Park Ave., Mnhtn

WED MAY 23

6:30PM—7:30PM • \$5
ART: CRITICAL WALK-THROUGH WITH KAMAU WARE OF BLACK GOTHAM EXPERIENCE
Artist and historian Kamau Ware will lead a guided tour of the exhibition "Holding Space: The Museum Collects." Ware will discuss founding Black Gotham Experience (BGX), an immersive visual storytelling project that celebrates the impact of the African diaspora on New York City through interactive walking tours, a developing series of photography-based graphic novels and events.

SUN MAY 27

11AM—5PM • FREE
FEST: 2018 LOISAIDA FESTIVAL
Since 1987, the Loisaída Festival has celebrated the diverse manifestations of Puerto Rican, Latino and all the Lower East Side's diverse cultures through music, cuisine and art.
6th St.—12th St.
Avenue C, Mnhtn

SUN MAY 27

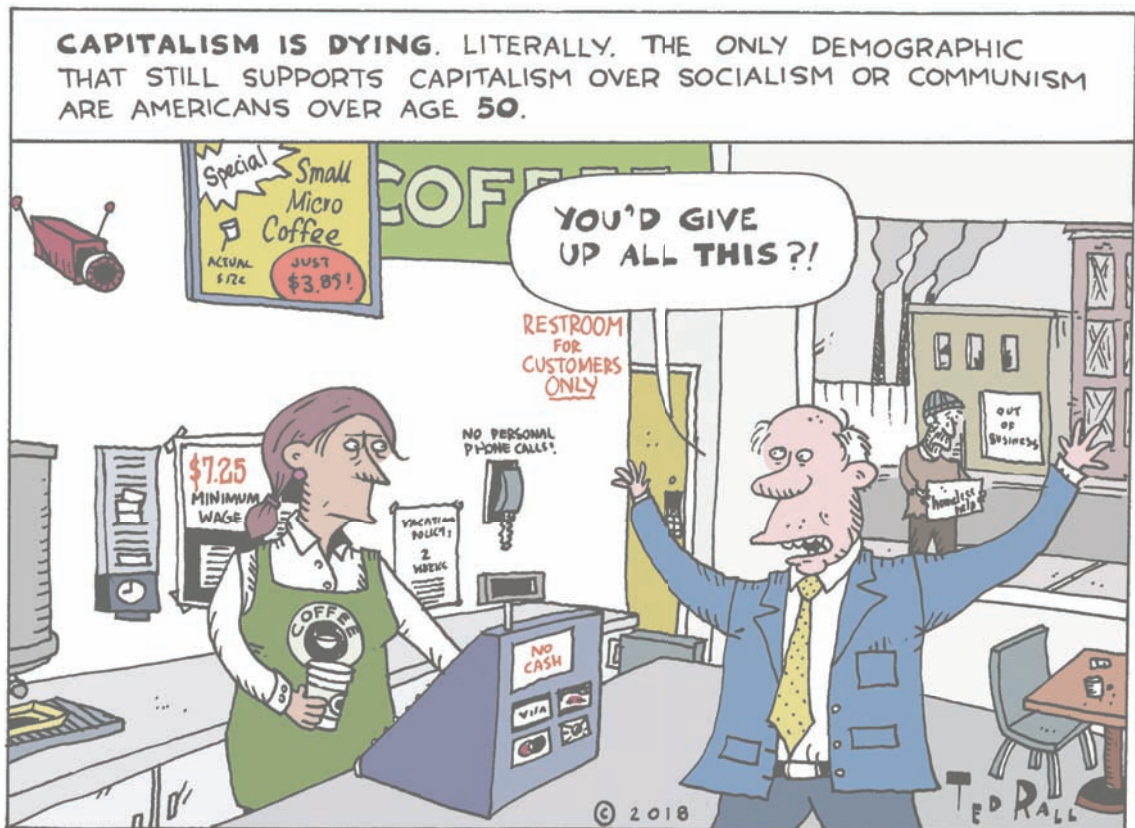
2PM—6PM • FREE
MEETUP: WIKIPEDIA EDIT-ATHON FOR ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE
Come together and work to address gaps and deficiencies across Wikipedia pages related to Asian-American literature. The goal is to bolster the presence of Asian-American writers and literary organizations and make this information accessible to all. No previous Wikipedia experience necessary. Bring a laptop.
ACE HOTEL NEW YORK
20 W. 29th St., Mnhtn

AMPED UP: The legendary grunge band The Melvins will perform in Williamsburg May 11.

STREET PARTY: Celebrate the diverse cultures of the Lower East Side on May 27 at the Loisaída Festival.



RYAN JOHN LEE



TED RALL

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Public defenders are standing up for their undocumented clients in more ways than one.

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The city may cut a key source of funding for adult literacy programs after Gov. Cuomo recently passed on more of the bill for subway repairs.

GUMMING UP THE WORKS, P5

The Trump administration is sabotaging the refugee settlement program from within.

MARIA'S MIGRANTS, P6

Puerto Rican evacuees in New York are struggling to rebuild their lives months after a category 4 hurricane struck their island.

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What changes should be made to prevent the NYPD from killing more unarmed civilians in the future?

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The future of New York's quasi-third party hangs in the balance.

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Uzodinma Iweala's new novel explores the intersection of race, tradition and sexual identity through teenage eyes.

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Jeanne Theoharis puts fact before fable in *A History More Beautiful & Terrible*.

TRUMP HELP HOTLINE, P18

Reverend Billy on sacrifice, climate change, and who exactly needs an anti-racial bias class at Starbucks.



ICE BREAKERS

BY JESSE RUBIN

The increasing detention of undocumented immigrants inside New York City courthouses is spurring protests from the public defenders who represent them. Immigrants make up a large percentage of public defender clients and their attorneys say Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is violating their clients' rights by preventing them from attending court hearings without fear of apprehension.

Undocumented immigrants often arrive to court for low-level offenses, only to find federal agents waiting for them.

Alejandra Lopez of the Immigrant Defense Project told *The Independent* that so far this year her organization has documented 41 courthouse arrests statewide, including 31 in the city. "This is a 70 percent increase from the same time period last year," Lopez said.

During the first year of the Trump administration ICE made 144 courthouse arrests in New York State, 97 of which were in the city's courthouses. There were just 11 such recorded incidents in 2016.

In response to ICE's increased presence in the halls of justice, attorneys with the Legal Aid Society have staged a series of walkouts with more planned for the future.

"Public defenders were just tired of having their clients taken away from them and having their due process denied," said Alexi Shalom, an organizer for the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (ALAA).

Legal Aid Society attorneys, as well as lawyers with Bronx Defenders and Brooklyn Defender Services, have walked out of courthouses six times so far this year.

Critics have denounced the temporary strikes, accusing attorneys of abandoning their clients. "There is no justification for walking out on clients during court hours," Kim Livingston, a spokesperson for the Queens DA's office, told *The Indy*. In April, court administrators took the unusual step of assigning 10 Legal Aid clients in Queens to new attorneys.

"If anything, we are representing our clients through these walkouts," Shalom argues, adding that none of Legal Aid's clients are left without representation, since the walkouts have occurred during the lunch hour with supervisors

assigned to clients in the meantime.

There are other means of protecting immigrants in the courtroom, but they require cooperation between prosecutors and the presiding judge.

"What we usually do when we know there's a client that's going to be arrested by ICE is we try to argue for some type of low-level bail," says Legal Aid attorney

Pauloma Martinez. By remaining in the city's custody, clients avoid federal arrest. It's a bizarre situation in which attorneys are forced to stop defending their client's innocence and instead must advocate for them to go to jail as a means of escaping deportation.

This strategy is not ironclad. When she spotted ICE agents waiting in the wings for two of her clients at the Kew Gardens courthouse Martinez sought bail. However, an assistant DA argued against it in one the two cases, leading to a client's apprehension.

"For what reason is an assistant district attorney not arguing for bail?" Martinez asked. In situations that don't involve ICE, for a low-level legal citizen drug offender for example, "they almost always argue for bail."

"[W]e believe there's only been one occasion where we were asked to set bail, and did not do so because it did not meet the criteria for setting bail, which is to ensure an individual's return to court," said Kim Livingston of the Queens DA's office.

In multiple states, the American Civil Liberties Union and other legal groups are challenging ICE's court presence, arguing it is a violation of states' rights and that it impedes access to the courts.

On April 25, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced he would sign an executive order requiring ICE to obtain a court order before making arrests in the state's courthouses but immigration advocates remain skeptical the order will stem the tide of detentions. ICE shows no signs of turning away from New York's courtrooms. As *The Indy* was going to press immigration agents made two separate arrests at courtrooms in Staten Island and Manhattan.

OUT OF ORDER:

Legal Aid attorneys in Lower Manhattan join a citywide walkout against the presence of immigration agents in New York courthouses, March 15.

IRYNA YAFIMCHYK/WORKING FAMILIES

THE ABCs OF AUSTERITY

ADULT LITERACY CLASSES FACE BUDGET AXE

BY LYDIA McMULLEN-LAIRD

Julio Forbes sneaks into the intermediate ESL class almost half an hour late, red folder in hand and ready to learn. He joins the class of students from Colombia, Russia and Korea. Forbes is a 35-year-old a doctor from the Dominican Republic who's come to the United States looking for a better life. But he's unemployed at the moment — and he won't have much luck in the job market until he improves his English.

Forbes is not alone. He's one of the 2.2 million people in New York City who lack English proficiency or a high school diploma. The \$90 million dollars required to run adult literacy programs, which comes from a combination of city, state and federal funding, serves 61,000 people, a mere 3 percent of those in need.

An additional \$12 million dollars was added last year for adult literacy programs, but advocates are worried some of their programs may be in jeopardy after the release of Mayor de Blasio's preliminary budget for the 2019 fiscal year failed to include the additional funding. The New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy has been organizing rallies to demand the restoration of the funding.

The Coalition is not just advocating for additional 2019 funding, but for multi-year funding that would allow programs to thrive in the long term. According to a statement on the Coalition's recommendations for the 2019 fiscal year, "One-year funding makes it difficult to operate programs... funding instability means programs cannot hire full-time staff with benefits and lose their best teachers as they search for more stable employment."

Forbes struggles through the exercise on past participles. "Have you ever eaten frog's legs?" he asked his classmate Carlos Mendez, a 40-year-old porter who is hoping to improve his English so he can get a promotion at work. "No I haven't" answers Mendez. Their class meets three times a week in the evenings at the International Center of the Catholic Charities Community Services in downtown Manhattan.

But if the funding isn't reinstated, people like Forbes and Mendez could lose access to classes. "That would be horrible for the people who come to this country and they don't speak English," said Mendez when asked how he would feel if

his class were cut. "It's going to cut all our opportunities to improve our lives. Taking public transportation, attending parent-teacher conferences — everything is harder if we don't speak English. It's something that is going to affect our lives."

The cuts follow on the heels of a state budget deal hammered out at the end of March by Gov. Andrew Cuomo and top legislative leaders that forced the city to allocate an additional \$418 million toward subway repairs that previously had been New York State's responsibility. But the \$12 million dollars of additional city funding for adult literacy "is a small amount in the overall budget that goes a long way," says Elaine Roberts, director of programs at the International Center. Some adult literacy programs also receive state and federal funding, but many of the classes at the International Center, including the ESL class Forbes and Mendez are taking, are completely funded by the city, said Roberts.

The final city budget won't be approved until June. In the meantime, advocates say they will keep fighting.

LANGUAGE LEARNERS:

Julio Forbes (center) and Carlos Mendez take a break after their intermediate ESL class.

LYDIA McMULLEN-LAIRD

WALL OF NEGLECT

HOW THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION IS DISMANTLING THE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT SYSTEM

BY RICHARD SALAME

April 1 marked the halfway point in the federal government's fiscal year and, so far, the United States has only admitted 10,548 refugees, placing it on track to fall far short of its already record-low admission ceiling of 45,000 individuals. Resettlement workers and refugee advocates say that this is further evidence of the Trump administration's deliberate efforts to sabotage the refugee resettlement system now and for years to come.

"The program is being torn down from the top," says Dr. Shelly Callahan, executive director of the Mohawk Valley Resource Center in Utica, which works to resettle refugees.

Since 1980, the president has set the cap on refugee admissions every fall for the fiscal year running from October to September. President Trump's 45,000 person ceiling is the lowest ever, down from 110,000 during President Obama's last year.

Workers for the nonprofits that handle refugee resettlement claim the administration is deliberately slowing down the processing of cases as part of its effort to cause long-term damage to the country's refugee resettlement infrastructure. In the past year, the administration has introduced time-consuming and unnecessary additional screening procedures. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, an office of the Department of Homeland Security, has also reassigned "about 100" out of 197 Refugee Corps officers to the Asylum Division, according to a spokesperson.

While similar to refugee officers in some ways, asylum officers do not conduct refugee interviews overseas, the first step in the lengthy and complex process by which individuals are approved for resettlement to the United States. With fewer refugee officers screening applicants overseas, the entire pipeline is slowed down, with dramatic effects.

The U.S. government works with nine private non-profit organizations, known as voluntary agencies, to assign refugees to host communities around the United States. Voluntary agencies receive \$2,125 in federal funding for each refugee they resettle and administer networks of local offices that provide services directly to the refugees. All of the approximately 320 local offices provide new arrivals with housing and social services that include language training, job-search assistance, school-enrollment assistance and help integrating into the community during their first months in the United States.

In practice, virtually all resettlement offices also provide a variety of services to other immigrant, minority and vulnerable communities alongside refugees, and assist refugees beyond the first months of resettlement. They rely on private donations for these programs.

In December, the State Department informed the

voluntary agencies of its intention to close all local affiliate offices that are not projected to receive at least 100 refugees in fiscal year 2018. According to a plan drawn up by the voluntary agencies and obtained by Reuters, some 74 offices are expected to be closed this year.

"We're trying to look into what would be the best make up of our network and how do we change what currently exists into something more sustainable that can still meet its moral and legal commitments," says Erol Kekic, executive director of Church World Service, one of the national voluntary agencies. Church World Service has closed 17 offices this fiscal year, bringing its total to just 19.

In New York State, home to one of the largest immigrant and refugee populations in the country, the closures could hit the resettlement sector hard. The state has 23 resettlement offices, 12 of which Reuters says will be closing this year. No one in the resettlement sector knows which offices will be closing, but several officials interviewed for this article reported layoffs at their organizations.

As of March 31, New York State has only been assigned 652 refugees by the State Department, far from the number needed to maintain the existing network. Despite this low figure, New York remains a major destination for refugees previously resettled in other U.S. states, as well as people applying for asylum on arrival at its busy airports — numbers that do not factor into State Department funding and closure decisions but represent constituencies that need many of the same services that refugees require and that resettlement offices are currently equipped to provide.

By throttling the pipeline, the State Department is creating the low numbers that it will then use to close offices in the name of cost-saving efficiency. It is also forcing staffing cuts at the agencies, whose funding depends on refugee arrivals.

LONG-TERM DAMAGE

The layoffs and closures being engineered by the Trump administration will impact the refugee resettlement system for years to come. Highly-skilled and specialized workers leaving the sector today will be hard to replace if and when a new administration restores the government's commitment to humanitarianism. Educational and cultural programs cannot be revived at the drop of a hat, especially if the backgrounds of the new refugees differ from those of the earlier ones.

Perhaps even more concerning is the loss of the slowly-earned trust that makes agencies more efficient.

"[Resettlement offices] have already built up trust with communities, people know to come to us," says Jim Morris, vice president of the Catholic Family Center in Rochester, New York. His organization and others like it need to establish relationships with refugee communities and state agencies in order to act as a facilitator between the two and ensure that refugees don't get lost in bureaucracies they may not yet understand, he says. These relationships allow them to intervene early and prevent the need for more expensive and less successful interventions later on.

A closing office is required to notify its active clients but a larger and less defined network of people count on it being part of the community. "The resettlement agency isn't just there to serve the client," says Kelly Agnew-Barajas, director of refugee resettlement at Catholic Charities in Yonkers. "It's also there to serve as a hub on refugee issues. People in universities, public schools and health care settings regularly come into contact with refu-

HUMANITARIAN NETWORKS ARE UNRAVELING AS REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PLUMMET.

gees and call the agency. It's a community resource that's especially knowledgeable."

In response to the Trump administration's attacks, many Americans have rallied in support of the local resettlement offices in their communities. Shelly Callahan of the Mohawk Valley Resource Center says her organization received the most donations ever last year and there has been a surge in volunteers. But, she says, "The State Department is dismantling the program from the inside out. I can have all of Utica hit the streets in support, but it's not going to change the fact that overseas processing has come to a halt."

Still, she says that her agency is standing strong and not going anywhere, no matter what the current administration dictates. "We're fired up in a way we haven't been, maybe ever," she says.



DANIEL IENAO

'I DO NOT HAVE A ROOF OVER MY HEAD'

BY ERIN SHERIDAN

On the evening of April 18, the sun is just beginning to set over the Penn South complex in Chelsea as Andrea Tejada, Branda Suarez and Sofia Miranda walk into the colorful 17th floor apartment of Lizette Colón, a counselor and union chapter chair at Hostos Community College in the Bronx.

The three women, who have been living without permanent housing since they left Puerto Rico after Hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated the island last September, are preparing to speak outside City Hall the next day. The event was organized to protest the impending eviction of 83 Puerto Rican families on April 20, after the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declined to renew housing assistance it distributed through its Temporary Shelter Assistance (TSA) program.

"I do not have a roof over my head. Not even here, not even in Puerto Rico," Tejada remarks in Spanish.

Their mood is brighter than would be expected. Earlier that afternoon, it had been rumored that the city would temporarily foot the bill for housing, preventing families from becoming homeless until the next TSA renewal deadline in May. But the three women and many of the 2,600 Puerto Rican hurricane refugees here still lack permanent housing and adequate help to navigate the welfare system, deal with language barriers and get psychological support.

They call it "the limbo," says Colón. On April 5, four months after their arrival in the city, Tejada and her four-year-old daughter, Gadieliz, were evicted from their hotel room and placed in the Bronx's PATH shelter, only to be later removed on the grounds that Tejada had to exhaust support from all other programs before she could enter the city shelter system.

"Already twice they have told me to pack because they would throw me out," Tejada says, through Ana Lopez, a professor of Latin American and Caribbean studies at Hostos who helped with translation that evening. "And my daughter says 'Mama, do I help you pack again? Are they going to kick us out?' And then she says, 'Imagine me, every time I put the card — is it going to turn green? Is it going to stay red?'" The electronic key cards they use to get into their hotel room turn green to let them in and red if access is barred.

"They've had to navigate the whole welfare and public agency system here and they've been thrown from one agency to the other — it's like ping-pong," Lopez, translating for Miranda, says. "And it is really exhausting."

"I spoke to someone from legal services that is servicing families in the Bronx," she adds. "And she said that the hotels get \$8,000 a month for housing them. With \$8,000 a month, these families can have permanent housing — for less."

Currently in New York State there 157 families checked into hotels under FEMA's TSA program. Each family receives some money through public assistance

and SNAP benefits. Sitting at Colón's kitchen table, Miranda says she receives \$145 every two weeks for herself and her son. Suarez, who left two daughters behind in Puerto Rico in order to seek medical care for her 80-year-old grandmother, who suffers from dementia, says she gets \$178 bi-weekly. According to FEMA spokesperson Daniel Llargues, any rental assistance families may be eligible for through FEMA's Individual Assistance program is based on a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) assessment of market values in Puerto Rico, which likely would not cover the cost of rent in New York City.

The women have struggled to find a way to produce a stable income. Miranda is working as a home attendant, but had to cut her hours "because when she was working extra, she didn't qualify for the rest of the services," Colón says, translating what Miranda told her. "It's a catch-22. If you work, then you don't have the services. So she has opted out because she has a son in school."

"And Andrea, she has a daughter," she adds. "The daughter is in school, and she's trying to get a job. But then between all the things that you have to do with so many appointments, there's no way that you can keep a job. She has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice."

Living in hotel rooms also causes other problems. "They cannot cook, because they don't have a kitchen," Colón says. "So it's a catch-22, because the money doesn't last."

The regularly threatened housing-aid cutoffs hit women and children the hardest and show the government's disrespect for Puerto Ricans, argues Lopez. "In other states and even in New York, hurricane-disaster evacuees did not have a term limit in housing aid," she says. "They were put in a hotel until housed in permanent housing. No one was ever kicked out. So it appears Puerto Rico is not treated with same respect and dignity."

State Senator Gustavo Rivera (D-Bronx) calls FEMA's decision to end TSA aid "the latest example of their inadequate and unacceptable response to this crisis."

Tejada struggled to find food in the months following the storm. Her apartment in San Juan was flooded and condemned for being unfit for human habitation, and power outages were frequent. The final straw was when her daughter saw three muggers kill an older man.

"The little one saw it from the balcony," she says, translated by Lopez. "They were on the balcony getting air, it was dark, and there was no electricity. She actually saw the man get killed in front of her. And she remembers."

The refugees got a temporary reprieve on April 20, when FEMA, responding to a request from Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Roselló, announced it would

extend TSA funding to Puerto Rican families for another month.

Peter Gudaitis, executive director of New York Interfaith Disaster Services (NYDIS), argues that while it is legally the federal government's responsibility to assist evacuees, the city's response has also been inadequate.

In February, it quietly closed the emergency service center at the Julia De Burgos Performance and Arts Center in East Harlem, which had been set up to help evacuees from Puerto Rico and other hurricane-devastated areas last September.

"People that chose to come to New York and are here in New York are New York City's problem, whether they get federal funding or not," Gudaitis says. "Because the alternative is just that they end up on the street or in the shelter system, or they have mentally ill children, or they're getting dumped on hospitals if they have medical problems and they can't pay their bills."

While organizations like NYDIS can help families move into apartments with rental deposits, furniture and transportation, applicants have to prove that they can afford to pay the rent before they can access those services, Gudaitis notes. And Puerto Rico has yet to be rebuilt, with another storm sea-

STORM-TOSSED PUERTO RICAN FAMILIES LOOK TO START ANEW IN NYC.

son coming in a few months.

"The governor of Puerto Rico says they want people to return to the island. Return to what exactly? A damaged home with no power, no access to water? A hospital that's two or three hours away that's barely functioning on generators still?" he says. "It's like sending people back to a war zone."

Miranda says she's not going back. "She said that in two months she was able to complete a home attendant course, she got certified and it is with a lot of pleasure that she will be taking care of the elderly," Lopez translates. "Here she says there is an assurance of electricity, water. She's going to continue to study. And her son is going to school and that's a sure thing — in Puerto Rico the schools are closed. She feels she can reach certain goals here."



AMONG FRIENDS: Lizette Colón (far right) hosts a gathering of Puerto Rican women at her apartment to prepare for a rally outside City Hall.

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SEEING GREEN

DEVELOPER ENVISIONS 30-STORY TOWERS BY BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN. NEIGHBORS SAY, NO WAY.

BY RICO CLEFFI

Mega towers, shady developers, community resistance — it's a story so commonplace these days it is almost a bad joke. But this time the developers might be aiming bit too high, pushing the community a little too far.

Bruce Eichner of Continuum Company, LLC wants to build a series of towers at the million-square-foot site of spice importer Morris J. Golombek Inc at the southernmost section of Franklin Avenue in Brooklyn. The development — up to six buildings, with at least two in the 30-story range — could block out the sun that shines on the prized foliage growing a block away at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. So far, the Botanic Garden has been silent about this project and did not return requests for comment.

Beyond the garden's walls, Eichner's plans have stoked fears of more gentrification and displacement in Crown Heights and nearby Flatbush.

The developer claims half the planned apartments would be below market rate, though it remains unclear what percent of the development would actually be affordable for neighborhood residents. Market-rate metrics include New York City's wealthier outlying enclaves, tilting the scales toward higher incomes. Eichner also appears to be attempting to head off community opposition by securing construction financing from the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust, in exchange for a commitment to use union construction labor.

Continuum Company referred *The Independent's* inquiries to Lupe Todd-Medina, a public-relations operative with a history of working with politicians of color. The move signals that Eichner is looking to pursue a strategy similar to that taken by the backers of the Bedford Union Armory project, green-lit by the City Council last year. BFC Partners presented the Armory development as beneficial to the surrounding Caribbean neighborhood and pledged to include a recreation center, space for local nonprofits and "affordable housing," in addition to luxury condos. Todd-Medina insisted to *The Indy* that "there's nothing to report" about the spice factory development. The project is "fluid," she said.

Still, community members have no shortage of concerns about Eichner, who has made headlines in recent weeks for suing his partners over the funding of a condo tower in the Flatiron District. Eichner has the Trumpian distinction of having failed in the casino business and of being forced to settle for fraud with New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. He paid out \$7.5 million in 2014 and was barred from the timeshare industry as part of the deal with Schneiderman, who accused the real estate tycoon of deploying "bait and switch" tactics to lure buyers to his Manhattan Club in Midtown.

Brooklyn's Community Board 9 Land Use Committee announced at an April meeting that the development was not something it could support in its current form. Michael Liburd, the committee's chair, was unable to say what an acceptable proposal from Eichner would look like.

"Unanimously, the committee said. 'It makes no sense,'" Liburd told *The Indy*. "It's too dense, it's too tall." But Liburd stresses that even if the community board as a whole decides against the project, it is only an advisory body. The board also opposed the Bedford Union Armory project, yet the plan was ultimately pushed by City Councilmember Laurie Cumbo.

Samuel Stein, who teaches urban studies at Hunter College, points to the difficulties of organizing community opposition to this type of development. In the end, all New York City's community boards have are Robert's Rules of Order. Its votes constitute recommendations. The real decision-making power rests in the hands of individual council-

members, since the City Council tends to follow the lead of those who represent the districts where any given development is proposed.

"However the local councilmember votes, almost everybody, if not everybody, will vote along with it," Stein told *The Indy*. "For people on the ground who are looking to influence things, they're the one to focus on. Councilmembers in rich neighborhoods are fiercely protective, and don't necessarily need stuff from the city, whereas the ones in poor neighborhoods need stuff, and the only way they're going to get it is by allowing a rezoning and getting all these goodies on the side."

Targeted grassroots campaigns can be effective, though. Stein gives the example of Councilmember Ydanis Rodriguez in Washington Heights, who refused to support the Sherman Plaza rezoning project in 2016 when local residents brought their concerns to him. "There was so much community opposition that he backed off."

"There's a broader issue that's not being addressed in all this urban development that's going on and that's displacement," Liburd said. "It's really virtually impossible to separate new development from displacement. And as you bring these new buildings to the table, lots of folks get displaced and the current landlords are very aggressive about getting people out."

Crown Heights has been embroiled in a battle over development and zoning for years. Divisions exist between newer and longtime residents, homeowners and tenants, black and Caribbean residents and recent white arrivals.

So far, the most vocal opposition to the spice factory development is Movement to Protect the People (MTOPP) which has also been going by the moniker "Flower Lovers Against Corruption" of late. The group has been active in keeping the spice factory fight in public view but has also alienated many in the community with explosive rhetoric and aggressive tactics that have verged on performance art. Depending on your perspective, MTOPP in action at Community Board meetings is either speaking truth to power or sowing chaos. The group's leader, Alicia Boyd, and a small cadre of followers, cajole, heckle, interrupt, shout, chant and make sure they are heard above everyone else.

One 40-year resident of the neighborhood told *The Indy* she worries MTOPP's slash-and-burn tactics actually keep others from participating in the meetings.

On April 12, when Michael Liburd announced the Land Use Committee's decision not to support Eichner's proposal, many took it as a victory — a temporary win, but one that nonetheless added additional fodder to arguments against the development. Yet as soon as Liburd uttered a few words about the need for a wider discussion about zoning in Crown Heights in order to ward off future proposals like Eichner's, MTOPP activists encircled him. "We don't want it," they chanted. The police were called, the meeting adjourned.

"This is the time when pushback can be the most effective," Boyd told *The Indy*, explaining her tactics.

Meanwhile, the city has done little to assuage concerns about displacement. At a recent meeting in Bushwick, Winston Von Engel, director of City Planning for Brooklyn, reportedly told residents, "Our intention is to preserve the character and the buildings, not the people in them." Von Engel wasn't merely channeling the old Reaganite canard about the neutron bomb killing people while leaving private property intact. He was reinforcing the notion that City Planning is tone deaf, out of touch with the desires of New York communities.

And while the vast majority of New York's community boards voted against Mayor Bill de Blasio's Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH), it was pushed through the City Council anyway. The plan allows for



Aquatic H

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LEAF US ALONE:

Crown Heights residents worry the planned towers could blockout the sun from the nearby Botanical Garden — and raise their rents.

OUTRAGED:

Developer Bruce Eichner's plan has sparked vociferous protests at the normally staid meetings of Brooklyn's Community Board 9.

Continued on page 16

HOW CAN WE MAKE THE POLICE LESS DEADLY?

INTERVIEWS BY APOORVA TADEPELLI
PHOTOS BY ELIA GRAN

More than 390 people have been killed nationwide by police in the first four months of this year according to killedbypolice.net. Among the victims is Saheed Vassell, 34, who was gunned down in the streets of Crown Heights, Brooklyn on April 4 when police opened fire within seconds of encountering him wielding a metal pipe. The incident was the latest in a long line of NYPD shootings and ignited protests that drew hundreds of people. We asked a cross-section of New Yorkers passing through Union Square how the problem of police shootings should be addressed. We heard a wide range of responses.

ROY

Williamsburg

Officers should be taught practical self defense — to use their hands, or a police baton — so they can neutralize or take down someone. Even if you shoot you don't have to kill. They always claim that they didn't know [what their victim was holding] was not a gun — there's no such thing. They know what a gun looks like. There definitely should be less guns. It's possible to have a police force without guns. They can have tasers.

FADWA

Midtown West

I'm originally from France, and there even though there is a lot of police violence, fatalities are avoided. Fatalities happen because people react immediately. But proximity to the community gives knowledge of the area, which makes their reactions more sensitive.

HAROON CHAUDERY

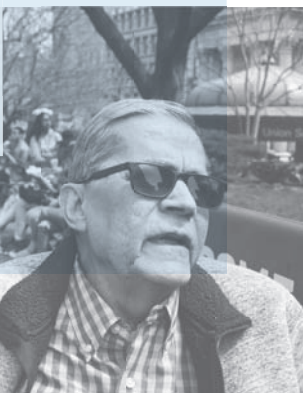
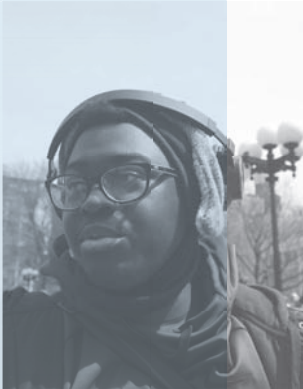
East Village

I work in artificial intelligence. It's possible to have technology to help police officers make decisions in escalated moments. Maybe down the road, someone could develop a pair of glasses that could alert the officer when the probability of a suspect holding a gun is high. Of course, this solution would probably bring along a host of new issues, including privacy concerns if the technology was also used for things like person identification using face detection algorithms.

ALBOR RUIZ

Woodside

Police don't respect citizens. They're holding a cell phone, or a wallet, and the police just react. The police has become more of a military force than a community force. They need more training. The police used to do community service. The way they dress is not appropriate for a city. It's more appropriate for a war.



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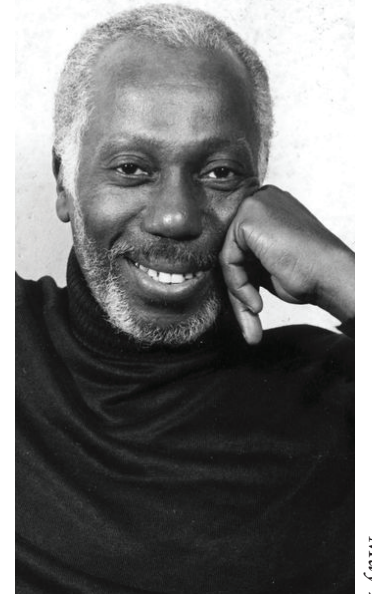
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FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

UNFRIENDING ZUCKERBERG

BY PETER RUGH

You are in an abusive relationship. It eats up your time, saps you of energy, takes you away from meaningful interactions with friends and family, prevents you from fully experiencing the things you enjoy most.

The man in your life emotionally manipulates you, feeds you lies, tests your loyalty, decides what you will know and what you won't. Sex isn't his thing. He disapproves of nudity, even implied nudity; has banned bellies, buttocks, cleavage from his presence. No, he's a voyeur, but it's wholesome domination that turns him on. He watches you in silent ubiquity, secreting away your wants, needs, your most minute behaviors in his seemingly infinite memory. You have made him rich and powerful and yet you hardly know him.

Sure, there are others. Jeff from Amazon. Sundar from Google. But he is the hardest to imagine breaking up with. You will be cut off from all your friends. He is creepy but you have come to rely on him.

Assuming you are one of the more than 2 billion active users of his social media platform, I am referring, of course, to your ongoing affair with Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. Zuckerberg, the archetypal wonderboy coder, who, we are often reminded, founded the worldwide social network in his Harvard dorm room and who rose in the late aughts to become one of Silicon Valley's most powerful men. His famous hoodie seemed to convey a rebel's disregard for appearance with the monkish work ethic of one perennially hunched over a computer screen, devoted to his company's mission of empowering people "to share and make the world more open and connected."

Valued at no more than \$2 billion in 2006, Facebook is worth an estimated half a trillion dollars today. Zuckerberg was savvy. He refused early buyout offers from Viacom and Yahoo but welcomed investment. He shunned ads, opting to prioritize user experience, until the company finally went public in 2012. Like a typical abuser, he charmed us first, drew us by the millions onto his platform with the flowery promise of universal kinship and locked us in with cheap but persistent appeals to our all-to-human need for validation. Before we knew it our data was in the hands of shady private spy agencies like Cambridge Analytica and God knows who else.

Then there was Zuckerberg on television, his trademark cowl replaced by a suit and tie, on the CEO apology tour. Facebook will take a "broader" view of security in the future but the company is still dedicated to connecting people, he told lawmakers on Capitol Hill, all the while wearing the perma-smile of a man gradually becoming a happy-face emoji.

Astra Taylor, author of *The People's Platform: Taking Back Power and Culture in the Digital Age*, has a dim view of Facebook and other online platforms that purport to be neutral conduits of human connectivity. "These are shopping malls," she told *The Independent*. "They're not public squares."

You might be saying to yourself, "Alright, so Zuckerberg wants to sell me jeans, some hacker in Moscow wants me to click on a phony story about Hillary Clinton practicing witchcraft. Big deal." Maybe you even think all that nonsense about Russia undermining our democracy is overblown. I mean Vladimir Putin didn't force Clinton to avoid campaigning in the Upper Midwest, did he? But the problem is more insidious than we have been led to believe. Our democracy is being undermined but Facebook itself is doing it, not to mention Google and Amazon, the big tech firms that increasingly mediate our reality and know things about us that we wouldn't tell our friends or families.

"Facebook and these big data people, they don't care about how you masturbate or something," says Douglas Rushkoff, who teaches media and digital economics at CUNY and is the

author of *Throwing Rocks at the Google Bus*. "They don't care about who you are seeing or what you are doing. They're using metadata. It's how fast you are moving from one geospot to the other. It's how quickly you swipe your emails. What's the order in which you look at different links? It's just data points that they need in order to clump you in with other people like you. And that's how they predict who you are and that's how they drive you to more extreme versions of yourself."

What does Facebook know about us? A lot more than what we like and share.

If you are reading this article at independent.org right now, that little "f" in the upper left corner of the page has probably told Facebook you are here. You don't even need to click on it. Obviously, it's not just *The Indy's* website. Think of all the times you've seen that "f" or that hitchhiker's thumb around the web. Millions of sites have installed snippets of Facebook code that on the front end invite you to promote their web pages, but on the back end feed Facebook your browsing history. It's not limited to the web either. If you've installed Facebook or another of Zuckerberg's platforms (Instagram, WhatsApp) on your smart phone, the GPS data tells wonderboy where you are at any given moment.

"The main thing that they are trying to do is to get you to behave more consistently with your statistical grouping," Rushkoff said.

If this sounds paranoid, well, just because you are paranoid that doesn't mean someone isn't following you. A 2016 Facebook document titled "FBLearn Flow" boasted that by using artificial intelligence, or machine learning, the company can "predict future behavior." Rushkoff gives a for-instance of what happens when Facebook, using big data analysis, suspects you are thinking of losing weight.

"If they've used big data analysis to determine that there is an 80 percent chance that you are going to go on a diet in the next three weeks, they're going to fill your news feed with advertisements and stories of people dying from being overweight — all the frightening images that they know help encourage you to go on a diet," said Rushkoff. "They're not doing it just to sell you the product of a particular diet company. They're doing it so that they can say that the rate of accuracy of their algorithm is not just 80 percent but 90 percent. It's that 20 percent of people who were going to do something different, who were going to discover something else, who were going to invent something, who were going to engage in anomalous human behavior. Those are the people that have to be stopped. They're trying to reduce human spontaneity, human choice."

The ramifications of targeted online advertising go well beyond the dieting industry. "In the build-up to 2008, some of the biggest online advertisers were banks and subprime mortgage lenders who were using lead generators to get people into these mortgages that were bad," notes Taylor. That was 10 years ago and targeted ads helped bring down the global economy. Imagine what they could accomplish today.

All media to one extent or another contains at least a whiff of persuasion, whether it is through outright argument or simply presenting information that could influence your behavior. But Facebook is a walled garden and much of the information landscape is collapsing around it. Advertisers have fled traditional media outlets, preferring instead Facebook's targeting algorithms, while those same traditional outlets have been forced to turn to Facebook themselves in order to reach their audience.

Sure, Facebook is about connecting people, but the company



restricts, manipulates and monetizes those connections. Beyond ads, its algorithms determine which posts are more likely to appear front and center in your news feed. It prioritizes posts by people who interact with the platform frequently over those who don't. The more you share, the more you like, the more you play Zuckerberg's game, the more visible you will appear on the platform to others. This addictive reward system drives Facebook's network effect. Together with WhatsApp and Instagram, Facebook accounts for more than a third of the world's web referral traffic.

And perhaps only with the exception of Google (or the NSA) does one institution know so much about so many people.

There are steps you can take to keep Zuckerberg from breathing down your neck. You can prevent his site from knowing everywhere you go at all times by changing the location settings on your phone and you can keep him off your tail on the web by editing the advertising settings on the site. It's also not a good idea to click that convenient "login with Facebook" button when you are setting up an account on another app like Airbnb or OkCupid, unless you want Zuckerberg to know your vacation plans or your dating preferences.

It might prove harder, however, to disentangle yourself from the web of for-profit data brokers that Facebook partners with to further hone its ad targeting ecosystem with information, primarily financial, and less likely to be public online. By working with data brokers, Facebook probably knows your household income, or, as one of 29,000 targeting categories Facebook offers advertisers puts it, whether you are a "frequent transactor at lower cost department or dollar stores."

On its site Facebook provides a list of the data providers it works with and links to their websites, where you can opt out. But the process is much more complicated than it is when changing your privacy settings on Facebook itself. As reporters for ProPublica noted in a 2016 investigation into the company's partnerships with big data providers, "opting out of Oracle's Datalogix, which provides about 350 types of data to Facebook according to our analysis, requires 'sending a written request, along with a copy of government-issued identification' in postal mail to Oracle's chief privacy officer."

So is it time to leave our man, to unfriend Zuckerberg, so to speak? Or will he change his lockdown? During his 10-hour performance in Washington, Zuckerberg offered one solution to a range of complaints raised by congressional inquisitors. From terrorist propaganda to misinformation campaigns, racist ads to security, the answer to all problems plaguing Facebook was the same: artificial intelligence. Rushkoff describes it as "techno-solutionism," "where you're just going to fix the problems of one technology by inventing another one, but it just distances you further and further from anything you understand."

Commentators have offered a range of solutions of their own. One idea is for Facebook users concerned about their privacy to pay something like a dollar a month for the service, allowing the platform to remain profitable without spying on us. Facebook would remain free to those who didn't fork up the cash, only those folks would still be subject to data collection.

Another idea is to simply nationalize the beast. "[I]n the past, natural monopolies like utilities and railways that enjoy huge economies of scale and serve the common good have been prime candidates for public ownership," Nick Srnicek, who teaches digital economy at King's College in London, commented in the *U.K. Guardian* recently. "The solution to our newfangled monopoly problem lies in this sort of age-old fix, updated for our digital age."

But such a solution would require a radical break with free market orthodoxy. While we're talking big ideas, Rushkoff suggests one way to fix Facebook is to render it open source, like Firefox or Open Office — software that is managed by a collective of programmers around the world. Such a solution would put the

monopoly's fate in the direct hands of its users and the people who program it rather than a shadowy data harvester, whether that be Zuckerberg or the U.S. government. Strip away its surveillance aspects, Facebook's operating code is relatively simple.

Yet another option is to simply delete our Facebook accounts. Even with all that's come out about the site, this might still be a hard option for some of us to consider, particularly the homebound disabled amongst us, for some of whom Facebook is a vehicle to the outside world. But even though it is increasingly monopolized, there are still the remnants of the big wide open wild internet out there, places to discover, new people to meet. Why not tear down the walls Zuckerberg has erected?

And who knows, reflects Taylor, "One day we might realize, 'Facebook — oh my God, everyone on it is over 50 and it is dying out.' But it will probably just be replaced by another monopoly. Monopolies fade and new ones emerge in their place. The emphasis should be on regulatory power — what Facebook really fears."

New regulations take effect in May that give citizens of the European Union the ability to have certain kinds of data about them scrubbed from the web and require Facebook and other tech firms to notify users within three days of a data breach. No such regulations are on the horizon in the United States with our Republican-controlled Congress, as an exchange between Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Zuckerberg during a joint hearing of the Senate's Commerce and Judiciary committees on April 10 illustrated.

"So would you work with us in terms of what regulations you think are necessary in your industry?" Graham asked.

"Absolutely," Zuckerberg assured him.

The usual tactics for social change don't translate so smoothly on the internet. How do you launch a blockade against the rhizomic digital flow of information? Who do you boycott when you are the product? Meanwhile, our real world hierarchies repeat themselves, intensify and multiply online and the network effect makes building noncommercial alternatives to platforms like Facebook difficult. Remember Ello? If not, you've proved my point.

"Is a more fair, open internet even possible under our political system?" asks Taylor. The leverage we have as citizens to pressure lawmakers is our most viable option for making it so, she says, "because the option of exit and alternatives is really tricky given the scale of these companies and their multinational scope." Nonetheless, she hasn't written off the possibility that a people's alternative to Facebook might one day emerge: "It's really necessary not to lose that imagination."

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BRIEFING ROOM



PEOPLE BEFORE PIPELINES

1,500 environmentalists rallied in Albany, April 23, demanding Gov. Andrew Cuomo put a halt to pipelines and related infrastructure pumping fracked gas into New York. The activists, 55 of whom were arrested during a sit-in outside the governor's office, want Cuomo to move rapidly toward implementing an energy system based solely on renewable sources. Among those taking part in the protest were two candidates seeking Cuomo's job, Democrat Cynthia Nixon and the Green Party's Howie Hawkins.

appropriate and force teachers to devote excessive amounts of time to preparing students to take them.

READY FOR CHANGE:

Two of the 55 people arrested outside Gov. Cuomo's office April 23.

ERIK MCGREGOR

CITY SUES AIRBNB TO HAND OVER RECORDS

New York City filed a lawsuit against Airbnb on April 16 seeking to force the app to hand over data relating to 156 West 15th Street in Manhattan. The company has refused to comply with a subpoena issued by the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) in January citing privacy concerns. The city has stepped up enforcement against illegal rentals over the past year, reaching settlements or winning judgements against landlords who are renting apartments to tourists on the sly. OSE is seeking \$1 million from landlord Phillip Baldeo and a partner for leasing apartments at 156 West 15th for less than the 30 days required by law.

SWEET HOME ALABAMA

Residents of Parrish, Alabama were shit out of luck when a legal battle left a train full of 250 tractor trailer loads of NYC sewage sludge stranded near the town's youth ballfields. The poop train sat on the rails for two months emitting a putrid odor after the next town over won an injunction preventing waste-management contractor Big Sky Environmental from burying the crap in its backyard. New York has often avoided complicated local disposal ordinances by shipping its manure to pastures where regulations are looser. After a public outcry, the unwanted poo-poo choo-choo left Parrish on April 19 and the last turd was disposed of 25 miles away. "I don't think you can underestimate the power of what a community can do," said Parrish Mayor Heather Hall, "especially when you can be vocal and stand together."

NOT SO FAST

While environmentalists rallied in Albany, Texas-based Transco was planning to refile a permit application with the NY Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for its Williams pipeline. On April 20, the agency denied a key water permit to the project, which would carry gas from Pennsylvania through New Jersey and beneath New York Harbor. DEC's announcement happened to come during a press conference held by Cynthia Nixon in Rockaway, Queens, to support a bill that would set New York on course for 100 percent renewable energy by 2050.

WHEN THE TEST GETS IT WRONG

Imagine you are in grade school, taking a test that could determine whether your teacher keeps her job, the amount of funding your school receives or even if it will remain open. There's a multiple choice question on the screen in front of you, but every option — A, B, C — reads "system error." The software glitch, which occurred on April 18 while students in 263 New York school districts were taking a digitized version of the state English exam, was ultimately ironed out. But the fiasco is indicative of a wider problem: the state's over reliance on standardized testing. In the past two school years, approximately 20 percent of New York parents have refused to force their children to take the state's standardized tests. They say the tests are developmentally inappro-

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WFP AT A CROSSROADS



GARY MARTIN

On April 14 the New York Working Families Party cast caution to the wind and voted to endorse Cynthia Nixon over incumbent Gov. Andrew Cuomo. While Nixon received strong backing from frontline community groups such as Make the Road Action, Citizen Action and NY Communities for Change, several of the WFP's largest remaining union affiliates — SEIU 32 BJ, CWA Local 1 and the United Federation of Teachers — reaffirmed their support for Cuomo and exited the party, taking their checkbooks with them.

With the Working Families Party facing an uncertain future, Michael Kinnucan of the Democratic Socialists of America reflects on why the DSA and other left-wing groups have much to learn from WFP's experience even as they forge their own path forward.

BY MICHAEL KINNUCAN

In 1998, when George Pataki was governor, Rudy Giuliani was mayor and the New York minimum wage was \$4.25 an hour, some people with politics not far from the Democratic Socialists of America had an idea that was way smarter than anything we have come up with so far. They figured that if you could combine grass-roots energy with labor-movement money and personnel, and exploit the fact that New York election law lets third parties endorse other parties' candidates, you could build a permanent, self-sustaining progressive electoral operation that could coordinate an independent labor movement's political strategy, institutionalize skills and experience, build political careers from the ground up, and win dramatic reforms.

This strategy paid off massively. The Working Families Party is by far the most successful thing the left has done in New York in my lifetime, because it won things like substantial wage increases, free child care and guaranteed parental leave for working-class New Yorkers. Very few left projects in the United States since 1970 can point to accomplishments like that.

The contradiction inherent in that strategy had to do with the

politics of the labor movement. You absolutely couldn't do it without the unions, because organized labor is the essential working-class institution, and the only possible source of funding on the scale and stability required to build this sort of thing. But doing this with the labor movement posed its own risks. For structural reasons, most unions are always going to be enormously vulnerable to pressure from politicians. Depending on union money and holding a labor coalition together always risked the party's political independence. But you can't run this kind of thing out of your basement — not sustainably, not for the long haul. Without union funding, there was no way at all.

Ironically, as the power and confidence of the Working Families Party increased, so did the problem. The stronger the party and the progressive left it represented became, the greater the incentive for powerful Democrats to take it down. The fix was probably already in when Bill de Blasio, the WFP's preferred candidate, was elected New York City mayor in 2013. When the party's grass roots tried to avoid endorsing Gov. Andrew Cuomo for re-election in 2014, powerful Democrats — Cuomo above all — began to move in for the kill.

I suspect that the people running WFP saw the threat very clearly. Hence the decision to take the model national, to expand as quickly as possible and avoid being vulnerable to the politics of New York.

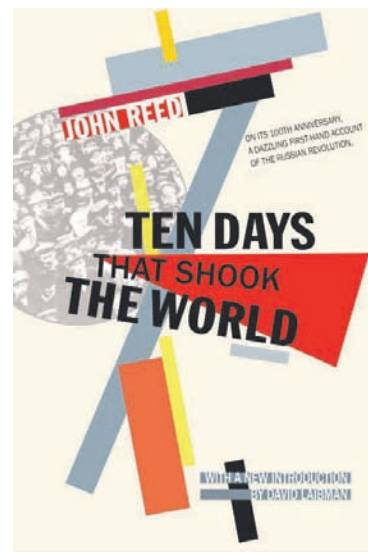
By 2018, the dilemma was obvious in New York. Endorse Cuomo and discredit the project, or refuse and lose the unions. Break right or break left. The party broke left, and now we're in a new era, navigating new terrain. Perhaps the national expansion will save the party, or perhaps the newly confident and aggressive grass roots will be enough to sustain it.

Maybe, maybe not. In any case, it's a new strategy now. And it's a scary moment for everyone fighting for the working class in New York.

Ever since I started engaging in

Continued on page 16

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THE SOUNDS WE SMUGGLE INSIDE US

THE LEAD SINGER OF ALSARAH & THE NUBATONES DISCUSSES HER ROOTS, MUSIC AND HER FAVORITE CHILDHOOD MIXTAPE.

BY CHARINA NADURA

When I first heard AlSarah's voice on NPR's "Tiny Desk Concert" program, I was sold. Her soft but proud voice serenaded me in Arabic and I couldn't care less that I didn't understand the lyrics. Accompanied by a blend of electric and traditional African instruments like the oud and the goblet drum, AlSarah, also known as Sarah Mohamed Abunama-Elgadi, describes her sound as East-African retro pop.

At a time when immigrants are being vilified and scapegoated in Washington, the Sudanese-born Brooklynite proudly declares, "I am an immigrant, a self-identified one for life." Her voice is all the more poignant given the turbulent times and, as I learned when we spoke this April, the turbulent past, it arises from.

CHARINA NADURA: *AlSarah, tell us about yourself. You're from Yemen, but you were born in Sudan.*

ALSARAH: I was born in Khartoum. My parents were both grassroots activists. They did a lot of human rights and environmental rights work. They loved art and music. I grew up in a really educated and leftist household. There was curfews and on Thursday nights we would have these gatherings in the house with a lot of creative people. Then in 1989 the coup happened. And things got really tense for everybody in Khartoum, especially for people that were already politically active. My dad's friends started to get arrested. So my mom got really concerned about our safety. She decided to move us to Yemen, which was wise because my dad was arrested shortly after that. He ended up sneaking out of Sudan about two years later to join us in Yemen.

And then there was a war in Yemen in 1994. They deported any foreign people working for foreign companies and NGOs like my mom. We ended up having to figure out where to go. We couldn't go back to Sudan yet because things were still really crazy and that's how we ended up in the United States.

How did that experience shape your worldview?

I am an immigrant, a self-identified one for life, but I've had my U.S. passport for many years now. I am a U.S. citizen, but the first question I still get asked is where's your passport from. So this whole imaginary border crisis, I feel like it's really important to talk to people, to bring forward the conversation of the fact that people move. It's normal. It's been happening forever. In fact, it is humanity's first anti-poverty plan. You move somewhere else. Especially in America, being a place full of immigrants. To me, if you are not a person of the First Nations, you are a fucking immigrant.

The way we deal with borders now is really new, it's no more than 200 years old. Before geographical things

like a river was the end of your empire. A mountain was the natural border. And even then you crossed them as you pleased.

Borders are racist. Borders are a new form of colonization.

How did you feel when you learned Sudan was on Trump's travel ban list last year?

The ban made me realize how important it was to do a lot of outreach work in the States and to start talking about being an immigrant really openly. There's so many of us having these kinds of conversations. And it's very healthy. You know, they always say, "Wherever there is poison, the medicine is right next to it." I feel like that's really what's happening. There is a poison and not too far is the medicine.

Where does your interest in music stem from?

When I was a kid, my dad had this cassette tape that was made and recorded by this collective of writers, poets and musicians, and it was performed by a choir made up of singers from the Conservatoire of Music and the University of Khartoum. It was all anti-imperialist songs and know-your-rights songs. The tape wasn't allowed to be in existence, so people were passing it around and I memorized that tape forward and backward.

How has your life experience of moving from Sudan to Yemen to the United States and settling in Brooklyn shaped your music?

It made me conscious of the fact that different peoples have different music very early on, because I was literally moving from place to place listening to different music. And it made me think about certain questions. People would be like, "Who are you? Where are you from?" Normally a young child would not have to think, "Where am I from?"

Yemeni people wanted to know who I was. And moving to Yemen, it also made me realize immediately that I wasn't an Arab because they did not consider me an Arab. It immediately made me the consciousness of the differences between Sudanese and Arabs — even though we speak the same language. I was confused because in Sudan I was Arab. Then, when I left Sudan, I wasn't an Arab. "So what am I?" I wondered. The question started way early for me. I started listening to music looking for clues.

Tell me about your last album Manara.

Manara, which literally translates to "lighthouse" is about migration, movement and borders. Also my personal story is part of it. Manara is a personal reflection about what does it mean to have a home, what is a home? Water is also a theme in the album, because to



LYNNE FOSTER

me water is the oldest highway, it's the oldest road and it's still where a lot of us come for peace with ourselves.

You describe your music as East African retro pop. What does that mean?

I hate the term world music. I hate everything about it. So I refuse to have my music called just that. And when I was younger, I remember I used to read a lot of Audre Lorde's work. She's an amazing poet, philosopher and thinker — just a powerhouse overall. She had written something really interesting about the importance of self-defining and self-labeling. For her the idea is, "If I don't correctly label myself, I'm leaving myself at the mercy of somebody else to label me for me."

That really struck me. If I deny myself the three-dimensional frame that I want, I am just going to end up being flattened out and pressed into something that I am not. I draw from a lot of East African sounds for inspiration. I'm a huge fan of Taarab sounds from Zanzibar and from Kenya. I'm a fan of Ethiopian traditional music, of Sudanese music, of Somali music. The way I reflect Sudanese and Nubian music is through a Pan-East African lens. That's why I picked up that label. And my music is retro pop. It's not traditional.

Your songs are all in Arabic. Do you feel it is the important to sing in your native language?

Language is personality, it reflects certain traits in people. It shapes the way we sing even. I like it that my music is in Arabic because then I can send it to my aunts in Sudan and Saudi Arabia.

What role do you see music playing in shaping our society today?

It's important for all of us to weave our story into the larger network. In a very honest way. And when you do that you give people the space to learn from your story so maybe they don't have to go through the same thing or if they're going through the same thing it helps them through it. But more than anything it's a way to make sure that you feel remembered. It's like as soon as you feel you're remembered and you're present and you are here, it immediately makes you feel like a part of something bigger and it makes you want to give back because you feel a collective responsibility.

This interview has been lightly edited for concision and clarity.

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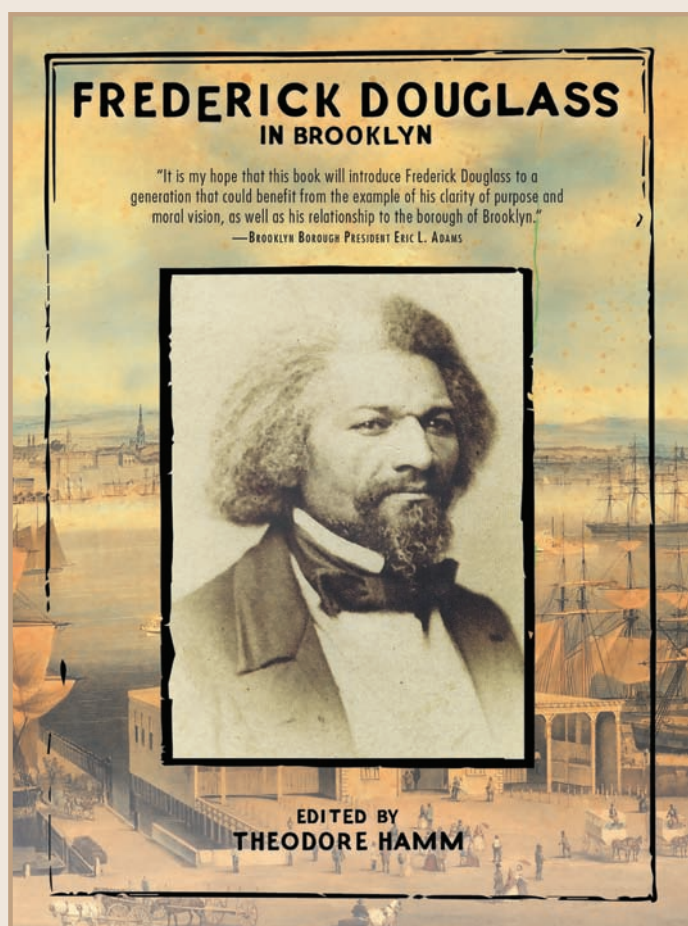
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WHEN FATHER FINDS YOU ON GRINDR

Speak No Evil

BY UZODINMA IWEALA
HARPERCOLLINS, 2018

By Christopher Stewart

When you are gay and in the closet, damage is different. Pain doesn't destroy you all at once. It leaks out like an oil spill. The clean-up can take a long time, the wreckage can be everlasting. Help can sometimes make matters worse. For Niru, the primary narrator of Uzodinma Iweala's new novel *Speak No Evil*, his coming out is a gay-teen nightmare. Plenty of books have been written about teens coming out, but few to my knowledge deal with a protagonist who is both black and gay. Niru is not only a pioneer of the emerging black-LGBTQ-teen genre, but a martyr to the cause.

Yet when we first meet Niru we learn he is from a relatively affluent family living in the suburbs of Washington D.C., goes to a private school and is Harvard-bound. Iweala, whose *Beasts of No Nation* followed child soldiers in West Africa, operates best within the tumultuous battleground of adolescence and his prose takes Niru's developing psyche to new depths, turning the dopey chants of Niru's high school counterparts — "Drink, drink, drink" — into traumatic reminders for his central character.

"There are kids smoking weed in the basement of someone's parents' house and there are kids fucking in the bathroom... And then there is me, black, sober and scared to death by locker room banter from an epic asshole." It is the simplicity of the scene — a setting many readers are probably familiar with — that

make Iweala's attention to the naive teenage rationale that follows a gut-wrenching example in voice: "I will have the rest of my life to be constricted and I will have the rest of my life to make amends." Or so we all seem to think.

Niru believes in a brighter tomorrow and is chasing it with unwavering passion, but his dreams are stunted when his father learns he is gay. A Nigerian immigrant turned American corporate success story, Niru's father expects the best. "Appearances matter to him. That's why he drives a Range Rover and wears a Rolex with his tailored suits and Ferragamos," Niru tells us. "You have to pay attention to these things, my father says, don't give the world any reason to doubt you." Though an immigrant, Niru's father is the quintessential American. He leaves no room for error, only success.

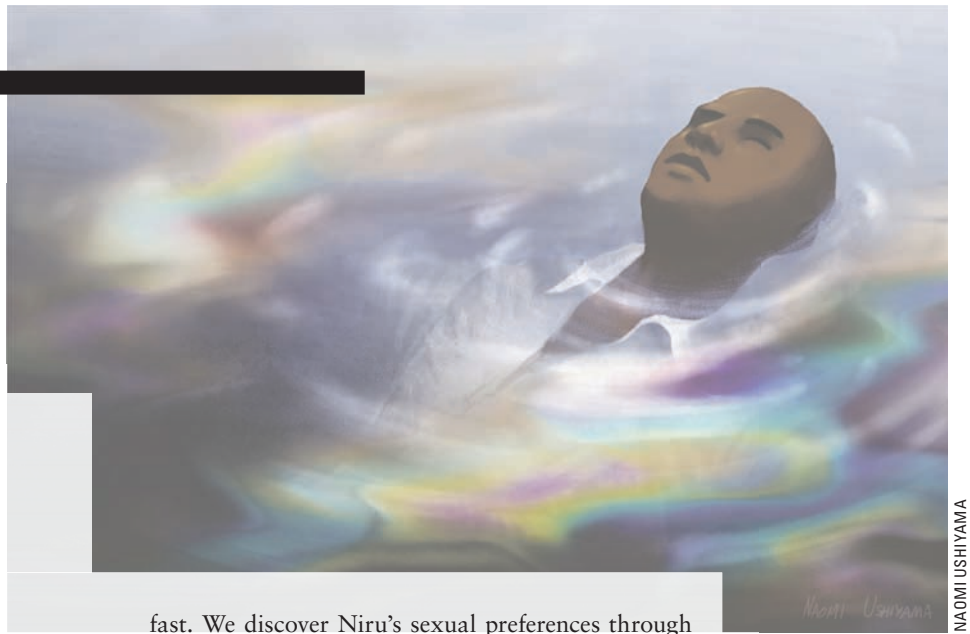
Iweala plays close attention to the racial dynamics in our contemporary society, using them to problematize Niru's homosexuality. Race becomes an added hurdle in his quest for absolute parental approval. Being gay is hard enough, but for black gay men, or any LGBTQ-identifying person of color for that matter, you are often expected to ascribe to one thing: to be either black or gay, as if, even in 2018, the two are mutually exclusive. Niru, who devotes so much energy to navigating his burgeoning sexuality often forgets being black (and a teenager boy) is tricky too.

The first 50 pages of *Speak No Evil* move quite

fast. We discover Niru's sexual preferences through his father, who finds Grindr installed on his son's phone and Tinder message notifications on the lock screen. For his father, homosexuality is an American-born illness, so he takes his son back to Nigeria for a cleansing.

"We live such different lives with such different worries," Niru posits during their trip back. Like the American teen he is, Niru has no idea how to behave around the younger Nigerian kids who crowd his father, accepting money in exchange for services. "Who has time to think about sexual orientation," he bemoans, "when there is no food to eat, no money for school fees, no doctor in sight when you get sick." Overcoming naivety is a huge part of coming into your own, and Iweala plays into that heavily. Sometimes long stretches of Niru's interior monologues will make readers cringe, like listening to a teenager often can.

Above all else, Iweala's choice to write about a black gay teen is commendable. 2016 brought us *Moonlight*, the Oscar-award winning film about a black gay man's coming of age story in inner-city Miami. *Speak No Evil* marks another step forward in exploring the previously taboo topic of homosexuality within the larger black community. This is not a young adult novel, rather it is a masterwork in the too-young-to-know-better genre as Niru struggles with how to navigate a world that is designed to suppress his desires.



NAOMI USHIYAMA

SEEING GREEN

Continued from page 8

site-specific upzonings anywhere a developer agrees to build a certain amount of "affordable" housing within luxury developments. Since Eichner's complex would ostensibly meet these affordability requirements, he would be granted a "spot upzoning" approval.

While Liburd believes Crown Heights needs to have a serious discussion about what residents want in terms of planning and zoning, he is leery of the power dynamic between community boards and the city. "No one is

naive enough to think we won't be treated the same way as East Harlem or Bushwick," he says, citing recently upzoned neighborhoods.

To date, all the neighborhoods that have been upzoned have been low-income neighborhoods of color.

Proponents of development claim that neighborhoods reap the benefits, a rising tide lifts all boats. The facts on the ground don't bear this out. "If you change the conditions of what can be built in any place, through zoning, or if you build up a bunch of luxury highrises, then the land itself becomes more valuable, which then makes it easier for landlords to charge higher rents," said Samuel Stein, explaining the eco-

nomics driving displacement in New York.

Alan Berger of Concerned Citizens for Community Based Planning (CCCBP) details the changes he's seen in Prospect Lefferts, which neighbors Crown Heights to the south, in the last 10 years.

"You start to see a lot more shuttered storefronts," Berger said. "Businesses open at higher costs to people. You see rent-stabilized buildings change hands."

Brenda Edwards, president of the Prospect Lefferts Gardens Neighborhood Association, helped lead community opposition to the Parkline, a 26-story tower at 626 Flatbush Avenue built in 2015. The development "re-

ally hurt a lot of tenants in the older buildings whose landlords saw an opportunity to raise their rents and try to bribe them to get them out or to harass them," she said. Yet Edwards doesn't see the struggle as a complete failure.

"Some people say you really lost because that large building that you were protesting went up," Edwards told *The Indy*. "But it empowered people to learn their rights and get organized" — knowledge and experience that can be carried forward in the upcoming battle over the spice factory development.

WORKING FAMILIES PARTY

Continued from page 13

New York politics, whenever WFP came up, some leftist would sneer at it. Not a real party, barely independent of the Democrats, they endorsed Cuomo, the fools! I always found that ridiculous.

The difference between us and the people who founded WFP isn't that we're so brilliant we see that it would be nice to have an independent third party and they don't, or that

we're so savvy we saw that Cuomo was a bad man in 2014. It doesn't take a genius to see that. The difference between us and them is that they found an organizing model that worked and changed the world, and we haven't yet. Having good positions is easy. Getting power so they matter is hard.

What worked in 1998 won't work now, because the world has changed. The WFP is moving on to a new thing, and so is DSA. But for those of us on the left who want to have the power to win fights, write laws and change the world, the WFP's pre-2018 strategy, contradictions and all, is a model we have a lot to learn from. The lives of working-class New

Yorkers are better because they figured out a way to build sustainable power and win.

Michael Kinnucan is a writer and activist in Brooklyn. He is on the organizing committee of DSA's Brooklyn Electoral Working Group.

FACT BEFORE FABLE

A History More Beautiful and Terrible: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History

BY JEANNE THEOHARIS
BEACON PRESS, 2018

By Steven Sherman

In *A History More Beautiful and Terrible: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History*, Brooklyn College political scientist Jeanne Theoharis takes aim at what she calls the civil rights “fable.” This fable states that ‘Rosa Parks sat down, Dr. King delivered his inspirational speech and American democracy righted itself of its major flaw, racial discrimination.’ Theoharis highlights the misuse of this fable by those who wish to declare that the work of the civil rights movement is finished and denigrate contemporary Black Lives Matter activists. Far from being saints who seem to float outside history, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King are here portrayed as two tough-minded, often frustrated activists struggling in a wider movement that faced serious opposition from most white people, the federal government and the national media, notwithstanding the self-congratulation all have enveloped themselves in decades after the fact.

Theoharis devotes considerable space to repudiating the idea that the civil rights movement before 1965 was almost exclusively focused on the South. Instead, she highlights struggles in New York City, Detroit and Los Angeles before the riots of 1964–68 made the issue of racism in the North a national concern. Far from being the product of slippery “de facto segregation,” where the preferences of multiple individuals produced segregated results without anyone really being to blame, Northern city policies repeatedly strengthened segregation in schools, delivered inferior public services to African-American communities and maintained police brutality, while the local media denigrated the concerns of local activists. Struggles were sometimes intense and involved mass participation, as in the 1964 boycott of schools in New York City. Dr. King travelled to these cities and urged action. But the movements were met with condescension and indifference until the uprisings, at which point the tone shifted to shock and dismay. Similarly, when a court in 1974 ordered Boston to desegregate its schools, the long history of fights to integrate the schools was wiped out in favor of the pretense that the decision came out of nowhere.

The civil rights fable largely excludes the role of “white moderates” in stymieing the movement, although Dr. King noted it. It highlights the violence of the Ku Klux Klan and Southern sheriffs, but glosses over the economic violence (firing activists), red-baiting, indifference and polite racism that also posed major obstacles. And while media like the *New York Times* have congratulated themselves for cutting through the lies and evasions that Southern elites put forth and reporting empathetically on the struggles of African Americans in the South, they didn’t do so well in the North. Theoharis emphasizes that the movement struggled not only for desegregation but also criminal justice, economic justice

and global justice, clarifying continuities with present-day struggles and ways in which the civil rights agenda was not fully achieved.

Young people played a significant role in the movement, courageously challenging power and demanding that elders overcome their caution. Women leaders abounded and often bristled at efforts to minimize their achievements or keep them out of the spotlight. These tensions were already palpable by the 1963 March on Washington. Theoharis highlights Coretta Scott King, who in some respects was more politically left than her husband. The movement was disliked, spied on and vilified by a wide swath of government institutions and white people.

In the strongest chapter, Theoharis describes the 1955-56 Montgomery bus boycott. Rosa Parks and organizer E.D. Nixon are recast as longtime activists, struggling in an environment where the prospects of mass struggle were bleak. Although teenager Claudette Colvin’s earlier refusal to get up from the bus is often portrayed as a struggle that didn’t qualify as “respectable,” here it is shown as partially effective, as it highlighted the restiveness of young people and spurred Parks to commit civil disobedience and trigger the citywide bus boycott. The boycott, an impressive feat of collective action, worked because it was disruptive, although this produced not only opposition from the white community but also tensions with the national NAACP. White people used many tactics to oppose it, from violence to claims that it was just a question of a “few bad apples” among the drivers — which should sound familiar to those following the news these days.

Theoharis’ account is revelatory and disturbing. For example, she argues that claims today that schools have “resegregated” in the last couple of decades are misleading because in some places, including New York City, genuine desegregation never happened. The fable — the worshipping of Dr. King and Parks as saints detached from their historical and political context — emerges as an obstacle to clearly understanding the past and present. Recovering the challenges and contradictions of the real history is indispensable to grounding today’s struggles.

I do have one reservation about this book. It emphasizes the constraints of the civil rights movement so much that it obscures its achievements. A clear-eyed assessment of those achievements, neither vacuously celebrating the United States as a self-correcting democracy nor pessimistically seeing the reassertion of white supremacy as inevitable, would have strengthened it.

Similarly, it doesn’t illuminate the

political context that made possible Dr. King’s visits to the White House to meet with three presidents. By 1948, an alliance of labor unions, Northern African Americans and white liberals was powerful enough to force the inclusion of civil rights in the Democratic Party platform. That alliance was able to isolate the formally segregated South, even as it had a less clear commitment to the more complex task of transforming the North. But there are only so many things one book can do, and as a guide to the beautiful, terrible history of determined, angry movement activists and the sometimes fierce, sometimes polite resistance they faced, this one is invaluable.

WOMEN LEADERS:
Coretta Scott King in Washington, D.C. protesting the Vietnam War, October, 1969.



SHANE GONZO/JOY ARBITRARY

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HISTORY STATES

REVEREND BILLY'S TRUMP HELP HOTLINE



JON QUILITY

Hey Billy, is it time to praise Starbucks, not damn them? I mean that incident in Philly where they called the police on a couple of black guys for sitting down was pretty disgusting. But maybe it was a much-needed wake-up call. They're closing all their stores after all for an anti-racial bias training.

— MARNIE, Jackson Heights

ing his life to send a message altered his message. Yes, we have a terrible emergency, but there must be another way to express it.

— CHARLENE, Jamaica Plains

Dear Charlene, I don't question David Buckel's decision to die. What goes on in a soul? I do know he took responsibility for all of us, and for that we should be grateful.

His suicide begs the question, “Why is our response to Earth's crisis so muted, so ho-hum?” Climate change seems like the stuff of a blockbuster film, but is a serious subject that is threatening all life. It's severity is not really getting through to us. In Hollywood, mass death comes with all those special effects, but the real apocalypse can't be monetized.

With his ultimate sacrifice, David has alerted us to something that we have forgotten. Every social movement had to find an unforgettable way to dramatize its vision. The Earth needs a generation of planet criers.

We will never forget David's gift.

— BILLY

REVEREND BILLY IS AN ACTIVIST AND POLITICAL SHOUTER, A POST-RELIGIOUS PREACHER OF THE STREETS AND BANK LOBBIES. GOT A QUESTION FOR REVEREND BILLY? JUST EMAIL REVBIILLY@INDYPENDENT.ORG AND UNBURDEN YOUR SOUL.

WHAT? Howard Schultz is a model West Coast right-wing manufacturer of zombie-inducing, fake, neo-European monoculture and a white supremacist of long standing. For years, the Starbucks CEO screwed Ethiopian farmers out of fair prices for Sidamo, Yirgacheffe and Harar coffees by corrupting international certification officials. Whether it's the Guatemalan children laboring in coffee groves, inner-city African Americans facing eviction because Starbucks outposts gentrified their neighborhood, or support for the occupation of Palestine — pick your race. The Mermaid-with-no-nipples likes the whites. To bring it back to Philly, Schultz is worth \$3 billion but the black ministers can't get him to give his baristas a raise from \$12 an hour. Starbucks employees taking off an afternoon for anti-bias class is horseshit. Their boss needs that class — in jail.

...

Dear Reverend,
I got the news about David Buckel. He took his life by fire in Prospect Park early on a weekend morning to protest climate change. I felt that end-

FROM KONY2012 TO MUSEVENI2018
JOIN US ON WED MAY 16 7PM



SCREENING OF ABRILLIANTGENOCIDE
DIRECTED BY EBONY BUTLER

This award-winning documentary tells the part of the Ugandan tragedy selectively left out of the KONY2012 propaganda video.

Q&A FOLLOWING THE SCREENING WITH:

MILTON ALLIMADI

Ugandan-born, publisher of the Black Star News, Professor of African History at John Jay College

HELEN EPSTEIN

Author of “Another Fine Mess: America, Uganda, and the War on Terror”, Professor of Human Rights and Global Public Health, Bard College

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BIKES AGAINST DEPORTATION

MAY 17 THURS 5-6PM
201 VARICK AT HOUSTON
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SANCTUARY

THIRD THURSDAYS



TOWARDS A NEW STRATEGY FOR THE LEFT

JUNE 1ST - 3RD

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
899 10TH AVENUE, NYC

FEATURING: AJAMU BARAKA, JANE SANDERS, SILVIA FEDERICI, GAYLE MCLAUGHLIN, PAUL JAY, GEORGE CICCARIELLO-MAHER, RAVI RAGBIR, KALI AKUNO, MARK WINSTON GRIFFITH, RICHARD WOLFF, BHAIRAVI DESAI, JUMAANE WILLIAMS, CATHY DANG, CHRIS HEDGES and hundreds of other speakers, panels, workshops, musical performances and a book fair throughout the weekend

LEFT FORUM 2018

REGISTER AT LEFTFORUM.ORG

WORKERS UNITE! FILM FESTIVAL 7 MAY 4-24TH 2018

WWW.WORKERSUNITEFILMFESTIVAL.ORG

WEEK ONE @ CINEMA VILLAGE
22 EAST 12TH STREET

FRIDAY, MAY 4 OPENING NIGHT SALUTE - NYLHA

The Iron Triangle - Stop Gentrification in NYC!
Bowery Tenants Fight Back

#COUNTMEIN

The Cost Of Construction
Stop Deadly Non-Union Construction Work!

SATURDAY, MAY 5 AUSTERITY SUCKS

SINK (U.K.), SITIRIAYIS - A Living Graphic Novel
Freelance Nation - (Uber Story) & Gig Economy Lie
American Courtesans - Sex Workers Are Workers Too

SUNDAY, MAY 6 WOMEN ORGANIZE THE WORLD!

Adios Amor : The Search for Maria Moreno - Trailblazer!
DOLORES - Huerta, A Rebel, Activist, Feminist, Mother
Berta Didn't Die, She Multiplied - Land Defender in Honduras
Gabby Antonio Smashes the Imperialist,
White Supremacist, Capitalist Patriarchy!



TICKETS & FULL SCHEDULE - WUFF WEBSITE AND
EVENTBRITE bit.ly/2pzzrai

THURSDAY, MAY 10 POISONED AT WORK

Dirty Laundry - The Mesothelioma Movie
The 39th - Outsider Runs for Election
Amidst Corporate Bribery, Corruption
Howard Zinn: A People's History Of the U.S.
- A Voice for the Voiceless, 1929 to 2009

MONDAY, MAY 7 NY STATE NURSES/SHORTS

Healthcare Workers On the Line
PLUS! Our Dysfunctional Political System
We Have Our Ways, The 39th, Picket Line,
A Strike And An Uprising - Black Women
Rise Up In Texas. Beloved CEO Replaced
In Unique **Scenes From A Protest**

TUESDAY, MAY 8 PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ROCK!

Teacher Of the Year - Personal & Political
Charlie vs Goliath - Money Out Of Politics!
Underdog Candidate Runs for Senate

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9 OVERLOOKED & OVERDUE!

The Sea Is My Brother - WWII Marine Vets
Bottom Dollars - Minimum Wage Loophole
for Disabled. **COMPLICIT (China)** - Sick
& standing up to global electronics industry!

DON'T MISS THESE EVENTS!

MAY 11-12TH CALL MR. ROBESON
One-Man Play Based On the Life of Paul Robeson
Tix Available Now at www.castillo.org

**MAY 14TH ACTIVIST FILMMAKER
BOOTCAMP (DC1707 Auditorium)**

**MAY 18-20TH MUSIC & FILM NIGHTS,
POETRY/SPOKEN WORD @ Crystal Lake
Williamsburg, Brooklyn**

Cinema Village - 22 East 12th St @ University Place

Castillo Theatre - 543 West 42nd St

District Council 1707 - 420 West 45th St

Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies - 325 Hudson St

Public Employees Federation (PEF) - 100 William St

Crystal Lake Brooklyn - 647 Grand St

+ Penn South Co-Op