

= SEPTEMBER 13 PRIMARY ELECTION GUIDE, P18 =

THE INDYPENDENT

#238: AUGUST 2018 • INDYPENDENT.ORG

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State Senate candidate Julia Salazar in Bushwick, Brooklyn.

ERIN SHERIDAN

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THE INDYPENDENT



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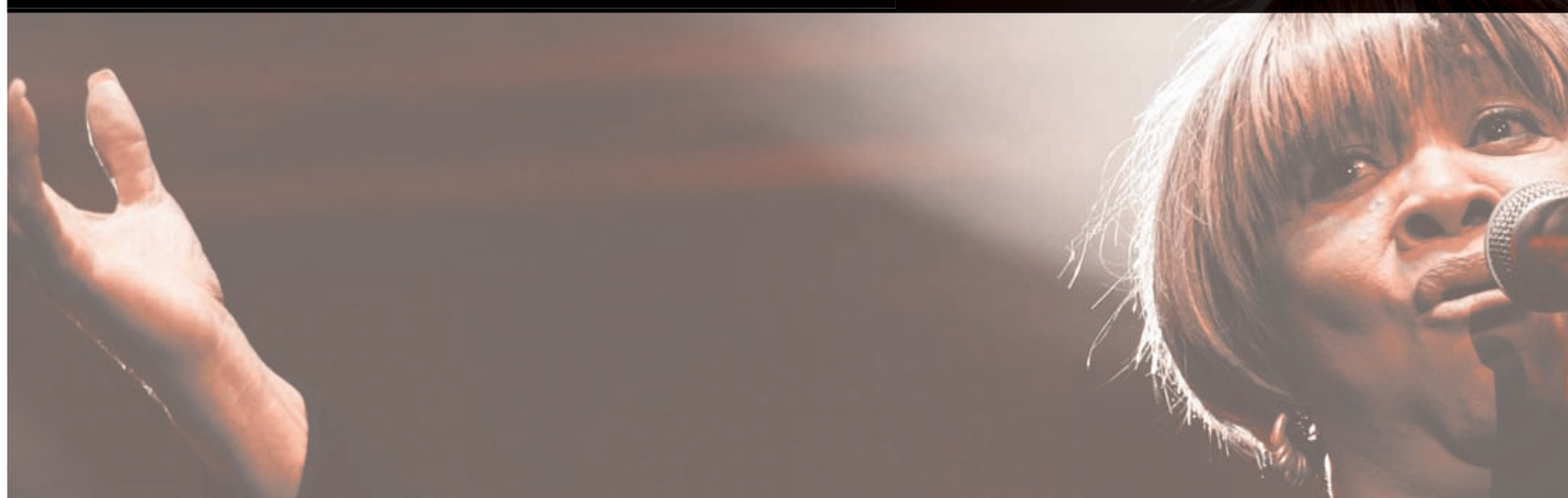
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR



THRU AUG 9

Various times • \$15

FILM: THE FEMALE GAZE

An international survey of films by female cinematographers, including in-person appearances and free talks. See the full schedule visit filmlinc.org/femalegaze.

FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
165 W 65th St. Mnhtn

THRU AUG 30

THUs 7PM–9PM • \$10–\$125

LIT: SUMMER IN THE DARK:

CRIME AND THE CAPITALIST WAY
Explore deals made in the shade by those packing heat with the Anti-bourgeois Summer Reading Group. Join them weekly to discuss classic works of noir fiction through a Marxist lens. Visit marxedproject.org for a reading list.

THE BROOKLYN COMMONS
388 Atlantic Ave., Bklyn

AUG 4–AUG 26

Opens at 11AM daily, closing times vary • FREE

ART: CARIBBEING HOUSE

A mobile art center inviting visitors to engage with culture from across the Caribbean diaspora. Visit Thursday evenings and Saturday afternoons for special programs.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM
200 Eastern Pkwy, Bklyn

TUE AUG 7

6PM–8PM • FREE

PANEL: A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION WITH ALEXANDRIA AND ADY

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ady Barkan host a community discussion on keeping families together,

single-payer health care, environmental racism, restorative justice and other pressing issues.

ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
1891 McGraw Ave., Bronx

TUE AUG 7

8PM–10PM • Cover change TBA, 21+

PERFORMANCE: REVEREND BILLY AND THE STOP SHOPPING CHOIR
Thirty-five singers and musicians with their secular preacher, Indy columnist Reverend Billy, belt out a message of radical social justice and environmental healing. This improbable blend of soulful gospel and surrealistic humor somehow works!

STARR BAR
214 Starr St., Bklyn

THU AUG 9

6PM–10PM • FREE

MUSIC: WILD STYLE 35TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION WITH DJ FUNK FLEX

Nas once dubbed Charlie Ahearn's 1983 film *Wild Style* a "visual Bible of hip-hop." The evocative film culminates with a real-life concert that took place at the East River Amphitheater, in which the likes of Rammellzee, the Fantastic Five and Treacherous Three performed. Thirty-five years later, the stars of the film invite fans and friends to celebrate with them at that very place.

EAST RIVER PARK
FDR Dr. btw Jackson St. & Cherry St., Mnhtn

FRI AUG 10

7PM–10:30PM • FREE

MUSIC: GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR

The legendary Montréal-based experimental collective bring their anarchic and deeply political post-rock sound to Brooklyn.

PROSPECT PARK BANDSHELL
141 Prospect Park W., Mnhtn

SAT AUG 11

10AM–5PM

FOOD: BLACK VEGFEST

A Black-led, Brooklyn-based vegan festival. The food will be delicious.

GRASSROOTS ARTISTS MOVEMENT

1958 Fulton St., Bklyn

SAT AUG 11

7:30PM–10PM • FREE

MUSIC: MAVIS STAPLES & JOE HENRY

Poetic folk picker Joe Henry opens for the legendary R&B singer.

DAMROSCH PARK
175 W 62nd St., Mnhtn

AUG 11–12

SAT & SUN 10:30AM–4PM • FREE
FESTIVAL: DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL 2018

Watch 170 dragon-boat teams compete on Meadows Lake and enjoy music, dance, martial arts, folk art and Chinese food.

FLUSHING MEADOWS–CORONA PARK, QUEENS

AUG 16–AUG 19

THU–SUN, 8:30PM • FREE

FILM: MORUS FILM FESTIVAL: LIQUID DENIAL

Taking place in various community gardens throughout the East Village, this year's MoRUS Film Fest is all about water. Films include *Water*

for *Life: The Diary of Jay Z* in which the hip hop impresario explores

the water crisis in Africa, and *Flint* which depicts the story of the toxic water crisis in Flint, Michigan. Visit morusnyc.org for further details.

MUSEUM OF RECLAIMED URBAN SPACES
155 Ave. C, Mnhtn

FRI AUG 17

6:30PM–10PM • \$25–\$30

MUSIC: PERE UBU

The avant-garde punk pioneers are joined by Stuyedeyed & A Deer A Horse.

(LE) POISSON ROUGE
158 Bleecker St., Mnhtn

SAT AUG 18

2PM–9PM • FREE

FESTIVAL: HUDSON RIVER PARK BLUES BBQ

A day filled with smoky goodness and great music.

PIER 97
Hudson River Park, Mnhtn

SAT AUG 18

7PM • \$15

FILM: LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS SING-ALONG

Sing along to this black comedy musical, featuring a performance by Steve Martin that will make you never want to go to the dentist again.

VIDEOLOGY BAR & CINEMA
308 Bedford Ave., Bklyn

WED AUG 22

7PM–9:30PM • FREE

BOOK LAUNCH: YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN FAT

Virgie Tovar imagines a world where bodies are valued equally,

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AUGUST

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BLUESTOCKINGS BOOKSTORE, CAFE & ACTIVIST CENTER
172 Allen St., Mnhtn

FRI AUG 24
8PM–12AM • \$15
PARTY: SOCIALIST SEMI-FORMAL
Dress your best, or just wear red and raise money for the Democratic Socialists of America.
VERSO BOOKS
20 Jay St., Suite 1010, Bklyn

SUN AUG 26
10AM–4PM • FREE
PARTY: BOOGIE ON THE BOULEVARD
The center lanes of the Grand Concourse from 162nd Street to 170th Street will be closed to cars and open to a world of music, art and fitness.
BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS
1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx

SUN AUG 26
4:30PM • \$15
MUSIC: MUSIC AGAINST MASS INCARCERATION W/ GUERRILLA TOSS, SUNWATCHERS, KYP MALONE
A bi-annual musical benefit uniting the New York music community in the fight against authoritarianism.
SECRET PROJECT ROBOT
1186 Broadway, Bklyn

AUG 28–AUG 31
TUE–FRI, 8:30PM • \$30–\$40 per show
MUSIC: CHARLIE PARKER'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
Some of the biggest names in Jazz celebrate the Bird's birthday at his

namesake. Visit birdlandjazz.com for details.
BIRDLAND JAZZ CLUB
315 W. 44th St., Mnhtn

THU AUG 30
7PM–9PM • \$16
FILM: BASQUIAT: RAGE TO RICHES
The story of Jean-Michel Basquiat personal and artistic journey, told through interviews with those who knew him best. A talkback will follow the film with Lisane and Jeanine Basquiat, director David Shulman and producer Janet Lee.
BROOKLYN MUSEUM
200 Eastern Pkwy, Bklyn

AUG 31–SEP 16
Dates & times vary • \$11
FILM: WOMEN OF THE WEST
This film series highlights Westerns that focus on a female protagonist, foregrounding the importance of women both to the Western genre and to the history of the American West itself. Visit anthologyfilmarchives.org for showtimes.
ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
322nd Ave., Mnhtn

SUN SEP 2
2PM–9PM
MUSIC: PUNK ROCK PIC-A-NIC!
Send summer off with a big sloppy bite of punk rock fun at this potluck picnic. Bring a dish if you like and catch the punk rock bands playing all afternoon. The Drossells headline.
OTTO'S SHRUNKEN HEAD
538 E. 14th St., Mnhtn



KMERON

DIVA: Mavis Staples' unshakable voice fills Damrosch Park on Aug. 11.

BLACK FLAG: Pioneers of the post-rock pantheon, Godspeed You! Black Emperor, bring their jagged musical vistas to Prospect Park Aug. 10.



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TED RALL
7-13-18

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Our advice columnist Rev. Billy talks horror, love and revolution.



WHO WILL TELL THE STORY?

THE FALL OF THE DAILY NEWS IS ANOTHER BLOW FOR NYC JOURNALISM

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

The most striking thing about the layoffs of almost half the *New York Daily News*' newsroom staff July 23 is that they leave the paper with only 40 to 45 reporters, editors and photographers.

That's 40 to 45 people to cover a city of 8.6 million people and a metropolitan area of more than 20 million, including sports and culture. It's about 10 percent of the number the *News* had circa 1990. When I worked for a now-defunct New Jersey daily newspaper in 1990, we had about 18 people to cover a county of 500,000.

The *News* is still publishing, but writing this feels like an obituary. It's impossible to do broad and in-depth coverage with that few journalists. The *News* may end up like a slightly thicker version of AM New York or Metro, the free papers full of four-paragraph stories that you can finish within five subway stops.

U.S. newspapers have been declining since the end of World War II, from suburbanization, television, diminishing literacy and, in the last 20 years, the internet, which has obliterated print media's income from both sales and advertising. The *News* was once the largest-circulation daily in the country, with more than 1.5 million people buying copies. Its paid circulation is now less than one-seventh of that.

Its decimation chokes a crucial New York voice. Its 1975 "FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD" headline might be the most renowned in the history of American journalism, a pointed encapsulation of President Gerald Ford's refusal to aid New York in the depths of its fiscal crisis that could be understood by a smart fifth-grader. The *New York Times* had better coverage of Japan and Egypt, but the *News* had better coverage of Jamaica and Elm-hurst.

Its politics have oscillated over the years. In the '50s and '60s, it was the voice of the city's working- and middle-class white Catholics, who were much more conservative — and rabidly anti-Communist — than the working-class Jews who were the pre-Murdoch *New York Post*'s base. A 1960s editorial called Vietnam War opponents "garbageheads," and headlines were often newsstand-era clickbait: "BRUNETTE STABBED TO DEATH" over "6,000 Die in Iranian Quake."

In the 1970s and '80s, it became more liberal, arguably because it realized that as one of the city's two surviving tabloids, it had a lot of black and Latino readers. It moved to the right after Mortimer Zuckerman acquired it in the early '90s; sometimes it seemed as if the *News*' editorial holy trinity was the real-estate market, the Yankees and Israel's Likud party. In 2011, a news article called Occupy Wall Street protesters "rabble." On the other hand, reporter and columnist Juan González was probably the farthest-left writer for any large U.S. daily before he retired.

Despite its slashed staff, in the last few years the *News* published major

investigative pieces on arbitrary evictions of public-housing tenants and the city's failure to protect them from lead paint. It was the first news outlet to post the video of Eric Garner being choked to death by police in 2014. And it was the most loudmouthed anti-Trump voice in mainstream media, as befits a paper that had been covering him for 40-odd years and thus knew what an ignorant, bigoted megalomaniac he was.

The Internet is great for disseminating news produced by other people, but destructively parasitic to the outlets that actually do that reporting. Also, its monetized-clicks economy favors instant-outrage clickbait over nuanced and in-depth reportage, viral national stories over local news. Far more people read or write quickies about "covfefe" or Stormy Daniels than lengthy exposes of the Trump regime's wars on environmental protections and labor rights.

Stories about zoning are about as far from clickbait as you can get. Few online readers want to wade through arcane details about ULURP, R7A and 197-a plans, especially if they don't live in the neighborhoods affected. Yet zoning enabled developers to turn Williamsburg into a phalanx of luxury high-rises, and will determine whether Inwood, Highbridge and Chinatown will follow.

Consistent local reporting, on neighborhoods, legislation, education, policing, labor, housing and more, takes tons of legwork by people who know the city and are paid a living wage to do it. The *News* layoffs exemplify the loss of the resources needed to do that work.

As axed editor-in-chief Jim Rich put it, July 23 was a good day for those who "hate democracy and think local governments should operate unchecked and in the dark."



MICHAEL DOUGHERTY

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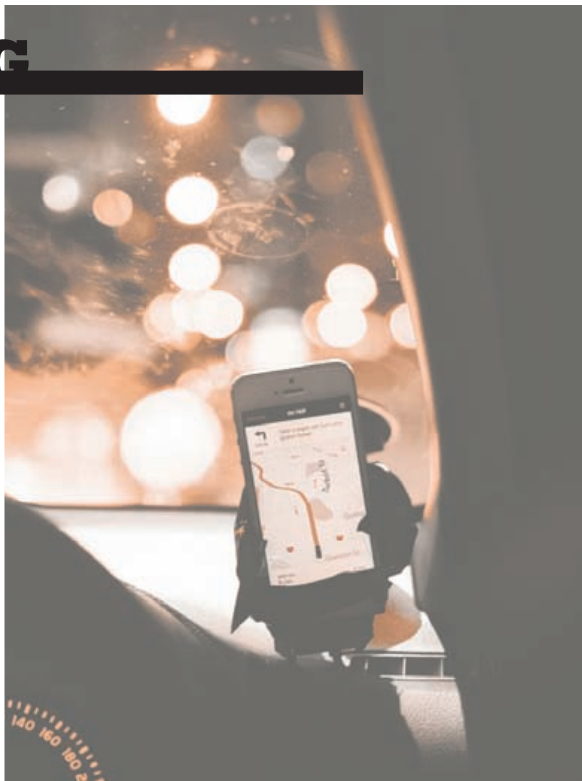
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BRIEFING ROOM



NYPD FINALLY TO CONSIDER FIRING ERIC GARNER'S KILLERS

Four years after Eric Garner died while being arrested, the NYPD is finally bringing disciplinary action against two of the cops involved, Officer Daniel Pantaleo and Sgt. Kizzy Adonis. Garner was held in a chokehold by Pantaleo during his arrest for allegedly selling illegal cigarettes on Staten Island in July, 2014. Five months later, a Staten Island grand jury declined to indict Pantaleo for his role in Garner's death. The verdict came on the heels of another non-indictment, of police officer Darren Wilson for the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. In reaction to both killings, protests erupted in more than 100 cities across the country.

Until now, both Pantaleo and Adonis had been placed on "modified duty." The NYPD has repeatedly said they can't begin their own disciplinary procedures until seeing the results of a federal civil rights probe. The Justice Department says earlier this spring it told the NYPD they could take action. "The idea that NYPD couldn't have acted before DOJ has always been a lie," said Gwen Carr, Garner's mother.

ACCUSED NYPD COPS: SHE ASKED FOR IT

Two NYPD detectives accused of raping and sexually assaulting a 18-year-old woman in the back of their police van have come up with a novel argument in their defense: they say she asked for it. Lawyers for the detectives say that the woman, who goes by the alias Anna Chambers, offered to swap sex to get out of her arrest. Richard Hall and Eddie Martins both admit to having sex with Chambers while on a drug bust, but have pled not guilty to over 50 charges, including bribery and extortion. Chambers says she was raped and assaulted by both men after she was arrested on Sept. 15, 2017 for possessing marijuana and prescription painkillers in her purse. Both men, who have since resigned from the NYPD, will be back in court in September to set a trial date.

NYC READY TO SLAM BRAKES ON UBER

The NYC City Council is preparing to put the brakes on Uber. New pieces of legislation being considered would place a cap on the number of ride-hailing cars on the city's streets, regulate minimum wages for drivers and put a freeze on new licenses while the city conducts a year-long study on how these companies affect traffic and wages. In 2015, Mayor Bill de Blasio was forced to back down from similar cap proposals after an aggressive ad campaign from Uber. The years since have seen the number of ride-hailing cars in the city rise to 100,000. In the last five months, five yellow-cab drivers have died by suicide. In response to the latest legislation, Uber released a new ad noting that it's harder for riders of color to hail a yellow cab than order an Uber and that some New Yorkers will end up stranded if the Council gets its way.

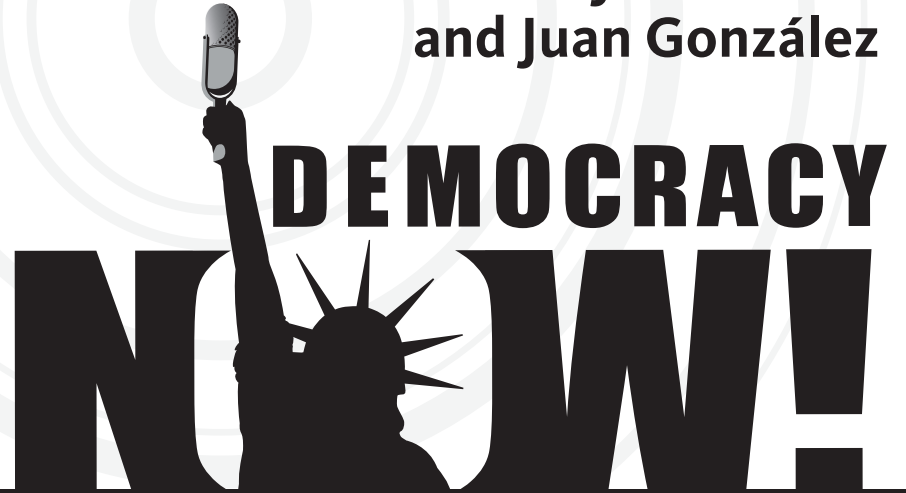
SO LONG, SPECTRUM?

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's administration has taken steps to prohibit Spectrum Cable from operating in New York. In a July 27 letter to the cable giant, the Public Service Commission gave Spectrum 60 days to leave the state, accusing it of violating the terms of its 2016 merger with Time Warner. The commission approved the merger, which made Spectrum the second largest cable provider in the country, on the condition it provide broadband service to sparsely populated regions of the state, something the commission says Spectrum failed to do. Members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers who have been on strike at Spectrum since March 2017 welcomed the commission's decision. Spectrum will likely mount an aggressive legal challenge.

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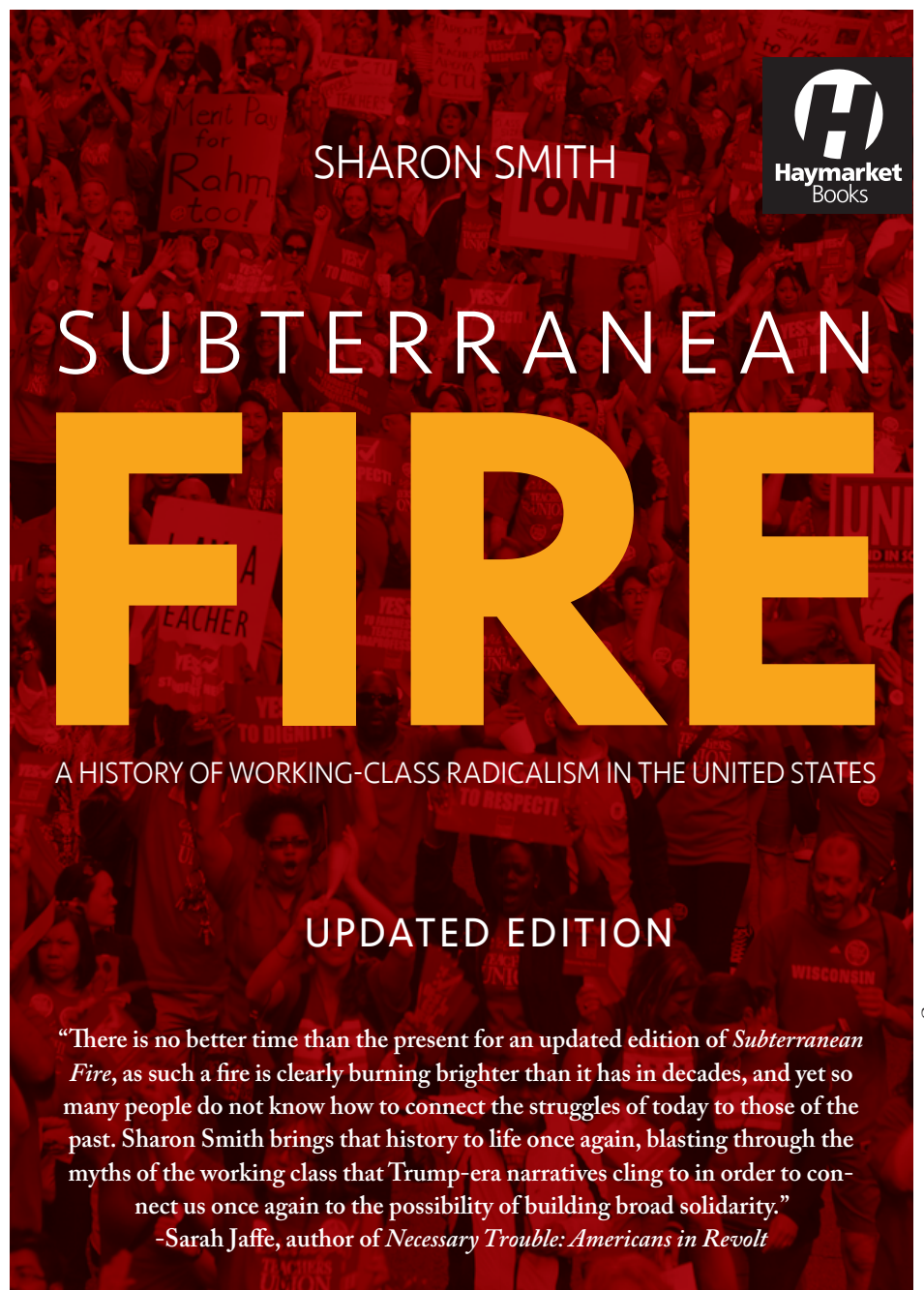


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SUBTERRANEAN FIRE

A HISTORY OF WORKING-CLASS RADICALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

UPDATED EDITION

"There is no better time than the present for an updated edition of *Subterranean Fire*, as such a fire is clearly burning brighter than it has in decades, and yet so many people do not know how to connect the struggles of today to those of the past. Sharon Smith brings that history to life once again, blasting through the myths of the working class that Trump-era narratives cling to in order to connect us once again to the possibility of building broad solidarity."

-Sarah Jaffe, author of *Necessary Trouble: Americans in Revolt*

August 2018 THE INDEPENDENT

MTA WEBSITE LEAKS PRIVATE USER DATA

PASSWORDS, SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS & OTHER SENSITIVE INFORMATION HAS BEEN AVAILABLE TO THIRD PARTIES ON THE INTERNET FOR YEARS DUE TO A BASIC TECHNICAL FLAW.

By JOHN BOLGER

It's no secret that the MTA website is as decrepit as the signals directing its trains. But then again, the MTA website is not very good at keeping secrets. If you have used TripPlanner, Subway Times or Bus Times, customer service, filed a Freedom of Information Law request or a sexual harassment complaint, if you have submitted personal information through any of these MTA web portals, your data — such as name, email address, username, password, postal address, phone number, photo uploads, text entries and travel details — have been exposed to countless third parties, for many years.

This is because the MTA's website did not use encryption when transmitting your private information. As a result, any data submitted to the MTA website could have been read by third parties whose networks your private information passed through on its way to the MTA.

In general, the MTA's web offerings are all insecure at this time except for the My MTA Alerts, MTA Employment Opportunity and EasyPay portals, which all use encryption to protect visitors. After being notified of the leak, the MTA has since secured the customer service and the third-party developer portals.

For web traffic, secure transmission is known as "HTTPS." Without HTTPS, there is no privacy or assurance on the web. This is because the internet is basically a network of relays between you and the physical locations of requested web servers. This means a lot of strangers handle your web requests. Without encryption, private data sent over the web can be spied upon or tampered with by any of these third parties. HTTPS thwarts these types of attacks.

It is impossible to count the number of third parties who have had access to your data, and it is impossible to know if any of them read or harvested your data, but a short list of these third parties includes internet service providers and phone companies (Verizon, AT&T, Time Warner Cable), WiFi providers, such as coffee shops, hotels and free providers like LinkNYC — even your landlord in some buildings. Also, criminal hackers and government spy agencies both foreign and domestic.

"For a government agency that is sending and receiving data that has a real effect on people's daily lives, there's really no excuse for not using basic security techniques that are, at this point, absolutely bog standard," said Parker Higgins, a computer security expert and director of special projects for Freedom of the Press Foundation.

"For at least the last five years," Higgins added, "most government agencies are moving towards HTTPS everywhere. Within the federal government that's been an official, established standard for three years."

Switching to HTTPS from the nonsecure transmission line "HTTP" is easy and inexpensive. HTTPS has also recently become common among local government websites. New York City's various web services, from traffic ticket payment to public housing requests, are all HTTPS-secured. The state government is also up to date in this sense — except when it comes to the MTA.

The MTA website itself is not a single website per se. It is a collection of unrelated web servers located around the country that perform different functions on the website but which link to each other. Since each web server uses a uniform style, the transition from one server to the other during browsing appears seamless. TripPlanner is located in Brooklyn, Subway and Bus Times are located in Virginia, Long Island Rail Road schedule lookup is on Long Island. None of these used HTTPS at press time.

The largest privacy violator for years was the MTA's web customer service portal, which

is located in Chicago on a network operated by Oracle. Traffic to and from this server was unprotected until July 16, when the MTA switched it to HTTPS after being contacted for this article a few days earlier. Last month, a simple web request to this site passed through at least 12 internet relays on its way from New York City to Chicago, according to a diagnostic tool named traceroute. This means that in addition to the MTA, 12 internet operators were able to read your username and password, and any FOIL requests (including postal address), customer service requests or sexual harassment complaints (including photo uploads and phone number) you might have filed. If you re-used passwords, the MTA customer service website could have compromised every account you used the same password for.

"Data that you send over HTTP can be intercepted and read by anyone on your network, including internet service providers and individuals connected to the same WiFi network as you," said Sydney Li, a staff technologist for the Electronic Frontier Foundation. "Sensitive data such as personally identifiable information, passwords, or sexual harassment complaints should absolutely be sent over an HTTPS connection. When you load content over HTTP, any entity responsible for routing this content can also alter or present fake content to you. This is known as a man-in-the-middle attack."

Verizon was caught doing just that, since at least 2014, according to reports from *ProPublica*. In 2016, the Federal Communications Commission fined Verizon \$1.35 million for injecting "super-cookies" into the unencrypted traffic of their mobile customers, with no way to opt out. These are tracking codes that Verizon and third parties use to monitor browsing histories and build profiles on unsuspecting web users. This type of message tampering is exactly what encryption was designed to defeat. It is not possible while using HTTPS.

Some sections of its website are managed in-house by the MTA, others are outsourced to contractors like Oracle, which conducts the MTA's customer service and employment opportunity portals. Oracle is one of the MTA's biggest technological contractors. As of May 2017, Oracle held at least \$59 million in combined contracts with the MTA until 2020, according to minutes from a board meeting where the Oracle contracts to-date were consolidated into a single umbrella contract.

The MTA's customer service website is provided to the authority via a service known as RightNow, also referred to as Oracle Cloud. This contract originates from 2002, years before RightNow was purchased by Oracle. At the time, it was offered to MTA for \$112,000 per year, according

UNDERGROUND NEWS

SAME AS IT EVER WAS

Last summer, as strap-hanger rage reached a fever pitch, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced he was instituting an \$836 million emergency rescue plan for New York's deteriorating subway system. One year on, after the MTA burned through \$333 million worth of the funds, service remains at levels not seen since New York's blighted '70s. According to the MTA's own data, major incidents delay 50 or more trains three, sometimes four times a weekday. Officials said the money has mostly gone to maintaining the existing network, which mostly operates on a 1930s-era signal system. Andy Byford, who took over management of the subway in January, has touted a separate \$37 billion plan to overhaul the subway. He has called on NYC to put up half the funds, although the governor controls the MTA.

HOME STATE DECORATING

Gov. Cuomo ordered the cash-strapped MTA to spend a reported \$20 to \$30 million tiling two NYC tunnels blue and gold. Originally white, the tiles lining the Brooklyn-Battery and Queens Midtown tunnels were set to be replaced following damage incurred during Super-

storm Sandy. When Cuomo got wind of the project he ordered that stripes composed of the state's colors be added. Gavin Masterson, the agency's top procurement officer, described the expense as "modifications to meet New York State branding guidelines." According to the NY Post, which first broke the story in July, workers on the Queens Midtown tunnel took to referring to the governor as "Chief Engineer Cuomo" due to his habit of stopping his motorcade to chat with them about the progress of his vanity project. The MTA disputed the Post's figures, insisting the colored tiles only added \$7.3 million to the cost of the project, adding that it was paid for via a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

SMILE, YOU'RE ON CAMERA

The MTA plans to install cameras equipped with facial recognition software on the nine bridges and tunnels it operates. The "Facial Detection and Recognition System" will take the photographs and compare them to vehicle license plates. There is no timeline for implementing the system but the MTA, at the direction of Gov. Cuomo, is asking technology companies for assistance.

— INDEPENDENT STAFF

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to a 2011 procurement report. Oracle bought RightNow in 2012 and MTA costs have ballooned since then. In July 2014, the RightNow contract was renewed under Oracle for \$190,000 a year, according to minutes from a board meeting where the RightNow contract was combined with the procurement of another Oracle service, "Social Relationship Management," for a combined \$518,000 for two years.

Currently, MTA still contracts Oracle for RightNow, which as of 2017 is included in the umbrella Oracle contract. This guarantees that the costs associated with RightNow will be much harder to trace going forward.

The MTA developer portal, for third-party app developers, was also not encrypted, meaning developers may have had their login username and password compromised or their API keys stolen. (API keys are the credentials MTA issues to third-party app developers to grant access to proprietary data feeds, such as train schedule or location services.) Visitors applying for a developer account also had their submissions leaked, which included their name, phone number and company name. The developer servers are located in Virginia. The MTA secured this portal as of July 25.

On July 2, the MTA unveiled a pre-release version of its new and redesigned website, which was a vast improvement over its current website. Commendably, the homepage and the basic text pages were secured under HTTPS. Train schedule lookups have been merged into the basic website and are now secure as well. But the new website still linked to insecure areas of the old website, such as the lost and found form, which leaked name, phone numbers, email address, postal address and travel details.

The MTA has since secured the lost and found form. But other parts of the old website remained unprotected at press time, such as TripPlanner and Subway Times and Bus Times.

Despite recent progress, the MTA violated its privacy policy for years and will continue to do so until its entire website is secured under HTTPS. The privacy policy states "the MTA Agencies are strongly committed to protecting personal information collected through the MTA Website against unauthorized access, use, or disclosure ... MTA Agencies have implemented procedures to safeguard the integrity of their information technology assets, including, but not limited to, authenticating ... and encrypting. Security procedures have been integrated into the design, implementation, and day-to-day operations of the MTA Website as part of our continuing commitment to the security of electronic content."

After the initial web publication of this report on July 18, an MTA spokesperson emailed *The Independent* the following statement: "The MTA currently uses HTTPS and encryption for all ecommerce apps to protect customer data associated with financial transactions, and our technicians are working on remaining sections of the legacy website and expect to have that patched within days. There has been no evidence of data leak or breach of any information from the MTA website to date."

However, the nature of this type of data leak means that the mere occurrence of data transmission to the MTA's insecure servers is evidence itself that the leak has occurred. Since the leak occurs via the act of transmission itself, the MTA has no control over who reads or saves that leaked data. If a third party abused its access to the data, then the evidence would rest with that third party, not the MTA.

And despite its assurance that technicians were patching the data breaches on its "legacy website," many areas of the website remained leaking as *The Indy* went to press.

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YOU'VE GOT MAIL

AFTER SUPREME COURT RULING, UNION MEMBERS ARE RECEIVING 'STOMACH TURNING' MESSAGES FROM RIGHT-WING GROUPS

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

The emails arrived barely six hours after the Supreme Court issued its *Janus v. AF-SCME Council 31* decision on June 27.

Sent to teachers' work email addresses, they ostensibly came from a woman named Amanda Burke. “The U.S. Supreme Court just ruled that all government workers — teachers, state workers, local public employees, police, firefighters and more — now have a real choice when it comes to their unions,” they said. “Whether it’s disagreements about politics, concerns about a lack of local representation, problems with union spending, or something else — you now have the right to stop paying for activities you don’t support.”

“It turned my stomach,” says a Long Island middle-school teacher who asked not to be identified. An active New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) member, she was already upset about the Court’s decision.

The emails, sent to teachers from Rochester to Long Island, came from the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a Michigan policy-and-propaganda organization that campaigned for state laws there banning the union shop and repealing “prevailing wage” standards for construction workers on public projects. They are part of a nationwide campaign by far-right groups against public-sector unions.

The Freedom Foundation in Olympia, Washington, announced the day of the *Janus* decision that it had hired 80 canvassers to persuade union members on the West Coast to drop out. The Mackinac Center had been planning the email campaign for months; it sent similar messages to teachers in California, Illinois, New Jersey, and other states.

In New York, more than 500,000 public-sector workers got emails from a group calling itself New Choice NY, telling them that they now “have every right to say no” to staying in the union. The Civil Service Employees Association calls the group “an affiliate of Americans for Fair Treatment, a front group funded by corporate billionaires including the Koch brothers.”

New York is a rich target: It has the highest percentage of union members of any state, with 23.8 percent of workers union members and 25.3 percent represented by unions, according to federal Bureau of Labor Statistics figures for 2017. About two-thirds of public-sector workers in the state are union members, according to a 2017 report by state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

“We are reaching out to all public employees throughout the country, and teachers are a critical mass of public employees in New York State,” a Mackinac Center spokesperson told the *Rockland/Westchester Journal News* June 28.

NYSUT spokesperson Carl Korn says the union prepared for the *Janus* decision by internal organizing, including knocking on more than 100,000 members’ doors, and that it plans to visit new members this summer. It recommended that members tell Mackinac that they’re sticking with the union and then report the email as spam. The Long Island teacher says “99 percent” of the members of her local signed “recommitment cards.”

“Union members are smart,” Korn told *The Independent*. “They’re not going to fall for this spam from an outside group.”



GARY MARTIN

The Mackinac Center apparently got the teachers’ email addresses from a combination of combing through the websites of school districts that post them for parents and Freedom of Information Law requests, says Korn. The CSEA says New Choice NY got workers’ addresses from “standard government email domains.”

Gov. Andrew Cuomo issued an executive order June 27 prohibiting state officials from releasing state workers’ personal addresses, phone numbers or email addresses to anyone except a union unless under court order — but it does not cover their work email addresses, which are considered public information. Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo issued a similar order in July.

Another side of the anti-union campaign is more than 30 lawsuits seeking to force unions to reimburse nonmembers for agency fees they paid, including nine filed against state affiliates of the National Education Association. In California, the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is suing Service Employees International Union Local 1000 to demand that it refund \$100 million in fees paid by about 40,000 current and former state workers since 2012.

These suits argue that the *Janus* decision, which also held that workers had to opt in to union membership instead of having to opt out if they didn’t want to join, should be applied retroactively. Federal courts dismissed several similar cases after the Court’s 2014 *Harris v. Quinn* decision, a precursor to *Janus* which held that home health aides paid by Medicaid couldn’t be required to pay fees to their union because they weren’t “full-fledged public employees.” They ruled that the unions should not have to reimburse fees that were legal when they were collected.

The Supreme Court may feel differently. In a little-noticed move on June 28, it vacated the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals’ decision in *Riffe v. Rauner* denying class-action certification to health aides backed by National Right to Work who were trying to force Service Employees International Union Healthcare Illinois & Indiana to refund \$32 million in fees. The Court ordered the Seventh Circuit to reconsider its ruling “in light of *Janus*.”

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NORTH BROOKLYN RISING

JULIA SALAZAR & HER DSA COMRADES WANT TO PUT TENANT DEMANDS FRONT & CENTER IN ALBANY. BUT FIRST SHE HAS TO DEFEAT A WILY OLD PARTY BOSS

BY PETER RUGH

You'll find Julia Salazar's campaign headquarters in a quiet corner of Bushwick, Brooklyn, down the street from a salvage yard. It's located within a former coffee shop that, in a more distant incarnation, served as a funeral parlor. In one of the storefront's Gothic windows, someone has taped up a recent cover of the *New York Times* Sunday Review section. "Millennial Socialists Are Coming," reads the headline, while beneath it a metal placard nailed to the building's facade cautions visitors striding through the parlor's entryway to "Watch Your Step."

Whoever placed those two pieces of signage in such close proximity to one another, aside from having an eye for collage, also has a clear grasp of the political moment Salazar's candidacy for the state Senate exemplifies. Salazar is one of those millennial socialists, and her opponent in the Sept. 13 primary for District 18's North Brooklyn Senate seat, Martin Malavé Dilan, is among a number of establishment Democrats now in surprising danger of losing their positions. The old stalwarts of transactional politics, political machines and unions, just aren't as powerful as they once were. Or at least, as recent events signal, they aren't much of a match against a candidate with a real ground game who catches the ardor of voters.

Who would've thought? Talking to people face-to-face about meaningfully improving their lives pays off. That's the Democratic Socialists of America's (DSA's) strategy, and it appears to be working. In Virginia last November, DSA member Lee Carter defeated the incumbent Republican House of Delegates majority whip, and this May, four DSA members clinched primary victories in legislative races in Pennsylvania. But the group's most impressive electoral achievement to date came in June, when 28-year-old Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez upset longtime Queens Democratic party boss Joe Crowley in a congressional primary.

DSA activists knocked on doors by the thousand for Ocasio and helped knock down Crowley, who was widely expected to someday succeed Nancy Pelosi as the top House Democrat. The Queens-Bronx district is heavily Democratic, so the win all but ensures Ocasio will have a place in Washington.

"Our ability to mobilize people is a threat to all corporate politicians," says Abdullah Younus, co-chair of DSA's 4,000-member New York City chapter. The organization has seen its national membership jump from about 5,000 to 47,000 since Donald Trump's election in 2016. Millennials, disenchanted with mainline Democrats and feeling a sense of urgency, have swarmed into its ranks — and more so since Ocasio-Cortez's stunning victory.

"What people are realizing is that this isn't about specific candidates, but that this is about a movement," Younus said. "All over the country, as people organize more and more, we're defeating the power of machines. We're doing this by placing the needs of the many over the profits of the few. This is only the beginning."

DSA has thrown itself into the Salazar campaign. Like Ocasio, who is one year her senior, Salazar hails from a working-class background. She was raised by a single mother, with what she terms "conservative bootstrap politics." Those politics influenced her to register as a Republican when she first signed up to vote in 2008. Her own life experiences soon set her on a different political path, though she wasn't a registered Democrat until last year.

Salazar has been working since age 14, getting her first job at a grocery store and cleaning homes to supplement the financial aid she received while attending Columbia University. That's where she says she found her class consciousness, reading Karl Marx and later attending study

groups hosted by the socialist magazine *Jacobin*. She was already an activist by then, having organized her fellow tenants in a campaign to force their landlord to make repairs and turn on the heat in the winter.

"I went on the city's website and found out we could legally withhold our rent," she recalled, sitting on a folding chair in the back of her campaign headquarters. At the time, she wasn't even aware there was a term for the tactic. "Little did I know that is called a rent strike. Three months later, we ended up going to Housing Court, and we won concessions from the management company. It was really empowering."

The strike taught her the impact collective action can have, how "working people who don't have power under capitalism, or don't have resources that translate into power, through organizing and being in solidarity with each other, we can change our lives."

Her campaign for the state Senate — calling for a Medicare-for-all health care system, immigrant rights, stronger rent protections and an end to cash bail — is an extension of that initial impulse, says Salazar, who is on a leave from Jews For Racial & Economic Justice, where she has worked since 2016 on anti-police brutality initiatives.

• • •

THE 18TH DISTRICT STRETCHES across northeast Brooklyn, from Greenpoint and Williamsburg through Bushwick, Bed-Stuy, Cypress Hills and East New York. Its demographics — 49 percent Hispanic, 26 percent black and 19 percent white — are similar to those of Ocasio's district, where Hispanic voters and younger white millennials who voted en masse for Bernie Sanders in 2016 broke heavily for the challenger.

Like Ocasio, she is highlighting the gentrification and the soaring rents that are affecting both old and new North Brooklyn residents. She's promising to bring their voices to the center of the debate next year, when state rent laws that affect more than 2 million New York City tenants will be up for renewal in Albany.

"Affordable housing is an issue that affects every inch of the district," she says.

In Malavé Dilan, Salazar faces a wily old political boss who inherited the remnants of Vito Lopez's North Brooklyn machine. Dilan has been a state senator since 2002, and served on the City Council for 10 years before that. His son Erik took over his dad's seat on the Council before moving to his current perch in the state Assembly. Facing a strong challenge from Salazar, Dilan launched a two-pronged attack on the Salazar campaign, as *The Independent* went to press, disputing the validity of the petition signatures she collected to qualify and claiming she did not meet the state's residency requirement to run for office. The Salazar campaign says Dilan is grasping at straws.

Dilan's strongest base of support comes from older homeowners in southeastern Bushwick and Cypress Hills who have seen their property values skyrocket amid an overheated housing market, along with seniors who live in the affordable housing that Vito Lopez delivered to his district during his long tenure in the Assembly. (That tenure ended in 2013 amid allegations that Lopez had assaulted multiple female staffers.)

Dilan was challenged from the left in 2014 and 2016 by veteran tenant organizer Debbie Medina, who reached 42 percent in her first campaign, but saw her second run unravel amid news reports that she had beaten her son with a belt.

While serving on the Council in 1994, Dilan voted in favor of high-rent vacancy decontrol, which enabled land-



WILLIAM MATELSK



ERIN SHERIDAN

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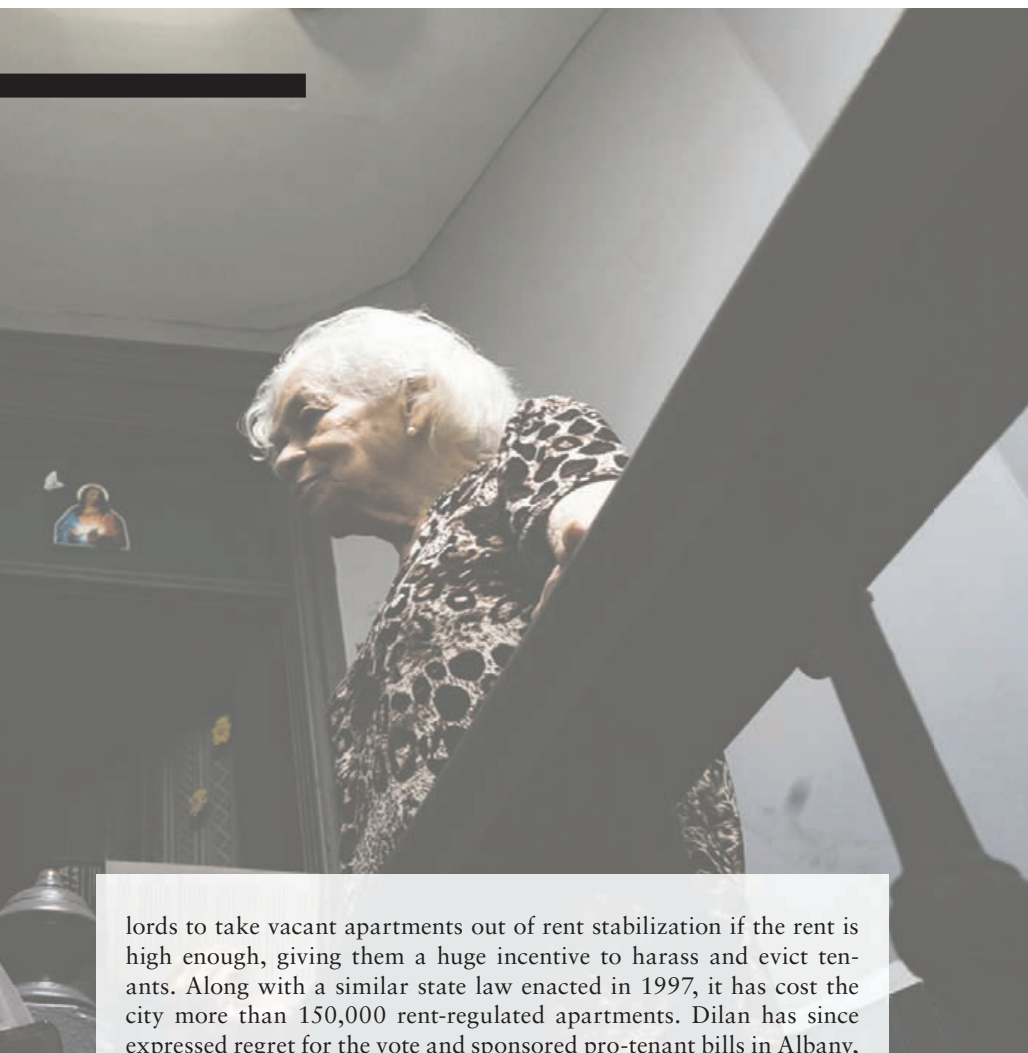
THEY'RE AT: Members of the Democratic Socialists of America and numerous community groups are getting word out about Salazar ahead of the Sept. 13 primary.

WHEN WOMEN LEAD:

Julia Salazar, right, speaks at a rally with gubernatorial candidate Cynthia Nixon on July 26. Both campaigners are challenging their entrenched opponents from the left.

MIND THE (WEALTH) GAP:

Young socialists like Salazar and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are capturing the imagination of voters overburdened by the strain of capitalism and disillusioned with the establishment.



ERIN SHERIDAN

lords to take vacant apartments out of rent stabilization if the rent is high enough, giving them a huge incentive to harass and evict tenants. Along with a similar state law enacted in 1997, it has cost the city more than 150,000 rent-regulated apartments. Dilan has since expressed regret for the vote and sponsored pro-tenant bills in Albany, but has also continued to take campaign contributions from the real-estate industry.

“A year ago my opponent wasn’t a Democrat,” Dilan said in a statement emailed to *The Indy*. “A few years ago she was a Republican. Twenty years ago people in Bushwick averaged \$400, \$500 in rent. In all that time, the only consistency has been me acting for and on behalf of the communities I represent.”

Salazar is one of a legion of left-leaning candidates running for state office this year in the hopes of cleaning up Albany, where a confluence of Wall Street and real-estate money and a deeply entrenched political class have rendered New York state government among the most corrupt in the country for decades. The most high-profile of these challengers is actress Cynthia Nixon, taking on Gov. Andrew Cuomo in the Democratic primary. Taking note of what DSA helped accomplish with the Ocasio campaign, she paid its members a visit in July, seeking their endorsement.

Nixon, a longtime education activist, already had bona fide progressive credentials, but all of a sudden asserted that she had “democratic socialist values.” DSA endorsed her along with progressive City Councilmember Jumaane Williams, who is making a bid for lieutenant governor, but not until after a heated debate. Many in the organization find Nixon’s supposed support for socialism a bit of a stretch.

One flier, circulated ahead of Nixon’s DSA visit, pointed out that the candidate hadn’t precisely embraced socialism, merely its values. “The DSA is not the fucking Working Families Party (thank god),” it read. “We don’t just grant endorsements to progressives who beg us for one. We endorse people who can advance the anti-capitalist struggle. If she won’t even identify herself as a socialist, how can we spread those ideas?”

Yet the fact that a high-profile candidate like Nixon would embrace ideas that once elicited visions of Stalinism in American minds indicates how far socialism has risen in the public’s estimation and how much political clout DSA is garnering. But the organization’s growth and electoral success have also posed new strategic challenges.

Banished from the mainstream political arena in the United States, Marxism has survived — barely — through two main poles of activity. One, in academia; the other, through small grouplets whose members, never numbering more than a few hundred, tout a near-unified political outlook and attract recruits in ones and twos through social-movement activism. Socialism has thereby avoided sully itself with the form of political activity Americans engage in most: the two-party electoral process. It has maintained its ideological purity while managing to be awesomely irrelevant.

...

NOT THAT FEARS OF ENGAGING with the Democratic Party aren’t well founded. It has a way of vacuuming up social movements’ energy and subverting the outcomes activists are fighting for.

DSA is attempting a new method of electoral engagement.

Through its backing of Bernie Sanders’ presidential campaign and by heeding Sanders’ call for progressives to run for office and take over the Democratic Party, DSA has thrown itself in the political muck,

Continued on page 22

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CUOMO'S WEB

BY GEORGIA KROMREI

As Gov. Andrew Cuomo stepped out from between the columns of the neoclassical-style venue on Park Avenue on June 14, shepherded by police officers into a waiting SUV, he likely heard the thousand or so housing activists on both sides of the building's entrance, chanting his name. Unlike the nonunion contractor inside, the Building Trades Employers' Association, which had just given him its "Master Builder" award, the demonstrators were not there to sing the governor's praises. The rally was a show of grass-roots force urging Cuomo to strengthen New York's rent laws when they expire next year, rather than allow them to unravel further.

The governor did not acknowledge the protesters. That's not surprising, as he has received more campaign contributions from real estate than any other industry, while allowing a housing crisis to fester and spread since he took office in 2011.

Real-estate groups have given Cuomo \$10 million since 2010, including \$1.9 million so far this election cycle, according to an open-source data analysis conducted by *The Independent*. They give it through their political action committees, firms, employees and limited liability corporations. LLCs are shell companies commonly used to shield a company's holdings from the financial liabilities of one property — but in what is called the "LLC loophole," state campaign-finance laws let landlords game the system: they can donate the maximum amount permitted for an individual business from multiple LLCs.

"In the United States, we have codified and legalized what in other countries would be considered corruption," said Sarah Goff, associate director of Common Cause, a government-watchdog group that has long called for the closing of the LLC loophole.

The frenzy of cash comes at a crucial time for the future of rent stabilization in New York City. The city is home to upwards of 2.5 million people who are covered under some form of rent regulation, first established as rent control in 1943, and as rent stabilization in 1969. The laws have been incrementally eroded since the 1990s, with loopholes such as vacancy decontrol, in which vacant apartments can be deregulated if their rent is high enough, and preferential rents, in which landlords give tenants discounted rents that can snap up to the legal maximum when their lease expires. Owners also raise rents for major capital improvements (MCI).

State law prohibits the city from closing these loopholes, and the state government has also weakly enforced the laws against illegally high rents. This has left half of all renters in New York City "rent burdened," paying more than 30 percent of their income on rent, according to 2018 data from the Rent Guidelines Board. Tenant advocates want the state legislature to repeal vacancy decontrol and the preferential-rent loophole when the laws come up for renewal next year, in order to stop the erosion of affordable apartments. But the state Senate has consistently blocked such measures, with Cuomo tacitly supporting the Republican gerrymandering and the renegade Democrats who preserved GOP control.

Many of Cuomo's biggest real estate donors are linked to the powerful Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY), an organization of large landlords and developers with more than 1,400 member firms. REBNY has given Gov. Cuomo \$1.1 million since 2010 through its political arm, the Real Estate Board PAC. Its members, their employees, their shell LLCs and their family members also show up on the campaign-contribution rolls.

Of the \$10 million that Cuomo has received since 2010 from the real-estate industry, \$5.9 million came from LLCs and \$4.1 million came from firms and affiliated individuals. While this is clear evidence they are seeking influence, it is not illegal. LLCs are treated as individuals, not subject to the same limits as corporations.

Real-estate firms and executives for firms such as RXR Realty, the Moinian Group, Fisher Brothers, Triangle Equities and Brookfield Property Group all have much to gain with Cuomo in their pocket: influential board appointments, the approval for mega-developments on state land, the possibility of weakening regulations, and government subsidies that sweeten the already lucrative development pot.

SHAFTING TENANTS

In the run-up to this year's election, developers Fisher Brothers gave Cuomo \$250,000, RXR Realty gave \$205,000 and Triangle Equities gave \$95,000. Cuomo's single biggest donor so far this year, however, is Brookfield Properties.

The luxury-development firm made headlines in May when it began talks to purchase Jared Kushner's 666 Fifth Avenue office building, but Brookfield has also entered into the multifamily property market, with a \$350 million investment in a rent-stabilized portfolio in East Harlem in 2016 and new mega-developments underway in Midtown, Greenpoint and the South Bronx. The company contributed \$40,000 to Cuomo on Jan. 9, 2017 and \$150,000 on Jan. 9, 2018 under three separate LLCs registered to the same address — chump change for the Canada-based corporation, which possesses \$80 billion in assets.

Perhaps more than any other firm, Brookfield Properties has reason to be interested in the weakening of rent-stabilization laws. Its investments in rent-stabilized portfolios will not yield a significant profit unless the apartments are converted to market-rate. As *The Indy* has previously reported, the firm Brookfield loaned money to for a rent-stabilized portfolio purchase is already using aggressive tactics to force residents out of the 49 East Harlem buildings it has invested in, including harassment, refusing to make repairs, turning off heat in the winter and turning it on in the summer. The state failing to strengthen tenant protections will enable such firms to continue driving out tenants.

"Rent stabilization suppresses rents," says Andrea Shapiro of the Metropolitan Council on Housing, a tenant advocacy group. "It makes it harder to justify high rents in surrounding areas, and luxury developers buy real estate at well above the rent rolls with the hope of deregulating through MCIs. That's when we see large-scale construction as harassment."

TAX BREAKS

Even while working to push tenants out, Cuomo's big-money real-estate donors have taken advantage of a generous tax benefit for housing them. Known as 421a, it allows developers to receive a property-tax abatement for new buildings if they reserve 20 percent of the units built for "affordable housing" for 10 to 40 years. The affordable units don't have to be in the building receiving the abatement; they can even be in a different borough.

First introduced in 1975 to encourage development when the city was experiencing massive abandonment, the 421a program has been revised over the years to create incentives for building affordable units. But it mainly functions as a govern-



ESTEBAN GUERRA

REAL ESTATE DONATIONS SINCE 2010

BY PARENT ORGANIZATION

REAL ESTATE BOARD OF NEW YORK MEMBER



THE MOINIAN GROUP
 JOSEPH MOINIAN, CEO
 • Cuomo appointed Nazeem Moinian to NYS Council on the Arts, 2017
 • 2,624 rent-stabilized units in NYC
\$207,500



MACQUESTEN DEVELOPMENT
 RELLA FOGLIANO, PRESIDENT
 • 1,200 affordable units in NYC & Westchester
\$301,000



SIGNATURE BANK
 GEORGE KLETT, CHAIRMAN
 COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
 • Ivanka Trump sits on their board
 • Has \$14.8 billion in multifamily mortgages
\$613,000



TRIANGLE EQUITIES
 LESTER PETRACCA, PRESIDENT
 • Cuomo appointed Petracca to the Nassau Interim Finance Commission, 2013
 • Also appointed him to the Battery Park City Authority, 2013
\$442,000



THE BRODSKY ORGANIZATION
 DANIEL BRODSKY, SENIOR PARTNER
 • 2,241 rent stabilized units in NYC
\$27,500



EXTELL DEVELOPMENT CORP
 GARY BARNETT, PRESIDENT
 • 964 rent stabilized units in NYC
\$190,000



BROOKFIELD PROPERTY GROUP
 RIC CLARK, CHAIRMAN
 • Lent \$350 Million for Dawney, Day portfolio in Harlem, 2016
 • Bought Jared Kushner's building, 2018
 • 7% owned by Qatar's sovereign fund
\$190,025



RXR REALTY
 SCOTT RECHLER
 • Cuomo appointed Rechler to Port Authority in 2001, MTA Board in 2017
 • Rents to ICE
 • Chairman of Regional Planning Authority
\$366,000



THE FISHER BROTHERS
 ARNOLD FISHER, SENIOR PARTNER
 • Cuomo approved exemptions in 2013 for Fisher's 86 Trinity Place development
\$417,000



STERLING EQUITIES, INC.
 FRED WILPON, CHAIRMAN
 • 185 rent-stabilized units in NYC
\$85,000



THE DURST ORGANIZATION
 DOUGLAS DURST, CHAIRMAN
 • 674 rent-stabilized units in NYC
\$347,500



TISHMAN SPEYER
 ROB SPEYER, CEO
 • 13,096 rent-stabilized units in NYC
\$92,200

ment subsidy for developers.

"It allows them to not pay taxes for a period of time, and it cushions their initial investment," says Shapiro.

The benefit expired in 2015, but Cuomo renewed it two years later, removing a provision that marketed affordable units to locals first. Developers not only cheered, but reached for their pocketbooks. On May 19, 2017, one day after 421a's renewal, developer RXR and Gabeli Holdings LLC, which share the same address, gave \$130,000 to Cuomo.

A PIECE OF THE PIE

RXR and other developers have received additional perks from Cuomo over the years. In 2013, he signed an amendment to the Hudson River Park Act that allowed for the development of office buildings along the greenway's piers. Two years later, RXR signed a 97-year ground lease with the Hudson River Park Trust to redevelop Pier 57 at 15th Street into a sprawling office park for Google.

In addition to lifting red tape and fostering lucrative development deals, Cuomo has made a habit of appointing his developer donors to influential board posts.

Through LLCs, executives and individuals linked to it, RXR has showered \$366,000 on Cuomo throughout his three campaigns for governor. Last year, it donated \$205,000 to his re-election campaign. While taking in funds from the firm, which possess \$12.2 billion in assets, Cuomo appointed RXR CEO Scott Rechler to the Port Authority's Board of Commissioners, where he oversaw the authority's \$30 billion budget from 2011 to 2016. In 2017, he appointed Rechler to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's board.

Rechler is also chair of the Regional Planning Association (RPA), an influential think tank that sets a strategic vision for urban planning in the New York metropolitan area. Its Fourth Regional Plan, published in February, advocates for a streamlining of the bidding process and for cost reductions in construction. That puts it at odds with another of Cuomo's supporters, the building-trades unions.

With the help of Cuomo and RPA, Rechler can craft urban planning strategy, determine its execution and profit directly

from it, explains Cea Weaver, research director of New York Communities for Change. The Fourth Regional Plan enables him to justify RXR's developments in suburban areas like Hempstead, New Rochelle and Glen Cove, as New Yorkers are priced out of the city and move to the suburbs.

"What [Rechler] is not saying is that these units are not affordable for people of color who live there," said Weaver. RXR is positioning itself to take the place of urban-planning departments for vulnerable small towns, she adds. "As people are pushed out of urban areas, a firm like RXR can come in and offer to develop the entire downtown, gentrify it and promise to make it appealing for millennials to move in."

While Cuomo has benefited from his ties with the real-estate industry and their contributions, those relationships could come back to haunt him if he tries to run for President in 2020. Both Cynthia Nixon, challenging Cuomo in the Democratic primary, and Zephyr Teachout, a candidate for state Attorney General who won 34 percent of the vote when she ran against Cuomo in the 2014 primary, have called him out for his pay-to-play politics. They and other Democratic insurgents running for the state Senate have committed to refusing money from corporations and have pledged to close the LLC loophole.

Cuomo has moved to the left in this year's race in an attempt to outflank Nixon, touting, among other stances, his opposition to migrant family separations. On the other hand, the money RXR has donated to Cuomo is far less than the \$12.4 million in rent it has collected over the past 16 years from an Immigration and Customs Enforcement field office in a Manhattan building it co-owns.

Politicians from Richard Nixon to Bill de Blasio have long insisted that campaign contributions don't affect their policies. But as billionaire Betsy DeVos, a major donor to Republicans in Michigan and elsewhere, said in 1997: "We expect a return on our investment."

Decca Muldowney and Peter Rugh contributed to this article.

SOURCE: NYC-DB, LITTLE SIS, REBNY.COM, DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS, FOLLOW THE MONEY

BIRDS OF A FEATHER...

ANDREW CUOMO HAS RECEIVED OVER HALF A MILLION DOLLARS FROM INDIVIDUALS & FIRMS TIED TO DONALD TRUMP.

BY DECCA MULDOWNNEY

Donald Trump and Andrew Cuomo go way back. They have both been big players on the New York political scene for years and it's hardly a surprise that they share financial connections.

Early this month Cynthia Nixon, Cuomo's rival in the Democratic primary race for governor, criticized him for accepting \$64,000 in donations from Trump between 2001 and 2009.

"Governor Cuomo cannot serve as a defense against Donald Trump when he's accepted tens of thousands of dollars in campaign donations from Donald Trump," read Nixon's Facebook ad.

In response, Cuomo said he would not return the donations. "I'm going to be deeply critical of him and keep the contributions," he said. Cuomo spokesperson Abby Fashouer later called Nixon's critique "a cheap distraction from a campaign gasping for air," and added, "No governor has fought harder against Donald Trump than Gov. Cuomo."

But Trump's direct donations to Cuomo are only part of the story. An *Independent* analysis of Cuomo's 2017-18 campaign donations shows a web of financial links to Trump-linked individuals and companies.

Andrew Cuomo's office did not respond to requests for comment on these donations.

ALEXANDER ROVT

Ukrainian-American billionaire Alexander Rovt is a major Cuomo donor. Since 2010, Rovt and his wife Olga have given \$356,000 to Cuomo's campaign. On Election Day, Rovt donated \$10,000 to the Trump campaign. Most of it was returned to him because it exceeded the \$2,700 limit.

Rovt made his fortune importing fertilizer from the Black Sea.

His company, IBE Trade Corp., now owns 12 percent of the world's ammonia supply. He is also a big player in the New York real estate world.

In 2014, Rovt put down \$303 million in cash to buy a majority share in 14 Wall Street, a 29-story skyscraper opposite the New York Stock Exchange. The year before he had bought the Henry T. Sloane mansion on East 68th Street for \$34 million, also in cash.

When former Trump campaign chair Paul Manafort came under federal scrutiny as part of the Russia probe, Rovt was pulled into the spotlight. The *New York Times* reported that after stepping down from the campaign, Manafort took out a number of loans through a shell company.

One of these loans, for \$3.5 million, came from the lending arm of Spruce Capital, a New York investment firm backed by Rovt. The co-founder of Spruce Capital, Joshua Crane, was involved in the failed luxury hotel project Trump Ocean Resort Baja Mexico, according to court filings.

MARC KASOWITZ

One of Cuomo's largest longtime donors is Kasowitz, Benson & Torres, a New York City law firm specializing in antitrust and patent litigation. They gave over \$250,000 to Cuomo between 2010 and 2013. (David Friedman, a partner at the law firm, advised Donald Trump during his presidential campaign. Trump made him ambassador to Israel in March 2017.)

The firm was founded by Marc Kasowitz, a trial attorney who represented Donald Trump in numerous cases, including his first divorce, his casino bankruptcies, and suits brought against Trump University. Kasowitz donated \$25,000 personally to Cuomo in 2011.

In May 2017, Trump brought Kasowitz on to act as his private counsel in matters related to the Russian election meddling probe. In July 2017, *ProPublica* reported that Kasowitz was struggling to get security clearance due to alcohol abuse and had bragged to friends about encouraging Trump to fire Preet Bharara. "This guy is going to get you," he allegedly told Trump. Later that month, Kasowitz left Trump's legal team.

Kasowitz's troubles weren't over. In October 2017, a joint WNYC-*ProPublica* investigation found that Kasowitz had represented Ivanka Trump and Donald Trump, Jr., in 2012, when the Manhattan District Attorney was considering bringing a criminal case against them for misleading prospective buyers of condos at Trump SoHo. That year, Kasowitz donated \$25,000 to District Attorney Cy Vance.

According to *ProPublica's* reporting, Vance said he returned the \$25,000 to Kasowitz before meeting with him, which is standard procedure when a donor has business before the DA's office.

Vance ruled against his own prosecutors and the case against the Trump children was dropped. Later that

A UKRANIAN FERTILIZER MAGNATE, A SHADY LAWYER AND THE KOCH BROTHERS ARE AMONG THE MAJOR CAMPAIGN DONORS THAT ANDREW CUOMO & DONALD TRUMP SHARE.

year, Kasowitz made another donation to Vance and helped raise money for his office, totalling \$50,000.

After the story broke, Cy Vance announced he would return the donations from Kasowitz. "I don't want the money to be a millstone around anybody's neck, including the office's," he said.

THE KOCH BROTHERS

When Cuomo first ran for governor in 2010 vowing to take on public sector unions, he received \$87,000 in donations from libertarian billionaire David Koch and his wife, Julia. Along with his brother Charles, David Koch (the richest resident of New York City) is a major donor to the Republican party, and has spent decades throwing hundreds of millions of dollars toward combating corporate taxation, social security spending and environmental regulation.

Initially skeptical of Trump's presidential campaign, the Koch network gave generously to Trump once Mike Pence was announced as VP. Trump also voiced suspicion of the Kochs during his campaign, but at least 35 Trump political appointees have been connected to the Kochs, from Mike Pompeo, to Scott Pruitt, to Kellyanne Conway.

MAJOR FEMINIST GROUPS ENDORSE CUOMO, DESPITE RECORD

BY DECCA MULDOWNEY

Big-name feminist advocacy groups have endorsed Andrew Cuomo over his rival Cynthia Nixon, despite Nixon's record of pro-choice advocacy and criticisms of Cuomo's legacy on securing reproductive rights.

Reproductive justice is increasingly taking center stage in the Democratic primary for New York Governor. President Trump's July 9 announcement of his nomination of Brett Kavanaugh for the empty seat on the Supreme Court opened the door for a 5-4 conservative majority that would be able to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

On July 11, shortly after Brett Kavanaugh was announced, Planned Parenthood Empire State Votes PAC, the organization's state action committee, endorsed Cuomo.

"In this critical moment in our nation's history, the stakes are too high," Robin Chappelle Golston, the group's CEO, said in a statement. "We need an experienced leader who will fight to protect New Yorkers from federal attacks on our rights and values — and that leader is Andrew Cuomo."

Cuomo also picked up an early endorsement from the New York chapter of the National Organization of Women (NOW-NY) in March. NOW-NY's president Sonia Ossorio praised Cuomo's record.

"His position on reproductive freedom is steadfast," Ossorio said. "There really is a lot at stake at this point in history. There's so much at stake. My bets are on Andrew Cuomo who has the experience and the track record to effectively run New York state government."

Nixon, meanwhile, has been critical of Cuomo's legacy on reproductive rights. Earlier this month she released a campaign video outlining her position on the threat to *Roe v. Wade*, interspersed with clips of Cuomo's own comments.

Cuomo is shown addressing a crowd on July 9, saying: "God told me I was a feminist when he gave me three daughters."

The same day, Nixon tweeted: "Thanks to Cuomo and the IDC, #RoevWade is not codified into state law. And with today's #SCOTUS nomination, there's never been a more important time for women to run and make ourselves heard."

IDC stands for Independent Democratic Conference, a group of eight Democrats who have collaborated to give Republicans control of the state senate with Cuomo's tacit approval.

Despite being one of the first states to amend criminal abortion laws in 1970, advocates say New York has outdated laws around reproductive rights. The penal code has not been updated since the passage of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, which activists say denies New York women their constitutional rights.

While there are fewer barriers to seeking an abortion than in other states, it is still illegal to have an abortion in New York after 24 weeks of pregnancy unless the life of the pregnant person is in danger. This forces people to leave the state to seek abortion after this cut-off point.

Over the last nine years, legislation to update the state's abortions laws and bring them in line with *Roe v. Wade* languished in the state Senate.

In March 2018, the Reproductive Health Act (RHA) was finally passed in the New York State Assembly. But it has been held up in the Republican-controlled state Senate. The IDC members have said they will again join mainline Democrats as part of a deal engineered by Cuomo this spring. Observers remain skeptical, however, that they will follow through with the bargain.

In a campaign video, Nixon says that although Cuomo has said he's been fighting for the passage of bills like the RHA, he has instead "prioritized keeping the IDC and the Republicans in control, knowing that they will never bring these bills up for a vote."

NOW-NY president Ossorio disputed this criticism of Cuomo and the delayed passage of the RHA.

"Anyone else who has been on the ground working to strengthen New York's reproductive laws knows that it's held up solely because we have a Republican-led state senate, aided by a Brooklyn Democrat who votes with those Republicans," Ossorio told *The Independent*. "To put that on the shoulders of the governor is an empty campaign slogan."

Abortion access has been a central part of Nixon's campaign. She has spoken about her own mother's decision to terminate a pregnancy. At a rally in Union Square on July 10, the day after Kavanaugh's pick, she held up a coat hanger as she told the story.

"It was very important for her to tell me that she had had an abortion, that it had been illegal and that it had been a tremendously awful experience," Nixon told the crowd. "She had wanted to make sure that I knew her history so I can fully value how crucial reproductive freedom is."

As reproductive rights have become a flashpoint in the gubernatorial race, Cuomo has taken out ads targeting Republican lawmakers over the delayed passage of the RHA and has passed an executive order to ensure access to contraception.

Following President Trump's inauguration, he also called for an amendment to the New York State constitution to write in freedoms guaranteed under *Roe v. Wade*.

Throughout 2017, the activist group Women's Health and Reproductive Rights (WHARR), part of Get Organized Brooklyn, held weekly protests outside Cuomo's New York City office, calling for him to help pass RHA.

"We've been asking him to speak about the Reproductive Health Act for years," Amy Bettys, co-chair of the group, told *The Indy*. "It seems like the only thing that got him moving on it is that this is an election year."

One of the weirder chapters of Cuomo's history on women's rights is his 2014 founding of the "Women's Equality Party" (WEP), in an attempt to appeal to women voters when he was first running for reelection. The WEP is not to be confused with WFP (Working Families Party), founded two decades ago by a coalition of labor unions and activists.

Cuomo drove around the state on a bus called the "Women's Equality Express," decorated with pink stars, encouraging female voters to support him.

Writer Michelle Goldberg spoke for many critics of Cuomo at the time, when, writing in the *Nation*, she described the Women's Equality party a "joke" and "an attempt to use feminism against the Working Families Party, the real champions of New York's women."

This year, the Women's Equality Party endorsed two men, Joe Crowley and Andrew Cuomo, over their female opponents, Cynthia Nixon and congressional candidate Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

The Working Families Party chose to back Nixon, and used their endorsement announcement to level criticism at Cuomo's record on reproductive rights. It initially endorsed Crowley but, following his June Democratic primary to defeat Ocasio, has called for him to withdraw from its ballot line. Crowley has refused to do so.

"Every year for eight years, Andrew Cuomo has claimed to be a champion of reproductive freedom. Every year for eight years, he's failed to deliver," Karen Scharff, the party's co-chair told the *New York Times*. "Why? Because it was more important to keep Republicans in power and keep taxes on his wealthy donors low than it was to protect our rights."

For Bettys, protecting reproductive rights in New York State matters more than whoever wins the gubernatorial race. "There is an extra sense of urgency because of Brett Kavanaugh," she said. "I want somebody who's going to do something."



GOVERNOR ANDREW CUOMO / FLICKR

'THE WRONG PEOPLE ARE IN JAIL RIGHT NOW'

AN INTERVIEW WITH ZEPHYR TEACHOUT

BY JOHN TARLETON

The revolt against business-as-usual machine politics in New York began in the summer of 2014 when then little-known Fordham Law School professor named Zephyr Teachout won 34% of the vote against Andrew Cuomo in the Democratic primary. She ran on an anti-corruption message with hardly any money, endorsements or name recognition.

Four years later, the author of a widely acclaimed book on the history of corruption in America is back on the campaign trail. This time Teachout is running for Attorney General, an especially powerful post given New York's role as a center of finance and media as well as the home of President Trump and his sprawling business empire.

I recently found Teachout in her spartan office in the back of her East Harlem campaign headquarters where she was picking through a lunch of salad and falafel balls. Brimming with ideas for how to transform a justice system that has one set of rules for the powerful and the connected and another for everyone else, she made her case for why New York's top law enforcement official should be someone with no ties to the existing political establishment.

JOHN TARLETON: *Why are you running for Attorney General? What do you bring to the table that your opponents do not?*

ZEPHYR TEACHOUT: With all the corruption scandals we are seeing here in New York and in the administration of Donald Trump, the New York State Attorney General really becomes the regulator to protect our very democracy. We have to have someone who will investigate Wall Street, investigate Trump Tower, investigate financial crimes. We have to bring in more of the public corruption unit and amp up the criminal unit because the wrong people are going to jail now. You have financial criminals who are avoiding the law, landlords who are avoiding the law, people close to power in Albany who are avoiding the law, serial sexual predators in high places who are avoiding the law.

The job of attorney general is to investigate the crimes of the powerful so there aren't two systems of laws, one for the wealthy well connected one for everybody else. At the same time we must end mass incarceration, end cash bail and speak out against the travesty caused by marijuana arrests. It is particularly important for law enforcement to take that role.

New York State government has long been cited as among the most corrupt in the country. What should the next AG's relationship to the rest of the political establishment be?

I'm running against three candidates who in different ways all have close ties to the establishment and who all take big New York City real estate money. In order to speak out, you have to be comfortable taking on the legislature and the governor. You have to be real clear about legal violations. That is why I am calling for the resignation of Seth Agata, the head of the Joint Commission on Public Ethics, the state agency that is supposed to be investigating corruption and sexual misconduct but instead protects those in power. Of course he should resign in the same way [MTA Chairman] Joe Lhota should not be allowed to receive outside income from other jobs.

You've had success as an academic and as an author whose writings have been cited by the courts in prominent anti-corruption cases. But do you have the necessary experience to serve in a high pressure public office like New York Attorney General?

I started my career representing people on death row. When your client's life is on the line, that's high pressure. You have to be creative, dogged, tenacious, uncover every possible fact that could help your client. Right now I'm a plain-

tiff in a lawsuit to overturn the Citizens United Supreme Court ruling. Seventy-two hours after Trump took office I was one of the lawyers in the first emoluments lawsuit, as well as advising others. For years I've been advising legal strategy around net neutrality and anti-trust violations. So I feel fully ready to take on this job.

ZEPHYR TEACHOUT

In the same vein, how would you approach running the Attorney General's office with hundreds of lawyers under your charge given that you haven't held public office before?

I've started foundations and non-profits and worked closely with legal teams in developing strategy. Much of the work of attorney general is recruiting, building up and supporting the underlying talent — really lifting up the line attorneys and working with bureau heads to maximize the potential of the office. One of the changes I would make is to create a flatter structure with fewer layers of bureaucracy to enable faster action. While focusing on individual cases, we would also be looking for patterns in those cases that might impact systemic change so the big companies can't get away with just paying off thousands of small fines.

How would you describe your political philosophy?

I start with a basic belief that every person has dignity and is deserving of equal respect. So many problems in our society come from unaccountable, concentrated power and the abuse of that power which is why it's especially important to hold those in power accountable.

Reading your book, Corruption in America, I was struck by the inspiration you drew from this country's founders and the debates they had among themselves. It's often Tea Party types who focus on the historical figures from that era while the left draws its inspiration more from subsequent social reformers and revolutionaries who dot this country's history.

The book started as an appeal to the Supreme Court saying you're using originalism as a judicial philosophy all wrong. What we should do is look for those values which are wise and powerful and strong and reject those values which are not. The wisdom that was a focus of my book and a focus of my research is a profound anxiety about power and corruption. Let's learn, let's take everything of value that we can from history and not take those parts that aren't. That's the way I approach any era in history.

Is it a coincidence that your campaign office is located at 1789 Madison Avenue given James Madison's leading role in writing the Constitution.

(Laughing) No, total coincidence.

Given that the legal system often serves as a tool of class domination, it's hard not to feel a certain cynicism when the importance of the "rule of law" is invoked?

When I talk about the rule of law I don't mean what the Supreme Court says. I don't mean what the people who carry badges say. The ideal is that the same rules apply, and you don't get special treatment because you're a bank or a friend of the President.



ELIA GRAN



WHY THE STATE SENATE MATTERS

BY ROSS BARKAN

What is going on with the New York State Senate these days? It's an innocuous question with a labyrinthine, but vitally important, answer for our democracy here in New York, which is far lousier than most residents imagine. While the heinous Donald Trump gobbles up what little attention and patience people have for current events, Albany muddles on, calling the shots in our lives while remaining cloaked in relative anonymity, just the way most legislators like it.

When I tell people I'm running for state Senate, I explain to them that this vague-sounding office is actually incredibly crucial to their lives. Despite our belief that New York is a deep blue state and a progressive bastion, Republicans control the state Senate. They have done so, with the exception of one brief and chaotic interruption, for a half century, a fact that truly staggers the mind.

Yes, Republicans have been running the show in New York, in one form or another, since Lyndon Johnson was president and the Beatles were owning the charts.

What has this meant? For New York City, a whole lot, and little of it good. Our rent control and rent stabilization programs, the last bit of protection for the working class we have in this city, exist at the whims of the state legislature. Every four years, the rent laws come up for renewal, and every four years Republicans backed by millions of dollars from the real estate lobby try to weaken the laws with the eventual goal of doing away with them altogether.

Since the 1990s, we have lost hundreds of thousands of units of rent-stabilized housing because Republicans and complicit, real estate-friendly Democrats have supported policies to make it easier for landlords to deregulate the housing stock. New York City can't set its own rent laws because of something called the Urstadt Law, which gave the state dominion over city housing laws during the 1970's fiscal crisis.

Republicans in Albany are loathe to give it up.

Our income taxes, minimum wage, education and transportation are all controlled by the state. Mayoral control of public schools is now a once-a-year proposition that can disappear whenever because Republicans in Albany hate Mayor Bill de Blasio. The MTA will never be adequately funded or held accountable for its management failures because Senate Republicans, based primarily in suburban and rural areas that have little in the way of public transit, don't really care. (Mediocre Democrats can share some blame in this too, of course.)

New York abortion law, last updated in 1970, predates *Roe v. Wade*, and Senate Republicans

refuse to strengthen it so the *Roe v. Wade* decision (now imperiled by Trump's Supreme Court) is codified in the New York State Constitution. Republicans refuse to pass a bill granting civil rights protections, statewide, to the LGBTQ community. They refuse to ban so-called conversion therapy.

I can go on and on and on.

The Republican Senate doesn't so much exist to advance conservative policy — Assembly Democrats can always thwart actually destructive legislation — as to thwart, dilute and limit progressive outcomes. New York's antiquated voting and campaign finance laws are a legacy of a Republican Senate that sees no problem with millionaires and billionaires dominating our politics. The status quo serves them fine.

And then there's the elephant (or the elephant in donkey's clothing) in the room: Gov. Andrew Cuomo. The terribly kept secret of Albany over Cuomo's two pharaonic terms is that the governor with presidential ambitions would prefer that Democrats never take control of the state Senate.

How? Why?

The how is easiest to answer. Republicans have clung to razor-thin majorities in the Senate even as demographics and voter registration numbers work decidedly against them because their districts are blatantly gerrymandered. My own state Senate district, drawn by the Republican incumbent Marty Golden, is just one of many bizarrely-shaped seats designed to empower Republicans at the expense of Democrats.

In 2012, the last time redistricting occurred, state Senate Republicans and Assembly Democrats were each allowed to draw their own districts. This is an Albany tradition dating back to time immemorial. Unlike California, we do not do independent redistricting. Incumbents protect themselves.

When Cuomo first ran for governor, he campaigned, strangely enough, on a platform of good government. He said he would veto new district lines that weren't independently drawn. This never happened, and Cuomo happily let Golden and the Republican majority shape district lines that have girded them for the last six years. It's why that, even with the wind blowing so fiercely in an anti-Trump state, they believe they can find a way to retain their majority.

In 2011, Cuomo and Jeff Klein, a Democratic state senator in the Bronx who has an affinity for real estate developers and charter schools, effectively collaborated to create the Independent Democratic Conference. Whether it was more Klein's idea or Cuomo's has never been clear — maybe Klein hatched the concept and found a willing enabler — but the aim became readily apparent after Barack Obama was reelected and Democrats won enough seats to take control of the state Senate.

Klein's bloc of Democrats, then four in number, chose to align themselves with the Republicans to keep the rest of the Democrats out of the majority. This partnership brought enormous benefits to Klein and his allies, granting them all the perks of the majority: swollen staff budgets, funding for their districts and coveted committee chairmanships.

Cuomo, who has always been most comfortable governing in the Clintonian center and once proclaimed himself a "new Democrat" who was going to break the hold of organized labor on New York, relished this arrangement. When progressives cried foul, he could always blame the Republican-IDC majority for stifling bills. When trades needed to be made, he could claim victory, like when Republicans allowed Cuomo to phase in a \$15 minimum wage in much of the state.

The evidence of Cuomo's affinity for the IDC-GOP partnership lay in how little he did to thwart it or aid Democrats in their quest to take control of the Senate. As Democrats in 2014 battled Republicans and Cuomo ran for reelection, he halfheartedly campaigned for a few candidates and saved his massive campaign war chest for himself. When 2014 drew to a close, Cuomo still had millions in his account and the Democrats were swamped.

The winds have now shifted. Trump is president and arrangements with the Republican Party are out of vogue. Doing what Democrats begged him to do years ago, Cuomo overnight crushed the IDC this spring, forcing them to rejoin the mainline Democrats. The IDC, now numbering eight, technically belongs to the Democratic conference but its members have been further ostracized in the wake of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's victory over Rep. Joe Crowley, the once powerful Queens Democratic boss and Cuomo ally.

All of them are facing primary challengers, several of which are quite strong. Mainstream politicians like Council Speaker Corey Johnson and Comptroller Scott Stringer have lined up against the former IDC members, further bolstering a movement that once only existed in activist circles.

It is a precarious time but a special time. I hope the Republican majority is finally beaten and Democrats, particularly good ones, can prevail. New York is a retrograde state, in many chilling ways. Next year, we can really change all of that.

Ross Barkan is a journalist-turned-political candidate running in State Senate District 22 in South Brooklyn.

HALLS OF POWER:
The New York State Capitol Building in Albany.

SMASHING THE STATUS CUOMO

OUR VOTER'S GUIDE TO THE UPSTARTS, UNDERDOGS AND INSURGENTS ON THE BALLOT
ON SEPTEMBER 13

BY INDEPENDENT STAFF

When New York progressives woke up on November 9, 2016 to the smoking rubble of Hillary Clinton's defeat at the hands of Donald Trump and began to look around for ways to resist full Republican control in Washington, DC, they noticed a funny thing: in their sleepy state capitol of Albany, a Republican minority exercised a virtual veto over legislation in one of the most liberal states in the country. They accomplished this feat with the help of a rogue group of Democratic state senators and the blessing of New York's two-term governor.

The Independent Democratic Conference (IDC) was formed in 2011 just as the Republicans majority that had controlled the state Senate for a half-century was on the verge of losing its grip on power. The IDC was initially composed of four rogue Democratic senators and eventually grew to eight. Cementing Republican control was a Faustian bargain, but it came with its perks. And given the advantages of incumbency and how little attention New York voters usually pay to state politics, it must have seemed like it could go on forever.

But now we're in a different moment where a slew of candidates from the top of the ballot on down are targeting machine incumbents with people-powered campaigns that rely on small dollar donations and volunteer-driven voter outreach instead of large sums of corporate cash and a barrage of television ads and glossy mailers. Here are some of the key Democratic primary races that will be on the ballot on September 13.

GOVERNOR

ANDREW CUOMO VS. CYNTHIA NIXON

It's experience of the most unseemly sort vs. an unabashedly left-wing agenda in the governor's race. Andrew Cuomo describes himself as a progressive who gets things done and points to victories on gay marriage, an expanded minimum wage and a first-in-the-nation ban on fracking during his first two terms — accomplishments that required years of protest before the governor adopted positions he had previously spurned.

During the same two terms Cuomo has handed over much of the state regulatory apparatus to his pay-to-play campaign contributors, presided over the unraveling of the MTA and starved local governments across the state of needed funds. His opponent — award-winning actor and education activist Cynthia Nixon — is taking no money from corporate political action committees (PACs) or limited liability corporations (LLCs). She is calling for universal rent control, Medicare-for-All, marijuana legalization, reinvesting in the subway system and was recently endorsed by the Democratic Socialists of America.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

KATHY HOCHUL VS. JUMAANE WILLIAMS

Lieutenant governors have traditionally been non-entities who wait in the wings in case their boss is felled by scandal or worse. The current incumbent is a former congresswoman from Buffalo named Kathy Hochul. She is being challenged by Jumaane Williams, a Brooklyn City Councilmember who has vowed to remake the office as a center of advocacy and agitation on behalf of New Yorkers whose voices are ignored by other state officeholders.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

When two-term Attorney General Eric Schneiderman re-

signed due to a #MeToo scandal in early May, the race was on to succeed him. Three of the four contenders — Leecia Eve, Letitia James and Zephyr Teachout — are women. Eve, a former Cuomo and Hillary Clinton aide, is little-known outside her native Buffalo. James, the popular New York City Public Advocate, was tapped by Cuomo to be the Democratic Party's official candidate and has already reaped the benefits with hundreds of thousands of dollars in corporate PAC and real estate money flowing into her campaign coffers. Teachout, a law professor who wrote a well-received book on the history of corruption in America, is rejecting all corporate contributions in favor of an insurgent grassroots campaign. As of mid-July, she had raised \$550,000, of which 97% came from donations of less than \$200. Upstate Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney is the fourth candidate in the race.

DISTRICT 34: BRONX/ WESTCHESTER

JEFF KLEIN VS. ALESSANDRIA BIAGGI

Representing a district that includes wealthy, white bedroom communities like Riverdale and Pelham, as well the racially-mixed, working-class East Bronx, Jeff Klein has taken hundreds of thousands of dollars from the real estate industry and other corporate special interests since his Senate tenure began in 2005. After launching the IDC in 2011, he has helped ensure that the Senate is a swamp where progressive legislation — tenant protections against soaring rents, universal health care, the codification of *Roe v. Wade* into state law — goes to die. Among the recent bills Klein helped kill at the end of the legislative session this June, a government ethics reform package. Klein has resisted calls to resign since January when a former staffer accused him of shoving his tongue down her throat.

His opponent, Alessandra Biaggi, is no stranger to big politics herself. She's a former Cuomo staffer, ran national operations for Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential run and is the granddaughter of the late Congressman Mario Biaggi, who represented the Bronx for nearly two decades. Biaggi is running on a platform that includes single-payer health care and ending loopholes that allow landlords to hike rents on regulated apartments.

Biaggi has raised \$314,000, the most money of any anti-IDC candidate, with an average donation of \$76 while Klein has hoovered up \$1,785,000 with an average donation of \$1,947, according to an analysis of data from the Board of Elections by realsludge.com.

DISTRICT 31: UPPER WEST SIDE-UPPER MANHATTAN

MARISOL ALCANTARA VS. ROBERT JACKSON

Former three-term New York City Councilmember Robert Jackson is taking on IDC-member Marisol Alcantara for her uptown Senate seat. Prior to his time on the Council, Jackson led the Campaign for Fiscal Equity as a parent activist and school board member. In 1993, the organization filed a lawsuit against the State of New York, which more than a decade later agreed to disperse \$5.6 billion annually to long-underfunded schools over a four-year period. The state legislature froze the funds, however, following the 2008 financial crisis and much of the money has yet to be distributed.

Jackson narrowly lost a three-way race to Alcantara in 2016 when she ran as a progressive and attended the Democratic National Convention as a Bernie Sanders delegate. Alcantara has sponsored a number of pieces of tenant protection legislation, none of which have been brought to the floor, because the Senate is controlled by Republicans with

IDC's backing. Confronted by the fact that her political alignments were preventing legislation she supposedly supports from passing, Alcantara, speaking with *City Limits* in February, blamed Simcha Felder, another breakaway Democrat who, however, is not an IDC member.

DISTRICT 17: CENTRAL/ SOUTHERN BROOKLYN

SIMCHA FELDER VS. BLAKE MORRIS

Shortly after he was elected as a Democrat in 2012, incumbent Simcha Felder announced he would caucus with Republicans. A former City Councilmember who represents the conservative, orthodox Jewish neighborhoods of Midwood and Borough Park, Felder cast the lone Democratic vote against New York's \$15-an-hour minimum wage bill and, three years running, has played a pivotal role in killing the state's DREAM Act, which would reduce the cost of higher education for children of undocumented immigrants. In May, Felder told a local Democratic club that if they were looking for a real Democrat to represent them, "I'm not your guy."

Felder's opponent, attorney Blake Morris has promised to help push through the legislation Felder has either thwarted or stalled. Morris' slogan: "Real Democrat." Whether or not Felder loses the Democratic primary in September, he will also be appearing on the Republican, Conservative and Independence Party ballot lines.

DISTRICT 11: NORTHEAST QUEENS

TONY AVELLA VS. JOHN LIU

In 2010, Tony Avella knocked off a 19-term Republican incumbent and seemingly put District 11 in progressive hands. In 2012, the mercurial Avella joined the IDC, helping to ensure Republican control of the Senate. He continues to reap the financial benefits of that move. He has raised just under \$240,000 this cycle at an average clip of \$1,283 per contributor.

It looked like Avella was going to coast to an easy re-election before his opponent John Liu jumped into the race days before the filing deadline and quickly gathered the necessary petition signatures with the help of No IDC activists. Liu was the first Asian-American to win citywide office in 2009 when he was elected City Comptroller. He quickly became a thorn in Bloomberg's side by exposing corruption and mismanagement in the billionaire mayor's administration. Most famously, Liu laid bare the City Time scandal, an effort to update the city's timekeeping system for municipal employees that was plagued by \$600 million in cost overruns at the hands of private contractors hired by Bloomberg.

Liu limped to a fourth-place finish in the 2013 mayoral race after the FBI launched an investigation of his fundraising practices for which he was later cleared. In 2014, he ran and narrowly lost to Avella. Since then he has been teaching, learning to fly small airplanes and running in marathons. Now he is back in another kind of race. An outspoken critic of the IDC since his first run against Avella, Liu hopes to ride this year's wave of activist energy back into office.

DISTRICT 18: NORTH BROOKLYN

MARTIN MALAVÉ DILAN VS. JULIA SALAZAR

It's the old school machine politician against the millennial socialist who is 40 years his junior in this rapidly gentrifying North Brooklyn district. For more, see Page 10.



DISTRICT 13: WESTERN QUEENS

JOSE PERALTA VS. JESSICA RAMOS

The neighborhoods that make up the 13th district — Jackson Heights, Woodside, Elmhurst, East Elmhurst, Corona — helped propel Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to her landslide win over Joe Crowley and No IDC candidate Jessica Ramos hopes to catch some of that Ocasio magic in her race against veteran legislator Jose Peralta who joined the IDC shortly after being re-elected in 2016. Ramos whose parents immigrated from Colombia, worked as a union staffer before becoming the director of Latino media for the de Blasio administration. A lifelong Queens tenant and straphanger on the beleaguered 7 train, she has made reforming rent laws and fixing the MTA two of her top campaign priorities.

DISTRICT 20: CENTRAL BROOKLYN

JESSE HAMILTON VS. ZELNOR MYLIE

Jesse Hamilton is known in his district for delivering constituent services. But will voters forgive him for throwing in with the IDC and the Senate Republicans? Hamilton's opponent Zellnor Mylie hopes not. In a neighborhood experiencing rapid gentrification and displacement of longtime residents, Mylie is vowing to end vacancy decontrol, which gives landlords an incentive to push out long-term residents and to close the preferential rent loophole, which allows for sudden and unexpected rent increases.

DISTRICT 22: SOUTH BROOKLYN

ROSS BARKAN VS. ANDREW GOUNARDES

The incumbent in the 22nd District is Marty Golden, a pro-Trump troglodyte who once claimed that the 9/11 hijackers came from the Arab American community in Bay Ridge. He will face a Democratic challenger in November for the first time since 2012 when he trounced Andrew Gounardes by 16 points.

An aide to Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Gounardes is back for a second try and is the party establishment's favorite in the race. His primary opponent — journalist-turned-politico Ross Barkan — is running an ambitious grassroots campaign calling for abolishing ICE, universal rent control, free CUNY and SUNY and Medicare-for-All and has been endorsed by People for Bernie and Unite Here! Local 100 among others.

Whichever challenger squares off with Golden in the fall, he will confront a 16-year incumbent who sits on the Senate committee that approves and oversees the MTA's five-year capital spending programs. Not that it's done much good for his South Brooklyn constituents who face increasingly tortuous subway commutes. Since 2015, Golden has received 10 tickets for speeding in special zones near city schools that are monitored by speed cameras and has been accused of impersonating a police officer by a cyclist with whom he had a confrontation. That's not much of a transit policy though it's one way for his constituents to know he spends time in his district. Unfortunately for children in the city, Golden and his Republican Senate colleagues recently failed to renew a law that allows the city to use those speed cameras.

VOTER INFO

You can vote in the Sept. 13 Democratic primaries if you are registered in the State of New York as a Democrat, or if you are not registered to vote and do so as a Democrat by August 19. Due to New York's restrictive voting laws, if you are already registered as an independent or as a member of another political party, it's too late to switch your party status and vote in this year's primaries. For more, see the NYC Board of Elections at vote.nyc.ny.us.

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SOCIALISM IS MORE THAN NEW DEAL REFORMS

IT'S A VISION FOR HOW TO DEMOCRATIZE THE ECONOMY AND END THE POWER OF CAPITALIST BOSSES OVER OUR LIVES

BY HOWIE HAWKINS

A funny thing happened on the way to the 2018 election. Socialism broke out! Or at least a number of Democratic candidates have declared themselves to be socialists.

On June 26, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez beat the Democratic machine incumbent, Joe Crowley, in a Queens-Bronx Democratic primary for Congress. She won with the support of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and embraced the socialist label. Within days, the Working Families Party-endorsed Democrats for Governor and Lt. Governor, Cynthia Nixon and Jumaane Williams, were saying we, too, are socialists now. Lots of people and mainstream media were asking, what is this democratic socialism?

As someone who came up in the McCarthy and Cold War eras — when the word socialism stopped rather than started conversations — it is a welcome sight to see socialism coming back into mainstream public discourse.

The significant support for Bernie Sanders' presidential run in 2016 as a democratic socialist got the conversation started. The ranks of socialist groups have swelled in Sanders' wake, with DSA in particular growing from about 5,000 to approximately 47,000 members since Sanders launched his campaign in 2015. DSA elected 15 of its members to local offices nationwide in 2017, eight Democrats and seven independents. In 2018 to date, seven women supported by DSA have won Democratic primaries for Congress and state legislatures in Omaha, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and New York City.

However, something is notably missing in these candidates' descriptions of socialism. They are leaving out the distinguishing tenet of the traditional socialist program — the definition of socialism you will find in the dictionary — a democratic economic system based on social ownership of the major means of production.

It is a good thing that Sanders and other progressives have put socialism back into mainstream political discourse, but what these new socialist Democrats really advocate is New Deal liberalism. They promote redistributive social programs that partially mitigate the inequalities the capitalist economy generates.

For socialists, social ownership is the basis for economic democracy in both the public and private sectors. Government-owned corporations can be autocratic. They are often set up as “lemon socialism” to cover unprofitable markets or subsidize private profits for privately-owned corporations with below-cost inputs. A cooperative in the private sector is a form of social ownership. Sanders' “democratic socialism” is indistinguishable from traditional American liberalism. Like liberals, he conflates social ownership with state ownership. Like conservatives, he conflates liberal social programs with socialism.

Liberals contend that their fiscal, monetary and regulatory policies will support better than conservative policies the economic growth and profits that can then be taxed to support social programs. Socialists demand much more. They want to end the dictatorship capitalists exercise over economic resources, workers and work itself. They want to enjoy the full fruits of their labor instead of having owners take a share of the value every worker creates every day at work. With lots of workers and few owners, this wage labor system generates capitalism's extreme inequality. Socialists want equitable distribution in the first place, at the point of production, not merely partial redistribution after the fact through social programs.

In an age of environmental crisis and an unfolding climate catastrophe, socialists want to uproot capitalism's competitive structure because it is driving the blind, relentless growth that is poisoning the environment and depleting natural resources. Socialists want a system of economic democracy and planning to meet the basic economic needs of all on an ecologically sustainable basis.

Socialists also criticize the naive politics of liberalism. Capitalism generates concentrated wealth, which translates into concentrated political power. Liberal social programs are not secure as long as capitalists have the economic and political power. The rollback of New Deal programs in the United States and welfare state programs in Western Europe demonstrate this political reality.

Capitalists buying politicians through campaign contributions is the obvious way they exercise power over the political process. But even if we get full public campaign financing enacted, capitalists' control over economic resources gives them the power to repeal liberal programs. Capital can strike, too. It can temporarily tank the economy, blame the liberals and force them out of office.

The new socialist Democrats and traditional socialists who want to democratize the economy through social ownership are united behind immediate demands for social programs like single-payer health care and a job guarantee. But these programs are not secure, if they are even achievable in the first place, so long as capitalism prevails and concentrates economic and political power in the hands of the capitalist elite.

What the approach of entering the Democratic Party has meant historically is socialists have ended up doing the grunt work in campaigns to elect liberals, who, in the absence of an independent left political competitor, have moved steadily to the right since the early 1970s. Now, with candidates and politicians who are liberals calling themselves socialists, the very idea of socialism as a new social system could get lost even more.

If socialism is to advance as a radical alternative to capitalism, socialists will need their own distinct party, program, and identity outside and opposed to the two-capitalist-party system.



GARY MARTIN

At the beginning of this year, the state committee of the Green Party of New York decided we would campaign as ecological socialists. In previous campaigns, we have put forward socialistic reforms to address problems like the climate crisis, stagnant wages, the bipartisan test-punish-and-privatize school agenda and skyrocketing rent and medical expenses. Now we are campaigning explicitly as socialists, in part, because socialism has become a conversation starter, thanks to the electoral successes of Sanders, Ocasio and others.

We are promoting public enterprise in several areas:

- A public energy system in order to effectively plan the transition to 100 percent clean energy.
- Public broadband to universalize access, improve affordability and customer service and ensure net neutrality and privacy.
- A public bank to lower the costs of credit for public infrastructure, private businesses and consumers and to target investments to meet public needs.

We call for the public bank to have a division devoted to planning, financing and technically assisting the development of worker cooperatives, as the financial institutions at the center of the successful Mondragon cooperatives in Spain have done.

We also call for a state-owned Social Wealth Fund that over time will progressively transform private wealth into public wealth, in which every New Yorker would own an equal share. This Social Wealth Fund would buy into the securities of private corporations and share the returns across the population as citizens dividends and lower taxes on the earned income of wages.

Our slogan is “Demand more!”

Yet we should not overestimate how far openness to a discussion of socialism has spread. It is still largely confined to the progressive base that found its broadest expression in the 13.2 million votes Sanders received in 2016. Its strongest expression is among millennials, over half of whom view socialism favorably. Even if most of these people view New Deal liberalism as socialism, having a debate on socialism is half the battle. I don't think capitalism's defenders can win that debate.

Howie Hawkins is a retired Teamster from Syracuse, New York and the Green Party candidate for New York Governor. He previously ran as the Green Party's gubernatorial candidate in 2010 and 2014. During the latter campaign he received 5 percent of the vote.

HOW REPUBLICANS LEARNED TO LOVE PUTIN



CHARLYNE ALEXIS

BY NICHOLAS POWERS

Republican senators can scold Trump for lip syncing Vladimir Putin's lies but their base won't give a damn. MAGA hat-wearing men don't see collusion. They see Trump and Putin as the world's two manliest men, gripping hands like mafia dons making a deal.

Angry, white, conservative men shrugged off the FBI's report on Russian cyber-attacks in the 2016 election. But aren't Russian agents the villains in Hollywood films from *Red Dawn* to *Rocky IV* to *Miracle*. They should know better! They don't because they are reacting to their cultural impotence.

Red state America's fear of obsolescence makes it eager for the false protection sold by demagogues like Trump. His coalition is one third-poor, two-thirds affluent. It is white, older and Bible thumping. It's angry and scared at wage stagnation and its place in the new America. But even as he promises them a wall, he's digging their graves.

THIS AIN'T YOUR DADDY'S RACISM

White racists are scared. In his 1999 stand-up special, *Bigger and Blacker*, Chris Rock joked, "White people are pissed. You watch the news: 'We're losing everything. Affirmative action and illegal aliens; we're fucking losing the country!'"

August 11, 2017, eighteen years later, Nazis paraded with blazing tiki torches, chanting, "Jews will not replace us." The next day, one of them rammed a car into a crowd of counter-protesters, smashing Heather Hayer's skull and killing her.

Connecting Rock's routine to the Unite the Right Rally is the defensive whiteness of Republican men. Fear is the intergenerational inheritance of whiteness. When Europeans landed on the New World, native people fought back and colonists were afraid. When the enslaved Africans they imported rebelled, colonists were afraid.

Only violence guaranteed safety. The years between colonial America and the Civil Rights Movement were a golden era of whiteness. They had the guns and laws to justify killing. Slave rebellions were put down. Native people were herded off land. Jim Crow kept their neighborhoods monochromatic. The high point was after World War II, when America bleached its old world ethnicity in safe, leafy suburbs.

Now that fear has returned. Maybe because violence really protected whiteness. Not even from itself. Two world wars left the West and its ideal of racial purity buried in smoking rubble. After the Holocaust and the Civil Rights Movement, the moral confidence of white supremacy broke. Racial in-

tegration picked up speed. Immigration quotas were repealed. Popular culture was more openly mixed.

For some in the white majority, the change was welcome. For many, it stirred toxic anxiety that needed a new public expression. So the Republican Party did for racism what money launderers do for drug dealers' cash: they washed it clean enough to use.

Beltway Republicans used code words like "state's rights" or "welfare queens" or "culture of poverty." Millions of conservatives heard the real message. Don't be afraid. We're keeping you safe from niggers, spics, fags and gooks.

They weren't though. For the third of Trump voters who are working-poor, capitalism automated jobs, searched for low-wage workers, moved factories and gave executives huge salaries that split the nation by a vast wealth gap. And it hit white men's egos, hard. Now they were underemployed and becoming a minority.

We're in the era of defensive whiteness. Each new twist of history turns the temperature up on conservative, white fear. A first Black president? Fear. Protests against police brutality? Fear. Tearing down confederate statues and flags? Fear. China rising? Fear. Whiteness visible? Fear.

THE WHITE WHISPERER

In 2014, Putin annexed Crimea, bragging how the "residents of Crimea ... turned to Russia for help in defending their rights and lives." Putin's poll numbers shot through the roof. Three years later, Trump yelled to cheering fans, "We will build a great wall on our southern border."

Two men, thousands of miles apart, expressed the sentiments of the age. Walls. Ethnic nationalism. They swore to defend their people against outsiders and reassert a lost national "strength." The Cold War era divide between East and West is collapsing for conservatives into the divide between who is strong enough to protect them from the criminal, the immigrant, the pervert, and who is not.

Before the 2016 election, Fox News and Republicans drooled over Putin's shirtless machismo. "Putin decides what he wants to do and does it within half a day!" said former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani. Instead of Obama, who the right saw as overly intellectual, it wanted a gangster president to secure white entitlements while expressing their new found victimhood.

Everywhere, it seems, conservatives are lifting nationalist parties toward power. In France, it's Marine Le Pen. In Germany, it's the Alternative for Germany. And for Britain, it's the hardline Brexit bloc.

In this new frame, loutish behavior is not a liability but a stamp of authenticity. Putin's joking about

Russian prostitutes is fine. No problem. Boris Johnson's messy mop of hair and crude bigotry? Perfect. Trump's every lie and insult is proof he's the real deal.

The gangster president is the avatar for an insecure, conservative, white masculinity in the West that now finds less space for itself. Democratic and Republican elites expressed vexation over the Trump-Putin summit in Helsinki, but Trump's base has already warmed up to Putin, seeing in him a mirror of Trump.

BREAKING THE CYCLE

What is to be done with all these angry white guys? How is a durable, American progressive movement going to take hold? Do we write them off and focus exclusively on the emerging, minority-majority? What's at stake?

Everything is at stake. When the international ruling class spins the roulette wheel of casino capitalism, the earth is the little ball thrown into the game. The planet is dying. Deserts grow. Storms destroy towns. The oceans are acidic and choked with plastic. Climate change creates desperate people who search for work, housing and food. They run smack into physical and ideological walls, built by strongman presidents, who scare voters with images of immigrants "infesting" the nation.

In a time of defensive whiteness, it is easy to be snarky, contemptuous or dismissive of the angry whites. They voted for buffoonish authoritarians to return them to a mythical past where they had a prized role. The Left has to offer them a future with a role. Not the whiteness of yore. Not the toxic, Rambo manhood. So much of that was based on fear, anyway. Nor can it be a "welfare narrative," where they're wards of the state with no agency who scrape by on a universal basic income. Liberal sympathy feels like pity. The alternative has to be a vision that replaces white fear with solidarity.

They need to see those old Uncle Sam "I want you" posters in their barber shops and on billboards. Except instead of a call for war, it'll be a call to work. Maybe it's bolting down solar panels or fixing wind turbines or steering a ship that claws the plastic from the sea. They need to feel wanted in the left as co-creators of a sustainable civilization.

Should even a minority of Trump supporters be enticed by this vision, his electoral coalition collapses. If so, maybe a decade or so from now, their sons and daughters will look at old newsreels of Trump glad-handing Putin and say in Spanish, "Nunca más."



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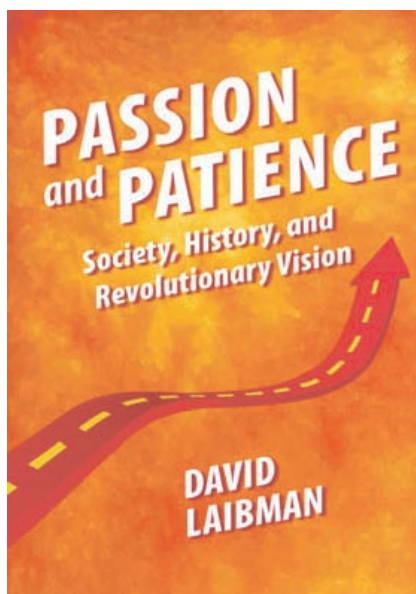
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DSA/SALAZAR

Continued from page 11

but, as Younus explains, its doorknockers remain independent of the candidates’ operations.

“There’s this older model of organizations working with candidates and campaigns, and there’s been a transfer of grassroots energy directly to the campaign and to the candidates,” he said. “This new model DSA has put forward recognizes that there’s limitations to that because you don’t end up building your own institutional power. What we do is have our own independent field operation that is run directly by the DSA. This equips our chapter with a lot more control over the canvassing team, increasing our capacity for both electoral and non-electoral projects.”

The group’s activism and its electoral work feed off each other. This process begins before DSA even endorses a candidate. The organization’s myriad, issue-focused working groups — racial justice, immigrant justice, housing, “Medicare for all,” postal banking — submit queries that appear on a questionnaire all candidates seeking its endorsement are asked to fill out. It has 90 questions, including some on specific pieces of legislation that DSA members are fighting for, like the New York Health Care Act, which would set up a single-payer system in the state. This ensures that DSA vets whether politicians are in line with its objectives. It also “makes it that much easier to go out and knock on doors and speak to what hurts you and what will connect with that voter at that door,” said Younus.

In addition to his role as a co-leader of DSA’s local New York chapter, Younus helps train DSA activists across the country in basic campaign organizing. Canvassing is covered, obviously, but also communications, social media, research, district analysis and resource allocation. “The goal is to strip away the power of the consultant class,” he said. “There’s this idea that there are keepers of secret information, but really, that information should be democratized and shouldn’t cost absurd sums of money. Candidates who truly represent the communities they are coming from should have access to that, their campaigns should have access to that and grassroots activists especially should have access to that, so that they can be engaged at this level and not need millions of dollars to do it.”

Salazar herself is one such activist. When she was deciding whether to run for office earlier this year, she wasn’t sure she could afford to do so.

“I didn’t see how I would be able to do this as a working person without a safety net or anything like that,” she said, explaining that there are many others who cannot participate in the day-to-day political process because they’re busy trying to make the rent or afford health care, or because they are ensnared by the criminal justice system. “It’s a perpetual thing. But if we don’t fight to at least elect people who will change these policies, then we’re never

going to have the movement that we need in order to truly have a revolution.”

Salazar has a real chance of winning in the Sept. 13 primary. She has endorsements from fellow insurgents like Nixon and Williams, as well as incumbent officeholders like City Comptroller Scott Stringer, Rep. Nydia Velázquez (D-Brooklyn) and Councilmembers Antonio Reynoso (D-Brooklyn) and Carlina Rivera (D-Manhattan). She’s received a deluge of media coverage from reporters looking for the next Ocasio, and has volunteer canvassers from DSA and a number of community groups blanketing the district. According to her most recent campaign filings, Salazar has raised more than \$120,000, none of it from corporations. As the race enters the home stretch, she has nearly twice as much cash on hand as Dilan.

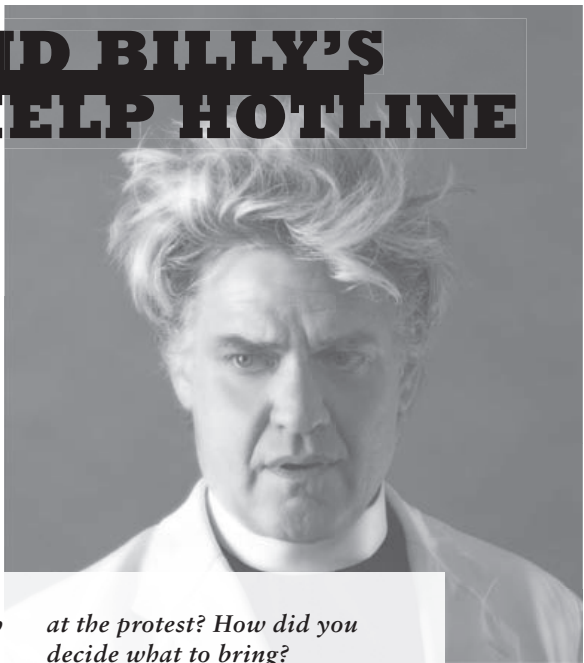
But as for revolution, that’ll be an uphill battle years in the making.

Mainline Democrats still control many thousands of elective offices at the city, state and federal level; almost all of the national, state and county committees; and access to enormous financial resources and institutional networks. Most current Democratic officeholders have the advantages of incumbency and name recognition. Yet DSA has offered a model that can be replicated, especially in heavily liberal areas where the Democratic machine has done a lame job. That has pushed some establishment Democrats to move to the left on issues like “Medicare for all,” free public college education and criminal justice reform.

Salazar is realistic about the challenges she and other socialists face: “My vision is for a more caring society in which nobody is denied what they need to thrive based on income, on property, on capital. This is not what is going to happen the day I’m elected to the state Senate — that would be cool though. I’m realistic, but without that vision this is pretty much a futile exercise.”

John Tarleton contributed reporting to this article.

REVEREND BILLY'S TRUMP HELP HOTLINE



JON QUILITY

Dear Rev, Sometimes I wake up and feel like the whole ship is sinking. Then I get the music, drink some coffee, light one up and things are okay. But I can't shake the feeling for long. Later, I'll be walking along and see, on some barroom TV, people trapped in a flood or something and I get the blues.

— RAY, Fort Lee

Ray, you are not alone. I can't remember the last time when so many of us were so haunted. One thing is clear: the force of normal living in consumer society is much stronger than anybody expected. The fierceness we put into another day. We march to the train, walk down the street, ride up and down the elevator and every couple hours we do a big double take at how completely inappropriate it all is.

We're just inches away from the horror. We'll be staring into a fire or flood on a screen somewhere and then, and then... Normalcy catches us, sneaks up from behind and engulfs us. The ads, headphones, sirens, gas smells — it closes over us and takes us back. We're not allowed to experience this thing that looks a lot like the end of the world.

But Ray, haven't you ever had something happen that cuts through it all? I think it's happening now. I'm talking about those images of children in the cages along the Texas border. Those eyes staring through the spaces between the metal have circled the world like the hoses and dogs in Birmingham in 1958. The shocked love in their eyes comes through the bars and beams into us like an ancient language. Suddenly our deadly normal life is powerless. We feel like there is something we must do. We know it. We're absolutely sure of it. We start walking faster...

— Rev

• • •

Hi Billy, I saw an event listing on Facebook for an immigrant rights rally at Federal Plaza the other day. Demonstrators were asked to bring one item that they would pack in their suitcase if they were being deported. I couldn't make the rally (I had to work), but it got me thinking about priorities. I own so much junk! I saw online that you were

at the protest? How did you decide what to bring?

— MOLLY, Clinton Hill

I packed the wing of an owl for my partner, Savitri. And poems by Rene Char. The force of this movement is that it reminds us all of love. Emma Goldman said, "Love is the molder of destiny. Love is stronger than laws." What are the small sacred objects you give your loved ones at the point that she or he is taken from you? One of the things in the suitcase is revolution.

— Rev

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.

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Sound Design by
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Costume Designs by
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DESIREE CONSTON
LAURA RYAN
VIOLETA HERNANDEZ

Props by
LYTZA COLON

Special Costumes by
DAVID "ZEN" MANSLEY

Production Director:
MARK MARCANTE

Assistant Directors:
LAUREN DELEON
ALEXIE CRUZ
ELLY NINA MOR

PLAYING AUGUST 4TH - SEPTEMBER 16TH

WHEN & WHERE

8/4 2PM • MANHATTAN

TNC | E. 10TH ST. & FIRST AVE.

8/5 2PM • BRONX

ST. MARY'S PARK | 147TH ST. & ST. ANN'S AVE.

8/11 2PM • MANHATTAN

TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK | E. 7TH ST. & AVE. A

8/12 2PM • MANHATTAN

CENTRAL PARK BANDSHELL | 72ND STREET CROSSWALK

8/17 6:30PM • BROOKLYN

CONEY ISLAND BOARDWALK | W. 10TH ST.

8/18 2PM • BROOKLYN

HERBERT VON KING PARK | MARCY & TOMPKINS

8/19 2PM • MANHATTAN

JACKIE ROBINSON PARK | W. 147TH ST. & BRADHURST AVE.

8/25 2PM • BROOKLYN

SUNSET PARK | 6TH AVE. & 44TH ST.

8/26 2PM • QUEENS

TRAVERS PARK | 34TH AVE. BETW. 77TH & 78TH STS.

9/8 2PM • MANHATTAN

WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

9/9 2PM • MANHATTAN

WISE TOWERS | W. 90TH ST. BETW. COLUMBUS & AMSTERDAM

9/15 2PM • STATEN ISLAND

CORPORAL THOMPSON PARK | BROADWAY & WAYNE ST.

9/16 2PM • MANHATTAN

ST. MARKS CHURCH | E. 10TH ST. & SECOND AVE.

FREE!

THEATERFORTHENEW CITY.NET

The forecast calls for gusty winds, extreme heat, and torrential downpours this year.

To understand the world we live in now, we have to know how we got here.

- Pete Seeger

WHITE HOUSE TORCHED

The White House, Supreme Court and Congress Burn to the Ground

Washington, DC - August 25th, 1814 - The British Navy has carried out what it claims was a retaliation for US forces burning York to the ground two years ago. Yesterday, British forces under the command of General Robert Ross burned the White House, the Supreme Court and the Congress to the ground.

Rumors abound that before setting fire to the residence of the US president, Ross's troops took the time to finish eating the breakfast which President Madison and other White House staff were eating when they had to beat a hasty retreat from the British Naval forces that had arrived unannounced on the Potomac River.

26 Pirates Hanged

Newport, Rhode Island - July 20, 1723 - The public execution of 26 Pirates yesterday at the gallows in the town center went off without incident. Most of the available soldiers in the Colony were to be seen guarding the gallows, a necessary precaution since the Mob seizure of the gallows and Freeing of pirates at the gallows in Boston Commons.

The Royal Navy claims success in their years-long efforts to regain control of the North Atlantic from such Renegades, Criminals, and Privateers. Asked for a comment on these claims, Captain Blackbeard lit his beard on fire and laughed heartily.



Britain Wins Trade War Against China

Nanking, China - August, 1842 - The Chinese Emperor has admitted defeat in the Trade War launched by Great Britain almost three years ago. Hundreds of British soldiers and tens of thousands of Chinese have been killed in the conflict, which has been dubbed an Opium War, since it began with British retaliation against Chinese troops burning over 20,000 crates of British opium.

Germany Leaves League of Nations

Berlin, Germany - October 19th, 1933 - The new National Socialist leaders of Germany have continued to demonstrate the unpredictable nature of their fascist state. With a terse announcement, Germany has left the League of Nations. This is only the latest move in what is becoming a clear pattern of Nazi efforts to break international agreements and undermine domestic democratic institutions in the course of Adolf Hitler's dramatic first year in power.

FBI Raids Union Halls Across US

Seattle, Washington - November 7th, 1919 - The newly-endowed national police force known as the Federal Bureau of Investigation has launched raids throughout the United States against the Industrial Workers of the World. Accused of treason for opposing the Great War, the FBI has announced their intention to arrest the entire leadership of the IWW and to deport 20,000 of their membership back to Europe.

There are reports coming in from across the US that veterans from the American Legion are accompanying the FBI agents in their raids and leaving nothing but smoldering ruins in their wake.

IRISH BATTALION FIGHTS AGAINST UNITED STATES

Monterrey, Mexico - September, 1846 - The US Army continues its advance into Mexican Territory. The City of Monterrey has now fallen to US forces, but there was stiff resistance from Artillery manned by a detachment of red-haired soldiers flying a green flag. Several initial attempts at taking the city center were rebuffed before the Mexican Army capitulated.



Government buildings throughout the city were completely destroyed, but civilian homes were left undamaged. Construction of the White House, Congress and Supreme Court buildings was only completed 12 years ago.

FDR SIGNS INTERNMENT ORDER

Washington, DC - February, 1942 - President Roosevelt has signed into law Executive Order 9066, stating that all Japanese nationals and other persons of Japanese descent shall immediately be detained and interned until sometime after the cessation of the current hostilities in the Pacific.

Critics of the order complain that it is a form of Collective Punishment against people, including Children, who can't possibly have anything to do with the Japanese Empire's attack on the US Navy in Hawaii. Others note that most of the most productive agricultural land in California is owned by Japanese farmers, and they wonder who is going to get all of their land once they are interned?

Syndicalists Seize Danish Stock Exchange

Copenhagen, Denmark - March, 1918 - Thousands of workers have marched from Folkets Hus, the main base for trade unionists in Copenhagen, to the Stock Exchange in the city center. Stockbrokers reportedly were not harmed, but there was no trading on the floor of the Danish Stock Exchange for an entire day, as it was Occupied.

Danish authorities have announced they will be pressing charges against the ringleaders of the protest action. For their part, the Syndicalists say it is unacceptable in a country as rich as Denmark that there are hungry children living on the streets. Maintaining its neutrality throughout the Great War, Denmark has seen a dramatic rise in its fortunes in recent years as a result of what some have called War Profiteering.

Refugee Ship Refused Entry

New York, New York - June, 1939 - The MS St Louis, with its cargo of almost a thousand German Jews, has been denied the right to dock in the United States. Having already been denied entry to Cuba and Canada, the St Louis is headed now towards Amsterdam.

President Roosevelt is resisting overtures from some quarters to lift the quota on those seeking asylum from what is frequently being referred to as the "Nazi Terror."

Most of the Congress also remains united against loosening immigration restrictions imposed against Eastern and Southern European immigration after the 1920 bombing of Wall Street. Authorities never caught the perpetrators, but they are believed to have been Italian Anarchists.

Crusaders Take Jerusalem

Jerusalem - July, 1099 - After an epic journey and a lot of military losses along the way, Christian Crusaders have this month breached the walls of the ancient City of Jerusalem. The Crusaders, who came from as far away as the northern reaches of Scandinavia and many other Christian lands, wasted no time in trying to figure out which one of the defeated residents of Jerusalem were Muslim, Christian or Jewish - people of all ages were killed without discretion.

Ottoman Sultan To Rescue Jews

Izmir, Ottoman Empire - March, 1492 - Ottoman Sultan Bayezid II has announced that he has ordered the deployment of the entire Ottoman Navy to sail to Spain in order to rescue the Spanish Jews. The Sultan's announcement comes in the wake of the Alhambra Decree earlier this month, when the



SULTAN BAYEZID II

Catholic rulers of the newly-united Spanish nation, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, declared that all Jews in Spain have been given three months to leave Spain, upon punishment of Death.

Ship captains in the Mediterranean region have reported that the Shipping Lanes are so full of Ottoman vessels that they have had to use alternate routes in order to avoid Collisions with the Muslims.