THE INDEPENDENT

BACON AS A WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION

BY ARUN GUPTA PG. 8

COVER BY JENNIFER LEW

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Send us your events for the next issue by August 5.

ONGOING THROUGH AUG 13
See Express section.
EXHIBIT: BASHI: WOLVERTON.
Godfather cartoonist Basil Wolverton influenced the underground cartoonists like R. Crumb, John Holmstrom and important punk rock titans, like The Ramones. Gladstone Gallery, 515 W 24th St.
gladstonegallery.com +122-308-3500

TUES JUL 28 6pm FREE
LECTURE, THE NEW YORK CITY ORIGINS OF THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT. Historian Warren S. Forman discusses how NYC was on the forefront of the disability rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s. (RSVP Required) Third Root Community Center 380 Marcy Ave, Brooklyn
syrcho@thirdroot.org +171-340-3943

7pm + SUGGESTED DONATION
OPEN/MIC WOMEN’S TRANS POETRY NIGHT. The jam fired up by Melissa Vittoria. The hardest working poetry/busy dyke poet on the Lower East Side.
Blastrickmgs, 172 Allen St
blastrickmgs.com +177-727-2800

7:30pm + FREE/10$ SLIDING SCALE
FILM: THE APOLYTHRA: ANGER AND DISAPPROVAL. Join us for the screening of a two-film work of Italian communist director Pier Paolo Pasolini.
Brooklyn Flea, 541 Will Street
brklynflea.com +174-4201

WED JULY 29
8pm + FREE
THEATRE: THE MATTACHEIN PROJECT, 11TH ANNUAL HOTT FESTIVAL. The Mattachein Project will explore the origins of modern homosexuality and gay liberation.
Dixon Place, 191 Chrystie St
dixonplace.org +172-0178

8pm + FREE/ADVANCE, 1 DAY IN SHOW OF CONCERT.
ECON BONES, London’s one-of-a-kind producer, songwriter and performer crosses the lines between sonic-colored charcters, Caribbean quissons and African rhythms. Her lyrics describe British authorities’ instrument- ing and the social terror in post-war Britain. With all the energy of a young Macy Gray.
Gladstone Gallery, 515 W 24th St
boweryballroom.com

FRI JULY 31 7pm + SUGGESTION
CONCERT, THE VIVIAN GIRLS: THESE ARE POWERS. The Vivian Girls are a one-of-a-kind producer, songwriter and performer crosses the lines between sonic-colored charcters, Caribbean quissons and African rhythms. Her lyrics describe British authorities’ instrument- ing and the social terror in post-war Britain. With all the energy of a young Macy Gray.
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boweryballroom.com

FRI JULY 24
10pm + FREE
WORKSHOP: LATERSTAR GALACTIC.
Warfield Center for Reading & Writing 4100 Lowell Pl.
Warfield@mywarfield.org +171-652-4683

TUE AUG 4 8pm + FREE
EXHIBIT: HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ART FEATURES. This National NYC Hate Crime Prevention Project is based on the Make Movement and Taiyo Na with a list of speakers also involved. (RSVP Required) Bronx Borough Hall, 209 Jackson St
hatecrimesprevention@gmail.com herinitu.net

WED AUG 5 10am-11:30pm FREE
DISCUSSION, TRANSJUSTICE GENERAL MEETING. People of color who identify as trans, gender non-confoming, gender variant, transgender, drag queen, bisex, drag, bisex, queer, bi-gendered, agender, gender non-binary, and gender honor-ables are welcome.
International Action Center, 55 W 17th St, 6th floor
iact.org +175-589-3040

THURSDAY JULY 30
7pm + FREE
D.C. ACTION: SINGLE PAYER RALLY! Join unionists, doctors, nurses, seniors and faith groups as they celebrate Medicare’s 44th birthday. Lobby Congress to create a national, single-payer healthcare system and demand passage of HR 676. PHOTO: FLIKR/NESTI email@healthcare-now.org • healthcare-now.org

FRI AUG 7 10pm + FREE
WORKSHOP: CENTRAL PARK MOONLIGHT. Come join a relaxing ride highlighting the area’s beautiful ponds, waterways, vistas and structures.
Meet at Columbus Circle (SW corner of Central Park).
212-822-8222 times-up.org

MON AUG 10 7pm + FREE
READER RESPONSES. Indypendence Books. Jane Press Harris hosts the work of several independent publishers. This week’s readers include Richard Barone, author of Classic Fails (Making the New Left Take) and Carmen Mango (Fronts of the Head of a Crown).
McNally Jackson, 53 Prince St
mcnallyjackson.com +122-274-1180

WED AUG 12 8pm + FREE
DISCUSSION, SEX AND THE CITY. A series of seminars focusing on the history and contemporary experiences of sexual and gender minorities in particular LGBT people in the U.S. city from the late 19th to 21st century to the present. Presented by the CURY Center for Lesbian & Gay Studies (RSVP Required)
LGBT Center, 208 W 13th St, 5th Fl

Post your own comments online at the end of each article at indypendent.org or email letters@indypendent.org.

reader comments

ORGANIZING PEOPLE FOR SINGLE PAYER
Responses to “Fighting to Cure a Sick System,” June 26:
I fully support a single payer system but the profit greedy in- surance industry has Congress in their back pocket. We have a totally corrupt political system that only looks after the interests of the rich. I am stable in a union job. —NATHAN KAYALE

All forms of direct nonvio- lent action to get attention and awareness seem like a good lending action to get attention and —rOSIE

These are not “new homeless.” This has always been the case, since N ewspaper entered the term “homeless” in the Ameri- can Lexicon, in December 1944. The New York Times reported on the Reagan Hard Luck Christmas magazine cover — I remem- ber well. I looked at the world pass by from a cardboard box in those days. (I am stable in a restaurant now.) Back then we were mostly young men. Veter- ans (like myself), out of work and homeless. I vividly recall an article that press out of this —M A X

REVISING CONSTITUTIONAL PROMISES
Responses to “Growing Up Homeless,” June 26:
It describes a woman and her family that lived in the back room of a shelter for 30 years. They were trying to get a job and get their own place. They were stable and did not care about the world. —sANDA

The draconian twists and turns of the shelter system are famil- iar to me from having advokat- ing on behalf of people try- ing to house their families. At first I was shocked at the lack of compassion and just plain cold hatred of the Department of Homeless Ser- vices workers, eventually it be- came second nature to see them throw families out for violating one of their many mysterious regulations. Often they tried to send people back to the streets after homes, homes they had never lived in with family they did not know, or to apartments where their presence would cause the lease-holders to face eviction. As long as they could get the person off the street they did not care at all. —M A X

bread winners for their fami- lies. I saw young couples bring- ing up their young ones in the street. Those young people are now in their 20’s and 30’s, and are strag- gling to raise their kids in the street. This would be the third generation of young people to call the streets of the United States their “home.” The Re- publicans dismantled the social safety net decades ago. We are back to one now. —mike MARTINEZ
S triking Stella D’Oro Biscuit Co. work- ers ended a 15-month strike July 4 after winning a sweeping judgment from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) that their employer, Brynwood Partners, had engaged in unlawful labor practices. However, the Bronx bakery work- ers now find themselves racing to save their jobs after the private equity firm, based in Greenwich, Conn., announced that it would close the factory by October.

While Brynwood’s ultimate course of ac- tion remains uncertain, the Stella workers and their supporters are focusing on snack food giant Lance Inc., based in Charlotte, N.C.

Mike Filippou, a shop steward with the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (BCTGM) International Union Local 50, which represents the Stella D’Oro workers, says the union has learned that Brynwood is in negotiations to sell the Stella D’Oro brand, but not the factory, to Lance.

Lance, which has a non-union workforce of 5,000, posted sales of $825.5 million for 2008 and has a market value of $769 mil- lion as of July 14. (Lance did not respond to The Indypendent’s request for comment.)

Filippou says that Local 50 has received offers from buyers who would keep the cookie plant and the jobs in the Bronx, but that Brynwood Partners has refused to consider these offers.

The Stella workers and their supporters are now channeling their efforts into build- ing the political and community support they believe is going to be necessary to force the company’s hand. The workers’ battle with Brynwood began in August 2008 when they went on strike after the private equity firm demanded that they accept pay cuts of as much as 26 percent, as well as reductions in holidays, sick days and health coverage.

On July 22, 45 community members and labor activists, including 20 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 103 and 10 from the Financial District outside the headquarters of Gold- man Sachs, one of Lance’s largest share- holders.

“There’s no doubt Lance will move pro-
duction if they buy that brand,” said Mi- chel Landau of the Stella Workers Solidarity Committee. “Lance might get cold feet if they see people going to their investors.”

The workers and their supporters plan to stage future protests at the headquarters of other top Lance shareholders based in New York City, such as Barclays.

The Stella D’Oro dispute has also begun to attract the support of high-profile politi-
cians, including City Comptroller and may-
oral candidate William Thompson, Jr., who jumped on board July 13 with a press con-
ference outside the factory gates at Broad-
way and 237th Street.

Calling Brynwood’s behavior “disgrace-
ful,” the mayoral candidate promised to “squeeze the company” by pressuring pub-
ic pension funds invested in Brynwood to divest.

Among known Brynwood investors is the Pennsylvania State Employees’ Retirement System (SERS), one of the nation’s largest public employee pension funds, with more than 200,000 members and $26.2 billion in assets. According to a 2008 year-end report, SERS has more than $9.9 million invested in Brynwood and has committed another $10 million to the fund.

The Stella Workers Solidarity Commit-
tee, a coalition of Stella workers and their supporters, is spearheading a slew of other initiatives, from an outreach campaign to New York City unions to arranging a hearing before the City Council. They are also planning a pressure campaign against 14 public employee pension funds that are invested in Lance.

“They [Lance] are not used to this,” said Steve Kindred of the Solidarity Committee. “It’s going to be a shock to them.”

Meanwhile, Local 50 has filed charges with the NLRB, alleging that Brynwood is closing the plant in order to dodge the union.

“The company’s decision to close came immediately after they got an unfavorable decision,” notes Louie Nikolaidis, the law-

yer for Local 50’s lawyer. “We’re saying that’s a retaliation for the protective con-
cernted activities of the workers.”

The union has also filed a request with the NLRB seeking 10(j) injunctive relief, which would force Brynwood to keep the factory open while the board investigates the union’s charge.

For more, see stelladorostrike.com.

Bronx Cookie Workers Fight Buyout

By Sarah Secunda

**TACKLED BICYCLIST SUES NYPD**

**By Julia Dunn**

It’s been one year since NYPD officer Patrick Pogan stomped Christopher Long off his bi-

Luckily for Long, the incident was captured on video by a nearby tourist (see still frames at left). New York City-based video activists imme-
mediately took action and tracked down the tourist and purchased the clip for $310.

The 70-second video was posted to YouTube two days later and immediately went viral, ulti-

mately receiving more than two million views.

“It’s an amazing example of how video can im-
 pact what’s going on,” said Bill DiPaola, execu-
tive director of Times Up!, a local environmental advocacy group.

The video was played at a hearing before the City Council. They are also planning a pressure campaign against 14 public employee pension funds that are invested in Lance.
A Call for Equal Holidays

By John Ching

Last December, seven-year-old Hayum Bubbins was targeted to celebrate Eid Ul-Adha, one of the holiest days on the Islamic calendar, while her first-grade class went to see a holiday movie on the same day. Hayum’s mother, Isabel Bucaram, tried to explain the importance of celebrating a holiday central to their faith, but Hayum was upset and confused. “Why is school closed?” she asked.

The Coalition for Muslim School Holidays, an alliance of more than 80 religious, immigrant, education and labor organizations, is working to ensure that in the future, schoolchildren will no longer have to ask this question.

The Muslim holidays of Eid Ul-Adha and Eid Ul-Fitr, also known as the Eids, are currently observed in New York City public schools. Christian and Jewish holidays, on the other hand, are recognized.

Bucaram, 36, who lives in Astoria, Queens, joined the coalition’s campaign for recognition. “I feel that this is not a new issue,” she said.

The coalition was formed after the 2006 Regents exams fell on Eid Ul-Adha, spurring an outcry among Muslim parents and students.

Muslims represent one of the fastest growing religious communities in New York City. Approximately 600,000 Muslims live in the city, according to Columbia University’s Middle East Institute.

Currently, about 100,000 public school students — or one in 10 — are Muslim, according to a 2009 report by Columbia University’s Teachers College.

Proponents of Muslim school holidays argue that recognizing the first days of Eid Ul-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, and Eid Ul-Adha, which commemorates the prophet Ibrahim’s willingness to sacrifice his son, would require only a minor adjustment to the school calendar and would spare Muslim students from make-up work and allow them to freely celebrate their religion.

At the outset, the coalition focused on members of the Muslim community and increasing awareness about the Eids.

However, more than a year ago, the coalition started calling on its efforts to convince the City Council to pass a resolution calling on the mayor to recognize the Eids as school holidays.

The coalition’s varied tactics, from rallies and letter-writing to lobbying council members and speaking at council hearings, were rewarded June 30 when the City Council passed a non-binding resolution calling for the Eids to be incorporated into the school calendar.

The resolution was sponsored by the council’s only Muslim member, Robert Jackson, a Democrat who represents District 7 in Upper Manhattan and chairs the council’s Education Committee.

“It’s the best expression, and most sincere expression of tolerance by allowing these holidays,” said Saidi Abdul Malik, 55, who worships at a mosque in the Bronx and was at the City Council meeting with other coalition members when the resolution was approved.

However, since the resolution is non-binding and Mayor Bloomberg has publicly stated he will ignore the legislation, the council’s efforts are only symbolic.

“One of the problems you have with a diverse city is that if you close the schools for every single holiday, there won’t be any school,” Bloomberg said June 30.

However, there may be hope for such legislation in the New York Legislature. In 2007, a bill preventing standardized testing from being held on religious holidays, including the Eids, was signed into law.

The state legislature is also considering a bill sponsored by Assemblyman Michael Benjamin, who represents the Bronx, and state senator Bill Perkins, who represents Harlem, that would require New York City public schools to recognize the Eids.

Local legislation has already been passed in Dearborn, Mich., and several New Jersey townships including Trenton, Paterson and Atlantic City.

According to Bakary Camara, the public relations officer for the Gambian Society of New York, if the state legislature passed the bill, “There would be no more discussion from the mayor.”

Faced with limited funding, the coalition is hesitant to sue the school system. Rahib Michael Fenberg, who heads the Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition, an organization that has been involved with the issue of Muslim school holidays, said a lawsuit would be costly and would fail to inspire broad civic participation.

Though coalition organizers are hopeful about the state legislation, they were initially concerned that members of the legislature who did not represent New York City residents and were not familiar with the issue would have been less effective than previous efforts lobbying city council members, Camara said.

As the coalition continues to pressure Bloomberg to recognize the resolution, Camara remains worried that she will have to pull her daughter and two-year-old son, Haa- ray, out of school in order to observe the Eids in the future.

If her children couldn’t celebrate, said Bu- caram, “It would be an empty day for me, as a parent, and as a person.”

More information: nyopp.org

Workers File Lawsuit Against Scoop NYC

A group of 15 former employees filed a lawsuit July 8 against Scoop NYC for unpaid wages and violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Cary Kane LLP, the law firm representing the fired workers, estimated that the upscale retail chain owes employees more than $300,000 in unpaid overtime wages and $200,000 in lost earnings since they were terminated.

The lawsuit states that former stock and security employees who worked at store locations in New York and New Jersey regularly worked 60 to 70 hours a week but did not receive overtime pay. According to workers, while they were promoted to managerial positions, they were ineligible for overtime pay because they were given a fixed salary instead of hourly wages.

“They used me,” said former employee Georges Epoh, a Cameroonian immigrant. “That was just a name, to say I was a manager.”

Workers also complained of infrquent breaks and unsafe working conditions, such as loose wires and stockrooms without insulation.

Most plaintiffs in the lawsuit are West African immigrants. According to Retail Action Project (RAP), which helped the workers find legal representation, Scoop NYC fired seven of these immigrant workers without warning in late 2008, claiming they were undocumented, even though they had valid documents.

“What happened to the Scoop NYC workers happened because they were immigrants,” said RAP coordinator Carrie Glason. “This is an issue that affects every resident throughout the city.”

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By John Tarleton

Supporters of slain New York City Indymedia journalist Brad Will are calling for the immediate release of Juan Manuel Martinez Moreno after a Mexican judge ruled that Moreno could be held in prison indefinitely in a murder investigation that activists say has gone horribly wrong.

“Brad did not come from a .38 revolver, the same gun that both the authorities mistakenly asserted that the two bullets that killed Will, 36, were fired from,” said Mark Read, an New York University film professor who interviewed Moreno in February 2009.

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“As a friend I have been sickened, as his family has been sickened, by the ways in which Brad’s murder has been used to further brutalize, intimidate and sickened, by the ways in which Brad’s murder has been used to further brutalize, intimidate and
UNBINDING PREGNANT INMATES: Toya Murray, who was shackled during labor while serving a prison sentence, joined a July 9 rally urging Gov. Paterson to ban the practice in New York.

PHOTO: JACQUE SIMONE

By Jacquie Simone

Childbirth is a painful and difficult experience for most women, but Toya Murray says for her, it was torture. Like many other incarcerated women across New York state, she was shackled immediately before and after giving birth.

“When it was due for me to have my baby, they shackled my hands and feet when I went into labor to go to the hospital,” Murray said.

Murray was pregnant when she began serving a 13-month sentence for a nonviolent crime at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in Westchester County in 1996. She was often shackled when transported between facilities, but said she never experienced anything like the discomfort of being restrained during labor, when she was unable to move her arms or legs. She worried that her child’s safety would be jeopardized since she had little control over her body.

Once the baby was born safely, Murray’s ability to hold her newborn was limited by the metal shackles. What should have been a tender moment between mother and child was awkward and restricted.

“Anything could have happened when the baby came out. I felt very uncomfortable,” Murray said. She told her story outside Gov. David Paterson’s Manhattan office July 9, at a rally held to end the shackling of inmates before and after delivery.

A coalition of more than ten organizations worked to push anti-shackling legislation through both the New York state Senate and Assembly in May. This network, which includes the Correctional Association of New York, Human Rights Watch and Women on the Rise Telling HerStory (WORTH), is now waiting for Gov. Paterson to sign the bill.

The decision to use restraints during labor and childbirth is currently within the purview of individual correctional officers. The bill creates uniform statewide standards and only permits one wrist restraint during transportation if the pregnant woman has an exceptionally high risk of injuring herself or personnel.

In 2004, an estimated 4 percent of women in state prisons, 3 percent of women in federal prisons and 5 percent of women in jail were pregnant.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Public Health Association have condemned shackling because it causes severe pain and trauma, according to a legislative report released May 20 by Sen. Velmanette Montgomery (D-Brooklyn). The Center for Reproductive Rights stated that shackling prevents a woman from moving to alleviate contraction pains. This increases stress on the woman’s body and may decrease the flow of oxygen to her fetus.

Additionally, Serena Alfieri, associate director of policy for the Women in Prison Project, explained that shackling often delays transportation to the hospital.

“Putting shackles around your ankles, arms and around your waist and connecting them to your arms is a process,” Alfieri said. “If you are in labor, that process could be torture for you.”

The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) recently took up the issue with a report entitled, “Access to Reproductive Healthcare in New York State Jails.”

“We found that of the 66 local correctional facilities [in New York state], only three had written policies about the use of shackles and only two actually prohibited it altogether,” said Ami Sanghvi, a NYC-LU staff attorney. She considers shackling women in labor a violation of the Eighth Amendment, which prohibits cruel and unusual punishment.

According to a statement released by rally organizers, prisons in New York City have restricted the use of restraints on incarcerated women during labor since 1990. Since then, there have been no reported incidents of escape or harm to medical or correctional staff.

“Shackling cannot be justified as a measure necessary to prevent escape: women cannot run with any significant level of speed during labor or recovery after delivery,” the statement read.

Former inmate and mother Jeana Marie recalls her experience of giving birth in shackles.

“They handcuffed me away from the special moment of my child’s birth and made me feel like less of a mother,” she said. “It was a very emotionally difficult experience.”

The Rise telling Herstory (WORtH), is now inviting you to the War Resisters League’s 44th Annual Peace Award Dinner

honoring the work of anti-apartheid activist

Dennis Brutus, feminist and nonviolence group

Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WZDA), and War Resisters’ International section

Days and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)

SEPT 18, 2009

6:30 pm

Judson Memorial Church

239 Thompson St

New York City

STUBBORN HOPE:

Celebrating the Ongoing Struggles for Justice and Peace in Southern Africa

FOR RESERVATIONS OR TO PLACE AN AD IN THE PROGRAM GO TO WARRESISTERS.ORG OR CALL (212) 228-0450

WARRIESisters.org or call (212) 228-0450

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THE INDYPENDENT

July 24 – August 13, 2009

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African dinner, award ceremony and more!
No Sign of Economy’s Green Shoots

By Max Fraad Wolf

Over the last few months a chorus has risen to a deafening volume. Pundits and talking heads sing of green shoots and economic rebound. As strange as it seems, they sing of renewal not because the economy is getting better these days, but because it is getting worse at a slower pace than during the financial meltdowns that began last fall. Many observers focus on the gross domestic product (GDP) which determines the presence or absence of economic growth. The GDP fell by 5.5 percent in the first three months of 2009 and fell by 6.3 percent in the last three months of 2008. It is likely that by year end GDP will be largely flat. However, reducing a national economy of many millions of businesses, neighborhoods and towns is a drop in the more than 1 million jobs businesses, neighborhoods and towns. Many moving pieces and trillions of interactions between people in the United States and around the world to a single number such as the GDP is difficult. So even if we technically exit recession later this year, which is not a given, most people will not notice an improvement in their fortunes because of their position in the economy. In this recession, as an old saying in the real estate business goes, the three most important factors are “location, location, location.” It is a fitting description of what we are seeing, in part, as of a real estate boom gone terribly bust. Reckless buying has created a profound parting of ways between well-positioned people and industries and most Americans. Many businesses are in a bad spot. House prices are falling. Work is hard to find and hard to keep. Over-time and benefits have become scarce. Prices have not fallen for our basic needs. Crime rates have risen. Economic problems and stress have put millions of people on the edge or over it.

OUT OF WORK

Unemployment is high and rising. As of July 1, the national unemployment rate was 9.5 percent, up from 4.6 percent when Obama took office. There are 17.1 million Americans officially unemployed, up from 7.5 million in December 2007. There are 4.4 million people who have been unemployed for more than half a year. Clearly, the hordes of unemployed are in the wrong location in our economy.

Many homeowners are also in a bad spot. In 2008, 3.1 million foreclosure filings took place. In the first half of 2009, 1.9 million foreclosures were filed. Foreclosures are increasingly driven by unemployment. Prime mortgage borrowers, made to people with higher credit scores — now account for more new foreclosures than sub-prime borrowers. Late payment and default rates on credit cards, auto loans and home equity lines of credit are also high and rising.

Auto-workers and the growing multitude of former auto-workers are in another poor economic position. The GM and Chrysler bankruptcies have resulted in 2.000 auto dealerships going, costing over 50,000 jobs directly. This will add to unemployment, say local tax rolls and hurt other businesses, neighborhoods and towns.

The elimination of 21,000 United Auto Workers and 4,000 hourly workers from GM is a drop in the more than 1 million jobs that may be lost as a result of the bankruptcies, according to the Center for Autoimmune Research. In 1979 GM had 450,000 U.S. employees; at the end of 2009 it will have 41,000.

Remaining employees will have fewer benefits, less job security, a weaker union and millions of shares in GM and Chrysler/Fiat. The UAW has also given up the right to strike at the two companies through 2015. Taxpayers have pumped over $100 billion into GM, Chrysler/Fiat, auto parts makers and tax cuts for new vehicle sales. There are some bright spots. Federal assistance has allowed millions to remain on unemployment rolls longer. There are presently 2.5 million Americans receiving unemployment benefits because of extensions that allow for up to 33 additional weeks of benefits.

On the other hand, California is considering slashing welfare assistance to $5,000,000 residents and healthcare to over 900,000 low-income children. California is not alone in cutting assistance to the most vulnerable because of huge state budget deficits and an unwillingness to raise taxes. The National Governors Association reports that states reduced budgets in 2009 by an average of 2 percent. Most estimates suggest budgets will be cut by up to 3 percent in 2010. Federal assistance from the Reinvestment and Recovery Act is helping states but not enough to offset falling taxes completely. State workers are facing wage cuts, lost days, reduced benefits and public anger.

HEALTHCARE OVERHAUL

The United States remains the only developed nation without national health insurance. Historically Americans received health coverage through their employers, but now less than 60 percent of employed Americans get job-based health insurance. About 46 million Americans, particularly those who are younger or have low incomes, are without insurance at some point every year. Healthcare costs have been rising much faster than wages for the last 30 years, even as we have some of the worst health indexes in the developed world.

If Congress passes any healthcare plan this year it will likely be a version of the Wyden-Bennett Plan, in which federal and state governments provide subsidies to low- and moderate-income Americans and mandate that they purchase health insurance or enter a public plan. Issues with the plan include disputes over state versus private economic activity, the cost of the plan and its ability to extend quality, affordable care to all Americans.

The Obama administration and Congress are attempting to build a mixed healthcare system that leaves for-profit insurers and employer-based coverage in place while leaving some people out. We will have more state involvement and shouldering of costs. This plan may prove very expensive and politically polarizing over the coming years. More people will have care and for many the plan may be helpful.

THE NATIONAL BUDGET DEFICIT AND DEBT FIASCIO

A Reagan-era trend of cutting taxes and increasing spending went into overdrive with the recent Bush administration. He nearly doubled the national debt from $5.7 trillion in 2001 to $10.6 trillion by 2009. The first two years of the new administration will rack up 60 percent of the entire debt America had in 2001. The Congressional Budget Office estimates a 2009 budget deficit of $1.8 trillion and a 2010 budget deficit of $1.4 trillion.

How did we get so far down this road? American business and wealthy individuals have loved and pushed for tax cuts for decades without massive cuts in government spending. Foreign interests own $3.2 trillion of our debt and foreign government agencies own $2.3 trillion of our debt. This is changing America’s position in the world and adding powerful foreign voices to every policy decision we make.

THE STIMULUS SAVIOR?

In response to the speed and depth of the economic crisis, Congress and the Obama administration passed a $787 billion stimulus package. Despite the eye-popping price tag, the stimulus is designed to reduce the depth and duration of the downturn by filling some of the massive and rising revenue gaps on the state and local levels, and easing the length of and rise in unemployment.

Through July 2009 about 15 to 20 percent of the stimulus money has been spent. As with most Obama policies, the stimulus is gradual and moderate in scope and was not designed to change the way the U.S. economy works.

Like the trillions being spent or loaned by the U.S. Treasury and Federal Reserve System to the finance and banking sectors, the aim of the stimulus seems to be to return America to the economy we had from 2001 to 2007. This period may look idyllic now, but policies and economic decisions made during these years play a big role in our current difficulties.

The economic downturn has been bad news for everyone. Some were helped back to strength fast and full. Goldman Sachs reported a $3.64 billion profit for April to June 2009, and JP Morgan Chase reported $2.7 billion. These firms were beneficiaries of access to government credit at very low interest rates coupled with a dramatic increase in U.S. and foreign stock markets over the last few months. Many of their competitors have been closed or crippled and no new regulations have been passed. This has created a sweet spot in the crisis for the largest, best-managed and most nimble financial firms. These firms are not alone. The early evidence is that rebound is largely concentrated in a few already favored locations. This offers us a dual warning. One, inequality is growing. This is alarming, given how unequal the distributions of wealth and income were in America before the present downturn. Two, we have yet to see any significant evidence of the much heralded change that so many want and need. It remains to be seen how the public handles mounting evidence of big bills and small change.

Max Wolf is an economics instructor in International Affairs at The New School and blogs for the Huffington Post.
Georgia Parents Fight Military High School

By Jimmy Tobias

The U.S. Marine Corps and the DeKalb County Board of Education, school board have postponed their plans to establish a military-themed high school after more than 100 parents, students, peace activists and veterans in the Atlanta-area community waged a two-month campaign against it.

“No one had successfully opposed one of these schools before,” said Tim Franzen, the American Friends Service Committee staffer who helped lead the campaign. “We had to go up against the board of education and possibly the most powerful entity in the world, the American military-industrial complex.”

The activists fought the school because they believe it would be used as a tool to recruit youth in the Atlanta suburbs into the military, a charge both the school’s planners and Marine Corps have denied.

The DeKalb Military Institute (DMI), which was scheduled to open on Aug. 10, has been postponed indefinitely, Dale Davis, a spokesman for the DeKalb County Board of Education, said that the opposition did not have an impact on the local school board’s decision to put DMI on hold. Instead, he attributed the decision to the Marine Corps’ failure to sign a “memorandum of agreement,” which would have committed it to funding and operating the school at an initial cost of $1.4 million.

Franzen and local activists are skeptical of Davis’ claim.

“We showed up at every single [school] board meeting, first with dozens and then with at least a hundred people,” Franzen said. “By June, we were controlling the story, dominating the public discourse and our campaign was all over the press. … As a result, we put them in the hot seat.”

The decision in Georgia comes as the military is taking an ever-increasing role in U.S. public education. The Associated Press reported June 28 that the Marine Corps is in discussion with at least six school districts — including locations in suburban Atlanta, Las Vegas and New Orleans. These schools will require students to wear a uniform, participate in Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) and take military classes.

Obama’s Secretary of Education Arne Duncan championed military high schools during his seven-year tenure as CEO of the Chicago school district, helping to open five military-themed schools.

The military academies are part of a greater trend, as the U.S. military works to increase the number of JROTC programs. Last year, the JROTC program received funding in a defense policy bill to increase the number of units from 3,400 to 3,700 in the next 11 years.

“…We believe it would be used as a tool to recruit youth in the Atlanta suburbs into the military,” said Arlene Inouye of the Coalition for Atlanta Public Education. It is the military way.”

Although other communities, such as Chicago, have rallied against military academies, they have had little success in stopping them.

“Teachers in Chicago have been fighting [the schools], but they have not been able to stop it the same way they have in Atlanta,” Inouye said. “De-Kill is considered a model in terms of organizing and coalition building with students, parents, teachers and veterans.”

According to a resolution written by the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia, the group hopes to challenge the military schools by arguing that it is illegal for the Department of Defense to recruit children under the age of 17 for military service, as stated in the 2002 Optional Protocol to the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The De-Kill activists are aware that their purported victory may be short-lived. In a June 2 press release announcing the postponement of DMI, the DeKalb County school system said that it “will continue to commu- nicate with the Marine Corps with hopes of finalizing an agreement. If accomplished, the school system will move forward with plans to open the school in August of 2010.”

Latasha Walker, who has a daughter enrolled in a DeKalb county school system, and was active in the campaign, recognizes the need to keep pressure on the school board.

“We definitely need to continue making sure that they never build a DMI,” she said. “The school board is very steady.”

To read a longer version of this article, visit independent.org.
In cereal grains. In the 1970s, the “Livestock Agricultural Revolutions” took off, especially with the U.S.-led “Green Revolution” of agricultural revolutions that have been going on for decades now. It’s government policy that allowed CAFOs to enter into World War II, some 18 percent of the U.S. farm population had been shrinking since the late 18th century. While the U.S. farm population had been shrinking since the late 18th century, the living hogs; the contractors produced more shit every day than all the humans from using about 175 different suppliers of proteins and amino acids. Thus, the crisis of factory farming becomes its own solution through the implementation of bacon production systems. Because of these systems, there’s no need for factory farming to be profitable. In the 1970s Smithfield Foods was a breeder of disease that much of the public health at risk; the contamination of the interface between human beings and their piglets in cages so small they cannot turn around. The use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry is a hotspot of new infections. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified the use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry as one of the causes of antibiotic resistance. The use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry is a hotspot of new infections. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified the use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry as one of the causes of antibiotic resistance. The use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry is a hotspot of new infections. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified the use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry as one of the causes of antibiotic resistance.
Blockade-Busting New Yorkers Head to Cuba

By Jнал. Noor

Harry D’Agostino seems like an average New York City high school student, but his summer plans are far from ordinary. On July 19, D’Agostino, openly defied U.S. law by traveling to Cuba without government permission.

He joined 60 other New Yorkers as part of the Venceremos Brigade, which is marking its 40th anniversary of bringing Americans to Cuba to deliver humanitarian aid and engage in volunteer work and political education.

“What really attracted me to this trip,” said the 16-year-old D’Agostino, “is that we’re bringing material aid and we are going to be doing a lot of work there and show solidarity with the Cuban people.”

Since 1969, the Venceremos Brigade (meaning “we shall overcome”) has led more than 8,000 Americans to Cuba as a challenge to both U.S. travel restrictions and the economic embargo Washington imposed on Cuba shortly after Fidel Castro’s provisional government came to power in 1959.

The 2009 Venceremos Brigade trip comes three months after the Obama administration unsealed changes to U.S. Cuba policy. While the White House announced April 13 that it was lifting “all restrictions on family visits to Cuba” and on remittances, critics described the changes as “minor adjustments” that only return policy to what it was under the Clinton administration.

The group issued an open letter to President Obama July 13 asking him to “repeal the old, staled policies of yesterday.”

We urge you to support lifting the travel restrictions for all U.S. citizens and residents, and take serious steps towards ending the economic embargo on Cuba.”

During their two-week visit to Cuba, the “brigadistas” plan to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and to participate in social and community programs, protest repressive measures, and help with agricultural programs, LGBT equality and healthcare.

The New York-based Venceremos Brigade is partnered with Pastors for Peace, which is making its 20th annual trip to Cuba to deliver humanitarian aid, including medical supplies, educational material and sporting equipment.

Lucia Bruno, communications director for Pastors for Peace, says the caravan is sending reconstruction supplies because “Cuba was hit by three hurricanes last year” and the embargo makes it difficult to procure needed materials.

One participant, Kathy Carlson, who has been on 10 trips since 1990, expressed admiration for the Cuban government, saying it has maintained its “commitment to people to provide free healthcare and free education to all of its population.”

In recent years, Venceremos Brigade participants have been posing a “travel challenge,” publicly protesting the travel restrictions by bringing the U.S. government of their intent to break the travel ban. It is estimated that approximately 25,000 Americans quietly travel to Cuba year without legal authorization.

“The protest is not without risks. Diego Iniguez-Lopez, who is joining the 2009 brigade, received a letter from the U.S. government prior to his last trip in 2008 threatening him with a fine if he did not answer questions about his expenditures in Cuba. Iniguez-Lopez said the brigadista’s legal team responded that the travelers claim their right under the Fifth Amendment to not incriminate themselves. “We will never ask for a license because we believe it is our right to travel to Cuba,” he said.

On July 16, days before the brigade left, the Center for Constitutional Rights filed a lawsuit challenging the U.S. government’s new policies and a U.S. policy compelling citizens who travel to Cuba to answer questions about their spending there.

The threat of punishment doesn’t faze D’Agostino, a member of the Socialist Workers Party. “I want to go to see an example of revolution.”

Iniguez-Lopez said he is returning to Cuba despite the threats, hoping to publicly challenge U.S. policy.

Iniguez-Lopez is joined by Martin Luther King, Jr. His conviction “On has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.” Iniguez-Lopez.
The signing of a “point understanding” - by U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev July 6 to cut the two countries’ nuclear arsenals is a hopeful step forward in creating a nuclear weapons-free world.

However, as the agreement sidesteps numerous contentious issues — such as U.S. plans for anti-ballistic missile sites in Eastern Europe and NATO’s status — it still leaves humanity living under the threat of nuclear annihilation for years to come.

The document is not a treaty or legally binding document; it only signifies that the leaders “agree to agree” on reducing warheads and delivery systems. Negotiators will work on drafting a treaty with a projected duration of 10 years and a completion date of this December when the 1993 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty known as START I expires.

The goal of a new treaty is to set a “ceiling” of 1,500 to 1,675 warheads and to limit long-range delivery systems between 500 to 1,100.

It remains unclear how much a new treaty will reduce the U.S. and Russia’s strategic nuclear weapons because they are covered by two separate treaties, START I and the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT). Under SORT, Russia and the United States are required to limit the number of warheads to somewhere between 1,700 and 2,200 by 2012.

On July 16, the U.S. State Department announced the United States had met its SORT requirements in May 2009 when it cut the number of “operationally deployed strategic warheads” to 2,126. Only counting “operationally deployed” weapons, however, allows active nuclear weapons that are literally sitting on a shelf not to be counted. The actual U.S. stockpile, according to a recent estimate by the Federation of American Scientists, is 5,200 warheads. As for Russia, the State Department put its stockpile at 3,909 weapons as of January 1, 2009.

The two countries are estimated to control more than 90 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons and dwarf the arsenals of the other “official” nuclear weapon states — China, France, and Britain — as well as the “unofficial” nuclear weapon states of India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea.

From one perspective, the Obama-Medvedev agreement is a commitment to the NPT, which represented more than 60 years of political action, economic, food supplies and the oceans.

The Obama-Medvedev joint understanding does boost the international non-proliferation regime, which has been weakened in recent years.

REVIVING THE NPT
The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) came into force on March 5, 1970, and committed the five official nuclear weapon states to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.”

Every country in the world has since accepted the NPT, with the exception of Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea. But, nearly 40 years later, in the absence of progress toward complete disarmament, non-nuclear weapon states have been loath to adopt more stringent measures ensuring they do not develop the bomb.

The George W. Bush administration undercuts the NPT during its eight years in office, rejecting numerous arms-control treaties and pursuing the acquisition of a new generation of weapons (as did other nuclear weapon states).

The Obama-Medvedev agreement re-establishes a commitment to the NPT obligations, but it still lacks a timeline. While Obama affirmed the goal of a nuclear weapons-free world, he added it will “not be reached quickly — perhaps not in my lifetime.”

Perhaps most important, the new agreement revitalizes cooperation between the powers needed to address security challenges.

As one former U.S. official said, the new agreement is “not about [arms] control, it’s about cooperation.”

More than cutting the number of warheads, the United States and Russia must also agree to take them off “hair-trigger alert” to reduce the risk of an accidental launch.

But this still leaves unresolved Nato’s status and the plans to deploy anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems in Eastern Europe. Although the 1995 breakup of the Soviet Union ended the Cold War and, with it, the rationale for Nato, the alliance has continued to expand eastward, providing Russia with an excuse to retain a substantial nuclear weapons stockpile.

Russia also sees the planned Eastern European ABM system, which the United States claims is intended to target Iran’s missiles, as aimed instead towards its own nuclear arsenal. A limited ABM system has no hope of defeating Russia’s array of nuclear weapons, but it provides Russia with a further rationale, one of deterrence, for hanging on to a variety of weapons and delivery systems.

Some observers suggest that the United States is using the ABM system as a bargaining chip to pressure Russia to agree to end its transfer of nuclear energy technology to Iran.

While negotiations proceed on a new treaty, the Obama administration is under-taking a review and overhaul of the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), the policy document governing U.S. nuclear weapons.

The Bush administration’s NPR had lowered the threshold for use of nuclear weapons and expanded the mandate for such use. Members of the U.S. Nuclear Posture Commission have recommended that, beyond rescinding Bush’s expansion of the role of nuclear weapons, Obama’s NPR should unambiguously assert that the sole purpose of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter their use by others.

Such a limited role for nuclear weapons could lead to a global no-first-use policy and legally binding assurances that nuclear weapons will never be used against a non-nuclear weapon state. These are measures that non-nuclear weapon states have long demanded as ways to strengthen the NPT.

VIVA PALESTINA
The U.S. activist group Viva Palestina broke through the Israeli blockade July 16 and entered Gaza for 24 hours to deliver humanitarian supplies.

While the group distributed more than $1 million in medical supplies, the 100-member convoy also sought to hear, and then recount, stories in the United States, stories about the experiences of Gazans who have lived under more than 60 years of occupation. Activists also met with local politicians and relatives of political prisoners.

Former Green Party presidential candi- date Cynthia McKinney, along with New York Congressman Charles Barron (D-Brooklyn), were also part of the convoy.

GB BULLETS CLIMATE TALKS
The climate talks at the G8 summit in LaGiqua, Italy, drew to a close July 10th with G8 industri-alized nations vowing to cut emissions by 85 percent by 2050.

However, G8 nations refused to set targets for 2020, or, as a result, the G8 group of emerging economies refused to commit to any targets for cutting emissions.

Emerging countries also called on industri-alized countries to help them build low-carbon economies through financing and technology transfers. However, G8 countries have refused to commit themselves to contributing funding, which according to some experts, might top $150 billion a year.

In the wake of such inaction, environmen-tal activist organization 350.org is planning a Global Day of Action Oct. 24 to pressure politi-cians attending December’s U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Den-mark, to make more robust changes.

AFGHAN WAR CRIMES
Physicians for Human Rights is calling for an investigation into the Bush Administration’s failure to investigate possible war crimes in Afghanistan.

As many as 2,000 Taliban soldiers were suffocated to death in container trucks and then buried in mass graves after surrendering to Afghan troops, who were fighting un-der U.S. military forces in 2001.

Meanwhile, U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates recently announced plans to increase the number of soldiers in the Army by 22,000 over the next three years to meet the “persistent pace” of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to The New York Times.

July 2009 has been the deadliest month for the U.S. military and its allies in Afghanistan, with 82 troops killed by July 22.

UNION BOYCotts HUNDUrn BoATS
The International Transport Workers’ Federa-tion, which represents more than 600 unions worldwide, called on its more than four mil-lion members to protest Honduran ships July 17 in an effort to oppose the recent military coup.

The federation said it hopes these efforts will “defend democracy” and support the Or-ganization of American States’ denunciation of the ousting of President Manuel Zelaya June 28.

The federation also stated that its goal was to impede loading and unloading of all 850 ships flying the Honduran flag.
Man in the Mirror

By Nicholas Powers

What is wrong with Michael Jackson? I asked so many times it became a punch line. Like most jokes, it overpowered the anxiety that I felt when looking at Michael's thinning body and ghoulish face.

Now that he's dead, I can ask what happened to him and why I didn't stop joking. Maybe I couldn't afford empathy while he was alive. He might release another desper- ate album, dance his toddler over a hotel railing again, a new photo of his face would make the news, or another boy would leave his bed sung by handprints. But I still followed the news because before he was “Wacko Jacko” he was simply Michael. He achieved a first name intimacy with the world.

Everyone loved him, and because he came from us, his stardom meant we could be loved. He was skinny and coy and he moon-walked. He glided over sidewalks, spun and never fell. That's what I loved most about him.

I was only seven years old but already knew that color meant weight. We lived in the projects of Harrisburg, Pa., where poverty was a daily pressure; eyes watched me and I watched myself. I was told to lock the door because junkies might break in, to close window shades so people didn’t see what we had and not to talk about our business in the street. Danger, real and imagined, surrounded us. But at night, we watched TV, and Mom pointed over my shoulder at Michael in the “Billie Jean” video, dancing through trash-strewn streets as if free from our weight. “He's the first black man on MTV,” she said. And I saw the city glow beneath his feet.

Michael also taught me how to be ugly. At school we divided the playground into Good Clothes and Bad Clothes. The Good Clothes kids had name-brand sneakers, pressed hair and sports team shirts. They laughed at us who were Knock-off Velcro shoes, threadbare pants and checkered eyeglasses, pressed hair and sports team shirts.

We went into adolescence. In high school, music heads because we had nothing left to lose. Our feet and thrust our arms around our shoulders, our faces set to shift the questioning from our self-worth budget. Part of the goal of Black literature is to question the worth of the ideas we believe in. Ideas of beauty. Ideas of power.

We did and saw photocopies of Michael's face scrawled on the album posters in the subway. His classic line gushed from that split between who we are and who others want us to be: “This sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.”

In 2007, I walked into the classroom where I taught an African-American literature course at SUNY Old Westbury. The students sized me up as I handed out papers and said, “Please flip them over.” They did and saw photographs of Michael’s face spanning from beautiful brown to ghostly white. Also included were photographs of Lil' Kim fromollen point to bulb-cheeked manniquin.

“We assume,” I intoned, “ideas are imma-
terial. But hopefully these images show that ideas are real and can determine our lives.”

They gawked at the photos. “How many of us have been called too fat, too thin, too dark or too nappy and stood in front of a mirror wanting to be different?”

Everyone raised their hand, including me. “So did they; except their self-hate had a budget. Part of the goal of black literature is to shift the questioning from our self-
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An Enemy for the People
Public Enemies
Directed by Michael Mann
Universal Studios, 2009

With Public Enemies, Michael Mann has crafted his most nostalgic and firmly genre-rooted work to date. The director’s latest feature is a throwback to the classical gangster films of the 1930s, when the notoriety of real-life criminals like John Dillinger blended with the exploits of their fictional counterparts to shape an enduring myth of outlaw populism. Accordingly, Mann’s Dillinger (Johnny Depp) embodies a larger-than-life blend of historical figure and film-historical character. Never more so than in the made-for-the-movies build-up to his death, he gravitates toward the big screen as if it were his mirror image.

This is Mann’s second period piece, and like his earlier The Last of the Mohicans (1992), its narrative chronicles a pivotal moment in the American experience, namely the culture’s entry into modernity, which both empowers and imbues the film with a dark glamour that fashioned, romantic worldview of American democracy. The resonance of Dillinger’s death in 1934 triggered a vehement reaction from Hollywood’s Motion Pictures Producers and Distributors Association, which required all films made after 1934 to receive approval prior to their release, and led to the declaration of a moratorium on the gangster genre film the following year. This censorship aimed not to appease concerns about the genre’s challenge to moral propriety, but also to address deep-rooted anxieties over its resistance to the consolidation of national identity, as movie gangsters brought to unprecedented prominence the look, talk and pedigree of the nation’s ethnic urban working class.

Mann portrays Dillinger as a natural, indiscriminate people’s champion by virtue of his total outsider sensibility. He has no qualms about Frechette’s Native American background and holds no prejudice against the foreign descent of Anna Sage (Branka Katic), the Romanian prostitute who ends up betraying him when threatened with poetic justice meted out by the public enemy, but to show-case how Dillinger makes manifest his destiny by identifying with the iconic presence he has cultivated. Personable yet aloof, Depp deftly underplays Dillinger’s grandeur to match the film’s grandeur. With the iconic presence he has cultivated. Personable yet aloof, Depp deftly underplays Dillinger’s grandeur to match the film’s grandeur. With the iconic presence he has cultivated. Personable yet aloof, Depp deftly underplays Dillinger’s grandeur to match the film’s grandeur.

The injured man revives and Bell circles Bell. “It’s obvious you’re a clone,” one says. The young Bell grins. “Maybe you’re the clone.” But they suspect a deeper horror. The older Bell hobbles to the computer and unlocks a secret record of Bells, detailing how each one, eager to return home, became sick, was told to lie in an Earthbound capsule and was cremated.

Send in the Clones
Moon
Directed by Duncan Jones
Sony Pictures Classics, 2009

H e stares at the screen, waiting. His wife finally appears. “Hey, someone wants to say something to you.” She hosts his daughter up. “Hi, Daddy.” He strokes the screen. Outside is the lunar landscape, vast starry space and, in the distance, Earth, where his family lives. After a three-year contract as the sole employee working to mine the Moon for fuel, astronaut Sam Bell is going home.

In the film Moon, Bell (played by Sam Rockwell) ambles through work charting with GERTY, the intelligent computer that provides his only real time communication. In two weeks he is scheduled to return to Earth. Like Odyssey in Homer’s Odyssey or Tom Hawks in Cast Away, Bell is a symbol of an alienated man longing for home. It’s a story retold endlessly, but what matters is how we see and what home means.

Bell represents the epitome of the post-industrial worker, trapped in a dull drone, eyes weary from computer screens, insecure at being an appendage to a bureaucracy more valuable than life. This is our inheritance. Our generation walked into the library of the preceding one and we’re looking for an exit. For Bell, that exit is his family — that is, until he learns that not even they are real.

When the mining equipment breaks, Bell heads to the lunar mine to observe the scene, but sees instead a hallucination of his wife and crashes, bringing life as he knows it to a jarring halt. He wakes up in the infirmary, looking younger, but dazed. Once he learns that the mining tank is broken, he takes an unauthorized trip back to the site. He peers open its lid and finds a man inside. Bell hauls him to base, lays him on the floor and sits at his own face.

The clone becomes Bell’s friend. “He’s your obvious you’re a clone,” one says. The young Bell grins. “Maybe you’re the clone.” But they suspect a deeper horror. The older Bell hobbles to the computer and unlocks a secret record of Bells, detailing how each one, eager to return home, became sick, was told to lie in an Earthbound capsule and was cremated.

He limps to the room, fingers the ash and pulls up a floor panel. Both clones climb down into a hall of mower-like drawers. They pull one out and see a sleeping Bell.

“Who is it?” It’s a metaphor for modern workers, interchangeable, expendable, their lives merely means to the end of profit. Young Bell says flatly, “That team the company sent to fix the mining tank. They’re coming to kill us. We weren’t supposed to be awake at the same time. We weren’t supposed to know the truth.”

But the older Bell drives a moon rover beyond the base, pulls out a laptop and calls home. A woman answers. He asks to speak to his wife. “She died years ago. I’m her daughter.” His lips purse, “Oh, sweetie, how did Mommy die? Are you okay?” Befuddled, she creases her eyebrows: “Dad? Mommy’s asking about Mom.” A man’s voice booms, “Who is it?” It’s the original Bell, and the clone shuts the laptop. He turns and turns in his seat, staring at Earth, saying, “I want to go home. I want to go home.”

The movie critiques the American dream. Moon exists, it is produced by the functioning of power. The soul is the prison of the body. It is a critique that philosopher Michel Foucault began in Discipline and Punish, where he writes, “It would be wrong to say the soul is an illusion… It exists, it is produced by the functioning of power. The soul is the effect of political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body.”

Home was a false memory, installed by the corporation to trick him into thinking he has a family. In the final scene, Bell is alone. He wakes up in the infirmary, looking younger, but dazed. Once he learns that the mining tank is broken, he takes an unauthorized trip back to the site. He peers open its lid and finds a man inside. Bell hauls him to base, lays him on the floor and sits at his own face.

—Kenneth Crab

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The movie critiques the American dream. Moon exists, it is produced by the functioning of power. The soul is the effect of political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body.

Home was a false memory, installed by the corporation to trick him into thinking he has a family. In the final scene, Bell is alone. He wakes up in the infirmary, looking younger, but dazed. Once he learns that the mining tank is broken, he takes an unauthorized trip back to the site. He peers open its lid and finds a man inside. Bell hauls him to base, lays him on the floor and sits at his own face.

—Kenneth Crab

supposed to know the truth.”

But the older Bell drives a moon rover beyond the base, pulls out a laptop and calls home. A woman answers. He asks to speak to his wife. “She died years ago. I’m her daughter.” His lips purse, “Oh, sweetie, how did Mommy die? Are you okay?” Befuddled, she creases her eyebrows: “Dad? Someone asking about Mom.” A man’s voice booms, “Who is it?” It’s the original Bell, and the clone shuts the laptop. He turns and turns in his seat, staring at Earth, saying, “I want to go home. I want to go home.”
those who have characterized Mark Rudd's memoir, *Underground*, as unapologetic must not have read it. The book passionately reflects on the 1960s and 1970s, a time when a new world order seemed not only possible, but likely. Rudd begins this well-written, almost-confessional book with an account of entering college in the fall of 1965. He admits that Columbia University was a dream come true, since it was such a radical departure from his middle-class, suburban upbringing in New Jersey. At Columbia, he was encouraged to read revolutionary theorists, such as Malcolm X, and deeply affected by David Gilbert, the chair of the university's Independent Committee on Vietnam, who openly declared his opposition to the war and suggested that antiwar activists adhere to their beliefs instead of behaving like “good Germans.” As a Jew reared in the shadow of the Holocaust, Rudd found Gilbert’s words potent and quickly became immersed in campus activism, soon joining Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The discovery of Columbia’s connection to the Institute for Defense Analyses, a think tank affiliated with the Pentagon, in early 1967 led SDS members to intensify their anti-war efforts. Combined with pre-existing university plans to raze several buildings in largely Black Harlem for the construction of a gymnasium in Morningside Park, the pre-dominantly progressive student body felt pushed to the brink. Due to an administration crackdown, students decided to occupy five buildings on the Columbia campus in April 1968. African-American students and Harlem residents entered Hamilton Hall and refused to leave. White students took over Low Library and other surrounding buildings and penned demands. Rudd’s excitement over the week-long sit-in is palpable, and readers who have ever immersed themselves in organizing will feel the contagion. Rudd writes with vivid fury about the police violence that ended the occupation and rails about the police violence that went on to occupy five buildings on the Columbia campus in April 1968. African-American students and Harlem residents entered Hamilton Hall and refused to leave. White students took over Low Library and other surrounding buildings and penned demands. Rudd’s excitement over the week-long sit-in is palpable, and readers who have ever immersed themselves in organizing will feel the contagion. Rudd writes with vivid fury about the police violence that ended the occupation and rails about the police violence that went on to occupy five buildings on the Columbia campus in April 1968. African-American students and Harlem residents entered Hamilton Hall and refused to leave. White students took over Low Library and other surrounding buildings and penned demands. Rudd’s excitement over the week-long sit-in is palpable, and readers who have ever immersed themselves in organizing will feel the contagion. Rudd writes with vivid fury about the police violence that ended the occupation and rails about the police violence that went on.

Rudd, who was still working in what he called a “traveling salesman relationship with LeGrand” ended the occupation and rails about the police violence that went on to occupy five buildings on the Columbia campus in April 1968. African-American students and Harlem residents entered Hamilton Hall and refused to leave. White students took over Low Library and other surrounding buildings and penned demands. Rudd’s excitement over the week-long sit-in is palpable, and readers who have ever immersed themselves in organizing will feel the contagion. Rudd writes with vivid fury about the police violence that ended the occupation and rails about the police violence that went on.

Rudd buried these worries as the Weathermen became the Weather underground. Moving between safe houses in New York and Washington, D.C., he became a “traveling salesman” for SDS and spent four years on the lam; Rudd describes a mood that is difficult to fathom in 2009. In retrospect he calls it “a fantasy of revolutionary urban-guerrilla warfare.” This fantasy ground to a halt when a 1970 plan to bomb New Jersey’s Fort Dix went awry, killing three of Rudd’s comrades and two bystanders. The demons of the movement had begun to haunt him.

Rudd’s poignancy is underscored by Rudd’s conclusion: “The Weather Underground didn’t seem to affect anybody at all. We were not part of most people’s universe, even of those who were still working in what remained of the movement.” This sobering and heartfelt statement, bolstered by his across-the-board denunciation of violence, clearly speaks to 21st century activists who are eager for rapid change.
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