#YesAllWomen

After the Isla Vista Shooting, a Cultural Shift p10–13

KARIKATURA! p18
ANTARCTIC MELTDOWN p14
WORLD CUP CONTROVERSY p19
the reader's voice

In response to the #196 article regarding the deportations of 2 million immigrants (“Rallies, Blockades, Hunger Strikes Greet Deportation Milestone,” May Indypendent) by President Obama, I feel that both the president and House Speaker John (Bonehead) Boehner are guilty of inept, ineffective leadership in coming up with some kind of immigration reform plan to help those already here.

President Obama’s obliviousness in enacting an executive order to stop the deportations or some type of reasonable or logical immigration reform program is extra troubling. Does the president believe that still carrying out a program to separate families will give him some type of leverage with House members? Hopefully, whatever so-called plan he is brewing will be more substance than rallying cry. If President Obama is truly genuine about immigration reform, he will need to do more than go before House members and plead his case. If John Boehner is serious about his aspirations for ever-higher office, he needs to act against the delusions and wishes of that right-wing cabal that has hijacked the House. Then maybe, they’ll act like two men who got something done in Washington.

— VICEnte WATSON, Brooklyn

LISTEN TO THESE TEACHERS! Giles and Frascella are correct in their assertions about English Language Learners (“Tested by Language,” May Indypendent). As a Professor Emerita of Education with a solid linguistics background, I agree entirely with their position. I’d like to add a few questions: Would these students be able to pass a test in Science or Social Studies in their own language? Is the exam testing content knowledge, language, or both? How many of us could take and pass a challenging exam such as the Regents exam in New York...in a second language? We must take a good, hard look at what our goals are with high-stakes tests.

— MERRYL from indypendent.org

AVOID THE BLAME GAME Immigrant workers (“The Moment We Lost Our Way,” May Indypendent) do not devalue American workers. Both are exploited by corrupt, greedy employers and lawmakers.

— MICHELLE from indypendent.org

Responses to “Art in the Flesh” in the May Indypendent.

Thanks for the great article. I love your title — Art in the Flesh — can I borrow it for my next show? And your etymology of the word radical — I did not know its root “is” roots. Makes sense though. Hope to see you soon.

— DAKA SchAEPER from indypendent.org

Brilliant essay, Bravo!!

— RHArTmannPHotos from indypendent.org

A new award-winning documenta
tion, Risky Business: A Look Inside America’s Adult Film Industry, examines many of the current is-
sues surrounding the adult film in-
dustry, including many of the items addressed in this article regarding Art & The Flesh. The film’s web-
site is riskybusinessthemovie.com.

— DAVID MECH from indypendent.org

PLYING THE FINGERS OF THE BOURGEOISIE OFF THE EARTH

Hi Nick,

Like your latest piece (“Web Ex-
clusive: Letter from Karl Marx,” May Indypendent). You are say-

ing, it’s another century but it’s still the same issues of struggle be-tween labor and capital and from the looks of things at the moment capital is winning big time.

— STEPHEN Mckenzie from indypendent.org

DISCUSSING PRIVILEGE While I agree that the privilege of white men exists (“White Men’s Rage,” February Indypendent), it is not easy for us (white men) to observe it. I find that white men are persecuted, not for being privi-
leged, but for not identifying that privilege. It’s seldom that we see the world through others’ eyes, so naturally most white men assume they are working as hard as oth-
ers and getting by on their merits rather than benefiting from a nor-
malized white advantage.

We need to do a better job of dis-
cussing these matters without per-
secution. It is not fair that white Americans — and particularly white men — have an inherent ad-
vantage over all other segments of society, but they will fight to main-
tain the status quo if they are vili-
fied for something they don’t see.

I don’t mean to sound like an apologist, just someone who never appreciated the extent of my ad-
vantage until I began to talk about it with my peers at university.

— FREDERICK PERRY from facebook.com/ TheIndypendent

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ected. Winner of more than 50 New York Community Media Alliance awards, The Indypendent is funded by subscriptions, reader donations, merchandise sales, benefits and advertising. We accept sub-
missions that look at news and culture through a critical lens, exploring how systems of power — economic, political and social — affect the lives of people locally and globally. The Indypendent reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity.


The reader’s voice
**BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE:** This year's annual New York City Pride March will be held on Sunday June 29.

**SAT JUNE 21**
4pm • $10 Suggested donation
SCREENING: FORWARD EVER, THE KILLING OF A REVOLUTION. This documentary explores the suspicious circumstances around the 1983 coup that led to the murder of Grenada’s revolutionary prime minister Maurice Bishop and the subsequent U.S. invasion of the Caribbean island nation. Mayesles Documentary Center 343 Lenox Ave/Maccolm X Blvd 212-537-8843 • mayesles.org

**MON JUNE 23**
6:30pm • Free
PANEL: LIFE IN A SOCIALIST USA. Frances Goldin, Debby Smith and Michael Steven Smith — co-editors of Imagine: Living In A Socialist USA — discuss the many ways life could become more humane and democratic if socialism prevails over capitalism. Mid Manhattan Library 455 5th Ave 212-340-0863 • nycsocialist.org

**TUE JUNE 24**
7pm • Free
LECTURE: THE EXPANSION OF ISRAEL THROUGH PALESTINIAN HOUSE DEMOLITIONS. Jeff Halper, author and founder of the International Solidarity Movement, will discuss nonviolent forms of resistance against Israel that include direct action, civil disobedience and international advocacy. Co-sponsored by Jewish Voice for Peace and Alwan for the Arts. Alwan for the Arts 16 Beaver St, 4th Fl 646-732-2681 • alwanforthearts.org

**THURS JULY 3**
6pm • Free
DISCUSSION: MARRIAGE, GENDER AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION THEORY. This meeting is part of the bi-weekly forum, Socialism Series, sponsored by the International Socialist Organization. In this discussion, Marx’s insights in Capital will be used in order to better understand the relationship between capitalism and women’s oppression. CUNY Graduate Center, Rm 5/414 365 5th Ave • nycsocialist.org

**SAT JUNE 21 THRU SUN JUNE 29**
Various times • Free
FESTIVITIES: NYC PRIDE WEEK. Heritage of Pride hosts New York City’s Pride events in commemoration of the Stonewall Riots of 1969. The culminating event, New York City’s Pride March, is one of the biggest pride celebrations in the world and a chance to remember those we have lost to violence and illness. It will be held from 12 to 5pm on Sun, June 29, and Laverne Cox, Rea Carey and Jonathan Grissom will be the March’s 2014 Grand Marshals. The march will begin at 36th Street and Fifth Ave., and will end at Christopher and Greenwich Streets. Line-up is at 11am.

For a complete list of events that commemorate and celebrate Pride Week, visit nycpride.org.

**SAT JUNE 21**
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SCREENING: FORWARD EVER: THE KILLING OF A REVOLUTION. This documentary explores the suspicious circumstances around the 1983 coup that led to the murder of Grenada’s revolutionary prime minister Maurice Bishop and the subsequent U.S. invasion of the Caribbean island nation. Mayesles Documentary Center 343 Lenox Ave/Maccolm X Blvd 212-537-8843 • mayesles.org

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By Steven Wishnia

W
ill the city’s Rent Guidelines Board freeze rents this year, as Mayor Bill de Blasio promised when he was running for election? There are signs that the mayor may renge on what he pledged during his campaign — for example, when he told a Bronx housing forum that it would be unfair to raise rents when almost half the city’s people are living close to or below the poverty level. The Rent Guidelines Board (RGB) — which now has a majority of de Blasio appointees, five out of nine members — left the issue open on May 5. It voted to suggest a range of possible increases for the city’s 1 million rent-stabilized apartments: zero to 3 percent for a one-year lease renewal and 0.5 to 4.5 percent for two years.

The board will set the final guidelines for 2014-15 on June 23. “We’re in an information-gathering phase,” new chair Rachel Godsil said when tenant representative Harvey Epstein asked her to justify her suggested increases. The plight of tenants is “obviously moving,” she said earlier, but the board also has to consider that landlords need revenue to maintain their buildings.

“It’s not going to be easy to get a rent freeze,” says Sheila Garcia, a Bronx housing organizer who de Blasio picked as the RGB’s other tenant member, but she adds, “I think it’s really possible.”

HOW RENT STABILIZATION WORKS

New York City’s rent stabilization law covers approximately 1 million apartments, which comprise about half of all rental units. To qualify, a tenant must live in a building of six rental units or more built before January 1, 1974, or in a newer building that went into rent stabilization because the landlord received certain tax breaks.

The Rent Guidelines Board decides on annual rent increases for rent-stabilized apartments. Eight of the RGB’s nine members are appointed by the mayor to terms ranging from two to four years, while the chair serves for as long as the mayor desires. Two of the board’s members represent the landlord interests, two represent tenant interests and the other five appointees are “public” members.

Landlords can also increase rents when they make major capital improvements to their buildings, a loophole many landlords abuse by inflating costs and passing them on to tenants as higher monthly rents. Vacant apartments are deregulated when their rent surpasses $2,500 per month.

The city’s rent laws have been substantially weakened since the mid-1990s. Over the past two decades hundreds of thousands of units of rent—stabilized housing have moved out of the system. Tenants and activists hope to strengthen the state law that allows New York City to have rent-stabilized housing when it comes up for renewal in 2015.

For more, see metcouncilonhousing.org or tenantsandneighbors.org.

— Independent Staff

However, longtime housing activist Michael McKee of Tenants PAC suspects that the de Blasio administration is discreetly opposing a rent freeze because it doesn’t want to upset the city’s economic oligarch. “My view is that de Blasio needs the real-estate industry to cooperate with his new production plan, and is afraid to alienate them lest they say they will not build,” McKee says.

The planning panel the mayor released in May (see page 5), he notes, avoided calling for the repeal of the state vacancy-decontrol law, which de Blasio had pledged to support as a candidate. The mayor says his housing plan will “preserve” 120,000 affordable units, but somewhere between 30,000 and 60,000 rent-stabilized apartments are deregulated each year, McKee says.

On May 21, deputy mayor Alicia Glen, who is in charge of housing policy, told a Harvard Club forum that she didn’t think anyone believed that a rent freeze “is good for the rental stock, any portion of the rental stock,” although she added that a smaller increase than usual would be justified.

RENT FREEZE OR RENT REDUCTION?

While more than 40 housing and community organizations have demanded a rent freeze, many are also arguing that rents should be reduced. “For the past five years the board un- conscience and indefensibly inflated owner incomes while a homeless and affordability crisis mounted,” former RGB executive director Timothy L. Collins, now a tenant lawyer, told a board meeting May 1. “Rents must be rolled back. While this may seem like an ex- treme recommendation, it is made in the wake of an extreme abuse of the system.”

Board data from 2012 show that net operating income went up for the eighth year in a row. On average, owners of rent-stabilized housing now spend roughly 60 percent of their income on running and maintaining their buildings, leaving almost 40 percent for debt service and profit. Before the recession, Collins calculates, they spent about 64 percent — so bringing what landlords spend on operating costs back to the proportion it was in 2008 would require lowering rents by 6 percent.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

More than 200 tenants and supporters turned out to protest at the May 5 preliminary vote despite abnormally tight security, significantly more than how many showed up in the last few years. The tenant movement is now focusing on getting people to testify at the public hearings the board has scheduled for June. Under Bloomberg, the RGB usually took testimony from tenants and landlords only during the workday in Manhattan. This year, it will hold hearings in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens that will start at 5pm.

“Tenants have to come to the outer-borough hearings to talk about their experiences,” says Garcia.

Ultimately, she says, the question is, “What kind of city do we want to live in?” Do we want to have a city where an office cleaner can afford an apartment, or one where working people can’t make enough to live on their own? “I can’t tell you how many families I know are doubling up,” she says.
A Tale of Two Housing Plans
DE BLASIO’S DRIVE TO BUILD BIG UNDERMINES NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

By Tom Angotti

Four months into his term, Mayor Bill de Blasio, who continues to declare his commitment to reducing inequalities in New York City, issued a 116-page report, “Housing New York: A Five-Borough, Ten-Year Plan.” But do the many big and little proposals in the plan add up to a break with the Bloomberg years of unabashed promotion of luxury development and gentrification, or are they a kinder, gentler version of the same?

Housing and community activists and all those concerned about inequality are trying to sort it all out, but it really doesn’t make much sense unless we look at it as two housing plans. One is a plan for new housing development and the other is a plan for keeping rents down and preserving neighborhoods. The problem is that the two plans contradict one another, and it looks like the development plan will be the priority.

BUILD, BUILD, BUILD

The de Blasio development plan got the biggest headlines because it is the most concrete (literally), immediate and likely to be implemented. It includes a giant housing development scheme that promotes the creation of 200,000 new affordable housing units in the city over the next 10 years, 40 percent of them in new construction. Added to this are promises of new opportunities for luxury development. The city would zone in strategic areas to promote new building, allow for taller buildings, let landowners transfer their development rights to hot locations, continue tax and infrastructure subsidies to developers and streamline land use, environmental and building regulations. It’s no wonder that Co-ops & Condos’ reported that the city’s largest real estate developers are gushing with praise for the plan. Construction unions are also satisfied.

The real estate moguls can’t conceal what too many have a hard time recognizing: the new mayor’s plan would not undo the enormous opportunities for new private development opened up by Bloomberg. It volunteers even more government help for those who need it the least. The de Blasio “affordable” housing proposals are fundamentally no different than Bloomberg’s, which produced approximately 165,000 units of housing during the 12 years he was in office. The new plan would shuffle the definitions of affordability, making a larger proportion of units available for people in low-income brackets without changing the way “low-income” is defined (50-80 percent of the Area Median Income, which can be up to $67,000 a year for a family of four).

THE PRESERVATION PLAN: GOOD INTENTIONS

The other de Blasio plan speaks to the real concerns of people who find themselves facing incredibly high rent increases, intimidation and the illegal flaunting of rent and eviction controls by landlords. This is basically a community preservation proposal. In his introduction to the plan, de Blasio says we must “protect neighborhoods” and “engage communities.” In an indirect reference to the phenomenon many of us know as gentrification — a word that never appears in the document — the mayor states, “If you’re in a community where affordability is dropping, we want to protect it.”

The preservation plan speaks to the widespread frustration and anger of renters and homeowners who were and are victims of the speculative real estate fever that forces them to move out of neighborhoods they have lived in for decades and generations. This de Blasio plan promises that new housing, better services and community involvement will allow more residents to stay. It echoes calls by tenant groups to repeal the State’s Urstadt Law and allow the city, not Albany, to govern rent regulations. It also takes a step away from using homeless shelters and toward creating decent housing opportunities for people in greatest need.

But when you get down to the details, the plan is filled with only small steps forward and vague promises. In some areas, it makes only weak gestures toward solving deep flaws in rent regulation. For example, it responds to the structural flaws in the city’s housing court by recommending more pro bono lawyers, not a system overhaul. It is silent on the tenant demand to stop removing housing units from rent regulation, even though protecting and improving rent regulation is surely the best way to support affordable housing and stabilize neighborhoods.

MASKING THE PROBLEM

In the mayor’s plan, creating new housing remains the overriding mission, not saving neighborhoods. The term displacement appears in references to two specific programs and in two footnotes, but is never used to denote a fundamental problem. Since the proposal never targets the basic problem, it can’t really help resolve it. When all is said and done, the 200,000 affordable housing units in the first plan are touted as the solution to the problems addressed in the second plan. In practice, under Bloomberg and now under de Blasio, the promised building boom masks the deeper problems of gentrification and displacement, and the even deeper questions of racial, ethnic and class divisions. It appears that the authors of the document avoided raising the issues of gentrification and displacement not just because they are politically charged but because the use of these terms would question the fundamental objectives.

The glaring truth that the new mayor has not sought to hide is that during the Bloomberg years more affordable housing

Continued on page 8
Much of the establishment left has praised and supported Mayor Bill de Blasio for promoting what heconstantly describes as a progressive agenda. Recent breaks with the Bloomberg administration in paid sick leave, access to pre-school education, housing policy and a promise to increase the city’s minimum wage have garnered attention, and in general, increased appointments at city agencies — also applauded by liberals — reflect an apparently genuine interest in policy change. However, more than five months into his administration, the mayor has done little to make good on campaign promises to reform a New York Police Department that had come to be seen by many as running off the rails.

A few hollow actions — such as withdrawing a Bloomberg-era appeal in the federal stop-and-frisk litigation and disbanding the already defunct Zone Assessment Unit that was used to monitor the Muslim community — have drawn muted praise from some police accountability advocates, but the NYPD under new Commissioner Bill Bratton still looks very much the same as it has in years past. More troubling, early data on this year’s policing trends point to an NYPD that is already taking a more expansive and invasive approach under the guise of progressive ideals.

**SUBWAY PERFORMERS, JAYWALKERS AND THE HOMELESS**

In the first months of 2014 there were dramatic increases in arrests of subway performers, jaywalkers and the homeless. Trespassing arrests are up nearly 30 percent in 2014. Bratton has recently taken on policing graffiti with increased zeal, arming police officers with their own spray paint to cover up tags — and calling graffiti “the first sign of the disease that is criminal behavior.” At a recent function at the conservative Manhattan Institute, Bratton declared vandals as “bastards” who drive him “out of [his] mind.” Just weeks before, in response to a protest by mothers whose sons had been killed by the NYPD — including those of Amadou Diallo, Sean Bell and Ramarley Graham — Bratton implied that any sort of criminal behavior “out of [his] mind.” Just weeks before, Bratton had decried as “unjust and unfair” last year; the benefits of arresting him are hard to comprehend, particularly for his family now.

In larger trends, felony arrests are down, while arrests for misdemeanors and violations are up, according to figures given by de Blasio in his presentation of the NYPD’s proposed 2014 budget. In March, the NYPD made more arrests for marijuana possession than in any month over the second half of 2013 — doubling down on a practice that candidate de Blasio had derided as “unjust and unfair” last year; the benefits of arresting him are hard to comprehend, particularly for his family now.

**SURVEILLANCE STATE**

Bratton has, with little public opposition, laid out the groundwork for a far more invasive police presence throughout the city and has spoken publicly, in a way Ray Kelly never did, about the essential role of the police in facilitating gentrification. Throughout his career Bratton has taken a military position with regard to the role of the police — he sees his troops on the right side of a war against “criminals.” He is forever casting an expanding “crime-fighting” net. Bratton has stated his support for the use of drones for surveillance and will soon be approving $35,000 of the NYPD with tablets with which they can quickly scan license plates, track vehicles as they move about the city and check warrants; facial recognition software is surely not far behind.

“The challenge in the 21st century is how do we keep the trust of the public when we are going to be so potentially invasive into the privacy of their lives through our technology,” Bratton said in a recent appearance at the 92nd Street Y.

A memo leaked from the Civilian Complaint Review Board, an NYPD oversight agency, indicated that police have begun to use summonses as a pretext for searches and frisks, even without suspicion of weapon possession — the constitutional threshold for a frisk during a police encounter. Searches subsequent to arrests have a long tradition at the NYPD and other police departments, but searches subsequent to summonses — of which there are 500,000 a year in New York — are going to be so potentially invasive into the privacy of their lives through our technology.

New York Times that traffic stops were an untapped resource as a pretext for other investigations, recently suggested that traffic enforcement be used to address street crime. “A lot of criminals are bad drivers,” Kelling explained at a panel discussion last November.

Most recently, Bratton has been beating the drum for predictive policing — the use of data analytics to create algorithms with the potential to help police pre-empt crime. But if the data inputs are culled from police resources, they will reflect the ideologies and biases of the department. According to the ACLU of Massachusetts’s Privacy SOS blog: “The algorithms simply reproduce the unjust policing system we’ve got, and dangerously, add a veneer of ‘objectivity’ to that problem.”

Nick Malinowski is a social worker, journalist and activist based in Brooklyn.

**ALSO INCLUDED**

The trial and conviction of Occupy Wall Street activist Cecily McMillan for allegedly assaulting a NYPD police officer shocked many observers who watched Judge Ronald Zweibel repeatedly side with the prosecution. In a web-exclusive, our legal columnist Ann Schneider explains how judges and prosecutors are often able to render the promise of trial by jury meaningless. For more, see independent.org/rogue-judges.
The Real Reason WFP Cut a Deal with Cuomo

By Charles Lenchner

As the Working Families Party (WFP) gathered for its state convention on May 31, it appeared the small but influential third party was set to turn New York politics on its head and challenge incumbent Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo.

Progressives’ frustration with “Governor 1%” has been building for years, to the point where statewide polls this spring showed a hypothetical WFP candidate getting more than 20 percent of the vote in a three-way race with Cuomo and Republican nominee Rob Astorino. And the party had a candidate waiting in the wings: Zephyr Teachout, a Fordham Law School professor and former Howard Dean campaign aide who was the favorite of many of the state committee’s 200 members. Yet by the end of a raucous convention, the WFP endorsed Cuomo, just as it had in 2010. In return, the party received a string of promises that no one believes the governor intends to keep — including WFP insiders.

The endorsement deal dismayed many WFP supporters who ask how a left-leaning party with strong ties to labor unions could back a right-wing governor who has cut the pensions of state workers, lavished support on charter schools and handed out tax breaks to millionaires while putting much of the state government on an austerity budget.

EYE ON THE STATE SENATE

What critics of the WFP’s endorsement are missing is that the strategy isn’t about trusting Cuomo, but boxing him in so he won’t interfere with the real goal: restoring control of the State Senate to the Democrats. Large unions are promising to help bankroll this effort, who if successful will almost certainly include deployment of the WFP field staff. And some of this has already happened; SEIU 1199 has committed to only supporting Democrats this year, while the UFT has told Independent Democratic Caucus (IDC) members they need to rejoin the Democrats ‘or else.’

Republicans have controlled the State Senate almost continuously for the past 50 years. The Democrats won a majority in the 2012 election, but soon afterwards, five Democratic state senators announced they would caucusing with the Republicans. It’s widely believed that Cuomo encouraged this accord because, if the Senate doesn’t change hands, don’t expect Cuomo to go out of his way to help the WFP.

TEACHOUT’S NEXT MOVE

Meanwhile, Teachout and her supporters are now looking to run against Cuomo in the September 9 Democratic primary. As The Independent went to press, Teachout had not made a final decision to run but was moving quickly to raise the money to mount a credible campaign against Cuomo in the primary.

Should Teachout run, she will pressure Cuomo from the left. She could also help drive the turnout of progressive voters in districts where the WFP is trying to win primary races against the five renegade Democratic state senators. In the process of building a campaign and mobilizing supporters, Teachout may give birth to something akin to the WFP, but without the dominance of organizations that prioritize transactional politics.

Charles Lenchner is executive director of Organizing 2.0 and former director of online organizing for the Working Families Party.
De Blasio’s Housing Plan
Continued from page 5

units were lost than built. Yet there is a huge disconnect as the new mayor, instead of learning from this cautionary tale, has doubled down and sought to up-Bloomberg on the construction front.

At bottom, developers typically argue, the housing problem is all about supply and demand. Let us increase the supply, they say, and there will be more housing to go around for all. This, not rent regulation, will keep rents from rising. That’s good old trickle-down economics, which never works. Indeed, we’ve just come through a couple of decades in which the total housing supply has grown dramati- cally, and so have rents, but there was also a huge loss of low-rent housing. Over the last 20 years almost 250,000 units of rent- al housing were deregulated.

THE LAND MARKET
The trickle-down approach conceals a fundamental truth: the market driving everything is the land market, not some mythical housing market. Developers and investors choose areas where future land values are higher than current ones and try to build on this land so they can make a profit from rising land values. This is why the elementary principles of real estate are “location, location, location.” It is also why “dislocation” or displacement is a virtually inevitable companion to new development. It is the reason our neighbor- hoods need better means for controlling land use, not just more housing.

The city’s housing plan states that the problem is that supply does not match de- mand. The solution: increase the supply and, through government subsidies and regulatory actions, make sure that more new units are “affordable.” But the ex- planations for the presumed shortfall are suspect. While noting the decline in new building since 2008, there is no acknowl- edgment that it had anything to do with the collapse of the mortgage market. Also, the plan claims the city’s population is bound to increase in the next decade, and the need for smaller housing units would actually welcome more gentrification. Younger sin- gle adults, professionals and the so-called creative class pay higher rents and are more mobile and less aware of rent laws. In effect, by shaping the future supply it would also shape future demand.

Another way to understand the huge gap between the two plans is to look at de Blasio’s outspoken commitment to public-private partnerships as the basic underpinning of city housing policy. The aim of City Hall is to “leverage markets.” While-pinning of city housing policy. The aim of private partnerships as the basic under-

gap between the two plans is to look at de Blasio’s plans but stand to benefit from the largesse

of the community-based planning process

accept the power of developers as inevitable, leaving us to negotiate for what we can get from the development plan — more “af- fordable” housing or other community benefits. This defeatist notion forces us to accept the bedrock neoliberal philosophy that private power is not only a given but the only legitimate power. Government, therefore, must follow the lead of private capital. This was the path charted under Bloomberg and we have forgotten that re- sistance is an alternative.

A particularly vocal segment of the community-based organizations allied with nonprofit housing developers and po- litical groups close to the mayor and the liberal wing of the Democratic Party were not only involved in shaping the housing plan but stand to benefit from the largesse flowing from new public-private develop- ment. For example, the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Developers (ANHD), the city’s largest coalition of non- profit organizations, has emerged in neighborhoods facing increasing
devolution. New alliances between tenants and commu- nity groups and nonprofit housing devel- opers, but the city’s bifurcated housing plan may very well pull them away from each other. The divided housing move- ment is in a weak position when it comes to moving housing policy further in a pro- gressive direction. Until we develop a uni- fied strategy of our own, the responses to the city’s dual housing policies will also remain weak.

Tom Angotti is professor of urban affairs and planning at Hunter College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York. He is the author of New York For Sale: Community Planning Confronts Global Real Estate (MIT Press, 2008).

PRIVATE SECTOR PARADIGM
A central premise of Mayor de Blasio’s affordable housing plan is that the only way the public sec- tor can act is in tandem with the private sector. De Blasio’s plan includes, for example:

- A continuing interest in private development on public housing land. Referring to the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the plan targets “underused NYCHA land and development rights.” While proclaiming a willingness to take into consideration “tenant needs,” the plan treats public housing as a “land use” problem and real estate opportunity, and not as many large communities imbedded within larger communities. While Bloomberg’s proposal to build luxury housing on eight Manhattan public housing sites has been put on hold, the no- tion that the authority’s green spaces are a gold mine for development opportunities persists.

- The introduction of mandatory inclusionary zoning in areas ripe for development. Inclusion- ary zoning allows developers to build higher when they provide some affordable housing units (under the current rules 20 percent of the units must be affordable; new rules may in- crease this proportion). Under Bloomberg, inclusionary zoning was an option subject to the discretion of the developer, and helped to sell zoning proposals to wary communities. The de Blasio administration wants to make inclusionary zoning mandatory in areas that it chooses to re-zone and would continue public subsidies for the inclusionary housing units. The problem with this is that inclusionary zoning will be an even greater weasp- on for developers or work against communities. Inclusionary zoning, inevitably built for the luxury market, is still bound to drive up housing prices and rents and dis- place more affordable units than it creates. That is what happened in the Bloomberg years. Let’s call it what it is: gentrification and displacement, not reducing inequalities.

- Allowing landowners to sell their unused development rights to desirable “hot” spots in the real estate market. This is a dream of big real estate investors that would create a sort of financial market in land use and allow high-rise areas to get even higher, thus maximizing profits for land speculators.

— Tom Angotti
Thinking Inside the Box

By Keith Williams

Even in Williamsburg, a neighborhood seemingly overrun by absurd, futuristic designs, there is something unique about 351 Keap Street: it’s constructed entirely from shipping containers, steel units normally used to convey cargo across the seas.

After five months of preparation, contractor David Boyle and architect Michele Bertomen pieced together the six corrugated metal boxes in a single day in January 2010. The home has all of the amenities one would expect in a city dwelling — a far cry from the spartan image shipping containers often conjure.

With Mayor Bill de Blasio pushing an ambitious plan to create 200,000 affordable units over the next 10 years, we wondered: could the administration replicate the Williamsburg feat on a larger scale?

It’s a tempting idea, as shipping containers have a number of advantages. They’re strong and durable; each in the Williamsburg home had spent over a decade ferrying goods around the world through all kinds of weather.

They’re also inexpensive. The couple’s home cost $400,000 to construct, according to DNAinfo.com, including $100,000 in loan interest while they dealt with multi-year pushback from the Department of Buildings. That’s still well under the $500,000 average to erect a “typical” residential building in the same space.

What might be a sustainable model for large-scale container-home construction has developed slowly over the last 20 years. An early leader in the field was Urban Space Management, a company in Britain. Two of their turn-of-the-century designs were built expressly as temporary structures on an as-needed basis, with one in London’s Dockyards aptly named Container City I was completed in 2001. Located in London’s Dockyards, Container City I was completed in 2001. Located in London’s Dockyards, Container City I was designed and to play a role in its recovery.

For now, the city appears intent on using shipping containers in favor of custom-built units, offsetting several problems with the transport carriers. While still 40 feet long, the OEM containers are 12-foot wide and high, making their ceilings more tolerable than the smaller boxes used in Container City and elsewhere.

Shipping containers are also finicky when it comes to regulating temperature. The OEM model has insulation built into the walls, far preferable to the retrofitting needed for a retired seafaring vessel.

The OEM building is modeled after nearby brownstones. It officials wanted to replicate the Asian ideas though, it seems the sky’s the limit: representatives of both LOT-EK and OVA told The Independent their designs could be built much higher with proper engineering.

For now, the city appears intent on using these structures on an as-needed basis, with an important benefit: they’ll allow community members to remain in their neighborhood — and to play a role in its recovery.

And then there’s OVA Studio’s proposed Hive Inn, a 340-foot-tall Hong Kong hotel built of shipping containers placed in a steel lattice. Containers are to be removed or added as needed by a crane sitting atop the structure.

These social and temporary aspects are at the heart of containers’ potential role in New York’s response to future catastrophes. Since 2008, the city’s Office of Emergency Management has worked with other agencies on a container-based plan for disaster housing.

The project, the Urban Post-Disaster Housing Prototype Program, was born from a 2008 competition called “What If New York City...” the ellipse hinting at an apocalyptic occurrence. Entrants were asked to help a fictional neighborhood hit by a Category 3 Hurricane, leaving 38,000 families homeless. (In a twist of irony, the plan was almost in place in October 2012, when funding was diverted to recovery efforts from Superstorm Sandy).

In April 2014, OEM finally put the plan to the test, building a five-container “townhouse” next to its Downtown Brooklyn office. With four bedrooms on three floors, the steel structure leaves room to spare in its 100’ x 40’ lot on Cadman Plaza East.

The model eschews traditional shipping containers in favor of custom-built units, offsetting several problems with the transport carriers. While still 40 feet long, the OEM containers are 12-foot wide and high, making their ceilings more tolerable than the smaller boxes used in Container City and elsewhere.

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What is male privilege? You can choose @MINIIG @PEEG13

Because when girls go to college they’re under the spin-off hashtag #AllMenCan. Here are some of the most poignant comments.

But ALL women have, at some point, been harassed by men. Food for thought.”

have included, as might be expected, ones of vitriol (see #NotAllMen) but also ones of solidarity and support, written

@WHERESADDIE

#yesallwomen made me feel attacked for this conversation.

@NATALIECATHLEEN
don’t defend. Just read and think about it.

I’d like to recommend every guy read the

@STACK2THEFUTURE
tomers to back off. #YesAllWomen

@SHARPEGIRL
legitimate concerns, called crazy for re-

#YesAllWomen know what it’s to be con-

AM:

Because I now wear shorts under dress-

Because I now wear shorts under dress-

EM:

This conversation is excerpted from a longer in-

#YESALLWOMEN

@EMILYLHAUSER

The cops who asked me “Well, what
time. And that’s pretty fucking scary. Once I fi-

@SCEMALY

reproduction are regulated like public

@ROBJONES_1989

an attack and attempted rape. #YesAll-

@SOPHIABUSH

ter r i f f e d

@DEANNARAYBOURN

Because when I was raped my own fa-

Because men don’t last after the

@SCEMALY

Because I was lire my nose and in my

@ANATEBOTEO

because reading some re-

@AMCFRANKLIN

RIGHT

Because my wife has had a self defense/escape

@SEAN_HOLLENHORS
plan since she was a teen. I cannot fath-

@HARRISONMOONEY

My wife has had a self defense/escape

@SOPHIABUSH

EM:

This conversation is excerpted from a longer in-

@CMCLYMER

@LILYDUGAS

@LILYDUGAS

@SOPHIABUSH

@SOPHIABUSH

@HARRISONMOONEY

They were other women too. If I had a few more minutes I’d go into school and tell everyone to try to keep me tall, I would be taller. I got men’s shoes on other days. Mean- 

“Men are afraid that women will laugh

@LILYDUGAS

because I was lire my nose and in my

EM:

This conversation is excerpted from a longer in-

@CMCLYMER

@LILYDUGAS

@LILYDUGAS

@SOPHIABUSH

@SOPHIABUSH

@SOPHIABUSH

@HARRISONMOONEY

@SOPHIABUSH

AM:

How has it affected your outlook on sexual-

@AMCFRANKLIN

AM:

This conversation is excerpted from a longer in-

@AMCFRANKLIN
Now All Men

BY NICHOLAS POWERS

“I don’t know why you girls aren’t attracted to me,” he said into the camera. “But I will punish you all for it.”

The next day, on May 24, news headlines said that a young man named Elliot Rodger in Isla Vista, California, drove around stabbing and shooting until six people were dead. He crashed his car and shot himself dead, leaving families to mourn slain loved ones. And he left behind a 137-page autobiographical manifesto and a collection of YouTube videos; in one entitled Retribution, he said to women: “I don’t know what you don’t see in me. I’m the perfect guy and yet you throw yourselves at these obnoxious men instead of me, the supreme gentleman.”

Misogyny: the hatred of women. It is the emotional atmosphere of a patriarchal society that, like an acidic fog, burns everyone.

“Men are trained in, celebrate and have made industries out of sexism. One is simple displacement. Privileged men project their sexism downward and outward to the faraway “Others” who is always more brutal and more savage. In comparison to them, we look like extras from The Bachelor. How can we be sexist? We let you drive and vote!”

And then of course there’s depression. We minimize the pain our male privilege causes women. Men are trained in, celebrate and make have industries out of violence. Often, pain is visible only if it’s physical. Yet bodily harm is one pole on the spectrum of violence and making it the only “real” form of sexism renders invisible the thousand small acts of disrespect and aggression that women endure each day. But again there’s that question: How can we be sexist? We didn’t leave any marks!

Finally, sexism as an ideological practice “naturalizes” itself with nature and religion. Our dominance is part of the evolutionary order, we hunt, we pursue, we spread our seed, we build and destroy; we lead. Women are weak and emotional. Biology is destiny. Or pick your holy book, the Torah, the Bible, the Koran, all written by men, describing a male god who demands that women obey him. Shock! Of course it leaves women in the impossible position of “interpreting” religious texts that are hopelessly sexist to eke out a moderate form of devotion.

Sexist ideology and practice are reproduced in institutions. The military, the church, police, schools, sports, sports, sports. It’s the Bobo, movie stars, sports heroes, sports heroes. Sports, sports. Sports heroes, sports heroes, sports. It’s the Saudi, the Black guy on the street corner. No, it’s the Puerto Ricans during their annual parade. Maybe the Indian men who have two raped girls hanging dead from a tree? Better yet, it’s the medieval Saudis who won’t let women drive. Yes, it’s always someone else, somewhere else. It will never be me or me.

And yet, every woman I talk to has a story. Every, single, one. At Bed-Stuy’s Civil Service Café, I asked two women about sexism. One told me of being paid less than her male boss while doing his work. The other said she pretended to be made of steel in order not to be hurt by sexist comments at her job.

There is the subset of men who are insecure about their masculinity not because they’re broke or ugly or awkward but because they’re not really straight. They sublimate their bisexuality into sexist rituals of objectifying women and attacking gays and transgender people, who represent the very desires they repressed in themselves. These insecurities may be why on an Atlanta train in May, a group of men assaulted two transgender women. They taunted and violently attacked the pair, stripping one of the women naked while bystanders filmed the scene.
The seven essays in Rebecca Solnit’s latest collection, *Men Explain Things to Me*, range from the righteously indignatant title piece to commentaries that address the persistent plague of male violence, the backlash against marriage equality and the bubbling up of feminist activism among a new generation of youth. There’s also serious scholarship here, including an analysis of Virginia Woolf’s embrace of ambiguity and doubt, alongside work meant to inspire social change. It’s a potent and engaging brew, and while some of the essays seem somewhat dated — six of the pieces were published in *TomDispatch*, *The Financial Times*, and *Zyzzva Magazine* between 2008 and early 2014 — Solnit’s pull-no-punches observations nonetheless make this a valuable contribution to contemporary feminism.

Indeed, the many pontificators who have declared feminism passé need simply read the memoir fragment that became the title essay, “Men Explain Things to Me,” to be reminded of their folly. In the piece, Solnit recounts a personal experience: the scene is a genteel dinner party and Solnit, with her friend Sally, is asked to be a male host to the recent release of her book, *River of Shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the Technological Wild West*. “He cut me off after I mentioned Muybridge,” Solnit begins. “‘Have you heard about the very important Muybridge book that came out this year?’ The gent asked.

‘Mr. Very Important,’ she continues, ‘was going on smugly about this book I should have known when Sally interrupted him to say, ‘That’s her book.’ Or tried to in a way she said, ‘That’s her book’ three or four times before he finally took it in... And then, he went ashen.’

Yes, it’s funny in a “gotta get back” sort of way, but it is also an experience that will resonate with many women. It surely did with me, as I remembered the guy who offered to “correct” an article I was working on and the man who suggested I read a lot if I wanted to write well.

While it helps to have a sense of humor about some of this, other topics, like the ubiquity of rape, sexual assault and domestic violence, are deadly serious. Solnit’s “The Longest War” addresses these crimes — the kinds of assaults that include the recent murder of teenager Maren Sanchez by a male peer in Connecticut and the killings carried out by Elliot Rodger in Isla Vista, California — and underscores the fact that they are far more likely to be perpetrated by men against women than the reverse. “The lives of half of humanity are still dogged by, drained by, and sometimes ended by this pervasive variety of violence,” she writes. “Think of how much more time and energy we would have to focus on other things if we weren’t so busy surviving.”

Or, imagine, for that matter, not having to fight for marriage equality — not only in the traditional sense of the term, which denotes same-sex marriage, but in terms of equality between heterosexual partners. In “In Praise of the Threat,” Solnit champions the parity she believes is inherent in LGBTQ relationships. While I would argue that the existence of racial and class hierarchies are as common in same-gender relationships as they are in straight ones, her contention that queer couples represent an alternative to the rigid gender binary — one that opens up space for reimagining heterosexual relationships as well — is both refreshing and hopeful.

Likewise, her closing essay, “Pandora’s Box and the Volunteer Police Force,” notes how far we’ve come in the past 30 years. Domestic violence is considered a crime; women are visible players in political, social and economic life; bearing children out of wedlock is no longer deemed shameful or even wrong; and the term “rape culture” has been coined to call attention to society’s assumptions about predatory male behavior. And our lexicon has recently been expanded. As Solnit wrote on *TomDispatch* on June 1, the term “sexual entitlement” has come to the fore since the Isla Vista murders. This attitude, she explains, rests on the assumption that a man has the right to have sex with a woman regardless of what she wants. “In other words,” Solnit wrote, “his rights trump hers, or she has none.”

Although this is maddening, Solnit nonetheless celebrates the feminist gains that have been made to date and argues that, no matter the backlash, the genie cannot be stuffed back into the bottle. Although I’m not entirely convinced — just look at the Taliban or Nazi rise to power and the immediate suppression they orchestrated — if her optimism catalyzes a movement to ensure that these gains are maintained and built on, it will be much more time and energy we would have to focus on other things if we weren’t so busy surviving.

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Since the Industrial Revolution began two centuries ago, the amount of carbon dioxide in the air has grown by 43 percent while the annual average global temperature has increased by 0.8 degrees Celsius (1.5°F).

Amid this seemingly minor increase in temperatures, we have seen in the past decade increasingly powerful hurricanes and typhoons, scorching droughts and heat waves, more intense forest fires, unprecedented flooding and even some low-lying Pacific islands starting to disappear beneath the waves.

Scientists warn that a good deal more warming (and a whole lot more trouble) is on the way. Even for people who acknowledge climate change is real, it’s still an abstraction in a world filled with more immediate problems. After all, how drastically can the physical world we’ve always known be altered?

On May 12, we received an answer. In separate studies teams of scientists from NASA and the University of Washington announced that the West Antarctic Ice Sheet (WAIS) had “passed the point of no return” and would fully collapse within 200 to 1,000 years. Glaciologists had long worried that the WAIS was a “weak link” because key parts of it are situated in a bowl that lies below sea level and is vulnerable to contact with warming ocean waters.

The initial disintegration of the WAIS is projected to increase sea levels by three feet by the end of this century and more than 10 feet when all is said and done. This will be the rough equivalent of a Hurricane Sandy-sized influx of water being the new normal on every coastline in the world.

The story made headlines for a day or two. “For many, the research signaled that changes in the earth’s climate have already reached a tipping point,” the New York Times intoned, while Mother Jones called the news a “Holy Shit moment.” Then, like a low-lying coastal island, the story was quickly submerged beneath a flood of media coverage about Jay Z and Solange’s elevator smackdown.

Reading the reports from Antarctica, I felt a deep sense of loss. For New York (and other coastal cities), it’s a future death sentence.

For a surreal glimpse into this future, I visited a website that superimposes risings waters. For a few seconds I was quickened by a圣itas that there’s going to be no more of this wonderful place. I struggle to bathe with. I’m trying to incorporate this habit here in Germany. Catriallism only thinks in the short term. I’m disappointed that toward the end of my life we haven’t solved this problem. I thought my generation would change the world and now it seems like the whole world is going down the drain.

WHAT NEW YORKERS ARE SAYING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

INTERVIEWS BY ALEX ELLIFSON
PHOTOS BY ALINA MOGIYANSKAYA

EMMA HYTON, 70
RETIRED HOUSENEWORKER
EAST NEW YORK, BROOKLYN
When I think about climate change, I think about disaster. I think about hurricanes and floods. We used to have hurricanes when I lived in Jamaica. We had heavy floods and when we had rain, we had heavy rain. It would wash away houses.

A lot of people here, to them Sandy was a disaster. But coming from the island, when I was a child, we were without water or electricity for weeks or months and we just lived with it. But here, it’s different. When there’s a hurricane, people are afraid.

RAYA NITRAI, 36
HARE KRISHNA MONK
1995 DODGE CARAVAN
When I think about climate change, I think about the effects of the new normal on every coastline in the world. The story made headlines for a day or two. “For many, the research signaled that changes in the earth’s climate have already reached a tipping point,” the New York Times intoned, while Mother Jones called the news a “Holy Shit moment.” Then, like a low-lying coastal island, the story was quickly submerged beneath a flood of media coverage about Jay Z and Solange’s elevator smackdown.

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I, a retired homecare worker from East New York, Brooklyn, was quickened by a sense of loss.

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ing ocean waters onto street images from Google Earth. The quiet side street I live on in Alphabet City remained undis-
turbed, except for a two-story high river of water making soft lapping noises on my computer screen — I almost expected some of the neighborhood yuppies to zip by in kayaks heading to the nearest wine bar.

Can this really be happening? Global warming brings to mind a bad 1930s sci-
ence fiction movie starring an invisible, odorless gas, carbon dioxide, that gradu-
ally accumulates and threatens to change life on the planet as we know it. And now — cue the ominous musical score — we have a mysterious continent lying frozen at the bottom of the world that is beginning to shed its icy cover.

Unlike the usual Hollywood blockbuster, this apocalypse will not be a single, spectacular moment but a slow inunda-
tion, a fraying of an interconnected glob-
al civilization upon which many of the world’s seven billion people depend.

The news about climate change is often bad, but it has also spurred scientists to
study rocks, sediments, ice sheets, tree
mats, and all the other indicators of our planet’s past. Their remarkable detective work has given us a much more nuanced understanding of how the Earth’s climate system has func-
tioned (and malfunctioned) in the past and should inspire how we act while we still have time to make a difference.

In a nutshell, the Earth has fluctuated between climate regimes both much hot-
ter and much colder than the current sta-
tus quo. On at least one occasion in the Earth’s ancient past runaway global cool-
ing left the planet fully covered in ice (“Snowball Earth”). In the past two mil-
lion years, glaciers have repeatedly spread down from the North Pole and covered much of Europe, North America and Asia in what is known as the Ice Ages.

However, for many of the past 300 mil-
lion years, the Earth has been a good deal warmer than it currently is, and it has of-
ten been ice-free. Picture a torrid world suited to the likes of Brontosaurus and T-Rex with alligators swimming in the Arctic Circle and you get the idea. The switchover from a hothouse climate to the cooler one we’re familiar with began 34 million years ago at the transition from the Eocene to the Oligocene Epoch. This transition roughly coincides with when ice sheets began to form on Antarctica.

Since the last Ice Age ended 12,000 years ago, humans have enjoyed a stable climate with moderate temperatures. This allowed our hunter-gatherer ancestors to transition from hunting big game to culti-
vating plants. The rise of agriculture facil-
itated the emergence of urban centers and complex civilizations with all their bless-
ing and curses.

The fossil fuel-burning binge of the past two hundred years has put humanity’s long springtime at risk. In recent years, scientists have discovered that runaway global warming has occurred many times in the past. When it does, the Earth’s cli-
imate system barrels through a series of tipping points like a train running down-
hill without brakes.

We may already be in the early stages of such a scenario. As just one example, hotter temperatures have made forests dryer and more likely to catch fire. Instead of pulling CO2 out of the air, all those burning trees put carbon back into the atmosphere. In 2012, heavy forest fires in North America deposited large amounts of soot on the Greenland Ice Sheet. This, in turn, meant now-darkened ice absorbed heat instead of reflecting it back into space. A record melt ensued that summer in Greenland.

It remains to be seen how many tipping points we may pass through. CO2 levels are currently at 400 parts per million, the highest in three million years. If current trends continue unabated, CO2 levels will rise to 600 ppm by the end of this cen-
tury. Should we soar beyond 1,000 parts per million, a fully ice-free world with sea levels 200 feet higher than at present be-
comes inevitable, says Peter Ward, a Uni-
versity of Washington paleontologist and author of several books on the history of mass extinctions.

Runaway global warming has been the culprit behind four of history’s five mass extinctions, Ward says (the fifth occurred 65 million years ago when a giant me-
tor strike wiped out the dinosaurs). The doomsday scenario he describes runs like this: Sudden increases in carbon dioxide and methane (another powerful green-
house gas) drive up temperatures by as much as 10 degrees Celsius (18°F). This

The Air
Max Flbaum

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An award-winning documentary highlighting the 28 day paddle from Onondaga Nation to the United Na-
tions during the summer of 2013, with discussion to follow.

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TION
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On the twentieth anniversary of the International Dyke March, mobili-
zating 20,000 lesbians on Fifth
Avenue, march organizer Kelly Cog-
swell presents her memoir.

Continued on next page

HARLEM, MANHATTAN
BENJAMIN vEILLEux, 24,
MUSICIAN

“Realizing it more now that I’m older. I mean, there’s obviously worse problems out there. Wars. Democracy. AIDS. But it’s still pretty bad and I’m really worried about it.”

MELISSA KEELING, 26,
MUSICIAN
WASHINGTON HEIGHTS,
MANHATTAN

“Every time I’m riding the bus, I’m just thinking about how they need to get these cars off the road because they’re messing up the environment.”

Mike Paulemon, 31,
SERVICE TECHNICIAN
CANARSIE, BROOKLYN

“I would be naive to say that carbon dio-
Xide doesn’t play a part in climate change, but that’s the way the world is — a lot of people don’t understand that their car is messing up the environment. They’re just thinking about how they need to get somewhere. Everybody’s in it, a rush all the time.”

Eddie KANG, 24,
STUDENT
UPER WEST SIDE, MANHATTAN

“Going to Starbucks, I bring my own mug or tumbler and when I shop at the supermarket, I always bring my own bag. In Korea, we have to pay a fee when we use plastic bags or paper bags because it affects the environment. Here in New York City, it’s free, so there’s abuse and so much waste.”

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Ice
Continued from previous page

The worst of these episodes — the Permian-Triassic Extinction — occurred 252 million years ago and saw 96 percent of all species on Earth killed off."

On May 29 French energy giant Total SA announced that it was indefinitely suspending an $11 billion project to develop the Joslyn tar sands mine in Canada’s northern province of Alberta. In its announcement the company cited escalating costs and limited access to pipelines. For climate justice and indigenous activists in the United States and Canada who have worked in recent years to thwart tar sands pipelines coming out of Alberta, it was a small but significant victory.

In May and early June, three towns in Massachusetts and the Anglican Church of New Zealand moved to divest in fossil fuel stocks, the Obama administration announced plans to reduce emissions from coal-fired power plants by 30 percent by 2030 and Barclays decided to downgrade the bond rating of all U.S. electric utilities because of the growing threat utilities face from the solar industry.

Will these actions by themselves stop the fossil fuel industry in its tracks? Hardly. Nor can we entirely turn back the onset of climate change. However, these small victories remind us that we have the ability to do something while it still matters.

PEOPLE’S CLIMATE MARCH

Efforts to reach a new global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions have been stalled for years. With world leaders coming to the United Nations for a September 23 climate conference, climate change activists are mobilizing for a massive protest they hope will inject a new sense of urgency into the deliberations.

The People’s Climate March will be held in Manhattan on either Saturday, September 20 or Sunday, September 21, depending on the outcome of negotiations with the NYPD, said Leslie Cagan, a march coordinator.

“The basic demand of this effort is that governments of the world need to take action,” Cagan said. “The time for talk-talk-talk is over.”

As of early June, more than 100 environmental, student, labor, community, Occupy and faith-based groups have signed on as co-sponsors. Hundreds more are expected to come on board. Organizers are putting out calls for people from across the United States to come to New York, and they will do an East Coast speaking tour closer to the event to get the word out. Cagan said she expects there will be a wide array of spin-off protests and educational and cultural events that will take place during the weeks before and after the main demonstration.

“The potential for something big is there,” said Cagan, who has previously organized demonstrations hundreds of thousands of people strong against the U.S.-Soviet arms race, the invasion of Iraq and at the 2004 Republican National Convention. “We’d like this to stand out on that short list of the largest demonstrations in the country’s history.”

For more, see peoplesclimatemarch.org.

— JOHN TARLETON

Men
Continued from page 12

but did not intervene.

A GAME OF STATUS

The daily control of women is how patriarchy is maintained. On their bruises we map the fossil fuel industry in its tracks? Hardly — the technologies exist to make this happen and the millions of new jobs such a transition would create are sorely needed.

Here in New York we have a unique opportunity to make our voices heard in advance of a September 23 climate conference for world leaders that will be hosted at the United Nations. A broad coalition of environmental, labor, student and community groups is organizing what they hope will be a massive demonstration to be held September 20 or 21 (see sidebar).

“A loud movement — one that gives our ‘leaders’ permission to actually lead, and then scares them into doing so — is the only hope,” author and activist Bill McKibben wrote in an open invitation to join the protest published in Rolling Stone.

“It’s often difficult for people see how they can do anything about climate change. Hopefully a sea of people will fill the streets of Manhattan on September 20 or 21. And while much of our city is destined to someday disappear beneath the waves, it actually matters as much for us as our descendents whether the West Antarctic Ice Sheet finishes dropping into the ocean in two centuries or 10. It will be the measure of whether in the early 21st century we really took responsibility for addressing climate change and the system that perpetuates it and began to save ourselves, or if we let business as usual run its course.

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A series of small, stark, black-and-white photographs taken around 1980 shows a modern city: there are tall buildings, wide concrete sidewalks, and very few people. The weather is grey and foggy; the city looks like a sad place. This feeling — of urban anomic, or a sort of postindustrial loneliness — will be familiar enough to pretty much anyone who’s spent a lot of time in a big, modern city, walked around its business district at night or waited too long for the bus home. But here’s the thing: the photos, by Mauricio Valenzuela, are specifically of Santiago, Chile’s capital. Shot during the regime of Augusto Pinochet, the photos aren’t just about modernity and alienation, but also the muffled conditions of life under a military dictatorship. Valenzuela’s photos are part of “Urbes Mutantes,” currently on display at the International Center of Photography. Subtitled “Latin American Photography 1944-2013,” the show looks at Latin American cities in times of social, economic and political upheaval (or in other words, pretty much the entire second half of the 20th century). Many of the works on view involve conflict between culture and modernity, showing tradition and daily life under the ever-advancing pressures of capitalism. For example, Susanna Torres’s Neocolla Museum (1999-2013) presents straightforward, objective photos of supermarket products with “Inca”-style branding: an inorganic Peruvian culture turned consumerist cartoon (Inca Kola, anyone?). Miguel Rio Branco’s consumerist cartoon (Inca Kola, with “Inca”-style branding: an in-office cafeteria). The works are deftly paired with compositions, each painting shows a life-sized body in crisis, a naked body, a room-sized installation of paintings created in response to the clandestine torture practices of the Brazilian military. With their realistic renderings and spare, reduced compositions, each painting shows a scene of torture or execution of a political prisoner, or in other words, by us. In the banks and skyscrapers, at the movie theaters and the punk rock shows, on the sidewalks and in the prison cells, at the parades and the protest rallies: we are the city, even when we’re, strangely, nowhere to be seen.

“Brazil is a special country and Dave Zirin honors its people and history while mercilessly going after those who would undermine its people. This book is a remarkable mix of investigative sports journalism and insightful social history.”
—Glenn Greenwald, author, No Place to Hide

“Bearing Witness: Art and Resistance in Cold War Latin America”

“Urbes Mutantes”
International Center of Photography
Through September 7

“Bearing Witness: Art and Resistance in Cold War Latin America”
Shiva Gallery, John Jay College
Through September 12

Marcelo Montecino, Military School (Escuela Militar), Santiago, 1983. Collection Leticia and Stanislas Poniatowski. ©The Artist

As the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games approach, ordinary Brazilians are holding the country’s biggest protests in decades. Sports journalist Dave Zirin traveled to Brazil to find out why. From the favelas of Rio de Janeiro to the fabled Maracana Stadium, Zirin examines how athletic mega-events turn into neoliberal Trojan horses.

“Brazils Dance With the Devil, Zirin’s at his best, on familiar and fertile ground. Like so much of his work, it’s incisive, heartbreaking, important and even funny.”
— Jeremy Schaap, ESPN, author, Cinderella Man

“A bare-you-dare event, in solidarity with the World Naked Bike Ride”

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Karikatura’s World of Sound

By David Meadow

World dance-fusion band Karikatura packed the East Village’s Bowery Electric to capacity on Sunday, June 1, making the floors throb and the audience whirl. A listener might be hard-pressed to categorize this act, but this is how they self-identify: “An organic synthesis of all the music heard blasting out of car windows and shops onto the streets of NYC, Karikatura lives where cumbia meets hip-hop, reggae meets klezmer and indie-rock meets afrobeat.” The event was an album-release party for their LP, Eyes Wide, which includes a number of social themes like gentrification, immigration, media propaganda and the atomization of society (the title track plays on the idea of false consciousness). Karikatura’s music heard blasting out of car windows and shops onto the streets of NYC, Karikatura lives where cumbia meets hip-hop, reggae meets klezmer and indie-rock meets afrobeat. The band pulls off these ambitious multi-genre designations by drawing on a deep vocabulary, both of different idioms in general and individual rhythms and riffs in particular by originals selected for maximum danceability. It was eight-note funk beats and percussive riffs from all instruments, including melody ones. However, on June 1, they shared the bill with a very good soul/jazz group, Los Hacheros, so, appropriately for the occasion, they focused much more on Latin or Latin-tinged material, with paguancan patterns on the ride cymbal and claves on the cowbell. Drummer Morgan Greenstreet, perhaps the most deft and subtle deployer of these diverse cues, launched his kit into a true 6/8 polyrhythm at another.

Powerhouse bass player Eric Legaspi coaxed into thinking about how it will happen with this setup is a 6/8 polyrhythm. Vocalist Ryan Acquaotta, with his forceful yet tender tenor, often seems to plead earnestly with his guitarist Dima Kay appears to have started in heavy metal, for whatever that’s worth. In any case, the audience went right along with it and cherished lustily. Karikatura is originally the brainchild of the above-mentioned Dima Kay, who conceived the group while making his way across India in 2009. Kay tied things together well that night with his guitar, mostly subliminal as he chorded and matched the bass or horns, and leaped every now and then with a slinky solo or a prominent book-ending riff drenched in delay-pedal effects. If you want to see Karikatura for yourselves, they are playing at Mehanata, in the Lower East Side, on Saturday, June 28. You will smile, you will shake your butt, you will think about why you love this city so much — and you might even be

JUNE–JULY THEATER LISTINGS

THE OTHER MOZART
Written & performed by SYLVIA MILO
Directed by ISAC BYRNE

Nannerl Mozart was a child musical prodigy who toured Europe with her brother Amadeus to equal critical acclaim; though a keyboard virtuoso and composer, she faded from the world’s stage. In any case, the audience went right along with it and cherished lustily. Karikatura is originally the brainchild of the above-mentioned Dima Kay, who conceived the group while making his way across India in 2009. Kay tied things together well that night with his guitar, mostly subliminal as he chorded and matched the bass or horns, and leaped every now and then with a slinky solo or a prominent book-ending riff drenched in delay-pedal effects. If you want to see Karikatura for yourselves, they are playing at Mehanata, in the Lower East Side, on Saturday, June 28. You will smile, you will shake your butt, you will think about why you love this city so much — and you might even be

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Brazil's Dance with the Devil: The World Cup, the Olympics, and the Fight for Democracy
By Dave Zirin
Haymarket Books 2014

Sports reporting has morphed into shoutfests with your morning radio zoo crew hosts Buzzard and Numbnut opining that the coach should get fired and that first-time-long-time caller Joey in Queens doesn't know what he's talking about. ESPN's SportsCenter drones on endlessly in bars with too many TVs and the local paper quotes some athlete cliché repeated a million times before. Nonetheless, when you turn down the volume, sports journalism can elevate athletics as a mirror of society and tell us about the world.

People in the United States are familiar with this story: your hometown pro-sports team might leave if they don't get a package of tax benefits and giveaways to build a new stadium. Your favorite team paints PR gloss about all the jobs created, convention crowds and housing for what amounts to a colossal shell surrounded by a sea of parking lots that sits empty most of the year. Taxpayers foot the bill and the team stays put to dodge the eye of the media. Threatened with having their community leveled, residents formed a community association to resist the wrecking ball and have thus far successfully fought the mayor, though many favela residents took buyouts or moved into a new housing complex. Their resistance combined lawsuits, activism and a knack for catching the eye of the media.

“Even with TV cameras and media, it doesn’t mean that city officials wouldn’t be violent with us,” Vila Autodromo resident Jane Nascimento told Zirin. “The evicted communities are often evicted with tear gas while TV cameras are rolling.”

Zirin posits that to understand futebol (“foo-chee-bowl”) is to understand Brazil. He provides a concise history of a country that has known slavery (which was not abolished until 1888) and military dictatorship as well as a record five World Cup championships. However, Dance with the Devil is not a textbook. It’s ultimately a tale of the choices that sports forces both athletes and the larger society to make.

Zirin’s heroes are athletes like Muhammad Ali, Billie Jean King and Olympians Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who combined great athletic achievement with the courage to use their rare and exalted position in society to speak out against injustice. His villains are jocks like Michael Jordan who think only of turning their fame into million-dollar endorsement deals. In this book Zirin contrasts Brazilian soccer stars Garrinha and Pelé (the first athlete to copyright his name) as symbolic of the tension between “the people” and neoliberalism’s emphasis on wealth and status.

“Becoming an international icon was very profitable for Pelé,” Zirin notes, “but it also had the effect of distancing him from Brazil’s masses. If he belonged to international commercialism, then he could never really belong to them.” In 2009 Pelé took center stage with then-Brazilian President Lula da Silva to announce that Brazil had won the right to host the 2016 Olympic Games. He has also served as a leading ambassador for this year’s World Cup.

In 2013 protests swept Brazil and raged against out-of-control World Cup and Olympic spending but also echoed grievances concerning government graft, racial and economic inequality and middle-class worries about the cost of living. Dance with the Devil does not cover these protests in detail, though the upheaval riddled Brazil’s government. World Cup-related protests and strikes erupted again in May and could overshadow this year’s games, which are slated to run from June 12 to July 13. To understand why, there’s no better place to start than Zirin’s book.

―Bennett Baumer

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-Michael Moore

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